

**An assessment of leadership styles which are
motivational with millennial employees within a
petrochemical organisation**

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ABSTRACT

Individuals from the millennial generational group are growing to be the largest segment of the workplace. This group is therefore an important element of an organisation's sustainability. It is therefore important to gain insight into what the characteristics of this group are, then determine their origins. Leadership is considered to be a process of social influence. It is important to apply this influence in an effective manner, such that the group in question is motivated.

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which transformational and servant leadership styles facilitate motivation within the millennial generational group in a petrochemical organisation, specifically its technology business unit. The study aimed to explore the aforementioned leadership styles and its constructs in order to determine the extent to which it facilitates motivation within the millennial group.

Two well-researched and validated questionnaires were administered to the millennial population within the petrochemical organisation; the first being the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), associated with the transformational leadership style, using a five-point Likert scale. The second questionnaire (SL-7), the Servant Leadership scale 7, associated with the servant leadership style, utilising a seven-point Likert scale. Feedback was sought from the millennial population in the petrochemical organisation's technology section and 70 responses were received.

The results revealed that both the transformational and servant leadership styles were effective in terms of motivation of the millennial group in the targeted organisation. Insight was also gained into the behavioural constructs with the strongest and weakest relationship with motivating this millennial group. The findings revealed that a very strong motivational relationship existed with leader behaviours associated with ethical conduct and the millennial group. The findings also indicated that a strong motivational relationship existed between millennials and individual consideration by the leader regarding the cultivation of subordinate growth.

The study presents detailed findings recommendations, limitations, recommendations for future research and closes off with a short conclusion.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CR:	Contingent Reward
FRLT:	Full Range Leadership Theory
GT:	Group Technology
HR:	Human Resources
IA:	Idealised Attributes
IB:	Idealised Behaviours
IC:	Individual Consideration
IM:	Inspirational Motivation
IS:	Intellectual Stimulation
LF:	Laissez-Faire
MBE:	Management by Exception
MBEA:	Management by Exception (Active)
MBEP:	Management by Exception (Passive)
MLQ:	Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire
NWU:	North-West University
PA:	Passive Avoidant
SCS:	Statistical Consultation Services
SD:	Standard Deviation
SL:	Servant Leadership
SL-7:	Servant Leadership Scale – 7
SPSS:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TAL:	Transactional Leadership
TL:	Transformational Leadership

CHAPTER 1: PROBLEM STATEMENT, OBJECTIVES AND METHOD

TITLE: An assessment of leadership styles which are motivational with millennial employees within a petrochemical organisation

KEYWORDS: Servant leadership, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, passive avoidant leadership, millennial, Generation Y, motivation, petrochemical organisation

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Leadership styles which are found to be motivational with millennial employees were assessed in this study, focused on the Group Technology portion of the selected petrochemical firm. Promotion of the leadership styles - or specific elements thereof, proven to be motivational - is envisaged, to enable the synergies associated with a motivated workforce.

Chapter 1 provides the context of the study and problem statement, while also clarifying its objectives and methodology undertaken. Thereafter, the structure of the empirical study, limitations and layout of the study will be preliminarily discussed.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The petrochemical firm selected for this study, has its origins rooted in a little town in the Free State province of South Africa. Established in 1950, the firm has proven to be enterprising and technology-focused, having grown to encompass various operations located locally and internationally. The specific function within the business being explored, is the Group Technology (GT) section, which is responsible for:

- Research and technology development;
- Engineering and project services; and
- Capital Projects.

Technologically-inclined individuals are thus of great importance to the GT function of the petrochemical firm selected as the focus of this study. The purpose and values of the organisation also confirm that talented individuals, diversity and technology is the core elements enabling the firm to create superior stakeholder value.

Leadership is an extensively researched subject. Research regarding leadership, spanning over more than a decade, has provided convincing proof that a firm's success is dependent upon its managers' leadership (Behrendt, 2017:229). The definition of leadership is elusive, given that it is such a multi-faceted topic (Woods and West, 2014:380). Yukl (2012:66) indicates that "the essence of leadership in organizations is influencing and facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives" (Yukl, 2012).

Woods and West (2014:383) consider five streams (with multiple subsets) of leadership research, which includes the following: trait, behaviour, contingency, dyadic and charismatic/transformational theories (Woods and West, 2014:383). In one study (Dinh *et al.*, 2014:45), 66 different leadership theory categories had been identified. This study focuses on Servant Leadership (SL), Transformational Leadership (TL) and (as part of FLRT) the associated constructs. SL theory is considered to be an emerging theory, conceptualised as a theory of ethical or positive orientation (Blanch *et al.*, 2016:170). In a meta-analysis of three emerging ethical/moral values-based leadership forms (authentic, ethical, and servant leadership), concerning TL, Hoch *et al.* (2018) found empirical and conceptual distinctness between transformational and SL only. The corrected correlation coefficient between TL and two other leadership theories, namely ethical and authentic leadership, were found to be high (Hoch *et al.* 2018:520), therefore not empirically distinct.

Hoch *et al.* (2018:502) identified that TL may be considered to be lacking due to the absence of a robust, precise moral dimension. Due to unethical behaviour among senior leaders in organisations, the potential justification for the abovementioned ethical/moral value-based leadership forms, is provided by theorists (Hoch *et al.* 2018).

Millennials, states Anderson (2017:245), differ from previous generational cohorts concerning ideas, behaviours and viewpoints, and need to be led differently by organisational leaders, out of necessity (Anderson *et al.*, 2017:245). Millennials have an almost conflicted relationship with authority, due to their upbringing (Ahmed *et al.*, 2013:6). They view themselves as not requiring direction or leadership from others but needing various forms of positive feedback (Anderson *et al.*, 2017:253). This may cause confusion for leaders, and the traditional leadership theories present little guidance for overcoming this dilemma. Although there may be potential incongruence between current leadership theories and the workforce of the twenty-first century, leading of millennials also offers several opportunities (Anderson *et al.*, 2017:253).

1.3 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Thompson and Gregory (2012:239) points out the critical nature of relationships at work regarding millennial satisfaction and retention, based on previous research (Thompson and Gregory, 2012). Fully leveraging, motivating, and retaining millennials may find its key enabler being relationships with immediate managers (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010). Thompson and Gregory (2012:239) cite various commentators, commenting that people don't leave their place of work, they leave managers. In a study by Cox *et al.* (2014), focusing on culture shifts during economic change, they state that leadership styles should be considered as being flexible and subject to change (Cox *et al.*, 2014:2).

Martins and Martins (2014:130) state that there is relatively limited research done on generational differences at work, in a South African context, compared to the amount of international research (Martins & Martins, 2014). Heyns and Kerr (2018:2) emphasise the need for generational group studies in developing countries, specifically in the South African environment, due to unique challenges associated with it's politically and socially divided past, resulting in fragmentation (Heyns & Kerr, 2018).

