

# **Generation Y's employee engagement compared with older generations**

What kind of factors are important for each generation and at what level?



Master's thesis

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<b>Työn nimi</b>	Y-sukupolven sitoutuminen työhön verrattuna vanhempiin sukupolviin; mitkä tekijät ovat tärkeitä millekin sukupolvelle ja millä tasolla?	
<b>Ohjaaja</b>	Kyllikki Valkealahti	

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## TIIVISTELMÄ

Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoitus oli selvittää mitkä tekijät liittyen työntekijöiden sitoutumiseen työelämässä ovat tärkeitä millekin sukupolvelle ja millä tasolla. Tutkimuksen toimeksiantajana toimii Hämeen ammattikorkeakoulu.

Yritykset ovat koko ajan enemmän ja enemmän tietoisia, että on helpompaa pitää kiinni nykyisistä työntekijöistä, kuin koko ajan hankkia uusia. Työelämä on myös jatkuvassa muutoksessa, kun nuoremmat sukupolvet ovat astuneet työelämään omien erilaisten asenteiden ja odotusten kanssa. Tästä syystä tämä aihe on ajankohtainen ja lähtökohtana tälle tutkimukselle. Tutkimuksen teoreettinen viitekehys koostuu työntekijöiden sitoutumisen sekä motivaation teorian tiedosta. Esiteltynä on myös teoriaa liittyen muuttuvaan työelämään sekä eri sukupolviin.

Kvantitatiivinen tutkimus toteutettiin käyttäen verkkokyselylomaketta. Tutkimus toteutettiin keväällä 2020. Tarkoitus oli saada mahdollisimman paljon vastauksia eri sukupolviin kuuluvilta henkilöiltä, joiden avulla saataisiin vastaus tutkimuksen tutkimuskysymyksiin. Kokonaisuudessaan kerättiin 237 vastausta, joista 204 hyväksyttiin analysoitavaksi. Tulosten mukaan Y-sukupolven ja vanhempien sukupolvien vastauksissa voidaan havaita joitain eroja. Kuitenkin jatkotutkimuksia tarvitaan, jotta saadaan vielä tarkempia tuloksia, ja jotta voidaan ymmärtää eri sukupolvien välisiä eroja vielä paremmin.

<b>Avainsanat</b>	Työntekijöiden sitoutuminen, motivaatio, muuttuva työelämä, Y-sukupolvi, eri sukupolvet
<b>Sivut</b>	64 sivua, joista liitteitä 5 sivua

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to find out what objects and factors in working life are important for employee engagement of younger and older generations and at what level. The commissioning party of the research is HAMK.

Companies and businesses are more and more aware of the fact that it is easier to retain old employees than constantly acquire new ones. Also, working life is changing as younger generation enters it with different attitude and experience compared to older generations. So, for that reason this subject is current which was the starting point for this research.

The theoretical framework of this thesis consists of the main points of employee engagement and motivation. Also, the changing world of work and different generations are presented and defined.

The quantitative research was conducted by using an online questionnaire. The research was conducted in spring 2020. The aim was to get as many answers as possible from different age groups, so that the research questions of this thesis could be answered. Altogether, 237 answers were collected, from which 204 answers were applicable. Based on the results of this research, there were some minor differences between the answers of Generation Y and older generations. However, further examination of the subject is needed to get more detailed results and to be able to understand different generations even better.

**Keywords** Employee engagement, changing world of work, generation Y, different generations.

**Pages** 64 pages including appendices 5 pages



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

Companies and businesses are more and more aware that it is easier to retain old employees than constantly acquire new ones, just as it is easier and cheaper to try to keep old customers rather than try to get new ones. So, it seems that companies have woken up to the fact that engaged workforce is not only good for employees but also good for customers and overall business performance as well. It is vitally important for companies to understand and realise how engaged employees' effect on company's financial success. Also, it is critical to understand those ways and actions leaders should conduct in their work to make their employees engaged to the company. Every employee act and gets motivated from different things, so leaders must have understanding in this matter too.

Employee engagement has not always been a phenomenon related to everyday life in companies. Just during recent years, it has become an interesting topic in companies human resource departments. Originally the concept of employee engagement was introduced by American organisational behaviour professor William Kahn already in 1990. However, his writing about employee engagement did not arouse large interest before 21st century but after that the change has been enormous. There are three factors speeding up the interest in employee engagement. First, companies in business and consulting world are more interested in human capital and especially personnel motivation being a competitive advantage in addition to personnel know-how. Other significant factor is the rise of positive psychology. Along with that companies have become aware of the fact that it does not tell enough about well-being at workplaces if companies are paying attention only to stress and burnout related situations and symptoms. Either it does not help to understand what motivates people in their work and what makes them thrive and maintain their motivation. The third actor speeding up the interest in employee engagement is the method developed by Wilmar Schaufel and Arnold Bakker which enables the research in employee engagement in every profession and job. (Salmela-Aro & Nurmi 2017, 117-118.) Still today there are people who underestimate the effect that it has on the performance of the company.

## 1.2 Objective and research questions

The objective of this research was to find out what things and factors in working life concerning employee engagement are important to which

generation and at what level. Answers to this objective will be pursued through research questions which are introduced in the next paragraph.

Research questions which pursue to answer to the objective of this research are:

- What kind of factors regarding employee engagement are important for each generation and at what level?
- Are there differences between Generation Y and older generations in importance of the factors regarding employee engagement?

## 2 THEORY

The theoretical background of this thesis is presented in this chapter. In scientific research new information is created by means of theory (Vilkkä 2015.) The theoretical background is divided in four parts. First employee engagement as a term is described and some factors that affect it are introduced. Also, employee engagement's effect on companies' financial success is presented. The second part introduces motivation and two theories about it. This part also focuses on work motivation. Third part introduces changing world of work and especially concentrates to a Dialogi 2011 research which presents what "new work" is like. Last part of the theoretical background introduces different generations, mainly generation Y, Generation X and Baby Boomers as those are under exploration in this research.

### 2.1 Employee engagement

As mentioned in the introduction employee engagement has become important part of companies HR strategies and companies understand more and more the importance of employee engagement and its effect on financial success.

In this chapter the theory part of employee engagement is introduced as a concept and definition for it and 11 elements that are affecting it by Larkin (2009). Also, one point of view about leadership's effect on employee is introduced and employee engagement's effect on company's financial success.

#### 2.1.1 Definition of employee engagement

We all might have a vision what engagement looks like and it has as many definitions as there are people defining it. Still there is the same main idea in all of them. Here are mentioned some of the definitions found from literature.

Cook states that employee engagement is personified by the passion and energy that people must give to serve the customers of the company. It is also all about the willingness and capacity to make an effort to help the company succeed. Cook gives a good way to sum up what employee engagement is; it can be summed up by how positively the employee thinks about the organisation, feels about the organisation and how positively the employee is proactive to achieve organisational goals for customers, colleagues and other stakeholders. (Cook 2008, 3.)

Definition that Bridger uses is that employee engagement is “the extent to which people are personally involved in the success of the business”. (Bridger 2014, 7). This definition is adapted from the work of John Smythe (2007), which is the author of *The Chief Engagement Officer*. This definition is quite easy for people to understand and it can be presented as in Figure 1. This definition views engagement as an attitude, as a behaviour and as an outcome. It highlights the importance of the alignment between employees’ values and the organisations values. It also states that engagement must be a two-way process which means that organisation must work to ensure that it is set up to develop engagement but also employee must volunteer themselves to be engaged. So, for example organisational values must be in line with employees’ values so that it is possible or at least easier for employee to feel engaged to the organisation. (Bridger 2014, 8.)

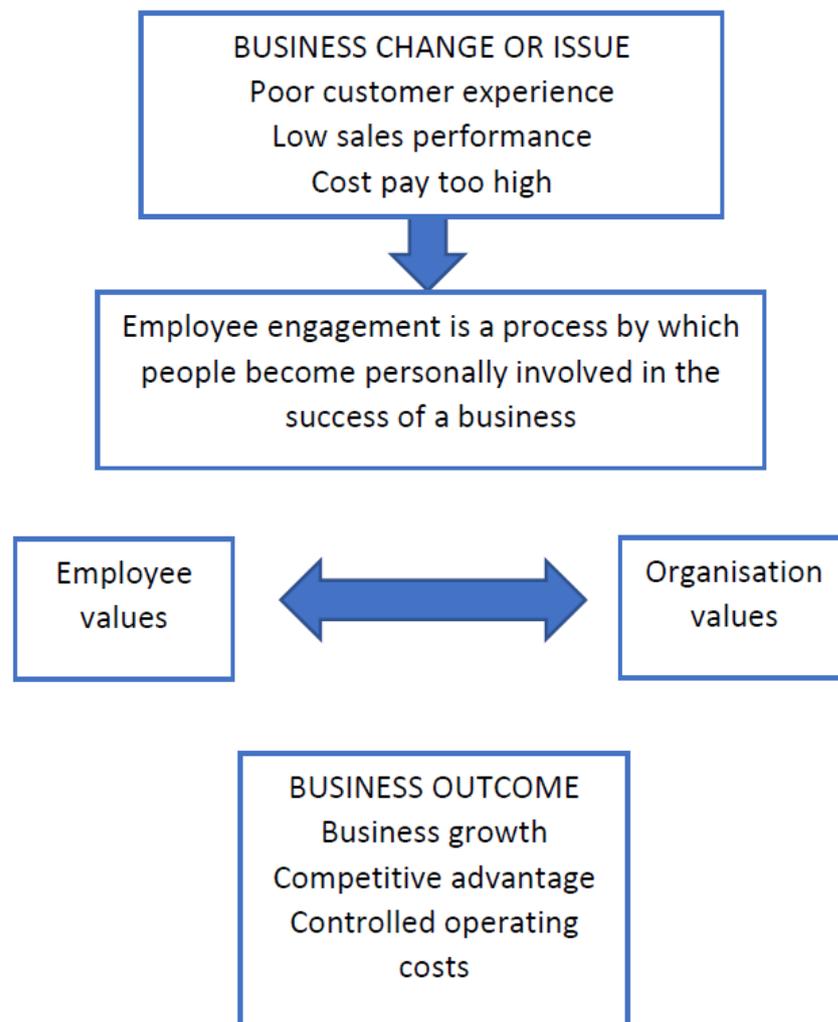


Figure 1. What is employee engagement (Bridger 2014, 9).

So basically, employees must know what the purpose and vision of the company is and how it can be achieved through the goals given to the employees. Employees must also be fully included to the team, supported in developing new skills, receiving regular and constructive feedback, and thanked and recognised also regularly. (Engage for Success n.d.)

Holbeche and Matthews (2012, 13) are introducing a research made by UK's Institute for Employment Studies which found that engaged employees

- look for opportunities and are given opportunities
- improve their performance
- are positive about their work and also about the organisation
- believe in the organisation
- work actively to make things better
- treat others with respect
- help others to perform better
- can be relied on
- do more for the job than required
- keep up to date and develop themselves

One approach to employee engagement in a company is stated by MacLeod and Clarke in their Engage for Success report. They state that there are two levels of engagement: transactional engagement and transformational engagement. Transactional approach to engagement often begins for example with an engagement survey which tells the areas of engagement that the company needs to focus on. After the survey company makes a plan that how those areas should be improved and maybe also conducts some of them, and then forgets the whole thing until the next survey will be done. So, in this approach engagement improvement is not integrated to the business strategy and culture of the company. Transformational engagement is quite an opposite, it is integrated to the company's strategy and culture. It is proactive, and employees' ideas and opinions are taken into consideration regularly. Usually surveys are not necessarily needed because engagement is integrated in the business focus, culture, and leadership style. There is a natural desire to improve the engagement in the company. Often companies are conducting an approach somewhere between these two approaches. (MacLeod & Clarke 2009).

Important factor which influences in employee engagement and commitment is the manager-employee relationship. The manager is the person who creates the connection between employee and the organisation and as a result from this the manager-employee relationship is usually the crucial point in relation to retention. Managers who apply the following characteristics promote employee engagement:

1. show strong commitment to diversity
2. take responsibility for successes and failures
3. demonstrate honesty and integrity
4. help find solutions to problems
5. respect and care for employees as individuals
6. set realistic performance expectations
7. demonstrate passion for success and
8. defend direct reports

Managers who do not apply these characteristics and who foster disengaged employees are not bringing valuable talent to the organisation but are rather losing it. (Lockwood 2007, 5).

Employee engagement can be considered as cognitive, emotional, and behavioural. Cognitive signifies for employees' beliefs about the company and for example its leaders and the workplace culture. The emotional aspect is how employees feel about the company and for example its leaders and colleagues in the workplace. The behavioural factor is the component reflected in the amount of effort employees put into their work, for example brainpower, extra time, and energy. Employees who are more involved in their work processes, for example in designing and implementing workplace, are more engaged. As highlighted in the literature the connection between high-involvement work tasks and positive beliefs and attitudes is an important driver for business success. (Lockwood 2007, 3).

When thinking about employee engagement and commitment they both are necessary endeavours in which organisation needs to invest time and money. Many might think that engagement and commitment are same thing, but they are not. Engagement drives commitment and commitment cannot be achieved without engagement. The difference is that while employee commitment is referring to satisfaction and identification with the organisation, employee engagement goes little bit further and the employee is making optional efforts to achieve organisational goals (ResearchGate 2014.)

Employee engagement actualises when employee shows interest in their jobs and are willing to do little bit extra to get the required results. It comes from internal motivation and is not for the organisation, even though the benefits do reach the organisation. So, according to M&E Studies article engaged employee is someone who shows interest and dedication to the job with no interest in the organisation except as the provider of the job.

Commitment in turn is about identification with the organisation, for example feeling proud to go to work. Commitment is the affection and loyalty for the firm and how strongly employee is associating feelings with the organisation (M&E Studies n.d.)

According to Viitala (2014) also Meyer and Allen (1991) have been investigating employee engagement. They have separated three different types of engagement which can be also thought as different dimensions of engagement. These dimensions are affective, continuing, and normative. Affective engagement means employees willingness to work for an organisation. Also, willingness to belong to an organisation, accreditation and trust are related to affective engagement. In continuing engagement for example salary, rewards and other benefits have impact on the level of engagement. Normative engagement means engagement forms from the norms created by society and especially expectations that the employer makes towards the employee. These three dimensions can appear one by one, but usually employee's engagement towards organisation contains features from all of them. (Viitala 2014).

### 2.1.2 11 factors affecting employee engagement

Larkin (2009) has introduced 11 factors affecting employee engagement. Larkin states that everything starts with good leadership, but leaders also must consider the remaining drivers to really engage people:

#### Culture

Culture has huge impact on the feeling or climate in an organisation. Leaders have impact on the culture of an organisation as they are the people who are building the culture of the organisation. There is no "right" culture but there are certain environments which build engagement.

