An investigation into the role of generational differences in the career types, progression and success of British managers.

Douglas Yourston

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Abstract

Research into generational differences in the workplace is limited. Academic studies range from being robust to those which portray generational differences in more generalised terms, omitting characteristics such as age, life-stage, gender or profession. Studies into a career style, progression and career success, are likewise varied, being studied from a range of different perspectives, including gender, life-stage or age; however, to date, there has been no research conducted from a generational perspective. There has also been an acknowledgement that there have been only a few studies conducted that have a clear theoretical and empirical underpinning. With the majority being quantitative-centric; these studies do not have the rich insight into understanding the complexities surrounding a generation and / or of an individual's career that a qualitative study would offer. Reflecting this existing gap, the aim of this study to investigate the role of generational differences in an individual, British manager's career type, progression and perception of career success. The main study using an interpretivist methodology in the form of semi-structured interviews, investigated the careers of 42 British managers across three generations. The participants' CVs were analysed using a documentary analysis approach, while the findings were interpreted using content analysis.

The study's first key finding is the acknowledgement that there is theoretical and empirical evidence to support the contention that a generation is a reliable means for grouping individuals. The second key finding of the study using, Verbruggen et al.'s (2008) Career Categorisation model, relates to the career types and progression are influenced by a generational grouping. This study contends that career styles and career progression are influenced by determinants such as age, life-stage, gender, profession but also by their generation. The final key finding is that the Kaleidoscope Career model provides a means to view differences towards career success from a generational perspective, but also reveals that a generation does not operate in isolation; rather, an individual's profession, life-stage and gender are also significant. In conclusion, this thesis provides a deep and rich conceptual insight, knowledge and understanding for Human Resource practitioners and academia as to how a career is influenced when viewed through a generational lens.

The first contribution of the study sets out the extent to which theoretical and empirical evidence demonstrates that a generation is a reliable means to group individual managers. The second contribution, relates to the extent to which career types and progression are influenced by a generational grouping. The final contribution extends Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005, 2006) original Kaleidoscope Career model to more accurately depict career success when individual managers are grouped generationally, by introducing a new "glass chip" to represent the need for a 'subjective challenge,' which is reflective in the shift to careers becoming more protean.

Key words:

Generations, career success, career style, career progression, Kaleidoscope Career Model, protean careers, boundaryless careers.

Declaration

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of the University of Gloucestershire and is original except where indicated by a specific reference in the text. No part of this thesis has been submitted as part of any other academic award. The thesis has not been presented to any other educational institution in the United Kingdom or overseas.

Any views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and in no way represent those of the University of Gloucestershire.

Signed   Date

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Chapter One
Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the research

This study connects generational groupings, the career type and progression and the perception to career success of individual managers. It is the intention of this study to gain a better insight into what a career means to managers and the implications for Human Resource practitioners to be aware. For example, Burke and Ng (2005) for the Society for Human Resource Management found that organisations with 500 or more employees, reported that 58% of HRM professionals conflict between younger and older workers, largely due to differences in perceptions of work ethics and work-life balance requirement. Similarly, Cogin (2012), Armstrong-Stassen and Lee (2009) emphasize the importance that Human Resource management need to be aware of 'age dissimilarities' and avoid assuming that policies used to motivate and engage older employees will be equally effective with younger employees, as they possess different 'generational' values. Brousseau et al. (1996) contend that organisations and Human Resource management need to adopt a more pluralistic approach and be flexible in career management, which should adhere to changes concerning what employees perceive, constitutes a successful career.

Based on these contentions studying career types, progression and the perception to career success of individual managers, presents a paradox as to whether or not these themes are in anyway informed and influenced by a person's generation. It is the contention of this thesis that a generation is influential. Behind the contention is the argument and over-arching purpose of this study, that to investigate today's career and its associated success, generation needs to be considered. This study contends that a career style and progression are directly influenced by the individual's generation and other attributes including gender, life-stage and profession / sector of employment, which need to be considered also.

1.2 Research gap

There is sufficient debate surrounding whether the portrayal of generational differences by writers such as Johnson and Johnson (2010), Zemke et al. (2000),

Kupperschmidt (2000) and Gursoy et al. (2008) is reliable. For writers such as Lyons and Kuron (2014), Lyons et al. (2015), Giancola (2006) and Rhodes and Doering (1993) relying on generational characteristics without considering other determinants, such as gender, is unreliable. Interlinked to this societal group is the argument that the modern career has changed from a traditional objective construct to one that is more individualistic and subjective, or has become dual in nature. This duality, Haslin (2005) argues, is complex due to the depth and breadth of a career and its associated success; therefore an effective investigation requires that both concepts be viewed through both lenses. While the themes of career types, progression and career success have been extensively researched (e.g. Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Hall, 2002; Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005), they have not been studied through a generational lens. Reflecting this gap, Lyons and Kuron (2014), Sullivan et al. (2009) and Guest and MacKenzie Davey (1996) called for future research into determining whether practical differences exists between the generations when investigating an individual's career. This study therefore provides a different perspective for business practitioners, such as Human Resource managers and academics, and addresses the call for research from Callanan and Greenhaus (2008), Eisner (2005), Van der Heijden et al. (2009), Clarke and Patrickson (2008), Yeatts et al. (2000), Zopiatis et al. (2012), Costanza and Finkelstein (2015) and Proserpio and Gioia (2007).

1.3 The research problem
Reflecting the identified the research gap in section 1.2 above, the study centred on three themes that have arguably dominated academic research and publication in the workplace for the past two decades. The first theme relates to the impending retirement of a large group of both North American and European employees (the Baby Boomers), which could create a potential crisis in the workplace. There has been debate has been centred on the necessity to recruit and retain the younger generation (Generation Y), who purportedly hold significantly different values, attitudes, and expectations from the generations of workers who preceded them (Generation X and the Baby Boomers) (Johnson & Johnson, 2010; Ng & Feldman, 2010; Barron et al. 2007; Zemke et al. 2000; Kupperschmidt, 2000; Gursoy et al. 2008). Because of increased longevity, as set out above, individuals now have the potential to prolong their economic

working life. Contributing factors are the extended retirement age (made possible by the abolition of the default retirement age) and employees reaching the statutory retirement age wanting, or needing, to remain in the workforce. The Employment Equality (Repeal of Retirement Age Provision) Regulation of 2011 enables older employees to continue working indefinitely.

For employers and Human Resource practitioners this dichotomy presents a paradox, that is, the need to maintain an increasingly diverse workplace for employees who wish to postpone their retirement, and the need to transform the workplace to reflect the changing perceptions of the next generation, thus attracting and motivating them. This has led to additional challenges in the workplace (Zemke et al. 2000; Barron et al. 2007). For example, the Baby Boomers, the oldest workers in this study, are presented as hard-working, dedicated employees, while younger employees, those of Generation X are perceived as cynical and uncommitted (Zemke et al. 2000). Although many authors (e.g. Johnson & Johnson, 2010; Kupperschmidt, 2000; Smola & Sutton, 2002; Egri & Ralston, 2004; Hirsch & Shanley, 1996; Brousseau et al. 1996; Gursoy et al. 2008) perceive these characteristics as acknowledged generational differences, on closer examination they are questionable at best.

This has led to commentators (e.g. Van der Heijden et al. 2009; Clarke & Patrickson, 2008; Yeatts et al. 2000, Callanan & Greenhaus, 2008; Zopiatis et al. 2012; Costanza & Finkelstein, 2015), to contend that is that Human Resource professionals lack the necessary knowledge to create effective policies and practices to understand the different generations of employees with regard to achieving career. This contention is based on the much of the research into careers to date has adopted a positivist paradigm concentrating on measurable drivers and outcomes from an organisational/employer viewpoint. Although some studies (e.g. Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005, 2006; Sturges, 1999) have focused on concepts such as 'career', 'job satisfaction' and 'success' from the perspective of gender (working in groups and organisations), they have neglected potential generational differences. In contrast generational writers, Johnson and Johnson (2010), Zemke et al. (2000) and Kupperschmidt (2000) contend that each

generation holds shared yet differing needs and perceptions. However, these generational studies neglect gender, life-stage, profession and the organisation.

The second theme attracts interest regarding whether the traditional career and its associated perception of success have been confined to the past, due to changes in society and the workplace. Today's career has changed to become *boundaryless* (Arthur et al. 1995), or *protean* in nature (Hall, 2002). Advocates of these new career constructs (e.g. Arthur et al. 1995; Hall & Mirvis, 1996; Chudzikowski, 2012) contend that they are reflective of society and the workplace, which are becoming more individualistic rather than being centred on meeting organisational needs. However, according to Guest and MacKenzie Davey (1996) and Walton and Mallon (2004) employees have already transformed the career and how it is perceived. What remains unclear is the extent of the new career's evolution and whether it is as significant as originally surmised (Hall, 2002; Arthur et al. 1995).

The third theme is whether the preceding two themes are in any way inter-related. This question is based on the fact that both a *generation* and a *career* are directly influenced through changes in society and in the workplace (Hall, 2002; Arthur et al. 1995). Zemke et al. (2000) and Kupperschmidt (2000) define a generation as a societal grouping of individuals, who share and display certain characteristics within a defined time or social period.

1.4 Research Aim

In drawing these themes together, this study set out to address the following research aim: to investigate the role of generational differences in an individual, British manager's career type, progression and perception of career success.

In achieving this research aim, this study sought to determine the extent to which a manager's generation influenced the individual, British manager's career type and its perceived success by asking the following research questions below.

1.5 Research questions

To answer the aim of the research, the following research questions were devised:

Research Question One: Theoretically, what supports the argument that a generational group is a reliable method to group individual managers? (Chapter Two)

Research Question Two: Theoretically, how are individual manager's career types and progression influenced by their generational grouping? (Chapter Three)

Research Question Three: Theoretically, when viewed through the Kaleidoscope Career model, how are individual manager's perceptions of a successful career influenced by their generational group? (Chapter Three)

Research Question Four: Empirically, what support is there that a generational group is a reliable method to group individual managers? (Chapter Four)

Research Question Five: Empirically, how are individual manager's career types and progression influenced by their generational grouping? (Chapter Six)

Research Question Six: Empirically, when viewed through the Kaleidoscope Career model, how are individual manager's perceptions of a successful career influenced by their generational group? (Chapter Seven)

1.6 Justifcation of the research questions

In justifying the theoretical and empirical research questions above, the next section sets out firstly the importance of studying generational differences (section 1.6.1). The reasons behind why it is important to study career perceptions, career types and career progression and its success are presented in section 1.6.2, before finally in section 1.6.3, the need to study the perceptions of

a career, career types and progression and career success from an organisational perspective are set out.

1.6.1 The importance of studying generational differences

Over the past twenty years a number of publications have debated whether generational differences exist, and if so, what they are. Some writers such as Johnson and Johnson (2010), Ng and Feldman (2010), Zemke et al. (2000), Kupperschmidt (2000) and Gursoy et al. (2008) hold that there is a marked difference between the generations, which industry practitioners need to consider.

A generation is a group that is influenced and modelled on societal changes (Giancola, 2006). For many generational writers (e.g. Ng & Feldman, 2010; Johnson & Johnson, 2010; Zemke et al. 2000; Kupperschmidt, 2000; Egri & Ralston, 2004; Hirsch & Shanley, 1996; Gursoy et al. 2008) societal changes have contributed to changes in attitudes, values and perceptions in both personal and working lives. The result is that in the early 21st century workplace, there are three different generational groups working alongside each other, Baby Boomers (1945-1960), Generation X (1961-1980) and Generation Y (1981-2000), each with differing needs and expectations. According to Zemke et al. (2000) and Kupperschmidt (2000), neglecting these differing needs and expectations can lead to conflict in the workplace. On the other hand, Giancola (2006) and Rhodes and Doering (1993) believe that in the process of focusing on these generational attributes, other influences are overlooked. What is unclear is whether a generation is a reliable method of grouping individuals, and if so, to what extent a generation influences an individual's career and how career success is perceived. Research question one addresses from a theoretical perspective, whether a generation is a reliable means to group individual managers. The fourth research empirically supports the argument that the use of a generation is a reliable method to group individual managers.

1.6.2 Reasons to study career perceptions, career types and career progression and its success

There are a number of benefits to understanding an individual's career progression and success. Much research to date (e.g. Sullivan & Baruch, 2009, Sullivan et al. 2009; Baruch, 1999) has described career progression and success in mainly objective terms [measured in organisational terms]. What has been omitted is how managers feel about their own success subjectively (e.g. Patton & McMahon, 2006; Nicholson & West, 1989; Scase & Goffee, 1989, 1990). Until recently gender was neglected (Powell & Mainiero, 1992; Hennig & Jardim, 1978) as was how career success is defined in relation to seeking a challenge (Greenhaus et al. 2009; Marshall, 1984; Asplund, 1988), and in relation to seeking a balance (Powell & Mainiero, 1992). Research investigating a manager's age, career progress and success in relation to career progress and success is also lacking (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010; Nicholson & West, 1989; O'Connor & Wolfe, 1987).

For many employees, uncertainty about their careers and the kind of success they may achieve is becoming increasingly important (Clark et al. 1996). Over the past twenty years, organisations have transformed themselves. This includes trends such as downsizing, reducing the workforce, and the demise of the *job for life* and traditional linear career progression. This is partly due to major economic downturns, increased competition, globalisation and the fast pace of information technology innovation (Gratton & Ghoshal, 2003; Cappelli, 1999). As businesses have introduced new ways to become competitive, the traditional career landscape, including stable employment, has begun to disappear.

Organisations have shed layers of management to speed up decision-making and become more responsive to the marketplace. This has led to the destruction of the organisational hierarchical career ladder. According to Kanter (1997, p.299), '…[c]limbing the career ladder is being replaced by hopping from job to job', with the result that career responsibility has become that of the individual, who needs to acquire the correct mix of 'portable' skills to gain a 'successful' career in the new environment. Watson (2008), Kalleberg (2000) and Handy (1989)

contend that companies are changing their employment model to a small core of permanent staff with the remainder brought in on a temporary basis.

These changes have resulted in the concepts of 'career' and 'career success.' It is clear that hierarchical success, based on pay and position, may no longer be available to all employees (Tyler, 2005; Gelatt, 1992). Handy (1989, p.94) suggests that 'discontinuous change and the new professionalism have therefore combined to spell the end of the corporate career for all but a few'.

Simultaneously, these changes are forcing managers to review and rethink what a career and career success means to them (Smith-Ruig, 2009). The traditional male career, according to Whyte (1956), was centred on working one's way up an organisation's hierarchy. In its place is the career that blends both work and personal life. According to Kimmel (1993) and Hall (2002), those men who achieved organisational success in 'traditional' terms often feel that something is missing from their lives. Scase and Goffee (1989, 1990) report that, many male managers are less 'psychologically immersed' in their work roles than their predecessors. Scase and Goffee (ibid) and Tyler (2005) note a shift to seeking personal success in a career, which is 'now broadly defined and includes non-work criteria' (Scase and Goffee, ibid). Whether this reported shift to a work-life balance can be attributed to a generational shift has yet to be investigated with academic rigour. Building on this contention, the second research question presents the theoretical background in to whether generational differences could be attributed to the reported changes in career perceptions, career types and career progression and its success. The fifth research question addresses the main contention that there has been a lack of academic rigour related to whether career types and progression have been generational differences, while the sixth research focuses on individual manager's perception to career success when viewed through the Kaleidoscope Career model.

1.6.3 The importance of studying the perceptions of a career, career types and progression and career success from an organisational perspective

Organisations have much to gain from understanding the potential changing nature of a career and its associated success. At the same time organisational change may have resulted in individuals questioning, re-evaluating and seeking a different kind of success in their careers. Although some organisations still offer opportunities for employees, much staff development is now based on the principle of meeting the current requirement of the organisation, as opposed to upward mobility. Instead organisations have shifted to expecting employees to take greater ownership of their careers and possess the necessary skills to progress. According to writers such as Arthur et al. (1995) and Hall (2002), and more recently by Briscoe and Finkelstein (2009) and Inkson, Gunz, Ganesh and Roper (2012), this shift in organisational commitment has culminated in a change in the conventional career landscape, with employees now having careers that are no longer bound to an organisation. However underlying this, is still evidence that employees still seek organisational commitment and input into their careers (Baruch, 2004). If an organisation understands what individuals perceive as important in their career progression and success, they will have a better idea of how to assist, thus facilitating employee retention.

For Human Resource Management, in particular, it is necessary to understand what employees feel about a career and its associated success. Karl and Peluchette (2006) and Peluchette (1993) believe that Human Resource management practices need to consider that 'subjective career success has implications for one's mental well-being and quality of life' (Peluchette, 1993, p. 201). More recently, as mentioned in section 1.5 above, Burke and Ng (2005) for the Society for Human Resource Management identified that organisations with 500 or more employees, had reported differences in perceptions of work ethics and work-life balance requirement that had culminated in conflict between younger and older workers. This has led to Cogin (2012) and Armstrong-Stassen and Lee (2009) warning Human Resource management to be aware of 'age dissimilarities' while avoiding assuming that policies used to motivate and engage older employees will be equally effective with younger employees, as they possess potential 'generational' differences in values. The tendency for

organisations to view career success and progression in purely external or objective terms can be counterproductive if managers are increasingly seeing career success in a subjective way. Both Gattiker and Larwood (1988) and Schuler and Jackson (1987) emphasize that success criteria can help Human Resource specialists achieve a fit between the employee's real career opportunities and needs. The question arises is whether this applies to all managers, or do different criteria, such as gender, age or generational background result in differing perceptions of career progression and success. To gain better insight into what career success and progression mean to different types of managers has particular implications, for example, providing a job that has the attributes that a manager seeks or needs. Gattiker and Larwood (1986, p. 90-91) posit, '… [a]ny understanding of career types and effective [human resource] management is substantially reduced if the subjective side of career success is ignored'.

In the past, traditional perceptions of career success were closely linked to Herzberg's (1968) motivation and reward models. Through 'family friendly' policies, Human Resource management and organisations are likely to provide improved career development and insight into a more balanced work and home life. Brousseau et al.'s (1996) study investigated the adverse effects of internal workplace changes on the traditional career. Brousseau et al. (ibid) found that many employees experienced major difficulties in adopting these changes, which ultimately impacted on their careers. Consequently, employees have taken control of their careers, since organisations are taking less responsibility for careers. Brousseau et al. (ibid) advise organisations and Human Resource management to adopt a pluralistic approach and be flexible in career management, which should adhere to changes concerning what employees perceive, constitutes a success career. What remains unclear in Brousseau et al. (ibid) study is whether there is any generational influence. Partly reflecting this potential gap, writers such as Callanan and Greenhaus (2008) have called for further research into generationally differences in organisations, how to best manage a generational diverse workplace (Eisner, 2005). To address this reported gap, the second and third research questions from a theoretical perspective presents the existing literature related to perception of a career, career types and

progression and career success from an organisational standpoint when viewed through a generational lens. Empirically, the firth and sixth research question have been designed to answer Callanan and Greenhaus' (2008) call for further research into how to manage a diverse generational workforce.

1.7 Thesis Structure

This section outlines the structure of the remaining chapters of the study.

Chapter Two provides an overview of the central themes associated with studying a *generation.* As a term, a 'generation' has been extensively used in both popular and academic literature. The literature review concludes that a generational grouping based upon personal kinship or family and their life-stage, or on a historical period has led to the polysemic use of the concept. The polysemic use of 'generation' has resulted in certain studies being methodologically flawed or confused; some studies are unauthentic and unreliable, since they neglect important attributes such as life-stages or gender (Kertzer, 1983) or even profession.

There is however consensus among generational writers (e.g. Johnson & Johnson, 2010; Gursoy et al. 2008; Kupperschmidt, 2000) that generational group exists and shares unique characteristics that have been informed by the group's shared experiences during their formative years. Other writers such as Lyons and Kuron (2014), Giancola (2006) and Rhodes and Doering (1993), warn that these publications and studies are primarily anecdotal, or based upon open meta-data drawn from North American population statistics and therefore lack the necessary empirical rigour. Based on this criticism, what remains unclear is the extent to which these shared characteristics are uniquely 'generational'.

The Chapter concludes by highlighting the need to generate a greater understanding of the influence that a generation can have on the individual in the contemporary career environment. In understanding a generation's potential influence, it is possible to provide new insight into the practical needs of managing a generationally diverse working environment.

Chapter Three reviews the literature pertaining to the changing nature of a career, and its definition and composition in the early 21st century workplace. Various conceptual models have been proposed −and criticised − to encapsulate these themes. These include the *traditional* (Adamson et al. 1998, Valcour & Ladge, 2008), *boundaryless* (Arthur et al. 2005; DeFillippi & Arthur, 1996) and *protean*

careers (Hall, 2002). The 'traditional' model proposes that the individual progresses linearly in one or two organisations throughout a working life, symbolised by organisational reference points such as salary or status.

In contrast, the '*boundaryless*' and '*protean*' careers reflect the changing nature of the workplace and society. The *boundaryless* career is centred on the individual seeking subjective goals. In reaching these aspirations, the individual is no longer bound to a single organisation, but instead uses transferrable competencies to move between different organisations and careers. Unlike the *boundaryless* career, the *protean* career focuses on individuals as the architects of their own careers. As architect, the individual takes active control of his/her career, achieving positive psychological and personalised outcomes. The Chapter highlights that since their inception, there has been much criticism of the creditability of these models, including the over-simplification of a career, the neglect of gender, the life-stage of the individual and generational grouping.

What emerges from the literature review is a series of hybrid models to address identified weaknesses of the traditional, *boundaryless* and *protean* careers. These include the Kaleidoscope Career Model (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005), career categorisation (Verbruggen et al. 2007) and the butterfly career (McCabe & Savery, 2005). The butterfly career is the individual's trend of 'flittering' between careers, no longer bound to an organisation or sector. The career categorisation construct is a composite of the traditional, *boundaryless* / *protean* career models, devised to determine whether the employee's career is boundaryless, protean or traditional. Finally, the Kaleidoscope Career Model, devised to study gender differences, uses three glass chips representing how a career and its success progresses from a challenge, to a work-life balance before becoming authentic in nature.

One theme to emerge is whether authenticity used in the *boundaryless*, *protean* and Kaleidoscope Career Models are accurately representative of this term when investigating a career and its success. The Chapter concludes that while the hybrid constructs are informative, there are attributes missing. These include life-stage, gender, occupation / profession and generational perspective. Furthermore

these studies often over-simplify and / or neglect the complexities of themes such as authenticity.

Chapter Four sets out the interpretivist approach of using semi-structured interviews. The sample of the main study consisted of 42 managers employed in the UK. The sample was drawn from the five main sectors of employment, that is: manufacturing; hotel and restaurant; transportation and communication; banking, finance and insurance and public administration comprising education and welfare. There were six participants from each sector with the exception of the public administrative sector, the largest employer in the United Kingdom, which had 18 participants. The participants were divided into the three generational groups, with an equal number of male and female participants reflecting the current demographic profile of the UK workplace.

The interpretivist paradigm was adopted and with the inclusion of a documentary analysis approach reviewed the participants' Curricula Vitae together with Verbruggen et al.'s (2007) six categories of career types, to classify the participants' careers. The study then drew on Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005) original additive Kaleidoscope Career Model to investigate career success from a generational perspective to answer the third research question.

Chapter Five in addressing the fourth research question: empirically, what support is there that a generational group is a reliable method to group individual managers? This study's findings firstly reject the use of family / kinship and historical generation. The study also rejects the use of groupings specifically based on a certain historical event. Instead the study concurs with Parry and Urwin (2011) and Kertzer (1983) that a generation based on grouping individuals according to birth years is more reliable. Parry and Urwin (2011) and Kertzer (1983) portrays a generation as having shared characteristics, that does not operate in isolation, and can be affected or influenced by other factors such as gender, culture or life-stages. However, while accepting the reliability of using a generation as a form of grouping, this study questions the portrayals by writers

such as Johnson and Johnson (2010), Ng and Feldman (2010), Strauss and Howe (1991), Zemke et al. (2000), Coupland (1991) and Kupperschmidt (2000).

In addressing the fifth research question, the findings in Chapter Six relate to the career types and progression of the generational groups. The findings indicate that the life-stage of the individual, gender and the generational grouping of the manager are influential. In the youngest generation, Generation Y, career progression is affected by sector or occupation rather than attributes such as gender. The findings support the view that this generation is less bound to an organisation and more individualistic.

For the middle generational group, Generation X, almost irrespective of gender, a career is mainly individualistic with regard to future progression, and no longer determined by an organisation. However, qualifying this finding is an increased commitment to family, which impacts on both genders. The result is that this generation sees their career and its progression as becoming bound to an organisation.

The oldest generation, the Baby Boomers, and particularly men, have now reached the end of their working lives and owing to the lack of opportunities in the workplace, see themselves as bound by, or trapped, in their current careers. Although Baby Boomer women are also at the end of their working lives, they are still seeking a challenging career.

Using the Kaleidoscope Career Model, Chapter Seven, in answering the sixth research question, contradicts Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005) contention that men primarily seek an *alpha* career at the expense of work-life balance and authenticity. Instead, in this study it was revealed that there is blurring of the genders, particularly among the two youngest generations (Generation X and Generation Y) in relation to wanting a work-life balance and career success reflective of their personal values. The study reveals several new determinants that can be attributed to achieving career success. These are the need for *personal challenge*, *satisfaction and attainment*, and *goal-setting*. Other inter-related characteristics are *self-awareness*, *self-satisfaction, self-recognition, self-esteem,*

self-respect and *self-understanding*. To emerge from this study is the inter-related nature of a generation, life-stage and gender difference between the three groups and that these determinants do not operate in isolation.

Chapter Eight repeats the research's aim and the research questions before presenting the conclusions derived from the findings and reflection on them. The Chapter outlines the areas of contribution to academic theory and to practice. The research supports Eisner (2005), Enache et al. (2011), Callanan and Greenhaus (2008) and Van der Heijden et al. (2009), Costanza and Finkelstein (2015) recommendation that it is necessary for Human Resource practitioners to consider generational differences in the workplace. The study also concludes that it is necessary to consider other attributes, namely, gender, profession and life-stage of the individual and that these do not operate in isolation when considering an individual's career and feelings of success. The limitations of the study are presented, including the necessity to conduct generational studies using a longitudinal approach. The Chapter then makes suggestions for future research and concludes with a personal note on the study's relevance and value.

Chapter Two
Generational studies

2.1 Introduction

The literature review is divided into two Chapters. Chapter Two focuses on generational studies by setting out the theoretical background to answer the first research question: theoretically, what supports the argument that a generational group is a reliable method to group individual managers?, while Chapter Three explores career theory. The concept of generations is widely used in everyday life to make sense of differences between societal age groupings and to locate individuals or groups within historical time (for example, 'my generation' and 'the younger generation'). Other uses include distinguishing those born in a particular moment in history, such as the 'sixties generation'. These terms have entered the mainstream and academic vocabulary, but seemingly without any consideration of their correct use. Part of this generalised use can be attributed to the emergence, over the past thirty years of a number of notable publications (e.g. Johnson & Johnson, 2010; Strauss & Howe, 1991; Coupland, 1991; Zemke et al. 2000), which have portrayed 'generation' in a tabloid manner due to their methodological approaches of relying on anecdotal or non-empirical research. These publication have been based on their using open, non-academic, meta-data or a series of anecdotal interviews to conclude that each generational grouping demonstrate a series of shared characteristic traits, neglecting the individual's gender, social, educational or occupational background.

Insufficient academic attention has been paid to understanding the importance of 'generation' becoming clichéd (Costanza & Finkelstein, 2015; Lyons & Kuron, 2014; Pilcher, 1994; Everingham et al. 2007). This research argues that many peer reviewed studies (e.g. Dencker, Joshi & Martocchio, 2008; Kupperschmidt, 2000; Gursoy et al. 2008; Smola & Sutton, 2002), have drawn extensively on questionable literary publications, including Johnson and Johnson (2010), Zemke et al. (2000) and Strauss and Howe (1991). Lyons et al. (2015), Lyons and Kuron (2014), Giancola (2006) and Twenge and Campbell (2008) contend that many generational studies have taken on popular or journalistic styles, grounded in questionable anecdotal studies, or used open meta-data based on North American

population statistics, that lacks empirical rigour. This issue will be debated throughout this study.

2.2. Debates in generational studies

Demographers, sociologists and behaviourists have tried to determine what constitutes a generation and the role it plays in an individual's life (Joshi et al. 2011; Pilcher, 1994; Kertzer, 1983; Strauss & Howe, 1991). Defining a generation has culminated debate in both academic and popular literature. This debate encapsulates whether individuals share experiences and determinants or, at the extreme, whether generational studies are fundamentally flawed. For writers such as Costanza and Finkelstein (2015) generational studies are portrayed as a 'hot topic' that is often seen as opportunistic, lacking academic rigour and the any real depth. Costanza and Finkelstein (ibid) encapsulated this argument by stating 'stereotypes are hard to shake because it is easy for us to see evidence of what seems to be their accuracy' (p. 312), and that 'there is miminal empirical evidence explanation actually supporting generationally based differences' and no sufficient explanation for why such differences should even exist' (p. 308). This has led a series of studies (e.g. Lyons, Urick, Kuron & Schweitzer, 2015; Riggio & Saggi, 2015, Perry, Golom & McCarthy, 2015), that have both supported and challenged Costanza and Finkelstein (ibid) assertion.

For over two millennia, many cultures around the world have used the concept of a generation. This includes its use in many ancient texts, for example, the Book of Numbers in the Bible. In African, Asian and Australasian societies the term 'generation' is part of the social order (Kertzer, 1983; Edmunds & Turner, 2005). The result is that Western sociology has embraced this concept. This includes an adoption of the term into everyday vocabulary and into sociology. It is perhaps inevitable that the transformation from popular / folk to analytical use would create conceptual confusion and debate (Kertzer, ibid). Reflecting this confusion, the following section presents the key areas of discourse from conceptual and methodological perspectives.

Kertzer (1983) distinguishes four types of generation − one based on kinship descent, one on generation as a grouping or as a cohort, one on generation as life-

stage, and one on generation as a historical period. Recently these categories were reduced to two − kinship or family, and cohort or a generational grouping (Strauss & Howe, 1991; Zemke et al. 2000; Kupperschmidt, 2000; Smola & Sutton, 2000; Dries et al. 2008b; Gursoy et al. 2008). This reduction occurred when sociologists actively combined these categories (Parry & Urwin, 2011; Foster, 2013) and as a result of the growth of intergenerational studies in popular literature. This shift to an almost polysemous use of the concept has created significant criticism regarding the validity and reliability of this narrower approach (Kertzer, ibid). In a pivotal study, Kertzer notionally concludes that the polysemous usage has also led to confusion, with many of the studies becoming methodologically flawed owing to their limited academic approach to gathering primary data. Reflecting this discourse, the next section draws upon Kertzer's categories to present a more extensive review of generational studies commencing with kinship, or family generation.

2.2.1 Kinship or family generation

Family or kinship descent has long been associated with social anthropology. Social anthropology, unlike sociology, uses a generation to study kinship relationships rather than parent-child relationships (Greven, 1970). Demographers have used the family generation to measure the 'length of a generation' through population replacement (Preston, 1978; Krishnamoorthy, 1980).

The origins and use of a family, or kin generation can be traced back to the beginning of recorded history in both Indo, Middle Eastern and European cultures. These early writings measure time not in years or centuries, but in generations. The Old Testament commencing with Genesis, documents a seemingly endless list of generation after generation, each one representing a particular period in time. The writings of the ancient Greek poet, Homer, in the Iliad, measures time as 'two generations of men die' (Jones, 2003, p. 24). Myths and legends from the Egyptians, Babylonians, Prussians, Hindus and Celts also use the term 'generation' to define and contrast a particular age (Strauss and Howe, 1991). Even the origin or root stem of the word 'generation' is from the

verb 'to come or bring into being', which refers to a single moment or passage of time, where children are brought into being from their parents; − a family generation (Strauss & Howe, ibid).

The use of a generation based upon a family's genealogy is seen by many contemporary generational writers (e.g. Strauss & Howe, 1991; Zemke et al. 2000) as fundamentally flawed. Greven (1970), tracing family life in a New England farming community from 1640 until 1780, details their social lives, including births, deaths, migrations, and occupations. As Greven's study progresses, the family's genealogy reveals that by the second generation there is a discrepancy between the individuals and their place in historical context. For example, Greven contends that some members of the second generation, due to their birth year, have more in common with the next generation than their own. Put simply, parents give birth to children at widely differing ages, and their children intermarry with other families with equally varied birth distributions. Hill (1970), studying three generations of family life in Minnesota, found similar discrepancies.

This fundamental flaw has resulted in generational writers (e.g. Kupperschmidt, 2000; Strauss & Howe, 1991) advocating a different approach to categorising individuals − by grouping based upon a 'cohort generation' or 'generational grouping' bound in a defined time or social period. Vinovskis (1977) and Elder (1978) contend that applying genealogical principles to generations can lead to substantial overlapping in age among the various generations. This has led to confusion in determining whether members of a generation have common or shared characteristics due to having lived through different historical periods (Vinovskis, ibid; Elder, ibid). Social scientists during the past three decades have challenged these generational attributes and key determinants characteristics.

2.2.2 Generation as a historical period

The use of generation to characterise an individual during a specific historical period has traditionally been associated with historians, for example, *The Generation of 1914* (Wohl, 1979) and *The Generation before the Great War*

(Tannenbaum, 1976). In a sense, a generation from a historical perspective covers a wide range of different ages, but is linked to significant events that define and influence them.

The relationship between a generation and historical events can be traced back to the works of Karl Mannheim and José Ortega y Gasset. Mannheim's 1923 essay, *The Problem of Generations,* is often described as a seminal theoretical treatment of generations. Its publication heavily influenced sociology. Laufer and Bengston (1974) argue that Mannheim's theory of generations is essentially a theory of social change, with generations, and in particular generational units, as agencies of change. Mannheim contends that as successive waves of individuals reach adulthood, they are influenced by the prevailing culture, or historical period. In contextualising this, Mannheim posits that the 'sociological phenomenon of generations is ultimately based on the biological rhythm of birth and death' (1952, p. 290).

Ortega y Gasset (1933 as cited in Strauss & Howe, 1991) formulated a similar generation concept, based upon the notion that individuals born at about the same time grow up sharing ahistorical period that shapes their views (Spitzer, 1973). This has led some writers such as Marias (1968 as cited in Strauss and Howe, 1991), to dismiss the relevance of a generation or family, which Strauss and Howe (1991) refers to as 'kinship', and instead calls for generational studies to focus on historical meaning only. This specific focus subsequently dominated many contemporary publications (e.g. Kupperschmidt, 2000; Zemke et al. 2000; Gursoy et al. 2008). These authors contend that specific events such as the assassination of John F Kennedy, the Apollo moon landing, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the beginning of Thatcherism are pivotal, informing and ultimately influencing a whole generation's attitudes, values and perceptions throughout their lives.

Eyerman and Turner (1998, p. 93) contest the importance of a specific event in defining a generation and conclude that a generation is

'…[people] passing through time who come to share a common habitus, hexis and culture, a function of which is to provide them with a collective memory that serves to integrate the generation over a finite period of time.'

Sessa, Kabacoff, Deal and Brown (2007, p. 49) in their cross-sectional generational survey into differences in leader values and leadership behaviours, state that only when events have occurred in a way that demarcates one grouping from another can a generation be distinguished. Sessa et al. (ibid) propose six characteristics to define a generation − (1) a traumatic or formative event, such as a war, (2) a significant shift in demography that affects the distribution of societal resources, (3) an interval that connects a generation to success or failure, such as an economic depression, (4) a moment that becomes encapsulated into the group's shared memory, such as Live Aid for those living in the United Kingdom or North America, (5) individuals who by their actions or activities become role models or mentors, and (6) the work of people who know and support each other.

Although the historical period has become synonymous with intergenerational studies, this concept as an accurate means to categorise a group of people has begun to be challenged on the basis of the validity and reliability of the methodologies used. Murray, Toulson and Legg (2011), Costanza, Badger Fraser and Severt (2012), Giancola (2006) posits that much of the current research has been over-reliant on anecdotal or non-empirical data. Giancola argues, for example, that Strauss and Howe's (1991) exact temporal point at which a generation can be segregated, is flawed owing to a lack of empirical rigour and over-reliance on meta-data drawn from North-American population data sets. Giancola explains that it would be naive to assume that all members of any given generation will experience the same key sociocultural or socioeconomic event in the same way. Giancola argues that a generation does not operate independently of social class, gender, ethnicity or national culture, but is influenced by all four. Troll (1970, p. 201) contends that 'all people living at the same time do not necessarily share the same history'. Therefore it would be inaccurate to surmise that members of a generational grouping in North America would share the same experiences as another in the same country, let alone one from the UK (this

theme will be discussed in further depth below in section 2.3). Rhodes and Doering (1993) similarly argue that it is difficult to separate generational differences, such as the influence of maturity, age, career or the life-cycle stage of a person. More recently studies into personality changes amongst the generations (e.g. Smits, Dolan, Vorat, Wicherts & Timmerman, 2011), contend that biological factors together with the cultural landscape of the individual and experiences in childhood and adolescence shape are significant influences. Murray, Touslon and Legg (2011) stated that generational differences, in particular Generation Y, were largely anecdotal, while Costanza, Badger, Fraser and Severt (2012) in a meta-analysis study into job satisfaction, turnover intentions and organisational commitment also concluded that generational differences 'probably do not exist' (p. 375).

2.2.3 Generation as life-stage

While a generation can refer to a succession of people (the young replacing the old) moving through time and being influenced by major events, it is recognised that an individual's age is a determinant factor. For example, Sorokin (1947) attributes generational conflict between young and old to an individual's age and level of maturity. Sorokin's (ibid) concept of life-stage of a generation proposes that a person's attitudes, values and perceptions change with maturity. Sorokin (1947, p. 192-193) adds that a generation is best understood by looking at an individual's response to the same event at different ages. In a key publication, Eisenstadt (1956) earlier found that age and differences in age are amongst the most fundamental and critical aspects of human life. As the individual passes through different ages with a life-time, the person attained different experiences and capabilities. Closely connected to both Sorokin (ibid) and Eisenstadt studies, Rhodes (1983) and Twenge, Campbell and Gentile (2012) suggested that individuals are influenced by 'age' or the 'maturation effect'. The age or maturation effect are changes that occur irrespective of when the person are born, the individual's 'matures'. In explaining this further, Polach (2007) stated this effect is not simply determined based on when a person is born that in turn governs their behaviour at work, but is also influenced by their age. Polach (ibid) contended that some behaviour can be better explained when thought of in terms

of life-stages. To illustrate, Polach (ibid) uses the example of people in their 20s establishing their independence, a career and family regardless of their generation. Polach (ibid) in concluding added that a better understanding of how to manage an age diversity workforce can be achieved by combining life-stages with a generational approach. Howe and Strauss (2007) in an attempt to explain the role of life-stage and age, proposed a complex approach, referred to as the 'Generational Diagonal,' to illustrate the complex way historical events and society shapes a generation's lives, also how people's lives are affected very differently, depending on the phase of life they occupy at the time (p. 46). In explaining the Generational Diagonal, Howe and Strauss (ibid) draw upon the example of the Great Depression and World War Two. These two events meant challenges, teamwork, trials and sacrifices for young adults (soldiers). These events also brought about a new sense of responsibility and a need for practical leadership for those in their mid-life, and tight adult protection for their children based on their experiences. These changes challenge the assumption that generations are formed only by events in their formative years, (which will be discussed in more depth in section 2.3) and towards a view that the different generations continue to be shaped as they grow older. Kertzer (1983) supports this assertion, and contends that to fully understand these differences and similarities, generational studies that involve age, such as that of Sorokin (ibid), need to group individuals with in certain timeframes to capture a person's life-course position, a theme this study investigates. To address this cohort issue, Lyons and Kuron (2014) advise the use of longitudinal sequence data as used by Krahn and Galambos (2014) to track and compare the grouping. However as Lyons and Kuron (ibid) together with Lyons et al. (2012) and Bernald, Killworth Kronenfeld and Sailer (1984) contend, life-cycle or life-stages is poorly suited to subjective data, and is susceptible to memory recall errors.

2.2.4 Generational Groupings and Generational Cohorts

Kertzer's (1983) final generation category is the 'generational grouping' and 'generational cohort'. 'Cohort' and 'generation' have been used extensively in sociology, to the point where these terms have become interchangeable and confusing. In the past twenty years many generational publications have used the

terms 'generation' and 'cohort' to mean the same. Pilcher (1994) warns of this synonymous use and draws on the work of Glenn et al. (1974), who note that the term 'generation' is a structural one in kinship terminology that denotes a parent-child relationship. A cohort, on the other hand, refers to people within a delineated population who experience the same significant events within a given time period. Before proceeding it is necessary to understand the key differences between a 'generation' and a 'cohort'.

The origins of a generation can be traced back to Mannheim (1952) (as discussed in section 2.2.2). Mannheim (ibid) defined a generation as being similar to the class position of an individual in society, and that a generation is not a 'concrete group' (i.e. its members do not have mental or physical proximity or any knowledge of each other) but is a 'social location'. Mannheim suggested that the existence of generations is made possible by five characteristics of society: (1) new participants in the cultural process are emerging; (2) former participants are continually disappearing; (3) members of a generation can participate in only a temporally limited section of the historical process; so (4) cultural heritage needs to be transmitted; and finally (5) the transition from generation to generation is continuous (Parry & Urwin, 2011, p. 81). For Mannheim, members of the same generation share the same year of birth so have a common location in the historical dimension of the social process. This common location therefore limits the individual to a specific range of potential experience, predisposing them to a certain characteristic mode of thought and experience. However, Mannheim does note that individuals cannot be members of the same generation by simply sharing a particular year of birth. They instead must definitely be in a position to participate in certain common experiences so that a concrete bond is created between members of a generation and so that they share 'an identity of responses, a certain affinity in the way in which all move with and are formed by their common experiences' (Parry & Urwin, 2011, p. 81). Therefore according to Mannheim (1952), Edmunds and Turner (2002), Eyerman and Turner (1998), Turner (1998), there are two fundamental elements to the term 'generation'. Firstly, a common location in historical time and, secondly, a 'distinct consciousness of that historical position …shaped by the events and experiences of that time' (Gilleard, 2004, p. 108).

In contrast, a generational cohort can be defined as 'a set of individuals entering a system at the same time,' and are '*presumed* to have similarities due to shared experiences that differentiate them' (Mason & Wolfinger, 2001, p. 1). For Mason and Wolfinger (ibid) any differences between cohorts are due to a combination of these three age-related, period and cohort effects. Ryder (1965), considered the term 'cohort' as a 'more neutral construct' (Gilleard, 2004, p. 108). In defining a 'cohort,' Ryder (ibid) saw the concept as 'the aggregate of individuals who experienced the same event within the same time interval' and each cohort as having 'a distinctive composition and character based upon the circumstances of its unique orientation and history' (p. 845). The key element of Ryder's (ibid) and Mason and Wolfinger's (ibid) definitions of a cohort, is that there seems only to be a *presumption* made that cohorts exhibit differences in outcomes due to shared experiences.

Unlike a cohort, a 'generation' must *exhibit* such differences, for example due to a social, political or economic event, change in resource, demography or social characteristic in order to be considered as such; therefore creating a distinction between 'cohorts' and 'generations'. Based on this fundamental, if subtle difference, Parry and Urwin (2011) contend that despite a 'cohort' often containing a well-chosen cohort sample consisting of predominance of members from a particular generation who have shared experiences, a cohort remains a much simpler and more atheoretical grouping than a generation. Parry and Urwin (2011) argument is based on the assertion that for a cohort, no implied change in attitudes or behaviours is made as a result of shared birth year – rather, environment and institutional factors are thought to determine shared cohort experiences. Therefore when carrying out a study using existing cohort categorizations (for example Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y), any evidence that differing values, behaviours or attitudes are not apparent and the results need to be interpreted carefully (Parry & Urwin, 2011). The lack of apparent differences could be either attributed to two reasons: (i) these cohorts are not good proxies or examples for the generations described, or (ii) these are the correct categorizations, but that there are genuinely no differences between generations. This is due to the assumption that a cohort is an accurate

measurement of a generation, which Parry and Urwin (2011) rejects. The basis of Parry and Urwin (ibid) argument is centred on the fact that a cohort only *presumes* to exhibit differences in outcomes due to shared experiences. Therefore if a cohort study rejects differences in workplace attitudes or values amongst the cohorts, due to the presumption nature of a cohort, this raises fundamental questions over the validity of the findings and the generational categories used, as a cohort only acts as a proxy for a generation. This becomes further problematic when considering Rhodes (1983) and Dencker et al. (2008), who highlighted the difficulty in distinguishing between age, period and cohort (generational) effects, suggesting that cohort effects cannot be effectively used in cross-sectional or short period of time studies, which is the approach adopted in this study.

Kertzer (1983) agreed with Parry and Urwin (2011), who stated that the term 'cohort' should not be simply used as a popular synonym, for a generation. In illustrating this perspective, Kertzer (ibid) highlighted studies that have retained elements of genealogical relationships in their cohort studies, for example with Bristow, Amyx, Castleberry and Cochran (2011), Gursoy et al. (2013), Real, Mitnick and Malony (2010) and Masnick and Bane (1980). Masnick and Bane (1980) study whilst distinguishing three very different adult cohorts: those born by 1920, those between 1920 and 1940, and those born since 1940 onwards, did employ a generational cohort when comparing the family patterns of the young adults to those of their parent's generation (Kertzer, 1983, p. 129). This confusion is problematic as the study firstly did not justify the length of the genealogical generations, and secondly used two types of generations (genealogical and cohorts) interchangeably. This common double usage of a 'generation' is also seen in Rosow's (1978) perspective of what a cohort is. Rosow (1978) stated that the,

> '…cohort effects are a central concerns in the analysis of generations. By cohort effects, [the writer means] the typical response patterns of members of various cohorts to the same thing. Those in one generation react the same way, but differently from members of another. So when responses to the same phenomenon are similar within, but different between generations, this is the cohort effect' (Kertzer, 1983, p. 130).

From Rosow's (ibid) quote it is unclear whether the 'cohort effect' is being used for historical, genealogical or for only cohort purposes, which again is common problem associated with generational studies when studying differences that include potential genealogical and historical comparisons. Based on the argument put forward by Parry and Urwin (2011), Kertzer (1983), Rhodes (1983) and Dencker et al. (2008), this study opted to study a 'generation' as opposed to a 'cohort'.

Amidst this debate, is the emergence in both popular and academic studies use of the terms 'generations' and 'generational cohort' to refer to potential inter-generational conflict in the workplace (e.g. Johnson & Johnson, 2010; Strauss & Howe, 1991; Zemke et al. 2000; Coupland, 1991; Kupperschmidt, 2000) based on Mannheim's (1923) idea that generational 'cohorts' are a representative agents of social or historical change. However, later studies (e.g. Kupperschmidt, 2000), portray the cohorts in somewhat stereotypical terms. Often these shared characteristics are presented (particularly in workplace studies) as operating in isolation, unaffected or influenced by other characteristics such as gender, culture, or life-stage. These representations are thus an over-simplification of the complex nature of portraying an individual's values, perception and attitudes in the workplace.

In summary, it appears that the term 'generation' is widely used in both popular and academic literature to distinguish between groups of individuals. These include groups based on personal kinship or family, on life-stage, on a historical period, or as a cohort or generational grouping. In the past two decades interchangeable use of these four categories in contemporary generational and intergenerational studies has culminated in polysemous use of the term 'generation' raising criticism as to its validity and reliability. Kertzer (1983) contends that this polysemous use has led to confusion with many studies methodologically flawed as a result. Fundamental to this criticism is the omission of determinants such as gender and profession. What remains to be answered is whether the concept 'generation' is a valid means to study differences in individuals in the workplace.

2.3 A generation and its boundaries

There have also been a number of works that have attempted to define and set out generational boundaries. One notable publication is by Kupperschmidt (2000), which is recognised as seminal in generational studies (Gursoy et al. 2008). Kupperschmidt (ibid) defines a 'generation' as 'an identifiable group that shares birth year, age, location, and significant life events at critical development stages' (p. 364). Kupperschmidt (ibid) based her study on Strauss and Howe's (1991, p. 60) study that contends that 'a generation is a cohort-group whose length approximates the span of a phase of life and whose boundaries are fixed by peer personality'. According to Strauss and Howe (1991, p. 64), a peer personality is 'a generational persona recognised and determined by (1) common age location, (2) common beliefs and behaviour, and (3) perceived membership in a common generation'.

In an earlier study, Schaie (1965) concluded that a generational grouping includes individuals born around the same time, who tend to share distinctive social or historical life events during critical developmental periods. Schaie (1965)'s original ascertain was later supported by Schaie (1983, 1994, 2012), Sessa, Kabacoff, Deal and Brown (2007) and Rhodes (1983). Pekala (2001) contends that at the start and end points of a generation or sub-generation, a boundary is set that is dependent on key social or political events. For example the end of the Second World War in 1945 was the starting point of the Baby Boomer generation. Jurkiewicz and Brown (1998) meanwhile add that a generational group comprises of those who share historical or social life experiences, the effects of which enter into the person's psyche and remains relatively stable over the course of their lives. The premise of the argument of Jurkiewicz and Brown (ibid) is based on the idea that the experience becomes embedded into the shared consciousness of the generational group, therefore life experiences tend to distinguish one generation from another.

In a more recent quantitative, meta-analysis based publication, Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman and Lance (2010, p. 4) perceive that a generation,

'…is influenced by broad forces (i.e. parents, peers, media,
critical economic and social events and popular culture) that
create common value systems distinguishing them from people
who grew up at different times'.

Scott (2000, p. 356) concurs that the value system or view of the world,

'…stays with the individual throughout their lives and is the
anchor against which later experiences are interpreted. People are
thus fixed in qualitatively different subjective areas'.

That is to say for Scott (ibid) the individual's subjective perceptions are formed
and then used as a reference point to interpret future events and experiences. For
Twenge et al. (2010b) while society and certain publications (e.g. Johnson &
Johnson, 2010; Zemke et al. 2000, Kupperschmidt, 2000, Gursoy et al. 2008)
have labelled each generation differently to separate the groups from each other;
other research (e.g. Twenge et al. 2004, 2008) suggests that generational effects
are linear rather than categorical, with steady change over time rather than
sudden shifts at birth year cut-offs. Other commentators (e.g. Giancola, 2006;
Parry & Urwin, 2011), have argued that precise boundaries chosen to demarcate
the generations are not critically important, as there is often a fuzziness or
blurring of these boundaries.

Although there is a general consensus surrounding the concept of generation and
its sub-groups, based on a social or historical context, generational studies still
remains an imprecise science. A generation located at a particular time and
influenced by certain events does not do so in isolation. For example, the John F
Kennedy's assassination in 1963 affected different generations differently in
North America and Europe (Zemke et al. 2000). However, it would be incorrect
to assume that all members of a generation experience the same event in the
same way as suggested by Zemke et al. (2000). Kupperschmidt (2000, p. 365)
partly addresses this theme when she points out that the composite of a
generation is made up of three periods or waves, each lasting five to seven years.
Each wave is, of course, influenced by the echo of the previous wave. Therefore
individuals born at the beginning or the end of a particular generational grouping
are influenced by the previous or next grouping. This is often referred to as the

'crossover effect' (Kupperschmidt, 2000). In popular literature these generational sub-groupings at both the beginning and the end of a generation and have gained the label 'tweeners'. What Kupperschmidt neglects are determinants such as gender, social-class and nationality. In presenting her research, Kupperschmidt drew primarily on two key publications, those of Zemke et al. (2000) and Strauss and Howe (1991) that also neglect gender, which directly influences an individual (Sturges et al. 2002).

Although the 'tweeners' label lacks academic substance, Arsenault (2004) argues that Kupperschmidt's (2000) 'crossover effect' has relevance. According to Arsenault (ibid) the 'crossover effect' is where individuals, whose birth dates are positioned on the cusp of two generations, are able to recall shared memories and views. To illustrate the 'crossover effect,' both Parry and Urwin (2011), Schuman and Scott (1989) drew on the Apollo 11 moon landing. For early Baby Boomers, being 20 years old at the time, tended to express similar views of the late Traditional generation (born between 1922-1944), one of amazement that this feat was achieved in 1969 (Parry & Urwin, 2011; Schuman & Scott, 1989). In contrast, those in the late Baby Boomers group, being 10 years old in 1969, matched the attitudes of members of early Generation X group (being 5 years old at the time), who perhaps having lived with space exploration almost from the beginning, held a less amazed perspective, focusing more on the next step of space-exploration that the moon landing represented (Schuman & Scott, ibid, p. 376-377).

The crossover effect also appears to partly contradict the idea of a generation as a distinct grouping. Kupperschmidt (2000) argues that the previous generation's experiences and values will reverberate into the next, but not actually mirror them. However, it is reiterated that the idea of shared experiences does not imply that all members of the generational group share the same experience, or that those who do are affected in the same way. Troll (1970, 1980) like Schuman and Scott, (1989) above argues that not all individuals living in the same time necessarily experience the same event the same way (see section 2.1.4 above). In addition, Giancola (2006) notes that, a generation does not operate independently of social class, gender, ethnicity or national culture. In investigating the cultural

dimension of a generation, Egri and Ralston (2004) conducting a study comparing generational groups in the USA and China. Rather than use the same definition of generations in each county, Egri and Ralston (ibid) hypothesized that there are four generations in Chinese society based upon political and historical events in the country. The generational groupings were: Social Reform, Republican, Consolidation and Cultural Revolution generations – and three generations in the USA: Traditional or Veterans, Baby Boomers and Generation X. Using the Schwartz Values Scale, Egri and Ralston (ibid) found clear differences between the US generational groups for openness to change, conservation and self-enhancement, but no differences for self-transcendence. For the Chinese, there were no clear generational differences amongst the four groupings. More interestingly, Egri and Ralston found significant national differences between each of the US and Chinese groups, supporting the notion that generational characteristics are specific to a national setting rather than being globally influenced. The idea of differences between countries has also been taken up by Schewe and Meredith (2004), who discussed the differences in generational groups in the USA, Brazil and Russia. In their study, Schewe and Meredith (ibid) used different generational groupings for Brazil (because of different experiences during World War Two and later political events in the country: the Vargas era - coming of age, in 1930–45; post war 1946–54; optimism 1955–67; the iron years 1968–79; the lost decade 1980–91; and 'be on your own' 1992 to the present day) and for Russia (collectivism group - 1929–40; the great patriotic war 1941–53; the thaw group 1954–69; the Stagnation group 1970–85; the Perestroika group 1986–91; and the post-Soviet group 1992 to the present day). Schewe and Meredith's (ibid) findings suggest that some events have significance in the USA but were less significant in other counties, illustrating the influence of national culture. Contradicting this, Edmunds and Turner (2005) argue against national differences in generations, suggesting instead that globally experienced traumatic events have created 'global generations', rather than nationally bounded generational categories. Edmunds and Turner (ibid) suggest that events such as the 2001 attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York were globally and similarly experienced across the world, owing to widespread access to television and the Internet. The result of this global experience has led to the development of a global generation based

around this event, and will increasingly become common as these 'global' incidences occur more often. While the impact of globalization is well documented, Edmunds and Turner's (ibid) contention has yet to be tested, and is questionable whether major world events will have affected all nationalities equally, particularly for non-Western societies.

In reviewing the theme surrounding culturally influence on generational studies, Parry and Urwin (2011) warns that for researchers who cannot subscribe to Edmunds and Turner's idea of 'global generations.' In explaining this, Parry and Urwin (ibid) agrue that Edmunds and Turner (ibid) contention that consideration must be made to population being studied due to the participants coming from different birth groups and from potentially differently countries, therefore makes the process of ascribing work values to particular generations difficult. Moreover for Parry and Urwin (ibid) the issue of culture may well explain the failure of many studies to find generational differences in work values, if the samples did not come from a single nationality. In concluding, Parry and Urwin (ibid) stated that studies need to consider the effects of nationality and ethnicity, and not to assume that a generation is purely a heterogeneous grouping.

2.4 Generational categories

The term 'generation' and 'generation cohort' originated from the popular literature of the 1960s when 'generation gap' was first observed, and, according to Giancola (2006), it is now embedded into everyday language. Categorizing and labelling a generation and to a greater extent, dating groups, is an inexact science (Sessa et al. 2007), which has led to significant debate, particularly concerning dating a particular generation (Craig & Bennett, 1997).

The lack of precision and consensus among generational commentators is best illustrated with regard to labelling and defining the group born during the first part of the 20th century. In North America, those born between 1909 and 1933 are referred to as the 'WWIIers', and those born between 1934 and 1945 are the 'Swingers', or 'Silent' generation (Lyons & Kuron, 2014; Schaeffer, 2000 as cited in Sessa et al. 2007). In contrast, Kupperschmidt (2000) groups all those born up to 1945 together and classifies them as 'Traditionalists', and Jurkiewicz

and Brown (1998) label those born between 1925 and 1942 as the 'Matures.' The basis of these labels and also the generational timeframes are based on numbers, including perceived significant event(s) and groups' demographic size.

One major generational grouping, which has become synonymous with generational studies, is the Baby Boomers. The name 'Boomers' is derived from the size of the group and because they lived during prosperous economic times of the late 1950 early 1960s. Like all generational groups, the birth years that bind this group are open to debate. Some writers in both North America and Europe report that the Boomers were born between 1946 and 1960 (Kupperschmidt, 2000; Strauss & Howe, 1991), 1946 and 1964 (Leach et al. 2013; Hart, 2006; Bova & Kroth, 1999; Wong et al. 2008; Yu & Miller, 2003), and 1940 and 1960 (Sessa et al. 2007).

Following the Baby Boomers, came Generation X, or the 'Gen-Xers'. This generational group begins somewhere in the early 1960s and ends somewhere between 1975 and 1982 (Cogin, 2012; Adams, 2000; Jurkiewicz & Brown, 1998; Karp, Sirias & Arnold, 1999; Kupperschmidt, 2000; Scott, 2000). The latest generational group to enter the workplace has numerous names, including Generation Y (Kupperschmidt, ibid; Neuborne & Kerwin, 1999), and more recently, the 'Millennial' (Sheahan, 2005; Howe, Strauss & Matson, 2000), while Yu and Miller (2003, p. 23) cite the 'dotcom generation'. Other names include 'Echo Boomers', 'Generation Next', 'Generation Why' and 'Net Generation' (Costanza, Badger, Fraser, Severt & Gade, 2012; Parry & Urwin, 2011; Twenge, 2010; Tapscott, 1998; 2009) and 'Nintendo Generation'. Sessa et al. (2007) argue that there is no definitive name, or agreed cut-off date for this grouping. However, irrespective of label, this generational group's birth year is 1982 or 1983.

While these categories and boundaries have become embedded in recent generational studies (e.g. Dries et al. 2008b; Wong et al. 2008; Gursoy et al. 2008), studying the almost paradoxical nature of this theme using distinct demarcations has been challenged (Twenge et al. 2004, 2008). Wong et al. (2008) using an Occupational Personality Questionnaire found that the results in

their study did not support the argument of generational characteristics that have been pervasive in the management literature and the media. The study found specifically, few meaningful differences, but these observed differences could be attributed to age rather than a generation. Twenge et al. (2004, 2008) note that society has labelled each generation differently in order to separate one generational group from another, yet most research indicates that the generationl effect is linear rather than categorical. Twenge et al. (ibid) explain that a generational group will change gradually over time rather than suddenly at particular birth year cut-offs. In explaining this Twenge et al. (2004, 2008), stated that a generation is linear, influenced by agentic traits, where the individual's perceptions and values are self-organised, proactive, self-reflective and self-regulated, not just shaped in reaction by environmental forces or driven by shared impulses. This perspective contradicts Zemke et al. (2000) and Gursoy et al. (2008) portrayal that a generational group changes suddenly at particular birth year cut-off.

2.5 A critique of generational characteristics

In the past twenty years there has been a re-emergence of interest in studying the differences between the generations. Of particular importance are the works of Kupperschmidt (2000) and Smola and Sutton (2002), and from a more popular perspective, most notably Johnson and Johnson (2010), Ng and Feldman (2010), Coupland (1991), Tapscott 1998; 2009) and Zemke et al. (2000). While covering a wide range of themes including values, attitudes, and behavioural traits, these works primarily centre on inter-generational relationships in the workplace. In this section each of the generational groups (Traditional generation, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y) is investigated independently. In exploring the specific attributes supposedly held by each generation, themes such as values, beliefs, attitudes and working ethos will be reviewed, drawing on existing popular and academic literature.

In investigating this theme it is necessary to divide the groups into distinct generational groups to determine whether a generational group can be used as an effective method to group individuals. The labels and date grouping used in this research follow those of Kupperschimdt (2000), Zemke et al. (2000) and Gursoy

et al. (2008), and commence with the Traditional or Veterans group (1922-1944), the Baby Boomers (1945-1960), move on to Generation X (1961-1975) and then to Generation Y (1976-2000). Labelling the latter two Generation X and Generation Y is for continuity. Other labels, for example, Millennial, do not encapsulate the entirety of the group; others − Echo Boomers, Generation Next, Generation Why, Net Generation and Nintendo Generation − have less academic substance. The table below derived from Chen and Choi (2008, p. 600-601) provides a summary of key publications on the three major generational groupings currently found in the workplace.

Facet	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Generation Y
Generational traits	Formative years Raised by traditional structured family (c, e) Education and economic expansion (c, e)	Latchkey kids (c) Many born into and raised in poverty (c, e) Society unfriendly to children (c, e) Raised during economic instability (c, e)	Raised by active parents (b) 'Decade of the child', centre of the family (b) Cultural wars and roaring 90s Racially diverse (b) Sheltered (child safety rules and safety devices)
	Style Independence stressed (c, e) Psychology of entitlement (c, e) Radical individualism (c, e) Challenging, protested, and rejected social norms (c, e) Redefined-swinging singles, childlessness, dual careers, self-gratification (c, e) Idealists (c, e) Optimistic (c, e) Self-absorbed (c, e) Inner-directed (c, e)	Independence stressed (c, e) Free agents (c, e) Boomeranging (leave home and return) (e) Extended adolescence (c, e) Commitment reluctance (c, e) Realists (c, e) Cynical (c, e) Self-reliant (c, e) Highly independent (e) Entrepreneurial (c, e)	High expectations of self (b, f) Idealists (b) Highly optimistic (b, e, f) Confident (independent thinking) (b, d, e, f, g, h) Conventional (take pride in behaviour) (b)
	View of money I deserved it – I spend it (c, e)	I demand it – I invest it (c, e)	Financially smart Retirement benefits are important in job choice (b)
	View of leisure Means to self-fulfillment (c, e) Work is shortcut to leisure (c, e)	Work to have money for leisure (c, e) Balance work and leisure (c, e)	Work-life balance (b, e,)
	View of technology Expedient commodity (c, e)	Technology is a fact of life (c, e)	Intense users of high technology (b, e)

Facet	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Generation Y
View of work	Meaningful and purposeful work (c, e) Self-fulfillment (c, e) Expect consensus (c, e) Expect participation (c, e) View rewards and recognition in terms of deserving (c, e) Meaningful and purposeful work (c, e)	Employment viewed simply as a job (c, e) Less value on corporate loyalty (a, e) Accept learning opportunities to enhance marketability (c ,e) Flexibility (a) Freedom (a, e) Competence (c, e) Shared leadership and involvement (c, e) View rewards and recognition in terms of demands (c, e) Balance work with fun (a,c, e) Expect casual, friendly work relationships (c,e)	Thrive on challenging work (b, e, f) Addicted to change (b) Skeptical of corporate loyalty (b, e) Want to make an impact immediately (b, g, h) Goal driven Expect rapid promotion and development (b, e, f, g, h) Demanding (b, e) Need constant feedback / recognition (b, e) High expectations of employers (b, e, g, h) Question authority (b, e) Prefer structure and direction (b, e g, h)

Table 2.1: Generational Differences

Sources: (a) Adams (2000), (b) Armour (2005), (c) Kupperschmidt (2000), (d) Martin (2005), (e) Zemke et al. (2000), (f) Barron et al. (2007), (g) Broadbridge, Maxwell and Ogden (2007), (h) Maxwell and Broadbridge (2014)

2.5.1 Traditional Generation

Although not shown in Table 2.1 above, the majority of the Traditional or Veteran Generation born between 1922-1944, have now reached retirement. This generation, born before the outbreak of the Second World War, provides interesting insight into the paradox of presenting potential generational differences in the workplace. The Traditional Generation grew up after the Great Depression and then lived through Second World War and its aftermath. Cherrington (1980) describes this generation as deeply affected by the above events. The period was characterised by a scarcity of jobs that profoundly influenced this generation into considering that almost any job was better than no job. The result was that this generation perceived that losing a job through bad performance was unacceptable (Kupperschmdit, 2000; Smola & Sutton, 2002). This was because the Traditional generation were brought up and raised in North America and the UK following the Protestant Work Ethic, in a predominately Judeo-Christian milieu. This milieu stressed the importance of morals, obligations and social norms, which needed to be observed, and the necessity to work hard (Cherrington, 1980, p. 73; Kupperschmidt, 2000, p. 68).

According to Kupperschmidt (2000) in her survey of the generational literature, the first and core waves transferred their early experiences and upbringing into their adulthood, without overtly challenging or rebelling against it. This generation married early; the man was the breadwinner and the wife the homemaker. UK census statistics support this contention (UK Office for National Statistics Social Trends, 1999, 2011). Undoubtedly some mothers of young children went out to work, but these children were looked after by other family members (Office for National Statistics Social Trends, 1999), since child care provision, as known today, did not exist. Members of this generation tended to sacrifice financially to provide for their children, the next generation (Zemke et al. 2000). Generally, the Traditional Generation valued a secure working environment, job security and an emphasis on the satisfaction of doing a job well. Not until the last wave of the Traditional Generation, did this strict ethos begin to change. This change was brought about in North America partly by publications such as Dr. Benjamin Spock's *The Common Sense book of Baby and Child Care*, published in 1946 (Zemke et al. 2000; Kupperschmidt, 2000), that advocates greater independence for children rather than the discipline and obedience of the past. Zemke et al. (ibid) contend that this independence and open questioning led to a fundamental shift in workplace dynamics, particularly among later

generational groups. Work and career path were no longer the focus of the individual's life. Promotion became dependent on ability and was no longer based on seniority or tenure.

In studying the generational group, Zemke et al.'s (2000, p. 47) anecdotal study concludes that this generation shared the belief in, 'an honest day's work for an honest day's pay.' Zemke et al. add that this generation grew-up viewing career as obedience over individualism. In the workplace, this generation tended to view a job as being for life (Zemke et al. ibid, p. 48). Their attitude was that since an organisation had invested in them, for example, through training, in return they would display a great deal of loyalty to that one company.

2.5.2 Baby Boomers

In contrast, the Baby Boomers were born and grew up after World War Two. This generation was raised in more prosperous, optimistic, safe and secure times admist the backdrop of the Cold War, than the Traditional generation (Zemke et al. 2000; Kupperschimdt, 2000; Smola & Sutton, 2002). This generation gained a clear identity, including being put forward in popular and academic literature as the archetype for a generational group. This reputation is encapsulated in 1967, with the Baby Boomer generation being awarded the Time magazine 'Man of the Year,' normally awarded to an individual as opposed to a group of individuals based on the expectations that this generation would 'clean up our [the North American] cities, end racial inequality and find a cure for the common cold' (Zemke et al. 2000, p.66). Zemke et al. (2000), Smola and Sutton (2002) and Kupperschmidt (2000) contend that this generation has witnessed the beginning of the media exposure of political, religious and business leaders, with events such as Watergate, the Profumo affair, that has culminated in an increase in cynicism and rebellion against authority. This can also be attributed to certain defining events (Zemke et al. ibid; Gursoy et al. 2008; Kupperschmidt, 2000) which occurred during this generation's formative years, for example, the Vietnam War, the rise in Western political unrest, Watergate and the social and sexual revolution of the 1960s. The generation's cynicism has manifested in their personal lives and in the workplace (Kupperschmidt, ibid; Smola & Sutton, ibid). Zemke et al. (2000, p. 67) add that this generation has shaped societal events. These social changes according to writers such as Leach et al. (2013, p. 118) have also led to this generation, although diverse, to possess a high degree of contextual awareness of their 'lucky position.'

In contextualising this generation, Zemke et al. (2000) and Kupperschmdit (2000) concur that the first waves of Baby Boomers − partly echoing the previous generation − were generally more idealistic, supporting causes such as civil rights. The first wave born immediately after the war, wish to prove themselves to their parents, or as Zemke et al. contend, 'want[ed] to prove to those [their parents and grandparents] who had fought for their future [during the war]' (2000, p. 77). In contrast, the last waves of the generation became increasingly disillusioned, which was compounded by the after effects of the economic crisis of the early 1970s.

Unlike their parents, the Baby Boomers in North America and the UK entered the workplace as a phenomenal force (UK Office for National Statistics Social Trends, 1999, 2011) as a result of their large birth-rate numbers and non-conformist attitudes. Kupperschmidt (2000, p. 69) states that the sheer number of Boomers allows them to be strong-willed and rebel against the previous generation's notion of work. Unlike the previous generation, the Boomers have radically changed the workplace in their pursuit to seek work that has meaning and material gain.

Specifically from a generational work perspective, Callanan and Greenhaus (2008) while studying the Baby Boomer generation, contended that with the projected retirement of this grouping in the next few decades, that will create a potential leadership vacuum and labour shortage. To address this, Callanan and Greenhaus (ibid) call for organisations to recognise the talents and experience that this generation has, through devising Human Resource programs to attract to motivate and capitalise on the Baby Boomers' expertise.

2.5.3 Generation X
Unlike their older counterparts, this generation was named after Douglas Coupland's (1991) novel entitled, *Generation X: Tales for an Accelerated Culture* (Mitchell, McLean and Turner 2005), is smaller in number and portrayed as being pessimistic. For many generational writers including Kupperschmidt (2000), Smola and Sutton (2002) and Zemke et al. (2000), the Generation X group are either the Baby Boomers' children, or live in their generational shadow of this grouping. Rather than a bright and prosperous future, Zemke et al. (ibid) contend that they have inherited the social debris of their self-absorbed parents, who neglected them. Consequently

this generation became independent, rebellious, cynical and negative to authority. Zemke et al. (2000) argue that this generation's independence has manifested itself as a direct result of both parents needing to go out and work. This absent parents social trend during the generation's formative years led to them being known as 'latch-key children' (Kupperschmidt, 2000). The generation's rebellious and negative nature can be directly attributed to the group witnessing a series of economic crises which adversely affected their childhood and early working lives (Smola and Sutton, ibid). Some writers, such as Strauss and Howe (1991) contend that this generation gained the label '13th Generation' or Generation X owing to their lack of interest, which stemmed from their negative perceptions, attitudes and values (Strauss & Howe, ibid). Other writers, for example, Gursoy et al. (2008) believe that these characteristics have transferred to the workplace.

Studying the values, perceptions and attitudes of members of Generation X, Cennamo and Gardner (2008), Smola and Sutton (2002) and Cherrington (1980) argue that this generation are less work-orientated than their contemporaries. Cherrington's (1980) study into values among employees reveals that those in this generation value leisure and free-time more than pride in their 'craftmanship'. Cherrington (ibid) adds that when a particular task has been achieved, members of this generational group, in comparison with their older peers, are less likely to perceive that the achievements are worthwhile or have benefited others. Cherrington argues that this reflects the extrinsic motivation of this group's attitude to work. Zemke et al. (2000), Kupperschmidt (2000) and Gursoy et al. (2008) concur. Zemke et al. (ibid), suggest that this generation has rejected the concept of work as the centre of their lives and instead value a greater work − life balance. For Reisenwitz and Lyer (2009), members of Generation X are seeking a fast track, a unique work experience, and a changing environment; otherwise this grouping would be prepared to leave an organisation. This lack of commitment has led, according to Reisenwitz and Lyer (ibid), to this grouping changing jobs every two to four years, sometimes holding more than one job at a time with more than one company at a time, and changing careers several times during their working lives. In concluding, Reisenwitz and Lyer (ibid) projected that the average Generation X member would have approximately nine different jobs by the age of 32, in contrast to the traditional employee who worked 30 to 40 years at one firm. In a follow up study, Smola and Sutton (2002) posit that attitudes to work have changed since the group in Cherrington's (1980) study which was carried out in the early stages of their career. This change

in attitudes, values, and perceptions relating to work, according to Super (1980), Levinson (1978) and Super, Thompson and Lindeman (1988), can be directly attributed to a person's life-stage and maturity. More recent cross-sectional studies (e.g. Parry and Urwin 2011) show more consistent evidence of differences, suggesting that differences may be growing as generations proceed through their respective life-cycles. However the results of eight other cross-sectional studies from the U.S.A. are inconclusive. Three recent studies by Bristow, Amyx, Castleberry and Cochran (2011), Gursoy, Chi, and Karadag (2013), Real, Mitnic and Maloney (2010) found generational differences as to work value, while four older studies Chen and Choi (2008), Jurkiewicz and Brown (1998), Jurkiewicz (2000) and Leschinsky and Michael (2004) argued that there are inconsistencies. Other studies from Australia (Taylor, 2008; Wong et al., 2008), Canada (Lyons, Duxbury, & Higgins, 2005; Lyons et al., 2012), the Netherlands (Lub, Bijvank, Bal, Blomme, & Schalk, 2012) and New Zealand (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008), and a multi-national study by Cogin (2012), showed greater differences among generations. In reviewing these studies, Lyons and Kuron (2014, p.147), concluded that the findings related to values remained inconclusive as to the influence of an individual's generation. Part of this inconclusively could be attributed to the cross-sectional studies being sampled from different countries and industries (e.g., construction, government, hospitality and manufacturing).

Linked to work ethos is career tenure. Cherrington (1980) contends that the Generation X grouping are less inclined to follow the traditional linear path of promotion based on seniority or remaining loyal to one organisation. Dries et al. (2008), Hay (2000) and Loomis (2000) agree, pointing out that Generation X is the first generation to leave a job without another to go to. This is revealed by the higher levels of transiency between jobs and the expectation of being unemployed from four to six times in their working life. Hay (ibid) and Loomis (ibid) and later by Dries et al. (2008), Chudzikowski (2010) and Costanza et al. (2012) concur that this generation is more likely to leave a job and seek more challenging alternatives, a higher salary, or improved benefits. This supports Cherrington's (1980) original quantitative study based on data gathered from 53 US companies. The study investigated workers' attitudes toward their jobs, their companies, their communities, and work in general. The attitudes included: pride in craftsmanship, feelings about the specific job, company, and top management, and to pay and other work-related outcomes, the acceptability of welfare benefits, and towards fellow workers.

Cherrington's (ibid) findings indicate that this generation, unlike their older counterparts, perceive that a person should not risk losing friends or decreasing leisure time in order to work harder. Smola and Sutton's (2002) study, using the same methodology, concurs that those in the Generation X group still view promotion as being primarily based on an individual's skills or ability, and not on tenure.

The shared characteristics of Generation X have been challenged. Commentators in the field of sociology, for example, Davis et al. (2006), while acknowledging a trend towards an increase in family breakdowns and single parent families in the UK, have pointed out that this social revolution has not resulted in societal disaster. Instead various sociologists (e.g. Twenge and Campbell, 2008) posit that Zemke et al.'s portrayal of Generation X attitudes and perceptions are more tabloid than factual because of the anecdotal nature of the research method employed. Twenge and Campbell (ibid) further suggest that these stereotypical portrayals are potentially discrediting. However, social and demographic data provide evidence to suggest Zemke et al.'s (ibid) conclusions cannot be dismissed totally (Office for National Statistics Social Trends, 1999). There have been a number of significant demographic changes in the UK mirroring trends across the Western world. For example, the increase in the breakdown of the family unit and greater numbers of families where both parents work. This has led some authors (Pekala, 2001 & Kupperschmidt, 2000) to concur that Zemke et al.'s findings have a certain degree of accuracy.

More recently, studies into the generational workplace (e.g. Twenge & Campbell, 2008; Dries et al. 2008b) found that the Generation X group has become hard-working and displays a higher degree of loyalty to employers than previously reported in earlier studies. This partly contradicts Cherrington's (1980) and Smola and Sutton's (2002) earlier findings. In explaining this shift in perceptions and priorities amongst Generation X workers towards the workplace, they conclude that these changes can be attributed to the group's maturity and career life-cycle. The theme of career life-cycles will be investigated in Chapter Three. Although those in Generation X have changed due to maturity, there is insufficient research to determine whether this generation follows an organisational career path as previous generations have.

2.5.4 Generation Y

The youngest generational group in the workplace, Generation Y, has gained particular prominence in both popular and academic literature, which is reflected in the number of labels associated with the grouping. For example, Costanza et al. (2012), Parry and Urwin (2011), Neuborne and Kerwin (1999) and Tapscott (2009, 1998) refer to the 'Net Generation', or 'N-Gen' to encapsulate the influence new technology and the internet has on this generation. Zemke et al. (2000, p. 128) add, 'if Generation X was the lost generation, this generation is the found generation'. Strauss and Howe (1991), who refer to this generation as the 'Millennial' generation, draw upon their governmental meta-data to predict that this generation, unlike any other has moved quickly to gain control over the adult world. Strauss and Howe (ibid) contend that the generation is more concerned about society than themselves. In explaining this, Strauss and Howe (ibid) argue that this generation is prepared to work hard, do voluntary work and to be an active member in society. Twenge (1997, 2000, 2006), Twenge and Campbell (2001) and Twenge et al. (2008) challenge this perspective positing that they have identified strong individualistic traits in this generation, such as assertiveness, self-esteem, and self-entitlement that the writers sees as being narcissistic or self-centred. Trzesniewski et al. (2005) and Ackerman et al. (2010) concluded that this self-entitlement or narcissistic trait can be attributed to upbringing. Stinson et al. (2008), who studied 35,000 Generation Y Americans, found a generational shift in increased cases of narcissism. Linked to the rise in self-entitlement / narcissism is an increase in anxiety and poor mental health, which Twenge (2000) associates with a focus on self rather than on relationships.

Although members of this generation are still in the early stage of their careers, studies have found that they actively seek a career that has a number of specific and unique characteristics (Zopiatis et al. 2012; Barron et al. 2007; Broadbridge et al. 2007; Maxwell, Ogden and Broadbridge, 2010; Maxwell & Broadbridge, 2014), including training (Proserpio & Gioia, 2007; Zopiatis et al. ibid), fair compensation and a positive company culture. For Cennamo and Gardner (2008) in a quantitative study on person-organisational values found that Generation Y valued freedom to pursue more than the older generations. This was later supported by Maxwell, Ogden and Broadbridge (2010) and Maxwell and Broadbridge (2014). Martin (2005) adds that Generation Y perceives that mutual loyalty rather than length of service is an important

expectation. Kerslake (2005) concurs and adds that this generation demonstrates loyalty and dedication to an employer providing that their personal goals are being attained and their efforts recognised (see also Zemke et al. 2000). If these conditions are not met, then the typical Generation Y member would seek a new challenge in another job (Zemke et al. ibid; Barron et al. ibid; Broadbridge et al. ibid). Zopiatis et al. (2012) in their qualitative study in Cyprus cited the importance of Human Resources management to develop new, innovative, employee-centric initiatives and intervention to engage with this generational grouping, as they are seeking rapid promotion. It is worth noting, however, that the majority of the studies cited above were conducted prior to the recent economic downturn when employment opportunities were more abundant. In a more recent study to explore the theoretical and empirical linkage between emerging knowledge of Generation Y and employee engagement, Maxwell and Broadbridge (2014) identified a determination to succeed and achieve promotion while meeting personal goals. Contextualising the findings, Maxwell and Broadbridge (2014) concluded that this generational grouping holds high career aspirations, seeking challenging work. In particular, females sought an equal, fair and equality employment environment to achieve their career progression and personal aspirations, in return for being loyal and committed. What remains to be investigated is whether these particular characteristics (loyalty and dedication, provided personal goals are met) prevail during the current economic recession. To date no published research has addressed this issue. This study addresses this gap by investigating whether the economic climate of the second decade of the 21st century, has influenced the member of Generation Y attitude to organisational and job security.

