

The Impact of Generational Diversity on Organizational Culture within the Hotel Industry

Bachelor Thesis for Obtaining the Degree

Bachelor of Science

International Management

Submitted to Horst Treiblmaier

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Affidavit

I hereby affirm that this bachelor's thesis represents my own written work and that I have used no sources and aids other than those indicated. All passages quoted from publications or paraphrased from these sources are properly cited and attributed.

The thesis was not submitted in the same or in a substantially similar version, not even partially, to another examination board and was not published elsewhere.

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Abstract:

This thesis aims to expand the knowledge with respect to the influence that diversity has on organizational culture and how the overall performance of the hotel industry is affected. Within my research, I analyze the roles and the responsibilities which managers and employees hold and how they impact the overall business. I investigate how companies operated in the past and compare how they do nowadays, along with analyzing both the disadvantages and the advantages that arise. I also go into brief detail of the different types of diversity which include; gender, level of formality, communication channels, and age. In order to adequately achieve information concerning this topic and address the research questions, I have chosen to take on a quantitative and qualitative research approach. I have formulated a questionnaire where I collected primary data from hotel managers and employees from varying sectors in order to gain firsthand information regarding the topic. The overall aim of my bachelor thesis is to gain further insight on how the hotel industry business practices are impacted by generational age differences.

Key words: generational diversity, age, organizational culture, management styles, managers, employees, hotel industry

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1 Background of the Study

In this thesis I focus on establishing the impacts of generational diversity within the hotel industry and how the differences ultimately influence the industry's organizational culture. Primarily focusing on how people, when coming from different generations, impact the hotel industry's working environment and management style. A discussion of the following sections will provide more insights into the literature as well as an understanding of the theory in this field. The first sections will define organizational culture along with the key factors, followed by the explanation of generational diversity. The next sections analyze the roles of managers along with employees within organizations. A discussion will be made on how companies operated in the past versus how they operate nowadays, while also noting the disadvantages and advantages that arise. The later section describes the different types of diversity besides age. Followed by the section that focuses primarily on categorizing and analyzing the four distinct generational groups. Also, the act of discrimination towards age is described and management techniques in regard to dealing with diversity are specified. Lastly, the research method chosen is explained followed by the analyzation and interpretation of the survey responses in regard to the research topic.

1.1 The Purpose/Aim of the Research

Generational diversity is significantly influencing the culture of actors in the hotel industry which in turn impacts the performance of an organization within a global business environment. Limited data exists on the impacts of generational diversity on the overall global business performance. Thus, this research aims at expanding the knowledge on the influence that generational diversity has on organizational culture and how it effects the performance of the hotel industry in business environments. In this case, the following questions will guide this research:

How is organizational culture influenced by generational diversity in the hotel industry?

In what ways does generational diversity impact business practices of actors in the hotel industry?

By addressing each of the questions listed above, the researcher seeks to provide information to upper management within hotels with the primary goal of enhancing their understanding of how to effectively manage generational diversity within their organizations in order for the business to be successful. Employees have provided their firsthand insight and experiences through the completion of a survey. This in return provides insight in order for the hotel's management to understand whether they are meeting the needs of their employees. The survey questions are tested through a certain type of methodology, which will be described later on in the thesis.

1.2 Significance of the Research Study

The research study is also critical in addressing a side to diversity within business that is not always as highlighted as other issues. Differences that arise due to various ages of employees and how they affect the business culture along with management, is what the research aims to better understand. The research plays a critical role in analyzing the hotel organization's managers and employees and analyzing what their views and opinions represent. The findings are geared at providing upper management with information in regard to employee's feelings towards the topics as well as questions which are addressed within the survey in order to see whether they believe there is room for improvement. The research study also asks participants certain questions that might be enlightening, leading them to thinking deeper into the matters and self-analyzing themselves as employees.

1.3 Scope of the Research Study

The research study is limited strictly to the hotel industry and it examined employees from various sectors within the organization. The major goal of the research is to present that members from different generations are unique and each of them possess different skills and qualities. In return these specific attributes that each individual possesses, lead to the requirement of

different management styles. Additionally, for there to be efficient and effective collaboration within the hotel there will ultimately be members from opposing generations working together to achieve the goals of the organization. The hotels which were analyzed within the study are hotels that are well known around the world due to the satisfactory services they provide and the standard which they hold.

1.4 Limitations of the Study

The initial study plan aimed to compare two different hotels, which had divergent rankings globally. One hotel initially, being more successful as opposed to the other hotel. Unfortunately, none of the numerous hotels, which were contacted were able to have 30 employees from their hotel fill out the questionnaires, due to either limited time or personal reasons. This led to a change in the strategy of which the research would be conducted. Rather than questioning two hotels the survey conducted was distributed to multiple employees from a number of various hotels. Another disadvantage, which arose during the distribution and data collecting process, was the fact that during the winter months, the hotels faced an increase in overnight stays, which limited their availability to participate in the survey. This was due to the holiday season and the fact that Vienna, Austria is a sought-out tourist destination during that time. This made it a complicated task to reach the people working within the Human Resources Department who were responsible for approving and distributing the surveys to the employees.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Organization Culture and its Factors

In order to understand how businesses are able to function, it is essential to understand the way things are done and how people relate to one another within organizations. First, one must look at organization in a broad sense, before analyzing the underlying components. Organizations are influenced by beliefs, practices, policies and ideologies that are held by

employees, which dictate how business activities are accomplished. The knowledge behind how different cultures interact with one another, along with how different occupations specify tasks, and how multicultural teams' function, grows rapidly. A clear cultural archetype includes command and control when organizations are carefully observed and analyzed (Schein, 2010). The section that follows focuses on defining more precisely generational diversity along with organizational culture.

2.2 Definition: Generational Diversity

Amayah and Gedro (2014), described generational diversity as a group of individuals whose age ranges are significantly differentiated from one another. Age boundaries adequately define a group of individuals belonging to the same generation and they share the same experiences in the process of growth and development (Singh & Gupta, 2015). According to Parry (2014), these groups of people also tend to share similar values along with certain attitudes. Today's workplace is characterized by a workforce that involves different age groups of individuals resulting to a work environment that can be said to be generationally diverse. This broad range of generational diversity is becoming an increasing issue of concern in today's business environments due to the influence that they are directing to the level of success in the business as noted by Baran and Klos (2014). Each of these generations perceives the working environment differently as dictated by their ambitions, attitudes, and world views. As a result, each of these generations approach the working environment in their own unique way. Their focus is to achieve that in which they believe is of value to them. As such, a workplace environment that is composed of individuals from the different generations tends to be significantly influenced in terms of the organizational culture.

2.3 Organizational Culture

Organizational culture, on the other hand, refers to a system of shared values, beliefs and assumptions which govern the manner in which people behave within an organization (Belias & Koustelios, 2014). Depending on the culture of an organization, a unique psychological and social environment is

created. According to Aier (2014), the relationships and business processes are significantly impacted by the culture that people possess. As such, the increasing generational diversity is influencing the kind of business environment that is being experienced. The hotel industry holds a significantly high number of employees and it experiences the active participation of all the generations in the provision of services. In this case, the industry's culture and global business performance are primarily influenced due to the rich generational mix (Rahimi & Gunlu, 2016). Throughout this study, both of these definitions will be used as the basic definitions of generational diversity and organizational culture. The analysis of the influence of generational differences is crucial for scholars and hotel managers. It facilitates the understanding of the impact of generational diversity on organizational culture and the performance of hotels within the competitive industry.

2.4 Hotel Industry

The hospitality industry and more specifically the hotel industry, which is the main concern within this thesis, has continued to experience exponential growth over the centuries. The major driving factors expanding the hotel industry are the increasing number in tourism activities, both domestic and international. The hotel industry is labor intensive and with its expansion, there has been an increase in demand in regard to employment. Hotels seek to accomplish a set of objectives and goals within their organization in order to increase the overall profitability and growth (Geller, 1985). At the same time, the industry has sought to maintain the critical experience possessed by individuals. With this situation in place, the industry has created a multi-generational working environment that is made up of individuals from all of three generations, which will be discussed in the following chapters (Nieves et al., 2014).