#### Composition

This is related to the team building. All team leaders should pay attention to how they are recruiting people to certain teams. It is important that all the team members fit together well. Of course they do not all have to like each other, which actually is not even possible, but there must be a general convenience between all the members so that engagement can be build.

#### Clarity

In this case clarity means ensuring that employees understand both aspirations and expectations. Aspirations meaning that leaders need to help employees to understand the big picture, where the organisation is going and how they can contribute to that. Expectations meaning that it must be clear for the employee that what is expected from them, as nothing will destroy engagement faster than unclear directions or roles and responsibilities.

## Competence

Most employees want to build their skills and competence at work so to increase engagement leaders must ensure that there are suitable options and opportunities for employees to assure their personal development. All employees should be equally competent to do what they are supposed to do, and if not, other team members need to take up the slack and this leads to condemnation or even conflict which then can reduce engagement.

## Cooperation

Cooperation in teams is important. When people work well in teams, they build bonds and at the same time trust increases. This in turn improves general engagement levels because most employees prefer to work in collaborative environments.

## Communication

Where communication is regular, open, two way and effective employees tend to be more engaged.

## Challenge

For most people, a sense of challenge in their work is essential to how engaged they feel with the organisation. Leaders need to find enough challenge for employees so that they feel more engaged to their work. If work feels too ordinary or repetitive employees feel less engaged.

## Conflict

Conflicts happen inevitably at workplaces and they need to be managed in a right way. The managing of a conflict can have a huge impact on how engaged employees are likely to be. Constructive conflict leads to new ideas and better solutions and should be encouraged but well managed, so that it gives a picture to the employee that they can speak their minds and contribute in an appropriate manner. If on the other hand destructive conflict is managed poorly it will affect on engagement as employees do not wish to work in a poisoned atmosphere.

## Compensation

People love to feel rewarded for the contribution they make. Salary and conditions are important element on this but also for example positive feedback and recognition when deserved are as powerful in terms of building engagement.

## Change

Change management also impacts on the level of engagement. Too little change can cause stagnation which decreases engagement yet too much change can frustrate employees and cause disengagement.

When applying these factors in everyday work leaders must remember that they should not do these things simply to increase engagement, but because engagement will in turn lead to greater productivity and better financial results in the organisation.

### 2.1.3 Employee engagement & financial success

Employees are the most important asset for the company and employee engagement is a key driver for organisational success. High levels of engagement improve organisational performance and stakeholder value and it can be a deciding factor in organisational success.

It is also proved in many researches that engaged employees lead to better business outcomes. Kruse (2012) in Forbes article “What is employee engagement” tells that according to Towers Perrin research companies with engaged employees have 6 % higher net profit margins, and according to Kenexa research engaged companies have five times higher shareholder returns over five years.

Kruse (2012) also brings out he’s own idea of how employee engagement leads to higher stock prices. That is shown below

“Engaged employees lead to...  
 higher service, quality, and productivity, which leads to...  
 higher customer satisfaction, which leads to...  
 increased sales (repeat business and referrals), which leads to...  
 higher levels of profit, which leads to...  
 higher shareholder returns (i.e., stock price)”

The way that employee thinks about the organization and how they behave and feel about working in the company effects on the performance of the company. Still there are many sceptics that doubt this thinking. But the question that should be asked is that does high engagement lead to higher organizational performance or does working in a highly performing organization result in a higher engagement? Bridger (2014) introduces few studies that have showed that engagement comes first. For example, study by Watson Wyatt says that engagement seems to be a lead indicator of company’s financial performance. This finding has been proved many times. Bridger also introduces also Engage for Success report, “The Evidence”, which shows that increased levels in the engagement lead to

increases in customer satisfaction which then results in improvements in sales. (Bridger 2014, 19).

Engagement has also effect on productivity of employees. Improvements in performance can also arise through increased productivity, and there is a strong evidence that employee engagement is linked to business outcomes. Bridger introduces a research sponsored by the CIPD which shows that the impact of employee engagement on productivity increased because engaged employees were more involved and socially connected allowing them to do better solutions. (Bridger 2014, 28).

From the positive psychology movements point of view, we have lots to learn about how engagement works. Positive psychology is a field of psychology which has been invented around 20 years ago. It does not claim that it has found the value of positive thinking and approach, but it helps to understand that in which conditions individuals flourish and thrive. Positive psychology aims to focus on learning that what works rather than always focusing on what does not work or how problems can be fixed. Normally we think that the way to happiness comes followingly; we work hard which gives us more success which then leads to happiness and engagement. This way is wrong way based on the positive psychology and what researcher Shawn Achor has stated. He thinks that we should think it other way around; that first we are happy or engaged, then we work hard and after that comes great success. Advancements in positive psychology and neuroscience have provided evidence to back this up. It is found that being happy or positive is a precursor to success, not a result of success. There is a quite simple scientific explanation as to why this is how it is. When we experience positive and good emotions our body starts to secrete more serotonin and dopamine which are neurotransmitters and they not only make us feel good, but they also enhance the parts in our brain where learning happens. This helps us to organize new information more effectively, retain information longer and allow us to think more quickly and creatively and analyse complex information better. Summarized, when we are engaged at work, we have more opportunities to experience positive emotions which leads to the release of associated chemicals and it enables us to perform at higher level and work better, so, engagement leads to better performance. (Bridger 2014, 52-54).

## 2.2 Motivation

Motivation is one subject on the theory part of this thesis as it is closely related to employee engagement. This chapter is going to explain the basis of motivation and work motivation and two theories about motivation.

### 2.2.1 Definition of motivation

Motivation is a complex and diverse subject and every person experience about motivation is different based on every person's own persona and preference. Studying motivation is complex and usually people are not aware of the reasons behind their actions. Motivation as a word derives from a Latin word "movere", which means movement. Later the word has gotten also other meanings, such as the factors that define our behaviour. (Mathe, Pavie, & O'Keeffe 2011, 1). Motivation is an internal willing stimulated by the drive to attain certain goals to satisfy individual needs and values. And as every person has different needs and values motivation can have millions of different definitions in the world. Motivation is like a fuel for our actions. When we are motivated, we have a sense of direction and we act appropriately.

When examining motivation in its most basic level in humans and animals we see that we are all mainly and instinctively motivated or driven to satisfy survival needs such as food, shelter, love safety and reproduction. Once these necessary needs are fulfilled priorities change and we become motivated to satisfy psychological needs, also called high-order needs, which are for example growth, esteem, and fulfilment. These needs appear differently in different environments. For example, in our personal life we have different needs than in our working life. Survival needs are quite similar in both, but psychological needs differ when comparing someone's personal life to working life. (Mathe et al 2011, 10-11).

In working life employee is usually mostly driven by a need to work for a salary or payment to provide and ensure for example shelter and food which are survival needs. But evidently the promise of the salary is not enough to ensure the employee's motivation. At this point a series of other needs come into play in the form of high-order needs. As we move from primary to high order needs the needs become more abstract and also accordingly more difficult to satisfy. It needs to be remembered that it is precisely the drive to satisfy a need that creates motivation and that a satisfied need no longer motivates. When applying this to working life it means that the drive to satisfy high-order needs explains an individual's desire for example to progress in the organisation or maybe even change job if more interesting or rewarding jobs are offered elsewhere. (Mathe et al 2011, 11).

### 2.2.2 Work motivation

Motivation at work means the ability from the organisation to stimulate a person's motivation so that the person strives towards the organisations goals by providing opportunities to fulfil the individual needs. When thinking about individual's motivation to work it has a straight connection to employee engagement. Can an employee be engaged if he/she is not motivated, or vice versa? Also, job satisfaction and well-being are essential

factors of motivation of an employee. When approaching the motivation right way, a motivated employee will be engaged and satisfied. (Mathe et al 2011, 3-4). The job features and working environment together with employee's personality, life experiences and events of life are affecting individual's motivation at work.

As mentioned before employee engagement influences company's financial success and so does work motivation. The success of an organisation depends on how its employees perform at work and that performance depends on different factors. Company leaders must understand and appreciate differences between individuals to ensure that every employee is motivated. Motivation together with ability (the capability to do the job) and resources (tools, materials and information needed to do the job) define the level of motivation. When all three factors are high the performance is on the high level. As said, motivated workforce leads to higher and better performance and to profitability, lower turnover and absenteeism and a more efficient workforce that is innovative and can respond to the needs and goals of the company. (Mathe et al 2011, 177, 179).

Basically, motivation at work is about creating a workplace where employees want to stay, evolve, and contribute their knowledge and expertise for the in a mutually beneficial relationship with the company. Employees commit to high performance for the success of the company and by doing their job well and contributing to the company's goals every day and company commits to employee satisfaction and engagement and provides resources to achieve company's goals. (Mathe et al 2011, 186).

But what is really the driving force and what people really want from work? What are people's needs and expectations and how do they behave and performance at work? The various needs can be categorised in many ways, for example into extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation is related to so called physical rewards such as salary, security, promotion, work environment and conditions in the workplace. This kind of rewards are usually determined at the higher level of organisation and are pretty much out of control of individual managers. Whereas intrinsic motivation is related to psychological rewards such as the opportunity to use one's ability, a sense of challenge and achievement and receiving appreciation and positive recognition. (Mullins & Christy 2010, 254).

Motivation to work can also be classified quite simply in three different sections when processing motivation to work;

1. Economic rewards

Such as salary, fringe benefits, pension, material and security at work.

2. Intrinsic satisfaction

This section is derived straight from the work itself, for example persons' interest in the job, personal growth, and development, like personal orientation to work

### 3. Social relationships

Such as relationships with colleagues, friendships, group work, affiliation, and dependency on others.



Figure 2. Needs and expectations of people at work (Mullins & Christy 2010, 255).

Persons motivation at work depends on the comparative set of these three factors. Some might appreciate something more or even make a deliberate choice to favour some of these sections more than others. For example, someone might appreciate salary and social relationships more than personal development. Social relationships seem to be quite important for many people, especially those who work in a hospitality industry. (Mullins & Christy 2010, 255).

Money as a motivator at work is quite controversial subject. Earlier it was more general thought that money brings motivation and satisfaction at work but nowadays the researchers think otherwise too. Earlier for example F.W Taylor believed in economic needs motivation and that employees would be motivated by obtaining when getting the highest possible wage by working in the most efficient and productive way. This kind of approach is called rational-economic concept of motivation. This approach has fuelled the continuing debate about financial rewards as motivators and their influence in productivity. When there is little pleasure in the work itself or the work offers little opportunity for career advancement, personal challenge or growth it is possible that most of the people working in this kind of job appear to be motivated primarily by money. So, if money is a good motivator or not and at what level depends

very much on their personal circumstances and other satisfactions they get from work. (Mullins & Christy 2010, 255-256).

How about the situations when employees' needs are not fulfilled, and motivation levels are low? Frustration is a negative response when employee for example does not achieve a desired goal and result is a defensive result of behaviour. The reaction to frustration depends on many things and can be summarised under four main headings: aggression, regression, fixation, and withdrawal. These might appear separately but usually frustrated behaviour at work is combination of aggression, regression, and fixation.

Aggression is physical or verbal attack for example on some person or object. This might appear with rage, abusive language, and destruction of equipment. Aggression can be directed against the person or object which is perceived as the cause of the frustration or also to someone or something which does not have anything to do with the frustrating situation. The latter is called displaced aggression. Regression is regressing to a childish or primitive behaviour, for example sulking or crying, tantrum or for example kicking equipment or machine. Fixation is persisting in a certain behaviour which has no real value and does not have any positive result. This kind of behaviour is for example not accepting change or new ideas. Withdrawal is apathy, giving up resignation, for example arriving work late, absenteeism, avoiding decision making or leaving the work altogether. Factors determining individual's reactions to frustration are for example strength of motivation, degree of attachment to the certain goal and personality of the individual. It is important for the manager to pay attention for example to training, development, job design, equitable policies, recognition, and rewards. Proper attention to motivation and these issues will help decrease boredom and frustrated behaviour. (Mullins & Christy 2010, 258-259).

### 2.2.3 Motivation theories

#### Motivation theory by Maslow

Maslows' theory about motivation introduces an idea that humans rank their needs in order of importance. Maslow categorised human needs into five groups which he put in order in a form of a hierarchical pyramid. In the bottom of the pyramid is physiological needs (for example water, food, and sleep) and self-actualisation needs (for example challenging projects and opportunities for creativity) at the top of the pyramid. Between these two from bottom to the top are safety and security needs (for example physical safety, economic security and job security), social needs (for example acceptance, being part of a group) and ego needs (for example respect, recognition from others and personal esteem).

When the basic physiological needs are satisfied human is ready to fulfil needs higher in the pyramid. The idea of the model is that we move in sequence from the bottom to the top in order to achieve our full potential. (Mathe et al 2011, 12). Maslow basically suggests that people always want more depending on what they already have. (Mullins & Christy 2010, 261).



Figure 3. Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Mathe et al 2011, 12).

Important points about this model are;

- satisfied need no longer motivates
- needs are hierarchical, which means that usually human is driven by a higher order need only after a primary need is satisfied
- the hierarchy reflects the priority of each need which rises in importance up along the levels

It needs to be remembered that needs vary from person to person, meaning that when someone might want to become a mother, whereas someone else might want to become a painter. Both needs are universal but unique to all individuals.

In the business world Maslow's hierarchy of needs has become a referential business model in terms of understanding employee needs. With this model it can be illustrated that people are motivated by need in several different levels. Businesses need to modify the model to fit into their own business and way of working and analyse what are the needs of the employees in a specific business or company. (Mathe et al 2011, 12-14).

Problems regarding when applying this theory to working life and situations at work is for example that people do not necessarily satisfy their needs at work, especially so-called higher-level needs. They might satisfy those needs also in other areas of life too. Therefore, leaders would need to know and understand employee's personal life too. Also, even for people within the same level of the hierarchy the motivating factors might not be the same. (Mullins & Christy 2010, 263).

### Herzberg's two factor theory

Frederik Herzberg's idea of motivation consists of two types of needs; hygiene factors which cause dissatisfaction and demotivation if they are unfulfilled, and motivator factors which cause satisfaction and can also have remarkable positive impact on motivation. When combining these both, hygiene, and motivator factors, it is possible to satisfy all needs of employees and stimulate motivation.

With hygiene factors Herzberg means external environmental factors in work such as salary, security, interpersonal relationships, physical working conditions and HR practises. These factors are found in the base levels of Maslow's hierarchy. Motivator factors relate to the work itself and equate with the higher-order needs in Maslow's hierarchy. These factors are for example responsibilities, opportunities for promotion, autonomy, work challenge and interest. (Mathe et al 2011, 18).

