



Identifying diversity in academic libraries to improve management of diversity

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Andisiwe Magocoba

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Supervisor:

PhD: LIS

Date: 15/09/2020

Co-Supervisor:

MTech: LIS

Date: 29/09/2020

DECLARATION

I, Andisiwe Magocoba wish to declare that this dissertation is my own work and all sources used in this study were acknowledged.

Andisiwe Magocoba

Abstract

A number of studies have been conducted in relation to the workplace and many have noted a marked increase in the number of different generational cohorts that co-exist in the workplace over recent decades. However, fewer have specifically investigated the increase of different generational cohorts in academic libraries and even fewer that focused on generational diversity in South African academic libraries. There are different generational cohorts that co-exist in the workplace however that is still a very difficult topic to engage in because of the complexity of diversity itself. The purpose of this study was to present a systematic review of the evidence based literature concerning generational diversity in academic libraries in order to improve its management. It specifically investigated where different generational cohorts exist in academic libraries and the working relationship between these different generational cohorts. This study used a quantitative research approach to address its objectives. The objectives of this study were to investigate generational diversity in the cohorts that co-exist in the workplace in the academic libraries in KwaZulu-Natal, to ascertain if there are any challenges associated with the values and types of the diverse population and the impacts thereof in the academic libraries in KwaZulu-Natal, to ascertain similarities and differences across generations with respect to values, goals, preferences and behaviours and to provide strategies to improve diversity management. The main findings were that each generation has a different working style hence they are likely to clash every now and again. Employees across these generational cohorts also have different preferences when it comes to how they receive feedback and collaborate with others in the workplace. With each generation having such distinctive traits and characteristics, there is always potential risk of conflict happening due to clashing values and beliefs.

It is hoped that this study will inform academic library practitioners about generational diversity and assist in managing it.

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List of abbreviations

DUT	Durban University of Technology
IREC	Institutional research ethics committee
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
LIASA	Library and information association of South africa
MUT	Mangosuthu University of Technology
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
UNISA	University of South Africa
UNIZULU	University of Zulu land

List of keywords

Diversity

Management

Academic

Library(ies)

Generations

Cohorts

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The academic library of the 21st Century is an organization that straddles two worlds, print and digital. Libraries continue to maintain, use, and even extend their legacy print collections while adopting much of their services in digital formats. Library buildings still house collections but are primarily focused on providing work and learning spaces for the community. Workforce diversity is growing at an accelerated pace, companies are faced with a variety of employees differentiated by age, gender, ethnicity, education, occupation, etc (Hernaus and Vocik 2014: 615). "Present-day workforce consists dominantly of three generational cohorts: Baby-boomers (born between 1945 and 1960), Generation X (born between 1960 and 1980), and Generation Y (born between 1980 and 2000), while Veterans (born before 1945) are retired" (Hernaus and Vocik 2014: 615). To capitalize on the diversity of generations, knowledge must be exchanged between workers, sharing knowledge is essential for organizations as it transforms individual knowledge into organizational knowledge (Foss, Husted and Michailova 2010: 461).

1.2 Background to the study

Before the researcher started with this study, she had been given an opportunity to participate in a month long course at the University of Pretoria. The course was about enhancing ICT skills for research enablement in African universities. The aim was to empower the next generation of library and information professionals. Countries that were eligible to participate were South Africa, Ghana, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda. This was a diverse group of candidates, the age group was between 25 – 50 and the researcher was the youngest of that intake. The experience to be partnered with a diverse group like that motivated the researcher to undergo this study. "There are many challenges faced by leaders because of the multi-generational workforce" (Murray 2011: 56). Haeger and Lingham (2014: 317) looked at four generations (Traditionalists/Veterans, Baby-boomers, Generation X and Generation Y/Millennials) in a library setting, their study showed that in situations where millennials manage a multi-generational workforce, disputes are common based on job priorities, alliances and multi-task priorities. Haeger and Lingham (2014: 317) propose that with technical developments and multiple generations coexisting with various behavioural norms,

which allows all realms to fuse and re-scape face-to-face and virtual contact management.

“Generational diversity is a result of different generations sharing space” (Murray 2011: 56). There has always been the idea of generations sharing a workplace and sometimes even places, but technology has brought new viewpoints as generations shift (Murray 2011: 56). “Libraries like any other workplace experience the same challenges in terms of different generational cohorts working together” (Murray 2011: 56).

There are many things that contribute to generational clashes or differences, this study hopes to find what academic libraries need to understand in order to successfully manage a multi-generational workforce. Shragay and Tziner (2011: 144) define a generation as “an identifiable group (cohort) that shares birth years and significant life events at critical developmental stages.” Parry and Urwin (2011: 301) concluded that actually, the method used by many researchers in their work to define generations used in practice does not allow for a true definition of a generation, but rather offers a classification of various age groups. They say a true generation interpretation should take into account characteristics of a social space other than the year of birth, such as geographical location or gender (Parry and Urwin 2011: 301).

According to Lawton and De Aquino (2015: 23) creating successful multi-generational work teams is a critical challenge for corporate leaders looking for productivity and promoting workforce diversity. They say that understanding the similarities and differences between these generations of work values is the first step towards organizational success, and lack of that awareness could prevent the efficient functions of the work teams that could be detrimental to an organization. For example, Managers or leaders should draw on the fact that different generations already share the workplace and use their common work principles to ensure that the organizations 'goals and objectives are fulfilled (Lawton and De Aquino 2015: 23).

This study sought to identify the diversity in generations in academic libraries in KwaZulu-Natal. It also seeks to ascertain similarities and differences across generations with respect to values, goals, preferences and behaviours as well as to ascertain the challenges associated with the values and types of the diverse

population and the impacts thereof as these may contribute to generational diversity in the workplace.

1.3 Research problem

Any workforce composed of different generations is faced with challenges or generational tensions caused by different beliefs, goals, views, mindsets, demographics and opposing generations (Babbie 1992: 282). It is clear from literature that organizations that want to be successful or stay successful in the 21st century are facing a relentless challenge to tackle the great diversity that exists in the world. "Diversity presents itself in many dimensions such as gender, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, culture, thinking, among many others" (Babbie 1992: 282). "The diversity found in the workplace of most companies and organizations including different generational cohorts of workers (Baby-boomers, Generation X and Generation Y also known as Millennials) represent a great challenge to them, and a better understanding of that can lead to better outcomes" (Babbie 1992: 282). It is better to face and embrace generational diversity instead of resisting, that is the problem most workplaces have. Dwyer (2016: 285) says that "currently in North America four generations share the workforce, thus posing some interesting challenges". He says "these generations have varied personal values, they differ in their approaches to how they wish to work and have an overflow of communication style, diverse languages and different perception of how they see the world" (Dwyer 2016: 285). He also adds that, consequently, these differences can lead to tension in the workplace, so companies need to be mindful not just of the differences but also of how each group brings its specific characteristics. However, it is not only North America that is experiencing this shift, in the South African workforce, companies are competing not only against conventional talent rivals, but also against other high-quality workplaces, a labor market with very small numbers of high-skilled and medium-skilled workers, high rates of job mobility and many young people with less expertise entering the workforce (Bussin and Moore 2012: 9). The problem is that "More than one in three people waste five or more hours each week (12% of the work week), due to chronic, unaddressed conflict between colleagues from different generations" (Maxfield 2015: 153). The researcher has observed many problematic factors that contribute to generational diversity in the workplace, including but not limited to, different working styles, communication gaps and lack of mutual

understanding as an employee in an academic library in KwaZulu-Natal. The researcher has completed a certificate on “the next generation of librarians in Africa” from the University of Pretoria and that is where the inspiration of this exercise came from. Through this exercise the researcher has been exposed to some of these good and not so good results of having a multi-generational workforce in academic libraries.

1.4 Objectives of the study

- To investigate generational diversity in the cohorts that co-exist in the workplace in the academic libraries in KwaZulu-Natal.
- To ascertain if there are any challenges associated with the values and types of the diverse population and the impacts thereof in the academic libraries in KwaZulu-Natal.
- To ascertain similarities and differences across generations with respect to values, goals, preferences and behaviours in the academic libraries in KwaZulu-Natal.
- To provide strategies to improve diversity management.

1.5 Critical questions

- What are the generational diversity cohorts that co-exist in academic libraries in KwaZulu-Natal?
- What are the challenges associated with the values from co-existing generational cohorts in the workplace in the academic libraries in KwaZulu-Natal?
- Are there similarities and differences across generations with respect to values, goals, preferences and behaviours in the academic libraries in KwaZulu-Natal?
- What strategies can be used in order to manage generational diversity?

1.6 Rationale of the study

Based on the literature reviewed, as much as generational diversity can yield good results in academic libraries, it can also have bad implications if it is not managed well. This study is important because it hopes to make suggestions on the extent to which generational diversity exists in academic libraries and how it is managed. The outcome of this study might encourage more conversations on generational diversity and assist in overcoming it.

1.7 Overview of methodology

This study used a quantitative research approach to address its aims and objectives and also to explore and understand the phenomenon of generational diversity. Self-administered questionnaires were used in this study, intended to evoke the respondents' answers to the structured questions. The target population for this study consisted of library employees from the four generations namely; the veteran generation, the baby boomer generation, generation X and generation Y. This study used a cluster sampling method and the sample size was determined based on the sample size used by Sekaran and Bougie (2016: 263). The analysis of the results was carried out by means of the statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) and also organized using Microsoft excel. Graphs and tables were also used to present data. This study is limited to academic libraries in KZN.

1.8 Clarification of key concepts

1.8.1 Generation

Parry (2014: 2) defines generation as “a group of individuals who were born at a similar point in time, have shared similar experiences during their formative years and therefore have similar attitudes and preferences”.

1.8.2 Cohort

Sakdiyakorn and Wattanacharoensil (2018:135) say that a cohort is “a proxy for the generational groupings that bring together individuals based on the cutoff points of birth dates”.

1.9 Limitations and delimitations of the study

According to Kurmar (2014: 273) “limitations are structural problems relating to methodological aspects of the study”. The focus of the study was on four academic libraries in KwaZulu-Natal namely; Durban University of Technology, Mangosuthu University of Technology, University of KwaZulu-Natal, University of Zululand. College libraries were also not included in this study because according to the Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA) they belong to a large sector straddling both the FET (Further Education and Training) and the higher education sectors (Anon: 2015).

1.10 Structure of the research report

This chapter provides an introduction and background to the research problem and generational diversity in academic libraries in KZN. The research problem, the objectives of the study followed by critical questions generated to address the objectives of the study. The rationale of the study and an overview of the methodology used was provided. Key concepts were clarified as well as the limitations and the delimitations of the study explained.

Chapter 2 reviews literature relevant to the study as well as a theoretical framework that informs the study

Chapter 3 sets out the methodology used in carrying out the study including methods used to collect and analyze data.

Chapter 4 presents the findings

Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the main findings, recommendations, and conclusions.

1.11 Summary

This is an introductory chapter, it provides the background of the study, and it also provides the research problem and contextualized generational diversity in academic libraries particularly. This chapter presents the research problem, the objectives of the study and the critical questions generated to address the objectives and the rationale of the study. This chapter provides an overview of the methodology that was adopted, key concepts are clarified, limitations and delimitations of the study are also outlined. The next chapter covers the literature reviewed in the study.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter gave a brief introduction to this study. The background, the research problem, aims and objectives, as well as the content of the chapters were discussed in chapter one. This chapter includes the theoretical framework and discusses the literature reviewed that pertains to this study. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2014: 50), a literature review is a step-by-step process that involves the identification of published and unpublished work from secondary data sources on the topic of interest, the evaluation of this work in relation to the problem, and the documentation of this work. The goal for reviewing literature is to broadly learn what has been done and what still needs to be done in your area of study (Wentz 2014: 81). This chapter presents literature on generational diversity, the different generations that co-exist in the workplace, the difference in work values and life domains which include behaviours and preferences of the different generational cohorts. It also looks at the technological factors that may cause generational diversity.

2.2 Theoretical framework

A theoretical framework is a guiding principle for research that provides structure or an explanation to a problem (Wentz 2014: 83). This study uses the generational cohort theory, developed by Inglehart in 1991 and was later made popular by Stauss and Howe in 1997. A generation is a social construction in which individuals born during a similar time period experience, and are influenced by, historic and social contexts in such a way that these experiences differentiate one generation cohort from another (Lester, Standifer and Schultz 2012: 341). This theory has been used in various studies relating to generational diversity and it guided this study as it focuses on generational cohorts which speaks to the aims and the objectives of this study and was therefore sought suitable to adopt by the researcher.

(Lester, Standifer and Schultz 2012: 341) postulate that, currently many organizations comprise of four generations of employees working together which are the Veterans, baby boomers, generation Y as well as millennials. Employees from each of these generations may have varying expectations of what they want from the workplace, from both an intrinsic and extrinsic standpoint and therefore may approach work differently (Lester, Standifer and Schultz 2012: 341).

