Gordon Institute of Business Science
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Intergenerational workplace dynamics: a focus on millennials as leaders

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DECLARATION

I declare that this article is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

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1 December 2020

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COVER LETTER

To Whom It May Concern

The researcher has selected the Leadership and Organisational Development Journal based on the fit of the nature of this study, and the aims and scope of the journal. Concerned with new, effective ways of leading in organisations, the journal also focusses on interdisciplinary concerns of leadership. As is the case of this study, which draws on the theoretical underpinnings of the sociology of work and leadership theories.

Considering journal quality, the Leadership and Organisational Development Journal received a 1-star ranking from the Academic Journal Guide (AJG), and is ranked by ISI and Scopus, receiving a 3.7 CiteScore tracker ranking. It also holds a 2.122 five-year impact factor (at 2019) from Clarivate Analytics. This journal is, however, not DHET and IBSS ranked.

As this study is concerned with the dynamics that exists between two generational cohorts and the strategies millennial leaders utilise to manage these, when leading Generation X, the researcher believes this journal to be the best fit.

Kind regards

Qa'id Wingrove

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Employees aged between 26 and 39, collectively referred to as millennials or Generation Y, have often been slated for being a cohort lacking literacy skills, having a short attention span and possessing a low level of employer loyalty (Bennett, Beehr, and Ivanitskaya, 2017; Weber, 2017). Older, Generation X workers are annoyed and confused by millennials, citing their high degree of transparency, narcissism, and sense of entitlement as some of the main issues (Anderson, Baur, Griffith, & Buckley, 2017; Laird, Harvey, & Lancaster, 2015; Weber, 2017). Despite this negative sentiment, millennials have also been praised for their creativity, technological prowess, exigency for connectedness and sense of immediacy with regards to access to information (Weber, 2017; Zhang, Omran, & Cobanoglu, 2017). Of importance are millennials' strong sense of autonomy, a need for independence and peer acceptance when compared to previous generations (Gomes and Deuling, 2019).

With the rising number of millennials surpassing Baby Boomers as the largest cohort in the burgeoning workforce (Brownstone, 2014; Fry, 2018; Statistics South Africa, 2019), and the ever-expanding gap between them and their older counterparts (Anderson et al., 2017), it is important to understand how effective millennial leaders (MLs) are at leading Generation X.

Baby Boomers, who previously represented the largest generational cohort, is either on or preparing for retirement (Eversole, Venneberg, & Crowder, 2012), giving way for millennials to take the reins as the future leaders of organisations. Lesser attention has been given to millennials as leaders in organisations (Butler et al., 2020; Williams and Turnbull, 2015) with a paucity of literature relating to the dynamics that exist between MLs and Generation X subordinates. The retirement of Baby Boomers also marks the emergence of millennials and Generation X as the majority of the workforce, thus bringing to the fore, the great need for organisations to prioritise understanding and managing the dynamics that exists between these groups (Murphy, 2012).

This study investigated the nature of intergenerational dynamics in the workplace, specifically those that exists between MLs and Generation X subordinates. This study also aims to uncover strategies MLs use and should start using to lead older generations more effectively. Of further interest is the leadership characteristics

valued by both generations as being the most effective and recognising the characteristics that both believe are ineffective.

The literature review is a critical analysis of the related literature currently available. This review was conducted with the intent to 1) gain insight to and an overview of the myriad of literature related to this topic, 2) identify and recognise key experts in this field of study, 3) provide context and justification for the research, 4) identify research gaps, and 5) to consider opposing sides of the argument the researcher will present (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

This chapter begins by describing the generational theory, establishing the various generations and the group memories and factors which influence each generational cohort. Of interest to this research are millennials and Generation X, and this chapter describes this cohort, drawing attention to their characteristics and the need to understand them as leaders and subordinates respectively. The chapter then discusses leadership schemas within the context of generational cohort theory, theories for the management of intergenerational tension and concludes in a discourse of leadership theories.

1. Generational cohort theory

Mannheim's (1952) theory of generations, also referred to as the sociology of generations, underpinned future studies of generational cohorts and is utilised to describe a cohort born between the same date range, sharing similar cultural experiences at critical developmental stages and is also used as a method of understanding the differentiating characteristics of these groups (Pilcher, 1994). According to Mannheim (1952), people are strongly influenced by their socio-historical environment, in particular, events of their youth in which they were actively involved. These experiences give rise to social cohorts with shared experiences which in turn influence future generations (Mannheim, 1952).

Generational theory, which originated in sociology, identified generations as a tool which could guide the understanding of the structure of social and intellectual movements (Parry & Urwin, 2011). Parry and Urwin (2011) argue that the concept of generations is not fixed, comparing the concept to that of class in society, where the individual member is not aware of the physical or mental proximity of, nor do they have knowledge of each other; they further the argument that the concept of generations is social in nature.

The existence of generations is possible due to five characteristics, as identified by Mannheim, which includes 1) the emergence of new participants in the cultural process, 2) the disappearance of former cultural participants, 3) the ability for the members of society to participate in a time-bound section of the historical process, 4) the transmittance of cultural heritage, and 5) the continuous transition from one generation to the next (Parry & Urwin, 2011).

Though members of the same generation share the same year of birth Mannheim (1952) argues that individuals cannot be classified to a generation simply because they share a year of birth. The ability for these individuals to participate in common experiences is key and solidifies the generational group. It can therefore be argued that generations need two qualifying conditions; 1) they have to share a common birth year, and 2) they have to have a consciousness of that period in time, the events that shaped it and their response and experience of it (Parry & Urwin, 2011). This argument is further strengthened by the concept of 'collective memories', which suggests that individuals are shaped through their adolescence by significant events, both nationally and internationally, which affects their future behaviours, preferences and attitudes, and is also referred to as 'generational imprinting' (Parry & Urwin, 2011). As an example, in the South African context, this may be the collective memory of Apartheid, the first democratic election or the 2019 win at the Rugby World Cup.

Utilising this generational framework as a tool, the generations have been identified. The Silent Generation, born between 1925 and 1945, is the oldest of the five generations (Zhang et al., 2017). The next generations include Baby Boomers, born between 1945 and 1960; Generation X, born between 1961 and 1980; and Generation Y (millennials), born between 1981 and 1995 (Weber, 2017). A new generation has since been identified as Generation Z, also referred to as the internet generation (iGen) or Gen Z, born from 1995 (Hampton & Keys, 2016).

Millennials are often characterised as being disloyal, impatient, ego-centric (Porter, Gerhardt, Fields, & Bugenhagen, 2019), arrogant, abrasive, entitled (Stewart, Oliver, Cravens, & Oishi, 2017), lacking literacy skills, and having a short attention span (Bennett et al., 2017; Weber, 2017). Despite these negative traits, they are also praised for being ambitious, curious (Porter et al., 2019), and compared to previous generations they are more educated (MacKenzie & Scherer, 2019), autonomous and independent (Gomes & Deuling, 2019).

As they represent the largest proportion of the workforce it is important to understand whether these perceptions contribute to generational tension, when leading Generation X.

This research focussed on millennials, aged between 26 and 39 years of age (as at 2020) currently in leadership positions, within an organisation. The population also included Generation X subordinates, aged 40 to 59 years of age (as at 2020).

1.1. Silent Generation

The Silent Generation, also commonly referred to as Veterans, Matures or Traditionalists are born between 1925 and 1945 (Meister & Willyerd, 2010; Parry & Urwin, 2011; Zhang et al., 2017). The vast majority of this cohort are enjoying retirement and are therefore not active members of the workforce. This generation, therefore, does not form part of this study.

1.2. Baby Boomers

Born between 1945 and 1960, it is argued that Baby Boomers changed politics (Meister & Willyerd, 2010). Following World War II, there was a marked surge in the number of births during this period, which was also referred to as a Baby Boom (Van Bavel & Reher, 2013). Most notably, they are characterised by their loyalty to their employers, however, they also suffered the inability to manage their work-life balance (Bennett et al., 2017; Zabel, Biermeier-Hanson, Baltes, Early, & Shepard, 2017).

Similar to the Silent Generation, this cohort is also of retirement age with the minority, still forming part of the workforce. They hold leadership positions and for the most part lead millennials (Murphy, 2012). This generational cohort will also not be the focus of this study.

1.3. Generation X

This cohort, born between 1961 and 1980 (Weber, 2017) is most commonly referred to as Generation X. They are, however, also referred to as Generation Xers and Gen X (Kuron, Lyons, Schweitzer, & Ng, 2015; Lyons, Schweitzer, & Ng, 2015; Parry & Urwin, 2011; Weber, 2017). Interestingly, they are sometimes referred to as the ‘latchkey generation’ as a result of reduced adult supervision, when compared to previous generations, resulting from the increased divorce rates and greater participation of females in the workforce (Zabel et al., 2017).

The first of Generation X joined the workforce in the early 1980s, facing close to double the unemployment rate faced by Baby Boomers. This period was further characterised by the saturation in the job market, a recession and retrenchments (Lyons et al., 2015).

Although this generation can also be characterised by their loyalty, they do not suffer the same perils of Baby Boomers. They have, however, been found to have higher levels of job mobility than that of Baby Boomers (Lyons et al., 2015).

This generation formed part of the focus of this study, specifically Generation X in subordinate roles with direct or indirect experience of millennial leaders.

1.4. Millennials

Literature has referred to this generation using various names, however, the most commonly used title is millennial (Brownstone, 2014; Lyons et al., 2015; Meister & Willyerd, 2010; Murphy, 2012). Millennials are also commonly referred to as Gen(Me) (Anderson et al., 2017), Generation Y (Anderson et al., 2017; Eversole et al., 2012; Gomes & Deuling, 2019; Kuron et al., 2015), Nexters (Hampton & Keys, 2016; Kuron et al., 2015; Williams & Turnbull, 2015) and Digital Natives (Zhang et al., 2017). For the purpose of this research, the researcher has adopted the more commonly used title of millennials when referring to this generation.

Extensive research has been conducted, relating to the work values of millennials and their impact on the workforce (Kuron et al., 2015; Papavasileiou & Lyons, 2015; Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman, & Lance, 2010), with an emergent theme defining a marked difference in the work values per generation.

Lesser attention has been given to millennials as leaders in organisations (Butler et al., 2020; Williams & Turnbull, 2015) with a with a paucity of literature relating to the dynamics that exist between MLs and Generation X subordinates. The retirement of Baby Boomers also marks the emergence of millennials and Generation X as the majority of the workforce, thus bringing to the fore, the great need for organisations to prioritise understanding and managing the dynamics that exists between these groups (Murphy, 2012).

Millennials, as leaders, are therefore the focus of this study.

1.5. Generation Z

Referring to the cohort born from 1995, Generation Z is the most common name given to this generation (Hampton & Keys, 2016; Kuron et al., 2015). They are, however, also referred to as the internet generation (iGen) or Gen Z, born from 1995 (Hampton & Keys, 2016). Accounting for 27% of the global population, this generation is characterised by a time of inclusivity and diversity, complexity, the global recession, and socioeconomic uncertainty (Hampton & Keys, 2016).

Generation Z has characteristics similar to millennials. They are, however, more diverse than previous generations from both an ethnic and cultural perspective. They also have greater respect for authority, have a sense of community, and are generally more 'we' than 'me' oriented (Hampton & Keys, 2016). They have a work ethic akin to Baby Boomers, a sense of responsibility and resilience shared by their Generation X parents, and a technology prowess exceeding the ability of millennials (Hampton & Keys, 2016).

For the purposes of this study, Generation Z does not form part of the focus.

2. Leadership schemas and generation cohort theory

There has been a shift in focus to understand the efficacy of leadership from the perspective of followers (Huettermann, Doering, & Boerner, 2014; Salvosa & Hechanova, 2020). Schemas, as described by Piaget & Cook (1952), refers to the way in which people make sense of situations through representations of the world. Within the context of the workplace this approach is adopted in the evaluation of leaders and followers, specifically the evaluation of expectation versus the reality of the experience of that leader.