Du Plessis *et al.* (2015:2) cite Covey (2006), stating that the appropriate leadership model to be utilised in South Africa, could be SL due to it being characterised by moral authority, humility, service and sacrifice to create trust and teamwork (Du Plessis *et al.*, 2015) .

For South African organisations, this study may provide insight into the needs of millennial employees, in an attempt to enhance the level of motivation and therefore productivity. A wide variety of synergies can be achieved, i.e. improved recruitment strategies, retention strategies, employee performance, innovation, etc. The whole "experience" of work may be impacted, which will definitely affect the social wellbeing of the group focused upon in this study. Individual managers, depending on their level of maturity, may benefit even more significantly from the insight gained into this generational group. This study endeavours to set a positive social process in motion within the workplace. As indicated previously, this specific organisation has already identified the need for change.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Potgieter and Doubell (2018:71) state that in 2015, the workforce in South Africa consisted of 34% Millennials, 34% Generation X and 31% Baby boomers (Potgieter and Doubell, 2018). Hays (2014:1) cites (Ng, Lyons and Schweitzer, 2012), stating that 75% of the global workforce will comprise millennials by 2030. Older generational cohorts did not impose personal requirements on managers, but millennial workers have a different outlook (Hays, 2014:2).

There are currently three generations in the workplace, namely Baby boomers (1946 to 1964), Generation X (1965 to 1980) and Millennials (1981 to 2000) (Kilber, 2014:80; Aruna & Anitha, 2015:94). Stereotypes related to Millennials are extensive and do not contribute to their efficiency in a positive manner (Kilber, 2014:81). Instead, the focus should be placed on the competitive advantage they present to employers in the global marketplace, based primarily on their desirable characteristics of technological proclivity, cultural diversity, education and values (Anderson, 2017:254).

Vecchiotti (2018:43) states that the millennial workforce displays characteristics mainly associated with styles such as social learning, transformational, and SL (Vecchiotti, 2018). When the three leadership styles (ethical, servant and transformational) were tested for effectiveness in a study by Long (2017), using various instruments on a millennial population, it was determined that the most effective style is SL (Long, 2017).

Nqwababa (2018) states that the leadership style which would be focused upon within the petrochemical organisation in question, is TL. The current leadership style identified within this petrochemical organisation is associated with "command and control" (Nqwababa, 2018). A culture of command and control tends to suppress entrepreneurship and worker motivation, with engagement levels as low as 15% (Jordaan, 2019: 62). The selected and identified leadership style to be pursued by the petrochemical organisation (TL) will be evaluated against the SL style amongst the millennial population.

Approximately 40% of resignations within the Group Technology (GT) section of the petrochemical organisation are within the millennial age group (the financial year 2017). Among the 15 categories of the various reasons given for resignations, approximately 30% were attributed to career scope; 1% being remuneration.

As stated by Nqwababa (2018), the current leadership style has been identified as a significant barrier. The contemporary leadership style being aspired to is TL. TL is considered to have its foundations in transactional leadership (TAL), according to Full Range Leadership Theory (FRLT) as described by Bass (1999:11). The TL style will be evaluated and compared to the results obtained regarding the SL style. This will be done to discover the preferred leadership style amongst the millennial employees within this organisation.

From the theory investigated, the following problem could be derived namely: *Is there a leadership style, with specific reference to servant leadership and full range leadership theory, which will be effective with millennial employees within the chosen petrochemical organisation?*

It is clear that the workforce will comprise a large proportion of millennial workers in the next decade. Therefore it is required that organisations provide effective leadership to enable optimal operation. This study is necessary to determine which leadership style would be optimal in a South African setting.

The TL style will be evaluated and compared with the results obtained regarding the SL. This will be done to discover the extent to which each leadership style was found to be motivational amongst the millennial employees within the targeted petrochemical organisation.

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study will be to assess the leadership style behaviour preference in the GT function of the selected petrochemical organisation. Although the specific objectives are stated in below, TL forms part of “Full Range Leadership Theory” (FRLT), as presented by (Avolio & Bass 1991). Leadership styles associated with FRLT, namely LF, TAL and TL, will therefore be assessed as a whole.

The specific objectives of this research are:

- To determine the extent to which the SL style facilitates motivation within the millennial cohort in the selected petrochemical organisation.
- To determine the extent to which the TL style facilitates motivation within the millennial cohort in the selected petrochemical organisation.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To which extent does each leadership style (servant and transformational) facilitate employee motivation for millennials inside the GT function within the petrochemical organisation?

Based on a study by Long (2017), SL is preferred amongst the millennial cohort. The petrochemical organisation in question is pursuing TL, which may prove to be less optimal/preferred amongst this group, compared to SL. This research study was conducted to understand the relationship between servant and TL styles with motivation and also determined the leadership style preferred in the selected petrochemical organisation. The research questions for this study therefore were:

RQ1: To what extent is the servant leadership style prevalent among millennial employees in the chosen petrochemical organisation, in terms of motivational facilitation?

RQ2: To what extent is the transformational leadership style prevalent among millennial employees in the chosen petrochemical organisation, in terms of motivational facilitation?

1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The focus of this study was millennial employees, focusing on leadership styles proven to be popular, based on the current literature available. This study will focus on transformational and SL, with emphasis on motivation as the 'effectiveness measure'.

The population of this study will consist of GT employees of the millennial generational cohort, based in South Africa only, not expatriates. It should be noted that GT primarily focuses on 'professional services' type of work, employing largely engineers and scientists employed in the role categories of Optimisation and Execution.

1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology describes the logic associated with research methods/techniques employed in conducting research, according to Welman *et al.*

(2001:2). Welman *et al.* (2010:5) describes the focus of research as “a means to expand scientific knowledge; and in the context of business research, to gain an understanding of human behaviour in a variety of contexts”. The research methodology employed for this research study was conducted in the following manner:

1.8.1 Literature study

To enable an enhanced understanding pertaining to the various aspects of this study, as reflected below, access to existing research and literature was required. The NWU online library was utilised to obtain seminal literature: the most recent literature, together with older sources which were found to be of significance. Google Scholar, accessed from the NWU online library, was the primary search engine utilised, providing access to various other databases: most commonly directing searches regarding the topics of interest to ScienceDirect. Peer-reviewed resources were accessed and utilised, which included articles and scientific journals, via the following databases:

- Boloka: NWU Institutional Repository
- Emerald: International Quality journals;
- ProQuest: International dissertations in full text.
- SAePublications: South African journals; and
- ScienceDirect;

The keywords presented at the beginning of the following chapter, together with the following key concepts have been utilised in the literature search:

- Generational cohort theory, with the focus on millennials;
- Employee motivation, with the focus on millennials;
- Leadership in general, which included concepts and frameworks;
- Full range leadership, with subsets being transformational, transactional, and passive (Laissez-Faire) leadership;
- Servant leadership; and
- Instruments commonly utilised to measure leadership style constructs.

