DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVED PERFORMANCE OF MULTI-GENERATIONAL NON-ACADEMIC STAFF AT A SELECTED STATE UNIVERSITY IN ZIMBABWE

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by

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ABSTRACT

A lack of frameworks on the motivation of multi-generational non-academic staff motivated this empirical study to develop a framework for motivation and performance for multi-generational non-academic staff at universities using the Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU) as a case study. In developing this framework, the study investigated existing motivational strategies and challenges in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff. The study also determined the relationships between intrinsic motivation and performance and extrinsic motivation and performance. In particular, the research tested the mediating role of generational cohorts on the effects of intrinsic motivation on performance and extrinsic motivation on performance. This empirical study was quantitative with 216 respondents who were Generation X, Y, and Z non-academic staff at the ZOU. The response rate for the questionnaires distributed was 92%. Data analysis was conducted through the Statistical Package for Social Science version 30.0 for Windows. Cronbach's alpha test demonstrated that the research was reliable. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin, Bartlett's, and goodness of fit indices tests illustrate no issues with sample adequacy, factor analysis, and model fitness. Descriptive statistics illustrate that transport allowance, job security, staff development, meaningful work, and promotional opportunities are existing motivational strategies. The empirical research demonstrates that budgetary constraints, administration costs, difficulty adhering to labour laws, different preferences in feedback, and differences in values are challenges in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff. The descriptive statistics demonstrated that Generation X employees were mainly motivated extrinsically. In contrast, Generation Z employees were mainly motivated intrinsically, while Generation Y employees were primarily motivated by extrinsic and intrinsic strategies. Hypothesis testing was conducted through regression analysis, Chi-square tests, and Andrew F. Hayes' tests for mediation analysis. The results show that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are positively correlated with performance. Generation X was significantly extrinsically motivated and not significantly intrinsically motivated. Generation Y was motivated considerably by both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Generation Z was significantly intrinsically motivated and not significantly extrinsically motivated. The study shows that generational cohort mediated both the effects of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation on performance. The research presents a framework based on what motivates each generational cohort, the positive and negative outcomes, and recommendations for boosting motivation.

DECLARATION

I, undersigned, hereby declare, except where indicated, that the work in this thesis is my own, and that the references, to the best of my knowledge, are accurately reported.

______ _________ Date: 08/07/2025

REGIS MISHEAL MUCHOWE

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my departed mother (Nyarai) and father (Milton), who remain to be my source of strength and inspiration. The thesis is also dedicated to my wife, Tariro Mushore, who has been supportive since day one. I would also like to dedicate this research to my daughter, Anashe Muchowe, and my sister, Natasha.

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ABBREVIATIONS

EM: Extrinsic Motivation

IM: Intrinsic Motivation

KMO: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin

P: Performance

SEM: Structural equation modelling

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Science

ZOU: Zimbabwe Open University

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Organisations worldwide employ a multi-generational workforce, which can be problematic in terms of performance (Krajac & Sarmadzija, 2024). Motivating a multi-generational workforce worldwide is hard because each generation has a preferred culture, leadership, and management style. In Africa, Acheampong (2021) claims that many organisations, including state universities, have employees from diverse generational cohorts, resulting in poor job performance due to a failure to accommodate and motivate these employees appropriately. This investigation is at a state university in Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU). This university is engaged in various teaching, research, community engagement, industrialisation, and innovation services. The university employs multi-generational workers, and lately, it has been experiencing a decline in job performance (Zimbabwe Open University [ZOU] Annual Report, 2023). The management of this institution is seeking solutions to enhance the performance of its multi-generational workforce.

This chapter serves as an introduction to the research. It therefore explores the background of the study, the problem that stimulated the research, and demonstrates the research aim, objectives, questions, and hypotheses tested. The chapter further shows the significance of the study and progresses by exploring definitions of terms, brief literature, and research methodology used in the research.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

There have been few empirical studies on the performance of different university generations in the last two years (Zhao, Wider, Zhang, Fauzi, Wong, Jiang & Udang, 2024; Mantha & Krishna, 2024). This investigation is peculiar because it focuses on understanding the performance of different generations in state universities. Studies conducted by Davis (2024) and Markiewicz, Leśniak, and Sokołowska (2024) focused on the performance of one generation, and studies by Ann and Blum (2020) and Ganguli and Padhy (2023) have been conducted in other contexts that are not state universities. The current study was conducted at the ZOU and focused on non-academic staff who belong to Generation X, Y, and Z. Generational theory was the primary theory for this study. The study aimed to contribute to the relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and performance in generational theory. In addition, motivation theories such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Herzberg's two-factor theory provide some background information on motivational factors supporting the generational theory.

The existing literature is essential background for the study and helps shape the theoretical framework. However, there is a knowledge gap, as only some studies investigate differences in the performance levels of different generational cohorts. Many studies focus on the motivation of one generation (Sesen & Donker, 2023). Furthermore, studies have tended to specialise in either extrinsic or intrinsic motivation. In contrast, this study focuses on both extrinsic and intrinsic motivational strategies and the performance of a multi-generational workforce. This combination of variables has received little research attention.

1.3 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

The study variables are defined in this section.

1.3.1 Motivation

Motivation refers to influencing people to behave consistently in a certain way (Kalogiannidis, 2021), which involves internal and external drivers that cause people to act with energy in a particular manner. Motivation in the workplace is a process that drives and influences employees to be consistently productive (Ali & Anwar, 2021). Motivated employees are usually efficient and effective, so employers prefer a motivated workforce. Thus, employee motivation is a process where employees are energised to align with the organisation consistently.

Employee motivation is in two forms: intrinsic and extrinsic (Fishbach & Woolley, 2022). Intrinsic motivation is the generation of motivation internally or from within an employee (Xu, Lio, Dhaliwal, Andrei, Balakrishnan, Nagani, & Samadder, 2021). Factors such as need for achievement, excitement, and growth are intrinsic motivation factors (Oke, 2022). On the other hand, extrinsic motivation is generated externally from forces in the environment (Van den Broeck, Howard, Van Vaerenbergh, Leroy & Gagné, 2021). Factors such as leadership style, job security, and salaries are external motivation factors (Yusuf, 2021).

1.3.2 Intrinsic motivation

Hesar, Abbaszadeh, Ghaleei, and Ghalavandi (2019) define intrinsic motivation as generated within an employee. Consistent with this, Buil, Martínez, and Matute (2019) state that intrinsic motivation is when an employee persuades and inspires themself to behave in a manner that meets organisational objectives. This school of thought raises an essential element: motivation is internal or within the employee and is individually triggered. The second characteristic this line of argument proffers is that the employee controls ("drives") the motivation (Sagituly & Guo, 2023). Intrinsic motivation is a personal choice to enhance work performance without considering or being inspired or influenced by external factors (Akosile & Ekemen, 2022).

1.3.3 Extrinsic motivation

Extrinsic motivation is another type of employee motivation that is a critical construct of this study. Like intrinsic motivation, many researchers, such as Driscoll (2022) and Ojo et al. (2019), have investigated this aspect and attempted to provide a picture of what it is. Despite these efforts, extrinsic motivation remains problematic to define and explain (Emmanuel & Nwuzor, 2021). According to Hariyanto and Haverina (2021), extrinsic motivation is any motivation that an employee does not generate from within themselves. Hariyanto and Haverina (2021) explain the scope of extrinsic motivation but do not pinpoint what it is. This approach is similar to Ujma and Ingram's (2019) research, which presents extrinsic motivation as any behavior triggered by reasons other than enjoyment and pleasure. In this regard, extrinsic motivation is an external trigger that enhances work performance (Aljumah, 2023). Thus, according to this school of thought, extrinsic motivation is when an employee behaves in a goal-directed manner due to the influence of external factors.

1.3.4 Job Performance

Performance is defined as the quality of an employee or a group of employees' outcome (Sustrisno, 2022). The outcome is measured against a set target and stated objectives. Performance success criteria are usually connected to organisational objectives (Suprayinto, 2024). Hence, Yandi and Havidz (2022) posit that performance is a state of competitiveness accomplished by efficiency and effectiveness.

1.3.5 Multi-generational workforce

A multi-generational workforce refers to an organisation's workforce belonging to more than one generational cohort (Kay, 2024). A generational cohort is a group born within a specific time frame (Dinh & Park, 2023). Generational cohorts are Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y, Generation Z, and Generation Alpha. This study focuses on Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z. Generation X refers to the generational cohort after Baby Boomers, made up of people born between 1965 and 1980 (Tan & Chin, 2023). Generation Y comprises people born between 1981 and 1996 (Hur, 2022). Generation Z is the generational cohort born between 1997 and 2012 (Dinh & Park, 2023).

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Sagituly and Guo (2023) state that the motivation of a multi-generational workforce is essential in improving the productivity and performance of organisations. This is supported by Ludviga and Sluka (2023), who believe that achievement and realisation of organisational performance depend solely on the multi-generational staff's motivation level. This is also substantiated by Chapisa and Khumalo (2023), who opine that there is a direct link between organisational survival and performance and the level of motivation of staff. It is, therefore, necessary to identify the direct level of connectedness between the motivation of multi-generational staff and performance.

ZOU is a critical state university in Zimbabwe that was founded in 1999. The university's primary mandate is to provide open and distance learning. Furthermore, the ZOU is essential for research output, community engagement, industrialisation, and innovation. In Zimbabwe, higher education is vital to achieving Zimbabwe's Vision 2030 of a middle-income economy by providing education, community engagement, research, innovation, and industrialisation (Garwe, 2021). However, the ZOU faces challenges in terms of performance. The ZOU employees are demoralised and demotivated, leading to poor job performance (Munyani, 2021). Its enrollment numbers are declining, losing out to competitors such as Midlands State University (Rudhumbu, 2021). Some job performance challenges have been pinned on failure to motivate a multi-generational non-academic workforce (Munyani, 2021). Finding a solution to this problem is critical because the university needs to gain more market share (Jonathan & Sibiziwe, 2022). According to Florence (2022), poor performance at the ZOU is directly linked to the demotivation of staff. The current investigation is necessary to develop a framework for motivating non-academic staff so that the institution can perform and contribute to the national and global economy.

In summary, the following four gaps were identified for the justification of the study:

- There is a gap in studies investigating motivation and staff performance in higher education institutions (Sesen & Dankor, 2023; Davis, 2024).
- There is a gap in studies on multi-generational non-academic staff motivation and level of performance in higher education institutions (Ann & Blum, 2020)
- There are documented local and national cases of a lack of motivation and performance in regional and national higher education institutions (Niezurawska, 2023; Chapisa & Khumalo, 2023).
- More attention is paid to the motivation of academic staff than non-academic staff in higher education institutions in the literature (Marczak & Yawson, 2021).

Therefore, this study investigated the motivation of multi-generational non-academic staff to address these gaps.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

ZOU is a critical university in Zimbabwe because it is mandated to deliver open distance learning. However, apart from academic staff, its performance largely depends on its non-academic staff. Employee performance levels depend solely on motivational strategies (Moosa & Aloka, 2023). Motivation is a complex matter because humans are also complex. This complexity is increased because different generational cohorts have different needs and expectations. Therefore, motivational strategies for each generational cohort must be identified to utilise these and improve performance. This study develops a framework for motivating multi-generational academic staff to enhance their performance at the university. The resultant framework can improve the motivation and performance of multi-generational non-academic staff at the university.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study focused on non-academic ZOU employees from Generation X, Y, and Z cohorts. The respondents were drawn from the ZOU's National Centre and all 10 regional campuses in Zimbabwe's 10 provinces. The study was conducted from 2024 to 2025, and findings reflect occurrences during this period. The study had three variables, namely: motivation (independent variable), generational cohort (mediating variable), and performance (dependent variable). Only Generations X, Y, and Z multi-generational non-academic staff were involved in this study.

1.7 AIM OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to develop a framework for improving performance among multi-generational non-academic staff through motivational strategies.

1.8 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the motivational strategies currently implemented at the university
2. To investigate challenges in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff at the university.
3. To identify the relationship between intrinsic motivation and the performance of multi-generational non-academic staff at the university.
4. To determine the relationship between extrinsic motivation and the performance of the multi-generational non-academic staff at the university.
5. To determine the mediating role of the generational cohort on the effects of intrinsic motivation on the performance of non-academic staff at the university.
6. To determine the mediating role of the generational cohort on the effects of extrinsic motivation on the performance of non-academic staff at the university.
7. To develop a framework related to motivational strategies and performance of a multi-generational non-academic workforce based on findings.

1.9 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What motivational strategies are currently being implemented at the university?
2. Which challenges have been faced in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff at the university?
3. Is there a relationship between intrinsic motivation and the performance of multi-generational non-academic staff at the university?
4. How does extrinsic motivation relate to the performance of multi-generational non-academic staff at the university?
5. What is the mediating role of the generational cohort on the effects of extrinsic motivation on the performance of non-academic staff at the university?

6. Does the generational cohort mediate the effects of extrinsic motivation on the performance of non-academic staff at the university?
7. What motivational framework can be developed to improve the performance of a multi-generational non-academic staff?

1.10 HYPOTHESES

H1: There is a positive relationship between intrinsic motivation and the high performance of non-academic staff.

H2: There is a positive relationship between extrinsic motivation and the high performance of non-academic staff.

H3a: Generation X non-academic staff are intrinsically motivated.

H3b: Generation Y non-academic staff are intrinsically motivated.

H3c: Generation Z non-academic staff are intrinsically motivated.

H4a: Generation X non-academic staff are extrinsically motivated.

H4b: Generation Y non-academic staff are extrinsically motivated.

H4c: Generation Z non-academic staff are extrinsically motivated.

H5: Generational cohort mediates the effects of intrinsic motivation on non-academic staff performance.

H6: Generational cohort mediates the effects of extrinsic motivation on non-academic staff performance.

1.11 LITERATURE REVIEW

This section provides a brief literature review of previous research related to the topic of this study.

1.11.1 Theoretical framework

The study was guided by five theories: generational theory, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Herzberg's two-factor theory, equity theory, and expectancy theory.

1.11.1.1 Generational theory

The primary theory for this study is generational theory. Generational theory is a historical and sociological theory that explains that the era in which an individual is born influences their worldview (Knight, 2019). Howe and Strauss propounded the theory, and it was later developed to suit the human resource management field by Barhate and Dirano (2022). The significant contribution of generational theory is that people's worldviews are influenced by the general era in which they are born (Gabrielovu & Buchko, 2021). Defining events, such as a world war or communication technologies, significantly impact people (Knight, 2019). People who face similar issues are affected by the same events regardless of their country of origin. The theory also states that a generation is not a simple age cohort but a group of contemporaries who share similar experiences. These similar experiences they gain after major events make them distinct and provide a uniform worldview. A specific generation shares attitudes towards culture, family, society, and work (Chillakuri, 2020).

However, the generational theory does not identify extrinsic and intrinsic motivators suitable for each generation (Gabrielov & Buchko, 2021). Furthermore, generational theory is generic and is not primarily meant to explain work motivational issues (Chillakuri, 2020). Hence, Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and Herzberg’s two-factor theory must be included to fill the gap left by generational theory.

1.11.1.2 Maslow’s hierarchy of needs

Maslow’s hierarchy of needs theory is a content theory that provides information on what motivates people (Fjenbo, 2021). The theory was first propounded by Abraham Maslow (Yang, 2024). The hierarchy of needs theory states that people have needs, which should be satisfied from lower-order needs to higher-order needs, in a hierarchical fashion. The hierarchy shows that at the base, there are physiological needs (Badelani & Sajjadian, 2024). At this stage, employees are motivated by water, food, and warmth. Once the physiological needs have been met, these needs no longer motivate them; they become motivated by safety needs, which include safety and job security (Zhou, 2024). After the safety needs are met, employees become motivated by belongingness and love needs and by relationships and friendship (Dar & Sakthivel, 2022). After these needs are met, employees are motivated by esteem needs, including prestige and feelings of accomplishment (Yang, 2024). According to the hierarchy, the last set of needs is categorised by self-actualisation, which is generally self-fulfilment

(Zhou, 2024). Maslow's hierarchy of needs was useful to this study because it identifies what motivates employees.

1.11.1.3 Herzberg's two-factor theory

Herzberg's two-factor theory is a content theory propounded by Frederick Herzberg that explains what motivates employees (Siddiqui, 2024). The theory resulted from Herzberg's study on accountants and engineers in America (Twum & Ayitey, 2024). The theory suggests that not all factors, as presented by other theorists such as Maslow, motivate employees (Tezel, 2023). The theory proposes that hygiene factors such as job security, company policies, salary, and supervision do not motivate employees. Still, not providing them to employees will lead to job dissatisfaction (Aggarwal, 2023). On the other hand, there are motivators such as growth, responsibility, work, and achievement (Chen, 2023). These motivate employees if provided by the employer. The theory was helpful in this study, as it elaborated on extrinsic and intrinsic motivators.

1.11.1.4 Expectancy theory

Expectancy theory, as first propounded by Vroom, is a content theory that explains how and why employees are motivated (Maczak & Yawson, 2021). Content theories such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Herzberg's two-factor theory do not explore this gap. According to expectancy theory, expectations motivate employees (Li, 2023). They work hard because they anticipate gaining certain benefits at the end of their performance (Yoes & Silverman, 2021). The theory demonstrates that organisations that tie performance and results generate high levels of employee motivation (Watters, 2021). The theory has been adopted because it explains how and why employees are motivated.

1.11.1.5 Equity theory

Equity theory is one of the content theories of motivation (Bae, 2023). The theory elaborates that employees expect fair rewards; therefore, equity is important to generate employee motivation (Bush, 2021). The theory demonstrates that employees compare their input and output (Yoon & Almond, 2022). The input includes hard work, loyalty, time, skills, and experience. Outputs are rewards that are obtained as a result of performance. If there is a mismatch between these two dimensions, employees become demotivated. The theory also illustrates that employees compare the output they get to others who bring similar input, and if there is any unfairness, the employees become demoralised (Uka & Prendi, 2021). This theory is essential in this study as it adds the dimension of equity in motivation.

1.11.2 Intrinsic motivation of a multi-generational workforce

The few studies on the intrinsic motivation of workers in different generational cohorts have shown inconsistent results. For example, Zhao et al. (2024) found that value-based leadership influenced younger employees more, which is an attribute of intrinsic motivation. Zhao et al (2024) also found that growth mindsets influenced older and younger generations. Davis (2024) investigated motivation, job satisfaction, and turnover of different generational cohorts and found that there are no generational differences but individual differences in intrinsic motivation. Nieżurawska (2023) conducted a study in Denmark and found that Generation Z was enthused by being more visual and global. On the other hand, Ludviga and Sluka (2023) found that younger employees were enthused by excitement, whereas older generations were motivated by independence. However, this diverges from Sagituly and Guo (2022), who found that Generation Y (the younger generation) was motivated by autonomy, while Generation X was motivated by security and co-workers. Overall, Sagituly and Guo (2022) believe that younger generations are more intrinsically motivated than older generations, citing intrinsic factors such as exciting and challenging work. Therefore, the literature shows that there are differences in observations in terms of intrinsic motivation.

1.11.3 Extrinsic motivation of a multi-generational workforce

There are also divergences within the literature regarding extrinsic motivation and generational cohorts. For example, Markiewicz et al. (2024) record that older generations value money, and younger generations are not motivated by money because they view this as a hygiene factor rather than a motivator. Sagituly and Guo (2022) concur, finding that Generation X, an older generation, is motivated more by extrinsic factors than intrinsic factors compared to younger generations. Ludviga and Sluka (2023) dispute this, finding similarities in work values and extrinsic factors amongst employees from different generations. This is supported by Bhuiyan et al. (2023), who submit that extrinsic factors such as pay and praise positively influence the performance of Generation Y, a younger generation. This is substantiated by Chapisa and Khumalo (2023), who observed that Generation Y employees are results-driven. However, Pitaloka et al. (2023) found that extrinsic factors such as pay had more impact on the performance of older generations than younger generations. These differences exist because of differences in the contexts of studies, with variations caused mainly by differences in countries.

1.11.4 Motivation of multi-generational non-academic staff in universities in Zimbabwe

There are scant studies on the motivation of non-academic staff in universities in Zimbabwe (Nenguwo, 2023). Most of the studies have not looked at multi-generational non-academic staff. However, research that has been conducted shows that extrinsic motivators such as salaries, recognition, and non-financial benefits motivate university employees (Mutage & Dewah, 2021). Intrinsic motivators such as autonomy, task complexity, and job excitement have been determined to motivate university employees thereby improving their job performance (Makumbe, 2022). Lack of clear policies, economic challenges, and inconsistent labour laws are challenges to motivating university staff in Zimbabwe (Kanonge & Bussin, 2022). Existing motivational strategies have mainly been extrinsic, such as the issuance of salaries (Chinyamurindi & Tsvangirai, 2019). Despite these findings, specific gaps stimulated this study. First, there is a lack of studies that focus on multi-generational staff. Second, most of the studies focus on academic staff. Hence, the research investigated motivational strategies for multi-generational non-academic staff at ZOU.

1.12 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

The research made use of quantitative methodology, as elaborated below.

1.12.1 Research paradigm

This investigation used positivism as the study is purely quantitative. According to positivism, there is a single reality, and conclusions can be generated objectively (Mohajan, 2020). According to positivism, the researcher should collect data more objectively. The positivist reality is centred on the assumption that numbers do not lie (Vu, 2021). Positivism is the basis for exploring relationships between variables, and inferential statistics are used to reach conclusions (Bauer, Greta, Churchill, Mahendran, Walwyin, Lizotte & Villa-Rueda, 2021). This study aimed to determine the relationship between motivation and performance of multi-generational non-academic staff, and therefore, positivism was a suitable paradigm.

1.12.2 Research method

The study was quantitative, using quantitative data to generate insights. Quantitative research is essential for hypothesis testing. According to Jamieson, Govaart, and Pownall (2023), quantitative research is vital to create large amounts of quantitative data that can be used for inferential statistics. In addition, quantitative methodology was essential in gathering large amounts of data from the three generational cohorts and comparing what motivates each generational cohort.

1.12.3 Research design

Research design is a blueprint for conducting a study (Claro et al., 2024). The study used a survey design to generate maximum insights on motivation and performance, which were quantified to reach conclusions. The survey design best suits quantitative studies that gather quantitative data for inferential statistics (Hodge, 2020). This study used inferential statistics, and the survey design was vital.

1.12.4 Population

The study focused on a population of 626 non-academic employees at the ZOU, provided by the university's Human Resources Department. This number pertained to support staff from Generations X (born 1965–1980), Y (1981–1996), and Z (1997–2012) who play administrative and operational roles such as secretaries, clerks, faculty administrators, and HR officers.

1.12.5 Sampling

Studying the whole population is expensive and time-consuming, hence the need for sampling (Habes, Ai & Pasha, 2021). Sampling is selecting items in a population to represent the vast population in the research (Faems, 2020). There are two types of sampling, probability and non-probability sampling. Non-probability sampling is sampling in which all subjects of the population do not have an equal chance of being selected for the sample (Di Franco, 2024). In other words, selecting a sample involves some form of bias. Some sampling techniques associated with non-probability sampling are convenience sampling, purposive sampling, and snowball sampling (Golini & Righi, 2024). On the other hand, probability sampling is a method that provides an equal chance for all population items to be selected for the sample (Ferri-Garcia & Castro-Martin, 2024; King, Goldfarb, & Simcoe, 2021). Some sampling techniques associated with probability sampling are simple random, systematic, and stratified (Bucher, 2024).

1.12.6 Sample size

The sample size was determined using Sekaran and Bougie's (2016) table. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2019), for a population of 626, the corresponding sample size is 242.

1.12.7 Sampling techniques

Stratified sampling is dividing the sample into categories and selecting the sample from the categories; its strength is that this approach provides a fair representation of the broader population (Sarker & AL-Muaalemi, 2022). The population was divided into three strata of generational cohorts (Generations X, Y, and Z). After categorising the members into groups, strata were used to select the respondents for the study systematically. Every third person from each stratum was chosen.

1.12.8 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Only non-academic employees from the Generation X, Y, and Z cohorts were included in the study. Both males and females were allowed to participate in the study. Non-academic staff who fell under the Baby Boomers' generational cohort (born between 1946 and 1964) were excluded from the study because their number is insignificant at the ZOU.

1.12.9 Data collection methods and measuring instrument

Data collection is the process of gathering data from the respondents for data analysis to meet the objectives of the investigation (Kotronououlas, Miguel & Dowling, 2023). Data was collected by means of a self-developed closed-ended structured questionnaire (Appendix D). A closed-ended structured questionnaire is a mechanism to collect vast amounts of quantitative data within a short period (Sarker & AL-Muaalemi, 2022). The closed-ended questionnaire was developed because studies on motivation have been done in different contexts. Performance indicators of non-academics differ from indicators of employees in other sectors. The closed-ended structured questionnaire had five sections using a 5-point Likert scale with responses ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree (Appendix D). Section A captured information on demographics, Section B captured data on intrinsic motivation, Section C captured data on extrinsic motivation, Section D captured information on employee performance, Section E captured information on existing motivational strategies, and Section F captured information on challenges motivating a multi-generational workforce. Questionnaires were distributed through Google Forms. According to Williams, Wiggins, Vogt and Vogt (2022), Google Forms is a tool that can speed up the data collection process. Hence, Google Forms was adopted for the study.

1.12.10 Primary data

Primary data is the data that the researcher extracts and gathers directly from the field (Williams et al., 2022). In this research, primary data was used. Primary data was obtained through closed-ended questionnaires.

1.12.11 Secondary data

Secondary data is information that has been generated by other researchers (Sarker & AL-Muaalemi, 2022). This research made use of secondary data in the literature review. Furthermore, secondary data was used in the discussions of findings.

1.12.12 Data analysis

Data analysis involves inspecting and transforming the data that has been collected during an investigation (Hodge, 2020). Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 30.0 and Stata version 12 were used in the study for data analysis. SPSS is a reliable tool for statistical data analysis (Pallant, 2020). Demographic data were presented using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages. Inferential statistics were used to identify causal relations and test hypotheses. Multiple linear regression, Chi-square tests, and Andrew F. Hayes tests were used for hypothesis testing. The level of confidence was 95%.

1.12.13 Validity

Validity is the degree to which the investigation is successful in measuring what it was deliberately intended to measure (Flake, Davidson, Wong & Pek, 2022). To establish the validity of the study, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's tests were conducted. Furthermore, confirmatory factor analysis using goodness of fit indices (GFI) to assess how the model fits the observed data.

1.12.14 Reliability

Reliability is the degree to which the measurement of the study is consistent (Coleman, 2022). Cronbach's alpha was used to determine internal reliability. The acceptable score for internal reliability starts from 0.7 and goes upwards. All scales and items that scored above 0.7 were accepted and used in the research.

1.12.15 Pilot test

A pilot test is a data collection done to test the reliability of the study (Nie, Li, Pan, Yang, Chen, & Hong, 2022). Ten respondents participated in the pilot test. Results from the pilot test showed that all scales used in the study were reliable. The ten participants in the pilot test were excluded from the main study.

1.13 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics are critical in any research study (Mohajan, 2020). Research should not harm or exploit participants, whether humans or animals (Skinner, 2020). Participants should be respected and allowed autonomy at all stages of the research (Vu, 2021). The following steps were taken to ensure that the research was ethical.

Anonymity/Confidentiality: Anonymity refers to the practice of protecting the identity and personal information of research participants (Nie et al., 2022). Confidentiality refers to the obligation of researchers to protect and safeguard the private information of research participants (Faems, 2020). Respondents' names and identities were not revealed at any stage of the study. The confidentiality form (Appendix C) was signed before the respondent participated, clearly explaining that the investigator would respect anonymity and confidentiality.

Data Storage and Disposal: Data was stored in the investigator's Google account and is password protected. Any data stored on the researcher's laptop is password protected, with only the researcher having access. Digital data will be deleted and overwritten after five years per the Durban University of Technology data disposal policies.

1.14 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

The research comprises seven chapters.

- **Chapter 1: Introduction**

Chapter 1 introduces the research and provides an overview of the study. This is achieved by outlining the study's research objectives, questions, and hypotheses. In addition, the chapter discusses the research problem and provides an overview of research methodology and ethical considerations.

- **Chapter 2: Theoretical framework**

The second chapter presents and explores theoretical frameworks that relate to this research. The chapter discusses five theories about the study: generational theory, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Herzberg's two-factor theory, equity theory, and expectancy theory. The justification of inclusion for each theory is discussed.

- **Chapter 3: Empirical literature**

This chapter explores empirical literature. Literature related to all the research objectives is discussed.

- **Chapter 4: Conceptual framework**

This chapter develops a conceptual framework elaborating how the study's independent, mediating, and dependent variables relate. Furthermore, the chapter presents the hypotheses arising from the framework.

- **Chapter 5: Research methodology**

This chapter clarifies and justifies the research methodology used. Research philosophy, approach, design, population, sampling, data collection, reliability, validity, data analysis, and ethical considerations are explained in the chapter.

- **Chapter 6: Findings and discussions**

This chapter presents and analyses findings. It begins with demographic results of the respondents. It further presents results relating to objectives and hypotheses. Findings are discussed in the context of the literature review.

- **Chapter 7: Conclusion and recommendations**

This chapter presents the conclusions, recommendations, and future research direction based on the study findings.

1.15 CONCLUSION

This chapter introduced the research. The research problem, objectives, questions, and hypotheses were presented. Furthermore, the study's significance and the research scope were explained. The chapter provided a brief overview of the study by exploring key concepts, the research methodology, and the design. The next chapter presents the theoretical framework of the research.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter introduced the study's background and the problem statement. This chapter presents and examines the study's theoretical framework relating to the motivation of employees. The theories used were the generational theory and content and process theories of motivation. Generational theory was used in this study because it accounts for generational differences. However, the generational theory does not account for the content and process of motivation; hence, theories of motivation were also used. Content theories provide "what" motivates non-academic staff, while process theories explain "how" they are motivated. The first section of the chapter discusses and analyses the generational theory. The second section elaborates on content theories adopted for this study: Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory and Herzberg's two-factor theory. The final section of the chapter expounds on the process theories used in this study, namely, expectancy theory and equity theory. All these theories are discussed in relation to generational cohorts, the non-academic university workforce, and the Zimbabwean context.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A theoretical framework is the lens through which a researcher understands the relationships between or amongst the problem's variables. Luft, Jeong, Idsardi, and Gardner (2022) believe that a theoretical framework is the appreciation and examination of existing theories that explain or attempt to explain the existing problem. Adelani et al. (2024) state that the theoretical framework is the starting point for all researchers, and this gives the investigator an understanding of existing knowledge on the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, and enlightens the researcher on the specific gap to be filled by the study. Larsen and Adu (2021) state that theoretical frameworks are a lens used by all researchers to analyse, examine, and gain clarity on the problem at hand using existing theories and to find gaps in those theories that justify the need to be investigated. Song, Shin, and Shin (2023) post that a theoretical framework comprises one or more theories about the problem, and the researcher can tap into these to create research objectives and a conceptual framework for the investigation. Calder, He, and Sternthal (2023) opine that theories that make up the theoretical framework are not cast in iron, and therefore, the investigator is free to expand, develop, and improve them using data gathered from study participants. The theoretical framework provides the researcher with a holistic view of the problem at hand using the lens of existing theories.

The perceptions and behaviors of people in different generations have been debated amongst sociologists (Gamaliel, 2023). Sociologists throughout the ages have been searching for explanations for why people in different generational cohorts are influenced differently, including in the world of work (McLean, 2024). One prominent theory that attempts to answer this question is the generational theory propounded by Howe and Strauss (Alber & Daniel, 2023). This theory has also been applied to answer motivational theories for different generational cohorts. However, the theory was mainly focused on explaining differences amongst generational cohorts in politics and social stratification outside the world of work (Dongfeng & Chun, 2023). Thus, the adoption of motivational theories provides explanations for different motivational theories. These theories have been foundational in answering questions about *how people are motivated* and *what motivates people* (Soikkeli, 2024). To gain a holistic understanding of the motivation of employees, both content theories and process theories of motivation were reviewed. According to Acquah, Nsiah, Antie, and Otoo (2021), content theories of motivation are critical as they reveal to the researcher individual needs that determine the motivation of employees. On the other hand, Sulastri (2021) explains that process theories are also crucial in helping employee motivation researchers understand 'how' people are motivated. Both theories were used in the current study to clarify the problem. Motivation theories are not duplicated or overlapping but complementary and support each other (Muizu & Sari, 2019).

However, these theories do not answer why people from different generations differ in how they should be motivated and what motivates them. This has resulted in adopting a fused theoretical framework, with generational theory being the central theoretical tenet for the study, and Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Herzberg's two-factor theory being complementary theories.

2.2.1 Generational theory

The primary theory for this study is generational theory. Generational theory is a historical and sociological theory that explains that the era in which an individual is born influences their worldview (Knight, 2019). Howe and Strauss propounded the theory and later developed it to suit the human resource management field (Barhate & Dirani, 2022). Generational theory is based on William Strauss and Neil Howe's seminal works "Generations: The History of

America’s Future, 1584 to 2069” (1991) and “The Fourth Turning: An American Prophecy (1997). Some preceding theories are considered generational theories. For example, Karl Manheim’s 1923 essay titled “The Problem of Generations” is regarded as a generational theory (van Twist & Newcombe, 2021). However, Howe and Strauss’s writings popularised generational theory.

According to the generational theory, each generational cohort goes through four stages in life: the youth stage, the rising stage, the midlife stage, and the elder stage (Okros & Okros, 2020). The theory demonstrates that each generation is unique because it has different experiences compared to other generations. History and societal attitudes are a glue for members of each generational cohort (Mironova, Bogdanova, Khvoevskaya, Yarovaya, & Tkacheva, 2022).

The significant contribution of generation theory is that people's worldviews are influenced by the general era in which they are born (Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021). Defining events such as world wars and communication technologies impact people (Knight, 2019). People who face similar issues are affected by the same events regardless of their country of origin. The theory also suggests that a generation is not a simple age cohort but a group of contemporaries who share similar experiences. These similar experiences they gain after major events make them distinct and provide a uniform worldview. A specific generation shares attitudes toward culture, family, society, and work (White, 2019). Therefore, according to this theory, each generational cohort's unique factors motivate them. Generational theory applies to the ZOU’s non-academic staff. ZOU has diverse employees from different backgrounds. This is supported by Nyagadza, Gwiza and Hove (2022) who found that universities in Zimbabwe have employees from diverse backgrounds. One of the diversities is the generational cohort employees belong to. This diversity in generational cohort affects how the cohorts are motivated and their level of job satisfaction (Chatiza, Mubvundu & Chisango, 2021). Therefore, it was essential to use generational theory to understand the motivation of a multi-generational workforce at a state university in Zimbabwe.

2.2.1.1 Justification of the generational theory

The generational theory offers a lens through which a multi-generational workforce can be viewed, as it spells out that the major determining factors influencing motivation for each generation (Knight, 2019). This theory was adopted for this study for the following reasons. Firstly, the theory clarifies the understanding of generational differences in preferences regarding motivation. This is substantiated by Mironova et al. (2022) who state that Howe and

Strauss's generational theory demonstrates that culture and history make different generational backgrounds behave differently. Secondly, the theory provides clarity in terms of context. The theory elaborates that generational differences are due to differences in experiences in terms of history and culture (Stevensson, 2020). The experiences of Generation X employees are different from those of Generation Y and Z. Hence, they are bound to have different preferences regarding motivation. Thirdly, generational theory is interdisciplinary by nature (Okros & Okros, 2020). It aligns with fields such as history, psychology, and sociology, including human resources management, in which this investigation is domiciled. In other words, the theory has been tested and substantiated to have universal applicability across numerous fields.

Thirdly, generational theory has practical implications when it comes to motivation. The theory demonstrates that people from different generations have different motivational preferences (White, 2019). This was crucial in formulating the hypotheses, enabling the research to test whether an individual's generational cohort influences their motivation at work. Fourthly, existing motivational theories treat employees as homogenous, but generational theory shows that employees are heterogenous in motivation, which makes them appropriate for this study. Finally, the generational theory has been tested and substantiated in studies on the motivation of multi-generational employees (Grobler & Rensburg, 2018).

2.2.1.2 Generational theory in the higher education context

Various researchers, such as Stevenson (2020) and Grobler and Rensburg (2018), have explored and tested generational theory in the context of higher education. Stevenson (2020) tested the generational theory in the context of higher education in the United States of America. According to the study, generational theory is applicable when motivating staff. The research shows that in higher education, four generational cohorts exist: the Traditional Generation, the Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y. Stevenson's (2020) exploration showed that all generations were motivated by communication, but each generation had different expectations when it comes to the platform of communication. Hence, according to the study, educational leadership should use traditional platforms to communicate with older employees (Traditional Generation, Baby Boomers, and Generation X) and electronic platforms for younger generations (Generation Y). In the Philippines, Juevesa, Juevesa, and Casino (2020) tested the generational theory on employees belonging to different generational cohorts in higher education institutions. Their findings revealed no differences in generational expectations regarding motivation and performance; both Generation X and Generation Y scored similar indexes.

In South Africa, Grobler and Rensburg (2018) tested the generational theory on organisational climate, motivation, and turnover intentions among employees in higher education. Their investigation shows mixed findings in terms of the applicability of generational theory. They found that employees in different generational cohorts have different needs. They found Generation X interested in equity between job demands and compensation. However, their research challenges the generational theory as they found a similarity in the motivation of Generation Y and Baby Boomers, both motivated by the favorable treatment from superiors. Thus, existing studies (Stevenson, 2020; Grobler & Rensburg, 2018) in higher education demonstrate mixed conclusions about generational theory. While some studies, such as Grobler and Rensburg (2018), show that generational theory applies amongst non-academic staff, others, such as Juevesa et al. (2020), show that it is inappropriate.

2.2.1.3 Generational theory in the Zimbabwean context

Generational theory has been adopted because it has been applied and tested in studies on employee motivation in Zimbabwe. Kanonge and Bussin (2022) explored employees' motivation and labour turnover in Zimbabwean higher education institutions. Their study demonstrated that young employees have high expectations regarding flexibility and technology, while older generations are motivated by job security and the need for association. However, Kanonge and Bussin (2022) point out that due to economic challenges in Zimbabwe, regardless of the generational cohort, employees are interested in money, and this somehow disproves the generational theory, which posits that there are different preferences regarding motivation. On the other hand, a study by Mlambo (2024) showed that the generational theory is applicable in Zimbabwe. According to the study, Generation X employees were motivated by job security and salaries, Generation Y employees were motivated by promotional opportunities, and Generation Z was motivated by access to technology and job flexibility.

This is substantiated by Jonas (2019), who investigated the motivation of non-academic staff in higher education in Zimbabwe. The research found that older generations, such as Generation Y, prefer job security, the provision of uniforms, and belonging to a group. At the same time, Generation Y and Z had job autonomy and creativity as top priorities. However, Sibanda, Mavenga, Maunganidze, and Ncube (2019) found different results. They found that non-academic staff in state universities no longer have different needs. They all have similar needs- decent salaries to cushion them against the harsh economic environment. They state that whatever other needs they have, they become secondary to the common denominator, which is salary. Nonetheless, researchers in Zimbabwe, such as Kanonge and Bussin (2022), agree that the generational theory applies in terms of the motivation of employees.

Many researchers, such as Barhate and Dirani (2022), have criticised the generational theory by Strauss and Howe. Firstly, the generational theory does not identify extrinsic and intrinsic motivators suitable for each generation (White, 2019). The generational theory is more sociological and political, limiting applications in other fields, such as human resources management (Zayko & Vinichenko, 2021). Hence, White (2019) posits that the generational theory is generic and is not primarily meant to explain work motivational issues. Thus, Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Herzberg's two-factor theory must be included to fill the gap left by generational theory.

Secondly, according to Howe and Strauss, generational theory is regarded as too general (Mironova et al., 2022). The theory makes grand generalisations and leaves no room for diversity within a generational cohort. For example, there may be inter-cohort differences and conflicts in one generation. This theory is thus regarded as rigid, and its assumptions oversimplify complex issues, as preferences may be diverse within one cohort (van Twist & Newcombe, 2021).

Lastly, generational theory has been criticised for being too culturally specific (Okros & Okros, 2020), focusing on American culture. The theory is limited to other contexts, particularly collective cultures and developing countries (Mironova et al., 2022). Hence, in this study, fusing this theory with other motivational theories is necessary to form a robust theoretical framework.

2.2.2 Content theories of motivation

This study utilised content theories of motivation to explain factors that motivate multi-generational employees. According to Moosa and Aloka (2023), content theories of motivation stress that motivation depends on a person's needs. Hajiali, Kessi, Budiandriani, Prihatin, and Sufri (2022) explain that content theories provide insights into what motivates employees. Sulastri (2021) asserts that content theories are essential as they spell out critical motivators for motivating employees. Acquah et al. (2021) stress that these motivators are the needs and wants of employees. Mahmoud, Fuxman, Mohr, Reisel, and Grigoriou (2021a) posit that these needs and wants are not general but specific to the individual employee's level. Moosa and Aloka

(2023) assert that content theories clarify that motivation is about fulfilling employee needs. A need is a state of an employee's life that triggers and activates behavior and action (Sulastri, 2021). Hajiali et al. (2022) argue that those investigating motivation problems must appreciate content theories as they show the researcher the patterns and systems of needs and wants (motivators) critical to motivating employees. Content theories clarify what employees want and at what stage to elicit the desired action and behavior (Acquah et al., 2021). Content theories are essential in identifying non-financial and financial benefits that motivate employees and improve performance. There are many content theories of motivation, including Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Alderfer's ERG theory, Herzberg's two-factor theory, and McClelland's theory of needs. For this study, Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory and Herzberg's two-factor theory were used to explain what motivates employees to improve their performance at the workplace.

2.2.2.1 Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Abraham Maslow's work on the hierarchy of needs is one of the earliest content theories of motivation. Thousands of researchers on employee motivation have used Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs as part of their theoretical framework (Darkwa & Antwi, 2021). According to Zhai, Chang, Li, Huang, Chen, Ding, Zhao, Li, Chen, Zhang, and Cai (2023), Maslow's hierarchy of needs is preferred by many researchers because it is spelled out. Maslow's hierarchy of needs explains people's needs to be motivated in the workplace. Maslow developed a hierarchy of needs that people must fulfill at each level of life to progress to the next (Anuya, Badillo-Urquiola, and Metoyer, 2023). Rojas, Méndez, and Watkins-Fassler (2023) contend that the hierarchy categorises and presents systems of needs that motivate people. The hierarchy comprises five categories of needs that are ranked from lowest to highest in the form of a pyramid (Cui, Wang, Chen, Wen, & Han, 2021). Once the lower need is satisfied, an employee will only be motivated by the next higher need (Dar & Sakthivel, 2022). In short, Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs states that employees are motivated by unfulfilled needs.

Employees are motivated by their wants and desires (Altymurat, Muhai & Saparow, 2021). To generate maximum employee performance, the employer should satisfy employee needs by starting with the basic needs up to the complex ones (Badelani & Sajjadian, 2024). Once a lower need has been met, the employee will only be motivated by the next higher need (Zhou, 2024). In other words, a satisfied need ceases to motivate employees as they want to meet the more complex (higher) need. Abed Alah (2024) states that Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory assumes that the person providing motivation should know the employee's position. Therefore, employers should first discern or locate the levels where each employee falls to provide for the appropriate needs to motivate them. Yang (2024) posits that Maslow's hierarchy of needs is about exploiting needs to improve employee performance. Employers must use what employees need for employees to improve performance. Fjendbo (2021) classified Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory as a system. This is because the theory presents connected levels of needs that can sequentially motivate employees. Soikkeli (2024) views Maslow's hierarchy of needs as a life cycle motivational theory. Transition or movement from one level of need to another is termed satisfaction progression. Their primary explanation is that the theory presents a road map of what needs are given to employees at different stages of life. Maslow's hierarchy of needs classifies people's needs into five categories, as shown in Figure 2.1.

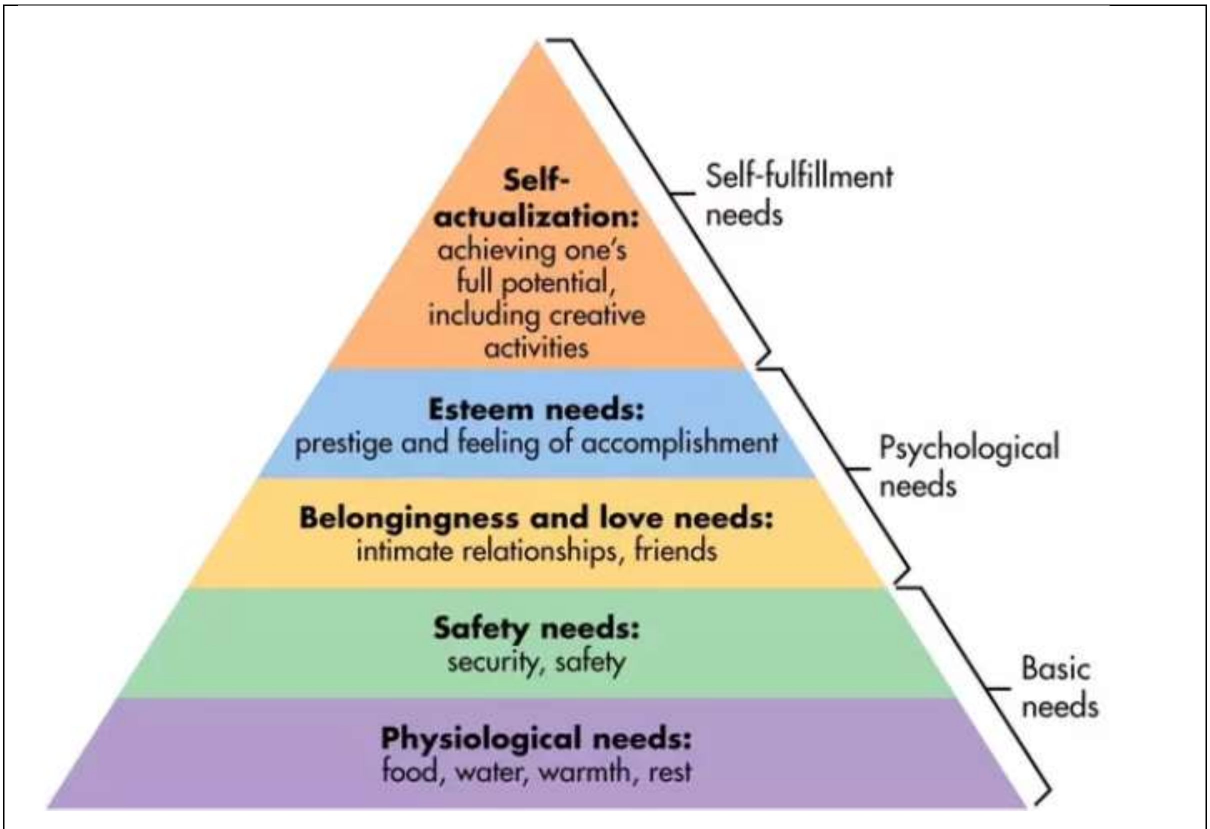

Figure 2.1: Maslow's hierarchy of needs
Source: Adapted from Anuya et al. (2023)

2.2.2.1.1 Physiological needs

According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, physiological needs are the starting point of motivation; basic needs are at the base of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Yurdakul & Arar, 2023). Physiological needs, together with safety needs, are categorised as basic needs. Griffin, Arndt, and Vinke (2023) posit that physiological needs are biological or prerequisites for human life. Frei-Landau and Levin (2023) assert that physiological needs should be satisfied first for people to continue to live. These biological needs are fundamental to human survival and sustenance of life (Babula, 2023). Lee and Sims (2023) classify physiological needs as existential needs, which are, therefore, foundational and fundamental. Mustafa, Yamin, Abdul Razzaq, and Ahad (2023) opine that no need can generate motivation before physiological needs have been met. Babula and Muschert (2023) state that physiological needs include water, oxygen, shelter, food, sleep, clothing, rest, sex, and warmth. Yang, Chen, Pan, Tang, Fan, and Li (2023) categorise physiological needs as instinctive because human life will be wiped out without water, food, or air. Therefore, the first need that employees have is physiological needs. This aligns with Husain (2023), who notes that physiological needs are immediate, and employers should start by providing these needs before turning to other needs. According to Patel, Gleiser, and Khashe (2023), physiological needs are the most vital needs because, without these, the human body cannot function. In other words, physiological needs are compulsory for every employer to provide to employees, as without these, the human body fails to function. Al-Shadouki (2023) believes the employer can provide these needs in two ways. The first strategy is for employers to give enough salary to employees to meet their physiological needs, such as water, food, clothes, and shelter. The second strategy is for the employer to provide these physiological needs, such as rest (off days and leave), food (breakfast and lunch), air (proper ventilation), water, and clothes (company uniforms). Fu (2024) argues that it is essential that the employer provides these, as all employee behavior will be directed to these needs. Peng et al. (2024) believe that without physiological needs, it is pointless for employees to come to work, as their physical bodies cannot function if they are not met. Therefore, according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the first set of motivators is physiological needs, which should be the starting point for motivation. After providing physiological needs, employees can no longer be motivated by them, and the following higher motivators are those categorised as safety needs.