When developing this model Herzberg asked two questions from a group of people; "when did you feel satisfied in work?" and "when did you feel dissatisfied in work?" When he analysed the answers to these questions, he realised that the factors contributing to satisfaction were not the opposite of the factors contributing to dissatisfaction. He found that 81% of the factors contributing to job satisfaction were motivators which led to growth and development and 69% of the factors contributing to job dissatisfaction were hygiene factors such as pay or interpersonal relations. All in all, according to Herzberg, it is necessary to enrich job content and at the same time satisfy hygiene factors to a certain level so that motivation and employee satisfaction and performance is sustained. (Mathe et al 2011, 18-19). In businesses this model has given a new angle to motivation; that satisfaction of all needs does not generate the same type of motivation.

## 2.3 Changing world of work

As the world of work is changing rapidly employers must start to pay attention on how to get and retain the most talented workforce that the company wants and needs to achieve its goals.

Population is ageing, and younger workforce is starting to take over the jobs in the businesses all around the world, of course with different kind

of greatness in different countries. Younger workforce, for example millennials which are also called Generation Y have different kind of objectives and things they appreciate in work life than the generation which is now little by little exiting the work life. So, as an employer companies need to prepare themselves to change their way of operating to fit to the needs and wants of the millennials. That way they can survive in the changing world of work and be able to retain employees in the company and tempt new talents to work in the company.

### 2.3.1 Dialogi 2011 project

Dialogi 2011 project was made by many Finnish companies and its mission was better working life. The aim was to yearly examine the change in working life, for example with students from Aalto University, as the case was in Dialogi 2011. In the Dialogi project students and companies are developing the future of work together by using dialogue instead of only analysing some results from research and based on that develop the ways to operate in working life. (Piha & Poussa 2011, 17).

Based on the findings of the project they were able to make 10 theses for the new work:

#### 1. New work is done together

It is social and 87 % of the students wanted preferably to work in groups. 77 % of the students says that they want responsibility in their job, but they do not want to carry it on their own, but together with the team. People in the workplace matter and work is seen above all as a social activity. Students think that good employee is enthusiastic and motivated, and eager to help other to perform better.

#### 2. New work is led by one's own

Separating work and personal life is more important. "Normal", 37,5-hour workday is the most preferable option based on students' answers. 70 % from the students say that working hours do not matter if the work itself is interesting enough. It is more relevant that the job is done than where or when it is done. Technology allows physical limitlessness when remote work is self-evident. 62 % from students think that internet or network is more important than physical working space.

#### 3. New work likes feedback

In new work feedback is given and gotten beside work tasks. 72 % from students say that they would like to get continuous feedback from their closest manager. Rewards and salary as a feedback is appreciated but still 77 % of the students would replace part of their salary with spare time. In Finland we have a bad habit to give mainly negative feedback, which is of course important too, but it should be done in a constructive way because feedback should guide, improve, and not concentrate on the past. In new work thanking is the new black.

#### 4. New work is fun

89 % of student say that the most important thing about a job is a meaningful content, which is usually build by experiences of success. Working can and has to be fun.

#### 5. New work is engaged

Generation Y is not generation which members change jobs all the time, but they are ready to quit a job if they feel that workplace has bad atmosphere, no development opportunities available or treatment is unfair. 39% of the students wants to work for same employer 3-5 years, 39% 6-9 years and almost 10 % thinks that over 12 years employment is ideal. Only 2 % supports 1-2-year employments. This comes as a surprise because common way of thinking is that generation Y is not so engaged to the same organisation. But of course, their engagement must be earned in some way.

#### 6. In new work everyone has their own special career path

Career paths are not necessarily hierarchical anymore, people can change jobs also horizontally. New work challenges employers to give new opportunities inside organisation. Also changing to a whole new career seems to be an option; 45 % of the students think that educating themselves to a new profession in near future is possible.

#### 7. In new work company without values is worthless

62 % of the students say that they could not work in a company which values have a contradiction with their own values. New generation demands moral from companies. . 74 % of the students think that it is important that company has a strong basis for values and that they build their operations based on those values.

#### 8. New work is entrepreneurial

This generation relates very positively to entrepreneurship, but they are not thinking it as a way to employ other people but as a way to execute their own ideas and work as freely as possible.

#### 9. New work is international but does not conquer the world

Generation Y is the first international generation and skilled in languages. Internationality is seen more as a way to develop themselves, not as an opportunity to make a big success abroad. Fifth of the students say that they are willing to move abroad for a job and 90 % of the students say that they are ready to work in a company which uses English as a main language.

#### 10. In new work manager is enabler

Students say that a good manager is supportive, easy-going, fair, reliable and knows how to put just the right amount of pressure for employees.

Future managers think that leading is above all helping others. The challenge also in the new work is to get women interested in leading.

## 2.4 Different generations

There are basically four different generations spending nearly half of their lives in working life. That means that there are quite many different personas and people with different experiences in life working together.

Tapscott (2009, 16) categorises different generations as follows:

1. Baby Boom Generation, born 1946-1964
2. Generation X, born 1965-1976
3. The Net Generation, also called as the millennials or generation Y, born 1977-1997
4. Generation Next, also called as Generation Z, born 1998 to present

Timelines between different generations vary since there are as many opinions about those as there are researchers. It is also impossible to define one specific timeline for a generation worldwide. One way to categorize generations is to think that there are baby boomers, generation X, generation Y or in other words millennials and generation Z.

### 2.4.1 Baby Boomers

Baby boomers are born between 1946 and 1964 and got their name from the time period after war. People had postponed having children until after the war. Men were serving overseas and were not able to set up or take care of a family. So, when the war was over it was again possible to live a normal life and set up a family. The economy was strong after war which gave families confidence to have lots of kids. It was said to be a time of hope and optimism because there was finally peace and prosperity taking hold. (Tapscott 2009, 16). When they were children man was traveling to the moon, Kennedy was president and televisions become a living room décor. Baby Boomers spent their youth in the fits of idealism. Their adolescent rebelliousness corresponded with an era of questioning the status quo. It was a time when it was thought that the world will be saved with love, music, and nonviolent demonstrations. Older members of the Baby Boomers were teenagers during the hippy-culture of the 1960s, but younger members of the Baby Boomers had different teenage experience. They had to face the oil embargo and the dramatic discoveries of the Watergate political scandal. As a result, from these experiences Baby Boomers did not learn to respect authority but rather to challenge authority and they still tend to believe that no authority or someone in charge should be trusted. (Weston 2001, 13.)

When Baby Boomers entered the working life, they were driven and dedicated. Many of them chose their profession not based on economic prospects but with the purpose to make the world a better place. For example, requirements from work, expectations about parenting and complying with idealism keep most people from this generation in the move around the clock. Therefore, they have reduced their work pace and set some goals that simplify their lives. They have also adapted to technology so that they can be more productive and have more free time. (Weston 2001, 13.)

#### 2.4.2 Generation X

Generation X followed Baby Boomers. Generation X has been defined as “in-between” generation. The generation has gotten its name from Douglas Couplands novel Generation X. This generation is the most educated one, but they have also suffered from unemployment and low wages. Nowadays people who belong to X generation are 44-55 years old active internet users.

Generation X had totally different childhood than previous generations. Most members of this generation grew up with both parents working. They were forced to grow as an independent human quite young as their parents were working so they needed to take care of themselves. Thus, they grew up as a under protected children in permissive homes where parents were rarely present. As teenagers they grew strong connections with friends and turned to them when family was not available. (Weston 2001, 13.)

Generation X is tolerant of alternative lifestyles as their friends and school mates were ethnically diverse. Also, schoolwork focused more on teamwork and less on individual tasks. Generation X was born in Information Age, so they are familiar with technology. This generation desire jobs that offer good possibilities to create a balance between work and leisure because they had seen their parents working extremely long hours and sacrifice their leisure for work. They want to make money but and be satisfied in their jobs but also equally important is the leisure time and that they can improve the quality of life. (Weston 2001, 14.)

When Generation X entered working life, companies were downsizing and reorganising their businesses. They were told that keeping their skills up to date they were guaranteed that they will have a job in the future too. So, Generation X learned that nothing in the job market is certain and as a result from the members of this generation does not have the same organisational commitment as older generations. Generation X members adapt well to change and realise that world is changing very quickly. So, based on that they realise that they continuously need to learn and adjust their skills to be successful. (Weston 2001, 14.)

### 2.4.3 Generation Y

Generation Y with its all differences compared to other generations represents a change which can be seen in many ways in the society. Generation Y members opinion really matters as they are now, in 2020, the most represented generation in working life. Generation Y values and wants different things in working life and it also wants change to happen. (Piha & Poussa 2011, 10).

A definition for generation Y is mainly those who are born in 1980's and as mentioned before generation Y can also be called as millennials. It is widely alleged that generation Y is restless, impatient, hard to manage, selfish, sarcastic, solidary, and so on. These definitions about the generation usually come from different experiences of people and needs of the person who is making the definition. So, definitions cannot be generalised to apply to whole generation. (Piispa 2018, 9.) Vesterinen and Suutarinen (2011, 120) describe generation Y as quick, entrepreneurial, able to network effectively and environment friendly. They also appreciate free time, handle IT issues well and trust in their own abilities. They fulfil their own needs in other ways than climbing up in the organisation and they don't want to build their life based on their career and especially not based on one employer.

Every generation is shaped by its circumstances and millennials make no exception. The thing is that they are not less ambitious than earlier generations; more than half still appreciate high salary and wealth. Still, their priorities have evolved or delayed by financial or other boundaries. Study made by Deloitte in 2019 says that having children, buying home or other traditional ways to show our success in adulthood are not in the top of the list of ambitions of millennials. Instead, for example, travelling and seeing the world are in the top of the list (57 percent) when little bit fewer than half thought that they want to own a home (49 percent). This study was made to 13 416 millennials across 42 countries and territories. Millennials in the study were born between January 1983 and December 1994. (Deloitte 2019, 5.)

As much as millennials are thought to be a "generation disrupted", they are also deeply disrupting business and society with their actions and choices. The study says that almost half, 49 percent, would quit their current jobs in the next two years. This percentage is biggest ever during the history of Deloitte's yearly millennial survey. For example, in 2017 the number was 38 percent. About a quarter of those who saying they would leave within two years have reported leaving an employer in the past 24 months. This is a big challenge for companies that are seeking stable and engaged workforce. Biggest reasons for wanting to leave are dissatisfaction with pay or financial rewards (43 percent), lack of opportunities to advance (35 percent) and lack of learning and development opportunities (28 percent). Also, 23 percent felt that they are

not appreciated. (Deloitte 2019, 14.) This shows that not only financial rewards etc are important for millennials, they are also very keen to train and develop themselves in working life and in their private life. They seek to have more experiences than generations before them, who might have been more used to just stick with their current job and just settle for it and be satisfied with that, maybe for rest of their lives.

### Generation Y and their values

Tapscott (2009) has been evaluating generation Y and he suggests their norms as follows.

#### 1. Freedom

Generation Y appreciates freedom in work and also on free time. They want to choose where and where they work and flexibility in hours and benefits is best way to attract and keep them. Gen Y members crave for work that is meaningful and challenging, but they also want their working life to be in balance with their personal life.

They also like the freedom to try new jobs. They are not loyal to their employer but to their career.

#### 2. Customisation

Gen Y members want individualised learning and development opportunities at their workplace, in other words they want to be managed as individuals, not as a big group. So, they want their work to be customised to fit in everyone's own and special needs.

#### 3. Integrity

Integrity is expected from employers among generation Y. They define it as being honest, considerate, and transparent. They respond well to integrity and become engaged that way. Employees in transparent and trusted firms are more motivated.

#### 4. Collaboration

Unlike Baby Boomers which grew up with hierarchies, Gen Y members are not turned on by status or hierarchy. They do not have a goal to constantly move up in their career or have more subordinates. They want to have a challenging job and great people to work with but not necessarily so much responsibility. Collaboration as Gen Y members understand it is achieving something with other people and experiencing things with other people.

## 5. Entertainment

For Generation Y work and fun can be combined unlike older generations were thinking that there is different time for work and for fun.

## 6. Speed

Gen Y members want everything to happen quickly and rapidly. They become frustrated easily if they must wait for something and because of that are not able to move on with their work. Also, long, and complex recruiting processes is easily frustrating them. Bureaucracy in the working places might even effect on loyalty as Gen Y members might think that it takes too long for things to happen in a company.

## 7. Innovation

Innovation is in blood of Generation Y.

Pînzaru (2016) and others made a study which purpose was to discuss and present the psychological profile of generation Y versus other generations. The study was made as most of the workforce in companies all around the world are members of generation Y, so the researchers felt like the situation needs a proper investigation of the characteristics of the millennials. The study was made by using Hogan assessment tool, which advances a multi-dimensional approach of the personality targeting three main areas: individual values, strengths, and risks.

The study shows that millennials' key motivational drivers are recognition, comfort, and interaction. They are typically keen to work and be in groups and are seeking to get involved in various work-related projects with social impact. Millennials need a large variety of tasks and they get easily bored if nothing interesting happens. It is also natural that most members of generation Y are leaving the entry level jobs early. Millennial seek freedom and guidance, prefer diversity, and require work-life balance; they have higher level of arrogance and lower resistance to stress when compared to members of other generations. This means that organisations must understand that they need to provide lots of support for example to management of this generation.

Latest and youngest existing generation is Generation Z. They have grown up with technology, internet and social media and they might be often described as anti-social and tech-addict with no social skills. This generation will enter working life soon, as they are oldest now at the age of 22, if considering Tapscott's definition of Generation Z timeline. This generation is not included in the research group of this thesis, so it is introduced only briefly.

#### 2.4.4 Leading different generations

When understanding employees' beliefs, attitudes, and values it is easier and more efficient for a manager to communicate and coach employees. One factor that has an influence in employees view and opinion about work is the generation in which they were born. There are three distinct generational cohorts in the working life at the moment. (Weston 2001, 11.)

Generational cohort as a term refers to people who are born in the same general time span who have been through same significant life experiences, for example some historical events or demographic trends. These life experiences create cohesiveness in people's attitudes and perspectives and as a result from this they also share different work ethic or expectations. And, of course every human is an individual but understanding generational experiences and perspectives in the working life certainly helps coaching employees from different age groups and is in fact becoming essential management skill. (Weston 2001, 11.)

Each generation has their own needs and characteristics when thinking about their professional and personal lives. When putting these differences together for example in a workplace, it is obvious that some difficulties and problems will occur. It is very important for companies and managers to learn how to get these members of different generations to get along as well as possible.

Common problem in the workplace is Baby Boomers having Generation X's or Y's member as their manager. Baby Boomers have been used to work and do things in a certain way, so when they need to report their work to somebody who might be half their age, they feel uncomfortable. They might feel cheated as they have done lots of work during their career to get to the point where they are, and then someone is hired as their manager to lead them straight from school, for example. They also work differently than the younger workforce; they are willing to spend more time at work whereas younger generation need balance between working life and leisure. Younger generation likes a more homely atmosphere at work which is also more relaxed and comfortable. (Comperatore & Nerone 2008, 24.)