2.5 Managers

Hotel managers are the most tasked individuals in the hotel industry due to the crucial role that they play in the service delivery. Studies have demonstrated that it is essential for effective hotel managers to exhibit a wide

array of behaviors in order for their job performance to be successful (Ghei & Nebel, 1994). It is the manager's role to ensure that the customer services which they provide are up to the expected standards. With the increasing levels of competition in the industry and the need for developing a competitive advantage, managers play the primary role of ensuring that they direct their organizations in the right direction. With the sole responsibility of overseeing the quality of service delivery that their employees are providing to the clientele, managers remain to be of great relevance in shaping the organizational culture (Solnet, Kralj, & Baum, 2015). It is the culture that determines the performance of the business in the global business environment. Thus, it remains crucial that managers facilitate the development of a universal culture that will unite all of the generations to work towards achieving a common goal. At the same time, the managers need to understand the individual differences of their employees and their clients in order for them to be able to create an enabling environment that adequately meets each person's specific needs. In this way, the business will be geared towards achieving a competitive advantage and sustainability in the long run.

2.6 Employees

The employee population in the industry has continued to be more diverse especially in terms of age differences. Generational difference is a reality in the industry with hotel owners and managers perceiving this diversity as an opportunity for further attracting and meeting the expectations of the consumers (Manoharan et al., 2014). However, the major challenge that exists is the generational gap which causes major impacts on the business and adversely impacts the employee's attitudes and performance. For Baby Boomers, their most significant workplace value is value for loyalty in the course of task accomplishment and service delivery. In this case, Baby Boomers are very committed to their work roles. The population of Generation X directs their values towards a work-life balance and are focused towards achieving their overall goal in life. Furthermore, they have clearly defined timelines to engage in work activities. Generation Y or the Millennials, value

innovation and change in the work environment, which result in their work life to be of interest. Multi-generational environments have conflicting priorities and concerns which need to be appropriately handled. As much as the employees are committed to the course of the industry, each perceives their cultures as effective towards achieving business goals and objectives. It is important that those employees' capacities are appropriately enhanced to ensure that they integrate their different generational capabilities for the best interest of the industry and the organization in particular.

2.7 How Companies Operated in The Past

One of the most prominent characteristics of how hotels operated in the past is the dominance of one generation in the industry. Two centuries ago, the hotel industry had a completely different approach in terms of service delivery and employee management (Yang & Law, 2014). The industry was not keen to ensure that it achieved an effective mix of employees who belonged to the different generational cohorts. As such a majority of the industry employees were Baby Boomers with a small population deriving from Generation X. The competition level in the industry was relatively low and service provision was completed in a conventional way without much focus on the specific needs of the consumer segment. As such, there was a wide gap in terms of the quality of services provided especially in relation to technological application within business (Lu & Gursoy, 2016). Most critically, there was a lack of an interactive platform to link the consumers with the actors within the hotel industry. These were critical factors that continually resulted to the stagnation of the industry in terms of its growth and development. With the expansion of other related industries such as transport and tourism, the hotel industry has experienced increased pressure to meet the increasing demand as well as diversify its profitability channels through the effective exploitation of the hotel asset. The most effective approach that was prioritized in the industry is to have the appropriate employee base who will effectively meet the needs of the diverse consumer population.

2.8 Disadvantages

The major disadvantage in relation to the service approach is that there was low creativity and a sense of inclusivity in the process of service provision. The organizational culture created was universal but lacked the necessary synergies to facilitate the achievement of the goals and objective of the industry. The dominance of a single generation meant that the various customer segments provided similar services that did not effectively match their needs. There was a significant gap in the quality of services provided. Along with these issues, hotel industries struggled with identifying a framework in order to measure service quality. Crosby (1979), noted that services are an intangible nature meaning that services cannot be measured by durability or number of defects. As a result, to this, heterogeneity service quality measurement conveyed many challenges (Raza et al., 2012).

2.9 How Companies Operate Nowadays

During an era of globalization nearly every company faces a situation in which they confront a fierce volume of competition (Raza et al., 2012). Current hotel industries and their organizational structures have been completely transformed. The use of technology has substantially changed the face of the industry. The most significant changes are the marketing and distribution costs which have been significantly cut down due to the use of technology. As indicated later on, Generation Y is composed of members who value change and innovation (Armour, 2005). In this case, this is a clear indication that the industry has embraced generational diversity in its marketplace. With the innovative culture that the young population possesses, introduces and facilitates in the industry, more efficiencies concerning service delivery is being experienced. With the global business environment, various companies get to interact with their clients from varying parts of the world. At the same time, there have been efficiencies in terms of customer engagement with the hotel actors. A broad customer segment can be served in the industry due to the appropriate mix of employees in the organizations and their abilities to understand the needs of the market segment (Torres et al., 2015). The

integration of industry experience by Baby Boomers along with innovation by Generation X and at the same time a balance achieved in work and social life by Generation Y, is proving to be effective in terms of ensuring that an excellent business environment is created, which will be discussed more in detail in a chapter later on.

2.10 Advantages

The transformations taken place within the hotel industries are proving to be beneficial not only for to the consumer but also for the companies. The generational diversity that has been largely embraced has facilitated the development of an interactive business environment which has focused on providing excellent services to customers and developing a competitive advantage. An effective culture has been developed that has ensured that the needs of each of the consumer segments are adequately met and that a supportive business environment is created. In this way, the global business environment is further enhanced.

2.11 Online Platforms

The hotel industry has turned to technology in the interest of meeting the challenges of growing customer expectations. Easily accessed platforms enable the ability for guests to provide ratings and detailed descriptions of their stay for others to read. Assessments regarding not only the hotel in general but also the established staff and services offered can play a major role on the overall hotel's reputation. The advancement of innovation permit hotel operators to stand out and be distinguished while not only meeting the expectations of current customers, but also attracting new ones. A favorable experience will not only affect a guest's stay, but it will also impact the way others perceive it. This in return will have an influence on behaviors along with online reviews regarding the trip. In today's age, word-of-mouth, is a very powerful advertising tool that can be used to pass on experiences and opinions. Marketing tactics remain clever, but the most powerful influences are customer's genuine satisfaction along with recommendations (Bhattacharjee, 2017).

2.12 Types of Diversity

Generational diversity is changing the face of the hotel industry in a number of major ways. But while most companies recognize the value of making diversity within business a priority, this is not always the case (Robinson & Dechant, 1997). Understanding and commitment focused to incorporate diversity within the workforce can aid to improve productivity and boost market share (Foster et al., 1988). Individuals differ on three broad categories which are either in terms of age, gender or level of formality, as well as communication channels. The following sections cover the different types of diversity, although the thesis will focus primarily on the impact that age holds within the hotel industry.

2.12.1 Gender

The increasing need for gender equality in the business industry has aided the realization of relatively equal numbers of men and women in the modern hotel industry. While the capabilities of men and women greatly vary in terms of the work roles that they play, the use of technology has helped leverage most of the work roles in the industry (Singh & Gupta, 2015). Women are more involved today in delivering services and therefore an inclusive culture has been created.

2.12.2 Level of Formality

Depending on the customer's expectations of the quality of service that they require, individual's level of formality gets to be identified. People serving in the hotel industry have varied levels of concern on meeting the customers' expectations. Based on age differences, the perception of employees on the environment is significantly varied and their approach to service delivery is influenced.

2.12.3 Communication Channels

There has been an increased need for effective communication channels in the hotel industry to facilitate the establishment of a feedback system that will allow for the exchange of information. The customer segment

requires a mean of communication that will enable the sharing of views and opinions while receiving feedback. Each of the generations have their most preferred communication approach and as each of them address the customer's needs, they are able to streamline the services that are provided.

2.12.4 Age

Within this thesis diversity in regard to age will be the primary focus. Among the four generations, age is the distinguishing factor which determines each individuals' experiences. Age is responsible for shaping people's ways of life including their beliefs, values and interests. Baby Boomers value loyalty to their work tasks, roles and ensure that they effectively accomplish that which is their responsibility. While Generation X, directs their interest at a life and work balance approach while also seeking to achieve their personal life goals. For Generation Y or Millennials, innovation and change are their priority, and they tend to change the face of the industry they are in. Singal (2014), indicated that each of these generations are shaping the direction for the business and especially the hotel industry, which will be discussed more into detail in the following chapter.