2.2.2.1.2 Safety needs

According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, employees can be motivated by safety needs after physiological needs are met. Safety and physiological needs are classified as essential (Boston-Leary et al., 2024). Oppong-Gyebi et al. (2024) posit that employees become worried about their safety and security after their physiological needs for food, water, and drink are met. Chen, Wu, Hu, He, and Ju (2021) also drive the same sentiments by noting that safety needs are the primary concern of people who have previously been motivated by physiological needs. Safety needs make employees feel safe and secure during and outside work (Rumaizi, Anshari, M., Almunawar, and Masri, 2023). In addition, security needs are about the interaction between law and order (Zhai et al., 2023). Safety needs include all mechanisms that are in place for employees to feel safe and secure. According to Dixit, Sharma, and Kamara (2023), safety and security needs enable employees to survive chaos, disturbances, and disorder. These chaotic environments may lead to physical harm, illness, injuries, mental illness, or even death. Therefore, employees want safety from war, violence, robbery, and threats (Fjendbo, 2021). In addition, employees wish for protection from natural disasters such as tsunamis, floods, earthquakes, and volcanoes (Zhou, 2024). Lee and Sims (2023) note that at this level, employees are motivated by anything that brings peace of mind. Anuya et al. (2023) state that safety and or security needs must be met to prevent employees from being frightened. Employees need safety from uncertain occurrences in the future, such as retrenchment. Employers can use many motivators to fulfill safety and security needs (Yang et al., 2023). People are concerned with safe working conditions. An organisation must provide safe working conditions free from accidents, dangers, and hazards. Moreover, Rojas et al. (2023) observe that some employers offer personal protective equipment and clothing for employees' safety. Employers must liberate workers from fear, threat, and harm (Chen, Qiu, Wang, Zhou, Zhang & Qi, 2024). Mustafa et al. (2023) argue that economic security is one of the motivators companies can take advantage of to improve employee performance. One such way is to provide job security to employees so that they have economic assurance. Furthermore, employees need a personal workplace during working hours. In addition, employers may also offer health and funeral insurance (Rumaizi et al., 2023). The employer can provide security guards to secure the workplace. Once safety and security needs have been provided, employees can only be motivated by higher needs of belonging and love (social needs).

2.2.2.1.3 Belonging and love needs

According to Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, once physiological and safety needs have been met, people can be motivated by belonging and love needs. Fjendbo (2021) states that employees start looking for love after meeting their physiological and safety needs. At this stage, they can only be motivated by social needs. These needs include the desire to belong to a social group. According to Anuya et al. (2023), humans are social animals who desire to belong to a group. Therefore, their colleagues, subordinates, and superiors must love and appreciate employees.

This social need extends to the desire to have friends at work and outside work (Oppong-Gyebi et al., 2024). Love includes intimacy, which is essential for people to exchange their feelings. Boston-Leary et al. (2024) believe that belonging and love needs are of fundamental importance, as they can reduce stress and guard against mental health issues. Employees want to belong and affiliate with a group within and outside the workplace (Rojas et al., 2023). In this regard, an employer can organise employees into departments and foster teamwork. Employees feel loved and essential if they are part of a group. This also becomes a platform for them to be heard and contribute to decision-making (Rumaizi et al., 2023). Groups will make people feel accepted and are a platform for interaction and association. Organisations must give employees work-life balance (Griffin et al., 2023). This allows employees to spend more time with their families, friends, and companions. Once these needs have been fulfilled, employees socially progress to esteem needs.

2.2.2.1.4 Esteem needs

After fulfillment of belonging and love needs, humans desire esteem. According to Yang et al. (2023), employees desire recognition and appreciation after belonging to a group. Esteem needs have two-tier motivators: internal and external esteem needs (Peng et al., 2024). Psychological needs include esteem, belonging, and love (Cui et al., 2021). Internal esteem needs are the desire for self-respect and accomplishment (Zhai et al., 2023). External esteem is related to a desire to be recognised and have social status (Mustafa et al., 2023). Fu (2024) defines esteem needs as ego and prestige needs. People need to fulfill their ego with attention-seeking behaviors and want prestige to be separated from others. In other words, they want to be heard and to be felt. Griffin et al. (2023) posit that organisations must recognise employees by praising and rewarding them. This fulfills their esteemed needs and can improve employee performance. Awards can be given to outstanding performers to satisfy their ego (Patel et al., 2023). Dixit et al. (2023) argue that people also need power. Promotion to newer roles and titles can motivate and enhance employee performance. Furthermore, Niyivuga et al. (2019) state that employees want to feel important, and superiors should always value their input during decision-making. Once esteem needs are met, employees socially progress to the self-actualisation level of needs.

2.2.2.1.5 Self-actualisation

According to Maslow's theory of motivation, people desire self-actualisation once their esteem needs are met. Cui et al. (2023) state that self-actualisation is the last need to be satisfied. Lee and Sims (2023) note that self-actualisation is people's desire to maximise their gifts and capabilities. Niyivuga, Otara, and Tuyishime (2019) explain that some of these gifts and talents of employees are hidden and are not used frequently at work. Therefore, the employee embarks on self-discovery to unearth their gifts and skills to benefit the organisation and society (Ramaditya et al., 2020). According to Niati, Siregar, and Prayoga (2021), self-actualisation is also known as self-fulfillment because employees want to develop their skills and feel gratification. Thus, self-actualisation includes needs such as autonomy, personal growth, and achievement. Yang (2024) believes employers should provide room for creativity, innovation, and independence to motivate employees at this level. Strategies such as job enlargement and enrichment are of great use to the employees, allowing them to think and use their hidden talents (Peng et al., 2024). Bozeman and Eadens (2020) state that employees desire problem-centered tasks to showcase their talents at this level. Peng et al. (2024) assert that employees must be given challenging tasks to reach self-actualisation. Thus, self-actualisation represents the last level of needs that must be fulfilled for employees to be motivated. At this stage, employees seek personal growth and use their talents to innovate, solve problems, make key decisions, and reach their maximum potential for their benefit and the employer.

2.2.2.1.6 Justification of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs theory

Maslow’s hierarchy of needs was used as this study's primary theoretical tenet. The hierarchy of needs theory is helpful as it informs what motivates employees (Palumbo, Flamini, Gnan, Pellegrini, Petrolo & Fakhar Manesh, 2022). This research seeks to understand motivational strategies and the level of needs. Using Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is helpful in this regard. The theory presents an array of motivators (needs) that can be transformed into motivational strategies (Abed Alah, 2024). Maslow’s hierarchy of needs theory is popular and has been used by many researchers in employee motivation (Fishbach & Wooley, 2022). Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory is simple to understand, and it clearly shows employers what motivates employees (Mahmoud, Reisel, Fuxman & Mohr, 2021b). Furthermore, the theory summarises non-financial and financial benefits that motivate employees (Hajiali et al., 2022). Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is foundational to all motivational theories (Palumbo et al., 2022). Several researchers in motivation in higher education have used Maslow’s hierarchy of needs to research motivation. For example, Omodan (2022) and Patricia and Asoba (2021) used the theory to understand motivation in South African universities. However, the theory has not been tested for the multi-generational non-academic workforce, which this study seeks to achieve. Thus, Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory was used as a significant content theoretical tenet.

2.2.2.1.7 Maslow's hierarchy of needs and generational cohorts

Numerous studies, such as Cote (2019) and Krajac and Samardzija (2024), have demonstrated the applicability of Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory to different generational cohorts. The main objective of these studies was to elaborate on which needs apply to specific generational cohorts. Cote's (2019) study explored the applicability of Maslow's theory to employees in different generational cohorts. The author found that the issue of an employee migrating from one need to another through a hierarchy does not apply to Generations X, Y, and Z, as it only applies to Baby Boomers and traditionalists. Cote (2019) stressed that, based on Maslow's needs, Generation X is highly motivated by social, safety, and physiological needs. These are needs at the bottom of the hierarchy. The investigation also showed that needs such as self-actualisation and self-esteem are key in motivating Generations Y and Z, which are needs at the top of the hierarchy. This was substantiated by Wang and Niu (2024) who found that Generations Y employees are motivated by self-esteem and actualisation because they have a desire for growth and quick progression.

In their seminal work, Krajac and Samardzija (2024) stress that Generations X, Y, and Z differ in terms of the needs that Maslow presents. According to their investigation, Generation X is more concerned with physiological needs like money. They state that safety needs, such as job security, are also essential. Krajac and Samardzija (2024) elaborate that Generation Y is interested in belonging and love needs. This finding deviates from Cote's (2019) view, which is that this need is a motivator for Generation X employees rather than Generation Y. Krajac and Samardzija (2024) demonstrate that Generation Z is interested in self-esteem and actualisation, which substantiates Cote's (2019) conclusions. The general depiction of literature is that the younger the generation, the higher the order of needs it desires. This was confirmed by Saranya (2021), who found that Generation X was highly motivated by physiological and safety needs, Generation Y by belonging needs and self-esteem, and Generation Z by self-esteem and self-actualisation. Foktas and Juceviciene (2021) also support this by stating that the younger the generation, the greater the need for higher-order needs in Maslow's hierarchy.

However, some researchers, such as Turner (2024), opine this is not always the case. For example, Eannarino (2024) found that all needs in Maslow's hierarchy are of equal importance to multi-generational staff belonging to Generations X, Y, and Z. This is in line with findings by Sherrod (2022) that organisations can uniformly motivate employees to belong to these generations by providing all the needs recommended by Maslow’s hierarchy. In as much these divergences exist amongst researchers regarding Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and motivation of multi-generational staff, there seems to be a consensus that needs differ from one generation to another, with younger generations (Generations Y and Z) motivated by higher order needs, and older generations such as Generation X being motivated by lower order needs (Wang & Niu, 2024).

2.2.2.1.8 Maslow’s hierarchy of needs in the higher education context

Researchers have investigated Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and the motivation of university non-academic staff. Some researchers, such as Omodan (2022), have established that Maslow’s hierarchy of needs strategies, such as physiological, safety, belonging, self-esteem, and self-actualisation needs, are a solution for motivating non-academic employees in universities. However, Omodan’s (2022) seminal work disputes the sequential nature of the hierarchy and posits that the adoption of these strategies may not be necessarily sequential, as proposed by Abraham Maslow. This is denied by Idrissu's (2022) findings that the use of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs in the motivation of non-academic staff is more effective when the needs of employees are fulfilled sequentially according to the hierarchy. This is supported by Yildiz (2021), who substantiates that the pyramid, if implemented as it is, solves problems of motivation, performance, and labor turnover amongst higher education staff.

This is in line with Iheusekien and Joel's (2023) studies in universities in the USA, as they also show that non-academic employees are motivated by physiological, safety, belonging, self-esteem, and self-actualisation needs. Their research substantiates that fulfilling these needs is individual-based in that they diverge because employees are at different levels of the hierarchy. However, a study by Alajmi and Alasousi (2019) disputes these claims. Their analysis showed that library staff who were part of the non-academic staff at Kuwait University were not motivated by all the needs outlined by Maslow’s hierarchy. They submit that only self-esteem and self-actualisation motivate employees. In other words, employees are motivated by the higher-order needs of Maslow’s hierarchy.

2.2.2.1.9 Maslow’s hierarchy in the Zimbabwean context

Research on Maslow’s hierarchy of needs in Zimbabwe has generated divergent views. The most dominant view is that employees in Zimbabwe are motivated mainly by the lower-order needs of Maslow's hierarchy. This is expressed by Chikukwa, Msosa, and Mlambo (2022), who submit that Zimbabwe faces economic challenges, and employees are worried about their salaries and job security. This view is supported by Zishiri and Mugadza (2024), who found that non-academic staff in Zimbabwe are interested in physiological, safety, and belonging needs. Mazambara and Sepeng (2024) substantiate this view by asserting that employees in Zimbabwe are interested in salaries and belonging needs because it is a collectivist culture.

However, other studies dispute the claim that employees in Zimbabwe are only motivated by the lower-order needs of Maslow's hierarchy. For example, Mamvuto, Machingura, and Tafirenyika (2024) assert that self-esteem and self-actualisation can motivate employees in Zimbabwe. This is supported by Nenguwo (2023), who states that employees are interested in furthering their studies by enrolling in master's and doctoral studies because they want self-esteem and self-actualisation. Chigaga's (2024) meta-analysis demonstrates that Maslow's hierarchy of needs is universal. The study indicates that employees in Zimbabwe can be motivated by following Maslow's hierarchy of satisfying one need after another. This aligns with Jonas's (2019) contribution to the higher education sector, which elaborates that all the needs outlined in Maslow's hierarchy are key in generating employee motivation. Marumahoko, Ngorima, and Shayawabaya (2023) substantiate these claims as they claim that if satisfied, physiological, safety, belonging, self-esteem, and self-actualisation can solve motivation and labour turnover challenges in Zimbabwe. Therefore, the applicability of Maslow's hierarchy of needs remains in contention in Zimbabwe, and this study provides another lens for testing the theory in the Zimbabwean context.

A study by Uko and Ihebom (2020) demonstrates that Maslow's motivation theory does not apply to the motivation of non-academic staff in universities in Nigeria. Their seminal work indicates missing needs, such as power, as most university staff are motivated by the need for control. Their study also shows that the order of the hierarchy is problematic, as someone may require self-esteem needs before belonging needs. Therefore, research on Maslow's hierarchy of needs and motivation of academic staff remains an area of contestation, and this study adds to this discourse.

As much as Maslow's hierarchy of needs helps explain what motivates employees (motivators/motivational strategies), the theory fails to account for how and why employees are encouraged (Griffin et al., 2023). In addition, the satisfaction progression is unrealistic (Dixit et al., 2023). The idea that people progress from one level of needs to another does not hold water. The sequence has also been questioned, as some people seek higher-order needs before lower-order ones (Yang et al., 2023). For example, some people may seek esteem needs before belonging and love needs. Maslow's needs theory is also criticised because it is too Eurocentric (Chen et al., 2024). The arrangement of needs into levels was created using European values, and in Africa, where values differ, this theory may be problematic (Anuya et al., 2023). Anuya et al. (2023) argue that European culture is too individualistic, whereas Asian and African cultures are too collective. The theory is about employees fulfilling their individual and egoistic needs and ignoring collective needs, such as serving God and others, which are vital in the African context (Abed Alah, 2024). Furthermore, Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs ignores important concepts of simultaneous and multiplicity motivation (Mustafa et al., 2023).

The hierarchy presents sequential motivation, whereas employees may be motivated by more than one level of need. For example, an employee may need love while needing safety and security. Maslow's theory of needs does not factor this in as it proposes a progression of satisfaction. In addition, the theory is too complex to apply in the workplace as it requires management to be aware of what level in the hierarchy each employee is (Rojas et al., 2024). This requires time and investment in research for larger organisations to understand each employee's motivation level. Feminists have also challenged the concept of motivation by Maslow (Mahmoud et al., 2021a). Abraham Maslow arrived at self-actualisation by studying individuals such as Thomas Jefferson, Albert Einstein, and Abraham Lincoln. On the women's side, only Mother Teresa was studied, and this has raised eyebrows amongst feminists, who argue that the theory may not apply to women employees. Moreover, self-actualisation needs are more suitable and practical for entrepreneurs, and this is hard to implement for employees as organisations are guided by policies and procedures (Altymurat et al., 2021). Furthermore, most people do not reach self-actualisation. Only a select few do so (Bozeman & Eadens, 2020). According to Zhai et al. (2023), some of the needs presented by Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory do not motivate but cause employees to be dissatisfied if not provided for, including physiological and safety needs (basic needs). Herzberg's two-factor theory explains this well. Hence, the study adopted Herzberg's two-factor theory as a supplementary content theory guiding this study.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory is relevant in this study because it states that employees are motivated according to stages. For example, according to the theory, Generation Z, new in the workplace, will be at the first stage of motivation. These employees would be motivated by basic needs such as housing and food. According to the theory, Generation Y, between Generations X and Z, would have moved from basic needs to other needs, such as love and belonging. Maslow suggests that employees are motivated by basic needs, safety, love, self-esteem, and actualisation (Yang, 2024). Furthermore, Maslow's theory suggests that the immediate motivators (physiological and safety needs) that motivate employees to perform are extrinsic (Chen et al., 2024). On the other hand, up the ladder, employees are motivated by intrinsic needs (belonging, love, esteem, and actualisation). However, the theory does not attempt to overtly separate extrinsic from intrinsic motivators (Niati et al., 2021). Furthermore, the theory does not address the motivation of different generations of employees (Acquah et al., 2021). Hence, generational theory and Herzberg's two-factor theory are needed for the study.

2.2.2.2 Herzberg's two-factor theory

Herzberg's two-factor theory was adopted as a supplementary content theory of motivation. Frederick Herzberg studied job satisfaction, motivation, and employee performance. Herzberg's two-factor theory is content because it informs what motivates employees (motivators) (Thant, 2023). Herzberg's theory is one of the most frequently used theories by employee motivation researchers (de Oliveira, Balbino, Ribeiro, Ramos, Sepp & Loureiro, 2023). In the 1950s, Herzberg interviewed 200 accountants and engineers from over nine companies in the United States of America (Tezel, 2023). His findings consolidated Maslow's hierarchy of needs into two areas of job satisfaction (Mo, Zeng & Lin, 2023). The interviews by Herzberg unearthed two exclusively separate dimensions of motivation (Temory, 2023), namely, hygiene and motivational factors (Sankaran, Sankaran & Bui, 2023). Hygiene factors, also known as job dissatisfiers, do not motivate employees, but if they are not present, they can lead to job dissatisfaction (Aggarwal, 2023). On the other hand, motivators, also known as job satisfiers, if present, lead to employee motivation (Chen, 2023). Hence, Herzberg's theory implies that dissatisfaction is not the opposite of satisfaction (Zakaria, Ibrahim, Rahmat, Noorezam & Sa'adan, 2023). The opposite of dissatisfaction is no dissatisfaction, and the opposite of satisfaction is no satisfaction (Dixit et al., 2023). There is, thus, no relationship between hygiene factors and motivators.

Zeng and Paphawasit (2024) state that Herzberg's two-factor theory implies that employees can be dissatisfied and motivated simultaneously or demotivated and dissatisfied simultaneously. According to Herzberg's theory of motivation, hygiene factors do not motivate employees. They must be present, so employees are not dissatisfied with work (Siddiqui, 2024). These hygiene factors include job context and work environment (Twum & Ayitey, 2024). On the other hand, motivators do not cause job dissatisfaction when absent but cause no satisfaction (Saputri, 2024). According to Rokeman, Kob, and Yaacob (2024), motivators are about the job content, not its context. Herzberg's theory of motivation puts forward that hygiene factors and motivators determine employee work attitudes and level of performance (He Fu, Wu, & Feng, 2024). The difference between Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory and Herzberg's factor theory is that some of the needs related to job context are classified as dissatisfiers, not motivators, by Herzberg (Ibrahim, Ghazali, Syed, Abdullah, Hamid, & Aisyah, 2023). Herzberg's two-factor theories inform motivation and categorise needs into two broad categories: hygiene factors and motivators, as shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Hygiene factors and motivational factors

Hygiene Factors	**Motivational Factors**
Company policy and administration	Achievement
Working conditions	Recognition
Salary	Work itself
Personal life	Responsibility
Status	Advancement
Interpersonal relationships with supervisors, colleagues, and subordinates	Possibility of growth
Job security	
Technical supervision	

Source: Researcher

2.2.2.2.1 Hygiene factors

According to Herzberg, hygiene factors do not motivate employees but lead to job dissatisfaction if absent (Bhatt, Chitranshi, & Mehta, 2022). According to Thant and Chang (2021), hygiene factors are also called maintenance factors because they are there to reduce job dissatisfaction. Miah and Hasan (2022) assert that hygiene factors are extrinsic factors that do not motivate employees but decrease job dissatisfaction. Hygiene factors are variables in the work environment that one cannot control. According to the theory, hygiene factors are lower-level needs that do not lead to productivity. The theory also notes that managers have been focusing on hygiene factors, which do not increase employee performance (Siruri & Cheche, 2021). Koncar, Santos, Strohmaier, and Helic (2022) add that hygiene factors cannot increase or decrease job satisfaction as they guide employers to create favorable conditions.

Herzberg outlines ten hygiene factors organisations can use to minimise dissatisfaction: company policy and administration, salary, personal life, status, working conditions, interpersonal relationships with supervisors, colleagues, and subordinates, job security, and technical supervision (Hoque, Rabbany, Anny & Akter, 2021). Company policies and leadership styles should be pro-employee (Peramitzis & Galanakis, 2022). Abraham and Prasetyo (2021) indicate that providing long-term and permanent contracts guarantees job security, which can reduce job dissatisfaction. Furthermore, Mohammed, Abdulaziz, and Hananu (2021) encourage companies to facilitate good relationships among employees with their peers, because the lack of this is a cause for dissatisfaction. Employee salary and status should be sufficient to reduce dissatisfaction (Ganesh & Liu, 2022). In addition, employees should have a work-life balance to sort out their lives. Hence, hygiene factors are conditions at the workplace that are extrinsic to the job that employers should meet. If they are not met, they generate job dissatisfaction; if they are met, they do not create motivation but reduce dissatisfaction. Therefore, organisations should ensure that the work environment is conducive for all employees to minimise dissatisfaction. It should be noted that hygiene factors are the foundation through which motivational factors can be exploited to enhance employee performance.

2.2.2.2.2 Motivational factors

According to Herzberg's two-factor theory, satisfiers or motivators are the only variables that can garner positive effects. Motivational factors are intrinsic to the work content (Mustafa et al., 2022; Mo et al., 2023; Poissonnier, Allal-Chérif, and Le Dain, 2024). He et al. (2024) categorise these factors as the nature of the job and further state that employees have control over these. Herzberg's two-factor theory brings forward six motivational factors that employers can use to generate employee satisfaction: achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement, and the possibility of growth (Rokeman et al., 2024). Mustafa et al. (2022) argue that the motivational factors were developed from Maslow's self-actualisation needs as they are about employees growing, developing, and realising their potential. Furthermore, motivational factors are higher-order needs that must be met for employees to be efficient (Ibrahim et al., 2023). Herzberg's two-factor theory suggests that these motivators increase productivity but, if they are not present, do not cause employee dissatisfaction (Bhatt et al., 2022). The theory suggests that positive effects will be generated once these are met. Herzberg's theory of motivation proposes that employers should use job enrichment and job enlargement to make motivational factors present (Koncar et al., 2022). Job enlargement increases the job's scope by providing additional tasks (Zakaria et al., 2023). On the other hand, job enrichment increases the job scope by giving the job holder the power to make decisions (de Oliveira et al., 2023). The presence of motivational factors improves employee satisfaction (Dixit et al., 2023). In addition, these motivational factors enhance employee effectiveness and efficiency. According to Mohammed et al. (2021), employers must mix hygiene and motivational factors so that employees are not dissatisfied or satisfied. Herzberg's theory of motivation avers that motivational factors are intrinsic to the job, and if these are present, the organisation may experience improved employee performance.

2.2.2.2.3 Justification of Herzberg’s two-factor theory

Herzberg’s two-factor theory and Maslow’s hierarchy of needs are the most popular theories of motivation. He et al. (2024) note that Herzberg’s motivation theory has international recognition and has been used by many researchers on employee motivation. Herzberg’s two-factor theory is essential in clarifying that other needs are hygiene factors. They only reduce dissatisfaction but do not increase work performance (Saputri, 2024). The primary reason the theory was selected to supplement Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs theory in the current study was that the theory is easy to understand and demystifies other factors (extrinsic to the job) as mere dissatisfiers and not determiners of motivation. Since this study investigated motivational strategies, Herzberg's theory of motivation was adopted because it clearly outlines factors that motivate employees. Hence, Herzberg’s theory of motivation needed to be adopted as a guiding content theory.

2.2.2.2.4 Herzberg’s two-factor theory and generational cohorts

Studies have been conducted on the applicability of Herzberg’s two-factor theory on employees belonging to Generations X, Y, and Z. For example, Zhou and Ma (2024) investigated Herzberg’s two-factor theory across Generations X, Y, and Z, and found that hygiene factors such as salaries and job security only motivate employees in X, Y and Z cohorts. Their study also demonstrates that motivators such as recognition, career growth, and the job itself are indeed motivators, as espoused by Herzberg. This finding is supported by Rai, Thekkekara and Kanhare (2021) who found similarities in terms of satisfaction and motivation of employees in Generations X, Y, and Z. Their seminal work demonstrates that hygiene factors, such as working conditions, are merely there for satisfaction, while motivators such as autonomy and job excitement motivate employees regardless of the generational cohort they belong to.

However, Bhatt, Chitranshi, and Mehta (2022) found differing results regarding Generation Y employees. They found that both hygiene factors and motivators motivate employees. This means that both extrinsic factors and intrinsic factors motivate employees. However, a study by Jindal and Nalluri (2019) shows that Generation Y and Z employees are becoming motivated by satisfiers such as salary and job security. Their analysis shows that what Herzberg terms motivators (growth and responsibility) are hygiene factors for employees in Generation Y and Z cohorts. On the other hand, Cote (2019) submits that Generation X employees are motivated by hygiene factors such as compensation and job security, while motivators such as recognition and career growth provide job satisfaction. Cote's (2019) study demonstrates that Herzberg's two-factor theory applies to employees from Generation Y and Z cohorts; hygiene factors such as compensation satisfy these employees, while career growth, autonomy, creativity, and recognition motivate them. Eragani and Ganage (2019) also show a different angle. While their study concludes that hygiene factors are merely there for job satisfaction, they show that employees in different generational cohorts are motivated differently, with Generation X employees preferring achievement and advancement. Generation Y employees are motivated by the job, growth, and recognition. Therefore, the literature presents divergent views on applying Herzberg's two-factor theory amongst multi-generational employees, and this study extends this body of knowledge.

2.2.2.2.5 Herzberg's two-factor theory in the higher education context

Research has been carried out on Herzberg's two-factor theory in a higher education context, particularly in universities amongst non-academic staff. Adanlawo, Nkomo, and Makhosazana (2023), in their study on Herzberg's theory and motivation of non-academic employees in South Africa, found that hygiene factors such as benefits and job security merely cause job satisfaction. They agree with Herzberg's two-factor theory that motivators such as meaningful work, performance, growth, and influence motivate employees. This is further substantiated by Miah and Hasan's (2022) seminal work on the motivation of university staff, including non-academic employees in Bangladesh. They found that hygiene factors such as salary, fringe benefits, and job security cause dissatisfaction if not provided. Their study agrees with Herzberg's motivation theory that motivators such as job autonomy, achievement, work itself, advancement, and growth motivate employees. Hence, Herzberg's two-factor theory remains relevant in studies on the motivation of non-academic staff (Debabrata, 2020).

Nevins-Bennet (2023) agrees with Herzberg’s two-factor theory on a limited scale. According to these authors, studies on staff in universities in Malaysia show that motivational factors such as freedom, happiness, empowerment, and advancement are effective in motivating employees, as suggested by Herzberg. However, the study also found that factors such as relations with employers and the provision of resources, which Herzberg classifies as hygiene factors, motivate university employees. This is in line with the conclusions of Otyola et al. (2023) that some factors categorised by Herzberg as hygiene factors motivate employees at Makerere University. However, Chachar, Lothi, and Naz (2022), in their research on non-academic staff in universities in Islamabad, found that factors such as personal growth, listed by Herzberg as motivators, are hygiene factors. The same study agrees with Herzberg that recognition and achievement are essential motivational strategies. Zdonek, Hysa, and Zdonek (2021) also found that factors such as personal growth are hygiene factors, not motivators. Some factors, such as job security and work conditions, that Herzberg labels as hygiene factors are key motivational strategies. Therefore, there is an unending debate on the relevance of Herzberg’s two-factor theory, but it remains key in understanding the motivation of non-academic university employees (Debabrata, 2020).

2.2.2.2.6 Herzberg’s two-factor theory in the Zimbabwean context

Studies have been conducted on the relevance of Herzberg’s two-factor theory in the motivation of employees in Zimbabwe (Kanonge & Bussin, 2022). Some of the assumptions of Herzberg’s theory have been substantiated, while some are of limited application (Nenguwo, 2023). Chigaga’s (2024) seminal work demonstrates that the theory’s application is debatable. As elaborated by Herzberg's theory, the research shows that empowerment, trust, and recognition motivate employees. However, Chigaga’s (2024) research shows that some hygiene factors, such as salaries, policies, and benefits, motivate employees, contrary to Herzberg’s submissions. Chatiza et al. (2021) substantiated this, who found that while employee recognition, appreciation, and empowerment can motivate employees (as demonstrated by Herzberg), job security and competitive salaries can also encourage employees, which diverges from Herzberg.

Studies by Ngwenya (2021) demonstrate that Herzberg’s theory is not entirely applicable in Zimbabwe. Ngwenya (2021) elaborates that career development is essential in motivating employees, substantiating Herzberg’s theory. However, the research shows that providing resources and high salaries are not hygiene factors because they generate employee motivation, deviating from Herzberg's claims. Mazambara and Sepeng (2024) also agree with Herzberg's theory and diverge from it. Their research in Zimbabwe found that empowerment motivates employees, as elaborated by Herzberg, but that salaries are not hygiene factors because they lead to employee motivation. Ndlovu et al. (2023) studied employee motivation in Zimbabwe and supported Herzberg's view regarding employee recognition as a motivational strategy. However, they deviated from Herzberg by concluding that salary, work conditions, and provisions of resources are motivators rather than hygiene factors, as Herzberg claimed. Chikwariro, Bussin, and De Braine (2021) belong to the same school of thought. They argue that employees in Zimbabwe are motivated by salaries and job security, which Herzberg identified as hygiene factors that cause job dissatisfaction if not provided. Studies by Foya and Kandima (2020), Majoni, Chavunduka, Bhebhe, and Mufudza (2023), and Kajongwe (2021) also provide empirical evidence that Herzberg's theory is relevant by demonstrating that career growth and advancement are key in motivating employees in Zimbabwe. Despite the shortcomings of Herzberg's two-factor theory, it remains key to understanding motivational strategies in Zimbabwe.

While Herzberg's theory of motivation is critical in outlining motivational strategies that can be used to improve employee performance, the theory also has fundamental weaknesses. Like any other content theory of motivation, Herzberg's two-factor theory educates people on what motivates employees and does not explain how and why employees are encouraged (Dixit et al., 2023). Therefore, the current study also used process theories of motivation to explore how and why employees are motivated.

A further critique is that Herzberg's theory derives from studies on engineers and accountants (Hoque et al., 2021), so is suitable for professions such as accounting, information systems, and engineering (Tovmasyan and Minasyan, 2020), and may be problematic in explaining what motivates lower-level employees who do not have professions. This is the gap that Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs fills in this investigation. Herzberg's two-factor theory is mainly Western and does not consider other cultures, such as the African culture (Mo et al., 2023). For example, what constitutes hygiene factors may be motivational factors in different cultural settings. Thant and Chang (2021) assert that hygiene factors such as salary and job security may be motivational in Latin America, Asia, and Africa in underdeveloped countries. Mustafa et al. (2022) posit that there is also a need to test Herzberg's assumption that hygiene factors do not cause satisfaction if they are present. Motivational factors do not cause dissatisfaction when they are absent. Tezel (2023) states that Herzberg’s two-factor theory of motivation does not adequately explain the relationship between motivation and satisfaction.

Researchers have used Herzberg's two-factor theory to study motivation in universities. For example, in Zimbabwe, Chatiza et al. (2021), Ndlovu et al. (2023), Kanonge (2021), and Kanonge and Bussin (2022) have successfully used the theory. In South Africa, Mahoko (2023) and Ngwenya (2021) have utilised Herzberg’s two-factor theory to understand higher education motivation. Hence, this study needed to adopt two additional process motivation theories to explain better the variables that constitute the problem: motivation and employee performance.

2.2.3 Process theories of motivation

While content theories are critical in identifying what motivates employees (motivators), they do not explain how and why employees are motivated. Hence, this study used content theories and process theories to explain motivation. Ali and Anwar (2021) observe that organisations are not only worried about what motivates employees, but they are also interested in knowing how employees are motivated. Acquah et al. (2021) state that process theories guide managers on how they can manipulate employee behavior. Hajiali et al. (2022) argue that content theories treat employees as homogenous, and process theories attempt to explain the diversity of employees using the lens of motivation. Mahmoud et al. (2021b) add that process theories identify the variables that trigger goal-oriented behavior in individual employees. Sulastri (2021) asserts that process theories show that motivation is highly psychological and cognitive, and help managers understand variables in an employee’s mind that make the employee choose to act in a goal-oriented manner. Therefore, process theories explore how and why employee attitudes and behaviors are altered positively or negatively (Moosa & Aloka, 2023). Fishbach and Wooley (2022) understand process theories of motivation as a body of knowledge that examines the ‘why’ part of motivation.

Process theories guide organisations in motivating employees as psychological mechanisms are accounted for (Ali & Anwar, 2021). According to Yang et al. (2023), motivation is highly decisional, and this is a factor that is overlooked by content theories but is present in process theories of motivation. In a nutshell, process theories of motivation were used in this study because they help understand how and why employees are motivated. Furthermore, process theories appreciate that motivation is cognitive and that employees are diverse and can be motivated differently. Hence, it is helpful in this study also to include process theories in understanding the problem at hand. Some examples of process theories of motivation include operant conditioning, goal-setting theory, expectancy theory, equity theory, and Porter and Law's performance satisfaction theory (Acquah et al., 2021). Victor Vroom's expectancy theory and equity theory were used as part of the theoretical framework for this study.

2.2.3.1 Expectancy theory

Victor Vroom propounded the expectancy theory of motivation. This theory of motivation is a process theory because it puts forward that motivation is cognitive and psychological (Watters, 2021). In addition, Filipova (2023) posits that the expectancy theory of motivation establishes motivational strategies and informs organisations and their managers on how to motivate employees. According to the expectancy theory of motivation, employees engage in goal-oriented behavior due to perceived outcomes (Bushi, 2021). Nikulina and Wynstra (2022) state that conscious expectations of outcomes attached to performance motivate employees. Therefore, according to this theory, the level of motivation is influenced by the employee's perceived performance outcomes. George and Humphrey (2021) clarify that the expectancy theory of motivation is a body of knowledge that believes employees perform because they expect something from the organisation. Expectancy theory is highly decisional, as employees choose whether to perform based on perceived outcomes associated with their performance. Fan, Kline, Liu, and Byrd (2022) understand the expectancy theory of motivation as proposing that the probability or likelihood that an act leads to valued outcomes is what motivates employees. This is supported by Yoes and Silverman (2021), who posit that the primary assumption of expectancy theory is that employee expectations influence their behavior. According to expectancy theory, employees are likely to perform if they anticipate that this will lead to their needs being fulfilled. These needs can be intrinsic or extrinsic (George & Humphrey, 2021). Extrinsic needs include job security, high salary, and promotion, and intrinsic motivation includes achievement, status, and job enrichment.

Amin, Shamim, Ghazali, and Khan (2021) assert that all employees have individual goals and will only perform if they lead to achieving them. In addition, low performers are employees with low expectations associated with their performance (Li, 2023). In this regard, Basnet, Eyaa, and Okhawere (2022) view the expectancy theory of motivation as a contingency-based approach because motivation depends on the individual employee's expectations. Maczak and Yawson (2021) add that Vroom's expectancy theory of motivation values employee diversity as motivation choices vary from one employee to another. Adara, Nuryadi, and Nasution (2019) state that this theory of motivation shows that employee performance is a means to fulfil needs, not vice versa. The employee performs first to get the expected rewards. It's all about the linkage between performance and outcomes. According to expectancy theory, motivation results from the interaction or multiplication of three components: expectancy, instrumentality, and valence (Ahmad, Wong, Riaz & Iqbal, 2024). Motivation is a function of expectancy multiplied by instrumentality multiplied by valence. Therefore, each variable must not be zero because there will be zero motivation. Figure 2.2 shows the three variables that constitute motivation according to expectancy theory.

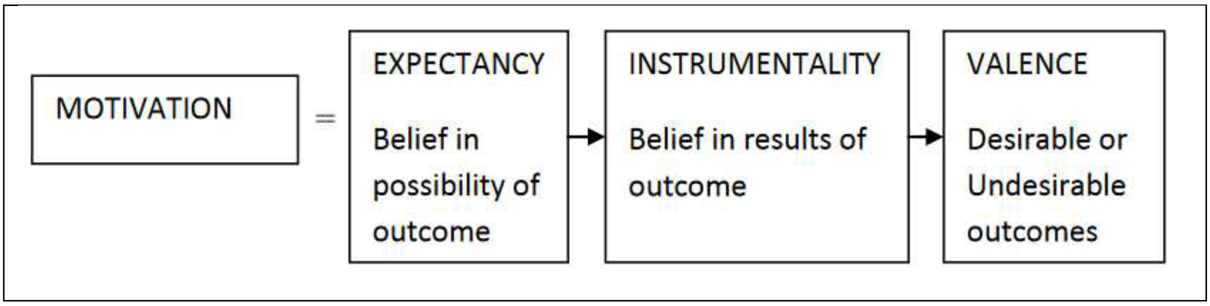

Figure 2.2: Expectancy theory
Source: Adapted from Vroom, Porter, and Lawler (2015)

According to expectancy theory, there should be a positive correlation between effort and performance. Employees should firmly believe that effort leads to performance before making further decisions (Alase & Akinbo, 2021). The second principle is that employees should also expect that performance will result in desirable results (Uka & Prendi, 2021). In other words, it is the belief that performance leads to valued outcomes. These results or outcomes should be able to satisfy employee needs. What is critical is that employees should value these outcomes. If they are not valued, employees will not perform desirably. Therefore, the expectancy principle means the belief that effort leads to performance (Soliman & Altabtai, 2023). Instrumentality is the belief that performance leads to a valued outcome (Liang & Bautista, 2021). Finally, valence refers to the value of the outcome (Koij & Van den Broeck, 2022). These theories have a plethora of implications for organisations and their managers. Employers should know that employees have diverse needs and research what each employee values (Alizai, Asif & Rind, 2021). Therefore, managers must recognise employees and value employee differences. The other assumption of the theory is that effort leads to performance, and managers should allocate tasks to employees that match their skills and capabilities (Gould, 2024). Furthermore, organisations should also invest in training and development for employees' efforts to lead to improved performance (Khan, Bhatti, Hussain, Ahmad & Iqbal, 2021). Ferdiana, Khan, and Ray (2023) believe setting specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound objectives can help transform effort into performance. In addition, employers need to explain outcomes to employees, so they know them. This aligns with Nmadu, Idris, Aidelokhai, and Adamu's (2021) observation that expectancy theory encourages constant communication and feedback. Below three components of expectancy theory are discussed.

2.2.3.1.1 Expectancy

One of the significant variables of the expectancy theory of motivation is expectancy. According to Alizai et al. (2021), expectancy is the probability that effort will lead to performance, and this variable is highly subjective. Expectancy is the belief that effort results in the performance or completion of tasks. Khan et al. (2021) understand this concept as relating to the likelihood of an employee's effort resulting in a desirable outcome. If the employee believes that desirable outcomes will not be achieved regardless of the effort, the employee will not put in any effort (Bushi, 2021). On the other hand, if the employee believes that effort leads to a desirable outcome, the employee will be motivated (Fan et al., 2022). Expectancy ranges from 0 to 1 (Gould, 2024). If the expectancy probability is 0, the employee will not be motivated. If the likelihood is high, the employee will be motivated, which means that job-related effort generates the desired performance. Expectancy is influenced by self-estimation, self-confidence, and self-esteem in one’s competencies, skills, and capabilities (Ahmad et al., 2024). Furthermore, perceived task difficulty and availability of organisational support and resources also influence expectancy. Therefore, organisations, to ensure positive expectancy, should offer support to their staff so that they have the desired skills through training and offer them the equipment and technologies required for completing tasks.

2.2.3.1.2 Instrumentality

The second variable of the expectancy theory of motivation is instrumentality. Instrumentality links the first level of outcome, performance, to the second level of outcome, which is a reward (Li, 2023). According to Nikulina and Wynstra (2022), instrumentality is the belief that employees will be rewarded if they perform. In other words, it is a thought that performance leads to rewards. The outcome is desirable once the performance is successful (Amin et al., 2021). Basnet et al. (2022) clarify that instrumentality is an employee’s estimate of the likelihood that performance will lead to many outcomes. Just like expectancy, instrumentality ranges from 0 to 1. If the instrumentality probability is 0, there is no link between performance and outcomes, and the employee will not be motivated. If the instrumentality probability is 1, the employee believes there is a link between performance and outcomes, and the employee will be motivated. Managers can improve instrumentality by delivering on promises after performance (Gould, 2024). More so, organisations should clarify the rewards that are associated with performance. This is because instrumentality is greatly influenced by trust and confidence in the management's ability to deliver desired outcomes after performance.

2.2.3.1.3 Valence

Valence is the third component of expectancy theory. According to the expectancy theory, motivation valence refers to the attractiveness of the outcome to the employee (Alase & Aknbo, 2021). Nmadu et al. (2021) posit that valence is the extent to which employees appreciate their reward after performance. Khan et al. (2021) argue that valence is the attractiveness of the outcome, while Ferdiana et al. (2023) describe valence as the extent to which employees like the outcome. Therefore, valence is the value or worthiness of the reward for performance. Unlike expectancy and instrumentality, valence can be negative or positive, ranging from -1 to +1. (Li, 2023). If the valence is positive, it is attractive to employees, and they are motivated; if it is negative, employees will not be motivated. Watters (2021) states that negative valences are undesirable and employees want to avoid them, whereas positive valences are desirable and employees want them. Therefore, managers should reduce negative valences and increase positive valences. Like instrumentality and expectancy, valence is subjective and varies from employee to employee, and organisations should incorporate everyone's needs.

2.2.3.1.4 Justification of the use of expectancy theory

The expectancy theory of motivation was selected because it has been widely applied and tested by numerous researchers on employee performance, and some have supported its assumptions. The theory also helps understand how employees are motivated by understanding their expectations. Furthermore, the expectancy theory of motivation shows that employee behavior is influenced by their goals (Amin et al., 2021). The theory is helpful because it accepts that employees are rational beings who can anticipate future rewards and have free will to choose to act. Basnet et al. (2022) state that many researchers prefer expectancy theory because it accepts employee diversity, an aspect overlooked by other motivation theorists such as Abraham Maslow. From an organisational point of view, expectancy theory is fundamental as it identifies actions to motivate employees. In addition, Majoni et al. (2023) and Chatiza et al. (2021) have researched motivation in Zimbabwe using an expectancy theory lens. However, they did not consider the motivation of a multi-generational non-academic workforce, which this study seeks to achieve. Hence, this study used expectancy theory as a significant process theory.

2.2.3.1.5 Expectancy theory and generational cohorts

Studies such as those by Ann and Blum (2020) and Chillakuri (2020) have reached different conclusions on expectancy theory and multi-generational employees. For example, Cote (2019) demonstrates similarities in employee expectations across Generations X, Y, and Z. They are goal-oriented and require precise and productive feedback (Foktas & Juceviciene, 2022). However, numerous studies show differences in applying the expectancy theory across employees in the three generational cohorts (Hassan, Jambulingam, Alam, & Islam, 2019). For example, Darby and Morrel (2019) elaborate that Generation X employees expect the effort to be linked to salaries and job stability. On the other hand, Generation Y requires clear expectations, and they want their effort to be linked to feedback, contribution towards the overall organisational goals, career achievement, coaching, and mentoring (Ann & Blum, 2020). Generation Z employees expect their efforts to be linked to innovation, efficiency, technology, automation, instant feedback, and quick results, as they do not have patience (Chillakuri, 2020).

Researchers show vast similarities in instrumentality across generations (Tien, 2020). Instrumentality refers to the belief that performance will lead to attaining specific results (Tovmas & Minasyan, 2020). Instrumentality for employees in the three generational cohorts depends on trust in leadership, past experiences, trust in the reward system, a link between performance and outcomes, perceived likelihood, clarity of reward system, experiences, and culture (Cote, 2019). If these aspects are present, the employees are likely to believe that effort will lead to specific rewards, which is present in all three generational cohorts (Darby & Morrel, 2019).

Valence refers to the reward preferences of employees (Ann & Blum, 2020). Generation X prefers traditional rewards such as salaries and job security (Cote, 2019). Generation Y prefers an inclusive culture, recognition, and career advancement (Hassan et al., 2019). Generation Z prefers excitement, creativity, and empowerment (Tien, 2020). Hence, the employees differ in terms of valence, and this is based on their generational cohort. Given these differences in expectancy theory based on each generation, using the theory in this study was critical.

2.2.3.1.6 Expectancy theory in the higher education context

Numerous studies have been conducted in higher education on expectancy theory and the motivation of non-academic staff. For example, Nhung and Do (2020) investigated the relevance of expectancy theory in Vietnamese universities. Their study showed that there is intrinsic instrumentality among university staff. In other words, they are motivated by the link of their performance with inherent motivators such as achievement, growth, and meaningful work. However, in their research review, Foy, Dwyer, Nafarrete, Hammoud, and Rocket (2019) found that university faculties have extrinsic instrumentality. Their study showed that linking performance to the provision of resources and work-life balance motivates employees. Furthermore, they demonstrated that the financial value factor is important amongst non-academic staff. This indicated that rewards such as salaries and bonuses are essential to non-academic staff.

In their systematic literature review, Daumiller, Stupnisky, and Janke (2020) established that the expectancy factor, which is usually debatable, is evident among university staff. This means that non-academic staff believe that effort leads to rewards and, therefore, put more effort into getting rewards. Ijeoma (2020) found that intrinsic and extrinsic instrumentality exists amongst non-academic employees in universities in Nigeria. The study found that non-academic staff in Nigeria prefer a mixture of extrinsic motivators, such as salaries, social support, and work conditions, and intrinsic motivators, such as achievement, excitement, and creativity. However, the expectancy factor depends on the transparency in the leadership and the reward system. Therefore, employees are not confident that effort leads to these rewards. Thus, research on expectancy theory in higher education has not been conclusive, but expectancy theory is key to understanding university employee motivation (Foy et al., 2019).

2.2.3.1.7 Expectancy theory in the Zimbabwean context

Studies have diverged in terms of expectancy theory and motivation of employees in the Zimbabwean context. For example, Chigaga (2024) demonstrates that in Zimbabwe, employees have extrinsic instrumentality. This is because the author found that employees expect to be provided with a conducive workplace culture, job security, and bonuses after putting much effort into their work. This is substantiated by Chiware (2021), whose study in Zimbabwe also showed extrinsic instrumentality among employees. Chiware's (2021) study found that the effort and performance of employees were linked to the provision of resources, training, and support. However, other studies, such as the study by Chinamurindi and

Tsvangirai (2019), suggest intrinsic instrumentality among employees. They link effort to inherent motivators such as excitement, growth, and autonomy. Kajongwe (2020) also supports this, submitting that joy and work motivate employees in Zimbabwe.

However, some studies demonstrate that extrinsic and intrinsic instrumentality are evident among employees in Zimbabwe. Chatiza et al. (2021) found that employees connect effort and performance to intrinsic and extrinsic motivators such as compensation, job security, growth, and excitement. Mazikana (2019) found that extrinsic and intrinsic instrumentality are key for employees in Zimbabwe. Motsi (2023) concluded that extrinsic and intrinsic rewards are complementary in Zimbabwe. When employees work hard, they expect the employer to provide external rewards while getting internal fulfilment and gratification.

The expectancy factor has also generated much debate. Studies conducted in the private sector show that the expectancy factor exists. For example, Mazikana (2019) demonstrated that employees believe that their effort is connected to more rewards. Chigaga (2024) found that employees' experiences are that once they work hard, they get more rewards. However, this is not the case in studies conducted in the public sector. For example, Chatiza et al. (2021) showed that employees do not see the connection between efforts and rewards. This is explained by Motsi (2023), who found that a lack of trust between employees and the government makes employees doubt this connection. Chiware (2021) notes that a lack of transparent reward systems and policies results in employees not seeing the connection between effort and the provision of rewards. However, regardless of these challenges in applying expectancy theory to the motivation of employees in Zimbabwe, it remains one of the best theories to explain the motivation process of employees in Zimbabwe, according to Chatiza et al. (2021).

As much as the expectancy theory of motivation is essential, it also has some limitations. According to Gould (2024), the expectancy theory of motivation is very complex and challenging to implement. Managers need too much time to detect positive and negative valences. Bushi (2021) asserts that expectancy theory emphasises that decisions are taken consciously, but this is not always the case, as employees may make many decisions without conscious thought. Moreover, rewards or outcomes do not always correlate with performance (Watters, 2021). In some companies, rewards are correlated to experience, education, responsibilities, and position. Furthermore, motivation is also about equity. Hence, equity theory was used to supplement expectancy theory in explaining the problem.

2.2.4 Equity theory

The current study used the equity theory of motivation to supplement the expectancy theory. Equity theory is a process theory of motivation developed by Jane Stacey Adams in 1963 (Hatfield, Purvis & Rapson, 2023). Chen et al. (2024) demonstrate that employees expect fair rewards in the workplace. Motivation depends on the perceived fairness of rewards given to the employee (Tavoletti, Cohen, Dong & Taras, 2023). In other words, perceived equity determines employee performance at the workplace. Employees measure the fairness of rewards in five ways. The most popular equity assessment is the equity norm (Prieto, Phipps & Vincent, 2023). Yoon and Almond (2022) aver that equity theory is based on reciprocal principles. According to the equity theory, employees compare rewards to their organisational contribution (Parameswaran, 2022). Thus, employees consider the fairness of the outputs they get compared to their inputs. Bushi (2021) posits that employees assess whether the rewards match their work. Nimmi, Syed, Manjaly and Harsha (2024) posit that there is a plethora of employee inputs, and these are time, effort, loyalty, hard work, commitment, ability, adaptability, flexibility, tolerance, determination, enthusiasm, personal sacrifice, trust in superiors, support to peers and co-workers and skill. According to Tanjung, Agustina, and Pradesa (2021), this work input is mainly physical and emotional labour. Khan et al. (2021) note that work outputs include job security, salary, employee benefits, expenses, recognition, reputation, responsibility, sense of achievement, and praise. If inputs match the outputs, there is perceived equity; if rewards do not match inputs, there is perceived inequity. Therefore, motivation is dependent on the perceived relationship between inputs and outcomes. Figure 2.3 summarises equity theory.