A study, which evaluated leadership traits from the perspectives of different generation cohorts, revealed that the perception of leadership was heavily influenced by differences in generations on the dimensions of values, motivation, preferences in work style, the meaning of leadership and what is meant by good leadership (Sessa, Kabacoff, Deal, & Brown, 2007). As a result of these influences, this study revealed that each generation valued and ranked leadership traits differently.

Focusing on Generation X and millennials, these cohorts placed similar emphasis on a leader's ability to listen and focus. Generation X, however, valued credibility, trust and dependability higher than millennials did. Millennials, in contrast, value

dedication, encouragement and optimism high than Generation X (Sessa et al., 2007).

One of the concerns of this research, is the efficacy of millennials as leaders. Leadership schemas therefore provides a theoretical anchor in understanding how the perception of effective and ineffective leadership is formed. The study aimed to understand what characteristics the cohorts valued in order to identify similarities and discrepancies between the generational cohorts.

3. Theory for the management of intergenerational tension

The theory of leadership schemas is underpinned by the concept of perception. It is the perceived variance between expectation and reality that influences the view someone holds of another person (Sessa et al., 2007). Perception, in turn, also has a direct influence on intergenerational tension, with generations setting an expectation of what to expect from their own and other generations (Cadiz et al., 2015).

In their study, Urick, Hollensbe, Masterson, and Lyons (2017) argue that intergenerational tensions are either values-based, behaviour-based, or identity-based. In response to these tensions, they recommend strategies which are either achievement-oriented, image-oriented, or ego-oriented.

Achievement-oriented strategies focusses on the way individuals adjust how they communicate and demonstrate their achievements based on the way other generations value them. These are categorised as communication style and performance proficiency strategies (Urick et al., 2017).

Being visible, as an image-oriented strategy, recommends focusing work efforts and being present at work, for others to notice. Managing information to control image, as the second image-oriented strategy, relates to the control someone exercises in managing a positive individual or generational image (Urick et al., 2017).

Lastly, ego-oriented strategies include the protection of needs and removing self. As a strategy, when individuals focus on their own needs in engagements with others, it is referred to as protection of needs. Removing self, refers to the separation of self from unproductive engagements through avoidance or the termination of a relationship (Urick et al., 2017).

As part of this study, it is of interest to understand whether millennials and Generation X experiences similar tensions. Additionally, the study also aims to understand whether MLs make use of similar strategies in managing intergenerational tension.

4. Leadership theories

A number of research theories exist, each improving or disregarding preceding theories. These theories shed light on the behaviours exhibited by leaders. The evolution of these leadership theories is therefore viewed as a "flexible development process" (Khan et al., 2016, p. 1). Of the most cited leadership theories, practitioners and researchers alike, have placed great emphasis on five theories.

4.1. The great man theory

The great man theory positions that leaders are born and not developed. First discussed in the 19th century, this theory views leadership as an inherent quality with leaders exemplifying natural qualities of confidence, charm, intelligence, courage and intuition (Borgatta et al., 1954; Spector, 2016).

4.2. Behavioural theory

Behavioural theory, however, argues against this notion, favouring a person's environment over natural abilities as the key to their leadership characteristics. Core to this theory is the concept of conditioning, which highlights the influence environmental responses has on a person's proclivity to lead in a certain style (Conger and Kanumungo, 1987; Yuki, 1971).

The great man theory argues that leaders are born with certain traits, however, although trait theory contends that these natural qualities create good leaders it also states that these qualities does not qualify someone as a good leader (Colbert et al., 2012; Khan et al., 2016). Where some leaders may possess confidence and strong communication skills, this does not qualify them as excellent leaders.

4.3. Transactional theory

Transactional theory, also referred to as management theory, views leadership as a system of penalties and rewards. For leaders to be considered effective, they should place greater importance on results and hierarchies. Such leaders therefore value structure and order over creativity (Antonakis and House, 2014; Odumeru and Ogbonna, 2013).

4.4. Transformational leadership theory

In contrast, transformational leadership theory forgoes hierarchy in favour of oneness with the team. Also referred to as the relationship theory, this theory views effective leaders as those who are able to establish positive relationship with their team members. They do so through their ability to inspire the team through their passion and enthusiasm. In addition, they are fair, in that they hold themselves to the same standard that they expect from their team (Dionne et al., 2004; DuBrin, 2013).

Transformational leadership impacts at an individual, group and organisational level (Yeşil & Sözbilir, 2017). As an instrument of change, transformational leaders motivate their followers to do better, often exceeding what they thought was originally possible resulting in higher overall performance. Yeşil and Sözbilir (2017) further describes transformational leadership as influential and associate this with high individual and organisational performance.

First conceptualised by Bass (1985), transformational leadership is concerned with four factors of leadership; their charisma, motivation through inspiration, intellectual stimulation and their consideration of the individual (Yeşil & Sözbilir, 2017). Transformational leadership refers leaders' ability to effectively utilise either one or more of these four factors in order to achieve excellent results.

A charismatic leader serves as a role model to their follower, with the need for them to identify with their respected and trusted leaders (Yeşil & Sözbilir, 2017). Leaders can also use inspiration to motive their followers by instilling and nurturing the idea that employees can accomplish far more if they realise their potential through additional effort. As an intellectual stimulus, leaders question followers assumptions, take new approaches to old problems, and promote the further understanding of problems in an effort to stretch followers and develop their abilities (Yeşil & Sözbilir, 2017). Lastly, transformational leaders foster employee growth by establishing an environment that is conducive to growth and creating opportunities for new learnings; this is all due to the ability of transformational leaders to appreciate employee differences (Yeşil & Sözbilir, 2017).

4.4.1. The qualities of transformational leaders

DuBrin (2013) argues that transformational leaders share the same personal characteristics as that of effective leaders, with a number of studies converging in nine qualities of transformational leaders.

Transformational leaders are charismatic, which is enhanced by their agreeableness and extraversion, which has the highest impact on relationships. Their degree of optimism and ability to embrace the viewpoints of others also contribute to their charisma (DuBrin, 2013). Emotional intelligence is another quality of transformational leaders, as they possess the ability to navigate situations by reading others emotions. In doing so, they elicit respect, confidence and loyalty of the group (DuBrin, 2013).

Transformational leaders lead through vision, by clearly articulating this they create guidelines through values which motivate the group (DuBrin, 2013). Relating to the four factors of transformation leadership, these leaders also support staff development, recognising that performance is likely to increase when you develop its group members (DuBrin, 2013; Yeşil & Sözbilir, 2017). Another quality, which is shared with the four factor transformational framework, is that of innovative thinking. Transformation leaders not only encourage innovative thinking but they also challenge staff through projects, assignments and the like (DuBrin, 2013; Yeşil & Sözbilir, 2017).

Staff empowerment is another key quality, which sees transformational leaders involving the team members in key decision making activities (DuBrin, 2013). They also lead by example, which is aligned to the argument by Yeşil and Sözbilir (2017) that followers need to be able to identify with their leaders, and want to be able to trust and respect them (DuBrin, 2013). Furthermore, transformational leaders set themselves apart from transactional leaders through their moral reasoning. In a study conducted, those managers who are perceived to be transformational by subordinates, scored higher when evaluating the moral reasoning of leadership (DuBrin, 2013).

Of critical importance is Dubrin's argument that leaders do not need to possess all nine qualities to be considered transformational (DuBrin, 2013).

A sustainable competitive advantage is achieved through great leadership and Bass noted the paradigm shift from transactional to transformational leadership in which leaders can achieve greater organisational performance by motivating and influencing individuals (Bass, 1985; DuBrin, 2013; Yeşil & Sözbilir, 2017). It is for this reason that the transformational leadership theory is a key framework which underpins this research as the objective and motivation for leaders is to achieve greater individual, group and organisational performance(Yeşil & Sözbilir, 2017). The

same can be said for millennials, as they transition to leadership roles within organisations.

4.5. Situational theory of leadership

Finally, the situational theory of theory of leadership does not promote one style of leadership over the others. Instead, this theory argues that effective leaders are those who are able to understand a situation, evaluate the competence level of their team and adapt their leadership style accordingly. Leaders are therefore flexible in meeting the needs of the organisations (Graeff, 1983; G. Thompson and Glasø, 2018).

These leadership theories have unique characteristics and leadership styles. As respondents have identified the characteristics effective and ineffective leaders, in the workplace with intergenerational dynamics and tensions, the leadership theory will be utilised to put forward leadership theories best suited to millennial leaders, within this context.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5. Choice of methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to justify the choice of methodology for this study. This qualitative, exploratory study aimed to gather deep insight and explore emergent patterns of millennials when leading non-millennials. The purpose of this research is to investigate the influence millennial leaders have on non-millennial subordinates in organisations. Of importance is understanding whether generational theory has any impact on the ability of millennials to influence non-millennials.

Table 1 below summarises the study's research methodology.

Table 1. Summary of research methodology

Research methodology	
Purpose	Exploratory
Philosophy	Interpretivism
Approach	Inductive
Methodological choice	Mono method, qualitative study
Research strategy	Focus groups
Time horizon	Cross-sectional

5.1. Philosophy

This study made use of an interpretivist philosophy. It aimed to gain understanding of the dynamics that exist between social actors, millennial leaders and Generation X subordinates, in a work setting (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). Interpretivism, as argued by Saunders & Lewis (2012), is best suited to studies relating to organisational behaviour, which includes leadership. As this study was focused on the dynamics of social actors in a business setting, it represented the coming together of these actors at a particular time giving rise to a "unique social phenomenon" (Saunders & Lewis, 2012, p. 109), as is the case of the intergenerational dynamics of MLs and Generation X subordinates.

5.2. Approach

This study utilised an inductive approach, with a need to identify relationships and patterns that exist in the data gathered. Saunders and Lewis (2012) advocates the use of this approach to gain insight into the meanings that humans ascribe to events,

as is the case of leadership in organisations. The researcher gained a deeper understanding of the phenomenon by using the patterns to create inferences and to further investigate these. This is done with the objective of reaching general conclusions relating to the research problem (Saunders and Lewis, 2012).

Within the context of this study, the researcher aimed to uncover those patterns that exist within these generational groups as well as understand patterns in perception and how these perceptions, both negative and positive, either assist or detract from MLs' ability to lead Generation X subordinates effectively within organisations.

5.3. Methodological choices

This study took the form of a qualitative, mono-method study utilising focus groups as a means of soliciting information from MLs and Generation X subordinates.

5.4. Purpose of research design

Since the topic of millennial leadership has received lesser attention, with a greater focus given to millennials as followers or subordinates, an explorative research design was best suited to the topic (Williams and Turnbull, 2015). This study aimed to discover information and uncover patterns for the identification of potential areas of future research. Saunders and Lewis (2012) purport that an exploratory study lends itself to qualitative research to gain new insight.

5.5. Strategy

Data was gathered using focus groups, which encouraged open sharing through storytelling with a purpose of overcoming superficial responses and probing beneath the surface to understand the complexities of attitudes, experiences and the behaviours of generational cohorts (Saunders and Lewis, 2012).

Focus groups are predominantly used by sociologists, however, there is an increased use of this qualitative method across other disciplines, including the sociology of work (Morgan, 1996). When considering the best suited method, it is important to note that data could also be gathered using the more frequently used qualitative methods.

Surveys, as an example, are a popular choice for business management research (Saunders and Lewis, 2012). Morgan (1996), in his comparison of surveys and focus groups, noted that focus groups offer greater depth of discussion, required far fewer

participants to arrive at the same conclusion, promoted the discussion of more sensitive topics, and allowed for more open-ended discussions related to the topic.

Morgan (1996) furthers the argument for the use of focus groups by comparing it to individual interviews. Focus groups are more efficient in producing ideas, as Morgan references a study by Fern which suggest that two eight-person focus groups produced as many ideas as ten individual interviews (Morgan, 1996). Furthermore, the study by Crabtree, Yanoshik, Miller and O'Connor (1993) addressed the issue of comparability of results, which argued that individuals who first participated in an individual interview and then a focus group would have a far greater degree of discrepancies when compared to those who participated in focus groups first, which gave similar accounts of the details when interviewed thereafter (Morgan, 1996).