2.3 The four generational cohorts in the workplace

For the first time ever, in the same organizations, four generations of employees work side by side (Bennett, Pitt and Price 2012: 278). All these generations hold different values, morals, dreams, desires, ambitions and style of working (Bennet, Pitt and Price 2012: 278). According to Collins (2004: 62) the four generations in the workplace are commonly referred to as Silent generation (Veterans, Matures), Boomers (Baby-boomer generation), Generation X and the Millennials (Generation Y). Collins (2004: 62) says that "these labels are derived from social scientists and demographers and they often conflict". You will note that in this study the birth years of each generation may differ slightly according to authors and countries, this is because generational definitions are based on two parameters; birth intervals and peer personality (Collins 2004: 62). Collins (2004: 62) says that birth intervals are simply the beginning and ending years of the average 22-year generational life cycle. "Social, political and economic circumstances contribute to the lengthening or shortening of life cycle intervals" (Collins 2004: 62). In the South African Context Traditionalists were born between 1930-1949, Baby-boomers 1950-1969, Generation X 1970-1989 and Generation Y 1990-2000 (Van der Walt, Jonck and Sobayeni 2016: 54).

Cody, Green and Lynch (2012: 199) say, whether the events are war or national icons, members of the same generation have that shared experience. Although people within the same generation may perceive events with various personal lenses (through race, class, faith and gender for example), they still experience the same events through history, shaping their perspective and defining the characteristics about them Cody, Green and Lynch (2012: 199).

Cody, Green and Lynch (2012: 199) postulate that, there is an intrinsic propensity with every generation to question subsequent generations. However, these differences are assumed to drive the values and work ethic of employees within and between individual generational cohorts (Cody, Green and Lynch 2012: 199). Specifically, there is an ongoing debate about whether the differences in perspectives of the incoming millennials versus the baby-boomers and beyond are significant enough to cause disruption in the workplace (Cody, Green and Lynch 2012: 200).

Dwyer (2016: 290) also highlights the four distinctive generational groups as; the veterans, a generation born between 1922 and 1946, they are a generation prior the

baby-boomers. He says that there are no members of this cohort participating in the workforce today (because of age), though they may still contribute by adding value to different organisations. Deeken, Webb and Taffurelli (2008: 213) echo the above statements, saying "this generation is also known as traditionalists, they believe in fairness, openness due to process and expertise". Baby-boomers were born between 1946 and 1965, they are the cohort that seeks personal growth. Also, baby-boomers are ambitious and aim to put their stamp on things; they are frequently described as being idealists, optimistic workaholics, competitive and more inclined to question authority Dwyer (2016: 212).

Tomislav and Vocik (2014: 62) say, multigenerational lenses should be used both in theory and in practice to gain a better understanding of workplace diversity in general and the nature of job characteristics specifically. Furthermore, they say, failure to include generations of employees in job design research may limit the ability to accurately predict individual attitudes and behaviours in organizations Tomislav and Vocik (2014: 62). Each generation is shaped by its experience, which brings a variety of strengths to the workforce and because of these differences, leaders are encouraged to learn and understand these factors to better lead each generational cohort (Al-Asfour and Lettau 2014: 66).

2.3.1 The Veteran Generation

Jonck, Van der Walt and Sobayeni (2017: 3) postulate that veterans also known as the traditionalist grew up during World War 2. In the workplace, there are no members of this generation present, as most members have retired and those that are still employed may be offering scarce skill services. Collins (2004: 64) says in 2004 members of this generation were likely on a second or third career. He echoes what was said above that, though this generation contributes a small portion if any at all of the workforce, they bring years of knowledge and experience in the workplace.

2.3.2 The baby-boomer generation

The term "idealist" has been used to describe the fundamental characteristics of this generation (Collins 2004:65). They are known to be visionaries and individualists (Collins 2004:65). Jonck, Van der walt and Sobayeni (2017: 3) say, within the South African context, "baby boomers were exposed to the Sharpeville massacre in 1960, the rise of the black resistance movement from 1948-1960, the Soweto uprising in

1976 and the banning of the African National Congress and Pan Africanist congress in 1960, to mention a few". While internationally, the baby boomers, born approximately between 1946 and 1964 came to age during the Vietnam war, the civil rights movement, and the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King junior and the Kennedy brothers (Cody, Green and Lynch 2012: 200). They also experienced watergate and the resulting resignation of a sitting president (Cody, Green and Lynch 2014: 200). Based on these events, this cohort can be described as optimistic and ambitious, believing in consensus-building to effect change (Cody, Green and Lynch 2014: 200).

2.3.3 Generation X

According to Dwyer (2016:284), "generation X was born between 1966 and 1979". He says, this generation was fairly easy to join or find a successful job in a higher education programme. They grew up experiencing social, economic and political upheavals (e.g. growing financial, social and family insecurity, rapid social changes and corporate downsizing, greater diversity and the beginning of the so-called 'information age' Dwyer (2016:284). According to Lawton and De Aquino (2015: 25), generation X employees have the work value diversity of the baby-boomer employees and the freshness of the generation Y employees, which may allow each generation to understand the other thus making team work more effective. Msweli and Naude (2015: 98) say, in a South African context, this generation can be defined as individuals that experienced apartheid and were the youngest cohort to join the struggle. Organizations must retain generation X if they are to create and sustain their competitive advantage because they are human capital repositories of knowledge, skills and expertise and they ensure good performance Martins and Martins (2014: 132).

2.3.4 Generation Y or Millennials

The generation Y cohort which is characterized by experience in technology and may have been born as early as 1981 and as late as 1995 (Msweli and Naude 2015: 98). They say "this generation cohort is the first to experience social media communication revolution" (Msweli and Naude 2015: 98). Jan (2014: 20) echoes this by saying, "millennials are the first generation that grew up totally immersed in technology".

Millennials have been early adopters of social networking, smartphones, text messaging and numerous other forms of electronic communication Jan (2014: 20).

This group has revolutionized the way work gets done and has reshaped employee and external stakeholder relationships (Msweli and Naude 2015: 98). "The manner in which information is shared and exchanged has also shaped the attitudes, values and work ethic of this group" (Msweli and Naude 2015: 98). Jan (2014: 20) says, this group values leading a balanced life. They are collaborative, extremely self-confident and philanthropically minded (Jan 2014: 20).

Having been impacted by globalization and international influences, South African millennials are self-confident, optimistic, hopeful, independent, determined, goal-driven, success-driven, lifestyle centered, diverse but inclusive, global, civic, community minded and entrepreneurial (Martins and Martins 2014: 132).

According to Amayah and Gedro (2014: 37) at present, generation Y is the dominant generation in the work market. It is therefore encouraging to find that it is this generation that displays the strongest and most positive effect on job involvement (Amayah and Gedro 2014: 37). They say that the findings to their study raised doubts as to whether it is necessary to invest a great deal of effort in attempts to bridge the generation gap in the workplace because according to their findings, it is possible that the gap has in fact already been bridged.

Martins and Martins (2014: 131) stipulate that, South African millennials are more diverse than their global counterparts. However, Chang (2011) mentions that, South African millennials are affected by a job market that is difficult to enter and by soaring unemployment among other social ills, which generates a disaffected and angry generation of millennials. Understanding the different generations and in particular millennials in South Africa, on whom the future of business is largely dependent, would mean older generations and particularly managers would be better able to connect with them as millennials are already forming part of the workplace (Chang 2011).

The above section discussed the four generational cohorts that exist in the workplace and the descriptions of each of the generational cohorts is based on the characteristics described in the literature above. The cohorts discussed above are the core of this study. While there may be some value in trying to explain the attitudes of individuals and groups according to their generational cohort membership, it should be

recognized that individual differences exist within the cohort just as they do within any psycho-socio-cultural grouping.

Table 2.1

Current workforce generation

GENERATION	TIME BORN	WHAT THEY VALUE	POSSIBLE CONFLICT
"BABY-BOOMERS"	1947 – 1969	✚ Hard work – "lives to work"	✚ They like to be "in charge"
		✚ Sacrifice the personal for the professional	✚ Values hard work and Gen X might not see the point
		✚ Teamwork – all aligned to mission and vision	
GENERATION X	1970 – 1989	✚ Flexibility – more work and personal balance	✚ Does not see "team" the same as Boomers
		✚ Change – is indication of progress and growth	✚ Strive for more balance, and works to live
		✚ Individuality – difference characterize good teams	
GENERATION Y AKA GENERATION C/MILLENNIALS	1990 – Now	✚ Technology – expect connectivity and networking	✚ Will expect to be consulted on decisions, and Boomers expect to be listened to
		✚ A cause – want to contribute to	✚ Accustomed to transparency

something bigger and availability of
than themselves information

But why? – will
question
everything, and do
not simply do as
they are told”

Source: Robson (2015: 647)

Table 2.1 depicts characteristics of the generations included in this study with the exception of the veteran generation. The table outlines amongst others what the different generations’ value at work and possible conflict amongst them.

2.4 Managing diversity in the workplace

According to Van der Walt and du Plessis (2010: 4) If academic libraries are to thrive in a diverse setting, there must be unique approaches to maintaining and attracting staff. It is necessary to delineate the age profile of employees as a starting point for academic libraries to recognize the need to recruit staff and enforce effective succession policies (Van der Walt and du Plessis 2010: 4). They further state that academic libraries can only encourage a diverse, and specifically an age diverse staff complement, if they are aware of the age profile of their specific organization. Perhaps South African academic libraries have failed to understand the immediacy of the need for succession planning because, in the short term, they do not yet face the same shortages of new qualified staff as corporate organizations, but also of leaders within their own organizations (Van der Walt and du Plessis 2010: 4).

Martin (2006: 10) concurs with the above authors, mentioning that, “the upcoming decade could see a drastic change in the staffing models of libraries”. For libraries to handle these changes effectively, they need to be aware of generational diversity Martin (2006: 10). Generational diversity brings different perspectives and is about much more than using differences to create ideas, embracing diversity will work to serve the practical staffing needs of library administrators (Martin 2006: 10). With so many Baby Boomers expected to retire and not enough younger workers to take their place, businesses of all kinds, including libraries, will need to find ways to retain older workers while simultaneously attracting as many young workers as possible (Martin

2006: 10). These actions will create an unprecedented event: four different generations in the workplace at the same time. In order for this to work, libraries must try to meet the needs of each generation (Martin 2006: 10). However, this will not only require that library administrators understand the values of each generation, but that they change their approach to best accommodate each generation. This will require time, effort, and a healthy dose of respect for all involved. It is imperative that this be accomplished if libraries want to thrive and be fully staffed in the future Martin (2006: 10).

Academic libraries are experiencing the same pressures that challenge other twenty-first century businesses and organizations and they must respond effectively to an increasingly diverse workforce, an expanding multicultural customer base, and growing competition for "market share" from other providers (Kreitz, 2007: 8). Furthermore, unlike many businesses, academic libraries are on the leading curve of meeting these challenges. The library profession at many levels is actively recruiting and mentoring diverse staff, for more than two decades, libraries have met diverse customer needs through collections that support the study and understanding of non-mainstream populations (Kreitz, 2007: 8).

2.5 Challenges in the management of diversity

The challenge for businesses is not to simply manage the intergenerational conflicts resulting from the generational diversity on a reactive basis, but to use it as an opportunity and to the long term advantage of the business (Bennett, Pitt and Price 2012: 280). This means that organizations must align the business goals with cultural norms and values of each generation so that they are able to work together in harmony (Bennett, Pitt and Price 2012: 280). McGuire, Todnem and Hutchnings (2007: 593) seconded this saying, organizations must seek to optimize the talents of all groups, reconcile differences in the workplace, educate and develop employees to utilize this diversity for individual and organizational advantage and create new generational cultures that value and optimize generational diversity.

According to Sancht (2009: 7) there are some barriers that are hindering the implementation of diversity in South Africa's' workplace. He postulates five of these barriers as follows; firstly, the role of introducing diversity is frequently transferred to workers or consultants who are not only unable to comprehend the law but also unable

to address the human complexities surrounding the process of organizational cultural change. Secondly, employers fail to see how diversity can be a competitive advantage, when work diversity can represent that of its customers, then it can have a powerful effect on customer understanding. Thirdly, diversity is treated as an imposition, the government is placing it on organizations instead of a key priority that can ensure the long term survival of the organization. Fourthly, although organizations are saying diversity is central to their business, they do not treat it with the same discipline and accountability as other initiatives. And lastly, instead of learning to work together to bring about progress, various groups are still fighting for scarce resources contributing to racial and gender conflicts.

To adapt, change and evolve is part of human nature and has been since the dawn of time (Bennett, Pitt and Price 2012: 280). Some companies were slow to respond to change while others made use of it as an opportunity and quickly accepted it and so to maintain a competitive edge, stay ahead of the game and embrace change is absolutely vital in today's increasingly diverse workforce (Bennett, Pitt and Price 2012: 280).