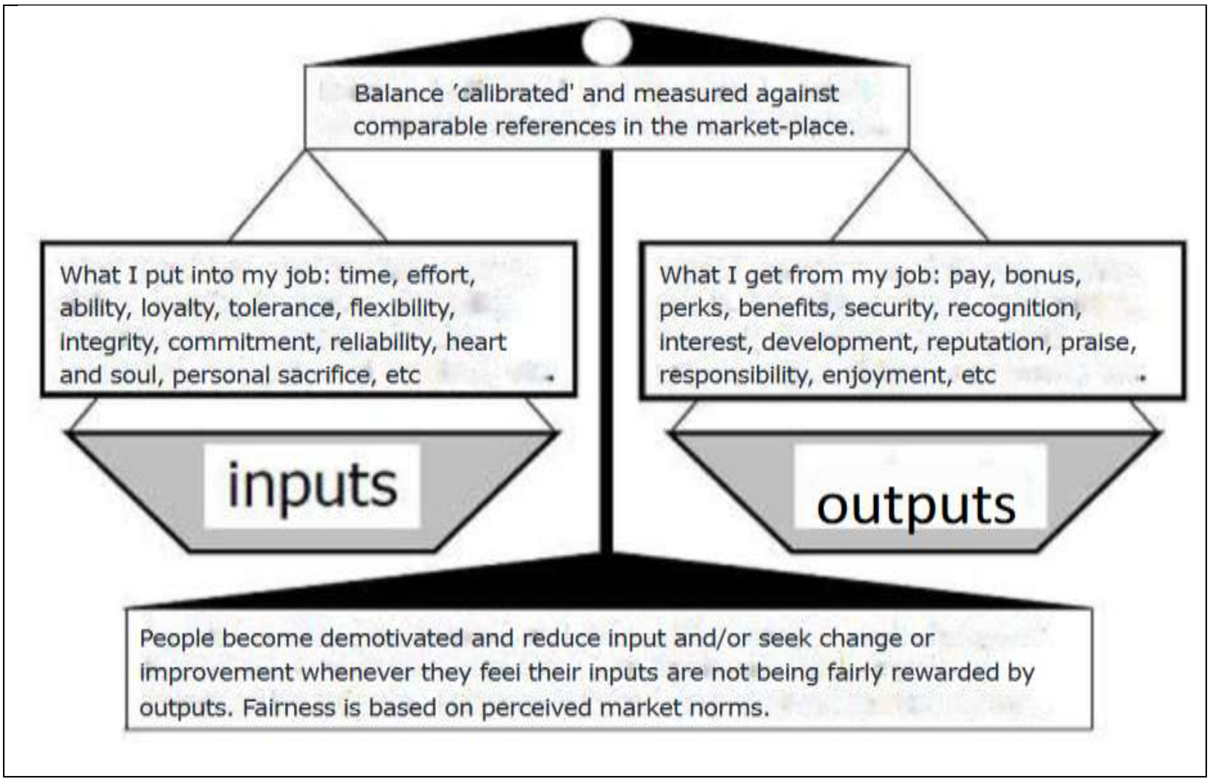

Figure 2.3: Equity theory
Source: Adapted from Adams (1963)

The second and third ways of measuring fairness are social comparisons. Social comparison is the comparison of benefits and peer benefits. Uka and Prendi (2021) posit that employees compare their rewards to their peers doing the same work in the same organisation. If the individual employee receives the same rewards as peers in the same organisation, there is equity; if this is not the case, there is unfairness. This concept of Adam's equity theory is also known as other-inside comparison (Al-kharabsheh, 2022). Another dimension of social comparison is when employees compare their rewards with those of others doing the same work in other organisations (Balkin & Werner, 2023). This is known as external equity or the other inside equity theory concept (Patricia & Asoba, 2021).

The fourth way brought forward by the equity theory is known as the self-inside. This is when an individual compares the current job's outputs to previous employment within the same organisation (Bae, 2023).

The fifth way is known as the self-outside, where the employee compares the production of the current job to the outputs of previous employment in another organisation (Tumi, Hasan & Khalid, 2022). Bashir, Wright, and Hassan (2023) show another dimension of equity theory: internal equity. Internal equity is when employees compare rewards to the organisation's size and profits. Employees also assess the fairness of decision-making processes for salaries, such as job evaluation, known as procedural equity (Riyanto, Endri & Herlisha, 2021). The higher the employee's perception of equity, the higher the motivation and performance. However, if there is no perceived equity, employees will address the equity (Ghani, Zada, Memon, Ullah, Khattak, Han, Ariza-Montes & Araya-Castillo, 2021).

According to Ali and Anwar (2021), if there is inequity, employees will change their behavior to make it fair. Employees will likely alter their inputs. If they are being underpaid, employees will reduce their efforts (demotivation), and if they are being overpaid, they will increase their efforts (Hermanto & Srimulyani, 2027). Another consequence of the lack of fairness, according to Botha (2020), is that employees may leave their jobs (labour turnover). Employees may also engage in cognitive distortion to address inequity (Khan, Saeed, Fayaz, Zada, & Jan, 2023). Cognitive distortion includes a change in perception of the self by thinking that the effort is low to attract high outcomes (Virgiawan, Riyanto & Endri, 2021). Cognitive distortion also includes changing perceptions about outcomes by assuming that the outcomes match the effort. Jahanzeb, De Clercq, and Fatima (2021) state that employees may change their perception of peers by thinking that their peers are putting in more effort and deserve more rewards. Other employees address inequity by changing the referent others to whom they compare outputs. Equity theory has a plethora of implications for organisations and managers. Organisations must be fair and transparent and address equity issues in rewarding employees (Bae, 2023). Furthermore, there is a need for management to involve employees in the decision-making processes of salaries to address procedural fairness.

2.2.4.1 Justification of the use of equity theory

Equity theory of motivation was used for this study because it has been widely used and tested by many international researchers on employee motivation (Bashir et al., 2023). Equity theory is fundamental as it guides managers in motivating employees and generating performance (Riyanto et al., 2021). In addition, equity theory adds an essential dimension to the motivation of perceived equity (Tumi et al., 2022). Motivation is not always about expectancy; employees are also worried about equity. Furthermore, Nimmi et al. (2024 posit that equity theory tries to exhaust all dimensions of measuring equity that can influence employee motivation. In addition, equity theory takes the human approach that views employees as capable of thinking and making decisions, which is an aspect of motivation overlooked by process theorists such as Abraham Maslow and Frederick Herzberg (Prieto et al., 2023). Equity theory has not been tested regarding research on the motivation of the multi-generational workforce in universities in Zimbabwe. Equity theory studies have been conducted in other contexts, such as with local authorities (Chisango, Faitira & Zororo, 2023). This study closes this gap by testing the relevance of the equity theory in state universities in Zimbabwe. Hence, this study needed to adopt equity theory to supplement expectancy theory in explaining employee motivation.

2.2.4.2 Equity theory and generational cohorts

Studies indicate differences in the application of equity theory among employees in Generations X, Y, and Z. These employees differ in their perception of fairness (Cote, 2019). For example, Varghese, Khetade, and Shetty (2021) postulate that for Generation X employees, fairness is based on tangible rewards such as job security, salaries, and promotion. On the other hand, Generation Y employees perceive fairness based on tangible and nontangible rewards, while Generation Z employees are interested in intangible rewards (Hassan et al., 2019). Generation X and Y employees compare what they get to their colleagues with the same experience and expertise (O’Connor & Crowley-Henry, 2019). They feel inequity if there is favouritism in the workplace. However, Generation Z employees compare their work conditions to their peers globally through social media (Tovmasyan & Minasyan, 2020). Therefore, their perception of inequality stems from global comparisons with their peers.

In terms of inputs, research suggests that these employees differ. For example, Generation X believes that experience, hard work, and loyalty are valuable organisational inputs (Cote, 2019). They want their long-term contributions to be rewarded. However, Generation Y employees believe collaboration, teamwork, provision of unique ideas, innovation, and creativity are valuable inputs they should bring to work (Darby & Morrel, 2019). Generation Z employees value multitasking, adaptability, and speed (Singh, Verma & Chaurasia, 2021). In other words, Generation Z employees want recognition for being tech-savvy and efficient.

Research by Akuffo-Aduamah (2025) and Hassan et al. (2019) has shown that reactions to inequality are generational. For example, Generation X employees react to inequality by reducing effort through quiet disengagement (Hamouche, Koritos & Papastathopoulos, 2023). Generation Y employees react by voicing their concerns and pushing for fairness through collaboration (Akuffo-Aduamah, 2025). Generation Z employees quickly respond to inequality by raising concerns (Kollmann, Stockmann, Kensbock & Peschl, 2020). This is substantiated by O’Connor et al. (2019), who add that Generation Z employees sometimes raise these concerns publicly via social media and expect their employers to take corrective action promptly (Hassan et al., 2019). Equity theory is therefore essential in understanding the motivation of a multi-generational workforce, and its inclusion is necessary in this study.

2.2.4.3 Equity theory in the higher education context

Researchers have investigated the motivation of non-academic staff using the lens of equity theory. Numerous researchers, such as Mira, Choong, and Thim (2019), have substantiated equity theory in explaining the motivation of university staff. According to Khan et al. (2021), university staff, including non-academic employees, are motivated by equity. These employees constantly compare their rewards to those of academics (Cheruiyot & Kalei, 2020). Furthermore, they also compare their inputs and outputs to those of other non-academic employees in different universities (Jahanzeb, De Clercq & Fatima, 2021). Regarding inputs, non-academic staff bring effort, skills, and education (Foy et al., 2019). These employees also give universities loyalty and dedication (Wilbring & Lillwhite, 2021). Mira, Chong, and Thim (2023) found that some university employees bring efficiency and creativity. This is supported by Inegbedion, Potter and Harry (2020), who found that innovation and creativity are valuable work inputs.

However, in terms of outputs, researchers have mixed observations. For example, Khan et al. (2021) demonstrate that non-academic staff prefer extrinsic rewards such as job security, benefits, and salaries. On the other hand, Bensimon and Malcom (2023) elaborate that non-academic employees want intrinsic rewards such as growth, autonomy, and empowerment as part of their output. Other researchers, such as Inegbedion et al. (2020), demonstrate that combining extrinsic and intrinsic rewards as output for university support staff is essential. This is also suggested by Mira et al. (2019), who present both inherent and extrinsic rewards as key to ensuring equity within the workplace.

Studies indicate that the non-academic workforce reacts in many ways to inequity. Foy et al. (2019) show that they reduce effort when there is a mismatch between input and output. This is in line with Cheruiyot and Kalei (2020), who state that staff in universities in Kenya who experience inequity tend to lower their effort because they are demotivated. Bensimon and Malcom (2023) support this by indicating that university employees begin to resent work if there is inequity. In extreme situations, a lack of equity in universities may lead to employees leaving the organisation (Foy et al., 2019). Mira et al. (2019) submit that having fairness and transparency in rewards is key to solving motivation and labour turnover issues in universities.

Equity theory is key to understanding the motivation of non-academic staff, and hence, it is essential to include it in research on motivation in universities (Inegbedion et al., 2020).

2.2.4.4 Equity theory in the Zimbabwean context

Studies have been conducted on the relevance of equity theory in the motivation of employees in Zimbabwe. Research has shown that equity is an essential ingredient in the motivation of employees in Zimbabwe (Dzingirai, 2023). Workers expect their inputs to be matched with the outputs that they get after completing work (Chiware, 2019). The inputs employees in Zimbabwe bring are education and skills (Nhamo & Mildred, 2023). Employees in Zimbabwe are constantly engaged in educational development, a key input they bring to their organisations (Kajongwe, 2021). Furthermore, employees in Zimbabwe are also provided with effort, loyalty, innovation, and creativity (Ngwenya 2021). This is supported by Dzingirai (2023), who states that most companies in Zimbabwe do not have adequate resources, and employees improvise to attain efficiency, thus bringing innovation and creativity.

There have been some debates on the nature of the outputs that employees in Zimbabwe expect from their employers (Chinyamurindi & Tsvangirai, 2019). Most studies signal that they prefer extrinsic outputs (Motsi, 2023). They want job security because there is high unemployment in Zimbabwe (Kajongwe, 2021). Employees in Zimbabwe want their salaries, bonuses, and other financial incentives to match their inputs because of the challenging economy that always prevails in Zimbabwe (Chiware, 2021). They also want promotion as a reward for their effort and performance because promotion comes with a pay increase (Ngwenya, 2021). However, other studies show that employees in Zimbabwe want intrinsic outputs. For example, Dzingirai (2023) found that job autonomy, excitement, and career growth are key outputs that can motivate employees.

The other bone of contention regarding equity theory and the motivation of employees in Zimbabwe is their reaction to inequity. Nhamo and Mildred (2023) assert that employees in Zimbabwe react by leaving organisations. However, this is disputed because of Zimbabwe's high unemployment rate due to job scarcity (Chiware, 2021). Hence, employees react by lowering their efforts (Motsi, 2023). They also resort to other conduct, such as absenteeism and tardiness (Kajongwe, 2021). Most studies, such as Nhamo and Midlred (2023) and Motsi (2023), demonstrate that equity theory helps understand the motivation of employees in Zimbabwe, hence its inclusion in this study.

Equity theory of motivation also has its share of criticisms. The theory oversimplifies the concept of normative equity (Hatfield et al., 2023). Tavoletti et al. (2023) state that numerous factors determine equity, such as personal and contextual factors, whereas the theory’s main principle is a mere comparison of inputs and outputs. Ali and Anwar (2021) observe that Adam’s equity theory ignores cultural differences. Adam’s work was based on individualistic culture, and this study is based on collectivistic culture in Zimbabwe, where individual profit maximisation may not be the norm. Equity theory has been criticised when some employees are under-rewarded (Ghani et al., 2021). Such employees will choose a rewarding job to fulfil their intrinsic motivation. Against this background, equity theory was used with expectancy theory, Herzberg's two-factor theory, and Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs to explain the problem's variables.

2.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter elaborates on the theoretical framework. The theoretical framework fuses generational theory with content and process theories. The major theoretical framework for the study is generational theory by Howe and Strauss. This theory is essential for the study because it clarifies that employees are motivated differently based on their generational cohorts. The theory elaborates that the historical events that took place influence the motivational preferences of each generation. Generational theory demonstrates that historical events such as World War II and technological revolution influence the motivational preferences of each generation. These historical events are a glue to develop a societal attitude for each generational cohort. Hence, differences in terms of motivational preferences among Generation X, Y, and Z employees.

However, the generational theory has some gaps in explaining motivational strategies for Generation X, Y, and Z employees, because it does not specify what motivates them. Hence, content theories of motivation such as Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and Herzberg’s two-factor theory were adopted. Maslow’s hierarchy of needs theory is essential for this study as it demonstrates that employees are motivated hierarchically. The theory proposes that employees are motivated by physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualisation needs, in sequential order. Maslow’s hierarchy of needs has some gaps, as some motivators are hygiene factors. For example, basic needs are clarified as hygiene factors whose provision leads to job satisfaction and does not motivate employees according to Herzberg. Hence, Harzberg’s theory was also adopted to buttress Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Herzberg's two-factor theory shows that recognition, achievement, growth, responsibility, and work are motivators.

The content theories used are essential for answering what motivates employees. However, they do not explain how employees are motivated. This gap resulted in the study adopting the process-oriented theories. Vroom's expectancy theory was adopted to elaborate on the process of motivation. The theory shows that motivation is a cognitive and psychological process that occurs once employers fulfill the conscious expectations of employees. However, according to Vroom's expectancy theory, there is a gap in the motivation process, as it excludes the role of equity in motivation. Thus, Adam's equity theory was also adopted. Adam's equity theory was essential for this study because it shows that motivation occurs when employees perceive fairness in the rewards they get from the employer. The next chapter surveys existing literature on the motivation of multi-generational non-academic staff in universities.

CHAPTER 3: EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter elaborated on relevant theories on the motivation of multi-generational staff. This chapter discusses empirical literature on the motivation of multi-generational non-academic staff in universities. The chapter discusses motivation, performance, and multi-generational staff as presented in the literature. It explores motivational strategies and challenges in motivating staff and examines the relationship between intrinsic motivation and performance. Motivational strategies for each generational cohort workforce are discussed, and existing motivation and performance frameworks are explored. The chapter ends by reviewing existing research on motivation in universities.

3.2 UNDERSTANDING MOTIVATION

Motivation as a term has been widely and frequently used. Motivation is multifaceted and complex to the extent that the term is often misunderstood and vaguely interpreted (Acquah et al., 2021). Scholars, philosophers, human capital managers, and psychologists have defined motivation in various ways. Fishbach and Woolley (2022) assert that motivation is derived from the word *movere,* a Latin word that means to move. Vu, Magis-Weinberg, Jansen, van Atteveldt, Janssen, Lee, van der Maas, Raijmakers, Sachisthal, and Meeter (2022) agree with Fishbach and Woolley (2022) and state that motivation is a force behind people's negative or positive actions. Ali et al. (2023) further clarify this, asserting that motivation is anything or something that energises people to take action. Irkinovich (2021) also belongs to this school of thought, as the author posits that motivation powers human behavior. Ali and Anwar (2021) argue that motivation enhances, guides, and maintains goal-oriented behavior. This dimension of motivation emphasises the motive, which is the driving force. Understanding motives is critical in light of this explanation of motivation. An attempt to factor in motive is made by Fiddiyasari and Pustika (2021), who explain motivation as internal factors that cause one to engage in specific behaviors. This explanation is supported by Bureau, Howard, Chong, and Guay (2022), who also view motivation as any action driven and triggered by intrinsic motives. Schunk and DiBenedatto (2021) submit that motivation refers to intrinsic motivation where an employee's personality creates the need to initiate, disburse, and consistently apply effort to an activity. They insist that an internal state arouses employees to act, pushes them in a particular direction, and keeps them engaged.

The definition of Ismail, Putri, Zulfadhli, Mustofa, Musfiana, and Hadiyani (2022) is not watertight, as this explanation is limited because it does not consider behaviors and actions triggered by the environment and others. Both these definitions need to be open and blend motivation's internal and external factors. Niati et al. (2021) attempt to rectify omissions made by other researchers, stating that motivation refers to intrinsic and extrinsic factors that trigger goal-oriented behavior. In line with Niati et al. (2021), Persada and Nabella (2023) posit that motivation refers to reasons (extrinsic and intrinsic) that underly behavior. Wahyudi (2022) claims that motivation can be extrinsic, where the desire to channel more energy to a task is derived from external factors. However, as much as the two motivation attributes are acceptable, intrinsic motivation should be stated as desired and permanent, compared to external motivation. Thus, motivation is an array of forces that generate within or outside a person to act purposively, consistently, and with intensity. As much as motivation can be viewed using motives, it is critical to note that the concept is too complicated to be considered only through these lenses. There have been debates on whether the forces are the cause or a consequence of goal-oriented behavior. For example, Basalamah and As'ad (2021) explain that motivation stems from a need that has been fulfilled, whereas Mulang (2021) believes that motivation occurs when a person acts in a goal-oriented behavior to get a need fulfilled. This debate has been present over the years, but there has been agreement and compromise amongst scholars to view motivation as goal-oriented behavior that is a consequence of needs that have been met and that need to be met.

Another school of thought explains motivation as a psychological and cognitive state that leads to positive or harmful behavior. Sinambela and Ernawati (2021), who subscribe to this perspective, view motivation as a psychological process that causes a person to act in a way that achieves specific goals. Sitopu, Sitinjak, and Marpaung (2021) also belong to the group as they explain motivation as psychological and behavioral influences on people to invest time, energy, and persistence toward a specific action that meets a goal. Maharani and Saputra (2021) add that motivation is a psychological condition of being eager to work. According to Howard, Bureau, Guay, Chong, and Ryan (2021), motivation is derived from equal collaboration of unconscious and conscious influence. Thus, motivation is a psychological process that triggers goal-oriented behavior. Motivation is cognitive because there should be a willingness to act in a certain way that meets the desired goal (Van den Broeck, Howard, Van Vaerenbergh, Leroy

& Gagné, 2021). Therefore, motivation is the willingness and desire of an individual to take action (Amin et al., 2022). Bardach and Klassen (2021) broaden the depth of the definition by stating that motivation is the willingness to exert extreme levels of effort towards a specific objective. Motivation is thus the willingness to exert oneself and to act in a certain way. The cognitive explanation demonstrates that individuals who are motivated have a choice. It is cognitive because people must act in a goal-oriented manner. This is comprehensively explored by Ferrer, Ringer, Saville, Parris, and Kashi (2022), who suggest that motivation is cognitive decision-making and that people engage in goal-directed behavior. Again, explaining motivation under the psychological and cognitive lens limits the concept; there is a need to have a broader understanding of motivation.

There is a school of thought that views motivation as a process. Sapustra (2021) defines motivation as stimulating people to take action and accomplish desired objectives. Judge and Robbins (2017) posit that motivation is the process that causes a person to increase intensity, direction, and persistence towards achieving a specific goal. This definition is watertight as it views motivation as a continuous, systematic process and a combination of internal and external factors. Thus, motivation focuses on the strength and direction of people's behavior and the factors influencing employees to behave consistently. Therefore, motivation refers to internal and external factors that create willingness and volition within employees. Motivation is a general inspirational process that causes employees to put more energy into accomplishing workplace tasks.

Given the multiplicity of explanations for motivation, it is critical to look at key components that constitute motivation. There are four principal components of motivation. These components are (1) process, (2) goal-oriented, (3) initiation of activity, and (4) continuation of activity (Ferrer et al., 2022). Motivation is a process that involves people putting in additional effort to achieve a goal. It is thus a process because people start by voluntarily opting to behave, then behave in a goal-oriented manner (Ismail et al., 2022). Motivation is goal-oriented because motivated people behave and act with a purpose to achieve a specific goal (Howard et al., 2021). Furthermore, motivation involves initiating activity as internal and external factors trigger people to act in a particular way (Ferrer et al., 2022). A motivated person is induced to maximise their efforts towards a goal enthusiastically. This initiation can be done consciously or unconsciously, but there is a growing consensus that motivation is voluntary, as people choose to undertake a goal-oriented behavior. Additionally, motivation continues an activity, as this goal-oriented behavior should be sustained (Sitopu et al., 2021). Figure 3.1 shows the motivation process.

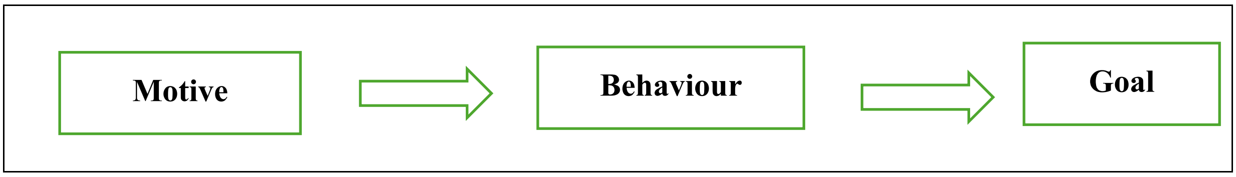

Figure 3.1: Motivation process
Source: Researcher

Having discussed an array of explanations of the term motivation as presented in the empirical evidence, it is critical to provide an operational definition for the purposes of this study. Motivation has three fundamental principles that are key to it. The first principle is a motive, which triggers an individual's behavior. In other words, a motive is an extrinsic or intrinsic force that drives a person's behavior. According to Mulang (2021), a motive increases an individual's eagerness to behave in a certain way. Behavior is the second key principle of motivation (Howard et al., 2021). After being triggered by a motive, the individual must act or behave goal-oriented. Ferrer et al. (2022) state that the behavior should maximise the individual's capabilities. Robbins and Judge (2017) are of the view that the behavior should be directed (choice), have intensity (effort), and be persistent (duration and or sustainability). In other words, when a person is motivated, they should be able to perform. This behavior is not always positive, as some individuals may be encouraged to act negatively (Wahyudi, 2022). The final principle of motivation is about goal (Niati et al., 2021). Ali and Anwar (2021) assert that the behavior of a motivated person should be aimed at meeting a specific goal. Motivation is thus systematic because there is a linkage or connection between a motive, a behavior, and a goal (Amin et al., 2022). Without a motive, no motivation applies to a behavior or a goal. Thus, motivation is a function of motive, behavior, and goal. All these attributes should be presented when explaining the term motivation. Therefore, a more comprehensive definition of motivation is that it is a systematic process that involves initiating goal-oriented behavior.

3.2.1 Understanding employee motivation in an organisational context

This study is based on formulating motivational strategies for employee performance. Hence, it is critical to define motivation in an organisational context. Employee motivation is complex and challenging to describe, explain, and understand (Kalogiannidis, 2021). It is also critical from the outset to note that motivation can either be negative or positive. Positive employee motivation is when employees act or behave consistently in line with the organisation

(Alsuwaidi, Alshurideh, Al Kurdi & Salloum, 2021). Negative employee motivation is when employees are inspired to display counterproductive behaviors (Hitka, Rózsa, Potkány & Ližbetinová, 2021). This study views employee motivation using a positive lens. Employee motivation is defined according to motives (Ali & Anwar, 2021). According to Forson, Ofosu-Dwamena, Opoku and Adjavon (2021), motivation refers to the underlying reasons for improved employee performance. This definition is in line with Yusup and Maulani's (2023) explanation that motivation at the workplace relates to what causes employees to desire to increase their work performance. In other words, employee motivation refers to factors that inspire employees to maximise their capabilities in achieving organisational goals. These inspirational factors can be extrinsic or intrinsic (Tumi et al., 2022). For example, Hajiali et al. (2022) argue that employee motivation is an inner feeling that stimulates employees to do better. This definition is shallow as it focuses on internal factors that drive employee motivation and completely ignores external factors. Riyanto et al. (2021) posit that employee motivation is the ability of an organisation and its management to inspire and persuade employees to enhance their performance. Employee motivation is getting employees to move in a specific direction (Iis, Wahyuddin, Thoyib, Ilham & Sinta, 2022). All energetic forces that increase employees' work behavior are employee motivation (Sitopu et al., 2021), anything that triggers employees to enhance their work quantity and quality (Andreas, 2022). Sumadi and Santoso (2022) agree as they argue that employee motivation is the ability of an organisation to manipulate employee performance by fulfilling needs. Thus, various reasons make employees work hard (Engidaw, 2021). Motivation at the workplace refers to the driving forces of productive employee behaviors (Sokolic, Croitoru, Florea, Robescu & Cosac, 2024). There is a consensus that motivation refers to extrinsic and intrinsic factors that make employees passionate about their work and increase their productivity.

Work motivation is also defined using the lens of needs fulfilment. Motivation is conditioning employees to give their maximum performance by fulfilling their needs (Nasution & Priangkatara, 2022). This argument is supported by Sinambela and Ernawati (2021), who opine that employee motivation occurs when employees lack specific needs and increase their work energy to fulfil them. Maryani, Entang, and Tukiran (2021) also submit that motivation at work is when workers exert high levels of performance conditioned by need fulfilment. Thus, motivation is a continuous process (Sari, 2022). Employee motivation is continuous because when one need is fulfilled, it results in another need that will make employees behave in a manner that fulfils the new need. This is in line with Abraham Maslow’s explanation of motivation. Wahyuni, Agustika, and Wiarta (2023) explain motivation similarly by noting that employee motivation stimulates employee behavior by fulfilling their needs. Employee motivation depends on the organisation's ability to fulfil employee needs (Iis et al., 2022). Therefore, motivation is when employees perform best to fulfil their needs. Thus, engagement in behavior leads to attaining organisational goals, which are calculated to satisfy needs.

Furthermore, employee motivation has been viewed using the psychological dimension. According to Sitopu et al. (2021), mental effort makes employees utilise their skills to meet organisational targets. Employee motivation is psychological because employees have a choice to make. They must be willing to act in productive behaviors (Tumi Jedd & Morris, 2022). Employee motivation is thus the desire to set and accept challenging goals, to take responsibility, and to exert more energy at work (Andreas, 2022). Employee motivation is how a worker directs their energy towards attaining organisational objectives. This line of argument treats employees as intelligent and able to choose to act or not. Therefore, employee motivation is an employee's willingness (a choice) to channel their energy towards organisational goals. Employees should have the will to direct their energy towards goal attainment.

Employee motivation has three fundamental components (Riyanto et al., 2021). These basic components are that the behaviour should be directed towards organisational objectives, have intensity, and be consistent. The action to be taken by employees should seek to meet an enterprise's set goals and aim to motivate them (Loor-Zambrano, Santos-Roldán & Palacios-Florencio, 2022). The behaviour must have intensity such that employees put in more effort and maximise their skills and capabilities to achieve an organisation's goals (Forson et al., 2021). Furthermore, this behaviour should be consistent, meaning it should be sustained and not just be a one-time thing (Hitka et al., 2021). Motivated employees are energetic and participative. Therefore, an operational definition for employee motivation must be given. Based on empirical evidence synthesised in this study, employee motivation is a multi-faceted process involving employees willing to consistently increase their work effort toward achieving organisational goals and inspired by the desire to fulfill their needs. Employee motivation is best understood via its two types (Sari, 2022), which are intrinsic and extrinsic (Wahyuni et al., 2023).

3.2.2 Understanding intrinsic motivation

Literature is awash with various and complex explanations of intrinsic motivation. Numerous theorists have attempted to study inherent motivation and develop a comprehensive understanding of what it is and what it involves (Fishbach & Wooley, 2022). According to Xu, Lio, Dhaliwal, Andrei, Balakrishnan, Nagani, and Samadder (2021), intrinsic motivation is synonymous with self-motivation. Morris, Grehl, Rutter, Mehta, and Westwater (2022) define inherent motivation as generated within an employee. Consistent with this, Ennis et al. (2018) state that intrinsic motivation is when an employee persuades and inspires themself to behave in a manner that meets organisational objectives. An essential element raised by this school of thought is that the motivation is internal and/or within the employee and is individually triggered. The second characteristic proffered by this line of argument is that the employee controls the motivation (Kotera, Taylor, Fido, Williams & Tsuda-McCaie, 2023). It is thus an individual's drive to perform and navigate work-related challenges. Intrinsic motivation is a personal choice to enhance work performance without considering external factors (Siyal, Xin, Umrani, Fatima, & Pal, 2021). Furthermore, since motivation is internal, intrinsic motivation is when employees perform at work without being inspired or influenced by external forces.

Intrinsic motivation has been defined as related to the extent to which employees like their work. Researchers such as Zeng et al. (2022) and Yousaf, Rasheed, Kaur, Islam, and Dhir (2022) view intrinsic motivation as when employees increase their energy towards work because they are highly interested. Chen et al. (2022) believe that inherent motivation refers to motivation triggered by interest and enjoyment of undertaking a task generated within an individual. In other words, intrinsic motivation is stimulated by pleasure, enjoyment, and interest (Supriyono & Susmonowati, 2022). Hence, Morris et al. (2022) argue that intrinsic motivation is behaviour stimulated by or a consequence of enjoyment. The employee should be pleased to undertake an action that consistently displays goal-directed behaviour (Van den Broecke et al., 2021). Yamini, Soloveva, and Peng's (2022) explanation is that intrinsic motivation occurs when employees conduct an activity because they like it. According to this school of thought, inherent motivation is engaging in a behavior out of enjoyment, interest, or personal satisfaction. It is the drive to perform a task with enthusiasm and consistency due to its inherent pleasure and fulfillment (Van den Broecke et al., 2021).

Given that some associate intrinsic motivation with pleasure, job content can also define it. For example, Faraz, Ahmed, Ying, and Mehmood (2021) explain inherent motivation as a motivation stimulated by job content. Karimi, Malek, and Farani (2022) believe that intrinsic motivation is triggered in employee behavior because of the work itself. This is also supported by Berkovich and Hassan's (2024) research, which observes that the job itself may motivate employees, and this is categorised as intrinsic motivation. It should be noted that what motivates employees is the pleasure that comes with the job, not external benefits attached to the job (Tekmen & Kaptangil, 2022). The job must be valuable and meaningful to inspire behavioural change in an employee.

Some researchers explain internal motivation using personal factors connected to the job (Shahid & Paul, 2021). Pham, Hoang, and Nguyen (2021) posit that intrinsic motivation is an employee action inspired by personal factors. Consistent with Pham et al. (2022), Engidaw (2021) believes that personal characteristics trigger intrinsic motivation. Thus, motivation is heavily influenced by a person's inherent characteristics, such as the need for achievement and recognition.

Intrinsic motivation has also been explained using needs fulfillment by several scholars (Nilasari, Nisfiannoor & Devinta, 2021). According to Ahmad et al. (2021), intrinsic motivation is performance inspired by the need to fulfill internal needs. Intrinsic motivation is a psychological or cognitive process of acting to fulfill internal needs (Liu, 2021). These internal needs are the higher-order needs of Abraham Maslow, i.e., esteem and self-actualisation (Good, Hughes, Kirca & McGrath, 2022). Morris et al. (2022) classify these internal needs as motivational factors brought forward by Herzberg's two-factor theory. Therefore, intrinsic motivation is self-inspired and job content-triggered, and the desire for internal needs fulfillment behavior is aligned with the enterprise goal alignment. These needs include status, recognition, autonomy, challenging tasks, and independence when doing their work (Kotera et al., 2023). Liu (2021) demonstrates that organisations should not view intrinsic motivation as adversarial to extrinsic. This is corroborated by Xu et al. (2021), who argue that organisational leaders should combine intrinsic and extrinsic motivational strategies to get the best out of their employees and achieve sustainable competitive advantage. However, Yousaf et al. (2022) explain that employers should desire their employees to have intrinsic motivation. This is because inherent motivation is viewed as more permanent than extrinsic motivation (Chen, Ghardallou, Comite, Ahmad, Ryu, Ariza-Montes & Han, 2022). This argument is further supported by Good et al. (2022), who believe that internal motivation is self-sustaining as it is generated from hereditary personal characteristics that are difficult to alter. Hence, intrinsic motivation is critical and was included in this study.

3.2.3 Understanding extrinsic motivation

Extrinsic motivation is another type of employee motivation that is a critical construct of this study. Like intrinsic motivation, many researchers have investigated it and attempted to provide a picture of what it is (Zeng et al., 2022). Despite these efforts, extrinsic motivation remains problematic regarding definition and explanation (Van den Broeck et al., 2021). According to Morris et al. (2022), extrinsic motivation is any motivation an employee does not generate. This explanation provides the scope of extrinsic motivation but does not pinpoint what it is. This approach is similar to the research of Karaferis, Aletras, Raikou, and Niakas (2022), which presents extrinsic motivation as any behavior triggered by reasons other than enjoyment and pleasure. In this regard, extrinsic motivation has been viewed as any trigger that enhances work performance from external factors (Hashiguchi, Sengoku, Kubota, Kitahara, Lim, & Kodama, 2021). Grabowski, Chudzicka-Czupała, and Stapor (2021) agree with this as they classify extrinsic motivation as any outside influence that makes an employee increase performance towards attaining a company's targets. Yusuf (2021) demonstrates that extrinsic motivation is work behavior generated from outside factors. Anything outside the employee that increases performance is extrinsic motivation (Astuti, 2021). Therefore, according to this school of thought, extrinsic motivation is when an employee behaves in a goal-directed manner due to the influence of external factors.

Identifying external influences and/or factors is necessary to explain external motivation (Mulyadi, Prahiawan, Pancasasti & Haryadi, 2023). In attempting to explain motivation using this angle, Mardanov (2021) shows that extrinsic motivation is the arousal of job performance based on job context. Job context refers to every factor related to the work but is outside the work (Aljumah, 2023). Therefore, a supervisor can influence extrinsic motivation that stimulates employees to increase their efforts toward goal attainment (Resubun, Razak, Arifin, Indar, Malloangi, & Thamrin, 2022). In addition, it can also be inspired by the employee's peers and/or colleagues (Akosile & Ekemen, 2022). Tantular and Fauzi (2023) add that this influence can also stem from subordinates and company customers. These factors may include the physical work environment (Whitfield et al., 2021). Lee, Kim, and Hyun (2022) show that company location, office space, equipment, and technologies are a source of external motivation. What is clear is that extrinsic motivation involves employee behavior inspired by external factors.

Some researchers view intrinsic motivation as transactional (Nilasari et al., 2021). According to Venketsamy and Lew (2024), extrinsic motivation is the extent to which an employee's behavior is linked and or attributed to the need for external outcomes. This is the same sentiment that Li, Liu, Chen and Wang (2023) raised: extrinsic motivation is when employees perform to get a result. These outcomes are extrinsic or external rewards (Engidaw, 2021).

Siyal et al. (2021) contend that extrinsic motivation is when employees perform because they want a financial reward. This is shallow, as many extrinsic factors influence behavior but are not monetary, including praise and recognition. Mahmoud et al. (2021b) proffer a more straightforward explanation that extrinsic motivation improves employee behavior in anticipation of an extrinsic reward. Therefore, extrinsic motivation combines instrumental and social motivation (Zeng et al., 2022). It is instrumental motivation because performance is a means to get an external reward (Yusuf, 2021). More so, it is social motivation because it is a consequence of being influenced by others (Lee et al., 2022). In other words, extrinsic motivation is the presentation of external stimuli to modify behavior.

Extrinsic motivation is thus positive and negative reinforcement. Positive reinforcement is when the organisation presents a stimulus to entice employees to behave in a certain way (Mardanov, 2021), and negative reinforcement is when the organisation reduces a stimulus to modify employee behavior (Grabowski et al., 2021). There is also a need to factor in punishment when explaining extrinsic motivation (Li et al., 2023). External motivation is manipulation by supervisors to make their subordinates perform. Hence, researchers such as Astuti (2021) encourage organisations to use the intrinsic motivation route.

Researchers must be careful when defining extrinsic motivation using extrinsic rewards. For example, Herzberg's two-factor theory shows that extrinsic factors are simply hygiene factors as they do not motivate, but their absence causes dissatisfaction. However, extrinsic factors are still crucial. Other theorists, such as Abraham Maslow, classify these as lower-order needs that must be fulfilled first and can stimulate work-related behavior. It should be stated that extrinsic motivation is temporary compared to intrinsic motivation (Aljumah, 2023). This is because an extrinsic reward is usually not long-lasting. Therefore, companies should be extra careful when using extrinsic rewards.

Studies have found that extrinsic motivation can drastically reduce intrinsic motivation (Nilasari et al., 2021). Some studies have found that extrinsic motivation brings results using minimum effort at a quicker rate than intrinsic motivation (Morris et al., 2022). However, it has also been established that once extrinsic rewards are removed, the motivation disappears from the employee (Siyal et al., 2021). It is, therefore, important that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation be viewed as complementary rather than adversarial so that they are combined to generate quicker results when implemented.

3.3 MULTI-GENERATIONAL WORKFORCE

There have been contestations on the terminology, age group, and definition of different generations. Baby Boomers have become the oldest generation in the workplace (Kay, 2024). Jain and Raman (2023) assert that Baby Boomers are people who belong to a generational cohort that comes after the silent generation and before Generation X. While there are differences amongst scholars, there has been a compromise on the generational cohort with many accepting that people born between 1946 and 1964 are Baby Boomers (Tan & Chin, 2023). On the other hand, Generation X refers to a generation born after the Baby Boomers (Kay, 2024). Many scholars have agreed that these are people born between 1965 and 1980 (Dinh & Park, 2023; Kol et al, 2023).

According to Kay (2024), Generation Y is a generational age cohort born after the Cold War and in the era of globalisation and wireless connectivity. Some researchers have settled for the term 'Millennials' because Generation Y's oldest became adults at the turn of the millennium (Dinh & Park, 2023). The age groups of Generation Y vary from one scholar to another. Kol and Zimand-Seiner (2023) classify them as people born between 1979 and 1994. Kol et al. (2023) classify them as being born between 1977 and 1995, and Jain and Raman (2023) classify them as being vorn between 1978 and 1996. There are no precise dates for the start and end of this generation. What is clear is that these are people born in the late 1970s or early 1980s and up to the mid-1990s. A more precise definition of Millennials is one brought forward by Tan and Chin (2023) that Generation Y is a demographic age cohort that follows Generation X and precedes Generation Z. It is widely accepted that the Generation Y age group is made up of people born between 1981 and 1996 (Tan & Chin, 2023). Hence, the proposed study maintains that Generation Y is people born between 1981 and 1996.

According to Kay (2024), Generation Z refers to people born between 1995 and 2012. Kol et al (2023) differ and state that members of Generation Z are people born between 1995 and 2010. However, Dinh and Park (2023) state that researchers have settled for the period 1997 to 2012. As such, the study adopts that employees born between 1997 and 2012 are classified as Generation Z. Table 3.1 shows the generational cohorts.

Table 3.1: Generational cohorts and their characteristics

Generation	Birth Years	Characteristics
Baby Boomers	1946-1964	Idealistic, hardworking, competitive, value loyalty and stability
Generation X	1965-1980	Independent, adaptable, skeptical, value work-life balance
Generation Y	1981-1996	Tech-savvy, diverse, collaborative, value personal growth
Generation Z	1997-2012	Digital natives, socially conscious, entrepreneurial

Source: Adapted from Knight (2019)

3.4 PERFORMANCE

The concept of performance is highly subjective and contextual (Anakpo, Nqwayibana & Mishi, 2023). There has not been an agreement on defining performance, as it can be qualitative and quantitative. Sustrisno (2022) asserts that performance is the quality of an outcome of an individual or a group of employees. Hence, performance according to these lenses is a good result achieved individually or collectively. Andreas (2022) argues that these definitions do not help as performance remains ambiguous and interpretive. Performance is interpretive as it relies on the organisational results. Suprayinto (2024) contends that performance achievement criteria are linked to organisational objectives. Therefore, performance is evaluated based on the goals and targets assigned to an employee. Yandi and Havidz (2022) state that performance is a state of competitiveness attained by being efficient and effective within a volatile, uncertain, changing, and ambiguous business environment. The study adopts the perspective that performance is the level of success of activities conducted by an employee against the set targets and organisational objectives.

Studies conducted on the nexus of motivation and performance have mixed findings (Sinambela and Ernawati, 2021). Nasution and Priangkatara (2022) found that motivation enhances organisational performance. Many studies, such as Yandi and Havidz (2022) and Wijayanto and Riani (2021), have attributed and linked performance to motivation (Lesmana and Damanik, 2022). Other researchers, such as Wuryani, Rodlib, Sutarsib, Dewib, and Arifb (2021), have found that intrinsic motivation has more impact on performance than extrinsic motivation. Wijayanto and Riani (2021) submit that inherent motivations have more impact on performance than intrinsic motivation. However, many studies suggest that extrinsic and intrinsic motivation affect performance similarly (Sinambela & Ernawati, 2021). Krueger and Casey (2016) recommend that more studies on motivation and performance be carried out in emerging economies. This is similar to the advice by Wuryani et al. (2021), which is that more studies are needed on motivation and employees.

Sustrisno (2022) classifies performance in terms of three measures: financial performance (costs, profits, and revenue), product market performance (continuous innovation, sales, and market share), and shareholder return. This study borrows four perspectives from Kaplan's balanced scorecard and uses them as performance measures, including the financial perspective, the customer perspective, internal business processes, and learning and growth. Kumar, Lim, Sureka, Jabbour, and Bamel (2024) assert that a balanced scorecard provides a clear picture of business performance and growth. This is supported by Mio, Costantini, and Panfilo (2022), who indicate that the balanced scorecard is comprehensive in detailing indicators of organisational performance. Chehimi and Naro (2024) believe that most studies on motivation have used balanced scorecard perspectives of performance. This finding is supported by Tawse and Tabesh (2023), who report that balanced scorecard perspectives have been successfully tested as organisational performance measures. Mio et al. (2022) recommend that researchers conducting studies on motivation and performance use the four perspectives of the balanced scorecard as performance indicators. Researchers such as Camilleri (2021b) and Pietrzak (2021) have used the balanced scorecard as a performance metric in higher education. However, the balanced scorecard has not been used in studying motivation amongst a multi-generational workforce in universities in Zimbabwe, and this study contributes new knowledge to this area. These balanced scorecard perspectives are financial, customer, internal business processes, and learning and growth.

3.5 MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES

Motivation is a vast subject, meaning unlimited strategies are available at the organisation's and its managers' disposal. Ali and Anwar (2021) state that strategies can be derived from theories proffered by psychologists. Forson et al. (2021) classify motivation strategies as intrinsic and extrinsic strategies. Tumi et al. (2022) aver that any tool employed deliberately to inspire and enthuse employees to behave positively can be regarded as a motivational strategy. Sokolic et al. (2024) believe there is no incentive to differentiate and classify motivational strategies and argue that they can be blended and implemented similarly. However, Ukolova et al. (2020) found that staff in universities in Russia are motivated differently, and most universities have introduced cafeteria-style motivational strategies, where each employee is given a motivational package. Wahyudi (2022) investigated motivation at Pamulang University and found that the need for achievement is the best motivator in the university. The university is providing support for its staff to advance their career growth. Another study by Basalamah (2021) in private universities in Makassar City, Indonesia, established that financial motivation is the best strategy, and staff are willing to perform if there is an economic incentive. These universities are offering competitive salaries to enhance employee performance. However, these studies show that university motivation is not yet a concluded matter, given the differences in findings. Furthermore, their studies did not specifically look at multi-generational staff, which makes it pertinent to conduct this study.

Hiam (2003) presents a unique lens for viewing intrinsic and extrinsic motivational strategies. The motivational strategies are summarised and outlined in what Hiam (2003) terms an "incentive profile". The incentive profile comprises 15 motivational strategies: affiliation, self-expression, achievement, security, career growth, excitement, status, purpose, competition, recognition, consideration, autonomy, rewards, responsibility, and personal needs (Singh & Singh, 2023). This study will adopt the incentive profile to represent numerous motivational strategies that organisations may adopt. Table 3.2 illustrates the incentive profile.

Table 3.2: Incentive profile

Motivators / Strategies	**Definition**
Affiliation	Aspiration to feel part of a team or a group with which the employee works. Desire to be associated with a great enterprise.
Self-expression	Urge employees to express themselves through their work using innovativeness and creativity.
Achievement	Determination to accomplish personal objectives and pursuit of excellence.
Security	Reduction of uncertainty and stress, or guaranteeing the employee's stability.
Career growth	Help employees develop their careers to the fullest.
Excitement	Work should bring new experiences and make employees enjoy their lives.
Status	Motivation to increase employee standing for their accomplishment
Purpose	Tasks should have direction and meaning and contribute to the organisation's objectives.
Competition	There should be room for employees to learn from other employees.
Recognition	Giving positive feedback and support to employees. Provision of appropriate recognition for their contributions.
Consideration	Offering a supportive, friendly workplace environment where employees care for each other.
Autonomy	Giving employees control of their work and work life.
Rewards	Provision for incentives and wealth for work done.
Responsibility	Provision of leadership roles for every employee.
Personal needs	Help them satisfy their essential personal and family priorities.

Source: Adapted from Hiam (2003)

According to Singh and Singh (2023), ten of the strategies in the incentive profile are intrinsic motivational strategies: achievement, affiliation, self-expression, career growth, excitement, autonomy, purpose, responsibility, consideration, and status, while five strategies are extrinsic: rewards, job security, personal needs, security, and competition (Hiam, 2003). The following section categorises and discusses intrinsic and extrinsic motivational strategies.

3.5.1 Intrinsic motivational strategies and performance

According to Herzberg, these factors lead to job satisfaction and motivation and enhance job performance (Oke, 2022). These strategies are mainly generated within an employee, and the employer plays a facilitative role in improving these strategies. Intrinsic strategies to be discussed are those adopted from the incentive profile, because the incentive profile has been tested by numerous researchers on employee motivation.

3.5.1.1 Achievement

Achievement motivational strategy is an intrinsic motivator generated within an employee. It is identified as an inherent motivation variable by McClelland's theory of needs and is also embedded in Abraham Maslow's higher-order needs for motivation (Siyal et al., 2021). According to Morris et al. (2022), achievement is subjective because it depends on the individual. It generally refers to good feelings after achieving success. Achievement is completing a task (Yamini et al., 2022). Pham et al. (2021) posit that achievement is the end feeling employees get after solving a work-related problem. Good et al. (2022) assert that achievement is an experience of gratification from finishing a task with one's effort. The need for achievement is generated within an employee and is, therefore, a personal factor (Liu, 2021). Achievement is the desire of an employee to do better (Engidaw, 2021). Ahmad et al. (2021) offer a more comprehensive explanation of achievement: it is when an employee works diligently with vitality to steer towards set targets.