The strength of focus groups, when compared to other methods, is its ability to not only explore a topic but to provide insight into complex situations and motivations (Morgan, 1996; Morgan and Krueger, 1993). Focus groups also offer direct interactions, also referred to as 'the group effect'. This reduces the number of vague statements as participants can question and explain themselves to each other (Morgan, 1996). Focus groups also offer a unique advantage as the researcher is able to gather data on the extent of consensus (agreement) or diversity (disagreement) among participants (Morgan, 1996; Morgan and Krueger, 1993).

5.6. Time horizon

The research will be conducted at a particular point in time, 2020, and as such will not be concerned with the change over a period of time (as is the case for longitudinal studies). As a result, this study will be cross-sectional in nature (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

5.7. Techniques and procedures

The researcher made use of focus groups, to engage the respondents and encourage a level of feelings, attitudes and reactions relating to the phenomenon of intergenerational dynamics, which is otherwise not possible through structured, semi-structured, unstructured interviews, self-completed or interviewer completed questionnaires (Saunders and Lewis, 2012).

Respondents were identified using volunteer sampling and a preliminary questionnaire. This identified MLs and Generation X subordinates, who were then

invited to partake in this study, in one of seven focus groups: four for MLs and three for Generation X subordinates.

The Covid-19 pandemic limited the way in which researchers would traditionally engage in a focus group. To manage the health risk to participants, focus groups were conducted using Microsoft Teams (MS Teams). This collaboration platforms allowed participants to engage in group discussions without the need to be physically located at the same venue, thereby eliminating any risk of Covid-19 infection as a result of participation.

Respondents consented to the session being recorded with their cameras enabled. Once completed, the focus group discussions (FGDs) were transcribed verbatim. This process involved the converting of the audio into text (King and Horrocks, 2010). This transcription allowed the researcher to get more engrossed with the data (Langdridge and Hagger-Johnson, 2009). The video recordings, transcripts and coded data was securely stored on Microsoft OneDrive, a file hosting service, using a password.

Once transcribed, the focus group data was analysed utilising constant comparison analysis, developed by Glaser and Strauss (Glaser, 1965; Glaser and Strauss, 1967). This analysis technique, first used in grounded theory research, involved three stages. First, data was separated into key quotes and descriptors, also referred to as codes, were assigned to give these meaning. In the next step, these codes were grouped into categories based on their similarity or subject matter. In the final step, the researcher developed themes which identified the content of the groups (Dye et al., 2000; Onwuegbuzie et al., 2009).

6. Population

A population, as defined by Saunders and Lewis (2012, p. 138), refers to “the complete set of group members”. A population is not limited to a group of individuals but is seen as a complete set of the sample (subgroup) and can therefore include organisations, places, and so forth (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

The population, relevant to this study, was the employees of organisations who operate in the financial services sector, in South Africa. This research focussed on millennial leaders with leadership experience, as well as Generation X subordinates, aged 40 to 59 (as at 2020).

7. Unit of analysis

A unit of analysis is described by Vogt and Johnson (2015, p. 463) as, “the persons or things being studied”. In research, this is often the individual but could also be groups, and could even include reaction times and perceptions.

The purpose of this research is to explore the influence that millennials, as leaders, have on non-millennial subordinates in organisations. For this reason, the views and perceptions of the individual participants will form the unit of analysis for this study.

8. Sampling method and size

Due to reasons of practicality, the sampling (sub-group) technique was selected for data gathering, as opposed to the entire population. This is done with the aim of attaining correctly positioned participants, with a millennial leader and non-millennial subordinate relationship. The researcher will make use of purposive sampling, as this non-probability technique will allow the researcher to exercise their discretion in selecting participants best suited for the focus groups (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

The researcher will select ten millennial leaders (across the millennial age spectrum) and ten non-millennial subordinates from multiple organisations. The ten millennial leaders will form a focus group and the non-millennial subordinates will form another.

Should there be no evidence of data redundancy and saturation at the end of the initial focus groups, further participants will be identified to participate and additional focus groups will be established.

9. Access

The sample was accessed through a Human Resources Business Partner (HRBP) of Old Mutual Limited, an Executive Head at Standard Bank, and consultants for iOCO (also known as EOH), Liberty Group Holdings, Datonomy, Analyze Consulting and Capsource. All of which form part or consult to the financial services industry.

10. Measurement instrument

The measurement instrument was in the form of FGDs as the researcher sought to obtain data from a group of people at the same time. Due to the nature of the study and the negative sentiment of the older generations toward millennials, the focus groups was structured in such a way that it seperated millennials from Generation X, with each group not exceeding ten participants.

Through these focus groups, the researcher aimed to cover the following areas:

- The dynamics (both negative and positive) existing between Generation X and millennials
- The influence of the preconceived perceptions of millennials, held by Generation X
- Strategies best suited to managing intergenerational dynamics
- Perceived efficacy of millennial leaders from the perspective of both millennial leaders and Generation X subordinates
- The generational barriers that exist for millennials to lead effectively within organisations
- Most desired and valued leadership characteristics

11. Data gathering process

Data was collected by means of seven FGDs. Consideration was made for the use of additional FGDs, should saturation not have been reached, however in both the millennial and Generation X focus FGDs, saturation was reached at the third FGD.

FGDs were conducted in English with the use of prompt questions, with each group comprising between four and six participants each. FGDs lasted approximately 90 minutes and was conducted and recorded online.

An interview schedule was utilised and served as the foundation for the FGD (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008). This schedule was distributed to respondents prior to the session to allow them sufficient time to consider the various scenarios related to these questions. In addition, questions were open-ended so as to solicit an open, honest conversation. Further probing was utilised where participants left any statements unclear or responded vaguely.

11.1. Rationale for focus group discussion

Described as a group of people sharing similar experiences, a focus group is however not constituted as an existing social group. To overcome the potential shortcomings of interviews, focus groups allowed the ability to stimulate discussion and encourages the open, honest expression of views through the interaction of the group (Krueger & Casey, 2000). Allowing for multiple voices to be heard, focus groups draw a larger sample into a smaller number of data collection efforts or events (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009).

In addition to overcoming the shortcoming of stimulated conversations, focus groups are also appropriate in addressing potential individual discomforts which arise as a result of one-on-one interviews with strangers thus allowing these individuals to contribute more freely in a group setting (Bloor, Frankland, Thomas, & Robson, 2001).

12. Analysis approach

Following the collection of the qualitative data during the FGDs, the researcher transcribed, validated and performed the analysis of the data. Making use of the ATLAS.ti software, specifically designed as an aid for qualitative data analysis, the researcher organised the data into codes, code groups or categories to perform thematic analysis. This was done to uncover trends within the data whilst at the same time highlighting potential points of disagreement (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

The focus group data was analysed utilising constant comparison analysis, developed by Glaser and Strauss (Glaser, 1965; Glaser and Strauss, 1967). This analysis technique, first used in grounded theory research, involved three stages. First, data was separated into key quotes and descriptors, also referred to as codes, were assigned to give these meaning. In the next step, these codes were grouped into categories based on their similarity or subject matter. In the final step, the researcher developed themes which identified the content of the groups (Dye et al., 2000; Onwuegbuzie et al., 2009).

13. Quality controls

Qualitative research presents a risk of the trustworthiness of the study which is achieved through credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability as this may be compromised by the bias of both the researcher and participants. To mitigate the risk of compromised quality, the four-stage process was adopted. This process required the researcher to 1) ensure absolute clarity when designing the questions, so that it aligns to the data required, 2) ensure that there is no ambiguity which could compromise the way in which respondents decode the question, 3) ensure that respondents answer all questions, and 4) decode the responses in a way that the respondent intended (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

13.1. Credibility

There is an element of researcher bias, as the researcher is responsible for the data collection and interpretation. To safeguard the credibility of this study, the researcher made use of member checks as recommended by Shenton (2004). To ensure that participants are honest, they were afforded the opportunity to refuse participation in this research; therefore the participants included in this study were willing participants who offered their data freely. Participants were also be requested not to disclose any details discussed in the FGDs, in order to encourage open, honest conversations.

Participants were also encouraged to offer their honest opinions with a reassurance of confidentiality, whilst at the same time allowing them to withdraw from the study at any stage without the need for any explanation (Shenton, 2004).

Through peer scrutiny of this research project, the researcher aimed to further address any potential issues of credibility by welcoming their research supervisor to provide feedback over the duration of the research project, allowing them to provide a new perspective to the researcher that has been so closely involve with the study (Shenton, 2004).

13.2. Transferability

Transferability refers to the ability to apply findings from one study to other situations (Shenton, 2004). Qualitative research, however, is specific to a small number of participants within a specific environment, which therefore makes it difficult to demonstrate the application of its findings to other populations or situations (Shenton, 2004). Shenton (2004) refers to the work of Stake and Denscombe, which argues that transferability in qualitative research should not be automatically rejected. Where practitioners can draw similarities between their situation and the research study they may be able to apply these findings to their context.

Shenton's (2004) framework required the researcher to disclose information related to six areas of their study. In accordance with this framework the researcher has provided the following information: 1) employees across multiple organisations will be partaking in this study, 2) both leaders and subordinates will partake in this study, with the exclusion of the Silent Generation, Baby Boomers, and Generation Z, 3) a minimum of 20 participants will be included in the study, 4) the data collection methods are outlined within this document, 5) the final number and length of the data

collection sessions will be included in the final report, and 6) the data was collected in the year 2020.

13.3. Dependability

To ensure dependability, the researcher was required to prove that if the research were to be repeated within the same context, utilising the same methods and participants, the research would yield similar results (Shenton, 2004). The nature of qualitative research, however, makes this problematic. To address the issue of dependability, the researcher outlined in detail, the processes within this study to allow a future researcher to repeat this work.

14. Limitations

There is no common definition and agreement among researchers of the generational cohorts in terms of start and end years. Focussing on Generation X and millennials, a review of literature revealed differences in start and end years for these cohorts.

Table 2. Birth year comparisons: Generation X and millennials

Source	**Generational cohort**	
	Generation X	**Millennial**
Gottman et al (1998)	Late 1970s – early 1980s	Early 1980s – late 1990s
T. Zhang and Acs (2019)	1965 - 1979	1980 - 1994
Weber (2017)	1965 - 1980	1981 - 1995
Kuron, Lyons, Schweitzerand and Ng (2015)	1965 - 1979	1980 - 1994
Anderson et al. (2017)	-	1982 - 1999
Lyons, Schweitzer and Ng (2015)	1965 - 1979	1980 - onwards

Table 2 compares the range of birth years for Generation X and millennials. This illustrates that although there is no clear agreement on the periods, there is commonality in terms of the range within these periods. This lack of agreement undermines the transferability and comparability of generational studies.

14.1. Additional limitations

a. Due to the explorative nature of qualitative research, there are a number of limitations to this research, and due to the subjective nature the findings of this research are influenced by biases (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

b. At the time of the research, the researcher may have included bias as he himself is a millennial leader.
c. The data collection, transcription and coding was performed by the researcher, which potentially presents the limitation of bias in the analysis and interpretation of the results of this study.
d. The researcher selected millennial leaders and Generation X subordinates to conduct the FGDs. This selection was not representative of the South African Financial Services Industry, nor is it representative of all generations of South Africa and may therefore not be generalised to South African millennials nor can it be generalised to the Financial Services Industry.
e. Qualitative research poses the issue of transferability. The researcher has made every effort to disclose information which will assist practitioners to draw similarities and enable them to apply these findings to their context.
f. Due to the cross-sectional time horizon of this study, the findings are representative of a point in time and will not provide any insight into the development of this phenomenon.

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APPENDICES

15. Appendix 1 – Author guidelines of the Leadership & Organization Development Journal

Before you start

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Biographies and acknowledgements	If you want to include these items, save them in a separate Microsoft Word document and upload the file with your submission. Where they are included, a brief professional biography of not more than 100 words should be supplied for each named author.
Research funding	Your article must reference all sources of external research funding in the acknowledgements section. You should describe the role of the funder or financial sponsor in the entire research process, from study design to submission.