2.13 The Four Different Generations

In the 1950's the sociological theory of generations proposed by Karl Mannheim was raised in order to illustrate the impact on American culture. The sociologists defined a generation as shared common habits, hexes and culture of people passing through time. A function served in order to provide them with a memory that is used to integrate the generation through a certain period (Arsenault, 2004). Leading to the theory that members of different generational groups possess contrasting characteristics and traits that ultimately deem to be a critically important issue for their leaders (Yu & Miller, 2005). Due to the fact that employees that have different work characteristics this in turn will lead to more productivity and effectiveness with differing styles of leaderships (Yu & Miller, 2005). The following sections will explain in further detail the four different generations and the traits that associate them that were derived from prior research.

2.13.1 Baby Boomers

Every generation has their unique view on the way they believe that the working world functions (Bova & Kroth, 2001). Researchers have come to the conclusion that different generational groups of employees exhibit differing work characteristics and favor different styles of leadership. Baby Boomers are people born between the years of 1945 and 1964. They are individuals who have witnessed a profound amount of economic and cultural changes (Yu & Miller, 2005). They grew up in an age where technology was not as advanced as it is today and sometimes finding it to be a challenge and intimidating. This generation preferred one on one communication, making personal phone calls and sending letters. They are groups of people who can be known as not only hardworking, but also having a powerful work ethic. In some situations, they are known as having a somewhat old-fashioned approach to business.

2.13.2 Generation X

Individuals from Generation X were brought up in an era during the revolution of technology, specifically computers. This particular generation of people were born between the years of 1965 and 1981. A vast majority of the individuals from this generation witnessed the business world turn to an abrupt amount of corporative downsizing along with a massive number of layoffs (Bova & Kroth, 2001). The values which deem to be of utmost importance to this generation is their sense of teamwork, capability to learn new things, and their flexibility. They tend to hold skepticism towards hierarchal relationships and a status quo, and they consider that managers should earn respect as opposed to deserve it, due to the virtue of their title (Jurkiewicz, 2000). People from Generation X process attributes, which offer key insights on their preferred ways of learning. Members from this generation can be characterized as, parallel thinkers, independent, resourceful and possess a “want it now” mentality. In order for organizations to accommodate these characteristics they may need to consider certain teaching strategies. Key training strategies have been suggested which include, focusing on outcomes as opposed to

techniques, make learning an experimental process and motivate learning by engaging them to create their own environments of learning (Bova & Kroth, 2001).

2.13.3 Generation Y

Generation Y, also known as the Millennial or the “dot.com” Generation, are individuals who are born between 1981 and 1996 (Yu & Miller, 2005). They are a generation that are more comfortable with the use of technology and are said to have a simpler time adapting to communication technologies. During an era of demographic change, this age group is transpiring into the workforce alongside older generations and are often overseeing employees, which are much older (Armour, 2005). Generation Y absorbs the majority of the current, general workforce and plan to occupy three quarters of the global workforce by the year of 2025 (Bates, 2019). The individuals from Generation Y are said to often desire a balance between work and life along with the ability to be creative within the workplace. This generation values diversity and equality not only in their personal lives, but also in their professional lives. As opposed to older generations, this group of individuals are less likely to acknowledge the popular command and control management style (Armour, 2005).

2.13.4 Generation Z

The most recent generation, born in the year 1997 and later, is known as Generation Z. These individuals are recognized for their profound usage of the internet and electronics starting from a young age. The members from this generation spend a significant amount of time and a great portion of their personal interactions through the use of social media websites. The majority of the generation are deemed to be comfortable with the use of technology, since it has existed since their birth. In the next seven years Generation Z will begin to occupy the workforce and form a so called, “youth bubble,” following the retirement of 30 million aging Baby Boomers. (Tulgan, 2013). It is said that this generation will also exhibit new challenges in varying sectors within the workforce due to the profound generational shift. Managing this generation

will require certain tools and skills on the usage of social media (Tulgan, 2013).

2.14 Ageism

When facing diversity differences between individuals are not always accepted. Discrimination with respect to a person's age has fostered profound attention over the past two decades across various disciplines within social science (Roscigno et al., 2007). Ageism can be broken down into three parts including, "stereotyping and prejudice against older persons," along with, "negative attitudes and behaviors toward the elderly" and "discrimination against older people" (Palmore, 2003). Age discrimination has shown to lead to feelings which include, uselessness, powerlessness, and low self-esteem (Cadiz et al., 2017). In the past 14 years many workers have been laid off due to strains within the economy that result in a decrease in available positions. Ultimately, challenging assumptions of job security for hard work and loyalty exemplified by employees. The changes within the workforce are more likely to affect the middle aged or older workers who carry higher financial responsibilities when compared to younger generations. Older generations also sometimes face career progression problems specifically in the era of rapid technological development due to their lack of training (Maurer, 2001). A main result to the discrimination of the differing age groups can be caused by the use of stereotyping.

Stereotypes of the older working class include views and attitudes that insist that they are less productive, less flexible, and more difficult to train in order to acquire new skills. (Kulik et. al, 2000). Reil (1981), came to the conclusion that, "older people were viewed as conservative, traditional, present oriented and moral." Where Rosen and Jerdee (1976), stated that, "younger employees are seen as being more productive, efficient, motivated, capable of working under pressure, innovative, creative, and more logical than older employees." In more recent research, Fiske et al. (2002), found that older generations possess attributes of being tolerant, warm, good natured, but sometimes lacking confidence and independence. Limited amount of

information shows that stereotypes, in regard to age, have direct effects on employment opportunities, but evidence shows that prejudices still occur within the working environment. The following section will discuss how diversity can be handled and dealt with in order to avoid problems.

2.15 Dealing with Diversity

Dealing with diversity means, “Understanding and relating effectively with people who are different than you” (Notter, 2002). The capability for a group of individuals to build strength and to unify together through their diversity is the foundation, which guide organizations into new dimensions of accomplishments along with performance. Managers and employees must be aware of and skilled when it comes to the fields of dealing with differences along the lines of generational diversity, if they wish for their organization to thrive in the future. In large organizations one is ultimately bound to find teams or units of members from different generations working together in order to complete a task. Managers have examined and identified that there are important differences between the generations and their varying approaches to working, work and life balance, employment, loyalty, along with other crucial issues (Notter, 2002). Given that there are many perspectives in regard to business issues, successful management of diversity can aid organizations to manage change more effectively (Badi et al., 1988).

2.16 Managing Diversity

Generational differences are a diversity concern which have not been precisely recognized and are often misunderstood. While the different generations when working strongly together can lead to greater innovation and a foster of creativity, it can also lead to a clash in viewpoints leading to personal and organizational conflict. According to Femke et al. (2000), generational differences are vital due to the fact that values, attitudes, ambitions and mind sets of the people differ. Lancaster & Stillman (2002), have recognized that controlling the different generational strengths can lead to a boost in morale control costs, a reduction in turnover and an increase in sales and profits. Generations are working together now more than ever, and

these generational interactions can be beneficial to organizations. Leadership and management are two different, but also complementary methods of taking action. Each have certain functions along with characteristics making them both necessary in terms of a sector's success. Powerful leadership that is followed by a weak management system can be very harmful to an organization. Leadership along with management includes administrating employee activities while guiding them towards the completion of objectives in order to satisfy the needs of each generation's particular work perspectives, attitudes, and values, companies should aim towards benefits and incentives (Cretu & Iova, 2015).

2.17 Employee and Customer Satisfaction

Employee satisfaction is a critical concern within the service industry due to its nature. Multiple studies, which have been conducted, lead to the conclusion that there is a positive underlying relationship between satisfied employees and gratified customers (Chi & Gursoy, 2009). The attitudes of the employees and the way that they behave towards customers have shown to influence the way customers perceive the service quality and the performance of the employee (Yoon & Suh, 2013). A well-established working environment has been linked to satisfied employees who exemplify loyalty and who are in return able to deliver an excellent service experience to customers. When customers are satisfied with the services offered to them, they are more likely to exhibit loyalty, leading the customers to repurchase or increase the number of referrals. Due to the behaviors of loyalty a great amount of market share along with profitability will be generated for the service company over time (Chi & Gursoy, 2009).