Three dimensions emerge from these explanations of achievement: the first dimension is that it is a feeling of completing a task. The second dimension is that the task should be complex for employees to feel they have achieved. This evidence is presented by Nilasari et al.'s (2021) study, which found that achievement needs are fulfilled when employees think they have completed a difficult task. Thus, a sense of achievement is attained when an employee dominates a complex task. The third dimension is task-oriented achievement, including feeling, experience, attitude, and behavior. This is supported by Shahid and Paul (2021), who state that an employee should have attained set targets, so achievement involves pursuing excellence against the set standards. Similarly, Xu et al. (2021) believe that perfectionism is a characteristic of employees with high achievement needs. In other words, they are happy when they attain a work-related goal with minimum resources used.

However, it is essential for managers and organisations that use employee achievement as a motivational strategy to understand the complexity of the need for achievement. According to Faraz et al. (2021), three elements constitute achievement. The first element is the mastery of employee needs. Employees with an achievement drive need an intellectually challenging job (Karimi et al., 2022). Mastery of needs means that employees want job leadership where they can easily link the attainment of targets to themselves. The second element is work orientation (Pham et al., 2021). Work orientation means employees love and are passionate about their work (Morris et al., 2022). Passion makes them have the desire to excel and achieve in their line of work. The third element is competition. Employees measure the extent to which they have achieved by comparing their performance to that of their peers and themselves, which is called achievement imagery (Andreas, 2020; Siyal et al., 2021). Employees compete with themselves by comparing their past performance with their current performance.

In addition to these three achievement elements, achievement-oriented employees fear failure (Dzomonda & Neneh, 2023). This fear is the general worry of failing to attain set targets related to the employee's job. Employees with high achievement needs may require long-term involvement and unique accomplishments (Cai, Cai, Sun, Xu, & Feng, 2021). Long-term involvement means that they must be involved with the project from start to finish so that success is traceable to them. Unique accomplishments imply that they desire to come up with new products and services. Furthermore, achievement is linked to personal responsibility and helps one succeed (Ahmad et al., 2021). Personal responsibility means these employees prefer to work independently to measure their success more easily. They need help navigating personal and worldly obstacles that can hinder them from succeeding.

As much as understanding achievement is essential, what's more critical is appreciating the implications of achievement motivational strategies to employers. Management should set specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound (SMART) goals (Uka & Prendi, 2024). This makes it easier for employees to track their performance and fulfill their achievement needs. Constant feedback is necessary for employees who have achievement needs to understand the extent to which they have achieved (Hajiali et al., 2022). Furthermore, achievement-oriented employees must be permitted to innovate to be happy (Dousin et al., 2021). It is critical to note that achievement is an individual drive. Still, employers play a facilitative role, such as developing policies that make work meaningful so that employees perform well and can feel successful.

Mushibwe and Simuka (2021) found that women in leadership in universities in Zimbabwe are motivated by achievement. Women want to be promoted to perform and bring novel solutions continually. Mushibwe and Simuka's (2021) study was quite narrow in the following three ways: (1) their study focused on women in leadership, meaning that they also included academic staff (2) their research excluded men, and (3) non-academics in lower-level positions were also excluded. There exists a gap in achievement as a viable strategy in state universities in Zimbabwe amongst multi-generational non-academic staff, and this study seeks to bridge this gap.

3.5.1.2 Affiliation

Affiliation is another intrinsic motivational strategy that can be used to improve organisational performance. Many studies, such as those by Roesminingsih and Soedjarwo (2021) and Guo and Ayoun (2023), have examined the relationship between affiliation and performance. These studies have shown mixed results. For example, a survey by Nson (2024) shows that affiliation motivational strategy enhances performance.

Given the popularity of affiliation, it is necessary to discuss it in the literature on motivation and employee performance. The need for affiliation rose to prominence after the work of McClelland (Acquah et al., 2021). According to McClelland's theory of needs, the need to affiliate with others increases employee performance (Guo & Ayoun, 2023). The need for affiliation is simply the drive to need people (Nson, 2024). Affiliation is, therefore, the wish to have long-lasting relationships at the workplace. Eriyanto, Roesminingsih and Soedjarwo (2021) post that affiliation is necessary for social relationships. Yee Johari, Emang and Thoo (2022) agree that some employees' main goal is interpersonal orientation. The main goal of these employees is to be with others. In other words, affiliation is a social contract as it is the desire to form interpersonal relationships. Hence, employees with needs for affiliation are motivated by social connections. Many studies have found that affiliation needs to have two dimensions (Mulyan et al., 2021), namely, sociability and intimacy. Mahande, Akram and Rahman (2022) assert that sociability means the need for many or superficial relationships. On the other hand, intimacy refers to the drive to have unique, deep, and quality relationships with a few people (Varona & Capretz, 2021). These dimensions must be understood by every manager who wants to use an affiliation motivational strategy.

It is paramount to understand the key features of employees with affiliation needs. Duan and Moore (2022) explain that understanding the characteristics of workers with affiliation needs will assist the organisation in using the affiliation strategy for the correct target audience. According to Awit and Marticio (2022), employees with affiliation needs fit well in teams and groups. This means, therefore, that they can quickly adapt to new people and characters. Abdulkadir et al. (2021) found that these employees want acceptance, friendship, and cooperativeness. Gwanyo and Doosuur (2022) present a more robust finding, which states that employees with affiliation needs wish to form, maintain, and restore positive relationships within an organisation. This is corroborated by the study conducted by Villanueva, Disu, and Villanueva (2021), who found that these employees want to work with high social interaction. Furthermore, people with affiliation needs have compassion for others (Nson, 2024). This is consistent with Acquah et al. (2021), who posit that employees with a drive for affiliation have empathy; they want to help others. Yee et al. (2022) observe that these employees do not want to work alone because they want to help their peers. Therefore, these employees want to please everyone in the workplace. Furthermore, these employees want to feel involved and part of the organisation (Mulyan et al., 2022). In other words, they want to identify with their department and organisation.

According to McClelland's theory of needs, employees with high affiliation needs want to control everyone and often exaggerate their position and resources (Patricia & Asoba, 2021). On the other hand, according to McClelland's theory, people with low affiliation needs depend on others and often understate their position and the resources they own. Given all these characteristics, it is essential to note that an employee with affiliation needs seeks significant social interaction and wants to help others.

Understanding the stances and approaches employers can take when using affiliation motivational strategies is critical. Nson (2024) demonstrates that the role of company management is to implement policies that promote social interactions. Organisations should set goals that can be achieved through teamwork (Mahande et al., 2022). Cai et al. (2021) note that organisations should facilitate the sharing of offices amongst employees to foster social relationships. Some employees prefer working independently, so problem-solving should be done as a team (Varona & Capritz, 2021). Guo and Ayoun (2023) classify this as a quality circle strategy, where the employer can make employees meet as teams to analyse and develop solutions to problems affecting their productivity. However, studies by Acquah et al. (2021) warn organisations regarding implementing an affiliation motivation strategy, as these employees may display counterproductive behavior because they are agreeable and want to be liked by others. The good side of them is that they resolve conflict as they wish for a harmonious work environment (Yee et al., 2022). Hence, organisations adopting this strategy should promote a friendly, collaborative atmosphere that fosters sustainable social relationships.

Majoni et al. (2023) researched state universities in Zimbabwe and found that academic staff are motivated by the need for affiliation. However, Majoni et al. (2023) focused on academic staff, thereby overlooking non-academic staff with different perspectives regarding motivation, and their study did not consider a multi-generational workforce as a mediating variable. This study contributes to filling these gaps in affiliation as a motivational strategy for a multi-generational, non-academic workforce.

3.5.1.3 Self-expression

Self-expression is another vital motivational strategy companies can use to enhance employee performance. According to Fernandes and de Matos (2023), self-expression is how employees can be themselves in the workplace. Self-expression is the degree to which workers share themselves with their peers, superiors, and supervisors (Fishbach & Wooley, 2022). Self-expression is the extent to which employers allow employees to display their uniqueness, come up with different viewpoints, and freely express their concepts and ideas. It is the freedom to express oneself without fear or ramifications (Hur, Shin & Moon, 2022). From these explanations, self-expression has numerous dimensions. Workplace self-expression can be emotional and physical (Kim, David, Chen, & Liang, 2023).

Emotional self-expression is the degree to which employees can express their beliefs, attitudes, feelings, values, and thoughts (Vu et al., 2021). Employees should be allowed to be who they are as long as this is not counterproductive. Berdicchia et al. (2022) state that organisations should make employees feel comfortable expressing their worldviews. Beliefs are different, and the workplace should be inclusive, as other employees are motivated by the ability to express their beliefs. However, there should be standards that employees must not cross because that would compromise the organisation’s professionalism (Zhang, Huang, Chen &

Zhao, 2023). Amin et al. (2021) recommend that organisations exclude hate speech as this negatively influences employee self-expression.

Self-expression can also be physical, where employees can express themselves through dress code, hairstyle, and makeup (Yue, 2021). However, there should be standards that must not be crossed to maintain professionalism. For example, employees can wear casual attire while maintaining industry professionalism and safety (Camilleri, 2021a). Therefore, employees should feel at home while respecting business continuity standards.

Employees should be allowed to express themselves during task execution. Some organisations allow employees to be innovative when conducting their duties (Mahaputra & Saputra, 2021). According to Shaukat and Khurshid (2022), an organisation's primary concern should be the results, not the means. Innovative and creative employees can fully utilise their skills, talent, competencies, and capabilities to produce quality output (Lee, Hameduddin & Lee, 2023). This is supported by Hur et al. (2023), who found that employees who express themselves are agile, flexible, and highly reliable. This also aligns with Jin and Suntrayuth's (2022) observations that hidden employee talents are utilised for the organisation's good. Employee voice is another form of self-expression. Employees should be allowed to air their opinions about issues affecting their work (Yue, 2021). The drive to be heard can motivate employees. Management should create an environment where different views on work-related policy are celebrated (Vu et al., 2021). In this regard, Kim et al. (2023) opine that the multiplicity of opinions, which is an outcome of self-expression, helps in problem-solving and can result in an organisation attaining a sustained competitive advantage. Hur et al. (2021) aver that employees are the ones on the ground, and some of them have worked for many companies, and their ideas can have long-lasting solutions. These employees get extra energy when they can be themselves and communicate their individuality through their work innovations.

Understanding the tactics organisations can use to promote self-expression is essential. According to Shaukat and Khurshid (2021), firms should develop policies that make employees feel at home. Kim et al. (2023) add that organisations should welcome everyone. Hur et al. (2022) contribute that these policies should be inclusive and accommodate everyone regardless of culture, creed, religion, tribe, and beliefs. One way is to communicate performance expectations to employees and not define how to achieve these targets (Yue, 2021).

Amin et al. (2021) believe that the means, methods, and mechanics of achieving stated goals should not be dictated to employees to allow them to express their talents fully. Camilleri

(2021a) found that some firms allow employees to design their workplace as a means of self-expression. Employees may dictate their ergonomics (Zhang et al., 2023). Workers can choose color paintings for their office walls, design seating arrangements, and decide on pictures to put in their offices (Fernandes & de Matos, 2023). Office ergonomics will enable employees to express their cultures and individuality, which can be a fundamental foundation for employee performance.

Chen and Zhao (2023) observe that freedom of speech enhances employees' self-expression. Employees should inform employees of policies, which can make them take ownership of the policies. Vu et al. (2021) established that self-expression amongst employees improves their well-being. Berdicchia, Bracci, and Masino (2022) agree with this as they state that failure to express one's individuality leads to stress and depression. Many findings have pointed to a positive correlation between self-expression and employee performance (Kim et al., 2023). Nson (2024) found that self-expression motivates employees. However, Fernandes and de Matos (2023) show that self-expression is not always positive. It can also be a source of discrimination, leading to low morale and productivity (Vu et al., 2021). Therefore, organisations need to implement policies that reduce stereotyping and description. Self-expression has been viewed as a motivational strategy since time immemorial. Hence, it needed to be included in this study.

Kanonge and Bussin (2022) state that self-expression is a key ingredient in motivating employees in universities in Zimbabwe; as much as this contribution is key, like other studies that tend to only focus on academic staff. The current study investigated self-expression as a key motivator amongst non-academic staff who are (multi-generational), which addresses this gap in the literature.

3.5.1.4 Career growth

Career growth is another motivational strategy proffered by the incentive profile. Career growth as a motivational strategy is dynamic and complicated but significant (Setyawati, PG & Rianto, 2022). Career growth is complex because it can be classified as both extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation, depending on one's explanation (Wang, Gan, Wei, Sun, Wang & Zhou, 2024). Career growth is inherent motivation because it is an individual's drive to grow (Sibonde & Dassah, 2021). However, career growth is an extrinsic motivation when the employee aims to get associated rewards (Susanto, Soehaditama & Benned, 2023). Herzberg identifies career growth as a motivator (Bhaskar & Chopra, 2021). In this study, career growth is classified as an intrinsic motivation because it is based on the internal drive of an employee to grow. Managers must understand career growth, together with its numerous dimensions.

According to Japor (2021), career growth is the progression of employees through specified ranks in the enterprise's organogram or hierarchy. Ismael et al. (2022) agree with this explanation as they state that career growth is the movement of employees from one position to another in a clearly defined and explicit manner. Therefore, career growth is the migration of employees from one position to another toward the top. However, this is not done haphazardly, as there is a need for a clear career path. Career growth begins with acquiring new skills, experience, and education (Chahar, Jain & Hatwal, 2021). This acquisition of new knowledge equips employees with significant capabilities to carry out tasks associated with their new position. Tamsah, Farida, Ybnu, Yusriadi, Nasirin, and Kurniawan (2021) view this process as career development where employees improve their skills and competencies to occupy future meaningful positions. Therefore, employees will be readying themselves for future tasks in this process.

A career growth motivational strategy includes career planning, identity, insight, and resilience (Dyahrini & Nugraha, 2022). Career planning is when employees have stated goals about which position they want to occupy within or outside the organisation (Yoopetch, Nimsai & Kongarchapatara, 2021). This position is the best job that utilises the employee's maximum potential, talent, and skills. On the other hand, career identity is when employees see themselves associated with a specific post in the company (Nuriman, 2021). Career insight is explained by Tajudin, Syaechurodji, Alfarizi & Haryadi (2023) as awareness of the best position in the company hierarchy that suits one's skills and competencies. Career resilience is the ability to stick with a career regardless of turbulence and complex challenges (Thwin, Janarthanan & Bhaumik, 2023). All these dimensions have to be present to facilitate career growth. Career growth has to be fair, and employees should have an equal chance to be promoted regardless of gender, ethnicity, age, culture, and religion (Purwanto, 2023). In other words, career growth should be merit-based, and the best-suited candidate should be promoted (Susanto et al., 2023). Employees are likely to work hard because they want to be promoted (Japor, 2021). This is supported by Tajudin et al. (2023), who note that career growth is essential for improved employee performance as it leads to hard work, and employees want to be promoted.

Understanding various tactics that employees can use to promote career growth is critical. Employers can implement internal recruitment policies that result in employees migrating to better positions (Chahar et al., 2021). Ismael et al. (2022) contend that organisations should train employees for future positions. This is known as succession planning if it concerns preparing employees for future management positions (Tamsah et al., 2021). This whole process is known as career management. Company management should help all employees identify careers they are interested in, prepare them, and later recruit them for those positions. This will help employees to realise their full potential. However, the downside is that after preparing employees for managerial posts, they leave for competitors (Nuriman, 2021). A plethora of studies have been conducted on the impact of career growth on employee performance (Wang et al., 2024). Sibonde and Dassah (2021) found that employers offering their workers career growth have positive organisational performance. Setyawati et al. (2022) insist that career growth is fundamental to achieving sustainable competitive advantage. This is corroborated by Japor's (2021) work, which shows that employee performance is a means of acquiring career growth. It should be noted that some employees do not have ambitions and are comfortable with their current positions (Chahar et al., 2021). However, many researchers have researched and tested career growth, and there is strong evidence of its linkage to employee performance (Nuriman, 2021).

In Zimbabwe state universities, career growth is a key motivational strategy (Chatiza et al., 2021). This is substantiated by Kanonge and Bussin (2022), who state that lecturers expect to make reasonable career progress. Majoni et al. (2023) have a similar observation: career growth unlocks academic staff potential. From the literature, it is known that in higher education, career growth unlocks staff motivation. However, it is unknown whether it has the potential to motivate the multi-generational non-academic workforce, and this study contributes knowledge to answering this problem.

3.5.1.5 Autonomy

Autonomy is another essential intrinsic motivational strategy that employers can use to enhance employee performance. Autonomy as a motivator was first brought into the limelight by Hackman and Oldham in 1976 in their seminal work titled "Conditions under which Employees Respond Positively to Enriched Work". The authors developed a job characteristic model that identified autonomy alongside feedback, task variety, task significance, and task importance as major employee motivators (Dermircioglu, 2021). Since the development of this model, numerous researchers in employee motivation have researched the nexus between autonomy and employee motivation (Zhang et al., 2023).

Autonomy as an indicator of intrinsic motivation has been explained in various and complex ways. It is carrying out one's work independently from others, such as peers and supervisors (Slemp et al., 2021). According to Kao, Hsu, Thomas, Cheng, Lin, and Li (2021), autonomy is the degree to which an employee can decide upon a work schedule, work method, and work criteria. Santiagor-Torner (2023) contends that autonomy at work refers to the freedom of choice given to employees in executing their tasks and discharging their responsibilities. Sung, Yoon, and Han (2022) posit that autonomy at the workplace allows employees to determine their own goals. Jungert, Schattke, Proulx, Taylor, and Koestner. (2021) view autonomy as the degree to which employees can choose working methods. A more holistic definition of autonomy is proffered by Guo, Ahmad, Adnan, Scholz, and Naveed (2021), which explains autonomy as the level of freedom, discretion, and independence granted to employees to decide upon work method, work schedule, work hours, work goals, workplace, and priorities. In other words, employees can exercise authority and control and make decisions affecting their work.

Autonomy at the workplace is associated with self-determination, job enrichment, and delegation (Msuya & Kumar, 2022). Under self-determination, employees are expected to make choices as long as this does not negatively influence their job outcomes (Lee et al., 2021). Job enrichment involves adding decision-making tasks to employees (Sarmah et al., 2022). Li et al. (2021) contend that delegation refers to a supervisor transferring decision-making responsibilities to a junior employee or subordinate. Self-determination, job enrichment, and delegation are components of autonomy as they allow employees to control and make rules to regulate their work. Lartey's (2021) study found that autonomy is self-rule in the workplace. This is similar to Zhang et al. (2022), who define autonomy as unlimited freedom for employees to regulate their feelings and job behavior. Martela, Gómez, Unanue, Araya, Bravo, and Espejo (2021) found that autonomy is a type of job design that allows employees to exercise authority and determine all aspects of their jobs. In a nutshell, researchers on employee motivation have concluded that autonomy at work grants employees the right to make decisions about their work to stimulate them and increase their performance.

Autonomy has three dimensions unearthed from research (Peng et al., 2022). These three dimensions are the choice of work methods, work schedule, and work criteria (Slemp et al., 2021). In the work method, the employer allows employees to choose procedures to carry out tasks (Zhang et al., 2023). In terms of work schedule, employees are permitted to determine working hours and location of work (Sung et al., 2022). Kao et al. (2021) posit that employees can work from home or in the office. These methods are known as flexible work arrangements, depending on the work location, for example, remote working or teleworking. Furthermore, employees can use flexitime or compressed working hours when determining their work hours (Guo et al., 2021). Employees can alter job standards and indicators on the final dimension of work criteria (Lartey, 2021). Peng et al. (2022) assert that determining work criteria involves employees being allowed to set their own goals about work.

Various studies, such as Lartey (2021) and Zhang et al. (2022), have found that autonomy motivates employees (Dermircioglu, 2021). However, Sung et al. (2022) established that the employee has to be willing to be given autonomy. Lartey (2021) states that the desire for independence depends on employees' experience. Employees with more experience desire autonomy as they can tap into their expertise to work independently (Li et al., 2021). On the other hand, studies have established that employees with less experience do not need much autonomy (Zhang et al., 2023). Lu, Guo, Qu, Lin, and Lev (2023) report that autonomy significantly increases employee performance as employees view their work as meaningful and exciting. However, Zhang et al. (2022) found that autonomy's ability to motivate employees depends on the job level. Their study indicates that some jobs require tight supervision and monitoring. These include hazardous factories and industries that can threaten human life, requiring great attention to detail. In Zimbabwe, Ngwenya and Phuti (2022) demonstrate that job autonomy is critical in motivating academic leadership in institutions of higher learning. However, Ngwenya and Phuti's (2022) findings are directed to educational leadership. A gap exists in job autonomy as a motivator of multi-generational non-academic staff, and this study seeks to close this gap.

3.5.1.6 Excitement

Excitement is another intrinsic motivational strategy that various enterprises use. Since many human resources management researchers have studied the relationship between work excitement and employee performance, the term work excitement has not been explained holistically (Mardanov, 2021). Work excitement is the level or degree to which employees enjoy their jobs and work environment (Brincker & Pedersen, 2023). Fishbach and Woolley (2022) explain work excitement as employees being happy and experiencing pleasure at work. Hence, work excitement is how employees find their jobs and workplaces pleasurable and enjoyable. Some researchers have defined excitement using subjective well-being (Sucipto, Gunawan & Kusumah, 2022). Arfan (2021) understands well-being as the extent to which employees are healthy, happy, and comfortable at their workplace. Excitement is the goal of every human being (Upathissa, 2022). Tien and Manh (2021) support this view by reporting that everyone wants to be happy. Chahar et al. (2021) agree that life's most critical goal is excitement. In other words, people wish to be pleased even at their workplaces. Mardikaningsih and Darmawan (2022) state that excitement about their workplace can be the most significant thing that can happen to a human being. This is because they spend most of their time at their workplace. According to Scharp et al. (2022), work excitement depends on an individual and is genetic. What excites one employee does not necessarily excite another (Kariuki, 2021). Excitement is always good, according to Gamble et al. (2015). Therefore, excitement is always associated with positive attitudes, feelings, emotions, and moods. This is supported by Senoaji, Yuliana, Nasution, and Yuliana (2023), who report that work excitement is characterised by favorable judgments and pleasant feelings about work.

Employers can use numerous complex dimensions of work excitement to increase employee performance (Irfan, 2022). Tien and Manh (2021) argue that providing constant feedback at the workplace can excite employees. This makes them feel valuable and can stimulate pleasure among them. Furthermore, Chahar et al. (2021) believe that allowing jokes in the workplace causes employees to laugh and experience enjoyment. Kariuki (2021) found that celebrating small production wins with employees generates excitement. Supervisors should match employees with activities that employees love (Irfan, 2022). These activities connect employees' positive emotions, and one way is to understand employee talents and give them tasks that match their abilities. This makes employees passionate about their jobs and the workplace (Arfan, 2021). Susanto et al. (2023) assert that work should be exhilarating and less stressful. This means that peers and supervisors should be supportive, not adversarial. Employees are also excited about workplaces with suitable practical tools and technologies (Tajudin et al., 2021). In addition, complex and challenging tasks that make employees utilise all their capabilities, skills, and competencies are also sources of excitement (Senoaji et al., 2022). Tien and Manh (2021) found that employees are excited about their work if they feel useful and can contribute to the organisation's success.

There are seven attributes of work excitement. The first attribute of excitement is that employers should not give employees work that goes against their conscience. Ethical work excites employees (Arfan, 2022). Employees are also enthused by work that tests their critical thinking skills (Sucipto et al., 2022). The freedom to make decisions also makes employees happy (Tamsah et al., 2021). Chahar et al. (2021) established from their research that tasks that provide a high sense of achievement excite employees. The other attribute of excitement is that employees feel happy if rewarded for good work (Ismael et al., 2022). Thwin et al. (2023) found that the opportunity to help others excites workers and offers opportunities for promotion. In a nutshell, there are a plethora of ways that employers can take advantage of to make employees happy.

Work excitement has been found to have many consequences that are good for both the employee and the employer. Purwanto (2023) found that excitement leads to productive work relationships. These relationships may be between supervisors and subordinates, or amongst peers. Furthermore, Sung et al. (2022) report that excitement at work results in improved employee performance. Lee et al. (2021) corroborate these findings and state that excitement leads to an energised workplace and marvellous creativity, leading to a sustainable competitive advantage. Zhang et al. (2022) believe that employees who are excited about their work are healthier, less stressed, and live longer. Studies such as Zhang et al. (2022) and Li et al. (2021) establish a positive correlation between work excitement and employee performance. Still, excitement may deter an organisation from its goals (Guo et al., 2021). Li et al. (2021) support this view as they found that work excitement is not applicable in all workplaces. Ismael et al. (2022) assert that other workplaces should be rigid to make employees productive.

Mahoko (2023) conducted a study in South Africa and found that excitement and enjoyment are key ingredients in motivating staff in higher education. Chigaga (2024) surveyed Zimbabwe, demonstrating the importance of excitement in the fast-food and beverage industry. As much as the survey showed that excitement positively correlates with motivation, the study focused on a different context. These findings may not apply to multi-generational non-academic staff. Hence, this study seeks to contribute to this knowledge by addressing motivational strategies suitable for multi-generational non-academic staff.

3.5.1.7 Purpose

Purpose is another pivotal intrinsic motivation antecedent used by many researchers in understanding factors that enhance and improve employee performance (Riyanto et al., 2021). Human capital management researchers have defined and explained the purpose of work in numerous and complex ways (Pham et al., 2021). Good et al. (2022) view work purpose as the degree to which an individual’s work has direction. Although Lee et al. (2022) developed an essential notion of directedness to work, their definition is not watertight. Wahyuni et al. (2023) reported that work purpose is related to the job being meaningful, important, and valuable to the organisation. Yamini et al. (2022) suggest that work purpose is the overall significance of the employee's job to the organisation. In other words, there should be a clear relationship between the work and the organisation (Ahmad et al., 2021). Hence, purpose is the extent to which employees view their jobs as important, valuable, and worthwhile.

Loor-Zambrano et al. (2022) emphasise that work output should be significant to organisational outcomes. Hajiali et al. (2022) believe that there should be an alignment between the tasks that an employee carries out and the company's overall objectives for the job to be considered to have a purpose. However, the purpose of the work is not only about linking the job to the organisation's overall objectives (Liu, 2021). Shahid and Paul (2021) posit that work purpose is the overall significance of the job to the greater good. Work is a means to achieve something more significant, and the job is directed towards something greater than the job itself (Faraz et al., 2021). Hence, work purpose is the extent or degree to which the job contributes to the greater good of the job holder, the organisation's overall goals, and society at large. Therefore, a job is considered valuable if it directly contributes to the individual, the department, the strategic business unit (SBU), the organisation, and society. Chahar et al. (2021) add another dimension to the work's purpose: the job's morality. Thus, a job has a purpose if it involves morally right tasks. Sucipto et al. (2022) identify job purpose as a psychological state in which employees feel that their job is vital or has a positive impact. Therefore, the purpose of the workplace is the intrinsic value of work. Kao et al. (2021) found that a lack of work purpose may lead to a negative psychological state that can cause depression among employees. Psychologists argue that people are motivated to achieve something big (Zhang et al., 2023). This intrinsic drive is genetic and can lead to frustrations if it is not fulfilled (Senoaji et al., 2023). Therefore, their study encourages employers to design jobs in a way that provides a sense of purpose for employees.

Many studies such as Sitopu et al. (2021) and Wang et al. (2024) have been carried out on the impact of work purposes on employee performance. Sari (2022) established that work purpose results in job satisfaction and high employee performance. This is corroborated by Morris et al. (2022), who found that where there is a job purpose, employees are passionate about the job and are energised to work efficiently and effectively. Zeng, Takada, Hara, Sugiyama, Ito, Nihei, and Asakura (2022) observed that work purpose positively correlates with organisational citizenship, commitment, job satisfaction, and employee performance. Yusuf (2021) established that the absence of a job purpose results in high absenteeism, conflicts, and poor employee performance. Sitopu et al.'s (2021) study found direct linkages between job purpose and organisational profitability. Wang et al. (2024) studied antecedents of work purpose, which are work meaningfulness, work direction, and work significance. They conclude that these three antecedents are pivotal in achieving work productivity, and they recommend that employers redesign jobs so that tasks are significant, meaningful, and have direction. Andreas (2022) observes that work has replaced religion in providing purpose to people's lives. However, technological advancements challenge people to find purpose in their work.

Karimi et al. (2022) contradict these findings as their study found that job purpose does not motivate. The authors do state that the lack of a job purpose leads to dissatisfaction. Similarly, Faraz et al. (2021) found work purpose to be a hygiene factor, not a motivator. Good et al. (2022) also note that job purpose does not motivate but is a foundation for motivation.

Liu (2021) observes that purpose as a motivational strategy is highly efficient for knowledge workers and less efficient for unskilled employees. Ali and Anwar (2021) resonate with McGregor's theories X and Y, with employee Y being a knowledge worker who values job purpose, and employee X being an unskilled worker who is not concerned about the purpose of their work. Many studies have found a positive trend and linkage between work purpose and employee performance (Engidaw, 2021). Most of these studies have been carried out in the Western world. Still, it is necessary to understand how purpose can stimulate work performance in developing nations such as Zimbabwe, where hyperinflation is prevalent. These mixed feelings amongst researchers on the importance of purpose on employee performance require further interrogation. Hence, there was a need to include purpose as an intrinsic motivational strategy in this study and understand the degree to which it may be helpful to employees in pursuit of improved employee performance.

In Zimbabwe, few studies demonstrate the nexus between purpose and motivation. However, in South Africa, Naidoo-Chetty and du Plessis (2021) observed that employees in higher education are motivated by purpose, i.e., the degree to which their tasks or the overall job fit the organisation's purpose. However, as Naidoo-Chetty and du Plessis's (2021) observations may not apply to the motivation of multi-generational non-academic staff in Zimbabwe, there is a need for this study to address this knowledge gap.

3.5.1.8 Responsibility

Responsibility is another intrinsic motivational strategy that employers can use to improve employee performance. Work responsibility has been explained from various and differing angles by human resources researchers and scholars (Siyal et al., 2021). Faraz et al. (2021) state that work responsibility involves giving employees more tasks. Van den Broeck et al. (2021) note that giving employees more responsibility refers to redesigning their jobs to have both task and skill variety. Task variety means employees have more tasks than usual (Pham et al., 2021). Employees with more responsibility require more skills and competencies to carry out the additional functions (Tumi et al., 2022). In their meta-analysis, Iis et al. (2022) observed that responsibility refers to adding more work and duties to employees' job profiles to avoid job traction (doing the same activity all the time). Job traction results in boredom (Good et al., 2022). Job traction always dislodges the same responsibilities (Maryani et al., 2021). Hence, there is a need to add more responsibilities to employees to avoid boredom.

There are three dimensions to increase employee responsibility: job rotation, job enrichment, and job enlargement (Liu, 2021). Job rotation involves employees changing and switching jobs within an organisation (Nilasari et al., 2021). Job rotation is in sharp contrast to specialisation, where employees in assembly line duties carry out one function every day.

Job enrichment is another dimension of responsibility that involves the vertical expansion of a job (Ahmad et al., 2021). According to Shahid and Paul (2021), employees are more responsible for planning, controlling, and organizing their work in job enrichment. According to Yamini et al. (2022), job enrichment occurs when employees are delegated decision-making roles. In other words, they are responsible for making decisions about their work. Zeng et al. (2022) observed that organisations integrated planning, controlling, and execution roles and delegated them to employees. Therefore, job enrichment involves adding more qualitative tasks to employees' duties. In some organisations, employees are given extra responsibilities (Yousaf et al., 2022). Therefore, job enrichment is about adding more managerial responsibilities to employees to motivate them.

The final dimension of responsibility is job enlargement (Morris et al., 2022. Job enlargement is increasing and widening the job scope by assigning additional tasks (Xu et al., 2021). Job enlargement differs from job enrichment because it focuses on adding quantitative functions, not decision-making (Chen et al., 2022). Wahyuni et al. (2023) found that employers who use job enlargement transform employee jobs by increasing task components in a process known as task structuring. Job enlargement is horizontal loading of the job, not vertical loading (job enrichment), which comes with challenging and complex tasks.

There have been mixed findings on the impact of responsibility on employee performance over the years (Sokolic et al., 2024). It is recommended that employers use all three dimensions of responsibility to achieve maximum return. Engidaw (2021) found that the primary drawback of additional responsibility is that employees may lack the skills to execute these new functions. Zeng et al. (2022) found that additional responsibilities result in mental and physical overload among some employees. In their meta-analysis of employee motivation, Nilasari et al. (2021) observed that some companies do not increase remuneration after adding more responsibilities to employees. This demotivates employees and decreases productivity (Morris et al., 2022). However, Andreas (2022) established that additional responsibility results in job satisfaction and enhances employee performance. A study by Karimi et al. (2022) found that more responsibility makes work interesting and stimulates employees. This is corroborated by Kotera et al. (2023), who found that additional responsibility makes employees passionate about their work. Similarly, Faraz et al. (2021) observe that additional responsibilities reduce boredom. Good et al. (2022) found that organisations that employ job enlargement and job enrichment have high organisational performance, and their study recommends that employers use this intrinsic motivational strategy to achieve sustainable competitive advantage. Job enrichment positively correlates with employee motivation, and job enlargement has a neutral correlation (Chen et al., 2022). Their study identified additional quantitative responsibilities as a hygiene factor, whereas additional qualitative responsibilities were a motivator. This aligns with findings from Marynai et al. (2021) that additional qualitative responsibilities motivate knowledge workers, whilst quantitative responsibilities do not. Yamini et al. (2022) conclude that unskilled and semi-skilled employees are motivated by quantitative responsibilities, not qualitative ones. This means responsibility is a subjective, intrinsic motivational strategy that depends on the individual. Hence, given the differences in these findings, responsibility must be included in the current investigation on improved employee performance.

In Zimbabwe, Majoni et al. (2023) demonstrate that more job responsibilities motivate academic staff in Zimbabwe universities. This is substantiated by Mushimbwe and Simuka (2021), who found that academic women in leadership are enthused by more responsibility. However, their observations may not be relevant for the motivation of multi-generational non-academic staff. There is a need for this study to address this gap in responsibility as a motivator of multi-generational non-academic staff.

3.5.1.9 Consideration

Employees also value a considerate workplace in which to perform. Managers should not forget that employees are human (Karimi et al., 2022). Employees have feelings and ought to be treated well by their supervisors, peers, and subordinates (Iis et al., 2022). According to Alsuwaidi et al. (2021), employees desire a workplace with a harmonious environment where they can thrive without conflict. Hajiali et al. (2022) believe that workplace superiors and peers should be friendly and supportive. They should be helpful and not break each other's spirits. Forson et al. (2021) support this, noting that employees do not like violent and adversarial workplaces filled with antagonistic behaviors and hostilities. Workers should create an environment with civility and respect for each other (Sitopu et al., 2021). Alsuwaidi et al.'s (2021) study on considerate workplaces showed that employees desire a work environment with interpersonal behaviors of love. They should experience love from their work colleagues. Pham et al. (2021) observed that employees want to be valued by others at their workplaces. Employees wish for a workplace with mutual respect regardless of employment status (Ahmad et al., 2021).

Researchers have found that workers are interested in morality as they want their colleagues and superiors to display the right behaviors (Chen et al., 2022). Liu (2021) found that employees want an environment where they care for each other. It should be an environment where stress is reduced. Workers seek attention and kindness from their workmates (Good et al., 2022). Shahid and Paul (2021) assert that employees detest noisy and violent workplaces. Workers want to have fun with their work peers and also want their colleagues to be approachable (Nilasari et al., 2021). Morris et al.'s (2022) study found that employees want to invest in positive relationships with peers at the workplace. They want their peers to empower them and be helpful, transparent, and selfless (Xu et al., 2021). Karimi et al. (2022) add that the dimension of the employer is considered to be in line with employee well-being. Employers should create an environment where employees can feel positive mental and physical well-being (Novitasari et al., 2021). Siyal et al. (2021) summarise consideration at work as creating a more humane workplace. Wahyuni et al. (2023) view consideration as an aspect of a sustainable work environment. Yamini et al. (2022) posit that employees spend most of their time at work, and it makes sense that they should desire care from the people they spend the most time with (peers, superiors, and subordinates). Hence, employers must be considerate of employees.

Some researchers considered it a subjective intrinsic motivational strategy (Forson et al., 2021). For example, Yamini et al. (2022) found that extroverts desire a considerate workplace environment, but introverts are less interested in a considerate workplace because they prefer working independently. Their study established that extroverts are more likely to be motivated by considerate workplaces than are introverts. Andreas (2022) diverges from many of these studies, as their research found that consideration only motivates knowledge workers. Zeng et al. (2022) stated that less skilled workers are not interested in consideration because they want a higher salary. This is similar to a study by Yamini et al. (2022), which concluded that consideration as a motivator is subjective. These findings corroborate McGregor's theory X and Y, where worker X is an economic worker less interested in consideration, and worker Y is a knowledge worker more interested in consideration.

In higher education, Mahoko (2023) shows that employees in a South African university are motivated by a considerate workplace. In Zimbabwe, Kanonge and Bussin (2021) concur that the lack of a considerate work environment can lead to a brain drain. However, these two studies focused on academic employees. This study closed the knowledge gap by determining the motivational strategies of multi-generational non-academic employees.

3.5.1.10 Status

Status is also an intrinsic motivational strategy that can be used to enhance employee performance. According to Tumi et al. (2022), employees want to have some influence on other employees. This resonates with Alsuwaidi et al. (2021), who argue that employees have an ego that needs to be fulfilled by being given status. Status is a feeling of being unique, different, powerful, and influential over other employees (Hitka et al., 2021). This explanation aligns with Xu et al.'s (2021) description of status as an intrinsic drive that makes employees feel superior to their colleagues or workmates. Morris et al. (2022) found that status is derived through comparison with other employees. This is also observed by Kotera et al. (2023), who report that status is gained by viewing oneself as better than others, which improves employee performance.

Status is the need to be superior to other employees (Siyal et al., 2021). Status as an intrinsic motivator stems from McClelland's theory of needs and is categorised under power (Hur et al., 2022). Abraham Maslow's higher-order needs imply status as an inherent motivational strategy (Kim et al., 2023). However, according to Herzberg's two-factor theory, status is not viewed as a motivational factor (Thant, 2023). Herzberg categorises status as a hygiene factor whose absence decreases job satisfaction but whose presence does not increase employee motivation (Saputri, 2024).

Status as an intrinsic motivational strategy has various and complex dimensions, as presented by empirical research on employee motivation. This is supported by Kotera et al. (2023), who view the status drive as complex to understand. Fishbach and Woolye (2022) view status using a control lens and encourage managers to design jobs that give employees some control over their colleagues. This is consistent with Siyal et al. (2021), who view the ability to command other employees as a significant dimension of employee status that triggers high performance. Influence is another essential status dimension (Novita et al., 2021). Employees feel they have status if they can influence their work colleagues (Zeng et al., 2022). This corroborates findings by Yousaf et al. (2022) that employees with status can persuade their workmates, subordinates, and superiors. Chen et al. (2022) categorise these employees as more potent than others. Supriyono and Susmonowati (2022) explain status as the perception of being wiser than others; therefore, the employee must share ideas, which should be considered.

Morris et al.'s (2022) study revealed that employees with a status drive are motivated by being clever, wiser, and more prosperous than others. In other words, they want to be unique and stand out. This is supported by Van den Broeck et al. (2021), who found that status drive leads to employees wishing to be viewed as more knowledgeable than others. Therefore, to meet this drive, employers need to credit these employees for their work (Yamini et al., 2022). Furthermore, employers must share their accomplishments with other employees to fulfill their status ego (Faraz et al., 2021). Regarding improving employee performance, the literature is awash with mixed feelings from researchers in different contexts. Karimi et al. (2022) opine that status drive as a motivator depends significantly on the context.

Few studies in Zimbabwe have investigated the nexus between status and motivation. Machibaya and Ndamba (2023) conducted a survey that revealed that job status motivates academic women. However, the results of their study cannot be generalised to multi-generational non-academic staff. Hence, this study contributed to filling this gap by investigating motivational strategies for multi-generational non-academic staff.

3.5.2 Extrinsic motivational strategies and performance

Another dimension of motivation critical to this study is extrinsic motivational strategies. According to Zeng et al. (2022), extrinsic motivational strategies involve improving employees' performance to attain a reward. This is supported by Van den Broeck et al. (2021), who state that extrinsic motivation strategies are motivators that are influenced by external sources. Indicators for extrinsic motivational strategies adopted for this study are extracted from the employee incentive profile because it has been tried and tested by researchers such as Yusuf (2021) and Astuti (2021). Extrinsic motivational strategies discussed below are rewards, recognition, job security, competition, and personal needs.

3.5.2.1 Rewards

Since time immemorial, rewards have been linked to employee motivation. Rewards are an extrinsic motivational strategy because the employee enhances their performance to be rewarded. According to studies by Sayed, Matloob, Shah, and Ahmed (2021), rewards offered by an organisation are the foundation of employee performance. This is reiterated by Haq, Qazi, Kamran, and Yosaf (2023), who view an enterprise's reward system as the key to employee motivation toward achieving a sustained competitive advantage in a challenging business environment. A reward is anything an organisation offers its employees in exchange for their labour (Din, Shahani & Baloch, 2021). Kwok, Watabe, and Ahmed (2021) concur with this explanation and argue that a reward is what employees get from their employer in exchange for their service, time, and effort. A reward is often confused with salary and/or pay (Okolie & Egbon, 2024). Rewards have many dimensions beyond employee salary (Novianti & Ramli, 2024). Nurhaeda, Maryadi, Salim, and Kitta (2024) state that rewards refer to all monetary, non-monetary, tangible, and intangible benefits given to employees by an employer.

Monetary benefits refer to salaries, bonuses, and allowances given to employees for the work they have done for an employer (Marleyna, Devie & Foedjiawati, 2022). Non-monetary rewards include promotion, training, flexible working arrangements, praise, certificates, and awards (Chen, 2023). Tangible rewards refer to material benefits given to employees by the employer for their efforts, and these include pay, allowances, awards, vehicles, and houses (Mardanova, 2021). Intangible rewards refer to non-material benefits given to employees by the organisation for their work (Mubeen & Alam, 2022). Usually, monetary benefits are formal because they are stated in the employment contract (Chan & Hooi, 2023). Non-monetary rewards such as training and development are not stated in the employment agreement and arise from the employee's psychological contract (Chantal, Manyange & Asuman, 2022a). Many researchers have investigated the reward strategy of motivation with all its dimensions, as does the current study.

Reward as a motivational strategy emanates from a plethora of motivational techniques. For example, in Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs, rewards are classified as motivators because they help employees get basic needs such as food, water, housing, and safety (Tumati & Al Yousfi, 2023). Therefore, according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, rewards are lower-order needs that should be met first for the employee to improve their performance (Kumari, Barkat Ali, Un Nisa, Khan & Abbas, 2021).

Rewards as motivators also stem from Skinner's reinforcement theory (Siswanto, Maulidiyah & Masyhuri, 2021). According to reinforcement theory, rewards can be used for behavior modification and should be presented to employees whenever they display the required behavior (Manzoor, Wei, & Asif, 2021). This is where the concept of performance management is borrowed from. The highest performers are given rewards so that they can consistently display these desired behaviors, so that these employees can generate a sustainable competitive advantage.

Adam's equity theory diverges from reinforcement theory and Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Equity theory shows that it is not the reward that motivates the employee but the perceived equity or fairness (Emmanuel & Nwuzor, 2021). Therefore, equity theory emphasises that organisations should grant fair rewards to improve employee performance. Herzberg's theory also diverges in its assumptions about rewards as motivation. Herzberg's two-factor theory categorises monetary rewards, such as pay, under hygiene factors that only reduce job dissatisfaction but do not increase employee motivation if present (Hariyanto & Haverina, 2021). However, the theory identifies non-monetary benefits such as responsibilities and achievement as rewards that motivate employees (Mazher, 2022).

Many studies, such as Nosike and Nosike (2022) and Venketsamy and Lew (2024), have been conducted on the nexus between rewards and employee performance, but diverging results have been generated. Nosike and Nosike (2022) found that non-monetary rewards significantly impact monetary motivation. Their observations were that non-monetary rewards are more permanent than financial rewards, therefore have a lasting impact on motivation. Employees in third-world countries are more concerned about money and survival (Alimawi & Muda, 2022). Lin, Shipton, Teng, Kitt, Do and Chadwick's (2022) study found that rewards can only motivate employees if tied to performance. Their analysis indicates that rewards generate high employee performance in organisations with performance management systems that tie rewards to performance. These findings are supported by Venketsamy and Lew (2024) who report that reward has an effect if communicated and linked to performance.

Chatiza et al. (2021) state that university staff are rewarded in Zimbabwe. This is because of economic turbulence (Majoni et al., 2023). However, no studies show the link between rewards and motivation of multi-generational non-academic staff, as the existing studies focused on academic staff. This study addresses this knowledge gap.

3.5.2.2 Recognition

Recognition is another extrinsic motivational strategy that employers can use to improve employee performance. According to Chantal, Manyange, and Asuman (2022b), recognition is an external motivator because employees work hard to get recognition. Numerous human capital management scholars have defined recognition in various complex ways (Kalogiannidis, 2022). Recognition acknowledges employees for meeting organisational goals and objectives (Christopher, Moses, Muhindo & Nturanabo, 2022). This definition resonates with Garai-Fodor, Varga, and Csiszárik-Kocsir's (2021) explanation that employee recognition is when employers appreciate employees for their hard work and effort. Driscoll (2022) believes recognition is constructive feedback to outstanding employees. According to Gist-Mackey, Piercy, and Bates (2024), recognition is when an organisation shows its employees that their hard work is not going in vain but is being noticed. Recognition as a motivational strategy is dynamic, complex, and has many dimensions, making it problematic to research and understand (Xu, Mussagulova, Chen, & Kuo, 2023).

Six features of employee recognition can generate improved employee performance. The first two features are that recognition should be sincere. In other words, the supervisor should have no hidden agenda when recognising the employee. Haq et al. (2023) state that recognition should be immediate and offered immediately when the employees reach the performance milestones. The authors found that recognition should always be favorable to yield high employee performance. Lin Ambrosius (2022) states that recognition should be spontaneous and have no defined time frame. This is related to recognition being immediate when employees do excellent work. Mazher's (2022) investigation also shows that recognition for being effective should be personalised. In a nutshell, recognition should be directed to the employees who have displayed outstanding behavior at the workplace.

There are four dimensions of recognition. The first dimension is that recognition can be formal or informal. Zeng et al. (2022) observe that formal recognition is the one spelled out, and there are criteria or standards that an employee has to meet to be recognised. Formal recognition is a ritual and is embedded in company culture and policies. Mardanov (2021) believes that formal recognition significantly improves employee performance by making recognition transparent and fair. This aligns with Adam's equity theory of motivation, which states that recognition should be just, fair, and equitable. Morris et al. (2022) found that recognition can be informal when employers give low-cost awards immediately after an employee reaches a milestone. Furthermore, another dimension of recognition is that it can be granted publicly or privately. Lee et al. (2022) found that public recognition is a significant motivation as employees want to be elevated in front of others. This is in line with Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, which states that workers have self-esteem needs that must be filled by their employer (Resubun et al., 2022). Furthermore, recognition can be collective or individual (Yusuf, 2021). Collective recognition is an appreciation of a team or department for hard work. When tasks are done collectively, separating an individual's efforts is hard. This type of recognition is key in Africa, where collective culture dominates (Astuti, 2021). Individual recognition is when appreciation is directed to one employee. This is essential in positions where tasks are done individually (Aljumah, 2023). Jiminez and Didon (2017) posit that individual recognition is more suitable in Western countries where the dominant culture is individualism. Furthermore, Nilasari et al. (2021) established that recognition can be monetary or non-monetary. Monetary recognition is appreciating employees through bonuses, high salaries, and allowances. This is vital in less economically developed countries to cushion employees against high inflation (Karaferis et al., 2022). Non-monetary recognition is employee appreciation with other means that do not involve money. Yusuf (2021) states that non-monetary recognition is essential because it is more permanent than monetary recognition.

Three categories of employee recognition increase employee motivation (in less economically developed countries to cushion employees against high inflation (Karaferis et al., 2022). The first category of employee recognition is no-cost recognition, which includes a verbal thank-you message, praise, and a certificate of achievement. According to Grabowski et al. (2021), a supervisor can offer this type of recognition on a day-to-day basis when employees achieve their daily milestones. Akosile and Ekemen (2022) also identified that recognition can be of low cost. Low-cost recognition includes providing mugs and t-shirts with the company logo, paying employee fees for professional courses, breakfast, lunch, or dinner with the manager, and giving a day off to the individual (Tantular & Fauzi, 2023). Li et al. (2023) assert that low-cost recognition is more suitable for informal recognition. Furthermore, Lee et al. (2022) assert that high-cost recognition strategies include a promotion, pay rise, organisation party, paid holiday, and fees for an international professional certificate. Mulyadi et al. (2023) report that high-cost recognition is more suitable for formal recognition. Mardanov (2021) notes that despite recognition ranging from low-cost to high cost, many employers do not recognise their employees.