The above section discussed management of diversity in the workplace and the challenges thereof. Through the above literature the researcher found that managing diversity is becoming an organizational imperative.

2.6 Work values and life domains

According to Al-Asfour and Lettau (2014: 647) generational diversity in the workplace has led practitioners and researchers to explore how to lead organizations with radically different generational experience for their workers. Furthermore, they postulate that each of these generations is a cohort of common values, behaviours and beliefs that can influence the way organizational leaders lead their workers. Robson (2015: 1) says, currently workplaces are comprised of three distinct generations that have different expectations and approaches to life, leadership, work and relationships. He mentions that, these generations value different things and are thus motivated by different rewards – but all are trying to co-exist and find meaning in workplaces whose policies, procedures and reward systems are (understandably) applied in a one size fits all way.

Jonck, Van der Walt and Sobayeni (2017: 11) found that generational differences exist in terms of work values. He says, it should also be acknowledged that there are similarities between generational cohorts with regard to work values and that organizations should capitalize on these similarities and build on them, especially in view of the cultural differences that prevail. Martins and Martins (2014: 132) reiterates as follows "it appears as if organizations need to take note of the similarities between the generations and maintain the strategies for focusing on these". However, he mentions that, the different expectations and needs of the various generations and especially the two younger generations should be noted because they are the people who will need to step into the jobs of the baby boomers (Martins and Martins 2014: 132). It thus makes good sense to focus on what needs to be done to improve their employee satisfaction and to retain valuable knowledge for future organizations.

According to Steyn and Kotze (2004: 9) work values in a multicultural society such as South Africa are important because of the many systemic changes that have taken place and have created a wide variety of human values that are of particular significance in the workplace. "Work design theory and research have largely overlooked workforce diversity issues" (Hernaus and Vokic 2014: 615). However, increasingly diversified workforce in general and generational differences specifically should encourage scholars and HR professionals to question traditional notions of what makes workers thrive in work context (Hernaus and Vokic 2014: 615). According to Dokadia, Rai and Chawla (2015: 96) organizations should accept the fact that employees from different generations have different work values and preferences. With the diversity of multiple generations in the same workplace, it becomes necessary to adopt multiple management techniques to overcome the variations (Elmore 2010: 9).

Work-home values must be examined for their usefulness as a framework for connecting work values with home values (Parry 2014: 55). He suggests that work-home values are formed and shaped simultaneously via personal values, work-related values and home-related values. According Parry (2014: 55) when the integration is successful, work-home balance is achieved.

According to Amayah and Gedro (2014: 36) the baby-boomers, Gen-Xers and Gen-Yers had some differences in the workplace values but fewer that they had expected.

They say that younger workers prefer a company psychological contract that stresses independence, prestige and social participation. They emphasize the importance of discussing values and expectations with staff because that may help to avoid disappointment and conflict and help manage expectations from staff. Dwyer (2016: 301) found that supervisors need more time and expertise today, and must seek to understand where employees come from, to allow them to deal with employee problems and to represent effectively the evolving nature and dynamics of their work environments. He also found that when supervisors from one generation managed another generation, the gap between the two generations becomes problematic and needs to be bridged.

Amayah and Gedro (2014: 36) support the above statement, they say, managers possess stereotypes of generational cohorts whether accurate or not, may unknowingly create factions within an organization. Like other stereotypes, managers may consciously or unconsciously adopt attitudes, behaviours and expectations based on common generalizations instead of fact. According to Wesolowsky (2014: 34) one of the biggest obstacles for managers to overcome is the difficulty for their staff to accept change. He says that senior staff members may feel as though they are being replaced by younger staff members who in turn may react by feeling threatened. The values of different generations differ, leading to high employee turnover and poor performance. For example, younger workers may be comfortable multi-tasking, which, could be unfamiliar to more experienced managers Wesolowsky (2014: 34). Dwyer (2016: 285) recommends that leaders should expect to spend more time engaging with their workers in a multi-generational work force. He says that an open-door policy needs to be promoted and employees should be encouraged to discuss misunderstanding. He continues to say that job motivation should be intrinsic in providing incentives for growth and development, and in acknowledging well done work. Organizations must promote a multicultural environment that leverages differences experienced within teams, within strategic development of initiatives, and in the development of organizational policies (Dwyer 2016: 285).

Managers should create systems for their employees who connect with other employees of various generations (Bano, Vyas and Gupta 2015: 361). They mention that employees could be trained to be active listeners, be supportive, and respect diversity at work. Such projects may theoretically draw on the intensity of each

generation, which would also help to increase work commitments among employees of different generations. Furthermore, the program could also help in creating an environment of fun and humor in the workplace (Bano, Vyas and Gupta 2015: 361).

According to Lawton and De Quino (2015: 24) equally important for both generations is the information which one generation can offer and the other can receive and the key to all strategic decisions and successful interactions among work teams relies on dedication and team work. One generation may have the power to make up for another's weakness (Lawton and De Quino 2015: 24). Swan (2012: 271) agrees with this statement, he says "a multi-generational workforce brings a diverse set of skills, complementing the attributes that help strengthen the effectiveness and capabilities of the organization". According to Brecton, Walker and Jones-Farmer (2014: 176) due to the generational life experiences, personal values also differ. Moreover, Tomislav (2014: 617) says that work preferences include distinctive job characteristics and any potential match or mismatch in generational preferences and the expected job performance could have a positive or a negative outcome across generational cohorts, emphasizing the importance of understanding generational differences.

Moritz (2014) says, different generations value different rewards; therefore, although one may appreciate the time-off, another may prefer the performance bonus or other incentive. Furthermore, taking into account the varying beliefs, caring for different generations is considered key to retaining employees (Moritz 2014). The above statement is echoed by Amayah and Gedro (2014: 36) as they found that there are significant differences between generations with respect to what they view as important in their working lives and that has critical implications for organizations. Snigdha-Rai and Chawla (2015: 96) say that generational gaps can be seen more as an advantage than an on - the-job burden. Moreover, it is true that generational differences might lead to conflict among employees and resultantly lead to stress and low engagement (Snigdha-Rai and Chawla 2015: 96). However, on the other hand, it would build a positive community and increase commitment, motivation and overall productivity in organizations if these differences are handled effectively (Snigdha-Rai and Chawla 2015: 96).

The above section discussed the values and work domain of the generational cohorts that are included in this study. As human beings, we have to make some

generalizations to cope with our experiences, and companies have to do the same to have a workplace that is harmonious.

Table 2.2

Work values profiles of the different generational cohorts

BABY-BOOMERS

"BIRTH YEARS	1946 - 1964
CURRENT AGE	50s and 60s
EDUCATION	A birth right
VALUE	Success
WORK ETHIC	Driven, workaholic
PREFERRED WORK ENVIRONMENT	Flat hierarchy, democratic, warm & friendly
LEADERSHIP STYLE	Participative, accessible,
WHAT THEY WANT FROM WORK	A loyal employer, the chance to mentor others, respect
HOW TO MOTIVATE THEM	Utilize their experience and suggestions, leverage their optimism, offer opportunities for collaboration"

GEN X

"BIRTH YEARS	1965 - 1979
CURRENT AGE	Late 30s to early 50s
EDUCATION	A way to get there
VALUE	Work/life balance
WORK ETHIC	Balance – work smarter with greater output
PREFERRED WORK ENVIRONMENT	Functional, positive, efficient, fast-paced and flexible
LEADERSHIP STYLE	Self-directed, hands-off, flexible

WHAT THEY WANT FROM WORK

A trustworthy employer, problem-solving opportunities, competent colleagues, autonomy

HOW TO MOTIVATE THEM

Give them credit for their work, assign them meaningful tasks they can complete individually”

GEN Y/MILLENNIALS

“BIRTH YEARS	1980 - 1994
CURRENT AGE	Early 20s to mid-30s
EDUCATION	An incredible expense
VALUE	Individuality, flexibility
WORK ETHIC	Ambitious, entrepreneurial, done at 5pm
PREFERRED WORK ENVIRONMENT	Collaborative, creative, diverse. Want to work where and when they like
LEADERSHIP STYLE	Cooperative, collaborative, inclusive
WHAT THEY WANT FROM WORK	An empathetic employer, meaningful work, mentorship, flexibility
HOW TO MOTIVATE THEM	Match them up with inspiring leaders, provide immediate feedback, especially reinforcement, let the present their successes”

Source: Robson (2015: 650)

The tables above exclude the veterans as most of them are no longer in the workplace and some are exiting the workplace due to retirement however it outlines the work value profile of three generational cohorts, work ethic, preferred work environment, leadership style and what they want from work.

2.7 Technology and the multigenerational workforce

Traveling from a typewriter to the I-Phone via PCs, internet, e-mail mobiles in just over 20 years just underlines the pace at which technology is transforming the workplace and continues to do so (Bennett, Pitt and Price 2012: 279). According to Kazi and Karodia (2013: 50) the contemporary workplace is radically different from what it was

20 years ago. Cummings and Worley (2005:10) postulate that diversity in the workplace means more than just cultural or racial differences, however a diverse workplace encompasses a range of other issues. They further state that, the outcomes of diversity are people who bring different skills and experiences to the workplace and who have specific needs, interests, aspirations and lifestyles.

Cody, Green and Lynch (2012: 201) say, although generations interpret technology differently and approach technology training tools with varying degrees of competence, this does not mean that technology is more or less appropriate for use with one generation or another. In fact, with technological advancements growing, much attention has been paid to how these changes impact generations (Cody, Green and Lynch 2012: 201). It is quite clear that technology has innovated learning in many respects. Jan (2014: 21) says that, "the internet has grown from a curiosity with limited uses to a powerful marketing tool that can connect service employees directly with users".

According to Wesolowsky (2014) some of the most important benefits that the new technological revolution has begun to bring is a transition in the way workers work together. He says "it is unlikely that office meetings will become a thing of a past or that the use of pen and paper will be phased out anytime soon, but new technologies are beginning to run along the old and knowing how to balance both is the key to successfully managing digital workspaces". Multi-generational workplace could bring many advantages as far as technology is concerned because the knowledge and experience of senior employees could be passed down to the next generation, while the same senior employees could be open to social and collaborative technologies from the younger generation, this would then create well-rounded employees (Wesolowsky 2014). Thanks to technology and online communication tools, workers can now work together to tackle and fix issues whether they are located in a typical business office or anywhere else in the world (Jan 2014: 20). "As long as there are cellphones and internet connection available, workers in today's workforce can easily collaborate" Jan (2014: 20).

Jan (2014: 20) mentions that modern leaders face the additional pressure of managing multi-generational teams made up of different generational groups who are familiar with technology, but the latest collaboration technologies now emerging in the

workplace will allow leaders to build diverse multi-generational teams with the ability to solve complex problems and develop innovative solutions to organizational problems. Haeger and Lingham (2014: 319) say that, our current environment will be experiencing shifts in how work and life are managed and affected by the advancement in technology and how such technologies are utilized by the four generations that are now co-existing in this environment. They argue that technology radically shifts how we interact with others, and this shift drastically affects our work environment interactions, particularly when different generations are involved with different expectations and behavioural norms and begin to clash. They continue to say there is clear evidence that technology is changing how people manage both work and life spheres and how younger generations are savvier with technology.

The older generations are affected by the behaviour of the younger generation around texting in meeting and using other social media at work (Haeger and Lingham 2014: 319). Bennett, Pitt and Price (2012: 279) say that the older generations must embrace technology and harness it, however, in order to achieve this, they require support from the younger generations. They say that, support and mentoring is a two-way relationship, and as a crucial generational transition takes place, it must be managed consciously and willingly to avoid war of talents. Jan (2014: 21) agrees that, teamwork may be difficult to promote as it was in the era before digital collaborations, however, online collaboration tools available to employees may hold the keys to building innovative, cross-generational teams.

According to Bennett, Pitt and Price (2012: 219) technologies let people and ideas interact and communicate and information technology devices are just the beginning of a work culture that frees itself from the boundaries of time and space. They say “as corporate culture evolves from hierarchies to networks, work life is changing in profound ways and today’s workforce has to react to this by offering exactly what workforce on the move needs”. If the challenges of handling a multi-generational workforce are not addressed correctly or early enough, organizations may be harmed. Technology should serve as a mediator to help organizations maximize the benefits of demographic change (Wesolowsky 2014). According to Massis (2016: 86) the library’s mission is to serve as the information provider on campus and the IT department’s mission is to support the technology systems on campus and manage a technological infrastructure used by the library to deliver that information. Technology

was not going to replace library services but would be used as an essential tool to allow its mission to be fulfilled (Massis 2011: 86).

Table 2.3

Diversity in an organization and its advantages to the employees and the organization.