3 Methodology

This chapter has been divided into four main sections which include the research design, the survey method, the development of the survey questions along with the process of the data collection. In the first section the different types of research designs used within my study are explained, which include

both quantitative and qualitative approach to gaining information. Followed by a description of the type of survey chosen within my study and the elements which make it successful. Further on, potential errors which are able to arise when conducting a survey are also explained. The following section explains how the survey questions were used to gather information, while describing the types of questions that were asked along with the reasoning behind it. The final section, which includes the data collection process, focuses on the actual distribution of surveys along with the total number of respondents that participated.

3.1 Research Design

Research designs can be described as plans and procedures where data collection and analysis are conducted. The decisions made by the researcher not only span from broad assumptions, but also include a detailed analysis. In order for an appropriate research design to be selected the researcher must focus on the nature of the research problem, the researcher's prior experiences, along with the intended audience for the study (Creswell, 2009). When it comes to research there are three different types of designs which include, qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method approaches. Qualitative and quantitative studies are not complete opposites because they both meet ends, in regard to a continuum (Newman & Benz, 1998). A mixed method approach incorporates both a qualitative along with a quantitative research approach. Within my research I have chosen to take on both a qualitative and also a quantitative approach, resulting in an overall mixed method approach in order to gain information.

A qualitative research design was selected with the goal to facilitate the gathering of the appropriate information in order to address the research questions. Lewis (2015), indicated that qualitative research design allows for the gathering of descriptive data that appropriately explain the influence on business culture and performance. This method will be shown later on within the actual survey and the analysis. Furthermore, a quantitative method approach has been chosen in order to compare participant's answers in

accordance with which age group they belong to. By doing so I have chosen to conduct a Kruskal-Wallis test along with a Chi-Square test. Through these statistical analysis techniques, I will be able to see whether different age groups differ when compared to one another when analyzing the answers to specific questions, which will be shown later.

3.2 Survey Method

For the sake of testing the findings through primary research, a survey was first conducted and then administered to a specific target population. Specifically, a sample survey, was used in order to collect my data which incorporates three distinct types of methodologies. The sample survey first includes sampling, followed by designing questions, and finally the overall data collection process. A combination of the three elements is a crucial aspect in terms of a well-established survey design (Fowler, 2002). According to O’Leary (2014), surveys are built on the process of asking the same set of questions to a specified group of people. These specific questions have the intention to echo the respondents, attitudes, opinions, and beliefs. According to Fowler (2002), the overall function of the survey is to produce statistics pertaining to the study population.

3.2.1 Questionnaire-based Survey

The use of an online questionnaire in conducting the study is one of the critical data collection methods used in the hotel industry to capture the perceptions and attitudes of the various actors. The internet is a growing tool that has been used as a platform in order to conduct survey research (Van Selm & Jankowski, 2006). Primary data will be collected to identify the generational cohort participating in the hotel industry and as well to capture their views of their workplace and whether there is a dedication to incorporate and manage diversity. The questionnaire will have three distinct sections whereby the first section will capture personal biodata to identify the generation in which the respondents belong to. The second part will seek to determine the influence of generational diversity on organizational culture. While finally, the last section will attempt to identify the impact on global

business practices as informed by generational diversity among the various hotel actors.

3.3 Choosing the Appropriate Survey Questions

According to Dillman (2007), the purpose of writing a self-administered survey question is to develop a query that each respondent will be able to understand in the same way and be able to respond and willing to give a response. The survey was developed with the main goal to answer the research question within the thesis, which is the effects generational diversity has on the hotel industry. Within my questionnaire I aimed to ask the intended audience of hotel employees of their personal opinion and experiences in relation to age differences within their working environment. The questionnaire included questions in regard to topics which were mentioned within my literature review.

At the start of the survey, the reason for the questionnaire was addressed and the purpose was stated in order for the respondents to know why the survey was being conducted. The first few questions asked responders to state their gender, age, nationality, and position within the hotel. The following questions went more into detail in regard to generational diversity and organizational structure in order to see whether the respondents had an idea of what elements impacted the two since the questionnaire is based on those two underlying definitions. Within the survey there were different types and forms of questions. The first type of questions were ones that were to be answered either with “yes or “no.” The following questions were open ended, and the participants needed to give a definition to the terms which could be answered in a short text. The following type of questions were to be answered using a Likert scale of “strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, or strongly agree” concerning statements regarding different generations, their skills, and whether the various generations require apposing management styles. The other questions included a Likert scale of “very low, low, medium, high, very high” according to the amount of diversity their workplace possesses. Along with one question addressing whether the respondents feel that their work

environment is positive or negative, which they were also provided with a Likert scale ranging from, “very negative, negative, neutral, positive, very positive.”

3.4 The Data Collection Process

The survey had in total 20 questions, which were all written in English. The survey was made with the survey generator through Google Forms. The reason that I chose to use this generator is due to the fact that it is easily accessible and does not require any payment. Google Forms does not request any personal information to be entered by the respondents, which means that all of the data entered was kept completely confidential and anonymous. As opposed to other available software’s used to generate surveys, Google Forms does not demand any sort of prescription in order to be used. The overall data collection process lasted a total of 3 months starting from December until February. A total of 51 responses were received during the given period of time. The target group in regard to my research were employees at hotels located throughout Europe and the United States. The hotels that participated were chains of hotels that were globally known and had overall satisfaction ratings that ranged from 4 stars to 5 stars. This group of participants were the most competent, in regard to my research because they are the people who are employed within the hotel organization and can provide their first, hand experience and insight in regard to the areas focused on within the thesis. The hotels which I contacted are known for meeting the needs of their customers through their services. Appendix 1 later on displays the entire survey and the questions which were asked.

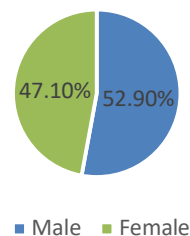
The survey distribution process included personal phone calls to hotels within Vienna, Austria, where I spoke to members of the hotel’s Human Resources Department. The members within this department were the ones that were responsible in making the decision whether they were willing to participate. They were also responsible for forwarding the surveys to the employees at the hotel. Each phone call was followed by a detailed email explaining the purpose and reasoning behind conducting the survey. Also,

multiple emails were sent to different hotels within Europe. A fellow manager from a hotel located in the United States was contacted and the individual agreed to forward the survey to employees. I also visited the Career Office at my University, which has many contacts to hotels around the world. The Career Office agreed to aid me in finding more hotels which would be willing to participate in order for more questionnaires to be completed. In Appendix 2, the emails which I sent can be found.

4 Findings

The background knowledge is critical as it allows the researcher to develop the most appropriate research hypotheses to direct the research process. The researcher's expectations are that the research questions will be adequately and effectively addressed to facilitate the identification of how the hotel industry global business practices are impacted. The data collection procedures enable for gathering the necessary information that is analyzed and interpreted. This will help gain an understanding and effective utilization by hotel managers who are the primary target audience for the reported findings. The following figures display the answers to each individual question taken from the survey along with the correlation to the topics that were addressed earlier within the literature review.

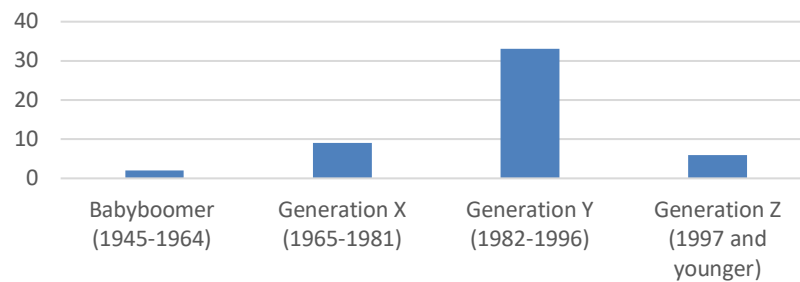
Figure 1: Gender Distribution



As presented in the pie chart the participants that completed the questionnaire were both female and male. The number of male participants was a bit higher totaling to 27 people while there was a total of 24 female participants. Resulting in an overall almost equal representation in both gender categories

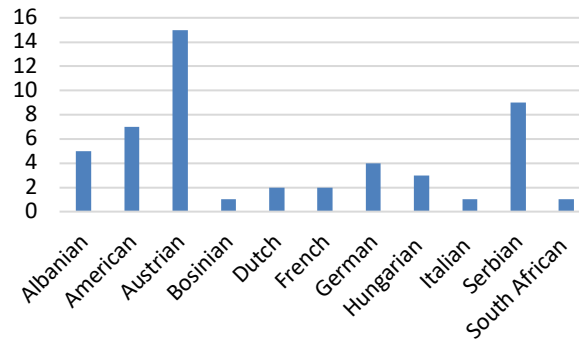
in regard to the study conducted. As stated earlier, increasing need for gender equality in the business industry has fostered the realization of relatively equal numbers of men and women in the modern hotel industry (Singh & Gupta, 2015). Later on, the two different genders will be analyzed individually according to their responses to a few survey questions.