3.5.2.3 Job security

Job security is another complex extrinsic motivational strategy organisations use to increase employee performance. Job security is categorised by Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs under safety needs (Soliman & Altabtai, 2023). This means that job security is a basic need that needs to be fulfilled first to improve employee performance (Alase & Akinbo, 2021). However, Herzberg's two-factor theory does not classify job security as a motivator but as a hygiene factor (Bushi, 2021). This means that the presence of job security reduces job dissatisfaction but does not increase employee motivation (Wang, Ahmad, Arshad, Yin, Ahmed & Ali, 2021). Nonetheless, this study adopts job security as an extrinsic motivator because many studies show a positive and significant nexus between job security and improved employee performance (Aman-Ullah, Aziz, Ibrahim, Mehmood, & Abdullah Abbas, 2022). Long, Tu, Wang and Jiang (2022) define job security as an assurance that an employee will occupy the job longer. This is similar to the explanation offered by Ali, Alam, Noreen, Anwar, Qazi, and Hussain (2021), who state that job security guarantees that an employee can occupy the job for extended periods. Job insecurity refers to perceptions and beliefs by an employee that they will soon lose their job (Kaferis et al., 2022). Irawati and Farradia (2021) found that employees experience adverse effects from job insecurity. Employees with job insecurity are always in the job market looking for jobs and will not be engaged and fully committed to the company (Machova, Zsigmond, Zsigmondova & Seben, 2022). This results in poor work performance, threatening an organisation's survival. Hence, Hur (2022) states that it is essential that employees have job security for an organisation to achieve a sustained competitive advantage. Zafar, Sarwar, Zafar, and Sheeraz (2021) posit that when employees do not have enough money to motivate them, they can be alternatively motivated by providing job security.

Job security is important to employees, as labour laws cover them. Most labour laws worldwide protect employees and force employers to make their employees permanent (Khan et al., 2021). However, due to the global economic recession, organisations sacrifice their employees rather than closing the whole organisation (Le, Aquino, Truc, Si & My, 2021). There are high unemployment rates worldwide, and once an employee loses their job, it is not easy to get one again (Alkhalifa, Nawaz & Sawaya, 2024). Therefore, job security is essential and is at the heart of employee motivation (Bushi, 2021). Employees want to stay in their jobs to cater to their families' needs (Kaferis et al., 2022).

Machova et al. (2022) state that having a job motivates employees in poor countries because most people do not have jobs. Ali et al. (2021) report that job security is an essential motivator for unskilled employees, as they do not have professions. Job security does not motivate skilled professionals, as their skills are in high demand in developed countries. Wang et al. (2021) submit that employees with responsibility and families value job security more than other employees.

3.5.2.4 Competition

Employers use competition as a key extrinsic motivational strategy to enhance employee performance. Hiam (2003) indicates that employee competition has been a growing trend in many organisations. This is substantiated by studies by Singh and Singh (2023), which claim that many managers believe employee competition is key to worker motivation. Employee competition occurs when workers view each other as competitors and want to outdo one another regarding work performance (Oke, 2022). In some organisations, the best performer among employees is given a prize (Cai et al., 2021). Employee competition means there will be a loser and a winner at the end of the day (Uka & Pendi, 2024). This corroborates Lazear and Rosen's tournament theory of motivation (Bourg & Gourguet, 2023). According to tournament theory, employees are made to compete, ranked according to their performance, and the best performers are given prizes (Shenkman et al., 2022). Employees' desire to compete is inherent (Ismail et al., 2021). Regardless, competition is categorised as an extrinsic motivational strategy because the employees work due to the outside influence of other employees (Banks, Whelpley, Crawford, O’Boyle & Kepes, 2021). Given this view, the current study also categorised competition as an extrinsic motivational strategy.

Researchers have praised and criticised competition. Some researchers have found that competition positively and significantly affects employee motivation (Kusnanto, Amelia, & Yulianti, 2024). Employees who compete against each other become determined and committed to their work, increasing their morale (Bognanno, 2023). Kim and Jang (2023) believe that employees who compete with one another go beyond working hours to outdo other employees. Organisations with employee competition have a sustainable competitive advantage with improved performance levels (Bertheau, 2021). Hong, Jeon, and Lee (2023) state that not all competitions are productive, as some can be unhealthy. There are two dimensions of employee performance: healthy and harmful. Healthy competition leads to employee motivation, high performance levels, organisational profitability, and survival (Banks et al., 2021). Research conducted by Hong et al. (2023) recommends that organisations manage employee competition to be healthy. Furthermore, employee competition brings excitement and vibrancy to an organisation (Shenkman et al., 2022). Hence, healthy employee competition is a key extrinsic motivational strategy.

Unhealthy competition amongst staff can have far-reaching repercussions for the organisation and its employees. Unhealthy competition can lead to serious employee conflicts, disrupting productivity (Bourg & Gouguet, 2023). Bertheau (2021) states that staff competition can lead to anti-social behavior within the organisation. This is corroborated by the study by Banks et al. (2021), which found that employee competition leads to selfishness and unethical behavior. Employees who compete cannot share ideas and help each other (Hong et al., 2023). Unhealthy staff competition sabotages and destroys employee relationships (Kusnanto et al., 2024). Banks et al. (2021) believe that competition as a motivational strategy should be the last resort for managers, given its negative consequences. This is supported by Hong et al. (2023), who posit that organisations should be extra careful when using competition to motivate their staff. Competition can be stressful and result in employees working longer hours to be the best performers, which can have negative consequences, such as occupational health and safety accidents (Kim & Jang, 2023).

Competition as a motivational strategy depends on the context and nature of the job. Banks et al. (2021) show that competition can only be used in specific jobs. Competition can be a disaster in tasks relying on teamwork (Kim & Jang, 2023). These jobs are usually at the base of the company organogram or hierarchy (Kaferis et al., 2022). However, as we progress to the top of the organisation's hierarchy, some tasks require independence, and this is where the competition strategy helps motivate and improve employee performance (Bertheau, 2023). Hong et al. (2023) are at pains to encourage managers to always understand the contexts and nature of jobs before initiating the competition motivational strategy. This resonates with Kusnanto et al.'s (2024) report that management should never forget that the competition's goal is to improve employee performance, not reduce performance levels.

3.5.2.5 Personal needs

Another motivational strategy that has improved employee performance is catering to employees' needs. The employee incentive profile adopts this strategy, based on Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Niyiwag et al., 2019). This is substantiated by Patel et al. (2023), who opine that personal needs are used synonymously with Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Personal needs are complex and have many dimensions (Yang, 2024). Rojas et al. (2023) identify two dimensions of personal needs: individual and family. Family needs include the drive to have employees' dependents catered for their health, school fees, food, clothing, and shelter (Fu, 2024). Usually, the ability of an employee to cater for family needs depends on their salary (Peng, Luo, Tan, Jiang, Yin, & Yan, 2024). However, some organisations provide their employees' dependents with school fees, health insurance, and funeral coverage (Boston-Leary, Alexander & Davis, 2024). Many studies have examined the nexus between family needs and employee motivation (Chen et al., 2024). Fjendbo (2021) found that catering to employee family needs reduces employee stress and enhances motivation and productivity. These claims are substantiated by Cui et al. (2021), who found that providing for an employee's family generates employee commitment and can be a great motivator. Yang et al. (2023) note that this strategy works for employees with big families, while Lee and Sims (2023) state that this strategy makes youthful employees with smaller families less likely to be motivated. Zhai et al. (2023) make similar observations that in India, where employees have larger families, they want their employers to cater to the needs of their dependents. In the same spirit, Niati et al. (2021) note that this strategy is less effective in Western nations as most employees have smaller families.

Fu (2024) states that individual needs relate to salary. Employees' wages help provide basic needs such as water, food, and shelter (Anuya et al., 2023). The salary should be significant enough to cover employees' basic needs (Altymurat et al., 2021). Chen et al. (2024) posit that salaries should cushion employees against high prices of essential commodities in poor nations with hyperinflation. Dixit et al. (2023) support this and note that employees in less economically developed nations are motivated by salaries that enable them to afford basic amenities. However, this is not the case when encouraging employees in developed countries (Griffin et al., 2023). According to Lee and Sims (2023), Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs spells out dimensions of employee needs: physiological needs, safety needs, love and belonging needs, esteem needs, and self-actualisation. Organisations can provide ventilation, lighting, and breaks to satisfy employees' physiological needs (Fjendbo, 2021). This is in line with the Hawthorne studies by Elton Mayo, which found that improving lighting and ventilation and giving employees frequent breaks motivates them (Rumaizi et al., 2023). Furthermore, providing for occupational health and safety also improves employee performance (Zhai et al., 2020). This aligns with findings by Yang (2024) that the provision of helmets, gas masks, and other necessary personal protective equipment in organisations motivates employees. Employers can also provide their employees with leisure centers and sporting facilities to fulfill their belonging and love needs (Zhou, 2024). This is substantiated by Cui et al. (2021), who found that employees want to mingle and belong to a particular group.

The other category of personal needs is self-actualisation (Hussain, 2023). This is a drive or need to use one’s maximum potential, such as sharing one's ideas (Niati et al., 2021). This is a big motivational factor for senior organisational executives (Fu, 2024). This is corroborated by Irawati and Farradia (2021) who believe that senior management executives want to influence policy and decision-making, and granting them these powers makes them more motivated. This is not true with lower-level employees at the organisational hierarchy's base (Cui et al., 2021). Employers should be cautious when using personal needs as a motivational strategy, reporting that some needs can motivate but others cannot (Zhou, 2024). Herzberg’s two-factor theory shows that personal needs such as job security, salaries, and shelter, are hygiene factors whose presence only reduces job dissatisfaction but cannot motivate. Despite these criticisms, personal needs have been used in the long term as motivational strategies for many successful organisations.

3.6 MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR GENERATION X EMPLOYEES

Research on Generation X's motivation has shown multiple strategies to motivate this group of employees. Some researchers, such as Mahmoud et al. (2021a), have shown that Generation X employees are predominantly motivated extrinsically. This is also indicated by Rank and Contreras (2021) who elaborate that intrinsic factors may be necessary for job satisfaction rather than motivation. One factor that motivates Generation X employees is salary (Lee et al., 2022). Generation X employees prefer financial rewards because they allow them to meet their personal needs, including those of their families (Setiyano et al., 2019). Setiyani, Djumarno, Riyanto and Nawangsari (2019) expand this strategy to financial benefits. This means that Generation X employees are motivated by salaries, commissions, bonuses, and allowances. This also includes indirect pay that covers medical and retirement benefits. This is substantiated by Lee et al. (2022),who express that some Generation X employees are about to retire and are interested in retirement plans.

Apart from financial benefits, Generation X is interested in job security (Hee & Rhung, 2019). Job security has become important for Generation X employees because of the rise in technologies and artificial intelligence (Lee et al., 2022). Therefore, they expect job stability to be offered by their employers. Furthermore, Generation X are also motivated by loyalty (Mahmoud et al., 2021b). These employees stay with one employer longer than Generations Y and Z (Setiyan et al., 2019). These employees expect formal recognition for their loyalty. To motivate them, employers must offer them long-term service awards and any form of formal appreciation (Valenti, 2019). In addition, Generation X employees are motivated by collaboration (Oksa, Saari, Kaakinen, & Oksanen, 2021). They want to work with others while valuing their independence (Chala et al., 2022). In addition, Generation X workers prefer formal employer feedback (Almoud & Rjoub, 2020). This feedback alerts them to improvements they need to work on.

However, some studies have shown that Generation X employees are motivated intrinsically. For example, Evans (2023) stresses that they also want personal growth. Organisations fund their training and development so that they have career growth (Lee et al., 2022). In addition, they want a promotion that fulfils their need for self-esteem by allowing them to acquire a better status (Hee & Rhung, 2019). Furthermore, they also need job autonomy and excitement, but not at the level of Generation Y and Z employees (Oksa et al., 2021). According to Setiyani et al. (2019), Generation X employees value achievements, but must be formal. Furthermore, they also want self-reliance and independence (Valenti, 2019). As many researchers have shown, what motivates Generation X remains a deeply contested topic, and this study helps to add knowledge to this debate.

3.7 MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR GENERATION Y EMPLOYEES

Studies show that Generation Y employees are motivated differently than Generation X and Z employees, though there are some fundamental similarities (Chala et al., 2022). Unlike Generation Z, Generation Y employees have been found to prefer both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Hassan et al., 2019). They are similar to Generation X because they also want competitive salaries to meet their personal needs (Bussin, Serumaga-Zake & Mohamed-Padayachee, 2019). Another extrinsic motivator for Generation Y is recognition (Lee et al., 2022). However, unlike Generation X employees, Generation Y employees prefer informal recognition. The recognition does not have to be formal. In other words, they prefer friendly praise or acknowledgment. Fero and Dokoupilova (2019) found that Generation Y workers are motivated by feedback. Hassan et al. (2023) elaborated on this, submitting that the feedback must be constructive and instant.

Another external motivational strategy for Generation Y staff is collaboration (Hee & Rhung, 2019). This resonates with findings by Younas and Waseem (2020) that they tend to prefer teamwork and to network with others. This is substantiated by Torsello (2019), who states that collaboration allows Generation Y employees to have an open dialogue. Furthermore, Generation Y expects to be provided with training (Kong, Okumus & Bu, 2020). This training should be travel (Hitka, Rozsa, Potkany & Lizbetinova, 2019). This means that they prefer adventurous training outside the organisation's premises. In addition, Generation Y employees are motivated by work-life balance and the provision of flexible work arrangements (Chala et al., 2022). This is supported by Almoud and Rjoub (2020), who posit that initiatives such as remote work enthuse Generation Y employees. Another essential extrinsic motivator for Generation Y workers is the provision of coaching (Bussin et al., 2019). This aligns with a study by Kong et al. (2020) that shows that these employees value coaching and mentorship. This is important to them because it leads to promotion, another key motivator for them (Hassan et al., 2019).

However, apart from extrinsic motivators, Generation Y employees are also motivated by intrinsic factors (Oksa et al., 2021). They are motivated by purpose and meaningful work (Lee et al., 2022). Torsello (2019) subscribes to this view and asserts that these employees want their efforts to contribute to the overall organisational objectives. They also want their job exciting (Younas & Waseem, 2020). This is elaborated by Kong et al. (2020), who found that exciting, challenging, and complex tasks enthuse Generation Y employees. Furthermore, they are motivated by autonomy, as they want to be involved in decision-making that affects them and their work (Bussin et al., 2019). Kong et al. (2020) state that Generation Y employees are achievement-oriented. The only difference they have with Generation X employees is that they appreciate informal achievements. Since research has elaborated on some factors that motivate Generation Y employees, researchers such as Hitka et al. (2019) posit that this area needs further study, as it is often contested.

3.8 MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR GENERATION Z EMPLOYEES

Research has shown that Generation Z employees are motivated differently from Generation X and Y (Kirchmayer and Fratricova, 2020). Regarding extrinsic motivation, Generation Z employees prefer being provided with technological resources (Racolta-Paina & Irini, 2021). They want resources to connect to the internet and social media. In addition, Gabrielova and Buchko (2021) state that Generation Z workers prefer instant feedback and recognition. The input has to be regular and quick. In terms of promotion, they want to climb the ladder very quickly (Ali, Dogan, Chen, Cobanoglu and Limayem, 2023). They are motivated by diverse and inclusive organisations (Goh & Baum, 2021). This is substantiated by Nabahani and Riyanto (2020), who found that Generation Z employees value differences and want a work environment that is equitable and supportive. Furthermore, they are interested in work-life balance because they are more concerned about their mental health and well-being (Acheampong, 2021). Hence, it is concluded by Waworuntu, Kainde, and Mandagi (2022) that these employees want compressed work weeks and remote work.

Goh and Jie (2019) demonstrate that Generation Z employees prioritise skill-building over job titles. They want employers who invest in their skills to make them tech-savvy. In addition, Ahmad et al. (2023) show that Generation Z wants social connectivity. They want to collaborate and network with the broader community through the internet. In addition, research by Leslie, Anderson, Bickham, Horman, Overly, Gentry, Callahan, and King (2021) elaborates that Generation Z employees are motivated by authenticity. These employees want their superiors, workmates, and subordinates to be authentic and transparent when dealing with them (Gabriela & Buchko, 2021).

Generation Z is intrinsically motivated (Leslie et al., 2021). For example, Chillakuri (2020) shows that these employees are motivated by job purpose. They want organisations to have a clear vision, mission, and goals, which should be linked to their jobs (Titko, Svirina, Skvarciany & Shina, 2020). According to Gaidhana, Arora, and Sharma (2019), they are motivated when their jobs offer them freedom. In other words, they want autonomy to be creative and innovative (Achmad, Noermijati, Rofiaty & Irawanto, 2023). They want to control their work in terms of how they can do tasks using technology. In addition, Titko et al. (2020) indicate that Generation Y workers are motivated by challenging work. This is supported by Acheampong (2021), who states that these employees want complex tasks so that they are constantly engaged in problem-solving. However, the motivation of Generation Z employees remains problematic, hence it has generated interest among researchers (Goh & Jie, 2019). In Zimbabwe, the motivation of Generation Z employees, particularly in universities, remains underexplored.

3.9 EXISTING MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES IN UNIVERSITIES IN ZIMBABWE

Research in Zimbabwean universities demonstrates that universities in Zimbabwe use both extrinsic and intrinsic motivational strategies (Mushibwe & Simuka, 2021). Hence, these strategies are discussed separately in the next section.

3.9.1 Extrinsic motivational strategies in universities in Zimbabwe

In Zimbabwe, various studies have been conducted on motivation in universities. Researchers have demonstrated that extrinsic motivation is vital in universities to motivate non-academic staff (Makumbe & Washaya, 2022). This is corroborated by Chikukwa et al. (2022), who demonstrate a positive correlation between extrinsic motivation and the performance of non-academic staff. Chatiza et al. (2021) observe that salaries are a significant source of motivation in universities in Zimbabwe. This is substantiated by Chigaga (2024), who states that financial benefits are essential motivators in Zimbabwean universities. The country has economic challenges, and employees need a financial cushion against the economy (Chinyamurindi & Tsvangirai, 2019). Hence, salaries, indirect pay, bonuses, commissions, and allowances are current extrinsic strategies used to motivate employees in Zimbabwe. However, the financial rewards are not competitive. This is also supported by Kanonge and Bussin (2022), who state that academics leave Zimbabwean universities mainly due to low remuneration. However, university studies have shown that salary is the primary extrinsic motivational strategy in universities in Zimbabwe (Mushibwe & Simuka, 2021).

Job security is another extrinsic motivational strategy used in universities in Zimbabwe. (Nenguwo, 2023). This is important because in Zimbabwe, there is a high level of unemployment, and people are motivated by having job security (Makumbe & Washaya, 2022). Furthermore, social relations are also used to motivate non-academic staff in universities in Zimbabwe (Kanonge & Bussin, 2022). This is because Zimbabwe has a collective culture, and people are interested in having social relations with their superiors, work colleagues, and subordinates (Mutage & Dewah, 2021). Leadership is another essential university factor (Chatiza et al., 2021). The way leadership treats employees can make or break them. Leadership styles used in universities are laissez-faire and strategically positioned to motivate employees (Nenguwo, 2023). Furthermore, promotion is used to motivate non-academic staff in universities in Zimbabwe (Chinyamurindi & Tsvangirai, 2019). Promotion is essential because it comes with a salary increase and is a form of appreciation for hard work, determination, and loyalty (Kanonge & Bussin, 2022). Other extrinsic motivational strategies in universities in Zimbabwe are feedback and work-life balance (Makumbe & Washay, 2022). Researchers have shown that extrinsic motivation increases its impact on performance in universities in Zimbabwe when intrinsic motivation is present (Nenguwo, 2023). Chatiza et al. (2021) substantiate this, who submit that universities in Zimbabwe use a cross-pollination of motivational strategies, with some being extrinsic and others being inherently intrinsic. Hence, the following section discusses intrinsic motivational strategies used in universities in Zimbabwe for non-academic staff.

3.9.2 Intrinsic motivational strategies in universities in Zimbabwe

Studies have shown that intrinsic motivational strategies are used in universities in Zimbabwe. Nenguwo (2023) demonstrated that intrinsic motivation positively correlates with employee performance in Zimbabwe. One of the inherent motivations used in universities in Zimbabwe is empowerment (Chatiza et al., 2021). Mutage and Dewah (2021) found that higher education institutions in Zimbabwe use job autonomy to motivate employees. Employees are motivated when they are empowered to make decisions related to their jobs. Majoni et al. (2023) add that, on top of autonomy, excitement is used to motivate staff in universities in Zimbabwe. This is substantiated by Chikukwa et al. (2022), who found that the design of jobs in universities in Zimbabwe aims to make the job exciting to motivate employees. Furthermore, personal growth motivates employees in Zimbabwe (Makumbe, 2022). The higher education jobs in Zimbabwe allow the employees to grow in their skill set and experience (Chigaga, 2024). Employees are motivated by personal growth in universities (Kanonge & Bussin, 2022).

Universities in Zimbabwe offer employees challenging and complex tasks to motivate them (Nenguwo, 2023). This is substantiated by Chinyamurindi and Tsvangirai (2019), who found that complex and less simple tasks motivate staff in colleges and universities in Zimbabwe. Furthermore, Makumbe (2022) states that some universities have resorted to designing jobs to give them meaning and purpose. The jobs available in universities are linked to the National Development Strategy of Zimbabwe (Vision 2030). This is a mechanism to motivate employees through purpose and motivation. Furthermore, responsibility and status are also used by universities to generate staff motivation (Mushibwe & Simuka, 2021). This is supported by Chigaga (2024), who points out that university employees enjoy additional responsibility, which improves their status. As much as universities in Zimbabwe use intrinsic motivational strategies, their value in enhancing performance remains controversial. Because of economic challenges in Zimbabwe, extrinsic motivation is gaining ground (Chigaga, 2024). These studies have focused on the motivation of academic employees, so there is a knowledge gap regarding the intrinsic motivation of non-academic employees. The other problematic issue is that their studies have elaborated on motivation without considering a multi-generational workforce. Lastly, their studies have focused on other universities, not the ZOU. This has resulted in a knowledge gap, which necessitates this research.

3.10 CHALLENGES IN MOTIVATING EMPLOYEES

Managers face various and complex challenges in motivating employees. Motivation is complex and requires managers to be sober-minded when approaching this subject (Khan et al., 2021). Researchers have presented many challenges managers face in motivating employees (Le et al., 2021). Some of these challenges are, but are not limited to, diversity of employees, economic challenges, changes in labour laws, lack of top management support, and dynamism of motivation (Alase & Akinbo, 2021). These challenges are fully explored in this section.

3.10.1 Employee diversity

Today's workplace is made up of a diverse workforce. Kunze, Boehm, and Bruch (2021) state that a single employer accommodates employees from numerous backgrounds. Du, Ma, and Lin (2021) also support this, who believe that various labour laws have successfully compelled organisations to employ diverse employees. Employee diversity means plurality and diversity of interests and values (Croitoru, Florea, Ionescu, Robescu, Paschia, Uzlau & Man, 2022). Since employers use what employees cherish the most to motivate them, diversity of interests makes it difficult to develop a solid motivational framework. Chen and Cuervo (2022) show that it is easier for a company with a homogeneous workforce to establish a robust and holistic motivational strategy. Their study also indicates that multicultural employers are frequently faced with motivational issues. This is supported by Popoola and Fagbola (2023), who established that smaller firms with a less diverse workforce have more solid motivational strategies than large conglomerates with a complex and diverse workforce. Rampen, Pangemanan, and Mandagi (2023) believe that it is essential to discuss diversity challenges in light of the specific differences among employees. Some of these differences are gender, culture, religion, the status of employment, and generational differences (Chen & Cuervo, 2022; Rampen et al., 2023). These differences are fully explored in the sections below.

3.10.1.1 Gender

Various researchers have shown that there are differences in terms of what motivates women and men. Edgar, Blaker, and Everett (2021a) state that the socially ascribed roles of males and females influence what motivates them. Women are motivated by flexible work arrangements and work-life balance (Anakpo et al., 2023). This is in line with Hora, Lemoine, Xu, and Shalley (2021), who found that women are motivated by flexible work arrangements because they are more concerned with their families (children, dependents, and spouses). Men scored low on flexible work arrangements (Chen et al., 2021). Women have an edge over men in terms of being motivated by affiliation (Drydakis, Paraskevopoulou & Bozani, 2023). Men are more motivated by power and achievement. A study by Edgar et al. (2021a) showed that women want a more joyful and engaging job than men. This is corroborated by Anakpo et al. (2023), who found that women scored more on happiness as a motivator than men. On the other hand, men tend to be motivated by recognition from workmates and superiors (Drydakis et al., 2023). High salaries have a more motivational impact on men than women (Anakpo et al., 2023). In addition, job enrichment substantially influences men more than women (Hora et al., 2021). Chen et al. (2021) found that men are highly motivated by competition and assertive roles. These differences in motivational preferences between the two genders challenge organisational management. It is hard for managers to blend the differences between male and female employees to develop a robust motivational strategy.

3.10.1.2 Culture

Another dimension of diversity that poses a challenge to management in motivating employees is cultural diversity. According to Ichdan (2024), many organisations are multicultural, which is problematic in motivating employees. Employees from collective cultures are highly motivated by teamwork, affiliation, love, and belonging (Ali & Anwar, 2021). On the other hand, employees belonging to an individualistic culture have esteem needs and want to compete with others (Wahjoedi, 2021). Employees from high power distance cultures are motivated by autocratic leadership styles and accumulation of status and power (Al-bawaia, Alshurideh, Obeidat & Masa'deh, 2022). However, employees whose culture has low power distance are motivated by self-determination, free regime, and equity (Zacharias, Rahawarin &

Yusriadi, 2021). Employees from high uncertainty-avoidant cultures are motivated by clear job rules, policies, and procedures (Sari, 2022). On the other hand, people from low uncertainty avoidance cultures are risk-takers and are motivated by complex tasks that require problem-solving (Anisya, Supriyanto & Ekowati, 2021).

People from highly masculine cultures are motivated by men in leadership positions, whereas those from feminist cultures are inspired by equity, fairness, and justice (Setyowati & Sofing, 2022). Employees from indulgent cultures are motivated by flexibility, free rein, freedom, and enjoyment (Dirwan, Rajindra, Farid, Mande, Nursiah & Supriadi, 2024). Company rules, regulations, and bureaucracy motivate employees from restrained cultures. People from short-term-oriented cultures are inspired by frequent celebrations of achieving short-term goals (Ichdahn, 2024). On the other hand, those from a long-term orientation are motivated by goals aligned with the organisation's longer-term objectives (Sari, 2022). The multiplicity of needs stemming from a multicultural workplace is confusing and makes it hard for the employer to motivate employees.

3.10.1.3 Religion

The multiplicity of religious beliefs in the workplace has also challenged motivating employees (Nwachukwu, Chládková, Agboga & Vu, 2021). According to Hassan et al. (2022), a person's life and direction are aligned with their religious beliefs. Hassi, Balambo, and Aboramadan (2021) corroborate this, asserting that employees' behavior and attitudes stem from their religious beliefs. Values and interests of employees are also cascaded from religion (Ongaro & Tantardini, 2024). There are many spiritual beliefs that employees adhere to, and these beliefs differ in terms of ethics and frameworks of prescribed lifestyle (Vo, Tuliao & Chen, 2022). These influence the motivational preferences of employees. For example, praying and worship times differ from one religion to another (Ongaro & Tantardini, 2024). Seventh-day Adventists and Jews are motivated by being allowed to rest and go to worship on Saturdays. On the other hand, Christians want to be permitted by their employers to relax and go to worship on Sundays, and Muslims want to do the same on Fridays. Buddhists and Hindus are motivated by self-actualisation and self-esteem because they are on a path to finding themselves. Hindus want to avoid challenging tasks because the central theme of the Schvetashatara Upanishad is miraculously escaping hardships and torment. Jews are motivated by company rules, clothing, shelter, a sense of belonging, and security, which are emphasised in the Pentateuch books. Christians value unity, togetherness, helping others, and sacrifice because these are taught in the Gospels. These diverging and converging beliefs make it difficult for an employer to develop one solid motivational strategy to improve employee performance (Faliza, Setiawan & Agustina, 2024).

3.10.1.4 Status of employment

The nature of jobs also determines what motivates the employee. An organisation comprises employees with differing statuses (Ali & Anwar, 2021). Some employees are on contract employment, and some are on probation. According to Ongera (2023), these employees are motivated by job security. This corroborates observations by Vatankha (2021) that giving a permanent job motivates employees in contract positions. However, job security has a low influence on employees' motivation for permanent employment, as these are more inspired by promotion and other factors (Kaferis et al., 2022). Knowledge workers who occupy line management up to top management positions are motivated by laissez-faire, delegation, job enlargement, and enrichment (Baqi & Indradewa, 2021). On the other hand, semi-skilled and unskilled employees at the base of the organisational hierarchy are motivated by occupational health and safety and salaries (Lohela-Karlsson, Jensen & Björklund, 2022). Diversity in employment status brings diverse motivational needs, which can challenge management in motivating employees.

3.10.1.5 Generational differences

Today's organisations have employees belonging to two or more generations (Mahmoud et al., 2021a). Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z are the most dominant generations in the workplace (Machova et al., 2022). Generation X employees are motivated by safety, money, and job security (Rank & Contreras, 2021). Millennials (Generation Y) were born in a unique environment and have distinct features from other generations (Oksa et al., 2021). Lu et al. (2023) state that they enjoy being on social media, even at work, to connect with virtual friends. This may be because they were born during the age of the Internet. Min et al. (2021) posit that this generation is self-confident and ambitious, although older generations interpret this attribute as selfish and egocentric. Garai-Fodor et al. (2021) believe millennials are a generation of optimists who bring high hopes to work, including expectations for quick career progression. However, he notes that as they grow up, they become pessimistic. Phuong and Takahashi (2021) highlight that Millennials are motivated by multitasking and being given autonomy to make decisions at work. Managers can thus take advantage of job enrichment and job enlargement strategies to inspire them to perform. Furthermore, Bhalla, Tiwari, and Chowdhary

(2021) argue that Millennials are more than money-oriented. This means that they prefer a work-life balance. They are interested in spending more time with relatives and friends than at work. However, they are also willing to work anytime and anywhere using technology. Good et al. (2022) state that Generation Y employees embrace cultural diversity and cooperate with co-employees. However, they do not hesitate to leave the employer if their expectations are unmet. In a nutshell, Millennials are a unique age group requiring unorthodox means of motivational strategies to harness their skills.

Generation Z has features that are unique to themselves as they were born in a digital age. Hence, their thinking differs from the generations preceding them (Leslie et al., 2021). According to Dutta and Mishra (2021), the iGeneration is an internet generation always glued to social media networks such as Facebook and Twitter. Acheampong (2021) observes that Generation Z is unafraid of change and uses the internet to seek solutions. Therefore, management should delegate tasks to them and allow them to innovate and solve problems at the corporate level. Raub et al. (2023) report that the iGeneration is interested in influencing rather than being influenced and sharing knowledge with other employees rather than being micro-managed. Dutta and Mishra (2021) posit that this generation is aggressive, not interested in careers, and lives for the present. In a nutshell, they are a brave generation interested in pleasure and not committed to long-lasting relations with the employer. All these attributes are unique and require tailor-made motivational strategies. These differences in motivational factors make it hard for management to motivate employees.

3.10.2 Economic challenges

Economic crisis is another major challenge in motivating employees (Tumi et al., 2022). A study by Hitka et al. (2021) shows that it is easier to encourage employees in stronger economies than in weaker economies. Organisations in struggling economies experience challenges in retaining and motivating their key staff (Ghani et al., 2022). This is mainly because the primary motivational strategy is basic employee salary (Uka & Prendi, 2021). During an economic recession characterised by hyperinflation, no matter the salary increment, it is generally not enough to cover the basic needs of employees (Amushila & Bussin, 2021). Muzam (2023) reiterates this by stating that where there is hyperinflation with prices of essential commodities changing two to three times a month, a basic salary ceases to motivate employees. Allowances such as hardship and transport allowances are of little benefit to employees in a hyper-inflation environment. Sypniewska, Baran, and Kłos (2023) note that companies operating in economically struggling nations need to review the salaries and conditions of their employees two or three times a month. This is because the wages keep losing value. In such an environment, no matter what employees' salaries are, they will be valueless as events overtake them.

Organisations in poor economies are struggling to survive. They operate at break-even levels, constantly faced with retrenchment and even company closure (Gorgenyi-Hegyes, Nathan & Fekete-Farkas, 2021). In other words, these organisations are bankrupt and cannot afford to adopt various motivational strategies (Saputra & Suharson, 2021). This resonates with Ali and Anwar (2021), who submit that many companies in less economically developed countries struggle with performance and profitability and cannot incentivise their employees. A company working without profits cannot afford to give its employees allowances, paid vacations, new equipment, and technologies (Norbu & Wetprasit, 2021). In a nutshell, motivational strategies become expensive and beyond the organisation's reach in a weak economy. It is hard for human resources executives to convince others to fund motivational strategies during economic hardship, as most companies cannot afford to invest in employee motivation.

Psychological burden is another attribute of a poor economy that frustrates employee motivation (Faulks, Song, Waiganjo, Obrenovic & Godinic, 2021). Tumi et al. (2022) state that employees are primarily stressed in a poor economy. They come to work worried about their household debts, children's school fees, rentals, and food (Uka & Prendi, 2021). This is because everything is spiraling in terms of price increases, and employees will be physically present at work but mentally absent (Ghani et al., 2022)—a psychological burden results in a bad workplace atmosphere. There will be more conflicts and more cases of subordination (Hitka et al., 2021). The work atmosphere will be toxic to the extent that it is hard to motivate employees. Another source of stress is work insecurities (Muzam, 2023). Most organisations are retrenching and closing in poor economies (Ali & Anwar, 2021). Thus, many employees will be worried about being retrenched. This is worsened by the fact that there is a high unemployment rate, and once one loses a job, it is hard to find one. This piles up the employees' psychological burden, which makes it hard for the organisation to motivate them. It is also hard for human resources executives to justify adopting motivational strategies, as other executives think high unemployment justifies low remuneration (Ghani et al., 2022). Furthermore, a poor economy produces a high labour turnover (Muzam, 2023). Key employees and knowledge workers will leave their jobs for greener pastures in economically stable countries (Faulks et al., 2021). This is consistent with findings by Uka and Prendi (2021) that professionals leave for Germany, Canada, the USA, the UK, and Australia during economic hardships. This frustrates the organisation's efforts to motivate employees as they keep changing.

3.10.3 Labour laws

Labour laws usually determine the financial and non-financial benefits organisations must offer employees. Red and Teng-Calleja (2021) state that organisations rely on labour laws to develop motivational strategies. Labour legislation aims to protect employees from their employers (Tang, Rasool, Khan, Khan, Khan & Azaz, 2021). Legislations such as the Employment Act, Collective Bargaining, and Minimum Wages Act allow employees to receive fair benefits (Villiers, 2021). The Minimum Wage Act specifies the threshold in terms of wages that employers should give their employees (Tsymbaliu & Shkoda, 2022). In Zimbabwe, various national employment councils are mandated to set minimum wages. However, some organisations are unwilling to surpass the stated conditions in the employment laws (Adeosun & Owolabi, 2023). The problem with labour law is that organisations or employers want to stick to the conditions stated by the Labour Act (Xu et al., 2022). This makes it hard for human resources practitioners to recommend to the top executives to improve on what is stated in the laws.

Another challenge emanating from labour laws is rigidity. Tien and Manh (2021) state that labour laws do not prescribe but force organisations to give employees specific benefits. These laws even specify non-financial benefits such as vacation leave, occasional leave, maternity leave, and other employee rights (Chhinzer, 2022). There is no flexibility on the employer's part in coming up with its motivational strategy. The organisation cannot determine what it wants to pay its employees. They cannot replace benefits in the Labour Act with those that motivate their workforce (Maqsoom, Musarat, Mubbasit, Alaloul, Ashraf, Rabbani & Shaheen, 2023). Employers can only add to what is in the labour laws, but cannot subtract from or replace it with what they think can better motivate their employees. Lee (2024) believes that labour laws bring rigidity, as it is hard for companies to develop their flexible motivational strategies, as they are expected to comply or face litigation. The rigidity of labour laws, national employment councils, and collective bargaining agreements obstruct employers from developing unique and effective motivational strategies. These labour laws usually standardise benefits according to the needs of employers and employees in the country (Tang et al., 2021). However, this does not reflect the unique contexts in different organisations that require different motivational strategies (Villiers, 2021).

Labour and employment laws are ever-changing (Xu et al., 2022). Interests and expectations of employees and employers change. Therefore, labour laws are changed regularly to suit these changes. A study by Baqi and Rhian (2021) found that labour laws are amended two or three times on average in five years. This is supported by Lee (2024), who states that many trends force changes in employment laws. These changes disrupt motivational strategies in different companies (Villiers, 2021), meaning that organisations must abandon their strategies and conform to what is directed by labour laws. Changes in labour laws are a significant challenge in motivating employees (Chhinzer, 2022; Tien & Manh, 2021). Lee (2024) found that labour law changes make motivating employees complex for most human resources professionals. Employers must develop comprehensive motivational strategies incorporating labour law requirements and employee needs (Maqsoom et al., 2023).

3.10.4 Lack of top management support

Various researchers show that lacking top management support is another obstacle to motivating employees (Welch & Brantmeier, 2021). Wuryani et al. (2021) state that top management is pivotal in motivation because they are the ones who approve policies and resources to channel toward employees. However, top executives often do not support their human resources managers in motivating employees (Han, 2022). According to research by Kalogiannidis (2021), top managers do not support motivational strategies because they want to stick to what is provided in labour laws, such as minimum wages. Dangol (2021) agrees and states that employers wish to have the lion's share of profits and give the remainder to the employees. They believe that labour is just like other factors of production, and there should be minimal investment in that direction (Forson et al., 2022). This has made top management resist motivational strategies, making organisations forking less money to invest in human capital (Hajiali et al., 2022). In other words, top executives view investing in human capital as the worst use of money (Arshad et al., 2021). This converges with an observation by Basalamah and As'ad (2021) that few managers view human resources as a source of competitive advantage. Labour is considered a means to generate profits, and there is inadequate investment for its needs and maintenance (Virgiawan et al., 2021).

There is a tendency for management to believe that money is the only motivator (Riyanto et al., 2021). According to Kamau and Kamara (2017), top executives resist other motivational strategies because they believe money is the only motivator. This aligns with McGregor's theory X, which states that employees dislike work and can only be motivated by money

(Aldabbas, Pinnington & Lahrech, 2023). However, in reality, employees can be enthused by other mechanisms, such as leadership style and delegation (Han, 2022). The challenge is that organisational leaders cling to this belief to the extent that they resist other mechanisms of motivating employees, as they view them as a waste of resources (Haryanto, 2021). As much as money is an essential part of the formal employment contract, management must know that many basic needs and expectations form part of the psychological contract (Aflah, Suharnomo, Mas'ud & Mursid, 2021). These needs are hidden and too important to be left out when developing motivational strategies (Ushakov & Shatila, 2021). Furthermore, top company executives believe one universal way motivates employees (Shalley, 2024). However, employees are not homogeneous but heterogeneous (Kumari et al., 2021). This means that what motivates one employee does not necessarily motivate the other. Top managers resist motivational strategies that are flexible and that have many dimensions because they believe that there is only one best way of motivating employees, which is money (Sabir, Ali, Majid, Sabir, Mehmood, Rehman & Nawaz, 2022). Han (2022) corroborates this, finding that companies used one strategy to motivate their diverse workforce. However, this is backward and primitive, as labour is dynamic, and employees have different needs that must be fulfilled.

In addition, top management believes motivation is intrinsic or extrinsic (Forson et al., 2022). They think that one cannot mix the two to motivate employees. Top executives believe that an employee's motivation and zeal come from within, so employees cannot be motivated externally (Dangol, 2021). By the same logic, top executives think that when one's motivation comes from external variables, one cannot be motivated internally (Shalley, 2024). This tendency makes top management resist motivational strategies that mix intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors (Han, 2022). However, humans are very complex (Kumari et al., 2021). An employee can be motivated by various factors, some being extrinsic and some being intrinsic (Sabir et al., 2022). It is recommended that top management should be forward-thinking and transformational and come to terms with an understanding that employees can be enthused by mixing extrinsic and intrinsic motivation (Haryanto, 2021). Most successful companies mix extrinsic and intrinsic motivational strategies. A motivational strategy is more influential when it mixes inherent and extrinsic motivations (Riyanto et al., 2021). Top management must understand this and stop frustrating human resources strategists from doing their jobs.

3.10.5 Dynamism of motivation

Motivation is not constant but highly dynamic (Edgar, Blaker & Everett, 2021b). What motivates an employee today may not motivate them tomorrow (Apascaritei & Elvira, 2022). The basic motivational strategy is salary, which constantly loses value (Ihemerez, Eyo-Udo, Egbokhaebho, Daraojimba, Ikwue & Nwankwo, 2023). In countries with hyperinflation today, employees may celebrate because of a pay rise, but tomorrow the figure will be valueless (Hajiali et al., 2022). Therefore, the salary must be increased to motivate employees (Wahyuni et al., 2023). These changes make it hard for employers and their management to motivate employees. This is also in line with Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. According to Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, once a need has been fulfilled, the same need can no longer be used to motivate the employee (Ichdan, 2024). There is a need for a higher order to enthuse the employee (Vermooten et al., 2021). For example, employees who are motivated by job security today focus on other issues such as promotion and freedom. This makes it difficult to motivate employees, as there is a need to revise and devise motivational strategies frequently.

Dust, Liu, Wang and Reina (2022) state that management should not be fixated on one motivational strategy, as employees' needs change regularly. This corresponds to Kumari et al. (2021), who submit that a motivational strategy has a timeline and expires. Once employees are used to it, it no longer inspires or drives employees to perform above expectations (Schade, Digutsch, Kleinsorge & Fan, 2021). Haris et al. (2023) recommend that human resources practitioners look for new employee needs and incorporate them into their motivational strategies. This is also consistent with findings by Zampetakis (2023) that employees have new needs daily, which should be detected by the organisation to be fulfilled as appropriate.

Changes in the political, economic, social, technological, ecological, and legal environment trigger changes in the needs of employees (Parker, Dawson, Van den Broeck, Sonnentag & Neal, 2021). For example, during a hyperinflation period, money may motivate employees (Siyal et al., 2021). This is because prices of essential commodities will increase left, right, and centre (Mulang, 2022). Employees will be more worried about their ability to afford crucial commodities such as food and clothing (Forson et al., 2021). The greatest need will be survival; hence, there will be a higher inclination to pay higher salaries. This line of debate is supported by a study conducted by Holtom and Darabi (2018), which found that no matter the level of employees in a bad economic environment, employees are motivated by higher salaries. The ecological environment also inspires changes in needs (Tao, Lee, Sun Li, & He, 2022).

Employees are motivated by basic needs such as housing, clothes, and food during disasters such as floods, volcanoes, earthquakes, and cyclones. This finding correlates with Tolici (2021), who found that providing for their basic needs is the best way to attract, retain, and motivate employees during natural disasters. An example of an ecological factor requiring motivation to be dynamic was the COVID-19 pandemic. During the COVID-19 pandemic, employees were encouraged by the COVID-19 allowance. Furthermore, employees needed work-from-home arrangements to avoid getting the virus. Technology is the most dynamic environment (Grant & Shandell, 2022). Technology results in employees having new needs. For example, newer inventions such as mobile phones and laptops motivated employees with cellphone allowances, data allowances, and company-provided internet (Abdul-Azeez, Ihechere & Idemudia, 2024; Emmanuel & Nwuzor, 2021). This poses a challenge as motivational strategies must be changed and reviewed frequently.

3.11 INTRINSIC MOTIVATION, MULTI-GENERATIONAL WORKFORCE AND PERFORMANCE

Scholars' observations on intrinsic motivation and performance among employees from different generations vary. Other researchers have established significant differences, while others have detected similarities. For example, Ioannis (2021) researched the motivation of Generations X and Y at a university in Cyprus and observed that intrinsic motivation enhances the performance of Generation Y more than it does for Generation X. This is substantiated by Mahmoud, Reisel, Fuxam and Mohr (2021b) who found Generations Y and Z to be more intrinsically motivated than Generation X. Their observation is that the younger the generation, the more intrinsically it is motivated. Kothari, Pingle, and Karani Mehta (2024) also state that the younger the generation, the more autonomy, challenging work, purpose, and excitement they want at work. This observation demonstrates that Generation Z has more intrinsic motivation than Generation Y, while Generation Y is more intrinsically motivated than Generation X.

However, some researchers have observed similarities in intrinsic motivation among all generations. For example, Nguyen (2022) observes that the desire for meaningful work is similar across all three generations. Chala et al. (2022) observe that Millennials and Generation Z have similar intrinsic motivators, requiring creativity, purpose, and excitement. These divergences in findings demonstrate the need for a study that provides a conclusion on this matter. The other challenge is the scant studies on the motivation of the multi-generational workforce in universities, and this study provides knowledge in this area.

3.12 EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION, MULTI-GENERATIONAL WORKFORCE AND PERFORMANCE

Researchers such as Jenei and Machova (2024) have made multiple observations on employees' extrinsic motivation and performance from different generations. There are two areas of debate: (1) the extent to which there are differences in levels of extrinsic motivation and (2) divergences on whether or not differences exist in the extrinsic motivators for each generation. A study by Jenei and Machova (2024) demonstrated differences in extrinsic motivation, concluding that older generations, such as Generation X, are positively impacted by extrinsic motivation. Their study shows that Generation X prefers structured and traditional leadership styles, while younger generations prefer being managed via flexible and laissez-faire leadership styles. Grenčíková et al. (2022) support this, stating that Generation Z wants online communication and can be bored by more formal communication. Their study also showed that remuneration is likely to have more of an impact on Generation X. Albrychiewicz-Słocińska (2022) has similar observations and found differences in extrinsic motivation amongst generations. Albrychiewicz-Słocińska (2022) showed that younger generations, such as Generation Z, are more likely to be motivated intrinsically and extrinsically. They prefer motivators such as working from home, which differs from what other generations prefer. Anastasiou (2021) shares similar sentiments and concludes that where Generation X is more motivated by salaries, Generation Y and Z are likely to be more motivated by recognition.

However, some scholars have found similarities in extrinsic motivation for the three generations. For example, Nguyen (2022) showed that all the employees are interested in salaries and external rewards. This is supported by Chala et al. (2022), who found that all employees want decent wages, a conflict-free environment, work-life balance, and promotion. This observation contrasts with other researchers' findings on differences in extrinsic motivation. Therefore, the topic of extrinsic motivation and the performance of employees in different generational cohorts is not a closed chapter. Hence, this study fills this knowledge gap, particularly amongst the multi-generational non-academic workforce, which many researchers have overlooked.

3.13 EXISTING FRAMEWORKS, MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES, AND PERFORMANCE

Many frameworks have been developed to explain the relationship between motivation and performance. This section discusses existing motivation frameworks.

3.13.1 Forson et al.'s employee motivation framework

Forson et al. (2021) developed a framework for motivation and performance for teachers in Ghana. They observe that performance is a function of both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Figure 3.2 shows their proposed motivational framework.

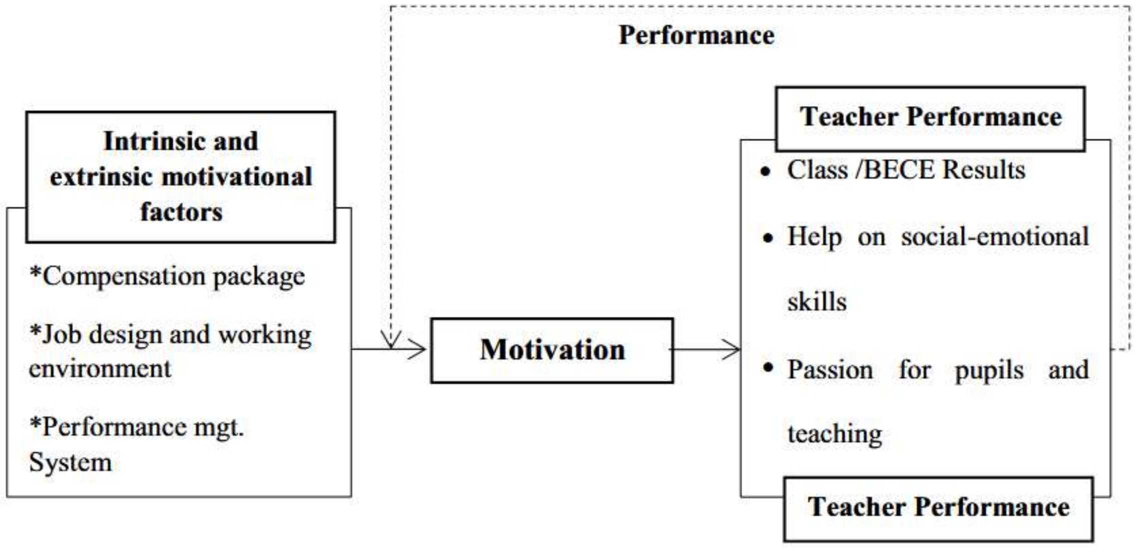

Figure 3.2: Forson et al.'s motivational framework
Source: Adapted from Forson et al. (2021)

According to their framework, three factors can be intrinsic or extrinsic and can motivate employees to perform. These factors are: (1) compensation package, (2) job design and working environment, and (3) performance management. Forson et al. (2021) state that the compensation package should be competitive and equitable for employees to be motivated. This is because employees go to work to get paid. In addition, the job design and work environment should be conducive, allow for autonomy, and be enjoyable. Furthermore, their framework shows that a fair and equitable performance management system has the potential to motivate employees. According to their framework, combining these three variables leads to enhanced performance. The framework is relevant for this study because it demonstrates that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors are essential in motivating employees. However, the framework by Forson et al. (2021) has limitations. The first challenge is that it focuses on schools and not universities. Second, their framework is based on the motivation and performance of teachers, while this study focuses on non-academic staff. Third, their framework does not address differences in generational cohorts. Finally, their framework was developed in Ghana, a country unique in its socio-economic context compared to Zimbabwe.