1.8.2 Empirical study

1.8.2.1 Research design

The study was designed to be quantitative in nature. The theory formed the basis for this study, and it therefore implies that the research took a broadly deductive approach as discussed by Bryman *et al.* (2014:32) and Kumar (2011:103). An emphasis is placed on the testing of theories. Questionnaires were utilised to solicit feedback from the entire South African segment of GT. This information was then coded and statistically analysed, using a deductive approach. According to Harwell (2011:149), quantitative research methods have the benefit of being replicated, findings regarding research can be generalised, and these studies are interested in predictions. MacDonald and Headlam (2009:11) state that quantitative methods should be employed when generating primary data from a large number of sources to answer a research question. No interviews were conducted or interview-type questionnaire feedback requested.

1.8.2.2 Research instrumentation

Existing instruments, namely MLQ and SL-7 were utilised to determine a correlation between the two independent variables (servant and TL) and the dependent variable (employee motivation).

The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended and Likert scale questions, which were utilised to obtain the required data. The questionnaires attempted to determine the leadership factors (associated with the particular leadership styles) influencing motivation within the GT section of the targeted petrochemical organisation. The questionnaire was not sectionalised due to the demographic portion of the questionnaire only consisting of three questions.

The demographic portion of the questionnaire consisted of questions focused on the individual with nominal and ordinal variables. It was initially envisaged that the demographic portion of the survey would contain questions regarding age, gender, population group, highest qualification and last merit rating. Due to ethical considerations by the ethics committee, the removal of the majority of demographic

questions initially proposed for the survey, was requested. Age is a fundamental part of the study (i.e. millennials) and was therefore not eliminated and explained as such. Gender was also included in order to determine the diversity of the responding sample.

After the three demographic questions, the balance of the questionnaire consisted of interval variable questions, relating to factors contributing to desired leadership traits (Bryman, *et al.*, 2014:313). The data provided was then grouped within relevant categories and compared, to draw conclusions regarding the primary research questions, thematically.

1.8.2.3 Research population

The GT portion of the petrochemical organisation consists of 439 employees. The target population is documented to consist of 217 individuals at the point at which data was obtained from the senior HR consultant. The information provided consisted of the names and email addresses of the individuals identified as being part of the target population. The target population consisted of individuals from various role categories and respective departments, which included project managers; engineering managers; engineers; scientists; finance professionals; safety professionals; supply chain professionals; human resource professionals and administrative staff.

1.8.2.4 Data collection

There is a procedure in place within the petrochemical organisation in question to obtain consent for studies associated to social learning. Firstly, the motivation for this study was submitted to the Senior Manager: Learning and development, who then obtained permission from the vice president of the Human Resources (HR) division within the GT section of the petrochemical organisation. Finally, written consent was obtained from the Senior Manager: Learning and development, after which information was provided to the researcher by a senior HR consultant. The senior HR consultant became the 'point of entry' regarding the population/database utilised for this study.

Voluntary participation in the survey was sought from the target population, in which anonymity and confidentiality was guaranteed. This was done via email in which

details regarding the study was provided, together with ethical clearance details. At the end of the email, a hyperlink was created, which read “Yes, I would like to take the survey”. It was clarified that by following the hyperlink, the prospective participant had read and understood the information provided and it would constitute consent. The aforementioned hyperlink would then direct the participant to the online survey, which had been pre-populated by the researcher. An example of the survey request is presented in Appendix A.

An advanced survey licence was purchased from SurveyMonkey Inc. (2019), due to the free version only allowing for very short questionnaires, comprising ten questions or less. Detailed data is provided for each of the individual responses, whereby details regarding the time, IP address, and time taken to complete the survey is populated. The data is consolidated electronically and coded. The advantage of this specific tool being utilised, was that the firewall of the petrochemical organisation does not block this specific tool, as it is used extensively for internal surveys by the organisation as well.

An additional advantage of utilising SurveyMonkey Inc. (2019), was that settings embedded into the electronic tool utilised to administer the questionnaire, can be enabled to allow participants to electronically submit their questionnaires only if all the questions have been answered, therefore no ‘missing’ data will be reported.

1.8.2.5 Analysing and interpreting data

After the period had elapsed for respondents to participate, the data was coded and then presented to NWU’s SCS. IBM’s SPSS 2019 statistical package was employed by SCS (IBM, 2019). Upon completion of the statistical analysis, the researcher interpreted the feedback to form a generalised conclusion.

P-values were reported for completeness, but will not be interpreted, since a convenience sample, instead of a random sample was being used.

1.9 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The focus of this study was on leadership styles proven to be popular, based on the current literature available. This study focused on transformational and servant leadership. Motivation was the 'effectiveness measure' focused upon.

The population of this study consisted of GT employees based in South Africa only, not expatriates. It should be noted that GT primarily focuses on "professional services" type of work, employing largely engineers and scientists employed in the role categories of Optimisation and Execution. Feedback obtained from respondents may not be representative of the petrochemical industry as a whole, seeing that the majority of the population being surveyed can be considered knowledge workers.

Individual perspectives were sought, therefore preferences concerning leadership and its influence on levels of motivation may be a sensitive matter.

1.10 RESEARCH STUDY LAYOUT

Chapter 1: Introductory chapter

Chapter One presents the foundations on which the study is built, providing a detailed background and the rationale regarding why this study may add value to various stakeholders. The problem which is to be investigated/researched is expanded upon, explaining on details such as the objectives and study scope. The research method employed, its delimitations and finally the layout/format is explained.

Chapter 2: Literature review

Chapter Two presents a literature review which provides insight from existing literature, definitions of concepts focused upon. Insight into the millennial generational cohort and specific styles of leadership and its associated constructs. Seminal work regarding the respective concepts, older but relevant sources and more recent scholarly research contributions are consulted.

Chapter 3: Empirical research

Chapter Three expands on the method of research previously presented in chapter one and how it was practically utilised, the target population studied, the collection of data and methods employed. Finally, analysed data is presented and methods utilised is expanded upon, thereby enabling discussions regarding results obtained.