In studying Generation Y's perceptions and attitudes in the workplace, Barron et al. (2007) found that this generation is realistic regarding their opportunities to enter the workplace. Barron et al. (ibid) indicate that, this grouping seeks rapid career progression, and if necessary, a change of job in what can be described as a 'butterfly' or 'flutter in and out' manner (McCabe & Savery, 2005; McCabe, 2008, p. 113). Barron et al. (ibid) contend that although career mobility exists, there is evidence to suggest that there is also a need to be committed to a position and / or an organisation. Maxwell, Odgen and Broadbridge (2010) in studying the career expectations and aspirations concurs with those of McCabe and Savery (2005), McCabe (2008), Barron et al. (2007), by identify that due to this grouping's highly demanding and self-centred attitude of

achieving personal career development and employment aspirations, it culminated in this grouping being discouraged to remain in the sector due to the lack of career programmed offered. Maxwell, Odgen and Broadbridge (ibid) study also supported the earlier work of Worman (2006) who contend this generation unlike previous generations, while being highly focused on meeting career expectations and aspirations, are also more organisationally engaged.

Zemke et al. (2000) posit that Generation Y have already planned their goals and aspirations for the next five years. Career planning based on achieving individualistic goals and aspirations is seen as a unique feature of this generation (Zemke et al. 2000; Kupperschmidt, 2000; Johnson & Johnson, 2010). In the past, career aspirations were attained either based on tenure (Traditional generation), or by perceiving the need to work long hours to gain promotion (Baby Boomers), or on the desire to seek a balance between work / life choices (Generation X). This raises the question whether career aspirations have translated into actual career decisions as argued by Zemke et al. (ibid) for Generation Y, or can simply be attributed to a youthful optimism and exuberance. The second question is whether these different aspirations are in fact generational, or influenced by other attributes such as profession or life-stage. Finally with the question remains as to the effect of the recent economic downturn on these generations? This study addresses these three themes by investigating firstly, the extent that career aspirations are influenced by the individual's profession or sector of employment; secondly as mention above, the impact of the recent economic downturn; and thirdly, whether the life-stage of the manager is in anyway influential on his/her career.

While there is optimism that this generation possesses a positive attitude to work, potential negative societal and economic factors have been identified (e.g. Twenge, 2000, 2006; Caspi, 1998; Twenge & Campbell, 2001). For example, the Office of National Statistics Social Trends (2011) highlights the sharp demise of the traditional nuclear family unit. The increase in single parent households in the UK could manifest in a dramatic rise in anxiety, which would negatively affect the individual. To contextualise the above statement, the NHS Lifestyles Statistics (2008) notes that in 2007, one in five adults (20%) in the United Kingdom aged between 45 and 54 (Generation X and Baby Boomers) reportedly suffered from some form of common mental disorder. In contrast, the UK National Statistics Social Trends (2011) reports

that one in ten people among Generation Y had been diagnosed with depression, the highest group being those under the age of 30.

Anxiety among the Generation Y group has been extensively researched (Judge et al. 1995; Twenge, 2000, 2006; Caspi, 1998; Twenge & Campbell, 2001). These studies led to the generation gaining the name 'Generation Me' (Twenge & Campbell, ibid), as a result of being egotistical and self-centred (Twenge, 2006, 2010). Twenge and Campbell (ibid) argue that there has been a marked growth in anxiety and self-entitlement among this generation leading to over-confidence, which could potentially manifest itself in the workplace. Over-confidence can result in an inability to get along with others, or see another's perspective, and a lack of empathy (Twenge & Campbell, 2001, p. 865).

In summary, there is evidence to indicate consensus among certain generational writers concerning particular differences and traits pertaining to the groups, although the extent to which these characteristics are uniquely generational remains contentious. For some, for example, Zemke et al. (2000), Kupperschmidt (2000) and Gursoy et al. (2008), certain shared characteristics are uniquely generational, since they are based on a group's shared experiences during their formative years. However, the validity of these publications has been questioned, since they rely on anecdotal evidence which does bring into question how reliable these works are. According to authors such as Giancola (2006), Deal, Altman and Rogelberg (2010), Lyons et al. (2015), Lyons and Kuron (2014), Costanza and Finkelstein (2015), these publications and studies are primarily anecdotal, that is, based on open meta-data comprising of non-academic sources that lacks empirical rigour. Many of these publications make the assumption that all members of a certain generational group will experience the same sociocultural and/or socio-economic event in the same way (Giancola, ibid). The current study investigates how other attributes such as personality, work values and attitudes are influenced by an individual's generation.

2.6 Significant Generational and non-Generational characteristics

In investigating the influence that a generational grouping can have on an individual, it is necessary to investigate an assortment of other influential factors such as society, education and

employment sector. In a recent publication by Maxwell and Broadbridge (2014), studying the career transitions of Generation Y, the writers state that several researchers including Deal, Altman and Rodelberg (2010), acknowledge that the reported generational divide do not exist as presented by writers such as Johnson and Johnson (2010), Gursoy et al. (2013), rather these groupings have a significant number of shared characteristics. This section explores the influence of work-related values on an individual and then reviews the influence of personality and work attitudes.

According to the literature, gender is not a significantly influential characteristic. This prompted the question whether an individual's generation was gender neutral. The theme of gender will be investigated in the next Chapter − career theory.

2.6.1 Generational differences in work-related values

As highlighted in previous sections there has been a debate surrounding whether there are significant similarities or differences between the generations. The question is to what extent a generational group influences an individual. Kowske et al. (2010) and Foster (2013) contend that, while generational differences exist, these differences may not necessarily reflect the stereotypical portrayals of Latham (2007), Kupperschmidt (2000), Zemke et al. (2000) and Coupland (1999). Costanza and Finkelstein (2015) warns about these generalised portrays in human resource management decision-making. Kowske et al. (ibid) add that certain work-values and characteristics are not exclusively held by one specific generation. Leach et al. (2013) in studying Baby Boomers' concur with Kowske et al. (ibid) adding that there has been a generational 'bridging' where there is both an inter-generational linkage to the previous grouping and the emergence of a 'downward blurring,' the sharing of values and perception with successive generations. This generational blurring has included time spent at work compared to personal-life and leisure time. In a more recent study in the workplace, Becton, Walker and Jones-Farmer (2014) identified that Baby Boomers exhibited fewer job mobility and greater compliance-related behaviours compared to the younger groupings. The study also revealed that both Baby Boomers and Generation Y were more likely to work overtime compared to Generation X. However in concluding Becton, Walker and Jones-Farmer (ibid) stated that the findings were less pronounced as often portrayed.

In a cross-sectional study comparing work-related differences between Baby Boomers and Generation X, Jurkiewicz (2000), concluded that the groups ranked work-related values similarly. However, Baby Boomers valued learning new things and freedom from conformity more than their younger counterparts. This finding concerning Baby Boomers contradicts earlier studies of Zemke et al. (2000), Kupperschmidt (2000) and Gursoy et al. (2008). On the other hand, Jurkiewicz's (ibid) study supports Zemke et al. (2000), Kupperschmidt (2000) and Gursoy et al. (2008) that the Generation X group values freedom from supervision more than the older generational grouping. The complexity surrounding generational studies has also been illustrated by the debate as to whether cross-sectional studies (e.g. Jurkiewicz, 2000) can accurately define what a generation is, as the approach lacks consideration given to other determinants such as gender (Parry & Urwin, 2011). For Parry and Urwin (ibid) generational studies are grounded in sociological theory, therefore there should be an awareness of potential determinants, including the distinction made between a 'generation' and 'age.' In addressing these perceived inherent weaknesses, Lyons and Kuron (2014) and Ryder (1965) contend that cross-sectional studies including time-lag data collection still have relevance, as the approach provides a unique perspective on this phenomenon, by creating a 'fossilised record' for meta-analysis and reviews (Lyons & Kuron, 2014, p. 153).

The complex and often contradictory nature of generational studies is illustrated in Kowske et al.'s (2010) empirical examination of generational attitudes to work. Kowske et al. (ibid) found that Baby Boomers valued personal growth more than their younger counterparts. Using a cross-sectional survey to look at generational differences in work values in the hospitality industry Chen and Choi (2008) found that generally, Baby Boomers rated personal growth more highly than younger generations, while Generation Y valued work environment more highly than Generation X or Baby Boomers did. However in concluding, Chen and Choi (2008) argue that irrespective of their generation, each grouping values comfort, security and professional growth. Drawing on Cherrington's (1980) earlier quantitative work, Smola and Sutton (2002) reach the same conclusion regarding work values among the generations. Smola and Sutton's study supports Cherrington's conclusion that the Generation X grouping values early promotion while the Baby Boomers see promotion as gained through serving a certain period of tenure. Other

contrasts include members of Generation X, who hold a more self-centric or 'me' orientation than the Baby Boomers', who display particular loyalty to an organisation. Smola and Sutton's study indicates that members of Generation X value working hard and associate this with self-worth more than the older generation. This finding contradicts Cherrington's (1980) conclusion that the Generation X group does not value working hard. What is unclear from these generationally related studies is whether this change in work value can be attributed to their maturity. Writers such as Lyons and Kuron (2014), Super (1980), Comte (1830 as cited in Strauss & Howe, 1991), Dilthey (1865 as cited in Strauss & Howe, 1991), Giancola (2006) and Rhodes and Doering (1993) contend that as individuals' grow older their values and attitudes also change, and are not influenced or associated with the person's generational group. Collin and Young (2000) add that individuals' values change throughout their life-stages. These changes can be both individualistic and having shared values through their experiences. In clarifying this, Collin and Young contend that these values are 'sensitive to changes in work and related social conditions over time,' and can be unique to the employee or shared by a group of individuals (Collin & Young, 2000, p.74). What Collin and Young (ibid) do not allude to is whether these shared experiences are generational. In contrast Appelbaum et al. (2004) argue that determinants such as motivation and values can be attributed to life-stages rather than generational differences. Appelbaum et al. (ibid) compared common motivational factors across Baby Boomers and Generation X and found common perspectives.

2.6.2 Generational differences in personality

Although there is limited consensus with regard to generational differences related to personality, various studies (e.g. Zemke et al. 2000; Kupperschmidt, 2000; Gursoy et al. 2008) highlight the potential implication of these differences for the workplace. Twenge (2000), Twenge and Campbell (2001) and Twenge et al. (2004, 2008) identify a number of significant personality trends that have come to prominence in the past 20 years. These include a growth in self-entitlement, self-esteem and extraversion, and a shift away from an external locus of control through 'collectivism' where the individual believe that luck and powerful others determine their fate, to one that is more centred on the individual.

Although studies have revealed a move to a more 'me'- focussed personality among the generation, this trend is not linear; rather it is influenced by each generation's shared perception of needing (e.g. Baby Boomers) or not wanting to gain (e.g. Generation X) social approval with regards to their career and attitude towards work (Twenge & Im, 2007). The move to a more individualistic attitude is supported by a number of contemporary career theorists, for example, Hall's (1996) 'protean career' and Arthur et al's. (1995) 'boundaryless career'. The debate surrounding these two career concepts will be examined in Chapter Three.

Social research into the growth of a more individualistic and self-entitlement personality is not without its critics. Part of the criticism concerns the validity of the methodologies used. Twenge et al. (2004, 2008) used a quantitative meta-analysis strategy to collect social trend data sets, which led Trzesniewski et al. (2003, 2008) − along with Kruglanski (1975) − to highlight the potential flaws and limitations of their research. According to Trzesniewski et al. (ibid), the research primarily relied on convenient sample sets, in themselves too narrow, therefore invalidating the findings. This leads to questioning whether there is a significant trend to a more individualistic perspective on life that has in turn brought about the shift in the contemporary career.

2.6.3 Generational differences in work attitudes

Closely associated with personality is attitude to work. To date there has been relatively little empirical evidence related to generational differences in the work attitudes. Of the majority of popular generational studies (e.g. Johnson & Johnson, 2010; Zemke et al. 2000; Lancaster and Stillman, 2003; Tulgan, 2003) focus has been on workplace attitudes. However, the majority of empirical studies on intergenerational work attitudes are sparse, with an array of inconclusive findings (e.g. Kupperschmidt, 2000; Chen & Choi, 2008). Zemke et al. (ibid) identify distinct differences in work attitudes (see also Arsenault, 2004; Gentry et al. 2009; Tulgan, ibid, Kupperschmidt, 2000; Gursoy et al. 2008), for example, job and pay satisfaction, turnover intentions, benefits, recognition, career development, and job advancement and security. According to the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) (2004) work values are the source of most significant differences amongst generations and a major source of conflict in the workplace (Gursoy, Chi & Karadag, 2013). Hulin and Judge (2003) and Kowske, Rasch and

Wiley (2010) contend that to investigate work attitudes it is necessary to evaluate cognitive and emotional or affective reactions to various aspects of work. In the area of job security and commitment, Sverke et al. (2002) found significant generational differences in the way generations react to the uncertainty of different employment conditions. For the youngest generation (Generation Y), uncertainty is a key determining factor whether someone leaves or remains in a particular job. Part of the reason could be attributed to their perception that they are prepared or willing to leave their current secured employment, rather than remain loyal to one organisation. This trend has come about due to changes in the workplace, including employers seeking employees with transferable skills (Hall, 2002). The result has culminated in this generation (Generation Y) drawing upon an array of previous experiences to make themselves more marketable in this ever-increasing fragmented employment landscape (Sverke et al. ibid).

Investigating this theme, Davis et al. (2006) found that the Generation X group exhibited lower job involvement and normative or semi-committed attitude. This resulted in a reduced obligation to be committed to work than Generation Y. Davis et al. (ibid) note that the Baby Boomers display a higher degree of organisational commitment possibly due to the perceived high cost of leaving, which supports Zemke et al. (2000) and Kupperschmidt (2000). Building on Davis et al.'s research, Cassidy and Berube (2009) investigated work attitudes across the three generations and reported that the Generation Y grouping exhibited a higher voluntary turnover rate than their two older counterparts Baby Boomers and Generation X. However, Dudley et al. (2009) contradict Davis et al.'s (ibid) and Cassidy and Berube's (ibid) findings, and conclude that Generation X and Y reportedly have a higher turnover intention than that of the Baby Boomers. Part of this can be attributed to a shift in organisational security with the advent of organisational downsizing. This theme will be investigated in further depth in the next Chapter.

Kowske et al. (2010) investigated job security and concluded that the perception surrounding job security has steadily declined among Traditional to late Baby Boomers. These authors found that for Generation Y, job security was an important facet of their job. This could partly be attributed to the recent economic downturn. Kowske et al. (ibid) notes that considering the backdrop of the Great Depression, the Traditional Generation conceptualised job security as holding / maintaining a 'cradle to the grave' job. Baby Boomers and Generation X, in contrast,

witnessed and experienced radical work changes that culminated in them redefining their expectations and perception to include job security. Those in the Generation Y grouping, faced with the same economic downturn as experienced in the late 1920s and early 1930s, now early on in their working life, are satisfied with job security, and wish to be employed for the next 25 years and receive some form of pension. Kowske et al.'s (ibid) findings thus partly contradict those (e.g. Barron et al. 2007, Twenge & Campbell, 2008; Lewis, 2015) who describe this generation as having a self-entitlement or narcissistic attitude concerning their careers. However in the same study, Kowske et al. (ibid) highlight that average organisational tenure has dropped. Reflective of this contradiction, the current study enquires whether part of the shift to seek job security could be attributed to organisational changes. For example, the emergence of a flatter organisational hierarchy has provided greater career opportunities, whereas the individual career path has become more lateral. Lewis (2015) in an open-ended questionnaire study of young workers (Generation Y), found an emphasis to self-achievement, the need for personal values to be enacted in the work environment and for open communications in the workplace. The career theme will be investigated in greater depth in Chapter Three.

To summarise, the evidence pertaining to generational and non-generational influences suggests that individuals born in the same historical period share common values, attitudes and perceptions, including work values. Sverke et al. (2010) identified specific generational differences in the areas of job security and work values; while Zemke et al. (2000) hold that there are differences in all aspects of a generation's characteristics. Zemke et al.'s (ibid) findings have been challenged as predominately stereotypical (Kowske et al. 2010). Kowske et al.'s (2010) study into work values identified generational differences in relation to job security, but indicates that these could be attributed to shifts in the workplace. There is also a lack of consensus among generational studies into the individual's personality (Johnson & Johnson, 2010; Coupland, 1999; Zemke et al. ibid; Lancaster & Stillman, 2003; Kupperschmidt, 2000). Sverke et al. (ibid) and Sterns and Miklos (1995) highlight other characteristics that could be influential, for example job attitudes, organisational attitudes, health and work-related behaviour. The next section will investigate these assumptions, and explore themes such as gender, occupation / profession which have been omitted.

2.7 Current research in Generational Studies

Generational characteristics have been researched extensively including distinct and unique generational differences. Most notable are Johnson and Johnson (2010), Coupland (1999), Dries et al. (2008b), Kupperschmidt (2000), Smola and Sutton (2002), Zemke et al. (2000), Macky et al. (2008), Egri and Ralston (2004), Hirsch and Shanley (1996) and Brousseau et al. (1996).

The increased interest in generational studies in both academic and popular literature has resulted in a number of authors (e.g. Lyons & Kuron, 2014; Foster, 2013; Urick, 2012; Eisner, 2005; Twenge & Campbell, 2008; Arsenault, 2004; Macky et al. 2008) questioning the authenticity and reliability of many of the above publications. The basis of this criticism is the over-simplified and arguably tabloid portrayal of the generations (e.g. Gursoy et al. 2008; Gursoy, Chi & Karadag, 2013; Smola & Sutton, 2002). Deal et al. (2010), Maxwell and Broadbridge (2014), Jorgensen (2003) questions whether Zemke et al. (ibid), Smola and Sutton (ibid), Kupperschmidt (2000), Egri and Ralston (2004) and Hirsch and Shanley (1996) present the Baby Boomers', Generation X's and Generation Y's values accurately. Deal et al. (2010) warns practitioners these over-simplified portrayals due to the over-reliance on cross-sectional methods, can confuse other attributes such as age, life-stage or gender. Where generational differences exist, they are often modest, and that other attributed to other detriments including the economic climate. For Jorgensen current generational knowledge has been generated through the qualitative experiences of the authors, and lacks the empirical rigour necessary for accurate interpretation. Foster (2013) and Urick (2012) argued that there has been an over-reliance on descriptive research that has neglected the complex dynamics and interplay that a generation as a social force, has on the individual. Foster (2013) using a qualitative approach, revealed that a generation, is perceived from two perspectives or as an 'axis': first as an axis of difference, and second as a socio-historical dynamic. The generation as an axis of difference: Foster (ibid) contends that each generation believes that the older and younger generations possess fundamentally different attitudes to work. To illustrate this, Foster's (ibid) study revealed firstly, that 'the younger generation' has an overblown sense of 'entitlement' about the rewards and conditions of paid work; and secondly, that vaguely-defined older people 'lived to work' while young people 'work to live'.

For the second axis, generation as a socio-historical dynamic, the interview data highlighted the influence of social change on the generation, including technological advancements; (women's) increasing career opportunities; shifting gender roles; the perceived rise of the 'knowledge economy' jobs and corresponding decline of manual labour; and increased prosperity (Foster, 2013, p. 200). Contextualising these findings, Foster (ibid) while identifying that participants articulated and reacted to perceived generational differences and dynamics, she does warn that the use of generation-as-discourse through anecdotal evidence to gather 'life stories' to evaluate 'entitlement' of one 'generation,' can lead to a divisive and 'atomized' effect. This atomized effect, Foster (ibid) contends ultimately leads to an over-simplification of generational differences as it neglects the second axis. To address this, Foster (ibid) and Lyons and Kuron (2014) called for further studies with non-positivist ontology, studies to be conducted using a double-hermeneutic social research approach. Giddens (1982) argues natural science and a positivist approach uses 'single hermeneutics' to understand and theorise how the natural world is structured. The understanding is one-way; that is, for example the understanding of the actions of minerals or chemicals, as chemicals and minerals do not seek to develop an understanding of us. In contrast the social sciences are engaged in the 'double hermeneutic', the studying people and society, and how people understand their world, and how that understanding shapes their practice. Because people can think, make choices, and use new information to revise their understandings (and hence their practice), they can use the knowledge and insights of social science to change their practice.

Urick (2012) reviewed the emerging literature on generational identity, proposing the use of a multiple research strategy, including an interpretivist approach to study this theme. Through adopting this more rigorous academic approach of using a non-postivist onotology approach, Urick (ibid) contends that this would either robustly support or show discrepancies in popular generational publications, and enable [Human Resource] managers to implement more effectively, strategies and programmes for managing the interactions of multiple generations.

Eisner (2005) in reviewing 100 generational articles before conducting a quantitative survey on Generation Y students warns about how many of the commentaries on intergenerational workplace conflicts are oversimplified, but also highlights the need for an awareness relating an

erosion of the psychological contract between individual and organisations due to intergenerational differences. Furthermore, Twenge and Campbell (ibid) argue that the work of Zemke et al. (ibid), Tulgan (2003) and Lancaster and Stillman (2003) relied on trivialised case studies, interviews, anecdotal stories and qualitative surveys. Giancola (2006) and Twenge and Campbell (2008) also question Strauss and Howe's (1991) over-reliance on governmental quantitative data sets. While providing an intriguing picture of generational differences, these publications are hindered by a dearth of empirical, quantitative data and fail to explore the underlying psychology (Twenge & Campbell, 2008; Smith-Ruig, 2009). Recent research by Foster (2013), Lester, Standifer, Schultz and Windsor (2012), while highlighting the lack of empirical research, also acknowledged that generational difference do exist. Lyons et al. (2015) support this perspective, stating that while generational research is not robust and lacks empirical evidence concerning intergenerational differences, the construct does hold a potential insight into the changing nature of work and careers.

Macky et al. (2008) point out that the majority of the unreliable publications are newspaper stories, consultant press releases, magazine articles and books, and that they lack academic rigour and critical peer-review. The result is over-simplification of generational differences in the workplace (Arsenault, 2004). Arsenault (2004, p. 124) agrees with Twenge and Campbell (2008) that this over-simplification has resulted in the generational differences between generations being portrayed as 'pop stereotypes', which does not reflect their complexity. Toslon (2001) notes that the incorrect portrayal of the generational differences has resulted in a generational melee, or mushiness, and Tulgan (1996) adds that consequently, organisations neglect or over-trivialise the differences, for example, gender and life-stages. Lyons and Kuron (2014) in reviewing generational literature over the past two decades related to work-related determinants (e.g. attitudes and values) concluded that the existing research was fractured and contradictory due to methodological inconsistencies. To address this, Lyons and Kuron (ibid), Foster (2013), Urick (2012) called for a further qualitative research to provide greater academic rigour. This study adopts a non-positivist ontology through using an interpretative approach, which will be presented in Chapter Four.

2.8 Summary

This Chapter provided an overview of the central themes associated with the study of generations in addressing the first research question: theoretically, what supports the argument that a generational group is a reliable method to group individual managers?, the term 'generation' is used widely in both popular and academic literature to refer to groupings or a generational group, based on personal kinship or family, life style, or historical period. During the past two decades a polysemous use of the term emerged in contemporary sociology and intergenerational studies. This led to confusion, as many studies' methods are flawed owing to the omission or neglect of determinants such as life-stage, gender and profession (Kertzer, 1983; Twenge, 2000; Twenge & Campbell, 2008). This study addresses this confusion and gap in generational studies identified by Lyons and Kuron (2014), Lyons et al. (2015) by investigating and revealing the extent that life-stage, gender and profession has on an individual manager's career when studied from a generational perspective.

There is a consensus among some generational writers (Lyons & Kuron, 2014) that particular differences and traits exist among the generations. However the extent to which these shared characteristics are uniquely 'generational' remains contentious (Lyons et al. 2015). Authors such as Johnson and Johnson (2010), Zemke et al. (2000), Kupperschmidt (2000), Gursoy et al. (2008), Gursoy, Chi and Karadag (2013) contend that shared but unique characteristics proliferate in the generations. These characteristics are informed by the generational group's shared experiences during their formative years. Sverke et al's. (2010) longitudinal study identified specific generational differences in job security and work values. Kowske et al (2010) emphasize that differences in job security could be attributed to workplace changes. Earlier Zemke et al. (2000) found that differences exist throughout a generation. Popular writers such as Coupland (1999), Lancaster and Stillman (2003), Johnson and Johnson (2010) and academic writers (e.g. Kupperschmidt, 2000 and Gursoy et al. 2008) have pointed out that generational differences are deeply rooted in an individual's societal upbringing. Sverke et al. (2002, 2010) highlight some societal attributes that could be influential, and note that generational studies tend to neglect the extent to which external determinants such as gender, occupation and profession influence an individual.

While recognising the perspective of Sverke et al. (2002, 2010), writers such as Ryder (1965), Jurkiewicz and Brown (1998), Parry and Urwin (2011), Lyons and Kuron (2014), Kowske et al. (2010), Leach et al. (2013), Jurkiewicz (2000) contend that a generation is a reliable and robust academic approach, which this study agrees with and addresses the first research question: theoretically, what supports the argument that a generational group is a reliable method to group individual managers? Chapter Five, the first of the findings chapters, builds on the theoretical evidence presented in this Chapter to extend further the understanding generational groupings through empirical evidence to address the fourth research question: empirically, what support is there that a generational group is a reliable method to group individual managers?

Chapter Three
Career theory

3.1 Introduction

In addressing the second research question, this Chapter sets out the theoretical narrative about individual manager's career types and progression are influenced by their generational grouping. The Chapter then proceeds to address the third research question: theoretically, when viewed through the Kaleidoscope Career model, how are individual manager's perceptions of a successful career influenced by their generational group? The Chapter commences with a review of the debate surrounding career theory, addressing the changing face of careers.

The traditional career model, including its limitations, is investigated and the subjective nature of careers is investigated. Career comprises objective and subjective constructs, which are examined. Career success and the implications of age, gender and organisational and generational differences are explored. The Chapter concludes with a summary of core concepts identified in the literature review, and the formulation of research questions as set out in section 1.5, Chapter One, together with the study's conceptual framework.

3.1.1 Definitions

Before proceeding to investigate the literature related to careers, it is necessary to define the key terms used in this study, namely: what constitutes a manager, career success and career types. In defining what constitutes a manager, this study drew on Drucker (2008) and Gattiker and Larwood (1988) definitions of a person who is responsible for a certain group of tasks, which may involve the controlling or administering of an organisation or group of staff.

For career success, this study draws on Olsen and Shultz (2013), Verbruggen (2012), Arthur, Khapova and Wilderom (2005) and Heslin (2005) definitions. Verbruggen (2012), Arthur, Khapova and Wilderom (2005) state that career success is the accomplished desirable work-related outcomes over time. Heslin (2005) contend that career success encompass 'the real or perceived achievements individuals have accumulated as a result of their work experiences,' (p. 262), in which objective or external attributes for example pay,

position, and promotions, or subjective or intrinsic determinants such as job and career satisfaction of success are attained. Olsen and Shultz (2013) contend that career success is subjective and objective, which is influenced by the individual matured that changes the person's motivation, desire and preferences.

Finally this study perceives career types as a term that encompasses the career path or progression and career aspiration of the individual (Verbruggen et al. 2007).

3.2 Review of the debate surrounding career theory

Over the past twenty years, the way careers are viewed has changed dramatically (Hess, Jepsen & Dries, 2012; Chudzikowski, 2010; Sullivan, 1999). Changes include the demise of the traditional career model and the shift to a more contemporary portfolio-type career. Similarly, career theory and what constitutes a career has witnessed considerable change. Psychologists argue that 'people make careers' while sociologists claim that 'careers make the people' (Van Maanen, 1977, p. 8). There has also been debate surrounding whether careers should be researched from an objective or a subjective perspective. Traditionally the study of careers focused on objectively measuring, observing and verifying certain tangible elements such, as pay, promotion and occupational status. These characteristics, according to Lips-Wiersma and McMorland (2006) and Nicholson (2000), have long been established as the 'hallmark of career development' in many societies, including the UK.

In the past two decades, there has been a move away from this objective paradigm; authors such as Chudzikowski (2010), Arthur et al. (1989) and Hall, (2002) contend that careers need to be viewed through a more subjective lens, since they are not free of social context (Macky et al. 2008; Higgins, 2001). Higgins (ibid) points out that careers, like individuals, are influenced by political, economic, historical and socio-cultural developments. The subjective focus of a career includes job satisfaction, individuals' perceptions of their own success and aspirations about the future (Dries, Pepermans & Carlier, 2008; Aryee, Chay & Tan, 1994; Judge, Cable, Boudeau & Bretz, 1995; Melamed, 1995; Nabi, 1999). To evaluate a career subjectively involves combining the internalized evaluation

of personal career success with peer evaluation and certain other age-related factors (Lyons & Kuron, 2014, Dries, Pepermans & Carlier, 2008; Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987). For other career writers, such as Baruch (2006), neither the traditional objective organisational construct nor at the other end of the continuum, the non-traditional subjective model is able to truly capture the nature of the realities of a career.

Those writing about career (e.g. Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Hall, 2002) note that, significant changes such as globalisation, the restructuring of the workplace, the advent of information technology and associated new opportunities, have resulted in fundamental changes in the traditional career model. Furthermore, the modern career has also been influenced by recent socio-demographics trends, such as the emergence of two-career couples, a declining birth rate in the industrialised world, increased divorce rates and greater longevity (Office for National Statistics Social Trends, 2011). These changes have undoubtedly also influenced research into career paths.

3.3 The changing face of careers

The shift in career theory is reflected in the definition of a career. Wilensky (1961, p. 523) refers to the traditional career as a succession of jobs arranged hierarchically based on prestige or status. The succession is orderly and more or less predictable (Wilensky, ibid). Twenty years later, Super (1980, p. 282) defined a career as 'a combination and sequence of roles, which an individual plays during the course of their working life'. Ten years on, Arthur, Hall and Lawrence (1989, p. 8) argued that a career reflects the 'sequence of a person's experiences over time'. According to Arthur, Khapova and Wilderom (2005), Arthur et al.'s (ibid) definition has become the established definition of a contemporary career, which this study will draw upon.

There is debate surrounding whether a career and its associated conception of success can be measured using the traditional objective criteria or whether new subjective criteria are needed. In the next section, background to the workplace is presented in section 3.4, followed by section 3.5 that sets out the traditional

career model is investigated, before then the debate surrounding subjective career theories is explored in section 3.6.

3.4 Background to the workplace

To fully understand today's workplace it is necessary to appreciate the context in which it occurs. The decrease in the birth rate over the past 50 years, combined with greater longevity among the UK population has produced inexorable demographic changes. In 2008, the number of people who reached state pension age (65 for men and 60 for women) overtook − for the first time − those aged under 16 (Office for National Statistics [ONS], 2013).

Based on current work patterns projected by the Office for National Statistics [ONS] (2013) the potential ramification is an ever-diminishing workforce needing to support an ever increasing, long-lived, older retiring generation. At the same time, for some reaching retirement, due to extended longevity, they also want to extend their economic working lives. For some it is due to their reluctance to retire, while for others it is a financial necessity. The ONS (2009, 2013) predicts that the ratio of 16 to 64 year-olds funding the state pensions, health costs, and welfare of older people is projected to drop from the baseline of 4.6 people in 1971 to 2.7 by 2031, and only 2.1 by 2081. In an earlier report, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2006) indicated that UK employees will need to work longer. The UK government has introduced initiatives specifically aimed at encouraging and supporting individual choice in the decision whether to continue working past statutory retirement age (e.g. Department for Work and Pensions [DWP], 2006).

Statistics show that 1 in 12 people aged over 65 continues to be employed (ONS, 2013) and this figure is expected to rise. The first Working Late Index (LV, 2010) predicts that 4.5 million of today's over-50s are expected to work beyond state retirement age by an average of just over six years (ONS, 2013). This has further been compounded by the recent global recession. The recession led to income erosion, falling house values, and pension shortfalls due to greater life expectancy. Consequently, many older workers have chosen to work for longer (ACAS, 2011). As a result, the average retirement age for men reached 64.5

years (62.0 years for women) in 2009 - the highest since data first became available in 1984 (ONS, 2009, 2013). However, many older individuals may be working for reasons other than financial reward. According to Barclays Wealth (2010) older workers are also motivated by a desire for social relationships, and a sense of value and contribution.

At the other end of the age spectrum, younger workers those aged between 16 and 29, represent under 10% of the total UK workforce (ONS, 2012). This demographic grouping are seen as being the most technically literate and educated (Eisner, 2005), who are focused on seeking continuously personal development (Terjesen et al. 2007). Unlike the older workers, recently studies by Broadbridge, Maxwell and Ogden (2007), Barron et al. (2007), have reported a shift amongst younger workers of wanting to have greater freedom and flexibility in the workplace, while seeking a more balanced working life.

There has also been a transformation in the workplace due to organisational downsizing, globalisation, the economic slowdown and the advent of new technology. The culmination of these trends has been the reported demise of the traditional demarcation in the workplace of employees based on age or seniority (Zemke et al. 2000). These factors have also been compounded by the emergence of a new career construct. According to Bell and Staw (1989), careers are no longer linear and owned by the organisation, but instead the individual have become the architects of their own vocational destinies.

These changes that have impacted on the workplace, the result had lead to writers including Gursoy et al. 2008), to highlight notable differences in values, attitudes and perception amongst employees to work. In studying this, there have been various studies and publications (e.g. Ng & Feldman, 2010; Johnson & Johnson, 2010; Zemke et al. 2000; Kupperschmidt, 2000; Gursoy et al. 2008), that focused specifically on potential conflict owing to fundamental differences in employees' generational backgrounds. The studies presented significant differences distinguishing each generational group with almost polarised features and characteristics; for example, Baby Boomers are hard-working and loyal to an

organisation, Generation X are less loyal, and Generation Y are prepared to leave an organisation if their personal needs are not met.

3.5. Traditional career models

The traditional career model (see Wilensky, 1961) reflects the economic and social conditions within which careers operate. Career-stage and life-span theories (Super, 1953; Levinson et al. 1978) form part of an objective career theory paradigm that portrays the individual's career progression as an upward movement through a number of hierarchically ordered stages linked to development and age (Adamson, Doherty & Viney, 1998). The traditional paradigm contends that employees will work for one - or a few - employers over the course of their working life; progression and tenure are employer-created and controlled. Progression includes changes in job status, role and salary, the tangibles of a person's success.

Super's (1953) Career Stage Development model can be used to describe how individuals implement their self-concept through vocational choices. Super (ibid) holds that the process of choosing an occupation that permits maximum self-expression occurs over a period of time that can be summarised into four distinct career stages − *exploration*, *establishment*, *maintenance*, and *disengagement/ decline* (see Figure 3.1). The first stage, 'exploration' is a period of engaging with different career options. In the second stage, 'establishment', the individual finds a niche or specialisation and takes up employment. 'Maintenance', the third stage, involves holding onto a certain position and up-dating skills, before finally entering the 'disengagement/ decline' stage of retirement. According to Super (ibid), each stage represents a different level of interest, satisfaction, motivation and commitment. At each stage the career trajectory include 'mini-cycles' which allows for interim re-evaluation and adjustment at any point in the full maxi-cycle spanning all four stages. In illustrating, Hess, Jepsen and Dries (2012) used the example of an employee starting a new role. As the person establishes themselves in the new role, they may realise that the new job does not suit them, and therefore will return back to the exploration stage. Super updated his model in later publications (e.g. Super, Savickas & Super, 1996; Sverko & Super, 1995,

Powell, 2012) to include the concept of recycling, that is, going back to an earlier stage when changing jobs. Figure 3.1 shows that the individuals' self-concept changes as his/her career progresses (denoted by the curved line). The straight lines represent the individual's level of motivation during the same period.
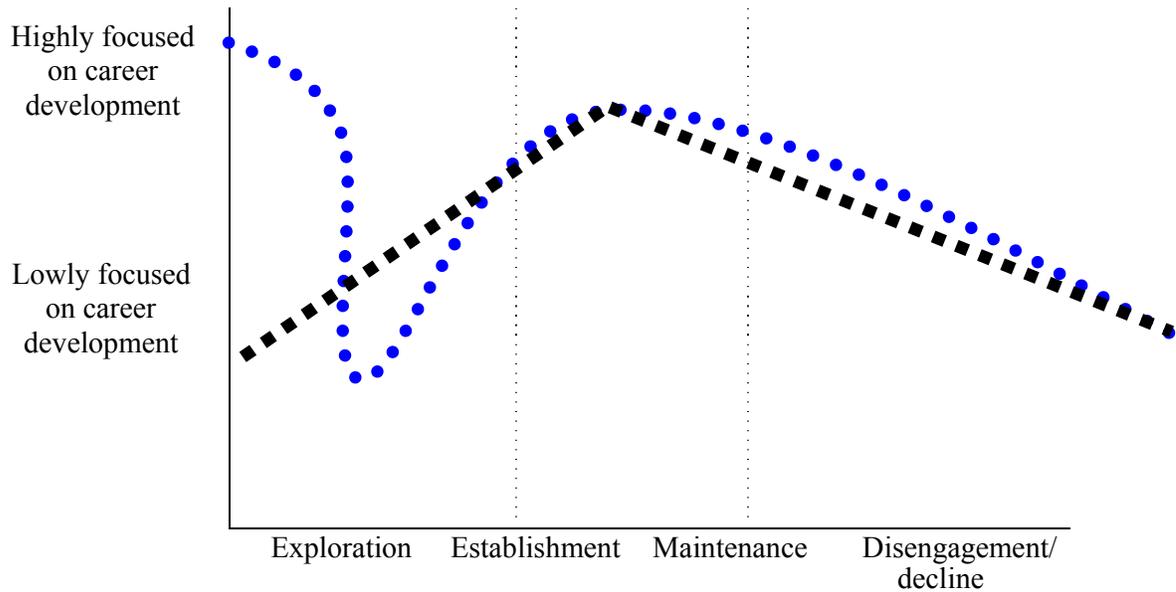
Figure 3.1: Career Stage Development model
(Adapted from: Cytrynbaum & Crites, 1989)

Partly building on Super's (1953) original model, Levinson et al. (1978) proposed the Life Span model. Levinson et al's. (ibid) model proposes four sequential age-related life-stages − childhood, and early, middle and late adulthood. The model is based on consistent lockstep progression where the individual's progression is based on the seniority, reflecting shared age- and experience-related norms. In contrast to Super's model, which is more concerned with the individual's 'job attitudes', Levinson et al.'s model relates more to 'career decisions' (Ornstein et al. 1989, p. 117). Levinson et al. propose the existence of three post-midlife-stages (growth, continuity, and decline), each marked by critical changes as the career progresses.

3.5.1 Criticism of the traditional career model

Since Super's (1953) and Levinson et al.'s (1978) original publications, the employment / workplace landscape has changed fundamentally. These changes

have led to criticism of the models for their lack of relevance in the modern workplace (e.g. Sullivan, 1999; Arnold, 1997; Ornstein, Cron & Slocum, 1989; Sturges, 1999). A further criticism is their failure to account for the potential blurring of distinctions between psychological development, age, gender, occupation and tenure (Verbruggen, 2012; Schneer & Reitman, 1995; Reitman & Schneer, 2003; Arnold, 1997; Powell & Mainiero, 1992). Most of the criticism has been levelled at Super's Career Stage Development model. Sturges (ibid) notes that Super's research is primarily based on North American middle class, male, white workers, and is not a true representation of the population. Sullivan (1999) questions the relevance of portraying a career as a progressive four stage experience, since the entire process is repeated at the commencement of every new job in a more transient workplace. Sullivan (1999) also criticises Super, as she believes that today's career progression is no longer based on seniority or length of service. For Sullivan (ibid) the radical changes in the employment landscape have reduced an individual's opportunity to grow and progress while retaining the ability to keep 'recycling' his or her career, an attribute that Super attempted to address (Super, Savickas & Super, 1996; Sverko & Super, 1995). This study concurs with Sullivan's (1999) perspective, particularly with the advent of the contemporary career which will be discussed in section 3.6 below.

What is also questionable is whether Super's model has any relevance against the current economic backdrop, that is the significant reduction in employment opportunities, the notable shift away from full-time employment and the emergence of greater part-time work (Office for National Statistics Social Trends, 2011). Further criticism of the model is that it does not sufficiently take into consideration individual perceptions, and circumstances such as age (Lyons & Kuron, 2014; Kooij, de Lange, Jansen & Dikkers, 2008; Greenhaus et al. 2009; Arnold, 1997; Ornstein, Cron & Slocum, 1989), occupation or gender (O'Neil, Hopkins, & Bilimoria, 2008; Sturges, 1999). Instead age, gender and occupation are seen as secondary or unintended determinants (Ng & Feldman, 2009; Meijers, 1998, 2002; London, 1993; London & Greller, 1991; Heijde & Van Der Heijden, 2006). While there has been substantial criticism of Super's (1953) Career Stage Development model, the construct continues to be used to explore careers. Hess, Jepsen and Dries (2012) studied the effects of employer

influences on the exploration, establishment, maintenance and disengagement stages of a career. The authors found that organisational commitment has a direct impact on these stages, particular in relation to employee motivation and affective and normative commitment.

3.6. The contemporary career model

While the limitations of the objective models are significant, perhaps the greatest restriction is their usefulness and relevance for the early 21st century workplace (Sullivan, 1999; Hall, 2002; Arthur et al. 1995; Chudzikowski, 2012). As mentioned above, the traditional models were devised in a work environment where it is proposed that individuals are employed full-time in one line of work with one employer and no external roles, or conflicts with family exist (Isaksson et al. 2006). The modern workplace has transformed this perception through economic and social changes and organisational downsizing (Gratton & Ghoshal, 2003; Cappelli, 1999). The result has been a move away from organisation-centric careers to more individualistically managed ones.

With the emergence of these themes, new theories have emerged, challenging earlier career constructs. For example, since individuals became self-managed, their career progression no longer follows the traditional horizontal route of progression and seniority based in one or two organisations. Instead it can be vertical or backward depending on personal circumstances, and inevitably encompasses a number of roles and employers. Among the new career models to emerge, of particular significance are the Career Anchors (Schein 1975), *boundaryless* (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; DeFillippi & Arthur, 1996) and the *protean* (Hall, 1976, 2002) models.

3.6.1 Career Anchors

To emerge from the debate surrounding the traditional career has been the work of Schein (1975, 1978, 1987), which was a precursor to the emergence of the Boundaryless and Protean career models. Schein focused on the composition of a career by publishing a series of publications during the 1970s and 1980s, Schein proposed the construct 'career anchors' (Schein, 1975, 1978, 1987). The

construct is based on the premise that through successive trials and challenges in an individual's life, commencing during the first few years out of school, young adults will gain an accurate and more stable career self-concept (Feldman & Bolino, 1996). To set the concept of a stable career, Schein proposed three components − (1) self-perceived talents and abilities based on actual successes in real-world work settings, (2) self-perceived motives and needs based on actual experiences in a variety of job roles, and (3) self-perceived attitudes and values based on reactions to a variety of norms and values experienced in different work groups and organisations. From these three, Schein developed 'Career Anchors', namely, *technical/ functional* competences, *managerial* competence, *security* and *stability* competence, *autonomy* and *independent* competence, *entrepreneurship* competence (Schein, 1975, 1978), *service* and *dedication* to a cause. Reflecting the emergence of boundaryless and protean career models, Schein added two additional anchors: pure *challenge* and *lifestyle* (Schein, 1987, 1990). Schein (1990, p. 34) contends that the individual has only one true career anchor, and cannot have two or more anchors: if individuals believe they have more than one, it is the direct result of insufficient life experience to develop priorities and make a choice. Schein (1990) advocates the use of a Career Orientation Survey to determine which career is reflective of the individual. Based on contentions of Schein, this study originally adopted the Career Orientation Survey in the first pilot, as a means of investigating the perception to a career, career success and career progression.

Schein's work has become recognised at a theoretical level as contributing to understanding career development (Feldman & Bolino, 1996). However Schein's work is not without its critics, for example the model does not enable the identification or distinguishing vocational choices. The model requires the individual to find the right career match or 'career anchor' and does not have any flexibility in terms of shared competencies or career anchors. Another identified limitation is that the life-stage of the individual changes: as circumstances change, so does the importance of competencies in the Career Orientation Survey such as 'know-how', a factor that Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) and Powell and Mainiero (1993) noted. Finally, as identified by Dries, Pepermans and Carlier (2008), the Career Orientation Survey while providing an critical insight into an

individual's career, can be very complicate to administer and interpretation after, generating potentially unreliable data. These limitations emerged in the first pilot study (refer to section 4.7.1 in Chapter 4), and was subsequently rejected from being used in the main study.

3.6.2 Boundaryless and Protean career models

Unlike the Career Anchor, the *boundaryless* and *protean* career models are a central tenet of the subjective career theory. As a theory, the subjective career is based on the premise that a career and its associated success are internal or individualistic experiences, through which the individual seeks *self-satisfaction* and *achievement* rather than being bound to traditional symbols of salary and status (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006). Reflecting their importance, the next section will critically review these two theories, commencing with the *boundaryless* career.

3.6.2.1 Boundaryless career

In a pivotal publication, Arthur and Rousseau (1996) set out to encourage researchers to re-evaluate their idea of a career. Unlike the traditional models proposed by Super (1953) and Levinson et al. (1978), Arthur and Rousseau contend that a *boundaryless* career transcends the boundary of a single employer. Instead the *boundaryless* career reflects the experiences of individuals whose careers may involve many employers and be a series of lateral or even downward career moves (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996). DeFillippi and Arthur (1996, p. 116) state that the modern career has become 'a sequence of job opportunities that go beyond the boundaries of a single employment setting'. For Chudzikowski (2012, p. 298), this new career form has emerged due to the frequency, form and impact of career transitions.

A summary of the ways in which *boundaryless* careers differ from traditional linear careers is provided in Table 3.1 below.

	Traditional career	Boundaryless career
Employment relationship	Job security for loyalty	Employability for performance
Boundaries	One or two firms	Multiple firms
Skills	Firm specific	Transferable
Success measured by	Pay, promotion, status	Psychologically meaningful work
Responsibility for career management	Organisation	Individual
Training	Formal organisation	On-the-job
Milestones	Age-related	Learning related

Table 3.1: Contrasts between the traditional and boundaryless careers
(Source: Sullivan, 1999, p. 458)

The *boundaryless* career is '... independence from, rather than dependence on, traditional organizational career arrangement' (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996, p. 6), since it is not bound or tied to a single organisation. Sullivan and Arthur (2006) note that the *boundaryless* career is embedded in the individual's physical and / or psychological mobility and that he/she moves between careers and opportunities. According to Arthur, Claman and DeFillippi (1995), this mobility is due to the increase in the portability of skills, knowledge and abilities, which can cross multiple firms. This mobility extends to the physical mobility of a career, where the individual is no longer tied to a job, employer, or industry. Sullivan and Arthur (2006) point out that the increased mobility of careers and the portability of skills has resulted in organisations no longer providing job security and careers ceasing to be the responsibility of a firm. Instead workers now exchange performance for continuous learning that provides them with transferable skills (Patton & McMahon, 2014; Baruch, 2006; Hall & Mirvis, 1996; Rousseau, 1989). These changes in career patterns and job security have been contradicted by Clarke and Patrickson (2008) who maintain that the transfer

of responsibility for employability from the organisation to the individual has not been as widespread as first predicted. Instead there is an expectation among employees that organisations will continue to manage careers through job-specific training and development. Clarke and Patrickson (ibid) conclude that although employees with highly developed skills will benefit, employability does not guarantee or translate into finding suitable employment, which this study and Clarke (2009) agrees with.

To contextualise the *boundaryless* career, Sullivan and Arthur (2006) devised a two-dimensional model (see Figure 3.2). Since the *boundaryless* career is a composite of physical and psychological mobility, this model shows whether the individual's career is highly or lowly physically and psychologically bound.

High		
	Quadrant 3 High psychological mobility Low physical mobility	**Quadrant 4** High psychological mobility High physical mobility
Psychological Mobility		
	Quadrant 1 Low psychological mobility Low physical mobility	**Quadrant 2** Low psychological mobility High physical mobility
Low		

Physical Mobility

Figure 3.2: Two dimensions of a boundaryless career
(Adapted from: Sullivan & Arthur, 2006)

Quadrant one has a low level of both physical and psychological mobility. This represents the career circumstances of those who are unlikely to leave an

organisation or current position. These individuals may possess a specialised skill which the organisation needs, and in return offers the employee job security, or a unique challenge in the work environment. As a consequence the individual has a little motivation to leave the organisation.

Quadrant two has a high level of physical mobility, but low psychological mobility. This quadrant represents careers that may be dysfunctional. These careers often cross physical boundaries or organisations, for example through the need to re-locate their job owing to family circumstances, but the individual is still seeking organisational security or possess a specialised skill that the employer needs.

Quadrant three has a low level of physical mobility, but a high level of psychological mobility. Individuals in this quadrant tend to have careers with the potential for psychological mobility. They expect to be employed, as they have a skill set the organisation needs. Often these individuals are respected in their field of expertise, but the skills are not easily transferrable. They may seek personal growth through introducing new ideas in the workplace to create self-interest, as they are not prepared to change organisations.

Quadrant four represents those who exhibit both psychological and physical mobility. Individuals located in this quadrant represent those who are prepared to make physical changes in their careers, such as changing locations or jobs often. The individual may also change their psychological career orientation on a regular basis, as they are not bound to their sector or profession, instead possess skills that are transferrable.

3.6.2.2 The Protean Career

The *protean* career (Hall, 1976) is related but not identical to the *boundaryless* career. The *protean* career focuses on the psychological attitude of an individual to managing his or her career. This is depicted in Table 3.2 below, which illustrates the facets of the individual's psychological mobility and success, the type of career progression with which the model is synonymous, and the new

type of career contract between the employee and the employer (Mirvis & Hall, 1994).

The Protean Career	
1. The career is managed by the individual and not the organisation	5. The ingredients for success change • From know-how to learn-how • From job security to employability • From organisational career to *protean* career • From 'work self' to 'whole self'
2. The career is a lifelong series of experiences, skills, learning, transitions and identity changes ('career age' counts, not chronological age)	6. The organisation provides • Challenging assignments • Developmental relationships • Information and other developmental resources
3. Development is: • Through continuous learning • Self-directed • Relational • Found in work challenges	7. The goal is psychological success
4. Development is not (necessarily) • Formal training • Retraining, or • Upward mobility	

Table 3:2: The characteristics of the protean career

The original *protean* career concept was developed by Hall (1976, 2002) in an attempt to capture the increasingly fluid nature of a career. The concept is based on Proteus, the mythological Greek god, who could alter his form at will. This suggests that individuals can shape their careers in many ways in response to environmental changes and / or personal circumstances. The *protean* career is driven by the individual, rather than being bound by the organisation or profession.

Briscoe and Hall (2006) maintain that an individual is considered to have a 'protean' career only when two predominant attitudes are displayed, that is, value-driven and self-directed (Tharenou, 2005, Ramaswami; Dreher, Bretz &

Wiethoff, 2010). A 'value-driven' attitude is associated with a person's internal values. These internal values 'provide the guidance and measurement of success for the individual's career' (Briscoe & Hall, 2006, p.8), and act as a compass to plot the individual's career, rather than the individual only seeking traditional symbols such as money and status. 'Self-directed' is the opposite of being 'organisational directed'. While recognising that not all *protean* careers are totally self-directed, Briscoe and Hall (ibid) contend that the individual actively seeks the opportunity to find continuous learning opportunities and work challenges for personal rather than organisational benefit. More recently Briscoe and Finkelstein (2009) and Briscoe et al. (2012) argue that there is little empirical evidence to suggest that there is direct correlation between an individual's self-directed and boundaryless mindset attitudes and a decrease change in organisational commitment.

To determine whether a career profile is protean, Briscoe, Hall and DeMuth (2006) original publication created eight distinct categories − lost/ trapped, fortressed, wanderer, idealist, organisational man/ woman, solid citizen, hired gun / hired hand, and the protean career architect.

Briscoe, Hall and DeMuth (2006) explain that at one extreme there are those who are seen as 'lost or trapped': these individuals are not driven by personal values or by the desire to manage their own careers, and consequently have limited career options. The 'wanderer' is an individual driven by objective career symbolism such as salary or job title, while the 'idealist' is driven by personal values. At the other end of the spectrum are those who are characterised as 'protean career architects', whose personal success depends on meeting their personal principles. In achieving this, these individuals are able to self-manage their careers. In one way these individuals are managing the attributes that the *boundaryless* career presents as the 'physical' and 'psychological' mobility of a career. The 'hired hand/ hired gun', in contrast to the protean career architect, possesses a lower personal value-driven dimension; these individuals view themselves as employees hired for their skills and not for their organisational commitment. The above characteristics are illustrated in Table 3.3 below.

Type	Characteristics
Trapped / lost	These individuals are not driven by personal values or a desire to manage their own careers (low psychological mobility), due to being unable to follow their inner values while pursuing a career (low physical mobility), and are therefore seen as being 'trapped / lost' in a career.
Fortressed	Unlike the trapped or lost individual, those labelled as 'fortressed' are very clear on personal values. However, these individuals are inflexible in directing their career opportunities across physical and psychological boundaries, therefore create a *fortress* and entrench themselves in a particular job. They possess a low aspiration to protean self-directed career management, high level of protean values, and low boundaryless psychological and physical mobility.
Wanderer	The 'wanderer' is an individual who is *boundaryless* physically, but not psychologically, and is therefore seen as possessing a low protean dimension. The wanderer is willing to take any opportunity across both organisational and geographical boundaries, but is constrained by psychological boundaries, as the person's attitude is unwilling to change career roles. They possess low aspirations to protean self-directed career management, low level of protean values and low boundaryless psychological but a high physical mobility.

Type	Characteristics
Idealist	This category describes those who are very value driven and therefore have high psychological boundaries. These individuals are not necessarily effective in managing their careers, as they seek roles that meet their personal values and expectations often at the expense of a stable career. The idealist may not be prepared to crossing physical career boundaries, as this would compromise their standards. They possess low aspirations to protean self-directed career management and low boundaryless physical mobility, but demonstrate a high level of protean values and boundaryless psychological mobility.
Organisational man/ women	This category is for those who have a strong ability to take charge of their career management, but are unclear about their values. They are good at working across psychological boundaries, but not willing to shift physically. They are opportunistic in directing their careers to match those of the organisation or sector, yet their personal needs are neglected. This may be due external commitments or the uncertainty of having to re-establish themselves in a new culture and organisation. This individual possesses high aspirations to protean self-directed career management and boundaryless psychological level, but a low level intention to attaining protean values and crossing boundaryless physical boundaries.

Type	Characteristics
Solid citizen	These individuals possess a *protean* career in the sense that they are both self-directed in managing their careers and driven to achieve personal values. While they are psychologically boundaryless, they are unable, or not prepared to be physically boundaryless. Here the individual see their career as needing to fit those of the organisation, and like the 'organisational man/ women' is threatened by mobility. This category possesses high aspirations to protean self-directed career management, protean values and boundaryless psychological level, but has no boundaryless physical intentions.
Hired gun/ hired hand	These individuals manage their careers and are willing to work across both psychological and physical boundaries. They are ineffective prepared to identify and respond to best opportunities for providing their services across boundaries. However, they are not driven by personal values and therefore do not possess a clear sense of priorities to contribute to their careers. Here the individual possesses high aspirations to protean self-directed career management, boundaryless psychological level and boundaryless physical intentions, but is not driven by protean values.
Protean career architect	The *protean* career architect is a career actor who crosses both psychological and physical boundaries. These individuals actively manage their careers and are driven by personal values that define meaning and success in their careers. The individual demonstrates a high level of protean self-directed career management; is protean value driven, and has also high boundaryless psychological and physical mobility.

Table 3.3 Characteristics of the protean career

Essentially, both *boundaryless* and *protean* models shift the responsibility for career development from the employer to the individual. The result is that the individual creates and develops his or her own career identity by moving between employers and maintaining self-allegiance rather than allegiance to any particular organisation. The main difference between the two models is that a *boundaryless* career relates to the career environment, whereas a *protean* career is more closely linked to individual adaptability and identity (Lips-Wiersma & McMorland, 2006).

3.7 Criticism of the boundaryless and protean careers

Although there has been substantial academic interest in the two career models over the past two decades, a number of key criticisms have emerged. Most significant are those of Hess, Jepsen and Dries (2012), Dries, van Acker and Verbruggen (2012), Cohen et al. (2004), Guest and Mackenzie Davey (1996) and Pringle and Mallon (2003). From a social constructivist paradigm these authors identify specific weaknesses in the majority of the *boundaryless* career methodologies. Guest and Mackenzie Davey (ibid) argue that although there has been substantial rhetoric about the changing nature of careers, it is difficult to empirically determine and trace the true extent of these changes. This is compounded by the recognised limitation that the majority of *boundaryless* career studies are grounded in a positivist paradigm. The over-reliance on a positivistic approach, according to Guest and Mackenzie Davey (ibid), has culminated in an unnecessary fragmentation and reduction of the theme at the expense of more holistic explanations. Patton and McMahon (2014), Collin (1986), Dries, Pepermans and De Kerpel (2008), Collin and Young (1986, 2000) contend that this reductionist approach has created a potential division between the individual and the organisation or profession, between a career being viewed subjectively or objectively, and between the traditional and the old. Sullivan (1999) adds that the positivist paradigm rarely provides critical insight into the evolving career process, since the strategy tends to be static and therefore calls for further research. Because it is static it only captures a single moment of time and omits the underlying dynamics changes in society.

It is thus possible to conclude that positivism as a research strategy tends to examine the individual in isolation, often away from his or her social circumstances, and excluding his or her social world and career structure. Without any social reference it is difficult to contextualise an individual's understanding and actions. Since career is rooted in social context (Feldman & Ng, 2007; Inkson, Gunz, Ganesh & Roper 2012; Sullivan, 1999; Sullivan & Arthur, 2006; Arthur & Rousseau, 1996), this study incorporated social context into its framework and methodology, to investigate whether the boundaryless and protean career constructs exist.

The question whether an individual who is qualified in a certain profession, trade or occupation is able to readily change his or her vocation and become boundaryless remains unanswered. In addressing this theme, both Inkson, Gunz, Ganesh and Roper (2012) and Baruch (2004) question whether organisations still adhere to a relatively traditional system within comparatively stable environments with employers continuing to exert considerable influence over managing their employees' careers. For Baruch (2004, 2006) careers have become transactional, flexible and the consequence of organisational re-structuring has blurred the traditional and former routes for success, leading to careers shifting from being linear to multi-directional. However Baruch (2006) and earlier McDonald, Brown and Bradley (2005) do highlight that the career landscape has become relatively stable, and the traditional linear career paths are still alive, particularly in the public sector.

In an interview reported in the UK press, the Chief HR Officer of Shell is quoted as saying, 'Our company is still predominantly one where people join young, leave old and follow a pathway through the organization' (People Management, 2010, p. 20). This being the case, assumptions about the ubiquity of career models cannot be made and any study into careers and their relevant success must take into account the organisational context and other facets such as the current economic climate or the sector of employment within which individual careers are enacted (Rousseau & Fried, 2001; Latham & Pinder, 2005). In addressing this, the study investigates the extent that determinants such as

prevailing economic factors, as set out in section 2.6.4 of Chapter Two, can impact on an individual manager's careers.

Other criticisms include the over-simplification of the career theory and its relevance in more austere times. Since the inception of the *boundaryless* and *protean* career theories, there is criticism that the two concepts have over-simplified the career construct. Inkson, Gunz, Ganesh and Roper (2012) and Pringle and Mallon (2003) highlight that the traditional career is linear, stable and predictable, and operates in a secure organisation that is defined by its rigid hierarchical structures. The contemporary career is the direct opposite, in that it is multi-directional, insecure, unanchored and unpredictable in situations that are constantly changing. Pringle and Mallon (ibid) question whether a career can be described as boundaryless or unanchored.

Dries et al. (2008b) studied North American student and academic staff careers to ascertain whether they were boundaryless in nature. They concluded that the traditional career still has relevance, which is consistent with Verbruggen et al. (2007), who found that only 6 percent of the 957 respondents in their study had a *boundaryless* career, while 60 percent had bounded careers. Dries et al. (2008b) argue that despite the growing popularity of the *boundaryless* career concept (e.g. Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Briscoe & Hall, 2005; Collin, 1998; Chudzikowski, 2012) several authors (e.g. Dries & Verbruggen, 2012, Baruch 2004, 2006; Guest & Mackenzie Davey, 1996; Verbruggen et al. 2007; Walton & Mallon, 2004) now maintain that the traditional career is 'far from dead.' Furthermore, career theorists must be careful when making claims about the speed and inevitability of the shift from traditional to 'new' career types (Guest & Mackenzie Davey, 1996; Verbruggen et al. 2007, Verbuggen, 2012; Walton & Mallon, 2004). Chudzikowksi (2012) contends that careers becoming so turbulent and complex have culminated in the emergence of a new career construct.

From a generational perspective Gentry et al. (2009) argue that there is evidence that the younger generations' careers are increasingly mirroring the *boundaryless* career model. Gentry et al. add that individuals are more focused on a career than

a job, demonstrated by their willingness to seek career development for external motives.

From the perspective of this study, there is sufficient academic evidence to suggest that the modern career has shifted to a new career type, but what remains unclear, which is addressed in this study, is whether this transformation has proliferated in all sectors and professions. Partly addressing this, Dries, Van Acker and Verbruggen (2012) in researching talent management revealed that the high potential and key expert employees often had a traditional organisational-centric career, wanting organisational commitment, higher job security and salaries, while average performers were less bounded to these determinants. However in concluding, Dries, Van Acker and Verbruggen (2012) do question whether this non-organisational perspective amongst average performers to a career, exists in the current career climate of the second decade of the 21st century.

Finally from a Human Resource management perspective, both Hess, Jepsen and Dries (2012) and earlier Hirsch and Shanley (1999) point out that the workplace transformation to a more boundaryless one has not affected all employees; some skills and occupations are less suited to this new career construct. Hirsch and Shanley (ibid) believe that although there is inevitability about the *boundaryless* career, there is the potential that some managers may become marginalised based on their occupation, values or perceptions. Hess, Jepsen and Dries (ibid) drawing on Super's (1980) Life-span, Life-space theory, argue that a career can be still portrayed as being a series of progressive steps: exploration, establishment, maintenance and disengagement. In setting out the argument, Hess, Jepsen and Dries (ibid) highlight the lack of research presented when employees change professions or roles, offering instead generalised assumptions. This finding concurs with Walton and Mallon's (2004) assertion that 'although boundaries of career have shifted, they have not melted into thin air' (p. 77), with Hess, Jepsen and Dries (ibid) advocating that when employees move across organisational boundaries or change profession, Human Resource practitioners need to provide some form of career counselling reflective of Super's career progressive stages.

In summary, it seems that the shift in the modern workplace brought about by organisational restructuring due to economic circumstances and other trends, including globalisation, has led to significant academic debate whether careers have mirrored this shift. The traditional career, characterised by an individual joining an organisation and progressing through a series of defined roles, has been replaced by a more fluid and pragmatic paradigm. This change is encapsulated in what constitutes a career, and whether a career has become more boundaryless in nature. Although there is evidence to suggest that the traditional career model has lost its relevance in the early 21st century workplace, the argument that it has been superseded by constructs such as the *boundaryless* or *protean* careers has also been challenged. This criticism (e.g. Sullivan, 1999) rests on the premise that not all individuals or careers can be boundaryless, or protean in nature. It is interesting that the traditional concept of career still has some relevance in the early 21st century workplace (Haslin, 2005), since this appears to reflect potential generational differences, and potential differences that may exist in the workplace today.

3.8 Other contemporary subjective career models

A number of further theories have arisen, most notable being the Kaleidoscope (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005) and Butterfly (McCabe & Savery, 2008) career models. In addition, Verbruggen, Sels and Forrier's (2007) study, based on the *boundaryless* and *protean* careers, devised a way to extend these constructs further when categorising a career type. In the next section the above models are discussed.

3.8.1 Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005) Kaleidoscope Career Model

The Kaleidoscope Career Model is based on the *boundaryless* career. The model depicts how career patterns shift over time as the individual's needs and interests change. The analogy of a kaleidoscope as a career model is derived from three parameters − *authenticity*, *balance* and *challenge*. These parameters are represented by three primary coloured glass chips within a kaleidoscope (red = challenge, blue = work-life balance, yellow = authenticity). As the individual's career (particular a woman's) changes, so the glass chips change in response, as shown in Figures 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5.

According to Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) a woman's career, like the Kaleidoscope Career Model, is relational; each action a woman takes in her career is viewed as having profound and long lasting effects on others around her. These changes are reflected in the way the glass chips are arranged in the kaleidoscope. Men tend to follow a predominately *objective* or *alpha* career (Mainiero and Sullivan, ibid). Ibarra (2003), Power (2009) and Sullivan and Baruch (2009) encapsulate this, by stating women in their mid-life reflect and re-evaluate their careers due to the external obligations beyond the workplace.

The yellow chip is the need for a career to be subjectively authentic, which although important, is less significant than a challenge

Both men and women are in the early career stage – with little external responsibilities and focused on establishing a career through achieving objective goals, for example, status and salary

The blue chip denotes the importance of a subjective need for work-life balance, but while active, it recedes as both men and women pursue their careers

The red chip denotes the predominance of an objective challenge and is referred to as the 'alpha' career that is dominant in the early stage of a career

Referred to as the *alpha* career or CAB

Colour	Glass-Clip
	Challenge - objective
	Work-life balance
	Authenticity

Figure 3.3: Early career-stage - the predominance of a challenge

(Adapted from: Mainiero and Sullivan, 2005)

Late career stage of women – women are freed from external responsibilities and now shift to making a choice that reflects their personal aspirations, values and desires that reflects their personal aspirations, values and desires

Referred to as the *beta* career or BAC

Mid-career stage –increased external responsibilities for women

The mid-career requires women to balance work-personal life, due to external commitments. Here the blue chip is more dominant with an objective challenge now of secondary importance as compromises are made

The subjective need for a career that is authentic is beginning to come to the forefront as the career emerges into later mid-career stage, where a woman's career begins reflect personal values

Mid-career stage for men - the career remains predominately challenging orientated

Colour	Glass-Clip
	Challenge - objective
	Work-life balance
	Authenticity

The career is established therefore in objective terms the importance in the career is reduced, as most challenges have been met

Figure 3.4: Mid-career stage - the predominance of work-life balance

(Adapted from: Mainiero and Sullivan, 2005)

Men in the career stage – their career remains goal orientated. They act first for the benefit of career

Referred to as a *beta* career or ABC

The subjective authenticity chip that denotes the change to a career that is reflective of the individual's personal values

The work-life balance demands of women has reduced due to less external commitments

The objective challenge has grown due to a reduction in external responsibilities, but the career is established and progression is limited

Colour	Glass-Clip
	Challenge - objective
	Work-life balance
	Authenticity

Figure 3.5: Late career stage - the predominance of authenticity

(Adapted from: Mainiero and Sullivan, 2005)

The first parameter, that of *challenge* (see Figure 3.3), denoted by a red chip, is the individual's need to experience career advancement that contributes to a feeling of self-worth. *Balance* is more predominant in Figure 3.4 and relates to the desire to successfully integrate working and non-working lives. According to Mainiero (2007, p. 221) individuals today have become less work-centric, choosing instead, life balance, based on the idea that it is better to work to live rather than live to work. Lastly, the *authenticity* parameter shown in Figure 3.5 is 'being true to oneself'; the individual looks for work that matches or is compatible with his or her values.

In developing this model further, Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) discovered gender- based differences, − men and women tend to follow different career patterns. Women follow a *beta* kaleidoscope career pattern, characterised by a focus on a challenge in their early career, balance becoming more important in their mid-career, and authenticity becoming the primary focus later in the career. In contrast, men tend to have more *alpha* kaleidoscope career patterns. Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, p. 111-112) note that men tend to examine career decisions from the perspective of goal orientation and independent action, and keep their work and non-work lives separate, while women manage an interplay between work and non-work issues. Drawing upon the Kaleidoscope Career Model, Cabrera (2009) attempted to understand women's careers with the aim of helping organisations and Human Resource management to make changes to increase female retention. Her study asked two specific questions: are women adopting a *protean* career orientation by becoming career self-agents and are women's career decisions guided by the kaleidoscope values of challenge, balance, and authenticity? The results indicated that the (female) participants tended to follow a *protean* career orientation when they returned to the workforce. This included finding part-time or reduced-hour positions, or completely changing careers. Of the 17 women interviewed, five returned to work following a traditional career orientation, while three chose to return to a job rather than re-initiating their careers. The vast majority of the women in Cabrera's study adopted a *protean career* to satisfy their need for *balance* in their lives. Overall, eight of the women expressed a need for *authenticity* in their careers and only two mentioned a desire for *challenge*. Many of them felt they had already satisfied their need for

challenge earlier in their career, as the Kaleidoscope Career Model suggests. However, Cabrera's (2009) study has a number of limitations associated with the research approach used. Although the sample included a number of diverse women, all of the respondents were from a professional background holding a graduate degree in international business, and were therefore not a true representation of the workforce. For example many of the respondents were also married to professional spouses as well; therefore they could afford not to work, were able to switch careers and were not dependent upon their career to meet financial commitments. This is obviously not the case for most women who do not have the option of quitting or changing their jobs. Finally Cabrera (ibid) research followed Verbruggen et al. (2007), Sturges (1999, 2004), Powell and Mainiero (1992, 1993) gender-based research. But by sampling women only, these studies have neglected the potential career differences amongst the genders, which this study addresses. More recently Carraher, Cricitto and Sullivan (2014) in a review of empirical studies on individual's career advocated the use of Kaleidoscope Career Model, combined now with the inclusion of theory of planned behaviour. The premise of using this theory is the acknowledgement that the construct, unlike the Kaleidoscope Career Model, recognises how contextual factors such as organisational or cultural background of the individual, influences a person's perceptions of their career.

While the Kaleidoscope Career Model was used in various later studies (e.g. Cabrera, 2009; Sullivan and Mainiero, 2007; Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005) only relatively recently (e.g. Smith-Ruig, 2009) has its neglect of the potential influence of a person's societal grouping been highlighted. Using the Kaleidoscope Career Model, Smith-Ruig (2009) researched the career journey of accountants based partly on their societal grouping. The model enabled her to investigate the attitudes, motivation and feelings of male and female accountants towards their individual careers. This included analysing whether the participants followed a traditional or *boundaryless* career and if gender influenced their career progression. While Smith-Ruig's (ibid) findings indicated that many of the participants enacted a traditional career, she concludes that there is a significant gender divide: the majority of the women sought a *beta* career, while the men

followed an *alpha career*. More interesting, however, is the emergence of a secondary theme that centred on potential generational differences among the male participants; however, Smith-Ruig (ibid) did not go on to explore this theme further. In conclusion, the author normatively indicates that the younger men in the study had a desire to achieve more of a 'work-life' balance. Smith-Ruig's (ibid) research framework facilitates re-examining the emergent theme of generational differences by focusing specifically on potential generational career differences. Based on Cabrera's (2009) and Smith-Ruig's (2009) effective usage to investigate attitudes to careers and success, this study has adopted this model to address the sixth question: empirically, when viewed through the Kaleidoscope Career model, how are individual manager's perceptions of a successful career influenced by their generational group?

Using the Kaleidoscope Career, *boundaryless* and *protean* models, Wales (2003, p. 644) contends that authenticity in a career reflects 'what a person knows about him or herself that is correct' through attaining self-understanding. Self-understanding is achieved through the reflective process of internalising self-awareness and self-knowledge. For Kernis (2003) and Baumeister and Leary (1996), self-esteem is another attribute of authenticity and an important psychological construct. Kernis (2003) and Baumeister (1982) concur that self-esteem is the way the individual evaluates or feels about him/herself, reflected in their interaction with people and their environment. Furthermore these authentic attributes are multi-faceted (Bachkirova, 2003). Kernis (2003, p. 13) suggests that the multi-faceted nature of authenticity is linked to 'optimal self-esteem' where individuals display confidence in their self-worth, and believe themselves to be valued for who they are, and not for what they achieve.

In Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005, p. 221) Kaleidoscope Career Model, *authenticity* is a parameter representing that one is 'genuine, sincere or being true to oneself' and 'knowing personal strengths and limitations'. This perspective of authenticity has been challenged by writers such as Svejenova (2005) and Tedeschi (1986). Svejenova (2005) refers to authenticity as having an emphasis on one or more of the following: being truthful to oneself, acting under one's own authority, achieving congruence between feelings and communication, and

being distinctive and coherent. Tedeschi (1986) maintains that authenticity is freedom of action to achieve goals and aspirations based on personal values, which this study agrees with, based on the extensive academic evidence related to authenticity presented above, for example Tedeschi (1986). From a career perspective, Nicholson and West (1989) and later Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010), note that careers are tales of a working life. According to Nicholson and West (1989, p. 181), 'work histories are lifetime journeys', and careers are the stories 'that are told about them'. Through re-evaluating and re-interpreting these stories, Ibarra and Barbuelescu (ibid) contend that new understanding emerges. This process allows individuals to weave the past and present to communicate their current identity and values, through which authenticity can be attained.

3.8.2 Career authenticity

A central element of the Kaleidoscope Career Model is the role of authenticity in a career. However in explaining the importance of authenticity, Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005) definition potentially simplifies and neglects the complexities of the attribute, by stating the construct is 'being true to oneself.' To fully understand the term 'authenticity', it is necessary to drawn on seminal authenticity works including those of Sartre, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche and Heidegger. The term is used in many different contexts, for example, in existentialist philosophy, psychology and aesthetics, making the ability to define and contextualise the concept difficult.

One of the key difficulties is the philosophical nature and meaning of 'authenticity'. Even notable authenticity philosophers, such as Sartre, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche and Heidegger, hold differing perspectives on what authenticity is, and how an individual can ever attain it. To fully appreciate career authenticity, it is necessary to understand the complexities surrounding the construct.

Religious and secular concepts of authenticity have co-existed for centuries under many guises, the earliest and most popular being that of Socrates. Socrates states, 'the unexamined life is not worth living' (Ricoeur, 1991, p.21). The person considered to be the inventor of modern authenticity in both its personal

and collective guise is Jean Jacques Rousseau (Lindholm, 2008). Set against the backdrop of the French Revolution, Rousseau's thesis relates the routes that people in the past have taken to attain authenticity. To attain authenticity, Rousseau advocates that people should reveal their true natures, even if this means challenging society's moral standards. For Rousseau, the judgment or opinion of others counts for nothing and can constrain the individual. In justifying this position, Rousseau states that only when individuals' experience the feeling of authenticity can they say they truly exist, Rousseau argues that the world of cultural and social beliefs does not permit the individual to feel authentically alive. Rousseau adds that authenticity is repressed and thwarted by the expression of the natural-self. To overcome this, Rousseau calls for social reform through the creation of an egalitarian society where citizens would live together based on the consensus of the greater community. Although this philosophy made Rousseau a hero of the French Revolution and also of subsequent radical political movements (Lindholm, 2008, p. 9), its application is impractical in everyday life.

The search for authenticity in modern Western thought was continued by a 22-year old Dane called Kierkegaard. Kierkegaard stated, '…the thing is to find a truth which is true for me, to find the idea for which I can live and die' (Dru, 1938, p. 15). Kierkegaard sees authenticity as an existential vocation rather than a theoretical speculation, and asks the rhetorical question, 'what is truth but to live for an idea?' This question emerges from Kierkegaard's recognition that people tend to seek authenticity based on confusion concerning their identity, which leads the individual to search for a genuine self. To understand the work of Kierkegaard, it necessary to understand his ontological position. Kierkegaard's writing is grounded in his Christian faith and a personalized quest to recover his abandonment of a religious 'Self' (Golomb, 1995). To attain authenticity, Kierkegaard maintains that a person must first generate meaning in life; he argues that the individual needs to go back to the past and learn from it. The individual needs to move away from seeing life as arbitrary as being random and unpredictable, and therefore as having no direct control over it. This arbitrariness, Kierkegaard contends, leads to the individual seeing life as a matter of chance, rendering the individual unable to take responsibility, and

consequently suppressing the freedom to seek authenticity. Through being freed from arbitrariness, Kierkegaard perceives that the individual will be true to him/herself to take control and responsibility, ultimately finding authenticity. Like Rousseau, Kierkegaard sees society, the media and the church, and in particular, bourgeois Christianity, as intervening agencies, blocking individual's way to true experiences, authenticity and God. To overcome this and attain authentic faith, Kierkegaard believes it can be attained through surrendering to 'something that goes beyond comprehension, a leap of faith into the religious' and 'facing reality, making a choice and then passionately sticking with it' (Holt, 2012, p. 4).

Nietzsche, in contrast with Kierkegaard, assumes an atheist perspective in the search for authenticity. Nietzsche believes that during the search the individual is driven to be free thinking. Nietzsche rejects the role of religion in finding authenticity, believing instead in finding truth without the use of virtues. Nietzsche does not use the term 'authenticity' explicitly; instead he uses artists' work to illustrate how an individual can become authentic. Nietzsche sees the artist's work as a product that transforms individuals and moves them away from everyday dogmas. Dogmas exert strong pressure to follow social conventions. Nietzsche contends that the creation of art enables individuals to remain true to themselves, since they no longer hide behind social conventions and dogmas, and instead live an authentic life. Through the removal of these constraints, Nietzsche argues, rather than the disintegration of the self, the self is liberated; new horizons to life-enhancing, self-crystallizing perspectives open up. This process of attaining authenticity is a continuum; when new perspectives lose their relevance or usefulness, they are simply discarded and replaced by new beliefs.

What emerged from Kierkegaard's and Nietzsche's work is the recognition that authenticity exists regardless of its guise; however, it is acknowledged that an explanation is needed concerning how it could be implemented in the individual's life. The next or second generation of authenticity thinkers, most notably Heidegger and Sartre, addressed this omission. For both, the conscious self must come to terms with being in a material world influenced by both internal and external forces. Being authentic is one way the 'self' can act and change in responses to these pressures. This can only be achieved through

moving away from the despairing and the suffering nature of authenticity advocated by Kierkegaard and Nietzsche to a systematic ontological approach. Although both Sartre and Heidegger support many of Kierkegaard's philosophical views, they reject his religious views. In his seminal work, *Being and Time*, Heidegger ([1927] 1962 as cited in Golomb, 1995) posits that the individual, referred to as *Dasein*, needs to 'run' into the future or to the point of death, then return to the past, back to the point of birth, or possibly earlier, before finally returning to the present. In 'running' into the future, Dasein reaches the point that Heidegger refers to as 'being-towards-death,' and then returns back. Through following this process, the individual is able to become the author of its 'own authentic character' (Golomb, 1995, p. 108). In explaining Heidegger's 'being-towards-death', Golomb (ibid, p. 109) contends that death is a 'distinctively impending' eventuality, which forces the individual to constantly ask and search for an authentic-self or alternatively they will lose this sense of authenticity. This concept of the individual or Dasein learning to attain authenticity from the past while reflective of Kierkegaard's view, does also differ. For Heidegger authenticity can only be gained through the individual reflecting backwards and constantly 'running into' or considering the future. Kierkegaard in contrast, argues that we live our lives forward, but can only understand them backwards, since the future, like God, remains unknown and not revealed.