Regardless of what kind of group manager is leading success can be achieved through understanding. Kyles (2005, 55) gives few advices to do that:

1. Create both function- and project-oriented assignments

This way every generation can find where they fit in; where they can develop new skills or where they already are experts.

## 2. Watch your mouth

Communication is important part of managers job no matter the age or the company so managers must know how to communicate with each generation. For example, younger generations are used to use e-mails or text messages whereas older generations prefer face-to-face meetings.

## 3. Acknowledge strengths and commonalities

In short, acknowledge team members strengths and commonalities and utilise them.

## 4. Listen

Managers should listen to employees' ideas and opinions. Sometimes they might have better ideas to carry out some tasks, and employees from different generations have competence and experience from different kind of things.

## 5. Look beyond appearances

Managers should not make any judgements on employees before really getting to know them and looking into their real abilities and skills.

## 6. Keep an open mind!

Also, it must be remembered that the characters given to every generation are generalised and not all the characteristics fit to every person in certain generation. For example, Baby Boomer might have some characteristics from Generation X and vice versa. Main point is that every generation has something valuable to give to a working place and managers need to make sure that the value is harnessed. (Kyles 2005, 55.)

### 3 METHODOLOGY

The objective of this research was to find out what objects and factors in working life concerning employee engagement are important to Generation Y and older generations and at what level. Answers to this objective will be pursued through research questions which are introduced in the next paragraph.

#### 3.1 Research questions

Every research is always based on some idea or thought that attracts attention and based on that the idea must be turned into research questions so that it becomes researchable. Research ideas usually come from past literature and it is almost always necessary so that it can be determined whether the research will contain some elements of novelty. One way to create research ideas, and questions, is to examine real world, for example look how people and organisations work, or not work, and create ideas and questions based on that. (Ghuri & Grønhaug 2002, 36-37.)

Research questions which pursue to answer to the objective of this research are:

- What kind of factors regarding employee engagement are important for each generation and at what level?
- Are there differences between Generation Y and older generations in importance of the factors regarding employee engagement?

#### 3.2 Research methodology

##### 3.2.1 Research method

Research methods point to systematic and focused way to collect data for the purpose of getting information from them so that the specified research problem or question will be solved or answered (Ghuri & Grønhaug 2002, 85).

Research method used in this research was cross-sectional quantitative method. Quantitative research method's basic idea is that it examines relationships between variables which are measured numerically and analysed with statistical or graphical techniques (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2019, 178). Basically, quantitative method is statistical research in which numbers are utilised and exploited. (Valli 2015, 15). Statistical methods are needed nowadays everywhere when analysing and reporting

different research outcomes. The data and information gained from statistical methods are used to estimate risks, to make predictions and also to decision making in business. (Nummenmaa, Holopainen & Pulkkinen 2016, 3).

Quantitative method was chosen because its emphasis is on testing and verification and it focuses on facts and reasons for social events. It is also logical and critical approach and measurement is controlled. (Ghauri & Grønhaug 2002, 86.) In quantitative method the data needed can be gathered from statistics, registers or databases maintained by someone else or then it can be gathered themselves for example with survey or interview (Heikkilä 2008, 18). Quantitative method is suitable for this study also because it is easy to conduct again later if wanted to analyse changes in engagement later too.

The quantitative technique used was structured survey. A survey was chosen as a data collection method in this research because it is effective when wanting to get opinions, attitudes and descriptions and cause-and-effect relationships (Ghauri & Grønhaug 2002, 93). In quantitative research the basis is on measurement because when wanting to examine facts statistically it is required that the information can be measured with different indicators. In surveys the indicators consist of questions and arguments (Vehkalahti 2008, 17).

This quantitative technique was carried out as a questionnaire. Questionnaire is the most common way to collect data when using quantitative research method. Questionnaire is standardised which means that all the respondents are asked the same questions in a precisely same way. (Vilkka 2015.) In questionnaire researcher asks questions from respondents via questionnaire form which the responder reads and answer questions by themselves. This kind of data collection suits in a situation where there is large number of respondents and they are scattered. Questionnaires are quite often anonymous, so respondent stays unnamed. That is good when questionnaire deals with for example private or delicate matters. The most common risk in questionnaires is low response percent. (Vilkka 2015.)

Other ways to implement quantitative surveys is for example structured interview (Vehkalahti 2008, 11).

### 3.2.2 Research model

A model used in this research was experiment-based research model. The experiment-based research model relies on basic structures that are commonly used in a quantitative and qualitative scientific research. In quantitative studies, such as experiments and surveys the concepts of a research problem are generally used, whereas in qualitative studies the

concept of research question is more common. This is told in HAMK's thesis guide, in a version which is approved for use in January 2017.

The HAMK Thesis guide also tells that experiment-based thesis usually has specific goals and a research problem or a research hypothesis or research questions that the thesis aims to answer. It also contains data that helps to solve, understand, and explain the goals and the research problems or question. It includes an analysis of the data and can be carried out as an independent study or as a part of a larger research or development project.

### 3.2.3 Data collection

As mentioned before the survey was carried out by an online questionnaire. The questionnaire form needs to be planned properly because the success of the research is mostly dependent on the questionnaire. Crucial point is that are the questions in the form appropriate by their content with statistical point of view. (Vehkalahti 2008, 20.) The questionnaire was made with Webropol which is a questionnaire and reporting tool.

Advantages when using an online questionnaire are for example visibility, meaning that the questionnaire form layout can be made versatile and as pleasant as possible. Online questionnaires are also faster and cheaper to carry out. When making the questionnaire it needs to be remembered that respondents might answer to it using for example tablet or phone instead of computer, so the questionnaire must be made to suit for all the appliances. (Valli 2015, 47). When doing a questionnaire with Webropol it automatically makes the questionnaire suitable for tablets and mobile devices.

The questionnaire was formed from claims or things concerning working life and respondent should evaluate how important she/he finds those things. Those things concerning working life were to be evaluated in Likert scale and the scale was from 1 to 4; not at all important, slightly important, pretty important and very important. In Likert scale there is usually also option "I don't know" but that option was intentionally left out from the options in this questionnaire because it can be so called easy answer to the respondent if they do not have proper opinion on some question. Likert scale is usually used when wanting to rate the questions and get the opinion about a certain subject. (Saunders et al. 2019, 523).

In the research it was wanted that the respondents already have some experience from working life, as the objective was to find out level of employee engagement and factors that have effect in it. So, the target group of the questionnaire is Finnish people who are in working life and in an employment relationship and aged between 23-65. The questionnaire

was carried out in Finnish language as all the respondents should be Finnish.

Claims in the questionnaire were made based on the theoretical framework of the research. The questionnaire included claims from 5 different topics or themes; leadership, enablement & success, personal development & career options, working atmosphere and equality & compensation. There were 4 background questions and 34 claims in the questionnaire. The questions were divided in two groups; first background questions and after that there were matters concerning work that respondent should estimate that how important, they think those matters are to them. With these 38 questions and claims it was intended to get a clear and distinct answer to the research questions of this research. Last two questions were open questions where respondents were asked to list 3 most important things from working life and 3 most important things from their free time.

The questionnaire was shared in researchers' own social media channels, Facebook, and LinkedIn. The post including the link to the questionnaire was made public so that Facebook friends and LinkedIn connections were able to share it also in their own social media profiles if wanted. This helps to reach as many proper respondents as possible. The questionnaire was also shared in researcher's workplace, in Hämeenlinna and Tampere branches. The aim was to send the questionnaire also to certain student groups in HAMK, but researcher was not able to get a research permission for that because of GDPR.

As mentioned before the questions and claims in the questionnaire were in Finnish language as the respondents were Finnish people and it was wanted that respondents can answer in their own native language to prevent misunderstanding of the questions. All questions and claims are translated into English in this report. The questionnaire form can be found as an attachment at the end of this report.

The questionnaire was open for respondents for 10 days.

## 4 RESULTS & ANALYSIS

### 4.1 Results of the research

The data gotten from the online questionnaire was analysed with Webropol and Microsoft Excel. Webropol has Professional Statistics tool which was used to make deeper analysis of the results. Cross tabulation was used to analyse the data more deeply. With that it is possible to examine the connection between two variables and how they are affecting each other (Heikkilä 2008, 210). Cross tabulation can be used as the data in this research is in form of a nominal and ordinal scale. Cross tabulation is one of the most used methods for analysing the data and well-formed table is illustrative way to present information in a compact way. (Vehkalahti 2008, 68).

When talking about older generations when presenting the results of the research it includes Baby Boomers and Generation X, as the main point of the research is to compare Generation Y and older generations answers with each other.

The presentation of the results is divided in sections based on the themes that were used in the questionnaire, which are background information, warm up questions, leadership, enablement & success, personal development & career options, working atmosphere and equality & compensation.

Variable age was recoded when analysing the results of the claims in the questionnaire. Age groups were integrated in a way that option 23-33 years and 34-43 years were combined as new group "Generation Y" and option 44-55 years and 56-65 years were combined as new group "older generations". Recoding was done with Webropol Professional Statistic tool.

#### 4.1.1 Background information

As mentioned before the link to the online questionnaire was shared in researchers own social media accounts, Facebook, and LinkedIn. Posts including the link to the survey was made public so other people were able to share it also in their own profiles if wanted. The questionnaire form was also shared in researcher's workplace in two branches, Hämeenlinna and Tampere.

In its entirety 237 answers were collected. Age, gender, position, and work experience in years were asked as a background question. There were 33 answers that were ignored when analysing the answers as there were 2 respondents who were 18-22 years old and the research concerns only people from age 23. Also, there were 13 respondents who operates as an

entrepreneur and this research concerns only people who work for some company, not for themselves. It was thought that entrepreneurs might have different attitude towards matters concerning employee engagement so their answers might have unwanted effect on the results. When asked about position option “other” was given to respondents. 8 respondents chose that option and all those answers were ignored as they were for example “student” and “unemployed”. Also, 11 respondents told that they have been in working life 0-2 years, so these answers were also ignored as the respondent should have little bit more experience from working life than 0-2 years, so that he/she has more competence to analyse what factors are important. So, 204 answers in total were considered when analysing the results.

The age distribution in this research was people between 23 and 65 years. The biggest answerer group was people who were 23-33 years old (42,93 %), second biggest group was 34-43 years old (19,81 %) and 56-65 years old (19,81 %) and the third group was 44-55 years old (17,45 %). So, younger people were more active to answer to this questionnaire. One reason for this matter might be that younger people are more oriented to use modern and digitalised tools, as respondents were able to answer to the questionnaire only online.

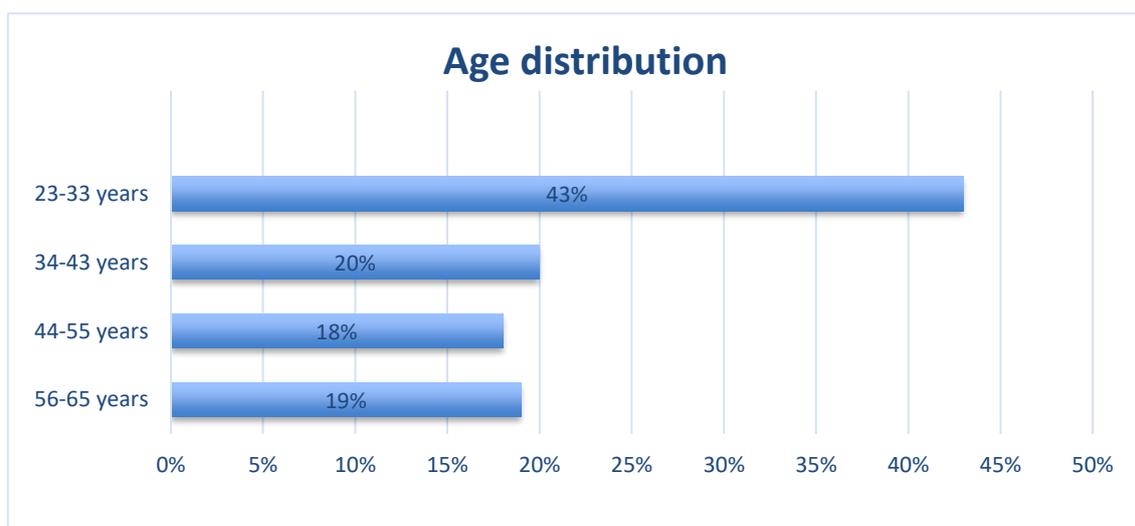


Figure 4. Age distribution between answerers.

As the research focuses to examine generation Y and older generations those age groups were defined based on the definition made by Tapscott in 2009 as follows

- Baby Boom Generation, 19,81%
  - o Born 1946-1964 (56-74 years old at the moment)
- Generation X, 17,45%
  - o Born 1965-1976 (44-55 years old at the moment)
- The Net Generation, also called as millennials or generation Y, 62,74%

- Born 1977-1997 (23-43 years old at the moment)

The answer percentage of each group is presented after the name of the generation in the list above.

Among the acknowledged answers there were 145 women (68,39 %) and 66 men (31,13 %), so women were more active answerers to this questionnaire. One person (0,048%) reports "other" as gender.

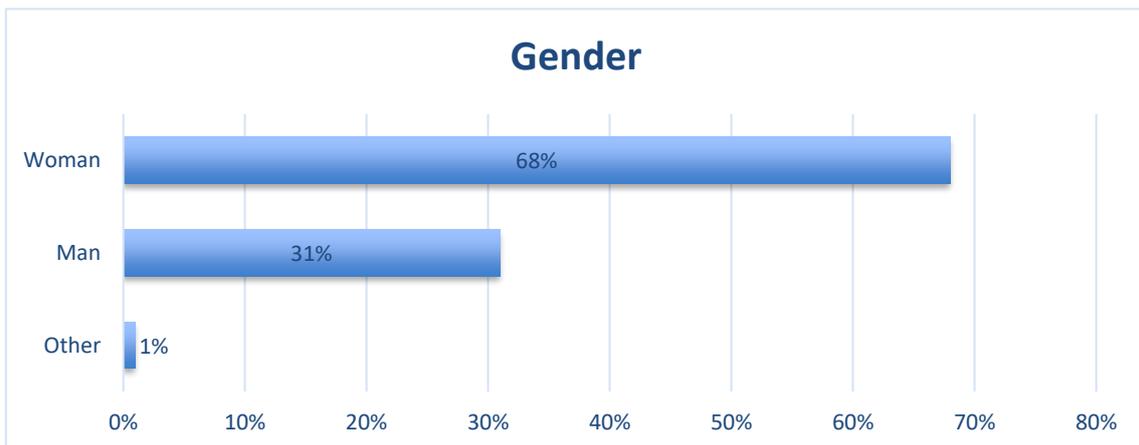


Figure 5. Gender.