DIVERSITY IN AN ORGANIZATION	ADVANTAGES FOR THE EMPLOYEE	ADVANTAGES FOR THE ORGANIZATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ “STEREOTYPING PREJUDICE ✚ DISCRIMINATION ✚ CONFLICT/MISUNDERSTANDING ✚ DISRESPECT ✚ LANGUAGE COMMUNICATION GAPS ✚ HIERARCHICAL LEVELS ✚ CULTURAL DIFFERENCES ✚ MISUNDERSTANDING OF DIFFERENT DIVERSITY DIMENSIONS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RELIGIONS - GENDER - BELIEFS - AGE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Learn about each other ✚ Improve communication ✚ Friendships are formed ✚ Trust ✚ Respect ✚ Work as a team/unity ✚ Less stereotyping/discrimination ✚ Personal development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Increased productivity ✚ Goals are achieved ✚ Creativity/new ideas ✚ Improved client service ✚ Create an interesting environment

Source: Joubert (2017: 370)

2.8 Summary

The literature reviewed in this chapter discussed generational diversity in the workplace, the different generational cohorts as well as the technological aspect of generational diversity. It looked at the different generational cohorts that currently co-

exist in the workplace, the work and life values of the different cohorts as well as the technological aspects in different generations.

The next chapter outlines the methodology that was followed in conducting this study.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses and explains the research methodology employed in this study. The methodology is one of the most important aspects in research because it's where the actual research is conducted (Sekaran and Bougie 2014: 95). While the previous chapter reviewed literature relevant to the study, this chapter sets out the methodological processes followed in carrying out the study. A methodology is a systematic, focused and orderly collection of data for the purpose of obtaining information from them to solve or answer research problems or questions (Gronhaug 2011: 85).

This chapter consists of three parts which are research design, data collection and data analysis. The technique for collecting data was developed and the strategies for collecting data were put into practice in the data collection part and this section includes population, sampling, questionnaire design and administering of questionnaires. The data collection part explains how the data was analysed.

3.2 Research design

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2014: 95) "a research design is a complete plan for connecting the conceptual research problems to the relevant empirical research and it speaks to what data, and how this is going to address the researcher's research questions". Research design is about planning strategies to find things out systematically with the intention that the findings should contribute to the existing body of knowledge (Rugg and Petre 2007: 60).

3.2.1 Quantitative method

Given (2008: 1) stipulates that "quantitative data is any data that is in numeric form, such as statistics and percentages". Quantitative data allows the researcher to reach a large portion of the population and it provides a precise and numerical data that can be easily interpreted (Qwabe 2016: 31). After careful consideration the researcher chose the quantitative method for this study. The researcher hopes that this study will contribute in identifying and managing generational diversity not only in academic libraries but organisations at large in South Africa.

3.3 Research context

3.3.1 Target population

According to Sekaran (2013: 240) population refers to the entire group of people, events, or things of interest that the researcher wishes to investigate. While Castillo (2009: 1) says, a target population refers to the entire group of individuals or objects to which researchers are interested in generalizing the conclusions and it usually has varying characteristics. Castillo (2009: 1) states that "a target population is also known as the theoretical population". The population for this study consists of all library staff members from academic libraries in KZN excluding UNISA. Initially, UNISA was included in the study but during the collection of data, there were a lot of complications with getting the ethics clearance at UNISA which delayed the study, because of that UNISA was excluded. According to LIASA (Library and Information Association of South Africa), the KwaZulu-Natal province has five academic libraries (Anon: 2015), listed on the table below. The researcher phoned each of the mentioned institutions to get the number of staff in the library with the exception of DUT, the researcher was an employee of the DUT during this period and therefore the number of library staff was accessed via DUT library SharePoint.

Table 3.1

Sample

	INSTITUTION	NUMBER OF LIBRARY STAFF MEMBERS
1.	University of KwaZulu Natal	104
2.	University of Zululand	36
3.	Durban University of technology	81
4.	Mangosuthu University of Technology	37
TOTAL		258

3.3.2 Sampling

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010: 266) sampling is the process of selecting sufficient number of right elements from the population, so that a study of the sample and understanding of its properties or characteristics make it possible for us to generate such properties or characteristics to the population elements. Welman and Kruger (2012: 39) say that “the purpose of sampling is to save time and costs or sometimes it may be impractical to survey the whole population”. They highlight the two main types of sampling as probability and non-probability sampling.

Leedy and Ormrod (2001: 196) say that, probability sampling enables the researcher to indicate the probability with which sample results deviate in differing degrees from the corresponding population values while non-probability sampling is a technique where the probability of each element of the population being included in the sample is not known and is thus generally regarded as not being very representative of the population. Examples of a probability sample include systematic and cluster, simple random and stratified random sampling (Sekaran and Bougie (2010: 266).

This study included all library and information workers in academic libraries in KwaZulu-Natal. The KZN province according to the Library and Information Association of South Africa has 3 public universities and 2 universities of technology however the number of academic libraries used in this study is four (refer to table 3.1).

A cluster sampling method was used. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010: 391) “cluster sampling is a probability sampling design in which the sample comprises groups or chunks of elements with intragroup heterogeneity and intergroup homogeneity”. This method is appropriate for this study because the cluster samples offer more heterogeneity within groups and more homogeneity among groups (Sekaran and Bougie 2016: 263). Below is a table that states the sample size for each institution according to Sekaran and Bougie (2016: 263). A census was conducted in the institutions with a fewer number of staff.

Table 3.2**Sample size**

	INSTITUTION	NUMBER OF STAFF MEMBERS	SAMPLE SIZE
1.	University of KwaZulu Natal	104	80
2.	University of Zululand	36	36
3.	Durban University of technology	81	66
4.	Mangosuthu University of Technology	37	37
TOTAL		258	219

Table 13.3 from Sekaran and Bougie (2013: 268) was used to determine the sample size.

3.3.3 Data collection

Data collection is a fundamental and integral aspect of the research design (Sekaran and Bougie 2010: 180). Only questionnaires will be considered in the collection of information relevant to this study. Sekaran and Bougie (2010: 180) state that “primary data refers to information obtained first-hand by the researcher on the variables of interest for the specific purpose of the study and secondary data refers to information gathered from sources that already exists”. Rossouw, (2005: 129) says questionnaires may form the basis of larger scale national opinion polls.

In order for the researcher to solve the research problem and also collect the required data, a self-administered questionnaire was designed. The questionnaires were personally delivered and collected by the researcher. The data for this study was quantitative in nature and was initially meant to be collected from all library and information workers from the five academic libraries involved in this study (DUT, MUT, UKZN, UNISA, UNIZULU). However, the researcher ended up collecting data from only four academic libraries in KwaZulu-Natal excluding UNISA. On the 14th of September 2018, the researcher wrote to the research ethics committee of the UNISA asking for gatekeeper permission. On the 17th of September 2018, the researcher received a response from the research integrity administrator who acknowledged

receipt of the documents and promised to peruse them and get back to the researcher. The next communication from the UNISA research integrity administrator was that the researcher changes the research design. The researcher referred the query to her supervisor and the administrator was then asked to give reasons as to why the research design must be changed, there were no reasons given. Since gatekeeper's permission from UNISA research committee was not forthcoming, they were excluded from the study. Furthermore, as UNISA consisted of only 8 people from the Durban branch of UNISA (main campus is situated in Pretoria), the researcher decided to go ahead with the research without including the UNISA branch that consisted of 8 staff members.

3.3.4 Data collection instruments

Bless and Higson-Smith (2010: 156) describe a questionnaire as an instrument of data collection consisting of a standardized series of questions relating to the research topic, to be answered in writing by respondents chosen for the study. Self-administered questionnaires were used in this study. Once the gatekeeper permission letters were obtained by the researcher and the respondents agreed, they were given a time limit of a week to fill in the questionnaires, the respondents were called and reminded of the questionnaires and a final reminder call was made two days before the questionnaires were due for collection. According to Sekeran and Bougie (2010: 116) questionnaires have the advantage of obtaining data more efficiently in terms of researcher's time, energy, and costs.

3.3.5 Questionnaire design

A questionnaire is a preformulated written set of questions to which respondents record their answers, usually within rather closely defined alternatives (Sekaran and Bougie 2014: 147). They further state that, questionnaires are an efficient data collection mechanism when a study is descriptive or explanatory in nature and are generally less expensive and time consuming than interviews and observations, but they also introduce a much larger chance of nonresponse and nonresponse error. This was proven to be correct in this study as many respondents did not return their questionnaires despite the researcher asking them to and even offering more copies of the questionnaire in case the respondents lost a copy. Out of 258 questionnaires that were distributed by the researcher to the 4 academic libraries in KZN only 110

(55%) were returned and analyzed. Questionnaires are generally designed to collect large numbers of quantitative data and can be administered personally, mailed to the respondents, or electronically distributed (Sekaran and Bougie 2014: 147). A pre-testing of the questionnaire was created and administered to people that were not part of the population on the 1st of August 2018. A sum of 10 pretesting questionnaires was distributed to colleagues from different departments excluding the library at the Durban University of Technology, five of them were academics and the other 5 were support staff.

3.3.6 Administering the questionnaire

After the sample was identified, questionnaires were distributed. All questionnaires were delivered personally by the researcher to ensure maximum return rate. The first distribution took place in August 2018. Data was collected until December 2018. Because the study included all library and information workers, all levels of staff were included in the survey, from stack attendants to library directors. The first batch of questionnaires was personally delivered by the researcher to the University of Zululand, next was the Durban University of Technology, Mangosuthu University of Technology was next and lastly being the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Some respondents asked for a period of a week to have the questionnaires answered while others asked for two weeks. The researcher delivered and collected all the questionnaires personally.

3.3.7 Data analysis

According to Welman and Kruger (2012: 199) after research has been conducted, the obtained results must be interpreted. According to Mountain (2011:26) analyzing data involves two steps, firstly, making sure that data collected is practicable, identifying patterns and themes. Once data processing has been completed the use of tables, graphs, figures should be used to present and summarize data collected. The data collected from the responses was analysed with SPSS version 25.0. The results presented the descriptive statistics in the form of graphs, cross tabulations and other figures for the quantitative data that was collected. Inferential techniques include the use of correlations and chi square test values; which were interpreted using the p-values.

3.3.8 Evaluation of research methodology used

No measurement technique in social science is perfect, as a result it is important that researchers always evaluate the measures that they use (Bless and Higson-Smith 2004:126). Busha and Harter (1980: 161) define research evaluation as an attempt to measure operations in terms of the goals of the project or end results sought. The self-administered questionnaires used in this study generated the data required. This data together with the related literature reviewed enabled the researcher to address the research questions generated to meet the objectives of the study. The population of the study was carefully identified and sampled before being surveyed so as to ensure that findings are a true reflection of the population under study. However, as the researcher has already explained there was a lot of difficulty in securing questionnaire returns, the researcher has however secured an adequate return rate of (55%) for analysis and reporting. This statement is backed up by Baruch and Holtom (2008: 1140), they mention that the average level of response rate is 52.7%.

3.3.9 Validity and Reliability

The difference between information required and information obtained is referred to as measurement error, and it is important to avoid this pitfall in designing a questionnaire (Jinabhai 1998: 267). According to Bless and Higson-Smith (2010: 137) Content validity is achieved by referring to the literature relating to the area of study. In this regard, the design of the questionnaire provided high content validity and the techniques used were evaluated by pretesting to ensure that the instrument measured what it was supposed to measure.

The questionnaire developed focused on the theoretical dimensions of the study and ensured that the variable items were relevant to the research objectives as well as applicable to the respondent. Bless and Higson-Smith (2010: 139) make emphasis on the importance of the instrument being tailored to the needs of the respondents for whom it is intended.

TABLE 3.3
VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

"CHARACTERISTIC	Method used
VALIDITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Phrasing the questions concisely to avoid ambiguity ✚ Checking appropriateness of responses to questions ✚
RELIABILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Making questions easy enough for respondents to comprehend them easily ✚ Providing clear instructions in the questionnaire ✚ Avoiding leading questions"

SOURCE: MUSHONGA (2015: 59)

3.3.10 Description of the questionnaire

The research tool that was used for this study consisted of a pre-coded questionnaire which was carefully designed to facilitate maximum response and at the same time obtain more detailed information. The questionnaire was directed to library staff members from DUT, MUT, UNIZULU and UKZN which formed the unit of analysis.

3.4 Ethical considerations

The proving methodology of this research was approved by the Faculty of Accounting and informatics Ethics Committee with Ethics clearance number REC 18/42 (Appendix C) at the Durban University of Technology prior to the commencement of this proving study to ensure the protection and safety of all participants. The requirement for seeking permission from each University included in this study was difficult and proved extremely challenging and a very time-consuming task. The researcher started to approach the included universities for gatekeepers' letters from May 2018 until September 2018. Between the month of May and September 2018 the researcher would receive gatekeeper permission letters from the different Universities and data was collected as when the gatekeeper permission letters were received. Permission

to administer questionnaires for the study was obtained from the library directors from DUT, MUT, UNIZULU and UKZN. Participation was voluntary and an informed consent form (Appendix A) was attached to sign. Participants were made aware of the fact that they were under no obligation and were free to withdraw from the study at any point and that the questionnaires would not contain personal questions and they were not obliged to answer.