Structured abstract	All submissions must include a structured abstract, following the format outlined below. These four sub-headings and their accompanying explanations must always be included: • Purpose • Design/methodology/approach • Findings • Originality The following three sub-headings are optional and can be included, if applicable: • Research limitations/implications • Practical implications • Social implications You can find some useful tips in our write an article abstract how-to guide. The maximum length of your abstract should be 250 words in total, including keywords and article classification (see the sections below).
Keywords	Your submission should include up to 12 appropriate and short keywords that capture the principal topics of the paper. Our Creating an SEO-friendly manuscript how to guide contains some practical guidance on choosing search-engine friendly keywords. Please note, while we will always try to use the keywords you've suggested, the in-house editorial team may replace some of them with matching terms to ensure consistency across publications and improve your article's visibility.
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	Technical paper. Describes and evaluates technical products, processes or services. **Conceptual paper**. Focuses on developing hypotheses and is usually discursive. Covers philosophical discussions and comparative studies of other authors' work and thinking. **Case study**. Describes actual interventions or experiences within organizations. It can be subjective and doesn't generally report on research. Also covers a description of a legal case or a hypothetical case study used as a teaching exercise. **Literature review**. This category should only be used if the main purpose of the paper is to annotate and/or critique the literature in a particular field. It could be a selective bibliography providing advice on information sources, or the paper may aim to cover the main contributors to the development of a topic and explore their different views. **General review**. Provides an overview or historical examination of some concept, technique or phenomenon. Papers are likely to be more descriptive or instructional ('how to' papers) than discursive.
Headings	Headings must be concise, with a clear indication of the required hierarchy. The preferred format is for first level headings to be in bold, and subsequent sub-headings to be in medium italics.
Notes/endnotes	Notes or endnotes should only be used if absolutely necessary. They should be identified in the text by consecutive numbers enclosed in square brackets. These numbers should then be listed, and explained, at the end of the article.
Figures	All figures (charts, diagrams, line drawings, webpages/screenshots, and photographic images) should be submitted electronically. Both colour and black and white files are accepted. There are a few other important points to note: • All figures should be supplied at the highest resolution/quality possible with numbers and text clearly legible. • Acceptable formats are .ai, .eps, .jpeg, .bmp, and .tif. • Electronic figures created in other applications should be supplied in their original formats and should also be either copied and pasted into a blank MS Word document, or submitted as a PDF file. • All figures should be numbered consecutively with Arabic numerals and have clear captions. • All photographs should be numbered as Plate 1, 2, 3, etc. and have clear captions.
Tables	Tables should be typed and submitted in a separate file to the main body of the article. The position of each table should be clearly labelled in the main body of the article with corresponding labels clearly shown in the table file. Tables should be numbered consecutively in Roman numerals (e.g. I, II, etc.).

	Give each table a brief title. Ensure that any superscripts or asterisks are shown next to the relevant items and have explanations displayed as footnotes to the table, figure or plate.
References	All references in your manuscript must be formatted using one of the recognised Harvard styles. You are welcome to use the Harvard style Emerald has adopted – we've provided a detailed guide below. Want to use a different Harvard style? That's fine, our typesetters will make any necessary changes to your manuscript if it is accepted. Please ensure you check all your citations for completeness, accuracy and consistency. **Emerald's Harvard referencing style** References to other publications in your text should be written as follows: • Single author: (Adams, 2006) • Two authors: (Adams and Brown, 2006) • Three or more authors: (Adams et al., 2006) Please note, 'et al' should always be written in italics. A few other style points. These apply to both the main body of text and your final list of references. • When referring to pages in a publication, use 'p.(page number)' for a single page or 'pp.(page numbers)' to indicate a page range. • Page numbers should always be written out in full, e.g. 175-179, not 175-9. • Where a colon or dash appears in the title of an article or book chapter, the letter that follows that colon or dash should always be lower case. • When citing a work with multiple editors, use the abbreviation 'Ed.s'. At the end of your paper, please supply a reference list in alphabetical order using the style guidelines below. Where a DOI is available, this should be included at the end of the reference.
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For book chapters	Surname, initials (year), "chapter title", editor's surname, initials (Ed.), title of book, publisher, place of publication, page numbers. e.g. Calabrese, F.A. (2005), "The early pathways: theory to practice – a continuum", Stankosky, M. (Ed.), Creating the Discipline of Knowledge Management, Elsevier, New York, NY, pp.15-20.
For journals	Surname, initials (year), "title of article", journal name, volume issue, page numbers. e.g. Capizzi, M.T. and Ferguson, R. (2005), "Loyalty trends for the twenty-first century", Journal of Consumer Marketing, Vol. 22 No. 2, pp.72-80.
For published conference proceedings	Surname, initials (year of publication), "title of paper", in editor's surname, initials (Ed.), title of published proceeding which may include place and date(s) held, publisher, place of publication, page numbers. e.g. Wilde, S. and Cox, C. (2008), "Principal factors contributing to the competitiveness of tourism destinations at varying stages of development",

	in Richardson, S., Fredline, L., Patiar A., & Ternel, M. (Ed.s), CAUTHE 2008: Where the 'bloody hell' are we?, Griffith University, Gold Coast, Qld, pp.115-118.
For unpublished conference proceedings	Surname, initials (year), "title of paper", paper presented at [name of conference], [date of conference], [place of conference], available at: URL if freely available on the internet (accessed date). e.g. Aumueller, D. (2005), "Semantic authoring and retrieval within a wiki", paper presented at the European Semantic Web Conference (ESWC), 29 May-1 June, Heraklion, Crete, available at: http://dbs.uni-leipzig.de/file/aumueller05wiksar.pdf (accessed 20 February 2007).
For working papers	Surname, initials (year), "title of article", working paper [number if available], institution or organization, place of organization, date. e.g. Moizer, P. (2003), "How published academic research can inform policy decisions: the case of mandatory rotation of audit appointments", working paper, Leeds University Business School, University of Leeds, Leeds, 28 March.
For encyclopaedia entries (with no author or editor)	Title of encyclopaedia (year), "title of entry", volume, edition, title of encyclopaedia, publisher, place of publication, page numbers. e.g. Encyclopaedia Britannica (1926), "Psychology of culture contact", Vol. 1, 13th ed., Encyclopaedia Britannica, London and New York, NY, pp.765-771. (for authored entries, please refer to book chapter guidelines above)
For newspaper articles (authored)	Surname, initials (year), "article title", newspaper, date, page numbers. e.g. Smith, A. (2008), "Money for old rope", Daily News, 21 January, pp.1, 3-4.
For newspaper articles (non-authored)	Newspaper (year), "article title", date, page numbers. e.g. Daily News (2008), "Small change", 2 February, p.7.
For archival or other unpublished sources	Surname, initials (year), "title of document", unpublished manuscript, collection name, inventory record, name of archive, location of archive. e.g. Litman, S. (1902), "Mechanism & Technique of Commerce", unpublished manuscript, Simon Litman Papers, Record series 9/5/29 Box 3, University of Illinois Archives, Urbana-Champaign, IL.
For electronic sources	If available online, the full URL should be supplied at the end of the reference, as well as the date that the resource was accessed. Surname, initials (year), “title of electronic source”, available at: persistent URL (accessed date month year). e.g. Weida, S. and Stolley, K. (2013), “Developing strong thesis statements”, available at: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/588/1/ (accessed 20 June 2018) Standalone URLs, i.e. those without an author or date, should be included either inside parentheses within the main text, or preferably set as a note (Roman numeral within square brackets within text followed by the full URL address at the end of the paper).

For data	Surname, initials (year), title of dataset, name of data repository, available at: persistent URL, (accessed date month year). e.g. Campbell, A. and Kahn, R.L. (2015), American National Election Study, 1948, ICPSR07218-v4, Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (distributor), Ann Arbor, MI, available at: https://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR07218.v4 (accessed 20 June 2018)

16. Appendix 2 – Example article

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Transformational leadership and turnover

Mediating effects of employee engagement, employer branding, and psychological attachment

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to report the findings of a study which examines the relationship between transformational leadership and intention to leave through the mediating role of employee engagement, employer branding, and psychological attachment.

Design/methodology/approach – Transformational leadership, employee engagement, employer branding, and psychological attachment were assessed in an empirical study based on a sample of 405 full-time employees working in information technology (IT) organizations in India. The data which were obtained using Google doc and a printed questionnaire was analyzed through structural and measurement model.

Findings – The results reveal that transformational leadership style directly influences employee intention to leave. Transformational leadership and employer branding is mediated by employee engagement. The leadership relation with psychological attachment is mediated by employer branding.

Practical implications – The implications of the study are of utmost importance for Indian IT industries facing high voluntary turnover in recent times. Transformational leaders in teams contribute to develop employee engagement, employer branding, and psychological attachment. Imparting transformational leadership training to team leaders can help in generating psychological attachment with the employees which would go a long way.

Originality/value – This study explores the relationship among transformational leadership style, employee engagement, employer branding, and psychological attachment which has not been explored theoretically and tested empirically in an Indian context.

Keywords Transformational leadership, Employee engagement, India, Employer branding, Intention to leave, Psychological attachment

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

The evolution of leadership theory and practice has attracted researchers on a quest to explain the influence of leadership by developing models. A review of developments in the field of leadership published in the Annual Review of Psychology (Avolio *et al.*, 2009) raises the need to determine causal mechanisms that link leadership to various organizational interim and ultimate outcomes, and highlights the importance of a strategy-driven leadership. It points toward further research to examine the role of mediators, in order to explain the significance of leadership for organizational outcomes.

Transformational leadership is one of the most sought after approaches to leader behavior that transforms and inspires followers to be of greater value to the organization (Ghadi *et al.*, 2013). Earlier research on the outcomes of transformational leadership shows that it can predict job behavior (Piccolo and Colquitt, 2006) and financial performance over a length of time (Bass *et al.*, 2003). The present study focuses on the transformational leadership style of information technology (IT) professionals. One of the most important human resource (HR) challenges faced by IT industries in India is the high rate of voluntary employee turnover, as revealed by triangulation research. The challenges faced by these organizations call for

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transformational leaders to lead and deliver results (Agrawal *et al.*, 2012). Our research starts with transformational leadership as the main component in the hypothesized model, followed by employee engagement, employer branding, and psychological attachment as intervening variables, helping to explain employee intention to leave the organization. Through a post-positivist approach we examine whether transformational leaders can control attrition amongst IT employees. We suggest leadership training to address the issues leading to employee turnover in the IT industry. A systematic review of 72 studies, from 1980 to 2008, and focused on the intention of IT personnel to leave, supports the need for clarity in communication, to reduce role ambiguity and role conflict and highlights the manager's initiative in team management (Ghapanchi and Aurum, 2011). Transformational leadership is studied for its virtues which are idealized influence, motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. These virtues display an association with employee outcomes and occupational success (Nielsen *et al.*, 2009; Höper *et al.*, 2012).

A transformational leader's behavior in terms of "visioning" and "inspiring" is of much importance in bringing about employee engagement (Densten, 2005). Studies have reported that a leader's support and positive relation aids the achievement of high level engagement by the team (Xu and Thomas, 2011; Ghadi *et al.*, 2013). Under such team leadership, followers display integrity and perform effectively. In our study, we analyze the role of mediating variables such as employee engagement, employer branding, and psychological attachment in establishing a nomological network between transformational leadership and intention to leave. Furthermore, transformational leader contribution in building brand image in the new economy, by achieving a congruence of identities of a variety of stakeholders has been validated through quantitative and qualitative research (Kaufmann *et al.*, 2012). The mediating role of a leader between the corporate branding structure and an individual has been explored, using grounded theory that portrays leaders as an "integrating force," responsible for unifying the elements which contribute to corporate identity (Vallaster and De Chernatony, 2005). However, its limitation with regards to generalizability gives scope to further investigation into the role of a leader.

Our study aims to test the role of transformational leadership on employee intention to leave and the effect of employee engagement, employer branding, and psychological attachment in the process. By examining the mediating role of employee perception in Hong Kong and Japan, representing collectivist culture, it is observed that identification contributes to the reduction of turnover (Abrams *et al.*, 1998). Moreover, as identification is an important element of attachment, as realized by subordinates, it is affected by the superior leadership style (Shalit *et al.*, 2010). We explore this relationship with transformation leadership. A causal relationship is established through the analysis of self-rated data from IT professionals, using structural equation modeling (SEM). Results show that transformational leadership contributes to employee engagement and employer branding, developing a feeling of identification and internalization among them.