Chapter 4: Conclusions and recommendations

Chapter Four presents conclusions, based on discussions presented regarding results obtained in Chapter Three. Empirical findings are the basis on which the research conclusions are made, therefore recommendations can be made based on literature regarding proposed strategies to follow in future. Study objectives are evaluated to determine if it had been achieved. If objectives are found not to have been achieved, or that specific information is required to enhance problem insight, recommendations are made regarding future research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

A review of existing literature was conducted in an attempt to gain theoretical insight into concepts addressing the research questions. Existing literature was investigated in the form of journals published, printed books and articles. This aided the formulation of descriptive research questions, research instrument selection and academic support in answering various questions associated to this research. The motivational influence of various leadership styles on millennials in the Group Technology (GT) section of a petrochemical organisation was explored. Therefore, the following concepts was investigated to enable a good understanding of the questions being researched:

- Millennial generational cohort:
 - What are the characteristics and values of this group and why is it so entrenched?
 - Based on the question mentioned above: What motivates them?
- Leadership – The characteristics of leadership styles associated with FRLT (transformational, transactional and passive avoidant leadership) and SL. The primary focus was on TL.

The most recent similar study to the one anticipated, is that of Samuel Long:

- Exploring which leadership styles are active with millennial employees (Long, 2017).

This study consisted of a randomly selected sample of 158 millennial employees, working in an office setting in the United States of America (USA). The focus of this study was to determine how effective three proposed leadership styles (Ethical, Servant and Transformational) are, with the aim of determining which facilitates motivation (Long, 2017:2). Long (2017) states that insight is required for the sustainability of firms, due to the millennial cohort having exceeded the baby boomers as the most significant generational cohort in the USA (Long, 2017:2).

2.2 MILLENNIALS

There are currently three generations in the workplace, namely Baby boomers (1946 to 1964), Generation X (1965 to 1980) and Millennials (1981 to 2000) (Kilber, 2014:80; Reynolds *et al.*, 2008:20). There is no clear agreement among scholars regarding the periods constituting each generation (Heizman, 2019:42). The timeframes reflected represent the predominant descriptions of the generational cohorts researched, as reflected by Close (2015:6).

The latest delineation of the generations by the Pew Research Centre is presented in the figure below:

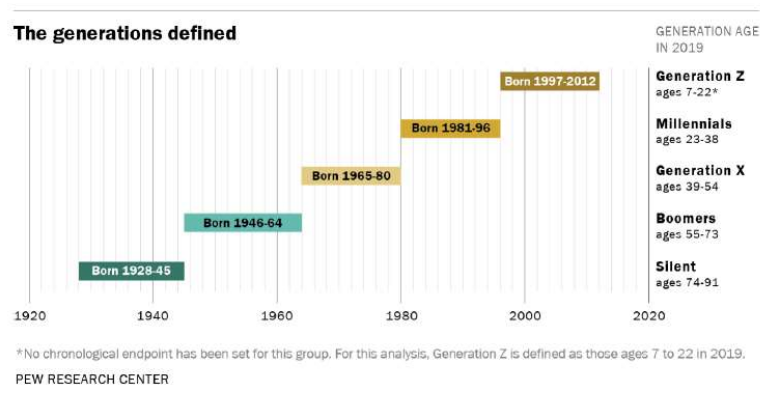


Figure 1: Generations defined

Source: Dimock, 2019:4

Dimock (2019:5) indicates that various analytical lines have been drawn between Millennials and the following generation, supported by good viewpoints for drawing a specific line a few years earlier or later than where they have. Dimock (2019:5) speculates that as more data is collected over the years, a clear, particular definition will materialise. (Dimock, 2019)

The age range (i.e. 23 to 38, when considering the period 1981 to 1996) presented for millennials in Figure 1 would include the same individuals for the range (1981 to 2000), seeing that 22-year-old individuals have not entered the workplace. This is stated with the consideration that individuals working for GT are predominantly knowledge workers, having had to complete a four-year degree. This can be verified within the empirical research section of the study.

Millennials represent approximately 35% of the population of South Africa, as presented in the mid-year population estimate of 29 July 2019. The South Africa population of millennials are approximated to be 58 775 022. The gender split was 50.74% male and 49.26% female (Statistics South Africa, 2019:10).

2.2.1 Generational cohort theory conceptualisation

Seminal work by Karl Mannheim, a European sociologist, created the platform for modern generational theory. The Problem of Generations, an essay written by Mannheim in 1927, as cited by Bevan-Dye (2016:8), proposed that generational location depended on what is termed “biological rhythm of human life” (Bevan-Dye, 2016). Persons born within a shared location in history, experiencing common historical events, its influence and the corresponding reaction to specific events, is dependent on the individuals’ phase of life, in addition to their social positioning (associated to the economic and power structure of a specific society) and space location (geographic area). Generational cohorts are therefore not for from a biological perspective, but rather by processes associated to history and sociology (Milkman, 2017).

Phase of life

Emphasis was placed on the fact that older cohorts may experience exactly the same historical events, but only historical occurrences in the person’s formative years add towards a generational consciousness, stating that “early impressions coalesce into a natural view of the world”. There is a definitive effect of shared experiences during youth or the adolescent years of a particular generation. Common/similar life experiences, as well as prevalent social developments experienced throughout individuals’ developmental years contribute towards shaping a specific cohort’s outlook towards family, gender roles, an establishment, risk, culture, values, and the like (Milkman, 2017).

Social location

Mannheim (1952 [1927]:289, 291), as cited by Bevan-Dye (2016:8), describes social location as “certain individuals’ hold in the economic and power structure of a given society” and access to intellectual material. Upward social class mobility is enabled

with tertiary education, due to education correlating positively with professional occupations and an increased salary. University students represent a particular form of generational consciousness within the formative years of each generational cohort. South Africa is no different. Although unemployment amongst graduates is high, a tertiary qualification still renders higher earning potential and upward social class mobility. Tertiary-qualified individuals have a high probability of manifesting as opinion leaders and trendsetters among peers within a particular society, taking a leading role in social movements and inducing social change. (Bevan-Dye, 2016)

Space location

An important theme presented by Mannheim (as cited by Bevan-Dye, 2016:10), referred to as location in time or “the phenomenon of the stratification of experience” in delineating generational cohorts. The impact of historical events and societal tendencies on the creation of a generational consciousness are being referred to. Historical occurrences and social trends which have influenced individuals of generational cohorts in their developmental years include traumatic events such as disease and wars, economic conditions and/or political ideology changes, social turmoil, technological developments, music preferences (Zemke *et al.*, 2013), social movements, the media, popular culture and icons (Twenge *et al.*, 2010:1120), and parenting methods (Debevec *et al.*, 2013:21). People’s nostalgia towards popular culture (i.e. music, actors and fashion) throughout their developmental periods has a profound effect on generational dissimilarities. (Bevan-Dye, 2016)

2.2.2 Who are these Millennials?

Close (2015:48-51) states that Millennials are generally referred to by various names, which include the Net generation, Generation Y, the Google generation and Digital Natives. Twenge and Campbell (2008:862) found that members of this cohort exhibit higher confidence; depression; anxiety; and narcissism - also lesser need for individual social approval; increased external locus of control; and women with more agentic traits (Twenge and Campbell, 2008). Inelmen, Zeytinoglu and Uygur (as cited in Close, 2015:48-51) compared millennials to previous generations, which found that millennials are:

- Noticeably dissimilar from prior generations in terms of values such as personal ambitions and goals, increased self-confidence, a need to express their opinions and a low tolerance for boredom.
- Expectant of greater remunerations, more flexible schedules at work, prospects for and a steady rate of advancement as well as recognition from the organisation and supervisor.