In the acknowledged answers 76,96 % from the respondents reported their position as employee and 23,04 % as a manager or leading position.

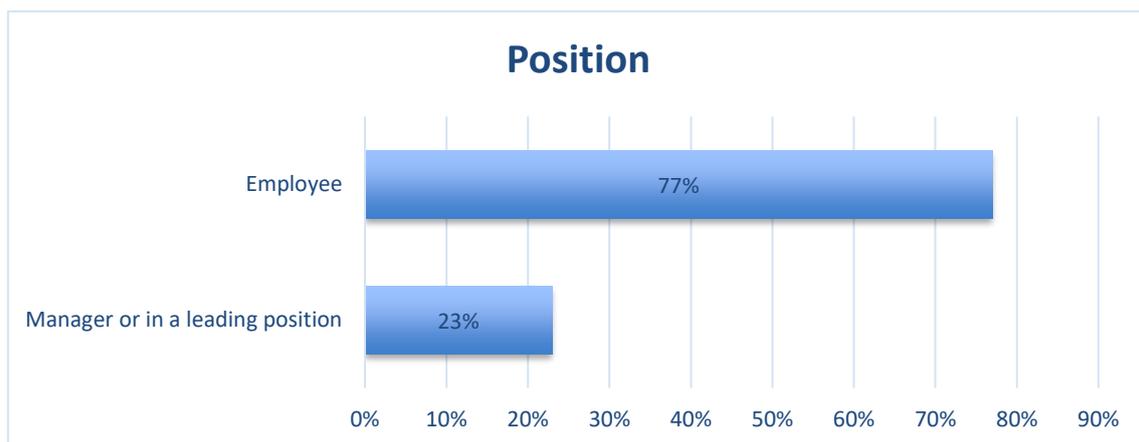


Figure 6. Position

Work experience in years was last background question and it had answer options as forward: 3-5 years (5,66 %), 6-10 years (20,75 %), 11-20 years (34,91 %) and 21-30 years (14,15 %). There was also option for those who had been in working life more than 30 years, that option was chosen 24,53

% from the answerers. Answers to that question varied from 31 years to 46 years in working life.

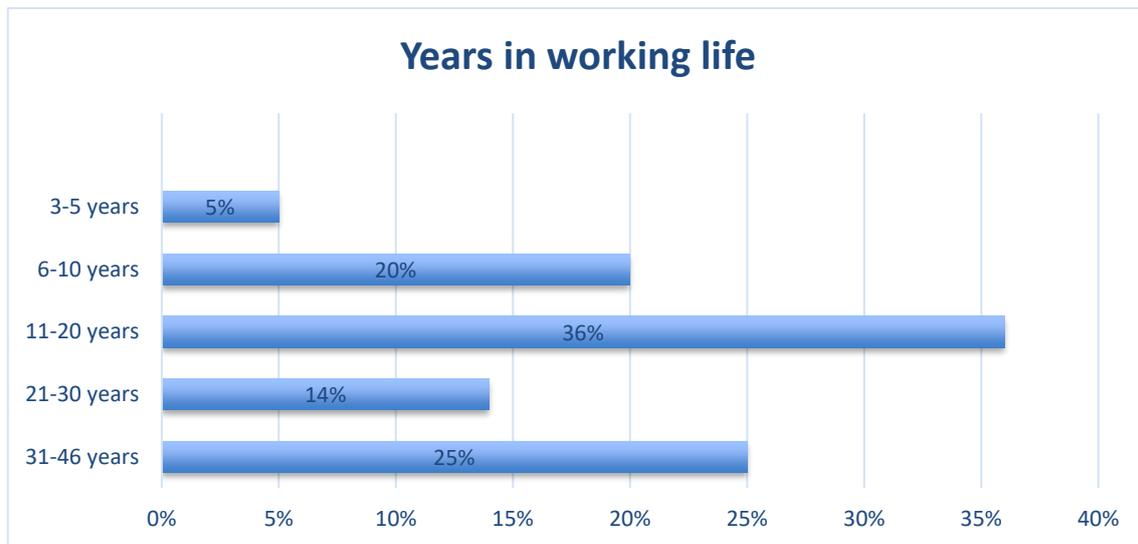


Figure 7. Years in working life.

#### 4.1.2 Warm up claims

In the first page of the questionnaire were some warm up claims to wake up interest towards the questionnaire. These claims were meant to describe respondents' feelings towards a workplace and how important they would find certain things. There were 4 claims to examine this theme. Claims and distribution of the mean values of the answers between Y generation and older generation can be seen in a figure 7 below. Figure 7 describes the answers of Generation Y in blue and older generations (Baby boom & Generation X) in red.

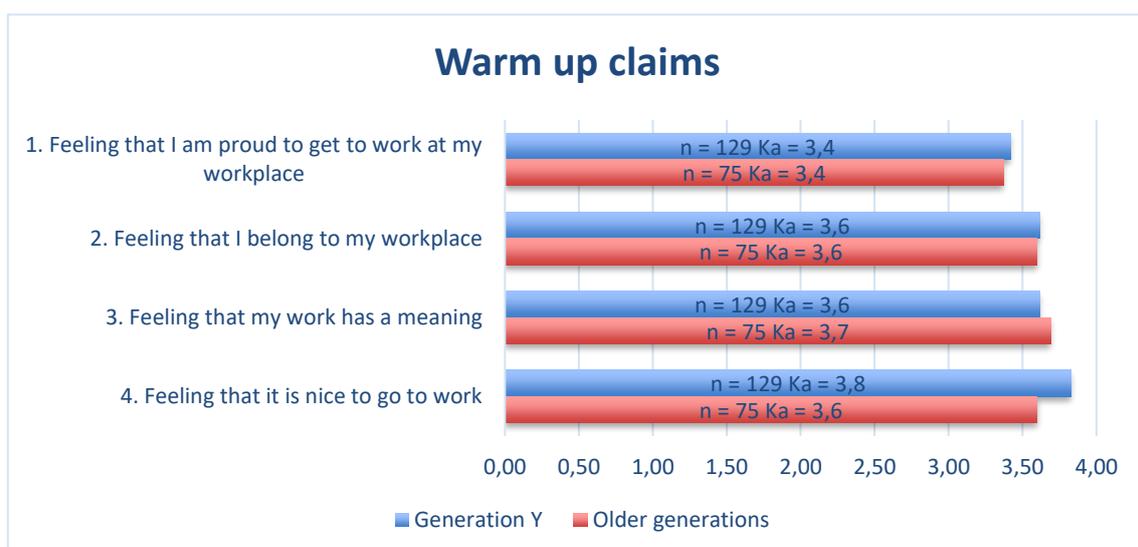


Figure 8. Warm up claims

As it can be seen from the figure there are no big differences in mean values in the answers between Generation Y and older generations. In claim 3. and 4. there is some difference but based on only on the figure itself it cannot be stated that is the difference statistically significant. It seems that all these claims are considered to be between pretty important and very important for the answerers.

To test the statistical significance the cross tabulation was used. The results of the cross tabulation are presented in table 1 below.

		Generation Y		Older generations	
		%	N	%	N
<b>1. Feeling that I am proud to work at my workplace</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0,49	0,78	1	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	6,86	5,43	7	9,33	7
: 3 Pretty important	44,61	44,96	58	44	33
: 4 Very important	48,04	48,84	63	46,67	35
<b>2. Feeling that I belong to my workplace</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0,49	0	0	1,33	1
: 2 Slightly important	1,47	1,55	2	1,33	1
: 3 Pretty important	34,31	34,88	45	33,33	25
: 4 Very important	63,73	63,57	82	64	48
<b>3. Feeling that my work has a meaning</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0	0	0	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	1,96	2,33	3	1,33	1
: 3 Pretty important	31,37	33,33	43	28	21
: 4 Very important	66,67	64,34	83	70,67	53
<b>4. Feeling that it is nice to go to work</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0	0	0	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	1,47	0,78	1	2,67	2
: 3 Pretty important	22,55	15,5	20	34,67	26
: 4 Very important	75,98	83,72	108	62,67	47

Table 1. Cross tabulation, warm-up claims

In Table 1 notable differences between answers are marked with purple colour. Based on only the cross tabulation it still cannot be stated that the difference between answers is statistically significant.

Chi2 test was used to examine the real statistical significance in the groups where the difference is so big that it maybe can be called statistically significant. Chi2 test is used when it is wanted to test that are two different variables dependent on each other and can the difference be generalised to the whole reference population. There are requirements when Chi2 test can be used; at most 20 % from the expected frequencies are allowed to

be smaller than five (Percentage number in “Fraction < 5” in the Chi2 table) and every expected frequency should be bigger than 1 (Min Expected in the Chi2 table). Also,  $p$ -value should be < 0,005. If these requirements are not applied the test will lead easily to a wrong conclusion. (Heikkilä 2008, 213.)

As it can be seen in the table 2 the requirements for the Chi2 are not applied as the expected fraction is over 20 % in every variable and also the expected frequencies were less than 1 in two variables, so Chi2 test was not possible for this theme of claims.

Variables	Generations	P-value	Min Expected	Fraction < 5
<b>1. Feeling that I am proud to work at my workplace</b>	1.69 ( $p=0.639$ )	0,639	0,37	25
<b>2. Feeling that I belong to my workplace</b>	1.77 ( $p=0.622$ )	0,622	0,37	50
<b>3. Feeling that my work has a meaning</b>	0.95 ( $p=0.621$ )	0,621	1,47	33,3
<b>4. Feeling that it is nice to go to work</b>	11.64 ( $p=0.003$ )	0,003	1,10	33,3

Table 2. Chi2 test, warm up claims

There was no statistical significance found in the analysis, but it can be seen that the claim 3. (Feeling, that my job has a meaning) is more important to older generations ( $n = 75$ , mean value 3,7) than to Generation Y ( $n = 126$ , mean value 3,6). Whereas claim 4. (Feeling that it is nice to go to work) is more important to Generation Y ( $n = 129$ , mean value 3,8) than to older generations ( $n = 75$ , mean value 3,6).

#### 4.1.3 Leadership

The second page of the questionnaire included claims regarding leadership. These questions were meant to describe respondents' feelings towards leadership and how important they would find certain things regarding it. Questions/claims and distribution of the mean values of the answers between Y generation and older generation can be seen in a figure 8 below. Figure 8 describes the answers of Generation Y in blue and older generations (Baby boom & Generation X) in red.

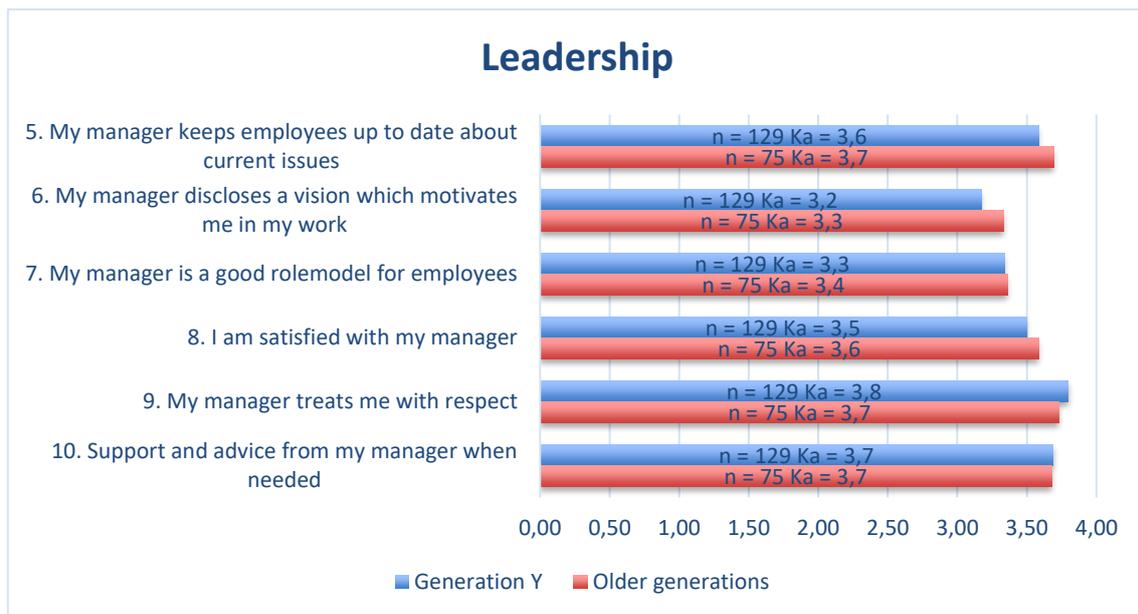


Figure 9. Leadership

Also, as it can be seen from the figure 8, there are no big differences in mean values in the answers between Generation Y and older generations in this set of claims. In claims 5., 6., 7., 8., and 9. there is some difference but based on only on the figure itself it cannot be stated that is the difference statistically significant. In claims 10. the mean value in Generation Y and older generations answers is exactly the same. In this theme claims 5., 9., and 10. got the highest mean value so those were regarded as most important from this theme.

To test the statistical significance the cross tabulation was used. The results of the cross tabulation are presented in table 3 below.

		Generation Y		Older generations	
		%	N	%	N
<b>5. My manager keeps employees up to date about current issues</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0	0	0	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	5,39	6,98	9	2,67	2
: 3 Pretty important	26,47	27,13	35	25,33	19
: 4 Very important	68,14	65,89	85	72	54
<b>6. My manager discloses a vision which motivates me in my work</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	1,96	3,1	4	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	10,29	12,4	16	6,67	5
: 3 Pretty important	50,49	48,84	63	53,33	40
: 4 Very important	37,25	35,66	46	40	30
<b>7. My manager is a good rolemodel for employees</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	1,47	2,33	3	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	8,82	8,53	11	9,33	7
: 3 Pretty important	43,14	41,86	54	45,33	34
: 4 Very important	46,57	47,29	61	45,33	34
<b>8. I am satisfied with my manager</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0,49	0,78	1	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	4,41	4,65	6	4	3
: 3 Pretty important	36,76	38,76	50	33,33	25
: 4 Very important	58,33	55,81	72	62,67	47
<b>9. My manager treats me with respect</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0	0	0	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	1,47	1,55	2	1,33	1
: 3 Pretty important	19,61	17,05	22	24	18
: 4 Very important	78,92	81,4	105	74,67	56
<b>10. Support and advice from my manager when needed</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0	0	0	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	1,47	1,55	2	1,33	1
: 3 Pretty important	28,43	27,91	36	29,33	22
: 4 Very important	70,1	70,54	91	69,33	52

Table 3. Cross tabulation, leadership

Table 3 presents that there were no notable differences between answers of Generation Y and older generations as there is no purple colour in any of the cells. This can be also verified by doing a Chi2 test also to this set of questions. As it can be seen from the table 4 that the requirements for the Chi2 test are not applied so the test was not possible for this set of questions. So, the statistical significance is not possible to be tested.