Industry reports show that attrition in Indian organized sector is the highest globally (Hay Group, 2013). The attrition rate in the IT industry within India ranges from 15 to 50 percent, depending on the size of the organization and structure (NASSCOM Annual Report, 2013). This raises concerns for employee engagement and retention. Therefore, for growth and sustainability of the organization, innovative practices need to be developed in order to retain talent. Our findings of the causal relationship among the different factors in the organization address some of the issues related to the training of team leaders on transformational leadership.

Conceptual framework

Turnover

Various organizational and environmental factors, including leadership, supervision, perceived job characteristics in terms of motivational potential and pre-employment

expectation, as antecedents to intention to leave lead to turnover among employees (Miller *et al.*, 1979; Mobley *et al.*, 1978). The present research uses the theory of reasoned action (TRA) (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975) and theory of planned behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 2011) to examine these factors. According to the theories, behavioral intentions result from the combination of attitudes and subjective norms. The TRA explains 40-50 percent of the variance in intention (Sutton, 1998). A longitudinal study using the TPB shows that behavioral intentions are the best predictors of turnover, in which the effects of all the variables such as job satisfaction, organization commitment, age, and tenure were accounted for (Van Breukelen *et al.*, 2004). In this paper, transformational leadership is operationalized as the subjective norm, and employee engagement, employer branding, and psychological attachment as the attitude of the employee. The study in collectivist culture attempts to apprehend the relation of these factors with intention to leave (Besser, 1993; Luu and Hattruo, 2010).

Psychological attachment

Psychological attachment is based on the basic inclination of human beings to relate affectionately to a person or place (Bowlby, 1977). This attachment is observed in the form of a relationship between employees and their organization (Lin, 2010). O'Reilly and Chatman (1986, p. 493) identified psychological attachment as: "[...] the degree to which the individual internalizes or adopts characteristics or perspectives of the organization." They proposed that psychological attachment can be predicted through compliance (instrumental involvement for specific, extrinsic rewards), identification (involvement based on a desire for affiliation), and internalization (involvement predicated on congruence between individual and organizational values). Often individuals conform to the behavior to gain rewards, noted as compliance or exchange. The process of individuals identifying with a person, place, object, or group starts with congruence in their values or attributes. Incorporation of these attributes into one's cognition brings about internalization of the values or attributes which is reflected in their behavior. The base of attachment and degree to which an individual is attached varies psychologically, depending on various antecedents.

Our study uses O'Reilly and Chatman's definition to conceptualize and operationalize psychological attachment owing to two reasons: first, it includes both identification and internalization of values as intrinsic factors leading to behavior; and second, it includes compliance components that help to interpret the role of extrinsic rewards. This definition has been often used by researchers as a tool to measure psychological attachment among different samples, to establish their reliability and validity (Sutton and Harrison, 1993; Martin and Bennett, 1996; Pillai *et al.*, 1999).

Employer branding

The concept of employer branding lies in the idea of brand as "a mixture of attributes, tangible and intangible, symbolized in a trade mark, which if managed properly, creates value and influence" Swystun (2007) said. Employer branding in a HR setting is defined by Ambler and Barrow (1996, p. 185) as "The package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company."

Its framework is based on the outcome of brand associations in the form of employer attraction and employee productivity and highlights the role of organization identity, as an input for intention to quit and turnover. The differentiation in a firm's characteristics, presented as its unique feature, for value creation, to attract potential employees and retain current employees, is of paramount importance and gives the organization an identity, in terms of employer branding (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004; Dell and Ainspan, 2001). It is an important building block for strategic HR management. Hence, the inclusion of employer branding in this study is used to establish the nomological network.

Employee engagement

Employee engagement has been defined in many different ways (Harter and Schmidt, 2008; Macey and Schneider, 2008). The initial outline of employee engagement as cognitive, emotional, and physical resources (Kahn, 1990) put forth by employees in their work, was expanded to describe three facets of engagement, namely individual trait (views of life), state (feelings of energy), and behavior (extra role), displayed by an employee at workplace (Macey and Schneider, 2008).

In many organizations, employee engagement is evaluated by the Gallup Q12 questionnaire that operationalizes the resources and opportunities available to boost engagement (Buckingham and Coffman, 1999). However, the relevance of the questionnaire was raised by some scholars as it only reports on the conditions in organization which facilitate employee engagement (Harter and Schmidt, 2008; Macey and Schneider, 2008). Such issues were addressed by a meta-analysis of Gallup Q12 used by 8,000 business units that showed a positive relation between levels of employee engagement and business unit performance (Harter *et al.*, 2002). Due to its relevance in engagement research for organization outcomes, Gallup Q12 is used in the present research. Furthermore, it will be of value for further discussion on employer branding, which is graded on characteristics of the organization.

Transformational leadership

Transformational leadership comprises four dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass, 1998). Such leaders promote and motivate their followers by projecting and communicating attractive visions, common goals, and shared values (Bass and Riggio, 2006). Idealized influence is the leader's ability to build loyalty and devotion among the team members, assisting them to identify with the leader. Inspirational motivation relates to the ability of the leader to provide a vision to its followers and motivate them to work in that direction. Intellectual stimulation activates the followers to be risk-taking and innovative at work. The last one, individualized consideration, is related to the behavior of the leader to pay attention to the individual needs of the followers. A strong association between leadership behavior and desirable outcomes has been proved in some studies (Ghadi *et al.*, 2013; Men and Stacks, 2013; Piccolo and Colquitt, 2006).

According to Lacity *et al.* (2008), research on IT turnover in India indicates the routine nature of work to be one of the most important reasons. Their revised model identifies job satisfaction, organizational satisfaction, and social norms as main determinants of employee's intention to leave. A systematic review of past studies shows that role clarity, role ambiguity, and perceived workload add to high turnover among these professionals (Ghapanchi and Aurum, 2011). They place an emphasize on the manager's role in developing strategies to overcome these barriers. Leadership styles that are focused on communication, development, innovative work distribution, and autonomy at workplace may reduce attrition. Among different leadership styles, conceptualized, transformational leadership appears to fit the requirement for an innovative leader.

Hypothesis development

Transformational leader and intention to leave

A cluster study on the taxonomy of antecedents of IT turnover intentions identifies five main categories, including individual, organizational, job-related, psychological, and environmental factors (Ghapanchi and Aurum, 2011). The issues covered in these clusters are related to autonomy, work schedule, supervisor support, intrinsic motivation, affective commitment, future uncertainty, discrimination, distributive justice, lack of team work, and

career orientation. Transformational leaders are observed to inspire and motivate team members to work in the direction of realizing the organization's vision through innovation (Chen *et al.*, 2012), and generate commitment for the accomplishment of said vision (Eisenbeiss *et al.*, 2008; Bass and Riggio, 2006). Their ability to manage team diversity, fostering utilization of member potential, provides an outlet to individual cognitive endeavors (Kearney and Gebert, 2009), and boosts team work and intrinsic motivation of the teams working in the IT sector.

It has been observed that psychological empowerment experienced by followers under a transformational leader predicts their intention to leave (Larrabee *et al.*, 2003; Avey *et al.*, 2008). A positive impact on a follower's motivation has been noted in terms of their self-actualization needs, extra efforts, and helps to stimulate their personal development (Dvir *et al.*, 2002; Hughes *et al.*, 2010). It moderates the relation between emotional exhaustion and turnover intention (Green *et al.*, 2013). Regression results also provide support for differential mediating effects between the influence of transformational leadership and followers' withdrawal cognition (Tse, 2008). Moreover, trust in a leader and follower relationship contributes to employees well-being (Kelloway *et al.*, 2012) and builds their moral identity (Zhu *et al.*, 2011). These observations indicate the significance of the four transformational leadership dimensions on employee intention to leave.

The transformational leader and employee engagement

Engaging employees is one of the greatest challenge that organizations face in present times (Frank *et al.*, 2004). Research in the area of positive organization behavior is focused on employee engagement, for improving organizational outcomes (Bakker and Schaufeli, 2008). Transformational leaders influence their subordinates' perception of meaning of work, leading to higher engagement (Ghadi *et al.*, 2013; Xu and Thomas, 2011). The antecedent conditions proposed by Kahn (1990) also includes psychological meaningfulness, availability, and safety which can be enhanced by a leader's behavior. These conditions can be influenced by supportive interactions, autonomy, and creativity at work, thus boosting the self-confidence of subordinates (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Hallberg and Schaufeli, 2006; Bakker and Xanthopoulou, 2009).

The relationship between engagement and employee intention to leave comes from high levels of dedication to work (Halbesleben and Wheeler, 2008). In light of social exchange theory, it is seen as an obligation generated between the individuals and resources in the organization (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). Individuals pay for the resources in organization through their level of engagement. In some studies, employee engagement is a mediator between the perceived supervisor support and intentions to quit (Saks, 2006) and between leadership empowerment behavior and turnover intention (Van Schalkwyk *et al.*, 2010). Furthermore, the level of engagement among the members in supervising employee dyad predicts intent to remain (Jones and Harter, 2005). Therefore, we anticipate that:

H1. Employees' engagement mediates the relationship between employees' perception of transformational leadership behavior and their intention to leave (Figure 1).

Transformational leader and employer branding

Among the antecedents of brand building behavior, leadership style has been known to have an impact, through role identity salience and value congruence (Kaufmann *et al.*, 2012). Discourse on employer branding and organization behavior theory have proposed that organizations demonstrating open communication and fairness are more likely to attract high levels of identification and commitment from employees (Edwards, 2009). It has been observed that employee interactions, involvement, and empowerment contribute to brand building behavior (Kaufmann *et al.*, 2012). Social identity theory (SIT) advocates increased

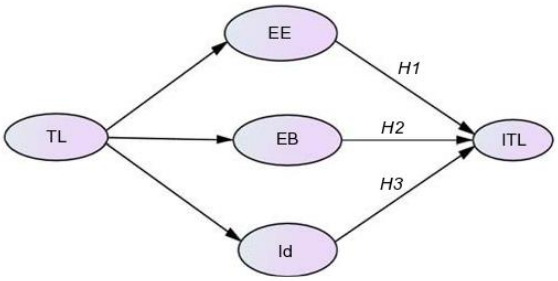

Figure 1.
Hypotheses proposed

belongingness of an individual toward an organization with a higher brand value (Tajfel, 1979; Reade, 2001). The brand-oriented leadership exhibited by transformational leaders serves as the key integrating concept, aligning vision, culture, and image. It also ensures brand building among the employees. Brand-specific transactional leaders influence followers through a process of compliance, leading to an increase in turnover intentions and a decrease in in-role and extra role brand building behaviors, whereas transformational leaders influence followers through a process of internalization and decreased turnover (Barling *et al.*, 1996; Morhart *et al.*, 2009).

The influence of employer brand on organizational outcomes is evident from interrelations amongst the brand and commitment (Vaijayanthi *et al.*, 2011). Strong employer brand indicates greater employee satisfaction and an employee's higher affinity toward the brand (Davies, 2008). Moreover, employee satisfaction is attributed to employee trust of the employer, by being more supportive and open. The above discussion makes it relevant to the study of the mediating role of employer branding in the leadership-turnover relationship. Hence, we hypothesize:

H2. Employer branding mediates the relationship between employee perception of transformational leadership behavior and intention to leave.

Transformational leadership and psychological attachment

The literature on antecedents of psychological attachment includes group-leader relations, such as participative leadership (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990). We argue that transformational leader behavior contributes to building attachment with employees. Attachment theory states that the need for attachment is fulfilled through an emotional bond and emphasizes the value congruence among the players as an essential factor (O'Reilly and Chatman, 1986; Bennett and Durkin, 2000). The vision of a transformational leader acts as a unifying force, leading to convergence of values between a leader and his team members (Kirkpatrick and Locke, 1996; Krishnan, 2001). Laboratory simulation by Krishnan displayed that a transformational leader's vision of quality and its implementation affects self-set goals and self-efficacy, giving rise to performance. Moreover, providing a vision and motivating followers toward achievement shows their dependence and personal identification with the leader (Kark *et al.*, 2003). The individualized consideration demonstrated by these leaders develops attachment among the members (Bass, 1998; Keller and Cacioppe, 2001). Transformational leaders foster ethical approaches to work and fairness in following norms and procedures (Pillai *et al.*, 1999; Odom and Green, 2003). Their role in enhancing the effective commitment supports follower attachment (Bycio *et al.*, 1995; Allen and Meyer, 1996).