2.2.3 Experiences during formative years

Experiences which shaped the millennial group includes exposure to technology, global historic events and economic fluctuation, child-centric smaller families,

Close (2015:37) quotes Jansen (1975) regarding his concluding description of a generational cohort:

“A generation is the concrete social body of perspectives developed by coevals sharing the same circumstances, or the social form in which perspectives, developed by coevals sharing the same circumstances, exist.”

Bevan-Dye (2016:13) recognises the major force to have moulded the millennial cohort (based on the “space location” metric proposed by Mannheim), is growing up in the digital age and its associated connectivity, along with global twenty-four-hour television consumption capability, creating a “global village” outcome. Global generational cohorts are thus developing, with the millennial cohort being prominent (Bevan-Dye, 2016).

2.2.3.1 Exposure to technology

Millennials have grown up using technology and are exceptionally tech savvy, with access to mobile phones and the internet (Heizman, 2019:41). This group have constantly been exposed to information/communication technology and the resulting globalised world (Close, 2015:48). Bevan-Dye (2016:13) states that the internet has enabled greater collaboration, content sharing; global interactivity and access to vast amounts of information, making them the most informed group in history. Communication, entertainment, information and task management on the move and across geographical boundaries, has become the norm (Bevan-Dye, 2016).

Cogin (2012) states that millennials have been socialised in a digital world, connected to digitally-streamed entertainment, information, and contacts, continuously. Instant messaging is favoured, including e-mails and text messaging. This group is more comfortable with forwarding a quick digital message or e-mail, than with face-to-face or telephonic conversations. Social skills are therefore not optimally developed amongst this generation. Close (2015:48) postulates that this constant technological stimulation is the origin of low thresholds associated to boredom, particularly at work (Close, 2015).

2.2.3.2 Parenting style experienced

Parry *et al.* (as cited by Close, 2015:49) states that responsible parenting was the order of the day during the period of millennials' birth and the child being the centre of the family during this period, resulting in a self-confident generation of youths (Holt, 2012:81). Cogin (2012) states that this cohort was conceived during a period in which abortions and contraceptives had come to be commonly available, and therefore millennials were most likely "planned children". Greater resources were therefore available to spend on them, due to families having fewer children.

'Helicopter parents' was the term coined to describe the parents of this cohort in a parenting handbook in 2010 (Odenweller *et al.*, 2014:408). These parents are described as having the tendency to hover around their offspring, attempting to watch over their social activities and education (Odenweller *et al.*, 2014:408). Continued involvement is maintained throughout their children's tertiary training and employment. These experiences during their formative years translated into millennials being considered emotionally needy adults, lacking focus and direction. (Odenweller *et al.*, 2014)

Millennials grew up being told by their parents and teachers that they could achieve anything. This concept has thus manifested itself into millennials' thinking, and they believe it. Consequently, this group is socially active, confident, continually voicing opinions and believing that they can make a difference (Cogin, 2012).

2.2.3.3 Intersectionality

In an analysis of four of the largest social movements experienced in the recent history of the USA, Milkman (2017:3) postulates that millennials are a new political generation. In her view, all of these have occurred post 2008, after the financial crisis (Milkman, 2017:5). Drawing on theories by Mannheim, the study reflects on the influence of technology associated to the aforementioned social movements, against the backdrop of this crisis. Eloquently describing the millennial as “the graduate with no future”, millennials are also described as “the most racially and ethnically diverse generation” to date (Milkman, 2017). She describes society in its current state, as experienced by millennials, as being “post racial”. Milkman (2017:11) describes this cohort as being committed to the concept of intersectionality (i.e. aimed at inequality relating to class, sex, race and the like). This concept is confirmed by Twenge and Campbell (2008), stating that millennials are culturally tolerant and less prone to bias (racial and sexual) and that they value social commitment. Expressions of 'unmet promises' and betrayal by earlier generations pertaining to the global economic and environmental state of affairs, is expressed by this cohort globally, making reference to radicalization. Specific reference is made to the 'Arab spring' and 'Occupy Wall Street' movements (Milkman, 2017).

South Africa is no stranger to protest movements by the millennial cohort and has the ability to organise in an instant, as reflected in the #FeesMustFall campaign (Fubu, 2017:17).

2.2.3.4 Economic fluctuations and student debt

Close (2015:56) makes reference to the fact that millennials grew up during a period of economic stability, but started working during a period of elevated levels of youth unemployment. With this said, the economy has become extremely “knowledge-driven”, therefore making a tertiary qualification very relevant. With the increased demand, came a surge in tuition fees, therefore necessitating student loans (Bevan-Dye, 2016:15). Student loans create a situation in which this cohort enters the workplace with a great financial burden, or even worse, unemployment (Milkman, 2017:10).

2.2.4 Characteristics of millennials at work

Millennials have been experiencing a range of unique contexts (compared to older generational cohorts), which include educational experiences, economic fluctuations, social value adjustments and political change (Thompson & Gregory, 2012: 238). Early life experiences during their formative years greatly influence millennials' traits and preferences in the workplace. It is believed that these characteristics will persist, therefore organisations and its leadership are required to adapt in order to enable them to appeal to this cohort. Once employed, motivation and retention become the focus for managers (Thompson & Gregory, 2012: 238).

Daniels and Davids (2019:220) contend that millennial job satisfaction, which enables retention, has the ability to enhance firms' competitiveness. In their study, focused on chartered accountants, Daniels and Davids (2019) found that salaries, flexibility, professional growth, hours of work, challenging and meaningful work to be critically important to the millennial cohort. Themes regarding specific traits and preferences, as proposed by Marais (2013:43), associated to this cohort will greatly influence them in the workplace and are explored from 2.2.4.1 to 2.2.4.4 below.

Millennials want challenging and meaningful work, employing a style of work which is characterised by multitasking, taking on accountability, working autonomously, and flexibility (Aruna & Anitha, 2015; Kornelsen, 2019). They have a great appetite for work associated to problem solving and the associated pressure, while collaborating in teams. Employees take along all their positive skills and traits to the workplace. (Aruna & Anitha, 2015:97)

Regarding intrinsic values, specifically associated to results-oriented, interesting work, Twenge *et al.* (2010:1117) arrive at a completely different deduction than previous commentators, stating that millennials do not have stronger intrinsic values than previous generations (Twenge *et al.*, 2010).