Like Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, Heidegger attempts to motivate individuals to change their lives, or at least the perception of life as authentic. Preoccupied with ontology, Heidegger maintains that through seeking authenticity, the classical metaphysical question of 'what is' – and more importantly, the exact meaning of 'is' – is answered. Through addressing the question what is 'is', the individual (Dasein) becomes aware of his/her level of authenticity or inauthenticity. In his later work, Heidegger shifts his focus away from the ontology of Dasein's authenticity to investigating 'Being' itself in terms of 'Being a human'. This shift led writers such as Golomb (1995, p. 91) to maintain that the voluntary and human elements associated with attaining authenticity limits Heidegger's work, as authenticity is no longer attained through human achievement or failure but determined by destiny or fate, which differs from Kiekegaard.

Sartre, a follower of Heidegger, also sees authenticity in ontological terms. Sartre is the first thinker to supplement his philosophy of authenticity. Unlike Heidegger who sees authenticity as a pre-requisite for morality, Sartre contends that authenticity is brought about through sociability, and calls for direct political action to overcome this. Sartre sees authenticity as extending beyond the domain of objective language to include elements such as 'sincerity' and 'honesty' which are key words associated with Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005, 2006) Kaleidoscope Career Model's authenticity attribute. In setting out his thesis, Sartre uses the terms 'bad faith' and 'good faith' to illustrate how authenticity can be impeded (bad faith) or facilitated (good faith). However, the terms are not simply associated with 'authenticity' and 'inauthenticity'; they are associated with our attitudes towards attaining an authentic ontological outcome emerging from Sartre's perception of the unbridgeable gap between authenticity and his ontological study's conclusions. Sartre explains that authenticity is rooted in the ontology of 'human reality': authenticity cannot be attained by intelligent or social revolutionary means. It cannot be brought about through social interaction, but only through political intervention, a theme Rousseau advocates earlier. Although Sartre is considered by writers such as Golomb (1995) to be the most influential proponent of authenticity, paradoxically he was also deeply pessimistic about the viability of attaining authenticity, which led him, following Nietzsche, to very rarely use 'authenticity' in his published work.

Sartre's pessimism can be explained through his belief that introspection cannot lead to knowledge of one's authenticity (Golomb, 1995, p. 86-87). To attain authenticity there needs to be a shift from the domain of concrete social action to political action. Sartre is also limited by the momentary pathos of the 'now', as it is the present and not the future that determines authenticity. In justifying his position, Sartre states that a person has the potential to reflect on the present, but this is not an external, objective attribute of one's state of mind, since the individual never actually reflects upon all of the 'now'. This perspective directly challenges Heidegger's ontological position on authenticity.

In the past 40 years, there have been a number of other notable authenticity writers, such as Trilling (1972), who like their older contemporaries, have

attempted to address 'what is' and 'how to attain' authenticity. These writers have also attempted to provide an updated narrative of authenticity. Trilling (1972) defines 'sincerity', a term often, if mistakenly, closely associated with authenticity (Lindholm, 2008). This perspective of Trilling (ibid) is reflective of Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005, 2006) authenticity attribute. For Trilling (1972), authenticity comes from the simpler and more modest virtue of sincerity as a result of the gradual breakdown of the face-to-face feudal relationship of sixteenth century European society. According to Trilling (1972, p. 2), sincerity is 'the state or quality of the self which refers primarily to congruence between avowal and actual feeling'. Unlike Sartre, Trilling (1972) sees sincerity and honesty as synonymous with an individual's inner convictions and commitments based on that individual's behaviour; Trilling views sincerity and honestly as different from 'authenticity. Trilling believes that authenticity requires an incessant search for meaning to attain some form of 'self-transcendence' and 'self-creation'' (Golomb, 1995, p. 9). Trilling (1972) posits that authenticity or the illusion of authenticity is having 'full power over' one's environment. Both Trilling (ibid) and later Tedeschi (1986) relate authenticity to authority, self-doing and having responsibility for one's own choices which is closely related to the Kaleidoscope Career Model. Bovens (1999, p. 228) maintains that the individual's choices are informed by the past: 'the authentic person does not turn her [his] back on the past, but searches for a way to integrate her [his] present with her [his] earlier self'. Bovens' (1999) perception of authenticity is similar to Heidegger's ([1927] 1962), and also echoes Nicholson and West (1989) and Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010). In investigating authenticity from a personal and organisational perspective, Roberts et al. (2009) defined the construct as the subjective experience of alignment between an internal experience and external expressions. In elaborating, Roberts et al. (ibid) notes that authenticity is achieved when two parties experience a shared event. From sharing these experiences, individuals are potentially able to understanding or appreciation the strength and weaknesses of the other person (p.151).

Although the above perspectives enrich our understanding of authenticity, what remains unanswered is whether authenticity is relevant from a career perspective when viewed through a generational lens. Drawing upon the above research, this

study sees authenticity of the early 21st century career as being as a composite of Trilling's (1972, p.2) notion is having 'full power over' their own personal environment, Tedeschi's (1986) link to authority and responsibility for one's own choices, and Bovens (1999, p.288) who see the authentic person as the person who does not turn her [his] back on the past, but searches for a way to integrate the present with her [his] earlier self.

3.8.3 The Butterfly career

The butterfly career is a hybrid of the *boundaryless* career that extends and develops it (Gleick, 1987). According to McCabe and Savery (2005) and McCabe (2008), the butterfly career evolved as a result of growth and development in the service sector; service sector professions facilitate 'flutter in and out' career moves. Gunz et al. (2000) point out that individuals are enabled to move freely between firms and sectors, since their knowledge, skills and competencies are transferable. Advocates of the butterfly career (e.g. McCabe & Savery, 2005; McCabe, 2008) argue that from industry's perspective adopting a butterfly's progression and fluttering between sectors and roles should not be seen as negative, as it enables the individual to gain and develop professional expertise and core competencies. Saxenian (1996, p. 24) adds that the butterfly career provides an organisation with additional benefits that can lead to cross-fertilisation of ideas, innovation and experimentation. McCabe and Savery (2005), and McCabe (2008) question whether the butterfly career is specifically a service sector phenomenon, or an emerging career trend. Although McCabe's research attempts to depict the career progression, the study neglects gender, life–stage and generational influence and has yet to be applied beyond the service sector, which this study sees as a potential gap in knowledge and understanding that needs addressing.

3.8.4 Verbruggen, Sels and Forrier's (2007) career categorisation model

Unlike the Kaleidoscope Career and butterfly models, Verbruggen et al's. (2007) career categorisation is based on the *protean* and *boundaryless* models. Verbruggen et al. (ibid) identify a number of characteristics that best represent an

individual's career type (depicted in Table 3.4), namely, bounded, staying, homeless, trapped, released and boundaryless.

Career type	Description
Bounded	Stable career; high importance attached to organisational security
Staying	Multiple-employer career; high importance attached to organisational security; expected to stay in the same role
Homeless	Multiple-employer career; high importance attached to organisational security; expected to leave the organisation
Trapped	Stable career; low importance attached to organisational security; expected to stay
Released	Stable career; low importance attached to organisational security; expected to leave
Boundaryless	Multiple-employer career; low importance attached to organisational security

Table 3.4: Verbruggen, Sels and Forrier's (2007) Career categorisation model

Verbruggen et al. (ibid) describe 'bounded' as those who are entrenched in a traditional career path. This person's career path has primarily focused on working for one or two organisations. These individuals hold the expectation that their employer will provide relative job security, a standard career track, pay, promotion and status in return for their loyalty. Verbruggen et al's. (ibid) bounded person can be likened to Briscoe, Hall and DeMuth (2006), Briscoe and Hall's (2006) lost / trapped individual (see section 3.5.1.2). At the other end of the spectrum − the 'boundaryless' career – is pursued by those individuals who work for multiple firms, have transferable skills and gain psychological satisfaction from pursuing personal goals. These individuals can be likened to Briscoe, Hall and DeMuth (2006), Briscoe and Hall's (2006) 'hired hand' in the *protean* career (see section 3.6.1.2 and Table 3.3). The 'staying' category (shown

above) reflects those people who in the past have changed employers, but now seek long-term security and stability; therefore they are now likely to *stay* with their current employer. The staying characteristic is similar to Briscoe, Hall and DeMuth (ibid), Briscoe and Hall's (ibid) 'solid citizen'. The 'homeless' category represents those who would stay with their current employer, but because of a particular situation or grievance, they are unable to remain with the current organisation. The homeless category, although sharing similarities with Briscoe, Hall and DeMuth (2006), Briscoe and Hall's (2006) 'wanderer', is in its purest form a new category. 'Trapped' and 'released' are two categories which have some similarities and differences. Actors in both these categories have built their careers over a long period of time, and do aspire to change and seek new challenges. 'Trapped' and 'fortressed' are simiar, since both actors are stuck, unable or unwilling to change their circumstances. 'Released' is opposite to 'trapped' with regard to future direction. Those individuals who are categorised as 'released' perceive that they are able to resolve differences or discrepancies in achieving their current future career aspirations. This study draws upon Verbruggen et al.'s (2007) career categorisations to investigate the career paths of full-time managers.

Dries et al. (2008b) used Verbruggen et al.'s (2007) categorisation to explore generational differences in the careers of academic staff and students. Dries et al.'s (2008b, p. 920) study revealed 'cautious' or potential differences between the generations. However, there were a number of notable limitations to the study, the most notable being that the research omitted to determine the extent to which the participants' careers had been influenced by their generation. Dries et al's (2008b) study was conducted in an educational institution, therefore the results reflect the students' aspirations rather their actual career paths. Overall however, Dries et al. (2008b) provide a suitable framework to explore generational differences in individual's career type and progression, in answering the fifth research question: empirically, how are individual manager's career types and progression influenced by their generational grouping?

3.9 The duality of the objective and subjective career

While there has been a substantial debate (e.g. Giancola, 2006; Rhodes & Doering, 1993, Baruch, 2004, 2006; Dries & Verbruggen, 2012) surrounding whether the 'objective' career has been consigned to the past and replaced by the 'subjective' career, there has also been significant interest in the emergence of a dual career theory. According to Hall and Chandler (2005) in a key publication started that both concepts are equally important, and although diametrically *opposing* constructs, neither is more nor less important than the other. Hall and Chandler (2005, p. 156) add that neither '…vantage-point is more pertinent, but rather that the subjective career cannot be ignored – as it was in prior decades – particularly in today's career environment'. Hall and Chandler (2005) refer to the necessity that the researcher avoids taking a naïve approach that ignores one of these constructs when studying a career. Instead Hall and Chandler (ibid) recommend that both constructs are considered. This duality was first identified by Hughes (1937, 1958), who believed that the career concept has an ontological duality. This duality is Janus-like, facing in two directions, simultaneously subjective and objective (Khapova & Arthur, 2011, p.6; Becker, 1963, p. 24; Becker & Carper, 1956, p. 289; Braude, 1975, p. 141; Faulkner, 1974, p. 132; Goffman, 1961, p. 127; Hughes, 1937, p. 403). The Janus-like simile is based on institutional elements (the objective side) such as status, for example: office hierarchy/ size and quality [or all three] serves as a guide to the individual's status in the organisation. On the other side of the simile the internal aspect of a career, includes self-satisfaction. Barley (1989) argues that the objective elements such as salary and status of a career remain valid. In contrast a career's subjective characteristics, such as self-satisfaction, are formed by a person's experience and internalised (Barley, 1989, p. 49). Savickas (1995) argues that from an 'authentic' career perspective, the dual career has evolved from the traditional trappings of 'job' (status and wages) to an more internalisation of 'experiences' such as job satisfaction. This construct provides a useful representation to the extent a career objective and subjective, which is used in this study to investigate career success.

Baruch (2004), Dries et al. (2008), Adamson et al. (1998), Chen (1997), Valcour and Ladge (2008) and Collin and Young (2000) support this perspective and

concur that the objective career model, rather than superseding the subjective model is gaining greater academic attention. This can partly be attributed to the realisation that career success is a social construct rather than a subjective reality. Therefore it can be argued that both constructs are equally valid to investigate career theories. However, as mentioned in section 3.7 above, Baruch (2004, 2006), Dries and Verbruggen (2012), Guest and Mackenzie Davey (1996), Verbruggen et al. (2007) and Walton and Mallon (2004) concur that the traditional career is far from dead, and that the prediction that the subjective career will supersede the objective career has not materialised.

In a more recent study, Van der Heijden et al. (2009) investigated the perception of employability related to the subjective and objectives dimensions behind promotion and concluded that Human Resource practitioners need to be aware of the differences between employees of different ages. The study highlighted that younger employees perceive promotion objectively, whereas those over forty in supervisory positions, while rating promotion positively over their careers, rated overall promotion negatively.

3.10 The necessity for the dual career theory
In the early work of Hughes (1937, p. 403), the writer notes the importance of reflecting both career constructs; the subjective and objective career is described as 'the moving perspective in which the person sees his [sic] life as a whole and interprets the meaning of his various determinants, actions and the things that happen to him'. This view of the career as an entity which has both a personal (subjective) and an organisational (objective) context is supported by other writers (e.g. Barley, 1989, Greenhaus, Callanan & Greenhaus, 2009). Schein (1978, p. 1) states that the 'concept [of the career] has meaning to both the individual pursuing an occupation - the internal career - and the organisation trying to set up a sensible developmental path for employees to follow throughout their working life in the organisation - the external career'. Gunz (1989, p. 226) suggests that the two facets of a career reflect the individual's personal and organisational development: '[careers] can be seen both as a process of personal development [the subjective career] and as a sequence of externally observable jobs [the objective career]'. In a recent study by Briscoe et

al. (2012), who are ardent advocates of boundaryless and protean careers, they concluded that there is both a subjective and objective character to a career. For Briscoe et al. (ibid) and earlier Briscoe and Finkelstein (2009), the anticipated decline in organisational commitment has not materialised.

In an earlier pivotal study, Derr and Laurent (1989, p. 454) view the two dimensional career as a link between the individual and the social structure, which fuses 'the objective and the subjective, the observable facts and the individuals' interpretation of their experience'. According to Derr and Laurent (1989, p. 466), the two dimensions are 'inseparable and interactive elements in the social construction of career reality: both elements are strongly influenced by organisational and national culture, and by individual differences'. Undoubtedly the culture of the organisation and national culture have a significant influence on individual differences, however, Derr and Laurent (1989) are less clear about their organisational and national culture's composition and influence. Although gender and age have been studied extensively in relation to career subjectivity and objectivity, there is little that has been viewed specifically through a generational lens. Of great interest is whether 'career reality' of Derr and Laurent (1989), is influenced in any way by a person's societal or generational grouping. Reflecting this, this study intends to ascertain the extent to which the traditional model has relevance among the younger generations. As shown above, the foregoing discussion shows that there is clear academic evidence that career theory with any claim to valid academic rigour, therefore this study encompasses both the subjective and objective nature of a career into this study's methodology.

To summarise, it is possible to deduce that to investigate an individual's career it is necessary to consider its complexity, being objective and subjective in nature, reflecting Derr and Laurent's (1989) emphasise on career duality. Generational writers such as Johnson and Johnson (2010), Zemke et al. (2000), Kupperschmidt (2000), Smola and Sutton (2002) and Gursoy et al. (2008) highlight the significant changes that have occurred in attitudes and perceptions in the workplace. What still needs to be addressed is whether Derr and Laurent's (ibid) 'career reality' based on individual differences is influenced in any way by a

person's societal or generational grouping. This study investigated from a generational perspective whether a career is objective or subjective.

3.11 Career success

Career theory is related to career success. As noted above (section 3.5.1), the modern career landscape has been dramatically revised, likewise so has the meaning behind career success. Career success can be defined as the accumulated perceived positive work and psychological outcomes that have resulted from an individual person's economic working experiences (Chudzikowski, 2010; Seibert, Crant & Kraimer, 1999). For Cerdin and Le Pargneux (2009) career success is a duality of objective and subjective perspective, which is encapsulated in the conventional measurement of success and also the feelings of success relative to the individual's personalised goals and expectations. Olsen and Shultz (2013) contend that career success is objective and subjective, which matches the person's evolution in the area of motivation, desires and preferences.

As a theme, career success has received academic attention over the past few decades, which has included the influences of career success (Ng et al. 2005) and how organisations can assist individual's achieve career success through positive intervention (Heslin, 2005). More recently there have been studies into understanding the relevance of career success to both individuals and organisations (Dries, 2011).

For Scase and Goffee (1989, 1990) and Roper (1994) careers and corporate success still confer a sense of order and security in the workplace. This sense includes mapping out an employee's future with clearly defined career structures and progress. According to Schein (1978) career structures provide, at best, symbols of conspicuous success, or at worst, at least a degree of respectable security. However this landscape has changed; employees view their careers not as a secure foundation for life, but as 'portable' (Kanter, 1993) and 'boundaryless' (Hall & Mirvis, 1994; Arthur & Rousseau, 1996). Pahl (1995, p. 157) states:

'…whether or not the golden age of orderly careers ever existed, the experience of most managers in the 1990s [and beyond] is of considerable insecurity and uncertainty about their future prospects'.

Rodrigues and Guest (2010) while agreeing with Pahl (1995), do point out that regardless whether the traditional organisational boundaries exist, the workplace, due to re-structuring, has created an uncertain and less-predictable working environment. Haslin (2005) notes that questioning of the continued relevance of traditional objective criteria, such as pay and promotions, stems from the fact that these are not the only objective outcomes that people seek from their careers. For instance, school teachers (e.g. Parsons, 2002), nurses (e.g. Van der Heijden, van Dam & Hasselhorn, 2009) and academic mentors (e.g. McGrath, 2003, Haslin, 2005) often frame their career success in terms of hard data on the learning and other attainments of their students and protégés. Similarly, bus and taxi drivers base their career success on their years of driving without an accident, industrial designers on e-mails of peer recognition for their creativity, and doctors on the proportion of emergency patients' lives they save (Haslin, 2005).

Even when continual attainment of such objective outcomes does not lead to an increase in pay, promotion, occupational status, or rank, their value as objective indicators of career success is not necessarily diminished. Instead Haslin (2005) points out that many people also desire less tangible, subjective outcomes, such as work-life balance (Sturges & Guest, 2004; De Hauw & De Vos, 2010) and a sense of meaning influenced by wider world events, for example 9/11 (Wrzesniewski, 2002), a sense of purpose (Cochran, 1990), transcendence (Dobrow, 2003), and contribution (Hall & Chandler, 2005) from their work. In exploring this theme, Friedman and Greenhaus (2000), studying more than 800 business professionals found five dimensions associated with career success − status, time for self, challenge, security, and social. With the exception of status, the other dimensions place considerable emphasis on the subjective nature of career success, which goes beyond the objective outcomes of prestige, power, money, and advancement. In contrast Baruch (2006), in reviewing literature relating to careers, concurred with Skromme Granrose and Baccili (2006) and

McDonald et al. (2006), that the new career landscape has culminated in the emergence of stress and alienation, resulting in many individuals still wanting to keep the traditional psychological contract in terms of organisational security. In studying alienation in careers, Chiaburu, Diaz and De Vos (2013) stated that alienation can occur if the individual senses a separation or estrangement from themselves and those around them. This alienation can be personal, being disconnected from self-image or disconnected from others, leading to social alienation. Alternatively alienation can be in the form of a disconnection of social relationships with in the workplace. The result of alienation can be detrimental to an organisation, adversely effecting work commitment and performance. For the individual, alienation can impede on their own careers, through the lack of job satisfaction and involvement culminating in the intention to leave (Chiaburu, Diaz & De Vos, ibid). In earlier studies by Hall (2002), Korman, Wittig-Berman and Lang (1981) and Schein (1978), receiving high pay and promotions does not necessarily make people feel proud or successful, but can cause work and personal alienation and depressive reactions. Part of this could be attributed to a feeling of social and personal alienation where the individual is unable to attain job satisfaction and ultimately self-actualisation.

Specifically from a gender perspective both Roothman, Kirsten and Wissing (2003) and Korman et al. (ibid), on women's satisfaction and self-actualisation shifts from a high affiliation orientation to more achievement concerns due to personal and family commitments, while men also change but more due to life-stage and changes in the workplace. Where job dissatisfaction occurs the culmination can lead to anxiety, alienation and being unable to attain self-actualisation. Roothman, Kirsten and Wissing's (2003) study highlighted the psychological well-being of men and women in achieving self-actualisation to utilise their full potential, concluding that men tended to have a higher level of self-concept to achieving their personal goals. In contrast women expressed a higher level of affirmation and well-being. In addressing this, Korman et al. (1981) in a key study suggest that one possibility could be for employers to consider the differences such as age and gender influence related to work and non-work. From a generational perspective, Eisner (2005) concludes that alienation can occur where management strategies do not reflect or resonate to

their generational expectations, and calls for human resources strategies to consider this.

What remains of the traditional corporate career and its related success is unclear. Greenhaus, Callanan and Godshalk (2009), Baruch (2004), Rosenbaum (1979, 1989), O'Reilly and Chatman (1994), Melamed (1995) and Gentry et al. (2009) argue that the multi-tiered organisational hierarchies and clearly defined routes of progression that relied on seniority have all but disappeared. However, these authors agree that the model of career success as upward mobility and salary growth is relevant to organisations and to academic literature. This means that employees still work towards something that is tangible or linked to organisational success, such as a certain position in the organisation, challenging the advocates of a subjective / *boundaryless* career such as Arthur et al. (1995), Arthur (1994), Briscoe and Hall (2006), Briscoe et al. (2006). Hall (1976, 2002), an ardent critic of the traditional career model, acknowledges that certain objective elements of managerial success survive, for example, desire for attainment of a certain a position in an organisation.

There is debate surrounding whether contemporary career success has an internal (subjective), or external (objective) dimension, or a mixture of both as highlighted by Hall (1976, 2002) above.

Bailyn (1989, p. 481) in a seminal publication encapsulates this debate:

> '…on the whole it is easiest to assume that external definitions coincide with internal ones. It is instructive, for example, to note how readily one falls into the presumption that upwardly mobile careers are experienced as successful even when one's adopted definition specifically denies such a connection'.

Bailyn's quotation implies that, while career success has both an objective and subjective elements; it is easy to focus on either one of these career theories, and reject the relevance of the other. Gunz (1989, p. 235) warns about relying only on construct, that is, the objective meaning of a career; Gunz contends that the 'objective career only scratches the surface of the meaning of careers to

individuals' (p. 235). Instead Gunz emphasises that to understand career success more holistically, researcher needs to ascribe to it a logical or subjective meaning. This study reflects Gunz's (ibid) warning by adopting a holistic approach. In a later publication Baruch (2004), concurred with Gunz (ibid) that career success is a composite of objective and subjective attributes.

This duality of career success was investigated in an earlier study by Gattiker and Larwood (1988). Gattiker and Larwood proposed that career success should include both internal and external dimensions. Their study suggests that although traditionally career success has been judged according to objective criteria such as income and job title, 'a person's own assessment of his/her success may be strongly influenced by subjective internal career concepts' (Gattiker & Larwood, 1988, p. 78). Gattiker and Larwood (1988) add that career success is in the individual's mind and has no clear boundaries.

Gattiker and Larwood's (1988) study led others (e.g. Olsen & Shultz, 2013; Peluchette, 1993; Haslin, 2005; Gattiker and Larwood, 1990; Zeitz et al. 2009) to conclude that any understanding of career success must incorporate subjective internal success and objective external success. Gattiker and Larwood (1988, p. 81) sum up by stating, 'the automatic assumption that hierarchical career success leads to feelings of success must be rejected'. Peluchette (1993, p. 200) notes that 'the subjective view concerns how a person feels about his or her career accomplishments and prospects for future achievements'. Peluchette (ibid, p. 201) adds,

> '…it should be emphasised that subjective career success has
> implications for one's mental well-being and quality of life,
> issues which most organisations are concerned about'.

Gattiker and Larwood (1988), Poole et al. (1991, 1993), Gunz (1989), Barnett and Bradley (2007) and Judge et al. (2010) agree that subjective internal success may in fact be a more important determinant of perceived career success, but that objective external success should not be omitted or excluded. To represent this duality, Poole et al. (1993, p. 43) contended that there are five elements that are interconnected as shown in Figure 3.6: subjective criteria of success and

subjective view of a career (shown in blue), objective criteria of success (shown in orange), background and socialisation role and constraints and limitations (which is added to the original model added to encapsulate the internal and external dimensions of a career), which directly influence the objective and subjective career are coloured in grey. Since its publication, this model has been extensively used to depict the objective and subjective nature of career success, for example Arthur, Khapova and Wilderom (2005) and Van der Heijden et al. (2009).
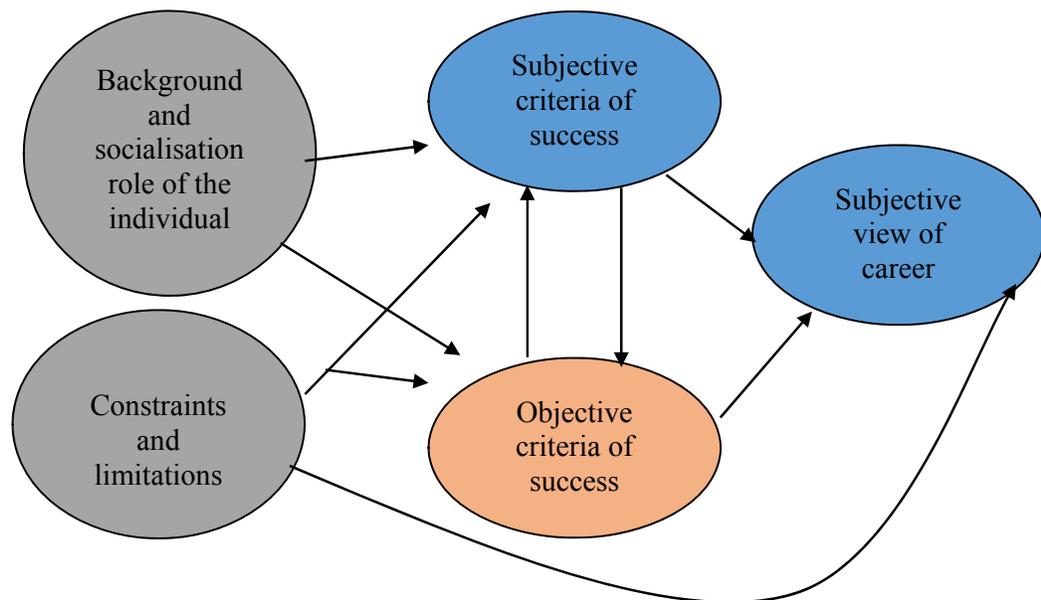
Figure 3.6: Poole et al.'s (1993) theoretical model of the subjective criteria of career success

(Adapted from Poole et al. 1993)

Poole et al.'s (1993) model shows two major sources of influence on perceived career success – the individual's background and sociological role. Background and sociological role derive from Astin's (1984) model of career development of men and women. Astin's socio-psychological model of career choice and behaviour emphasises that both men's and women's careers comprise four constructs, that is, *motivation*, *expectations*, *sex-role socialisation* and *structure of opportunity*. In setting out the model, Astin (ibid) assumes that work motivations are the same for women and men; however work expectations and

ultimately work outcomes manifest themselves differently between the genders in terms of career choices and occupational behaviour. In explaining these differences, Astin (ibid) identifies that sex-role socialization, the process whereby an individual's behaviour, attitudes, and perceptions are directly influenced by how society perceives gender characteristics. This creates the structure of opportunity and career differences amongst the genders. However with recent trends in society, Astin, (ibid) argues these changes have positively affected women, giving them greater freedom to choose a wider range of options, with the structure of opportunity in a career now becoming more equalized. In explaining the socio-psychological model of career choice and behaviour model further, Astin (1984) posits that work behaviour is mainly motivated by the need for *survival*, *pleasure* and *contribution*. In explaining these expectations, Astin (ibid) contends that these are concerned with the accessibility of various occupations and their relative ability to satisfy these three major needs: *survival*, *pleasure* and *contribution*. *Survival* according to Lindholm (2004) is having paid employment sufficient to accumulation financial wealth to adequately meet essential needs. *Pleasure* is a driving force for pursuing work, manifesting itself in an internal drive to find self-satisfaction in work-related pursuits. This according to Lindholm (ibid), can lead to substantial inherent joy and internal satisfaction. Finally Astin's (1984) third work motivation category, *contribution*, is the desire to contribute to the advancement in the workplace. This contribution could be a desire to make an intellectual contribution, for example assisting in employee development or promoting the organisation externally. In the context of this study, Astin's (ibid) model provides a critical insight into the multi-faceted nature of an individual career. Themes such as 'survival' can be closely linked to that of Super's (1953) 'exploration' or to Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005) 'challenge' career, while 'pleasure' and 'contribution' is reflective of Super's, (ibid) 'established' stage where the individual seeks 'authenticity' in a career.

Poole et al.'s (1991, 1993) empirical research, and later by Dries et al. (2008b), Arthur, Khapova and Wilderom (2005), Van der Heijden et al. (2009) highlights the complexity surrounding Astin's argument concerning the inter-relationship between the background and sex-role socialisation role of the individual. In

explaining the gender differences in socialisation, Poole et al. (ibid) contend that women are socialised to have personality traits such as warmth and devotion to others, they therefore seek an internal subjective approach to their careers, while men tend to be more independent and competitive, hence having an objective perspective. Although Poole et al. (1993) provide insight into how potential career success is perceived by the different genders, what needs to be considered is whether these differences are in anyway influenced by an individual's generation. Dries et al. (2008b) attempted to address this issue and concluded that irrespective of generation, gender or job type, job satisfaction is important. In addition, they acknowledge that although an objective element, salary is also relevant. However, it is questionable whether Dries et al.'s (2008b) research accurately represents the modern workplace, as the study used a limited sample student population who had not yet commenced their careers.

Gattiker and Larwood's (1988) and Poole et al.'s (1991, 1993) view of career success as a 'duality' has been challenged. Career theorists such as Hall (2002) and Arthur and Rousseau (1996) emphasise that to be able to categorise career success, it is fundamental to understand the dimension of career success or failure from a purely subjective perspective. Hall (2002, p. 2-3) states that career success is 'best assessed by the person whose career is being considered, rather than by other interested parties [that of the organisation or a third party]', because 'there are no absolute criteria for evaluating a career'. Gattiker and Larwood (1990, p. 22) agree that to encapsulate an individual's perceptions of achievement requires 'less obvious, more subjective personal standards'. Gattiker and Larwood (1990) add that by examining an individual's perceptions of achievement, it may be possible to provide new insight into a person's perception of career success, which an outsider or researcher might not recognise. To achieve this, Gattiker and Larwood (ibid) maintain that the research methodology needs to be interpretative. Based on Gattiker and Larwood recommendations, this study adoped an interpretative approach to investigate an individual's personal perceptions to career success.

Gattiker and Larwood's (1990) findings have been validated by later notable studies including Ng et al. (2005). Ng et al.'s (ibid) study classifies career

success as having four predictors and influences, namely, *human capital* (work centrality, hour's worked, educational level attained, international experience); *organisational sponsorship* (supervisory support and organisational resources); *socio-demographic* (gender, race, marital status, age), and *individual differences* (personality characteristics). The study's findings indicate that discernible patterns, particularly with regard to human capital and socio-demographic aspects, can be associated with salary, organisational support and individual differences. Other related studies that have re-conceptualised career success with regard to its focus and central findings are set out in Table 3.5, and will be will be discussed in further detail in section 3.13.1 and 3.13.2.

Authors (s)	Year	Groups researched	Central criteria / themes
Sullivan and Baruch	2009	Critical review of literature	There is a need for further research, in particular with regard to nonpaid work such as voluntary work, and how this contributes to a person's career
Blickle et al.	2009	A critical review of recently qualified managers	Objective and subjective career outcomes
Arnold and Cohen	2008	Critical review of literature	Career and career success research neglects the whole of the person and requires more examination
Dries, Pepermans and De Kerpel	2008	Critical review of managers	Perception of other's careers from an objective and subjective perspective; contending that there is a need to

			include different groups of employees

Authors (s)	Year	Groups researched	Central criteria / themes
Dries, Pepermans and Carlier	2008	Critical review of managers	Studies the interpersonally and intrapersonal career outcomes of career success
Hennequin	2007	Critical review of blue-collar workers	Looking at careers and emotional outcomes using objective and subjective attributes found that blue-collar workers needed to be better understood
Gunz and Heslin	2005	Critical review of literature	Questions how career success is different based on social settings
Heslin	2005	Critical review of literature	More research is required with regard to older workers and not just the young

Authors (s)	Year	Groups researched	Central criteria / themes
Ng, Eby, Sorensen and Feldman	2005	Critical review of literature	The meta-analysis reviewed 4 categories of predictors of objective and subjective career success to conclude both objective and subjective career success related to a wide range of predictors
Abele and Spurk	2009	Critical literature review before conducting a longitudinal study on 734 professions	Longitudinal study found salary and status important in the first 3 years, but other subjective predictors important 7 year on
Ng, Schweitzer and Lyons	2010	Critical review of literature before conducting a secondary data analyse on Generation Y undergraduates	Data gathered from national survey indicated realistic expectations for their first job in terms of career success, while also seeking a meaningful and satisfaction outside of work.

Table 3.5: Key career authors and research themes

(Adapted from Mulhall, 2011, p. 73-82)

3.12 Career and life success

As discussed above, there is academic evidence to support the view that there have been significant changes in the perception of career success. To provide an accurate depiction, it is necessary to investigate life success from an individual

perspective. This perspective is based on Schein's (1993) contention that career success cannot be separated from the concept of life success. Schein's argument is illustrated by the growing desire of individuals' to view their personal and work lives holistically. Schein maintains that lifestyle and balance are integral to career success. Schein (1993, p. 2-3) notes that 'a growing number of people who are highly motivated towards meaningful careers are, at the same time, adding the condition [of work-life balance] to the career and must be integrated with total lifestyle'. Earlier, Derr (1986) and later by Carlson, Derr and Wadsworth (2003) identified an emerging theme that integrates lifestyle into the context of career success: there was a greater desire among employees to achieve a better 'balance' between work and leisure.

Based on studies derived from individual accounts derived from personal accounts, there are a number of significant characteristics related to career success and life; these are age, gender and the organisation (Lyons & Kuron, 2014; Sullivan et al. 2009; Derr, 1986; Korman et al. 1981; Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). Therefore to contextualise a career and its associated success, this study investigates these characteristics separately.

3.13 Career attributes: age, organisation and gender

If, as has been suggested, all careers and their associated success are influenced by a myriad of factors, then it may be presumed that a career and career success may also differ between groups of people. The next section explores the influence of age, organisation and gender differences on career and career success.

3.13.1 Age and its influence on a careers

Derr's (1986) theme of 'getting balance' is central to career success and age. Korman et al. (1981) and after by Lyons and Kuron (2014), Mainiero and Sullivan (2005), Greenhaus, Callanan and Godshalk (2009) and Baruch (2006) emphasize that age is an important determinant in an individual's perceptions of career success. Korman et al. (ibid) in a seminal publication found that success cannot be adequately contextualised using organisational terms, such as salary or

job title, but needs to be approached from both an objective and subjective perspective. Korman et al.'s (ibid) research into MBA students revealed that many middle-aged employees, particularly men, experience an underlying feeling of 'alienation', partly attributable to the 'changing world', or paradigm shift in the importance associated with success in the contemporary workplace. Korman et al. (ibid) indicate that middle-aged employees' feelings of alienation can be attributed to changes in their perceptions of career success; this re-evaluation is the result of reaching a mid-point in their careers. Greenhaus, Callanan and Godshalk (2009) and earlier Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) state alienation could also be attributed to successful managers apparently alienating themselves (a theme covered in section 3.11 above), by focusing more on work tasks and less on personal or family commitments. In the studies, they found that as managers entered in their mid-careers (aged 35 – 42), they re-evaluated their work-life balance, and questioned their earlier preoccupation of work. This concurs with Bartolome and Evans (1997) and Korman et al. (ibid).

Career theorists (e.g. Hall, 2002) and generational writers (Dries et al. 2008b) have independently explored why individuals have framed career success in a predominantly objective traditional context and neglected the subjective nature of success. Dries et al. (2008b) and Hall (ibid) identified that owing to their generational values and attitudes, older managers tended to view their careers in more objective terms than their younger contemporaries. Dries et al. (2008b) maintain that Baby Boomer and older Generation X managers was more focussed on objective career constructs, and thus value determinants or attributes such as salary and status.

Whether this re-evaluation is a direct result of changes in the contemporary workplace, or has occurred as a consequence of getting older, or is associated with generational grouping, remains contentious. Sturges (1999) directly attributes this trend in employee evaluation to fundamental shifts in the workplace. In contrast, Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) and Smith-Ruig (2009) believe that it is a direct consequence of age. Evan and Bartolomé (1981, p. 19) found that those over 40 showed 'some degree of career disengagement' and argued that it is not related to level of organisational success, but linked to an

increased emphasis on their relationships and commitment to their families. Marshall's (1995), Broadbridge and Simpson (2011) and study of women in their mid-lives concurs, adding that there have been changes in women's attitudes to seeking a better work / life balance. Marshall's (ibid) sample indicated that they re-evaluated what their careers meant to them, and adjusted their working lives to be more in line with what they considered to be important aspects of their identity. Broadbridge and Simpson (ibid) in a review of 25 years of literature related to gender, found that organisations still have a considerable emphasis on women's careers, but since the inception of career and gender studies in the 1970s, also found work-life balance has also emerged as a critical issues for men. O'Connor and Wolfe (1987) confirm that irrespective of gender, individuals at their mid-life turning point tend to re-evaluate their perceptions of career success. In their study of 64 male and female employees aged between 35 and 50, O'Connor and Wolfe (ibid) argue that there is a need for greater autonomy at work that has led to what they describe as a gender 'mid-life transition'. For men, O'Connor and Wolfe (ibid) contend that, due to their high career investment, a career identity remains important to them. As they reach a plateau in their career with limited future promotional opportunities, they turn to become a mentor as a means of recreating their career. In contrast women, returning back to the workplace after starting and looking after the family, have a new enthusiasm and commitment, which contradicts the findings of Marshall (1995) and Nicholson and West (1989, p. 237), who maintain that irrespective of gender, as individuals near the end of their economic working lives, they become 'more relaxed, fulfilled, and less ambitious and not as concerned with material rewards.'

In studying the social implications of ageing and intergenerational relations in society, Biggs et al. (2006) indicated that social policy and ultimately organisations need to change their policies and practices relating to older workers (Baby Boomers). Biggs et al. (ibid) drew upon two statements by the World Assembly on Ageing, one in 1984 and the other in 2002, to illustrate how the perception to ageing has changed. The statement from 1982, focused on three major themes: the increasing number of people over 60 and 80 years of age; the recognition that the majority were women; and the need to create a generative

relationship to enable the transfer of life experiences through passing on knowledge and experience. In 2002, the statement contained a different vision, focused on a need for the older person (Baby Boomer) to be encouraged to participate actively in society and extend their contribution to economic careers (Biggs et al. 2006, p. 241). Part of this can be attributed to the shift in generational attitudes to aging and their role in the workplace and society (Leach et al. 2013).

Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010) contend that work and careers are lifetime journeys, and that as they progress individuals tend to re-interpret past events in the light of new understanding, weaving the past and the present to communicate their identity. This theme of re-interpreting the past to communicate identity relates to career success authenticity (discussed in section 3.8.2 above). Flynn (2010) and Claes and Heymans (2008), Yeatts et al. (2000) highlight a major organisational factor that affects an older worker's ability to adapt to workplace changes: the workplace needs to adapt its processes to recognise that older employees have needs, values and interests that must be met by their jobs while they remain employed.

Nicholson and West (1989) and Clark et al. (1996) identify some form of psychological adaptation related to life-stage influence. These authors suggest that older employees are happier at work because their work values, perceptions and attitudes are different from those of younger people. Clark et al. (1996) draw on data from the British Household Panel Survey (1991) that concludes that the relationship between job satisfaction and age is reflected as a U-shaped curve when graphed, particularly for men. Their research found that on average job satisfaction declines until the age of 31, after which it rises again. This finding endorses Scase and Goffee's (1989, 1990) conclusion that younger individuals are more dissatisfied in their careers than older ones. What is uncertain is whether there is an underlying generational cause, as posited by Gursoy et al. (2008), Kupperschmidt (2000) and Zemke et al. (2000). The difference in satisfaction can be attributed to various influences including life-stage and shared societal values. For example, income and promotional opportunities are of less concern to older employees, since they will usually have attained a particular

level of material success (Judge et al. 1995). More recently Dries et al. (2008b) found a distinct U-shaped data curve representing the relationship between generations and the importance attached to organisational security. The authors explain that this result could imply that the 'old-fashioned' career preference (that it is desirable to work for an organisation that can offer long-term security and stability) is particularly prevalent among the oldest generation, yet is also true of the youngest grouping. Although Dries et al.'s study (2008b) provides interesting generational insight, it is fundamentally flawed: the study's population was narrow and the influence of life-stage on career was neglected.

Research specifically into changes in individuals values due to age (e.g. Posner & Munson, 1981; Gomez-Mejia, 1990; Agle & Caldwell, 1999) mirrors Dries et al.'s (2008b) later findings. Gomez-Mejia (ibid) contends that gender values begin to mirror one another as individuals' progress in their occupations. This finding suggests that from an age perspective, as individuals continue in the organisation, organisational socialisation influences what they find most important about their work, and that their values become similar to that of the organisation. Posner and Munson (1981, p. 878) agree that the effects of organisational socialisation may make the difference between men's and women's work values less pronounced, and conclude that 'value structures may shift, in part, due to a transcendence of roles'. In explaining *transcendence of roles*, Posner and Munson (1981), contend that shifts in values, and hence the transcendence of roles, have come about due to the perceived demise of gender differences in society and in the workplace, a theme that Astin (1984) encapsulated in the socio-psychological model of career choice and behaviour. Agle and Caldwell (1999) contend that there is evidence that values are an integral and daily part of our lives. Values determine, regulate, and modify relations between individuals, organisations, institutions, and societies. What remains unclear is whether the divergence of age and values exists as a result of organisational socialisation, and if so, whether there is any relation to the boundaryless career landscape.

There is academic evidence to suggest that personal values may be influenced by a person's generational or societal grouping (Zemke et al. 2000; Kupperschmidt,

2000 and Gursoy et al. 2008). According to these authors, an individual's values, attitudes and perceptions of work and life are determined by a shared generation experience. What remains to be answered is whether a person's career and as its associated perception of success is influenced by generational differences.

3.12.2 Gender differences and their implications for careers

As previously mentioned throughout this Chapter in relation to career success, there has been research focused specifically on gender differences (e.g. Maxwell & Broadbridge, 2014; Maxwell, Ogden & Broadbridge, 2010; Sturges, 1999, 2004; Cabrera, 2009; Powell & Mainiero, 1992, 1993). As discussed in section 3.7.1, Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005, 2006) Kaleidoscope Career Model specifically represents a career and its associated success. The Kaleidoscope Career Model identifies two major career patterns, an *alpha* pattern representing those individuals who are strongly focused on their career, and a *beta* pattern covering those individuals who have made adjustments in their career to enable a greater work-life, or work-family balance. Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006) propose three parameters that influence a person's career trajectory, that is, *authenticity*, *balance* and *challenge*. Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006) agree that at any point in time, all three parameters are active in an individual's career and life, but one tends to dominate.

Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006) maintain that *authenticity* represents how people define themselves in relation to being true to themselves, aligning this parameter with their personal values and behaviours. *Balance,* in contrast, represents people's efforts to achieve equilibrium between the work and non-work aspects of their lives. Finally, *challenge* defines how an individual engages in activities that permit him or her to demonstrate responsibility, control and autonomy at work. Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006) describe the *alpha* career pattern as mainly applying to men. Their careers tend to be linear or sequential, with a specific focus on challenge, followed by personal development, and then a focus on balancing work and work-life balance. Mainiero and Sullivan (ibid) add that, during the *challenge* stage men are devoted to family, but express this commitment through a need to provide financially for the family. As men's

careers plateau in the later mid-career stage, they start to question their lives, spend more time with their families and think about life beyond their workplace. What is unclear is whether this finding is prevalent for all males, or whether there has been a shift. This study addresses this gap, by investigating whether men's careers remain challenge orientated or have male careers shifted to a more balanced career. This study also investigates whether male careers are in any way generationally influenced.

The *beta* career pattern predominately represents women's perceptions of career success. Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006) and Melamed (1995), maintain that women focus on ambition and advancement in their early careers, but need to balance work and family commitment mid-point in their careers. Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006) argue that women who follow an *alpha* career tend to have either no family commitment, or a husband who works from home, or does not work at all. Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006) provide limited evidence that some younger men who follow a *beta* career path, believe that the level of responsibility, work and travel demands are not worth the sacrifice of family and non-work interests. Similar to women, these *beta* career men tend to forgo their career ambitions mid-career to follow a more relaxed, family centred life-style. This perspective is supported by Wise and Millward (2005) who studied the gender differences in learning and continued growth in a career. Wise and Millward (ibid) posit that the modern career is no longer linear, and unlike men, women's definition of career success is often focused on subjective rather than objective outcomes. What remains unclear from Wise and Millward research is whether this gender difference is in anyway generationally influence. This study investigates from a generational perspective, whether males career remain linear or *alpha* orientated, or have shifted to become more reflective of women's subjective or *beta* career.

Enache et al. (2011) researched the effects of gender on the relation between *protean* and *boundaryless* career attitudes and subjective career success in the changing modern workplace. Enache et al. (2011) recommend that Human Resource managers should provide greater flexibility and control over their work, adding that this is particularly pertinent with regard to female employees.

The study showed that a value-driven predisposition, that is, the individual's self-reliance and proactive approach to managing his or her career, including developing goals and taking responsibility for success or failure and acquiring and developing skills and competencies, can lead to low levels of perceived career success, if not met. This finding indirectly suggests that individuals experience intrinsic career success when their values mirror those of the organisation. Therefore, Enache et al. (ibid) argue that Human Resource practitioners should be aware that employees seek work opportunities that match their ideals and values. What this study did not investigate is whether these individual's ideals were in any way influenced or informed by their generational grouping. Partly addressing this omission, Maxwell and Broadbridge (2014), studied the career transition of Generation Y graduates entering the workplace. The study revealed both a gender divide and a shared perspective associated to the importance personal career success. For male graduates there was a high degree of expectation for their careers, manifested in attaining graduate level entry jobs, a willingness to have mobility across jobs, and preparedness to work longer hours at the commencement of their career. In contrast women held lower career expectations which were reflected in their lower aspirations, and commitment to their career. In explaining the reasons why, Maxwell and Broadbridge (ibid) identified women encountering gender discrimination in the workplace that had adversely affected their personal and professional aspirations.

Career success has become a common theme among career theorists (e.g. Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Hall, 1996; Mainiero & Sullivan, 2007; Super, 1980; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009; Dries, Pepermans & De Kerpel, 2008). Earlier career success studies by Russo et al. (1991), Keys (1995), Poole et al. (1991, 1993) and Powell and Mainiero (1992, 1993) conclude that women perceive career success in more subjective internal terms than men, with Bailyn (1989) indicating that women due to their external commitments have a career which to have the characteristics of a 'slow burn'. Powell and Mainiero (1992) describe the traditional career model of success as being specifically a 'male' idea of success. Hennig and Jardim (1978) add that women see achieving success in their careers as a process of internal growth. Hennig and Jardim (ibid, p. 12) conclude that

'…women see a career as personal growth, as self-fulfilment, as satisfaction, as making a contribution to others, as doing what one wants to do. Men … visualise a career … as a series of jobs, a progression of jobs, as a path leading upward with recognition and implied rewards'.

Following a qualitative study of 30 women, working in the publishing and retail industries, Marshall (1984) reports that many did not look far ahead in their careers, but instead sought continual challenge, interest and growth from their work. Marshall's study reveals that some women do not want promotion; when their job ceases to offer interest and challenge, they begin to seek new opportunities. In another key study, Alban-Metcalfe (1989) claimed that women rate significantly higher than men in the need for a challenging job, opportunity for development, quality of feedback, working with friendly people, and autonomy. According to Alban-Metcalfe (ibid), men are more concerned with external factors such as high earning and job security, and the more traditional roles. This is supported by Broadbridge (1999, 2008) who, using a quantitative study, revealed that to be successful, women needed to forgo or postpone having a family to conform to the convention 'male' model of the workplace. The study in concluding concurred with Heilman (2001) contention that men exhibited characteristics (aggressive, forceful, independent and decisive), while women held characteristics of being kind, helpful, sympathetic and concern for others (Broadbridge, 2008, p. 24). This finding mirrors Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005) finding of a predominately alpha objective career for men. Women, in contrast, tend to seek a beta kaleidoscope career, which is focused on seeking work-life balance, and defining career success in subjective terms.

In addition to the evidence that women have a more subjective internal measure of career success than men, some authors (e.g. Gallos, 1989; Bell & Nkomo, 1992; Greenhaus, Callanan & Godshalk, 2009) claim that women differ from men, since they define success more holistically. This could partly be attributed to women tending to be more involved in the family. Women are more likely to see success in their career as just one part of success in their lives as a whole. Marshall (1995, p. 321) states that 'many women have a more open sense of a

career than do many men' and that 'women may make a decision as a life choice rather than simply as a career choice'. Cheung and Halpern (2010), Wiggins and Peterson (2004) and Powell and Mainiero (1993) agree that success at work and at home is important to women. Powell and Mainiero (1993, p. 220) note that 'in attempting to strike a balance between their relationship with others and their personal achievements at work, women seek some sort of personal or subjective satisfaction in both realms'. To depict this gender difference, Powell and Mainiero (1993) devised the cross-current model to represent a woman's career progression as a 'river of time' (see Figure 3.7). On either side of the 'river' are two opposing banks: one emphasises the importance of a career and the other, the relationship with others. As a woman progresses, her career may veer from one to the other, depending on external circumstances.

Emphasis on career

Promotion, salary, seeking a challenge

Time

Friends, family commitments

Emphasis on relationships with
others beyond a career
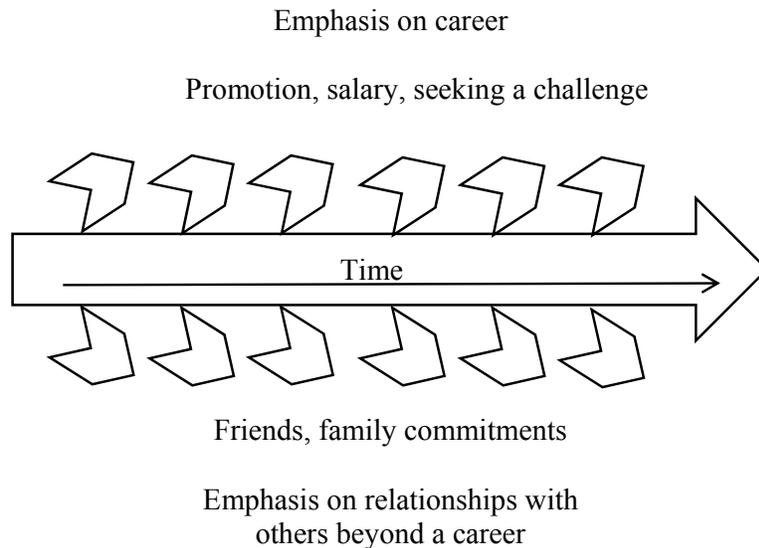
Figure 3.7: Cross-currents 'river of time' model
(Adapted from: Powell and Mainiero, 1993)

Powell and Mainiero's (ibid) River of Time model represents four aspects of a woman's career, that is, emphasis on career versus relationships with others, success in a career, success in relationship with others and time. The model depicts individual women placing themselves somewhere on the continuum. The continuum represents the relationships between the four elements, but does not depict the life-stage of the individual at any particular moment in time. Instead Powell and Mainiero (ibid) contend that at any point in time, a woman may place

a particular degree of emphasis on a career rather than relationships with others when deciding on which action or decision to make.

Powell and Mainiero's (1993) polarisation of gender differences has been challenged (e.g. Smith-Ruig, 2009; Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005). There is increasing evidence to suggest that younger males are also seeking a more balanced work-life. The above studies posit that younger males are increasingly opting for a beta career pattern, where there is a need for balance and authenticity, rather than seeking a predominately challenging career. However the extent to which this is happening and the underlying reasons have not been investigated. This study addresses this gap in knowledge related to whether there is a generational shift amongst males seeking a more beta orientated career by investigating, from a generational perspective, the career paths as well as perception to career success of men.

3.14 Careers through a generational lens

Although career theory has been studied from different perspectives including age and gender, only recently has the theme been viewed through a generational lens, most notably by Dries et al. (2008b), who contend that increasingly, there is an underlying lack of interest among members of the youngest generation (Generation Y), in achieving career success. This lack of interest has manifested itself in a shift away from the traditional understanding of career success due to changes in generational values and attitudes in the workplace. According to Dries et al. (2008b), part of this shift could be attributed to the search for greater work-life balance. Although not specifically related to careers, earlier work by Zemke et al. (2000), Kupperschmidt (2000) and Gursoy et al. (2008) highlights the change of attitudes to work, and in particular, the desire for greater career autonomy and actively seeking a better work / life balance. Dries et al. (2008b) draw on a mixed research methodology incorporating both Verbruggen et al.'s (2007) career categorisation and the use of Schein Career Anchors together with qualitative vignettes to describe someone's fictitious career. The study revealed that as the male participants grew older, they started to re-evaluate career success. This finding is supported by Smith-Ruig (2009), who used Mainiero and

Sullivan's (2005) Kaleidoscope Career Model to identify a potential shift among older workers, particularly males, to re-evaluating their work-life balance.

More recently Maxwell and Broadbridge (2014) studying Generation Y career transitions amongst undergraduate students, found that due to gender discrimination, women in this generational group, led to a lower expectation in careers compared to men. This finding concurs with earlier work of Broadbridge and Simpson (2011) and Lewis and Simpson (2010), who identified the direct association to maternal and domestic roles of women when seeking a career, a theme that proliferated throughout all generations. The result of this gender discrimination, according to Maxwell and Broadbridge (ibid), has culminated in female Generation Y graduates often remaining in their student job or alternately accepting a non-graduate position.

Also to emerge from generational research is the fact that irrespective of gender, or the functional level or type of career, a person's societal or generational grouping potentially has a bearing on how that individual perceives his or her career success. Dries et al.'s (2008b) study indicates that satisfaction is important irrespective of an individual generation; however, there are underlying differences with regard to the importance placed on salary and status. For example, for those in the oldest generation, job satisfaction and salary are equally important. However Dries et al. (2008b) study revealed that the sample's level of job satisfaction increased in importance dependent upon the generation of the individual; in other words there seems to be a generational influence associated with the individual's perception to a career. Dries et al.'s (2008b) finding supports the literature that states that "free career agency" 'took off' in the Baby Boomers era, and continued for Generation X and Y, when all career securities had almost disappeared (Zemke et al. 2000). This finding is also supportive of Kupperschmidt (2000) and Gursoy et al. (2008), who argues that the traditional career securities have all but disappeared. Furthermore, Dries et al.'s (2008b) study questions whether 'satisfaction', although a universal concept, has in fact gained increasing prominence when evaluating career success, due to the disappearance of more traditional careers markers. However, Dries et al. (2008b) conclude that salary continues to play an important role in a person's career which challenges the existence of a boundaryless or protean career. What Dries

et al. study does neglect is whether gender, life-stage or other determinants are important. Reflecting is omission, this study addresses this theme related as to whether gender, life-stage or other determinants such as profession / occupation and generation are influential.

3.15 Summary of the career literature

This Chapter has sets out how the theoretical narrative answers the second and the third research question. The second research question asks: theoretically, how are individual manager's career types and progression influenced by their generational grouping? The third research question asks: theoretically, when viewed through the Kaleidoscope Career model, how are individual manager's perceptions of a successful career influenced by their generational group?

While there is clear evidence that the definition of a career has changed (e.g. Wilensky, 1964; Super, 1980; Arthur, Hall & Lawrence, 1989), how these changes are viewed remains contentious. The traditional model, exemplified by the individual progressing in one or two organisations in a linear manner, has been replaced by a more pragmatic, fluid model that is boundaryless, or protean in nature. This change reflects the change from the objective, organisational-centric career to one that is individualistic. This change is partly due to globalisation, economics, the shift in society values, and the employment landscape. The subjective centric career also has its critics. These include the criticism that this career model reflects a career using a predominately positivistic methodology, and therefore neglects the complexities of what constitutes a career. This over-simplification has led writers such as Pringle and Mallon (2003) to propose that to study a career and its associated success, it is necessary to view it from both an objective and subjective perspective. The criticism also culminated in questioning (e.g. Sullivan, 1999; Inkson, Gunz, Ganesh & Roper, 2012) the existence of the contemporary, individualistic-centric career.

A series of models have emerged to study today's career. These include Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005) *Kaleidoscope Career* and Verbruggen, Sels and Forrier's (2007) *career categorisation Models*. In setting out to address the theoretical

narrative to answer the second research question, Verbruggen et al.'s (2007) career categorisation based on the *boundaryless* / or *protean* constructs provides a framework to investigate the career progression amongst the generations. This hybrid was been incorporated into Dries et al.'s (2008b) generational studies. Although the study was notably limited as it focused on aspirations rather than the actual careers of the different generations, Dries et al. (2008b) study illustrated the potential that the career categorisation could be used to determine answer the fifth question.

In investigating the theoretical narrative to answer the third research question as presented above, the Kaleidoscope Career Model is based on the *protean* career, illustrated the changing nature of a career and its associated success by introducing three parameters: *balance*, *authenticity* and *challenge*. While this construct has begun to be used to investigate the complexities of a career, Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) contend that men, irrespective of their generation, profession or to a large extent their life-stage, follow a predominantly '*alpha*' or *challenge*-orientated career, whereas women have a '*beta*', or *authentic*, or *balanced work-life* (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005). This portrayal of a gender divide has been challenged. Smith-Ruig (2009) maintains that life-stage has a bearing on career, and alludes to the potential of other societal influences such as the individual's generational grouping.

The literature review revealed that there is a need to study a career and its success from a dual perspective. While some studies have attempted to investigate the duality and complexity nature of a career and its success through objective and subjective lenses, certain characteristics are often over-looked or neglected. These include viewing career success holistically in relation to age, life-stage, gender and generation. Answering research question three: theoretically, when viewed through the Kaleidoscope Career model, how are individual manager's perceptions of a successful career influenced by their generational group?, this study addresses that the gap in the literature by investigating from a generational perspective, the influence of age, life-stage and gender on the complexity of a career and its success.

3.16 Chapter summary of the literature review

This Chapter has considered a wide range of research from various disciplines and different paradigms. Of particular interest are Dries et al. (2008b), Verbruggen et al. (2008) and Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) research. Their studies provide comprehensive insight into generational differences between individuals (Dries et al. 2008b; Lyons and Kuron, 2014), the means to categorise a career to encapsulate progression (Verbruggen et al. 2008), and a construct to view career success (Mainiero and Sullivan, 2005).

In critiquing generational research, the literature review identified a common theme: potentially every generation has a number of distinct and unique characteristics. For many authors, such as Zemke et al. (2000), Kupperschmidt (2000), Smola and Sutton (2002) and Gursoy et al. (2008), these shared characteristics are embedded in an individual's values, beliefs and perceptions, which ultimately influences all aspects of their lives, including their careers. However, other critics (e.g. Twenge & Campbell, 2008; Arsenault, 2004; Macky et al. 2008) posit that many intergenerational studies portray potential differences in an over-simplified and arguably, tabloid manner. Macky et al. (ibid) note that the majority of publications are reliant on newspaper stories, consultant press releases, magazine articles and books, which lack any academic rigour or critical peer-review. This criticism has informed this research by ensuring that potential generational characteristics and differences are critically questioned. Kowske et al. (2010) identified that although differences exist, they tend to contradict or differ from the generational stereotypes portrayed by Zemke et al. (2000) and Kupperschmidt (2000). In answering the first research question: theoretically, what supports the argument that a generational group is a reliable method to group individual managers?, this study draws on the contention of Lyons and Kuron (2014), Parry and Urwin (2011), Gentry et al. (2009), Davis et al. (2006) and Jurkiewicz (2000) that a generation is a valid form of grouping people, as there are similarities and differences between the different generations.

In the area of career progression and associated success, the literature review has highlighted the debate surrounding whether the traditional career, its linear trajectory and associated objective attributes has been confined to the past, replaced by a more individual construct. Schein (1975, 1978, 1987) in encapsulating the complexities of a career devised seven competences known as 'Career Anchors.' These career anchors represent the individual's self-perceived talents and abilities derived from their actual experiences in the workplace, which are used to categorise the core competence of the person.

Other notable contemporary career models also to emerge include the *Boundaryless* and *Protean* careers. These models were devised to represent the shift to a more individualistic career, advocating that today's career is managed by the individual and not the organisation, a career is life-stage is a series of experiences and success has shifted from 'know-how' to 'learn-how.' To emerge from these individualistic career constructs has been the *Kaleidoscope Career* (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005), *career categorisation* (Verbruggen, Sels & Forrier, 2007) and *butterfly careers* models (McCabe & Savery, 2008). These models attempt to portray a career as being no longer objective or organisational bound, instead are more individualistic / subjective in nature. This study draws on the *career categorisation* model to investigate the career types and progression of individual manager's careers, then the *Kaleidoscope Career model* to determine the perception of career success from a generational perspective.

3.16.1 Conceptual Framework

To contextualise this summary, a conceptual framework was devised to reflect the emerging themes and identify gaps in the existing literature. The model shows the integrated nature of the two themes of career success and generational studies, answering this study's empirical research questions: research question four: empirically, what support is there that a generational group is a reliable method to group individual managers?; research question five: empirically, how are individual manager's career types and progression influenced by their generational grouping?, and research question six: empirically, when viewed through the Kaleidoscope Career model, how are individual manager's perceptions of a successful career influenced by their generational group?, to

determining the extent to which, based on empirical evidence individual manager's career types and progression are influenced by their generational grouping, and to determine the extent to which, when viewed through the Kaleidoscope Career model, individual manager's perceptions to what constitutes a successful career are influenced by their generational group. Career theory highlights the debate surrounding whether a career and its perceived success can be framed as a traditionally objective, or subjective construct. The concept of the subjective career has led to the development of a number of contemporary models, most notably the *protean*, *boundaryless* and butterfly models. What remains unanswered from the theoretical narrative is the extent to which the contemporary career models accurately represent today's career. To address this gap, the conceptual model below (see Figure 3.9) in the context of the research questions, views the debate through a generational lens.

The first gap is based on this study's contribution as to whether generational studies are valid when investigating career types, progression and career success. This gap reflects the calls by Lyons and Kuron (2014), Foster (2013), Urick (2012), Eisner (2005), Twenge and Campbell (2008), Arsenault (2004), Macky et al. (2008), for generational studies to have greater authenticity and reliability, and addresses the need for further empirical research to determine the extent that determinants such as age, life-stage, gender and profession are influential compared to a generational grouping. In investigating this gap, this study will investigate and identity whether differences in work-related, personality and attitudes exists as portrayed by generational writers such as Gursoy et al. (2008), Gursoy, Chi and Karadag (2013), Smola and Sutton (2002), Deal et al. (2010), Zemke et al. (2000), Kupperschmidt (2000) exists.

The second gap is based on this study's unique contribution of using Verbruggen, Sels and Forrier's (2007) career categorisation model, to specifically focus on career types related to whether there are generational differences, to determine the career type and progression of the groupings.

The third and final gap of this study relates to career success, as to whether the career through a generational perspective is objective, subjective or a duality of

the two. To address this gap, the study investigates career success through Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005) Kaleidoscope Career Model. Through using the Kaleidoscope Career Model, the study seeks to ascertain the importance of a challenge, work-life balance or authenticity to achieve a successful career.
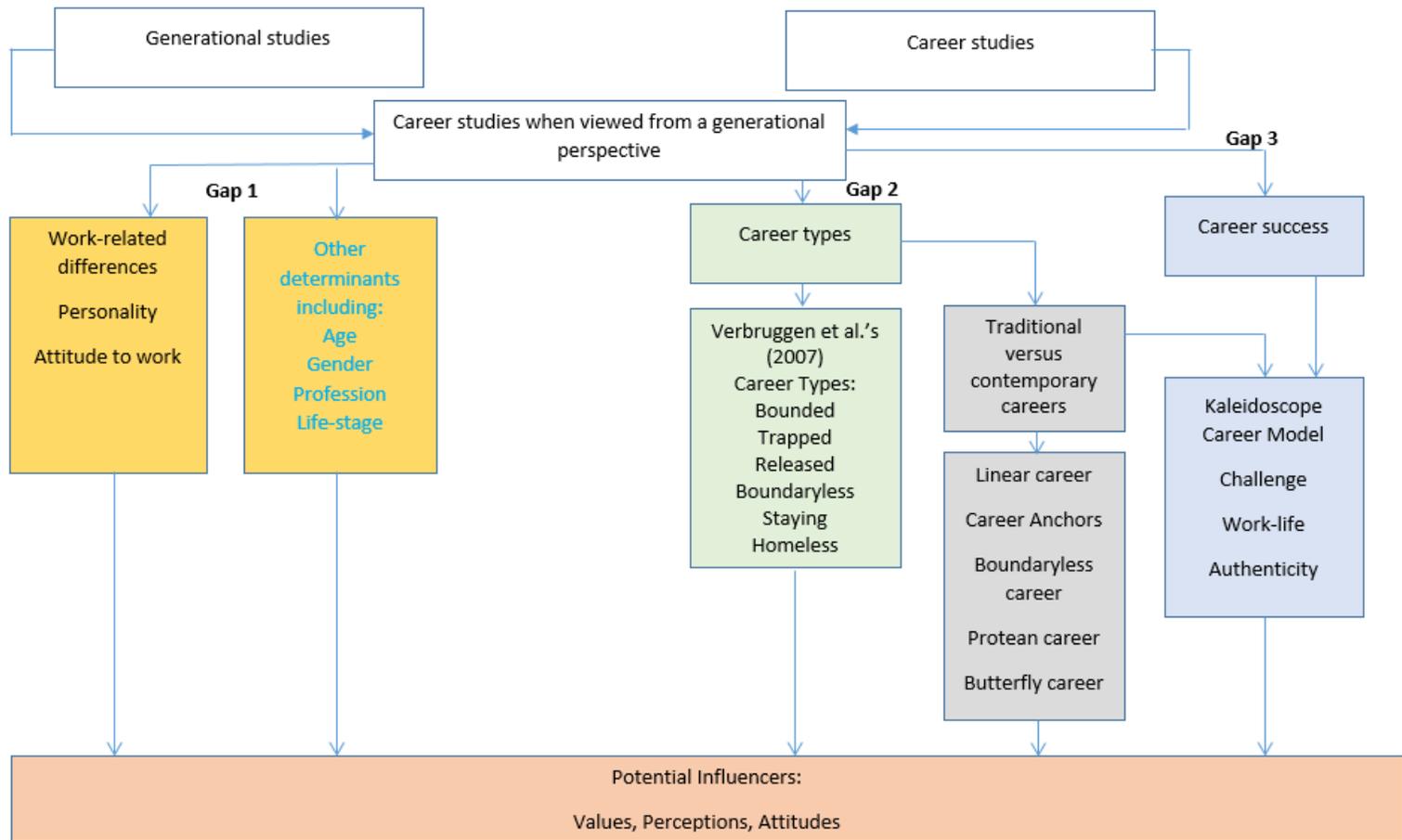
Figure 3.8
Literature review conceptual model

Chapter Four
Methodology

4.1 Introduction

A key question which a management researcher must consider before embarking on a research project is related to the nature of the social reality that will be investigated and how knowledge about that reality can be acquired. An understanding of the ontological and epistemological issues surrounding the proposed research is important for the researcher and reader to feel confident that the methodological approach chosen is likely to best support gathering the data and developing the findings, which will add to the body of knowledge in the chosen field of enquiry. As Gill and Johnson (2002, p. 491) state:

> '…the choice and adequacy of a method embodies a variety of assumptions
> regarding the nature of knowledge and the methods through which that
> knowledge can be obtained, as well as a set of assumptions about the nature
> of the phenomena to be examined'.

This Chapter outlines the strategy adopted in conducting the research. Both the philosophical perspective and the practical methods used to conduct the fieldwork are explored, and the rationale behind these choices and potential limitations of the study are explained.

As Silverman (2013), Halkier (2010) and Blaikie (2007) acknowledge, all researchers experience the inherent dilemma of deciding on an appropriate research methodology. Tension exists between the nature of what is to be investigated and the researcher's own world-view. In this research the author's world-view has undoubtedly led to a particular focus on the nature of the theme being investigated.

The world is made up of 'representations that are creations of individual minds' (Blaikie, 2007, p. 16), rather than founded on the existence of independent truths (Silverman, 2013). Therefore, to obtain knowledge about reality, meaning must be approached from the viewpoint of the individual, as only the individual can provide the evidence needed to construct a theoretical understanding. In this study the intention was to adopt what Blaikie (2007, p. 8) terms a 'bottom up' approach using an inductive strategy, which derives social scientific concepts and theories of social life from social actors' everyday conceptualisations and understandings. Through this approach it is then possible to generate a technical account that enables the research results to be an accurate reflection of the participants' own accounts through using their own words.

4.2 Research Strategy

Blaikie (2007, p. 15) identifies two key influences on the choice of a research strategy based on the premise that the decision can be made for pragmatic reasons 'to try to match a strategy to the nature of a particular research project and the kind of research questions which have been selected for consideration'; or it can be made because it reflects the 'world-view' of the researcher, that is his/her personal preference for a certain philosophical position on the nature of social reality and how knowledge about it can be obtained. Blaikie's (ibid) perspective is paramount, since it defines the research strategy, the choice of which ultimately entails 'the adoption of a particular set of ontological and epistemological assumptions' (Blaikie, 2007, p. 6). Easterby-Smith et al. (2012) and Alvesson and Deetz (2000, p. 6) emphasise that the distinction between quantitative and qualitative paradigms although important, is not necessarily paramount, compared with a failure to consider and understand the ontological, epistemological and axiological implications of the research strategy. If this view is not taken into consideration, the results can have unintended effects on research outcomes.

4.2.1 Potential Research Methodologies

Before proceeding, the next part of this section will set out the central tenets of the research methodology. As Blaikie (2007) stated, the selection of a methodology reflects the system of beliefs or values that influences the researcher's view of the world. Bryman (2012) concurred highlighting that both quantitative and qualitative research can be viewed as exhibiting a set of distinctive, but contrasting characteristics. These characteristics reflect the epistemological beliefs about what constitutes acceptable knowledge. In determining which research strategy is appropriate, writers such as Silverman (1993), Bryman (2012) and Veal (1997) contend there are two principal research 'paradigms': positivism and interpretivism.

4.2.1.1 Positivism paradigm

Positivism as a research method typically lends itself to be grounded in a quantitative approach, with its origins in natural sciences. Positivism characteristics include reducing all phenomena to follow scientific rules by taking a hypothetico-deductivist approach to either verifies or disproves hypotheses (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). In broad terms, positivism has an objectivist conception of social reality, which is based on the collection of numerical data,

then adopts a deductive and predilection approach to understand the relationship between theory and the research.

Blumer (1956, p.685), in setting out the characteristics of positivist studies, highlighted this paradigm tend to omit 'the process of interpretations or definition that goes on in human group.' From a social science and real-world study perspective, Blumer's (ibid) contention is that the usage of a positivist approach brings into question the reliability of this paradigm when studying the influence of the subject being researched, the role of the researcher and the connection between the individual's perceptions as everyday events are detached and therefore ignored. Schutz (1962) concurred highlighting that a quantitative or positivism approach due to its scientific approach fails or neglects to distinguish individuals and the social institutions from the 'the world or nature' or the 'social world.' For Guba and Lincoln (1994), positivism can only generate findings that exist independently of some form of theoretical framework, therefore can become problematic when studying real-world themes such as beliefs, attitudes and perceptions (Guba & Lincoln, ibid). In concluding Guba and Lincoln (1998), noted the detachment and being value-free elements means that the subject being researched is removed or stripped away from their social world. This stripping away has led writers such as Sarantakos (2012, 1998), to argue that researching the social world needs to be set in real-life; otherwise it becomes dehumanised or artificial.

Brymer (2012, 2015) in presenting the characteristics of positivism highlighted also the objective and value-free nature of this paradigm which means that the researcher needs to be detached from the research. Therefore, to adopt this paradigm could potentially limit the research to be able to investigate only experiences or the perceived experiences through the sample's senses (Bryman, 2012, 2015), as opposed to understanding the rich and reflexive perceptions of career types, progression and career success amongst managers from a generational perspective.

4.2.1.2 Interpretivist paradigm
The interpretivist paradigm unlike positivism, is typically lends itself to be grounded in a qualitative approach. Interpretivists take the view that social research must be generated by interaction, through either the research subjects or between the researcher and the subject. This characteristic of interaction implies that interpretivist research seeks to study the

subjective meaning as opposed to objective meaning to social action. By adopting this inductive approach, the research process takes into account the interdependence of the researcher and subject (Easterby-Smith et al. 1996). This assertion of Easterby-Smith et al. (ibid) means however that the researcher is unable to remain detached or to be removed from the research as positivism advocates, but instead the researcher investigates the subject in a subjective paradigm, which is reflective of this study.

4.2.2 Research approaches

In deciding which research approach to adopt, writers such as Rogers (2011) and Guba (1990), contend that researchers need to select a single approach. While there are distinct differences between the approaches, which writers such as Sale, Lohfeld and Brazil (2002, p.43), contend make qualitative and quantitative incompatible, as 'the two paradigms do not study the same phenomena, therefore qualitative and quantitative methods cannot be combined.' Other authors such as May (2011), Bryman (2006, 2012), Cresswell (2013), Robson (2011) contend that each approach does not operate in isolation, and the perceived differences appear to breakdown under scrutiny (Bryman, 1988, 2012; Hemmersley, 1992; Robson, 2011). It should be noted that even though this study adopted an interpretivist paradigm, as the study progressed, certain assumptions as presented above pertaining to positivism and interpretivist paradigms become less applicable. The most significant of these emerged during the first pilot study, and the inclusion of a questionnaire in the participants briefing pack, which will be detailed below in section 4.2.2.2.

In setting out which research approach is most appropriate, Brymer (2012, 2015) suggests there are two research approaches: quantitative and qualitative, which are presented in the next two sections.

4.2.2.1 Quantitative approach

The quantitative approach is closely associated to positivism, with its origins in natural sciences. Quantitative, as a research approach, advocates that there is a single reality of truth, which can only be explained by following fixed laws, and researched by adopting a value-free deductive method to ensure that the results are valid (Brymer, 2012, 2015). This emphasis on quantification and validity requires the researcher to develop a functional relationship that includes interpreting the findings mathematically or statistically in order to

synthesise the results. Through adopting this approach, a quantitative study will often seek to identify patterns that facilitate the prediction or control of future phenomena, which can be checked and repeated in the future based on following the same study and controlling research variables (Guba & Lincoln, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Given these assumption and characteristics, a quantitative approach would not be appropriate for this real-world study, as the central tenet of this research is to conceptualise a manager's subjective perceptions and attitudes to his/her career through a generational lens, investigating the differences and similarities as to the career styles, progression and what career success means to the three generational groupings.

4.2.2.2 Qualitative approach

While a quantitative approach tends to be closely associated with positivism; a qualitative approach is closely linked to an interpretivist paradigm, as the characteristics are naturally aligned. The qualitative approach assumes that the social world is a human construct and that reality can only be understood from the participant perspective of social interaction (Brymer, 2012, 2015). This approach is centred on developing theory inductively, taking into account the dynamic nature of the subject or phenomenon being studied, as opposed to static analysis of situational variables. A qualitative approach enables the researcher to determine the participant's perception to gain meaning and an insight and understanding as how and why a phenomenon exists. In other words, this approach enabled the respondent to put into their words the meaning and perceptions of their social reality, thereby generating a richness in the data (Brymer, 2012, 2015). In seeking a deeper understanding, a qualitative approach tends to study smaller number of participants, and therefore does not aim to establish generalised patterns. The approach also enabled the discovery of what may account for certain kinds of perceptions, attitudes or behaviours, thereby developing a unique insight into the complexities associated with human behaviour.

This is encapsulated in Bell et al.'s (1993) argument that a qualitative methodology enables the researcher to gain a deeper insightful understanding relating to an individual's perceptions, assumptions and presupposition to a career.

This study concurs with this notion, as the central tenet of this research is to conceptualise a manager's personal definitions of his/her career through a generational lens, investigating the

differences and similarities, which may exist among the three generational groupings, the intended strategy was to use an interpretative methodological approach using a qualitative paradigm as the means of enquiry, but changed during the first pilot study to include an questionnaire in the participants briefing pack. This inclusion of a questionnaire and the request for the participant's Curriculum Vitae enabled the findings to be analysed, as set out in section 4.7.1 & 4.7.3 below. The next section specifically sets out the philosophical position of this study.

4.3.1 Ontology and Epistemology

Ontology is a branch of philosophy that is concerned with the nature of what exists (Crotty, 1998, p. 8). Ontology is concerned with 'how you choose to define what is real,' and epistemology is centred on 'how you form knowledge and establish criteria for evaluating it' (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2006, p. 12). Theories surrounding ontological stances relating to the nature of social reality are frequently reduced into two opposing categories - positivist or anti-positivist and the objectivist versus the subjectivist. Unlike positivists, who contend that knowledge lies in objective measurement and classification of an independent external reality, this study is diametrically opposite, and subjective. Being subjective, the study's ontological position takes the view that 'something exists only when you experience it and give it meaning' (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2006, p. 12). In this study, there was a specific focus on wanting to determine whether generational differences exist in an individual's career types, progression and perception of career success, therefore the researcher ensured that the participant's meaning was not ignored, and that an almost static social world separate from the individual's social world was not created.

Epistemology is the theory of how individuals come to have knowledge of the world around them and includes what a person knows (Silverman, 2013 and Blaikie, 2007). Epistemology provides a philosophical grounding for deciding and establishing what kinds of knowledge exists, what is known, and the criteria for deciding how knowledge can be judged as being both adequate and legitimate (e.g. Crotty, 1998, p. 8). Crotty (1998, p. 8-9) elaborates by stating that epistemology 'is the theory of knowledge embedded in the theoretical perspective and thereby in the knowledge'. From this quotation it is possible to surmise that the epistemological position describes the way a researcher perceives his / her world. Being interpretivist, the epistemological approach of this study proposes that knowledge can only be created and understood from the point of view of the individual who experiences the

phenomenon under investigation. The rationale for this epistemological position is based on the addressing the central aim of the research seeking an understanding, as opposed to a causal explanation as to how to interpret the participant's perceptions of their career, addressing the fifth and sixth research question. It should be noted that although this study is interpretivist, as the research progressed, certain assumptions of what an interpretive study should include became less appropriate. Part of this change occurred with the incorporation of a questionnaire in the participant's briefing pack, which informed the main study, of the participant's career style and progression to address the fifth research question. The briefing pack, enabled the perceived career type and progression in conjunction with the participant's CV to be analysed prior to the interviews.

4.4 Research design

Designing the research involves choosing a method and then deciding on an operational framework suitable for conducting the research. In light of the inherent inconsistencies in the interrelationship between the generational groupings of individuals and other determinants such as gender and occupation, it was necessary to factor these inconsistencies into the investigation. Informed by the literature review and the conceptual framework, the research design chosen for this study followed that of Verbruggen et al. (2008) and Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) and facilitated investigation of an individual's career path and how success is perceived. This included exploring and contextualising the individual's life-stage and perception of career success framed within the participant's generational grouping.