Variables	Generations	P-value	Min Expected	Fraction < 5
<b>5. My manager keeps employees up to date about current issues</b>	1.95 (p=0.377)	0,377	4,04	16,66
<b>6. My manager discloses a vision which motivates me in my work</b>	4.27 (p=0.234)	0,234	1,47	25
<b>7. My manager is a good rolemodel for employees</b>	1.95 (p=0.583)	0,583	1,10	25
<b>8. I am satisfied with my manager</b>	1.39 (p=0.708)	0,708	0,37	37,5
<b>9. My manager treats me with respect</b>	1.45 (p=0.483)	0,483	1,10	33,33
<b>10. Support and advice from my manager when needed</b>	0.06 (p=0.971)	0,971	1,10	33,33

Table 4. Chi2 test, Leadership

In this theme of claims 5., 9., and 10. got the highest mean value so those were regarded as most important from this theme. There was no statistical significance found in the analysis, but it can be seen that the claim 5. (My manager keeps employees up to date about current issues) is more important to older generations (n = 75, mean value 3,7) than to Generation Y (n = 126, mean value 3,6). Whereas claim 6. (My manager discloses a vision which motivates me) is more important to older generations (n = 75, mean value 3,3) than to Generation Y (n = 129, mean value 3,2).

#### 4.1.4 Enablement & success

The third page of the questionnaire included claims regarding enablement and success. These claims were meant to describe respondents' feelings towards the subject and how important they would find certain things regarding it. Claims and distribution of the mean values of the answers between Y generation and older generation can be seen in a figure 9 below. Figure 9 describes the answers of Generation Y in blue and older generations (Baby boom & Generation X) in red.

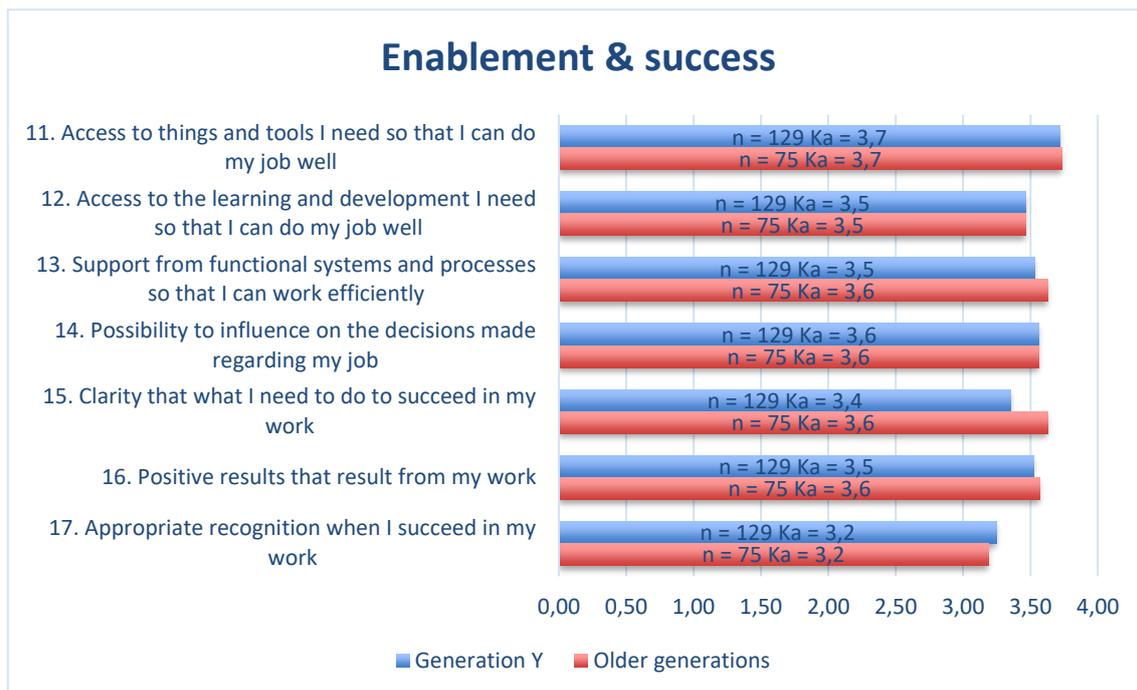


Figure 10. Enablement & success

When looking at the figure 9 it can be seen that there are no notable differences between the answers of Generation Y and older generations. Biggest difference can be seen in mean values of claim 15. Other differences are in claims 13. and 16.

The statistical significance of that can be measured with cross tabulation and Chi2 test. Next table represents the cross tabulation of this set of questions.

		Generation Y		Older generations	
		%	N	%	N
<b>11. Access to things and tools I need so that I can do my job well</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0,49	0,78	1	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	1,47	0,78	1	2,67	2
: 3 Pretty important	23,04	24,03	31	21,33	16
: 4 Very important	75	74,42	96	76	57
<b>12. Access to the learning and development I need so that I can do my job well</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0	0	0	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	5,39	4,65	6	6,67	5
: 3 Pretty important	42,65	44,19	57	40	30
: 4 Very important	51,96	51,16	66	53,33	40
<b>13. Support from functional systems and processes so that I can work efficiently</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0,49	0,78	1	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	2,45	3,1	4	1,33	1
: 3 Pretty important	36,76	37,98	49	34,67	26
: 4 Very important	60,29	58,14	75	64	48
<b>14. Possibility to influence on the decisions made regarding me</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0	0	0	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	1,96	2,33	3	1,33	1
: 3 Pretty important	39,71	38,76	50	41,33	31
: 4 Very important	58,33	58,91	76	57,33	43
<b>15. Clarity that what I need to do to succeed in my work</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0	0	0	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	6,37	6,98	9	5,33	4
: 3 Pretty important	41,67	50,39	65	26,67	20
: 4 Very important	51,96	42,64	55	68	51
<b>16. Positiiviset tulokset, jotka aiheutuvat työstäni</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0,49	0,78	1	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	2,94	3,1	4	2,67	2
: 3 Pretty important	38,24	38,76	50	37,33	28
: 4 Very important	58,33	57,36	74	60	45
<b>17. Appropriate recognition when I succeed in my work</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0,98	0,78	1	1,33	1
: 2 Slightly important	12,75	13,95	18	10,67	8
: 3 Pretty important	49,02	44,96	58	56	42
: 4 Very important	37,25	40,31	52	32	24

Table 5. Cross tabulation, enablement &amp; success

Table 5 shows that there is notable difference in the answers between Generation Y and older generations in claim 15. In question 15 it was asked

that how important it is for the respondent to have clarity about what to do to be successful in the job. So, it seems that opinions between Generation Y and older generations differ in this matter. To figure out if there is statistical significance the Chi2 test was made. Chi2 test is represented in the table 6 below.

Variables	Generations	P-value	Min Expected	Fraction < 5
<b>Access to things and tools I need so that I can do my job well</b>	1.9 (p=0.593)	0,593	0,37	50
<b>12. Access to the learning and development I need so that I can do my job well</b>	0.6 (p=0.743)	0,743	4,04	16,66
<b>13. Support from functional systems and processes so that I can work efficiently</b>	1.6 (p=0.660)	0,66	0,37	50
<b>14. Possibility to influence on the decisions made regarding me</b>	0.34 (p=0.845)	0,845	1,47	33,33
<b>15. Clarity that what I need to do to succeed in my work</b>	12.48 (p=0.002)	0,002	4,78	16,66
<b>16. Positive results that result from my work</b>	0.69 (p=0.875)	0,875	0,37	50
<b>17. Appropriate recognition when I succeed in my work</b>	2.61 (p=0.456)	0,456	0,74	25

Table 6. Chi2 test, Enablement & success

From this Chi2 test it can be stated that the difference between Generation Y and older generations answers is statistically significant ( $p = 0,002$ ). In this case the Chi2 test was possible for question 15. as all the requirements applied. With other claims Chi2 test was not possible as the requirements do not apply.

As it is now stated that there is one statistically significant difference between Generation Y and older generations, it can also be seen from figure 9 that claim 13. (Support from functional systems and processes so that I can work efficiently) is more important to older generation ( $n = 75$ , mean value 3,6) than to Generation Y ( $n = 75$ , mean value 3,5). Also, claim 16. (Positive results that result from my work) seems to be more important to older generations ( $n = 75$ , mean value 3,6) than to Generation Y ( $n = 129$ , mean value 3,5). All the other claims in this theme have equal mean values.

#### 4.1.5 Personal development & career options

The fourth page of the questionnaire included claims regarding personal development and career options. These claims were meant to describe respondents' feelings towards the subject and how important they would find certain things regarding it. Claims and distribution of the mean values in the answers between Y generation and older generation can be seen in a figure 10 below. Figure 10 describes the answers of Generation Y in blue and older generations (Baby boom & Generation X) in red.

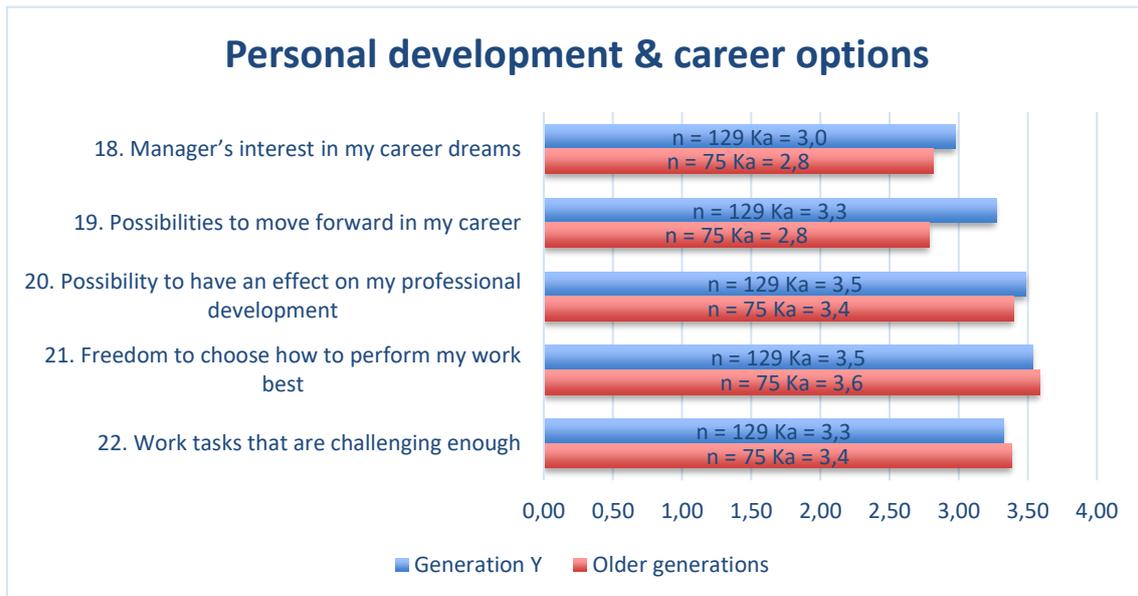


Figure 11. Personal development & career options

From figure 10 it can be seen that most notable differences in mean values in this theme are in claims 18. and 19. Question 18 (Generation Y n = 129 mean value 3,0, older generations n = 75 mean value 2,8) is describing the importance of managers interest regarding career dreams and question 19 (Generation Y n = 129 mean value 3,3, older generations n = 75 mean value 2,8) the importance of possibilities to move forward on career. The statistical significance of these differences can be measured with cross tabulation and Chi2 test. Next table represents the cross tabulation of this set of questions.

		Generation Y		Older generations	
		%	N	%	N
<b>18. Manager's interest in my career dreams</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	1,96	2,33	3	1,33	1
: 2 Slightly important	25,98	24,03	31	29,33	22
: 3 Pretty important	50,49	47,29	61	56	42
: 4 Very important	21,57	26,36	34	13,33	10
<b>19. Possibilities to move forward in my career</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	2,45	2,33	3	2,67	2
: 2 Slightly important	22,55	17,83	23	30,67	23
: 3 Pretty important	38,24	30,23	39	52	39
: 4 Very important	36,76	49,61	64	14,67	11
<b>20. Possibility to have an effect on my professional development</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0	0	0	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	4,41	3,1	4	6,67	5
: 3 Pretty important	45,59	44,96	58	46,67	35
: 4 Very important	50	51,94	67	46,67	35
<b>21. Freedom to choose how to perform my work best</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0	0	0	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	5,88	6,2	8	5,33	4
: 3 Pretty important	32,84	34,11	44	30,67	23
: 4 Very important	61,27	59,69	77	64	48
<b>22. Work tasks that are challenging enough</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0,49	0,78	1	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	10,29	12,4	16	6,67	5
: 3 Pretty important	43,14	40,31	52	48	36
: 4 Very important	46,08	46,51	60	45,33	34

Table 7. Cross tabulation, Personal development &amp; career options

Table 7 also shows the difference between answers of Generation Y and older generations demonstrated with cross tabulation. To figure out if the difference is statistically significant the Chi2 test was made. Chi2 test is represented in the table 8.

Variables	Generations	P-value	Min Expected	Fraction < 5
<b>18. Manager's interest in my career dreams</b>	5.19 (p=0.158)	0,158	1,47	25
<b>19. Possibilities to move forward in my career</b>	25.12 (p=0.000)	0	1,84	25
<b>20. Possibility to have an effect on my professional development</b>	1.66 (p=0.436)	0,436	3,31	16,66
<b>21. Freedom to choose how to perform my work best</b>	0.38 (p=0.829)	0,829	4,41	16,66
<b>22. Work tasks that are challenging enough</b>	2.76 (p=0.430)	0,43	0,37	25

Table 8. Chi2 test, Personal development & career options

Table 8 shows that Chi2 test was not possible as all the requirements for it are not applied. Because of that it is not possible to analyse the statistical significance of this theme of claims.

Even though it was not possible to analyse the statistical significance of the claims it can be seen from the figure 10 that claim 20 (Possibility to have an effect on my professional development) is more important to Generation Y (n = 129, mean value 3,5) than to older generations (n = 75, mean value 3,4) whereas claim 21. (Freedom to choose how to perform my work best) is more important to older generations (n = 75, mean value 3,6) than to Generation Y (n = 129, mean value 3,5). Also, claim 22 seems to be more important to older generations (n = 75, mean value 3,4) than to Generation Y (n = 129, mean value 3,3).

#### 4.1.6 Working atmosphere

The fifth page of the questionnaire included claims regarding working atmosphere. These claims were meant to describe respondents' feelings towards the subject and how important they would find certain things regarding it. Claims and distribution of the mean values in the answers between Y generation and older generation can be seen in a figure 11 below. Figure 11 describes the answers of Generation Y in blue and older generations (Baby boom & Generation X) in red.