Figure 2: Age Distribution



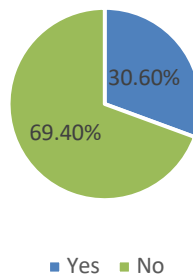
The graph above displays the different age groups of the participants that answered the questions within the questionnaire. Most of the participants totaling to 33, belonged to Generation Y meaning that they were born between the years of 1982 and 1996. As mentioned above, within the literature review, Generation Y occupies a great amount of the current workforce and by 2025 plans to absorb three quarters of the workforce (Bates, 2019). The second leading group of people belonged to Generation X totaling to 9 people. While the least number of participants that contributed to the survey were from the Baby Boomer generational group with 2 participants. Yang & Law (2014), noted that one of the most prominent characteristics in regard to how hotels operated in the past, was the dominance of one generation within the industry. The findings display that there is not one dominant age group, but that there is a mix of people from different generations within the workforce.

Figure 3: Nationality Distribution



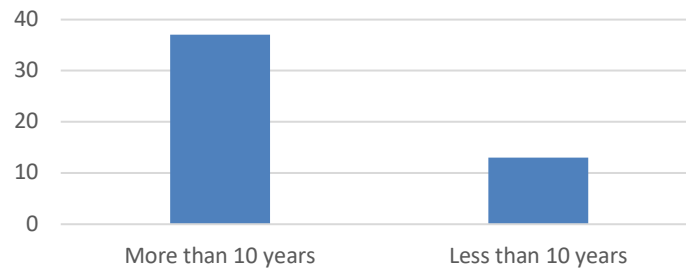
As shown in Figure 3, the participants came from varying, different countries. Most of the participants originated from Austria (15 people), Serbia (9 people), and America (7 people). The rest of the participants were mainly from other countries from Europe along with one participant originating from South Africa. Leading to the conclusion that the hotel sector is not only diverse when looking at age but also when analyzing where the participants originate from.

Figure 4: Have you ever felt discriminated against due to your age?



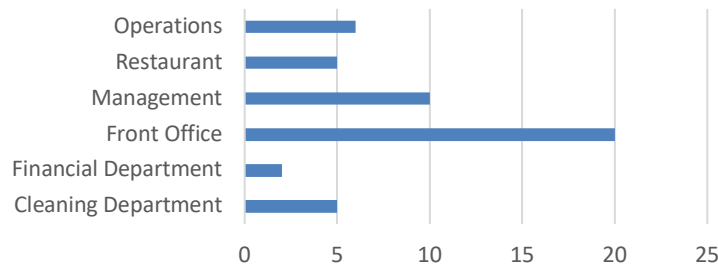
Out of 49 responses, 69.40 % (34 people) responded that they did not feel discriminated according to their age while 30.60% (15 participants) answered that they have felt a sense of discrimination due to their age. The data within Figure 4 shows that several people already have been involved in the act of ageism, which was described earlier as discrimination because of one's age. Prior evidence showed that prejudices still seem to arise within the working environment (Fiske et al., 2002). This section displays that some of the participants have experienced ageism.

Figure 5: How many years have you been working for the hotel?



In regard to the questions asking participants how long they have been working for the hotel industry, 37 participants answered that they have been working for the hotel for more than 10 years. 13 people stated that they have been employed less than 10 years. The remaining number of participants left the question empty, leaving no response. The majority of the participants are experienced within the field of hospitality, facing various situations making them competent in terms of answering the questions based on their prior experiences.

Figure 6: What is your position in the hotel?



The majority of the participants working within the hotel industry are employed in front office department, totaling to 20 participants. The leading department in which the responders work is in the management department totaling to 10 people. While the remaining are working in operations (6 people), restaurant (5 people), cleaning (5 people), and the financial department (2 people).

Table 1: In your own words, please define generational diversity

From the perspective of the participants they seemed to have similar views on the basis of what generational diversity is and includes. Sample statements collected within the survey include:
Different generations of people
...people of a wide range of different ages represented in our workplace...worked hard to achieve
Different ages
Different ages, attitudes, wider range to 'touch' the guests
Team members from different generations and experiences
It is good
The words too young or too old for the job do not exist, as long as you can do the job
Diverse
Workplace that accepts people from different ages
Differences in people based on their age...generation which they're from
Flexible
Inclusiveness
Employees from different age groups working together...helpful to work with people with different lengths of experience...learn from each other
Working with people from different ages
Team with people with different ages...expectations...ways of thinking...coming together to form team
Difference between habits and lifestyles of different generations

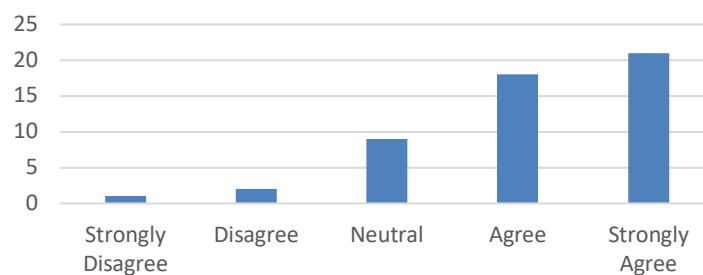
As shown above many of the definitions given include people coming from different generations (ages) working together as a team in order to achieve a certain goal. This includes flexibility, inclusiveness, and learning from each other's past experiences. As mentioned above in the literature review generational diversity can be defined as a group of individuals whose age ranges are significantly differentiated from one another (Amayah & Gedro, 2014). Also as noted each of the differing generations perceive the working environment differently due to their ambitions, attitudes, and world views. Each generation can use these attributes in order to help one another and to work on achieving a specific goal in order to make the organization stronger.

Table 2: In your own words, please describe organizational culture

The following open-ended question asked participants to state their definition in regard to organizational culture. Sample statements include:
...encompasses values, behaviors that determine image of organizations
Different cultures
Second house-family
Way of working
Clear distribution of tasks
Way how employees are treated within the organization
Behavior of people inside workplace
Cultural environment formed within organization
Well connected, functional
Shared beliefs
Same goals
Structure provided by management

As opposed to the definition of generational diversity given by participants, organizational culture seemed to have varying viewpoints and did not tend to share the same core definition. Each participant viewed organizational culture in their own unique and different way, but they were similar to the definition noted earlier. As stated within the literature review organizational culture, refers to a system of shared values, beliefs and assumptions governing the manner in which people behave in an organization (Belias & Koustelios, 2014).

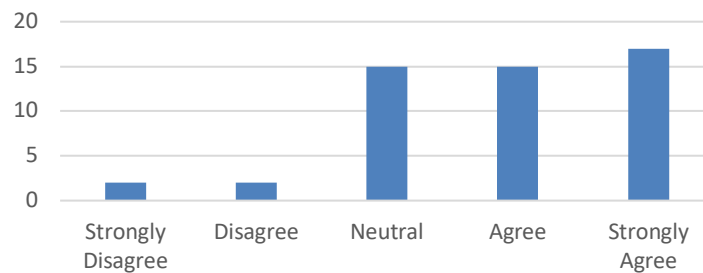
Figure 7: Different generations possess different skills



Overall, the majority of respondents answered that they strongly agree that different generations possess different skills totaling to 21 people out of 51 people. While 18 respondents answered that they agree with the statement that differing generations possess opposing skills. Leading to the conclusion that most of the participants believe that each different generational group member has distinct skills when compared to one another. Supporting the theory mentioned within the literature review that members of different generational

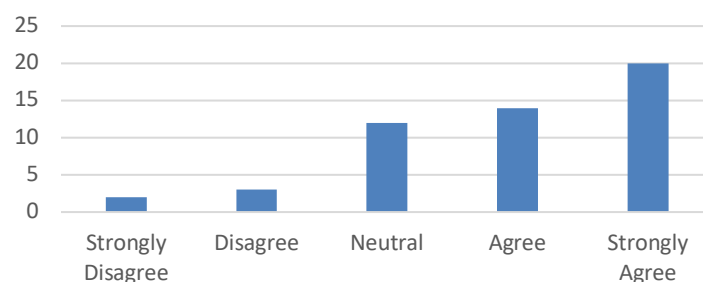
groups possess contrasting characteristics and traits that ultimately deem to be a critically important issue for their leaders (Yu & Miller, 2005). Each group has its own specific characteristics, values, and attitudes towards work that are based on the life experiences of the distinct generation (Cretu & Iova, 2015).