Verbruggen et al.'s (2008) and Verbruggen's (2012) career categorisation framework was based on studying the psychological mobility of a career using the *boundaryless* and *protean* careers. Their method focused on the boundaryless mind-set and organisational mobility preference of career success whether objective or subjective. In Verbruggen et al.'s (ibid), study a Likert-scale questionnaire-based survey was used before a face-to-face interviews was conducted to determine the effect of psychological mobility on career success through physical mobility. In developing the quantitative method, their study identified a series of control variables specific to a career, namely, age, gender, level of education, contract type and size of organisation. These determinants were also used initially to inform this study concerning potential influential characteristics other than an individual's generational attributes.

In presenting and the contextualising their findings, Verbruggen et al. (ibid) created a series of headings to categorise an individual's career, that is, *bounded*, *staying*, *homeless*, *trapped*, *released* and *boundaryless*, which were drawn from studies into organisational and individual career theory (Sturges et al. 2005, 2002; Judge et al. 1995; Hiltrop, 1995). Verbruggen et al. (2008) argue that categories broaden the original 'traditional' versus 'new' or 'boundaryless' constructs of Arthur and Rousseau (1996). These categories provided the framework for the current study to map the career type of the individual managers and ascertain whether their career progression had followed a traditional or *protean / boundaryless* model. To determine the career types in this study, a documentary analysis approach was used prior to the interviews being conducted, to map the participant's career to date from their Curricula Vitae.

Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005) Kaleidoscope Career model builds on the boundaryless career construct, but is focused on determining whether gender differences affect a career by specifically foregrounding gender. Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) created the Kaleidoscope Career model as a metaphor to illustrate a career's changing nature due to internal and external demands such as family commitments, which influence the individual.

Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) study used a multiple, mixed research three stage approach, commencing with conducting an online survey to 100 high achieving women, focusing on the participants' key career transitions. The next stage, a more detailed online survey of professional men and women, focused on career motivations, and transitions between the genders. The final element of the method was conducting a series of online 'conversations' with professional men and women. In this study, a series of semi-structured interviews were conducted with the 42 participants across the five main employment sectors, as set below in section 4.5.2 and Appendix 3 and 10.

4.4.1 Research method

In choosing a method for this research, the concern was to find a way to explore, reveal, examine, and understand the meaning of career progression and success for individuals, specifically through a generational lens. This included generating sufficiently rich data concerning what managers see as their motivational drivers, and how they recognise and account for motivational changes that may have occurred over their career span. As there was a need to generate rich data, thus exploring individuals' perceptions and insights, face-to-face interviews were chosen as the best means of doing so, compared with, for example, using

some form of questionnaire (Bartholomew, Henderson & Marcia, 2000; Crano et al. 2005). Semi-structured interviews provided a degree of flexibility and a framework within which participants could respond to various issues related to career progression and allow new concepts to emerge that may not have been directly addressed within the interview protocol. Semi-structured interviews also enabled the researcher to prompt participants to elaborate on and explain areas of particular interest and relevance as they emerged. This is particularly important when collecting data, since outcomes depend on individuals' recall and interpretation (Kvale, 1983; Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995).

Once the methodology had been decided on, two pilot studies were undertaken prior to the main study. From the outset during the literature review, a number of significant themes had emerged. It was decided to conduct a first pilot study using semi-structured interviews to explore these themes, and also to add a degree of flexibility to investigate any topics that might emerge. The central themes were:

- Drivers for positive and negative career progression
- Influences on career styles, progression and success
- Opportunities for career progression
- Attitudes to career styles, progression and success
- Subjective and objective motivation for career styles, progression and success
- Current and future career direction.

Related themes that emerged from the pilot studies were the influence of
- Gender
- Profession / occupation
- Life-stage
- Generational group.

In the second pilot, the study was conducted to verify the changes made to the original research protocol, which will be discussed below in section 4.7.1.1.

4.5 Selection and Profile of the Sample

From the outset in determining the sample's profile and reflecting the central purpose of the study, equal numbers of participants were drawn from the three generations (Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y). Consideration was also given to ensure that the sample reflected the composition of the UK employment sector. Drawing upon the latest Labour Force Survey LFS data from the Office for National Statistics ONS (2013), it was found that the gender composition of the UK workforce comprised of 51% men and 49% women. The ONS workforce data was then analysed to determine the main sectors of employment. From the Labour Force Survey LFS, Office for National Statistics ONS (2013), data, five key sectors were identified: manufacturing, (representing 13% of total employment of all sectors), hotel and restaurants (representing 23% of total employment of all sectors); transportation and communication (representing 9% of total employment of all sectors); banking, finance, insurance (representing 19% of total employment of all sectors), and finally public administration, education and health sectors (representing 24% of total employment of all sectors). All participants interviewed in both pilots and the main study held some form of management role and responsibilities. The criteria for selecting the managers was based on Gattiker and Larwood's (1988) and Drucker's (2008) definition that a manager is an individual responsible for controlling or administering an organisation or a group of staff in an organisation. The final composition of the pilot studies are discussed in section 4.5.1, and the main study in 4.5.2 below.

4.5.1 The pilot study profile

The purpose of the first pilot study was to determine whether the themes emerging from the literature review were well-founded. This pilot study involved three participants, two males and one female, representing the three separate generational groupings (Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y). The criteria for the participants for first pilot were based on immediate access, therefore were drawn from colleagues or immediate acquaintances, but one participant from each generational grouping. These participants were drawn from personal contacts; a colleague working in IT, a graduate student working in finance and a nurse acquaintance. The participants were contacted directly and a time and location for the interviews arranged. The profiles of the participants in the first pilot are shown in Appendix 3.

As the first pilot study progressed, it was decided that due to the emergence of professional / sector influence, as discussed in section 4.7.1, it was necessary to interview five new participants, who would represent the five main employment sectors. Based on the identification of this potential important detriment of profession and sector on an individual's career and the need for a sectorial representation in the purpose of a second pilot study was organised to test the revised typology process. Drawing upon a new pool of participants, the sample profile of the second pilot was drawn from the five employment sectors, together with a cross-section of all three generations (Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y) and finally proportional number of male and female managers (see Appendix 3). These participants were drawn from a pool of the researcher's acquaintances, and also became the key gatekeepers for the main study.

4.5.2 The main study profile
The main study consisted of interviews with a sample of 42 British managers; a micro-representation of the UK's working population employment profile, which is reflective of Robson's (2011) assertion that real world research based on relatively small-scale study is reliable. The sample composition and size were based on the desire to obtain the richest data possible (Lofland & Lofland, 1984; Creswell, 2012). The rationale for having a representative sample was also to provide some form of view of the UK's working population profile and an understanding of relevant influences related to an individual's career and its success. In this regard, gender has a key influence; consequently, consideration was given to ensure that gender did not become the dominant theme when viewing the data through a generational lens. The sample also reflected the UK's full-time working population. The sample size took into account the limited time and resources available, given that the interviews had to be transcribed in full, and then coded (King, 1994, 2004; King et al. 2004).

The selection criteria for choosing the participants were kept as simple as possible. This was particularly important for the main study, since the participants included a pre-determined number of managers who represented both the employment profile of the UK and the three generations. The grouping was based on the identification of five key sectors − manufacturing, hotel and restaurant, transportation and communication, banking finance and insurance, and public administration comprising education and welfare. These five sectors

represented 88.78% of those employed in the UK (Labour Force Survey LFS, April-June 2013, Office for National Statistics ONS, 2013), as follows:

1. Manufacturing (13% of total employment of all sectors)

2. Hotel and restaurants (23% of total employment of all sectors)

3. Transportation and communication (9% of total employment of all sectors)

4. Banking, finance and insurance (19% of total employment of all sectors)

5. Public administration, education and health (24% of total employment of all sectors).

The final sample size was derived from calculating the employment ratio for each sector as set out above, ensuring that each sector had an equal number of male and female managers. The rationale behind having an equal number of male and female participants was to ensure that gender was equally represented, reflecting the UK's employment profile at the time of the research. The UK's gender composition in the second quarter of 2013 comprised 51% men and 49% women (ONS, 2013). The final sample is shown in Appendix 3 and 10.

4.6   Accessing the sample

Since the sample was a cross-section of five sectors of employment, access was a concern. Access was achieved through using personal contacts and referrals, a process more commonly referred to as the *snowball* technique. The social network, or snowball sampling technique involves the researcher accessing potential participants through contact information provided by another participant. This process is, by necessity, repetitive: each participant acts as a gatekeeper referring other potential participant(s). The researcher contacts the referred participant, and may then receive another referral from that participant, and so the process continues, creating the 'snowball' effect. This metaphor encapsulates the accumulative, diachronic, dynamic approach of this sampling procedure; data is gained in an evolutionary way until the research aim is met, or no further data is required. In the case of this study, the process ended when the prescribed sample quota was met.

As a sampling technique, snowballing is now generally accepted as a valid qualitative approach (Noy, 2008), and enabled the researcher to access a suitably rich pool of respondents in unrelated sectors of employment, who would otherwise have been unavailable

for this study. The approach is supported by Polkinghorne (2005), who suggests that the snowball method provides a valid strategy to increase the pool of possible respondents in fields unfamiliar to the researcher, which was the case in this study. Furthermore, Kuper et al. (2008), contend that using multiple sampling methods for qualitative research can broaden understanding. When employed in the study of social systems and networks, as was the case in this study, this sampling method can also deliver a unique type of knowledge.

Finally, the snowball approach used chosen social networks to access respondents from different backgrounds, genders and generational groupings. The initial list of possible candidates was derived from the following access points:

- Friends, parents of children's classmates
- Previous colleagues
- Fellow students
- Business executives known through work
- Financial advisors
- People known through hobbies, clubs and associations
- Friends and colleagues, relatives and associates (= snowball method).

These individuals were initially contacted to determine whether they were prepared to be involved in the research. If they were, they were asked whether they had colleagues who were in a managerial position and prepared to participate. If they were unable to assist in the referral process, they were asked whether their background met the criteria. Each referral was initially approached by the contact, but was given an introduction letter explaining the aim of the research and the researcher's contact details (see Appendix 2). The new contact was then requested to contact the researcher directly if prepared to participate. As the process continued consideration was given to ensure that the generational and gender quota for each sector was met. At the end of the process for each sector, specific referral targeting was employed to ensure that the generational / gender candidate criteria were met. As a result, the snowball referral process became more purposeful, although a number of referrals to certain sectors / generations could not be followed up, and the researcher had to return to the original gatekeepers to request a more targeted referral approach.

After a list of possible candidates had been compiled, the final candidates were selected based on their backgrounds, to achieve a cross-sectional sample from the population. This list

enabled the criteria set out in the sample profile (see Appendix 10) to be adhered too. The candidates were screened according to their generation, gender, profession, and company size, and the background, industry and sector of the company to include a diverse range of backgrounds. The criteria did not however impose any further restriction on the participant's personal or professional profile.

The candidate profiles are shown in Appendix 3 Participants' Profile. It should be noted that for the purpose of this study, any organisational grade structure was simplified and a summary of pertinent roles represented. The 'status' column shows the participants' relationship status and whether they had children.

Throughout the analysis of the findings, the names of candidates were changed to ensure anonymity. Once the planning stage was concluded, it was possible to move onto the actual interviews. As the study involved NHS staffs (nurses and doctors) the NHS Research Ethics Committee (REC) was approached. But as the research did not involve patient, clinical or medical investigation, both Gloucestershire Care Services and Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust decided that the study did not need NHS REC approval.

During both pilot studies, a degree of recruiter bias appeared in the choice of participant. When using the snowball strategy, there is unquestionably a close connection to the researcher. Fortunately, analysis of the data and comparison of the findings with existing literature suggested that this had little effect on the research outcomes, and therefore it was decided to proceed with the snowball technique in the main study.

4.7   The Fieldwork

As briefly explained previously, three distinct exercises were undertaken prior to the main study, as shown below in Figure 4.1 below. The first exercise, as set out in Step 1 of Figure 4.1, mapped out the central emergent themes generated from the literature review, which became the conceptual framework and identified the central theme of the research. This exercise was the precursor to the second exercise, namely, the first pilot study. The first pilot study informed the questions to be included in the research interview protocol. The third component, the second pilot study, tested the methodology's suitability and reliability, as set out in Step 2 of Figure 4.1. The second pilot study ensured that the protocol provided adequate scope to the interview questions to enable further probing, and the flexibility to

explore emerging responses and themes. The fieldwork time frame was approximately 18 months: it began in April 2010, with the first pilot study, and finished in October 2011 with the completion of data gathering for the main study. Most of the pilot stage interviews were conducted in February 2011, and interviews for the main study (as set out in Stage Three in Figure 4.1) between April 2011 and September 2011.

All the interviews were conducted at the participants' place of work and there was an option for follow-up interview(s). For the sake of convenience, the follow-up interview(s) were conducted by telephone or email. These follow-up interviews were conducted to clarify a specific theme, such as the importance of the participant's occupation / profession. During the main interview (see Appendix 4), individuals were asked a series of broad questions concerning 'how they perceived their career', 'whether they considered that their generation had influenced their career' and 'what career progression and success meant to them' to encourage them to talk in general terms about their career and their motivation. They were also asked about their perceptions of the careers of other managers within different generational groupings, in order to include views and incidents outside their personal experience before progressing to investigate career success. At certain stages during the interview, the individual's career was mapped to Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005, 2006) Kaleidoscope Career model to ascertain how they perceived career success and to Verbruggen et al.'s (2007) career categorisation framework to determine their current progression and career path.

All the interviews were recorded with the participants' permission, then transcribed and analysed using the qualitative content analysis framework (Miles & Huberman, 1994; King, 1998; Weber, 1990) to assist in identifying key emerging themes. This analysis involved investigating both the content of what was said, for example, 'How long I decide to continue in this role will really depend whether or not I can get promotion again', and indications of the internal processes people went through and the feelings they accessed to describe their career motivation, for example, 'I love what I do and wouldn't want to do anything else right now. But then… one day I'm going to have to find something else that matters as much'.

The research process is illustrated in the Figure 4.1 below.

Literature Review and development of the Conceptual Framework

Questions created based upon the literature review to from the conceptual framework – to reflect the research aim and research questions

Stage one

Participants sent out a briefing pack based on Schein's Career Anchor Inventory, requesting their Curriculum Vitae

Curricula Vitae are reviewed using content analysis, then the participants are interviewed

Determine the coding method for the interviews and rejection of grounded theory for a qualitative content analysis approach as set out in section 4.8.3.1

The emergence of interest, satisfaction, motivation and commitment as key to career progression and success

Rejection of Schein's Career Anchor Inventory, and the inclusion of Verbruggen et al's and Mainiero and Sullivan's criteria to the documentary analysis of the participant's Curriculum Vitae

Second pilot study with 5 participants from 3 generations

Stage two

Participants sent out a briefing pack setting the generational differences, requesting their Curriculum Vitae

Curriculum Vitae are reviewed using content analysis, then the participants are interviewed

Interview the 5 participants' then using a qualitative content analysis approach for coding of the pilot interview data

Use the 5 participants as gatekeepers to access the 42 participants for main study

Stage three

Participants sent out a briefing pack setting the generational differences, requesting their Curriculum Vitae

Interview the participants then coding of the interviews with a qualitative content analysis approach

Figure 4.1: The research process

4.7.1 Stage One: The first pilot study

In an interpretive study, it is often not appropriate or possible to pre-determine detailed questions for the research protocol from the existing literature, although it is sometimes possible to identify general areas of focus, for example, the life-stage of a person's career. Reflecting the lack of research into career success and progression through a generational lens, the decision was taken to use a series of open-ended questions to investigate any emergent themes derived from the literature review. The emergent themes included:

- Career progression has shifted from being organisation centric to being individualistic.
- Career success has shifted from being objective to being more subjective.
- Individuals are seeking a work-life balance.
- Individuals' attitudes and expectations have changed from needing to be bound to an organisation and job-security, to being more *boundaryless*.
- The influence of determinants that inform an individual's career style, for example interest, motivation, commitment and satisfaction.

As illustrated in Figure 4.1 above, the first pilot study provided a rich insight into emerging themes from a generational perspective, and an opportunity to test the entire interview process. During the first pilot, the usage of Schein's Career Anchor Inventory proved to be too complicated for the participants to complete. The first pilot study also provided a means of refining the interview and ultimately the decision to use of Miles and Huberman (1994) qualitative content analysis approach to assist in coding the findings. The decision to code the interviews using a qualitative content analysis was based on how the data was generated. The initial data generated could also be organised hierarchically. As the data coding process progressed broad themes could be successively reviewed and narrowed as new theme emerged. The rationale and approach is discussed in section 4.7.3.1 below.

One significant decision to emerge from the first pilot study was to not use Schein's Career Anchor Inventory as a part of the pre-interview requirement. This was based on the feedback from the Schein Career Anchor questionnaire that was originally sent out in a brief pack with the accompanying cover letter. One participant commented that the Schein Career Anchor test was too time consuming and confusing in places. Although the confusion was resolved, the results generated did not provide any significant insight into the participant's career. The

only real contribution made by the Career Anchor Inventory was that it encouraged participants to think about aspects of their careers prior to the interview. Since this aspect seemed beneficial, it was decided to replace Schein's inventory questions in the pre-interview questionnaire with a request for the participant to complete the following activities.

- Please think about the main career decisions you have made which have exerted the most impact on your overall career progression, and your motivation for making these decisions.

- Consider whether you feel you have any underlying career/vocational identity or driver which has influenced your career choices and decisions over the length of your career.

The wording of this request was tested with the first pilot study participants to ensure that the pre-interview questionnaires could potentially generate the same level of reflection on careers. This approach worked successfully in the second pilot (as set out in Figure 4.1, Step 2) and the main study (as set out in Figure 4.2, Step 3): participants came to the interview having clearly given some prior thought to the above themes.

4.7.1.1 Outcome of the first Pilot study and Development of the Research Protocol
Having devised the interview questions from the first pilot exercise outlined above, the next step was to compile a full interview protocol (see Appendix 4). The interview protocol was a detailed summary of the steps to be followed in conducting the interviews. It was developed by listing all the information that would need to be gathered through the interview process, then compiled into a detailed and extensive checklist of each step involved − from the initial contact in the identified sector of employment to conducting the interviews. This schedule and accompanying notes formed the basis of the researcher's on-going journal for the duration of the research interviews. The process included noting down thoughts, reflections, and particular observations about the process as it was enacted. The journal initially provided a reference and memory prompt thereby acting as an aide-mémoire, but then changed during the coding process to be the basis of reflection and the reference point for documenting themes, including those that needed to be reviewed or needed to be investigated in greater depth by re-interviewing the participant.

The following format was followed for both the pilot and main studies.

1.   **Initial submission of the participant's career summary.** Potential research participants were asked, in advance via a standard letter or via email in the form of briefing pack to complete answers to a series of questions and requested to provide a copy of their current Curriculum Vitae. Through using a documentary analysis approach, the participant's Curriculum Vitae could be investigated in a relatively un-obstructive, non-reactive and unbiased manner, as the information was analysed prior to the main study, and the Curriculum Vitae were created in the majority of cases, for another purpose. Given the complex nature of studying in the real world as set out by Robson (2011), the process facilitated the researcher to become immersed in the data through extensively initially interpreting and then analysis the meaning, thereby enabling new themes or sub-themes to be identified. While the reading and digestion process was lengthy, this approach also assisted in the mapping of the individual manager's career to date, before determining each manager's career style according to Verbruggen et al. (2008) career categorisation.

2. **Interview warm up**. Consideration was given to the fact that most research interviews are generally conducted between two strangers, set within a constrained period of time, and can include divulging a great deal of personal and possibly sensitive information. To address this, the first section of the interview covered the research's aim and the empirically research questions, reassured participants of confidentiality/anonymity, requested permission to record the interview, and gave assurance that they would be provided with a summary of the overall research outcomes at an appropriate future date.

3. **Use of Timelines.** The timeline is a simple technique that allows participants to tell their own stories in their own way within an imposed structure concerning those things that are important to them (Mason, 1994). If individuals have a context in which to recollect feelings, beliefs and experiences that allow events to unfold, it allows for a variety of perceptual dimensions (Gerson & Horowitz, 1992). Within this study, individuals were asked in the early stages of the interview process to describe and map out their career to date. This mapping process included indicating the main career decisions they had made by drawing or annotating them on the timeline. The aim was to provide a vehicle through which the participant could indicate how and why they made certain career decisions, and to identify the decisions that had informed their career progression. Participants were also asked in

advance to use the time-line to think about likely future developments relating to their working life, and what the concept of career progression and success meant to them and how it may have changed over time. Completed time-lines were referenced and became a part of the theme coding process.

4.7.2 Stage Two: The Second Pilot study

A second pilot study (as set in Step 2 in Figure 4.1), was undertaken in advance of the main study to identify any problems or difficulties inherent in the first pilot research protocol, to check that the questions and the language used was appropriate for the intended participants, to test whether the time allowed was sufficient for the proposed procedure, and to assess the overall suitability of the entire procedure to generate subjective information and rich description and avoid unwanted repetition by the interviewer.

When planning the first pilot study, for convenience individuals in three sectors were sought through personal contacts, and there was thus no need for any referral. This meant that although the participants came from different organisations, the study could provide insight into the influence of organisation, sector and profession on a career.

Data collection for the pilot projects were undertaken in five stages, which were then followed in the main study.

Stage 1- initially approached identified contacts independently requesting whether they were prepared to participate in the second pilot/ main study.

Stage 2 - emailed those who responded to confirm their agreement to participate and then provided a series of questions relating to their backgrounds and careers sent out in a briefing pack.

Stage 3 - once the participant agreed to participate and the background information had been received, arrangements were made to meet and the participant was informed what to expect in the interview.

Stage 4 – conducting the face-to-face interview with the participants in their place of work or another convenient location.

Stage 5 - at the end of each interview the participants were asked for feedback about the interview process.

Stage 6 - In both the first and second pilot and main studies consideration was given to the participants' non-responsiveness. Where a question was unanswered, the researcher determined whether the question needed to be reworded due to misunderstanding. If the non-responsiveness was associated with the theme, the interviewee was reminded of their right to end the interview or to continue the process, but to focus on another theme.

4.7.2.1 Outcome of the Pilot Studies

The findings of the study were analysed from two perspectives - the extent to which the research strategy and interview protocol were reliable, and the outcome in terms of the meeting the aim of the research. The results from the first and second pilot studies were designed to ensure that the main study's research protocol was effective. The outcomes from both pilot studies and how they informed the research protocol are set out in Table 4.1 below. Table 4.1 summarises whether the questionnaire used was easy to understand, and if the exclusion of the Schein's Career Anchor Inventory in the second pilot was reliable. The power relationship between the participant and the researcher, discussed in section 4.8, was tested; in particular, the language used and whether Verbruggen et al.'s career categories enabled the participants to describe their careers in their own terms. Finally, Table 4.1 sets out whether the pilot studies generated sufficiently rich data.

The outcome of testing the research protocol	Outcome
Identify any problems or difficulties inherent in the research protocol	The participants found the questionnaire easy and straightforward. This confirmed the removal of Schein's Career Anchor Inventory. The participants completed all questions, and did so within the estimated time. All participated enthusiastically in the interviews and understood and responded appropriately to all questions.
Test that the questions and the language used were appropriate for the intended participants	The participants reported that they had enjoyed the interview and found it interesting. Some commented that they thought 'the questions were very good' and that the researcher was 'easy to talk to'.
Test whether the time allowed was sufficient for the proposed procedure.	The time allocated for interviews had been accurately estimated.

The outcome of testing the research protocol	Outcome
Assess the suitability of the procedure to generate information and rich description, and to avoid repetition.	The participants found the Verbruggen et al. career categories intriguing. The use of timelines as a means of recounting career experiences worked well, enabling participants to describe their careers in their own terms. Using the time-line at the outset of the interview enabled participants to relax and become increasingly comfortable and forthcoming as they spoke. Overall, the interviews generated rich data based on deep thought and reflection.

Table 4.1: The outcomes of testing the research protocol

As can be seen from Table 4.1 above, only a few changes were required to the main interview protocol. As explained earlier, the pilot study confirmed that the removal of Schein's Career Anchors Inventory as a research tool was reliable. The only specific feedback from the first pilot study was from the Baby Boomer interviewee, who said that to ensure easier access to future participants; it should be made clear that the researcher is a mature student, so allaying any participant concerns about discussing their careers with a younger researcher. All interviewees emphasised that the theme of generational differences had been a key factor in their agreeing to participate.

4.7.2.2 Emerging themes from the Pilot Studies

Furthermore, both pilot studies generated a number of new topic areas, which informed the final interview questions. These themes included generational differences and attitudes to career progression and success, and the influence of other drivers including the desire of wanting a work-life balance, the role of occupation/ profession, gender and age, and finally the emergence of associated themes related to interest, satisfaction, motivation and commitment associated with a career. The themes are presented below:

Theme 1: Perceptions of generational differences in relation to career progression and success. This theme related to individuals' perceptions of the meaning of success and how their career had progressed. An associated theme was how work commitment and leisure / recreational time were balanced, and whether this balance has changed at different life-stages. This included the importance of the boundaries between 'work - life balance' and the different reasons participants pursued some form of work-life balance in their career and in their personal lives. Other important factors that influenced career were profession and gender related. Another common theme that emerged was the unpredictability of career success and progression. Chapter Six and Chapter Seven of the main study addresses this theme.

Theme 2: Drivers of career progression and success. This theme related to what motivates people in terms of career choices and decisions. These drivers include money, self-fulfilment, hierarchical promotion, work/life balance, status, interest, commitment, satisfaction, development (self and others), loyalty, job satisfaction, and leaving one's mark. Chapter Six and Chapter Seven of the main study address this theme.

Theme 3: Influences on career progression and success. This theme related to those external and internal determinants that had exerted an influence on the generation's career choices, decisions, commitment and motivation. Sub-themes to emerge included spouse / partner and family, boss/employer/peers, financial considerations, status, increased responsibility/stress, skills and development opportunities, role models and health. Chapter Six and Chapter Seven of the study address this theme. The role that profession or occupation could have on a person's career progression, and the work values held by an individual and, particularly, how strongly they influence the attainment of personal goals, were other emergent themes.

Theme 4: Attitudes to career progression and success. This theme comprised two sub-themes, the generational attitudes to their own careers, and the attitudes they held towards other managers (e.g. interest, satisfaction, motivation and commitment), particularly in relation to generation, age and gender. Chapter Six and Chapter Seven of the study address this theme.

Theme 5: Attitudes to the organisation and organisational security. This theme related to how the different generations rated individuals' needs compared with those of the

organisation or profession. This included their perceived obligation and commitment to the organisation or profession, the organisation or profession's obligation to them, and whether they would be prepared to leave a job without one to go to. Sub-themes included the participants' attitudes to the organisation as a place of work and how current level of job satisfaction compared with that experienced previously. Chapter Six in the study addresses this theme.

Theme 6: Perceptions of career progression and success in relation to their future. This theme related to how attached the generational groupings were to their careers, and their perceptions concerning future career development in the area of interest, satisfaction, motivation and commitment. This theme reflected the participants' views about their careers and whether they felt a career is a part of, or a separate aspect of their lives. Chapter Six of the study addresses this theme.

Theme 7: Occupation / profession and career progression and success. This theme was closely linked to theme 6, and reflected how dedicated the different generational groupings were to their occupations while attempting to attain occupational and professional aspirations and commitment. It reflected the participants' views about their careers and the extent to which a career was a part of, or a separate aspect of their lives. Chapter Six of the study addresses this theme.

Theme 8: Comparing intrinsic and extrinsic career elements. Although closely related to theme 1, this theme drew from Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005, 2006) Kaleidoscope Career model that focused specifically on elements relating to how the participants ranked their careers in terms of 'authenticity'- defined as being true to oneself and aligned personal values and behaviours − in terms of 'balance' – defined as effort to achieve equilibrium between work and non-work aspects of the respondent's life - and in terms of 'challenge' – defined as being engaged in activities that permit the individual to demonstrate responsibility, control and autonomy, while learning and growing.

Themes 1 to 6 above emerged from the literature review; the seventh and eighth emerged from the pilot studies. The seventh theme related to the extent that a profession / occupation influenced a manager's career choices, and the eighth to how the generations, irrespective of gender, perceive work-life and their career balance.

All the above themes were used to design appropriate questions for the final research protocol. This process involved grouping and analysing respondents' statements in relation to their topic focus (e.g. promotion, identity, relationships) from which a list of questions was devised. This list was refined and reduced to produce several key questions that could be investigated during the main study. This stage also involved revisiting key areas of literature.

4.7.3 Analysis and coding the interview data

Each of the interviews were recorded, transcribed and analysed and then coded manually. The approach taken by this study to analysis and code was centred on a key dilemma associated with conducting qualitative research using semi-structured interviews and then coding substantial amounts of textual material, before analysing and interpreting the large quantities of rich data. Reflecting this, this study drew on the recent developments in business and management research as to the emergence of various methods to organise and analyse textual data, and drew on a content analysis framework. The adoption of this data analysis and coding method is supported by Braun and Clarke (2006), Clarke (2005) and King (2004), who emphasise that content analysis is not wedded to any specific methodology, but allows the researcher more flexibility to code data compared with other frameworks such as grounded theory. In explaining this, King (ibid, p. 439) states that content analysis provides a flexibility of the coding structure, enabling the use of priori themes, and use of the initial structure to organise emerging themes. Through adopting a qualitative content analysis approach in this study, the method provided a flexible means for analysing the text data (Cavanagh, 1997). Furthermore, this approach enabled this study to data generated from the interviews to go beyond merely counting the number of words or the occurrences to classify large amounts of text in an efficient number of categories that represent similar meanings. Supporting this, Downe-Wamboldt (1992, p. 314), contends that the approach 'provide[s] knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under study,' thereby providing content or contextual meaning to the transcripts.

4.7.3.1 Coding the data

Various coding approaches were considered, including grounded theory. Grounded theory is the systematic generation of theory from data that requires both inductive and deductive thinking. According to Glaser and Strauss (1967), when applying this methodology the researcher does not formulate the hypotheses in advance, since preconceived hypotheses result in a theory that is ungrounded in relation to the data. If the researcher's goal is already

known, then Glaser and Strauss (ibid) contend that another approach should be chosen, since grounded theory is not a descriptive method. Consequently, grounded theory in its original construct was seen as being unsuitable for this study, as the basis of this study derived from reading and questioning Gursoy, Maier and Chi's article (2008) *Generational differences: An examination of work values and generational gaps in the hospitality workforce*.

As a process, grounded theory sets out a series of prescribed steps that need to be specifically followed, including the fact that the process commences with the researcher not referring to any literature (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 2008). Grounded theory's emphasis is on deriving meaning from the subject or setting being studied. While presenting and analysing data similarly, a qualitative content analysis offers greater flexibility through the use of a framework that essentially categorises or codes the data into themes, while enabling the characteristics of the language used by the participants in the transcripts to emerge.

With the qualitative content analysis coding and categorisation of the data enables the data to be systematically classified and put into a hierarchical order, which assists the analytical process. As the data collection proceeds, the approach is subjected to constant revision. In this study, the revision process included analysing the interview transcripts and drawing on the observational notes from the journal, which resulted in changes to the theme's position and level in the hierarchy. As the process progressed, consideration was also given to the possibly of introducing new codes or altering, or changing the level of existing codes in the framework.

Although the qualitative content analysis has a number of benefits, there are also associated weaknesses; the main one is the acceleration of the process that can potentially lead to material that is related, or provides a way of representing the data being overlooked. The current study recognised these potential limitations; therefore, the coding process was frequently revisited until the key themes and relationships had been established.

4.7.3.2 Manual coding of the data

NVivo was considered to code and analyse the data. During the early stages of coding and analysing the main study's data, an attempt was made to use this specialised qualitative software. However, NVivo was abandoned for a number of reasons. First, to effectively use the software requires several months of dedicated practice, which was impractical due to time

constraints. Second, the first and second pilot studies and part of the main study data had been coded and analysed manually and third, manual coding provides an opportunity to personally explore the interview data rather than through a software programme.

4.7.3.3 Coding the First and Second Pilot Studies

The coding structure for the pilot studies, which informed the main study, is set out in Appendix 5 and Appendix 6. The initial structure was based on the five themes of career success and progression, which emerged from the pilot studies, that is, perceptions, drivers, influences, attitudes and feelings, which included interest, motivation, satisfaction and commitment as set out in section 4.7.2.2. Sub-categories of these themes were identified by analysing interview transcripts, highlighting major themes and then going through them again line-by-line and allocating a theme to each statement. During the coding process themes were initially grouped under the above five categories, plus a category labelled 'other'. Each category was then revisited to identify sub-themes which emerged from individual statements or themes which linked strongly with others. This led to the creation of two additional coding categories during the second pilot, being 'Change' and 'Future'. A final review of the overall structure and interrelationship of codes and clusters revealed that there was some overlapping between 'Perceptions of career progression' and other categories (such as 'Drivers' or 'life-stage'). Therefore, a few statements which had initially been coded as 'Perceptions' were re-coded into other categories/clusters.

4.7.4   Stage 3: The Main study

Following the same procedure as for the pilot interview (as set out in Step 3 in Figure 4.1), the main study participants were sent a briefing pack containing a questionnaire, which were based on the generational differences depicted in section 2.5 and 2.6 in Chapter Two, and requested the manager to complete and return it with their current Curriculum Vitae. Within a week of receiving the completed questionnaire and Curriculum Vitae, the interview was arranged and conducted, with the Curricula Vitae analysed prior to identify the current career styles of the manager as set out in section 4.7.1.

It quickly became apparent that it was possible to network the required quota of potential candidates rather than use individual referrals. The researcher decided that this was a more effective means of interviewing and gathering the data. However, at the end of the process,

the study's pre-determined sample profiles were checked to ensure that all categories were filled.

All interviews were recorded, and ranged from one hour to just over two hours in length. Through using the documentary analysis approach, some of the participant's Curriculum Vitae, or timelines were not sufficiently detailed to accurately represent their career progression. Consequently, more time was needed to add more detail.

4.7.4.1 Coding the Main Study
As with the first and second pilot studies, the main study was transcribed before being manually, thematically analysed as set out in Figure 4.1 and outlined above in section 4.7.3. The starting point for this analysis was the emerging themes generated from the pilot study, which reflected the original categories of data that emerged from the first pilot, for example, drivers, influences, attitudes and feelings – a structure that appeared logical to underpin on-going analysis (see Appendix 7).

Each interview transcript was analysed to identify specific themes (set out in section 4.7.1). When further themes emerged, either a new code was created in an existing part of the structure, for example, critical incident under 'influences / personal', or a new label was created, for example, 'boundaryless' and 'protean' careers. As the coding progressed, the original framework required numerous additions, regroupings and refinement of themes and a considerable amount of cross-referencing before the final structure was reached. Although this was time-consuming, it was beneficial in providing familiarity with the data. As can be seen in Appendix 5, the initial coding structure for the first pilot study differed from the final coding structure for the main study, as it incorporated new themes that emerged as a result of the second pilot study. The final coding structure included more free nodes to deal with interesting and potentially useful, relevant material that emerged but did not fit into the original coding framework (see Appendix 7).

4.8 Ethical Issues
Undertaking research with human actors always presents the researcher with a number of decisions and dilemmas. The following section sets out and discusses the ethical issues surrounding this study. The research was conducted within the Principles and Procedures

framework of the University of Gloucestershire. This framework was informed by the British Educational Research Association (BERA) and the British Sociological Association (BSA).

Part of the researcher's responsibilities include attempting to ensure that the 'physical, social and psychological well-being of research participants should not be detrimentally affected by the research' (University of Gloucestershire Research Ethics Handbook, 2014) of the participant giving freely informed consent. The researcher is required to inform the participants of the nature and aim(s) of the research, the reasons for undertaking the research and how the results will be presented and disseminated. The participants' anonymity must be guaranteed and they must be assured of the confidentiality of the data they will provide.

The power relationship between the participant and the researcher was also considered (see Table 4.1 above). The power relationship is centred on the shift of balance that occurs during the interview process. The power relationship begins with the researcher, who is in possession of the information about the study, and the participants, who owns the knowledge and experience needed to perform the study. Throughout the interview process their respective powers to negotiate the level of information provided shifts and changes. These changes occur in the power relations between the two, as at times the interview process gives the participant greater power and more information, and vice versa. To avoid this power relation becoming problematic, the researcher needs to show awareness of the developing power relation during the interview. The researcher being aware of these shifts needs to provide open communications that allows for the research and of the method being used to be criticised, even in the course of the interview (Bravo-Moreno, 2003). The participant should be given the right and the opportunity to object to answering questions at any time during the interview process (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2005). Reflecting back on the participant's life experience, consideration should be given to the use of language so that the interviews and the subsequent interpretation of the interview data encapsulate the participant's life experience (Few & Bell-Scott, 2002). Few and Bell-Scott (ibid) further contend that during the interview process, the participant should be reminded, particularly during sensitive or intimate portions of the interview, about the nature of the study, the freedom to answer the question or to stop the interview.

The above principles were adhered to in this study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, after ensuring that they fully understood the nature and purpose of the research,

the part they would play and what exactly they would be required to do. This was achieved by providing them with a written summary of the research purpose and structure and checking that they understood and were in agreement before their participation commenced.

Participant anonymity and confidentiality was maintained throughout the study. Assurances concerning anonymity and confidentiality were given in writing, and repeated verbally prior to the commencement of each interview. Anonymity as discussed in section 4.6 was achieved through the use of fictitious names and the inclusion of minimal personal information ascribed to any particular individual to protect identity. Permission to record and transcribe the interviews was sought on an individual basis. Finally, the recordings were handled with care and stored securely.

From the outset the interviewees were put at ease so they felt they had control over the interview process. This included conducting the research either in their place of work or in a neutral environment. The interviewees retained the right not to answer certain questions, or to stop the interview entirely should they wish. Each participant was reminded of this right at the outset. Participants' comfort was ensured with regard to the interview environment, for example, room temperature was taken into account and a glass of water provided should they require it. Confidentiality was enhanced by requesting an interview room at the participant's place of work, so that privacy was maintained and there were no interruptions.

4.9 The Reliability and Authenticity of the study

Careful consideration was given to the research design's robustness when investigating individual manager's diverse and subjective perceptions of their career, rather than addressing a specific hypothesis. In this regard, Guba and Lincoln's (1994) four criteria were drawn on, namely, creditability, transferability, dependability (or bias) and confirmability. Trustworthiness was a fifth criterion.

4.9.1   Credibility refers to how believable or trustworthy the findings are. For research to have credibility, the researcher must represent the experience of those being interviewed so that they are understandable to the academic reader. This can be achieved through a number of strategies including constant observation, refocusing on those areas that are specifically important to the study, and returning to the narrative so that the participant can check and verify. To assist with creditability, Guba and Lincoln (1994) and Lincoln et al. (2011) advise

researchers to ensure that the sample is authentic. In this study, all participants interviewed were managers from different generational groupings and employment sectors, and comprised of an equal number of males and females. Both the first and second pilot studies confirmed that the themes relating to career progression and success through a generational lens could be explored with a purposive sample. Similarly, the final selection for the main study's participants was drawn to represent the major employment sectors in the UK. The motivation was to provide a degree of authenticity to the study and representation of the current UK employment profile, while attempting to minimise the influence of cultural differences.

Recognising that in generational studies gender has mostly been omitted, although it is a major determinant in career research, the decision was taken to have an equal number of male and female participants; however, this profile was not a true representation of the British employment profile. The rationale was an attempt to minimise gender influence on career, so providing creditability, and instead focusing more specifically on the effects of generation.

The possible accusation that in choosing particular criteria, for example a prescribed number of participants from certain employment sectors or for using a determined number of managers in each of the generational groupings, could be likened to quantitative research, was considered. While acknowledging this potential criticism of using predetermined criteria, this study was used specifically to enrich the participant's narrative with regard to their sector of employment and gender while being viewed specifically through a generational lens.

Finally, Guba and Lincoln (1994) advocate *labelling* to enhance creditability, the researcher should constantly return to specific themes. In this study, a content analysis was used to code the data and an interview guide assisted participants to cover all the themes. Participants were also given the opportunity to check the transcripts, so validating the narrative's authenticity.

4.9.2   Transferability enables future researchers to access the findings and use the approach adopted for later studies. However, according to Baxter and Eyles (1997), transferability is less important to the qualitative researcher than creditability.

4.9.3   Dependability is essential for qualitative research. The study should engender trust in the research and the integrity of the narrative. Dependability also relates to whether the

findings are likely to apply to other times, and similar to creditability, also ensures others are able to access the data for further analysis. In this study, the interviews were recorded, so that at any stage during the analysis, rather than being solely dependent upon notes, the participant's actual words could be drawn upon and listened too. While recording can be intrusive, the process needed to be handled sensitively with the participant's consent being sought, likewise with note-taking. This duality enhanced the 'rich' content of the participant's account, and was returned to a number of times, thereby challenging or confirming the analysis, so enhancing the dependability of the study.

4.9.4   Confirmability is the degree to which the findings are determined by the participants and not influenced by researcher bias. Researchers therefore need to give account of how their interests and motivations have affected their interpretations. Huberman (1995) considers that honesty, authenticity and truthfulness are central to rigorous, qualitative research. Honesty and truthfulness are integral ethical issues (presented above): authenticity, or being genuine or true to oneself is attained through providing sufficient context to convince the reader that the narrative has been presented in a coherent manner. Huberman (ibid) contends that the research should resonate throughout the study so that the reporting process is plausible and valid. In this study, the participants were requested to review the transcribed narrative, which assisted the confirmability of the findings.

4.10   Methodological Limitations

Compared with an empirical approach, an interpretative methodology can create difficulties concerning the authenticity and reliability of research data (see section 4.7). Reliability, the requirement that the research findings are repeatable (Willig, 2013; Gill & Johnson, 2010; Burr, 2003), can only be achieved through the clarity and transparency of the research procedures, since the same outcome would not be achieved should the study be repeated, owing to the different research participants and their different world-views. With regard to the reliability and authenticity of the study, a difficulty encountered could be 'the extent to which an account accurately represents the social phenomena to which it refers' (Hammersley, 1990, p. 57). Hammersley (1990), acknowledges that reliability can be a difficult concept within qualitative research when one considers individuals' own conceptualisations and perceptions, particularly when researching an individual's career within a specific time frame. A key limitation of this study was the fact this the research was conducted by a Generation X male. This can be a potential limitation as the researcher may

not be able to fully understand or appreciate another generation's or female perspective. To overcome this, the data were continually reviewed to contextualise and understanding the participant's perspectives to ensure the reliability of the study.

Credibility and justification of the research depend heavily on identifying and highlighting clear gaps in perceptions between the participant and the researcher. To achieve creditability and to justify how the data is interpreted, the method used needs to pay particular attention to the participants' use of language; this was assisted by the adoption of a documentary analysis approach. This process includes a clear explanation of how the participants' assumptions and reality may differ from those of the researcher. Mindful of this necessity, a log of research developments was kept from the outset of the study, noting progress points, insights, and the details of the procedures undertaken at each stage. Where appropriate, the literature was revisited and advice sought. This included drawing on literature from other disciplines such as psychology, sociology, and developmental psychology, which enabled the data to be considered in a broader context. In addition, alternative views were sought from colleagues and supervisors to ascertain that a sufficiently rigorous approach to a theme had been taken. Consideration was also given to the reliability of the research, so that the methods, materials and settings of the study were reflective of the position of the research. Both Chamberlain (2008) and Schmuckler (2001) recognise that human action is situated and highly contingent on contextual determinants/attributes. Therefore, the research attempted to obtain 'authenticity' of the results by studying the participants in the richness of their 'natural' or working environment.

One of the challenges in qualitative research, particularly when using an interpretivist approach, is that the method produces an extensive amount of rich, interesting data to analyse. Separating out the data into themes can be considerably challenging and reflects an inherent tension − highlighted by Easterby-Smith et al. (2012, p. 129) − between 'creating meanings and counting frequencies'. In this study, this challenge was addressed by creating free coding nodes for interesting categories of material to be categorised. By adopting this approach, data that did not immediately relate to the core coding structure was able to be refined using these free nodes, and then reviewed several times to ensure the focus was maintained while keeping the emergent theme relevant.

A final issue in terms of methodological limitations was related to the relevance of the methodology for every aspect of the research. For example, as the study progressed, gender came to be regarded as a secondary theme. Earlier in the research, particularly throughout the literature review, gender was revealed as a major theme with regard to careers. As discussed in section 4.4, to ensure that gender differences did not influence the central aim of the study, an equal number of males and females were interviewed.

Building on Figure 4.1, Figure 4.2 below, sets out the sequence timeline of the study, which commences with the catalyst of the research of Gursoy, Maier and Chi (2008), into generational differences, through examining the work values and whether generational gaps in the hospitality workforce. From the reading Gursoy et al.'s (ibid) article led to questioning about whether the portrayals of a generation were accurate, which culminated in the development of the fourth research question to answer: research question four: empirically, what support is there that a generational group is a reliable method to group individual managers? This questioning of Gursoy et al. (2008) and related articles also led to further background reading centred on career theory, primarly in relation to career style and progression. The initial focus of the study being the hospitality industry changed after reviewing Smola and Sutton (2002) and Cherrington (1984) publications. Also after reading Dries et al.'s (2008) study based on Schein's (1984) Career Anchor Inventory and Verbruggen, Sels and Forrier (2007), Career Categorisation model, this study developed the fifth research question: empirically, how are individual manager's career types and progression influenced by their generational grouping? To emerge from career success literature was the Kaleidoscope Career model, first used by Mainiero and Sullivan (2005). This model was then incorporated into the sixth research question: empirically, when viewed through the Kaleidoscope Career model, how are individual manager's perceptions of a successful career influenced by their generational group? With the study focused on the studying the United Kingdom's workplace, the first pilot was conducted with three participants, one from each generation, with the inclusion of Schein's Career Anchor Inventory as a means to assist in mapping their career style and progression. The first pilot revealed firstly that the Career Anchor Inventory was time-consuming for the participants to complete. The pilot also informed the study that the use of documentary analysis provided to be an effective means to analyse the participant's Curriculum Vitae, and from the interview transcripts analysed by using content analysis approach to identify the emergent themes of

interest, motivation, satisfaction and commitment in relation to career style and progression. Finally, to emerge from the first pilot was the influence of an individual's sector of employment to their career. This last emergent finding, together with the rejection of using Schein's Career Anchor Inventory replaced by Verbruggen, Sels and Forrier's (2007) Career Categorisation model, required the conducting of a second pilot study, which incorporated the three generations from the five sectors of employment. The second pilot study confirmed that the changes made following the first pilot were reliable. For the main study, the participants from the second pilot were used as the gatekeepers to reach the 42 managers.

Literature
review

Methodology

Main study

Catalyst
Gursoy et al. (2008)

Career progression

Career style

Hospitality focus

Research Q 1

Generational Differences

Zemke et al. (2000), Kupperschmidt (2000)

Career theory

Smola and Sutton (2002,) Dries et al. (2008), Schein (1980)

Research Q 2

Mainiero and Sullivan (2005)

Research Q 3

UK workplace focus

Participant profile

First Pilot Studies

CV – documentary analysis, rejection of Schein's career inventory

The influence of the sector

Use of content analysis to finding the emergence of: interest, satisfaction, motivation, commitment

Second Pilot Studies

New participants

Use of Verbruggen et al. (2008)
Career Categorisation model

Main Study

42 participants

CV documentary analysis

A generation is valid

Research Q 4

Career type and progression

Research Q 5

Career success is through the Kaleidoscope Career model influenced

Research Q 6

Commencement

1st pilot

2nd pilot

Use of content analysis

Main study

Figure 4.2
The methodology sequence
time-line

4.11 Chapter Summary

This Chapter detailed the philosophical position underpinning the study and the research strategy and design. It outlined the processes involved in developing the research protocol, and how the results from a pilot study undertaken to test the effectiveness and reliability of the research design were used to produce the detailed level of subjective information required on topics of relevance. The Curricula Vitae that were requested in advance together the data gained through the participant's briefing pack were analysed through the documentary analysis. Explanations were provided for changes made to the initial research question list, and changes to the research design following the first pilot study. The procedure to record, analyse and code the data was documented and brief details provided of issues identified by Guba and Lincoln (1994), namely, validity, reliability, conformability and flexibility. An explanation of the study's findings follows on Chapters Five, Six and Seven, while Chapter Eight presents the discussion and reflection and finally Chapter Nine the conclusions.

Chapter Five Findings part 1
Are generational groupings reliable?

5.1 Introduction

This Chapter presents the first part of the findings of this qualitative study from the main study. The Chapter's focus is addressing the fourth research question, namely: empirically, what support is there that a generational group is a reliable method to group individual managers?

In establishing the authenticity of a *generation* as an acceptable methodology to group individuals, this study first drew on the literature review to determine if all 'generational groupings' are reliable. From the literature review, individuals when grouped by their Kinship / Family Generation or Historical period, is problematic.

5.2 The reliability of a kinship / family generation

The rejection of a kinship or family generation is based on the work of Greven (1970), Giancola (2006) and Hill (1970). These authors conclude that members of the same generation, due to their birth year, may have more in common with the next or previous generation than their own. This contention is supported by Vinovskis (1977) and Elder (1978), who concur that using genealogical principles to categorise a generation can lead to an overlap in age among the various groupings, therefore making this generational categorisation potentially unreliable.

This category's unreliability was confirmed by a number of interviewees who, in discussing their families, identified how particular individuals differed from each other based on their age grouping:

> "I am closer age-wise to my mother. My father is some 15 years older than mother, and she is definitively from a different 'generation' than him" (Sam, telecommunications, Generation X).

Sam, a senior telecommunication team lead, added that her mother had similar values and attitudes to her, compared to her father:

> "…she is more like me with regards attitudes and world-view [laughter]" (Sam, telecommunications, Generation X).

Nicola, a hotel head receptionist, stated,

> "I look at the age of my brothers and me. My oldest brother is now in his 60s, while I am in my mid-40s. There is definitely a difference generationally between us [laughter]" (Nicola, hotel sector, Generation X).

5.3 The reliability of a historical generation

This study also rejected the use of a historical event to define a generation. Although traditionally associated with historians, using the 'Historical Generation' as a grouping, can lead to a wide range of individuals of differing ages being categorised together. In explaining this limitation, Murray, Toulson and Legg (2011), Costanza, Badger Fraser and Severt (2012), Rhodes and Doering (1993) note that it is difficult to group people this way, since other influences, such as age or life-cycle stage are neglected. Furthermore, as seen during interviews, many of the participants indicated that a particular historical event can be shared by different age groups:

> "9/11 was experienced by whom? Definitely Baby Boomers, Generation X and Ys, but it would not be correct to group me and my aging grouping with those 20 years old or younger as being like me" (David, teaching, Generation X).

> "I expect my grandfather who was 18 at the time [of the First World War] held significant attitudinal differences and values to his fellow sailors…in some cases 20 years older" (Kevin, hotel sector, Baby Boomers).

5.4 The reliability of a generation

In answering the fourth research question − empirically, what support is there that a generational group is a reliable method to group individual managers? − this study concurs with Parry and Urwin (2011) that generation as life-stage and as a group provide reliable methods. There is robust academic evidence in Chapter Two, to support the use of a generational as group. The use of a generation has been effectively used by writers such as Ryder (1965), Jurkiewicz and Brown (1998), Parry and Urwin (2011) in fields such as sociology, demography, gerontology and psychology (Laufer & Bengtson, 1974; Pilcher, 1994). As a research method, a generation can be seen as a means to observe groups of people who "experience the same event within the same time interval" (Ryder, 1965, p. 845). Ryder (ibid) states that by seeing generations as a group implies that they have concrete boundaries corresponding to a set of birth years, are homogeneous enough to be meaningful

and have observable commonalities that are relatively fixed and measurable to study the attitudinal or behavioural attributes (Lyons & Kuron, 2014, p.140). While supporting the perspective of Ryder (ibid) and Lyons and Kuron (ibid) authenticating the use of a generation, Parry and Urwin (2011), highlight the need for generational studies grounded in sociological theory, and to be aware of potential determinants, including the distinction made between a 'generation' and 'age.'

Other researchers (Kowske et al. 2010; Jurkiewicz, 2000) examining generational differences in the workplace have almost exclusively adopted this perspective, focusing on differences among birth grouping (Foster, 2013). The use of a generation can act as means to study a group as a social force, enabling the framing age, period and social effects as complementary, rather than opposing influences; therefore a generation can be seen as multi-dimensional rather than monolithic concept (Lyons & Kuron, 2014, p.140).

As seen with Parry and Urwin (2011), a generation can refer to a succession of people moving through time with the young replacing the old, influenced by major event(s), it is acknowledged that a person's age is a key determinant. This perspective also recognises the influence of generational life-stage where a person's attitudes, values and perceptions change with maturity (Sorokin, 1947). The generation groups people within a delineated population, who experience the same significant event within a given period of time. This was illustrated and acknowledged through the interviews:

"I do look back at my parents and their generation, and my younger colleagues and there are generational differences. There is definitely something in grouping people into this form of categorisation" (Jim, manufacturing, Baby Boomer).

"A generation has some substance. Consider the big movement of the 60s, and the social revolutions; the music that we shared – like the 'hippie era of tune in and drop out', the clothes we wore. Then there was the Thatcher era, and the discourse, the riots and demonstrations, the anger, and the music of that era, like punk – happy days!" (Stuart, teaching, Baby Boomer)

"When I heard about your research, I was immediately interested. I have read extensively around the subject of generations. There are definitely differences between the generations and attitudes to work. I am definitely different from my parents and I am sure different to the younger generations [laughter]" (Susan, finance, Generation X).

"I look back at my life and my attitudes; I have definitely changed, but mainly due to growing up. I do share some values with my generation, but also some that I definitely don't share –like wanting to be a celebrity" (Beth, teaching, Generation Y).

When investigating what constitutes a generation, the interviews explored whether the portrayals of Zemke et al. (2000), Kupperschmidt (2000) and Gursoy et al. (2008) are accurate (refer to Chapter Two). According to Johnson and Johnson (2010), Zemke et al. (2000), Kupperschmidt (2000), Egri and Ralston (2004), Hirsch and Shanley (1996) and Gursoy et al. (2008), a generation shares experiences, which are displayed through holding the same values and perceptions as discussed in Table 2.1 in Chapter Two. Table 5.1 demonstrates using content analysis to determine how each generation in this study perceive the other two groupings (i.e. how the Baby Boomers perceive Generation Y and X and vice versa). Each participant was asked to rate each of the characteristics shown in Table 5.1 as being correct or incorrect. The tick or cross denotes whether the findings support or contradict the above authors' suppositions.

Baby Boomers

Generation X	Ranking	Generation Y	Ranking
Ambitious, without having the necessary skills	Medium ☒	Over-ambitious, without having the necessary skills	High ☑
IT savvy	Medium ☑	IT savvy	Medium ☒
Optimistic	Medium ☒	Optimistic	Low ☒
Confident	Medium ☒	Confident (overly)	High ☑
Achievement–centric	Medium/ low ☑	Achievement–centric	High ☑
Wanting a work-life balance	High ☑	Wanting a work-life balance	Medium ☑
Not hard working	Medium ☑	No dedication to staying in one job	High ☑
Do their own thing, their way	High ☑	Cannot be told what to do	Medium ☒
Spend less time managing their career	High ☑	Spend too much time on the internet, phone or emailing	High ☑

Generation X

Baby Boomers	Ranking	Generation Y	Ranking
Ambitious, without having the necessary skills	Low ☑	Over-ambitious, without having the necessary skills	High ☑
IT savvy	Low ☑	IT savvy	Medium ☒
Optimistic	Low ☒	Optimistic	Low ☒
Confident	Low ☒	Confident (overly)	High ☑
Achievement–centric	High ☑	Achievement–centric	High ☑
Wanting a work-life balance	Low ☑	Wanting a work-life balance	High ☑
Hard working	High ☑	No dedication to staying in one job	High ☑
Do things the organisational way	High ☑	Cannot be told what to do	Medium ☒
Spend time managing their career	High ☑	Spend too much time on the internet, phone or emailing	High ☑

Generation Y

Baby Boomers	Ranking	Generation X	Ranking
Ambitious, without having the necessary skills	Low ☑	Over-ambitious, without having the necessary skills	Medium ☒
IT savvy	Low ☑	IT savvy	Medium ☑
Optimistic	Medium ☒	Optimistic	Low ☑
Confident	Medium ☒	Confident	Medium ☒
Achievement-centric	Medium ☒	Achievement-centric	Medium / Low ☑
Wanting a work-life balance	Low ☑	Wanting a work-life balance	Medium ☒
Hard working	High ☑	Hard working	Medium ☒`
Do things the organisational way	High ☑	Do things the organisational way	Medium ☒
Spend time managing their career	High ☑	Spending time managing their career	Medium ☒

Table 5.1: Perceived comparison of generational characteristics

As seen in Table 5.1 above, the majority of the interviewees recognised certain characteristics presented by Zemke et al. (2000), Kupperschmidt (2000), Egri and Ralston 2004, Hirsch and Shanley 1996 and Gursoy et al. (2008), while others attributes are questionable, for example, with Liz below regarding life-stage, maturity, education and upbringing; as noted by Andrea. Unprompted, the interviewees also indicated other determinants that were equally important to them, if not more significant, compared with certain generational traits.

> "Although I have read about these characteristics, some I can see in me, and my colleagues, but there are some, which are just not right: 'Generation Y are cute'. Come on, just look at my two sons!" (Tom, teaching, Baby Boomer).

"The one thing missing in all this, regardless whether you are a man or women; it is your education and upbringing" (Andrea, nursing, Baby Boomer).

"What about maturity, as I look back throughout my career, and I have definitely changed and adapted, as I have needed to become IT savvy to survive" (Liz, finance, Baby Boomer).

From these findings it is possible to conclude that a generation, while being a creditable means to group individuals, there was an acknowledgement that a generation does not operate in isolation, as seen with Liz's comments. This finding partly contradict Mannheim (1952), but reflect Troll (1970), Schaie (1965) and Twenge et al. (2010b), who posit that irrespective of their generational grouping, no individual living at the same time experiences the same event in the same way. This view is supported by Giancola (2006), Lyons et al. (2015), Lyons and Kuron (2014), Costanza and Finkelstein (2015), who argues that a generation does not operate in isolation or independently. Kertzer (1983) believes that the social class, gender, ethnicity, national culture, and the life-stage of the individual also need to be considered. This point reinforces Sorokin's (1947, p. 192-193) contention that a generation is best understood by looking at how individuals respond at different ages to the same event. The interview data also supports Eisenstadt's (1956) belief that to understand a generation's complexities, life-stage must be factored in, and Kertzer's (1983) contention that life-course position adds to an understanding of the differences and similarities among different groups of people. Finally this study does reject Costanza and Finkelstein (2015) notion that generational differences do not exist, as the concept is based on insufficient empirical evidence, and instead concurs with Riggio and Saggi (2015) and Lyons et al. (2015).

5.5 Chapter Summary

In answering the fourth research question: empirically, what support is there that a generational group is a reliable method to group individual managers?, this study first questions the reliability of using a family / kinship and historical generation. This is based on the fundamental flaw of grouping individuals according to their position in a family and neglecting their birth date. Potentially an individual may have more in common with someone of a previous or next generation than with their family/ kinship generation. This study also questions grouping based on a certain historical event. Instead this study, based on robust academic evidence in Chapter Two, addressed when answering the first research question, supported the use of a generation, and not a cohort, concurring with Parry and

Urwin (2011) that a generation according to birth year is more reliable. The study thus recognises that in the past 20 years there have been a significant number of academic and non-academic publications portraying a generation as sharing a number of characteristics. These include writers such as Ryder (1965), Jurkiewicz and Brown (1998) in fields such as sociology, demography, gerontology and psychology (Laufer & Bengtson, 1974; Pilcher, 1994). Ryder (1965), Lyons and Kuron (ibid) in authenticating the use of a generation due to concrete boundaries based on set of birth years, homogeneous enough to be meaningful and have observable commonalities (Lyons & Kuron, 2014, p.140). Parry and Urwin (2011) also highlighted the need for generational studies grounded in sociological theory, to be aware of potential determinants, including the distinction made between a 'generation' and 'age.'

While accepting the reliability of using this form of grouping, the current research questions the recent portrayal of a generation by authors such as Johnson and Johnson (2010),Strauss and Howe (1991), Zemke et al. (2000), Coupland (1991) and Kupperschmidt (2000) as operating in isolation, unaffected or uninfluenced by factors such as gender, culture or life-stage. In determining the extent to which the generational characteristics proposed by Johnson and Johnson (2010), Strauss and Howe (1991), Zemke et al. (2000), Coupland (1991) and Kupperschmidt (2000) are reliable as set out in Table 2.1 in Chapter Two, this study openly questioned whether other factors that are non-generational are equally reliable, or more credible.

**Chapter Six Findings part 2 -
Generational Perceptions to Career Types and Progression**

6.1   Introduction

Building on the theoretical second research, this Chapter is the second of three detailing the findings of this study. It presents the findings from the main study interviews relating to the study's research question fifth: empirically, how are individual manager's career types and progression influenced by their generational grouping?

The Chapter commences with what constitutes a career, before proceeding to present the participants' perceptions of career identity and the influence of education, social and economic background to their career. Leading on from this, the findings using the documentary analysis of the participant's Curriculum Vitae and Verbruggen et al.'s (2007) career categorisation, presents the career progression and types of the managers.

In line with the epistemological approach of this study being interpretivist, the participants were not provided with definitions of 'career', 'career progression' or 'career success' to use as a framework. Rather the meanings of career progression presented here emerged from the participants' responses to the interview question: "what do 'career', 'career types', 'career progression' and 'career success' means to you at this stage in your working life?"

These responses were then coded based on the coding structure (see Appendix 5 and 6) focusing initially on the organisational and personal influences on career progression. The data analysed included the participant's career path to date from their Curricula Vitae and responses from the interviews. When further analysing the interviews, the study used a generational lens to explore perceptions held on career progression in relation to how current and past career opportunities and obstacles / limitations had impacted on the individual.

6.2. Definitions of Career

> "…a career is a journey of your working life, and not simply
> something that you do" (Alex Generation X male,
> telecommunications).

Alex's definition of his 'journey' encapsulates how many participants viewed a career. The use of a metaphorical journey evokes the richness of the experience and other elements such as facing redundancies, lack of future opportunities or external family commitments can also influence someone's progression.

Traditionally a career was seen as a series of linear progressive steps within one or two organisations (Adamson et al. 1998; Super, 1953; Levinson et al. 1998; Valcour & Ladge, 2008). This view was challenged by several theorists (e.g. Chudzikowski, 2012; Sullivan & Arthur, 2006; Hall, 2002; Sullivan et al. 2009), who noted the emergence of the *boundaryless* career (Arthur, Claman & DeFillippi, 1995; Arthur et al. 2005; Sullivan & Arthur, 2006; Arthur, 2006) and a *protean* career (Hall, 2002; Briscoe & Hall, 2006). Other authors such as Gratton and Ghoshal (2003) and Cappelli (1999) maintain that rapid changes including organisational downsizing due to globalization and technological advances led to the fragmentation and reshaping of the modern career landscape. This created a paradox: careers are no longer bound to a particular employer, yet employees continue to seek greater job security (Clarke & Patrickson, 2008). Sullivan (2010) emphasizes that increased life-span and length of working life, changes to the family structure including the emergence of dual-career couples, and an increase in the number of single parents, has for some participants, increased responsibility for family members. For Sullivan (2010) the increased life-span and length of working life had provided a motivation to seek self-fulfillment beyond the statutory retirement age that has resulted in a revision of the conventional career model. Ramaswami, Dreher, Bretz and Wiethoff (2010) and Tharenou (2005) holds that the contemporary career is more self-directed; the individual is driven by personal desire or preference, rather than the organisation imposing its decisions. The shift away from employees feeling loyal to an organisation resulted in employers no longer being prepared to invest in

extensive training. They now select employees on a short-term basis, based on their individual skills (Arthur et al. 2005; Hall, 2002). Hall (ibid) argues that these changes manifested themselves in the *protean* career denoted by the individual seeking a career that provides a series of experiences, whereas Sullivan and Arthur (2006) and Arthur et al. (ibid) hold that careers have become more boundaryless. Drawing on these changes, the current study investigated whether generational differences influence what constitutes a career.

6.2.1 Generation Y's Perceived Career

Sullivan and Arthur (2006) contend that young members of the workforce have embraced a *boundaryless* career. Since the career is boundaryless, workers move and progress between careers and opportunities at will, seeking new 'experiences' and consequently changing the modern career landscape (Patton & McMahon, 2014; Arthur, Hall & Lawrence, 1989). Behaving in this way rather than seeking career stability contradicts Chen and Choi (2008), Clarke and Patrickson (2008) and Clarke's (2009) contention that employees seek greater job security. In investigating Sullivan and Arthur's (2006) claims, this study first focused on investigating the perceptions of a career. Exploring what Super (1953, 1980) termed the *Exploration* (early) stage of a career, the study revealed that career can be perceived as a 'means to an end', or simply as a 'job', or as a 'vocation'. Perceptions depended on the sector of employment, for example, the majority of nurses viewed a career in nursing as extending beyond the confines of 'just a job' to an intention to remain in the profession.

In this regard, Ruth's comments highlight her perception of the professional aspects of a career as a trainee Ward Sister: "A career is something like nursing. It is not just a job; it is more like a profession which you belong too. It also like reflects me as a person… that is why I undertook doing a degree in adult nursing the first place. My career will hopefully [continue to] be in nursing" (Ruth, nursing, Generation Y). Jane, a deputy Ward Sister, mentioned the vocational aspect of a career: "…engineering, teaching, being a doctor or a lawyer, or like me a nurse – that is a career… almost like a vocation. Something that defines who you are and what you do" (Jane, nursing, Generation Y). This perspective is

supported by those in the teaching profession, such as Beth, a senior teacher and curriculum lead: "I think a career is something that you either enter into like a profession or fall into one. Maybe something that you look back at, towards the end of your working life and say that was my 'career' like me in teaching" (Beth, teaching, Generation Y). This view is linked to the perception of a career as authentic, for example, Ruth stated, "… [nursing] reflects me as a person."

For those in the service sector, a career was seen as 'a means to an end', and as 'a series of experiences'. None of the Generation Y service sector managers spoke about a vocation and openly expressed their intention to leave the current sector of employment in the long-term. Service sector Generation Y managers viewed their careers more as 'butterfly.' McCabe and Savery (2005) and McCabe (2008) maintain that service sector managers tend to have a career that is 'butterfly'; individuals 'flutters in and out' of jobs, which enables them to improve professional expertise and core competencies. Jason's, a sales leader and Emma's, a head hotel receptionist, viewpoints reflect this butterfly / non-committal attitude.

> "For me, a career represents a series of roles or jobs that can be in the same trade, company or profession, or alternatively something that is a mixture of different working experiences. My father's career was in accounting, my oldest brother to date has had a wide and varied career – including plumbing, bricklaying, working in a shop and now working for a financial services company like me. Both of us see a career differently from our father… I am in control of my career and not my company" (Jason, finance, Generation Y).

> "My boss has a career in hotels; that is what he has done since leaving school. For me my career is not that clear cut. I have done a series of jobs which I suppose are related, but I do not see myself in a particular career [head hotel receptionist] yet, maybe one day" (Emma, hotel sector, Generation Y).

The study revealed that among the Generation Y managers, Sullivan and Arthur's (2006) assertion of the prevalence of the *boundaryless* career was unfounded. Sullivan and Arthur (ibid) maintain that the career landscape has changed because the workforce seeks 'a series of experiences' as opposed to 'being committed' to a particular career. Some of the managers, particularly

those in professions that required certain qualifications, indicated dedication and commitment to a chosen career or occupation (see, for example, Jane's and Ruth's comments above). The study's findings agree with Sullivan and Arthur (ibid) with regard to those Generation Y managers who were employed in sectors that did not require specific professional qualifications. Among those managers, there was a more non-committal or boundaryless attitude to a career and sectoral commitment.

Of interest were Generation Y managers' perceptions of who should own or be responsible for a career, as seen with Jason's comments above and below. For Generation Y manager a career were primarily the responsibility of the individual, however they expected the organisation to assist them.

> "Without doubt I own my career. It is my responsibility to gain the experience and expertise I need. In some ways also I am responsible when I am ready for promotion or too leave. However, having said that I do expect my place of work to assist me with training for example" (Mike, hotel sector, Generation Y).

> "It is my career, my choice, my responsibility, my decision. I will always *own* my career" (Jason, finance, Generation Y).

When Jason was asked about the role of the organisation in a career, the issue of training and development generated an almost contradictory response:

> "To develop me and my career, this is the responsibility of me and work. Ultimately I will make the decisions about where I am going in career-wise, and the training needed, but work needs also to train and update the skills I need" (Jason, finance, Generation Y).

These findings above from Jason and Mike are more reflective of Hall's (1976, 2002) *protean* career as opposed to the conventional career. Chloe a telecommunication Generation Y manager encapsulates this:

> "…it is my career; therefore, it is my responsibility. If it was my place of work's responsibility, then like, I would never achieve my goals only theirs."

These findings also revealed an attitude amongst Generation Y managers towards their own career of a self-entitlement that manifests in wanting to 'self-direct' or seek a career that 'attains personal goals.' Some Generation Y managers saw their career as being personally owned and therefore spoke about an almost entitlement, of wanting to attain personal aspirations determined and directed by themselves.

> "It is my career at the end of the day. I have always been in-charge of my future, and while I work for a certain company, I expect work to support me to achieve my career goals; in return I will be a loyal employee" (Gemma, manufacturing, Generation Y).

> "No doubt about it, this is my career. So far I have worked in retail and now in a hotel [head hotel receptionist], but these career moves have been based on my desire to meet a certain goal or dream at the time. I certainly do not see my career being owed by a company – it is mine" (Emma, hotel sector, Generation Y).

In analyzing both Gemma's and Emma's comments, there was little evidence of any organisational or sector influence on their viewpoint. However, for others this self-entitlement attitude was in part influenced by the individual's occupation. For example, for those in nursing, the values associated with this profession were evident in how they wanted to attain personal career aspirations, while still fulfilling their commitment as a nurse: "As a nurse, you definitely gain personal and professional satisfaction. I do however expect the Trust to assist me in meeting *my* nursing career expectations and aspirations now I am going to become ward sister" (Ruth, nursing, Generation Y). For other occupations, such as the retail and service sector, this duality of meeting personal and organisational aspirations was less pronounced:

> "I am here as a stepping stone to my next move. I am happy here, but I am certainly working here to achieve my goals. If my goals happen to match those of work, then great, but it is more of a coincidence rather than planned. I don't see myself being here forever, or in this sort of job, I am doing as it suits me" (Mike, hotel sector, Generation Y).

> "I have to say that my career will always remain mine. The service sector, and I do include the hotel industry here, do need provide more opportunities for planned or structured career development, rather than leaving it to chance and 'in the right place at the right time.' I am ambitious, so why not give me the opportunity to be successful?" (Emma, hotel sector, Generation Y).

This finding, in particular with Emma's comments, concurs with Maxwell, Ogden and Broadbridge's (2010) study who argue that the service sector, need to provide greater career development to retain their employees.

The findings further revealed several cases of an egotistical attitude to future career prospects, for example with Emma above, and Mike, a deputy reception manager, and Chloe, below. Mike's egotistical attitude was revealed when he stated that he was 'out to achieve my goals and aspirations to be successful on my terms.'

Chloe, a telecommunication leader, held a similar view to Mike above:

> "I don't consider a career important. Like what I do not want is to be known for what I do, unless I am rich and famous. I want to be known like for being 'me' as a person, and not the work I do" (Chloe, telecommunications, Generation Y).

These sorts of attitude have led some generational writers, such as Twenge (2006), Twenge et al. (2008, 2004) and Twenge and Im (2007), to categorize the Generation Y grouping as the 'Me Generation'. According to Trzeniewski et al. (2003), Chloe's comment reflects an emerging self-entitlement attitude among Generation Y, particularly in relation to a career (Twenge & Campbell, 2008). Twenge and Campbell (ibid) highlight increasing assertiveness and self-esteem among Generation Ys, characterised by a presumption of the right to be in a career or job without necessarily possessing the skills or knowledge with an underlying perceived attitude of self-entitlement. For some managers there is an assumption of entitlement to their career in seeking progression and to be successful in their career. For example, Kim a team leader in finance, admitted to seeking a job before acquiring the needed skills:

> "I got this job [team leader], not by being able to do it, but by potentially being able to do it. The days of getting promotion through earning it, that's gone!" (Kim, finance, Generation Y).

This finding reflects the views of Zemke et al. (2000) and Barron et al. (2007) who posit a shift among Generation Ys to a willingness to seek a position without necessarily having the qualifications or experience.

This study was unable to determine the extent of this egotistical or self-entitlement attitude among the Generation Y managers. However, the findings revealed that some of the participants, particularly in the non-service sectors, were motivated by a desire to excel in an occupation or profession for self-gain or self-fulfillment. This finding, relating to the desire to be successful in terms of profession, does partly contradict Sullivan and Arthur's (2006) contention that a career is now more fluid and directly influenced by the individual's mindset and personal values.

In summary, for members of Generation Y who recently entered the workforce, differences in views of a career were influenced by profession or sector of employment as opposed by their generational grouping. For those in a profession, for example, Ruth, a trainee Ward Sister, a job was perceived as a career; however, for those in the service sector, for example, Emma, there was uncertainty whether her current job could be viewed as a career.

6.2.2 Generation X's Perceived Career

After being in the workplace for between 15 to 30 years, Generation X managers are now in what Super (1953, 1980) classifies as the *Established* stage. This stage is a period of steady career progression before entering the *Maintenance* phase. Super (ibid) maintains that in the *Established* stage, managers begin to progress in their careers, following a pre-determined vertical route. Contradicting this view, contemporary career theorists such as Sullivan and Arthur (2006) propose that a career is more fluid and is influenced by someone's mindset and

personal values. These factors determine individual attitudes to freedom, self-direction and careers decisions.

This study found that for many Generation X managers, particularly those in the non-service sector, now entering this *Established* stage, they were settled in a career to the extent that their careers now defined them. For this generation, profession was equally influential compared to attaining personal aspirations or values. The comments of David, a deputy head teacher, Cath, a Charge Sister, and Dave, a production line supervisor in manufacturing reflect this:

> "A career is a big part of your life. When you are introduced to someone, the first question they ask – 'what work do you do - what is your career?'" (David, teaching, Generation X).

> "It is what I do – I am senior nurse [charge sister] and it's my career. I expect I will always be in nursing. I may decide to change and go into senior management one day, but it will always be in *nursing*" (Cath, nursing, Generation X).

> "Engineering! It is what makes me, me, and I am proud of that" (Dave, manufacturing, Generation X).

Some managers' careers extended beyond the workplace; some saw their careers as matching their personal values: "I see teaching and pastoral care much like my faith; it's a part of what defines me as me" (Samantha, teaching, Generation X).

However, the sector of employment still remained an influential factor amongst the Generation X managers. For those managers in the service sector there was negative attitude towards seeing their jobs as careers. For example, Nicola, a Generation X hotel receptionist manager, stated: "I have been a receptionist [manager] for the past four years, but I still do not see what I do as a career; it's a job." This differentiation between a 'job' and a 'career' was a common view held amongst those service sector managers who were, either in an occupation that did not require any professional qualification, or alternatively were in the younger generational sub-group, for example, Yvonne, a team leader and Susan, a section leader.

> "I still remain uncertain whether I wish to work in
> manufacturing [as a team leader]. Maybe in the next few years I
> will decide, but for now I'm unsure" (Yvonne, manufacturing,
> Generation X).

> "A career to me means that you have settled into a particular role
> or occupation. Even though I am now in my 30s, I still have
> doubts at times that I've found my chosen career" (Susan,
> finance, Generation X).

Reflecting the contradictory nature of generational studies, other service sector managers had settled in a career, for example, Richard, a finance leader: "I am now more settled in this career and I know that I will most probably be in 'finance' for the rest of my working life" (Richard, finance, Generation X).

The findings also reveal that on-route to Super's (1956, 1980) *Established* stage of working life, a career is now being influenced by other factors and responsibilities. For example, Sullivan (2010) notes that throughout their careers, individuals are faced with life-stage responsibilities, such as family commitments. This study's findings confirm that females are more likely to be impacted by commitments external to their careers than males, encapsulated by Cath, a mother, homemaker and a charge sister and Richard a father of two under 5-year-old children and a financier:

> "I am a nurse, but I am also a mother, homemaker, sit on a local
> council now and a wife. When I complete a questionnaire or do the
> national census, you know, like a couple of years ago, I am loath to
> put down only one thing as my occupation. All of these roles I see as
> jobs, and they are important to me in different ways… It is like trying
> to categorise my mother or tell her that she did not have a career. She
> was a housewife and homemaker plus umpteen other things…"
> (Cath, nursing, Generation X).

> "…although I am a father, due to financial necessity, we decide
> [Richard and his partner] that I would be the breadwinner.
> Therefore, I still go to work; you know work the long hours but I
> do escape from the pressures of the day to day responsibilities of
> looking after the kids [laughter]. My career does definitely define
> me. Only last night, we [his partner and himself] were talking
> about whether since becoming parents, has changed how we see

> ourselves. My wife sees herself as a full-time mother who is a sales consultant, while I am still a financier first and foremost, and then of course a husband and father" (Richard, finance, Generation X).

This finding supports Powell and Mainiero (1992), who identify women's careers, more than those of men, as being influenced or impacted by both work and 'non-work', thus making them multi-dimensional. This is in contrast to the traditional perception of women being responsible for the family and home activities (Cheung & Halpern, 2010; Wiggins & Peterson, 2004).

This study also identified that like female members, many male members of Generation X have begun to perceive a career as impacted by external commitments. This is in contrast to the perception of older male Baby Boomers and indicates a generational difference. Mainiero and Sullivan (2006), Sullivan and Mainiero (2007), Twenge et al. (2010b) and Twenge (2010) note that there has been a societal shift in that men perceive a career differently due to increasing family involvement. Nicholas, an older Generation X manager, highlights the differences between himself and his father's generation: "A career is important to me, but so is being a father. Being a father has fundamentally changed my outlook and how I see work, something that my father missed out on due to his career" (Nicholas, hotel sector, Generation X).

These findings confirm that as a person matures, there is a change in priorities. Sullivan (1999), Arnold (1997), Ornstein, Cron and Slocum (1989), Sturges (1999) and Sturges et al. (2002) all note that psychological development, age, gender, occupation and tenure become increasingly detrimental factors that impact directly or indirectly on the individual's priorities and life / career choices.

In summary, the sub-grouping or profession of the Generation X participants determined how they viewed their careers. Those in the younger sub-grouping of the generation or in the sector that did not require a professional qualification were uncertain whether their jobs could be viewed as careers. Kupperschmidt (2000), Baruch (2004, 2006), Schuman and Scott (1989) identified this particular

sub-grouping as often holding the next generation's traits due to the linear nature of a generation, which contradicts Strauss and Howe's (1991) contention that generational differences are cyclical. Those managers in occupations such as nursing, irrespective of the generation's sub-grouping, were generally settled and identified with their professions.