3.13.2 Chala et al.'s employee motivation framework

Chala et al. (2022) developed a framework for motivating Generation Y and Z employees in Ukraine. Figure 3.3 shows the employee motivation framework they developed.

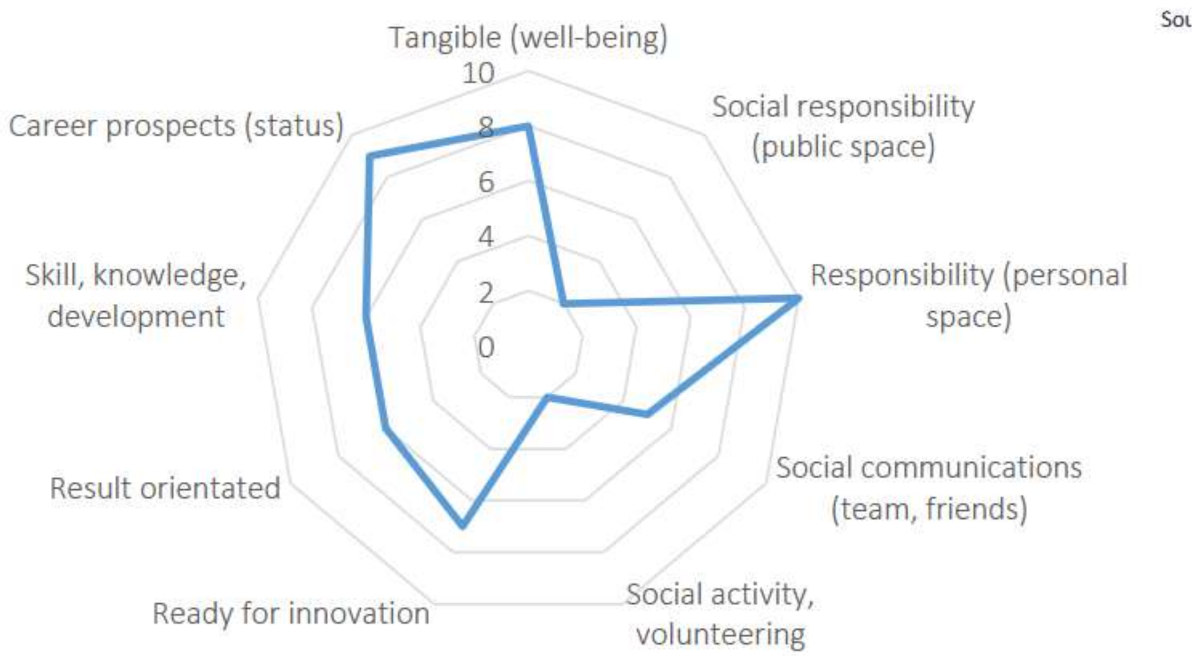

Figure 3.3: Chala et al.'s employee motivation framework
Source: Adapted from Chala et al. (2022)

Chala et al.'s (2022) employee motivation framework shows that employees are more motivated intrinsically. Their framework depicts nine intrinsic motivation factors influencing employees to perform: career prospects, skill, knowledge, development, result-oriented, ready for innovation, social activity and volunteering, social communications, responsibility, and well-being. Their employee motivation framework targets Generations Y and Z. They elaborate that the younger generations value status and creativity and are result-oriented. According to the framework, an employer who implements these motivational strategies is likely to enhance the performance of employees. However, the problem at hand is that their framework falls short. Chala et al.'s (2022) framework does not include Generation X, a key demographic among the non-academic staff at the ZOU. As much as the framework contributes knowledge on the motivational strategies of generations Y and Z, it leaves a knowledge gap regarding Generation X's motivation. Second, the Chala et al. (2022) framework focused on employees from various sectors, which excluded universities, therefore it may have only limited application to universities, which differ from other organisations. Last, their framework was developed in Ukraine, a country with a unique culture, and generalisations from their study may not apply in Zimbabwe.

3.13.3 Bussin et al.'s employee motivation framework

Another framework for employee motivation was developed by Bussin et al. (2019). Their framework was based on Generation Y employees in South Africa. The framework elaborates reward strategies and attraction strategies for Generation Y employees. Figure 3.4 shows the Bussin et al. (2019) employee motivation framework.

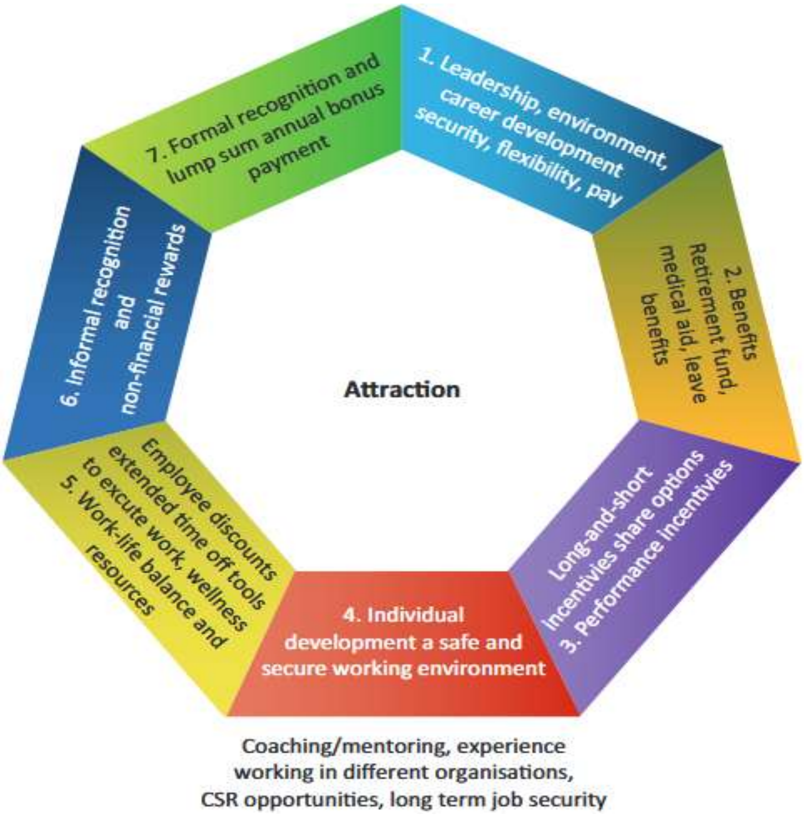

Figure 3.4: Bussin et al.'s employee motivation framework
Source: Adapted from Bussin et al. (2019)

According to Bussin et al. (2019), reward preferences for Generation Y employees are "(1) career development, (2) benefits, (3) remuneration, safety, and security, (4) resources, (5) social support, (6) safety and security and (7) career development and work-life". They ranked these seven rewards according to their importance as follows: "(1) social support and environment, (2) benefits, (3) performance incentives, (4) career and individual development, (5) work-life, (6) informal recognition, (7) remuneration and formal recognition, (8) traditional remuneration and (9) non-traditional remuneration" (Bussin et al., 2019). This means Generation Y employees value social support and the environment more than anything else. The framework is valuable, but it does not address many issues in this problem. First, their framework does not address the motivation of other generations, such as Generation X and Z, as their study focuses on Generation Y. Second, their study was conducted with industry experts and youth, thereby not involving non-academic staff. Last, their framework reflects what motivates employees, especially Generation Y, in South Africa, a country with a different socio-economic context from Zimbabwe.

3.13.4 Klesta et al.'s employee motivation framework

Another key employee motivation framework is one developed by Klesta, Korpula, and Grębosz-Krawczyk (2024). Their framework compares various motivation strategies across Generation X, Y, and Z in Poland's information and technology industry. Table 3.3 shows some of the employee motivation strategies they compared.

Table 3.3: Klesta et al.'s employee motivation framework

Motivation factor	Generation X	Generation Y	Generation Z
Finance (remuneration)	11	13	14
Growth possibility	7	12	10
Work-life balance	5	10	14
Leadership	5	6	6
Autonomy	3	10	12
Affiliation	7	4	0
Recognition	1	2	1
Stability of employment	16	1	4
Remote work possibility	0	1	4
Working conditions	3	2	1
Meaningfulness of performed work	2	2	1
Pleasure (of work)	0	0	0

Source: Klesta et al. (2024)

Klesta et al. (2024) compare Generations X, Y and Z regarding how they were motivated by 12 factors: (1) finance (remuneration), (2) growth possibility, (3) work-life balance, (4) leadership, (5) autonomy, (6) affiliation, (7) recognition, (8) stability of employment, (9) remote work possibility, (10) working conditions, (11) meaningfulness of performed work, and (12) pleasure (of work). Their framework shows that all employees, regardless of their generational cohort, were almost equally motivated by finance (remuneration). However, some differences exist. For example, their framework elaborates that Generation X valued job security (stability of employment), Generation Y valued growth possibility, and Generation Z preferred autonomy. This framework is essential because it explains motivational strategies for all three generations. However, the framework has shortcomings in terms of its context, which is dissimilar to this study's context. For example, they make their conclusions based on information about employees in Poland's information and technology sector. This context is different from a state university context in Zimbabwe, which has socio-cultural factors that may influence the motivation of a multi-generational workforce.

3.14 CONCLUSION

This chapter elaborates on the existing literature on motivational strategies for the performance of multi-generational employees. Firstly, the chapter showed that existing intrinsic motivational strategies are achievement, affiliation, self-expression, career growth, autonomy, excitement, purpose, responsibility, consideration, and status. Extrinsic motivational strategies include rewards, recognition, job security, competition, and personal needs.

Secondly, the chapter explored challenges in motivating a multi-generational non-academic workforce. Challenges discussed in this chapter were employee diversity, labour laws, lack of top management support, and dynamism of motivation.

Thirdly, the chapter discussed the relationship between motivation, a multi-generational workforce, and performance. The discussion showed that Generation Z is more intrinsically motivated than Generations X and Y. On the other hand, the literature review showed that Generation X is more intrinsically motivated than Generations Y and Z. Generation Y stands in the middle, as employees in this generational cohort have preferences for both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. The literature revealed knowledge gaps in the motivation of a multi-generational non-academic workforce, which inspired the undertaking of this research. Researchers have excluded the motivation of multi-generational non-academic staff in universities. Hence, this study was needed to increase knowledge on the motivation of multi-generational non-academic university staff. The next chapter elucidates the conceptual framework that was used in this study.

CHAPTER 4: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapters explored the theoretical framework and empirical literature of this research. This chapter develops a conceptual framework for this research. The chapter has four sections. The first section elaborates on the term conceptual framework. The second section examines the existing theoretical and empirical gaps. The third section develops the conceptual framework and associated hypotheses. Finally, the chapter discusses the practical contributions of the conceptual framework.

4.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A conceptual framework is a structured tool or model elaborating on concepts, variables, and relationships (Zhou et al., 2021). In a study, a conceptual framework shows how the independent and dependent variables are related (Koo, Kwon, Chung, & Kim, 2023). A conceptual framework demonstrates cause and effect, elaborating on which factor causes an impact on other factors, and outlines the consequences. According to Luft et al. (2022), a conceptual framework is usually in a diagram format so readers can quickly identify relationships. There are numerous benefits of a conceptual framework. Koo et al. (2023) state that conceptual frameworks provide clarity and focus for the study. Zhou et al. (2021) demonstrate that conceptual frameworks facilitate hypothesis development. Conceptual frameworks also help to link theory to practice. In this study, the theories that are used have shortcomings. For example, generational theory is critical in elaborating how generations differ regarding preferences. However, the theory does not explain what motivates these generational cohorts and how they are encouraged in the workplace. In contrast, motivational theories answer motivation-related questions but do not address generational differences.

4.3 THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL LITERATURE GAPS

This section explores the theoretical and empirical literature gaps that led to developing a conceptual framework that clarifies and elaborates the relationship between motivation, multi-generational workforce, and performance.

4.3.1 Theoretical gaps

4.3.1.1 Theory one

There are various gaps in the motivation of a multi-generational workforce, particularly for non-academic university staff. The theories elaborated in the previous chapter contribute immensely to motivation but do not address the three variables of this study: motivation, multi-generational workforce, and performance. For example, Maslow's hierarchy of needs demonstrates that employees are motivated by needs that are fulfilled hierarchically. However, Maslow's hierarchy of needs does not address employee motivation differences in different generational cohorts (Chen et al., 2024). Furthermore, Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory was based on a meta-analysis of people's motivational needs in a Western society. Maslow's seminal work was done in the United States during the mid-20th century (Mustafa et al., 2023). The theory reflects American culture in the mid-20th century and may have limited relevance to a multi-generational non-academic staff in Zimbabwe in the 2020s. Hence, there is a need to develop a conceptual framework that addresses the motivation of multi-generational non-academic staff.

4.3.1.2 Theory two

Herzberg's two-factor theory also has limited application in explaining the variables in this study. The two-factor theory only proposes motivators and satisfiers that employers can use to satisfy and motivate employees. Herzberg's seminal article of 1959, "The Motivation to Work," resulted from a study in the United States investigating 203 engineers and accountants (Hoque et al., 2021). The theory was critical in demonstrating that not all factors motivate employees because some are hygiene factors that only relate to job satisfaction. The significant gap associated with Herzberg's work and this study is that Herzberg focused on engineers and accountants and not universities (Dixit et al., 2023). This study looks at non-academic staff in a state university. Herzberg's work was conducted in the United States, a country with a different socio-cultural environment from Zimbabwe. Furthermore, Herzberg does not address generational differences and similarities in employee performance.

4.3.1.3 Theory three

Equity theory also has some limitations in explaining the relationships among the variables of this study. Adam's equity theory is critical because it demonstrates that employees value equity in rewards. However, the theory does not address differences and similarities in the motivation of multi-generational employees (Tavoletti et al., 2023). The equity theory was based on American culture, which is mainly individualistic (Hatfield et al., 2023). This study was based in Zimbabwe, where a collectivist culture exists. Some employees may value group equity over individualistic equity.

4.3.1.4 Theory four

Expectancy theory was also used to demonstrate the importance of expectancy fulfillment in staff motivation. The theory was essential because it reflects the process of motivation through expectations. The theory stresses extrinsic rewards over intrinsic rewards, yet the intrinsic rewards are integral to this research (Bushi, 2021). In addition, Vroom's expectancy theory aligns with individualist culture, whereas the Zimbabwean culture is collectivist; people may value group rewards over individual rewards (Gould, 2024). Furthermore, Vroom's expectancy theory does not address employee generational differences, a crucial aspect of this study.

4.3.1.5 Theory five

Another theory used to guide this study is the generational theory proposed by Howe and Strauss. The theory contributes to understanding the differences between employees from different generational cohorts. However, their theory is based on American society so that it might have little relevance to Zimbabwean society (White, 2019). Furthermore, Howe and Strauss's generational theory mainly applies to politics and culture (Barhate & Dirani, 2022). They do not directly address the variable of motivation. Hence, there is a need to develop a framework that addresses a multi-generational workforce, motivation, and performance.

4.3.2 Empirical literature gaps

Four key issues and research traditions on employee motivation have resulted in a knowledge gap on motivation, the multi-generational workforce, and performance. The first tradition is a tendency to research extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation separately. For example, Astuti et al. (2021) and Mulyadi et al. (2023) focus on extrinsic motivation only, whereas Ahmad et al.'s (2021) and Chen et al.'s (2022) studies are based on intrinsic motivation. This has resulted in a gap in a conceptual framework that addresses both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation.

The second tradition is focusing on motivation without considering generational cohorts. Most studies on employee motivation do not use a multi-generational workforce as a mediating variable. For example, Forson et al. (2021) only investigated the relationship between motivation and job performance. This is similar to the tradition of Kalogiannidis (2021) who studied employee motivation and organisational performance. This has resulted in a gap in knowledge on the mediating role of a multi-generational workforce on motivation and performance.

The third tradition is too focused on the motivation of university academic staff. Most studies have researched the motivation of academic staff, such as lecturers and professors. For example, Chatiza et al. (2021) explored academic motivation in Zimbabwe state universities. This is similar to Kanonge and Bussin (2022), who investigated the same variables. This has resulted in a gap in the motivation of non-academic employees in universities. These are also important in the overall performance of state universities.

The fourth research tradition is numerous studies on motivation in universities in other countries. For example, Khan et al. (2021) focused on employee motivation in higher education institutions in India, Mubeen and Alam (2022) focused on Pakistan's universities, and Niyivuga et al. (2019) focused motivation in universities in Rwanda. This has resulted in a knowledge gap in the motivation of the multi-generational non-academic workforce in Zimbabwe. This unique context has cultural and social factors that might differ from those in other countries.

4.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

The gaps in theories and empirical literature have necessitated a conceptual framework that addresses motivation, the multi-generational workforce, and performance. Hence, the development of the conceptual framework shown in Figure 4.1.

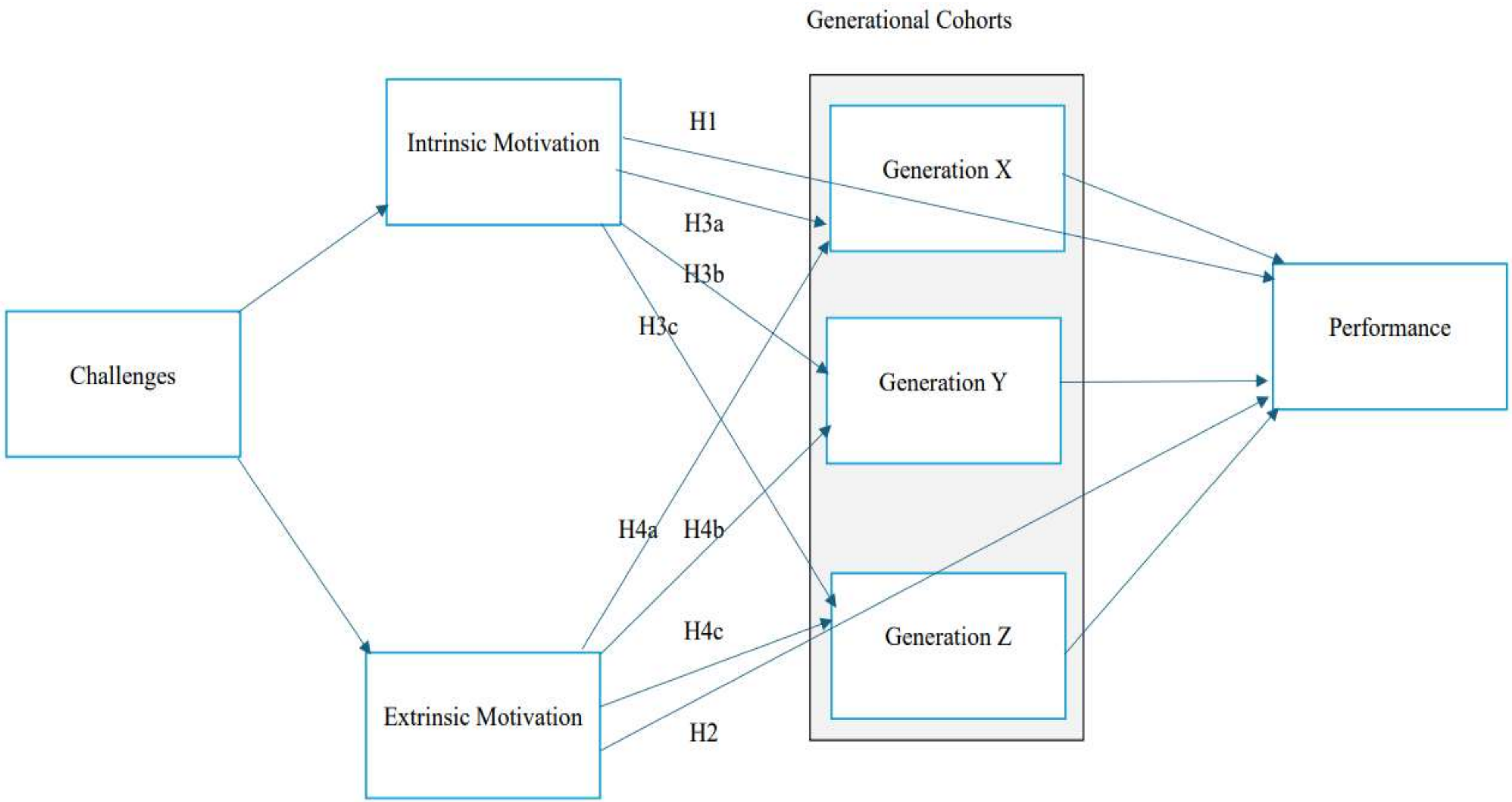

Figure 4.1: Conceptual framework
Source: Researcher

The study's conceptual framework comprises five components: challenges, intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, generational cohorts, and performance. The study's independent variable is motivation, the dependent variable is performance, and the generational cohort is the moderating variable. The following section elaborates on each component and its associated hypothesis development.

4.4.1 Challenges

Motivating multi-generational non-academic employees is challenging for an organisation (Yue, 2023). Therefore, identifying challenges is essential in motivating employees (Sulastri, 2021). Some obstacles to the motivation of multi-generational non-academic employees are employee diversity, economic challenges, labour laws, lack of top management support, and dynamism of motivation. Motivation and employee performance cannot occur where such challenges exist (Perica, 2024). These challenges frustrate management’s desire to motivate multi-generational employees to enhance performance (Vatankhah, 2021). Hence, according to Shan (2022), it is essential to identify challenges to employee motivation before coming up with a motivational strategy. For this reason, the study's second objective was to investigate challenges in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff at the university.

4.4.2 Intrinsic motivation

Employee motivation depends on motivational factors and processes (Fishbach & Woolley, 2022). Motivational factors are divided into two categories: extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation refers to internal factors generated within the employee, including achievement, affiliation, self-expression, and growth (Zhou, 2024). One of the significant gaps in the literature review is the failure to elaborate on differences in the motivation of multi-generational staff (Shan, 2022). The conceptual framework (Figure 4.1) developed from the literature shows that multi-generational staff are intrinsically motivated differently. Generation X is motivated by self-esteem, independence, personal growth, and formal achievement (Perica, 2024). Generation Y is motivated by job autonomy, meaningful work, informal achievement, and task complexity (Yue, 2021). Generation Z is motivated by freedom, creativity, problem-solving, and job excitement (Ochieng, 2023).

Given that there are few studies on the relationship between intrinsic motivation and performance in the non-academic workforce (Williams et al., 2022), the first hypothesis of this study was:

H1: There is a positive relationship between intrinsic motivation and the high performance of non-academic staff.

4.4.3 Extrinsic motivation

The second sub-variable of the study was extrinsic motivation. This motivation results from factors external to the employee (Shan, 2022). Extrinsic motivation motivates employees and originates externally from the individual (Wibowo et al., 2024). Extrinsic motivational factors are external influences that raise employees' motivational level, including rewards, recognition, job security, and competition (Williams et al., 2022). The conceptual framework demonstrates that generational cohorts are extrinsically motivated differently. Generation X is motivated by formal feedback, job security, formal recognition, and financial benefits (Yue, 2021). Generation Y is extrinsically motivated by work-life balance, informal recognition, feedback, and social relations. Generation Z is extrinsically motivated by technological resources, instant feedback, instant recognition, and an equitable environment (Ochieng, 2023). There is a paucity of studies on the relationship between extrinsic motivation and performance in the non-academic workforce (Sulastri, 2021). Therefore, the second hypothesis developed was:

H2: There is a positive relationship between extrinsic motivation and the high performance of non-academic staff.

4.4.4 Generational cohorts

The conceptual framework shows three generational cohorts: Generations X, Y, and Z. A generational cohort is a group of people born around the same time and who experience similar cultural, social, and historical events during their formative years (Yue, 2021). According to generational theory, employees from different generations are intrinsically and extrinsically motivated differently (Sulastri, 2021). Therefore, the assumption is that non-academics at the ZOU who belong to Generations X, Y, and Z are motivated differently. Research on motivation has not included the motivation of multi-generational non-academic staff in Zimbabwe. Therefore, the following hypotheses were developed to address this gap.

H3a: Generation X non-academic staff are intrinsically motivated

H3b: Generation Y non-academic staff are intrinsically motivated

H3c: Generation Z non-academic staff are intrinsically motivated

H4a: Generation X non-academic staff are extrinsically motivated

H4b: Generation Y non-academic staff are extrinsically motivated

H4c: Generation Z non-academic staff are extrinsically motivated

4.4.5 Performance

Finally, the conceptual framework shows the outcome of motivation, namely, performance. Performance is how well a company, team, or employee meets targets or objectives (Riyanto et al., 2021). Employee motivation leads to increased revenue, decreased operational costs, increased student enrolment, and student retention, which are performance measures (Ochieng, 2023). However, the conceptual framework does not end there, and it demonstrates that for motivation to attain performance, the relationship has to be mediated by generational cohort. Research traditions have not elaborated on the mediating role of generational cohort on the relationship between motivation and performance (Zhou, 2024). Therefore, hypotheses 9 and 10 were developed to address this gap.

H5: Generational cohort mediates the effects of intrinsic motivation on non-academic staff performance.

H6: Generational cohort mediates the effects of extrinsic motivation on the performance of non-academic staff.

4.5 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework fills four gaps. First, the conceptual framework addresses the challenges to the motivation of non-academic university staff. Existing frameworks do not depict the challenges in motivating non-academic staff in universities. Hence, this gap is bridged in this conceptual framework.

Second, the conceptual framework fills the gap in differences in intrinsic motivation. Existing theories explore motivation and generalise motivation to every employee regardless of the generational cohort to which the individual belongs. The conceptual framework elaborates on these differences so that they are evident in intrinsic motivators that apply to a specific generation. For example, Generation X is intrinsically motivated by self-esteem, independence, personal growth, and formal achievement. In contrast, job autonomy, meaningful work, informal achievement, and task complexity motivate Generation Y. Freedom, creativity, problem-solving, and job excitement intrinsically motivate Generation Z employees.

Third, the conceptual framework fills a gap in the differences in extrinsic motivation of a multi-generational workforce. Most theories of motivation, such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Herzberg's two-factor theory, equity theory, and expectancy theory, generalise extrinsic motivation to everyone. However, this conceptual framework shows that there are differences in terms of extrinsic motivation. Generation X is extrinsically motivated by financial benefits, formal feedback, job security, and formal recognition. The conceptual framework depicts that Generation Y is extrinsically motivated by work-life balance, informal recognition, feedback, and social relations. In contrast, Generation Z is motivated by the availability of technological resources, instant feedback, instant recognition, and an equitable environment.

Fourth, the conceptual framework fills a gap in non-academic staff motivation. Most studies have focused on academic staff. This conceptual framework conceptualises how a multi-generational non-academic workforce is motivated within state universities, an area that has been underexplored by multiple researchers of employee motivation. For example, the performance indicators depict outcomes in most non-academic jobs, such as student enrolment and retention.

4.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter elaborated the conceptual framework. The chapter started by elucidating the available theoretical and empirical gap. The existing theories of motivation, such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Herzberg's two-factor theory, expectancy theory, and equity theory, do not address the motivation of non-academic employees in universities in Zimbabwe because they were developed in Western countries. Empirical gaps include a tendency to research intrinsic and extrinsic motivation separately. Furthermore, there is a paucity of studies on the motivation of multi-generational non-academic staff in universities in Zimbabwe.

The conceptual framework developed has three variables: motivation, multi-generational workforce, and performance. The interaction of these variables resulted in the development of ten hypotheses tested in this study. The framework fills the theoretical and empirical gaps by developing a conceptual framework that displays how the three generational cohorts are motivated differently extrinsically and intrinsically. It further elucidates the positive and negative outcomes of motivation and demotivation, respectively. The conceptual framework finally presents recommendations to abate demotivation when dealing with multi-generational employees. This area has been underexplored, particularly among the university's non-academic staff. The next chapter elaborates on the research methodology adopted in this research.

CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapters reviewed existing literature on the motivation of a multi-generational workforce. This chapter is devoted to discussing the research methodology used during the study. Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill's (2023) research onion, illustrated in Figure 5.1, was used to guide the structure of this research methodology chapter. The chapter begins by exploring the research methodology's paradigm, philosophy, and framework. The research approach, methodological choice, and research design are presented. The chapter ends by depicting and evaluating the population, sampling process, methods of data analysis, and research ethics of the study.

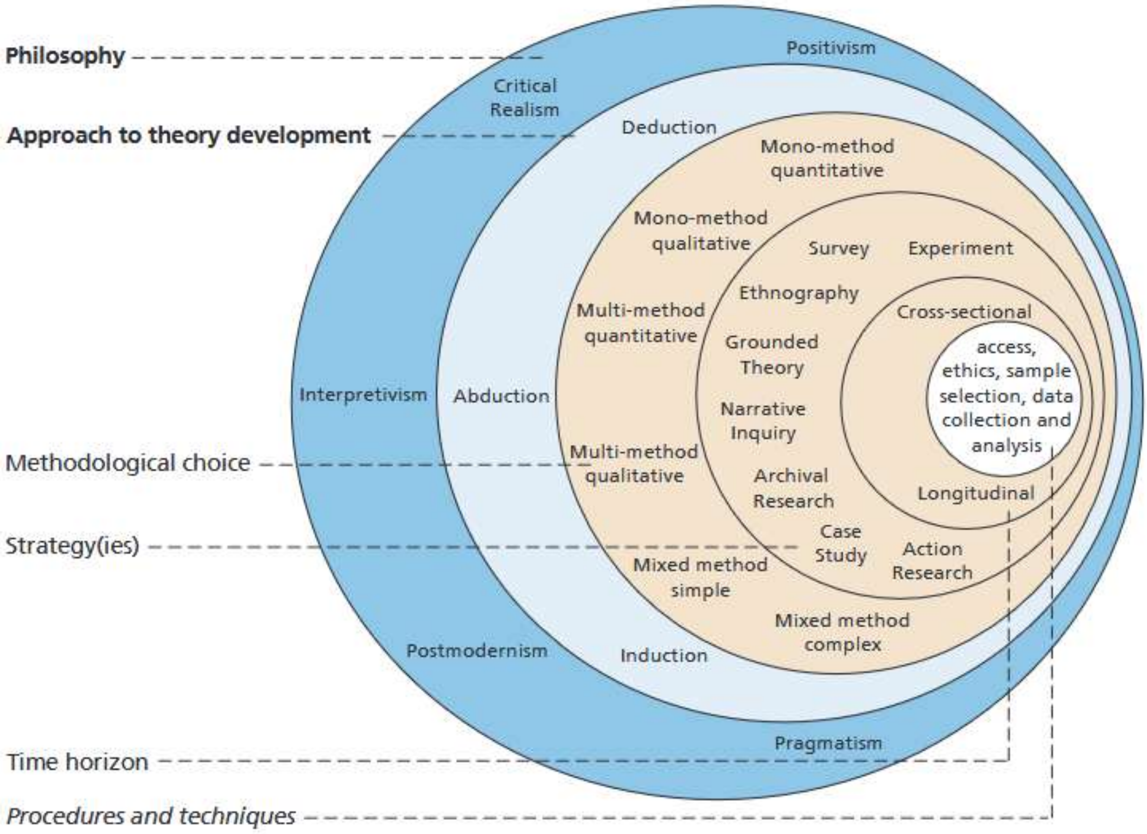

Figure 5.1: The research onion
Source: Adapted from Saunders et al. (2023)

5.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Research paradigms are basic assumptions of a scientific inquiry, yet they are taken for granted in business research (Saunders et al., 2023). It is essential to understand the origins of the research paradigm before explaining what it means and its various components. The term research paradigm originated from Thomas Kuhn's seminal work, "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions," authored in 1962. According to Kuhn (1962), a research paradigm is the theoretical framework dominating the scientific inquiry. This serves as the original explanation of the research paradigm. However, over the years, the research paradigm has received much attention from researchers, which has seen a migration from the complex definition offered by Thomas Kuhn to simplified definitions. For example, Kumatongo and Muzata (2021) express that a research paradigm is a broad framework for conducting research. On the other hand, Muzari, Shava, and Shonhiwa (2022) explain research paradigms as underlying assumptions of how the investigation is undertaken. Pervin and Moktar (2022) further explain a research paradigm as how the researcher understands and interprets the world. From these definitions, a research paradigm is a broad framework that connects values, beliefs, worldviews, assumptions, theories, and practices to shape scientific inquiry.

It is also important to elaborate on the significance of the research paradigm when conducting a scientific inquiry (Khatri, 2020). According to Park, Konge, and Artino (2020), a research paradigm guides scientific research. In other words, having a research paradigm helps to formulate research questions, methodology, and how findings are interpreted. In addition, Ugwu et al. (2021) elaborate that the research paradigm is important because it clarifies the investigator's assumption of the nature of reality. Apart from this, the research paradigm is essential in clarifying the role of the researcher (Yong, Husin, and Kamarudin, 2021). This is further explained by Bonache and Festing (2020) who state that it is through the research paradigm that the investigator is evident on the extent to which they will interact with study subjects. Through the research paradigm, the investigator is apparent in the methodology (Gannon, Taheri & Azer, 2022). This is consistent with Treagust and Won's (2023) submission that one can design a robust research methodology by being clear about the research paradigm. Bibi, Khan, and Shabir (2022) state that a research paradigm is critical in clarifying how data should be collected and research results should be interpreted. In a nutshell, a research paradigm is a framework that informs research methodology and makes the methodology consistent throughout the research process. Hughes (2020) identifies four research paradigm types: ontology, epistemology, methodology, and axiology. The following section elaborates on these research paradigms and the choices implemented in this study.

5.2.1 Ontology

One of the major research paradigms that should be addressed in a research process is ontology (Elgeddawy & Abouraia, 2024). Ontology deals with the nature of reality (Bogna, Raineri & Dell, 2020). This converges with sentiments by Chen, Wu, Hu, He & Ju (2021) who submit that ontology answers the question, "What is the nature of reality?". This is further expressed by Humphries, Mertens, and Truman (2020), who posit that ontology differentiates what is real from what is not. Ontology is a research paradigm concerned with the nature of being, existence, and reality (Patel & Debnath, 2024). Being clear about ontology in scientific inquiry is essential because ontology helps in understanding and conceptualising the research phenomena (Tarasenko, Shapovalov, Usenko, Shapovalov, Savchenko, Pashchenko & Paschke, 2021).

Two dimensions of the ontology research paradigm are constructivism and realism (Wu & Ye, 2021). Constructivist ontology is a worldview that states that reality is shaped by perceptions, beliefs, and human experiences (Hothersall, 2025). Realism is the opposite worldview, demonstrating that nature exists independently of human beliefs and perceptions (Akkerman, Bakker & Penuel, 2021). This investigation adopts the realism ontological dimension. This is because the study seeks to determine what motivates multi-generational non-academic staff. This is consistent with Villani's (2023) assertion that realism is a suitable ontological lens where the research aims to determine relationships. This study aimed to determine relationships among independent, dependent, and moderating variables, and therefore, it aligned with realism. Thus, this scientific inquiry pursued truth and objectivity in understanding the motivation of multi-generational non-academic staff.

5.2.2 Epistemology

In addition to ontology, it is necessary to clarify the epistemological research paradigm adopted in a study (Uscinski, Littrell & Klofstad, 2024). Epistemology concerns how people acquire knowledge (Sol & Heng, 2022). Han, Kang, and Sok (2023) state that epistemology answers how we come to know. In research, epistemology is critical, as it addresses how the research inquiries about knowledge (Kelly, 2021). Moon, Cvitanovic, Blackman, Scales, and Browne

(2021) add that epistemology regulates the role of the researcher in the investigation. Hence, it was essential to understand epistemology when undertaking this study.

There are two dimensions to epistemology: objectivity and subjectivity (Kapiszewski & Wood, 2022). Subjectivity epistemology is the belief that scientific inquiry is susceptible to researcher bias (Turner, 2022). Studies that take this route embrace subjectivity, and the researcher interacts with study participants so that they can interpret the information gathered (Montenegro, Balasch & Pujol, 2023). However, this study adopts objective epistemology. Objectivity is the belief that an investigation should minimise researcher biases (Carr, 2022). This sort of study has a limited role for the investigator as they are detached from the study subjects (Moon et al., 2021). This epistemology approach is adopted because it is consistent with realism ontology and applies to quantitative studies such as this one, which seeks to determine motivational strategies for multi-generational non-academic staff. Furthermore, objective epistemology has been adopted because it minimises bias in the research process, resulting in a replicable and generalisable study.

5.2.3 Methodology

Methodology is another type of research paradigm that is essential in research. Methodology in the context of the research paradigm refers to research choice, strategies, and design (Susilawati, Al-Obaidi, Abduh, Irwansyah & Nandiyanto, 2025). There are three types of research methods: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed. Quantitative research uses quantitative data (numbers) to derive meaning (Dzwigol, 2022). On the other hand, qualitative research uses non-numerical data to derive meaning (Dubey & Kothari, 2022). Mixed-method research combines both qualitative and quantitative research (Singh, 2022). This study adopts quantitative research because it aims to identify relationships among variables. Furthermore, quantitative research is consistent with this study's realism ontology and objective epistemology. The research methodology is further clarified in the methodological choice section in 5.5.

5.2.4 Axiology

The fourth type of research paradigm is axiology. De Monticelli (2022) states that the axiology research paradigm is about values and ethics in the research process. The researcher's values influence scientific inquiry (Edelheim, Joppe, Flaherty, Höckert, Boluk, Guia, & Peterson, 2022). Therefore, this research was value-driven as it was free from biases. Axiology addresses the relationship between the investigator and research participants (Corry & Simajuntak, 2021). This is based on ethical considerations on the researcher's side. The research was ethical as ethical clearance was obtained from the Durban University of Technology before undertaking the research (Appendix A). Consent to undertake the study was obtained from the ZOU (Appendix B). Furthermore, written informed consent was obtained from study subjects (Appendix C). Section 5.13 on research ethics further explores ethical considerations for this study.

5.3 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

Research philosophy and paradigm are intertwined, and most researchers confuse them (Saunders et al., 2023). While the research paradigm addresses issues to do with the nature of reality (ontology), how people gain knowledge (epistemology), axiology, and methodology, research philosophy is concerned with whether the research follows positivist beliefs or interpretivist beliefs (Zahle, 2021). The other difference is that the research paradigm is a broader framework of beliefs, ideas, and worldviews that influence the research (Saliya, 2023), while research philosophy refers to the research's underlying beliefs, ideas, and assumptions. Research philosophy is a “system of beliefs and assumptions about what constitutes acceptable, valid and legitimate knowledge; the nature of reality or being, and the role of values and ethics in relation to research” (Saunders et al., 2023, p.145).

There are three research philosophies: interpretivism, positivism, and pragmatism (Shan, 2022; Mir & Greenwood, 2021). Interpretivism is a research philosophy that aligns with qualitative research (Junjie & Xingxin, 2022). A study based on interpretivism research philosophy investigates the meanings that human participants ascribe to their experiences (Ikram & Kenayathulla, 2022). At the center of interpretivism is subjectivity, the belief that knowledge is based on the experiences and perceptions of research participants (Zahle, 2021). In a nutshell, there is no single objective truth as there are multiple realities, which is the belief held by interpretivists. Pragmatism is a research philosophy combining interpretivism and positivism (Vu, 2021). This study opted for positivism rather than interpretivism because the analysis is objective and adopts quantitative methodologies.

5.3.1 Positivist research philosophy

Quantitative researchers widely hold a positivist research philosophy (Karupiah, 2022). The investigation uses positivism as the study was purely quantitative. According to positivism, there is a single reality, and conclusions can be generated objectively (Pathak & Thapaliya, 2022). According to positivism, the researcher should collect data more objectively than interact. The positivist reality is centered on the assumption that numbers do not lie (Masuku, 2024). Positivism is the basis for exploring relationships between variables, and inferential statistics can be used to reach conclusions (Turyahikayo, 2021). There is no researcher bias in positivism, as researchers do not interfere with each other (Lim, 2023). This is also emphasised by Kuchinke (2023), who states that in positivism, the researcher should be detached from the participants and strive to be neutral. Figure 5.2 below shows how positivism is connected to ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodology.

Ontology (nature of reality or being)	Epistemology (what constitutes acceptable knowledge)	Axiology (role of values)	Typical methods
	Positivism		
Real, external, independent One true reality (universalism) Granular (things) Ordered	Scientific method Observable and measurable facts Law-like generalisations Numbers Causal explanation and prediction as contribution	Value-free research Researcher is detached, neutral and independent of what is researched Researcher maintains objective stance	Typically deductive, highly structured, large samples, measurement, typically quantitative methods of analysis, but a range of data can be analysed

Figure 5.2: Positivist research philosophy
Source: Adapted from Saunders et al. (2023)

This study adopts positivism because it is quantitative in nature. Furthermore, positivism is valuable in studies that test hypotheses (Sanchez, Bonache, Paz-Aparicio & Oberty, 2023). Since this study tested hypotheses on the motivation of multi-generational non-academic staff, adopting a positivist research philosophy was essential. In addition, positivist research philosophy is critical in studies that determine causal explanations (Hayre, Blackman, Hackett, Muller & Sim, 2022). This study aimed at understanding causal relationships between motivation and generational cohorts, and it was pertinent to use positivism. Furthermore, positivism allowed the research findings to be generalisable to broader contexts, as there is limited researcher bias (Gobo, 2023).

5.4 RESEARCH APPROACH TO THEORY DEVELOPMENT

Another integral part of the research methodology that needs to be clarified is the research approach (Mulisa, 2022). The research approach is how the research is designed and conducted (Pregoner, 20024). In a nutshell, the research approach is a framework that guides the data collection and data analysis (Taherdoost, 2022; Brand, Sheers, Wise, Seubert, Clifford, Griffiths, and Etherton-Beer, 2022). Tursunova (2023) states that there are three research approaches: inductive reasoning, deductive reasoning, and abductive reasoning. Inductive reasoning moves from specific observations to general conclusions and is mainly used in qualitative research where the outcome is theory generation (Hall, Savas-Hall, & Shaw, 2023). Abductive reasoning is applicable in mixed-method research and combines inductive and deductive reasoning. Deductive reasoning aligns with quantitative research, starting with a theory to test hypotheses (Proudfoot, 2023). This study adopts deductive reasoning.

5.4.1 Deductive reasoning

In this study, deductive reasoning was adopted. Deductive reasoning moves from the general premise to the specific one (Love & Corr, 2022). This means that there is already pre-existing knowledge of the problem, and the main aim of the research is to test this knowledge (Borgstede & Scholz, 2021). Usually, this knowledge is in the form of a theory (Younus & Zaidan, 2022). The scientists will then falsify or verify and test the validity of the theory's assumptions (Okoli, 2023). The starting point of deductive reasoning is the theory whose assumptions are translated into hypotheses, which are then tested. Deductive reasoning guided this study because it aligns with quantitative research, the research method used for this inquiry. In addition, the study started with theories (motivational and generational theories), and the goal of the research was to validate these theories. Therefore, the study progressed from general premises to specific ones. Furthermore, the study sought to test hypotheses in line with deductive reasoning.

5.5 RESEARCH METHOD

According to Clark, Foster, Bryman, and Sloan (2021), it is essential to clarify the research method used during the research process. Research method refers to the specific techniques and procedures used in data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Walliman (2021) adds that research methods are data-gathering and analysis strategies. Bhangu, Provost, and Caduff (2023) note that the research method should be systematic throughout the research process. This means that if data collection is quantitatively done, data analysis should also be quantitatively conducted (Hendren, Newcomer, Pandey, Smith, & Sumner, 2023). There are three types of research methods: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed. Qualitative research focuses on understanding, exploring, and describing human experiences, behaviors, and the meanings people assign to them (Vu, 2021). Quantitative research methodology focuses on collecting and analysing numerical data to understand and explain various phenomena (Bauer, Churchill, Mahendran, Walwyn, Lizotte & Villa-Rueda, 2021). Mixed methods use quantitative and qualitative methods in the same study (Mohajan & Mohajan, 2023). The study used quantitative methods, where quantitative data were used to generate insights. Quantitative research is necessary because a large sample was involved, and hypotheses could be tested. According to Jamieson, Govaart, and Pownall (2023), quantitative research is vital to generate large amounts of quantitative data that can be used for inferential statistics. The following section elaborates on quantitative methodology.

5.5.1 Quantitative research method

The study uses a quantitative research method. Quantitative research systematically gathers and analyses numerical data (Fischer, Boone & Neumann, 2023). Rudd, Meissel, and Meyer (2021) extend this definition by stating that quantitative research is a structured form of gathering and using quantitative data. Kotronoulas, Miguel, Dowling, Fernández-Ortega, Colomer-Lahiguera, Bağçivan, Pape, Drury, Semple, Dieperink, and Papadopoulou (2023) assert that at the center of quantitative research is 'numerical data'. Numerical data is key in quantitative research because constructs can be measured and quantified (Rudd et al., 2021). Quantitative research measures variables and tests hypotheses through statistical analysis (Sardana, Shekoohi, Cornett, & Kaye, 2023). Quantitative research has been used because it aligns with positivist research philosophy and deductive reasoning, as expressed by Williams, Wiggins, Vogt, and Vogt (2022). This research aims to determine relationships between generational cohorts and motivation, and quantitative research helps identify these relationships. This is in line with Scharrer and Ramasubramanian (2021), who state that quantitative research is ideal in research that aims to determine causes and effects among variables. The study sought to test and confirm hypotheses, which is possible through statistical analysis of data gathered during quantitative research.

5.6 RESEARCH DESIGN

It is also critical to identify and justify the research design used in a study (Chali, Eshete & Debela, 2022). Research design is a blueprint for conducting the study (Claro, Castro-Grau, Ochoa, Hinostroza, & Cabello, 2024). According to Eng, Soni, Lum, Khoo, Yao, Vineeth, Kumar, Lu, Johnson, Wolverton, and Seh (2022), a research design is a strategy that elaborates the data gathering and analysis process. According to Huntington-Klein (2021), research design is a framework that informs the entire research process. There are many research designs at the disposal of researchers (Rainforth, Foster, Ivanova & Bickford Smith, 2024). However, the prominent ones are case study research, experimental, and survey design (Salter, 2023). A case study is a research design through which the researcher explores a single case, a group, an event, or an organisation (Kekeya, 2021). This research did not use a case study because that design aligns with qualitative research and inductive inquiry. An experimental design involves the researcher manipulating the independent variable to determine its effect on the dependent variable (Andrade, 2021). Although experimental design is applicable in quantitative studies, it requires a controlled environment, which renders the design incompatible with this study. The survey research design involves collecting data from a particular group through questionnaires to gather data about opinions, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors (Kang & Hwang, 2023). A survey design was used in this study. The following section explores the survey design.

5.6.1 Survey research design

Survey design systematically gathers data from a sample (Adley et al., 2024). Survey designs gather data on people's attitudes, behaviors, demographics, and opinions (Walters, 2021). Braun, Clarke, Boulton, Davey, and McEvoy (2021) state that surveys are commonly used in social science and business research. The study used a survey design to generate maximum insights on motivation and performance, which were quantified to draw conclusions. The survey design best suits quantitative studies that gather quantitative data for inferential statistics (Doss, Rayfield, Burris, & Lawver, 2021). The research employed deductive reasoning because the survey moved from general information on motivation and performance to specific information, which aligns with the survey design, according to Kim (2022). Furthermore, the study tested various hypotheses on motivation and performance, making it an empirical research aligned with the survey design. The study was confined to the ZOU. This design enabled the researcher to understand a specific context regarding attitudes and behaviors related to motivation.

5.7 TARGET POPULATION

The population is the aggregate number of subjects that comprise the study context (Skinner, 2020), comprising all the items or individuals that share similar characteristics (Hassan et al., 2023) within a specific institution or geographical domain (Stratton, 2021; Ahmad et al., 2023). The target population refers to the subjects or items the investigator is interested in studying (Rudd, Meissel, Meyer, 2021). Willie (2024) states that the target population is a subset of the population. Consistent with this, Seys, Coeckelberghs, Sermeus, Van Zelm, Panella, Babu

Payedimarri, and Vanhaecht (2021) assert that the target population is the group that will answer the research questions. The study's target population was 626 non-academic employees of the ZOU. This information was obtained from the Human Resources Department of the ZOU. The demographics showed that 8 were top management, 32 were middle management, 56 were line managers, and 530 were general employees. All non-academic employees who fell into Generations X, Y, and Z constituted the target population. Non-academic employees are support staff who assist in universities' administration and ensure the smooth running. Non-academic roles include secretaries, clerks, faculty administrators, financial and HR officers.

5.8 SAMPLING

Studying the whole population is expensive and time-consuming, hence the need for sampling (Habes, Ali & Pasha, 2021). Sampling is selecting items in a population to represent the vast population in the research (Faems, 2020). According to Golzar, Noor and Tajik (2022), sampling is the process of selecting items from the population to make inferences about the larger population. The sample represents the larger group, as the selected individuals participate in the research on behalf of the group (Raifman, DeVost, Digitale, Chen & Morris, 2022). The main aim of sampling is to select individuals who are representative of the population in terms of behaviors and opinions (Noor, Tajik & Golzar, 2022). Researchers conduct sampling to eliminate costs and reduce the time taken to gather and analyse the data (Stratton, 2021).