3.5 Anonymity and confidentiality

Confidentiality was maintained during the course of the study by making sure that participants were not asked to fill in their personal information. The participants were also assured that all information gathered would be treated confidentially and with anonymity.

3.6 Summary

This chapter presented the methodology and data collection techniques that were used to carry out this study. Questionnaires were used as a data collecting tool and a pretesting exercise was conducted for reliability and validity. Ethical issues were also taken into account to ensure that the research was conducted within established ethical parameters. The next chapter presents the findings of the study.

Chapter 4: Statement of findings, interpretation and discussion of data

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results and discusses the findings obtained from the questionnaires in this study. The questionnaire was the primary tool that was used to collect data and was distributed to DUT, MUT, UNIZULU and UKZN. The data collected from the responses was analyzed with SPSS version 25.0. The results will present the descriptive statistics in the form of graphs, cross tabulations and other figures for the quantitative data that was collected. Inferential techniques include the use of correlations and chi square test values; which are interpreted using the p-values.

4.2 The Sample

In total, 258 questionnaires were despatched and 110 were returned which gave a 42.6% response rate.

4.3 The Research Instrument

The research instrument consisted of 18 items, with a level of measurement at a nominal or an ordinal level.

4.4 Cross tabulations

The traditional approach to reporting a result requires a statement of statistical significance. A **p-value** is generated from a **test statistic**. A significant result is indicated with " $p < 0.05$ ". A second Chi square test was performed to determine whether there was a statistically significant relationship between the variables (rows vs columns). The null hypothesis states that there is no association between the two, the alternate hypothesis indicates that there is an association. The variables are the Pearson's chi square and fisher's exact test.

4.5 Correlations

Bivariate correlation was also performed on the (ordinal) data. The results are found in the appendix (see excel sheet: Correlations appendix) the results indicate the following patterns.

Positive values indicate a directly proportional relationship between the variables and a negative value indicates an inverse relationship. All significant relationships are indicated by a * or **.

4.6 Section A: Biographic data

This section summarises the biographical characteristics of the respondents.

4.6.1 Institution to which the respondents belong

Table 4.1
Institutions to which the respondents belong
N=125

	Frequency	Percent
UKZN	13	10.4
UNIZULU	25	20.0
DUT	51	40.8
MUT	36	28.8
Total	125	100.0

The table above represents the number and percentage of the respondents per institution. A little less than half of the respondents were from DUT (40.8%), with the smallest number being from UKZN (10.4%) ($p < 0.001$).

4.6.2 Gender distribution.

Table 4.2
Gender distribution
N=125

	Frequency	Percent
Female	72	57.6
Male	53	42.4
Total	125	100.0

Overall, the ratio of males to females is approximately 2:3 (42.4%: 57.6%) ($p = 0.089$). In keeping with organisation and national statics, this study shows that there are

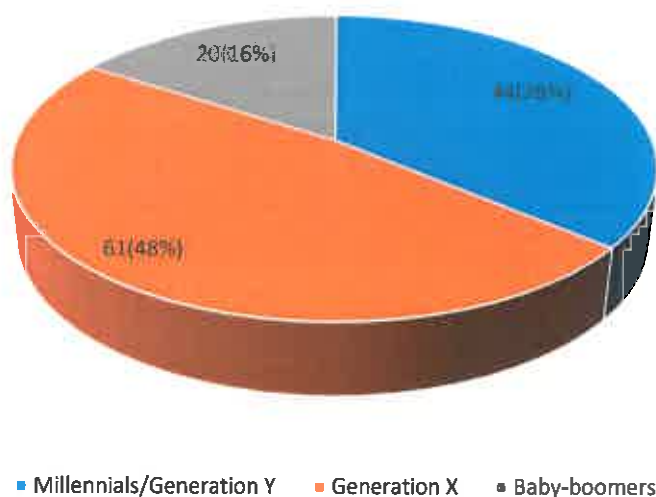
generally more women than men in the library and information sector. Therefore, it is not surprising that more women took part in this study as compared to men.

4.6.3 Generational cohorts

Figure 4.1

Generational cohorts

N=125



The figure above indicates the generational cohorts that the respondents belong to. Nearly half of the respondents (48.0%) indicated that they belonged to Generation X, with the smallest grouping being Baby boomers (16.0%) ($p < 0.001$). It is clear from this study that the majority of employees in the library and information sector are Generation X at (48.0%) while Millennials follow as the next big number of employees at (36.0%) and the Baby-boomers being the smallest group of employees at (16.0%). This study proves a statement by Jonck, Van der Walt and Sobayeni (2017: 3) to be correct, which stipulates that “in the workplace, there are no members of the veteran generation as members have retired and those that are still employed may only be offering scarce skill services”. No members of the veteran generation participated in this study because none were available during the data collection process from the organisations included in this study.

4.7 Section Analysis

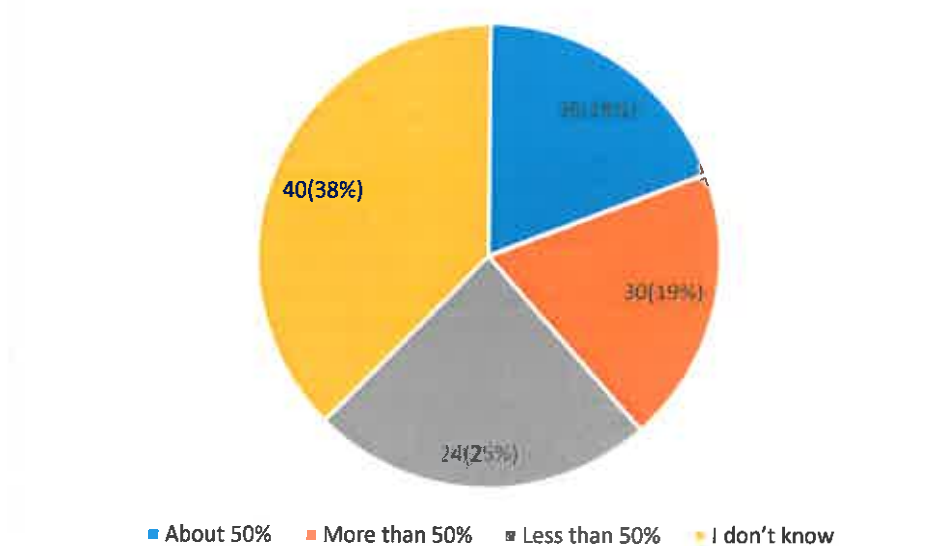
The section that follows analyses the scoring patterns of the respondents per variable per section. The results are first presented using summarised percentages for the variables that constitute each section. Results are then further analysed according to the importance of the statements.

4.7.1 Conflict in relation to generational diversity

Figure 4.2

Conflict in relation to generational diversity

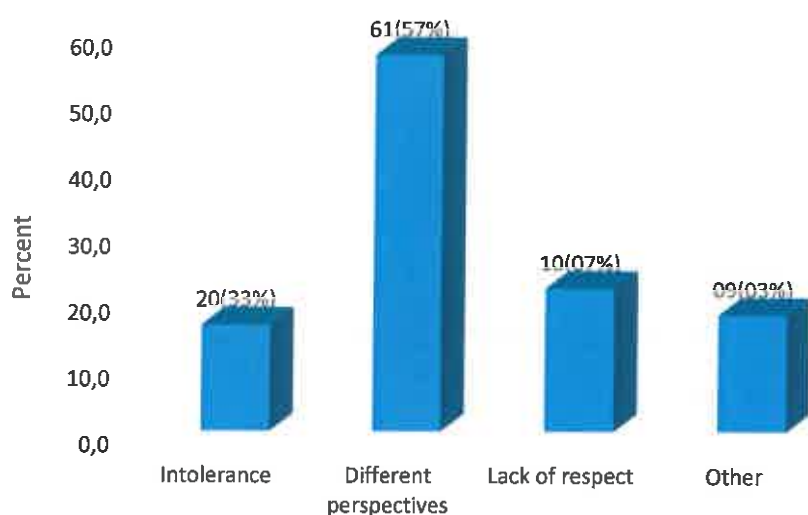
N=125



A little more than a third of the respondents (38%) did not know whether or not there was conflict related to generational diversity in their workplace. Similar numbers of respondents indicated 50% and more than 50% (19%). Approximately a quarter (24%) indicated less than 50% of conflict is related to generational diversity.

4.7.2 Reasons for generational diversity

Figure 4.3
Reasons for generational diversity
N=125



(Multiple responses were allowed.)

The majority of respondents (57%) indicated that different perspectives was the main reason for generation diversity in their workplace. While 07% indicated that it was lack of respect and 33% indicated it was intolerance. 03% of the respondents felt that there were other reasons that contribute to generational diversity apart from the ones they were asked to select from.

4.7.3 Is generational diversity a problem in your library?

Table 4.3
Is generational diversity a problem in your library?
N=125

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	55	43
No	33	27

I don't know	37	30
Total	125	100.0

Significantly more respondents (44%) indicated that generational diversity was a problem in their library. About a quarter of the sample indicated that no, generational diversity is not a problem in their libraries while (30%) indicated that they did not know whether or not generational diversity is a problem in their library.

4.7.4 Comments on why respondents think or do not think generational diversity is a problem in their library

Table 4.4

Comments on why respondents think or do not think generational diversity is a problem in their libraries.

N=74

Comment	Frequency
Baby-boomer generation sometimes expect to be treated differently. They like acting like parents to the younger generation while we are all equals at work	1
Discrimination amongst different generations	1
Diversity is good, it allows for different ideas	2
The older generation does not respect the younger generation	8
Management does not respect other staff members	8
Everyone is guided by the library policy and procedures.	1
Generational diversity is a problem in perspective and the way of doing things	1
Generational diversity is not a problem, however misunderstandings between generations can sometimes course conflict.	2
Generational diversity often poses different views which creates the conflicts	1
I'm not aware of any generational gaps in our library	2

In most cases older generations believe in tried and tested methods while the younger generation believe in new and innovative ways of doing things	3
In some instances some staff do not want to obey library etiquette to enable the library to function.	1
Management is made up of only females who possess LIS qualifications yet there are men with same qualification	1
Most of the time some claim that they have got more experience than others. Mostly it's the manner to which we approach each other, it's not right.	1
Older staff prefer quiet spaces while the younger generation prefer social and noisy spaces	1
Only old people in higher positions	1
People of different generations have different perceptions, ideas and knowledge	1
Perceptions vary regularly and there are ethical conflicts in approaching and understanding working environment issues and duties	1
Problems can be solved	1
Resistance to embrace new technology and change from older employees or new members of staff	3
Sometimes we undermine each other because of age	1
Staff and students/users are comfortable with their intentions with one another and the service offered or received is of importance	1
Staff from different generations find it difficult working and adapting to each other and that often result in conflicts	1
Staff members try to get along despite age differences	1
The attitude of staff and their unwillingness to do library work and additional assistance when asked to	1
The veterans expect the younger generation to do all the work while that at work everyone is equal.	1
There are so many reasons since we are coming from different backgrounds and environment	1

There is generational diversity in our library, it is caused by different perspectives, lack of respect, intolerance and different preferences	5
There is no skills sharing, old people don't want to pass down their experience	1
There is no team work. Different sections with different generations keep to themselves	1
There's a lot respect amongst us as workers. Whenever there's conflict, we always find a solution and reach an agreement of some sort	2
We all try to get along	3
We disagree a lot	1
We do get along as employees of different generations and we understand each other.	3
We have seminars that address the issue of generational diversity in a working environment	2
We take each others ideas and opinions into consideration and respect one another	2
We treat each other with respect regardless of age. We come to a compromise whenever there are disagreements.	1
When they forget that we are all equal at a workplace and we need to respect one another	2
Workwise, the older generations are more cautious with loyalty, authority and security while the younger is more tech-savvy and independent.	2
Yes because of the changes that one finds in the workplace. Change is hard to embrace especially if one is in generational age gap.	1

The above responses show the common factor that causes this diversity between the different generations is to adapt and accommodate one another, all these generations realising that they may be different however they are all working towards the same goal. According to Hrycaj and Blessinger (2013: 278) older people today perceive younger people as using too much slang, having poor communication skills, and being

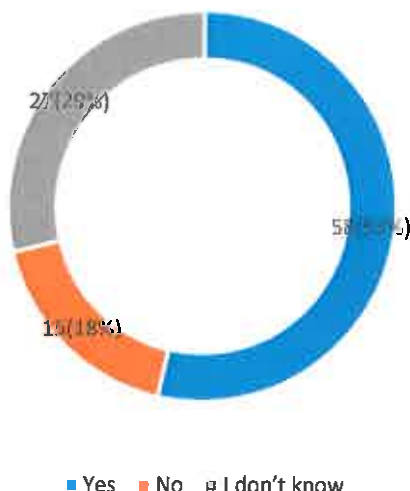
difficult, entitled, and service- focused. When these now older people were the age of Millennials today, previous generations used the same descriptors to characterize them (Hrycaj and Blessinger 2013: 278).