2.2.4.1 Work flexibility

In a study regarding the retention of millennial engineers, Marais *et al.* (2017:77), citing Gilbert (2011), state that flexibility is greatly valued by the millennial cohort, prioritising time for personal experiences and family. Flexibility has been identified as an enhanced factor of motivation (Marais *et al.*, 2017). Johnson (2015:5) states that this

cohort feels that technology simplifies their lives, seeing that it facilitates a work-life balance and enables them to work remotely (Ahmed *et al.*, 2013; Johnson 2015). They do not consider there to be a distinction between private activities and work, everything is merged, and therefore Johnson (2015:5) coins the term “Technological Equilibrium”. They can easily attend to work-related emails on a Saturday evening, while out with their friends. Madara *et al.* (2018:2) propose that organisations need to adjust policies to provide the required flexibility, which would contribute to an optimal work-life balance (Madara *et al.*, 2018). Ahmed *et al.* (2013:5) contend that the yearning for flexibility and autonomy, embracing the concept of “working to live” originates from limited time with their fathers, due to the latter’s lack of work flexibility (Ahmed *et al.*, 2013).

2.2.4.2 Career development and feedback

Due to having very child-centric parents with high expectations, accompanied by feedback and praise, millennials expect a steady advancement of their careers, accompanied by supervisory and organisational recognition (Close, 2015:48; Ahmed *et al.*, 2013:5). The opportunity to pursue personal growth is considered to be a vital motivational factor for millennial employees (Marais, 2017).

Ahmed *et al.*, (2013:5) make reference to research indicating that millennials value opportunities related to career development, irrespective of it involving a promotion or not. Lateral career moves are also valued by this group, allowing them to acquire new competencies and skills. Developmental exposure or training are considered as stepping stones to advancement. Care should be taken in workplaces having alternative views on training, to recognise that training and developmental exposure are greatly valued by millennials and contribute toward employee engagement (Ahmed *et al.*, 2013:5).

Millennial workers often repeatedly request feedback, due to them taking ownership for their personal professional growth and identifying blind spots regarding their growth, which ensures that they are not falling behind. A direct style of communication, along with regular reassurance and acknowledgement of their efforts are preferred. This can be attributed to their upbringing and the influence of their parents, teachers and authority figures (Marais, 2017).

2.2.4.3 Ethical focus

Corporate social responsibility is becoming a retention mechanism for millennial workers, with this cohort seeking out companies promoting corporate social responsibility (Aruna & Anitha, 2015:97; Supanti and Butcher, 2019). Corporates are being kept honest and millennials ensure that businesses are held accountable (Fubu, 2017:17).

Ahmed *et al.*, (2013:5) suggest that millennials are much more idealistic than cohorts before them. This group has a powerful moral compass, yearning to be employed by institutions found to be socially alert, ethical and focused on employee wellbeing, specifically in a “Western context”. Millennials are not focused on personal objectives, but rather on social and organisational objectives. Millennials are reported to utilise an ethical decision-making process referred to as “distributive justice”: the wellbeing of society and the organisation over personal achievement (Ahmed *et al.*, 2013).

It should be noted that Twenge *et al.* (2010:1117) arrive at a completely different deduction than previous commentators regarding altruistic workplace values and social values, stating that millennials do not have stronger altruistic or social values than previous generations (Twenge *et al.*, 2010).

2.2.5 Millennials from a South African viewpoint

Limited research is available regarding generational differences in a South African context. HIV prevalence in South Africa contributes towards a big generational gap, resulting in a reduced life expectancy. This may prove to be a problem during the period in which the Baby boomers leave the workplace, due to the lack of specific skills. Extreme levels of unemployment creates a situation in which a skills shortage will develop. If recessionary retrenchments are not managed responsibly, this situation may be exacerbated. (Martins & Martins, 2014:129)

Deal *et al.* (2010), as cited by (Close, 2015:64) states the South Africa “millennials” are different from other countries in terms of delineation due to the country’s legacy of apartheid. They expand by stating the while the United Kingdom and the United States

of America considers a delineation of the millennial generation being those born between 1980 and 2000, the South African cohort is split in two during this period.

Deal (cited by Close, 2015:67) states that within the South African context, those born between 1981 and 1993 are considered to be part of the “Transition Generation”. Individuals born in the period 1994 to 2000 are called the “Born-free” generation. For the period 1948 to 1994, individuals were affected differently by the same political and social national events. Black and white individuals may have been born during the same time, but have completely different views or outlooks (Close, 2015:64).

Bevan-Dye (2016:15) states that the South African millennial cohort was the first to be raised in the post-apartheid era, with many being the first in their families to attend multi-racial schools and free to mix with peers from different races. Since the elections in 1994, millennials across racial lines have had the same options open to them regarding education, career and wealth-creation prospects, than those accessible to previous generations (Bevan-Dye, 2016).

Millennials in South Africa, as stated by Martins and Martins (2014:131), are affected by a job market with great barriers to entry and rising unemployment, among other social ills, which generate a disaffected and angry cohort. Millennials entering the workforce are highly educated and therefore more opinionated, sophisticated and technologically savvy; they are highly achievement-oriented, highly energised within a team structure and have business sustainability at the top of their minds.

Bringing the characteristics mentioned above to the table can be crucial for an organisation's success (Martins & Martins, 2014). Jonck *et al.* (2017:6) found that there is a difference in terms of work values amongst the different generational cohorts within the South African work setting. Al-Asfour and Lettau (2014:60) state that the transfer of crucial information is inhibited by generational differences within organizations, which can be attributed to differences in the values, attitudes, and beliefs of each generation (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014).

Masibigiri and Nienaber, (2011:1) argue that retention of talent in South African firms, equally so internationally, is difficult due to the struggle for talent, skills shortages, employee mobility and the impending Baby boomer retirements (Masibigiri & Nienaber, 2011).

2.2.6 Millennial employee motivation

In a study by Heyns and Kerr (2018:8), millennials scored the highest on average for intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and the lowest for “amotivation”, compared to the other two generational cohorts in a South African firm (Heyns and Kerr, 2018).

Chiniara and Bentein (2016:124) state that by attending to simple psychological requirements as defined by Ryan and Deci (2000), a leader’s attentive focus on followers’ development can contribute towards fulfilment, if they employ the “autonomous motivational framework” of Self-Determination Theory (SDT). This may motivate employees in a distinctive manner, proposing a possible improvement in task performance, organizational citizenship behaviours, or both (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016)

2.2.7 Leading the millennial cohort

Scholars agree, as cited by Thompson and Gregory (2012: 237), that older generational cohorts should exhibit a more evident appreciation of the total political, social, economic, and educational circumstances of the millennial generation (Thompson and Gregory, 2012:237). This makes it important to gain insight into which leadership styles enable motivation for employees from the millennial cohort (Long, 2017:2).