Figure 8: Different generations require the need for different management styles



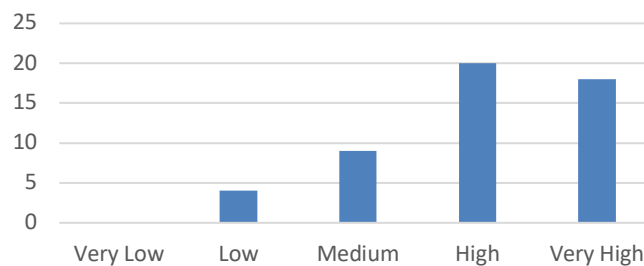
According to the responses most of the participants equaling to 17 out of 51 answered that they strongly agree that different generations require the need for different management styles. 15 people answered that they agree with the statement. Supporting the argument that management styles should be altered according to the generational group in which the employee belongs to. As stated earlier by Manoharan, Gross and Sardeshmukh (2014), managers can face diversity as an opportunity in order to attract more customers while meeting the expectations of their existing consumers. In order for there to be a successful integration of the different generations within the workplaces, radical changes must be embraced by companies. This should be in terms of a corporate culture which displays respect along with inclusiveness in regard to a workforce that is multigenerational (Author unknown, 2019).

Figure 9: Problems are solved quicker when people from different generations work together



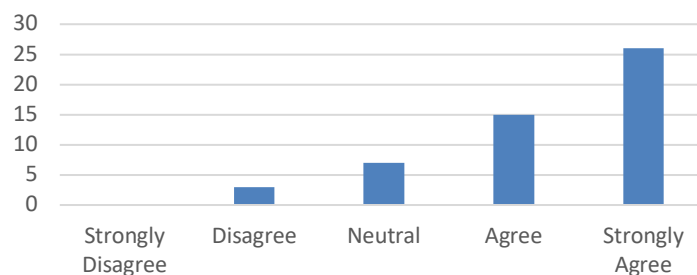
20 participants responded that they strongly agree that issues are resolved quicker when different generations work together. According to the statement 14 people agree while 12 people don't consider a positive or negative impact on age differences resulting to quicker problem solving. As noted earlier controlled generational strengths can lead to an increase in sales and profits (Lancaster & Stalman, 2002). This can lead to the fact that the experiences and knowledge from one member of a certain generation can be shared with a member from a different generation. By sharing knowledge and experience, problems can be solved quicker and more efficiently. As mentioned, when different generations work strongly together, this can lead to greater innovation and a foster of creativity.

Figure 10: In your opinion, how much diversity does your workplace have?



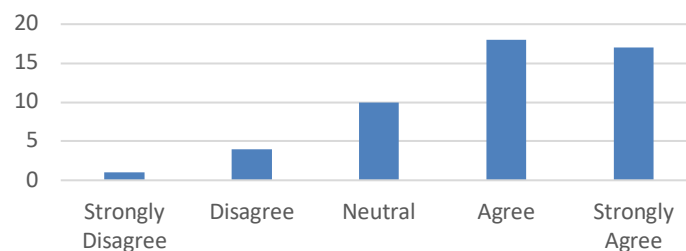
When analyzing the amount of diversity that the hotels possess, the majority of the respondents totaling to 18, answered that there is a very high amount of diversity. Along with 20 people answering that there is a high amount. This means that the hotel industry does not only hire one specific age group of employees. As noted earlier by Notter (2002), one is bound to find work teams or units of members coming from different generations working together with the goal of completing a task.

Figure 11: I feel that it is an advantage to have a generationally diverse employee force



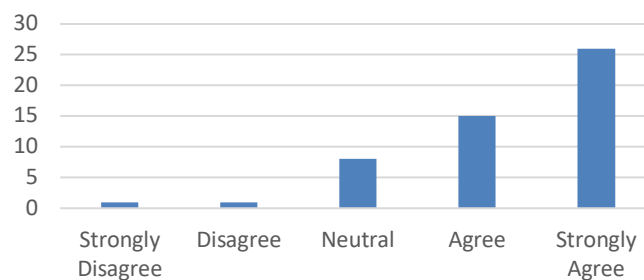
Most of the respondents, totaling to 26 people, strongly agree that having an employee force that includes individuals from different age groups is an advantage. 15 people also agreed with the statement. While 7 people were neutral, and 3 people disagreed. As noted earlier within the literature review, generational diversity has been largely embraced and has facilitated the development of an interactive business environment aiming to provide excellent services to customers while maintaining a competitive advantage. This supports the argument that different generational strengths can lead to a boost in morale control costs, a reduction in turnover and an increase in sales and profits (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

Figure 12: The hotel organization is dedicated to generational diversity and inclusiveness



According to the statement whether their hotel organization is dedicated to generational diversity and inclusiveness, 17 people strongly agree, along with 18 people agreeing, 10 people staying neutral, 4 people disagree and 1 individual strongly disagreeing. Figure 12 shows that in the eyes of the employees not all of the hotels are striving to maintain a diverse workforce in terms of age. Whether this is due to the act of ageism as later addressed is difficult to pinpoint and know.

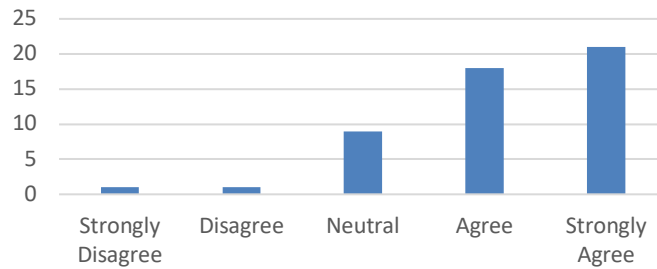
Figure 13: Older generations have a different working style as opposed to younger generations



26 people strongly agreed with the statement that older generations have a different working style as opposed to younger generations. 15 people agreed

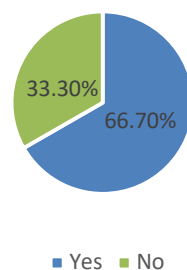
with the statement, 8 people were neutral, 1 person disagreed, and 1 person strongly disagreed. This result also supports the statement earlier mentioned that every generation has their unique view on the way they believe that the working world functions (Bova & Kroth, 2001).

Figure 14: The hotel industry in general benefits when the employees are generally diverse



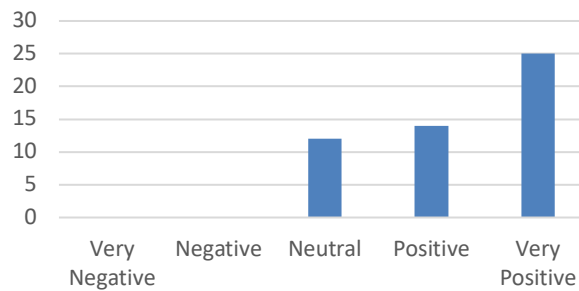
21 participants answered the question that the hotel industry benefits when the employees are generally diverse. 18 responders agreed to the statement, while 9 were neutral, along with 1 respondent disagreeing and the following 1 person strongly disagreeing. Even though generational diversity can be beneficial it does not mean that it does not pose challenges. As noted earlier a broad range of generational diversity is becoming an increasing issue of concern in today's business environment due to the influence that they are directing to the level of success in business (Baran & Klos 2014).