4.7.5 Difference in age as the cause of generational diversity in academic libraries

Figure 4.4

Differences in age as the cause of generational diversity in academic libraries

N=125



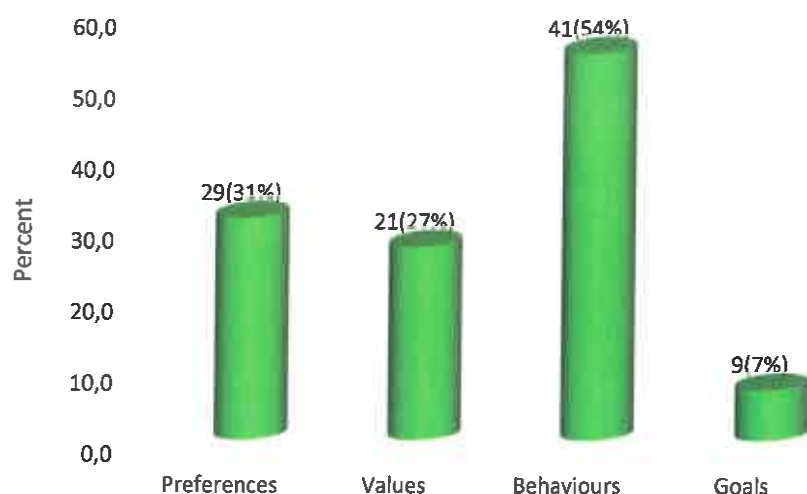
This figure reflects that more than half of the respondents (53%) believed that indeed age difference was the cause of generational diversity in their libraries, while 29% did not know whether this was true or not and 18% believed that No, that is not the case.

4.7.6 The main reasons for generational conflict

Figure 4.5

Main reasons for generational conflict

N=125



(Multiple responses were allowed.)

This figure reflects that, more than half of the population believed that behaviour was the reason for generational conflict, while 31% of the population believed that the reason for generational conflict is preferences. Only 27% of the population believed that values were the reason for generational conflict, while 7% believed it was goals.

4.7.7 Groups in which generational diversity is mostly present

Table 4.5

Groups in which generational diversity is mostly present

N=125

	Frequency	Percent
Co-workers of the same age group	4	3
Co-workers of different age group	49	39
Both	72	58
Total	125	100.0

Significantly more respondents identified diversity between both the groups (58%). A very small number of respondents believed that this existed between members of the

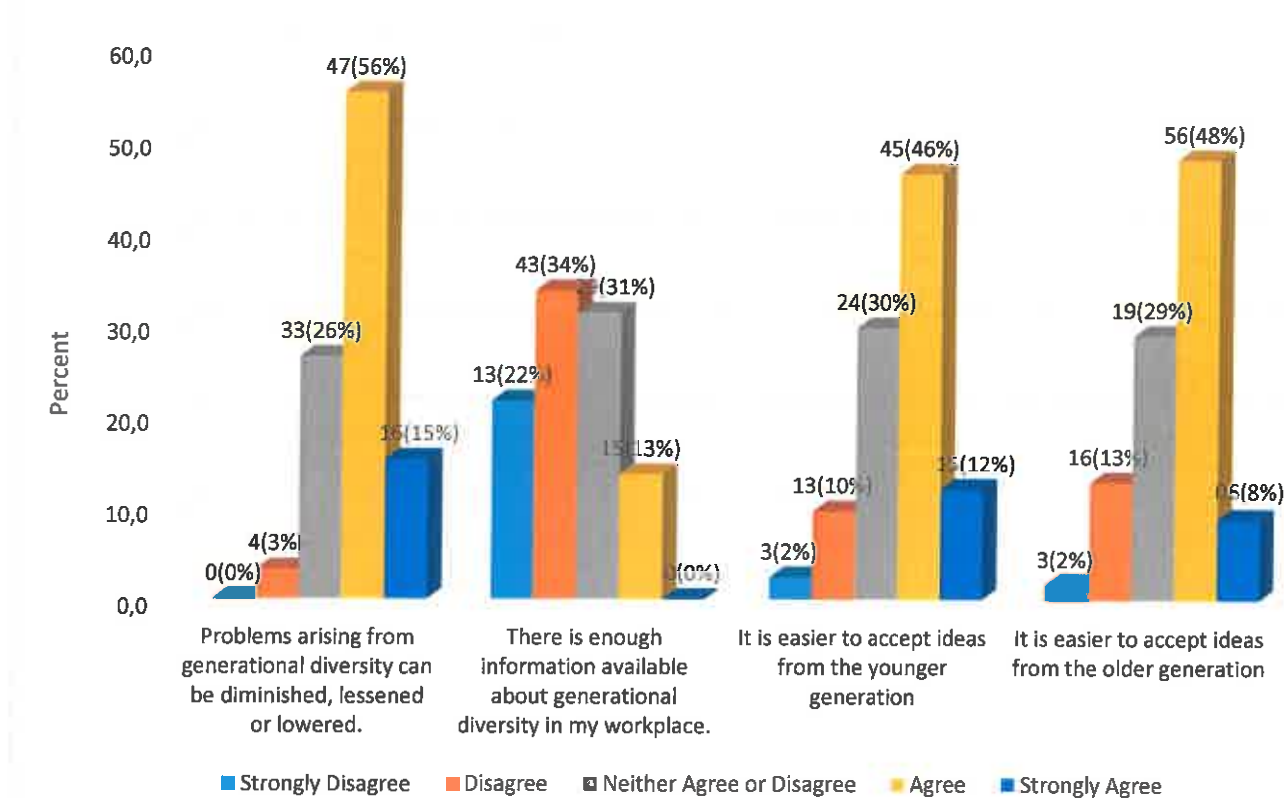
same age. About 39% of the respondents thought that generational diversity is mostly present in co-workers of different age groups.

4.7.8 Items containing the Likert scale.

Figure 4.6

Items containing the Likert scale.

N=125



The first statement indicates that more than half of the population agrees that problems arising from generational diversity can be diminished or lessened, it was encouraging that library staff members think generational diversity can be lessened or even diminished from their workplace and only 3% of the population disagreed with this statement.

In the second statement 34% of the respondents disagreed that there is enough information available about generational diversity in their workplaces, which is

dissappointing because information of such importance should ideally be made available to staff members.

Almost half of the population agreed with the third statement that, it is easier to accept ideas from the younger generation while just a little less than 10% of the population strongly agreed that accepting ideas from the older generation is easier.

The following patterns are observed:

- Some statements show (significantly) higher levels of agreement whilst other levels of agreement are lower (but still greater than levels of disagreement)
- The significance of the differences is tested and shown in the table.

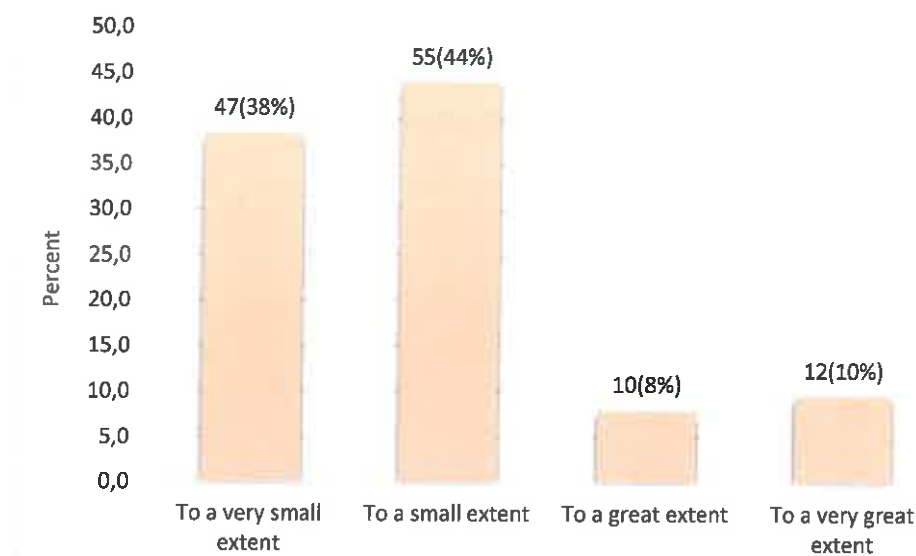
To determine whether the scoring patterns per statement were significantly different per option, a chi square test was done. The null hypothesis claims that similar numbers of respondents scored across each option for each statement (one statement at a time). The alternate states that there is a significant difference between the levels of agreement and disagreement. There were similar patterns regarding which generation it was easier accepting ideas from.

4.7.9 The extent of difficulty when working in the same team with different generations

Figure 4.7

The extent of difficulty when working in the same team with different generations

N=125



This figure shows that 44% of the respondents indicated that this experience was observed on a small extent. While only 8% thought it was to a great extent and 10% thought it was to a very great extent. It is encouraging to see that library staff members do not see generational diversity as that big an issue that they cannot work together in teams consisting of different generational cohorts.

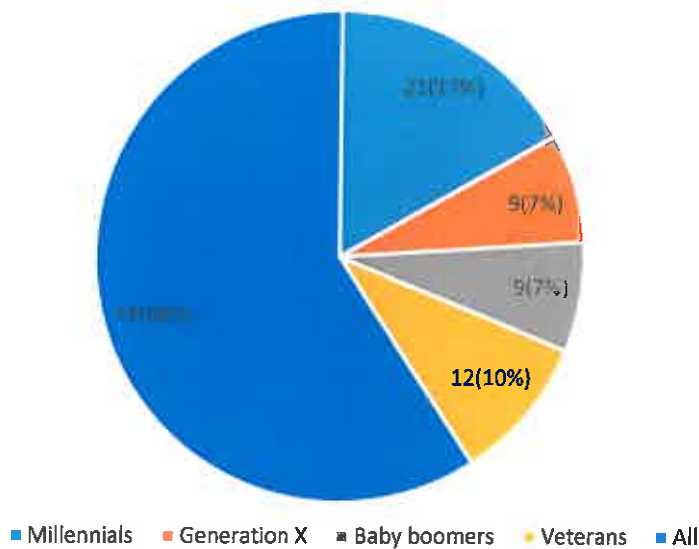
4.7.10 The generational cohort that suffers the most from conflict between different generations

Figure 4.8

The generational cohort that suffers the most from conflict between different generations

N=125

Almost 60% of the respondents believed that all employees suffer as a result of conflict between generations. While



Almost 17% of the population thought millennials suffer most. Almost 10% of the population thought veterans suffer the most while 7% of the population thought both baby boomers and generation X suffer the most. It was interesting to find that in this particular question, some respondents were answering according to the cohort they belonged in, each cohort saying they are the ones that suffer the most. However most of the respondents as indicated in the above figure say that all the generations suffer from generational conflicts.

4.7.11 Are there strategies in place in your library to address generational diversity?

Table 4.6

Are there strategies in your library to address generational diversity?

N=125

Answer	Frequency	Percent
Yes	25	20
No	48	38
I don't know	52	42
Total	125	100

The table illustrates that only a fifth of the respondents (20%) agreed with the question. A total of 38% of the respondents said that there were no strategies in place to address diversity in their workplace while a large portion of 42% had no idea whether or not there were strategies in place in their libraries to address diversity. Respondents who answered yes to this question were then asked to name those strategies (see table 4.6).

4.7.12 Strategies in place to address generational diversity.

Table 4.7

Strategies in place to address generational diversity.