Literature pertaining to the leadership preference of millennial employees is limited (Amayah & Gedro, 2014). Vecchiotti (2018:43) states that the millennial workforce displays characteristics mainly associated with styles such as social learning, transformational, and SL (Vecchiotti, 2018).

2.3 LEADERSHIP

Leadership is an extensively researched subject (Landis *et al.*, 2014:98). Research regarding leadership, spanning over more than a decade, has provided convincing proof that a firm's success is dependent upon its managers' leadership (Behrendt,

2017:229; Landis *et al.*, 2014:98). The definition of leadership is elusive, given that it is such a multi-faceted topic (Woods and West, 2014:380). Bass (1990:11) notes that:

“There are almost as many different definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept.” (Bass, 1990)

Gandolfi and Stone (2018:261) state that leadership research has grown to be a prominent scholarly and professional quest, in a dynamically complex and globalised world. Organisational complexity, primarily with regard to technology and employee behaviour, was identified almost five decades earlier by Maccoby (1979), as cited by Landis *et al.* (2014), calling for a “higher level” of leadership. Although there may have been a wealth of scientific and anecdotal work associated to leadership, various questions related to leadership are unanswered. In a conceptual study, Gandolfi and Stone (2018) attempt to provide clarity and thereby demystify the concepts of leadership, leadership styles and propose attributes critical to effective leadership. Gandolfi and Stone (2018:261), after providing examples of systemic problems related to leadership, further state that no institution is invulnerable to poor leadership. How a leader utilises their repertoire of leadership styles has a profound effect on stakeholders. Poor leadership affects all stakeholders, both within and external to organisations, which presents the reality that leadership is in a global crisis (Gandolfi and Stone, 2018).

Gandolfi (2016) as cited by Gandolfi and Stone (2018:263), asserts that combining five elements of leadership, provides a powerful working definition of the concept. The elements are presented as follows:

- One or more leaders should exist;
- There should be followers associated to the leadership;
- Leadership must be focused on action;
- A genuine course of action should exist;
- Leadership must be associated with objectives and goals.

A definition was then sought and accepted by Gandolfi and Stone (2018:263), based on the criteria identified.

“A leader is one or more people who selects, equips, trains, and influences one or more follower(s) who have diverse gifts, abilities, and skills and focuses the follower(s) to the organization’s mission and objectives causing the follower(s) to willingly and enthusiastically expend spiritual, emotional, and physical energy in a concerted coordinated effort to achieve the organizational mission and objectives.”

Winston and Patterson, (2006:7), as cited by (Gandolfi & Stone 2018:263).

Leadership theories have evolved over time, from Great Man theory which posited that leaders are “born, not made”, to the most modern theories which consider that persons, based on traits and behavioural patterns, can be taught to be leaders. Upon evaluation of the evolution of leadership theories, Landis *et al.* (2014:98) concluded that all the various theories which have been developed over the years provide a roadmap for leaders today. It is also necessary to advance the significance of gaining and applying admirable leadership skills (Landis *et al.*, 2014).

2.3.1 Leadership theories

Laureani and Antony (2019:59) proposed that the majority of leadership literature could be aligned into five theories of leadership, namely:

- Behavioural outlook: two distinct groups, focused on the behaviour of the leader, being either task or people-oriented. The leadership styles are limited within the following: Dictator, Autocratic, Participative and LF.
- Contingency outlook: leadership styles are adapted to the situation at hand, therefore being effective leaders. Amidst these theories, “path–goal” theory (with origins in expectancy theory of motivation (Isaac *et al.*, 2001)) has consistently remained popular for a long period. It has the distinction of having presented the idea of SL – proposing that leaders serve followers by having an appreciation for their needs and facilitating their performance in the workplace (Laureani & Antony, 2019:60 citing Spears & Lawrence, 2002). The path–goal leadership theory sponsors the following styles of leadership: Directive, Supportive, Participative and Achievement-orientated.
- Competency outlook: this attempts to identify the characteristics of effective leaders. Iles *et al.* (2004:212) presented the following traits as being the most

important: conscientiousness, intelligence, emotional stability, extroversion, agreeableness, and openness to experience.

- Transformational outlook – a vision is formed and communicated by the leader.
- Implicit leadership outlook - the significance of leadership is magnified.

The four leadership theories which have been mentioned are premised on the fundamental assumption that leaders have the ability to make a differential contribution within an institution. On the contrary, the last leadership theory (implicit), posits that leadership importance is exaggerated, due to it originating in the mortal need for control (Laureani & Antony, 2019).

2.3.2 Leadership style

Lewin *et al.* (1939) presented the notion that leaders could be made and were not necessarily just born. Leadership styles, namely Democratic, Autocratic, and *Laissez-faire*. Categorizing these styles set the framework for future styles of leadership (Gandolfi & Stone, 2018). Alternative leadership styles started concentrating on the leader/follower affiliation and how the actions of each would affect the other (Gandolfi and Stone, 2018).

Armandi *et al.* (2003) note that leadership is focused on influencing a group of individuals within the direction of a chosen shared objective. Leadership is also highly intentional. Rooke and Torbert (2005) state that contrasts among leaders are not decided by their philosophy of leadership, personality, or indeed management style. Rather, it has got to do with how they examine and interpret their environment and how those same interpretations impact the responses that leaders have under different circumstances. This requires a great degree of self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and natural setting both within and external to the organisation (Rooke & Torbert, 2005).

McDermott, Kidney and Surge (as cited by Gandolfi and Stone, 2018:263) state that leadership effectiveness, from the follower's point of view, is closely related to the drive reflected by the leader, their ability to inspire and the prioritisation of needs in order to produce a sense of stability and calm for individuals being led (McDermott, Kidney &

Surge, 2013). This points directly to the association between leader and follower as laid out by Winston and Patterson (2006), as cited by (Gandolfi & Stone, 2018).

With this insight regarding the development of leadership styles, Gandolfi and Stone (2018:263) defined a leadership style as follows:

“An intentional means by which a leader influences a group of people in an organization to a widely understood future state that is different from the present one.”

2.3.3 Positive forms of leadership

During the 1970s, a paradigm shift towards "positive forms" of leadership was experienced, away from leadership theories considered to be classical or traditional (Hoch, 2018:504). Hoch *et al.* (2018:502) states that recent public corporate scandals are related to the amplified attention on positive leadership, accentuating ethical and moral leader behaviour (Hoch *et al.*, 2018).