Past research combines the TRA and SIT to aid the explanation of identification as a consistent predictor of turnover intentions across cultures. Management systems that

support organizational identification may succeed in reducing turnover (Abrams *et al.*, 1998). As discussed in the conceptual part of this paper, psychological attachment consists of identification and internalization. A psychological bonding develops when members take the defining characteristics of the organization as defining characteristics of themselves (Dutton *et al.*, 1994). Hence, building on these justifications, we hypothesize as follows:

H3. Psychological attachment mediates the relationship between employee perception of transformational leadership behavior and intention to leave.

Methods

A quantitative survey was conducted on middle management level employees from 12 multinational IT organizations, located in four different cities in India, each having more than 500 employees. The responses were collected via online and pen and paper methods as per the respondent's convenience.

Sample and procedures for data collection

A total of 700 questionnaires were distributed, of which 400 were sent using a Google Doc survey and 300 were printed and distributed along with the assurance of confidentiality. Out of 426 responses received, 405 fully completed questionnaires were analyzed (21 were incomplete) – a sufficient number for SEM (Kline, 2005; Shah and Goldstein, 2006). As no significant difference was observed between online and pen and paper data sets by independent sample *t*-test across all variables, they were analyzed as one collective.

The demographic profile of the participants, in terms of age, gender, qualification, experience, and nature of work (technical/non-technical) are presented in Table I.

Measures

The five measures, namely transformational leadership, employee engagement, employer branding, psychological attachment, and employee turnover intention examined in the study are outlined below.

Transformational leadership. Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) form 6S, having 12 items to assess four sub-variables, namely, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration of transformational leadership was used (Bass, 1998; Bass and Avolio, 1992). These variables were taken as

Item	Category	Frequency	%
Age (in years)	21-25	136	33.70
	26-30	217	53.70
	31 and above	52	12.6
Experience (in years)	Up to 3 years	186	46.00
	3-6 years	158	39.1
	Above 6 years	61	14.9
Qualification	Graduates	191	47.2
	Post graduates	214	52.8
Gender	Male	367	90.6
	Female	38	9.4
Marital Status	Married	168	41.5
	Unmarried	237	58.5
Department	Technical	380	93.8
	Non-technical	25	6.2

Table I.
Demographic profile of the respondents

Note: n ¼ 405

indicators to create a single factor to measure transformational leadership. The response format of MLQ ranges from 0 (not at all) to 4 (frequently, if not always). A sample item is "I have complete faith in my superior." Cronbach's α reliability of the available scale was 0.96.

Employee engagement. Gallup Q12 (Mann and Ryan, 2014) was used to measure employee engagement. This instrument is widely used by researchers (Luthans and Peterson, 2002; Bhatnagar, 2007). In total, 12 items pooled into two parcels were taken as indicators on a five-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). An example of an item is "At work, I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day." The original Cronbach's α coefficient 0.88 showed excellent internal consistency.

Psychological attachment. A 12-item scale (O'Reilly and Chatman, 1986) was used to assess psychological attachment of employees. The scale has sound psychometric properties, with high reliabilities, ranging from 0.86 to 0.90 (Martin and Bennett, 1996; Pillai *et al.*, 1999; Sutton and Harrison, 1993). Employees were asked to rate their perceptions on a five-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). An eight-item sub-variable "identification and internalization" was divided into two parcels and taken as indicators. Sub-variable "compliance" was excluded from further analysis due to its poor relationship. An item of the scale is "How hard I work for this organization is directly linked to how much I am rewarded." Cronbach's α was 0.87 and showed soundness of scale.

Employer branding. A 25 items employer branding scale, which includes a refinement and extension of the three dimensions scale proposed by Ambler and Barrow (1996), was employed. It has superior psychometric properties (Berthon *et al.*, 2005). Responses were obtained on a five-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The scale was divided into five parcels (Hall *et al.*, 1999) for further analysis. Sample item included "Recognition/appreciation from management is good in this organization." The internal consistency for employer branding was found to be excellent, as Cronbach's α was 0.95 in the study.

Turnover intention. A three-item employee turnover intention scale developed by Mobley *et al.* (1978) was used as it predicted turnover more accurately then others (Hom *et al.*, 1979). Responses were obtained on a five-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Example included is "I am actively searching for an alternative to this organization." Cronbach's α reliability coefficient for turnover intention was found to be 0.85 in this study.

Procedures for data analysis

In the first phase of data analysis, mean, standard deviation, reliability, and Pearson's correlation were conducted. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to identify factor loadings and goodness-of-fit indices for the variables. During the second phase we took a two-stage approach in conducting SEM (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). This was done in order to identify the relationships amongst constructs by specifying how each construct appeared in the model. For this, different scale fit indices and factor loading required were checked as recommended by Hu and Bentler (1999) and Byrne (2010).

Results

Descriptive statistics and correlation test

Descriptive statistics, correlation coefficients, and Cronbach's α for all the study variables are presented in Table II. A moderate to high correlation (Cohen, 1992) between constructs (r ¼0.149 and 0.778, p o0.01) was observed. An initial evidence to support the hypotheses was that the outcome variable – intention to quit – showed a negative relationship with all other variables included in the study.

For the distinctiveness of the measures, CFA was performed using the AMOS software. Cronbach's α was obtained under the assumption of parallelity, i.e. all factor loadings and all error variances are constrained to be equal. As Cronbach's α may over or underestimate reliability (Raykov, 1998), composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) were calculated (CR assesses the internal consistency of the measure and AVE represents the ratio of total variance which is due to the latent variable). A variance extracted 0.50 indicates that the validity of both the constructs and individual variables are high (Dillon and Goldstein, 1984). In the study, the constructs had sound reliability and validity, as CR was greater than 0.70 and AVE was greater than 0.50 in the model. It proved that the constructs had sound discriminant validity (Hair *et al.*, 1998). Each variable was found to be distinct from each other.

The results of CFA showed that all the variables in the study had strong psychometric properties validating the distinct characteristics of the constructs in the study (χ^2¼190.120; df¼91; GFI ¼0.944; NFI ¼0.952; IFI ¼0.974; TLI ¼0.966; CFI ¼0.974; RMSEA ¼0.052). All values for the loadings were significant at p o 001. Furthermore, Cronbach's α for each scale was above the preferred 0.70 requirement of acceptability (Nunnally, 1978). The hypothesized model fit the data adequately (¼ 203.384; d¼95; GFI ¼0.939; NFI¼ 0.949; IFI¼ 0.972; TLI¼ 0.964; CFI¼ 0.972; RMSEA¼0.053) after imposing three additional constrains in the form of modification indices in the model (Steiger, 1990) (see Figure 2).

Kline (2005) suggested that a satisfactory model fit can be inferred when the χ^2/df ratio is below 3.00 (CFA: 2.089; SEM: 2.140) and values for CFI and other incremental fit indices are above 0.90. In addition to this, the RMSEA value for CFA and confirmed model (0.052 and 0.053) also indicated model fit. For RMSEA, values of 0.05 or less indicate close fit, between 0.05 and 0.08 indicate reasonable fit, and between 0.08 and 0.10 indicate marginal fit (Browne and Cudeck, 1992) (Table III).

Transformational leadership explained 42 percent of variance in employee engagement (R^2¼0.418; β ¼0.647; n o0.0001), whereas transformational leadership and employee engagement contributed 83 percent of the variance (R^2¼0.832). The regression weights (β) were 0.240 (no0.0001) and 0.738 (no0.0001) for transformational leadership and employee engagement, respectively explained employer branding (EB¼TL + EE); whereas sub-variable identification and internalization of psychological attachment explained 85 percent (R^2 0.8¼8) in the model (Id TL + EB¼+ EB). The indirect effect on identification and internalization was also significant (β′ 0.661). ¼

Interestingly, intention to leave did not show direct significant relationship as unstandardized parameter estimated value was non-significant (R^2 ¼0.077; B¼−0.044; n o ns; indirectly β¼ −0.048). Thus, it can be inferred that the variables did not significantly affect the intention to quit in the model.

Table II. Descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation coefficients for the five variables

Sl. Variables	Mean	SD	CR	AVE	1	2	3	4	5
1 Transformational leadership	2.384	0.576	0.901	0.696	(0.902)				
2 Employee engagement	3.58	0.605	0.707	0.556	0.539**	(0.826)			
3 Employer branding	3.424	0.618	0.849	0.535	0.650**	0.761**	(0.922)		
4 Identification and internalization	3.296	0.730	0.782	0.643	0.534**	0.609**	0.778**	(0.805)	
5 Intention to leave	2.913	1.06	0.855	0.665	−0.248**	−0.195**	−0.228**	−0.149**	(0.852)

Notes: n 4¼6. CR, composite reliability; AVE, average variance extracted. Values given in the parenthesis are Cronbach's α reliability coefficients. **p o 0.01 level (two-tailed)

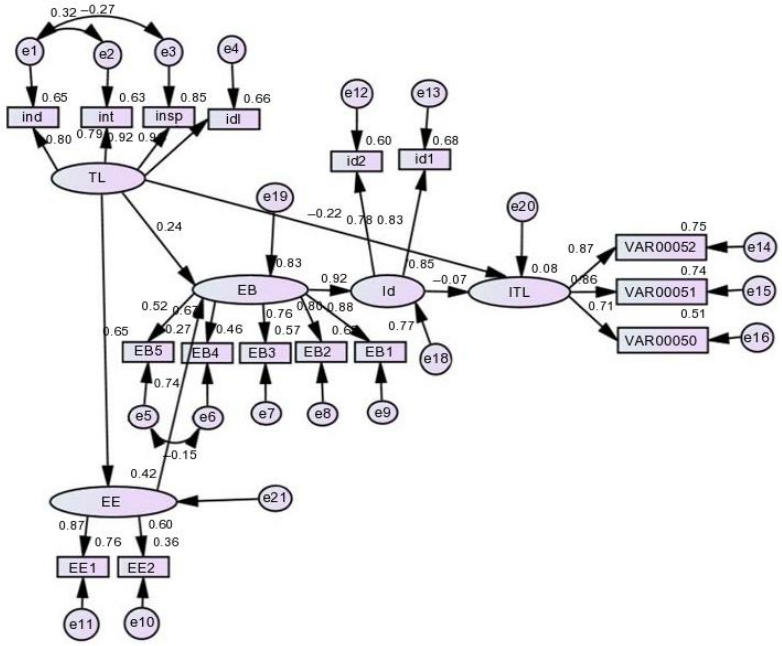

Figure 2.
Confirmed model

Structural relationships	Unstandardized parameter estimates (B)	Standardized parameter estimates (β)	Standardized indirect effect (β')	R^2
TL → ITL	−0.117***	−0.224		
EE → EB	0.632***	0.738		
TL → EB	0.128***	0.240		
EB → Id	1.496***	0.921		
Id → ITL	−0.044(ns)	−0.073		
TL → EE	0.404***	0.647		0.418
TL → EE → EB			0.477	0.832
TL → EE → EB → Id			0.661	0.848
TL → EE → EB → Id → ITL(ns)			−0.048	0.077

Notes: TL, transformational leadership; EE, employee engagement; EB, employer branding; Id, intentification and internalization; ITL, intention to leave. ***p o0.0001

Table III.
Unstandardized and standardized parameter estimates in the model

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of transformational leadership, employer engagement, employer branding, and psychological attachment on employee intention to leave the organization. The first hypothesis, that employee engagement mediates a relationship between respondents' perception of transformational leadership of their supervisor and intention to leave, was not supported. Rather, it was observed that employee engagement mediated positively between transformational leader and employer branding.