There are two techniques of sampling: probability and non-probability (Cash, Isaksson, Maier & Summers, 2022). Non-probability sampling is sampling in which all subjects of the population do not have an equal chance of being selected for the sample (Di Franco, 2024). In other words, selecting a sample involves some form of bias. Some sampling methods associated with non-probability sampling are convenience, purposive, and snowball (Golini & Righi, 2024). Non-probability sampling is not used in this study because, according to Rahman (2023), it is suitable for qualitative studies. Furthermore, Salvatore (2023) demonstrates that non-probability sampling has challenges pertaining to bias, lack of generalisability, and difficulty in replications, making it incompatible with this study. On the other hand, probability sampling is a technique that gives an equal chance for all population items to be selected for the sample (Baltes & Ralph, 2022). This study utilised probability sampling.

5.8.1 Probability sampling

Probability sampling is a sampling technique whereby each individual in a population has an equal chance of being selected to be part of the sample (Banning, 2021; King, Goldfarb, & Simcoe, 2021). Every item in the population has an equal, known, and non-zero chance of being chosen to constitute the sample (Sharma, 2023). Probability sampling was used in this study because it allowed for generalisations as the sample is representative of the larger population (Kim, 2022; Perret et al., 2024). Furthermore, where probability sampling is used, the research is replicable, as other researchers can verify the research (Tutz, 2023). Cheung (2021) states that probability sampling is suitable for quantitative studies. This study was quantitative, and probability sampling was therefore adopted.

Some sampling methods associated with probability sampling are simple, random, systematic, and stratified (Pace, 2021). For this study, probability sampling in the form of stratified sampling and systematic sampling was used.

5.8.1.1 Stratified sampling

The first phase of the study involved conducting stratified sampling. Stratified sampling is dividing the sample into categories and selecting the sample from the categories, and its strength is that there is a fair representation of the broader population (Sarker & AL-Muaalemi, 2022). Stratified sampling divides the population into sub-groups (Arunachalam & Spence, 2023). These subgroups are known as strata (Sadaiyandi et al., 2023). Each stratum has items with shared similar characteristics (Shao et al., 2021). The significant advantage of stratified sampling is that every population stratum is represented (Nguyen, Shih, Srivastava, Tirthapura & Xu, 2021). Song and Kawai (2023) assert that stratified sampling suits a homogeneous population. The study population was homogenous regarding generational cohorts to which non-academic staff at the ZOU belonged. The population was divided into three strata associated with the three generational cohorts (Generations X, Y, and Z). After categorising the members into groups using stratified sampling, systematic sampling was used to select the respondents for the research.

5.8.1.2 Systematic sampling

The second phase of sampling involved systematic sampling in each stratum. Systematic sampling is a systematic probability sampling method (Rahman, 2023). Systematic sampling is organised (Sarker & AL-Muaalemi, 2022). For example, regular intervals can pick population items into the sample. In this research, systematic sampling was performed after categorising individuals according to their strata using the information provided by the ZOU Human Resources Department. Every third person from each stratum was chosen until the desired sample size was reached.

5.8.2 SAMPLE SIZE

The sample size was determined using Sekaran and Bougie's (2019) table, as demonstrated in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Sekaran and Bougie sample size table

N	S	N	S	N	S
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	1000000	384

Source: Adapted from Sekaran and Bougie (2019)

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2019), a population of 626 non-academic staff members at the ZOU has a corresponding sample size of 234. Table 5.2 shows the breakdown of the sample per strata.

Table 5.2: Target population with corresponding sample sizes for non-academics at the Zimbabwe Open University

Department	Total	Sample Size
Generation X (44-59 years)	334	125
Generation Y (28-43 years)	217	81
Generation Z (18-27 years)	75	28
TOTAL	**626**	**234**

Source: Researcher

The human resource department at the university provided this information. The researcher was given a list of non-academic employees with their names, occupations, and ages. Then, a simple proportion was used to compute the sample size for each stratum. Generation X (334) divided by 125 yields 2.7, rounded off to 3. Every third respondent was selected from the source list. Generation Y (217) divided by 81 yields 2.7, rounded off to 3. Every third person from the source list was selected. Generation Z (75) divided by 28 yields 2.7, rounded off to 3. Every third person from the source list was selected.

5.8.3 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The study comprised non-academic staff at the ZOU. Only non-academic employees from the Generation X, Y, and Z cohorts participated in the study. The demographic data obtained from the university's human resource department, which contained non-academic staff names, occupations, and ages, was used to determine the strata for Generations X, Y, and Z. Both males and females were included. Baby Boomers were excluded because their number was insignificant at the ZOU. Academic staff were also excluded from this study because their motivational strategies have previously been documented in the literature.

5.9 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Data collection is the process of gathering data from respondents for data analysis to meet the objectives of the investigation (Tahedoost, 2021). Jain (2021) explains that data collection is a systematic process of collecting information from various sources for research purposes. Alam (2021) elaborates that the collected data should be consistent with the methodology adopted. Newman, Bavik, Mount, and Shao (2021) state that the data collected should be reliable and valid. There are two types of data: primary and secondary (Saunders et al., 2023). Primary data is when a researcher collects data directly from sources (Walliman, 2021). Secondary data involves information from others, organisations, and third parties (Clark et al., 2021). Secondary data is weak in that it may be irrelevant to the research, and the researcher has no control over the data quality (Sekaran & Bougie, 2019). This study made use of both primary data and secondary data.

5.9.1 Primary data

Primary data is information the researcher gathers directly from sources (Coe, Waring, Hedges & Ashley, 2021). In other words, the researcher goes to the field to collect the data from research respondents (Sardana et al., 2023). Primary data was used in this research, as it involved data collection from non-academic staff of the ZOU. Primary data enabled the researcher to control data quality issues and have up-to-date information. There are several types of tools for collecting primary data, including interviews and questionnaires (Biggs, De

Vos, Preiser, Clements, Maciejewski & Schlüter, 2021). Interviews involve the researcher conversing with participants (Saunders et al., 2023). Interviews were not adopted in this study because, according to McGill, Penney, Egan, White, Meier, Whitehead, Lock, de Cuevas, Smith, and Savona (2021), they are only suitable for qualitative studies. This research adopted closed-ended questionnaires.

5.9.2 Secondary data

Secondary data refers to the data already collected and analysed by other researchers (Sardana et al., 2023). In other words, this is already available data related to the problem under investigation (Biggs et al., 2021). The significant advantage of using secondary data is that it saves the researcher time and energy collecting data (Saunders et al., 2021). The research used secondary data derived from relevant literature reviews; the findings of this research were compared and contrasted with similar studies.

5.10 MEASURING INSTRUMENT

Data was collected through a closed-ended structured questionnaire (Appendix D). A questionnaire is a research instrument with questions designed for data collection from respondents (Baburajan, de Silva & Pereira, 2022). According to Semyonov-Tal and Lewin-Epstein (2021), a questionnaire is a research tool with questions directed to research respondents. Questionnaires are frequently used in quantitative research (Lund, 2023). Sekhon, Cartwright, and Francis (2022) state that questionnaires can gather information about demographics, attitudes, opinions, experiences, and behaviors. There are two types of questionnaires: open-ended and closed-ended (Bujang, Khee & Yee, 2022). Open-ended questionnaires allow respondents to respond in their own words (Cheung, 2021). The main challenge with open-ended questionnaires is that the responses are not standardised, making it difficult to run statistical tests (Jayanthi & Shanthi, 2022). Hence, open-ended questionnaires were not used in this research.

Closed-ended questionnaires have predefined responses for respondents to choose from (Sanchez, 2024). A closed-ended structured questionnaire is suitable for collecting vast amounts of quantitative data within a shorter period (Sarker & AL-Muaalemi, 2022). Closed-ended questionnaires were used because they have a wider reach and are time-efficient. Furthermore, they provided standardisation of questions and responses. In addition, closed-ended questionnaires help achieve respondent anonymity. The closed-ended questionnaire was developed by adopting questions from other motivation researchers, including Thant (2023) and Bhatt et al. (2022). The closed-ended structured questionnaire had four sections with questions using a 5-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Section A captured information on demographics, Section B captured data on intrinsic motivation, Section C captured data on extrinsic motivation, Section D captured performance information, Section E captured data on existing motivational strategies, and Section F captured data on challenges motivating multi-generational staff. The questionnaire's items were adopted from Hiam et al. (2003) employee incentive profile.

5.10.1 Administration of the measuring instruments

Questionnaires were distributed through Google Forms. According to Priyanda, Fadhelina, and Ariska (2021), Google Forms is a tool that can speed up the data collection process. Google Forms offers the advantage of real-time data collection, and the platform can be easily customised. The link to the Google Forms was shared with respondents through their institutional emails. The link was emailed to 234 non-academic staff at the ZOU.

5.11 VALIDITY OF THE MEASURING INSTRUMENT

Validity is the extent to which the investigation successfully measures its intended measure (Flake, Davidson, Wong & Pek, 2022). Validity ensures that the study provides accurate findings and that the conclusions meet reality (Findley, Kikuta & Denly, 2021). There are different types of validity, including face validity, criterion validity, content validity, internal validity, and external validity. In this study, content validity was used. Content validity is the degree to which a research instrument covers the important dimensions it has been developed to measure (Rusticus, 2024). Christalle, Zeh, Hahlweg, Kriston, Härter, Zill, and Scholl (2022) state that content validity assesses whether items in the research instrument (questionnaire) correctly represent the measured construct. This was achieved by exploring related studies in reputable online sites such as Google Scholar and DUT's Research Space. Furthermore, the study's results were compared to those of other studies. In using content validity, the researcher valued research instruments used by others and received guidance in developing the structured questionnaire for this study. Furthermore, the researcher conducted a confirmatory factor analysis to combine factors correlated with the benchmark of 0.8. This test was done through Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's tests using SPSS version 30.0. Goodness of fit indices (GFI) were also computed to determine the validity of the research.

5.12 RELIABILITY OF THE MEASURING INSTRUMENT

Reliability is the degree to which the study's measurement is consistent (Coleman, 2022). Reliable research has dependable measurements so that similar results will be established if the same research is carried out in similar circumstances (Ahmed & Ishtiaq, 2021). Some types of reliability are inter-rater reliability, inter-method reliability, test-retest reliability, internal consistency, and pilot test (Babu & Kohli, 2023). For this investigation, internal consistency reliability was used. Cronbach's alpha test was applied to all items in the measurement. The standard score for the test is 0.7, and items that scored below were removed or adjusted as they were not fit (Park, 2021).

5.12.1 Pilot test

A pilot test is data collection from a small sample to test the reliability of the study (Nie, Li, Pan, Yang, Chen, & Hong, 2022). A pilot test is essential in removing and adjusting items in a measurement instrument (Faems, 2020). A pilot test was conducted to ensure the closed-ended structured questionnaire was reliable. A pilot test was conducted with a sample size of 10 non-academic employees at the ZOU. Borg, Bach, O'Brien, and Sainani (2022) submit that a pilot test of 10 is adequate for a study with a population above 500. These 10 participants were excluded from participating in the actual research. The pilot test was critical in modifying the closed-ended structured questionnaire to be reliable before the actual research. A Cronbach's alpha test was applied to all items in the measurement. The standard score for the test is 0.7, and items that scored below this were removed or adjusted. Table 5.3 shows the results from the Cronbach's alpha test performed for the pilot study.

Table 5.3: Cronbach's alpha scores for the pilot test

Dimension	**Cronbach's Alpha**	**Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items**	**N of Items**
Intrinsic motivation	0.841	0.882	9
Extrinsic motivation	0.801	0.804	9
Performance	0.815	0.832	10
Existing motivational strategies	0.797	0.802	10
Challenges	0.788	0.801	5

The Cronbach Alpha scores demonstrate good internal reliability for all items. Intrinsic motivation scored the highest Cronbach's alpha (0.841), showing good internal reliability for all its items. The dimension of performance also had a good Cronbach's alpha score of 0.815, and there were no issues with its items. The extrinsic motivation dimension also scored a good Cronbach's alpha (0.801), and all its items were acceptable. The dimension of existing motivational strategies and challenges attained acceptable internal reliability of 0.797 and 0.788, respectively. There were no challenges, and all items were retained for the main study.

5.13 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics are of great importance in any research (Mohajan, 2020). Research ethics are moral principles that are considered by the researcher in the research process (Hasan et al., 2021). According to Montreuil et al. (2021), research ethics are guidelines for the conduct of research involving humans (Nii Laryeafio & Ogbewe, 2023). These ethics are essential in research because they help in the integrity of the study, protect human participants, and lead to responsible knowledge dissemination (Newman et al., 2021). The following section explores ethical considerations upheld in the survey.

5.13.1 Anonymity/confidentiality

Anonymity protects research participants' identity and personal information (Nie et al., 2022). Confidentiality refers to the obligation of researchers to protect and safeguard the private information of research participants (Faems, 2020). Chervenak and McCullough (2021) state that researchers should protect respondents' personal information. Information that can be identified should not be disclosed without consent (Kandi & Vadokedath, 2022). Respondents' names and identities are not revealed at every study stage. The informed consent letter, which guaranteed the confidentiality of participants (Appendix C), was signed before the respondent participated, and it clearly explains that the investigator respected anonymity and privacy.

5.13.2 Informed consent

Informed consent is another important principle in research (Kian, Pheby, Henehan, Brown, Sieving, Sykora, Marks, Falsini, Capodicasa, Miertus & Lorusso, 2022). Study respondents must be fully informed about the nature, purpose, and risks associated with the study (de Medeiros et al., 2022). The starting point was seeking permission from the ZOU to conduct research. University officials consented to this permission (Appendix B). Respondents voluntarily participated in this study. They signed consent forms (Appendix C). This was after they were educated on the purpose of the research and its nature (Appendix C). Respondents were respected and allowed autonomy at all stages of the research (Vu, 2021). Respondents were also informed that they could withdraw from the study anytime.

5.13.3 No harm

Research should not harm or exploit participants, whether humans or animals (Hasan et al., 2021). This principle is known as the beneficence and non-maleficence ethical principle. The research should benefit society without harming participants (Kandi & Vadokedath, 2022). No participant was physically or psychologically harmed during this research.

5.13.4 Honesty and integrity

Another ethical consideration principle upheld in the research is honesty and integrity. Scientific integrity is essential in research (Kian et al., 2022). During the study, the investigator was honest. There was no plagiarism, as all sources for information were acknowledged by citation and inclusion in the reference list. Furthermore, the research report was subjected to plagiarism software. SPSS version 30.0 was used for data analysis, eliminating falsification and fabrication of results.

5.14 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis inspects and transforms the data gathered during a study (Pentang & Pentang, 2021). Data analysis is important in research because it helps the researcher to identify patterns and provides an informed basis for making conclusions (Schoonenboom, 2023). SPSS version 30.0 was used for the analysis of data. SPSS is a reliable tool for statistical data analysis (Pallant, 2020). Descriptive statistics, such as frequency and percentages, were used to present demographic data. These were critical in clearly showing the dominant demographic. These percentages and frequencies were derived from SPSS version 30.0. Stata version 12 was also used for structural equation modelling.

The objectives and hypotheses were determined using appropriate inferential statistics to identify causal relations and test hypotheses. For correlational data, the Pearson T-Test was used. Relationships that score a positive result mean a positive relationship, whereas those that score a negative result mean a negative one (Pallant, 2020). The chi-square test was used for hypothesis testing, where the relationship between categorical and numerical data was tested. The confidence level was 95%; therefore, any hypothesis test with a p-value less than 0.05 was accepted, and those that exceeded it were rejected. One sample T-Test was used to compare the motivational strategies of Generations X, Y, and Z. For mediation analysis, multiple linear regression and the Andrew F. Hayes test were performed.

5.15 CONCLUSION

This chapter elaborated and justified the research methodology used in the study. A positivist research philosophy guided the study and utilised a survey design. The research was quantitative to determine the causal relationship between variables. A structured questionnaire was used to gather numerical data to perform statistical analysis using SPSS version 30.0. The next chapter presents the results of this research.

CHAPTER 6: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter demonstrated and justified the quantitative methodology adopted for this study. This chapter is devoted to presenting, analysing, and discussing findings on the ZOU's motivational strategies for multi-generational non-academic staff. A total of 234 questionnaires were distributed to non-academic staff at ZOU, belonging to the Generation X, Y, and Z cohorts. 216 questionnaires were completed and returned, constituting a response rate of 92%. This response rate is higher than the recommended response rate of 68% (Holtom, Jeon, & Lee, 2022). Therefore, the findings presented in this research are generalisable to the broader population of non-academic staff at the ZOU. All the respondents completed all the questions in the questionnaire. Data analysis was done using SPSS version 30.0 for Windows. First, the chapter shows results from reliability tests, demonstrating that the scales used were reliable. Second, results from factor analysis are elaborated, showing no issues with duplication of factors within the study. Third, the demographics of respondents are presented, explaining the extent of generalisability of the study. Fourth, descriptive statistics are presented, highlighting which scales and dimensions were favourable to study respondents and determining data normality. Fifth, given that the data were normally distributed, correlational tests were performed, and the results are presented. Sixth, Chi-square tests are presented for numerical and categorical data tests. Seventh, Andrew F Hayes tests were conducted for tests that had mediating variables. Finally, the chapter presents a model for motivating multi-generational non-academic staff to improve performance. The findings are compared with the seminal work of other researchers, theories, and the conceptual framework presented.

6.2 SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS

Section A of the questionnaire captured information on sample demographics, specifically, gender, age, educational qualifications, and length of service.

6.2.1 Gender

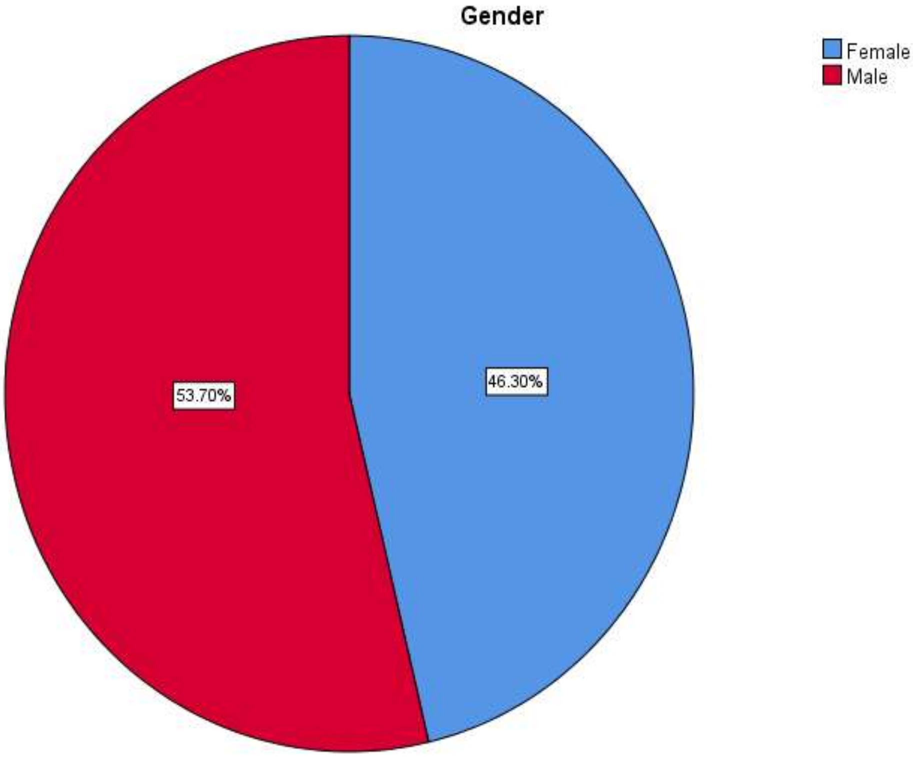

Figure 6.1: Gender

Figure 6.1 shows the gender of the respondents. Most respondents were male, constituting 53.7% of the sample, with females comprising 46.3%. Inasmuch as there was a marginal difference between males and females who participated in the study, both genders contributed significantly, making the research generalisable to both women and men non-academics at the ZOU.

6.2.2 Generational cohort

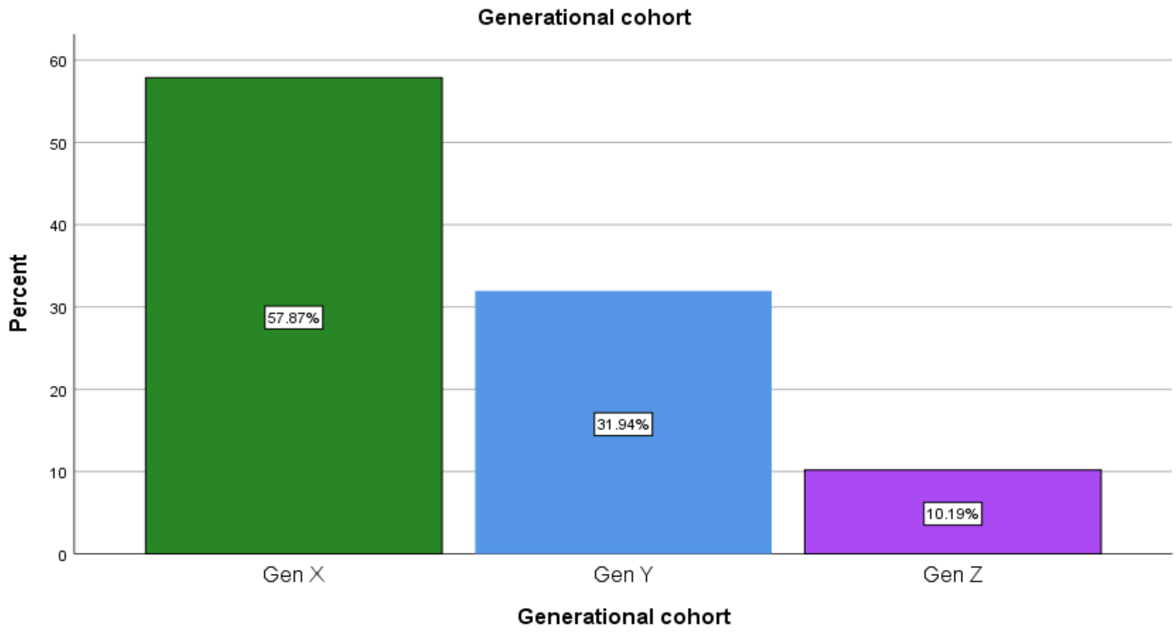

Figure 6.2: Generational cohort

Figure 6.2 illustrates the generational cohorts of the respondents. Most of the respondents belonged to the Generation X cohort (44-59 years), constituting 57.87%, followed by the Generation Y cohort (28-43 years) with 31.94%, and Generation Z (18-27 years), with 10.19%. The study incorporated views of all three generational cohorts, making it generalisable to the broader population of the three generational cohorts.

6.2.3 Educational qualifications

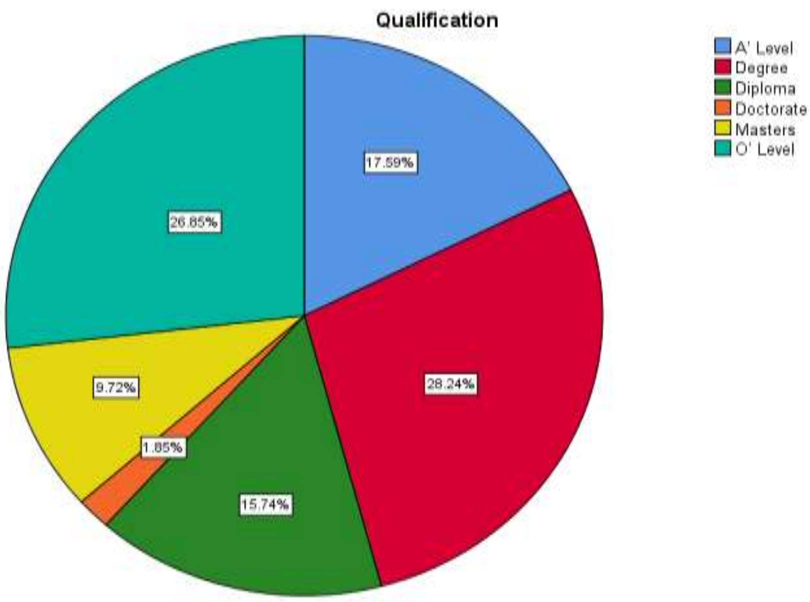

Figure 6.3: Educational qualifications

Figure 6.3 shows that the most frequent educational qualification of the research respondents was a degree, which comprised 28.24% of the respondents, followed by O-level qualifications (26.85%), A-level qualifications (17.59%), diploma (15.74%), master's degree (9.72%) and doctoral degree (1.85%).

6.2.4 Length of service

Table 6.1: Length of service

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	1-5 years	66	30.5
	6-10 years	68	31.5
	11-15 years	30	13.9
	16-20 years	22	10.2
	21-25 years	30	13.9
	Total	216	100.0

Table 6.1 shows that most respondents had been with the ZOU for 6-10 years (31.5%), followed by 1-5 years (30.5%), 11-15 years, and 21-25 years (both at 13.9%), and 16-20 years (10.2%). The research findings, therefore, reflect views of multi-generational non-academic staff with different tenures at the university, making it generalisable to the broader population.

6.3 RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

Reliability tests were conducted using Cronbach's alpha. The scores were interpreted as per Pallant (2020). According to Pallant (2020), Cronbach's alpha scores of 0.70-0.79 are acceptable, scores of 0.80-0.89 are good, and 0.90-0.99 are excellent. Furthermore, Pallant (2020) asserts that scale items should score at least an item-total correlation of 0.3 to be acceptable.

6.3.1 Intrinsic motivation scale reliability analysis

Table 6.2: Reliability analysis for the intrinsic motivation scale

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.943	.930	9

Table 6.3: Intrinsic motivation scale item – total statistics

Item – Total Statistics					
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
IM1	25.91	40.081	.935	.988	.942
IM2	25.66	49.752	.989	.992	.923
IM3	25.08	56.653	.933	.993	.934
IM4	25.63	50.149	.969	.994	.925
IM5	25.66	49.741	.988	.995	.923
IM6	25.66	49.741	.992	.994	.923
IM7	24.61	66.649	.738	.744	.958
IM8	24.58	66.524	.788	.760	.957
IM9	25.65	49.848	.977	.986	.924

Table 6.2 shows that the overall Cronbach's alpha score for the intrinsic motivation scale is 0.943, which signifies excellent internal reliability. Furthermore, all nine items of the intrinsic motivation scale have an item-total correlation above 0.3, signifying that they are all reliable (Table 6.3). Hence, all items of intrinsic motivation were retained for further data analysis.

6.3.2 Extrinsic motivation scale reliability analysis

Table 6.4: Reliability analysis – extrinsic motivation scale

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.879	.900	8

Table 6.5: Extrinsic motivation scale – total statistics

Item-Total Statistics					
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
EM1	27.66	12.221	.617	.702	
EM2	27.42	12.357	.699	.725	.868
EM3	27.42	12.570	.597	.739	.874
EM4	27.71	11.045	.805	.858	.851
EM5	27.44	12.313	.633	.756	.870
EM6	27.71	11.166	.782	.818	.853
EM7	27.37	13.192	.306	.582	.891
EM8	26.92	8.566	.932	.946	.829
EM9	27.19	7.938	.811	.949	.866

Table 6.4 shows that the extrinsic motivation scale had a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.879, which indicates good internal reliability. Furthermore, all nine items of the extrinsic motivation scale scored an item-total correlation above 0.3 (Table 6.5), which is acceptable. Therefore, all nine items were retained for further analysis.

6.3.3 Performance scale reliability analysis

Table 6.6: Reliability analysis for performance motivation scale

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardised Items	N of Items
.801	.801	10

Table 6.7: Performance motivation scale – total statistics

Item-Total Statistics					
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
P1	27.59	43.173	.462	.268	.785
P2	27.46	41.356	.524	.330	.777
P3	27.57	41.548	.514	.318	.779
P4	27.27	42.960	.445	.218	.787
P5	27.37	41.731	.476	.283	.783
P6	27.28	42.471	.432	.224	.788
P7	27.48	41.981	.470	.250	.784
P8	27.46	42.752	.500	.284	.781
P9	27.46	41.291	.511	.289	.779
P10	27.44	43.253	.412	.218	.790

Table 6.6 illustrates that the performance scale obtained a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.801, which signifies good reliability. All ten items of the performance scale had an item-total correlation above the benchmark of 0.3 (Table 6.7). Hence, all ten items were retained for further analysis.

6.3.4 Existing motivational strategies scale reliability analysis

Table 6.8: Reliability analysis – existing motivational strategies

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardised Items	N of Items
.768	.752	10

Table 6.9: Existing motivational strategies – total statistics

Item-Total Statistics					
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
EMS1	28.34	14.969	.368	.377	.578
EMS2	26.33	14.837	.400	.517	.573
EMS3	27.32	14.806	.543	.759	.572
EMS4	28.32	14.899	.417	.171	.575
EMS5	26.34	14.978	.518	.675	.578
EMS6	27.29	10.261	.394	.216	.494
EMS7	27.22	10.778	.353	.140	.510
EMS8	27.33	10.205	.427	.209	.480
EMS9	27.26	10.279	.416	.203	.485
EMS10	27.24	10.646	.365	.565	.705

Table 6.8 shows the Cronbach's Alpha test for the existing motivational strategies scale. The Cronbach's alpha score for the existing motivational strategies scale was 0.768, which is acceptable. All ten items of the existing motivational strategies scale had an item-total correlation above the acceptable benchmark of 0.3 (Figure 6.9). Therefore, all ten items were retained for further analysis.

6.3.5 Challenges in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff scale reliability analysis

Table 6.10: Reliability analysis for challenges in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardised Items	N of Items
.780	.781	5

Table 6.11: Challenges in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff – total statistics

Item-Total Statistics					
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
C1	12.09	11.861	.432	.395	.631
C2	12.16	11.290	.542	.505	.626
C3	12.17	11.696	.548	.502	.624
C4	11.94	11.573	.529	.491	.632
C5	12.06	11.582	.519	.483	.637

Table 6.10 shows that the Cronbach's alpha of the challenges of motivating multi-generational non-academic staff was 0.780, which is acceptable. In addition, all five items of the challenges of motivating multi-generational non-academic staff scale obtained item-total correlation scores were above 0.3 and were therefore acceptable (Table 6.11). Hence, all five items were retained for further analysis.

6.4 FACTOR ANALYSIS

Factor analysis helped determine whether the sample was adequate for the study, and the sub-scales used in the questionnaire were unidimensional. Furthermore, factor analysis helped to understand the relationships between factors. Factor analysis was conducted using the KMO and Bartlett's tests. According to Pallant (2020), a KMO test of 0.6-0.69 is marginally acceptable, whereas a score of 0.7-0.79 is acceptable, a score of 0.8-0.89 is good, and a score of 0.9-1 is excellent. Factor loadings above 0.3 are acceptable (Pallant, 2020). A p-value less than 0.05 in Bartlett's test is also permissible in factor analysis.

6.4.1 Intrinsic motivation scale factor analysis

Table 6.12: Intrinsic motivation scale – factor analysis

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.797
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	4892.110
	Df	36
	Sig.	.000

Table 6.13: Intrinsic motivation scale – component matrix

Component Matrix[a]	
	Component 1
IM1	.954
IM2	.992
IM3	.952
IM4	.979
IM5	.993
IM6	.995
IM7	.761
IM8	.717
IM9	.982

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 6.12 shows the factor analysis results for the intrinsic motivation scale. The KMO test score for inherent motivation is 0.797. This means that the sample was adequate for further analysis, and factor analysis was acceptable. Bartlett's test ($p < 0.05$) demonstrated no issues with factor analysis ($df = 31$, $p = 0.000$). In addition, all nine sub-scales of intrinsic motivation had factor loadings above 0.3 and were acceptable (Table 6.13). Therefore, all nine components were loaded into a single component.

6.4.2 Extrinsic motivation scale factor analysis

Table 6.14: Extrinsic motivation scale – factor analysis

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.823
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	6754.210
	Df	31
	Sig.	.000

Table 6.15: Extrinsic motivation scale – component matrix

Component Matrix[a]	
	Component 1
EM1	.773
EM2	.813
EM3	.756
EM4	.845
EM5	.902
EM6	.763
EM7	.705
EM8	.796
EM9	.817

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 6.14 illustrates results from factor analysis of the extrinsic motivation scale. A KMO of 0.823 demonstrates that the extrinsic motivation scale has a good factor analysis and sample adequacy. This is buttressed by an acceptable Bartlett's test result (df = 31, p = 0.000). In addition, the factor loadings of the nine sub-scales were all above the benchmark of 0.3, which was acceptable and indicated good quality (Table 6.15).

6.4.3 Performance scale factor analysis

Table 6.16: Performance scale – factor analysis

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.854
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	431.326
	Df	45
	Sig.	.000

Table 6.17: Performance scale – component matrix

Component Matrix[a]	
	Component 1
P1	.587
P2	.647
P3	.643
P4	.570
P5	.601
P6	.551
P7	.598
P8	.624
P9	.636
P10	.529

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 6.16 demonstrates the results of factor analysis for the performance scale. The KMO of 0.854 was obtained, signifying a good sample adequacy and factor analysis. This is also supported by the results from Bartlett's Test (df = 45, p = 0.000), which shows good factor analysis. Moreover, the factor loadings are all above 0.3 for the ten sub-scales (Table 6.17), validating unidimensionality.

6.4.4 Existing motivational strategies scale factor analysis

Table 6.18: Existing motivational strategies scale – factor analysis

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.765
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	469.641
	Df	45
	Sig.	.000

Table 6.19: Existing motivational strategies scale – component matrix

Component Matrix[a]	
	Component 1
EMS1	.322
EMS2	.378
EMS3	.631
EMS4	.367
EMS5	.495
EMS6	.536
EMS7	.433
EMS8	.561
EMS9	.607
EMS10	.549

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 6.18 illustrates results from factor analysis of the existing motivational strategies scale. The results from the KMO test demonstrate that the sample adequacy and factor analysis for the scale are acceptable (KMO = 0.765). This is substantiated by results from Bartlett's test (df = 45, p = 0.000), which are also acceptable. Furthermore, the factor loadings for the ten sub-scales surpass the recommended 0.3 score (Table 6.19). This shows that all ten sub-scales are unidimensional, which is sufficient.

6.4.5 Challenges in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff scale factor analysis

Table 6.20: Challenges in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff scale – factor analysis

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.767
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	138.691
	Df	10
	Sig.	.000

Table 6.21: Challenges in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff scale – component matrix

Component Matrix[a]	
	Component
	1
C1	.661
C2	.673
C3	.677
C4	.657
C5	.645

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 6.20 shows the results from factor analysis of the challenges in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff. The KMO test results of 0.767 demonstrate an acceptable sample adequacy and factor analysis for the scale. This is supported by acceptable results from+ Bartlett's test (df = 10, p = 0.000). All five sub-scales had factor loadings above 0.3 (Table 6.21), signifying a significant level of unidimensionality.

6.5 CONFIRMATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to assess and validate the measurement instruments. Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted through the use of goodness-of-fit indices (GFI).

6.5.1 Goodness of fit indices

Table 6.22: Goodness of fit indices

Fit index	Value	Interpretation
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	0.071	acceptable
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.932	acceptable
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.950	acceptable
Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	0.944	acceptable
Relative Fit Index (RFI)	0.930	acceptable
Tucker Lewis Index (TLI)	0.941	acceptable
Standardised (GFI)	0.921	acceptable

Goodness of indices tests whether the model fits the observed data. Root mean square error of approximation measures adjusted parsimony and should range between 0.05 and 0.08. Therefore, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) of 0.071 is acceptable. Normed fit index (NFI), comparative fit index (CFI), incremental fit index (IFI), relative fit index (RFI), and Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) should be between 0.90 and 1.0. These were all within the acceptable range as shown in Table 6.22. The goodness of fit index (GFI) should also be between 0.90 and 10. The goodness of fit index (GFI) attained in this study is 0.921, indicating that the model fits the observed data.

6.6 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Descriptive statistics are important to determine the extent to which research respondents agreed with the scale. Furthermore, descriptive statistics are crucial in establishing data normality, which is critical in determining whether tests such as Pearson's product-moment correlation and regression analysis can be performed. Hence, descriptive statistics tests such as mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis were performed on the current data. Table 6.23 shows the descriptive statistics for the scales used in this study, which are intrinsic motivation (IM), extrinsic motivation (EM), performance (P), existing motivational strategies (EMS), and challenges in motivating multigenerational non-academic staff (C).

Table 6.23: Descriptive statistics of scales

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Kolmogorov-Smirnov	Shapiro-Wilk
IM	4.173	8.179	.543	-1.497	>0.05	>0.05
EM	4.534	3.783	.462	1.062	>0.05	>0.05
P	3.049	7.144	.300	-1.131	>0.05	>0.05
EMS	3.057	3.863	.186	-.819	>0.05	>0.05
C	4.102	4.097	.219	-1.020	>0.05	>0.05

NOTE: IM=Intrinsic motivation; EM=Extrinsic motivation; P=Performance; EMS: Existing motivational strategies; C= Challenges in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff

Table 6.23 shows that the extrinsic motivation scale has the highest mean (m = 4.534). This means most respondents strongly agreed that most extrinsic motivators motivate them. Intrinsic motivation has the second highest mean (m = 4.173). This demonstrates that most respondents agreed with the inherent motivators presented in the questionnaire. The challenge of motivating a multi-generational non-academic staff scale has the third highest mean of 4.102, indicating that most respondents agreed with the challenges in the questionnaire. Existing motivational strategies have a mean of 3.057, suggesting that most respondents were neutral to most existing strategies. Finally, the performance scale has a mean of 3.049, which indicates that most respondents were neutral to this scale.

All the scales had a low standard deviation, suggesting there was convergence in responses by study respondents. Furthermore, the Skewness and Kurtosis tests for all the scales were between +2 and -2, indicating that the data were normal. This is also buttressed by Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, which were above the 0.05 threshold, signifying that the data is normally distributed for all the scales used in this research.

6.6.1 Existing motivational strategies

The first objective of the research was to determine the existing motivational strategies that the ZOU is implementing. Table 6.24 shows descriptive statistics of the existing motivational strategy.

Table 6.24: Existing motivational strategies – descriptive statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
I receive a competitive salary	2.10	.118	-1.736	.434
I am given a transport allowance	4.82	.096	.000	.500
I receive a cushioning allowance	3.20	.096	.319	1.052
I have the opportunity for flexible work arrangements	2.30	.096	.349	.462
There are promotional opportunities for staff members	4.07	.068	-1.697	.216
There are staff development initiatives in the university	4.05	1.238	-.118	-1.042
There is job security	4.11	1.184	-.064	-.842
I receive praise for the work done	3.45	1.201	.049	-.866
I receive constant feedback from my superiors	3.07	1.201	-.021	-.879
The work that I perform is meaningful	4.10	1.195	-.189	-.944

Table 6.24 shows that non-academic staff at the university are receiving a transport allowance. This had a superior mean of 4.82, suggesting that most study respondents strongly agree with this motivational strategy. This is in line with Nenguwo (2023), who asserts that universities in Zimbabwe are turning to the provision of transport allowance to motivate employees who are unhappy with job conditions in universities. Job security is the second primary motivational

strategy in the university, with a mean of 4.11. This indicates that most respondents agreed on the importance of job security. Chigaga (2024) states that compared to academic staff in Zimbabwe universities, non-academics have job security, which is used to enhance their performance. In addition, the research shows that meaningful work is the university's third major motivational strategy. This had a mean of 4.10, signifying that most respondents agree that meaningful work is provided. This concurs with Mushimbwe and Simuka (2021), who conclude that non-academics do work that supports academic staff to attain the university's goal. Thus, they are engaged in meaningful work.

Furthermore, the study found that promotional opportunities are also a motivational strategy used by the university, as this obtained a mean of 4.07, indicating that most respondents agreed to this sub-scale. This is consistent with Chatiza et al. (2021), who state that internal recruitment in the form of promotion is utilised to motivate and retain staff in universities in Zimbabwe. In addition, the other motivational strategy being deployed in the university is staff development initiatives, which had a mean of 4.05, showing that most respondents agreed to this sub-scale. This finding concurs with Makumbe and Washaya (2022), who posit that universities in Zimbabwe have staff development initiatives, including providing tertiary education with tuition exemption. Finally, praise from supervisors is another motivational strategy, with a mean of 3.45, indicating that respondents marginally agreed that this strategy is being deployed in the university. This concurs with Chikukwa et al. (2022) that universities in Zimbabwe are adopting cost-effective motivational strategies, such as verbal praise to employees who have performed well.

However, respondents were neutral regarding the provision of cushioning allowance, as this had a mean of 3.20. This suggests that the respondents are unsure, which means that the cushioning allowance may be in use but not consistently. This reinforces Chatiza et al.'s (2021) assertions that state universities in Zimbabwe cannot afford to consistently provide cushioning allowances to employees. In addition, constant feedback as an existing motivational strategy also received neutral responses, indicating that respondents are inconclusive. Chigagu (2024) believes that supervisors take constant feedback for granted as they view it as a waste of time, but it is a vital strategy that can be used to motivate employees. Furthermore, the study found that there is no provision of flexible work arrangements in the university for non-academic staff, as this had a mean of 2.30, demonstrating that most of the respondents disagreed with this sub-scale. This finding departs from research traditions articulated by Makumbe and Washaya (2022), who found this a motivational strategy. This difference may be due to the decline of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the pandemic, universities were coerced to implement flexible work arrangements; post-COVID pandemic, some have returned to their traditional ways. In addition, the competitive salary sub-scale had a mean of 2.10, illustrating that most respondents disagreed that they are getting competitive salaries at the university. This aligns with researchers such as Chatiza et al. (2021) and Mushibwe and Simuka (2021), who have elaborated that university staff in Zimbabwe are receiving low salaries, which has caused high labour turnover and demotivation.

6.6.2 Challenges in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff

The second objective investigated challenges in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff at the university. Table 6.25 shows descriptive statistics regarding the challenges in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff at the university.

Table 6.25: Challenges in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff – descriptive statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
There are differences in values	4.76	2.322	-1.956	.754
There are different preferences in feedback	4.02	1.478	.854	.332
There are budgetary constraints	4.51	3.861	1.743	.698
Difficulty in adhering to labour laws	4.18	2.797	.876	.371
There are administration costs that hinder the motivation of multi-generational employees	4.36	1.965	-1.803	.889

Table 6.25 demonstrates that the significant challenge in motivating the multi-generational non-academic staff at the university is that there are differences in values. This sub-scale had a mean of 4.76, demonstrating that most respondents strongly agreed. This is echoed by Du et al. (2021), who found no uniformity in the values of multi-generational staff. Generation X values job security, Generation Y values teamwork, and Generation Z values creativity, making it challenging to motivate such a group of employees (Chen & Cuervo, 2022). The second major challenge in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff at the university is budgetary constraints, with a mean of 4.51 demonstrating that most respondents strongly agreed with this variable. This is consistent with Hitka et al. (2021), who stated that to motivate a multi-generational staff, an organisation needs to have a large budget to meet diverse needs. Most organisations, including universities in developing countries, do not have such budgets (Ghani et al., 2022). In addition, the study found that administration costs hinder the motivation of multi-generational employees. This obtained a mean of 4.36, illustrating that most

respondents agreed to this sub-scale. This finding substantiates Tumi et al.'s (2022) observation that to proffer benefits that motivate every employee, organisations should have advanced payroll systems and more employees in the HR Department to administer employee benefits. This attracts administrative costs, which most organisations, particularly those in less developed economies, cannot afford (Uka & Prendi, 2021). The fourth challenge in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff in the university identified in this study is difficulty adhering to labour laws. This challenge had a mean of 4.18, demonstrating that most respondents agreed that this challenge exists. This reinforces Tang et al.'s (2021) view that in trying to implement a diverse motivational strategy to appeal to multi-generational employees, the organisation may infringe some labour laws. Most labour laws prefer employees to be rewarded homogenously, and trying to diversify may challenge adherence, which may result in detrimental litigation (Villiers, 2021). Finally, the other challenge in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff in the university established in this research is that there are different preferences regarding feedback. This had a mean of 4.02, suggesting that most respondents agreed with this challenge. This is consistent with Hitka et al. (2021), who state that some generational cohorts, such as Generation Z, prefer instant feedback. Generation Y prefers informal feedback, and Generation X prefers formal feedback. This is problematic for an organisation regarding how to offer employee feedback (Uka & Prendi, 2021).

6.6.3 Generational cohorts and motivational strategies

Table 6.26: Generational cohorts and motivational strategies

Mean Statistics			
	Generational Cohort		
	Gen X	Gen Y	Gen Z
IM1	3.03	4.79	4.52
IM2	2.77	4.88	4.97
IM3	4.05	4.96	4.57
IM4	2.31	4.04	4.87
IM5	3.07	4.56	4.89
IM6	4.17	4.89	4.90
IM7	4.80	4.15	3.24
IM8	4.16	4.67	3.29
IM9	2.73	4.44	4.97
EM1	4.98	4.77	4.45
EM2	4.79	4.32	3.41
EM3	4.87	3.32	2.40
EM4	4.45	4.07	2.18
EM5	4.86	4.75	3.56
EM6	3.97	4.90	4.17

EM7	4.79	4.51	3.16
EM8	4.76	4.12	3.41
EM9	4.37	4.76	4.43

Note: IM1: achievement, IM2: autonomy, IM3: career growth, IM4: expression, IM5: job excitement, IM6: purpose, IM7: responsibility, IM8: affiliation, IM9: task complexity, EM1: salaries, EM2: recognition, EM3: job security, EM4: competition, EM5: personal needs, EM6: work-life balance, EM7: work environment, EM8: leadership style, EM9: equipment and technology

Table 6.26 shows that employees in different generational cohorts are motivated differently. Generation X employees are motivated extrinsically, while Generation Z employees are motivated intrinsically. However, Generation Y employees can be motivated either intrinsically or extrinsically. This converges with the generational theory that generational cohorts determine people's preferences. This aligns with Siyal et al.'s (2021) observations that younger generations are more intrinsically motivated. On the other hand, older generations are more extrinsically motivated than other generations (Astuti, 2021). However, amongst intrinsic motivators, Generation X employees are motivated by career growth, purpose, responsibility, and affiliation. This converges with Herzberg's two-factor theory that these intrinsic factors can be a source of motivation. On the other hand, Generation Y and Z employees are motivated by all the indicators of intrinsic motivation. In contrast, Generation X employees are motivated by all indicators of extrinsic motivation, while Generation Y is motivated by all extrinsic motivators except job security. This contrasts with Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, which views job security as a fundamental aspect of safety needs that motivates employees regardless of generational cohort. Generation Z employees are not motivated by the majority of extrinsic motivators, but by salaries, work-life balance, and the provision of equipment and technology. This diverges from Herzberg's two-factor theory, which views strategies such as salaries as hygiene factors. In the Zimbabwean context, which is a developing economy, salaries are an integral part of the motivation of employees (Chatiza et al., 2021).

6.7 HYPOTHESIS TESTING

The study tested ten hypotheses that epitomised the problem under investigation. The study used regression analysis, the Chi-square test, and the Andrew F. Hayes tests for hypothesis testing. Regression analysis was used to test hypotheses involving variables with numerical data (H1 and H2). Chi-square tests were utilised to test hypotheses involving a variable with numerical and categorical data (H3a, H3b, H3c, H4a, H4b, and H4c). The Andrew F. Hayes test has been used to test hypotheses with a mediating variable (H5 and H6).

6.7.1 Regression analysis

Simple linear regression analysis was conducted for H1 and H2. According to Pallant (2020), the standard p-value for regression analysis is 0.05 at a 95% confidence level. Thus, any hypothesis with a p value less than 0.05 is accepted, and a hypothesis with a p value greater than 0.05 is rejected.

6.7.1.1 Intrinsic motivation and performance regression analysis

Table 6.27: Intrinsic motivation and performance – regression analysis

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.888[a]	.788	.787	3.772
a. Predictors: (Constant), Intrinsic Motivation				

Table 6.28: Intrinsic motivation and performance – ANOVA

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	11338.384	1	11338.384	796.865	.000[b]
	Residual	3044.949	214	14.229		
	Total	14383.333	215			
a. Dependent Variable: Performance						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Intrinsic Motivation						

Table 6.29: ,Intrinsic motivation and performance – coefficients

Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.435	1.127		2.160	.000
	Intrinsic motivation	.917	.036	.888	28.229	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Performance						

A regression analysis of 0.888 (Table 6.27) indicates a strong positive correlation between intrinsic motivation and performance. The more intrinsic motivation there is, the higher the performance of non-academic staff is, making the model proposed by H1 fit, given that R^2 is 0.788, indicating that intrinsic motivation explains 78.8% of performance within the university amongst non-academic staff. Therefore, the study found a strong positive relationship between intrinsic motivation and performance.

Regression results also support H1. The p value obtained is less than the standard p value of 0.05 (Table 6.28). This is substantiated with a significant beta ($\beta = 0.917$, $t = 28.229$, $p < 0.05$) (Table 6.29). Therefore, H1 is accepted, meaning a positive relationship exists between intrinsic motivation and performance. An increase in intrinsic motivation results in an increase in performance. This finding aligns with Oke's (2022) observations that motivation that emanates within employees results in them being efficient and productive. Siyal et al. (2021) contend that jobs that offer self-expression, affiliation, achievement, purpose, and status tend to motivate employees to generate quality results. Therefore, intrinsic motivation remains an integral strategy for enhancing the performance of non-academic staff in universities.