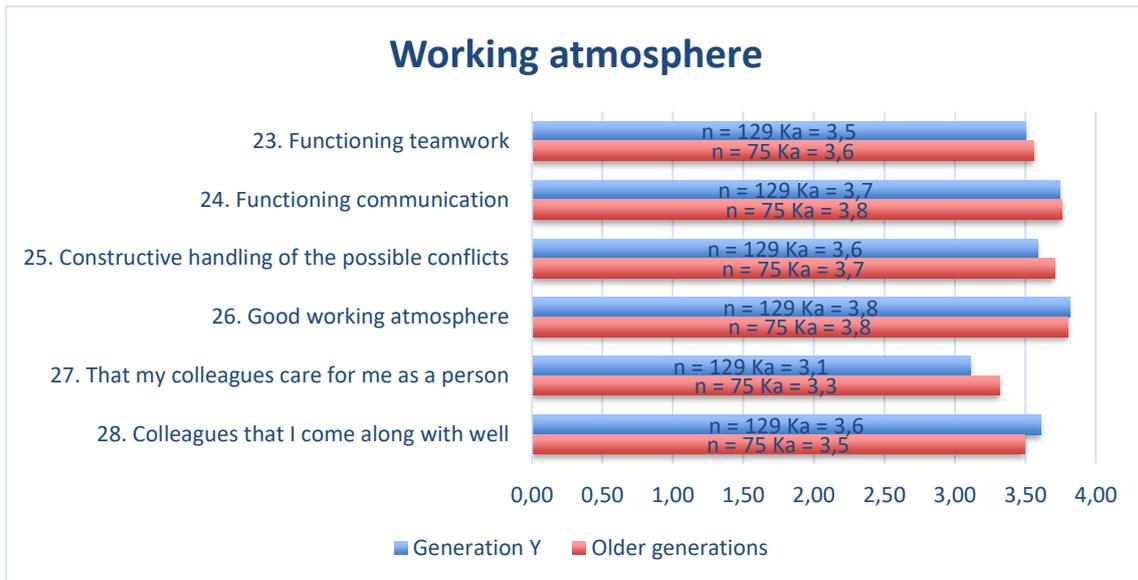


Figure 12. Working atmosphere

From figure 11 can be seen the mean values of the answers of Generation Y and older generations. Differences between mean values are quite converging although in claim 27. (That my colleagues care for me as a person, Generation Y  $n = 129$  mean value 3,1, older generations  $n = 75$  mean value 3,3) the difference seems to be biggest, older generations regard this as more important. To see if the difference is statistically significant cross tabulation and Chi2 test were made. In table 9 the cross tabulation of this theme is presented.

		Generation Y		Older generations	
		%	N	%	N
<b>23. Functioning teamwork</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0,98	1,55	2	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	4,41	4,65	6	4	3
: 3 Pretty important	35,78	35,66	46	36	27
: 4 Very important	58,82	58,14	75	60	45
<b>24. Functioning communication</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0,49	0,78	1	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	1,47	1,55	2	1,33	1
: 3 Pretty important	20,59	20,16	26	21,33	16
: 4 Very important	77,45	77,52	100	77,33	58
<b>25. Constructive handling of the possible conflicts</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0,49	0,78	1	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	3,43	3,1	4	4	3
: 3 Pretty important	28,43	32,56	42	21,33	16
: 4 Very important	67,65	63,57	82	74,67	56
<b>26. Good working atmosphere</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0	0	0	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	0	0	0	0	0
: 3 Pretty important	19,12	18,6	24	20	15
: 4 Very important	80,88	81,4	105	80	60
<b>27. That my colleagues care for me as a person</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	2,45	3,1	4	1,33	1
: 2 Slightly important	14,71	17,83	23	9,33	7
: 3 Pretty important	44,61	44,19	57	45,33	34
: 4 Very important	38,24	34,88	45	44	33
<b>28. Colleagues that I come along with well</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0,49	0	0	1,33	1
: 2 Slightly important	3,43	3,1	4	4	3
: 3 Pretty important	34,8	32,56	42	38,67	29
: 4 Very important	61,27	64,34	83	56	42

Table 9. Cross tabulation, Working atmosphere

Table 9 shows that there is not any notable difference in the answers between Generation Y and older generation even though some differences were seen in mean values in figure 10. With Chi2 test this can be verified if the test is applicable. Chi2 test is described below in table 10.

Variables	Generations	P-values	Min Expected	Fraction < 5
<b>23. Functioning teamwork</b>	1.24 (p=0.744)	0,744	0,74	37,5
<b>24. Functioning communication</b>	0.63 (p=0.890)	0,89	0,37	50
<b>25. Constructive handling of the possible conflicts</b>	3.66 (p=0.301)	0,301	0,37	50
<b>26. Good working atmosphere</b>	0.06 (p=0.807)	0,807	14,34	0
<b>27. That my colleagues care for me as a person</b>	3.98 (p=0.264)	0,264	1,84	25
<b>28. Colleagues that I come along with well</b>	2.88 (p=0.411)	0,411	0,37	50

Table 10. Chi2 test, Working atmosphere

The Chi2 test was not possible as all the requirements do not apply. This can be seen from table 10. So, statistical significance cannot be verified in this theme of claims.

Even though it was not possible to analyse the statistical significance of the claims it can be seen from the figure 11 that there is some difference between the mean values of the answers of Generation Y and older generations. In claim 23. (Functioning teamwork) it seems that it is more important to older generations (n = 75, mean value 3,6) than to Generation Y (n = 129, mean value 3,5). Also, claim 24. (Functioning communication) seems to be more important to older generations (n = 75, mean value 3,8) than to Generation Y (n = 129, mean value 3,7). Same thing is with claim 25. (Constructive handling of possible conflicts) that older generations (n = 75, mean value 3,7) regard it more important than Generation Y (n = 129, mean value 3,6). Claim 26. (Good working atmosphere) is equally important to Generation Y and older generations. Claim 28. (Colleagues that I come along with well) seems to be more important to Generation Y (n = 75, mean value 3,6) than to older generations (n = 129, mean value 3,5).

#### 4.1.7 Equality & compensation

The sixth page of the questionnaire included claims regarding equality and compensation. These claims were meant to describe respondents' feelings towards the subject and how important they would find certain things regarding it. Claims and distribution of the mean values in the answers between Y generation and older generation can be seen in a figure 12 below. Figure 12 describes the answers of Generation Y in blue and older generations (Baby boom & Generation X) in red.

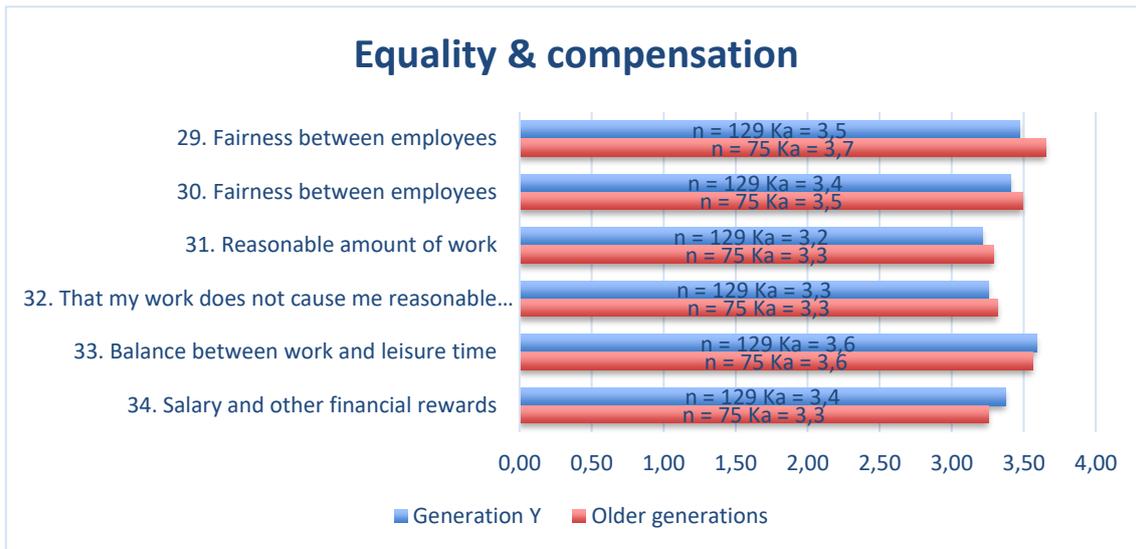


Figure 13. Equality & compensation

It seems that most notable difference in mean values in figure 12 is in claim 29 (Fairness between employees). Other claims have either same mean value or 0,1 difference in mean value. So, the difference between answers of Generation Y and older generations is not big on this theme of questions either. Cross tabulation and Chi2 test were made to ensure that is the difference statistically significant.

		Generation Y		Older generations	
		%	N	%	N
<b>29. Fairness between employees</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0,49	0,78	1	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	4,9	6,98	9	1,33	1
: 3 Pretty important	34,8	36,43	47	32	24
: 4 Very important	59,8	55,81	72	66,67	50
<b>30. Equality between employees</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	1,47	2,33	3	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	7,84	10,08	13	4	3
: 3 Pretty important	35,78	31,78	41	42,67	32
: 4 Very important	54,9	55,81	72	53,33	40
<b>31. Reasonable amount of work</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0,98	1,55	2	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	11,27	11,63	15	10,67	8
: 3 Pretty important	50	50,39	65	49,33	37
: 4 Very important	37,75	36,43	47	40	30
<b>32. That my work does not cause me reasonable stress</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	1,47	1,55	2	1,33	1
: 2 Slightly important	12,75	13,18	17	12	9
: 3 Pretty important	42,16	43,41	56	40	30
: 4 Very important	43,63	41,86	54	46,67	35
<b>33. Balance between work and leisure time</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0,98	0,78	1	1,33	1
: 2 Slightly important	5,39	6,2	8	4	3
: 3 Pretty important	28,43	26,36	34	32	24
: 4 Very important	65,2	66,67	86	62,67	47
<b>34. Salary and other financial rewards</b>	N=204		N=129		N=75
: 1 Not at all important	0,49	0,78	1	0	0
: 2 Slightly important	6,37	5,43	7	8	6
: 3 Pretty important	52,94	49,61	64	58,67	44
: 4 Very important	40,2	44,19	57	33,33	25

Table 11. Cross tabulation, Equality &amp; compensation

Based on the cross tabulation which can be seen from table 11, it seems that there are not any notable differences. Chi2 test was made to verify that.

Variables	Generations	P-value	Min Expected	Fraction < 5
<b>29. Fairness between employees</b>	4.86 (p=0.182)	0,182	0,37	37,5
<b>30. Equality between employees</b>	5.6 (p=0.133)	0,133	1,10	25
<b>31. Reasonable amount of work</b>	1.37 (p=0.712)	0,712	0,74	25
<b>32. Se, että työni ei aiheuta minulle kohtuutonta stressiä</b>	0.45 (p=0.930)	0,93	1,10	25
<b>33. Tasapaino työelämän ja vapaa-ajan välillä</b>	1.22 (p=0.747)	0,747	0,74	37,5
<b>34. Palkka ja muut rahalliset palkkiot</b>	3.2 (p=0.362)	0,362	0,37	37,5

Table 12. Chi2 test, Equality & compensation

Table 12 shows that the Chi2 test was not possible as all the requirements for it does not apply.

Even though it was not possible to analyse the statistical significance of the claims it can be seen from the figure 12 that there is some difference between the mean values of the answers of Generation Y and older generations. For example, claim 30. (Equality between employees) seems to be more important to older generations (n =75, mean value 3,5) than to Generation Y (n = 129, mean value 3,4). Also claim 31. (Reasonable amount of work) seems to be more important to older generations (n= 75, mean value 3,3) than to Generation Y (n = 129, mean value 3,2). Claims 32. (That my work does not cause me reasonable stress) and 33. (Balance between work and leisure time) have equal mean values. Claim 34 seems to be more important to Generation Y (n = 75, mean value 3,4) than to older generations (n = 129, mean value 3,3).

#### 4.1.8 Open questions

There were also two open questions in the end of the questionnaire. Questions were “list three things that are most important to you in work” and “list three things that are most important to you in free time”.

From figure 13 can be seen which were the things that were mentioned most often when asked most important things at work.

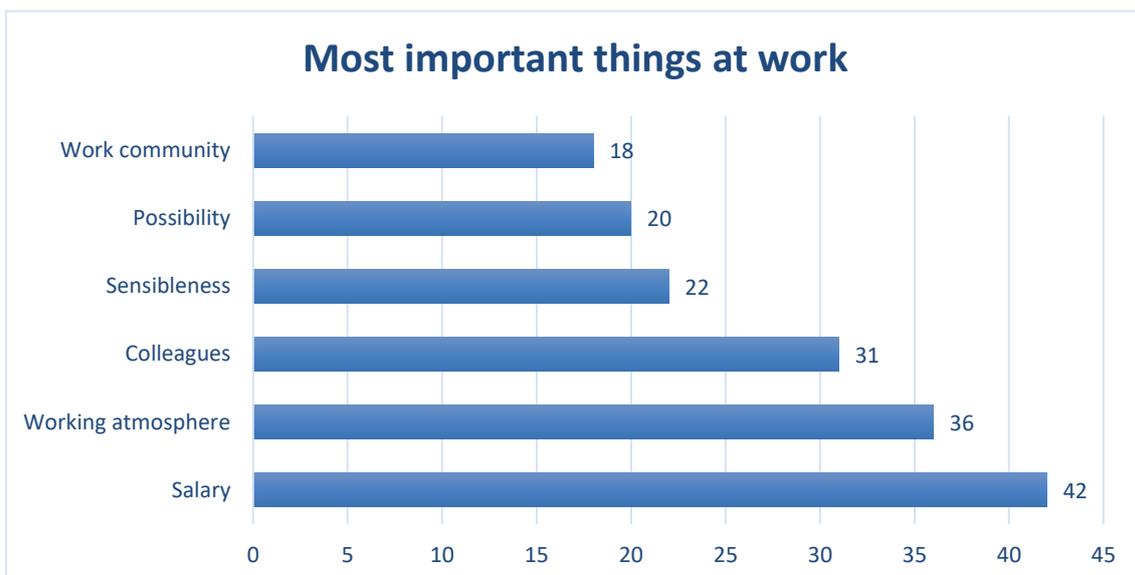


Figure 14. Most important things at work

Most often mentioned was salary (palkka) with 42 mentions. After that came working atmosphere (työilmapiiri), colleagues (työkaverit), sensibleness (mielekkyys), possibility (mahdollisuus) and work community (työyhteisö). There were also many answers which were quite close to those which were mentioned most often but were written in different form, for example “good salary” (hyvä palkka) or “good work community” (hyvä työyhteisö).

From figure 14 can be seen which were the things that were mentioned most often when asked most important things in free time.