This finding may be due to the inclusion of employer branding and psychological attachment in the nomological network. There are other outcomes influenced by engagement, such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Saks, 2006). Though, it was found that transformational leadership positively influenced employee engagement significantly (Bhatnagar, 2007; Ghadi *et al.*, 2013; Tims *et al.*, 2011; Salanova *et al.*, 2011), the role of employee engagement as a mediator between transformational leadership and employer branding expanded the understanding of transformational leaders' brand building behavior through better engagement of employees.

In our second hypothesis, we posited that employer branding mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and intention to leave. This hypothesis was not supported, as employer branding mediated between transformational leader and psychological attachment, and between employee engagement and psychological attachment. These observations surfaced because various factors influencing intention to leave were taken into consideration in the study.

The employer branding initiatives taken by a leader encourages a sense of identification with the organization (Edwards, 2009; Davies, 2008; Schlager *et al.*, 2011). It is construed that leader behavior leads to the vigor, absorption, and dedication of the employee, resulting in a positive image of the employer. Our findings help to extend the understanding of employer branding as an intermediary between transformational leadership behavior and psychological attachment. It also explored the influence of an engaged employee in building the employer as brand.

Direct mediation of psychological attachment in the relationship between transformational leadership and intention to leave was not observed, hence, our third hypothesis was not supported. The influence of transformational leaders on identification and internalization was recognized through employee engagement and employer branding, due to five constructs being studied in the model. Our findings are substantiated by a study that expands the conceptualization derived from attachment theory to the area of leadership (Popper *et al.*, 2000). It is noted that transformational leadership has a significant, positive correlation with a secure attachment style. It supports the theory that attachment is an important aspect in determining security (Bowlby, 1969). Our research has important implications for understanding this approach to leadership and attachment process.

The theory and research on turnover or employee's intention to leave is cumulative. It emphasizes the multiple factors influencing the phenomena (Holtom *et al.*, 2008). Our research also suggests that other factors in the IT industry may contribute to intention to leave. The data collected in the study primarily concentrated on entry-level employees, as voluntary turnover is high among this group. Therefore, it can be claimed that the meaningful contribution of transformational leaders in creating positive psychological conditions acts as a predictor of performance improvement through positive behavior (Bakker and Schaufeli, 2008). Their role as employer branding architecture is of paramount importance in developing attachment, which may be crucial for performance.

Implications

From a theoretical standpoint, we contributed to the understanding of the influence of transformational leadership, employee engagement, employer branding, and psychological attachment on intention to leave. While the three hypotheses were not supported empirically, their role in the nomological network makes a significant contribution to the leadership and psychological attachment literature. Moreover, this combination of variables and its potential in exploring the process of attachment and intention to leave has not been previously explored by scholars.

In our pursuit to further explain the factors leading to employee intention to leave, four variables were examined that influence turnover intentions. We found that transformational

leadership influenced employee intentions of turnover. The variables, employee engagement and employer branding, mediated the relation between transformational leadership and psychological attachment, but did not show significant relation to intention to leave. Hence, the employee decision-making process toward turnover is influenced strongly by a team leader's transformational leadership style. The leadership style may impact productivity and performance through engagement and attachment to the organization, but did not firmly contribute to employee intention to leave. It reflects the notion that an employee high in identification and internalization may also have intentions to leave the organization. Hence, other factors mediating the process can be explored in order to explain the phenomena.

Regarding practical recommendations, the relationships presented in the study play a significant role in understanding the forces which drive psychological attachment toward the organization. From the results, we suggest managers are trained in transformational leadership style (Nielsen and Cleal, 2011). This would help with employee engagement, which is an asset to the organization (Saks, 2006). It would further build employer image, attracting new and competent applicants to the organization and also contribute to building a positive image of the company in the eyes of its customers (Mosley, 2007). However, in our study, the influence of transformational leaders on intention to leave through employee engagement and employer branding could not be established.

The results of mediation indicate that by training managers in transformational leadership style, the team leaders in IT organizations will have more engaged employees. The input of these employees in the work process raise their perception of employer branding by building a positive view of the different contextual factors, such as opportunities in the organization for growth, security, and work environment in the organization. This acts as a source to generate psychological attachment among these employees. Research confirms that dimensions of transformational leaders can be learnt (Nielsen and Munir, 2009). Hence, more objective and focused training programs on leadership skills can be designed, based on these findings. The role of team leader and the dynamics involved in the influence of leadership style on team effectiveness has become more comprehensible, through this study.

Limitations and recommendations for future research

This study does have some limitations. First, it is based on self-reported surveys to generate responses from IT employees. There is the chance that the responses may suffer from bias, by responding to socially desirable options (Crowne and Marlowe, 1964) and leniency bias, especially in case of leadership theories (Schriesheim *et al.*, 1979). Future research may reduce the probability of socially desirable bias by including response from the parties, the team leader, and team members.

Another possible limitation to this study was the cross-sectional design in data collection. In order to establish the outcomes with higher confidence, longitudinal analysis can be conducted (Ghadi *et al.*, 2013). The measures used in the study have been widely tested, reducing the chances of common method bias due to item characteristics and context. Also, the items were measured on different scales, adopted as a procedural means to limit common method bias. Other than using some procedural remedies, we also made use of statistical methods to find potential effects of analysis. Harman's single-factor test was administered to find out the common method variance in the study (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003) and 44.49 percent variance was explained against the maximum limit of 50 percent.

Finally, we recommend future studies to improve on our proposed nomological network by further explaining the relation between transformational leadership and employee intention to leave. The study of other antecedent variables in the relationship would enrich the understanding of this phenomenon. It would provide managers with crucial information

to develop strategies to influence team members and increase their attachment toward the organization. Critical factors like trust and the role of person-organization fit may be of interest to researchers (BlessingWhite, 2008; Shuck *et al.*, 2011). Future studies may focus on the mediating role of other variables and extend this model to include job embeddedness (Felps *et al.*, 2009) and other performance-related outcomes. The mediating effect of meaning of work on the influence of transformational leadership and work engagement opens further avenues for research (Ghadi *et al.*, 2013). Also, the role of these variables in attachment can be studied with respect to workplace change management approaches (Inalhan, 2009).

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17. Appendix 3 – Interview schedule

Research Question	Millennial Group	Generation X Group
1. What is the nature of intergenerational dynamics in the workplace?	1. How would you describe the generation you belong to?	1. How would you describe the generation you belong to?
	2. How would you describe older generations?	2. How would you describe the Millennial generation?
	3. How do you think someone from an older generation would describe your generation?	3. How do you think the Millennial generation would describe you?
	4. Tell me about a positive work interaction you had with someone from an older generation?	4. Tell me about a positive work interaction you had with a Millennial leader?
	5. Tell me about a negative interaction you had with someone from an older generation?	5. Tell me about a negative work interaction you had with a Millennial leader?
	6. How has these interactions (positive and negative) influenced how you lead as a Millennial?	6. How has these interactions (positive and negative) influenced how you engage with Millennial leaders?
2. What strategies do Millennial leaders use to best manage intergenerational conflict?	1. As a Millennial, tell me about a time when you had to adapt your leadership approach to suit a situation in which you led non-Millennials?	1. Tell me about a time when you observed a Millennial leader adapting their approach when leading different generations?
	2. What key insights can you share, regarding leading non-millennials? What do you believe is effective and ineffective?	2. How do you believe Millennial leaders encourage cohesion in a team?
	3. What about leading non-millennials was surprisingly unexpected?	3. What do you believe Millennial leaders do well, when leading multi-generational teams?
	4. How has the perceptions of older generations towards Millennials influenced the way in which you lead?	4. What do you believe Millennial leaders need to adjust to lead multi-generational teams more effectively?
3. What is perceived to be the most effective and ineffective leadership behaviours, exhibited by Millennials?	1. What do you believe makes a great leader?	1. What do you believe makes a great leader?
	2. What characteristics do you believe makes you an effective leader?	2. What characteristics do you believe make Millennials effective leaders?
	3. What characteristics do you believe makes you ineffective as a leader?	3. What characteristics do you believe make Millennials ineffective leaders?

	4. How do you receive feedback regarding your leadership style?	4. From your experience, how do Millennial leaders receive feedback (positive and negative) regarding their leadership style?
Exit Question	1. What do you feel was most important about what we discussed today?	1. What do you feel was most important about what we discussed today?

18. Appendix 4 – Plagiarism declaration form

I declare that this article is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

Qa'id Wingrove

1 December 2020

19. Appendix 5 – Copyright declaration form

Student details			
Surname:	WINGROVE	Initials:	Q
Student number:	19392037		
Email:	19392037@mygibs.co.za		
Phone:	+27609662988		

Qualification details			
Degree:	MBA	Year completed:	2020
Title of research:	Intergenerational workplace dynamics: A focus on millennials as leaders		
Supervisor:	Dr Dorothy Ndletyana		
Supervisor email:	ndletyanad@gibs.co.za		

Access

A.	My research is not confidential and may be made available in the GIBS Information Centre and on UPSpace.

I give permission to display my email address on the UPSpace website

Yes	✓	No	

B.

	My research is confidential and may NOT be made available in the GIBS Information Centre nor on UPSpace.

Please indicate embargo period requested

Two years		Please attach a letter of motivation to substantiate your request. Without a letter embargo will not be granted.
Permanent		Permission from the Vice-Principal: Research and Postgraduate Studies at UP is required for permanent embargo. Please attach a copy permission letter. Without a letter permanent embargo will not be granted.

Copyright declaration

I hereby declare that I have not used unethical research practices nor gained material dishonesty in this electronic version of my research submitted. Where appropriate, written permission statement(s) were obtained from the owner(s) of third-party copyrighted matter included in my research, allowing distribution as specified below.

I hereby assign, transfer and make over to the University of Pretoria my rights of copyright in the submitted work to the extent that it has not already been affected in terms of the contract I entered into at registration. I understand that all rights with regard to the intellectual property of my research, vest in the University who has the right to reproduce, distribute and/or publish the work in any manner it may deem fit.

.

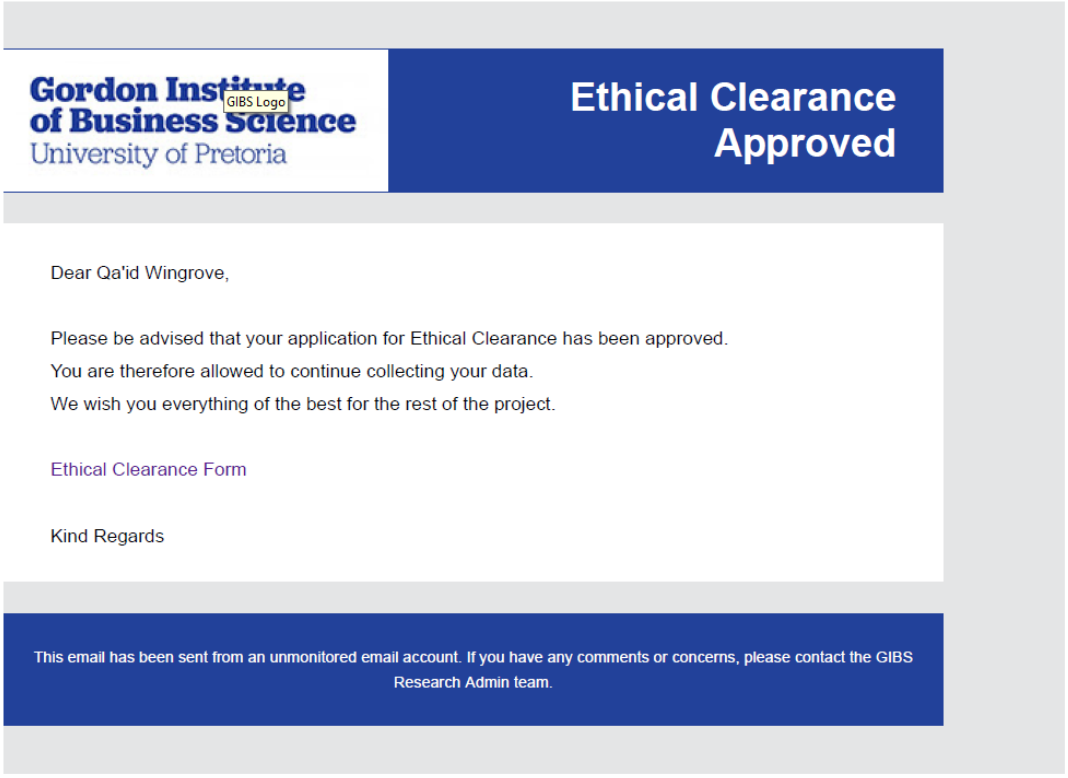
Signature: QWingrove	Date: 26 November 2020
Supervisor signature: Dorothy Ndletyana	Date: 1.12.20

20. Appendix 6 – Ethical clearance letter

Ethical Clearance Approved

1 message

MastersResearch2020 <MastersResearch2020@gibs.co.za> 29 September 2020 at 17:54
To: "19392037@mygibs.co.za" <19392037@mygibs.co.za>



GIBS ETHICAL CLEARANCE APPLICATION FORM 2020

RESEARCH PROJECT INFORMATION

NAME:	Qa'id Wingrove
STUDENT NUMBER:	19392037
PHONE NUMBER:	
E-MAIL ADDRESS:	19392037@mygibs.co.za
PROPOSED TITLE OF STUDY:	Exploring the influence of millennial leaders on non-millennial sub-ordinate groups in an established organisation.
RESEARCH SUPERVISOR:	Dorothy Ndletyana
E-MAIL OF SUPERVISOR:	Ndletyanad@gibs.co.za

The purpose of this Research Ethics process is to ensure that all research conducted under the auspices of GIBS is done so in an ethical manner, in accordance with the University's policy and in such a way that **the rights of all stakeholders** associated with the research are protected.