6.7.1.2 Extrinsic motivation and performance regression analysis

Table 6.30: Extrinsic motivation and performance – regression analysis

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.658[a]	.433	.431	2.854
a. Predictors: (Constant), Extrinsic motivation				

Table 6.31: Extrinsic motivation and performance – ANOVA

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1333.156	1	1333.156	163.675	.000[b]
	Residual	1743.062	214	8.145		
	Total	3076.218	215			
a. Dependent Variable: Performance						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Extrinsic Motivation						

Table 6.32: Extrinsic motivation and performance – coefficients

Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.637	.553		55.024	.000
	Extrinsic motivation	.349	.027	.158	12.794	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Performance						

Table 6.30 shows regression analysis for extrinsic motivation and performance. A regression of 0.658 demonstrates a moderate positive relationship between extrinsic motivation and performance. The model fits at an R^2 of 0.433, illustrating that extrinsic motivation explains 43.3% of performance. H2 is supported by the regression analysis that was conducted. The p-value obtained is less than the standard 0.05 (Table 6.31). Hence, H2 is supported. This is substantiated by the beta observed ($\beta = 0.349$, $t = 12.794$, $p < 0.05$) (Table 6.32). Therefore, the research indicates a positive relationship between extrinsic motivation and the performance of multi-generational non-academic staff at the university. An increase in extrinsic motivation increases performance. This is supported by Zeng et al. (2022) who assert that extrinsic motivation strategies such as providing personal needs, rewards, and job security are a source of enhancing employee performance. Yusuf (2021) observes an influx of sales and profits in organisations that offer extrinsic motivation. Inasmuch as this relationship is positive, the study found that the relationship between extrinsic motivation and performance is inferior to that between intrinsic motivation and performance. This diverges from Astuti's (2021) seminal work, which demonstrates that extrinsic and intrinsic motivation are equally important in enhancing employee performance. Hence, the research indicates that extrinsic motivation is also key to the performance of multi-generational non-academic university staff.

6.7.2 Chi-square tests

The chi-square test tests hypotheses involving a variable with categorical data and a variable with numerical data. According to Pallant (2020), the standard p-value for a chi-square test is 0.05 at a 95% confidence level. Hypotheses that score less than 0.05 are accepted, and those that score above 0.05 are rejected. Results from Chi-Square tests are presented in Table 6.33 and Table 6.34.

Table 6.33: Generational cohorts and intrinsic motivation – chi-square tests

Variable	**Chi-square (χ^2)**	**Degrees of Freedom (df)**	**p-value**
Gen X × Intrinsic motivation	398.47	12	0.131
Gen Y × Intrinsic motivation	842.65	12	0.000
Gen Z × Intrinsic motivation	1179.03	12	0.000

6.7.2.1 Generation X and intrinsic motivation

Table 6.33 shows the Chi-square test results of Generation X and intrinsic motivation. The results show that Generation X is not intrinsically motivated. This is demonstrated by a p-value above 0.05 ($p = 0.131$, $\chi^2 = 398.47$, $df = 12$). Hence, H3a is rejected. This finding is congruent with Mahmoud et al.'s (2021a) observations that Generation X is highly motivated by extrinsic rather than intrinsic motivators. This is also supported by Lee et al. (2022), who observe that Generation X employees are interested in retirement plans, rewards, and formality, which are mainly extrinsic. This finding sharply contrasts with Herzberg's two-factor theory, which shows that extrinsic motivators are hygiene factors, whereas motivation is an intrinsic process. However, this research demonstrates that Generation X is not motivated by many intrinsic motivators.

6.7.2.2 Generation Y and intrinsic motivation

Table 6.33 also shows the Chi-square test results for Generation Y and intrinsic motivation. The results demonstrate that Generation Y employees are intrinsically motivated. The p-value obtained is less than the standard 0.05 ($p = 0.000$, $\chi^2 = 842.65$, $df = 12$). Therefore, H3b is accepted. The research thus demonstrates that Generation Y non-academic employees are motivated by intrinsic motivational factors. This finding confirms observations by Hassan et al. (2019) that Generation Y employees are intrinsically motivated. Bussin et al. (2019) observe that intrinsic motivational factors such as responsibility, empowerment, and creativity highly energise Generation Y employees. Hence, this is uniform, as observed in this research.

6.7.2.3 Generation Z and intrinsic motivation

Table 6.33 shows the Chi-square test results of Generation Z and intrinsic motivation. The results demonstrate that Generation Z non-academic staff are intrinsically motivated. The p-value obtained is less than 0.05 ($p = 0.000$, $\chi^2 = 1179.03$, $df = 12$). Thus, H3c is accepted. This finding is similar to observations by Kirchmayer and Fratricova (2020), which show that Generation Y employees are motivated differently from Generation X employees. This supports Ali et al.'s (2023) recommendations that employers should invest in challenging work, providing Generation Y employees with platforms for innovation and creativity. The findings are congruent with Herzberg's two-factor theory, which demonstrates that intrinsic motivators such as job purpose and status motivate employees. This is also applicable to Generation Z non-academic employees in universities.

Results from chi-square tests for generational cohorts and extrinsic motivation are depicted in Table 6.34 below.

Table 6.34: Generational cohorts and extrinsic motivation – chi-square tests

Variable	Chi-square (χ^2)	Degrees of Freedom (df)	p-value
Gen X × extrinsic motivation	963.72	12	0.000
Gen Y × extrinsic motivation	788.40	12	0.000
Gen Z × extrinsic motivation	402.15	12	0.120

6.7.2.4 Generation X and extrinsic motivation

Table 6.34 shows results from Chi-square tests on Generation X and extrinsic motivation. The p-value obtained is less than 0.05, indicating that Generation X non-academic university staff are extrinsically motivated. Hence, based on the p-value ($p < 0.05$, $\chi^2 = 963.72$, df = 12), H4a is accepted. This finding corroborates Lee et al. (2022), who note that Generation X employees are mainly motivated by extrinsic motivators. According to Valenti (2019), organisations that use long-term service awards, formal appreciation, job security, and financial benefits motivate Generation X employees. This finding resonates with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, suggesting that providing personal needs, such as basic ones, motivates employees. However, the finding contrasts with Herzberg's seminal work, which indicates that most extrinsic motivators are hygiene factors. In this research, extrinsic motivators are observed to be instrumental in the motivation of Generation X employees.

6.7.2.5 Generation Y and extrinsic motivation

The Chi-square results in Table 6.34 display Generation Y and extrinsic motivation results. The p-value is less than 0.05, suggesting that Generation Y non-academic employees are extrinsically motivated. H4b is supported because the p-value is less than 0.05 ($p = 0.000$, $\chi^2 = 1179.03$, df = 12). This finding substantiates Hee and Kung's (2019) observations that Generation Y employees are motivated extrinsically. Younas and Waseem (2020) express that Generation Y employees are motivated by feedback, formal recognition, praise, acknowledgement, coaching, and mentoring. These factors are extrinsic in nature and are consistent with this study. Therefore, extrinsic motivational factors motivate Generation Y non-academic employees in universities.

6.7.2.6 Generation Z and extrinsic motivation

Table 6.34 also shows the Chi-square test results for Generation Z and extrinsic motivation. The results elaborate that Generation Z non-academic staff are not extrinsically motivated. H4c is not supported because the p-value is above the threshold of 0.05 ($p = 0.120$, $\chi^2 = 402.15$, df

= 12). This finding is consistent with Leslie et al. (2021), who found that Generation Z employees are motivated intrinsically. Goh and Jie (2019) demonstrate that Generation Z employees prefer intrinsic motivators such as purpose and opportunities for creativity. The findings align with Herzberg's two-factor theory that extrinsic factors, such as salaries and job security, are hygiene factors that only provide job satisfaction, not motivation. This also resonates with generational theory, which states employees from different generational cohorts have different preferences. While Generation X and Y employees are motivated extrinsically, Generation Z employees are not.

6.7.3 Andrew F. Hayes tests

Andrew F. Hayes' tests are used in mediation analysis. This is where the research aims to statistically test the mediating role of a variable on the relationship between other variables. Andrew F. Hayes' test was used to test H5 and H6. This was performed through the SPSS process macro bootstrapping technique in four phases. The standard p-value in Andrew F. Hayes' test is 0.05. Hypotheses exceeding 0.05 are rejected, whereas those below 0.05 are accepted.

6.7.3.1 Mediating role of generational cohort on intrinsic motivation and performance

Table 6.35: Mediation results of generational cohort on intrinsic motivation and performance

Path	Coefficient (β)	p-value
a (IM → P)	0.88	0.000
b (GC → IM)	0.32	0.000
c (GC→ P)	0.02	0.330
d (IM → P, controlling for GC)	0.94	0.000
a × b (indirect effect)	0.82	**Bootstrapped CI [0.33, 0.68]**

Note: IM=Intrinsic motivation, P=performance, GC=Generational cohort

Table 6.35 shows the mediation analysis from the Andre F. Hayes test. The test was conducted in four stages. The first stage was to establish the relationship between intrinsic motivation and performance. This relationship was positive and significant ($\beta = 0.88$, $p < 0.05$). The second phase determined the impact of generational cohort on intrinsic motivation, and this relationship was positive and significant ($\beta = 0.32$, $p < 0.05$). The third phase involved testing the relationship between generational cohort and performance. There was no statistically significant relationship between generational cohort and performance ($\beta = 0.02$, $p > 0.05$). The final phase tested the mediating role of generational cohort on the relationship between intrinsic motivation and performance. The results show that generational cohort mediates the relationship between intrinsic motivation and performance. H5 is supported as the p value is below the standard 0.05 ($p = 0.000$). This finding resonates with Ioannis (2021), who observes that employees from different generational cohorts respond differently to intrinsic motivation. Kothari et al. (2024) submit that younger generations, such as Generation Y and Z, prefer intrinsic motivation, whereas older generations, such as Generation X, prefer extrinsic motivation. This finding is similar to the assumptions of the generational theory that people from different generations have different preferences. However, the study diverges from Nguyen (2022), who maintains that employees from different generations can be intrinsically motivated uniformly. This study establishes that generational cohort determines the relationship between intrinsic motivation and performance.

6.7.3.2 Mediating role of generational cohort on extrinsic motivation and performance

Table 6.36: Mediation results of generational cohort on extrinsic motivation and performance

Path	**Coefficient (β)**	**p-value**
a (EM → P)	0.66	0.000
b (GC → EM)	0.40	0.000
c (GC→ P)	0.11	0.134
d (EM → P, controlling for GC)	0.78	0.000
a × b (indirect effect)	0.52	**Bootstrapped CI [0.51, 0.98]**

Note: EM=Extrinsic motivation, P=performance, GC=Generational cohort

Table 6.36 illustrates the mediation analysis conducted through the Andrew F. Hayes test. The test was in four phases. The first phase was to establish the relationship between extrinsic motivation and performance. The relationship was positive and significant ($\beta = 0.66$, $p < 0.05$). The second stage established the impact of generational cohort on extrinsic motivation, and this relationship was positive and significant ($\beta = 0.40$, $p < 0.05$). The third stage tested the relationship between generational cohort and performance. There was no statistically significant relationship between generational cohort and performance ($\beta = 0.11$, $p > 0.05$). The fourth stage tested the mediating role of generational cohort on the relationship between extrinsic motivation and performance. The results demonstrated that generational cohort mediates the relationship between intrinsic motivation and performance. H6 is supported as the p value is below 0.05 ($p = 0.000$). This finding is consistent with Machova (2024), who submits that the desire for extrinsic motivation depends on the generational cohort. The older the generational cohort, the more it can be motivated extrinsically with factors such as salaries and job security (Grenčíková et al., 2022). However, this finding diverges from Chala et al. (2022), who found that all employees are motivated similarly through extrinsic motivation. This study, therefore, illustrates that generational cohort mediates the relationship between extrinsic motivation and performance.

6.8 MODEL FOR PERFORMANCE OF MULTI-GENERATIONAL NON-ACADEMIC STAFF

Figure 6.4 shows the results of this study's structural equation modelling (SEM). The latent variables are challenges, intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, generational cohorts, and performance. C1-C5 are indicators of challenges, IM1-IM9 are factors of intrinsic motivation, EM1-EM9 are indicators of extrinsic motivation, and P1-P10 are performance factors. Most factor loadings for each latent variable are above 0.7, indicating they are a good measure of the variable.

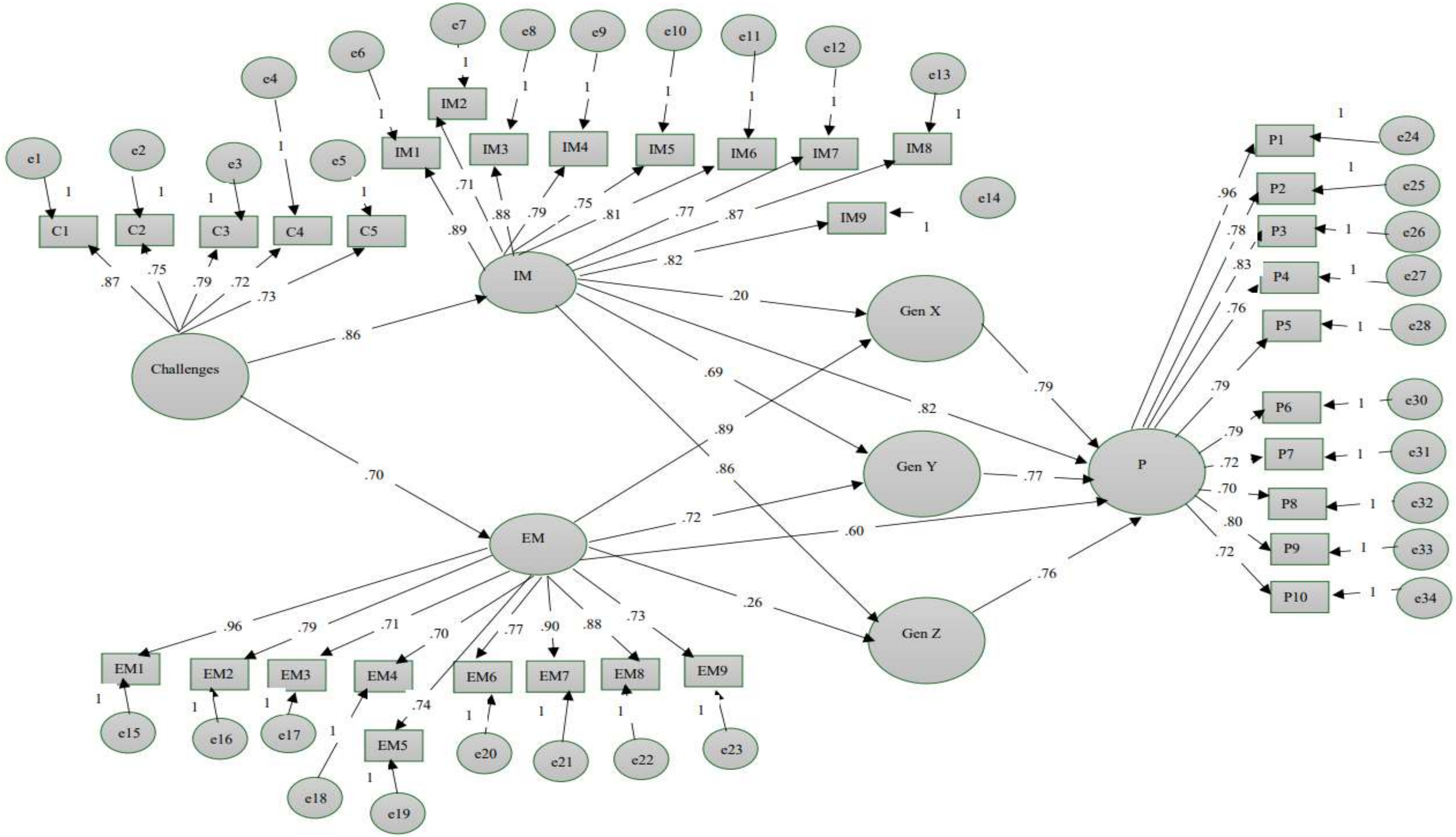

Figure 6.4: SEM for performance of multi-generational non-academic staff

Path coefficients in the SEM results demonstrate the regression weights of factor loadings. Challenges in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff have a strong positive effect on intrinsic motivation (0.86) and extrinsic motivation (0.70). Both intrinsic motivation (0.82) and extrinsic motivation (0.76) strongly affect performance. However, inherent motivation marginally edges extrinsic motivation in terms of positive effects on performance. This aligns with Riyato et al.'s (2021) observations that intrinsic motivation is better than extrinsic motivation. However, this diverges from Astuti's (2021) observations that extrinsic and intrinsic are equally crucial in improving employee performance.

The SEM shows that the path coefficients for intrinsic motivation differ between generational cohorts. Intrinsic motivation positively affects Generation Z (0.86) more than other generational cohorts. Intrinsic motivation has moderate positive effects on Generation Y (0.69), which is lower than the effect on Generation Z. However, intrinsic motivation has statistically insignificant positive effects on Generation X (0.20). This means that different generational cohorts are intrinsically motivated differently. The younger the generation, the more intrinsically motivated it is (Siyal et al., 2021). This corroborates the generational theory that people from different generations have different preferences.

In addition, the SEM shows that the path coefficients of extrinsic motivation vary according to generational cohort. Extrinsic motivation has more positive effects on Generation X (0.89) than on other generational cohorts. Extrinsic motivation has moderate positive effects on Generation Y (0.72), which is lower than its effect on Generation X. However, extrinsic motivation has statistically insignificant positive effects on Generation Z (0.26). Therefore, different generational cohorts are extrinsically motivated differently. The older the generation, the more extrinsically motivated it is (Ali et al., 2023). This corroborates the generational theory that demonstrates that their generational cohort shapes people's preferences.

Finally, the SEM shows no statistically significant difference in performance between generational cohorts. Generation X (0.79), Generation Y (0.77), and Generation Z (0.76) all have more or less equal contributions to performance. This contrasts with research by Ozturk and Yildirim (2023), who assert that older generations are hard workers. However, this study shows that performance is not dependent on the generational cohort of the employee.

6.9 FRAMEWORK OF MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES AND PERFORMANCE FOR MULTI-GENERATIONAL NON-ACADEMIC STAFF

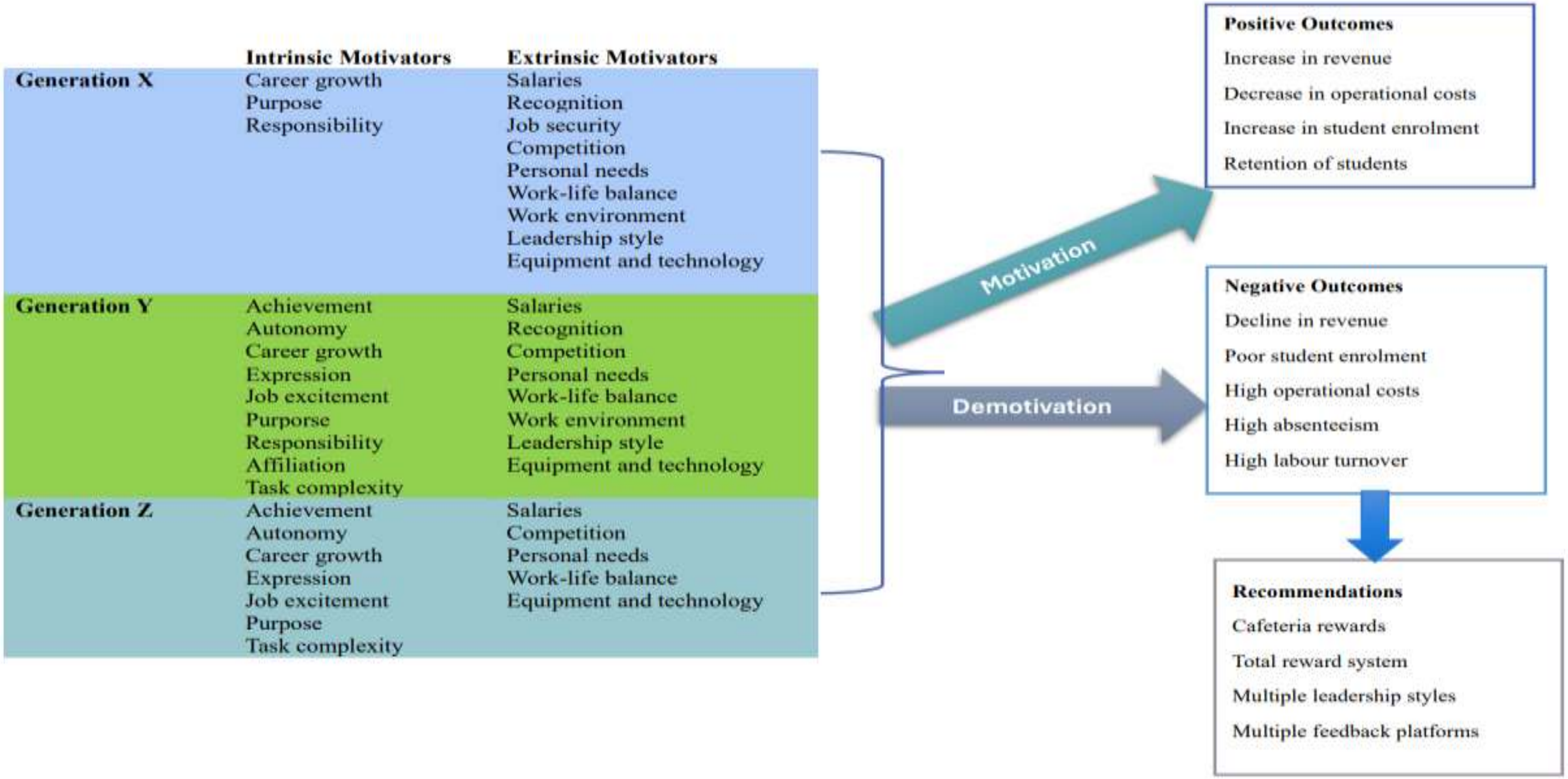

Figure 6.5: Framework of motivational strategies and performance

Figure 6.5 shows the proposed motivational strategies and performance framework for multi-generational non-academic university staff. The conceptual model addresses what motivates each generational cohort. The framework indicates that a generational cohort determines what motivates an individual. According to this research, intrinsic motivators for Generation X employees are career growth, purpose, and responsibility (Table 6.26). This is in line with Setivan et al. (2019), who note that employees of the Generation X cohort are enthused by more responsibility and carrying out tasks that have purpose. The framework shows that employees who belong to the Generation X cohort are not significantly motivated intrinsically. Furthermore, the research supports Rank and Contreras (2021) observations that Generation X employees are motivated by career growth initiatives such as training, development, and promotion (Table 6.26). However, the framework shows that the bulk of the initiatives of intrinsic motivation, such as autonomy, achievement, expression, job excitement, affiliation, and task complexity, do not motivate Generation X employees (Table 6.26). This contrasts with the motivational framework of Klesta et al. (2024), which demonstrates that Generation X employees are motivated by social relations (affiliation) and work-life balance.

The framework shows that extrinsic motivators for Generation X are salaries, recognition, job security, personal needs, work-life balance, work environment, leadership style, and provision of resources (Table 6.26). In contrast to other generational cohorts, the framework elaborates that Generation X is more motivated extrinsically than Generations Y and Z. This aligns with Klesta et al.'s (2024) framework, which shows that Generation X is motivated extrinsically rather than intrinsically. The finding also corroborates Busin's (2019) framework, which indicates that external factors such as job security, provision of resources, and remuneration motivate Generation X employees.

The framework shows that Generation Y employees are between the other two generations in terms of motivation. This means they can be motivated by many external and internal factors. Intrinsic factors that motivate Generation Y employees are achievement, autonomy, career growth, expression, job excitement, purpose, responsibility, affiliation, and task complexity (Table 6.26). This resonates with Chala et al.'s (2021) motivation framework that depicts Generation Y employees as motivated by career prospects, autonomy, and excitement (Table 6.26). However, this finding differs from Klesta et al.'s (2024) framework, which shows that pleasure (job excitement) and meaningful work do not enthuse Generation Y employees. But the Klesta et al. (2024) framework also shows that extrinsic motivators significantly motivate Generation Y employees.

Furthermore, the resultant framework shows that Generation Y employees can be significantly motivated extrinsically. Factors include salaries, recognition, personal needs, work-life balance, work environment, leadership style, and provision of resources (Table 6.26). This means that most extrinsic factors that motivate Generation X employees also motivate Generation Y employees. However, job security is not a motivator for this generational cohort (Table 6.26). This diverges from Bussin's (2019) framework, which classifies safety and job security as primary extrinsic motivators for Generation Y employees. Nonetheless, Bussin (2019) agrees that extrinsic factors such as recognition and benefits motivate these employees.

The framework demonstrates what motivates Generation Z employees. The framework shows that this generational cohort is significantly intrinsically motivated. They are motivated by intrinsic factors such as achievement, autonomy, career growth, expression, job excitement, purpose, and task complexity (Table 6.26). This resonates with Chala et al.'s (2021) framework that Generation Z employees are motivated by internal factors such as career growth and autonomy. However, the framework shows that intrinsic factors such as responsibility and affiliation do not encourage this generational cohort, hence differing from Klesta et al.'s (2024) framework, which articulates these two as some of the critical intrinsic motivators for this generational cohort. Nonetheless, the two frameworks converge in acknowledging that Generation Z employees are intrinsically motivated.

The framework shows that the Generation Z cohort is less extrinsically motivated than Generations X and Y. However, only factors such as salaries, competition, personal needs, work-life balance, equipment, and technology motivate this generational cohort (Table 6.25). This agrees with the Klesta et al.'s (2024) framework, which demonstrates that these external factors can motivate Generation Z employees. However, the finding does not resonate with Forson et al. (2021), which shows that this generational cohort can be more motivated extrinsically. However, many frameworks, including Chala et al.'s (2021) and Klesta et al.'s (2024), agree that Generation Z is best motivated intrinsically.

In addition, the framework shows positive motivation outcomes. Once employees are motivated, revenue increases, operational costs decrease, student enrolment increases, and student retention improves. This finding converges with Busin (2019), who states that motivation results in efficiency and effectiveness. Chatiza et al. (2021) state that an increase in motivation results in the effectiveness of universities in student enrolment and retention. The framework also elaborates on adverse outcomes in the case of demotivation. Where there is demotivation, the university experiences a decline in revenue, poor student enrolment, high operational costs, high absenteeism, and high labour turnover. This is substantiated by Klesta et al. (2024), who found that an organisation loses its competitiveness during demotivation. Revenue and customers begin to decline (Chala et al., 2021).

The framework demonstrates recommendations that are strategies that the university needs to employ to avoid demotivation. The university needs to adopt cafeteria rewards. This aligns with the Klesta et al. (2024) framework, which shows that cafeteria rewards (a strategy of offering a large pool of rewards, and staff choosing whichever reward they want) are essential in motivating a diverse workforce. In addition, the framework recommends the use of total rewards. The university should employ not only financial rewards but also non-financial rewards. This is consistent with Busin (2019), who found that all types of rewards, such as direct, indirect, tangible, and intangible, are essential in motivating employees. Furthermore, the proposed framework recommends multiple leadership styles and multiple feedback platforms. This is also demonstrated by Chala et al. (2021), that some generational cohorts prefer a democratic leadership style while others prefer laissez-faire. Therefore, an organisation with a generationally diverse workforce requires diverse leadership styles. The framework resonates with Klesta et al. (2024), who aver that where there is a diverse generational workforce, feedback systems should be diversified, as some may prefer formal, informal, and instant feedback systems depending on generational cohorts. The framework is necessary because it depicts what motivates each generational cohort, the positive and negative outcomes of the motivation process, and recommendations for the university to improve motivation.

6.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented findings and discussions. The response rate for this research was 92%, and results from Cronbach's Alpha were above 0.7, signifying that the research had internal reliability. Factor analysis was conducted using KMO and Bartlett tests, and all factors had p values below 0.05, indicating no issues in factor analysis. The descriptive statistics of skewness and kurtosis demonstrate that the data have a normal distribution. Descriptive statistics show that transport allowance, job security, staff development, meaningful work, and promotional opportunities are existing motivational strategies. The descriptive statistics also highlight that differences in values, budgetary constraints, administration costs, difficulty adhering to labour laws, and different preferences in feedback are challenges in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff. Furthermore, the descriptive statistics also show that Generation X employees are significantly motivated extrinsically, Generation Z employees are motivated considerably intrinsically, and Generation Y employees are motivated by both extrinsic and intrinsic motivators. H1 and H2 were tested through multiple linear regression. Both hypotheses were supported because their p-values were below the standard 0.05. H3a-H4c were tested via Chi-square tests, and H3a and H4c were not supported because their p-values were above the standard 0.05. H3b, H3c, H4a, and H4b were supported because their p-values were below the standard 0.05. H5 and H6 were tested through the Andrew F. Hayes test, and both hypotheses were supported because their p-values were below the standard 0.05, proving that generational cohort mediates the relationship between motivation and performance. Finally, the chapter presented a framework of what motivates each generational cohort, the positive and negative outcomes, and recommendations to boost motivation. The next chapter summarises and concludes this research.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter marks the end of the research and presents a summary of the findings regarding the hypotheses, conclusions from the data analysis, and recommendations arising from the findings. The limitations of the study are discussed, and future research directions on the motivation of the multi-generational workforce are proposed.

7.2 CONCLUSION

The study aimed to investigate motivational strategies of multi-generational non-academic staff performance. The research was quantitative in nature to identify relationships between variables. SPSS version 30.0 was used for data analysis. Ten hypotheses were tested in the study, and Table 7.1 summarises the hypotheses supported and not supported.

Table 7.1: Summary of hypotheses testing

Hypotheses	Results
H1: There is a positive relationship between intrinsic motivation and the high performance of non-academic staff.	Supported
H2: There is a positive relationship between extrinsic motivation and the high performance of non-academic staff.	Supported
H3a: Generation X non-academic staff are intrinsically motivated	Not supported
H3b: Generation Y non-academic staff are intrinsically motivated	Supported
H3c: Generation Z non-academic staff are intrinsically motivated	Supported
H4a: Generation X non-academic staff are extrinsically motivated	Supported
H4b: Generation Y non-academic staff are extrinsically motivated	Supported
H4c: Generation Z non-academic staff are extrinsically motivated	Not supported
H5: Generational cohort mediates the effects of intrinsic motivation on non-academic staff performance	Supported
H6: Generational cohort mediates the effects of extrinsic motivation on the performance of non-academic staff	Supported

7.2.1 Objective 1: Motivational strategies currently implemented at the university

The first objective was to assess the motivational strategies that were currently being implemented at the time of the study. Descriptive statistics were used to identify and compare the motivational strategies that the university was using. Strategies identified were transport allowance, job security, promotional opportunities, and meaningful work. Considering the findings of the literature survey, it is evident that competitive salary, flexible work arrangements, praise for work done, cushioning allowance, and constant feedback were not being deployed at the university.

7.2.2 Objective 2: Challenges in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff at the university

The second objective investigated challenges in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff at the university. The study shows that differences in values, budgetary constraints, administration costs, difficulty adhering to labour laws, and different preferences in feedback are challenges in motivating multi-generational non-academic staff.

7.2.3 Objective 3: Relationship between intrinsic motivation and performance of multi-generational non-academic staff at the university

The third objective was to determine the relationship between intrinsic motivation and the performance of multi-generational non-academic staff at the university. Regression analysis shows a strong positive relationship between intrinsic motivation and the performance of multi-generational non-academic staff at the university. An increase in intrinsic motivation results in an increase in performance.

7.2.4 Objective 4: Relationship between extrinsic motivation and the performance of the multi-generational non-academic staff at the university

The fourth objective was to investigate the relationship between extrinsic motivation and the performance of the multi-generational non-academic staff at the university. Regression analysis shows a moderate positive relationship between extrinsic motivation and the performance of the multi-generational non-academic staff at the university. An increase in extrinsic motivation results in a moderate increase in the performance of non-academic staff.

7.2.5 Objective 5: Mediating role of the generational cohort on the effects of intrinsic motivation on the performance of non-academic staff at the university

The fifth objective of the study was to determine the mediating role of generational cohort on the effects of intrinsic motivation on the performance of non-academic staff at the university. Mediation analysis through Andrew F. Hayes tests produced a p-value below 0.05, demonstrating that generational cohort significantly mediates the effects of intrinsic motivation on the performance of non-academic staff.

7.2.6 Objective 6: Mediating role of the generational cohort on the effects of extrinsic motivation on the performance of non-academic staff at the university

The sixth objective of the study was to determine the mediating role of the generational cohort on the effects of extrinsic motivation on the performance of non-academic staff at the university. Mediation analysis through Andrew F. Hayes tests showed a p-value below 0.05, signifying that generational cohort significantly mediates the effects of extrinsic motivation on the performance of non-academic staff.

7.2.7 Objective 7: Framework of motivational strategies and performance of a multi-generational non-academic workforce based on the findings

The final objective of the study was to develop a framework of motivational strategies and performance of a multi-generational non-academic workforce based on the findings. The developed framework shows that Generation X employees are significantly motivated by extrinsic motivators, while Generation Z employees are considerably more motivated by intrinsic factors. On the other hand, the Generation Y cohort is motivated substantially by both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. The process of motivation leads to positive outcomes for the institution, such as increasing revenue, decreasing operational costs, increasing student enrolment, and improving student retention.

7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the research, the following recommendations are suggested.

7.3.1 Intrinsic motivation and performance

The research demonstrates that intrinsic motivation strongly influences performance for multi-generational non-academic staff. Furthermore, the study shows that intrinsic motivators influence younger generations, such as Generations Y and Z. According to Acquah et al. (2021), intrinsic motivation is key because it is generated within an employee. Therefore, universities should adopt intrinsic motivation by offering an array of intrinsic motivators such as autonomy, achievement, expression, job excitement, affiliation, and task complexity to motivate multi-generational non-academic staff, particularly those belonging to Generations Y and Z.

7.3.2 Extrinsic motivation and performance

The empirical study demonstrates that extrinsic motivation positively enhances the performance of multi-generational non-academic staff in the university. The research demonstrates that salary is the most important extrinsic motivator, because all employees regardless of generational cohort are motivated by salaries. This is in line with Acheampong (2021) who states that salaries are significant in developing countries such as Zimbabwe. It is, therefore, recommended that universities offer competitive salaries for their staff. In addition, the research demonstrates that extrinsic motivators significantly motivate Generations X and Y employees. Hence, there is a need for universities to offer extrinsic motivators such as recognition, job security, personal needs, work-life balance, work environment, leadership style and provision of resources. This will enhance performance of multi-generational non-academic staff.

7.3.3 Intrinsic motivation, generational cohort, and performance

The study elaborates that generational cohort significantly mediates the relationship between intrinsic motivation and performance. The research shows that the younger the generation the more it is intrinsically motivated. This is aligned with Alase and Akinbo (2021) who found that Generation X is not significantly motivated by intrinsic motivators. Therefore, universities should invest in intrinsic motivators for Generations Y and Z employees in order to enhance their performance.

7.3.4 Extrinsic motivation, generational cohort, and performance

The research illustrates that generational cohort significantly mediates the relationship between extrinsic motivation and performance. The study demonstrates that the older the generation, the more it is extrinsically motivated. This supports the findings of Rank and Contreras (2021). These authors showed that Generation X is significantly motivated by extrinsic motivators, compared to Generations Y and Z. Therefore, universities should invest in extrinsic motivators for Generation X and Y non-academic staff to improve their performance.

7.3.5 Motivation and performance for multi-generational non-academic staff

Finally, the research recommends adopting the framework illustrated in Figure 6.5 which was developed as a result of the data analysis in this study, to address motivation and performance challenges. The framework recommends using career growth, purpose, and responsibility as intrinsic motivators for Generation X. In addition, it recommends that extrinsic motivators such as salaries, recognition, job security, personal needs, work-life balance, work environment, leadership style and provision of resources be used to motivate Generation X. The framework also recommends use of intrinsic motivators such as achievement, autonomy, career growth, expression, job excitement, purpose, responsibility, affiliation and task complexity for Generation Y. In addition, extrinsic motivators, such as salaries, recognition, personal needs, work-life balance, work environment, leadership style, and provision of resources, should be used to motivate Generation Y. The framework recommends that intrinsic factors such as achievement, autonomy, career growth, expression, job excitement, purpose, and task complexity be used to motivate Generation Z. Furthermore, extrinsic factors such as salaries, competition, personal needs, work-life balance, equipment, and technology should be used to motivate Generation Z. It is also recommended that universities adopt a total reward system, a cafeteria reward system, multiple leadership styles, and multiple feedback mechanisms.

7.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research was confined to Generation X, Y, and Z multi-generational non-academic staff at the ZOU. The study excluded Baby Boomers because their number was low compared to the three generational cohorts used in this study at the ZOU. Therefore, the findings apply only to Generation X, Y, and Z multi-generational non-academic staff at the ZOU. The research used quantitative methodology only to determine relationships between variables. The study only focused on non-academic staff; academic staff were excluded because many studies have focused on their motivation. The study used closed-ended questionnaires, with 216 respondents out of the targeted 234, a response rate of 92%. Literature on the motivation of multi-generational non-academic staff in universities was limited. Therefore, literature on the motivation of multi-generational employees in other contexts was also used in this study.

7.5 FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTION

Future studies can utilise mixed methodology, where qualitative methodology can explain the quantitative results of the motivation and performance of Generation X, Y, and Z of multi-generational non-academic staff. This methodology can also be used to investigate motivational strategies and the performance of multi-generational academic staff in the ZOU.

The current study focused on the ZOU, a state university. Future studies can focus on private universities in Zimbabwe to investigate motivational strategies and the performance of multi-generational staff in those institutions. In due course, future studies can adopt a comparative study approach to compare the motivation and performance of Generation X, Y, and Z employees in state universities to those in private universities.

Future research should also test the motivation and performance framework developed in this study so that it can be continuously improved.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE

DUT
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Email: lavishad@dut.ac.za
http://www.dut.ac.za/research/institutional_research_ethics

www.dut.ac.za

17 March 2025

Mr R M Muchowe
Department of Human Resources Management
Faculty of Management Sciences
Durban University of Technology

Dear Mr Muchowe

Motivational Strategies for improved Performance of Multi-Generational Non-Academic Staff at a Selected State University in Zimbabwe
Ethics Clearance Number: IREC 016/25

The DUT-Institutional Research Ethics Committee acknowledges receipt of your final data collection tool for review.

We are pleased to inform you that the data collection tool has been approved. Kindly ensure that participants used for the pilot study are not part of the main study.

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 DUT-IREC according to the DUT-IREC SOP's.

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

It is compulsory for a student or researcher to apply for recertification on an annual basis. The failure to do so will result in withdrawal of ethics clearance. It is the responsibility of the researcher and the supervisor to apply for recertification.

Please note that you are required to submit a Notification of Completion of Study form together with an abstract to the DUT-IREC office on completion of your study.

Yours Sincerely

Professor P Mashau
Chairperson: DUT-IREC

APPENDIX B: GATEKEEPER'S LETTER

ZIMBABWE OPEN UNIVERSITY

"Empowerment Through Open Learning" ®

F/REF: HR/2/7/1

4 July 2024

Mr Regis Muchowe
C/O Faculty of Commerce
Zimbabwe Open University

Dear Mr Muchowe

RE : AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: MR REGIS MUCHOWE: LECTURER: DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT: FACULTY OF COMMERCE

Reference

'A' Approval from the Registrar to carry out research at the Zimbabwe Open University reference HR2/7/1, dated 4 July 2024.

'B' A letter from Mr Regis Muchowe to the Deputy Registrar, Human Resources dated 2 July 2024.

Kindly be advised that authority has been granted for you to conduct research at the Zimbabwe Open University. Your research topic is entitled ***"Motivation strategies for improved performance of multi-generational non-academic staff at a selected State University in Zimbabwe".***

Kindly submit your findings to the University upon completion of your study.

Thank you,

Ms M. Masveure
ACTING DEPUTY REGISTRAR, HUMAN RESOURCES

Cc : Registrar
Dean, Faculty of Commerce
Director, RITT
Manager, Human Resources/Personal File

APPENDIX C: LETTER OF INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

LETTER OF INFORMATION

Title of the Research Study: Motivational Strategies for improved Performance of Multi-Generational Non-Academic Staff at a Selected State University in Zimbabwe.

Principal Investigator/s/researcher: Regis Misheal Muchowe

Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s: Dr Ashnee Rajlal and Dr Anos Chitamba

Brief Introduction and Purpose of the Study:

I am a PhD in Management Sciences- Human Resources student at Durban University of Technology. I want to invite you to participate in the research on motivational strategies for improved performance of multi-generational non-academic staff in a state university in Zimbabwe.

The main purpose of the study is to investigate motivational strategies that can be used for a multi-generational non-academic workforce. The study seeks to explore differences in performance levels amongst the different generational cohorts. The study also seeks to explore the relationship between extrinsic motivation and performance of multi-generational non-academic workforce. Furthermore, the investigation will explore the relationship between intrinsic motivation and performance of multi-generational workforce. The research will collect data from 239 non-academic employees who are part of generational cohorts of X, Y and Z. The research is aimed at coming up with lasting solutions on problems of performance of a multi-generational non-academic workforce at Zimbabwe Open University.

The research will be conducted by the researcher solely for academic purposes. Therefore, you will not receive any monetary or other types of remuneration from the researcher. Also, you are not required to cover any costs towards the research. The information that you will provide will be used for academic purposes and will be treated with confidentiality. Thus, you are expected to complete the questionnaires freely, and you should refrain from writing your name on the questionnaire to protect your identity.

The findings of the research will be contained in the final report (thesis) that will be submitted to Durban University of Technology. Also, the researcher will publish four papers in peer-reviewed journals. The outcome of the research is expected to be of great benefit to your university to solve performance problems. Therefore, you will be given access to the outcome of the investigation.

In the event that you have any problem or query, please contact the following:

Researcher: Phone number: +263771043440

My supervisors: Phone number: +270847113608 or +2744064807

DUT-Institutional Research Ethics Administrator: Phone number: 031 373 2375.

The Acting Director: Research and Postgraduate Support: researchdirector@dut.ac.za

CONSENT FORM

Full Title of the Study: Motivational Strategies for improved Performance of Multi-Generational Non-Academic Staff at a Selected State University in Zimbabwe.

Names of Researcher/s: Regis Misheal Muchowe

Statement of Agreement to Participate in the Research Study:

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher,, about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study –

Research Ethics Clearance Number: IREC 016/25,

□ I have also received, read and understood the above written information (Participant Letter of Information) regarding the study.

□ I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.

□ In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerised system by the researcher.

□ I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study.

□ I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study.

□ I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research which may relate to my participation will be made available to me.

Full Name of Participant Date Time Signature / Right

Thumbprint

I , herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study.

Full Name of Researcher Date Signature

Full Name of Witness (If applicable) Date Signature

Full Name of Legal Guardian (If applicable) Date

APPENDIX D: CLOSED-ENDED QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE ON MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVED PERFORMANCE OF MULTI-GENERATIONAL NON-ACADEMIC STAFF AT A SELECTED STATE UNIVERSITY IN ZIMBABWE.

INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS

1. **PLEASE TICK ONLY ONE RESPONSE IN APPROPRIATE BOX**
2. **ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS**
3. **PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE ANY QUESTIONS BLANK**

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. PLEASE INDICATE YOUR GENDER

		TICK
G1	MALE	
G2	FEMALE	
G3	PREFER NOT TO SAY	

2. PLEASE INDICATE YOUR AGE

		TICK
2.1	18-27 (Generation Z)	
2.2	28-43 (Generation Y)	
2.3	44-59 (Generation X)	

3. PLEASE INDICATE YOUR QUALIFICATIONS

		TICK
3.1	O' LEVEL	
3.2	A' LEVEL	
3.3	DIPLOMA	
3.4	DEGREE	
3.5	MASTERS	
3.6	DOCTORATE	

4. PLEASE INDICATE YOUR LENGTH OF SERVICE

		TICK
4.1	1-5 YEARS	
4.2	6-10 YEARS	
4.3	11-15 YEARS	
4.4	16-20 YEARS	
4.5	21-25 YEARS	

SECTION B: INTRINSIC MOTIVATION

According to Lee & Chan (2020) motivation refers to all energetic forces that make employees increase work performance. Hesar et al (2019) define intrinsic motivation as motivation that is generated within an employee.

Please tick where applicable

Code	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
IM1	Small and big achievements make me motivated	1	2	3	4	5
IM2	I am motivated by having autonomy	1	2	3	4	5
IM3	Opportunities for career growth make me work harder	1	2	3	4	5
IM4	I am motivated by a job that makes me express myself	1	2	3	4	5
IM5	I work harder if the job and the excite me	1	2	3	4	5
IM6	Tasks that have a purpose motivate me	1	2	3	4	5
IM7	I work harder if I am given more responsibility for my work	1	2	3	4	5
IM8	I am motivated by being affiliated with my co-workers	1	2	3	4	5

IM9	I am motivated by complex tasks	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION C: EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION

According to Lee & Chan (2020) motivation refers to all energetic forces that make employees increase work performance. According to Lous & Steyn (2021) extrinsic motivation is any trigger that enhance work performance that comes from external factors

Please tick where applicable

Code	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
EM1	I work harder if I am given more salary	1	2	3	4	5
EM2	Recognition at work motivates me	1	2	3	4	5
EM3	I am motivated by job security	1	2	3	4	5
EM4	I work better if I am competing with my colleagues	1	2	3	4	5
EM5	I am motivated by fulfilment of my personal needs	1	2	3	4	5
EM6	Provision of work-life balance motivates me	1	2	3	4	5

EM7	A conducive working environment motivates me	1	2	3	4	5
EM8	The leadership style of my superior motivates me	1	2	3	4	5
EM9	The work equipment and technology I use motivates me	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION D: PERFORMANCE

According to Elvina & Chao (2019) performance is the level of success linked to an individual's targets and goals

Please tick where applicable

Code	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
P1	My efforts have generated third income stream for Zimbabwe Open University	1	2	3	4	5
P2	I have reduced operational costs relating to my job	1	2	3	4	5
P3	I have brought more students for enrolment	1	2	3	4	5
P4	I respond to student complaints timeously	1	2	3	4	5
P5	I have received little complaints from colleagues pertaining to my performance	1	2	3	4	5

P6	I have received little complaints from my supervisor pertaining to my performance	1	2	3	4	5
P7	I have received little complaints from students pertaining to my performance	1	2	3	4	5
P8	I respond to requests timeously	1	2	3	4	5
P9	I meet work deadlines	1	2	3	4	5
P10	I receive recognition from my supervisor for my work	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION E: EXISTING MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES

Motivational strategies are techniques used to drive employees to improve their performance (Lee & Chan, 2020).

Please tick where applicable

Code	**Statement**	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
EMS1	I receive a competitive salary	1	2	3	4	5
EMS2	I am given transport allowance	1	2	3	4	5
EMS3	I receive cushioning allowance	1	2	3	4	5

EMS4	I have the opportunity for flexible work arrangements	1	2	3	4	5
EMS5	There are promotional opportunities for staff members	1	2	3	4	5
EMS6	There are staff development initiatives in the university	1	2	3	4	5
EMS7	There is job security	1	2	3	4	5
EMS8	I receive praise for work done	1	2	3	4	5
EMS9	I receive constant feedback from my superiors	1	2	3	4	5
EMS10	The work that I perform is meaningful	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION F: CHALLENGES IN MOTIVATING MULTI-GENERATIONAL NON-ACADEMIC STAFF

Code	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
C1	There are differences in values	1	2	3	4	5
C2	There are different preferences in feedback	1	2	3	4	5
C3	There are budgetary constraints	1	2	3	4	5

C4	Difficulty in adhering to labour laws	1	2	3	4	5
C5	There are administration costs which hinder the motivation of MG employees	1	2	3	4	5

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CORPORATION IN COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX E: EDITING CERTIFICATE

DR RICHARD STEELE
BA HDE MTech(Hom)
HOMEOPATH
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Practice No. 0807524
Freelance academic editor
Associate member: Professional Editors' Guild, South Africa

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Eastern Cape

082-928-6208
rsteele@vodamail.co.za
rsteele201@outlook.com

EDITING CERTIFICATE

Re: **REGIS MISHEAL MUCHOWE**
DUT doctoral thesis: **MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVED PERFORMANCE OF MULTI-GENERATIONAL NON-ACADEMIC STAFF AT A SELECTED STATE UNIVERSITY IN ZIMBABWE**

I confirm that I have edited this thesis for clarity and language. I did not edit the references. I returned the document to the author with track changes so correct implementation of the changes and clarifications requested in the text is the responsibility of the author. I am a freelance editor specialising in proofreading and editing academic documents. My original tertiary degree which I obtained at the University of Cape Town was a B.A. with English as a major and I went on to complete an H.D.E. (P.G.) Sec. with English as my teaching subject. I was a part-time lecturer in the Department of Homoeopathy at the Durban University of Technology for 13 years and supervised many master's degree dissertations during that period.

Dr Richard Steele
11 June 2025
per email

APPENDIX F: TURNIT IN REPORT

Regis Muchowe Thesis

ORIGINALITY REPORT

2%	1%	2%	1%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	researchspace.ukzn.ac.za Internet Source	<1%
2	openscholar.dut.ac.za Internet Source	<1%
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Supervisor: Date: 08/07/2025

Co-Supervisor Date: 08/07/2025