N=24

Comments	Frequency	Percentage
Different interventions are presented	16	13%
HR/University policies	45	36%
The institution has a range of training interventions to address the issue and the staff training and development from time to time host training on such issues	50	40%
We adopt REAHT values by which employees adhere to. The university makes employees to be in line with REAHT and be aware as to how they achieve their goals.	14	11%

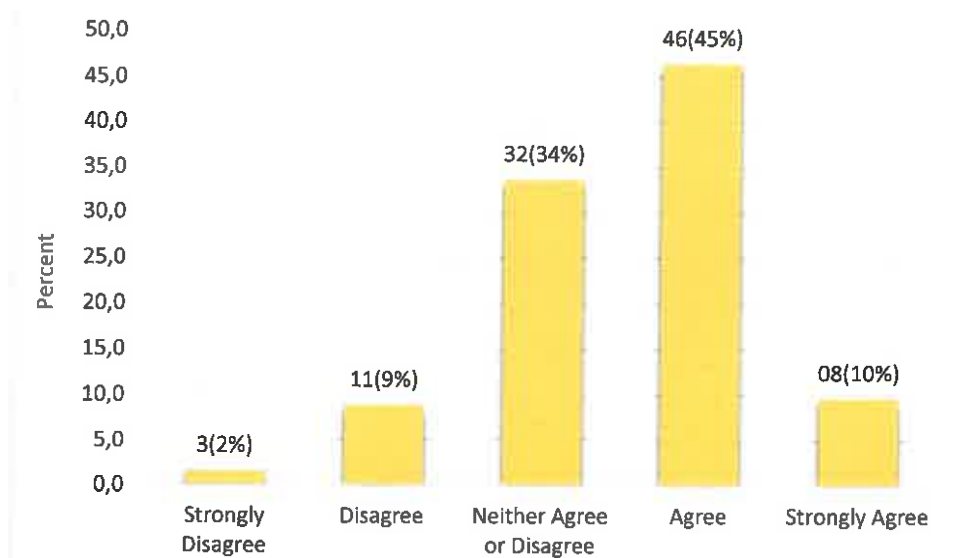
The table above shows that organisations are aware of generational diversity hence they take their staff for workshops and training. Some organisations even have policies on generational diversity, which the researcher was pleased to find out because it meant that there are discussions about generational diversity and its management and it was important enough to warrant implementation of policies on generational diversity.

4.7.13 Challenges associated with values from co-existing generational cohorts in the workplace.

Figure 4.9

Challenges associated with values from co-existing generational cohorts in the workplace.

N=125



45% of the respondents agreed there are challenges associated with values from co-existing generational cohorts in their workplace. 34% of the population neither agreed nor disagreed. Almost 10% strongly agree while 9% disagree and only 2% strongly disagree.

4.7.14 Similarities and differences across generations

Table 4.8

Similarities and differences across generations

N=124

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	71	57
No	15	12
I don't know	38	31

Total 124

100

Significantly more respondents agreed with the statement (57%). However, (31%) did not know whether or not there were any similarities and differences across different generational cohorts and just over 10% (12%) of the population said no, there are no similarities and differences.

4.7.15 Reasons for similarities and differences across generations.

Table 4.9

Reasons for similarities and differences across generations.

N=49

Comment	Frequency
A sense of purpose	1
Acceptance of technology, there are differences there. When technology fails, the older generation saves the day	1
All generations sometimes fail to be cooperative	1
All generations want their voices heard	1
As different generations we always have different opinions and values. The older generation talks and behaves differently from the younger generation	1
At times we work well together, sometimes not	1
Baby-boomers value punctuality, millennials don't. Baby-boomers have a strong work ethic, millennials not so much.	1
Difference is that the new generation is not afraid of change and the old generation would always prefer back to the old way of doing things and criticize any new idea that does not support the old way.	1
Different generations feel strongly about what they believe in, young and old.	1
Different generations have different opinions and beliefs	1
Different ideas in effective leadership. All generations want appreciation and recognition	1

Due to technological challenges, you would find that baby-boomers thrive and understand easily while older staff find it challenging to keep abreast with changes	1
Every generation thinks theirs is superior than the other	1
In terms of behaviours there are similarities and differences depending on various influences from fellow co-workers	1
In terms of values, generation X, baby-boomers and millennials have the same values most importantly respect in terms to bring people together.	1
Intolerance between generations and behaviour	1
Lack of respect	1
Most staff members hold similar qualifications and have enough experience	1
Our work values differ	1
People have different values and behaviours. Respect is virtue that should evolve in every situation	1
Race, background, culture can help in avoiding conflict. When people differ in race, age, culture and language that leads to misunderstanding and conflict	1
Race, gender, religion, cultural activities, preferences etc.	1
Race, gender, social background, cultural diversity and education	1
Same dedicated work ethics	1
Similarities are based on gender, age and race and so are the differences	1
Similarities are professionalism and differences are how we approach the younger generation.	1
Similarities are that we are all striving for the same thing which is student centeredness and differences are our cultures, backgrounds and race	1
Similarities are we value multiple traditions and values and differences are strategies of applying perceptions to practice ethical aspects that balances age difference.	1

Socializing is the most important factor in a workplace and in our library we like to do things together every now and then	1
Sometimes it's like we are all pulling in different directions	1
Sometimes things that are seen as normal or right by the younger generation may be seen as disrespectful by the older generation	1
Staff may be grouped according to the places they come from to accommodate different cultures, beliefs and customs.	1
Staff members socialize, share lunches and have a good laugh however the manner of approach from different generations is the only difference	1
The older generation does things differently as compared to the young generation and therefore causing conflicts at workplace	1
The older generation is more loyal and have stability whilst the younger generation is more flexible and want to finish work at their own pace and time	1
The young generation has new and faster ways of doing things compared to the older generation	1
The young generation is open to change more especially technological change. They are not afraid to start anything new	1
The younger generation speak up, they are assertive, challenge authority and are tech savvy unlike the older generation	1
The younger generation spends time together	1
Through discussions commonalities are often needed	1
Values can be the same across generations however as far as processes are concerned, there are major differences.	1
We are all working towards a common goal which is to provide our users the best service	1
We do not think alike	1
We don't hear each other out	1
We have common interest in achieving institutional goals but differences on how younger generation prefers innovative ways to do so while veterans prefer old trusted ways to achieve this	1
We have different behaviour	1

When we value each other's tradition, that way we can balance the age difference	1
Young staff are grouped together, same with the older staff. Their detail for issues may differ - younger generation prefer less, while older generation prefer comprehensive news or information. The similarities are, they both work hard, understand one another, and they can work as a team in any situation.	1
Younger generation likes to incorporate technology in everything they do while the older generation shy away from technology.	1

4.8 Generational trends

Nwosu, Igwe and Nnadozie (2016: 30) Dealing with diversity in the university libraries means, in part, understanding and relating effectively with people who have different backgrounds and idiosyncrasies. In this study majority of the sample agreed that the different behaviours within the different generational cohorts are the main reason for generational diversity in their workplace. According to (Nwosu, Igwe and Nnadozie 2016: 30) Workplaces such as university libraries are also finding themselves dealing with upside-down hierarchies in which Millennials and Gen Xers are managing older workers who perhaps because of stagnation or plateauing on one rank or those who may have re-joined the workforce after retiring on contract or beginning a new job or career after a layoff. This type of upside-down hierarchy can cause additional frictions. On the other hand, the blend of generations in the workplace can be a tremendous advantage. This statement was proven to be correct by this study, some of the population believe that even though there may be so much differences between the generations, still there are some similarities. All these generations are working for academic libraries towards the goal of achieving the vision and the mission of the institutions to which they are employed. The trend the researcher found during this study was that generational diversity does exist among academic library employees, however it is not something people discuss as frequently as they should.

4.9 Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to provide a full presentation, analysis and the interpretation of the data that was gathered from the library staff from the different

academic libraries in KZN. The overall findings indicate that indeed different generational cohorts do exist in the workplace and there are similarities and differences between these generations. The findings of this study overall suggested generational diversity must be acknowledged and addressed. Management needs to learn to navigate and manage all these generations for their libraries to succeed. that the introduction of a workload model in the university would be perceived positively and would help to address the perceived imbalances and heavy workloads but that there are a range of possible difficulties which also need to be taken into consideration some of which may be difficult to overcome.

The next chapter presents the concluding remarks, suggestions and recommendations of the study.

Chapter 5: Concluding remarks

5.1 Introduction

Chapter four presented the findings from the data and gave a detailed analysis of these. This chapter covers the achievement of the objectives, makes recommendations and draws conclusions. This study was guided by the generational cohort theory; this theory spoke to the objectives of this study as listed below.

5.2 Objectives

The broad objectives of the study were as follows:

- To investigate generational diversity in the cohorts that co-exist in the workplace in the academic libraries in KwaZulu-Natal.
- To ascertain if there are any challenges associated with the values and types of the diverse population and the impacts thereof in the academic libraries in KwaZulu-Natal.
- To ascertain similarities and differences across generations with respect to values, goals, preferences and behaviours in the academic libraries in KwaZulu-Natal.
- To provide strategies to improve diversity management.

5.3 Discussion of critical questions

The critical questions that were generated to meet the objective are as listed and discussed below.

5.3.1 What are the generational diversity cohorts that co-exist in academic libraries in KwaZulu-Natal?

This study revealed that only 3 generational cohorts exist in academic libraries in KZN, namely Millennials/Generation Y (36%), Generation X (48%) as well as the Baby boomers (16%). This study found that the most of employees in the library and information sector are generation Y and the smallest generational cohort are the baby-boomers, it also found that the veteran generational cohort was not available in all academic libraries involved. Literature reviewed in this study supports the above mentioned finding that, the Veteran generation, mostly have retired because of age or have gone on early retirement. This study thus proves this statement to be true and

literature supports this finding, For the first time ever, four generations of employees are working side by side in the same organizations (Bennett, Pitt and Price 2012: 278). Bennet, Pitt and Price (2012: 278) say, all these generations hold different values, morals, dreams, desires, ambitions and style of working. Collins (2004: 64) says, the members of this generation contributes a small portion of the workforce, they bring years of knowledge and experience in the workplace.

5.3.2 What are the challenges associated with the values from co-existing generational cohorts in the workplace?

This study proved that there are challenges associated with values from co-existing generational cohorts in the workplace. The respondents felt that different generations value different things at work e.g. some value incentives for a job well done while others value acknowledgement. Almost 50% of the respondents agreed that there are challenges associated with values from co-existing generational cohorts in their workplace. A little less (34%) of the population neither agreed nor disagreed. Almost 10% strongly agree while 9% disagree and only 2% strongly disagree. According to Brecton, Walker and Jones-Farmer (2014: 176) due to the generational life experiences, personal values also differ. Moreover, Tomislav (2014: 617) says that, work preferences include distinctive job characteristics and any potential match or mismatch in generational preferences and the expected job performance could have a positive or a negative outcome across generational cohorts, emphasizing the importance of understanding generational differences.

5.3.3 Are there any similarities and differences across generations?

This study found that, some of the similarities and differences across generations included the fact that all generations want to have a voice and be heard and that every generation thinks it is superior to the others. The respondents also say that intolerance between generations and lack of respect is another cause of there being differences. However, a small portion (12%) of the population said there are no similarities amongst the different generational cohorts that co-exist in academic libraries. According to Lawton and De Quino (2015: 24) "the knowledge that one generation can give and the other can receive is equally important to both generations". The key to all strategic decisions and successful interactions among work teams relies on dedication and team work (Lawton and De Quino 2015: 24). They say, one generation may have the

strength that complements the weakness of another. Swan (2012: 271) shares the same sentiments, he says, a multi-generational workforce brings a diverse set of skills, complementing the attributes that help strengthen the effectiveness and capabilities of the organization.

5.3.4 What strategies can be used in order to manage generational diversity?

More than half of the population did not know whether or not there were strategies that can be used to manage generational diversity in their workplace, which says that even if they are available they are not easily accessible to staff or they are not made aware of such strategies. Whereas, 38.4% of the population said no, there are no strategies. Literature states that diversity management is the systematic and designed obligation on the part of an organisation, to recruits, select, reward, promotes and retains a diverse mix of employees at any particular point in time, with the aim of combining and utilizing the blend of the uniqueness of each culture (Samuel and Odor 2018:42). According to the data collected during this study, the majority of the population says there are no available strategies that are in place in their workplace that can be used to manage generational diversity. Even though a few of the population seemed to know of a few strategies as listed in the chapter before this one, it was concerning to find that most of them do not know. As literature stated above, it is an obligation for organisations to make such policies freely and easily accessible to all. It was even more concerning to find that some staff members don't know whether or not these strategies exist in their place of work.