It emerges from the interviews that other commitments, such as family, the influence of gender on a career, and the life-stage of the individual are key determinants in influencing the individual's career and impacting on the individual's attitude to a career. All impact on career attitudes. Nicholas's comments (above) encapsulate the influence of a person's life-stage, which for some in the Generation X grouping, is seen as an important catalyst to re-evaluating a career, responsibilities and commitments. What was not evident from the interviews is whether the entire generational group views a career in the context of promotion or attaining a higher status. The interviews did not reveal consensus on the need for the above attributes in defining a career. What can be concluded from the findings above is that is the irrespective of profession or sector of employment; life-stage of the individual has now a direct impact on Generation X managers' careers to date.

6.2.3 Baby Boomers' Perceived Careers

The oldest generation, the Baby Boomers were less pragmatic concerning what constitutes a career. For the majority of male Baby Boomers − now either in Super's (1953, 1980) *Maintenance* stage, or preparing to enter the *Pre-Retirement* career stage − a career is best represented by the traditional model of a series of jobs and promotions occurring during a working life. From a Human Resource management perspective, Flynn (2010), Claes and Heymans (2008), Yeatts et al. (2000), studying older workers, highlight that, one major individual and organisational factor that affects this generational grouping is their ability to adapt to workplace changes; for example, employees needing to possess multi-skilled. Both Claes and Heymans (2008) and Yeatts et al. (ibid) called for the organisation to change, stating that the workplace needs to consider adapting its processes to reflect the older employees' career needs, values, and interests.

Generational writers, such as Zemke et al. (2000), Johnson and Johnson (2010) maintain that due to their upbringing, male Baby Boomers share the belief that a career is characterised by job security, pre-defined career routes and recognition through job role and status. This perspective was demonstrated by comments from three male Baby Boomers − George, Stuart and Bill.

Stuart viewed a career as a part of his persona: "A career defines you as a person. It tells people a lot about you and what you are all about; that is why I am a teacher [deputy head teacher]" (Stuart, teaching, Baby Boomer). Stuart's perspective illustrates the connection between seeking some form of individual authenticity that include personal values and a career that closely reflects identity. For George, a regional manager, a career is defined traditionally: "A series of promotions, better job titles and a salary to match" (George, telecommunications, Baby Boomer). Later in the interview, George contextualised his original definition of a career by highlighting the importance of his career in telecommunication engineering:

> "A career is a series of promotions and opportunities which you gain throughout your working life. My career has always been in engineering. I have progressed through the ranks to where I am today SW [South-West] senior telecoms manager. But I still see myself, my career and occupation, as being an 'engineer'" (George, telecommunications, Baby Boomer).

Bill, a Baby Boomer a senior finance manager, explained how he saw a career then and now:

> "My career has been in finance starting as a junior office boy… then working up into management. A career is a series of jobs in a profession that you specialise in. This might sound old fashioned, but today there needs to be more people committed to this sort of career rather than simply job-hopping around doing different jobs".

Although the majority of female Baby Boomers had interrupted a career as a result of outside commitments, their perception of what constitutes a career was similar to that of the male Baby Boomers. This finding supports both

generational writers such as Johnson and Johnson (2010), Zemke et al. (2000) and Gursoy et al. (2008), and career theorists such as Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) and Smith-Ruig (2009). These authors note that the traditional career model for women (such as Andrea, a matron below), still exists among members of the Baby Boomer generation, and is most prevalent among those returning to and re-establishing a career after fulfilling family commitments:

> "Like my mother, my career has been in nursing, even though I took 10 years out to have a family. To me a career is something that you dedicate a lot of your life doing. Nursing as a career is hard and you need to be committed. It also means balancing family life with work" (Andrea, nursing, Baby Boomer).

Andrea's perspective is however not entirely shared among female Baby Boomers. Some female participants, for example, Liz, a senior banking manager, is more orientated to being a 'family-maker' than orientated to a career. Similar to Andrea, Liz also interrupted her career to have a family, but unlike Andrea, Liz's perception changed due to her time away looking after her family. This change in perception for Liz came about when she became a family-maker and this positively transformed and enriched her life. This transformation included nurturing her children until they reached school age by actively participating in school committees, before re-embarking on her career in financial management.

> "Becoming a mother for the first time, assuming role of primary care or family-making, makes you revaluate yourself, your priories and how you see things. It also broadens your outlook. I became one of the governors at my daughter's school after being on the PTA for three years, something that I never considered before motherhood" (Liz, finance, Baby Boomer).

Liz's perspective echoes Gallos (1989), Greenhaus, Callanan and Godshalk (2009), who maintains that women now are taking a more holistic approach to their working lives: they are attempting to balance work, relationships and commitments while pursuing a career. To achieve this, women often seek a trade-off between family commitments and demands, and work. Liz's comments reflect this:

> "Having a family put my career on hold. It meant that I had to stop
> what I was doing, which I was dedicated to. But I have never
> regretted it, not for one minute. A career, even now as a senior
> manager, which I achieved recently, is one thing, but having a family
> is far more self-fulfilling" (Liz, finance, Baby Boomer).

Balance between career and family is evident in Liz's comments, but she added: "A career is still an important part of a person's life including mine" (Liz, finance, Baby Boomer). This comment reflects Bailyn (1989), who finds that women are more likely than men to display a 'slow burn' path in a career. Bailyn (ibid) and later Baruch (2004) contends that although women may ultimately end up at the same level as men, due to personal circumstances and duties, it may take longer to reach this point.

6.2.4 Summary

The findings reveal a potential generational influence relating to the perceptions of a career, and also show that how defining what constitutes a career, as set out in section 6.2, and depicted in Figure 6.1 below, has been influenced and informed by various complex factors, such as profession, gender and life-stage. The findings also reveal that, irrespective of the individual's generational grouping, the motivation to seek comfort, security and professional recognition in a career remains, a theme which is supported by Chen and Choi (2008), Clarke and Patrickson (2008) and Clarke's (2009).

For those in the Generation Y grouping, the influence of a profession was significant (as shown in Figure 6.1). Managers in those professions that need a specific qualification, such as nursing or teaching, viewed a career as an occupation, or even a vocation. In contrast, Generation Y managers in the service or retail sectors, valued a career less; some saw it more as a 'means to an end' rather than as a commitment to a profession. This finding while supporting Clarke and Patrickson (2008) who maintain that the transfer of responsibility for employability from the organisation to the individual has not been as widespread as first predicted, the study does partly supports the earlier work of Arthur, Claman and DeFillippi (1995) and DeFillippi and Arthur (1996), notion that

career have become more mobile is due to the increase in the portability of skills, knowledge and abilities, however does not cross all sectors.

The Baby Boomer managers, particularly the men, saw a career from the traditional perspective as a series of progressive jobs. Many Baby Boomers' careers had been influenced by external factors, for example, lack of perceived career progression. Female Baby Boomers' careers had been interrupted as a result of outside commitments to the family, which changed their perception of what constituted a career and its importance, including its role in a person's life. Underlying these themes was the recognition of the importance of having a career.

Among the Generation X managers there was a lack of consensus concerning the importance of a career to the individual; some participants, particular in the service sector, similar to those Generation Y managers, expressed a negative view of seeing their jobs as careers (refer to Figure 6.1). This concurs with the earlier work of Reisenwitz and Lyer (2009) who found that Generation X managers are seeking a fast track career and a unique work experience. Without these two attributes, Generation Y would, according to Reisenwitz and Lyer (ibid) consider changing environment or organisations. For these participants their jobs were simply a means to an end, rather than seeing their work as a career.

The interviews also revealed the impact on both genders, particularly on women, concerning family commitments. This confirms Gallos' (1989) and Greenhaus, Callanan and Godshalk's (2009) contention that women (Generation X and Baby Boomers) take a more holistic approach to their lives: balancing work and relationships affects career decisions and choices. As opportunities become less available, owing to external commitments, women tend to achieve what they seek by balancing or trading-off family commitments and family demands against personal career aspirations.

What does become apparent, and is a central finding in this study is that it reveals evidence that a generation that does not operate or function in isolation. Other

attributes such as life-stage, gender and profession also have a significant influence on the individual, which closely matches Foster's (2013) assertion that generational perceptions are interrelated on two axes: based on generational differences and influenced and informed by socio-historical dynamics. It is worth-noting, that the effect of each of these determinants cannot be simplified or isolated to determine its overall influence.

Figure 6.1: Summary of the external influences and attributes affecting a Generation

Baby Boomers	**Male** → Male Career stage *Late Pre-Retirement stage*	**Potential Male External Attributes and Influences** Redundancies, illness, well-being, lack of opportunities, life - stage
	Female → Female Career stage *Late Pre-Retirement stage*	**Potential Female External Attributes and Influences** Societal expectations for family commitments, lack of opportunities, life-stage, legacy of looking after the family
Generation X	**Male** → Male Career stage *Mid-Established stage*	**Potential Male External Attributes and Influences** Marital status, life-stage, fatherhood, family commitments, influence of sub-grouping
	Female → Female Career stage *Mid-Established stage*	**Potential Female External Attributes and Influences** Life-stage, marital status, family commitments, trading off work and family commitments
Generation Y	**Male** → Male Career stage *Early Exploration stage*	**Potential Male External Attributes and Influences** Profession / sector, job security, economy, desire to control their career, attitude of self-entitlement
	Female → Female Career stage *Early Exploration stage*	**Potential Female External Attributes and Influences** Profession / sector, job security, economy, desire to control their career, attitude of self-entitlement

In summary the schematic above in Figure 6.1, provides an overview of the interrelationship of these external attributes. This reinforces the notion that a generation although a reliable form of methodology, does not operate independently or in isolation. Each of the depicted external attributes is influential to varying degrees, and is equally independent upon the individual's generation.

The next section explores the connection between careers, that of career identity and educational, social and economic background theme of a career.

6.3 The Connection between Careers, Career Identity and Educational, Social and Economic Background

From the outset, this study has acknowledged that the perception of managers about what constitutes a career is potentially influenced by their educational and socioeconomic background (refer to Poole et al. 1993; Arthur, Khapova & Wilderom, 2005; Van der Heijden et al. 2009 in Chapter Three, section 3.11). This study contends that while the participants were influenced in this way, the influence was less pronounced than for other determinants such gender, profession or life-stage, as shown in Figure 6.1 above.

As seen in previous sections, educational background emerged as a key theme. Nearly all the managers recognised that in the early stages of employment, a career is influenced by, or dependent on holding a formal professional / occupational qualification. Those in professions that required a particular qualification (e.g. nursing or teaching) seemed to have embraced the concept of a career (refer to Ruth, section 6.2.1 above, and below). Their educational background, particularly their post-school qualification, was seen as a foundation to occupational commitment: "…after three years at uni, it is too much of an investment in time and money to quit nursing now" (Ruth, nursing, Generation Y). Other determinants such as family ethnicity of the individual although influential with certain managers, was outside the scope this study.

This study also revealed that although education assisted initially in the early stages of a career, there was a corresponding belief that individuals' careers are ultimately their own responsibility. For example, Ed, an Oxbridge graduate and doctor typifies this belief: "No doubt about it, going to Kings, then Cambridge and studying medicine there helped me and my career… Oxbridge has certainly assisted me to get to where I am today, but it is also down to you the individual" (Ed, doctor, Baby Boomer).

As seen in the comments of Ed above, educational background was used as a reference point. Participants drew on their educational background to illustrate how their careers had changed or progressed: "If I went back to my old school, you know they would not like believe what I have achieved [now a telecommunication manager]. Leaving school with only 5 GSCEs was not like the best start, but it is ultimately up to you" (Chloe, telecommunications, Generation Y).

Social background was also used by interviewees to compare themselves with their parents' profession or background, for example, George, a regional manager: "… my father was no help to me. He disliked management. He was a tradesman and proud of that fact" (George, telecommunications, Baby Boomer). For Phil, a Generation X department head and teacher, a career and its identity did differ from the way his father approached it:

> "Today there are fewer barriers to careers and professions than in the past. My father [Traditional Generation] was the first one in the family to break the family trade of plumbing. This was unusual at the time, but although he became an accountant, he still remained in this profession for all of his [working] life. For me since leaving school, I have had a series of jobs including plumbing, funnily enough, but then I decided to go into teaching [pause] and in some ways I have now followed my father's example and remained in the same career ever since".

While there are social and generational characteristics of Phil's experience, what remains unclear is the extent to which he was influenced by his social background, the generation and by other external factors.

Other members of Generation X, and of the Baby Boomers, used their backgrounds to reflect and contrast their careers with those of their peers' or parents': "…both of my parents were in semi-skilled jobs [blue collar] and they could not have prepared me for the career I have had as a senior manager" (Bill, finance, Baby Boomer). For others, it is the contrast between the expectations and norms of upbringing compared with what is experienced, brought about by the radical transformation in the modern workplace: "It was inconceivable when I left school that I, a girl, with a working class background, have achieved what I have in SM [senior management] [laughter]" (Liz, finance, Baby Boomer).

From these findings it is possible to surmise that education and social-economics influence a career, and ultimately a career progression and career types. The findings now move on to answer the question, related to the career progression of the managers.

6.4. Career progression

The participants' career progression was followed using the documentary analysis and a timeline approach to document the path from the Curricula Vitae and was then contextualised through the interviews. The study investigated the generation's progression viewed through a generational lens, which included examining the psychological attributes associated with career progression as identified during the first and second pilot studies, namely: *interest*, *satisfaction*, *motivation* and *commitment* as set out in section 4.7.2.2 of Chapter Four.

6.4.1 Career Progression among Generation Y participants

Analysing the Generation Y participants' Curricula Vitae and the interviews revealed a number of themes, the first being the influence of profession /

occupation. The main study revealed that the Generation Y participants' career path, career style and progression was directly influenced by sector of employment or occupation.

This study found that those in the medical, educational, financial and telecommunication sectors were reluctant to seek new experiences by moving professions. This finding contradicts the argument of Arthur et al. (1989) that careers are now individually driven and boundaryless in nature, with the employee seeking a series of experiences through working in various roles. However, for those managers in the service sector, although having a relatively short working life to date, their careers comprised a series of rapid changes and experiences in different jobs and organisations. This type of career mirrors both Arthur, Hall and Lawrence (1989), *boundaryless* career type with a career no longer bound to a sector, profession or employer and supports Broadbridge et al. (2007), Barron et al. (2007) and Zopiatis et al. (2012), who concur that Generation Y managers identify positive aspects of the sector, including flexibility to work at different locations and gain rapid promotion. These authors also identify a significant number of negative elements that can impact on length of tenure, that is, level of reward versus amount of work effort, the long and often anti-social working hours, which is typical of the hospitality [service] industry and the perceived poor treatment of employees in the sector. In this study, experiencing a lack of recognition and feeling undervalued were seen as major areas of dissatisfaction among these younger Generation Y managers, reinforcing Barron et al. (2007), who found that many employees in the service sector left due to the lack of recognition and the perception of being undervalued. According to Maxwell, Odgen and Broadbridge (2010), Barron et al. (2007), Broadbridge et al. (2007), members of Generation Y feel undervalued and unrecognized and this resulted in the service sector's high turnover and a lack of commitment on the part of its managers, and is reminiscent of McCabe and Savery's (2005) 'butterfly' career pattern. Mike, a deputy reception manager, and Emma, a head hotel receptionist, reflected these trends:

> "Yeah, I like working here and I am getting promoted
> shortly, but in the long-term, no way. The hours are too long
> and I know how much my manager here and regional
> managers work. I expect you know, to remain in this industry
> for another five years and then get a job which has more
> sociable hours" (Mike, hotel sector, Generation Y).

> "My career I see as being unsettled still. I tend to move between
> different roles and jobs, gaining more experience, before
> [eventually] moving on again" (Emma, hotel sector, Generation
> Y).

Emma's comments clearly evoke 'fluttering in and out' of job roles to gain
what McCabe and Savery (2005) see as developing professional expertise
and core competencies.

The study enquired into the extent to which the sector of employment is
pivotal to career progression among Generation Y participants to determine
the generational influence. The interviews revealed that those in the younger
generation who worked in the service sector, enjoyed their work, but did not
perceive a career as central to their lives. Consequently, there is a reluctance
to commit or remain in the sector or organisation. In comparison the older
Generation X and Baby Boomer managers (refer to section 6.4.2 and 6.4.3)
in the service sector, whilst holding a similar attitude to remaining loyal to
one organisation, did have a longer tenure between jobs and also indicated
more commitment to the sector from outset of their economic career. From
the findings it is possible to surmise that McCabe and Savery's (2005)
'butterfly' career type has a possible sector influence, particularly amongst
Generation Y managers.

A theme that emerged from further analysis of the transcripts was an
underlying perception amongst Generation Y females to have lower career
expectations and progression prospects. Part of this perspective could be
attributed to potential discrimination in the workplace, although not directly
reported by them.

> "I look at my male colleagues, like Mike for example, who is
> nearly the same age as me. I would say even though I want to
> achieve my personal career goals, that he is more ambitious and
> has greater career aspirations than me… Even though I have not
> experience discrimination myself, but my expectations and
> ambitions are in some way influenced by seeing more men in
> senior position than women. It gives the impression that for
> women there are still limited opportunities" (Emma, hotel sector,
> Generation Y).

This discrimination was more self-evident amongst Baby Boomers women (refer to Chapter 7, section 7.2.3, Liz's comments related to organisational barriers).

The findings above of both Mike and Emma also support Maxwell and Broadbridge (2014) notion that both gender of this generational group still held a shared view to the importance of achieving a high level of personal career success, but there exists perceived gender discrimination.

6.4.1.1 Psychological attributes of career progression among Generation Y participants

Drawing on the four psychological attributes derived from the pilot study, the Generation Y managers in the main study saw 'interest' and 'satisfaction' as being essential. 'Motivation', although seen as important, was rated lower, for many of the participants; 'commitment' was seen as almost irrelevant. However, perceived level of commitment was closely associated with sector of employment, as illustrated below:

> "I really enjoy my work [in the hotel] and I have progressed
> really fast [now a head hotel receptionist], but I would not like
> say that this will be my career until I retire. I don't go around
> telling all my friends that I work in a hotel; it is not like I am a
> scientist or a celebrity. I think that it is a stepping stone to
> something else. I mean I got into this just by chance and I expect
> that I will leave the same way. Working here is really great for
> getting into management when you are young, but it is a lot
> harder for getting into senior management" (Emma, hotel sector,
> Generation Y).

Although the Generation Y participants in the public service related professions also remained in a particular occupation for a short period of time, they were more committed to the profession. This is illustrated by Jane: "As nurse you need to acquire certain knowledge and skills before you can progress, so progression [even though Jane is a deputy ward sister] is slower than my sister who is in sales" (Jane, nursing, Generation Y). From both a generational and organisational perspective, Smola and Sutton (2002) identify certain industries such as medicine and manufacturing, that require individuals to 'serve their time' in a particular role or position, rather than the individuals determining when they think they are eligible for promotion.

In the current study, organisational influence emerged as a theme in the manufacturing sector. Unlike the service based sectors, the manufacturing culture appeared to limit any generational influence "… manufacturing is a trade that requires you to learn and serve your time, like an apprenticeship. It is a part of the culture here, you do not become a production team leader overnight" (Shane, manufacturing, Generation Y). Cennamo and Gardner's (2008), Cherrington's (1980) and Smola and Sutton's (2002) generational workplace studies support this cultural influence concerning the necessity to conform, which appears to limit or constrain any generational influence.

The interviews included questions about who is in control of progressing a career. The majority of participants expressed a desire to manage their careers, career opportunities and work-life balance. The desire to manage a career is a characteristic of Hall's (2002) *protean* career (that is a career focused on the psychological attitude of an individual to managing his or her career, which is driven by the individual, rather than being bound by the organisation or profession). Cennamo and Gardner (2008), Maxwell, Ogden and Broadbridge (2010), Maxwell and Broadbridge (2014), Twenge et al. (2010a), Costanza et al. (2012), found that members of Generation Y − unlike older generations (Generation X and Baby Boomers) − Maxwell, Ogden and Broadbridge (2010), (Maxwell and Broadbridge (2014), and work - life balance while simultaneously progressing in their careers, and

were more likely to leave their jobs if these attributes were not present. This theme will be covered in greater depth in Chapter Seven. This study identified that there is a trend to seek more work-life balance, although the extent of this balance is primarily influenced by the profession and the degree of individual motivation to develop a career. Kim's, a finance team leader, comments typify this: "When I first left school I did not take my job seriously and I was more interested in my free-time. Now I am in banking my focus is being successful here, but I still want time for myself" (Kim, finance, Generation Y).

Kim's comments reflect Parry and Urwin's (2011) and Jurkiewicz's (2000) view that the younger generations (Generation X and Generation Y), while focused on work, also have a leisure orientation. In contrast, Smola and Sutton (2002) conclude that the youngest generation (Generation X in Smola & Sutton's study) exhibits an underlying trend of valuing work and career progression less. Twenge et al. (2010a) identify the generational trend among both Generation Xs and Generation Ys of seeking more work-life balance. This trend differentiates these younger generational groupings significantly from the Baby Boomer generation and is reflective of the current study's findings. In the current study, the Generation Y managers were seeking a priority of wanting a greater work-life balance over career progression. Furthermore, the current study concurs with Zemke et al. (2000), Kupperschmidt (2000) and Gursoy et al. (2008) that there is a generational attitudinal change with regard to career progression that relies on team and group work. This study revealed that Generation Y managers acknowledged the importance of team work to achieve career aspirations and assist with promotion.

    "To progress in your career you are often dependent upon others around you. It is like you help them in exchange for them to help you" (Chloe, telecommunications, Generation Y).

> "This job relies on teams, and it is crazy not to use this [comradely behaviour] to help progress yourself and others to get a better job" (Emma, hotel sector, Generation Y).

Underlying these findings is Generation Y's close connection to its career stage (refer to Emma's comments above). Irrespective of gender or profession / sector, these managers indicated a strong desire to be promoted and climb up to higher positions in their organisations.

6.4.2 Career Progression among Generation X Managers

In analysing the career paths of Generation X managers, the interviews identified that regardless of sector, the participants' careers had become established. However, certain external factors, such as commitments outside the workplace, were beginning to dominate. The majority of Generation X women's career progression had changed significantly compared with their earlier working life owing to external commitments, such as having a family. This generation (both male and female managers) were generally more pragmatic than the older generation concerning job moves, and moved every three to four years early in their working lives. Investigating current working patterns revealed that these career moves had slowed down, changing from an average of three to four years to every four to six years. This finding partly validates and partly contradicts Smola and Sutton (2002), who maintain that Generation Xs tend be less bound or loyal to a particular employer, as shown by the shorter period of job tenure. The slowing down in career progression can be attributed to the generation's life-stage and external commitments, which Smola and Sutton's (ibid) study omits. The current study confirms Giancola's (2006) and Parry and Urwin's (2011) argument that the influence of being in a generation does not operate in isolation from other determinants influences. This study also concurs with Wong et al. (2010), Sorokin (1947) and Kertzer (1983), that as the individual ages, career advancement and loyalty to an organisation both change due to ageing, rather than as a result of generational influences.

6.4.2.1 Psychological attributes of career progression among Generation X participants

The study then investigated the psychological attributes of interest, satisfaction, motivation and commitment in relation to the career progression of Generation X managers. While the Generation X managers valued interest and satisfaction highly in a job, as their careers progressed, motivation and commitment become less relevant. The degree of importance attached to each of these characteristics was seen as comparatively weaker than for Generation Y, particularly with regard to 'interest' and 'satisfaction'. Rather than seeking personal satisfaction and interest, there was a greater focus on external commitments. The impact of external commitments on career progression is illustrated in Alex a shift leader's comment below.

> "…since [having the family] however, my life has changed. You know, becoming a father and everything, including work, is put into perspective. Once I worked long hours' even after we got married, but since my son came along everything has changed. When I was young my father still worked hard and we didn't really see much of him; for me I want to see my son growing up and certainly do not want to miss out" (Alex, telecommunications, Generation X).

Others, such as Phil, an assistant head teacher, and Dave, a production line supervisor, re-evaluated their priorities due to external commitments, such as having a family:

> "I can remember when I was single I was really ambitious, but then we started a family; although we need my income and I am the main money earner, I certainly tried to get a better work-life balance so my progress has slowed" (Phil, teaching, Generation X).

For Dave this *self-realisation* led to seeking a better work - life balance relating to the responsibility of balancing work and the needs of a family:

> "Although there is still the threat of redundancies and I should take every opportunity, I have come to the conclusion that

> although I am proud of what I do, I don't want to spend my life working, working, working. There is more to life than this" (Dave, manufacturing, Generation X).

In expressing this opinion, Dave demonstrates his way of 'rebelling' against the dominance of the culture of the manufacturing sector in which he works. Although this rebellious attitude was evident among some Generation X managers, mainly in the service sector, it was not as prevalent as portrayed by authors such as Johnson and Johnson (2010), Zemke et al. (2000) and Kupperschmidt (2000).

The impact of having a family on women's careers is evident throughout contemporary career literature (e.g. Powell & Mainiero, 1992; Mainiero & Sullivan, 2004; Sullivan & Mainiero, 2007). The current study agrees that for the majority of female Generation X managers, starting a family and then bringing up the children remains the domain of women; however, the interviews revealed two distinctly new themes. The first is that while accepting the responsibility of being the main carer, this group of women did not want to stop their careers. They viewed this period as 'suspending' their careers rather than 'stopping' them, which differs from the Baby Boomer Generation.

> "I had my first child and within 18 months I was back to full-time nursing [as charge sister]. This is totally different from my mother. She gave up teaching to have me and my brothers" (Cath, nursing, Generation X).

> "I certainly never considered leaving here. I do rely heavily on my partner, but my career is still important to me. It does not make me a bad mother, just a working mother" (Susan, finance, Generation X).

> "I could never do what my mother did, I need something [a career and being reception manager] to make me, me" (Nicola, hotel sector, Generation X).

The second theme to emerge among the male Generation Xs was the increased male involvement in family responsibilities, as seen in the

comments of Alex, a shift leader, Richard, a team leader in finance, and

Will, a general practitioner, below:

> "…since becoming a father, I have decided that work is not
> as important to me as it used to be. I now tend to balance
> home and life if I can, so I can share the child-care duties.
> This would never have happened before James [his son] was
> born" (Will, doctor, Generation X)

> "When my child was born it was real life changer. Although I
> still work hard to make sure that I remain employable, I
> certainly do not do the hours I used to do" (Richard, finance,
> Generation X).

> "When you become a father for the first time, you re-evaluate
> your life and priorities. I still enjoy work, but I certain enjoy
> spending time with my family. This is something that my
> father missed out on, and I certainly do not want too. Last
> week I took off a day to attend my children's sports day,
> something I cannot remember my father doing… Shame
> really" (Alex, telecommunications, Generation X).

As noted above (section 6.4.1), Generation Y managers expressed the need

to manage their careers, career opportunities and work /life balance.

Generation X managers expressed the same need. This generation voiced a

lack of trust in employers to manage or oversee their careers. Part of this can

be attributed to the changes in the workplace, such as redundancy, or the

threat of redundancy, or recent organisational restructuring: "I nearly lost

my job and it was my 'road to Damascus' moment of re-prioritising my

life" (Dave, manufacturing, Generation X). This opinion and those of Cath

and Susan above, support the contention that careers are becoming more

protean in nature. Smola and Sutton (2002) and Zemke et al. (2000) report

that due to witnessing organisational restructuring and the demise of job

security, the Generation X managers tend to want to manage their own

careers, which is supported by this study's findings.

6.4.3 Career progression among Baby Boomers
The documentary analysis of the Baby Boomers' Curricula Vitae showed

that this grouping and in particular, the male participants, were focused on a

conventional linear career progression. These career paths have been predominately based in one or two organisations. The Baby Boomers career progression has been based on gaining sufficient experience before gaining promotion in organisations. This study concurs with the study of Becton, Walker and Jones-Farmer (2014), who found that Baby Boomers tend to have less mobility in their careers and demonstrated high level of organisational complicance-related behaviour.

The comments of Ed, a doctor [GP] for his entire working life to date, and Bill, a broker and senior manager, encapsulate the above finding:

> "….my career came first, that is what was expected and seen as the norm − progressing up the organisation in a timely manner" (Bill, finance, Baby Boomers).

> "Leaving school, going to Oxbridge, getting married, working hard to rise up or climb up the ranks. In those days you were expected to be career focused and expected to provide for rather than nurture the family" (Ed, doctor, Baby Boomer).

According to Mainiero and Sullivan (2005), this type of career progression is typical of an *alpha* career, which focuses on males in the Baby Boomer grouping. However, as Mainiero and Sullivan (ibid) and Smith-Ruig (2009) emphasize, this perspective has changed and does change, mainly as a result of age/career stages rather than generational influence.

The current study instead finds a potential generational divide similar to Mainiero and Sullivan's contention. For example, the Baby Boomer men used words such as 'structured manner', 'progression in steady steps', 'gained promotion through tenure-ship' and 'based upon gaining the experience first before attaining a new role' to described career progression. Although many of the participants acknowledged that a career may include several significant changes or new directions, these occurred earlier on in their careers and were interlinked to a profession. This contrasts with the experiences and attitudes of Generation X and Y managers, who were prepared to have careers that are based on a series of experiences and not

necessary linked specifically to a profession or occupation, to seek promotion with or without the necessary skills needed, and were prepared progress in their career rapidly. The above findings support Zemke et al. (2000), who points out the generational differences in career paths and progression. Career progression among Baby Boomers was also markedly slower than among the Generation X and Y managers. Since starting to work, the Baby Boomer generation remained in one role for an average of five plus years. After becoming established and reaching Super's (1980) *Maintenance stage*, Baby Boomer progression between roles extended to seven plus years. When approaching retirement, opportunities to progress were significantly reduced. This finding is also supportive of Wong et al. (2010) who using a motivational questionnaire to compare generational difference in affiliation, power and progression, found that age rather than a generational grouping influences career progression and aspirations. George, a telecommunication manager, stated:

> "My career has been a steady progression of [climbing] gaining greater responsibility after I have proven my ability. For the past twenty years my career has been 'steady as it goes' and I know that each role I have done I have been able to do it well. Today it seems that the need for being able to prove yourself before getting promoted is long gone!" (George, telecommunications, Baby Boomer).

As identified in section 6.4.1, for a number of those in the younger generational managers, career progression often entailed taking the opportunity if it arose often irrespective of whether they possessed the experience required or not. Some believed that the necessary skills could be attained while doing the job as shown by Chloe's, a team leader, comments:

> "I have never thought like 'no I can't take this promotion as I have not been here longer enough' or 'I have not done this job before'. For me, I think like 'yeah I'll get the job first and then learn as I go along'" (Chloe, telecommunications, Generation Y).

For Baby Boomer women, as indicated previously, career progression was directly influenced by external factors, particularly family commitments. All of the mothers spoke about how their careers were interrupted when having a family:

> "My career progression before having a family was much like my male colleagues. But then when the family came along, my career halted" (Liz, finance, Baby Boomer).

> "Everything changes, even today. In my day [when younger] unlike today, you were expected to stop your career and that's what happened" (Cassandra, nursing, Baby Boomer).

The above views support career writers such as Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) and generational writers such as Zemke et al. (2000) who maintain that women, due to the demands of the family, tended to stop or suspend their economic career, while men are mainly unaffected. However, in this study there is evidence that a generational difference exists regarding when women return to work after having started a family. This is often at the point when returning to the workplace outweighs remaining at home for the sake of a child.

The career progression of many of the female Baby Boomers in the current study supports Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005, 2006) and Sullivan and Mainiero's (2007, 2008) contention that women ultimately seek to attain the same level in a career as male colleagues. For many of these women there has been a change in their motivation for seeking career progression:

> "You start your career as ambitiously focused on the job. When the family comes along, this does change. It becomes of secondary importance to your children no matter how successful you are, even though I am now a senior manager" (Liz, finance, Baby Boomer).

Underlying this perspective, which is investigated in greater depth in Chapter Seven, are the changes in attitude towards careers and success in careers.

6.4.3.1 Psychological attributes of career progression among Baby Boomers participants

With regard to the Baby Boomers' psychological attributes related to career progression, there was a shared perception that all four elements (interest, satisfaction, motivation and commitment) have equal significance at varying times during a working life. Tom, a Baby Boomer and an assistant head teacher, stated: "...my career has had all of these elements in it, but they tend to ebb and flow at different stages of my career."

This concurs with the views of Heijden and Van Der Heijden (2006), Meijers (1998), London (1993) and London and Greller (1991), who contend that a career is a composite of progression and change. Tom's comment (above) of the 'ebb and flow' of the four elements at different stages is reminiscent of what Powell (2012) refers to as 'career renewal', or 'career recycling' (Sullivan et al. 2003), and encapsulates the variations and changes encountered on an individual's career journey.

With regard to who it was felt was responsible for a career, the Baby Boomers perceived that remaining bound to the organisation for the majority a career was a personal responsibility: "I have to admit that when I first started my career, it was dictated by the organisation. But now the ownership is very much my responsibility. Unlike in the past it is no longer seen as unacceptable to move organisations" (Bill, finance, Baby Boomer). This viewpoint was shared by Ed, who is quoted as saying, "I am in a role and position where I am happier as a general practitioner. I suppose also I am stuck now because of my age. I expect I will remain here either until I die or retire …" (refer to section 6.5.1.2 below).

The Baby Boomers perceived that the responsibility for their careers encompassed work-life balance and career opportunities. Most Baby Boomer managers mentioned the changes that had occurred in the workplace over the past two decades, the lack of traditional job security and commitment to an organisation as contributing factors: "The end came in

the 1970s and 1980s ...the days of job security [sic] now long gone. Look at me, I was made redundant!" (Jim, manufacturing, Baby Boomers). Kupperschmidt (2000), Smola and Sutton (2002) and Gursoy et al. (2008) identify the impact of organisational restructuring on workplace dynamics. Furthermore, Baby Boomer men in particular, recognised that life-stage had impeded their ability to progress or 'climb-up' the organisation.

6.4.4 Summary

In addressing the contribution to knowledge narrative of the fifth research question, this study found that although generational differences existed among members of the different generational groupings, the majority of influences on career progression was related to other factors such as gender, profession, life-stage, or reduced opportunities, all of which appeared to have a significant influence. For some managers, particularly among the Baby Boomers, career progression was likened to a narrative. The participants demonstrated how particular attitudes and perceptions had influenced them, for example, societal norms and life-stage, which concurs with Becton, Walker and Jones-Farmer (2014).

Through conducting the documentary analysis on the Curricula Vitae, this study showed Baby Boomer had a conventional linear career progression, based predominately in one or two organisations, with female Baby Boomers career progression being affected by external family commitments.

For Generation X managers, the majority of Generation X women's career progression had changed significantly compared with their earlier working life owing to external commitments, such as having a family. However, for this generation, both male and female managers, were generally more pragmatic than the older generation concerning job moves. The documentary analysis on the Curricula Vitae indicated that early on in their working lives, Generation X managers moved every three to four years. Investigating current working patterns of Generation X now revealed that

these career moves had slowed down, changing from an average of three to four years to every four to six years.

For the Generation Y participants', the Curricula Vitae and the interviews indicated a number of influences, in particular that of profession or occupation. This study found that those in the medical, educational, financial and telecommunication sectors were reluctant to seek new experiences by moving professions. In contrast, for those managers in the service sector, their career and its progression to date had been comprised of a series of rapid changes and experiences in different jobs and organisations.

With regard to the psychological attributes of career progression, the findings revealed a potential generational difference in relation to interest, satisfaction, motivation and commitment. For the youngest generation the focus was on the 'interest' and 'satisfaction' aspects behind progressing in a career. 'Motivation', although seen as important, was rated lower, while among most of the participants, commitment was seen as almost irrelevant. The lack of commitment was demonstrated by the shorter tenure between roles, and attitudes to the organisation, employer, or sector. A common thread was that a career still comprises some form of 'climbing' or progression.

In contrast, the Baby Boomers rated the four elements (interest, motivation, satisfaction and commitment) equally. Some younger managers' progression was based on potential rather than having the necessary skills and knowledge. Of interest among the Generation X managers, almost irrespective of profession or gender, was the lack of importance attached to each attribute compared with the other two generations. Although valuing 'interest' and 'satisfaction' was seen as important, external commitments were seen as more important.

Finally, there was consensus among members of the different generations about controlling a career, although for different reasons, such as, the desire

to have greater opportunities (Generation Y), and work - life balance (Generation Y and Generation X). These views closely mirror Hall's (2002) *protean* career with managers modeling their careers to reflect their priorities. Also to emerge was sector influence on career progression. The findings indicated a greater propensity for managers in the service sector to have careers that resemble McCabe and Savery's (2005) 'butterfly' career pattern. For managers in other sectors, this 'fluttering in and out' of jobs and sectors was not evident.

These emerging themes from the interviews are depicted below in Figure 6.2. The data generated from the participants self-ranking, then the occurrences then ranked using documentary analysis approach to identify the dominant findings to categories the results into being low, medium or high. Figure 6.2 show that there are generational differences between the three generations, but there are also other factors which are influential. These factors include life-stage, family commitments and profession or sector of employment.

Figure 6.2: Generational differences in key characteristics affected by external influences

Baby Boomers 1945-1960	Male	***Male Career* stage** *Late* Pre-Retirement	**Potential Male External Attributes and Influences** Redundancies, illness, well-being, lack of opportunities, life -stage	**Male Characteristics** Interest (Important) Motivation (Important) Satisfaction (Important) Commitment (Important)
	Female	***Female Career* stage** *Late* Pre-Retirement	**Potential Female External Attributes and Influences** Societal expectations for family commitments, lack of opportunities, life-stage, legacy of looking after the family	**Female Characteristics** Interest (Important) Motivation (Important) Satisfaction (Important) Commitment (Important)
Generation X 1961-1979	Male	***Male Career stage*** *Mid* Established	**Potential Male External Attributes and Influences** Marital status, life-stage, fatherhood, family commitments, influence of sub-grouping	**Male Characteristics** Interest (Medium) Motivation (Low) Satisfaction (Medium Commitment (Low)
	Female	***Female Career stage*** *Mid* Established	**Potential Female External Attributes and Influences** Life-stage, marital status, family commitments, trading off work and family commitments	**Female Characteristics** Interest (Medium) Motivation (Low) Satisfaction (Medium Commitment (Low)
Generation Y 1980- to present	Male	***Male Career stage*** *Early* Exploration	**Potential Male External Attributes and Influences** Profession / sector, job security, economy, desire to control their career, attitude of self-entitlement	**Male Characteristics** Interest (Important) Motivation (Low) Satisfaction (Important) Commitment (Low)
	Female	***Female Career stage*** *Early* Exploration	**Potential Female External Attributes and Influences** Profession / sector, job security, economy, desire to control their career, attitude of self-entitlement	**Female Characteristics** Interest (Important) Motivation (Low) Satisfaction (Important) Commitment (Low)

6.5 Career Types

In answering the fifth research question: empirically, how are individual manager's career types and progression influenced by their generational grouping?, this section of the Chapter focuses specifically on career types, a key theme to emerge from the study was whether today's career is less organisation-centric and more *boundaryless* or *protean* in nature (Arthur et al. 2005; Hall, 2002, Arthur, & Rousseau, 1996). The current study investigated whether there was a generational change with regard to career progression. The participants' career types were studied using their Curricula Vitae timelines. They were asked which category best represented their careers types to date, to self-define themselves prior to the interview. This categorisation draws on Verburggen et al. (2007), who used six determinants to classify a career, namely, *bounded*, *staying*, *homeless*, *trapped*, *released* or *boundaryless*.

'Trapped', 'bounded' and 'staying' represent those individuals whose careers are organisation-centric. Verbruggen et al. (2007) perceive the 'bounded' category as representing individuals entrenched in a traditional stable career path, progressing linearly and working for one or two organisations. The individual expects the employer to take responsibility for providing a relatively high level of job security, a standard career track, pay, promotion and status in return for loyalty. The 'staying' category represents those who have changed employers regularly due to some form of discrepancy between their career aspirations and actual career path, however now believes that this discrepancy will be resolved. 'Trapped' individuals remain loyal to one organisation, but their career aspirations have changed therefore creating conflict at work; however, these individuals are stuck in a career as they are unable or unwilling to change. From a generational perspective, Gursoy et al. (2008) identify these employees as predominately Baby Boomers. Dries et al. (2008b) found a high level of need for job security among Generation Xs, not only the Baby Boomers. Wong et al. (2010) note that these changes in perceptions related to seeking job security, are more associated with age /career opportunities rather than generational traits.

At the other end of the Verbruggen et al. (2008) spectrum are 'homeless', 'released' and 'boundaryless' employees. A 'boundaryless' career represents those individuals who work for multiple firms, which has led to transferable skills and psychological satisfaction through the job moves. The 'homeless' category like 'staying' represents those who regularly change roles or employers, but still seek organisational security, but there is a disagreement between the individual and organisation over a particular situation or grievance, which although can be resolved are not expected to *stay*. 'Released' is the opposite of 'trapped', a loyal employee, although career aspirations have changed, the individual believes that the differences can be overcome, but it is expected to leave. Individuals who fit into the 'released' category perceive that to resolve current differences and achieve certain aspirations they need to be *released* to find a new, future career direction.

6.5.1 Baby Boomer Career Types

All of the Baby Boomers managers fitted into the trapped, staying or bounded category. Part of the reason can be attributed to the lack of opportunities as these managers reached retirement. This finding supports Davies et al. (2006, Becton, Walker & Jones-Farmer, 2014), who argue that the Baby Boomers display a high level of continuance commitment to an organisation owing to their perception of the high cost of leaving.

6.5.1.1 Trapped Baby Boomers

Of those Baby Boomers who categorised themselves as trapped, all identified their long commitment to the organisation, but also highlighted the lack of, or need for, organisational security. Many spoke about changes in their career aspirations but the feeling of being trapped in, or unable to leave, their current role. The interviews revealed various reasons for classifying a career as trapped, namely, family commitment, a perceived lack of future career growth, the need for financial security now, or in the case of Jim, a production line supervisor, having recently been made redundant:

> "About three years ago at the beginning of the recession, after being in that role for over 10 years, I was made redundant. Literally my world fell apart as I have always valued a stable job. Since getting another job back here, I have realised that job security is a thing of the past. I now tow the company line, but also realize that the company is not loyal to me… Although prospects are limited, I'm quite happy for the time having the stability of a monthly wage. …while not totally agreeing with the management for their treatment of me in the past and even now, I am remaining" (Jim, manufacturing, Baby Boomer - trapped).

Life-stage and financial situation were closely associated with the participants' self-classification. This mirrors Dries et al. (2008b), who posit that for many older workers, career aspirations remain focused on career stability. For those reaching the end of their working life, pension was acknowledged as a major incentive to remain loyal to their employer, hence causing them to become trapped. Tom, an assistant head teacher's comment typifies this:

> "Teaching is what I always have done apart from a little stint in horticulture. You never hear of teachers being made redundant …I remarried and need now to re-establish myself financially, so here I am at the same school, having to deal with an increasing workload and additional rules and regulations. Also my pension keeps me here, so I am staying or *trapped* here!" (Tom, teaching, Baby Boomer - trapped).

For others, for example, Kevin, a food and beverage manager, the need to meet other external financial commitments trapped them:

> "I have been here a long time, as I have commitments – sending my children through school for example, and now needing to send them to university, so my ambitions to work for example in hotels or even owning my own, has been somewhat tempered. Although I don't see my job in jeopardy, I suppose I'm trapped here, at least until the kids have graduated or I have retired" (Kevin, hotel sector, Baby Boomer – trapped).

Other participants, including Stuart, a deputy head teacher (see below), while identifying that career could make someone feel trapped, also exhibited a blurring of career types. Similar to Tom above, Stuart was 'staying', but also 'trapped' in his career:

"I am in the *staying* category no doubt about it. I worked in other schools, but now I am settled here as departmental head…job security has never been important, hence why I left one post for another. But like my aspirations, although they differ occasionally from the school's, my attitude to teaching and furthering my career has matured, so I am happy with my role here, so supposed I am *trapped*" (Stuart, teaching, Baby Boomer - trapped).

Although Stuart's comments indicate blurring of two categories, staying and being bound, this study identified that there is a generational association with regard to those who categorized their careers as trapped. A follow-up interview to ascertain why these managers felt trapped, revealed that for those who saw themselves as trapped or bound to their current employer rather than to their occupation, to be the result of their lack of motivation and opportunity to move to a new job, and their life-stage.

These findings support Dries et al. (2008b), who concur that those in this category tend to have, or seek a more traditional career, rather than having multiple employers (Baruch, 2004).

6.5.1.2 Staying Baby Boomers

The staying category represents those managers who were consistently on the move between organisations, departments and geographical locations, owing to conflicts or differences in the workplace, but now see organisational security as important, and are therefore now 'staying'. The interviews revealed that for the oldest generation: the Baby Boomers, their careers were no longer progressing as they had in the past, and they had therefore decided to settle or stay where they were. Other reasons for staying were family commitments, illness, being too old for further progression, or seeking long-term stability due to personal circumstances.

Ed, a doctor, best personifies the Baby Boomers who were self-categorised as 'staying.' Ed now sought long-term security and stability in his profession and with his current practice:

"My career has been successful, working for various hospitals in different locations, but I often found differences between senior management and myself. Now I am in a role and position where I am happier. I suppose also I am stuck now because of my age. I expect I will remain here either until I die or retire [laughter]. Here I am a doctor saying that [laughter]… This job also gives me a good pension; they listen and *respect* me, anyway I value job security" (Ed, doctor, Baby Boomer - staying).

Again the interview data indicates blurring of the categories; some managers were categorised as staying, but also saw their careers as bounded and themselves as trapped.

6.5.1.3. Bounded Baby Boomers

The bounded category represents those in a stable career; the individual seeks a high level of organisational security. The study revealed a generational and occupational / professional pattern. When determining the extent to which individuals' generations influenced them, the study found a generational paradox where life-stage was of primary importance. Some of the Baby Boomers (for example, Kevin, a food and beverage manager, who classified himself as 'trapped', left school at 16, became an apprentice in a hotel and then progressed steadily throughout his working life) when asked whether they had ever considered working for another hotel chain, take a sideways move, or lower position to attain a better work-life balance, replied negatively indicating he was 'bounded'.

"Throughout my career, I have progressed through the ranks either in this chain or in my original one, but always in hotels. I'm a hotelier through and through, so I am *bound* to the industry [and chain now]. My career has been a series of strategic moves with a better job title, responsibility and money as I moved on to the next job. I have never considered and probably even now, would not consider a sideways or lower grade for the sake of convenience or life-style; so in retrospect I value having a secure job" (Kevin, hotel sector, Baby Boomer - bounded).

Since they would soon reach retirement, Baby Boomers also saw their careers as bound to the organisation, owing to a lack, of or limited opportunities. Bill, a senior manager's comments reflect this bounded perspective:

> "I am certainly not planning to leave this company I have been here too long here anyway; I enjoy the job security too much. But I do in the next couple of years want to be on the non-executive board of directors here, as other opportunities have long gone in other companies. It is a place that I have always wanted to be, and it is also somewhere where I cannot cause too many problems [laughter]" (Bill, finance, Baby Boomer - bounded).

Reviewing the Curricula Vitae of many of the Baby Boomers (such as Bill and Kevin) revealed that their careers had followed the traditional career path. However, when Baby Boomer managers were asked to categorise their careers retrospectively, the majority described them as bound to a particular sector of employment throughout most of their working lives rather than one organisation. This finding contradicts Zemke et al. (2000), who maintain that this grouping tends to be loyal to an organisation, and supports Dries et al. (2008b), who maintain that they are loyal to a sector. However, this sectoral influence is not confined to the Baby Boomers.

The findings also contradicts the more stereotypical representation of a generation by generational writers such as Zemke et al. (2000) and Gursoy et al. (2008), who argue that a generation displays and exhibits shared attributes and perceptions, including pursuing an independent career and no longer being organisation-centric.

Although the Baby Boomers categorised themselves as staying, bounded and trapped, some findings highlight the contradictory and imprecise nature of generational studies. For example, Kirsty, a matron, who was approaching retirement, yet wanted new challenges and sought further opportunities:

> "I have been in nursing now for too many years to leave and do something else [bound]. Even with the after effects of the Agenda for Change (an initiative introduced to allocate posts to a set pay bands and

to provide the framework for introduction of a job evaluation scheme linked to pay and career progression based on knowledge and skills) and its radical changes to our jobs, I expect I will still remain with the Trust. …although I have to admit I have put myself forward for promotion – there is still life in this old dog" (Kirsty, nursing, Baby Boomer - challenged).

Kirsty's comment illustrates that not all members of the older generation perceived their careers as ending. There was little evidence from the interview data to indicate any significant generational influence: instead life-stage and the lack of available career opportunities were significant. Stuart, a deputy head teacher, encapsulates this: "I look at my father [pre-Traditional Generation] and how his career changed as he grew older, and this is now happening in my career. Much like my father, I am in a stable career within a stable profession" (Stuart, teaching, Baby Boomer-bounded).

6.5.2 Generation X Career Types

For this generation, the self-classification process was informed by the manager life-stage and influenced by their profession. The findings also revealed that the older members of Generation X echoed or closely matched those of the Baby Boomers, while the younger generational sub-group reflected the career patterns of the managers in the Generation Y grouping (see section 6.6.3.5 below), supporting the cross-over effected identified by Schuman and Scott (1989), Arsenault (2004) and Kupperschmidt (2000). However, unlike the Generation Y manager, none of the Generation X managers identified with a *boundaryless* career. This partly contradicts Davies et al.'s (2006) contention that the Generation X managers exhibits a lower job involvement than their younger generational contemporaries.

6.5.2.1 Trapped Generation X

The trapped Generation X managers were mainly in the older sub-group. The reasons they gave were lack of opportunity and their life-stage: "OK I have a stable career here, but I have reached the stage in my career where I feel trapped with regards to my goals and those of the school, with limited opportunity to change

these. But I don't think that my job is at threat, therefore job security has never been an issue, so I see myself as 'trapped' here as an assistant head teacher" (Alan, teaching, Generation X - trapped). Other managers identified career aspirations and financial commitments that had trapped them: "Even though I am in a good [stable] career [as a deputy head teacher], I would like to pursue my career goals elsewhere, as I cannot here. But I am also paying for my children's education, and then I expect I will need to set them up with a home afterwards [laughter] – so I am *trapped* here, paying for my children's future" (David, teaching, Generation X- trapped).

Similar to the Baby Boomers, the Generation X managers who felt trapped also identified themselves as staying or bounded.

> "I am 'bound' to nursing; my job is secure so I'm 'staying' here in this Trust. Even though I do not agree with the Trust and their policies at times, they have [sic] treated me very well when I was recently ill. So yes I am 'trapped' [as a charge sister] due to their commitment to me" (Cath, nursing, Generation X- trapped).

This finding confirms Arsenault (2004), Baruch (2004, 2006), Kupperschmidt (2000) and Schuman and Scott (1989) contention that a generation is linear rather than categorical.

6.5.2.2 Staying Generation X

The staying category was influenced by the participants' generational sub-group confirming the assertion that a generation is linear rather than categorical. For those Generation X managers who were staying, for example, Phil, an assistant head teacher, who was in the older sub-group, it was due to life-stage or the need for job security: "I am staying here; I have had enough of changing jobs. But I am staying here [as an assistant head teacher] as I am seeking job security. They also do listen to me, *respect* and treat me as an expert of sorts. So I am 'trapped' I suppose, or should I say I fit into the 'staying' category" (Phil, teaching, Generation X - staying). The younger Generation X managers were staying mainly due to external commitments, such as starting a family. Dave, a production line supervisor, who

recently became a father, saw external commitments as curtailing his career ambitions: "I was ambitious changing roles often, but I need now to put my family first and now want job security, therefore I am remaining where I am, becoming a secure 'company man'" (Dave, manufacturing, Generation X - staying).

6.5.2.3 Bounded Generation X

The reasons given for being seen as 'bounded' mirrored the Baby Boomers. For example, for Susan, a section leader, it was as a result of being content with her place of work and its security of employment: "I am in a stable career, and I am happy here… Anyway the opportunities have begun to reduce elsewhere as you have young children" (Susan, finance, Generation X - bounded). For others the lack of opportunity for rapid career progression with in other organisations resulted in the perception that their careers were 'bounded':

> "I suppose as you begin to reach a certain point in life, like starting a family or hitting 45 to 50, your career and your life changes and you begin to re-evaluate things differently. My career has been to one sector, and fairly stable. Now at my stage in life, there does not seem to be the same priority of needing to succeed, and at the same time opportunities beyond here have also been reduced after I became shift leader" (Alex, telecommunications, Generation X - bounded).

Other members of Generation X were bound to a particular sector or occupation and perceive a lack of promotional opportunities. The influence of personal commitments, as with Susan above, was also a factor for Will, a doctor below:

> "Even if I wanted to, it is not easy to change or move – you have to consider what other job I could do or which Trust I could work for. There is also the upheaval of the family, my partner's work, leaving some really good friends and of course, our parents who are getting no younger ...Those idealistic goals and dreams that you have in your early days when becoming a doctor, travelling around the world does change, and to be honest I am quite happy working here" (Will, doctor, Generation X - bounded).

This generation's perception of being bounded echoes Mainiero and Sullivan (2004) and Smith-Ruig (2009). Mainiero and Sullivan (ibid) contend that personal commitments tend to make both male and female employees *self-realising*: the individual re-evaluates work-life balance, and then shifts the emphasis away from being career-centric.

6.5.2.4 Homeless Generation X

The study revealed additional themes. For example, there were Generation X managers, mainly in the younger sub-generational grouping, who classified themselves as Homeless. The 'homeless' category represents those who have had multi-careers, whilst still attaching a high level of importance to organisational security, owing to a particular situation or grievance, felt that they were unable to do so (Verbruggen et al. 2007).

These managers also expressed the view that homeless is better than remaining, even if that included leaving without another job to go to (Dries et al. 2008b). Many of those who saw themselves as homeless reported that the main area of contention related to not being respected, or a lack of future opportunities. This finding reflects Hay (2000) and Loomis (2000), who maintain that this generation have considered leaving a particular job even if they became unemployed for a short period of time, based on not feeling that they received sufficient affirmation. Sam, a senior team leader, encapsulated this perspective:

> "I am seriously looking for something else. I have been here for nearly five years holding various roles but my current role has minimal management opportunities, therefore I need to move on. Being looked over [for promotion] has made me at loggerheads with senior management - shame really as I like the people here; many are my friends, and the job offers me financial security, which I value" (Sam, telecommunications, Generation X - homeless).

The conflict between individuals and the organisation led Nicola, a reception manager, to see her job as serving time:

> "…after being here for now five years, committed to the hotel, holding down various positions, it is definitely time to leave. I have really enjoyed the security of the hotel, but I have served my time and here they seem to run out of opportunities and training once you been here for any longer than four years" (Nicola, hotel sector, Generation X - homeless).

However, Nicola adds that with two young children the reality of changing jobs is limited:

> "…I also need to consider my children and whether the next place would be as accommodating, so maybe I'm really stuck [staying]" (Nicola, hotel sector, Generation X – homeless & staying).

In addition, those who fitted into the homeless category, apart from being the younger generational members, were in the service sector. Those in professions such as the public service, for example, teaching, nursing or other medical practices did not fit into this category. This is particularly pertinent, since (as noted above) some Generation X managers also experienced personal differences between themselves and their employers, and as a consequence, these individuals classified themselves as 'homeless,' without any loyalty to the sector or employer.

The second theme was the emergence of a generational divide. As seen in Nicola's comments, although some members of Generation X classified themselves as homeless, the majority were not prepared to leave their place of work without another job to go to.

6.5.2.5 Released Generation X

The 'released' category is the opposite of being trapped and represents those who had worked in the same organisation for a long period (stable career) and had experienced differences, or a discrepancy concerning their aspirations, but will leave believing that the differences cannot be resolved. This study found that members of

Generation X in the younger sub-grouping, predominately in the public sectors were in this category. For Sadie, a ward sister, resolution came about due to seeking a new role in nursing, but in a different Trust,

> "You have no choice or at least very little choice – although I am settled in my job [stable career], I have differences as to how the Trust operates sometimes. I would never consider leaving nursing, but the Trust [job security], yes" (Sadie, nursing, Generation X - released).

Throughout this study, no members of Generation X classified themselves as boundaryless. This finding contradicts Gursoy et al. (2008), but supports Dries et al.'s (2008b) conclusion that although the *boundaryless* career has been promoted as the future career type, employees are prepared to settle differences rather than simply leave a job.

6.5.3 Generation Y Career Types

This generational grouping's self-classification excluded the 'trapped' category, but included the 'boundaryless'. These managers' generation and profession were influential key factors. The study found that overall, Generation Y managers exhibited a higher level of voluntary employment turnover than their older counterparts, which contradicts both Dudley et al. (2009) and Barron et al. (2007), who maintain that Generation X and Y have a higher turnover intention than that of the Baby Boomers, and supports Davies et al. (2006), who contend that Generation X managers, rather than Generation Y, exhibit a lower job involvement and normative or semi-committed attitude.

6.5.3.1 Staying Generation Y

Among the younger generation, there were managers who were prepared to stay, but for different reasons than the Baby Boomers, or older Generation X group. Personal circumstances, such as family commitments, began to emerge as an increasingly

common reason. Colin's comments reflect this need for staying and seeking security due to family commitments: "I need to have secure employment now, before I worked for various Trusts. Even though I like the variety and freedom that work offered, I have a young family now and a large mortgage" (Colin, doctor, Generation Y - staying). Colin's comment mirrors Dave's above (see section 6.5.2.2); although from a different sectors and generations, Dave, held a similar view to Colin. Others managers' career progression was influenced by a subjective perspective, that is, being *respected*, or being seen as an *expert*: "Just like in my previous roles, I don't agree with every about the policies and regulations here, particularly surrounding ethical behaviour, and I am generally happy. I enjoy the security that this job offers and that I'm recognized as an *expert*, which does make a difference" (Kim, finance, Generation Y -staying). These comments of Kim, a team leader in finance, also mirror those of Phil, the Generation X assistant head teacher.

6.5.3.2 Bounded Generation Y

Those managers in Generation Y, who saw themselves as bounded by and dependent upon a profession, identified a desire to stay in a particular sector, and therefore to be considered 'bound' professionally. Jane is a member of Generation Y, who has been in nursing for the past 8 years, excluding her break for maternity leave:

> "As a nurse and having specialised [palliative care], in some ways I have pigeon-holed myself into what I do; now becoming a deputy ward sister in a palliative care ward. As a result, very few opportunities come along outside of palliative care, so I have become settled here with my almost planned career path and job security. Also my children are happy in their pre-school" (Jane, nursing, Generation Y - bounded).

While this finding supports Mainiero and Sullivan (2004) and Smith-Ruig (2009), who contend that due to personal commitments, individuals (mainly female) tend to *evaluate* their priorities in life and become less career-centric, it contradicts Sverke et al. (2002), who argue that there is a significant generational difference between

Generation Y and the Baby Boomer and Generation X groupings, since Generation Y are prepared to leave their current employment if conditions do not matching their expectations. Jane and Kim's comments (above) challenge Sverke et al.'s (ibid) conclusions.

6.5.3.3 Homeless Generation Y

This category represents those who were remaining with their current employers, until disagreement resulted in them being unable to remain. Their main area of dissatisfaction was a lack of promotional opportunity and not being 'respected'. These managers reflect Cassidy and Berube (2009), Barron et al. (2007) who maintain that this generation displays a tendency to voluntarily leave a job or a certain position. For those Generation Y managers who classified themselves as homeless, the contention between their current place of employment and themselves was sufficiently great that they were actively looking for a job with new employer.

Among the Generation Y managers were some who outwardly expressed the conflict between themselves and the organisation. The remainder hinted at a conflict of interests:

> "There are not many opportunities you know, as you reach duty management - it becomes more like 'dead-man shoes', and my career has been varied. So in some ways you need to decide, you know, whether you value the job as a regular income which I do, or the desire for a new challenge, which I also seek. But as you get bored you start, you know, asking questions about whether you can achieve your goals here or elsewhere. Then you begin to get restless which often leads I think to differences. As I don't like getting bored, you know – I will need to move on" (Mike, hotel sector, Generation Y - homeless).

Mike, a deputy reception manager's comments indicate that the need for promotion results in potential conflict. Unmarried and without children, Mike had no commitments, unlike others in this category.

6.6.3.4 Released Generation Y

Although they were relatively new to the workforce, some Generation Y managers' careers indicated a degree of long-term commitment to the organisation, while holding different expectations and aspirations. The majority of these Generation Y managers saw a career as encompassing more than just promotional opportunities: it included aspects such as recognition, as in the case of Jason, a sales leader:

> "My career has been stable, the model company man who never considering leaving here, therefore organisational security was never an issue. But recently I feel that I am being taken for granted, and no longer being recognised for what I do; so I am seriously refocusing my efforts to achieving my goals, but not necessarily in this current role" (Jason, finance, Generation Y - released).

The findings for this generation, contradict Gursoy et al. (2008), who maintain that Generation Y are not committed to any organisation or occupation, particularly if they are not recognised for their contribution or it does not reflect their values and perceptions, yet support Dries et al.'s (2008b) conclusion that although the *boundaryless* career has been promoted as the future career type, the younger Generation X and Y groupings are prepared to settle differences rather than simply leave a job.

6.6.3.5 Boundaryless Generation Y

Those in the 'boundaryless' category see a career as not bounded to one particular organisation, and hold no particular loyalty to their place of work (Arthur et al. 2005; Verburggen et al. 2007). In this study, very few who classified themselves as 'boundaryless' had a Curriculum Vitae indicating a *boundaryless* career. Those who saw a career as being boundaryless, did so predominately based on experiences earlier in their careers while they were in junior management positions. Ruth typifies this finding, and the paradoxical nature of the *boundaryless* career. As a junior manager in nursing Ruth found she was boundaryless but also bound: "I am loyal to nursing but not bound to this hospital; I see myself like a free agent. My loyalty is to me and my career [in nursing], particularly now I am training to become a ward

sister" (Ruth, nursing, Generation Y- boundaryless). To Ruth, the sector of employment is a key factor.

Although these managers classified themselves as 'boundaryless' and described themselves as not committed to their employers (e.g. Ruth above), further investigation revealed loyalty to profession. This loyalty was the result of personal investment, that it, obtaining a number of professional qualifications:

> "I have studied for the past three years to become a RN, so I don't expect to leave nursing… If the right opportunity came along somewhere else, but in nursing, then sure" (Ruth, nursing, Generation Y - boundaryless).

Gemma, a manufacturing shift leader, although self-classified as 'homeless', indicated a sectoral / boundaryless attitude to her profession:

> "You know I am here currently and I enjoy it; but yeah, I would take the opportunity for another job if I was offered. I would even leave manufacturing behind for the right opportunity [laughter]" (Gemma, manufacturing, Generation Y - boundaryless).

The majority of those managers who can be viewed as having a *boundaryless* career were young Generation Y managers in the service sector: "Boundaryless, am not loyal to here, the hotel industry, you know, just look at my resumé, it has not always been being a head hotel receptionist" (Emma, hotel sector, Generation Y – boundaryless). Mike, a self-classified homeless Generation Y deputy reception manager held a similar view: "My career to date has been left school, building trade, retail and now here. What next who knows?"

The emergence of profession or occupation as an influence is missing from previous career studies (e.g. Verbruggen et al. 2007; Hall, 2000; Arthur et al. 2005). The study's findings indicate that very few respondents had a *boundaryless* career. This supports Cohen et al. (2004), Guest and Mackenzie Davey (1996) and Pringle and Mallon (2003), who challenge the original assertions of Arthur and Rousseau

(1996), Briscoe and Hall (2005), Collin (1998) and Chudzikowski (2012) that the traditional career has become obsolete. On the other hand, the findings support Giancola (2006) and Rhodes and Doering (1993), who conclude that the *boundaryless* career is not as prevalent in the modern workplace, and that Hall and Chandler's (2005) assertion that neglecting the traditional career is naïve, is accurate. This study also partly supports Sullivan (1999), Inkson, Gunz, Ganesh and Roper (2012), Pringle and Mallon (2003), who question whether a career can be truly boundaryless, or unanchored.

Those who were identified as possessing *boundaryless* careers revealed a 'butterfly' pattern to their progression (McCabe & Savery, 2005). Their motivation was to develop and acquire professional expertise and core competencies; these participants had a strong desire to gain promotion in the organisation while attaining these attributes, thus resorting to 'fluttering' between roles and sectors.

6.6.3.6 Summary
The majority of the Baby Boomers were categorised as 'staying', 'bounded' or 'trapped'. In contrast, the younger generations (X and Y) described their careers as homeless, released and boundaryless. The youngest in the Generation Y grouping classified their career types as 'homeless', although sector had an influence. Those in the service sector perceived their careers as boundaryless, with little organisational or sector loyalty evident. This finding partly endorses Scase and Goffee's (1989, 1990) conclusion that younger employees are more dissatisfied in their careers than older employees, and challenges the idea of the *boundaryless* career (Arthur et al. 1995; Chudzikowski, 2012). Many of the participants who categorized themselves as boundaryless exhibited a butterfly career type. The Generation Y managers openly expressed a willingness to leave their place of employment owing to a lack of opportunity, or the feeling that personal aspirations could not be met. This attitude was not confined to one sector, although in some occupations it was not as pronounced. For managers in the medical or teaching professions, a career was established as part of their mindset, particularly in relation

to organisational commitment and not leaving a particular place of work if personal aspirations or opportunities for development were not being met.

The findings also confirm the work of Arsenault (2004), Baruch (2004, 2006), Kupperschmidt (2000), Schuman and Scott (1989), that a generation is linear rather than categorical, as those managers on the cusp or cross-over of another generation, shared similar values, attitudes and perceptions.

These findings are reminiscent of those of Van der Heijden et al. (2009), who investigated subjective and objective perceptions of employability. Van der Heijden et al. (ibid) and Zopiatis et al. (2012), call for Human Resource practitioners to be aware of the differences between employees of different ages when using performance appraisals to promote life-long employability and career success. Like Van der Heijden et al. (ibid), this study found that the younger employees perceived promotion in objective terms, such as gaining a higher salary, whereas those over forty, rated overall career promotion positively but from a more subjective terms. This study did find that there was an almost a blurring of Verburggen et al. (2007) career categorisation. For example between 'trapped' or 'bounded' (refer to section 6.5.1.1) and an echoing or cross-over effect as posited by Arsenault (2004), Kupperschmidt (2000), Schuman and Scott (1989) (refer to section 6.5.2). These findings indicate the complex and multi-faceted nature of a career.

6.7 Chapter Summary

To summarise the above findings, and answering the fifth research question, empirically, how are individual manager's career types and progression influenced by their generational grouping?, the career, career types and progression are closely associated with subjective and objective career attributes. The interviews showed that only the younger generation, Generation Y, was affected more by sector or occupation than gender. Those who were working in a sector that required a specific qualification were more committed to the sector of employment. Closely linked to

this finding was a strong indication that the youngest generation, Generation Y −
with their careers in the *Early* or *Exploration* stage − sought to *climb* in their careers.

Underlying these findings is the increased perception of having a more
boundaryless, *protean* career or even amongst the service sector of Generation Y
managers, a butterfly career pattern. There is no clear evidence that gender is an
important characteristic of influence amongst the Generation Ys as to influencing
their career path to date. This could be attributed to Generation Y have not started a
family yet, (see Appendix 3 Participant Profile). For the Generation X managers, the
gender and a commitment outside of the working environment has a particular
significance. There is also evidence that both Generation X and Y managers
perceive that subjective attributes such as a life outside of the workplace is essential.
While gender came to prominence amongst this generation due to life-stage for the
Baby Boomers, the interviews reveal significant differences in attitudes to the
subjective and objective nature of a career. Underlying this theme of life-stage, this
study concurs with the findings of Agle & Caldwell (1999), Posner and Munson
(1981) and Gomez-Mejia (1990) that values held by men and women begin to mirror
each other as their life-stages and occupations progress.

One key finding was that Generation X women were less inclined to give up their
careers when starting a family. The female Generation X managers saw this period
in their working lives as a suspension. The research identified that women in this
grouping tended to return to work within one to two years.

The participants' Curricula Vitae were analysed using a documentary analysis
approach, then contextualized during the interviews. This process enabled the insight
that the majority of Generation Y managers perceived their careers to date as being
predominately *boundaryless*, although none specifically categorised his /her career
as *boundaryless* in nature for the service sector managers. The interviews showed
that those in professions (teaching, nursing and finance) were bounded, staying or

trapped by their occupations. In contrast, those individuals in the hotel and manufacturing sectors saw their commitment as being significantly weaker, indicating that they were uncommitted and more *boundaryless*. These participants also showed a 'butterfly' or more transient approach to a career, 'fluttering' between jobs, roles and even sectors to build professional expertise and core competencies (McCabe & Savery, 2005).

An underlying finding was that job security impacts on an individual's career. Dries et al.'s study (2008b), Clark et al. (1996) and Scase and Goffee (1988) identified a noticeable U-shaped curve that represented the relationship between the generation, their life-stage and the importance associated with organisational security.

The Generation X managers perceived their careers as being mainly boundaryless. However, there were individuals who, due to increased commitments, were staying or bounded to the organisation. Some of this grouping reported that their careers had led them to feeling homeless or released due to unexpected circumstances, for example, family commitments. The Baby Boomers categorised themselves as staying, bounded or trapped, which is reflected in the work of Becton, Walker and Jones-Farmer (2014). For the majority now reaching the end of their economic careers, this was due to a lack of available opportunities and other factors associated with their life-stage, such as increasing importance surrounding retirement and pensions. Earlier in their careers, this grouping did have greater opportunities to progress in their careers, however for this generation there was a loyalty to the organisation and profession.

**Chapter Seven Findings part 3 -
Perceptions of what constitutes a successful career**

7.1. Introduction

This third findings Chapter generated from the main study addresses the sixth research question: empirically, when viewed through the Kaleidoscope Career model, how are individual manager's perceptions of a successful career influenced by their generational group?

The Chapter explains how the interviewees perceived career success, and then presents the findings relating to the objective and subjective nature of a career viewed through a generational lens. By way of illustration, the Kaleidoscope Career Model's (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005, 2006), three parameters, namely, balance, authenticity and challenge, as set out in the third and sixth research questions, and River of Time concepts (Powell & Mainiero, 1992), were used to better understand the multifaceted nature of a career and its associated success. The Chapter concludes by discussing the generational shift to seeking a work-life balance and greater authenticity in a career, themes identified in Chapter Six.

As mentioned in Chapter Six, all participants were able to define a career. None of the definitions were simple, since each participant saw career success as multi-dimensional and influenced by a variety of factors, such as remuneration or attaining a particular position in an organisation. All the participants viewed career success subjectively and objectively. The degree of importance placed on career success varied from participant to participant, and generation to generation. Time and the life-stage of the individual influenced this perception. The next section presents the findings associated with the perceptions of career success, and then investigates the subjective and objective nature of a career.

7.2. Career success

This study saw career success as the accomplished desirable work-related outcomes over time (Verbruggen, 2012; Arthur, Khapova & Wilderom, 2005), that encompasses 'the real or perceived achievements individuals have accumulated as a result of their work experiences' (Heslin 2005, p. 262), in

which objective or external attributes, for example pay, position, and promotions, or subjective or intrinsic determinants such as job and career satisfaction of success are attained. This study also drew upon Olsen and Shultz (2013) definition of career success of being a composition of objective and subjective attributes, that changes with the live-stage in area of motivation, desires and perferences.

It is apparent that what constitutes a successful career is very complex, as demonstrated by three generations of telecommunication managers' comments below.

> "I see people like the guy in the Bristol office who's younger than me and moving up the promotional ladder faster. He is now regional SW HRM [South West Human Resource Manager], but I don't see that he will necessarily, in my view, be any more successful than me" (Hilary, telecommunications, Baby Boomer).

> "Career success was once getting promotion, driving a good car, having my own office, but now after having a family, career success is less important to me" (Alex, telecommunications, Generation X).

> "[Career success for me] probably [is] being famous ...isn't that frightening?" (Chloe, telecommunications, Generation Y).

As seen in the above comments, career success is a multidimensional concept, consisting of and influenced by a number of criteria. There is a commonality in the criteria used that could be generationally informed and extends beyond the traditional external ideas of career success, such as remuneration or attaining a particular position in the organisational hierarchy. For the majority of participants irrespective of generation, career success had a subjective (internal) and objective (external) dimension. However, the objective and subjective nature of career success was dependent on gender, life-stage, occupation and generation.

Gattiker and Larwood (1990, p. 710) note that 'the examination of individual perceptions of achievement, which are important because [they] might reveal that

individuals feel differently about [their] accomplishments than an outsider might expect, has unfortunately not been a popular subject, so there is less research in this area'. Poole et al. (1993, p. 40) concur that 'one of the major shortcomings in the career success literature has been an inadequate conceptualisation of what career success means.' One reason for this perceived shortcoming can be attributed to the ease of use of external definitions of success afforded to those researching careers and career development (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1994; Melamed, 1995). As Bailyn (1989, p. 481) notes,

> '…on the whole it is easiest to assume that external definitions coincide with internal ones. It is instructive for example, to note how readily one falls into the presumption that upwardly mobile careers are experienced as successful'.

Reflecting these perspectives, the interviews enquired whether career success could be framed in a traditional context, or as seen today, as a more subjective construct. Traditionally career success is seen purely in an external, organisational context of hierarchical seniority and salary levels (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1994; Melamed, 1995). In recent years, academic research suggests that this perception has shifted, firstly, concerning how individuals perceive a career (Korman et al. 1981; Nicholson & West, 1989; Heslin, 2005; Sullivan, 1999), and secondly, questioning whether career success is individual, or shared by (inter-dependent on) the organisation. Although there has been a proliferation of publications concerning career success (e.g. Dries, Pepermans & Carlier, 2008; Derr, 1986; Rosenbaum, 1979, 1989; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1994; Melamed, 1995; Sullivan, 1999; Sturges, 1999; Sturges et al. 2002; Gentry et al. 2009) and generational differences in the workplace (e.g. Johnson & Johnson, 2010; Zemke et al. 2000; Gursoy et al. 2008; Dries et al. 2008b), this study questions whether their assumptions – and conclusions − are valid when these perspectives are combined. This questioning reflects Callanan and Greenhaus' (2008), Zopiatis et al. (2012), Costanza and Finkelstein (2015) 'call to action', that is, the need to study generational differences, because of the potential implications for organisational Human Resource planning and for individuals enacting a career.

7.2.1   Career Success and Generation Y

Interviewing those participants in the Generation Y grouping revealed that the perceptions held of career success were dependent on the age of individuals and their profession / occupation. From the outset it was apparent that sub-groups were a reliable means to group individuals (Arsenault, 2004, Parry & Urwin, 2011). For example, those in the younger sub-group of Generation Y, irrespective of gender, organisation, education or socio-demographic background, were more orientated to an external, objective, material idea of career success.

> "Success is meeting targets, getting promotion, a good salary, being recognised, a good team member and manager" (Kim, finance, Generation Y).

> "[Career] [s]uccess is about being challenged, achieving, being promoted, climbing the organisational ladder, getting a high salary and a place at the 'board'" (Chloe, telecommunications, Generation Y).

The above comments are indicative of many earlier Generation Y managers, which support Barron et al's. (2007) argument that this grouping still seeks to establish themselves by 'climbing' up the organisation, and are therefore focused on searching for a challenge (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005, 2006), and more materialist symbols, such as remuneration or status. The above comments also support McCabe and Savery (2005) and McCabe (2008), who recognise that service sector managers tend to have a 'butterfly' career pattern. 'Fluttering in and out' of positions and organisations, apart from providing the individual with the ability to improve professional expertise and core competencies, also enables this generation of service sector managers to attain career success.

Another theme related to career success was the importance associated with attaining goals and the extent to which Generation Y was prepared to achieve them. For example, James, a team leader, was prepared to leave his current job to achieve success elsewhere:

"I mean that's the final measure of success, I suppose, isn't it, in terms of your career, material possessions…because it's recognition…what you've achieved, how valuable you are to your company, whichever company that might be…they've said that you're worth enough money, that they're going to pay you x amount. If I was not being paid enough, I would seriously consider leaving" (James, telecommunications, Generation Y).

Other Generation Y managers (identified in Chapter Six) left jobs after being unable to achieve their perceived potential. Kim, a team leader in finance, was typical of these managers. Kim left being a secretary in retail since she felt that she deserved something much more challenging: "…both jobs were dead-end, and I thought that I couldn't achieve more [in them]" (Kim, finance, Generation Y). These viewpoints support Hays (1999), Loomis (2000), Wong et al. (2008) and Twenge et al. (2010a), who maintain that this generation are more likely to leave or 'quit' one job to seek alternative challenges elsewhere, such as a higher salary, or improved benefits. This finding partly contradicts Hall (2002), Korman et al. (1981) and Schein (1978), who contend that receiving a high salary or promotion do not necessarily lead to individuals' feeling successful. On closer examination, part of the perceptions held by Kim and James (above) can be attributed to their career stage.

Career success for others includes holding the perception that they have some form of entitlement; rather than gaining promotion through hard work, it is instead a prerogative. Chloe, a team and shift leader, for example, sees career success from an external perspective, and not necessarily through hard work:

"[Success] is … [pause]… to be in a position in the organisation where you have that responsibility and the rewards, you know the money… that is being successful… not necessarily being here for many years, or the amount of work you do, it is because you are good and worth it, and I am good and worth it [laughter]…" (Chloe, telecommunications, Generation Y).

Chloe's comments reflect Twenge et al. (2010b), who note that this generation, unlike previous ones, displays a self-interested almost narcissistic attitude, a

theme identified in section 6.2 of Chapter Six, and Twenge's (2006) naming the generation, the 'Me Generation'.

All the younger Generation Y participants were able to imagine their current perceptions of career success changing in the future. The anticipated change varied, however; for some this change could occur due to maturing or settling down. This projected change gives career success a subjective perspective. For Emma, a head hotel receptionist, it was due to potentially gaining promotion:

> "I am now reception [front office head] receptionist here, but I still remain ambitious to achieve my full potential whether it is in this role or something else… I am quite prepared to remain here if the hotel continues to provide me with the future career opportunities. If not, then sure, I would leave and go elsewhere" (Emma, hotel sector, Generation Y).

Emma's comment reflects Chloe's earlier perspective (above); also in the service sector, Chloe was prepared to 'climb' up the organisation, or alternatively embark on a butterfly career pattern to satisfy her perception of career success.

This shift in emphasis from external to internal attributes partly supports the idea that members of the younger generation, in this case Generation Y, at the commencement of a career, place a higher emphasis on the career's external aspects (Twenge et al. 2010). Underpinning this objective criterion is the close association with the importance surrounding job security. For example, James, while considering leaving what he does, highlights the need to take a measured, pragmatic viewpoint to attaining career success 'at any cost':

> "Since the recession [in 2008] you need to balance career reality with your dreams. Having no job means no money and no success" (James, telecommunications, Generation Y).

James' perspective matches that of Twenge et al. (ibid), who recognise the need for Generation Y to be more bound to an organisation, owing to the current economic uncertainty. This contradicts Gentry et al.'s (2009) contention that the youngest generation has become boundaryless, and also

Zemke et al. (2000) and Gursoy et al. (2008), who contend that the generation is now independent of the organisation.

This study's findings challenge Arsenault (2004), Lancaster and Stillman (2003) and Gentry et al. (2009), who maintain that Generation Y members are generally not searching for a particular meaning in work, but are instead seeking work-related experience and determinants like promotion and status. The study's findings validate the existence of generational sub-groups and reveal that the older Generation Y sub-group, and some of the younger Generation X managers are no longer seeking external attributes of career success. Instead the pursuit of an objective career seems to dissipate, or alters once the individual settles in a particular organisation or sector. What also emerged is the influence the particular sector has on how career success is viewed. Managers in the medical and educational sectors experienced a shift to incorporate a more personal perspective on career success, mirroring what Astin (1984) categorizes as being 'motivation by the need to contribute.' This change occurred after the managers had embarked on their 'chosen' career, concurring with Astin's (ibid) findings. This resulted in career success becoming more subjective, with attributes reflective of the individual rather than the organisation. Ruth, a young Generation Y and a trainee ward sister, stated:

> "…when I first started I wanted to be nurse, but I was not committed. Once you start, you seem to embrace something that becomes a part of you and your ideals" (Ruth, nursing, Generation Y).