Figure 15: Do you believe age differences are important for efficient collaboration?



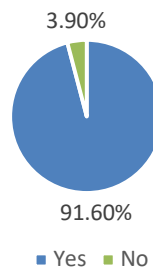
According to the question whether age differences are an important element when it comes to efficient collaboration, 66.7% of the people agreed with the statement while 33.3% of the people disagreed.

Figure 16: Overall, do you feel that your work environment is positive or negative?



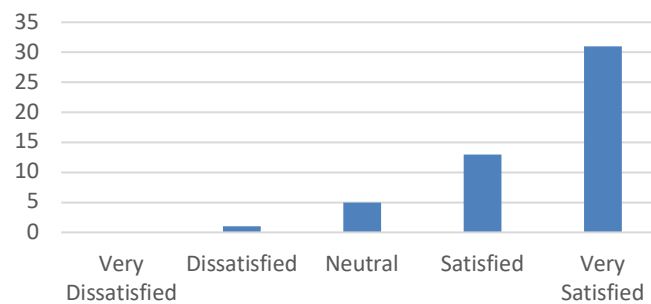
In regard to the question, most of the participants answered that they believe that they have a positive working environment or that they were neutral on the statement. None of the responders answered that they view their working environment within the hotel to be negative.

Figure 17: Do you believe your hotel meets the needs of guests?



Overall the majority of the people feel that the hotel that they are currently employed at, meets the needs of the guests. 91.6% of participants answered with 'yes' to the question while 3.9% answered with 'no.'

Figure 18: How satisfied are you with this survey?



In regards, to the question whether the respondents were satisfied with the survey, 31 people stated that they were very satisfied, while 13 said that they were satisfied, 5 people were neutral, and 1 person was dissatisfied.

4.1 Perceptual Differences Between Age Groups

In order to gain further insight in perceptual differences between the participants I used a Kruskal-Wallis data analysis test. This non-parametrical statistical test analyzes the differences between three or more independently sampled groups. This is done on a single variable, which is non- normally distributed and continuous. Non-normally distributed data can be categorized as either as ordinal or rank data (Mckight & Najab, 2010).

In order to conduct the test, I first split the 51 participants into three categories according to their age. These categories are marked as age groups 1, 2, and 3 in the tables. All three categories have an equal number of participants, totaling to 17 each. The 1st category included the participants, which were between the ages of 20-26. Followed by the 2nd category that included participants between the ages of 27-34. The analysis lastly included the 3rd category of respondents between the ages of 35-55.

This was done in order to analyze whether the three distinct age groups had a significant difference to one another or not in accordance to their responses to 9 questions from the survey. The 9 questions which were analyzed with the Kruskal-Wallis Test used a Likert scale ranging from 1-5. Two hypotheses have been formulated in order to analyze the charts which include: Null Hypothesis and Alternative Hypothesis.

Null Hypothesis: There is no difference or significance between the different age groups according to their responses to the question.

Alternative Hypothesis: There is a difference and significance between the age groups according to their responses to the question.

Table 3: Different age groups possess different skills

	Number:	Mean Rank:
Age Group 1:	17	25.21
Age Group 2:	17	22.91
Age Group 3:	17	29.88
Total:	51	
Chi-Square:	6.33	
Degree of Freedom:	2	
Asymptotic Significance:	0.04	

According to the question within the survey which asks, whether different generations possess different skills, the significance level is 0.04, which is below the chosen cut-off value of .05. Due to this the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted indicating a significant difference between the variables. This leads to the conclusion that there are significant differences between the responses arising from the three age groups.

Table 4: Different generations require the need for different management styles

	Number:	Mean Rank:
Age Group 1:	17	24.09
Age Group 2:	17	27.68
Age Group 3:	17	26.24
Total:	51	
Chi-Square:	0.55	
Degree of Freedom:	2	
Asymptotic Significance:	0.76	

As shown in the chart above, in relation to the question, whether different generations require the need for different management styles, the significance level is 0.76. It is greater than the probability value of 0.05 resulting to the

conclusion that there is no difference between the contrary age groups and their responses to the questions along with no significance.

Table 5: Problems are solved quicker when people from different generations work together

	Number:	Mean Rank:
Age Group 1:	17	31.09
Age Group 2:	17	26.53
Age Group 3:	17	20.38
Total:	51	
Chi-Square:	4.89	
Degree of Freedom:	2	
Asymptotic Significance:	0.19	

In accordance with the question of whether problems are solved quicker when people from different generations work together the significance value is 0.19. This is higher than p-value of 0.05, which means there is no statistically significant difference between the various age groups.

Table 6: In your opinion, how much diversity does your workplace have?

	Number:	Mean Rank:
Age Group 1:	17	28.47
Age Group 2:	17	23
Age Group 3:	17	26.53
Total:	51	
Chi-Square:	1.32	
Degree of Freedom:	2	
Asymptotic Significance:	0.52	

Based on the question on how much diversity does the respondents workplace have the significance level, 0.52, demonstrates that there is no significance between the variables along with no differences between the age group's answers.

Table 7: I feel that it is an advantage to have a generationally diverse employee force

	Number:	Mean Rank:
Age Group 1:	17	26.76
Age Group 2:	17	23.97
Age Group 3:	17	27.26
Total:	51	
Chi-Square:	0.56	
Degree of Freedom:	2	
Asymptotic Significance:	0.76	

According to the question whether the respondents feel that it is an advantage to have a generationally diverse employee force. There is no difference between the respondents age group and answers. The significance level is 0.76 leading to an acceptance of the null hypothesis.

Table 8: The hotel organization is dedicated to generational diversity and inclusiveness

	Number:	Mean Rank:
Age Group 1:	17	27.82
Age Group 2:	17	26.03
Age Group 3:	17	24.15
Total:	51	
Chi-Square:	0.58	
Degree of Freedom:	2	
Asymptotic Significance:	0.75	

Based on the question whether the respondent's hotel organization is dedicated to generational diversity and inclusiveness, the null hypothesis is accepted, and the alternative hypothesis is rejected. Significance value of 0.75 indicates no differences between the age groups and their answers.

Table 9: Older generations have a different working style as opposed to younger generations

	Number:	Mean Rank:
Age Group 1:	17	26.44
Age Group 2:	17	22.97
Age Group 3:	17	28.59
Total:	51	
Chi-Square:	1.51	
Degree of Freedom:	2	
Asymptotic Significance:	0.47	

In accordance with the question whether older generations have a different working style as opposed to younger generations the significance value of 0.47 leads to the conclusion that there is not a difference between the groups of ages.

Table 10: The hotel industry in general benefits when the employees are generationally diverse

	Number:	Mean Rank:
Age Group 1:	17	27.18
Age Group 2:	17	26.35
Age Group 3:	17	24.47
Total:	51	
Chi-Square:	0.34	
Degree of Freedom:	2	
Asymptotic Significance:	0.84	

When analyzing the different age groups and their responses to the question whether the hotel industry in general benefits when the employees are generationally diverse. There was no significance or difference in their answers.

Table 11: Overall, do you feel that your work environment is positive or negative?

	Number:	Mean Rank:
Age Group 1:	17	25.52
Age Group 2:	17	22.91
Age Group 3:	17	29.88
Total:	51	
Chi-Square:	2.26	
Degree of Freedom:	2	
Asymptotic Significance:	0.32	

The significance level of 0.32 according to the question whether the respondents overall feel that their working environment is positive or negative, shows no difference, leading to another acceptance of the null hypothesis.

4.2 Differences Between Males and Females

Further on, I also performed a Chi-square statistical analysis test in order to compare the differences between men and women in accordance to the nominal questions. A Chi-Square statistic is a data analysis method which is non-parametric and helps to detect group differences when nominally measured variables are used. This analysis test therefore does not demand the need for equality between the variances in regard to the study groups in the data (McHugh, 2013). By the use of the test I am able to analyze whether there is a significant difference between males and females in regard to their answers.

Null Hypothesis: There is no difference or significance between males and females according to their responses to the question.

Alternative Hypothesis: There is a difference and significance between males and females according to their responses to the question.

Table 12: How many years have you been working for the hotel?