5.4 Managing diversity in university libraries

The data collected from this study shows that today's face of workforce diversity is multi-faceted, and therefore the workforce is more diverse than ever before, and more difficult to handle. One is likely to find multi-generations working side by side in every contemporary work environment. This was evident during the process of disseminating and collecting the research instrument. In all the universities that were visited by the researcher and as the data collected proved, the library staff members were never of the same generation. There were different generation in different departments of the library which was interesting because it meant that the information collected would be diverse as well. Literature attests to this because according to Nwosu, Igwe and NNadozi (2016: 2) for the first time we have four distinct generations — Veterans (born

pre1946), Baby Boomers (1946-1964), Generation X (1965-1980), and Generation Y (born post-1980) in the office simultaneously. They say that this phenomenon cuts across the different sectors and professional groups in the society. It is therefore not surprising that generational workforce in the workplace has become a topical issue in Library and information science (LIS) among university library professionals and other scholars in recent times. This study found that there was an existing gap between the youngest and the oldest employees in academic libraries ranging between 20 – 65 in different organizations which shows that there is a broad range of perspectives, needs and attitudes floating around the workplace. Consequently, today's workforce is certainly multigenerational and each generation has its own set of aspirations, desired, beliefs and working styles. Coming to terms with diversity in university libraries implies in part knowing and engaging people of diverse experiences and characteristics effectively. During the course of this study it was found by the researcher that university library managers know that one management style now more than ever before does not suit all the sub-sets and circumstances. Each generation had different characteristics, different traits, different motivating factors, different ambitions and different working styles and in order to manage this diverse workforce, management has to deal with these directly. As shown in the findings of this study, the success of the university library is increasingly dependent on the management's ability to handle the variations along these lines of identity. Management must set collective norms based on values that transcends generations. Unless university libraries can recognize common grounds, conflict between generations is unavoidable. For library managers, reacting to generational disparities and conflicts, the same skills are needed to tackle other issues of diversity, such as understanding, communication and the ability to handle conflicts productively. Management is well conscious that as research has shown, satisfaction contributes directly to productivity and therefore managers must keep the workers happy which means making the work environment enjoyable for the workers. The older generation that is in management positions must avoid micro-managing the younger generation. Gavatorra (2012) suggests that instead of micromanaging, managers should act as coach or mentor and "be willing to allow for a coaching approach that creates dialogues rather than monologues". Best practices such as effective communication and flexible leadership styles can improve the possibility of effectively managing a productive workforce and fulfilling individuals' desires and needs as well as those of the company as a whole.

5.5 Conclusions

The main objective of this study was to investigate generational diversity in academic libraries and how it can be managed. Based on the evidence collected and discussed above, this study concludes the following about generational diversity and its management in academic libraries:







- ✚ Staff members are not aware of policies and procedures that inform generational diversity in their libraries. About 34% of the sample feels this way (See figure 4.6)
- ✚ Each generation is for themselves. Generational cohorts seem not accommodating of each other. (see table 4.4)
- ✚ Disrespect is another major issue amongst cohorts, from the information gathered from this study, the different generational cohorts are impatient with each other. (See table 4.4)
- ✚ Resistance to change is problematic as well. As proven in this study, there are generational cohorts that are fine with the way things are and always have been while others want to change the way things are done as times change. (See table 4.4)

Each generation has a different working style hence they are likely to clash every now and again. Employees across these generational cohorts also have different preferences when it comes to how they receive feedback and collaborate with others in the workplace. With each generation having such distinctive traits and characteristics, there is always potential risk of conflict happening due to clashing values and beliefs. Academic libraries must prioritise having some kind of discussion around generational diversity because as proven in this study it does exist however there is very little information made available to staff members about it. The sooner employees from all the existing generational groups learn to respect and accept one another the easier it would be for them to welcome generation Z employees to the new workforce after the year 2020.

5.6 Recommendations

This study found that managing diversity cannot be a one size fits all approach. Each generation has different values, behaves differently and prefers to be treated different from the other. The main reason for generational conflict is behaviour (see figure 4.5). It was also found that policies on generational diversity are not made easily available making it hard to manage diversity in the workplace. Even though that is the case, some felt that problems arising from generational diversity can be lessened. Based on the findings, this study makes the following recommendations.

Academic libraries management must:

-  Assemble age-diverse teams in their projects
-  Customize their approach for each employee
-  Refine their techniques for delivering feedback
-  Avoid making age-based assumptions and stereotypes
-  Listen to their employees and find out what it is that they want
-  Adopt varying communication styles

5.7 Suggestions for future research

Further research could be extended to accommodate the other academic libraries in South Africa as this study only focused on four academic libraries in KwaZulu-Natal. This would provide a fuller insight into the practical challenges and ways of managing generational diversity. From the literature reviewed, it became clear that investigation into the age diversity of South African academic libraries is lacking. Evidently, numerous international and local studies have been undertaken to investigate different generations of library patrons and the implications of age diversity impacting on the client-librarian relationship. However, very few studies focus on the different generations of librarians as co-workers and how age diversity affects co-worker relationships, library management. Therefore, generational awareness strategies to retain and attract staff need to be found if academic libraries want to thrive in a diverse work environment. It may be useful for future research to get managements insight into diversity.

5.8 Summary

This discussion chapter was based on the main findings of the study in the context of the theoretical framework underpinning this study and literature which informed the research. The discussion of main findings was structured in terms of the critical questions generated to address the objective of the study which responded to a research problem articulated in Chapter 1. Based on this discussion, conclusions have been drawn and recommendations made. The recommendations made were based on the data provided by the respondents and on the literature reviewed. The researcher is confident that the study has been successful in meeting its objective of investigating generational diversity in the cohorts that co-exist in the workplace in the academic libraries in KwaZulu-Natal. It is believed that the critical questions generated to address this objective as well as the research instrument designed for the study was adequate in collecting the data required to respond to the critical questions. It is hoped the findings of this study will assist the management of the university libraries in managing the different generational cohort employees that co-exist in their libraries.

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Appendix A: Letter of information and consent



LETTER OF INFORMATION

Title of the research study: Identifying diversity in academic libraries to improve management of diversity

Principal Investigator/s/researcher: (Andisiwe Magocoba, Masters of management sciences in Library and Information Studies)

Co-investigator/s/supervisor/s: (Dr Rajkoomar, PhD Library and information sciences)

Brief introduction and purpose of the study: This study seeks to identify the diversity in generations in academic libraries in KwaZulu-Natal. It also seeks to ascertain similarities and differences across generations with respect to values, goals, preferences and behaviours as well as to ascertain the challenges associated with the values and types of the diverse population.

Outline of the Procedures: Self-administered questionnaires will be used to collect data from the participants. A letter of consent will be given to participants outlining the purpose of the study and ensuring confidentiality. Data collected will be used for research purposes only. The target population of the study will be the library employees of UKZ, UNISA, UNIZULU, DUT and MUT.

Risks or Discomforts to the Participant: You will not be exposed to any risks since they will only be filling in the questionnaire.

Benefits: The study will contribute in identifying and managing diversity in academic libraries.

Reason/s why the Participant May Be Withdrawn from the Study: You will be free to withdraw from the study at any stage without any consequences.

Remuneration: There will be no monetary incentives and participation in this study will be voluntary.

Costs of the Study: There will be no charge for participating in the study.

Confidentiality: Confidentiality will be maintained and responses from you will be kept in a closed access. Your Identity will not be revealed.

Research-related Injury: You will not be exposed to any injury risks as you will not participate in any experiment.

Persons to Contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:

For more information please contact the researcher on (031-373 5246/38), my supervisor (031-373 6776) or the Institutional Research Ethics Administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can be reported to the Director: Research and Postgraduate Support, Prof S Moyo on 031 373 2577 or moyos@dut.ac.za

Appendix B: Research tool

Identifying diversity in academic libraries to improve management of diversity

Please complete the following questionnaire as frankly as possible, and where necessary indicate your option by means of (X). Your input will be greatly appreciated and confidentiality is ensured. Completed questionnaires can be returned to andisiwem@dut.ac.za and self-administered questionnaires will be collected personally by the researcher.

1. Please indicate your institution.

Institution	
UKZN	
UNISA	
UNIZULU	
DUT	
MUT	

2. Gender

Female	
Male	

3. Which generational cohort do you belong in?

Millennials/Generation Y (up to 35)	
Generation X (36-55)	
Baby-boomers (56-70)	
Veterans (Over 70 years of age)	

4. What percentage of conflict is related to generational diversity in your library?

About 50%	
More than 50%	
Less than 50%	
I don't know	

5. Which of the following do you consider to be the reasons for generational diversity?

Intolerance	
Different perspectives	
Lack of respect	
Other	

6. Is generational diversity a problem in your library?

Yes	
No	
I don't know	

6.1 If you answered Yes or No to the above question, please explain why.

7. Do you think the cause for generational diversity is the difference in age?

Yes	
No	
I don't know	

8. What do you think are the main reasons for generational conflict?

Preferences	
Values	

Behaviours	
Goals	

9. Generational diversity is mostly present between:

Co-workers of the same age group	
Co-workers of different age groups	
Both	

10. Problems arising from generational diversity can be diminished, lessened or lowered.

Agree	Strongly Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree

11. Do you think dialogue between generations, projects/case studies/guides of good practice on generational diversity, staff meetings and other possible strategies are important to manage generational diversity?

Agree	Strongly Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Neither agree or Disagree

12. Please give a personal example of this problem of generation issues when you had some positive experience and describe what you learned.

13. Do you think it is difficult to work in the same team with different generations?

To a very great extent	
To a great extent	
To a small extent	
To a very small extent	

14. It is easier to accept ideas from the younger generation.

Agree	Strongly Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree

14.1 It is easier to accept ideas from the older generation.

Agree	Strongly Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree

15. Who do you believe suffers the most from a conflict between generations?

The young	
The old	
Both	

16. Do you think there are strategies in place in your library to address the issue of diversity?

Yes	
No	
I don't know	

16.1 If you answered Yes to the above question, please indicate what strategies those are.

17. There are challenges associated with values from co-existing generational cohorts in my workplace.

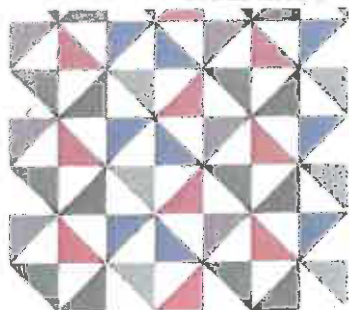
Agree	Strongly Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree

18. Do you think there are similarities and differences across generations in your library?

Yes	
No	
I don't know	

18.1 If you answered Yes to the above question, please indicate what those similarities and differences are.

Appendix C: Ethical clearance



Institutional Research Ethics Committee
Research and Postgraduate Support Directorate
2nd Floor, Berwyn Court
Gate I, Steve Biko Campus
Durban University of Technology

P O Box 1334, Durban, South Africa, 4001

Tel: 031 373 2375
Email: lavishad@dut.ac.za
http://www.dut.ac.za/research/institutional_research_ethics
www.dut.ac.za

24 August 2018

IREC Reference Number: **REC 42/18**

Ms A Magocoba
P. O. Box 61709
Bishopsgate
Durban
4001

Dear Ms Magocoba

Identifying diversity in academic libraries to improve management of diversity

The Institutional Research Ethics Committee acknowledges receipt of your notification regarding the piloting of your data collection tool.

Kindly ensure that participants used for the pilot study are not part of the main study.

In addition, the IREC acknowledges receipt of your gatekeeper permission letters.

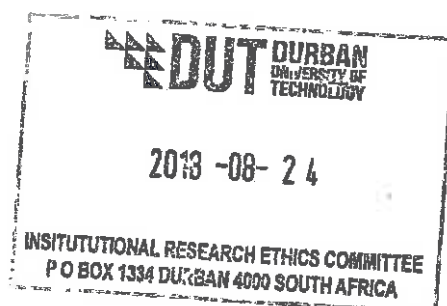
Please note that **FULL APPROVAL** is granted to your research proposal. You may proceed with data collection.

Any adverse events [serious or minor] which occur in connection with this study and/or which may alter its ethical consideration must be reported to the IREC according to the IREC SOP's.

Please note that any deviations from the approved proposal require the approval of the IREC as outlined in the IREC SOP's.

Yours Sincerely,

Professor J K Adam
Chairperson: IREC



Appendix D: Correlations

		Problems arising from generational diversity can be diminished, lessened or lowered.
Spearman's	Problems arising from generational diversity can be diminished, lessened or lowered.	Correlation Coefficient 1.000 Sig. (2-tailed) N 125
	There is enough information available about generational diversity in my workplace.	Correlation Coefficient -0.111 Sig. (2-tailed) 0.220 N 125
	Do you think it is difficult to work in the same team with different generation?	Correlation Coefficient -0.089 Sig. (2-tailed) 0.322 N 125
	It is easier to accept ideas from the younger generation	Correlation Coefficient 0.165 Sig. (2-tailed) 0.066 N 125
	It is easier to accept ideas from the older generation	Correlation Coefficient .236** Sig. (2-tailed) 0.008 N 125
	There are challenges associated with values from co-existing generational cohorts in my workplace.	Correlation Coefficient 0.174 Sig. (2-tailed) 0.052 N 125

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

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

There is enough information available about generational diversity in my workplace.	Do you think it is difficult to work in the same team with different generation?	It is easier to accept ideas from the younger generation	It is easier to accept ideas from the older generation	There are challenges associated with values from co-existing generational cohorts in my workplace.
1.000				
125				
-0.111	1.000			
0.218				
125	125			
0.144	-0.102	1.000		
0.108	0.255			
125	125	125		
-0.015	-0.175	.229*	1.000	
0.869	0.051	0.010		
125	125	125	125	
-0.013	0.034	0.071	0.090	1.000
0.884	0.705	0.429	0.320	
125	125	125	125	125