Jane, now a deputy ward sister, shared this perspective: "When you become a nurse, you join a profession that is not money orientated like banking; it is something you are dedicated to and you seek something beyond money, even though I have flirted with the idea of becoming an agent nurse." (Jane, nursing, Generation Y).

This attitudinal change was not confined to the medical sector. Jason, an early Generation Y member in finance, who had recently embraced this sector since becoming sales lead, saw career success as extending beyond external attributes:

"I have now reached the stage that I am settled and I am seeking job satisfaction [success] on my terms that is more than checking my salary."

For other managers there was an ulterior motive. This included the motivation to pursue a more subjective approach to self-fulfillment through gaining 'respect', or being seen as a valuable member of staff to gain promotion. Some managers believed that being seen as an expert potentially enhanced their future promotional opportunities, for example with Mike a deputy reception manager: "I am now seen as *expert* in my job, and this although not necessarily here, can be a good thing for my future career and success" (Mike, hotel sector, Generation Y).

As previously mentioned, it emerged from the study that both male and female managers in the Generation Y grouping recognised and anticipated that once starting a family, the focus on career would become less important. This included the need to seek an improved work - life balance rather than pursue their careers in the traditional manner. Many managers realised the need to find a balance between their career and personal life, demonstrated in Shane, a production team lead's, Ruth, a trainee ward sister's, and Chloe, a team leader's comments below:

> "...when I settle down, sure then… unlike many of my colleagues here, work I expect will become a secondary priority and home life become more important… the idea of success will become my family, and work a means to an end … so less time chasing my ambitious targets and promotion" (Shane, manufacturing, Generation Y).

> "Although I remain ambitious, I also realise that there is life outside of the work. I suppose I 'work to live', rather than 'live to work'" (Ruth, nursing, Generation Y).

> "I think at this stage in my life I'm more interested in what's going on in my social life and getting promotion. When I settle down and have a family, work will be getting money to pay for the nappies or whatever, rather than promotion…[pause] and my current lifestyle will have to become more balanced, less of the partying [laughter]" (Chloe, telecommunications, Generation Y).

This change in focus away from a career due to family commitments, and the realisation that there must be more to life than work, supports Mainiero

and Sullivan (2005, 2006), who contend that women tend to have careers that combine seeking a challenge in their career and external commitment. Furthermore, the current study identified a generational shift among men, who were seeking a balanced career. Shane's and Ruth's comments challenge Mainiero and Sullivan's (ibid) claim that men tend to follow a more challenging, alpha-type career, and is more reflective of Smith-Ruig (2009), who maintains that men are seeking balance in their work and personal lives.

With regard to whether the Generation Y managers held an individualistic attitude to wanting to seek success on their own terms, this study contradicts Sessa et al. (2007), Twenge and Campbell (2001, 2009) and Twenge et al. (2008), who claim that members of Generation Y are more individualistic and self-centred, and have no intention of changing these strong traits. Instead this study contends that members of the Generation Y group recognise that future commitments will influence their need to seek personal aspirations over external commitments, for example, needing a work - life balance (Zopiatis et al. 2012; Barron et al. 2007; Broadbridge et al. 2006; Maxwell, Ogden and Broadbridge, 2010; Maxwell & Broadbridge, 2014), training (Proserpio & Gioia, 2007; Zopiatis et al. ibid), fair compensation and a positive company culture.

7.2.2   Career Success and Generation X

For those in the Generation X grouping, gender, occupation or profession and age were influential determinants. For female Generation X managers starting a family fundamentally changed their perceptions of career success. Susan, for example, a finance section lead, suspended her career for two years to have children. During this period Susan's perspective changed: "…before starting a family my life was centred on attaining sales goals. Although I still want a career my priorities have changed" (Susan, finance, Generation X). Nicola, a reception manager, likewise re-evaluated her career after becoming a mother: "With my first child I still wanted to work, and still chase my career ambitions, but family commitments simply changed this" (Nicola, hotel sector, Generation X).

Exploring this shift revealed that for both Susan and Nicola, a career had moved from being what Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006) and Sullivan and Mainiero (2007, 2008) term *alpha* or challenge orientated, to one that is *beta*, or balanced. In Susan's case it was also the realisation that external commitment needs to be balanced with work.

Referring back to the earlier career stages (see section 6.4.2), the study enquired whether the Generation X women had focused on the objective elements of career success advocated by Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006), or the more subjective elements presented by Hall (2002). Generation X women had experienced success early on in their careers through seeking and meeting work related challenges, yet now wanted a work-life balance. For these women there was a need to balance career success and personal life: "Even when I first started, success in a career was not everything to me, I wanted to have a life outside of work beyond being a senior team leader here" (Sam, telecommunications, Generation X). Other women viewed career success in terms of traditional constructs, such as status: "To achieve your goals and potential you need to put the effort in. I remember how I felt when I was first promoted at 20" (Yvonne, manufacturing, Generation X).

Although Yvonne, a team leader supervisor comments support Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006) and Powell and Mainiero (1992), who point out that before external commitments arise, an objective career such as promotion and remuneration prevails, this study contends that underlying this (as seen with Sam) there is a need to pursue a career while maintaining a work-life balance. What remains unclear is the extent to which profession or occupation rather than external commitments or generation influence this need to seek a work-life balance.

Most male Generation X managers viewed career success from both a traditional and contemporary perspective. Nicholas, an assistant food and beverage manager, held the view that career success remains in the traditional mould, that is, further success is achieved through 'climbing' up the organisation: "…career success still remains [even with a family] important to me, like gaining a good job title

and the benefits" (Nicholas, hotel sector, Generation X). Dave, a Generation X manufacturing manager, also saw career success in traditional terms:

> "I am still seeking a good job with some form of security
> [especially after nearly being made redundant] with all of the
> trimmings [salary, title, associated benefits] and above all, at
> present my biggest priority is providing for my family. If I needed
> to make a choice over my career and the family, then I have
> changed – the family wins!"

The latter part of Dave's comment indicates an awareness that external independent attributes such as starting a family will potentially impact on his career ambitions and priorities.

As previously mentioned, the traditional career perspective was not confined to male Generation X managers; female managers also felt that career success was an important aspect of working life: "…although I have a young family, my career and achieving my goals are important" (Yvonne, manufacturing, Generation X).

In contrast to the traditional viewpoint concerning a career, men in this generation acknowledged that from the outset they actively sought a balance between work and their personal life. For David, a deputy head teacher, this attitude was brought about by seeing his father made redundant: "I'm ambitious, but I saw how my dad was treated, although I am proud to be teacher, I want a life which is not dominated by achieving career goals [success] … this is only a part of me" (David, teaching, Generation X). David's viewpoint was influenced by witnessing his father lose his job in the 1970s, and the lack of commitment to an organisation in the aftermath of this event. This echoes Zemke et al.'s (2000) contention that members of Generation X are cynical, mistrustful, and independent, since they are influenced by the re-drawing of the traditional workplace.

There was further evidence of a shift among male Generation X managers who were seeking greater intrinsic value and balance in their careers. Part of this shift can also be attributed to maturity. Throughout his working life, Alex, a

Generation X shift leader and self-declared high flyer, set himself regular pay and grade targets, but now is uncertain what he wants to achieve in the future. He expressed an awareness that his career needs to reflect his personal values:

> "Well you could argue that perhaps the ultimate goal I had when I first joined this company was to become what was called an SMG [senior manager] and I've got a few more steps to become that …in terms of me being able to do it, I've got no issue; of course I'll be able to do it if I wanted... but nowadays, 15 years on, I'm not really bothered. I'm certainly less ambitious… I've stopped thinking in career terms at the moment… [I am] seeking a different role like being recognised for my expertise" (Alex, telecommunications, Generation X).

This change in priorities is associated with commitments outside the workplace, such as starting a family: "Becoming a father and the responsibilities of being this, made me re-think for the first-time my ambitions of wanting to progress from being team lead and enter into being a senior manager" (Richard, finance, Generation X).

> "…I always saw myself as a career driven person, even with the threat of being made redundant during my early career to now become a production line supervisor. But when you settle down and start a family everything changes, and career success does lose its importance. I am not as driven as I used to be. I enjoy spending time with my family rather than at work" (Dave, manufacturing sector, Generation X)

The men's re-evaluating of their perspective on career success reflects Smith-Ruig (2009), who proposes that as men grow older, the need for a challenging *alpha* career shifts to one that is more *beta* in nature. This includes seeking to balance work and personal life, and an emerging need for authenticity in a career. In attaining authenticity, individuals seek a career that permits them to be genuine, or true to themselves and aligns behaviours and attitudes with personal values (Sullivan et al. 2007).

7.2.3   Career Success and the Baby Boomers

The meaning of career success changed as the Baby Boomers' careers progressed. Underlying this change was the influence of gender and, to a lesser

extent, profession or occupation. The change entailed a shift away from actively seeking promotion and a higher level of remuneration to more intangible rewards. Among the male Baby Boomers, the intangible rewards were to 'leave some form of mark', for example, through extending a job role.

> "[What I am achieving now is] something that I can look back on and say 'I did that', I guess. Success in my career has changed and how I judge it. It is not simply getting an Oxbridge degree and becoming a doctor, it is more… I suppose I am doing what my mentor did as he reached retirement, actively taking the responsibility to pass on my knowledge to the next *generation*. It is more work, but definitely worthwhile" (Ed, doctor, Baby Boomer).

> "In my earlier days I was driven by achieving more money, promotion, but now I just want something that leaves behind my *legacy*" and not simply remember as a deputy head (Stuart, teaching, Baby Boomer).

Although the desire to leave a mark or legacy was unique to this grouping, these male managers were reaching the latter part of their careers. Consequently, their perceptions of career success were changing. This is indicative of Super (1953, 1978), who contends that career success changes as the individual grows older. From a male perspective the findings also support the findings of O'Connor and Wolfe (1987) that, due to their high career investment, as their career begins to plateau due to the lack of opportunities, as seen in the comments of Stuart and Ed above, they seek new challenges, such as being a mentor. From a purely generational perspective, Wong et al. (2010) and Appelbuam et al. (2004) emphasised the influence of age rather than generation when they investigated changes in career attitudes and perceptions; and Sullivan and Mainiero (2008) identified that men reaching retirement tend to re-evaluate a career and become more concerned with leaving a legacy. This concurs with Biggs et al. (2006) and Leach et al. (2013) who advocate that society and organisations needs to create an environment that facilitates the opportunity to pass on their knowledge and experience.

What the current study revealed, is that for those male Baby Boomers who had not reached their perceived full potential in terms of status or better

remuneration, external elements remained important. However, life-stage also had an influence, for example Tom, an assistant head teacher, still aspired to gain headship:

> "I'd like to feel that professionally and financially to some extent I've got to the level which I thought appropriate... and that I'd had the *influence* that I would like to have ...that's part of my frustration… I feel as though I've got a lot of *influence*, but I don't feel that's backed up by my [current] position really…" (Tom, teaching, Baby Boomer).

Tom recognised that his current position had been negatively influenced by a serious illness:

> "…my illness has in some ways hampered me now from taking that last step to headship, but there is nothing I can do. So I said before I am *trapped* here" (Tom, teaching, Baby Boomer).

Tom's re-evaluation came about as a result of realising that attaining the position he would have liked, was unachievable. In contrast, George, a regional manager, re-evaluated his perception of career success after reaching a stage in his career where he was being over-looked for further promotion:

> "Promotion and job title was [sic] the measurement of success: this has changed since becoming a father. When I was younger I was really career driven. I would gain promotion, and then I would be content, or at least for a while. But the measurement of success has changed... the success is for me now, although my career is still important ...but opportunities for further advancement have become less. I have been overlooked a number of times recently, although I still apply for promotional opportunities, my drive for career success has changed" (George, telecommunications, Baby Boomer).

This perspective indicates that for those who achieve career success as they perceive it, the motivation to continue to attain this attribute diminishes. In contrast, when career goals and aspirations are not met, the findings show that these ambitions remain (refer to George's comments above). This finding also echoes Callanan and Greenhaus (2008) who studying the Baby Boomer generation, call for organisations to capitalise, through their Human Resource programs, on the talents and expertise that this grouping has.

In contrast, this study found that Baby Boomer women's views of career success differed markedly from those of male Baby Boomers. Rather than simply wanting to leave a legacy, Baby Boomer women wanted to have a more holistic career.

> "My career is not simply the job title, the car or the role I play in the organisation. I am recognised now as an expert in my field beyond being a senior manager here, where colleagues come for guidance. I am also a mentor, a mother and a wife, who has responsibilities beyond the confines of the workplace" (Liz, finance, Baby Boomer).

> "It might be a gender thing, but you mentioned about 'a desire to leave your mark or legacy,' but I think most women have already done this as a mother. I think as women, it is more than this… at work we have needed to continually prove ourselves…We also bring a mothering instinct to the workplace. We [as women] are managers, a person of authority; yes, an expert in our chosen field, but also here to nurture not just for our own satisfaction, but for the profession as a whole" (Kirsty, nursing, Baby Boomer).

This study found that Baby Boomer women held a personal aspiration of wanting to be acknowledged as an expert in their field, while seeking to nurture junior members of staff, and balancing external responsibilities. These facets enabled them to remain genuine or true to their personal values. This desire to be seen as an expert reflects the views of Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006), Sullivan and Mainiero (2007, 2008), Enache et al. (2011) and Powell and Mainiero (1993), who maintain that women tend to pursue an authentic career based on their personal values. This finding also confirms Greenhaus, Callanan and Godshalk's (2009), Gallo's (1989), Bell and Nkoma's (1992) claim that women see career success holistically. Melamed (1995, p. 35) states that:

> 'Women's achievements are influenced chiefly by merit …
> [degree of] domestic responsibilities, and favorable organizational
> and opportunity structures; men's are influenced by personality
> and societal opportunity structure'.

In addition, Cheung and Halpern (2010), Clark et al. (1996), Marshall (1995) and Gilligan (1982) contend that female and male careers are the reverse of each other.

This study's found that the Baby Boomers' perception to career success reflects Agle and Caldwell (1999) and Gomez-Mejia (1990), who points out that the values held by men and women contradict each other as they progress in their occupations, before finally mirroring to some extent each other. Women tend to value connectedness early in their careers, but then become more individualistic. In contrast, from the outset a man's career development is predominately driven by an emphasis on individual achievement and accomplishment, but later changes to being more connected with others. This study also found that Baby Boomer women felt a connectedness in their early careers whereas male Baby Boomers felt it later.

There was also consensus among Baby Boomer women that career success was not significantly pivotal in their lives: "I see myself as successful not just in terms of a career, but as a mother and wife" (Liz, finance, Baby Boomer). Jill, a duty manager, saw that her career and potentially being successful would have to be put on hold when she first became a mother: "…everything changes when you have a family; your career dreams are left behind" (Jill, hotel sector, Baby Boomer).

For those women who perceived that they had achieved a successful career (with or without having had a family), success was attained through hard work: "I see my success in terms of my commitment and hard effort, and not through now needing to pass on my *legacy*" (Kirsty, nursing, Baby Boomer). "I see my career as successful as I have achieved all that I see as important to me, but it has been through hard effort and against the odds" (Liz, finance, Baby Boomer). In explaining her use of 'against the odds,' Liz cited the organisational barriers and the lack of true meritocracy preventing her from reaching her career goals and her current position of a senior manager: "It might be easier now, but in the past women could not achieve their full potential, and I saw career success as attaining these goals like becoming a senior manager and having the

responsibility" (Liz, finance, Baby Boomer). There was consensus among female Baby Boomers that career success was determined through meeting external commitments, but on their own terms rather than those of the organisation. Kirsty and Liz's comments (above) support Greenhaus, Callanan and Godshalk's (2009), Gallos's (1989) contention that a woman's perception of a career is not the same as a man's, due to other determinants such as starting a family and societal pressures of bring up a family.

7.2.4   Summary

The study revealed that career success is complex and multifaceted and extends beyond traditional parameters. Irrespective of generation, gender, and life-stage, this study found that occupation or profession, had a significant influence. For Generation Y, success was a composite of objective features (salary, remuneration) and the desire for subjective elements, for example, being recognised for their expertise. There was also an acknowledgement that the objective focus (for example, remuneration) would decrease when their careers became more established. Sector also had an influence, for example, many managers in the service sector were prepared to either 'climb' up the organisational promotional ladder, or opt for a butterfly career.

Some Generation X managers indicated that career success is denoted by following the traditional pattern, while others saw a successful career as more subjective and based on personal values. Part of this could be attributed to the age of the members in the generation, with the older Generation X managers seeing career success in terms of traditional symbolism, for example a successful career defined by job role. Among the Baby Boomers there was a gender divide; male managers sought to leave a legacy, while also recognising their original motivation to attain career success, defined by objective elements, for example, promotion, status and remuneration. Both Generation X and Baby Boomer women's commitments outside the workplace superseded the desire to attain a traditionally successful career. The extent to which this stifled career success was related to the generation. From these findings, it is also possible to conclude that

Olsen and Shultz (2013) notion that career success is influenced by the age or life-stage of the individual, but also by the person's generation.

7.3.   Objective Criteria of Career Success

In answering the sixth research question: empirically, when viewed through the Kaleidoscope Career model, how are individual manager's perceptions of a successful career influenced by their generational group?, the study focused on the first parameter of the Kaleidoscope Career model, a challenge. Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006), see a challenge as being an objective aspect of career success. From a generational perspective, this study asked whether in the light of career success which has more recently been measured subjectively, an objective criterion has any continued relevance. The external criteria of success include elements such as climbing or gaining a position / role in the organisation's hierarchy (e.g. grade), level of pay (remuneration) and related status symbols (e.g. rewards). The interviews revealed a blurring of consensus among the generations with regard to the relevance of the objective nature of career success owing to the influence of non-related or external attributes.

7.3.1   Baby Boomers Objective Career Success

Since members of this generation were approaching the end of their economic career, use of the objective career construct gave ambiguous results. When the generation first entered the workforce, objective career success was viewed as essential by both the organisation and the individual. The findings revealed that this perspective still resonates among the generational group, particularly among the men. Male Baby Boomers viewed wages and status as important mainly due to external commitments.

Status remained a tangible indicator of career success. "Success, like being seen as an expert in your field, can only be achieved through holding a certain level of seniority, like in my current role as a senior manager here" (Bill, finance, Baby Boomer). Kevin, a food and beverage manager, held a similar objective view:

> "When I first started you've got to be seen as being successful, like moving up the ladder, [but now it is about] being seen to be an

influential person, or an expert in your field ...but the role you have
[objective criteria] is [still] the essence of what makes a career and
me successful" (Kevin, hotel sector, Baby Boomer).

Kevin's and Bill's views support Sullivan and Baruch (2009), Hennig and Jardim
(1978), Powell and Mainiero (1992, 1993) and Cherrington (1980), who found
that male Baby Boomers held an objective perspective on career. Among the
female Baby Boomers, it was less pronounced, partly as a result of commitments
outside the workplace. Unlike their male colleagues, many Baby Boomer females
had taken time away from a career, resulting in a reassessment of personal and
work-life priorities: "The job title and a good salary does show others how
successful you are, but everything fundamentally changes when you become a
mother" (Liz, finance, Baby Boomers). This finding supports Melamed (1995)
and Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006), who contend that due to the demands of
external commitments, women tend to pursue a balanced and authentic career
rather than seeking an objectively defined or challenge-orientated one.

However, there is general recognition that during the early stages of their careers,
Baby Boomers, irrespective of gender, were driven by objective drivers. This
study revealed that in the context of their current working careers, both genders
saw these objective drivers as less important, and had replaced them with
subjective factors, including the need to be recognised as an expert. For Andrea,
a matron in a hospital, this shift came about as a result of a reduction in
opportunities as she reached a certain stage in her working life after being away
from nursing for 11 years:

> "I've noticed since being the wrong side of 50, a distinct drop in
> opportunities… I remember before I started the family, I was almost
> eaten up with ambition. When I came back after 11 years away [while
> caring for the children], I still wanted to make that next move up in
> nursing, but the opportunities were no longer there… what I feel now
> is, the opportunities are no longer there, for whatever reason, and I
> think 'so what?' ... I enjoy what I'm doing now, and that is more
> important to me" (Andrea, nursing, Baby Boomers).

Other Baby Boomer women, for example, Cassandra, also a matron, noted how their profession had informed their perception of whether career success is objective:

> "When I first started my working-life, I was ambitious, focused on making money and wanting promotion. By then I left sales admin because I wanted a more meaningful job, and went into nursing. As a nurse and a mother, believe me, your attitude to wanting more and more money changes" (Cassandra, nursing, Baby Boomer).

With George, a regional telecommunication manager, the shift came about when his career entered the *Pre-Retirement* stage (Super, 1980); without any future opportunity to progress, he decided to seek other facets of career success: "I gained the promotion that I sought and decided that I wanted more than just climbing that greasy pole, so I have revised my meaning of what a career means to me" (George, telecommunications, Baby Boomers).

7.3.2   Generation X Objective Career Success

The Generation X managers, irrespective of gender, ranked grade, status, rewards and remuneration as equally important, but not essential in building career success. For this generation, there was a more measured attitude to these objective determinants. The interviews indicated that authenticity and career success extend beyond the traditional confines. There was a desire for greater freedom in decision-making and additional leisure time: "A good salary is important, but so is a life outside of work [and being a team leader] and of course, my family" (Richard, finance, Generation X). Others Generation X members sought a career that enabled them to be recognised as an expert or knowledgeable person:

> "I see career success as being more than just a job title [a reception manager] or a company car. For me, being recognised as an expert in my specialty is equally, if not more important, to me as a person" (Nicola, hotel sector, Generation X).

However, Richard's and Nicola's perspectives were not shared by all Generation X managers. This study revealed that gender, sector of employment and a

potential blurring of generational boundaries were influential. For example, Nicholas, an assistant food and beverage manager, who worked in the same sector as Nicola (above), expressed an opposing perspective: "… [career success is] promotion, income and impact" (Nicholas, hotel sector, Generation X). Closer examination of these two manager's profiles revealed that Nicholas was a young member of the Generation X generation, while Nicola was in the older sub-group. When compared with the Baby Boomers and Generation Y managers, Nicholas' perspective closely mirrored those expressed by Generation Y managers (refer to section 7.3.3 below), while Nicola's view was identical to that of Kevin, the Baby Boomer food and beverage manager (refer to section 7.3.1 above).

A similar difference emerged comparing Susan's (below) and Richard's (above) comments. In this instance the gender roles were reversed; for Susan, also a young Generation X a section financial lead, career ambition through gaining promotion remained a priority:

> "…although I would say that I have changed my priorities in gaining promotion, I still remain ambitious. Success in my career at least is based on job title, getting the annual bonus and the recognition for this" (Susan, finance, Generation X).

Other opposing views included those of Cath, a charge sister, Alan, an assistant head teacher and Alex, a telecommunication shift leader. All three were young members of the Generation X grouping; however, they worked in either the public sector (Cath and Alan) or in telecommunication (Alex).

> "I see the role of a nurse as a key motivator. I am not in nursing for the money. If you wanted a high salary you would not be working for the NHS. I am here first and foremost to care for people" (Cath, nursing, Generation X).

> "As a teacher, the role determines you and your priorities. If I wanted the higher salary I would have entered merchant banking" (Alan, teaching, Generation X).

> "I have been promoted a number of times since being here [British Telecom]. Each time I have gained promotion I have received the recognition and a better salary. This definitely influenced my attitude at the time as to how successful my career was, you know the job title and the financial rewards" (Alex, telecommunications, Generation X).

Although Cath, Alan and Alex are close in age, these findings indicate that the sector of employment may potentially influence how this generation views career success. For those in the non-service sector, profession was more central for the participant than the objectiveness of career success.

From these findings related to members of Generation X, it is possible to see the multifaceted and complex nature of career success (Kowske et al. 2010; Giancola, 2006). Susan's and Richard's comments indicate a potential blurring of generational boundaries among those of the older or younger generational sub-grouping, while with Cath, Alan and Alex, members of the same generational sub-group, this blurring remains unclear. Instead Cath, Alan and Alex's comments reveal the potential influence of sector and gender. Underlying these findings are the fundamental changes in expectations compared with those of the managers of the Baby Boomer generation. This can partly be attributed to the changes in the early 21st century workplace and in society. Yvonne (a manufacturing team lead) and Sam (a senior telecommunication team lead), two Generation X women managers, and Richard, (an insurance team lead), a recent Generation X father, commented on these changes.

> "I am now 44. My mother was a secretary before she had me. Then she became a full-time mother for about 11 years, before returning back to work. For me, yes I am a mother to 3 children under 10, but I returned back to work after 3 years. I could not stay at home any longer as the job, the position and responsibility I hold defines me. Also I think that changes in employment law in the past two decades have also allowed me, as a woman to follow my career aspirations" (Yvonne, manufacturing, Generation X).

> "When I say career success is not important, my job, the position I hold, the salary I have, I still want. When I compare my career to my mother's or grandmother's it has definitely changed. It was the accepted norm for both of them to stop work once they got married and started a family. Today, society accepts and in fact

> encourages women to be mothers, housewives and still hold down a career" (Sam, telecommunications, Generation X).

> "Career success is important, but so is being a father. Patrimony leave and increased flexibility in the workplace has assisted me compared to my father. For example, I could take time out when my children were born. Even now, I still try to match work-life with family" (Richard, finance, Generation X).

Sam's and Yvonne's comments also differ considerably from those of Liz and Andrea (above). Family commitments fundamentally changed Baby Boomer women's attitudes to seeking objective career success, a theme of Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005, 2006) Kaleidoscope Career Model, where women seek 'work-life balance' and 'authenticity' in a career. In contrast, there is evidence to suggest that status and remuneration significantly influence female Generation X managers, as they continue to balance family commitments. Societal and workplace changes enable family commitments and career aspirations to meet. This finding challenges Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005, 2006) contention that women have moved away from the *alpha* type career to one predominately work-life balanced and authentic. Furthermore, Richard's comment of actively wanting career success that includes a work-life balance also contradicts Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005, 2006) assumption that men continue to seek an objective, challenging, *alpha* career.

7.3.3 Generation Y Objective Career Success

Since members of the Generation Y were establishing themselves in their careers, grade, status and remuneration were perceived as important, which verified the importance of life-stage as a key determinant in this study. The main additional influential attribute for this generation was the sector of employment. For managers in the service sector or in those jobs that did not require a specific professional qualification, the objective nature of career success such as promotion, remuneration and status were essential.

> "A good job title, salary, indicates for those around you that you are successful" (Kim, finance, Generation Y).

> "Success is a good salary, the job title and the recognition of what you have achieved" (Gemma, manufacturing, Generation Y).

> "Yes, money, the job title, the responsibility – these are very important. Again I left retail for these reasons" (Emma, hotel sector, Generation Y).

In contrast, Generation Y managers in the public sector or in a profession that required a prerequisite qualification, there was less of an objective focus on career success.

> "I would say that being successful in nursing is doing a good job, but also becoming a senior nurse" (Ruth, nursing, Generation Y).

> "As a teacher, although I am ambitious, I am not driven by a huge six figure salary, like with the bankers. If I was, I would have gone into banking" (John, teaching, Generation Y).

> "I am in nursing to care for people, and as a part of the NHS; you are not driven by salary. If you are the sort of person who wants the mega salary you wouldn't spend 4 years doing a nursing degree, that is for sure" (Ken, nursing, Generation Y).

This finding also appears to reflect the earlier perceptions held by Baby Boomers (refer to Kevin's and Cassandra's comments above in section 7.3.1); however, as discussed in section 7.3.2 (above), there have also been fundamental changes in expectations among the generations. These changes can partly be attributed to societal and workplace changes, for example, greater gender equality in the 21st century workplace.

Although position in the organisation and salary were important, there is a suggestion that personal and professional challenges were also motivators:

> "That's where the challenge is for me, to break that very hard barrier of the senior management... a woman gaining senior management is now a lot more achievable. If I don't reach SM [senior management] and on my terms, then I think I will consider my career as being less successful" (Kim, finance, Generation Y).

Many members of the Generation Y saw external factors, such as salary and status, as essential aspects of career success: "…without the job title and the salary how can someone be seen or be recognised as a success?" (Chloe, telecommunications, Generation Y).

The interviews also showed that among Generation Y members the importance attached to objective attributes, such as monetary reward, were not only associated with external appearance (as in Chloe's case), but also involved debt, as in Ruth's and Jason's cases: "I have completed three years of uni, and now I have to pay back this debt, therefore getting a good salary is important to me" (Ruth, nursing, Generation Y). Jason, a financial sale lead, also needed to clear his debt: "Even though I work in finance, I am up to my neck in debt. That is even without the rise in tuition fees. I have about £5,000 to pay-off from my uni days to my parents" (Jason, finance, Generation Y).

This finding supports Super (1980), who notes that earlier in a career, the individual seeks external, objective attributes, such as money and remuneration. Arthur, Khapova and Wilderom (2005), Van der Heijden et al. (2009), Poole et al. (1993) add that despite the increasing importance of internal measures of career success, objective external criteria remain a 'necessary component'.

7.3.4   Summary

In answering the sixth research question, the study focused specifically on the first parameter of the Kaleidoscope Career Model, the 'challenge' or objective criteria. The comments above represent a range of interviewees' opinions and perceptions with regard to the relevance of objective criteria in classifying career success. Although the importance associated with these external criteria has declined over the past 20 years (indicated in Kevin's comments above), they remain relevant. According to Dries and Verbruggen (2012), Baruch (2004, 2006), Guest and MacKenzie Davey (1996), Verbruggen et al. (2007), Walton and Mallon (2004), Hall and Chandler (2005), the traditional trappings and associated perceptions of career success are far from dead, which challenges Hall's (2006), Arthur et al.'s (2005); Arthur's (1994) and Chudzikowski (2012)

opposing contention that career objectiveness has been replaced by more subjective elements. What is also evident is that for many of these managers, organisational commitment, job security and salaries remained important. However, what cannot be established is whether this perception was in anyway related to the individual's organisational potential, as identified by Dries, Van Acker and Verbruggen (2012).

This study revealed a potential blurring of generational differences (Giancola, 2006; Murray, Toulson & Legg, 2011; Costanza, Badger Fraser & Severt, 2012; Arsenault, 2004; Pekela, 2001; Troll, 1970). This blurring challenges Schaie (1965, 1983, 1994, 2012), Sessa, Kabacoff, Deal and Brown (2007), Rhodes (1983), who introduced the concept of uniquely shared generational characteristics. Schaie (1965) believed that a generation's birth date uniquely defines the individual; due to being born in a certain year the individual will experience the world differently from someone born earlier or later. This study concurs with Mannheim's (1952) concept of a 'Generation' being essentially a sociological phenomenon based on the biological rhythm of birth and death, in which successive waves of individuals reach adulthood, influenced by the prevailing culture, or historical period. In comparison Scott (2000) and Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman and Lance (2010), contend that the concept is social rather than biological, and that experiencing a specific historical condition can result in distinct shared ideologies and beliefs being formed. Scott (ibid) adds that the formative years provide the anchor according to which later experiences are interpreted. Furthermore, values and perceptions held by one generational grouping are societally influenced; what is unfamiliar and unperceived in one generation becomes familiar and obvious to the next. This occurs due to the person's upbringing and formative years, which becomes a future reference point. In conclusion, while indicating that a generation is far more important in determining an individual's beliefs than, for example, gender, Scott (2000), Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman and Lance (2010), Lyons and Kuron (2014), acknowledges that the effects of a generation are intertwined with age, that 'generation' and 'age' are almost impossible to disentangle.

This study suggests that for managers among the older generations (Baby Boomers and Generation X), age and career stage resulted in a shift to varying degrees away from the perceptions of career success in objective terms. Career success was more closely linked to the individual's life-stage. Furthermore, this study found that gender is also influential (refer to section 7.3.1). These findings are supported by Lyons and Kuron (2014), Lyons et al. (2012), Bernald, Killworth Kronenfeld and Sailer (1984), Rhodes and Doering (1993), Appelbaum et al. (2004), Sorokin (1947), Kertzer (1983) and Giancola (2006), who point out that a career is more influenced by life-stage and gender than generation. This contradicts Johnson & Johnson (2010), Zemke et al. (2000), Kupperschmidt (2000), Egri and Ralston (2004), Brousseau et al. (1996), Hirsch and Shanley (1996) and Gursoy et al. (2008), who maintain that a generation operates almost in isolation from other groupings. But in contrast the findings of this research, suggest members of a generation are also influenced by other characteristics such as gender and life-stage.

This study contends that the objective attribute of a challenge for all three generations (Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y), could be used to define career as being successful, however there are significant differences. From the findings, there emerged four objective criteria: *grade*, *reward*, *remuneration* and *status*. For Baby Boomer managers there was gender divide as to how objective challenge attribute was viewed. Male Baby Boomers saw grade, reward, remuneration and status as essential, whilst for female Baby Boomers, the four criteria were less important.

For the Generation X and Generation Y managers, irrespective of gender, these objectives attributes were seen being important, but not essential. From the findings it is possible to suggest that there is both a generational divide amongst Baby Boomers, and a blurring of the generational perceptions (Generation X and Y) associated with viewing career success objectively. The findings confirm the complex nature of career success.

Through exploring career success through Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006), Kaleidoscope Career model first parameter, a challenge, this study found that a

challenge was simply an objective means to define career success. Instead to emerge from the findings, a challenge in terms of career success neglects the individual's internal perceptions of what constitutes success (Gunz, 1989; Derr & Laurent, 1989; Briscoe et al. 2012; Briscoe & Finkelstein, 2009).

7.4   Subjective Attitudes to a Career

Barley (1989, p. 49) suggests that perceptions of career success have become more individualistic. Barley (1989) believes that individuals internalise their perceptions of career success by drawing upon their own personal life experiences. Peluchette (1993) and Zeitz et al. (2009) add that the subjective view of a career is concerned with how the individual feels about his/her accomplishments and future aspirations.

The shift to a subjective perspective on career is further encapsulated by Savickas (1995), who argues that from an 'authentic' career perspective, there is an evolution from the traditional trappings of a 'job', such as status and wages, to a more internalised perspective that includes 'experiences', such as job satisfaction. Underlying societal changes have influenced what employees seek in a career, for example, a sense of belonging, self-achievement and recognition (Foster, 2013, Lewis, 2015; Zemke et al. 2000; Kupperschmidt, 2000; Gursoy et al. 2008).

To explore the subjective nature of career success, the current research used Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005, 2006) and Sullivan and Mainiero's (2007, 2008) Kaleidoscope Career Model challenge parameter, except from a subjective perspective, commencing with this attribute.

7.4.1 Subjective Challenge

This parameter represents an individual's need to learn, grow and find stimulating, exciting work. Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006) view *challenge* as important to those individuals who are centred on work achievement that is, achieving certain goals and aims. For some it is a form of personal validation, a way to learn and growth; for others it is a way of developing expertise. Mainiero

and Sullivan (ibid) view *challenge* from a predominately objective perspective, whereas this study categorised it as *subjective,* which better demonstrates the multi-faceted nature of a career.

7.4.1.1 Baby Boomers Attitude to a Subjective Challenge

Baby Boomer members viewed challenge as objective and subjective in nature, since it is influenced by gender, the individual's position and life-stage. Although the Baby Boomers, particularly the men, saw challenge as an objective construct, there were some Baby Boomer men who saw it subjectively.

> "Yes, I would say challenge is a vital aspect of a career…although I used to see career success based on gaining promotion through meeting challenging goals such as meeting budgetary goals, I don't anymore. I now see career success differently…the challenge in my career is to be recognised as a person of influence who is able to positive influence the team around me, and I see this as a sign of my career being successful. Being able to influence positively the team has given greater satisfaction and lets me be true to my values [authentic]" (Kevin, hotel sector, Baby Boomer).

> "As you grow older, you definitely change from being focused on seeking promotion or a higher salary to having a more a *meaningful* career. Although I still see success in a career needing a challenge and this still motivates me, I have been seeking a role that permits me to put something back into the business…Recently I have been seeking a role that is based on personal values [making my career authentic] which has been a challenge in itself as it not part of my current role or remit" (Jim, manufacturing, Baby Boomers).

> "A challenge is important. As I reach the end of my working life, I feel *challenged*, if that is right word to use, to put something back into the business and not simply driven by my desire to have a better salary or further promotion. I now see success in my career as being linked to my values and ethics rather than simply driven by your own personal goals of seeking promotion. This had led me to now assist younger, up and coming members to achieve their goals, rather than simply gaining mine" (George, telecommunications, Baby Boomers).

Reduced promotional opportunities among the male Baby Boomers led them to revise their priorities and aspirations. As seen in Kevin, a food and beverage

manager, Jim, production line supervisor, and George, a regional telecommunication manager's comments (above), this has led these managers to seek a subjective pursuit of career goals in the form of personal challenge.

In contrast, female Baby Boomers spoke about the impact of having a family and how this had changed their perceptions of career success and the need for a challenge. For Baby Boomer women, a challenge was viewed less objectively and more holistically:

> "A challenge is important in a career, but I think it is male thing. I have enough challenges already [laughter]. When I was first starting out [working] sure yes, but it is not essential now, you know a family is challenging enough" (Liz, finance, Baby Boomer).

> "I would say that a challenging career is more of a male than female thing. When I look back when I first started my family, it was expected [as a woman] to simply stop, postpone, pause or sacrifice your career. This was the norm. …But also the drive for a higher salary to gain promotion pales into insignificance when you have the responsibility of looking after your family. A family fundamentally changes you, and includes your priorities and values, in fact how you see yourself…When I returned back to the work after X years away, you come back definitely changed, and there is a more motherly dimension to your attitudes and values as to work and towards colleagues" (Hilary, telecommunications, Baby Boomer).

Liz, a senior banking manager and Hilary, a sales telecommunication manager's comments confirm Mainiero and Sullivan's (ibid) and Smith-Ruig's (2009) contention that a woman's career shifts away from the challenge due to external responsibilities, and as a consequence, she seeks greater authenticity and balance in her career.

Baby Boomer women reflecting back to their earlier career acknowledged a shift from wanting a successful career in terms of a challenge, to one more reflective of their changing circumstances. For these female Baby Boomers, a challenge was seen as extending beyond the confines of their job role: "Being successful in a career [as a matron] is only one aspect of me… I have other responsibilities… my family and my parents" (Andrea, nursing, Baby Boomer). In contrast, other

women focused on a challenge that seemingly transcends their life-stage and commitments: "I still remain ambitious in my career. Although a mother of teenage children, I am still seeking work that stretches me as a [telecommunications sales] manager" (Hilary, telecommunications, Baby Boomer). Other women shared the same perception: "Although I have taken time out to raise my children, since coming back [as matron] I still seek my career ambitions and the original desire to achieve career related goals" (Kirsty, nursing, Baby Boomer).

> "I see a career and how success is seen as reflective of the individual. As priorities or commitments change so do careers, it's what success in a career means. I also think about how today's working environment has changed; a career is no longer centred in one organisation; instead a career seems to be a series of multi-roles that needs to be balanced with external commitments such as the family" (Cassandra, nursing, Baby Boomers).

From these findings, it is also possible to conclude, although not conclusively, that the current study revealed that Baby Boomer women's careers resemble Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005, 2006) portrayal that females seek work-life balance and authenticity. There is also evidence (seen in Cassandra's comments above), that many women have pursued a *protean* career, one in which the individual reshapes it in response to changes in life's circumstances (Hall, 2002).

There is some evidence that male Baby Boomers' careers have become subjective in nature with life-stage and lack of future opportunities being major influences in re-shaping attitudes. However, it needs to be noted that notwithstanding being able to see career success subjectively, male Baby Boomers retain their objective perspective.

7.4.1.2 Generation X Attitude to a Subjective Challenge

For the Generation X managers, who were entering the mid-point or *Maintenance* (Super, 1980) stage of their careers, the interviews reveal that irrespective of gender, occupation or profession, there is a need for a challenging in their career. However, this challenge is seen as being driven by personal rather organisational aspirations, with the life-stage being a major influence. This

change in seeking a personal challenge is also driven by shifts in workplace due to restructuring and downsizing with careers becoming more individualistic, together with changes in societal norms and attitudes in relation to the individual seeking a balance in work and personal life.

The generation reported a fundamental change in attitude after experiencing a potentially life-changing event. For some it was being threatened by redundancy or being made redundant, through illness, or through changes in personal circumstances. Dave a production line supervisor's attitude changed because of the threat of redundancy:

> "[In the past] I have left a job because of lack of opportunities [challenges]. … [since facing redundancy], I've had a good long think about my priorities, and have reassessed my need for a challenge... I now value more stability, like being employed. Unlike the past, I am no longer perusing those career goals at any cost" (Dave, manufacturing, Generation X).

> "Following my illness, I have changed my priorities. I used to be career driven. Now I am quite happy just doing my work as assistant head, leaving others to seek headship" (Alan, teaching, Generation X).

The impact of starting a family also emerged as a key theme - for both men and women. Richard, a finance team lead, and David, a deputy head teacher, considered themselves as highly motivated, driven by the challenge to constantly self-improve, but changed their focus fundamentally after becoming fathers:

> "I used to thrive on interesting and stimulating work. But when I became a father for the first time I changed my focus. I am less interested in work-related goals" (Richard, finance, Generation X).

> "Being a father changes your priorities. Although you are the main breadwinner for the family, the desire to work longer hours in order to seek promotion does change. I want now to spend more time with my children than spending my evenings and weekends marking or preparing lesson plans" (David, teaching, Generation X).

Female Generation X managers expressed the need to change their careers to reflect their change in circumstances:

> "Sure when I first started my working life I was ambitious. But as other demands come along, like having a family, then of course you need to change…But I still remain passionate about being a nurse [ward sister]" (Sadie, nursing, Generation X).

> "…motherhood definitely changes you. The days of seeking promotion in the cut and thrust of the workplace disappears. Although I remain ambitious, and when I returned back to work, I have re-established myself in my career [a reception manager], I see my career and what is success not simply in terms of more money or having a certain job title like in the past" (Nicola, hotel sector, Generation X).

For other female Generation X managers, irrespective of having a family, a work-based challenge in terms of needing to learn, grow and find stimulating, exciting work remained important.

> "A challenge is an essential element in a career. Work needs to be challenging, stimulating and in some ways take you out of your comfort zone… Yeah stretching you" (Susan, finance, Generation X).

> "Yes being a mother is life-changing and provides a great deal of satisfaction, but I still seek work-related goals and challenges. I am quite lucky my husband helps me to pursue my career as a senior telecommunication team leader" (Sam, telecommunications, Generation X).

> "I find that work provides me with additional dimension and stimulus that enables me to develop and grow as deputy head. This is something that being a parent does not provide. I mean, I went away last month on a training course and learnt a new skill and met some really interesting people" (Samantha, teaching, Generation X).

Other Generation X female managers shared the view that a challenge is not related to the organisation, but associated with personal growth: "Challenging work is not simply for the benefit of the organisation; it also needs to provide me with self-achievement and self-satisfaction (Yvonne, manufacturing, Generation X). "Sure a challenge needs to provide me with some self-satisfaction in my role

as a charge sister. Like you put it, 'stretching' me" (Cath, nursing, Generation X).

7.4.1.3 Generation Y Attitude to a Subjective Challenge

Generation Y managers viewed facing a challenge as an important characteristic of career success and associated it with meeting organisational goals, and with being successful at a personal (subjective) level, and attaining work-related objective gains, such as an increased salary.

> "I am good at what I do … meeting the deadlines...targets…but it can also gain me promotion [and offer me] a new challenge. Without this I would leave, pure and simple" (Kim, finance, Generation Y).

> "A challenge is a combination of both meeting my expectations and the Trust's. You need to see a career as enriching you; therefore, it is series of experiences whether it is here or with another Trust" (Ruth, nursing, Generation Y).

Kim, a finance team leader and Ruth, a trainee ward sister's perspectives reflect Barron et al. (2007), Broadbridge et al. (2006), Zemke et al. (2000) and Gursoy et al. (2008), who maintain that Generation Y are seeking work-orientated challenges as they attempt to establish their careers. To achieve this, this generation is prepared to seek opportunities beyond one employer or even sector of employment. Kim and Ruth's comments (above) also support Hall (2002), who contends that the career in the early 21st century is more *protean* or fluid in nature, where the individual will pursue different experiences and role to future develop their own career, and is no longer bound to one or two organisations. This is particularly evident in Ruth's comment that she sees a career as enriching her, which can be achieved through a series of experiences with different employers. These comments are also partly reflective of Arthur et al.'s (2005) *boundaryless* career, where a career is no longer restricted to one or two organisations, but instead is a series of differing experiences.

Generation Y managers are influenced by sector of employment. Those in the manufacturing and service sectors held a non-committal attitude to work, as seen

in the comments of Kim's above and later and those of Chloe. Kim added: "Sure I would leave here and this type of job became was boring. You need to have new challenges to make the work interesting; that is why I became a shift leader" (Chloe, manufacturing, Generation Y). "… although I am currently doing well here, as I have said before, if another opportunity [challenge] came along, I would seriously consider leaving" (Kim, finance, Generation Y).

In contrast, those in professions, particularly in the public sector, and those needing to attain a professional qualification showed a reluctance to leave the sector of employment. "You spend or invest so much time to become a RN, then deputy ward sister, you are less likely to change careers. The 'trust' yes, 'nursing' no" (Jane, nursing, Generation Y).

> "I think that as a nurse, you join the profession, as a career choice, and you are committed to it. I have also spent four years gaining a degree in nursing, and this certainly indicates my commitment to nursing. However, it does not mean I will stay here with this particularly Trust forever…I see myself moving to another hospital or even Trust in the future" (Ruth, nursing, Generation Y).

In the case of Generation Y managers, some saw a challenge as having a high level of personal satisfaction, but also being closely associated with their profession or organisation.

7.4.1.4 Summary

When viewing career success through Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) Kaleidoscope Career Model, this study revealed from the interviews that a 'challenge' is a duality - objective in terms of seeking a particular status in the organisation and a higher salary, but also subjective, since the individual needed to achieve personal goals and aspirations, such as, to learn, grow and find stimulating, exciting work. From the interviews there was a clear generational divide between those who saw a challenge as being specifically work-related and those who saw a challenge as being more subjective.

For Generation Y managers there was a need to seek and attain opportunities both within and beyond the confines of the traditional workplace symbolism of

job role and remuneration. This finding concurs with Hall (2002), Barron et al. (2007), Broadbridge et al. (2006), Maxwell, Ogden and Broadbridge (2010), who contend that members of Generation Y actively seek opportunities and experiences that are not specifically work-related. The findings are also reflective of Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005, 2006) challenge parameter in the Kaleidoscope Career Model, which represents the individual pursuit of achieving work-related rewards such as promotion or a high level of remuneration. However, this study found that Generation Y also saw a challenge in pursuing personal goals and aspirations. There was a professional divide between members of Generation Y: those in careers that had pre-requisite qualifications, such as nursing or teaching, who were prepared to change employers, but were less inclined to change their profession and those without such requirements. These managers' careers were more *protean* in nature. In contrast, Generation Y managers in the service, financial or manufacturing sectors were less bound to their current employment sector. For these Generation Y managers, there was less commitment to either organisation or sector, which is more reflective of both Hall's (2002) *protean* career and DeFillippi and Arthur (1996), Arthur et al.'s (2005) *boundaryless* career.

Although Generation X managers saw the importance of a subjective challenge, there was little evidence of any sector or gender divide; instead their perceptions were informed and influenced by changes in personal circumstances, such as having a family. Although the impact on personal circumstances was significant there was also a need to continue to learn and grow in their careers and find stimulating, exciting work. To attain their goals, the Generation X managers were prepared to seek a *protean* career, where the individual's career becomes less bound to a series of promotions, and is instead a series of experiences gained through a succession of jobs. For member of Generation X, the need for a subjective challenge transcended external attributes, such as gender, occupation or profession, although life-stage had a significant influence. This finding contradicts Sullivan and Baruch (2009), Dries, Pepermans and De Kerpel (2008), Russo et al. (1991), Keys (1995), Poole et al. (1991, 1993) and Powell and Mainiero (1992), who maintain that men are more concerned with external factors.

In contrast to the other two generations, the oldest grouping, the Baby Boomers, indicated a gender divide. For male Baby Boomers a challenge remained associated with attaining a higher salary and holding a particular job title; however, challenge had been tempered and influenced by outside factors, such as illness, or lack of further promotion. This led this generation to seek more subjective challenges through being a 'person of influence', which could be attributed to the individual's life-stage. Life-stage had also impacted on the female Baby Boomers' careers. Baby Boomer women's commitments outside the workplace, such as a having a family, impacted on their perceptions of career success, curtailing earlier ambitions. Starting a family fundamentally influenced these female managers to want a career that was no longer organisationally bound, but instead individualistic or *protean* in nature. These women were reshaping their careers in response to changes in life's circumstances (Hall, 2002).

7.4.2 Work-Life Balance and Career Success

Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006) aimed at identifying *alpha* and *beta* patterns among the genders. While acknowledging the importance of gender, this study used 'balance' to identify potential underlying generational differences. In the study's context, 'balance' referred to whether the participants sought a balance between work and non-work aspects of their lives. Work-life balance is portrayed in the River of Time (Powell & Mainiero, 1992) as one of the realms that an individual seeks during the course of a working life. As an individual progress in life, non-work related responsibilities, such as having a family, change the emphasis - away from career success to relationships with others (Powell & Mainiero, ibid).

The interviews revealed that the Baby Boomers and some of the older members of Generation X were influenced by gender and generation. In contrast, among the younger members of Generation Y, there was no significant difference between genders; instead sector of employment was pivotal.

7.4.2.1 Baby Boomers' Attitudes to Work-Life Balance

Men of the older generation, the Baby Boomers, and some male members of Generation X, irrespective of employment sector, rated a career as having to be firstly *challenging*, then *authentic* and finally *balanced*. Bill saw challenge as important: "My idea of a career is challenging, so I would rate that first" (Bill, finance, Baby Boomers). Kevin concurred: "A career for me needs to be a challenge, balance comes later" (Kevin, hotel sector, Baby Boomer). According to Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006), Sullivan and Mainiero (2007, 2008), Marshall (1989), Henning and Jardim (1978) and Greenhaus, Callanan and Godshalk (2009), expecting a career to be challenging is synonymous with the linear or sequential male career. Male participants explained their motivation for rating 'challenging' highest as self-satisfaction, societal norms and providing financial security for their families.

Participants also expressed the need for a greater balance between work and personal life, for example, Tom and Stuart:

> "I have worked for one school most of my teaching career… and now I am deputy head…The real issue for me is that I am no longer seeking further promotion [like] school headship. When we need money, I have marked A level and GSCE papers for various exam boards. But as time passes, financial commitments and balancing a personal life does become a bigger issue, and there have been compromises…this is the cost when you decide to have a balanced life-style" (Stuart, teaching, Baby Boomers).

> "My wife chose to suspend her work and stay at home while I go to work. I have worked for this school most of my teaching career becoming assistant head teacher about 5 years old. Admittedly the school has looked after me when I needed time off... The issue for me, with my wife not working full-time is whether or not I should seek further promotion or headship. For example, as the family gets older, our [the family's] finances begin to get stretched. When we needed additional finances, I mark A level and GSCE papers, and my wife now works part-time now… In balancing personal life there have been compromises. But in the end we decided that it was either my career or the family – and we chose family [balanced lifestyle]" (Tom, teaching, Baby Boomer)

There are a number of emerging themes that have been influenced Tom's and Stuart's lives, and of particular interest is the focus on seeking a work-life balance. Both Baby Boomer males had been loyal to one employer and this loyalty was reciprocated when they needed to take time off. Stuart's and Tom's comments, particularly in relation to seeking a work-life balance, contradict Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006), Sullivan and Mainiero (2007, 2008) and Marshall (1989), who contend that men tend to focus on seeking organisational challenges, and do not seek work-life balance or authenticity in defining career success. Instead Tom's and Stuart's observations support Smith-Ruig (2009), who points out that as males progress in their careers, there is a shift to leading a more balanced personal life. This finding also supports the contention of Leach et al. (2013) that Baby Boomers, due to societal and workplace changes has culminated in this generation, unlike previous generations (for example the Traditional generation), to match or 'downwardly blur' the characteristics with those of younger generations (Generation X & Generation Y), in seeking a greater emphasis on life-style preferences. Tom and Stuart's comments also reflect Powell and Mainiero's (1992) contention that as a person's life-stage changes, there is often a change from seeking *career success* to seeking success in *relationships with others* - in the case of the two male Baby Boomers above, the relationship with their respective families.

Stuart's comment above also reflects a view shared by other Baby Boomer males, including those of George, a regional telecommunication manager:

> "...my world collapsed when I was made redundant, my mother
> died and I almost suffered a nervous breakdown, so I needed to
> balance my life" (George, telecommunications, Baby Boomer).

For others it was due to ill-health, for example, Tom, an assistant head teacher: "…due to ill health I have needed to revise my workload" (Tom, teaching, Baby Boomer).

In explaining the impact of his illness to his career, Tom stated:

> "I would still say challenge first, but over the past five years due
> to ill health I have needed to revise my workload, so personally

now a balance is important. So I suppose in an ideal world for
me, a challenge then would be having what you call an authentic
career; but in reality balance and authenticity" (Tom, teaching,
Baby Boomer).

Tom, George and Stuart's comments (above) highlight the change in focus that
occurs among males later in life. There is a shift to re-evaluating ambitions − a
challenge being replaced by a need to seek a more balanced life-style. These
findings, while supporting Smith-Ruig (2009), who found that for various
reasons, including changes in personal circumstances, men tend to re-evaluate
the need for a balanced life, contradict Mainiero and Sullivan's (ibid) portrayal
of men seeking an *alpha* challenge centric career.

There were female Baby Boomers who also saw success primarily as attained
through meeting challenges, which were often organisation-centric. This finding
support those of Broadbridge (1999, 2008), Alban-Metcalfe (1989), who
contends that women seek challenging work. Alban-Metcalfe (ibid) saw the
challenge as one of personal development rather than as external. The majority of
female Baby Boomers and the vast majority of both male and female Generation
X managers perceived career success as having changed due to external
commitments, such as the family. For Broadbridge (2008) women exhibited
certain characteristics (being kind, helpful, sympathetic and concern for others),
which influences their career; however, women needed to adopt a more male
perspective in the workplace, forgoing or postponing having a family to have a
successful career. They could therefore be described as identifying with the
views of Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006), and Sullivan and Mainiero (2007,
2008) that career and success are more 'relationalistic'; the individual's emphasis
is on success in terms of relationship with others, rather than on a career (Powell
& Mainiero, 1992, 1993; Marshall, 1995, 1998). Many female Baby Boomers
viewed success in terms of meeting family obligations and conforming to
societal expectations, therefore needing to balance work and personal
responsibilities:

    "… it was partly expected you balanced your work commitments
    with those of your family and husband... it was partly expected
    [societal]" (Andrea, nursing, Baby Boomer).

Andrea's, (a matron and nurse) perception of balancing working commitments with family life was shared by both male and female Generation X managers. For example, Hilary, a telecommunications sales manager, reflected on the need to balance her ambitions with caring for her children:

> "There was no way that I could climb up the ladder because as a mother you sometimes needed to take time off when your child was sick or during school holidays" (Hilary, telecommunications, Generation X).

For Richard, a financial team leader, it was the need to balance his work priorities and his new family:

> "I need now to ensure that work goals and commitments are synched with my family. This has included recently withdrawing from a project as it meant that I would need to work weekends" (Richard, finance, Generation X).

While Andrea's, Hilary's and Richard's observations challenge the views of Powell and Mainiero (1992, 1993) and Marshall (1995, 1998), part of this contradiction can arguably be attributed to the blurring of generation and gender differences. With these managers wanting to seek a work-life balance, has been influenced by external commitments such as starting a family. In the context of Powell and Mainiero's (1992, p. 192) River of Time, the women managers in particular mirror their two areas of concern relating to a career: (a) concern about career and personal achievement at work, referred to as 'concern for career', and (b) concern about family and personal relationships outside of work, labeled as 'concern for others'. This study also identified that Generation X men are influenced by the necessity to balance a career with non-related work commitments.

7.4.2.2 Generation X's Attitudes to Work-Life Balance

As mentioned above, there is a blurring of female Baby Boomer and Generation X managers' attitudes to seeking a work-life balance that has been directly influenced by family commitments. There was a sharp contrast in attitude

between the younger and older male managers of Generation X, with the younger grouping seeking a greater work-life balance, while the older members are more organisationally centric, being prepared to work long hours to attain career success. Generation X male managers viewed a balanced career as a successful career, rating this parameter as being as important as a challenging career. This finding partly reflects generational writers such as Johnson & Johnson (2010), Zemke et al. (2000), Kupperschmidt (2000) and Gursoy et al. (2008), who note that this generation is more inclined to pursue a more balanced work-life. Seeking a *balance* was evident throughout the interviews (e.g. in the area of career progression, section 6.5, Chapter Six). The view that a balanced career is a successful career suggests an underlying motivation to pursue a career that goes beyond the confines of the workplace, of seeking promotion or higher remuneration. The view that a balanced career is a successful one supports Powell and Mainiero's (1992) 'River of Time' theory that individuals, in particular women, seek a balance between success in pursuing a career and success in relationships with individuals, such as colleagues at work and with family and friends. This finding also indicates that for the members of Generation X, there was no significant gender divide with regard to seeking a balance between career success and wanting successful relationship in both the workplace and outside, as suggested by Powell and Mainiero (ibid), and supported by Greenhaus, Callanan and Godshalk (2009), Gallos (1989) and Bell and Nkomo (1992). To illustrate, Alex, a telecommunication shift lead, stated:

> "Early in my career I was driven by seeking promotion at any cost. I was, and I suppose I am still, very much focused on achieving my goals here. But when I got married and started a family, my priorities did change. I have needed to re-evaluate my life, and that has included wanting to have a balanced life-style. I now work for shared team goals, time outside of the workplace to be with friends. This is a far cry from what I was like when I first starting my career" (Alex, telecommunications, Generation X).

Alex's comment while revealing an attempt to seek a challenge in his economic career, his priority has been influenced by his change in priories due to family commitments, which can, as seen in the case of Alex, ultimately dominate a

career. Will, a father of three children under 18, summarises the male Generation X perspective: "You have your first child and everything changes. I mean I still want to get promoted, but my priorities, or balance as you put it, unlike my father, has changed because of my children" (Will, doctor, Generation X).

> "You start a family everything changes. I was very independent in my early career…Then when my oldest was born, my drive to be successful changed. My pursuit of work-related goals stopped and my priority was for looking after the family… Being a father and needing to balance work-life with family life means that now I am more dependent upon others to assist me" (Dave, manufacturing, Generation X).

> "Since getting married I have become the main money earner… spending less time at home… I suppose my role in the family, is much like my father being the main provider, while my wife, although working part-time has become the home-maker, but I am trying to have more time with the family" (Richard, finance, Generation X).

Although Richard's comment (above) illustrates the need to be the financial provider, he adds the need to balance work and family responsibilities: "[T]he most important a thing is also getting the balance right". This comment reflects the dual nature of career success when viewed through a *generational kaleidoscope* (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005, 2006). The focus on the family illustrated in Will's and Nicholas' comments is notably absent from the comments of the Baby Boomer males.

7.4.2.3 Generation Y's Attitudes to Work-Life Balance

Among the youngest generation, Generation Y, both male and female managers held very similar attitudes regarding career success and the need to have a balanced work-life. They sought a challenge, and also a balance between work and their free time outside the workplace. Emma, a head hotel receptionist, elucidated this complexity:

> "It may be me, but many of my friends think the same; we all want a challenge in our work otherwise it is boring; but to work, work, work is not right. There are plenty senior managers who work those long

> hours, but for me I am not going to fall into that trap" (Emma, hotel sector, Generation Y).

Others in pursuit of a balanced life-style displayed a self-centred attitude, expecting the organisation to assist them to pursue a balance between work and personal life:

> "When you first join the organisation [finance] you try to fit in. Some of the colleagues here work long hours. I mean that they are here by 7am and do not go home until late. I initially tried this but in the end I thought… no way, there is more to life. I mean I earn the same money so why work these sort of hours, eh?" (Kim, finance, Generation Y).

The pursuit of a balanced life was a key reason for many younger managers desiring to travel and/or work overseas for a short period of time. The motivation many managers mentioned was that they wished to broaden their life-skills and gain experience. A few participants undertook work in a field of interest, while others went 'back-packing'. It is worth-noting that those participants who had back-packed, believed that taking a gap year is now seen as the 'norm.' The findings indicated that Generation Y is more work-life balanced than their older generation counterparts, which supports Zemke et al. (2000), Kupperschmidt (2000), Broadbridge, Maxwell and Odgen (2007), Barron et al. (2007). Another finding that emerged from the interviews was the importance of the impact of the recent economic crisis and reduced employment opportunities on participants' attitude to seeking more balance between work and personal life. Although seeking a work-life balance was prevalent among Generation Y and many Generation X managers, there was also the realisation that they were presently working long hours to achieve their career goals and in some instances, to retain their jobs: "… since the recession I have needed to work longer hours just to keep my role as a shift leader" (Chloe, telecommunications, Generation Y).

7.4.2.4 Summary

In viewing the second parameter of the Kaleidoscope Career Model, work-life balance the findings revealed that for those members of the older generation,

particularly the men, wanting to leave some form of legacy and meeting personal commitments, leading the Baby Boomer men to search for work-life balance.

Life-stage resulted in many Baby Boomer managers re-evaluating their perceptions of work and life balance (encapsulated in Powell and Mainiero's, 1992 'River of Time'). The influence of external attributes was particularly pertinent among male Baby Boomers, who had re-evaluated and made significant priority changes. Similar to summary section 7.4.1.4, this finding challenges Sullivan and Baruch (2009), Dries, Pepermans and De Kerpel (2008), Russo et al. (1991), Keys (1995) and Poole et al. (1991, 1993), who maintain that male perceptions of career success remain predominately a traditional construct.

In contrast, female Baby Boomers felt the need to balance work-life and personal-life due to external commitments, such as having a family, together with career prospectus being constrained by employer assumptions that as *women* will leave due to starting a family. The culminating has been a lack or perceived lack, of equal access to career paths because of their gender. A common theme that emerged was the expectation that Baby Boomer women would have to temporarily leave or postpone their careers.

Both genders of Generation X managers shared a similar perspective on seeking work-life balance, where work commitments are balanced with the family. For male Generation X managers, in particular, wanting to seek a work-life balance was partly attributable to their having witnessed their parents, particularly their fathers' experiences. Now in a similar situation to their fathers, the male Generation X managers consciously wanted to combine work with their family commitments.

The Generation Y managers viewed a work-life balance as imperative. Seeking a challenge and working hard to gain promotion were equally important. External factors, such as the recession and the lack of employment opportunities, and holding a self-entitlement attitude were also identified as influential factors.

7.4.3   The Authentic Nature of Career Success

After investigating career success using the *Kaleidoscope Career* and *River of Time* models, the study focused on the last parameter, *authenticity*. In this section, the attributes of authenticity are presented in relation to the authentic element in the Kaleidoscope Career Model. This includes investigating the extent to which, over time, the individual places emphasis on success in terms of a career, or focuses on personal relationships as depicted in Powell and Mainiero's (1992) River of Time as set out in Chapter Three, section 3.13.2.

7.4.3.1 An authentic career according to Baby Boomers

Among the Baby Boomers, authenticity was influenced by life-stage and polarized by gender. Male Baby Boomers viewed an authentic career as a composite − wanting an *alpha* career, yet one that reflected personal aspirations and challenges. Although Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006) contend that men are more focused on an *alpha* career, with a minimal emphasis on authenticity, this study found that men viewed personal challenges and goal-setting subjectively as essential. As noted in sections 7.3.1 and 7.4.1.1, in terms of career success, male Baby Boomers viewed a challenge both objectively and subjectively. Although Powell and Mainiero (1992), Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006) and Sullivan and Mainiero (2007, 2008) omit this dual perspective, it reflects Baruch (2004), Dries et al. (2008), Hall and Chandler (2005) and Barley (1989), who note a blurring of the objective and subjective nature of career success.

Kevin, a Baby Boomer food and beverage manager, referred to the dual nature of career success:

> "Now that I am in senior management, I am in search of something more. Even though on paper I have it all – a nice house, a nice car, a comfortable lifestyle, pension nest egg, teenager kids that requires me to have a good salary. But I do find that I am asking myself how I can use my skills in a way that will continue to challenge me [on a personal level] and just based on my position or role here."

Kevin also saw a challenge in objective terms:

> "…but I would say that a challenge at work still motivates me. I
> am still ready to further develop my career, and even have a job
> that is more financially rewarding and pay off university fees."

Tom, an assistant head teacher, concurs: "To be successful in a career there is in some way a need to set goals and then have to fight to get them. It is a part of a challenging career; it makes work more rewarding" (Tom, teaching, Baby Boomer).

Although being challenged was a common criterion in determining whether a career was authentic, not all the male Baby Boomers could agree about the form this challenge should take. For male Baby Boomers there was a recognition or desire to leave a legacy: "Since promotional opportunities have reduced, I have now set new goals for these are more personal to me. I want now to be recognised as an expert in my field, and not be seen as a production line supervisor" (Jim, manufacturing, Baby Boomer). This was similar to how Bill felt:

> "I am seeking now, as I begin to reach my retirement, to pass on
> my knowledge and experience [as senior manager]. I suppose I am
> setting out my legacy after being here for X number of years"
> (Bill, finance, Baby Boomer).

Seeking recognition reflects Trilling (1972) and Kernis (2003). Kernis (2003, p. 13) who links authenticity to 'optimal self-esteem': individuals base their contributions on self-value rather than achievements. Among the male Baby Boomers, this realisation occurred in the latter part of their careers. For authenticity the individual needs to have full control over and responsibility for self-choices (Trilling, ibid). In the case of the male Baby Boomer managers, reaching their current position in their organisations had enabled them to exercise a certain level of career autonomy. Partly owing to a lack of future promotion opportunities as a result of their life-stage, some male Baby Boomers had actively sought recognition beyond their job title or role. The reaction of other male Baby Boomers was a fear of being alienated in the organisation owing to

their life-stage, or as a result of family dynamics owing to the imbalance of work commitments with family responsibilities:

> "I am reaching the point in my career [as a production line supervisor] where I am now being over-looked for promotion, therefore I now looking for other ways of being able to *influence* the business through becoming a mentor" (Jim, manufacturing, Baby Boomer).

> "You reach a certain stage in your career [as regional manager] when your career begins to plateau. I am reaching this stage now; therefore, I have changed my outlook now as to how I see my career. I have taken the decision to become a mentor and coach. This also reflects me as a person, I am no longer as career focused since my illness, seeking promotion and more responsibilities…I need to take it easy now and this change definitely defines my career now, my ambitions have changed…" (George, telecommunications, Baby Boomer)

> "Even through you are committed to the same organisation, sometimes this dedication to work comes at the expense of the family… becoming a senior manager, with the restructuring and management changes in the past five years, I began to feel alienated from both my family and the company, as I reacted negatively to the restructuring as I felt left out. It was a very stressful time, and it impacted on my family to the extent I alienated myself completely from the family" (Bill, finance, Baby Boomer).

Jim's, George's and Bill's comments support Korman et al. (1981), who contend that the changing workplace combined with the individual life-stage can create a feeling of alienation. The comments also reflect a common theme among many Baby Boomers, irrespective of seniority, who have either experienced the threat of redundancy, or actually been made redundant, or who are close to retirement, namely, their feelings of alienation from work and family, which has culminated in male Baby Boomer managers re-evaluating their careers according to whether success is perceived as an objective challenge, or that success is more authenticity for them now. For male Baby Boomers, the result has been to seek a role based on being recognised or respected for their expertise or knowledge, which may even extend beyond their current working responsibilities.

This need for recognition owing to feelings of alienation also transcends gender:

> "I attempted to balance a career with my duties as a matron, with my family. But even though my husband and children are very understanding, I think it is nearly impossible to be successful in both. I also alienated both as I tried to balance family with work" (Andrea, nursing, Baby Boomer).

For female Baby Boomers generally, authenticity was related to the impact of the external factor of having a family and how this changed their perceptions of career success. Through having a family, female Baby Boomers changed their priorities from seeking to climb the corporate ladder, achieve increased remuneration, work responsibilities and promotions, to seeking work that reflects them as a parent and an employee. This change in perspective is also reminiscent of Kernis (2003, p.13), who contends, that authenticity is closely linked to 'optimal self-esteem' that results in individuals valuing who they are, rather than what they have achieved. The female Baby Boomers saw authenticity as extending beyond the confines of their job roles:

> "Being successful in a career [as a matron] is only one aspect of me, and also not my biggest. I have other responsibilities including my family and my parents" (Andrea, nursing, Baby Boomer).

Greenhaus, Callanan and Godshalk (2009), Gallos (1989) and Bell and Nkomo (1992), point out that this female perspective is demonstrated by the way in which women see career success holistically rather than as comprised of external attributes. However, this study found that the need for personal challenge in a career emerged once women returned to work after bringing up a family (Super, 1953, 1980).

Female Baby Boomer discussed how organisational and societal expectations had influenced them. When first entering the workforce, irrespective of whether they were single or married, the prevailing attitude was that women were expected to seek personal aspirations outside of the workplace, rather than organisational challenges in their careers. This was compounded by organisations restricting women's career routes, with obstacles such as employers holding negative attitudes towards part-time work, lack of flexible hours, and the existence of the

'old boys' culture.' Consequently, Baby Boomer women saw career success on their terms based on personal values rather than being purely organisation-oriented. Both Greenhaus, Callanan and Godshalk (2009) and Gallos (1989), agrees that a woman's career is directly influenced by family commitment. Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006) contend that the above factors (for example commitments outside of the workplace like starting a family) can lead women to seek authenticity, rather than an organisational challenge in a career. Female Baby Boomer managers stated that they sought a career that reflected their values, where they could make their own decisions, while still wanting to pursue organisational goals. Liz, a senior manager in finance, is an example:

> "Even before starting a family, career success and meeting your potential were seen as a male preserve. We [as women] were expected not to pursue high powered careers at all costs. Things have changed. I still want further promotion, which was unheard of. …You do realise that as a woman you can do what men can do, but as a mother also see things differently, for example with ethical decisions… promoting someone who is dedicated to their work at the expense of his or her family, or someone who has a background or reputation of dealing with unethical businesses" (Liz, finance, Baby Boomer).

Life-stage also emerged as a key external determinant. It was found that the individual's life-stage was directly influenced by self-awareness and understanding. Roberts et al. (2009) contend that self-awareness and understanding are connected to personal history. This also reflects Wales (2003), who points out in his phenomenological study that *self-awareness* is a composite of learning from the past, being open to personal feelings, being able to reflect and having the ability to make appropriate choices, and that authenticity is attained through 'self-understanding'. This finding concurs with Powell and Mainiero's (1992, p. 220) contention that women focus more on measures of self-awareness and satisfaction that represent how they are feeling about their careers, rather than 'what their career actually looks like', in other words, how the job reflects their values compared with the actual job title or position in the organisation.

Since the Baby Boomer managers were reaching the end of their working life, authenticity was seen in terms of attainment. The Baby Boomers identified attainment as being recognised as an *expert*, or being *respected* for their contribution. Tom, a late Baby Boomer and an assistant head teacher, stated:

> "[career success] would be sort of doing well at things, being able to do the job well, a sense of achievement [attainment], knowing it well, having people come and ask you questions because you were the person that knew the information [expert], that sort of thing" (Tom, teaching, Baby Boomer).

This shift came about through having limited opportunities to achieve further objective goals. Bill, a senior banking manager, perceived his career changed from being organisational and objective-centric, to one where he had a desire to be 'respected':

> "As I reach the end of my career, you begin to mellow and instead of focusing on organisational goals you begin to change your priorities. I now [self-awareness] want to be *respected* for my skills and not just my job role" (Bill, finance, Baby Boomers).

In contrast, Kevin, a food and beverage manager, wanted to be recognised for his 'expertise':

> "After X number of years, I have reached a stage in my career where I do not expect to be promoted any further, so I changed my priorities. I am no longer chasing promotion; I instead want to be recognised for my years of service, my loyalty and expertise" (Kevin, hotel sector, Baby Boomers).

For these Baby Boomers males, this drive to be *respected* or *recognised* as an 'expert' resulted in Kevin, Tom and Bill seeking career success from a personal perspective that reflected their personal as opposed to organisational values.

The above finding challenges the views of Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006) and Sullivan and Mainiero (2007, 2008), who state that women rather than men view authenticity as a career parameter. This study instead concurs with Smith-Ruig (2009), who concludes that men also seek authenticity in their careers. The

catalyst can be commitments outside the workplace, such as ill health, or reaching the end of a career.

7.4.3.2 An authentic career according to Generation X

For Generation X, career authenticity appeared to transcend gender, occupation or profession, although life-stage was an important factor. As with the Baby Boomers, these participants mentioned a shift in attitude that caused them to seek personal challenges in their careers owing to changes in their personal circumstances, or to having been faced with redundancy, or actually being made redundant. Dave, a production line supervisor, for example, explained:

> "To me a challenge is important in a career. Yes, I was a company man through and through. I even compromised my standard, dedicating a lot of time here… Since facing redundancy, I have had a good, long think about my priorities… and have become more self-aware of my personal commitments" (Dave, manufacturing, Generation X).

Dave changed his attitude and values from seeking an objective challenge to defining his career aspirations in a more subjective, authentic way. He appears to have learned from the past, which reflects Wales (2003), who views *self-awareness* as a facet of authenticity. According to Wales (2003), self-awareness is a composite of learning from the past, being open to personal feelings, being able to reflect and having the ability to make appropriate choices.

Others sought a more authentic career once they started a family, for example, Dave (see above in section 7.4.2.2), and Alex, a telecommunication shift lead, below.

> "When I first became a father, I started to re-evaluate who I was, and this included my career. I decided that working all the hours, chasing promotion and a higher salary at any cost needed to change. Since the birth of my second child I have purposely taken a role that permits me to be a father first. So now I work from home; it involves less travelling away from home and more time with the family" (Alex, telecommunications, Generation X).

David, a deputy head teacher, shaped his career so that he could spend more time with his family. A contributing factor was that he was approaching early retirement owing to ill health:

> "Only in the past five years have I started to question my working life. I mean I have been successful work-wise, but now I want to have more free time. I always rated my career as being a *challenge*, then authentic and finally, having some form of balance in my work and personal life. I have reached a point in my career where it has plateaued… where there are less [work-related] challenges… Although I have an important role − I am seen now as some more of an *expert* or authority which gives me a career that is more authentic to my values. I am also looking to spend more time with my family, … there is more to life than work and now I want to spend more time with my family" (David, teaching, Generation X).

David's comments support Evan and Bartolomé (1981), who argue that disengagement from seeking organisational career success can be attributed to personal relationships and commitments. The influence of life-stage is also evident: for Generation X managers there was self-awareness. Samantha, a deputy head teacher, for example, indicated progressive self-awareness, self-knowledge and self-understanding of her role as a deputy head teacher. Samantha wished to know herself:

> "I have read a lot about this. I think it has been awareness of needing to introspectively look at myself, and being more self-aware of myself. The more you know yourself, the more likely you can be authentic or be true to yourself… That is why I am doing what I am doing; I am being true to myself in being a teacher" (Samantha, teaching, Generation X).

Samantha's desire to become more self-aware reflects Kierkegaard, as cited in Golomb (1995), who theorised that authenticity is attained through self-knowledge, that is, through the individual knowing more about him or herself.

External responsibilities pronouncedly impacted on Generation X careers, particular among the females. As noted in section 7.4.2.2 above, among the Generation X women, there was a shift of focus away from career success based on a challenge to authenticity owing to the external responsibility of having a

family. In this regard, Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006) and Sullivan and Mainiero (2007, 2008) note that as women grow older, they experience a fundamental shift to a more 'balanced' and 'authentic' career at the expense of seeking a 'challenge'. On the other hand, Hall (2002) relates this shift to the *protean* career. With a *protean* career, individuals reshape their careers in response to changes in life's circumstances, for example, wanting to have a balanced work-life due to family commitments, or revising personal values resulting from their life-stage.

There were managers who identified key moments in their careers that resulted in them making a career decision based on their values or beliefs. Richard, an insurance team lead, for example, felt free to turn down an opportunity based on his past experience:

> "I was offered promotion and I turned it down ... because I didn't think it was going to be any different. I've been there before; I'd just be doing the same job at a higher level, and if I had taken the job, then maybe it would not give me the same level of enjoyment or interest" (Richard, finance, Generation X).

Bovens (1999) and Trilling (1972) view decision-making based on personal values and beliefs as a key characteristic of an authentic person.

Susan, a financial section lead, chose to reject a promotion opportunity as it could potentially have limited her future opportunities and not restricting her being true to herself:

> "I turned down an opportunity recently. I am fully aware that the job offered more money but there was more work, but potentially less future opportunities and not really offering a challenge or being in a role I would really reflected my personal values. In the end I am more interested in a role that reflects me as a person" (Susan, finance, Generation X).

The findings reveal an interconnection between self-awareness, self-knowledge and self-understanding as a valid means of measuring authenticity in career success. They also indicate a close similarly between the pursuit of personal enjoyment and satisfaction in attaining career success. Susan's, Dave's and

Richard's comments encapsulate this. Susan's comments highlight a Generation X trend to actively seek personal enjoyment and satisfaction in a career. For Dave, a Generation X manager in manufacturing, it was whether work-life balance and family commitments were more important than promotion: "I have to admit I have turned down promotion recently as it meant that I'd need to spend more time away from my family". Likewise, with Richard, who declined a job due to a potential clash of personal ethics: "[t]here was a job, not here, that I decided not to take, as it was with a company that had links to recent unethical behaviour" (Richard, finance, Generation X). These findings also support Sullivan and Baruch's (2009) and Hennig and Jardim's (1978) assertion that women seek self-fulfillment and self-satisfaction through contributing with others on a personal rather than an organisational level.

The findings also revealed an additional, non-generational influence on authenticity. Among Generation X and Baby Boomer women there was a desire for career satisfaction that extended beyond external workplace commitments. This desire encompassed a need for some form of spiritual fulfillment, a theme alluded to in relation to women by Sullivan and Mainiero (2007), Greenhaus, Callanan and Godshalk (2009), Gallos (1989) and Bell and Nkomo (1992). Irrespective of generation, for those managers in the nursing and teaching professions, career success was motivated, in part, by the desire to fulfill a 'vocation': "I left the retail world and went into teaching, and now as a senior teacher and curriculum lead. It was an alignment of my spiritual belief and the need to help others" (Beth, teaching, Generation Y). This is mirrored by the comments of Sadie, a ward sister "… it just seemed to be a natural progression of my life and my faith" (Sadie, nursing, Generation X).

For male Generation X managers, the change to seeking an authentic, subjective career was informed by upbringing, a theme supported by generational writers such as Zemke et al. (2000), Kupperschmidt (2000), Gursoy et al. (2008), Schaie (1965) and Twenge et al. (2010b). For example, Alex, a telecommunication shift lead, unlike his father, did not want to miss out on his family growing up: "… I can remember my dad not really getting involved in my childhood, and he regrets

this now, whereas I do not want to miss mine" (Alex, telecommunications, Generation X).