In order for the GIBS Research Ethics Committee to assess your application, you are required to submit **a description of your Research Methodology** that must contain sufficient detail to ensure that the required steps have been taken to achieve this purpose, in the research design, data collection, analysis and storage of data used in the conduct of this research.

Please indicate the nature of the output your research is aimed at producing (mark one box only):

- ☐ PGDip Applied Business Project
- ☐ MBA/MPhil Research Report
- ☑ MBA Project Publish Article
- ☐ MBA Teaching Case Study
- ☐ MBA Entrepreneurship Stream Portfolio
- ☐ MBA Consulting Stream Portfolio
- ☐ GIBS Faculty/Research Associate/Staff member or others undertaking research under the GIBS affiliation

GIBS Ethics Policy distinguishes between FOUR main types of data and THREE main types of methodology. Please complete the table for ALL the data types that you plan to use. Note that all applications must be accompanied by a description of the methodology to be used in the study. Initial all sections that apply to your research

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	Section of form and type of data or methodology	Attachments – including methodology chapter (please mark that they are included)
A	**Pre-existing personal records of human subjects,** e.g. performance reviews	☐ Methodology section of proposal ☐ Description of the nature of the records to be used ☐ Permission letter from appropriately authorised person in the organisation to use the data
B	**New data solicited from human subjects**, e.g. through interviews or surveys	☑ Methodology section of proposal ☑ informed consent statement (separate for qualitative data collection; as part of survey questionnaire for quantitative data collection) ☑ Interview guide / survey questionnaire / pre-existing proprietary test instrument / description of intervention ☑ IF pre-existing proprietary test instrument, letter of permission from the owner/copyright holder (e.g. the MBTI)
C	**Public non-human data,** e.g. World Bank or other databases (no letter needed)	☐ Methodology section of proposal ☐ Explanation of the nature of the data, how you will source it and how you will use it
D	**Private Organisation-specific non-human data,** e.g. financial statements, marketing or safety records	☐ Methodology section of proposal ☐ Explanation of the nature of the data, how you will source it and how you will use it ☐ Permission letter from the owner/organisation to use the data
E	**Indicate which methodology** you will be using. Choose one only	☑ Qualitative ☐ Quantitative ☐ Mixed methods

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SECTION A. PRE-EXISTING PERSONAL RECORDS OF HUMAN SUBJECTS

1. Specify the nature of records and how they will be used

2. Confirm that permission has been obtained from an appropriately authorised person to study and report on these records.
Remember to attach permission letter(s).

☐ I confirm

3. Provide the name and job title of the person in the organisation who has authorised the use of the records.

Name: Job Title:

4. In the event that individual data is to be reported, how will anonymity be assured?
Mark all that apply – ensure this is included in your methodology chapter.

☐ No names will be requested

☐ No names will be reported

☐ Data will be stored without identifiers

☐ Only aggregated information will be provided

☐ Other. Please specify

SECTION B. NEW DATA OBTAINED FROM HUMAN SUBJECTS

5. Does the nature of your research require you to collect data from respondents who constitute a 'vulnerable population' (defined as those who are particularly susceptible to coercion or undue influence or who have difficulty giving free and informed consent to being the subjects of research)

☑ No

☐ Yes.
IF yes, explain the nature of the population and what measures will be put in place done to reduce or minimise this vulnerability. Ensure this is included in your methodology chapter.

6. Please confirm that no incentive is to be offered to respondents to participate in the study.

☑ I confirm

7. Mark the applicable box(es) to identify the proposed procedure(s) to be carried out to obtain data.

☑ Interview guide Attach if applicable

☐ Survey questionnaire Attach if applicable

☐ Pre-existing proprietary test instrument, e.g. MBTI Attach if applicable
IF a pre-existing proprietary test instrument is used, confirm that permission has been obtained to use it.

☐ I confirm
Remember to attach permission letter(s) to use proprietary test instrument/s from an appropriately authorised person.

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☐ • Intervention, e.g. training or experiment Describe in full in methodology chapter

8. Confirm that the data gathering is accompanied by a consent statement.

☑ I confirm

9. Where is the consent statement found?

☐ As part of the survey questionnaire, if quantitative data collection, in the introduction section of the questionnaire.

☑ As a separate document, if qualitative data collection, remember to attach.

10. Is there a risk that the respondents may not fully understand the nature of the study, or instructions or questions, or their rights as a result of language barriers between themselves and the researcher?

☑ No, there is not a risk

☐ Yes, there is a risk.
IF yes, how will the subjects' full comprehension of the content of the research, including giving consent, be ensured? Please specify, and include in methodology chapter

11. Do any respondents risk possible harm or disadvantage (e.g. financial, legal, reputational or social) by participating in the research?

☑ No

☐ Yes.
IF yes, explain what types of risk and what is done to minimise and mitigate those risks and include in methodology chapter.

12. Are there any aspects of the research about which subjects are not to be informed?

☑ No

☐ Yes.
IF yes, explain why, and how subjects will be debriefed, and include in methodology chapter.

13. Will the audio or video recorded data be transcribed and/or translated by an independent transcriber and/or translator?

☑ No

☐ Yes.
If yes, confirm that the transcriber and/or translator will be required to sign a non-disclosure agreement to protect the respondent's confidentiality, and include in methodology chapter

☐ I confirm. Remember to attach a pro-forma non-disclosure agreement

14. How will **confidentiality** (when the identity of the respondent is known to the researcher e.g. when data collection is via interviews) and/or **anonymity** (when the identity of the interviewer is not known to the researcher e.g. when data collection is via surveys) of the respondents and their data be assured? Include in methodology chapter

☐ No names will be requested, relevant when the identity of the respondent is not known to the researcher

☑ No names of individuals or organisations will be reported, relevant when the identity of the respondent is known to the researcher

- ☐ Only aggregated information will be reported
- ☑ Data will be stored without identifiers
- ☐ Other. Please specify

15. Is the topic of your research and the nature of the interview or survey questions about one or more particular organisations or to be conducted within one or more particular organisations?

- ☑ No
- ☐ Yes. If yes, confirm that appropriately authorised person/s have provided written permission for you to conduct this research
- ☐ I confirm. Remember to attach signed permission letter/s

SECTION C. PUBLIC NON-HUMAN DATA

16. Specify the nature of records to be used: Explain how they will be selected, where the data will be sourced and how the data will be used, and include in methodology chapter:

17. Confirm that this pre-existing non-human data is in the public domain, is legally accessible and is free of any copyright.

- ☐ I confirm

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SECTION D. PRIVATE ORGANISATION-SPECIFIC NON-HUMAN DATA

18. Specify the nature of records (e.g. financial reports, marketing reports or safety records) and how they will be used.

19. Confirm that permission has been obtained to study and report on these records.

☐ I confirm. Remember to attach permission letter(s).

20. Provide the name and job title of the person in the organisation who has authorised the use of the records.

Name: Job Title:

21. Do companies risk possible harm or disadvantage (e.g. financial, legal, reputational or social) by participating in the research?

☐ No

☐ Yes. Explain what types of risk and what is done to minimise and mitigate those risks. Include explanation in methodology chapter

22. How will **confidentiality** (when the identity of the respondent is known to the researcher e.g. when data collection is via interviews) and/or **anonymity** (when the identity of the interviewer is not known to the researcher e.g. when data collection is via surveys) of the respondents and their data be assured? Include in methodology chapter

☐ No names will be requested, relevant when the identity of the respondent is not known to the researcher

☐ No names of individuals or organisations will be reported, relevant when the identity of the respondent is known to the researcher

☐ • Only aggregated information will be reported

☐ • Data will be stored without identifiers

☐ Other. Please specify

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ALL APPLICANTS MUST COMPLETE SECTIONS E AND F

E. CONFIDENTIALITY OF RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED FOR EXAMINATION OR PUBLICATION

23. Please select the relevant option relating to the confidentiality of the research report you will submit for examination:

☑ Free access, i.e. report not embargoed

☐ No access for a period of two years after research report is submitted for examination
Note that in exceptional circumstances, GIBS, being the copyright holder of the published research, may consent to an embargo of the report submitted for examination for a period of no more than two years. If you wish to apply for such an embargo, please provide reasons for this in a separate attachment.

☐ No access under any circumstance for an undetermined period.
A letter of permission from the Vice- principal: Research and Postgraduate Studies at the University of Pretoria must be obtained prior to making this application – and attached to this application for ethical clearance.

F. DATA STORAGE AND DISSEMINATION OF RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED FOR EXAMINATION

24. Please conform that you will use appropriate methods to ensure your data is safely stored in an accessible format for a minimum period of 10 years

☑ I confirm

25. Confirm that the details of your data storage method are set out in your attached methodology chapter

☑ I confirm

26. It is a goal of GIBS to make research available as broadly as possible. Mark the boxes below for the medium/media in which you do NOT wish results to be made available.

Academic dissemination	**Popular dissemination**
☐ Research report	☐ TV
☐ Scientific article	☐ Radio
☐ Conference paper	☐ Lay article
☐ Book	☐ Podcast
	☐ Book

Provide reasons for any limitation on publication marked above

27. Confirm that the consent obtained is aligned with the extent of dissemination. For example, consent if you are planning to use the research to launch a consulting career will be more comprehensive than in the case of research that is intended only for a scientific audience.

☑ I confirm

28. IF you wish to describe any other information which may be of value to the committee in reviewing your application

☑ No

☐ Yes. Provide details in a separate sheet attached to this application

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G. APPROVALS FOR/OF THIS APPLICATION

When the applicant is a student of GIBS, the applicant must please ensure that the supervisor and co-supervisor (where relevant) has signed the form before submission

STUDENT RESEARCHER/APPLICANT:

29. I affirm that all relevant information has been provided in this form and its attachments and that all statements made are correct.

Student Researcher's Name in capital letters:	QA'ID WINGROVE
Date:	23 Aug 2020
Supervisor Name in capital letters:	DOROTHY NDLETYANA
Date:	23 Aug 2020
Co-supervisor Name in capital letters:	
Date:	13 Aug 2020

Note: GIBS shall do everything in its power to protect the personal information supplied herein, in accordance to its company privacy policies as well the Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013. Access to all of the above provided personal information is restricted, only employees who need the information to perform a specific job are granted access to this information.

FOR DOCTORAL AND FACULTY/RESEARCH ASSOCIATE/STAFF MEMBER RESEARCH ONLY

Approved

REC comments:

Date: 29 Sep 2020