What is your gender?	
Male mean:	8
Female mean:	6

The number of male participants mean value exceeded females, with a total value of 8 as compared to a total of 6, showing that the group analyzed was almost equal in gender variation.

Table 13: Have you ever felt discriminated against due to your age?

	What is your gender?	
	Male:	Female:
No:	16	18
Yes:	10	5
Chi-Square:	1.61	
Degree of Freedom:	1	
Significance:	0.2	

According to the question whether the respondents have felt discriminated in regard to their age, 10 males answered yes while 16 answered no and 5 females answered yes while 18 answered no. The significance value of 0.2 shows that there is a significant difference between males and females in regard to their response to the question.

Table 14: Do you believe age differences are important for efficient collaboration?

	What is your gender?	
	Male:	Female:
No:	11	5
Yes:	16	17
Chi-Square:	1.79	
Degree of Freedom:	1	
Significance:	0.18	

In regard to the question whether age differences are important for efficient collaboration, 11 males and 5 females answered that it is not. While 16 males and 17 females answered that it is important. The significance value of 0.18 shows that there is a significant difference between males and females according to their responses.

5 Conclusion

This thesis defined generational diversity along with its components. It also explained the role of organizational culture. Moreover, it identified the different types of diversity, with an emphasis particularly on age differences. Besides that, it also went into detail on how companies operated in the past as apposed, to how they operate nowadays, specifying the advantages and disadvantages, which occur. Finally, it assessed the benefits that arise with companies incorporating a generationally diverse employee force while noting also the struggles and disadvantages. The goal of the thesis was two answer two questions: 1. How is organizational culture influenced by generational diversity in the hotel industry? 2. In what ways does generational diversity impact business practices of actors in the hotel industry? In order to gain first hand insight in order to analyze and answer the questions a survey was conducted. The theoretical findings were collected through the use of a questionnaire-based survey which asked hotel employees to explain their views towards different aspects regarding generational diversity within the hotel that they are employed at. The sole goal was to identify whether employees with differing ages require differing management styles and whether they believe different generations possess different skills. The participants were asked to evaluate the level to which their hotel was generationally diverse and whether they believed age differences were a positive or negative attribute to efficient and effective collaboration.

The first part of the survey asked the participants to state their age, gender and position within the hotel. The following questions asked them to define generational diversity and organizational culture in their own words. Moreover, their responses tended to share the same underlying definition of the terms. Noting that generational diversity includes people from different age groups ultimately working together and using their prior experiences to help one another. With a majority of the respondents acknowledging that organizational culture are shared beliefs, values and principles contributing to a social environment. A few questions included the participants opinion's on how generationally diverse their hotels are and whether they believe if

generational diversity is beneficial and whether the different age groups require contrary managing styles. The majority of the respondents answered that they agree with the statements in terms of generational diversity, being an overall advantage to the hotel industry, leading to the conclusion that hotel industries can benefit from a generationally diverse workforce.

After analyzing the overall answers to the questions, I decided to compare the results to the questions in terms of 3 different age groups by conducting a Kruskal-Wallis data analysis test. I did this in order to see whether age had an impact on the answer to the questions. Overall there was no significant difference between the responses of the 3 age groups except for one question which was, whether different age groups possess different skills. The answers for this question were significantly different to one another in terms of the respondents age. Furthermore, I decided to compare the two genders, male and female, in terms of 3 questions by using a Chi-Square data analysis test to also see whether there was a significant difference. This time I focused on gender as opposed to age in accordance to the questions. The analysis showed that there is a significant difference according to the participant's genders and their responses to the questions.

6 Limitations

Some of the limitations, in regards, to the study were hotel employee's busy schedules, which ultimately resulted in a longer waiting time for the surveys to be completed, then had initially been planned. Moreover, many hotels were contacted, but not all of them were willing to participate. Leading to the data collection process taking more additional time than expected due to the survey's limited responses in the early on stages. A further limitation was the total amount of responses to the questionnaire that were received. 51 participants are not exactly enough to represent an entire population. In my opinion, this was the reason that a majority of the Kruskal-Wallis results according to significance were similar and had no significant difference in the values between the generations.

Limitations in regard to the literature, include the insufficient amount of data collected directly related to age in regard to working relationships within hotels and even other businesses. A vast majority of studies focus on diversity within a workplace in accordance to one's gender or where they originate from, but not concerning one's age group. Additionally, there are not specific management techniques provided in order for managers to know exactly how they can manage and handle individuals deriving from the different generations. I believe this is due to the fact that even though there are certain traits and characteristics that specify a certain generational group, it may not always be true and there will always be individuals that do not fit into the predicted "norms." More studies could be conducted in order for businesses, not only hotels, to learn how to incorporate generational diversity and how to make the overall team more united in order to please and satisfy more customers.

Finally, further research should focus specifically on the impacts that occur when there are people of different age groups working within businesses and how they directly affect collaboration. Research should also analyze the distinct traits which the members of the different generations possess and how they ultimately handle certain situations. Furthermore, they should also include more of the impacts that arise and how managers can handle the situations. This could include specifically focusing on training techniques. By addressing the issues more valuable information can be provided not only to hotel managers, but also managers from various business sectors, in order for them to enhance their understanding of how to effectively handle generational diversity in order to be more successful.

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8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Katarina Simic, and I am a student currently enrolled at Modul University in Vienna, Austria. I am studying International Management with an emphasis on Entrepreneurship and once I complete my studies, I will be obtaining a Bachelor of Science degree. The survey included is a part of my bachelor thesis, which is used to gain a deeper understanding about the organizational culture within different hotels. Moreover, it also looks at the integration of different generations and whether they affect the working environment according to the perspective of the employees.

This survey targets individuals, employed at different sectors, who are currently working for a hotel. I would greatly appreciate it if you could take a couple of minutes to answer a few questions in order for me to gain first hand insight. Participating in the survey is voluntary and all of the information gathered will be kept confidential and completely anonymous. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions or concerns.

Thank you!

Best regards,
Katarina Simic

8.2 Appendix 2

Dear Ms. Maravic,

My name is Katarina Simic and my family friend Nina provided me with your email address.

I am writing my bachelor thesis in regard to the hotel industry and would like to gain first hand insight from employees working in the hotel. I would ideally need around 30-50 employees to fill out a survey. The survey consists of 20 questions and would only take a few minutes.

My thesis will be around 50 pages, and this is a crucial part for me to be able to complete it.

It would really mean so much to me if you would be willing to participate.

The name of the hotel is kept confidential along with the name of the employees (I do not ask for personal information)

I could also send you the final results so your hotel can maybe learn something from my research.

The survey is simple to use. It can be filled out directly by clicking on the link and can also be copied and forwarded.

Please let me know if you have any questions and if you would be willing to. Thank you!

The survey link:

<https://goo.gl/forms/74Jt3bRrhW47IRFu2>

All the best,
Katarina Simic

8.3 Appendix 3

1. What is your gender?
 - Male
 - Female
2. How old are you?
 - (Short answer text)
3. Please indicate your nationality.
 - (Short answer text)
4. Have you ever felt discriminated against due to your age?
 - Yes
 - No
5. How many years have you been working for the hotel?
 - (Short answer text)
6. What is your position in the hotel?
 - (Short answer text)
7. In your own words, please define generational diversity.
 - (Long answer text)
8. In your own words, please describe organizational culture.
 - (Long answer text)
9. Different generations process different skills.
 - Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)
10. Problems are solved quicker when people from different generations work together.

- Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)
11. In your opinion, how much diversity does your workplace have?
- Scale of 1 (a little) to 5 (a lot)
12. I feel that it is an advantage to have a generational diverse employee force.
- Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)
13. The hotel organization is dedicated generational diversity and inclusiveness.
- Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)
14. Older generations have a different working style as opposed to younger generations.
- Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)
15. The hotel industry in general benefits when the employees are generationally diverse.
- Scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)
16. Do you believe age differences are important for efficient collaboration?
- Yes
 - No
17. Overall, do you feel that your work environment is positive or negative?
- Scale of 1 (very negative) to 5 (very positive)
18. Do you believe your hotel meets the needs of the guests?
- Yes
 - No
19. How satisfied are you with this survey?
- Scale of 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied)
20. If not, please specify why.
- (Long answer text)