For others, the change to seeking an authentic career was due to having witnessed their parents and in particular their father's life-style change as a result of the threat of redundancy, or actually experiencing redundancy: "He [his father] was dedicated to the bank and they just treated him so badly it nearly destroyed him and the family. Ever since I thought there is no way that's going to happen to me. I am not purely a company man or a team leader" (Richard, finance, Generation X).

Generation X managers' comments reflected Baby Boomer perspectives and the following themes were evident among members of both generations − self-awareness, self-knowledge, self-understanding and self-esteem. Alex stated: "It goes back to when I first become a parent. I found a degree of success that came about due to a [self] awareness and understanding of my own personal abilities, and this is why I am now seeking to be recognised as an expert" (Alex, telecommunications, Generation X). Richard changed his role specifically to take on a mentoring [expert] role, which led to a new level of satisfaction: "I have recently changed my role so that I could spend more time being able to pass on my knowledge rather than simply achieving financial targets. This change has made me feel that I am achieving new career goals as a team leader" (Richard, finance, Generation X).

Alex and Richard's comments mirror those of Baby Boomers, and reflect Kernis (2003) and Leary (1996), who point out that authenticity is a multi-faceted psychological construct. The findings revealed a close connection to the individual's perspective on the meaning of career success and interaction with other individuals and the environment. Richard is an example illustrating that authenticity is linked to 'optimal self-esteem' (Kernis, 2003) where the individual has confidence in his/her self-worth and enough belief in his/herself to pursue an authentic career. In contrast, Alex's pursuit of self-awareness and self-understanding informed his perception of career success.

Zemke et al. (2000) and Kupperschmidt (2000) – following Nietzsche and Satre as cited in Golomb (1995) − drew attention to the rebellious element contained in the pursuit of authenticity, that is, that to pursue an authentic career, an individual rejects social and cultural conventions. None of the Generation X managers indicated any rejection of the social or cultural conventions, such as rebellion against organisational or workplace norms, as advocated by Zemke et al. (2000); instead this generation's perception of an authentic career reflects Kernis (2003), who holds that authenticity is attained through confidence in one's self-worth rather than through what one has achieved.

7.4.3.3 An authentic career according to Generation Y

Although Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005, 2006) *alpha challenge* was recognised as important among the Generation Y managers, being authentic was also necessary to them. Several attributes of authenticity emerged from the interviews, which this generation perceived as essential for a successful career, namely, self-awareness, and the need for personal challenges and goals, and enjoyment.

A personal challenge provided Generation Y managers with a degree of authenticity that reflected their values and beliefs. Without this aspect, Emma, for example, was prepared to leave her current position as a head hotel receptionist: "Don't tell the boss; I am currently seeking a job that meets my personal values. Here it really doesn't. It's all about customer turnover and not customer satisfaction. I feel my current job role does not meet my standards" (Emma, hotel sector, Generation Y). Emma's perspective reflects Svejonova (2005) and Baker and Aldrich (1996), who maintain that authenticity is central to career success and attained through being true to oneself. Emma's perspective is also reflective of generational writers such as Broadbridge, Maxwell and Odgen (2007), Barron et al. (2007), Broadbridge et al. (2006), Zemke et al. (2000) and Gursoy et al. (2008), and contemporary career theorists such as Hall (2002) and Arthur et al. (2005), who contend that today's youngest generation are not committed to a career.

Other Generation Y managers felt it was a challenge to achieve self-satisfaction through meeting organisational goals, which incorporated objective rewards. Kim explained: "I am good at what I do [as team leader in banking], you know, meeting the deadlines and targets… but it can also gain me promotion, recognition so I might get an offer from another company… you know, a new challenge or better opportunity a double whammy" (Kim, finance, Generation Y). Ruth concurred: "I achieve the ward's and hospital's targets, and this is satisfying… it must be beneficial for me in the future either here or somewhere else in nursing and as a qualified ward sister" (Ruth, nursing, Generation Y).

The interviews revealed that individuals wished to remain in certain professions and not in others. Those in the service sector were prepared to leave their place or sector of work to pursue a career that met their personal aspirations. These managers appeared to have a *boundaryless* attitude to their sector of employment. For them authentic career success was achieved through meeting personal aspirations rather than being bound by a certain vocation. In contrast, Generation Y managers in nursing and teaching recognised that career authenticity is vocationally bound. Ruth had no desire to leave nursing in order to attain personal or individual goals: "No, I've invested too much of my time and money into nursing ... I enjoy the challenge of nursing too much" (Ruth, nursing, Generation Y).

For other Generation Y managers, it was seeking authenticity through self-directed actions.

> "Yes of course if you meet the challenge you are given and it can lead to promotion [in teaching beyond being a senior teacher and curriculum lead], but it also gives you that 'I achieved that' moment, which often happens as a teacher. I am driven and motivated for those inspirational experiences" (Beth, teaching, Generation Y).

Beth's comments confirm Tedeschi (1986), who maintains that a key aspect of authenticity is freedom of action that extends beyond the confines of the traditional career pattern, such as promotion, and instead resides in making choices and decisions on an individual basis. Closely linked to this is the need for

a career to be 'sincere' and 'honest.' both Sartre (as cited in Golomb, 1995) and later Trilling (1972) viewed these determinants as related to attaining authenticity. Trilling (ibid) sees 'sincerity' and 'honesty' as being closely linked to an individual's inner conviction and commitment to attain some form of authenticity in life. However, it needs to be noted that in this study there was no evidence that the Generation Y managers were prepared to follow Sartre's contention that sincerity and honesty can only be attained through direct action, such as politics.

Closely linked with the need for a personal challenge, and based on their values, there was an awareness, that a career provides a sense of personal enjoyment. This theme differs markedly from the older generations (Baby Boomers & Generation X). Without this element, the Generation Y managers indicated that they would consider leaving their current place of employment, and for some, this was irrespective of whether they had another job to go to. For example, while expanding on her need for a challenge, Kim, a team leader in banking, also recognised the importance of enjoying the work: "…but you also need to enjoy what you do and being real to yourself. A challenge is one thing, but actually enjoying what you do is equally if not more important. I left being a secretary as I really didn't enjoy the work" (Kim, finance, Generation Y). What the findings pertaining to female Generation Y managers do not support is Powell and Mainiero's (1992) proposition that women seek satisfaction that represents how they feel about their careers, as opposed to what it looks like from an organisational perspective. Instead external attributes such as lifestyle, gender and profession are significant influences.

The necessity to seek personal, self-satisfaction and enjoyment to make a career authentic can be seen as bordering on Twenge et al.'s (2010) concept of the narcissistic attitude (highlighted in Chapter Six, section 6.2.1, and section 7.2.1 above). This theme also reflects Kernis (2003), who contends that authenticity is closely associated with self-esteem, where individuals display a high level of confidence in their self-worth, rather than what they have achieved. This high level of confidence mirrors Tedeschi's (1986) definition of an authentic

individual who 'takes responsibility for freely chosen actions that represent some internal standards – of self, potentialities, or principles' (p.7).

7.4.3.4 Summary

Through viewing career success from a generational perspective through Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005, 2006) Kaleidoscope Career Model, it is possible to conclude that irrespective of generation, gender and profession, authenticity is important. This statement challenges Mainiero and Sullivan's (ibid) position that men tend to seek a predominately challenging *alpha* career, and that authenticity is seen as insignificant. This study contends that authenticity is far more complex, and echoes to varying degrees the views of notable authenticity philosophers, namely, Sartre, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche and Heidegger as cited in Golomb (1995), and career authors, such as Nicholson and West (1989) and Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010). However, it must be noted that authenticity was influenced and informed by the generation, gender, life-stage and profession of the individual manager.

A number of related themes linked to authenticity emerged during the study. These can be classified under four main headings − *the need for personal challenge*, *satisfaction*, *ability to goal-set* and *attainment*. Each of these themes influenced the participants' desire to be 'true to themselves' when making decisions concerning their careers' relevant to their lives. What the study revealed is that gender, life-stage and profession were external attributes that influenced how career success was viewed. For example, women were interested in challenges, but on their own terms, and made decisions in an authentic, meaningful way. Profession had a direct influence on the individual, in that the culture of an occupation, if strong, determined the extent to which the individual was bound to conforming to organisational career paths, and the extent to which individuals were prepared to change their current job role in order to gain personal aspirations. For example, managers in nursing or teaching were prepared to leave their current employer, but not necessarily their profession. The interviews also revealed that if individuals had invested in their career choice,

then their values tended to align with those of the organisational / external environment.

To emerge from the findings is Generation Y the high level of responses to all of the categories. This is supports Barron et al. (2007) study into this generation's attitude of this grouping seek a rapid career progression, describing these generational members as having a self-entitlement or narcissistic attitude concerning their careers. This finding supports Foster's (2013), Twenge et al's. (2004, 2008), Twenge and Campbell's (2008), Lewis' (2015) contention 'the younger generation' [Generation Y] has an overblown sense of 'entitlement' about the rewards and conditions of paid work.

It is possible to conclude from the findings that authenticity is also influenced by the experiences of the past. However, because this study was not longitudinal, it was not possible to accurately determine the extent to which the authenticity of career success is influenced by time and past experience.

The study's findings question whether Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005, 2006) Kaleidoscope Career Model and Powell and Mainiero's (1992) River of Time model accurately depict a career and its success. Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006) contend that women seek an *authentic* career, while men seek a traditional *alpha* career. This study found that there are other attributes that are influential, namely, *personal satisfaction*, *goal-setting*, *personal attainment, self-awareness*, *self-satisfaction, self-recognition, self-esteem, self-respect* and *self-understanding*. The study found that authenticity is not purely centred on personal values as advocated by Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006), but on the attributes named above. This study also found that rather than pursuing a predominately *alpha* career, male Baby Boomer managers were inclined to seek career success in terms of authenticity through wanting to leave some form of legacy. With regard to the River of Time, the findings above indicate that both genders, and not only women (as maintained by Powell and Mainiero, 1992), experienced that career and non-work related responsibilities, such as having a family, changed the emphasis away from career success to relationships with others as their lives progressed.

The study revealed seven determinants that are essential for a career to be authentic − *self-awareness, self-satisfaction, self-recognition, self-esteem, self-respect, self-understanding* and *self-realisation*. In setting out these characteristics in a phenomenological study, Wales (2003) revealed that *self-awareness* is a composite of learning from the past, being open to personal feelings, being able to reflect and having the ability to make appropriate choices. *Self-knowledge* is closely associated with self-awareness, with an added dimension, namely, 'what a person knows about him or herself that is correct' (Wales, 2003, p. 644). According to Wales (ibid), *self-understanding* derives from the reflective process of internalising self-awareness and self-knowledge. Self-realisation relates to s*elf-esteem* as an important psychological construct representing how individuals evaluate or feel about themselves and is reflected in their interactions with people and their environment.

For male Baby Boomers, authenticity was important to this grouping. The interviews showed that seven identified attributes of authenticity: *self-awareness, self-satisfaction, self-recognition, self-esteem, self-respect, self-understanding* and *self-realisation* were equally relevant. In reviewing the interview data pertaining to male Baby Boomers', the need for career success to be authentic could be attributed to the influence of life-stage, the lack of opportunities and the realisation that their economic career was ended, therefore wanting to leave behind some form of legacy (Lyons & Kuron, 2014; Foster, 2013; Urick, 2012; Eisner, 2005; Twenge & Campbell, 2008; Arsenault, 2004; Macky et al. 2008). In contrast, female Baby Boomers saw self-realisation of achieving further growth in their career as essential, while the remaining attributes, with the exception of seeing self-recognition, for example an expert, as less important. The gender difference would be related to the fact for many of the female Baby Boomers' their economic career was only part of their lives, and that due to external commitments, such as raising a family, authenticity extended beyond their economic career (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005; Cabrera, 2009; Sturges, 1999, 2004; Powell & Mainiero, 1992, 1993; Carraher, Cricitto & Sullivan, 2014).

For those in the Generation X grouping, due to their life-stage and external obligations, for example family commitments, authenticity for both genders were seen as important, but not essential career success, supporting Derr (1986) and Carlson, Derr and Wadsworth (2003). For this grouping, self-recognition in their career was seen as unimportant, while self-awareness, self-satisfaction, self-esteem, self-respect and self-understanding provided relevance, however this was less important than the need for a work-life balance. The interviews did reveal that for male Generation X managers, self-realisation was seen as essential, while for female managers in this grouping, these authentic attributes, while important, was not essential.

As noted above, to emerge from the findings was that Generation Y managers' perception to career success included seeking self-satisfaction, self-recognition, self-esteem, self-understanding and self-realisation to make their career authentic. These identified authentic attributes reflected this grouping need for affirmation in the workplace, supporting Foster (2013), Twenge et al. (2004, 2008), Twenge and Campbell (2008), Lewis (2015).

7.5 Chapter Summary

In addressing the sixth research question, empirically, when viewed through the Kaleidoscope Career model, how are individual manager's perceptions of a successful career influenced by their generational group?, this Chapter first described how the different generations understand career success. The study findings indicated that while the youngest generation, Generation Y, sought success in terms of a challenge, both genders also wanted a more balanced working life. To achieve this, and dependent on their sector or profession, members of this generation were prepared to 'climb' up in an organisation, or alternatively adopt what McCabe and Savery (2005) refer to as a butterfly career pattern. Pursuing a butterfly career pattern was viewed by this group as a means to acquire and build professional expertise and core competencies. This finding supports Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006), who maintain that this generation often seeks a challenge with regard to career success. However, contrary to Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006), the study found that male managers were not following an *alpha* career. This finding is more reflective of Smith-Ruig

(2009), who holds that life-stage and personal circumstances influence an individual's perception of career success. Both male and female members of Generation X and Y were prepared to pursue a greater work-life balance, and authenticity in their careers, as opposed to simply following or pursuing an alpha career pattern to attain success in a career.

For both genders of Generation X managers, entering the *Maintenance* stage, career success was influenced by responsibilities beyond the workplace, such as family commitments. This finding challenges Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006), who posit that men at the maintenance stage of a career primarily seek an *alpha* career; this study contends that both genders focus more on *beta* characteristics of career success. The study supports Gentry et al. (2009) and Smith-Ruig (2009), who contend that this generation is actively pursuing a beta or balanced and authentic career. For male managers in the oldest generation (Baby Boomers), who had reached the *Pre-Retirement* stage, opportunities for future career progress had diminished. Baby Boomers cited illness or lack of opportunities due to their life-stage as curtailing their pursuit of success in a traditional career. As a result, perceptions of career success had become more subjective. This had led male Baby Boomers to seek opportunities to become mentors, or to pass on their *legacy* rather than pursuing higher salaries, titles and associated benefits. This shift supports O'Connor and Wolfe (1987), Sullivan and Mainiero (2007, 2008), who note that life-stage significantly influences the male career. This finding is also reflective of Olsen and Shultz (2013) who contend that career success is influenced by age and life-stage, with a career as to being objective and subjective.

In contrast, female Baby Boomers entering the pre-retirement stage of their economic careers, sought the traditional goals and aspirations of career success, although on their own terms informed by personal reasons and motivations rather than in terms of organisational goals. These findings concerning the male and female Baby Boomers partially concur with Broadbridge and Simpson (2011) and O'Connor and Wolfe (1987), who argues that female and male careers are the reverse of each other. However, although there was a reversal of career aspirations from being organisational-centric to personal-centric among the male

and female Baby Boomers, the study revealed that a gender divide did not exist among members of Generation X and Y.

A key theme to emerge from the study was the subjective nature of career success when approached using the Kaleidoscope Career Model. Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006) maintain that men tend to seek an *alpha* career at the expense of work-life balance and authenticity. This study revealed a blurring of genders among members of Generation X and Y with regard to wanting to achieve work-life balance and authenticity. The study revealed several new determinants to make career success authentic, namely, a need for *personal challenge*, *personal satisfaction, goal-setting, personal attainment, self-awareness*, *self-satisfaction, self-recognition, self-esteem, self-respect* and *self-understanding*. From an objective perspective, a key characteristic that emerged was the imperative to 'climb up' the organisation, which was also associated with the need for personal challenge, personal satisfaction, goal setting and personal attainment. This characteristic provided the participant with the opportunity to develop professional expertise and core competencies, and thus achieve career success.

To summarise, the findings above related to how each generation perceive career success, when viewed using the Kaleidoscope Career Model. The data showed the complexities of career success from a generational perspective. These complexities are represented in the Figures 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3 below, illustrating the interconnected nature of career success for each of the generations. Building upon Figure 6.1 and 6.2 in Chapter Six, each figure represents how the generation sees career success when viewed using the Kaleidoscope Career Model. The models (below, refer to Figures 7.1, 7.2 & 7.3) include Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005) three original parameters − *balance*, *work-life balance* and *authenticity* and the addition of a new *subjective challenge* identified in this study. The *challenge* parameter, often seen as the traditional means of defining career success, is divided into two distinct categories, namely, an *objective alpha challenge* (represented by a red chip) and a non-traditional *beta subjective challenge* (represented by a green chip). The other two remaining non-traditional attributes of career success are *authenticity* (yellow chip) and *work-life balance*

(blue chip). Authenticity reflects the degree of emphasis individuals place on their careers reflecting their values, perceptions, attitudes and work-life balance. The degree of importance of each of these parameters is shown in the models together with the inclusion of key determinants that emerged from the interview transcripts.

The objective challenge still remains perceptually important, even with a reduction in opportunities

Balance is important for those who have health issues

Identified Key External Influences (Male)
Family
Marital Status
Illness, well-being
Redundancies
Lack of opportunities

Male Career stage
Late
Pre-Retirement

Male

Authenticity of a career has moved to the forefront

Increase in a subjective challenge

Baby Boomers

1945-1960

Now seeking a subjective challenge

Authenticity becomes predominant

Female

Female Career stage
Late
Pre-Retirement

Potential Female External Attributes and Influences
Societal expectations for family commitments, lack of opportunities, life-stage, legacy of looking after the family

Objective challenge has increased in importance

Now with less external commitments, for women balance still remains important

Figure 7.1
Summary of the Baby Boomers managers' perceptions of career success

Colour	Glass-Clip
Red	Challenge - objective
Blue	Work-life balance
Yellow	Authenticity
Green	Challenge - subjective

Figure 7.1 above shows that for the Baby Boomer generation, gender had a particular influence on how this generational group perceived career success viewed through Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005) Kaleidoscope Career Model. Various influences have impacted on the Baby Boomer generation, including the individual's life-stage, family commitments, the effects of a serious illness, facing or having experienced redundancy.

Seeking to be seen as an *expert, respected, influential*, a legacy leaver or *self-realiser*

Colour	Glass-Clip
	Challenge - objective
Doug	Work-life balance
	Authenticity
Doug	Challenge - subjective

Work-life balance due to lack of opportunities

Illness and redundancies have made work-life balance more important

The *objective challenge* still remains important

Seeking a *subjective challenge* through goal-setting for personal reasons

Authentic career success in terms of a *personal challenge, self-satisfaction, personal attainment*

Figure 7.2: Male Baby Boomers managers' career success when viewed through the revised Kaleidoscope Career Model

As shown in Figure 7.1 and Figure 7.2 above, when these influences are viewed through Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005, 2006) model, the area of challenge remains significant. The model also indicates a significant gender divide, denoted by the importance of key attributes associated with authenticity. For the generation, the *challenge* is predominately subjective in terms of attaining *personal validation* as opposed to status or a higher salary. The male members of the Baby Boomer generation now view *balance* as also important. For Baby Boomer men (refer to Figure 7.2), the lack of opportunities combined with external events in their lives led to a re-evaluation of their perception of career success. For this grouping, particularly those who suffered a major illness, there is now a desire to spend more time with their family. The final chip, *authenticity*, is closely linked with a *subjective challenge*. Baby Boomers used terms such as s*elf-recognition*, seeking *self-esteem* and in terms of pursuing success through leaving some form of *legacy*. This legacy was seen in the context of making their career more *authentic*. Male Baby Boomers are actively pursuing this attribute, as they pursued an *objective challenge* earlier in their careers.

Colour	Glass-Clip
	Challenge - objective
Doug	Work-life balance
	Authenticity
Green	Challenge - subjective

Work-life balance due to external commitments, remains a major influence

Subjective challenge - being seen as an *expert*

Seeking a *subjective challenge* - seeking *respect* in a role

Being an *influencer* through attaining a *subjective challenge*
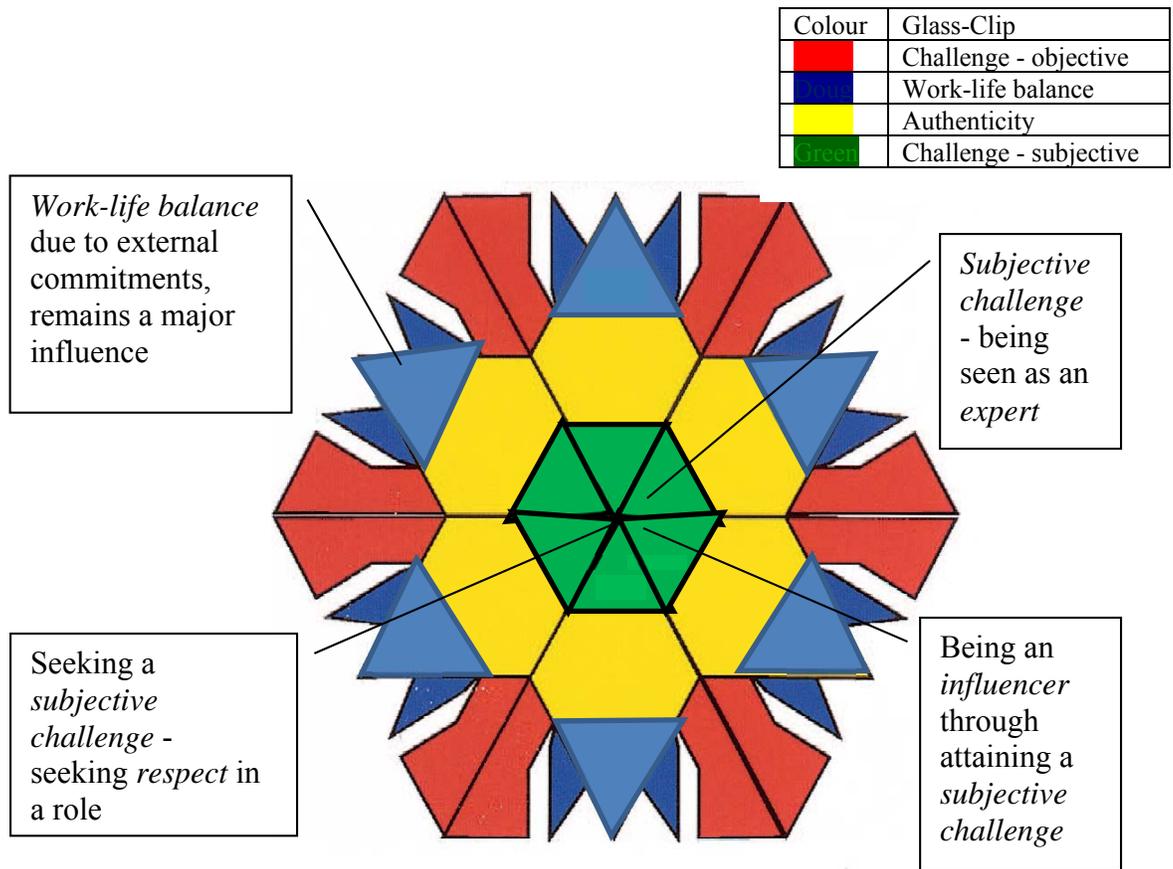
Figure 7.3: Female Baby Boomers managers' career success when viewed through the revised Kaleidoscope Career Model

In contrast, for female Baby Boomers (refer to Figure 7.3) external commitments related to the family were seen as a quintessential influence. When viewed through the Kaleidoscope Career Model, the findings indicated a preference for seeking *self-realisation* in a career to make it successful. Although the *objective challenge* was present among female Baby Boomers, it was seen as less important compared with their male counterparts. From a *subjective-challenge* perspective and that of *leaving a legacy* although important aspect among males in defining career success, this theme was seen as significantly less important than being seen as an *expert* and *respected*. To achieve this, female Baby Boomers viewed career success in terms of seeking a balance in their work and personal life that prevailed through most of their career, while after re-establishing their career, they sought to attain *self-growth* in terms of attaining objective or organisational (alpha) challenges, and still valued *self-recognition* and *self-satisfaction* as a means of gaining authenticity. It also emerged from the findings that, Baby Boomer women were still seeking further career opportunities.

Although similarities between males and females are present in both Figure 7.2 and 7.3, in the work-life balance parameter there is a clear demarcation between the genders. For the male Baby Boomers, illness and lack of opportunity are the key influences, while for female managers in this generation external commitments, such as the family, are significant.
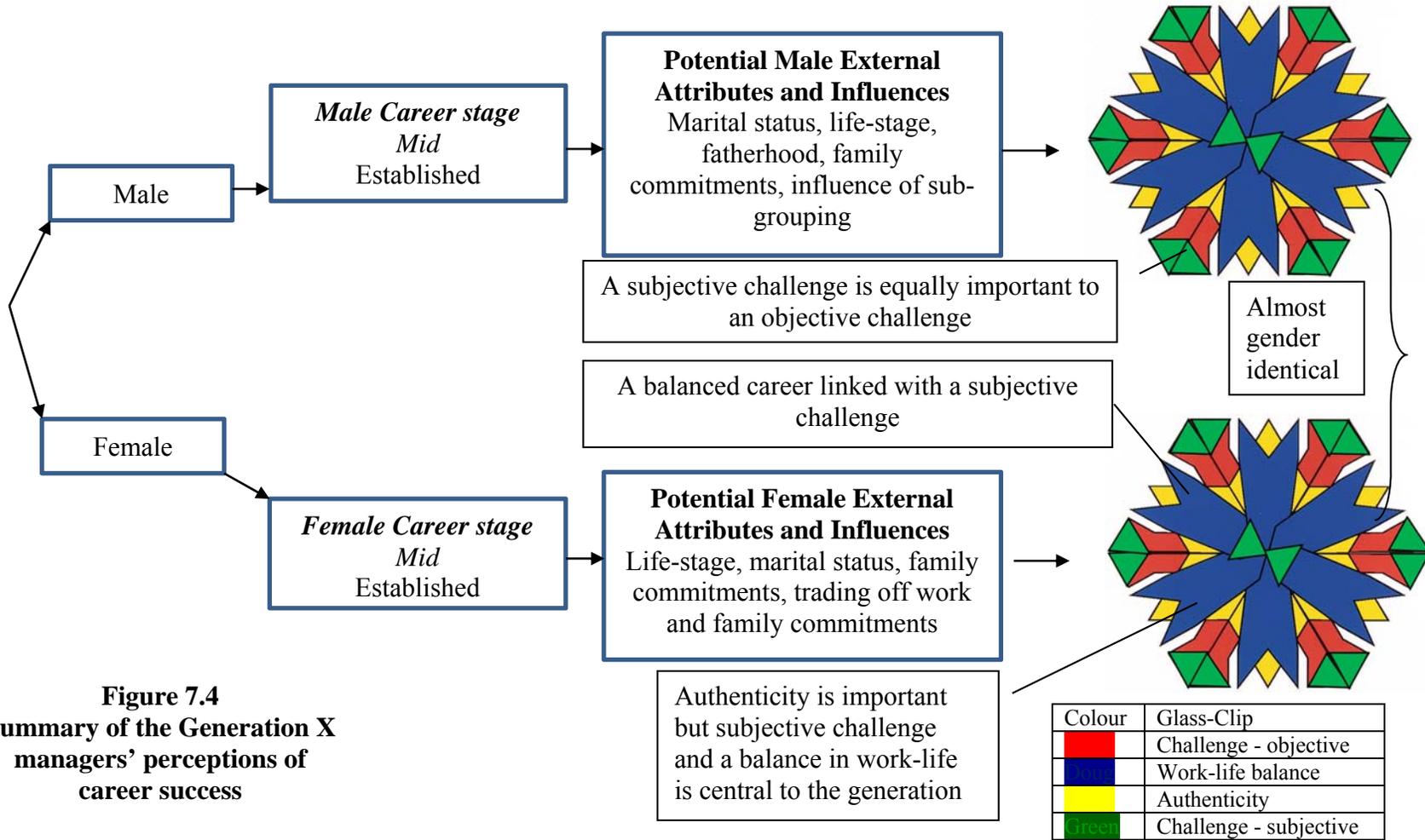
Figure 7.4
Summary of the Generation X managers' perceptions of career success

Male

Female

Male Career stage
Mid
Established

Female Career stage
Mid
Established

Potential Male External Attributes and Influences
Marital status, life-stage, fatherhood, family commitments, influence of sub-grouping

Potential Female External Attributes and Influences
Life-stage, marital status, family commitments, trading off work and family commitments

A subjective challenge is equally important to an objective challenge

A balanced career linked with a subjective challenge

Authenticity is important but subjective challenge and a balance in work-life is central to the generation

Almost gender identical

Colour	Glass-Clip
Red	Challenge - objective
Blue	Work-life balance
Yellow	Authenticity
Green	Challenge - subjective

For Generation X, as shown in Figure 7.4 below and 7.5 below, there is little gender difference related to career success. The key influences are the emergence of external commitment to family, and the threat of having experienced their parents face redundancies. Figure 7.4 shows that the generation predominately saw success subjectively. The non-career centric determinants were identified during the interviews as also being essential aspects to define career success. In relation to a *challenge*, Generation X managers rated *challenge* lower, and emphasised that a challenge needed to be *subjective* rather than *objective*.

Colour	Glass-Clip
	Challenge - objective
	Work-life balance
	Authenticity
	Challenge - subjective

Reduced degree of seeking an *objective challenge* – through attaining status or high wages

Being respected in their careers for their *expertise* and *influence*

Seeking a *subjective challenge* through attaining *self-realised* goals

Being recognised as an *expert*

The importance and dominance of external commitments such as a family

Figure 7.5: Male and female Generation X managers' career success when viewed through the revised Kaleidoscope Career Model

In Figure 7.5 above, there is less of a gender divide, and a recognition that attributes such as *expert, respected* and *influencers* are important. These *chips* are not seen as essential (as implied by the Baby Boomers, particularly the men). The findings show that external attributes such as family commitments are influential; however, unlike the Baby Boomers, there is less of a gender divide with regard to these determinants. As this study reveals, part of this particular finding, of a men moving to a *beta* orientated career, can be attributed to a potential generational shift, to desiring a *work-life balance*. The life-stage of this generation was also influential, for example, *Leaving One's Mark* was a key parameter among the Baby Boomers, but was not seen as being relevant to the Generation X managers.

Although there is commonality between the genders and sectors, when the key determinants associated with career success are added to the Kaleidoscope Career Model, the *objective challenge* attribute remains important to some managers, and in particular those in the service sector, since the profession or sector of employment remains a key influencer.

	Male	→	*Male Career stage* *Early* Exploration stage	→	**Potential Male External Attributes and Influences** Profession / sector, job security, economy, desire to control their career, attitude of self-entitlement	→

Generation Y
1981 to present

Almost gender identical

	Female	→	*Female Career stage* *Early* Exploration stage	→	**Potential Male External Attributes and Influences** Profession / sector, job security, economy, desire to control their career, attitude of self-entitlement	→

Authenticity of a career is inter-dependent on the sector or profession of the manager

Figure 7.6
Summary of Generation Y
managers' perceptions of
career success

Colour	Glass-Clip
Red	Challenge - objective
Blue	Work-life balance
Yellow	Authenticity
Green	Challenge - subjective

Finally, at the beginning or early stage of their careers, both genders of Generation Y managers saw profession and sector as key determinants (refer to Figure 7.6). When career success was viewed through the Kaleidoscope Career Model, the generation saw an *objective* and *subjective challenge* as essential. However, the degree of the importance related to authenticity and work-life balance was found to be inter-dependent on the sector of employment or profession of the manager, and the individual generational sub-generational grouping. For example, the perceptions of those in the older Generation Y grouping to challenge, were more reflective of the younger Generation X managers than the younger Generation Y sub-grouping. However, all members of the Generation Y group saw *work-life* balance as important and recognised the importance of seeking this attribute while attaining a challenging career.

Colour	Glass-Clip
	Challenge - objective
Dous	Work-life balance
	Authenticity
Dous	Challenge - subjective

The predominance of *the objective challenge*, but also closely linked to a *subjective challenge*

The need for *self-respect* and *self – awareness* through a *subjective challenge*

Career authenticity is dependent on sector

Objective challenges such as status and salary

Seeking *subjective challenges* such as *self-satisfaction*, *self-understanding*, and *self-realisation*

Need for personal time

The emergence of a generational theme of seeking a *work-life balance*

Figure 7.7: Male and female Generation Y managers' career success when viewed through the revised Kaleidoscope Career Model

The influence of the sector of employment emerged as a key influencer for Generation Y managers. Part of this influence can also be attributed to the career stage of the manager and a shared generational perspective as to what constitutes career success (refer to Figure 7.7 above). For those in the non-service sector, being r*espected* is important, while the service sector managers see *expert* as being essential. In contrast, for parameters such as s*elf-realiser* and *leaving one's mar*k there is generational consensus that these determinants have no relevance. The mapping exercise also revealed that irrespective of gender or profession, seeking a *challenge* both *objectively* and *subjective* was highly important. On closer examination career success is a blend of an *objective* and *subjective* challenge with *personal challenge, personal satisfaction, goal setting* and *personal attainment* becoming equally important. When it comes to *work-life balance*, although personal time is recognised a significant attribute, there is also recognition that to achieve personal and work-related goals, this parameter is often seen as being less significant. Finally, through attaining *self-satisfaction, self-esteem, self-understanding* and *self-realisation,* and to a lesser extent *self-awareness* and *self-respect,* these determinants must be closely associated with a subjective challenge.

From reviewing these determinants using the Kaleidoscope Career Model, the study also established that almost regardless of occupation, gender, life-stage or generation, the majority of managers expressed a protean orientation (Hall, 1976, 2002) to manage their own career. This encompasses career opportunities and work-life balance, although their actual career may not follow this pattern. In taking responsibility whether to progress or not in objective or subjective terms, the managers made clear choices not to progress on objective terms. This means that although for some, particularly those men in the older generation, a career is predominately objective in outlook, and now organisationally plateaued, they still view career success as being closely aligned to that of a *climber*. For men in the Generation X grouping, irrespective of gender, there was a revision of what constitutes career success and they have now incorporated a more subjective perspective into their view of a career. Among the younger Generation Y managers, there was an express desire to manage a career, but the extent to which this manifested itself as being protean was dependent upon occupation/ profession.

Chapter Eight
Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

Following the report on the study's findings (Chapters Five, Six and Seven), this Chapter presents the conclusions. The Chapter also considers how the findings contribute to the theory and understanding of managing a generationally diverse workforce. In conclusion, the Chapter presents the limitations of the study before making recommendations for future research.

8.2 The Aim of the Research

The aim of this study was to investigate the role of generational differences in an individual, British manager's career type, progression and perception of career success. To achieve this, the study addressed the following research questions:

Research Question One: Theoretically, what supports the argument that a generational group is a reliable method to group individual managers?

Research Question Two: Theoretically, how are individual manager's career types and progression influenced by their generational grouping?

Research Question Three: Theoretically, when viewed through the Kaleidoscope Career model, how are individual manager's perceptions of a successful career influenced by their generational group?

Research Question Four: Empirically, what support is there that a generational group is a reliable method to group individual managers?

Research Question Five: Empirically, how are individual manager's career types and progression influenced by their generational grouping?

Research Question Six: Empirically, when viewed through the Kaleidoscope Career model, how are individual manager's perceptions of a successful career influenced by their generational group?

By investigating these questions, the study also intended to generate greater understanding of the influence that a generation can have on the individual in the contemporary career environment, and provide insight into the practicalities of managing a generationally diverse working environment.

8.3 Overview of the Study

The fieldwork undertaken for the main study comprised of conducting semi-structured interviews with 42 UK managers. The participants represented the British employment sectors. Three generational groupings (Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y) were represented and equal numbers of male and female participants per sector were interviewed. Six participants from the manufacturing, hotel / restaurant, telecommunication and communication, and banking / financial sectors were interviewed. Eighteen participants from the public administration sector, the largest employer in the UK, were interviewed.

An interpretivist methodology was adopted. A career was defined as 'an individual's work-related and other relevant experiences, both inside and outside of organizations that form a unique pattern over the individual's lifespan' (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009, p. 1543). Career progression is upward movement through a number of hierarchically ordered stages relating to developmental stage and/or age (Adamson, Doherty & Viney, 1998; Barauch, 2004; Dries et al. (2008). As defined in Chapter Three, section 3.1.1, career success is viewed as having both internal and external dimensions (Olsen & Shultz, 2013; Verbruggen, 2012; Arthur, Khapova & Wilderom, 2005; Heslin, 2005).

The study adopted an inductive approach to elicit an understanding of the meaning that each individual participant gave to the terms of a 'career' and 'career success.' The Curricula Vitae were analysed using a documentary analysis approach while the interviews involved the use of timeline analysis (Mason, 1994), which enabled participants to tell their stories in their own way within a semi-imposed structure. Interviews were recorded, and transcripts analysed using a content analysis approach as advocated by Miles and Huberman (1994), before being manually coded. The findings were evaluated in relation to Arthur et al.'s (2005), Hall's (2002) and recently by Chudzikowski's (2012) contention that there has been a shift in the career landscape to a more *boundaryless* or *protean* career. The evaluation used Verbuggen et al.'s (2007) six categories of career types. Finally, the study extended Mainiero

and Sullivan's (2005, 2006) Kaleidoscope Career model to categorise career success viewed through a generational lens.

8.4 Findings and Conclusions

This section demonstrates how the six research questions set out in section 8.2, were answered and how the research aim − to investigate the role of generational differences in an individual, British manager's career type, progression and perception of career success − was achieved.

In answering the **first** question, that is, theoretically, what supports the argument that a generational group is a reliable method to group individual managers?, there is robust academic evidence in Chapter Two, and then addressing the **fourth** research question: empirically, what support is there that a generational group is a reliable method to group individual managers?, the findings set out in Chapter Five to show that a 'generation' based on the *life-stage* of an individual and generation provides a reliable method to group individuals to investigate their career types, career progression and career success. However, in reaching this conclusion this study concurred with Kertzer (1983) that anecdotally produced generational studies have created a polysemous use of the term that has led to confusion. This study disagrees Costanza and Finkelstein (2015) assertion that a generation should be rejected due to its lack of empirical evidence, therefore differences do not exist, and supports Perry, Golom and McCarthy (2015), Lyons et al. (2015), Riggio and Saggi (2015). By adopting a wider primary research strategy as advocated by Parry and Urwin (2011), Lyons et al. (2012), this study supports the idea that a generation does not operate independently or in isolation (Kertzer, 1983; Giancola, 2006; Rhodes & Doering, 1993; Lyons & Kuron, 2014) rather; a generation is influenced by a number of key determinants of attributes. These attributes include the individual's life-stage, in which a person's attitudes, values and perceptions change with maturity. It was also found in the literature review that social class, gender and age were influential (Parry & Urwin, 2011; Higgins, 2001; Arnold, 1997; Sturges, 1999). While 'society' has labelled each generation differently in order to separate one generation from another, the generational effect, although a reliable means of categorising and grouping individuals is linear rather than categorical. That is to say, a generation will change gradually over time as opposed to a sudden shift or change at a particular birth year cut-off. This study rejects the proposition that a generation changes suddenly at particular birth year cut-off, and instead concurs with Twenge et al. (2004, 2008),

who maintain that a generation is linear, influenced by agentic traits, where the individual's perceptions and values are self-organised, proactive, self-reflective and self-regulated, and not just shaped in reaction by environmental forces or driven by shared impulses, as advocated by Johnson and Johnson (2010), Zemke et al. (2000), Gursoy et al. (2008), Gursoy, Chi and Karadag (2013). To somewhat illustrate the pragmatic and inexact nature of a generation, this study found that individuals in the same generational grouping did not necessarily experience the same event in the same way. Further, there is also evidence of a generational cross-over, with those on the cusp of another generational grouping sharing similar traits, as advocated by Arsenault (2004), Kupperschmidt (2000), Schuman and Scott (1989).

In answer to the **second** research question – theoretically, how are individual manager's career types and progression influenced by their generational grouping?, and **fifth** research question - empirically, how are individual manager's career types and progression influenced by their generational grouping? − it is possible to deduce from the study that when managers are grouped by generation, there are distinct differences in their perceptions of what a career means, which was reflected in their career type and progression. The study revealed that while identifying potential generational influence affecting career type, it also indicated that a career and its definitions are multifaceted and complex. Underpinning these perceptions and ultimately the career type of the manager is influenced by other external attributes such as profession, gender and life-stage, which are also pivotal to the individual.

For the youngest generation (Generation Y), a career, career type and progression is deemed to be influenced and affected by the sector and profession rather than by the participant's gender. Those participants working in occupations or professions that required a specific qualification were more committed to the sector of employment than those without this prerequisite accreditation. For those managers in sectors that needed a specific qualification or experience, such as nursing or teaching, a career adhered to the expectations of the professional culture, and was seen as a vocation. In contrast, managers in the service or retail sectors value a career differently, seeing a career more as a 'means to an end' as opposed to being committed to the sector or profession, which supports Barron et al. (2007) assertion that this grouping seeks rapid career progression.

Underlying these findings is the increased shift to a more *protean* career, in some instances almost boundaryless among Generation Y managers: it transcended gender, profession or occupation. Individuals in certain professions, such as teaching, nursing or finance, tended to be *bounded, staying* or *trapped* by their occupation, but not necessarily by their employer. In contrast those individuals in the service and manufacturing sectors viewed commitment as being significantly less important, indicating that they remained uncommitted and potentially more boundaryless. What cannot be determined is whether the *boundaryless* or *protean* career element is influenced by the individual's life-stage and the emergence of external commitments. This study instead reflects Clarke and Patrickson (2008) and Briscoe et al. (2012), who contend that although managers are highly skilled, the recent employment landscape has not provided guarantees that transferable skills can cross all sectors, thus making a career totally boundaryless. Instead, the data revealed that organisational expectations exist among the generations that the employer should provide job-specific training and development, a theme that Pringle and Mallon (2003) originally presented, and later supported by Hess, Jepsen and Dries (2012), Dries, van Acker and Verbruggen (2012), Cohen et al. (2004), Guest and Mackenzie Davey (1996), while questioning whether a career can ultimately become boundaryless or unanchored.

One key finding to emerge from answering the fifth research question was that Generation X women were less inclined to give up their careers when starting a family. Male Generation X managers shifted to seeking a greater balance between work and career, and saw the objective career aspects as less important to them than did the male Baby Boomers. This finding could be attributed to a shared generational perception and attitude to a career. While the Generation X grouping, in their *maintenance* career stage, perceived their careers as being mainly *protean*, there were other external attributes, such as increased commitments and responsibilities, which impacted on this generation; thus their career style was categorised as mainly *staying, trapped* or *bounded*.

The study found that there were Generation X managers who perceived their career style as becoming more *homeless* or *released* due to unexpected circumstances, such as family commitments. This resulted in a need to change jobs or location, while continuing to seek organisational security.

The Baby Boomers, who were entering or in the *pre-retirement* stage of their careers, categorised themselves as *staying*, *bounded* or *trapped* in their occupation or profession, and by their employer. In investigating whether this was specifically generational, the group's Curricula Vitae and interview transcripts through using a documentary analysis approach revealed that it could be attributable to the lack of opportunities available and related to the increased importance of a pension. What emerged was an underlying recognition that a career and its identity were important in defining a person, and this was predominately seen in objective terms, such as status, job title and remuneration. In addition, for this generation, this study identified that there was an emergence of similar values between the genders. This supports the research of Posner and Munson (1981), Gomez-Mejia (1990), Agle and Caldwell (1999), Dries et al. (2008b), who assert that as individuals' life-stages and careers progress, their values begin to mirror each other (see Chapter Seven, section 7.2.3). From a Human Resource practitioner's perspective, as will be discussed in section 8.6 below, understanding the changes amongst the generations to career types can assist organisations to develop more sympathetic policies and strategies for employee career growth.

The **third** research question was to investigate what the generations saw as a successful career − theoretically, when viewed through the Kaleidoscope Career model, how are individual manager's perceptions of a successful career influenced by their generational group?, and then **sixth** research question addressed: empirically, when viewed through the Kaleidoscope Career model, how are individual manager's perceptions of a successful career influenced by their generational group?

As indicated at the start of the study, the *Kaleidoscope Career* model (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005, 2006) was used specifically to investigate and illustrate how an individual perceives a career as being successful. The findings in Chapter Seven illustrate the complexities surrounding the nature of career success. When viewed through a generational lens, this complexity extends beyond the traditional, objective elements of career success, such as pay and status, to encompass a more subjective categorisation of self or internal gain. This was demonstrated through multifaceted definitions provided by all the participants. The interviews revealed that the participants also saw success in terms of gaining personal recognition and exerting an authentic influence based on both personal and non-personal values. The study also revealed a marked difference in how individuals perceive career

success when compared to a traditional, objective and organisational model. These findings seem to support the contention that the models of Super (1953) and Levinson et al. (1978) are out-dated, that instead careers have become more *protean*. This was manifested in the individual managers wanting to manage their own careers, seeking continuous self-development, not necessarily through formalised training, but instead through viewing a career as value-driven and self-directed.

This study concludes that a career is a duality, and supports Baruch (2004, 2006), Dries and Verbruggen (2012), Khapova and Arthur (2011), Giancola (2006), Rhodes and Doering (1993) and Hall and Chandler (2005), who claim that careers are objective and subjective, and attained through organisational goals, while individuals remain true to themselves. The findings also concur with Gunz (1989), Peluchette (1993), Zeitz et al. (2009) and Hall and Chandler (2005), who argue that both aspects, although diametrically opposite, are equally important, and that it would be naïve to neglect either the objective or subjective nature of career success (Hall & Chandler, ibid), or to rely specifically on one construct (Gunz, ibid). Instead career success needs to incorporate both the internal objective and external subjective facets (Olsen & Shultz, 2013; Peluchette, ibid; Zeitz et al., ibid).

Generation Y's perceptions of significant factors that influenced whether a career was successful, was that it should be framed in an objective and subjective way. For this generation (Chapter Seven, section 7.2.1), there was an active pursuit of remuneration and job status, while still wanting a work-life balance and attaining success through seeking *self-recognition*. This perception was shared by both genders, but was critically influenced by the generation's life-stage and profession. Since this generation was still relatively new to their working lives, this study concurs with Barron et al. (2007) and Twenge et al. (2000), that these managers, while establishing themselves, were focused on having a predominately *alpha* career (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005, 2006). What cannot be established is the predominance of gender, as the key external determinant advocated by Mainiero and Sullivan (ibid) and Sullivan and Mainiero (2007, 2008). Mainiero and Sullivan (ibid) contend that men pursue a purely *alpha* career, while women pursue a more authentic / balanced *beta* career later in their careers. This study found that both genders shared a generational tendency to seek career success in terms of being *challenging*, *authentic* and having a *work-life balance*.

The study revealed the importance of profession as a key external attribute. For those Generation Y managers in occupations or professions, such as nursing or teaching, there was a greater commitment to the sector, which was also reflected in their perceptions of career success. Many of these managers saw career success in terms of extending their professions. For those Generation Y managers in the service sectors, there was an almost *boundaryless* attitude to the attainment of career success. Where opportunities for attaining further objective success, such as promotion or opportunities elsewhere, or having to work in a role that compromised their personal values, the interviewees were less committed to the place of employment or even sector.

Generation X managers viewed life-stage, and in particular, external commitments, such as having a family, or ill-health or redundancy, and a shared generational perception of the past as significant. The polarised assumptions made by authors such as Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006) and Powell and Mainiero (1992) that there is a significant gender difference in relation to balancing a successful career with external commitments or relationships was not significantly present in this study. Instead this study concludes that the 'relationalistic' approach of balancing success in a career with relationships, as advocated by Powell and Mainiero (ibid) was shared in the main by both genders. In investigating this theme further, the study revealed that this perception was partly shared by both genders, in particular the men, who were influenced by their childhood and formative years. For many of the male Generation X managers, there was a prevailing desire to balance their careers with family life; career success was closely associated with them not experiencing what their parents (in particular, their fathers) had missed out on, which was spending time with their families. This finding concurs with the views of Ng and Feldman (2010), Johnson and Johnson (2010), Zemke et al. (2000), Kupperschmidt (2000) and Gursoy et al. (2008) that the generations share certain characteristics uniquely generational, based upon a shared experience during their formative years.

In career success terms, the finding that Generation X managers were seeking career success in terms of greater *self-awareness* is reflective of Wales' (2003) view of authenticity as a composite of learning from the past, being open to personal feelings, able to reflect and having the ability to make appropriate choices. This finding contradicts Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005, 2006) contention that men in their mid-career stage pursue a predominately *alpha* career. This study argues that there was a potential generational shift influenced by

various external attributes that resulted in this generation seeking a more *balanced / authentic* or *beta* career. This echoes Hall's (2002) *protean* career type, namely, shaping a career to facilitate gaining work and personal experiences, while being value-driven and self-directed.

Finally, the oldest generation, the Baby Boomers, although having significant generational differences in their perceptions of what constitutes a successful career, revealed various other key external attributes that had influenced them. These include life-stage, external commitments, such as having a family, lack of promotional opportunities, retirement and ill-health. Unlike the Generation X and Y managers, gender was also a significant determinant. Many of the male Baby Boomers' careers reflect Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005, 2006) *alpha* construct, while female managers of this generation can be classified as *beta*. In terms of Powell and Mainiero's (1992) River of Time model, the women in this study throughout most of their working lives needed to negotiate between success in a career and other commitments and relationships, while men's careers did not follow this pattern.

As a generation, the Baby Boomers are now reaching the end of their economic working life and men have now begun to re-evaluate their perceptions of what constitutes career success. Although men still valued the objectiveness of career success, due to a lack of future promotional opportunities, ill health or a realisation of missing out on family life, there was a significant shift to a more *balanced* and *authentic* or *beta* career as posited by Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006), Sullivan and Mainiero (2007, 2008) and McCabe and Savery (2005). This has led Baby Boomer men to pursue different roles in order to attain career success. For example, in this study Baby Boomer men embarked on becoming *experts* or being recognised as a *person of knowledge*, able to *leave their mark* or *legacy* after they retire.

In contrast, Baby Boomer women, after sometimes taking significant amounts of time from pursuing career success, spoke about re-engaging and wanting to attain further career aspirations in objective terms. Underlying this was the recognition that women's perceptions in this generation had been impacted by external commitments, which differed markedly from their male colleagues. This finding is reflective of Hall's (2002) *protean* career, where, due to their role as the main family-maker, women have needed to pursue a career they have shaped rather than one shaped by the organisation. This led to Baby Boomer women adopting a more personal perspective on their career choices and searching for *self-fulfilment*, rather than being purely organisationally driven. It is further supported by Greenhaus, Callanan and

Godshalk, 2009, and earlier by Gallos (1989), Bell and Nkomo (1992) and Marshall (1995), that women make choices based on life experience rather than a career. These key findings, as will be discussed in section 8.6, have also a pronounced impact on how Human Resource management facilitate and assist employees of different generations achieve their perceived career aspirations and success.

8.5 Contribution to knowledge

This section, based on the purpose of studying the connection of generational groupings, the career type and progression and the perception to career success of individual managers, has provided a better insight into what a career means to managers and the implications for Human Resource practitioners. The first contribution sets out the extent to which theoretical and empirical evidence demonstrates that a generation is a reliable means to group individual managers, as presented below in section 8.5.1. The second contribution, presented in section 8.5.2, relates to the extent to which career types and progression are influenced by generational grouping. The final contribution extends Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005, 2006) original Kaleidoscope Career model in section 8.5.3, to more accurately depict career success when individual managers are grouped generationally.

8.5.1 Contribution to academic understanding of generational studies

Career theory and generational studies have often been researched independently. By combining these two disciplines, this study introduced a new dimension and unique contribution to investigate an individual manager's career, career style and progression, and how career success is perceived. This perspective has led to a series of calls by writers such as Lyons et al. (2015), Lyons and Kuron (2014), Foster (2013), Urick (2012), Sullivan (1999), Guest and MacKenzie Davey (1996) to study generations by adopting a rigorous qualitative approach. These findings also address the above and those of Dries et al. (2008b), who contend that there is a need for further research to investigate the lack of interest identified among generational studies regarding a career.

In studying generational theory in the context of career studies, this study revealed that a generation does not operate in isolation, which concurs with Lyons and Kuron (2014), Lyons et al. (2015), Kertzer (1983), Giancola (2006). While generational studies see values, attitudes and perceptions being informed during a generation's early years, and thus

remaining static (e.g. Gursoy et al. 2008; Gursoy, Chi & Karadag, 2013; Kupperschmidt, 2000), a key contribution of the study is that profession and sector of employment has a direct influence on shared attitudes, values and perceptions held by a generational grouping, therefore challenging the notion of a generation is static. In addition to the profession and sector of employment, the findings established other determinants − gender and the life-stage − to be equally influential. The above findings also make a significant academic contribution to understanding of what a career means to each generation: consideration needs to be taken that other influential factors are not simply looked at from one specific perspective, for example, based on a generation's perspective only.

8.5.2   Contribution to understanding the influence of a generation on career types and progression

The unique contribution of researching career theory and generational studies to investigate from a generational perspective an individual manager's career, career style and progression, this study establishes that while gender, life-stage and chronological age are significant determinants in a career, its progression and success, an individual's shared values, attitudes and perceptions of a generation are also influential. The study showed how career styles and progression, in general, changes over time − from upward progression and the accumulation of assets through remuneration and reputation in the early-mid stages to more balanced and authentic in the latter stages.

However, unlike previous publications into age (e.g. Lyons & Kuron, 2014; Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005; Greenhaus, Callanan & Godshalk, 2009; Baruch, 2006) and gender (e.g. Sturges, 1999), this study found that a generation has a significant influence on how an individual manager's career type and progression. To assist in investigating this theme, this study in addressing Lyons and Kuron (2014), Foster (2013), Urick (2012), Sullivan (1999) and Guest and MacKenzie Davey's (1996) call for further research that moves beyond the positivist paradigm, drew on Verbruggen et al. (2007) career categorisation to classify the individual's career type as being bounded, staying, homeless, trapped, released, or boundaryless. By viewing a career from a generational perspective, the study provided a unique and holistic insight into generational influences. The findings revealed a generational shift from being bound to an organisation to one where individuals are driven by their own values and self-directed, which is reflective of the Hall's (2002) protean career. However, this

study did not find any evidence that career types have become boundaryless (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; DeFillippi & Arthur, 1996), but instead that career landscape has become relatively stable and the traditional career paths particularly those in the public sector still exist. In the private sectors, while there has been a shift to be more transactional and flexible, the blurring of the traditional and former traditional career routes has culminated in career types becoming more multi-directional.

In investigating the career progression amongst the generations, this study identified that there has been a generational shift in male and female expectations and roles. For those managers in the younger generations (Generation X and Y), due to changes in society including the emergence of dual-career families (Office for National Statistics Social Trends, 2011) had changed their career. For the female managers in this study, there was an expectation that they were no longer expected to stop or suspend their careers due to family commitments. Men's roles and participation have also generationally shifted to meet commitments beyond the workplace, such those of the family.

Through conducting the documentary analysis of the various Curricula Vitae, this study identified other generational differences related to career progression. For Baby Boomers, in particular, the male participants were focused on a conventional linear career progression. These career paths have been predominately based in one or two organisations. Career progression for female Baby Boomers had been significantly influenced by their commitment beyond the workplace, for example family responsibilities. For Generation X managers, the majority of women in this grouping reported their career progression had changed significantly compared with their earlier working life owing also to family commitments. However, this was not only for females, in this generation, men highlighted that their career progression had been directly influenced by their family commitments. Both male and female managers were generally more pragmatic than the older generation concerning job moves. The documentary analysis on the Curricula Vitae indicated that early on in their working lives, Generation X managers moved every three to four years. Investigating current working patterns of Generation X now revealed that these career moves had slowed down, changing from an average of three to four years to every four to six years.

For the Generation Y participants', the Curricula Vitae and the interviews indicated a number of influences, in particular that of profession or occupation. This study found that those in the

medical and educational sectors were reluctant to seek new experiences by moving professions. In contrast, for those managers in the service sector, their career and its progression to date had been comprised of a series of rapid changes and experiences in different jobs and organisations. The findings indicated a greater propensity for managers in the service sector to have careers that resemble McCabe and Savery's (2005) 'butterfly' career pattern. For managers in other sectors, this 'fluttering in and out' of jobs and sectors was not evident.

While there is evidence of generational differences, there were also other determinants such as gender, profession, life-stage, and reduced opportunities, all of which appeared to have a significant influence, which confirms that a 'generation' as a construct does not operate isolation, therefore Human Resource practitioners and operational management need to consider this finding when devising future resourcing programmes and organisational policy, which addresses Van der Heijden et al. (2009), Clarke and Patrickson (2008), Callanan and Greenhaus (2008), Zopiatis et al. (2012), Costanza and Finkelstein (2015) and Yeatts et al. (2000), need for Human Resource professionals to accurately understand generations differences.

A major contribution of this study was the associated psychological attributes of career progression. The findings revealed a potential generational difference in relation to how the four psychological attributes: *interest*, *satisfaction*, *motivation* and *commitment* were valued. For the oldest generation, Baby Boomers, rated the four elements (interest, motivation, satisfaction and commitment) equally, while for the youngest generation, there was specific focus on the 'interest' and 'satisfaction' aspects behind progressing in a career. 'Motivation', although seen as important, however was rated lower, while among all of the Generation Y participants, saw commitment as irrelevant. The lack of commitment was demonstrated by the shorter tenure between roles, demonstrated through their attitude to the organisation, employer, and in some instances the sector. For the Generation X managers, almost irrespective of profession or gender, there was a lack of importance attached to each attribute: *interest*, *satisfaction*, *motivation* and *commitment*, compared with the other two generations.

Also to emerge from studying career progression was a consensus among members of the different generations about controlling their career, career style and progression. There were

various different reasons given by the participants, including the desire to have greater opportunities (Generation Y), and work - life balance (Generation Y and Generation X).

8.5.3 Contribution to understanding the generational influence on career success when viewed the Kaleidoscope Career model

To conceptualise a career, Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006), developed the Kaleidoscope Career model. The model is a composite of three distinct parameters, namely, an 'alpha challenge', representing an organisational orientated career, a 'work-life balance' representing the individual's need to seek a balance between work and personal life, and 'authenticity', where individual manager's actively seek a career that reflects their personal values and aspirations. These parameters change as the individual's career changes in response to key influences, particularly life-stage and gender, as advocated by Mainiero and Sullivan (2005); for example, women seek a work-life balance or a career that is more authentic because of their commitments outside the workplace.

This study through extending Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005, 2006) Kaleidoscope Career model, revealed a blurring of genders when viewed through a generational lens with regard to wanting to achieve a career with a challenge, work-life balance and authenticity.

8.5.3.1 Extending the challenge in career success

Prior to this study, Mainiero and Sullivan's Kaleidoscope Career model presented career success as an *objective challenge*, and two subjective determinants of seeking a *work-life balance* or having an *authentic* career reflective of an individual's values. Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006) view these career success attributes as interdependent, depending primarily on the individual's gender and life-stage.

A key contribution of study has been the identification that a challenge has a dual function. The *objective challenge* in this study was seen in terms of the individual manager seeking a particular status in the organisation and/or a higher salary: the *subjective challenge* was that the individual needs to achieve personal goals and aspirations, such as to learn, grow and find stimulating, exciting work. In other words, a challenge is viewed as organisationally bound while it maintains the traditional trappings of a career and its associated perceptions. However, this is not to dismiss the emergence of a subjective challenge. The introduction of a

new parameter to the Kaleidoscope Career model, namely a subjective challenge, became a key contribution of this study.

Through introducing the subjective challenge parameter, this study revealed that while gender and life-stage, as advocated by Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006), was influential, there was a clear generational divide between genders, and also uniquely, the influence of the individual manager's profession and occupation when seeking career success in terms of a challenge. With the introduction of the new subjective challenge parameter to the Kaleidoscope Career model, as presented in this study, it is now possible to further contextualize an individual's mean of career success.

This subjective challenge parameter also extends the extant knowledge about how managers perceive and are motivated in terms of career success illustrating the dual nature of a career. This study establishes that a subjective challenge is based on the generation, gender and life-stage of the individual in terms of seeking a career that is personally challenging, for example, to be successful a career needs to include stimulating, exciting work (Generation Y and younger Generation X), concurring with Barron et al (2007), Broadbridge et al. (2006), Maxwell, Ogden and Broadbridge (2010), Maxwell and Broadbridge (2014), and wanting to be a person of influence (Baby Boomers and older Generation managers).

8.5.3.2 Extending the work-life balance in career success

The study revealed *work-life balance* is a subjective attribute associated with a trade-off between two opposing spheres − work and life outside the workplace. What emerged was the predominance of a work–life balance that falls within three general categories, that is, working time arrangements (total working hours and flexibility), for those with parenting or other care responsibilities, parental leave entitlements (maternity, paternity, parental and caring responsibilities), and childcare (subsidies or direct provision).

As identified above in section 8.5.2, to emerge from the findings are the changes among the generations regarding men's roles and participation in meeting these external commitments. Part of this can be attributed to societal changes where dependent on the individual's generation, irrespective of gender are now more inclined to seek career success in terms of a work-life balance. This finding adds weight to and expands Smith-Ruig's (2009) study into

career success by identifying the normative theme that younger men possess the desire to achieve more of a 'work-life' balance, informed by their generational grouping. In this study work-life balance was seen as a means of satisfying and meeting work, external and home commitments with minimal role conflict. In meeting these commitments, there was a shift of responsibility between work and home life, where individuals, dependent on their generation, attempt to balance these two opposing spheres. The result could be attributed to the generational desire to integrate or harmonize work with their personal life. In reaching this conclusion, the study found that work-personal life balance was directly influenced by the generational grouping, life-stage and personal circumstances; for example, meeting parenting responsibilities, or due to changes in financial commitments.

The study also established a generational shift to seeing career progress and success as self-entitlement (Trzeniewski et al. 2003; Twenge & Campbell, 2009). This is reflected in the drive to manage their own careers and career opportunities while desiring a more balanced work and personal life, and being self-directed and reflecting their personal values. This has led to careers becoming more *protean* (Hall, 1976, 2002).

The study's further contribution to understanding work-life balance is that some managers, irrespective of their generation, continued to spend long hours at work. Part of this could be attributed to individual factors, for example, the person is work orientated or influenced by the workplace culture. This study found that in particular sectors, the demands of work might be high or low, and in terms of organisational culture, either support and cultivate a balance through practices and policies, or encourage work dedication. Where imbalances occurred, the study established that for some managers it was seen as an encroachment and / or misbalance of work-home life, leading to feelings of alienation (Greenhaus, Callanan & Godshalk, 2009; Greenhaus, & Beutell, 1985; Korman et al. 1981). Where personal and work lives had been balanced, the study found that the manager expressed an increased level of organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

8.5.3.3 Extending authenticity in career success

In studying career success using the Kaleidoscope Career model, the study focused on the parameter of *authenticity*. While authenticity can be described as being genuine, or true to oneself and knowing personal strengths and limitations (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005, 2006),

this study shows that authenticity is based on acting on one's own authority, being truthful to oneself, achieving congruence between feelings and communication, and being distinctive and coherent (Svejenova, 2005; Kierkegaard & Nietzsche as cited in Golomb, 1995). Authenticity exists on a continuum were the individual remains true to core values (Avolio et al. 2004). The study also suggests that authenticity is informed by past experience; to achieve an authentic career the individual draws upon the past, through which meaning can be gained and is then informed by the present (Bovens, 1999; Nicholson & West, 1989; Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010; Heidegger, 1927, 1962 as cited in Golomb, 1995).

To encapsulate these findings into authenticity of career success, the study uniquely introduced seven new attributes − *self-awareness, self-satisfaction, self-recognition, self-esteem, self-respect, self-understanding* and *self-realisation* to the construct. These attributes represented a new contribution as to how authenticity in career success is seen. This contribution further extends the work of Mainiero and Sullivan (2005, 2006), in terms of contextualising what an authentic career represents, namely, being influenced by gender and other determinants including life-stage, career-stage, age and generation. These seven determinants were identified as essential for a career to be authentic; however, underlying this, this study further identified the extent that these determinants were also generationally influenced. *Self-awareness* was a composite of learning from the past, being open to personal feelings, being able to reflect and having the ability to make appropriate choices, which was important to Baby Boomers, as was *self-knowledge* which was closely associated with self-awareness. *Self-understanding* was seen as essential for both Baby Boomers and Generation Y managers, as was *self-realisation*, s*elf-esteem, self-recognition* and *self-satisfaction*. However, the reason and context behind why each of determinants was important was clearly dependent on the individual manager's life-stage and shared generational attitudes.

In introducing these seven attributes (self-awareness, self-satisfaction, self-recognition, self-esteem, self-respect, self-understanding and self-realisation), this study also extends the phenomenological work of Wales (2003) and Sturges (2004), by revealing that authenticity in a career is also informed by individual reflecting back on their past experiences. Based on their generational grouping, and determinants such as gender, life and career stages, external influences including family commitments and illnesses, all managers irrespective of generational grouping, drew upon personal feelings then reflected back before making the appropriate choice in terms of a career that reflected them personally. The study revealed that

managers now individualised their careers. This has led to a greater focus on pursuing and developing a more personalised or *protean* career, illustrated by the focus on seeking greater personal mobility and attaining transferable skills.

The findings showed a generational shift to seeking a career that is focused on 'optimal self-esteem' where individuals display a confidence in their own self-worth, and believe themselves to be valued for who they are and not for what they have achieved. This manifested as a 'self-entitlement' attribute.

The findings as presented below, also address the concerns of Van der Heijden et al. (2009), Clarke and Patrickson (2008), Callanan and Greenhaus (2008), Zopiatis et al. (2012), Costanza and Finkelstein (2015) and Yeatts et al. (2000), who identified a need for Human Resource professionals to understand more about the differences between the generations when creating effective policies and practices to enable employees to achieve career success.

8.6 Contribution to Practice

As highlighted previously, there have been a number of generational writers over the past 20 to 25 years (e.g. Johnson & Johnson, 2010; Gursoy et al. 2008; Gursoy, Chi & Karadag, 2013; Strauss & Howe, 1991; Kupperschmidt, 2000; Zemke et al. 2000; Smola & Sutton, 2000), who have presented Human Resource practitioners as a new challenge in managing the contemporary workplace. This included a number of Human Resource management publications about generational differences and potential future challenges (e.g. Van der Heijden et al. 2009; Clarke & Patrickson, 2008; Yeatts et al. 2000; SHRM, 2004; Gursoy, Chi & Karadag, 2013). The central premise among these publications is that employees of different generations work together while holding different attitudes and perceptions of work. This led various writers (e.g. Callanan & Greenhaus, 2008; Eisner, 2005; Van der Heijden et al. 2009; Clarke & Patrickson, 2008; Yeatts et al. 2000; Zopiatis et al. 2012; Costanza & Finkelstein, 2015 and Proserpio & Gioia, 2007), to proclaim a 'call to action' for researchers to better understand generational differences, since they have potentially vital implications for both organisational Human Resource planning and for individuals enacting their careers. While the findings provide evidence to support aspects fundamental to generational studies, this study contends that many of the existing workplace generational studies are flawed due to the over-simplified presentation of generational differences. For operational management this means there is a need to understand the implications of an employee's generation while

remaining aware that a generation does not operate in a vacuum. Throughout this study, gender, occupation, life-stage and generational grouping have been facets that are interlinked and autonomous, influencing a person's attitudes and perceptions about a career and Human Resource policies need to reflect this. Further Human Resource practitioners should be aware of the multi-dimension nature of career success, with the inclusion of a subjective challenge in the Kaleidoscope Career model, therefore they can create policies that reflect these multifaceted influences that can influence an individual's career.

This study also contends that to motivate and retain employees organisations need to reflect the complexities surrounding the individual worker when viewed through a generational lens. This includes recognising that every employee is influenced and informed by a plethora of different factors in life, and a person's generational background is only one that needs to be taken into consideration. However, as this study has demonstrated, some of the generational differences presented in other publications need to be read in the context of the intended genre, readership or research methodology. What emerges is the need for organisations to consider the shift to careers being more subjective in nature, and the need to be more reflective of the *protean* career construct (Hall, 2002). The findings concur with Enache et al. (2011) that Human Resource practitioners should provide employees with greater flexibility and control; however, there is a needs to consider the individual's generational grouping and not simply gender, reflecting Callanan and Greenhaus (2008), who advocate organisations adopting Human Resource strategies that generationally develop and capitalise on the unique and shared characteristics of the generations. Further, this study also reflects the contention of Biggs et al. (2006) and Leach et al. (2013), that Baby Boomers have a different perception of ageing and retirement from their predecessors (Traditional generation), and should be encouraged and facilitated by organisations to pass on their knowledge and experience.

Today's employment culture therefore needs to be established and maintained to reflect the different facets of what employees consider important to them with regard to a career. Rather than considering a generation, gender, occupation or the life-stage of the individual in isolation, this study contends that the organisation needs to take a more holistic perspective when viewing careers. The outcome would enable employers to better recognise the differences and similarities of the workforce, so enabling the facilitation of different career options to meet the needs of both the organisation and its employees. Employers need to be

cognisant of the extent to which employees are 'doing it for themselves' in line with Sullivan and Baruch's conclusion that:

> Increasingly, individuals are driven more by their own desires than by organizational career management practices. Thus while organisational leaders are struggling to identify positive strategies and practices to tackle the changing work environment and workforce … individuals are adapting to a more transactional employer-employee relationship and taking more responsibility for their own career development and employability (2009, p. 1543).

What this means is that policies and practices must be developed to reflect the complex nature of the workforce, including generational differences, but also combined with other influential factors including profession / occupation and gender. This finding supports the earlier works of Van der Heijden et al. (2009), Clarke and Patrickson (2008), Callanan and Greenhaus (2008), Zopiatis et al. (2012), Costanza and Finkelstein (2015) and Yeatts et al. (2000), who advise Human Resource management to adopt a more pluralistic approach in career management, but include age, life-stage and generational influences.

8.7 Limitations of the Study

The study attempted to increase knowledge concerning how generational differences influence an individual's perception of a career and its associated success. Nevertheless, there are a number of limitations which impinge on the findings.

A key limitation was conducting the fieldwork using a sample of 42 managers. It would incorrect to conclude this study can be a representation of the UK's working population employment. However, as the study's sectorial and professional profile (set out in Chapter Four, section 4.4.2,), indicates some generalisation can be made from the findings. An alternative approach would have been to adopt a case study approach and focus on one industry or sector, as advocated by Yin (1984, 1994). Using a case study approach may have provided a different richness concerning generational influence on careers and their perceived success specific to that sector, but however this strategy would have resulted in this study not identifying the potential influence of an individual's profession or occupation.

With limited access to the participants in the five employment sectors, the study adopted the use of the snowball technique to select and gain access to potential participants, but this approach may have affected the study. As a sampling technique is based on a social network,

there is the potential that the participants will nominate candidates who they know; therefore, the subjects may share similar traits and characteristics as the gatekeeper. There is however strong academic evidence to suggest that this approach is generally accepted as a valid qualitative approach (Noy, 2008), and can enable the researcher to access a suitably rich pool of respondents in unrelated sectors of employment (Polkinghorne, 2005).

The findings may have been limited by the fact that only one person, the researcher, a male Generation X, conducted the data analysis (discussed in Chapter Four, section 4.5.3). Although the study is qualitative based, where the researcher is seen as the analytical device used specifically to be immersed into the data, being a male Generation X researcher could have tainted the data. In compensation, the researcher sought out every possible opportunity for the data analysis and its conclusions to be challenged by academic colleagues. Consideration is given to those instances where the research needed to be reliable, for example, validating the use of a content analysis approach to code the interviews and rejecting grounded theory. Other potential limitations of the study concern the complexities of the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewees. As King (1994, p. 56) states, '… there can be no such thing as a 'relationship-free' interview'. The interviewer may be so different from the interviewees that he/she '… throw[s] up barriers to the acquisition of rich data' (Lofland & Lofland, 1984, p. 54); they may be so similar that they make inappropriate assumptions about the research data. To overcome this, this study commenced with conducting two pilots, and throughout the main study, the findings was constantly checked to ensure that all emerging themes were accurately identified.

Finally, the impenetrability of the topic being studied may have placed limitations on the findings. It is acknowledged in the literature (e.g. Greenhaus, Callanan & Godshalk, 2009; Baruch, 2004; Gattiker & Larwood, 1990; Zeitz et al. 2009) that examining a career from the individual's point of view has not been an easy subject to study. Eliciting definitions of a career during the interview process was sometimes difficult. Although all the participants were able to articulate what their careers meant to them, some struggled to explain what career success meant to them. Nevertheless, using a timeframe analysis to map out the participants' careers and then investigating the concepts that emerged during the pilot stage, proved to be an effective method of eliciting information.

8.8 Areas for Further Research

While the study successfully conceptualised what career success is via a generational lens, some interesting nuances and unanswered questions outside the scope of this study remain to be explored. The most obvious avenue for future research would be to repeat the study described here with other similar generational groupings of participants, either in one particular sector or profession. While showing that participants from different generations perceive a career differently and that this can be attributed to generational influences, sector and gender, there are other factors outside the scope of this research that emerged as potential influences including socio-demographics, and educational and religious beliefs.

Although the study (discussed in Chapter Six, section 6.4), found very little empirical evidence for the influence of the socio-demographical and educational factors on the manager's career and its identity, some of the participants broached the issue of social class and its possible effect on their attitudes to their careers and what success meant to them, a theme identified by Macky et al. (2008) and Higgins (2001). The potential influence of the participants' 'moral' stance was also of interest. A group of participants, often for religion reasons, reflected their definitions of career success from a moral perspective. Among professions, such as nursing and teaching, there exists a notable underpinning of religious beliefs, which influence careers to the extent that the career is likened to a 'vocation'. This often meant participant's valued the integrity criteria highly, and in some way desired to use their religious beliefs or moral stance in a more practical way. What remains unclear was whether this tempered rather than dominated their definition of career success. Those who held this viewpoint often expressed it as 'putting something back into the organisation', 'passing on knowledge and skills', and 'taking something from it', in terms of their personal perception of success.

Further future research could include the use of a longitudinal approach in which the study would be conducted over an extended period of time, for example, the length of a generation. This would permit documenting changes over this time period rather than encapsulating a single snapshot based primarily on the participant's memory recall. Repeating the study in other countries would determine whether the typology has international applicability, or whether the effects of national culture on attitudes to career (Parry & Urwin, 2011; Derr & Laurent, 1989; Sturges, 1999). This means that it is only appropriate in a British context.

There is also a need to establish whether the current typology of perceptions of a career can be extended to include other groups of non-professionals, or the unemployed.

8.9 Concluding reflection

From a retrospective and reflective perspective, this study has been a 'research journey' established the importance of three notable outcomes. Firstly, it has provided new academic insight into how a career, career types, its progress and success can be viewed when individual managers are grouped according to their generation. Secondly, the study has extended the perspective on how career success changes through using Mainiero and Sullivan's (2005, 2006) Kaleidoscope Career model viewed from a generational perspective and it has extended this model by introducing a new 'glass chip' to represent the need for a subjective challenge. Finally, it has been a process of researcher personal development. At the end of this part of my research journey, I realise how it has been personally challenging, encouraging me to become more authentic, to reflect on my personal values and aspirations, and the need to balance work and personal commitments. I can now appreciate more fully the need for resoluteness, self-confidence and self-understanding, themes that writers of authenticity such as Wales (2003) and Kernis (2003) contend is essential. I hope this study has demonstrated this.

To where the study will go now, I took some time to reflect on this following my oral examination. I realised that my journey rather than ending has only just started a new chapter. This process of reflection has allowed me to realise that the oral examination, apart from enabling me to verify and discuss my research, has acted as a formative learning experience to stimulate me to further learn and reflect. It is my intention now that this study will be published with the aim to add to the existing research into generational and career studies. These publications include an article in the International Career Development, the original journal where Mainiero and Sullivan (2005), first introduced the Kaleidoscope Career model. It is my intention to publish a key contribution of this study, the viewing of career though the Kaleidoscope Career model, but from a generational perspective. The article will also introduce a key finding of this study, the introduction of the new 'glass chip' that to represent the need for a subjective challenge when viewing career success. The second article, to update Gursoy, Maier and Chi (2008) presentation on generational differences in the workplace in the International Journal of Hospitality Management, by providing a theoretical narrative illustrating that a generation does not operate isolation and challenging some of the

generalised characteristics presented. Finally, an empirical based article will be submitted in the Journal of Vocational Behaviour, presenting another unique contribute of this study, Verbruggen, Sels and Forrier's (2007) career categorisation but from a generational perspective.

8.9.1 Concluding note

At the start of the research, I held that it was a personal journey. It has not always been straight forward, or even known to me. At times it has been difficult and required taking one or two leaps of my own into investigating, then wrestling with new ways of thinking. This is what I think the entire journey means to me; venturing on a journey that draws you into new ways of being. I can also see how this journey has governed my life since I began. It has been life changing from a personal, professional and career perspective.

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Appendix 1: Instructions for completing the Career Anchors score chart below

1. Complete all the statements relating to career Anchors, giving each statement a score :-

   - Never True of Me   1
   - Seldom True of Me   2
   - Often True of Me   3
   - Always True of Me   4

2. Transfer the scores (1-4) to each of the statements on the Career Anchors score chart. Take care, the statements are not in order.

3. Add up all the scores for each Career Anchor (column); e.g. TF, GMC, AI, SS, EC, S, PC, LS

4. Determine your top three Career Anchors, in priority Order.

5. Read the description of the anchors for further understanding and clarification.

6. Complete the Career Anchors, values and drivers – self-coaching questions. These will be referred to again on the one-day programme.

7. For each Career Anchor you can reflect on your current role by answering the detailed questions about values.

Edgar Schein's Career Anchors

There are eight career anchors, each of which is described below.

Technical/Functional

If your key Career Anchor is strongly placed in some technical or functional area, what you would not give up is the opportunity to apply your skills in that area and to continue to develop those skills to an every higher level. You derive your sense of identity from the exercise of your skills and are most happy when your work permits you to be challenged in those areas. You may be willing to manage others in your technical or functional area, but you are not interested in management for its own sake and would avoid general management because you would have to leave your own area of expertise.

General Managerial

If your key Career Anchor is general managerial, what you would not give up is the opportunity to climb to a level high enough in an organisation to enable you to integrate the efforts of others across functions and to be responsible for the output of a particular unit of the organisation. You want to be responsible and accountable for total results and you identify your own work with the success of the organisation for which you work. If you are presently in a technical or functional area, you view that as a necessary learning experience; however, your ambition is to get to a generalist job as soon as possible. Being at a high managerial level in a function does not interest you.

Autonomy/Independence

If your key Career Anchor is autonomy/independence, what you would not give up is the opportunity to define your own work in your own way. If you are in an organisation, you want to remain in jobs that allow you flexibility regarding when and how to work. If you cannot stand organisational rules and restrictions to any degree, you seek occupations in which you will have the freedom you seek, such as teaching or consulting. You turn down opportunities for promotion or advancement in order to retain autonomy. You may even seek to have a business of your own in order to achieve a sense of autonomy; however, this motive is not the same as the entrepreneurial creativity described later.