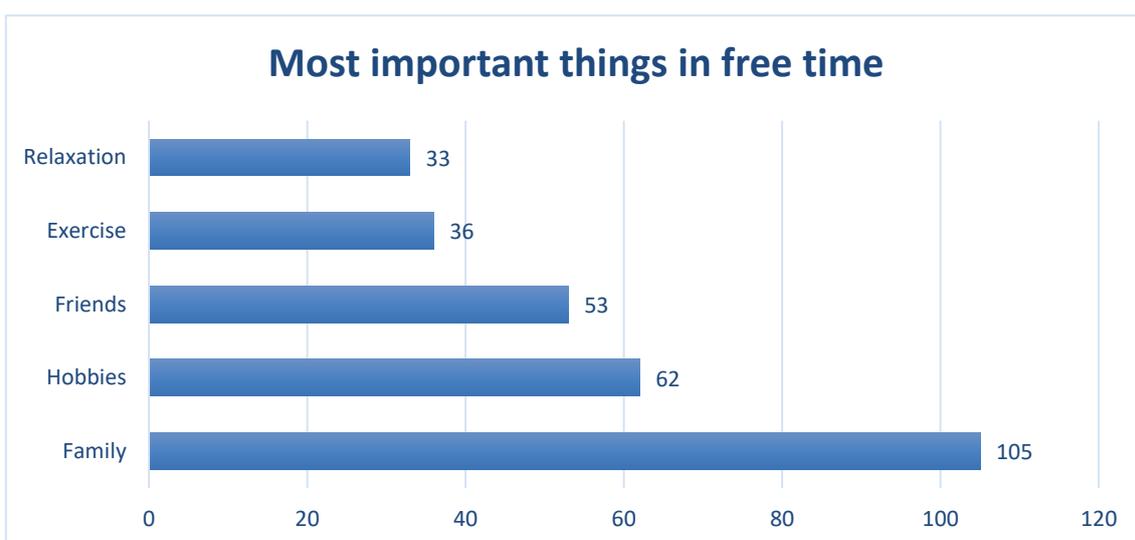


Figure 15. Most important things in free time

Most often mentioned was family (perhe) with 105 mentions. After that came hobbies (harrastukset), friends (ystävät), exercise (liikunta) and relaxation (rentoutuminen).

## 4.2 Credibility

Credibility of a research is based on reliability and validity of the research (Vilkka 2015). Those two together form the overall credibility of the research. First requirement for the credibility is that the research is done according to the criteria that is set for scientific research. (Heikkilä 2008, 185).

### 4.2.1 Reliability

Reliability of the research means its ability to give noncoincidental results, so it basically means the trustworthiness of the research. The results of the research cannot be coincidental. The researcher must act strictly and critically throughout the whole research. Errors might occur for example when collecting data or when handling or analysing the data. (Heikkilä 2008, 30.) Reliability is more trustworthy when coincidence has minimum effects the results. (Valli 2015, 139.) It also refers to replication of the research. So, if the researcher can replicate the earlier research design and achieve the same findings then the research is reliable (Saunders et al. 2019, 213).

The internal reliability can be stated by measuring the same statistical unit again. If the results are the same the research is reliable. The external reliability means that it is possible to make the same measures again in other researches and situations too. (Heikkilä 2008, 187.)

The reliability in this research was ensured as well as possible. It was not possible to redo the research as there was limited time and resources to use for completing this research. The research can be made again in other researches and situations too so the reliability based on that is good, but it must be remembered that the issues examined in this research might change over time as attitudes and values of people towards working life might be different as working life changes all the time. Also, as the generations are ageing all the time so their age range and also experience in working life is different if this research is repeated after somewhat long time.

The aim of the research was to get answers from Generation Y and older generations. The data collected with the online questionnaire shows that in the end Generation Y was more devoted to answer to the questionnaire as the distribution between answers was Generation Y 62,74 % from the answers and older generation 37,26 % from the answers. This might have

an impact on the generalisation of the results as the distribution is not even.

#### 4.2.2 Validity

Validity of the research evaluates that do the measures being used to assess the phenomenon studied actually measure what they are intended to measure and is the analysis of the results and the relationships being advanced accurately (Saunders et al. 2019, 214).

Measuring method used in this research was survey, more specifically an online questionnaire. It was made based on the theoretical frame of this research to ensure the validity of it. Few test answers for the questionnaire were taken before publishing the questionnaire in social media platforms. This was done to make sure that the claims in the questionnaire were understood unambiguously and that the answer options were sufficient. This also strengthens the validity of the research. When analysing the results cross tabulation and Chi2 test was used. Those are common and professional tools for analysing statistical results of a research so the analyse of this research was conducted as well and as professionally as possible.

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

This chapter of the thesis focuses to present main discoveries and answers to the research questions of this research. Also, some deliberation is done that how the research succeeded, what problems or limitations were faced during the research, how the results are generalised to the whole population and what kind of future researches regarding this subject can or should be done. Also, some speculation is done that how different generations should be considered in workplaces.

### 5.1 Main discoveries

First research question of this research focused on finding an answer to a question “What kind of factors regarding employee engagement are important for each generation and at what level?” and second research question was “Are there differences between Generation Y and older generations in importance of the factors regarding employee engagement?” Answers based on this research are presented in this chapter.

As it was analysed in the results & analyse chapter, there were some slight differences between opinions of Y generation and older generations regarding how important they keep factors that are affecting employee engagement. One statistically significant difference was found, and it was claim 15., “Clarity that what I need to do to succeed in my work” and it was more important to the older generations.

Based on the theoretical framework and previous knowledge about the subject this result was interesting and somewhat surprising as it was presumed that Generation Y has fairly different view and attitude towards work life than older generations. Still, as mentioned before, it must be noted that there were fewer answers to the questionnaire from older generations so it must be considered that it might have some kind of impact to the results of the research as the distribution of answers was not completely even. So, generalisation to the whole population needs to be done carefully and concerning this point of view of the research.

When looking at the most important things to the Generation Y based on the mean values of their answers, it seems that most important factors for them was 4. “Feeling that it is nice to go to work” (mean value 3,8/4), 9. “My manager treats me with respect” (mean value 3,8/4) and 26. “Good working atmosphere” (mean value 3,8/4).

Most important factors for older generations were 24. “Functioning communication” (mean value 3,8/4) and 26. “Good working atmosphere (mean value 3,8/4).

Least important factors for Generation Y were claim 18 “Manager’s interest in my career dreams” (mean value 3,0/4), claim 27. “That my colleagues care for me as a person” (mean value 3,1/4), claim 6. “My manager discloses a vision which motivates me in my work” (mean value 3,2/4), claim 17. “Appropriate recognition when I succeed in my work” (mean value 3,2/4) and claim 31. “Reasonable amount of work” (mean value 3,2/4).

Least important factors for older generations were claim 18. “Manager’s interest in my career dreams” (mean value 2,8/4) and claim 19. “Possibilities to move forward in my career” (mean value 2,8/4)

So, based on the results of this research it seems that Generation Y appreciates comfort and nice atmosphere at work and wants to be appreciated by managers but however does not necessarily need support or interest from manager concerning career dreams. Also, Generation Y does not regard recognition from success or reasonable amount of work so important as the other factors mentioned. This is reasonable as based on the Dialogi 11 research mentioned in chapter 2.3.1, Generation Y is said to have a need and demand that work must be nice, and they really want to enjoy the time they spent at work.

Older generations seem to appreciate functioning communication and nice atmosphere at work. What they regard as not so important is possibilities to move forward in their career and, they do not need interest from manager on their career dreams or aspirations. This might be because at older age people might not have that much inspiration or energy to plan to move forward on their careers anymore.

## 5.2 Deliberation

This thesis focused on finding if there are differences between Generation Y and older generation when thinking about factors effecting employee engagement and finding out that how important which factor is for Generation Y and older generations.

After all the research succeeded quite well even though there were some obstacles during the process. It was found that there are no significant differences between Generation Y and older generations at this subject but as mentioned before, unfortunately the distribution between Generation Y’s and older generations answers was not even, even though it was attempted to activate also older generations to answer to the questionnaire more. Also, first intent was to send the questionnaire also to certain student groups at HAMK but that was not possible because of GDPR. This would have helped to get more answers from different age groups. It might have an impact on the results of this research that distribution was not even and this needs to be considered when generalising the results to the whole population.

When thinking about the future, it would be interesting and great opportunity for someone interested in this subject to develop this research further and do it with more resources so that the amount of answers would be bigger. That way also the distribution between generations could be more even and it would be more reliable that the results of this research realistic.

This research can be utilised in the workplaces when wanting to learn how to deal with and lead different generations. This is very important subject to consider in the workplaces as there are people from many age groups pretty much in every workplace and they all might have different attitudes and aspirations towards work and workplace itself. Managers should openly discuss with their employees about this subject, especially when noticed that there are some issues concerning differences between generations in the workplace. It needs to be understood that people from different generations might act differently in certain situations and also that every person has their own personality too. People cannot be labelled only by the generation that they belong to, because every person is different based on their own background and experiences. Still, this research and its results gives tools on how different generations differ from each other and what they most need that they feel comfortable in the workplace and mostly important; stay engaged.

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## QUESTIONNAIRE FORM

**Sinulle tärkeät asiat työssä**

Kysely on osa YAMK-opinnäytetyötä, jossa tutkitaan työhön sitoutumiseen vaikuttavia asioita eri sukupolvien välillä. Tutkimuksen toimeksiantajana toimii Hämeen ammattikorkeakoulu.

Kyselyyn vastaajan tulisi olla tällä hetkellä työelämässä ja työsuhteessa oleva suomenkielinen 23-65 vuotias henkilö.

Vastaa ensin neljään taustatietokysymykseen, jonka jälkeen väittämiin sen mukaan kuinka tärkeänä väittämässä esitettyä asiaa pidät.

HUOM! Väittämien kohdalla älä mieti nykyistä työpaikkaasi ja työtäsi, vaan yleisesti tunnettasi ja mielipidettäsi kyseisestä asiasta.

Kiitos, kun vastaat kyselyyn!

**1. Ikä \***

- 18-22 vuotta
- 23-33 vuotta
- 34-43 vuotta
- 44-55 vuotta
- 56-65 vuotta

**2. Sukupuoli \***

- Nainen
- Mies
- Muu

**3. Asema \***

- Työntekijä
- Esimies/johtavassa asemassa oleva
- Yrittäjä
- Muu, mikä

## 4. Kuinka kauan olet ollut työelämässä? \*

- 0-2 vuotta  
 3-5 vuotta  
 6-10 vuotta  
 11-20 vuotta  
 21-30 vuotta  
 Enemmän, kirjoita tekstikenttään numeroin vuosimäärä

## 5. Kuinka tärkeitä seuraavat asiat ovat sinulle? \*

	1 Ei lainkaan tärkeä	2 Vähän tärkeä	3 Melko tärkeä	4 Erittäin tärkeä
Tunne, että olen ylpeä saadessani työskennellä työpaikallani *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tunne, että kuulun työpaikalleni *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tunne, että työlläni on tarkoitus *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tunne, että töihin on mukava mennä *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## 6. Kuinka tärkeitä seuraavat asiat ovat sinulle? \*

	1 Ei lainkaan tärkeä	2 Vähän tärkeä	3 Melko tärkeä	4 Erittäin tärkeä
Esimieheni pitää työntekijät ajan tasalla ajankohtaisista asioista *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Esimieheni tuo esille vision, joka motivoi minua työssäni *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Esimieheni on hyvä roolimalli työntekijöille *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Olen tyytyväinen esimieheeni *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Esimieheni kohtelee minua kunnioittavasti *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	1 Ei lainkaan tärkeä	2 Vähän tärkeä	3 Melko tärkeä	4 Erittäin tärkeä
Esimiehen tuki ja neuvojen saaminen silloin, kun niitä tarvitsen *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. Kuinka tärkeitä seuraavat asiat ovat sinulle? \*

	1 Ei lainkaan tärkeä	2 Vähän tärkeä	3 Melko tärkeä	4 Erittäin tärkeä
Tarvitavat työvälineet, jotta voin tehdä työni hyvin *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tarvittava opetus ja koulutus työpaikalla, jotta voin tehdä työni hyvin *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Toimivien järjestelmien ja prosessien tuki, jotta voin työskennellä tehokkaasti *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mahdollisuus vaikuttaa itseäni koskeviin päätöksiin *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Selvyyys siitä mitä tulee tehdä, että menestyn työssä *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Positiiviset tulokset, jotka aiheutuvat työstäni *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Asiannukainen tunnustus, kun onnistun työssä *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. Kuinka tärkeitä seuraavat asiat ovat sinulle? \*

	1 Ei lainkaan tärkeä	2 Vähän tärkeä	3 Melko tärkeä	4 Erittäin tärkeä
Esimiehen kiinnostuksen osoitus liittyen urahaaveisiini *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mahdollisuudet edetä uralla *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mahdollisuus vaikuttaa omaan ammatilliseen kehitykseeni *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	1 Ei lainkaan tärkeä	2 Vähän tärkeä	3 Melko tärkeä	4 Erittäin tärkeä
Vapaus valita itse, kuinka parhaiten teen työni *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Riittävän haastavat työtehtävät *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. Kuinka tärkeitä seuraavat asiat ovat sinulle? \*

	1 Ei lainkaan tärkeä	2 Vähän tärkeä	3 Melko tärkeä	4 Erittäin tärkeä
Toimiva tiimityö *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Toimiva kommunikaatio *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mahdollisten konfliktien hoito rakentavasti *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hyvä työilmapiiri *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Se, että työkaverit välittävät minusta ihmisenä *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kollegat, joiden kanssa tulen hyvin toimeen *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. Kuinka tärkeitä seuraavat asiat ovat sinulle? \*

	1 Ei lainkaan tärkeä	2 Vähän tärkeä	3 Melko tärkeä	4 Erittäin tärkeä
Reiluus työntekijöiden kesken *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yhdenvertaisuus työntekijöiden kesken *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kohtuullinen työn määrä *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Se, että työni ei aiheuta minulle kohtuutonta stressiä *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tasapaino työelämän ja vapaa-ajan välillä *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Palkka ja muut rahalliset palkkiot *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. Luettele kolme asiaa, jotka ovat sinulle työssä tärkeimmät (HUOM. kirjaa yksi asia/rivi, järjestyksellä ei ole väliä) \*

Minulle työssä tärkeintä on: \*

Minulle työssä tärkeintä on: \*

Minulle työssä tärkeintä on: \*

12. Luettele kolme asiaa, jotka ovat sinulle vapaa-ajalla tärkeimmät (HUOM. kirjaa yksi asia/rivi, järjestyksellä ei ole väliä) \*

Minulle vapaa-ajalla tärkeintä on: \*

Minulle vapaa-ajalla tärkeintä on: \*

Minulle vapaa-ajalla tärkeintä on: \*