Security/Stability

If your key Career Anchor is security/stability, what you would not give up is employment security or tenure in a job or organisation. You main concern is to achieve a sense of having succeeded so that you can relax. The value is illustrated by a concern for financial security (such as pension and retirement plans) or employment security. Such stability may involve trading your loyalty and willingness to do whatever the employer wants from you for some promise of job tenure. You are less concerned with the content of your work and the rank you achieve in the organisation, although you may achieve a high level if your talents permit. As with autonomy, everyone has certain needs for security and stability,

especially at times when financial burdens may be heavy or when one is facing retirement. People biased in this way, however, are always concerned with these issues and build their entire self-images around the management of security and stability.

Entrepreneurial Creativity

If your key Career Anchor is entrepreneurial creativity, what you would not give up is the opportunity to create an organisation or enterprise of your own, built on your own abilities and your willingness to take risks and to overcome obstacles. You want to prove to the world that you can create an enterprise that is the result of your own effort. You may be working for others in an organisation while you are learning and assessing future opportunities, but you will go out on your own as soon as you feel you can manage it. You want your enterprise to be financially successful as proof of your abilities.

Service/Dedication to a Cause

If your key Career Anchor is service/dedication to a cause, what you would not give up is the opportunity to pursue work that achieves something of value, such as making the world a better place to live, solving environmental problems, improving harmony among people, helping others, improving people's safety, curing diseases through new products and so on. You pursue such opportunities even if it means changing organisations, and you do not accept transfers or promotions that would take you out of work that fulfils those values.

Pure Challenge

If your key Career Anchor is pure challenge, what you would not give up is the opportunity to work on solutions to seemingly unsolvable problems, to succeed over tough opponents, or to overcome difficult obstacles. For you, the only meaningful reason for pursuing a job or career is that it permits you to succeed in the fact of the impossible. Some people find such pure challenge in intellectual kinds of work, such as the engineer who is only interested in impossibly difficult designs; some find the challenge in complex, multi-faceted situations, such as the strategy consultant who is only interested in clients who are about to go bankrupt and have exhausted all other resources; some find it in interpersonal competition, such as the professional athlete or the salesperson who defines every sale as either a win or a loss. Novelty, variety and difficulty become ends in themselves, and if something is easy, it becomes immediately boring.

Lifestyle

If your key Career Anchor is lifestyle, what you would not give up is a situation that permits you to balance and integrate your personal needs, your family needs, and the requirements of your career. You want to make all of the major sectors of your life work together toward an integrated whole, and you therefore need a career situation that provides enough flexibility to achieve such integration. You may have to sacrifice some aspects of the career (for example, a geographical move that would be a promotion but would upset your total life situation), and you

define success in terms broader than just career success. You feel that your identity is more tied up with how you live your total life, where you settle, how you deal with your family situation, and how you develop yourself than with any particular job or organisation.

Below are a series of statements that relate to individual career anchors. (20 mins)

Give each statement a score 1-4

1 I want to be really good at my job, one of the best, an expert.
2 I really feel most satisfied when I am able to manage the work of others to achieve a common goal.
3 Ideally I want to do things my way and to my own timetable.
4 I would much rather build my own business than be the boss in someone else's.
5 I believe that security and stability are much more important than having the freedom to choose how I work.
6 My ideal career will enable me to integrate all of my needs – whether work, personal or family.
7 It is important to me that I use my talents to further the greater good.
8 I get a kick out of solving the unsolvable or winning against the odds.
9 I will only feel really successful when I have the freedom to define my work.
10 I feel most satisfied and fulfilled when I am able to use my expertise, talents and skills.
11 I would really like to start my own business one day.
12 I would be very uncomfortable working in an organisation that took a lot of risks. I prefer to work for an organisation that offers stability and security.
13 I would rather seek employment elsewhere than move to a role that seriously undermined my ability to serve the greater good/others.
14 I prefer to work on projects that really challenge my problem solving skills and have a competitive element.
15 I would rather find a new job than accept a role that puts constraints on how I do my work.
16 Balancing my work with my family and personal commitments is more important to me than a senior position.
17 One day I would like to be the boss, in charge of a whole organisation.

18 Reaching a position of seniority in my area of expertise is far more important to me than becoming a more senior general manager.

19 I want to make a difference in my career. I will only be truly satisfied if I feel I have made a real contribution to society.

20 Working on difficult problems are more important to me than achieving a high-level position.

21 My preference in choosing a role would be to seek out opportunities that minimise any interference with my personal life (family, friends etc).

22 I would feel really fulfilled if I was able to create an enterprise that was primarily the result of my ingenuity, skills and efforts.

23 Job security and financial independence are really important to me.

24 I would rather become a general manager with broader responsibilities than become a senior functional manager in my area of expertise.

Career anchors score chart

Record your scores from the cards in the grid below.

TF TECHNICAL/ FUNCTIONAL COMPETENCE	GMC GENERAL MANAGEMENT COMPETENCE	AI AUTONOMY/ INDEPENDENCE	SS SECURITY/ STABILITY	EC ENTREPRENEURIAL CREATIVITY	S SERVICE/ DEDICATION TO A CAUSE	PC PURE CHALLENGE	LS LIFESTYLE
1…………..	2……………..	3………………	5………………	4……………… …	7………………	8……………..	6………………
10…………..	17……………..	9………………	23……………..	11………….. …	13……………...	14…………. …	16………… …
18…………..	24……………..	15……………..	12…………… …	22………….. …...	19…………. …	20……………...	21………… …
TOTAL…… …	TOTAL…… …	TOTAL…… …	TOTAL…… …	TOTAL…… …	TOTAL…… …	TOTAL…… …	TOTAL…… …

What are your top two or three? Read through the descriptions of Schein's career anchors. Do you think your score reflects what is important to you?

Career anchors, values and drivers – self-coaching questions (20 mins)

List five things you love doing.
List five things you love doing and you are good at (they might include the first five – but they might not!).
What are the achievements you value most in your life?
What sorts of things offend you most?
What are the chief philosophies or beliefs that guide you?
What is the one thing you could never compromise on?
What is it that keeps you in your current role/with your current employer?

What are the things you are most dedicated to – causes, people, tasks?
What are you most proud of?

Now - use a little history…

What did you want to do when you left school?
Where did you go to university (as an undergraduate)? What did you study? Why?
What was your first real job?
What were you looking for in this job?

Why did you choose that job?
What were your long-range ambitions and goals when you started out?
How did the first job work out in terms of your goals?
What were the most important things you learned on your first job?
When and why did you make your first job/career change?
What brought this about?
Why did you move?
How did this job work out in terms of your goals?
What were the most important things you learned?

As you look back on your career so far, do you see any major turning points? What were they and why did they occur?

What did they teach you?

What tasks/situations/roles have you most enjoyed so far?

What tasks/situations/roles would you prefer to avoid? Why?

In what way have your ambitions or career goals changed?

What do you now see as your long-range goals?

What do all these things tell you about your career success/orientation?

Take your top three values and consider:
- each value and reflect on how your current role satisfies this?
  (for example, if you value autonomy, how much control do you have over your workload, type of task, how you perform a particular task etc)
- to what extent is your current role aligned with this value?
- are there any activities that you can undertake to increase alignment between this and your role that will have a positive impact
  - on you
  - on the organisation?
- what career development activities can you undertake to gain a deeper understanding of your values?

Value 1 ……………………………..

To what extent does your current role reflect this value?

To what extent is your current role aligned with this value?

Are there any activities that you can undertake to increase alignment between this and your role that will have a positive impact
- on you
- on the organisation?

What career development activities can you undertake to gain a deeper understanding of your values?

Value 2……………………………..
To what extent does your current role reflect this value?
To what extent is your current role aligned with this value?

Are there any activities that you can undertake to increase alignment between this and your role that will have a positive impact
     • on you
     • on the organisation?

What career development activities can you undertake to gain a deeper understanding of your values?

Value 3 ……………………………..

To what extent does your current role reflect this value?

To what extent is your current role aligned with this value?

Are there any activities that you can undertake to increase alignment between this and your role that will have a positive impact
- on you
- on the organisation?

What career development activities can you undertake to gain a deeper understanding of your values?

Appendix 2: Letter to Participants

<div align="right">

4 Millennium Way
Cirencester
GL7 1FJ

</div>

Dear XXXX,

Thank you very much for agreeing to be interviewed for my research project on generational differences and career success. This project, which is being carried out within several industries, will form an important part of my PhD research at the University of Gloucestershire, in the School of Management.

I hope that you too will find the interview interesting and helpful, in that it may allow you to reflect on some aspects of your career which you may not have considered in depth before.

I anticipate that the interview will take around an hour and a half. The enclosed sheet contains some further information about its format and contents.

I look forward to meeting you.

Yours sincerely,

Dougie Yourston

Appendix 3: Participants Profile

First Pilot

Participant Code	Gender	Generation	Number of years since last career change	Martial Status	Number of dependents	Previous careers Chronological order	Current Career and sector	Managerial responsibilities
Y Matthew	Male	Generation Y Age 25	2 years	Single	Nil	Finance	Finance Team Leader	5 staff
X Gareth	Male	Generation X Age	5 years	Married	Two children under 5 years old	Senior IT engineer (4 years) Junior IT engineer (5 years) Retail (5 years)	IT Team Leader	4 staff
BB Lynn	Female	Baby Boomer Age	10 years	Married	Three who have left home	Senior nursing (7 years) Nursing (7 years) Family commitments (11 years) Nursing (7 years)	Matron	25 staff

Second Pilot

Participant Code	Gender	Generation	Number of years since last career change	Martial Status	Number of dependents	Previous careers Chronological order	Current Career and sector	Management responsibilities
Y	Male	Generation Y Age 26	2 years	In a relationship	One now at school age	3 years Team leader role (insurance) 2 years junior broker 1 year in retail 3 years at University	Team Leader	14 staff
X	Male	Generation X Age	4.5 years	Married	Two at school (one under 10)	6 years in IT supervision 5 years as software engineer 5 junior software engineer 5 supermarket	IT Team Leader	5 staff

Participant Code	Gender	Generation	Number of years since last career change	Martial Status	Number of dependents	Previous careers Chronological order	Current Career and sector	Management responsibilities
X	Female	Generation X Age	8 years	Married	Two in their teens	4 years team leader 4 years manufacturing supervisor 6 years family commitment (full-time child-care) 3 years retail 3 years service sector	Production line manufacturing	15 staff
BB	Female	Baby Boomer Age	8 years	Married	2 left home	7 years senior nurse 9 years nursing 9 years family commitment (full-time) 8 years junior nursing	Matron	20 staff

Participant Code	Gender	Generation	Number of years since last career change	Martial Status	Number of dependents	Previous careers Chronological order	Current Career and sector	Management responsibilities
BB	Female	Baby Boomer Age	9 years	Married	1 left home	9 years departmental head 8 years teaching 11 years family commitment) part-time teaching) 7 years junior teaching	Department head	5 staff

Main Study
Manufacturing sector

Participant Code	Gender	Generation	Number of years since last career change	Martial Status	Number of dependents	Previous careers Chronological order	Current Career and sector	Management responsibilities
Y Gemma	Female	Generation Y Age 22	2 years	Single	Nil	Manufacturing (2 years)	Shift leader	20 staff
X Yvonne	Female	Generation X Age 44	3 years	Partner	Three under 10	Manufacturing shift leader (4 years) Manufacturing (5 years) Family commitments (7 years) Secretarial (2 years) Admin (2 years)	Team leader	16 staff
BB Rita	Female	Baby Boomers Age 57	7 years	Divorced	Two – left home	Manufacturing manager (10 years) Homemaker (12 years) Manufacturing supervisor (6 years) Admin (3 years)	Middle Management	Entire shift

Participant Code	Gender	Generation	Number of years since last career change	Martial Status	Number of dependents		Previous careers Chronological order	Current Career and sector	Management responsibilities
Y Shane	Male	Generation Y Age 27	2 years	In a relationship	Nil		Retail – phones (3 years) Retail – clothes (2 years)	Team leader Fitter – car	6 staff
X Dave	Male	Generation X Age 46	5 years	Partner	Two – both under 10	Car fitter (4 years) Catering (2 years) Gardening (4 years) Plumber (3 years) Builder (4 years) Labourer (3 years)		Production line supervisor – car	10 staff
BB Jim	Male	Baby Boomer Age 62	10 years	Wife	Three – left home	Tool manufacturing (14 years) Car manufacturing (9 years) Car manufacturing (9 years)		Production line supervisor – car	10 staff

Hotel and Restaurant sector

Participant Code	Gender	Generation	Number of years since last Career change	Martial Status	Number of dependents	Previous careers Chronological order	Current Career and Sector	Management responsibilities
Y Emma	Female	Generation Y Age 24	10 months	Single	Nil	Retail – phones (3 years) Retail – clothes (2 years)	Shift leader – head hotel receptionist	5 staff
X Nicola	Female	Generation X Age 43	5 years	Separated	2 children under 18 years	Receptionist (5 years) Receptionist (3 years) Admin/ secretarial (2 years) Home maker (6 years) Reception (3 years)	Front Office manager	15 staff
BB Jill	Female	Baby Boomers Age 58	8 years	Married	3 grown up but at home	Reception Manager (8 years) Receptionist (6 years) Home maker (13 years) Reception (3 years)	Duty manager –hotel	20 staff

Participant Code	Gender	Generation	Number of years since last Career change	Martial Status	Number of dependents	Previous careers Chronological order	Current Career and Sector	Management responsibilities
Y Mike	Male	Generation Y Age 24	10 months	Partner	Nil	Retail (2 years) Building (2 years)	Deputy reception manager	15 staff

Participant Code	Gender	Generation	Number of years since last Career change	Martial Status	Number of dependents	Previous careers Chronological order	Current Career and Sector	Management responsibilities
X Nicholas	Male	Generation X Age 47	4 years	Separated	Nil	Hotel – food and beverage (12 years) Restaurant (9 years) Restaurant (3 years)	Assistant Food and Beverage manager hotel	25 staff
BB Kevin	Male	Baby Boomer Age 61	10 years	Divorced	2 children – one still in teens	Food and beverage manager (9 years) F and B supervisor (15 years) Retail (4 years) Haulage (1 year)	Food and beverage manager - hotel	37 staff

Transportation and Communication

Participant Code	Gender	Generation	Number of years since last career change	Martial Status	Number of dependents	Previous careers Chronological order	Current Career and sector	Management responsibilities
Y Chloe	Female	Generation Y Age 25	18 months	Partner	Nil	Telecommunication – retail (2 years) College (1 year) Retail (6 months) Admin (6 months)	Team / shift leader Telecommunications	6 staff
X Sam	Female	Generation X Age 43	4 years	Single	Two under 10	Telecommunication – sales manager (6 years) Homemaker (4 years) Telecom – sales manager (5 years) University	Senior Team leader Telecommunications	8 staff
BB Hilary	Female	Baby Boomers Age 59	8 years	Married	Two still in teens	Hotel reception (9 years) Sales (7 years) Homemaker (10 years) Sales Retail (5 years)	Sales manager Telecommunications	35 staff
Y James	Male	Generation Y Age 26	2 years	Married	One under 5	Telecom –sales (3 years) College	Team leader – Telecommunications	10 staff
X Alex	Male	Generation X Age 36	5 years	Separated	Two under 10	Engineering – telecoms (4 years) Engineering IT (3 years) University	Shift leader – Telecommunications	10 staff

Participant Code	Gender	Generation	Number of years since last career change	Martial Status	Number of dependents	Previous careers Chronological order	Current Career and sector	Management responsibilities
BB George	Male	Baby Boomer Age 56	10 years	Married	Three in teens one left home	Engineering (12 years) Banking/ finance (8 years) College	Regional Manager Telecommunications	46 staff

Banking, finance and insurance

Participant Code	Gender	Generation	Number of years since last career change	Martial Status	Number of Dependents	Previous careers Chronological order	Current Career and sector	Management responsibilities
Y Kim	Female	Generation Y Age 27	2.5 years	Single	Nil	Retail (3 years) Secretary (3 years) College	Team leader Banking	6 staff
X Susan	Female	Generation X Age 39	4 years	Married	Two under 10	Finance (4 years) Homemaker (4 years) Finance / University Hairdressing (3 years)	Section leader Finance	18 staff
BB Liz	Female	Baby Boomers Age 61	8 years	Married	Two left home	Finance sales (6 years) Finance marketing (8 years) Home maker (12 years) Admin (3 years) Secretary (5 years)	Senior manager Banking	56 staff
Y Jason	Male	Generation Y Age 24	18 months	Partner	One under 5	University Retail (1 years)	Sales leader Finance	7 staff
X Richard	Male	Generation X Age 45	6 years	Partner	Two under 5	Finance / insurance (UK Sales) (7 years) Pension Sales (7 years) Broker (6 years)	Team leader Insurance	5 staff

Participant Code	Gender	Generation	Number of years since last Career change	Martial Status	Number of dependents	Previous careers Chronological order	Current Career and Sector	Management responsibilities
BB Bill	Male	Baby Boomers Age 58	8 years	Divorced	Four left home	Broker Sales UK (7 years) Sales International (6 years) Broker (10 years) Banking (8 years)	Senior manager Banking	58 staff

Public administration – education and health

Participant Code	Gender	Generation	Number of years since last career change	Martial Status	Number of dependents	Previous careers Chronological order	Current Career and sector	Management responsibilities
Y Ruth	Female	Generation Y Age 25	2 years	Single	Nil	Junior nurse (2 years) University	Trainee Ward Sister	6 staff
Y Jane	Female	Generation Y Age 27	3 years	Partner	2 under 5	Junior nurse (3 years) Homemaker (3 years) Junior nurse (6 months) University	Deputy Ward Sister	18 staff
Y Beth	Female	Generation Y Age 29	18 months	Single	Nil	Teaching (4 years) University Retail (3 years)	Senior Teacher	4 staff
X Cath	Female	Generation X Age 39	4 years	Single	1 under 10	Nursing (6 years) University Retail (5 years)	Charge Sister	27 staff
X Samantha	Female	Generation X Age 43	5 years	Partner	2 under 18	Teaching (6 years) University Admin (4 years) College	Deputy Head Teacher	8 staff
X Sadie	Female	Generation X Age 46	4 years	Married	3 under 18	Nurse (5 years) Home maker (6 years) Junior nurse (5 years) University Admin (3 years)	Ward Sister	36 staff

Participant Code	Gender	Generation	Number of years since last Career change	Martial Status	Number of dependents	Previous careers Chronological order	Current Career and Sector	Management responsibilities
BB Kirsty	Female	Baby Boomers Age 58	6 years	Separated	3 left home	Nursing (9 years) Homemaker (12 years) Junior nurse (5 years)	Matron	42 staff
BB Andrea	Female	Baby Boomers Age 61	8 years	Married	2 left home	Nursing (9 years) Nursing (4 years) Homemaker (10 / 11 years) Junior nurse (6 years)	Matron	48 staff
BB Cassandra	Female	Baby Boomers Age 64	12 years	Separated	3 left home	Nursing (9 years Homemaker (13 years) Nursing (6 years) Admin (4 years)	Matron	46 staff
Y Colin	Male	Generation Y Age 29	2 years	Partner	1 under 5	Doctor (junior) University School	Doctor	3 staff (student doctors)
Y John	Male	Generation Y Age 27	18 months	Married	2 under 5	Teacher (4 years) University	Senior Teacher	4 staff
Y Ken	Male	Generation Y Age 29	2 years	Married	3 under 5	Junior nurse (5 years) University	Deputy Sister	28 staff

Participant Code	Gender	Generation	Number of years since last Career change	Martial Status	Number of dependents	Previous careers Chronological order	Current Career and Sector	Management responsibilities
X Phil	Male	Generation X Age 39	5 years	Separated	2 under 18	Teacher (8 years) University Carpenter (1 years) Plumbing (2 years)	Assistant head teacher	6 staff
X Will	Male	Generation X Age 44	4 years	Married	3 under 18	Doctor (14 years) University	Doctor	15 staff
X David	Male	Generation X Age 49	4 years	Divorced	3 over 18 still at home	Teacher (16 years) Univeristy Horticulture (3 years) Plumber (4 years)	Deputy head teacher	5 staff
BB Ed	Male	Baby Boomers Age 58	8 years	Married	2 left home	Doctor (21 years) University	Doctor	15 staff
BB Stuart	Male	Baby Boomers Age 61	7 years	Married	3 left home	Teacher (20 years) Teacher training Trade (10 years)	Deputy head teacher	24 staff
BB Tom	Male	Baby Boomers Age 62	12 years	Married	2 left home	Teacher (19 years) Teacher training Horticulture (5 years)	Assistant head teacher	4 staff

Appendix 4: Research Protocol Outline

Research Question Four

Empirically, what support is there that a generational group is a reliable method to group individual managers?

Research Question Fifth

Empirically, how are individual manager's career types and progression influenced by their generational grouping?

Research Question Sixth

Empirically, when viewed through the Kaleidoscope Career model, how are individual manager's perceptions of a successful career influenced by their generational group?

Generational differences and career research project

The research project's objective is to investigate what a career means to individuals of different generations. The interview will include questions and discussion in several areas related to this subject. These include:

- ❖ general discussion about the manager's career to date

- ❖ how they feel about their career

- ❖ whether their perceptions towards working for an organisation over your career has changed? (job security / organisational commitment)

- ❖ what they want / wanted from their career

- ❖ what would they like to achieve at work

- ❖ how important particular aspects of their work and career are to them

- ❖ what a career means to the individual

Biographical data checklist

- ❖ Name:

- ❖ Age range:

- ❖ Relationship status:

- ❖ Number of children:

- ❖ Ages of children:

- ❖ Main money earner:

- ❖ Job title:

- ❖ Scope of responsibility:

- ❖ Key responsibilities:

- ❖ Length of time with organisation:

- ❖ Length of time with previous organisation:

(There is a need to deal with all periods of employment)

Education – what is the highest attained qualification?

Post-graduate
Undergraduate
HND
BTEC
NVQ
City and Guilds
GSCE / O levels
CSEs

Other qualifications

Trade qualifications

No qualifications

Career breaks:

Nature of career breaks:

THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE USED FOR THE RESEARCH

1. The respondent's career

Questions
- ❖ Tell me about your career – what critical incidents have affect it and how?

- ❖ Where is their career at – static, progressive – why?

- ❖ At what level of the organisation did you start your working life?

- ❖ What did you do next

- ❖ Why?

(Elicit a chronological description of the respondent's career, filling out the details already gathered in the biographical data section and examining the reasons why it has developed as it has so far)

Guidance Questions
- ❖ Why do you think your career has developed the way it has?

- ❖ What did you want from your career at the beginning?

- ❖ Have you achieved this?

- ❖ Has this changed?

- ❖ How would you sum up your achievements at work?

- ❖ At what point(s) in your career have you felt particularly successful? Why? What do you want to achieve in the future? Why? If not why?

- ❖ Have you had definite goals in your career over your lifetime?

- ❖ When considering changing a job, you do consider whether the new job leads to another one that you want?

- ❖ You do give a lot of thought to plans and strategies for achieving the career goals

- ❖ What do you perceive as your strengths and weaknesses are in relation to your career goals

- ❖ In achieving career goals what are very / not important to you – why?

2. Work values

Now I want to talk to you about how you feel about your career.

Questions
- ❖ What is most important to you about your work?

- ❖ What do you want from your career?

- ❖ What would you describe as your personal goals at work?

- ❖ What motivates you?

3. External /Internal factors

What external aspects are particularly to you and your career?

(This section will be linked to what the respondents say in the previous section and, with prompts where appropriate, will cover the criteria of external material career success):

Guidance Questions

External success
- ❖ Pay

- ❖ Hierarchical position

- ❖ Promotional opportunities

- ❖ Fringe benefits

- ❖ Status - (the criteria of external intangible career success)

- ❖ Being an expert

- ❖ Respect

- ❖ Power to influence

- ❖ Leaving one's mark

- ❖ Organisation loyalty

- ❖ Job security

- ❖ Are there any additional external elements?

Internal values and perceptions
- ❖ Challenge

- ❖ Sense of accomplishment

- ❖ Sense of achievement

- ❖ Enjoyment

- ❖ Interest

- ❖ Doing new or different things

- ❖ Which are most important to you?

- ❖ Why?

- ❖ Has this changed during the course of your career?

- ❖ Can you imagine it changing in the future?

- ❖ Are there any other internal elements?

Comparison between intrinsic and extrinsic

- ❖ From the two categories which two elements (intrinsic and extrinsic) do you consider to be more important to you and why?

- ❖ If you did an exceptional piece of work, what would you expect?

- ❖ Is the anything wrong with doing a poor standard of work? What is your immediate supervisor was there; would this change your attitude to doing a particular task?

- ❖ Should a person feel a sense of pride in their work? If so / not why?

- ❖ In your opinion should someone enjoy their work? Why?

- ❖ In your opinion, does work define the person or it a means to an end? If it is a means to an end – then what is more important?

- ❖ Is recognition more important than remuneration and why?

How would you rank the following?

- ❖ *Authenticity* – defined as being true to oneself by aligning personal values and behaviours

- ❖ *Balance* – defined as efforts designed to achieve equilibrium between work and non-work aspects of one's life

- ❖ *Challenge* – defined as engaged in activities that permit the individual to demonstrate responsibility, control and autonomy while learning and growing.

Has this ranking changed in anyway – if so why?

4.   Attitudes to organisational security

- ❖ How do you rate your needs compared to those of your organisation?

- ❖ To what extent do you consider that you have an obligation towards the organisation? Can you provide examples?

- ❖ To what extent do you consider that the organisation has an obligation towards you? Can you provide examples?

- ❖ Have and would you now be prepared to leave work without another job to go to – so why, if not why?

5   Attitudes towards the organisation

- ❖ How would you describe the organisation as place of work – is it separate or apart of your life?

- ❖ Do you consider it to be unfair for your organisation if you actively looked for another position for personal gain?

- ❖ How would you compare your current level of job satisfaction at work, compared to previous roles? Has this perception changed?

6   Attitudes towards the family versus work

❖ Do you consider that work should interfere with a person's family life? Can you provide examples?

❖ Is it desirable for a partner to stay at home with small children than to go work?

7   Attitude / perception towards job enrichment

❖ How much responsibility do you have in your job, please provide examples?

❖ Would you like more responsibility in your job, and if what?

❖ How independent or closely supervised are you?

❖ Are you actively involved in decision-making? Do you consider this as important element of your job?

8   Career paths – referring to the participants career
❖ Looking at your career to date, how would you describe your career path?
❖ Is your career path what you expected to it be?

❖ How do you see your career path change in the next 5 years?

❖ Has your career paths changed significantly – and if so why?

Sub questions:

❖ Would you be prepared to gain promotion at work if it was detrimental to other aspects of your life?

❖ What factors would you restrict you, if you were offered a better job, and it required you to move?

❖ Is it more important to get along with your friends / colleagues than to work hard at a job?

❖ Describe your work in relation to work /life balance. Does work interfere with a person's life or is it separate?

9   Career type

The following is a list of options, which best represents your current career path?

Which one of the following best represents your career?

- ❖ Having a stable career with a high importance attached to organisational security.

- ❖ The career to date is a multiple-employer career, with now a high importance attached to organisational security, and expected to stay.

- ❖ The career to date is multiple-employer career with a high importance attached to organisational security but expects to leave.

- ❖ The career to date is stable with a low importance attached to organisational security and expected to stay.

- ❖ To date the career is stable. The career is of a low importance attached to organisational security, but it the individual expects to leave.

- ❖ The career to date is a multiple-employer career, with a low importance attached to organisational security

Appendix 5: Initial coding structure

       1. Drivers for career progression
             1.1 Drivers / challenge
             1.2 Drivers / financial reward
             1.3 Drivers / career plan
             1.4 Drivers / life plan
             1.5 Drivers / fulfilment
             1.6 Drivers / security
             1.7 Drivers / status/ formal advancement
             1.8 Drivers / giving back
             1.9 Drivers / interest
             1.10 Drivers / professional / occupational
             1.11 Drivers / peer or generational pressure
             1.12 Drivers / development

1.12.1 Drivers / development / personal
1.12.2 Drivers / development / functional / organisational

2. Influences on career progression
             2.1 Workplace
             2.1.1 Influences / relocation
             2.1.2 Influences / colleagues or peers
             2.1.3 Influences / mentor or coach
             2.1.4 Influences / workplace restructuring
             2.1.5 Influences / manager / colleagues / employer relationships

2.2. Personal
2.1.1 Influences / spouse or partner
2.1.2 Influences / relationship breakdown
2.1.3 Influences / children
2.1.4 Influences / parents
2.1.5 Influences / friends
2.1.6 Influences / health
2.1.7 Influences / financial situation
2.1.8 Influences / role models
2.1.9 Work-life balance

3 Opportunities for career progression
3.1 Opportunities / self-created
3.2 Opportunities / job offers
3.2.1 Opportunities / job offers/ internal
3.2.2 Opportunities / job offers external

4 Attitudes related to career progression
4.1 Attitudes / job / organisational security
        4.2 Attitudes / gender discrimination
        4.3 Attitudes / generational discrimination
        4.3 Attitudes / personal feelings

5 Change and career progression
5.1 Change / working hours
5.2 Change / commitment/enthusiasm
5.3 Change / stress levels
5.4 Change / nature of work
5.5 Change / need for authenticity, challenge/ balance

6 Career progression in future
        6.1 Career progression / Bounded
        6.2 Career progression / Staying
        6.3 Career progression / Homeless
        6.4 Career progression / Trapped
        6.5 Career progression / Released
        6.6 Career progression / Boundaryless

Appendix 6: Preliminary questions for the second pilot study

Full name

Your age according to the age grouping- [NB explanation given as to why this information required]

Marital status

Number and ages of children

Are there any people, for example children or elderly parents, for whom you have caring responsibilities? (please give details)

How many years have you been employed by this organisation?

How many years have you been in your current occupation / profession?

How many years have you worked in this role within the organisation?

What is your job title or role?

What are your key job responsibilities? (please give brief description)

Year of last promotion

When do you anticipate changing your current position / job?

[NB: Participants were also asked in advance of the interview to:]

Think about the main career decisions they have made which have had the most impact on their overall career progression, and their motivation for making these decisions.

Consider whether they feel they have any underlying career/vocational identity or driver which has influenced their career choices and decisions over the length of their career.

Going back to the different roles / jobs, did you seek:
- a *challenge* that is related to promotion, gaining a higher salary
- seeking a *work-life balance*
- *authenticity* – making the job reflective of your own personal values

Appendix 7: Final coding structure
Tree nodes:
1. Drivers for career progression
1.1 Positive Drivers
1.1.1 Drivers / Interest/enjoyment/variety
1.1.2 Drivers / Challenge/growth
1.1.3 Drivers / Contribution/ making a difference
1.1.4 Drivers / Relationships
1.1.5 Drivers / Recognition
1.1.6 Drivers / Further advancement/promotion
1.1.7 Drivers / Financial reward
1.1.8 Drivers / Status

1.2 Negative Drivers
1.2.1 Drivers / Avoiding stagnation
1.2.2 Drivers / Avoiding loss
1.2.3 Drivers / Reducing pressure and stress

2. Influences on career progression
2.1 Personal influences
2.1.1 Influences / Critical incident
2.1.2 Influences / Family – partner, children, parents
2.1.3 Influences / Quality of life – work life balance
2.1.4 Influences / Health / tiredness / stress
2.1.5 Influences / Security/stability
2.1.6 Influences / Lifestyle/ other interests
2.1.7 Influences / Financial situation
2.1.8 Influences / Awareness of ageing
2.2 Organisational influences
2.2.1 Influences / Organisational structure and change
2.2.2 Influences / Relationships: peers/reports/manager
2.2.3 Influences / Organisational / professional culture/attitudes
2.2.4 Influences / Working conditions/benefits
2.2.5 Influences / Generational Discrimination / ageism
2.2.6 Influences / Professional / employer policies

3. Opportunities for career progression
3.1 Opportunities / Luck
3.2 Opportunities / Self-created
3.3 Opportunities / Job offers

4. Attitudes towards career progression
4.1 Attitudes / Optimism / confidence/excitement
4.2 Attitudes / Satisfaction/contentment
4.3 Attitudes / Acceptance/resignation
4.4 Attitudes / Anxiety/disappointment/resentment
4.5 Attitudes / Vacillation/uncertainty

5. Attitudes / perception towards their careers

5. Meaning of career progression
5.1 Objective career progression
5.1.1 Objective career progression / Maintaining the status quo
5.1.2 Objective career progression / Lateral movement
5.1.3 Objective career progression / Flexible working hours
5.1.4 Objective career progression / Status
5.2 Subjective career progression
5.2.1 Subjective career progression / Developing interests/new skills
5.2.2 Subjective career progression / Retaining power and autonomy
5.2.3 Subjective career progression / Using knowledge or experience
5.2.4 Subjective career progression / Retaining enthusiasm and commitment

6 Career motivation
6.1 Career motivation / Career identity
6.2 Career motivation / Career insight
6.3 Career motivation / Career resilience

7 Future career progression
7.1 Future career progression / No plans
7.2 Future career progression / External move or change
7.3 Future career progression / More of the same
7.4 Future career progression / Upward move
7.5 Future career progression / Slow down

8 Current and future career
       8.1 Career progression / Bounded
       8.2 Career progression / Staying
       8.3 Career progression / Homeless
       8.4 Career progression / Trapped
       8.5 Career progression / Released
       8.6 Career progression / Boundaryless

9 Related differences
9.1 Related differences / gender
9.2 Occupational / professional
9.3 Life-stage
9.4 Generational

 Career Success
10. Challenge
       10.1.1 Challenge/ objective – grade criteria
       10.2.1 Challenge/ objective – reward criteria
       10.3.1 Challenge/ objective – remuneration
       10.4.1 Challenge/ objective – status

10.2 Challenge/ subjective
      10.2.1 Challenge/ subjective – legacy
      10.2.2 Challenge/ subjective – expert
      10.2.3 Challenge/ subjective – respected
      10.2.4 Challenge/ subjective – influencer
      10.2.5 Challenge/ subjective – self-realiser

11. Work/life Balance
      11.1 Work/life Balance – lack of opportunity
      11.2 Work/life Balance – health
      11.3 Work/life Balance – family
      11.4 Work/life Balance – external factors
      11.5 Work/life Balance – life-stage
      11.6 Work/life Balance – seeking a balance

12. Authenticity
      12.1 Authenticity – need for personal challenge
      12.2 Authenticity – need for personal satisfaction
      12.3 Authenticity – need to goal-setting
      12.4 Authenticity – need for personal attainment
      12.5 Authenticity – need for self-awareness
      12.6 Authenticity – need for self-satisfaction
      12.7 Authenticity – need for self-recognition
      12.8 Authenticity – need for self-esteem
      12.9 Authenticity – need for self-respect
      12.10 Authenticity – need for self-understanding
      12.11 Authenticity – need for self-realisatiom

Free nodes:
Career embeddedness
Career expectations
About generations
Boundaryless and protean careers
      Feedback

Appendix 8: Analysis theme

Code	Theme
CS3	Career Success
A	Authenticity

Content	Ref
Authenticity - challenge	
Now that I am in senior management, I am in search of something more. Even though on paper I have it all – a nice house, a nice car, a comfortable lifestyle, pension nest egg, teenager kids that requires me to have a good salary. But I do find that I am asking myself how I can use my skills in a way that will continue to challenge me [on a personal level] and just based on my position or role here. It might be a generational thing but I would say that a challenge at work still motivates me. I am still ready to further develop my career, and even have a job that is more financially rewarding and pay off university fees.	BBMH_CS3AC2
To be successful in a career there is in some way a need to set goals and then have to fight to get them. It is a part of a challenging career; it makes work more rewarding	BBMT_CS3AC1
To me a challenge is important in a career. Yes I was a company man through and through. I even compromised my standard, dedicating a lot of time here… Since facing redundancy, I have had a good, long think about my priorities… and have become more self-aware of my personal commitments	GXMM_CS3C5
Only in the past five years have I started to question my working life. I mean I have been successful work-wise, but now I want to have more free time. I always rated my career as being a *challenge*, then authentic and finally, having some form of balance in my work and personal life. I have reached a point in my career where it has plateaued… where there are less [work-related] challenges… Although I have an important role − I am seen now as some more of an *expert* or authority which gives me a career that is more authentic to my values. I am also looking to spend more time with my family, … there is more to life than work and now I want to spend more time with my family	GXMT_CS3C5
I was offered promotion and I turned it down ... because I didn't think it was going to be any different. I've been there before; I'd just be doing the same job at a higher level, and if I had taken the job, then maybe it would not give me the same level of enjoyment or interest	GXMF_CS3C6

You need to have a job, but you also need to enjoy what you do and being real to yourself. A challenge is one thing, but actually enjoying what do is equally if not more important. I left being a secretary as I really didn't enjoy the work.	GYFF_CS3C6

Authenticity - expert

Since promotional opportunities have reduced, I have now set new goals for these are more personal to me. I want now to be recognised as an expert in my field	BBMM_CS3AE10
[career success] would be sort of doing well at things, being able to do the job well, a sense of achievement [attainment], knowing it well, having people come and ask you questions because you were the person that knew the information [expert], that sort of thing	BBMT_CS3AE3
It goes back to when I first become a parent. I found a degree of success that came about due to a [self] awareness and understanding of my own personal abilities, and this is why I am now seeking to be recognised as an expert	GXMT_CS3E4
After X number of years, I have reached a stage in my career where I do not expect to be promoted any further, so I changed my priorities. I am no longer chasing promotion; I instead want to be recognised for my years of service, my loyalty and expertise	BBMH_CS3E4

Authenticity personal values

"[t]here was a job, not here, that I decided not to take, as it was with a company that had links to recent unethical behaviour	GXMF_CS3AV4
Being successful in a career is only one aspect of me, and also not my biggest. I have other responsibilities, including my family and my parents	BBFN_CS3AV12
Even before starting a family, career success and meeting your potential were seen as a male preserve. We [as women] were expected not to pursue high powered careers at all costs. Things have changed. I still want further promotion, which was unheard of. …You do realise that as a women you can do what men can do, but as a mother also see things differently, for example with ethical decisions… promoting someone who is dedicated to their work at the expense of his or her family, or someone who has a background or reputation of dealing with unethical businesses.	BBFF_CS3VC1

Authenticity self-awareness

As I reach the end of my career, you begin to mellow and instead of focused on organisational goals you change your priorities. I now [self-awareness] want to be respected [and recognised] for my skills and not just my job role.	BBMF_CS3SA4

Authenticity Faith	
I have read a lot about this. I think it has been awareness of needing to introspectively look at myself, and being more self-aware of myself. The more you know yourself, the more likely you can be authentic or be true to yourself… That is why I am doing what I am doing; I am being true to myself in being a teacher	GXFT_CS3SAF7
I turned down an opportunity recently. I am fully aware that the job offered more money but there was more work, but potentially less future opportunities and not really offering a challenge or being in a role I would really reflected my personal values. In the end I am more interested in a role that reflects me as a person	GXFF_CS3SAF15
I left the retail world and went into teaching. It was an alignment of my spiritual belief and the need to help others	GXFT_CS3SAF6
For me my career in nursing I see this as making sense, it just seemed to be a natural progression of my life and my faith	GXFN_CS3SAF5
Again I can remember my dad not really getting involved in my childhood, and he regrets this now, whereas I do not want to miss mine	GXMT_CS3SAF1
He [his father] was dedicated to the bank and they just treated him so badly it nearly destroyed him and the family. Ever since I thought there is no way that's going to happen to me. I am not purely a company man	GXMF_CS3SAF4
Authenticity - Respect	
As I reach the end of my career, you begin to mellow and instead of focusing on organisational goals you begin to change your priorities. I now [self-awareness] want to be *respected* for my skills and not just my job role	BBMF_CS3R3
Authenticity – personal goals	
I have recently changed my role so that I could spend more time being able to pass on my knowledge rather than simply achieving financial targets. This change has made me feel that I am achieving new career goals	GXMF_CS3P1
I am good at what I do, you know, meeting the deadlines and targets… but it can also gain me promotion, recognition so I might get an offer from another company… you know, a new challenge or better opportunity a double whammy	GYFF_CS3P4
I achieve the ward's and hospital's targets, and this is satisfying… it must be beneficial for me in the future either here or somewhere else in nursing	GYFN_CS3P6
Don't tell the boss; I am currently seeking a job that meets my personal values. Here it really doesn't. It's all about customer turnover and not customer satisfaction. I feel my current job role does not meet my standards	GYFH_CS3P9

No, I've invested too much of my time and money into nursing, and other tasks that are boring and repetitive, which makes the day or night go so slowly. But I enjoy the challenge of nursing too much.	GYFN_CS3P12
Life-stage	
So where do I start, well in the past, success in a career was seen as being pivotal, particularly for men. Although the older managers here would still say the job title and the salary indicates how successful you are, there is more to life, like my family, so my career and how I see success is definitely different	BBFN_CS3LS1
Being successful in nursing is important to me. When you say *career success*, I see this as being good at nursing and not something simply as having a successful career in terms of a job title or being an administrator	GXFN_CS3LS14
When I first became a father, I started to re-evaluate who I was, and this included my career. I decided that working all the hours, chasing promotion and a higher salary at any cost needed to change. Since the birth of my second child I have purposely taken a role that permits me to be a father first. So now I work from home; it involves less travelling away from home and more time with the family	BBMT_CS3LS18
Alientation	
Even through you are committed to the same organisation, sometimes this dedication to work comes at the expense of the family… with the restructuring and management changes in the past five years, I began to feel alienated from both my family and the company, as I reacted negatively to the restructuring as I felt left out. It was a very stressful time, and it impacted on my family to the extent I alienated myself completely from the family	BBMF_CS3A16
I attempted to balance a career with my family. But even though my husband and children are very understanding, I think it is nearly impossible to be successful in both. I also alienated both as I tried to balance family with work	BBFN_CS3A7

Authenticity –legacy and influencers	
This is something that I can look back on and say 'I did that', I guess. Success in my career has changed and how I judge it. It is not simply getting an Oxbridge degree and becoming a doctor, it is more of an achievement on a personal level. I suppose I am doing what my mentor did as he reached retirement, actively taking the responsibility to pass on my knowledge to the next *generation*. It is more work, but definitely worthwhile	BBMD_CS3AL2
I am seeking now, as I begin to reach my retirement, to pass on my knowledge and experience. I suppose I am setting out my legacy after being here for X number of years.	BBFN_CS3AL7
I am reaching the point in my career where I am now being over-looked for promotion, therefore I now looking for other ways of being able to influence the business through becoming a mentor	BBMT_CS3AL5
External factors – illness	
You reach a certain stage in your career when your career begins to plateau. I am reaching this stage now; therefore I have changed my outlook now as to how I see my career. I have taken the decision to become a mentor and coach. This also reflects me as a person, I am no longer as career focused since my illness, seeking promotion and more responsibilities…I need to take it easy now and this change definitely defines my career now, my ambitions have changed	BBMT_CS3ILL3
External factors – family	
I see myself successful not just in terms of a career, but a mother and wife	BBFL_CS3FAM4
Being successful in a career is only one aspect of me, and also not my biggest. I have other responsibilities, including my family, and my parents	BBFN_CS3FAM7
I have to admit I have turned down promotion recently as it meant that I'd need to spend more time away from my family	GXMM_CS3FAM9
Organisational influences	
I see my career as successful as I have achieved all that I see as important to me, but it has been through hard effort and against the odds	BBFL_CS3ORG2
It might be easier now, but in the past women could not achieve their full potential, and I saw career success as attaining these goals like becoming a senior manager and have the responsibility	BBFL_CS3ORG3

Challenge -Authenticity	
Yes I would say challenge is a vital aspect of a career	BBMH_CS3AC4
Yes of course if you meet the challenge you are given and it can lead to promotion [in teaching], but it also gives you that 'I achieved that' moment, which often happens as a teacher. I am driven and motivated for those inspirational experiences	GYFT_CS3AC8
You know the challenges of the past are no longer for promotional opportunities, I would say for me at least, the challenge in my career is to be recognised as a person of influence [or being more authentic]"	BBMH_CS3AC5
Challenge – authenticity and family	
A challenge is important in a career, but I think it is male thing. I have enough challenges already [laughter]. When I was first starting out [working] sure yes, but it is not essential now, you know a family is challenging enough	BBFF_CS3ACF3
Being successful in a career is only one aspect of me, there is me to me than that. I have other responsibilities, you know like for example my family and my parents"	BBFN_CS3ACF6
I still remain ambitious in my career. Although a mother of teenage children, I am still seeking work that stretches me as a person [manager]	BBFT_CS3ACF5
Although I have taken time out to raise my children, since coming back I still seek my career ambitions and the original desire to achieve career related goals	BBFB_CS3ACF8
[In the past] I have left a job because of lack of opportunities [challenges]. However this has all changed. [since facing redundancy], I've had a good long think about my priorities, and have reassessed my need for a challenge, my whole way of thinking has changed. I now value more stability, like being employed. Unlike the past, I am no longer perusing those career goals at any cost	BBMM_CS3ACF12
I used to thrive on interesting and stimulating work. But when I became father for the first time I have changed my focus, I am less interested in work-related goals	GXMF_CS3ACF13
Sure when I first started my working life I was ambitious. But as other demands come along, like having a family, then of course you need to change"	GXFN_CS3ACF10

Appendix 9: Code: Interview Code: GXM_T
Biographical data checklist

- ❖ Name: Alex

- ❖ Age range: 46

- ❖ Relationship status: Separated

- ❖ Number of children: 2

- ❖ Ages of children: under 10

- ❖ Main money earner: the interviewee

- ❖ Job title: Engineering BT

- ❖ Scope of responsibility: Telecoms Engineer senior shift team leader

- ❖ Key responsibilities: Telecoms Engineering

- ❖ Length of time with organisation: 15 years
- ❖ Length of time with previous organisation: in one engineering related jobs before joining BT

Education – what is the highest attained qualification?

Undergraduate - Engineering

Other qualifications -

Career breaks: None

Unit	Text	Notes – Themes
001	**Tell me about your career – what critical incidents have affect it and how?**	
002	I joined as sales specialists after gaining about 5 years' experience outside the telecommunication industry. When I joined BT I was then at the first level of management joined a headquarters group, and spent some years there, got my first promotion there to the next level of management then I moved into the sales function again in a headquarters environment, and in the late 90s I moved out to an	Background to the career – progressive 1.1.6 – further advancement 1.1.7- financial 1.1.8 - status

operational unit and I've stayed in roughly that sort of work since then.

The group I joined ...in those days there was actually a unit whose ethos was defined by the standards of accommodation: the amount of space and type of furniture people had been dependent on what grade they were. Remember BT has been privatised ...but it was quite exciting to be part this process still as there were still large shift in the organisation that was quite interesting and I moved across to the sales function because the unit I'd been was clearly past its sell-by date...I had been part of making that happen ... as one does, you spot that it's time to move on ... so I moved into a corporate sales policy function because that was fairly closely related ... that was, I suppose, about 1995...

I spent four years in a policy function and then as a development move really I moved out into an operational unit in north London, where I really ... that was a huge culture shock from working with the almost quite cerebral policy type issues to suddenly be plunged into the operational unit with the engineering line managers. ...I thoroughly enjoyed it ... that's why I've stayed in state ever since, I guess ... I was promoted again there in, I think it was 1998 the company went through another massive reorganisation with the emergence of all geographical units. I then worked in what was known as commercial sales, London... and for a while my role was functionalised ... the area I supported managers with was focused principally on the south east sales ... I hated being functionalised, I just felt that I wasn't doing what my experience and skills equipped me to do ... an awful lot of people felt that way ... most sales teams in the company now are

	organised the way we are, which ... sales is led on having people at the front end of the line managers and the people who work for us who act as a general consultancy type of service, with various functional experts backing us up I certainly prefer it that way .after this re-organisation and being in commercial sales division. I moved to this particular part of the world in 96 ... so since that time I've supported roughly the base same customer as I'm supporting now.	
003	**Looking back, have you got any idea why your career has developed as it has?**	
004	I suppose my sales background I've never had any inclination to convert to a more technical background ... so I guess it was probably background and inclination ... and really it's only the last 5 to 8 years the company has got serious about development plans for individuals ... anything that happened before then was almost fortuitous really ... and the moves I have made along the way have been because I've identified the need ... rather than being part of any plan that I'd sat and discussed with my line manager ... it was it feels like about the right time to do x, so I would go off and phone people, knock on their doors, make the contacts, to try and get the next move ...it's not been part of a structured plan as such, it's been circumstances at the time ... the last big move I made last year in 2010 was because where I was working I was very unhappy with the environment ... all sorts of reasons. I just put out the word that I was looking for a move, and the chap who ran the unit at the time rang me and said when would you like to come and join us? ... so that was how it happened. From all of this you could say that a career is a journey of your working life, and not simply something that you do	Drivers in careers progression – influences – 2.1.3 quality of life / work-life balance

005	**What was it about sales that attracted you?**	
	Well... at the time ... the work I had been doing in this strange antiquated unit had been related to peoples' environment, and we sort of moved that forward to being much more line manager owned…..... so it was moving into an area where I could bring that experience to bear, and where the learning curve wouldn't be too steep, and again it was about contacts ...I knew ... I'd met senior managers in that particular part of the organisation, and I made it known that I was interested in a move, and again the person in question was prepared to give me the opportunity...	2.2.1 Influences relationships manager
006	**Where is their career at – static, progressive – why?**	
	My career now at my age has still potential for further promotion. I have not yet reached the glass ceiling. I could I suppose could leave and get another job in a similar role but I am quite happy here. In the long term I have a good pension and there are enough challenges here to keep me busy. There is also scope for future promotion opportunities.	8.1 Career progression - bounded
007	**At what level of the organisation did you start your working life?**	
008	As you can tell by CV – I joined sales. Since joining I have had various roles in sales with a steady progression.	
009	**What did you do next?**	
010	This is my four or fifth role. I left university and by chance landed in sales, and never really looked back. Each job I had was a little better, more money, improved status.	Protean career – fairly fluid
011	**Why?**	
012	I wanted to improve and getting a better position.	

013	*Guidance Questions* **Why do you think your career has developed the way it has?**	
014	It is partly down to me and partly down to BT. There have been a lot of opportunities over the years. The opportunities have mainly come about as you get noticed for your hard work and reliability, and knowing people [laugh] … not what you know but who you know. My career however has focused on and in sales.	4.2 Attitude satisfaction / contentment 2.2.3 Organisational influences – professional 1.1.1 Interest / Enjoyment / Variety
015	**What did you want from your career at the beginning?**	
016	Something that is interesting, challenging, never dull and secure.	Challenge – subjective / objective
017	**Have you achieved this?**	
018	Over the years yes – there have been a lot of challenges as business environment has changed [pause- then laugh]. As they say never a dull moment.	Challenge – 5.1.4 Objective/ Status
019	**Has your objective / aim changed?**	
020	I suppose your outlook and your goals change as you get older and wiser. When I first started I was very idealistic and wanted to be in this position and organisation for about 10 years. Even when I got married I was very idealistic. But when you start having a family this does change your priorities. There is a change in your career and the need to support your family even more. This sense of job security and the need to provide for the family has dominated my priories since, but I do try and balance my working and family life.	2.1.2 Influences / Family
021	**What do you think you wanted from your career when you started work?**	
022	Oh I should think money ...back in those days I suppose, like most students, I had debts to pay ... so I was after job security ...you know joining BT you couldn't get much more secure than that ... I don't think I really knew, to be honest ...I was realistic enough to	8.1 Bounded career

	think that I wasn't going to fit it anything ...in the business commercial world where I could apply the degree I'd done directly. Sales was cut throat but in BT there was sense of direction and career progression.	
023	**How has what you wanted from your career changed since you've been at work?**	
024	Early in my career I was driven by seeking promotion at any cost. I was, and I suppose I am still, very much focused on achieving my goals here. But when I got married and started a family, my priorities did change. I have needed to re-evaluate my life, and that has included wanting to have a balanced life-style. I now work for shared team goals, time outside of the workplace to be with friends. This is a far cry from what I was like when I first starting my career. The emphasis in the early years ...just force of circumstance ...just out of university, you've got no money ... getting this job ...then getting married... you're trying to home put a together-and the priorities were financial more than anything else, more than job satisfaction ...but that's shifted...it is back to those priorities as you get more responsibilities. Since the divorce and the separation everything has changed….since however, my life has changed. When you become a father for the first time, you re-evaluate your life and priorities. I still enjoy work, but I certain enjoy spending time with my family. This is something that my father missed out on, and I certainly do not want too. Last week I took off a day to attend my children's sports day, something I cannot remember my father doing… Shame really. You know, becoming a father and everything, including work, is put into perspective. Once I worked long hours even after we got married, but since my son came along everything has	2 Influences – 2.1.2 Family 9.2 Life-stage

	changed. When I was young my father still worked hard and we didn't really see much of him; for me I want to see my son growing up and certainly do not want to miss out. .	
025	**Can you tell me a bit about what has changed?**	
026	I don't think I could pinpoint a date...it's just something I've realised as the years have gone by, that what the job is about and how I'm feeling about it is much more important than ... obviously the money is important, it's nice to have money, than how much does it pay, where does it sit in the hierarchy, in the scheme of things ... and although I am now the wrong side of 40 I still have the ambition and drive. I'm convinced the company reorganised just to spite me (laughs) ... where had the organisation not moved I was sort of poised for the next grade up, the next move up ... and then the whole world turned upside down ... that didn't happen ... and I remember in the 90s when I first started I almost being eaten up with ambition ... I still wanted to make that next move up, and what I feel now is... it didn't happen, and I think so what? ...I enjoy what I'm doing, and that's more important now ... this sort of overpowering obsession with I want to be this grade or that grade ...I don't know whether that's common in middle aged men today and still thinking that we can do it still, or whether I've just come to terms with I am where I am, and I might as well enjoy it, which I do, rather than eat myself up striving for something which may never happen. My father had a career, he was an accountant; I just see what I do as a series of jobs which I have enjoyed when I was doing them. A career is something that certain professions like nursing or a teacher have, but this not me yet.	1.1.2 Drivers / Challenge 1.1.1 Interest / Enjoyment / Variety 2.2.3 Organisational influences – professional 2.1.8 Influences awareness of age

	<mark>Also when I first became a father, I started to re-evaluate who I was, and this included my career. I decided that working all the hours, chasing promotion and a higher salary at any cost needed to change. Since the birth of my second child I have purposely taken a role that permits me to be a father first. So now I work from home; it involves less travelling away from home and more time with the family.</mark> However of course this changed with the divorce.	
027	**How would you sum up your achievements at work?**	
028	If I look back and I break it into the first ten years and the last ten years, I think the first ten years of my career here was being part of the start of the movement of change, one voice amongst many others coming into the company and saying why don't you do it this way? ... there were all sorts of policies around then ... when I moved into the sales world, promotion policies ... that went back, again nothing had really changed. I would say most recently that my contribution has been in gaining the confidence with the line managers for the sales function-the managers I support I know from customer satisfaction surveys that they respect my judgement, value my opinion, look upon me as a virtual team member of their operational teams, and that my thinking contributes to the way they manage their units ... I think that's what I would say I was most pleased about ... although it sounds a bit of a negative thing ... I guess all of us who had anything to do with managing the redundancy programmes … I feel we can take a pride in having managed that ... we haven't had a single compulsory redundancy in the company up until the last 3 years. Our team provided a great service and allows hit the target therefore we avoided redundancies, then 2008 but I	1.1.1 Interest / Enjoyment / Variety 2.2.3 Organisational influences – professional

	am still here – we are still making the targets.	
029	**At what point(s) in your career have you felt particularly successful?**	
030	The most memorable getting this is current role. There were more moments of success when I was young, which were good at the time, but in the context of my overall career they were simply stepping stones.	1.1.1 Interest / Enjoyment / Variety
031	**What do you want to achieve in the future? Why? If not why?**	
032	Again I would say it's not to do with status and money ...I'm not going to object if somebody wants to pay me a whole load more money, that would be fine, but I want to continue to enjoy myself .. on the whole I'm happy and I enjoy what I'm doing and I'm interested in it...I think the day it doesn't feel like that anymore I shall toddle along to my boss and say any chance of an exit package, I've had enough ..... quite modest really, that's what I want out of it ... I'm very fortunate in not having huge financial drivers...I have kids at school, and a huge mortgage ... the only financial drivers are my own tendencies to go out and spend huge amounts of money (laughs)...I think that frees you up to enjoy the job much more as well	1.1.1 Interest / Enjoyment / Variety 2.2.3 Organisational influences – professional
033	**Have you had definite goals in your career over your lifetime?**	
034	Yeah sure. I started off with a bachelor degree and I have gained professional qualification and accreditations in order to gain promotion, but I really did not have a strategy as such.	
035	**What about progression in a career?**	
036	I am not really in into this sort of career now. ==I have seen my senior managers vying for a job, and there are knives out. They seem to forget about the other person==	2.2.3 Organisational pressures

037	**When considering changing a job, you do consider whether the new job leads to another one that you want?**	
038	No not really – I changed jobs or roles only when I felt it was right or there was a new opportunity – it was not that strategic. I suppose as you begin to reach a certain point in life, like starting a family or hitting 45 to 50, your career and your life changes as you begin to re-evaluate things differently. My career has been to one sector, and fairly stable. Now at my stage in life, there does not seem to be the same priority of needing to succeed, and at the same time opportunities also seem to reduce.	2.1.3 Quality of life 9.3 life-stage 2.2.5 – Ageism or perceived
039	**You do give a lot of thought to plans and strategies for achieving the career goals**	
040	No not really I am not that sort of person. There are more strategic managers than me planning their careers and the next move – I am ambitious still [laugh]	
041	**What do you perceive as your strengths and weaknesses are in relation to your career goals**	
042	Being about the get on with the job and achieving the targets. Weakness oh I do not know – being over ambitious. Achieving the results and getting your boss's job [laugh].	1.1.2 Challenge
043	**In achieving career goals what are very / not important to you – why?**	
044	Providing a good service and being a reliable team member. Not important money or the job title that was important in the past [laugh]	2.2.3 Organisational influences – professional
045	**2. Work values**	
046	Now I want to talk to you about how you feel about your career.	9.2 Occupational / Professional
047	**What is most important to you about your work?**	
048	Being able to do a professional, high quality job. I suppose all the things I've talked about ... and therefore to have the respect of the people I work with and all the managers I support...	9.2 Occupational / Professional

049a	**What do you think you want from your career?**	
049b	I don't have a specific aim in mind, that I want to be in this job or that job, in x amount of time ... at the moment in the next eighteen months I would like to broaden my role ... the managers that I'm supporting, the areas they are in are high profile and their issues are unique to them, and I feel I need to balance that with a bit more of the pile it high, sell it cheap type of unit, big battalions, and to have the stimulation of building some new client relationships, because I think that just keeps you on your toes ... it's always nice and challenging to build a relationship with someone new, and start to get them believing in you ...it can be a bit too easy with someone who knows you ... so that's my short term plan ...I don't know whether it's to do with but getting older I don't really think beyond six months at a time.	9.2 Occupational / Professional 2.2.2 Relationships 4.2 Attitude / Satisfaction 5.2.3 Subjective / Using knowledge or experience
050	**In general terms of what you want from your career, would that reflect back on what we were saying in the previous section, things like enjoying it, finding it interesting?**	
051	Oh yes ... and being valued for what I do, having respect for what I do... those are the things that mean more to me than I want to be a particular grade, I want to have x thousand pounds a year more...	1.1.7 Drivers / financial reward
052	**What do you think motivates you?**	
053	It's again all around those areas of professionalism, integrity ... delivering a high quality service to the people I support ...I really don't believe ... I like money, I like being able to spend money ... I really don't believe that it's the salary I'm paid or the bonus I get once a year that motivates me ... I know it's not because there was a stage in that geographic organisation where at my level of management I was the worst paid in the entire district, and I	9.2 Occupational / Professional 1.1.7 Drivers / financial reward

	only thought about that afterwards...do not get me wrong it used to motivate me.	
054	**It wasn't an issue at the time?**	
055	No... because I was the sales manager I knew what everybody else was paid and it never really hit me until that period of time was over that I was the lowest paid of the lot ...it didn't occur to me to go and bang on the boss's door and say hand on a minute (laughs)...it definitely wasn't the money motivating me then ...it was the desire to do a professional job... and certainly the thought that once a year I might get an amount of money as a bonus doesn't drive me to work any harder than I do normally	
056	**3. External /Internal factors**	
057	Well again when my salary is reviewed once a year it's more a question of honour and professional pride rather than I desperately need a few thousand more this year because otherwise I can't pay my bills. This used to be case when I first started but not anymore. It's more if my boss said to me you're not getting a salary increase this year because actually you've not met your objectives, my pride wouldn't let me get into that position ... so that's the emphasis, the emphasis is on having achieved what I set out to achieve and that being recognised, rather than the amount of money itself.. I found a degree of success has come the more time I have spent in a job, so I'm tempted to say I have attained a role in which people recognise me as being the expert. I know when this first started. It goes back to when I first become a parent. I found a degree of success that came about due to a [self] awareness and understanding of my own personal abilities, and this is why I am now seeking to be recognised as an expert	Subjective career 9.2 Occupational / Professional 1.1.5 recognition 5.2.1 – Expert being recognised 6.1 Career identity
058	**(How important is your position in the hierarchy?)**	

059	Again it doesn't fuss me a great deal ...it's not something ...it doesn't drive me particularly ... my boss at the moment is someone... a few years ago we worked together as colleagues. There is a mutual respect – we are of the same age and therefore we understand each other largely. I think I used to define it very differently. I think previously when I first started in commercial accounting it was to go and be a financial controller of an organisation. Priorities change and your situation changes. Even getting married you rethink things. I used to work long hours at such as coming in at 7 am and leaving for home at 9pm on a regular basis. Originally that was only month end but it grew to be nearly all the time. At that point in time I thought 'hang on, what is the point?' I was earning good money for my age, and I had a car. You think 'what is the point', if you exhausted all the time. You just stop and think, is it really worth it?	2. Influences – quality of life (2.1.3)
060	**(How important are promotional opportunities to you?)**	
061	I have been promoted a number of times since being here [British Telecom]. Each time I have gained promotion I have received the recognition and a better salary. This definitely influenced my attitude at the time as to how successful my career was, you know the job title and the financial rewards, but it no everything. So I guess not too much ... the way I tend to approach things is, if there isn't a realistic possibility of something happening, it's not worth getting wound up over ....I seem to have a mental trigger somewhere that says if it's not going to happen, then I'm not going to waste energy on it ... and I suppose I feel like that about promotion opportunities ... there wouldn't be any point in it being desperately important to me because	1.1.6 Drivers / Further Advancement / promotion

	we're in a much flatter organisation and realistically it doesn't happen very often, the opportunity to be promoted, so I won't let that be important to me ...I haven't seen a job come along where I thought, yeah, that's me, that's got my name on it and I really want that ... that would have to be the way round for me, it would have to be the job, rather than in absolute terms I want to be promoted...	
062	**(What about fringe benefits, like a car?)**	
063	I enjoy having them. .. and I suppose I would feel if everyone else had them and I didn't have them, because there would be a status thing there ...I enjoy the convenience of not having to worry if I had a company car, but it not a driving [laugh] influencer.	
064	**So what about career – how do you see this?**	
065	Career success was once getting promotion, driving a good car, having my own office, but now after having a family, career success is less important to me. Look when I first started promotion was important to me. Now I have been promoted a number of times since being here. Each time I have gained promotion I have received the recognition and a better salary. This has definitely influenced my attitude as to how I assess how successful I am in my career	5.2 Subjective career success 6.1 Career identity 6.1 Career identity
066	**(How important is it to you that you are considered to be a bit of an expert at what you do?)**	
067	Very important-yeah ...because it's back to the being valued and respected. I found a degree of success has come the more time I have spent in a job, so I'm tempted to say I have attained a role in which people recognise me as being the expert. Well you could argue that perhaps the ultimate goal I had when I first joined	5.2 Subjective career success as linked to 065 6.1 Career identity 2.1.2 Family 2.16 influences life-stage

	this company was to become what was called an SMG [senior manager] and I've got a few more steps to become that SMG gaining more experience in terms of me being able to do it, I've got no issue; of course I'll be able to do it if I wanted, but there again I have changed. My responsibilities have changed. When I look back now you wonder if it is all worth it. Sometimes you think yes but nowadays, 15 years on, I'm not really bothered. I'm certainly less ambitious than I used to be, I've stopped thinking in career terms at the moment, you know, seeking a different role like being recognised for my expertise. Well you could argue that perhaps the ultimate goal I had when I first joined this company was to become what was called an SMG [senior manager] and I've got a few more steps to become that …in terms of me being able to do it, I've got no issue; of course I'll be able to do it if I wanted... but nowadays, 15 years on, I'm not really bothered. I'm certainly less ambitious… I've stopped thinking in career terms at the moment wanting as I said before seeking a different role like being recognised for my expertise	10.2.2 Challenge/ subjective – expert
068	**(The next thing on my list is respect. How important is that to you?)**	
069	Extremely important ... my integrity... even though I am in sales my professional integrity, nothing upsets me more, these are important to me.	
070	**(What about being able to influence what's going on?)**	
071	That's important as well	
072	**(Is that to do with the autonomy you talked about?)**	

073	It is and it is related to the value bit, because if I wasn't influencing what the line managers do and the way they run their units, then I would feel marginalised, I would feel they put no value on my contribution ... so that's an important area...	
074	**(What about doing things that leave your mark on the company?)**	
075	Not so much, again simply from the practical point of view ...if that was my aspiration the chances are I'd be disappointed because this is a huge company ...but if I look back and think yeah I have ... it's needed lots of people like me to make the changes that the company has made ... all of us are the company together ... the way that I've contributed to the thinking or implemented things operationally has been a collective making the mark, as it were ... not to go away thinking I was the one who discovered optic fibres, because it's highly unlikely I personally would think of or do something that was going to be that fundamental ... or any one person really. Anyway I tried to pretend it wasn't important...I tried to convince myself that it wasn't but of course it is, because it's part of the greasy pole stuff. Nobody wants to be left behind.	1.1.7 Drivers Further advancement
076	**(How important is to you to find your work challenging?)**	
077	That's fairly important, yeah ... if I reach a point in a job where I feel as if I could do it in my sleep, then I know it's time to move on, or add to the role, or do something with it... you're sort of cruising on two cylinders...	
078	**(What about feeling that you're really good at what you do?)**	
079	Yes, yes ... again that's back to the value thing and being respected, because if I wasn't the managers I deal with would very soon let me know ... they would let me know by ignoring me ... and they don't.	

080	**(Is it important to you to get a personal sense of achievement out of what you do?)**	
081	I'd be crazy if I said no it wasn't, but I guess the nature of the work I do is often I get my kicks. To hit those targets are important to me. I get a sense of achievement, if I think I've done a quality job on it, done it well...	
082	**(You mentioned that it's important for you to enjoy what you do)**	
083	Oh yeah... yeah, there's no point otherwise.	
084	**(What about finding it interesting?)**	
085	Yes, they go together... the intellectual stimulation really .... so that's very important, enjoying it.	
086	**(What about doing things people haven't done before?)**	
087	Yeah I am up for that I am certain not cautious by nature. I sales you tend to be the ones who will blaze a trail. If somebody's going to do something ground breaking I want that to me.	1.1.2 Challenge 1.1.3 Make a difference 6.1 Career identity
088	**What about in the past compared to now?**	
089	I was more of a maverick in the past than now. But when you are young you are out to prove yourself more. Even though I still want to be the trail blazer – there is a part of me with a greater sense of [laugh] maturity – target or no target. I think I used to define it very differently. I think previously when I first started in electrical engineering it was to go and be a telecoms engineer of this organisation. Priorities change and your situation changes. Even getting married you rethink things. I used to work long hours [in the first job] such as coming in at 7 am and leaving for home at 9pm on a regular basis.	8 Career seems to be bounded 2 Influences 2.1.2 Family 2.16 influences life-stage
090	**(Which of these criteria is most important to you?)**	
091	The latter	
092	**(Enjoyment and interest?)**	
093	Yes certainly	

094	**(Not the one with respect?)**	
095	Well I couldn't have one without the other ... I would be enjoying myself if I wasn't getting the value...	
096	**(So it's both of those two?)**	
097	Yes certainly	
098	**(Has that changed since you've been at work?)**	
099	I don't think it has really ... I think maybe the balance has changed in that perhaps when my personal drivers were different ... money was the bigger driver ... I would probably have been more prepared to put up with a situation where I wasn't particularly happy, and getting those things from it, and just bear with it until I could make a move ... being within a large organisation I've been able to make those moves within the company...	2.2.3 Organisational benefits
101	**(That was back at the beginning of your career?)**	
102	Yes, for the first half I would guess ... but basically I would say no, they haven't changed...	
103	**Call You imagine them changing in the future?)**	
104	Not realistically, no ... something pretty cataclysmic would have to happen ... no, no can't...	
105	**(How important is it to you that you are considered to be a bit of an expert at what you do?)**	
106	Very important-yeah ...because it's back to the being valued and respected.	
107	**(The next thing on my list is respect. How important is that to you?)**	
108	Extremely important ... my integrity... I often say it tongue in cheek ... call me what you like, question my grandmother's morals but don't question my professional integrity, nothing upsets me more, that's terribly important to me.	9.4 Generational
109	**What about being able to influence what's going on?**	
110	That's important as well	

111	**Is that to do with the autonomy you talked about?**	
112	It is and it is related to the value bit, because if I wasn't influencing what the line managers do and the way they run their units, then I would feel marginalised, I would feel they put no value on my contribution ... so that's an important area…	1.1.4 Relationships 6.1 Career identity
113	**What about doing things that leave your mark on the company?**	
114	It is still important to me, again simply from the practical point of view ...if that was my aspiration the chances are I'd be disappointed because this is a huge company ...but if I look back and think yeah I have ... it's needed lots of people like me to make the changes that the company has made ... all of us are the company together ... the way that I've contributed to the thinking or implemented things operationally has been a collective making the mark, as it were .... not to go away thinking I was the one who discovered optic fibres, because it's highly unlikely I personally would think of or do something that was going to be that fundamental ... or any one person really.	
115	**How important is to you to find your work challenging?**	
116	That's fairly important, yeah ... if I reach a point in a job where I feel as if I could do it in my sleep, then I know it's time to move on, or the sales were always being achieved then I would go – but that is highly unlikely and anyway there is a regression out there still.	
117	**What about feeling that you're really good at what you do?**	
118	Yes but again that's back to the value thing and being respected, because if I wasn't the managers I deal with would very soon let me know ... they would let me know by ignoring me ... and they don't.	9.4 Generational

119	**Is it important to you to get a personal sense of achievement out of what you do?**	
120	If I said no it would be a lie. But I guess the nature of the work I do is often I get my buzz from somebody else's achievement and my own. You know we work as a team here. I get a sense of achievement, if I think I've done a quality job on it, done it well...	
121	**You mentioned that it's important for you to enjoy what you do**	
122	Oh yeah... yeah, there's no point otherwise.	
123	**What about finding it interesting?**	
124	Yes, they go together... the intellectual stimulation really ... so that's very important, enjoying it.	
125	**What about doing things people haven't done before?**	
126	I am up for that. Thinking about it I am little more cautious than in the past, you know less of the maverick, I still see myself as a trail blazer.	
127	**Which of these criteria is most important to you?**	
128	The latter	
129	**Enjoyment and interest?**	
130	Yes	
131	**Not the one with respect?**	
132	Well I couldn't have one without the other ... I would be enjoying myself if I wasn't getting the value... Well you could argue that perhaps the ultimate goal I had when I first joined this company [financial institution] was to become what was called an SMG and I've got one more step to become what is now that...in terms of me being able to do it, I've got no issue, of course I'll be able to do it if I wanted... but nowadays, 15 years on, I'm not really bothered. I'm certainly not as ambitious, the divorce took its toll, and it makes you stop and think about your career. I have changed and seek a more expertise role here	4 Attitude is acceptance 7.1 No future plans 8 Career progression is bounded
133	**So it's both of those two?**	
134	Yeah, yeah	

135	**What about career success**	
136	It goes back to career success as getting promotion, driving that good car, having my own office, but things change, you change and life does also. Now after having a family, career success is less important to me	6.1 Career identity 2.2.2 Influences / Family
137	**Has that changed since you've been at work?**	
138	I don't think it has really ... I think maybe the balance has changed in that perhaps when my personal drivers were different ... money was the bigger driver ... I would probably have been more prepared to put up with a situation where I wasn't particularly happy, and getting those things from it, and just bear with it until I could make a move ... being within a large organisation I've been able to make those moves within the company... I can remember my dad not really getting involved in my childhood, and he regrets this now, whereas I do not want miss mine	2.1.2 Family
139	**That was back at the beginning of your career?**	
140	Yes, for the first half I would guess... but basically I would say no, they haven't changed...	
141	**Can you imagine them changing in the future?**	
142	Yes sure especially after starting a family. Again I can remember my dad not really getting involved in my childhood, and he regrets this now, whereas I do not want miss mine Having said that I am still ambitious and want to go higher still… I have another 10 years before I lose my opportunity to attain my goals	2.1.2
143	**From the two categories which two elements (intrinsic and extrinsic) do you consider to be more important to you and why?**	
144	Thinking back it has definitely changed – most probably intrinsic, but	

	when you first start off it is money and status, then you get this and there is a search or need for something more internalised.	
145	**If you did an exceptional piece of work, what would you expect?**	
146	Recognition, as this is what I would do to my junior associates	6.1 Career identity Expert
147	**Is the anything wrong with doing a poor standard of work? What is your immediate supervisor was there; would this change your attitude to doing a particular task?**	
148	I have always taken pride in my work. If I did a poor piece of work then I would have a conscious about it.	
149	**Should a person feel a sense of pride in their work? If so / not why?**	
150	Yes – we here at BT take a pride in our work and providing a good service. We are a service provider and all of us here need to take pride in our work	9.2 Professional
151	**In your opinion, does work define the person or it a means to an end? If it is a means to an end – then what is more important?**	
152	No reply	

153	**How would you rank the following?**	
	❖ *Authenticity* – defined as being true to oneself by aligning personal values and behaviours (1)	
	❖ *Balance* – defined as efforts designed to achieve equilibrium between work and non-work aspects of one's life (2)	
	❖ *Challenge* – defined as engaged in activities that permit the individual to demonstrate responsibility, control and autonomy while learning and growing (1)	

154	**Has this rank changed in anyway – if so why?**	
155	The challenge is still my driver. I would like to think that there is a balance but at times I am not so sure. Also with the recession job security and getting the sales are even more important.	Subjective
156	**4. Attitudes to organisational security**	
157	**How do you rate your needs compared to those of your organisation?**	
158	You mean my career and personal needs compared to the organisation?	
159	**Yes**	
160	There is a partnership, with the organisation which BT does provide training to its staff. In return, we get the sales [laugh]. There used to be more training pre-2008 but with everything else this benefits have been substantially reduced.	
161	**To what extent do you consider that you have an obligation towards the organisation? Can you provide examples?**	
161	Because BT has invested in me over the years, I have a great deal of loyalty. I have not really considered leaving BT; I like the people here and the company and its benefits.	
162	**What about examples?**	
163	I suppose the length of service here at BT **To what extent do you consider that the organisation has an obligation towards you? Can you provide examples?**	
164	BT understands that they need to training and recruit the right staff to get the results and service they want.	
165	**Have and would you now be prepared to leave work without another job to go to – so why, if not why?**	
166	No not now – may be in the past – but having said that no as I have generally been very happy here.	

167	**5 Attitudes towards the organisation**	
168	**How would you describe the organisation as place of work – is it separate or apart of your life?**	
169	It is a part of my life but although it feels like it at times I do not live for it. I do take work home with me from time to time but it does not dedicate to me. But <mark>being a father for the first time made me stop and re-consider whether I should be working long-hours</mark>	2.1.2 Family
170	**Do you consider it to be unfair for your organisation if you actively looked for another position for personal gain?**	
180	For me I am loyal to here, but for those younger than me, I would not hold it against them. Today there is a sense of uncertainty over the past couple of years, and if I was younger I would certainly have no issues about looking or leaving. In fact I think it is important that you change employer and have a look around.	9.3 Age / Life-stage
181	**How would you compare your current level of job satisfaction at work, compared to previous roles? Has this perception changed?**	
182	Like I said before this is my career as graduate at BT. My role has changed and it is a different challenge than in the past, but still a challenge.	
183	**6 Attitudes towards the family versus work**	
184	**Do you consider that work should interfere with a person's family life? Can you provide examples?**	
185	Of course there are times that work does interfere with family life. It is not ideal but it is a part of the business / sales environment today. I often go on holiday and check my emails, but this for my own piece of mind. **Is it desirable for a partner to stay at home with small children than to go work?**	2.1.6 Lifestyle 2.1.2 Family

186	In an ideal world yes. When we first started this was the case but we could afford to do so. Today there is more demand.	
187	**7 Attitude / perception towards job enrichment**	
188	**Would you like more responsibility in your job, and if what?**	
189	As we measured on results so although I am answerable to my line manager I do have a large degree of independence.	
190	**How independent or closely supervised are you?**	
191	I am independent. My only monitoring is with the sales results. So long as we meet them I am independent.	
192	**Are you actively involved in decision-making? Do you consider this as important element of your job?**	
193	Very much so, I lead the commercial sales team	
194	**8 Career paths – referring to the participant's career**	
195	**Looking at your career to date, how would you describe your career path?**	
196	Steadily upwards but I have reached a stage if life, you could say middle age when I no longer want just to seek the same goals, but gain recognition and be of influence on my terms	1.1.5 – Recognised 5.2.3 Subjective recognition
197	**Is your career path what you expected to it be?**	
198	Yes of course. I have been very fortunate to join BT at the time I did and I have been very lucky in my various position since. Even the ones I did not like or had problems with.	
199	**How do you see your career path change in the next 5 years?**	
200	[laugh] I am retiring – the career in gardening and taking it easy	
201	**Has your career paths changed significantly – and if so why?**	
202	No not really – as my CV shows I am BT sales through and through	

203	Which one of the following best represents your career?	
	❖ Having a stable career with a high importance attached to organisational security.	
	❖ **The career to date is a multiple-employer career, with now a high importance attached to organisational security, and expected to stay.**	
	❖ The career to date is multiple-employer career with a high importance attached to organisational security but expects to leave.	
	❖ The career to date is stable with a low importance attached to organisational security and expected to stay.	
	❖ To date the career is stable. The career is of a low importance attached to organisational security, but it the individual expects to leave.	
	❖ The career to date is a multiple-employer career, with a low importance attached to organisational security	
204	Bounded	

Appendix 10: Summary profile of the main study participants

Sector	Location	Participants	Generational profile
Manufacturing	Home Counties	6 participants – 3 males and 3 females	2 Generation Y (1 male / 1 female) 2 Generation X (1 male / 1 female) 2 Baby Boomers (1 male / 1 female)
Hotel and restaurant	South-West of England	6 participants – 3 males and 3 females	2 Generation Y (1 male / 1 female) 2 Generation X (1 male / 1 female) 2 Baby Boomers (1 male / 1 female)
Transportation and communication	North-East of England	6 participants – 3 males and 3 females	2 Generation Y (1 male / 1 female) 2 Generation X (1 male / 1 female) 2 Baby Boomers (1 male / 1 female)

Sector	Location	Participants	Generational profile
Banking, finance and insurance	London	6 participants – 3 males and 3 females	2 Generation Y (1 male / 1 female) 2 Generation X (1 male / 1 female) 2 Baby Boomers (1 male / 1 female)
Public administration	South-West of England	18 participants – 9 males and 9 females	6 Generation Y (3 male / 3 female) 6 Generation X (3 male / 3 female) 6 Baby Boomers (3 male / 3 female)