Malinga (2018:53) concluded, and presented the following description of positive leadership:

“Positive leadership is an approach towards leadership that is characterised by the demonstration of leadership traits such as optimism and a ‘can-do’ mind-set, altruism, an ethical orientation, and motivational characteristics, as well as leadership behaviours that entail the creation of a positive working environment, the development of positive relationships, a focus on results, and positive communication with followers. These traits and behaviours in turn result in positive leadership outcomes such as enhanced overall productivity and performance levels, improved organisational citizenship behaviour, and enhanced follower well-being.”

Two forms, which are considered to be positive forms of leadership are explored within this study (Blanch *et al.*, 2016:170), namely:

- Transformational leadership, as part of FRLT ; and
- Servant leadership.

A specific focus is placed on values and attitudes in the workplace. This may significantly affect the manager's ability to motivate and influence millennials to meet organisational objectives (Judge & Piccolo, 2004:755).

2.3.4 Full Range Leadership Theory (FRLT)

Bass (1985), as cited by Antonakis *et al.* (2003:264), expanded on the theory of TL, originally proposed by Burns in 1978, which was intended to define an ideal condition between political leaders and their followers (Hoch, 2018:504). Bass (1985), as cited by Antonakis *et al.* (2003:264) contended that prevailing theories of the time, associated to leadership largely concentrated on followers' "goal and role clarification" and the manner in which leaders incentivised or approved follower conduct.

TAL, as a leadership form, was restricted to prompting merely simple exchanges with the associated followers. A paradigm shift was suggested by Bass, specifically from an organisational point of view, in order to move away from self-regard for the greater good, to achieve optimal organisational performance. TL, as the theory was named, was regarded as the upper end of a **continuum**, *comprising* transformational and TAL. The aforementioned styles comprised of four and two factors respectively. Currently being referred to as FRLT (as a whole), *comprising* three topologies and 9 leadership factors, **5** of which is transformational, **3** transactional and **1** non transactional *laissez-faire*. (Antonakis *et al.*, 2003)

Referring to the leadership continuum mentioned above, Bass and Avolio (1993) contended that it is not always possible to be only transformational. Respective circumstances experienced would dictate that transactional means be utilised, as reflected in Figure 2. The TAL style can be considered to be an exchange, in which focus is placed on a contractual affiliation and pledge amongst the leader and employee (Bass and Avolio, 1993). The leadership exchange is intended to grow in order to ultimately be primarily transformational in nature.

TL is considered to have its foundations in TAL, according to FRLT, as described by Bass (1999:11).

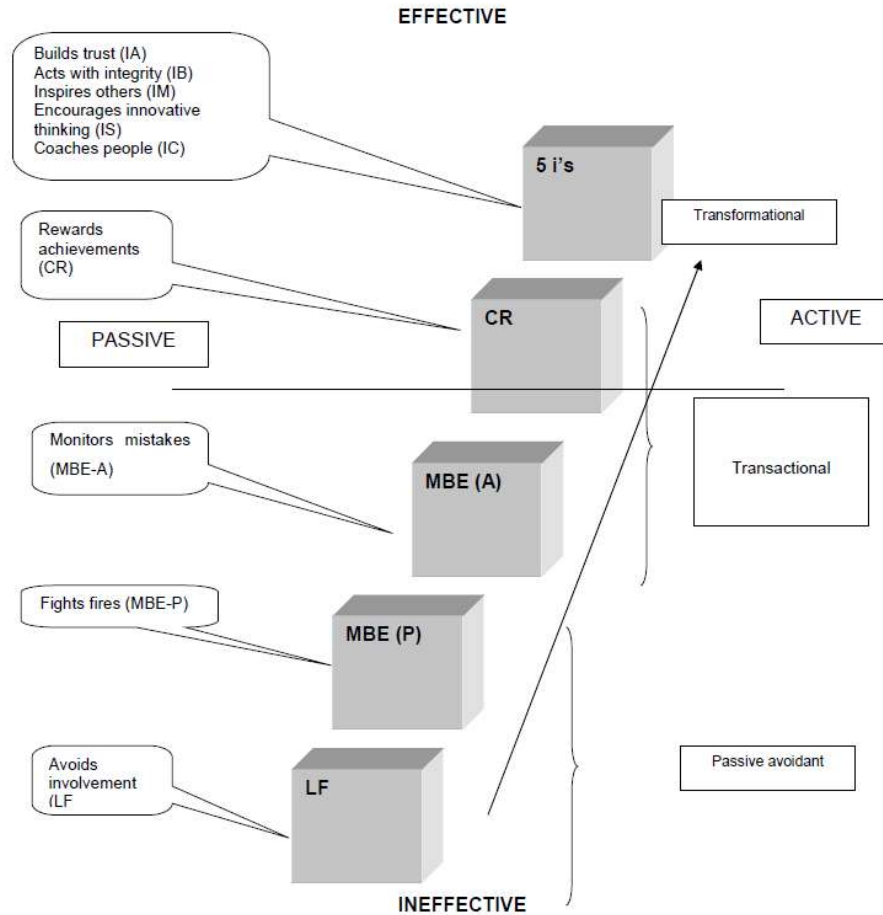


Figure 2: The full range leadership model

Source: Avolio and Bass (2008:4)

2.3.5 Transformational Leadership

Burns (1978), a political scientist, leadership expert and historian presented TL to define the ideal condition between political leaders and their followers (Hoch, 2018:504; Makka, 2019:86). Bass, who expanded upon the work by Burns (1978), contends that values are central to transformational leaders, encouraging followers to concentrate on the communal needs, instead of their own self-interest (Makka, 2019: 86). Yukl (1999:286) expands, stating that the respect, trust, admiration and loyalty prompted by TL practitioners motivate their followers to provide more than is required. Bass (1990) presented four faces of a transformational leader, namely, personal charisma, the capacity to inspire and motivate followers, encourages problem-solving and is personally attentive to employees (Makka, 2019:86). Zhu *et al.* (2018:224)

found that TL has remained at the core of leadership research within the period 1990 to 2017 (Zhu *et al.*, 2018).

Burns (1978) describes leaders practicing TL as change agents, collaboratively carving a vision for the institution or localised group, in an inspirational manner. Transactional leadership, considered to be on the opposing end of the continuum, assisting in the drive to ensure efficiency in achieving organisational goals (Goodwin, Wofford, and Whittington, 2001), as cited by Laureani and Antony (2019:61). For a period in the past, a leadership style very closely related to TL, charismatic leadership, was considered to be synonymous with TL, but eventually it was identified as being a separate perspective to leadership, which eventually establish itself by utilising referent power over followers Barbuto, (1997) cited by Laureani and Antony, 2019).

Due to the appealing nature of TL, associated literature had been generated in abundance, spanning a wide variety of industries over the last three decades since inception. TL was primarily conducted in a military setting upon inception; later governmental institutions, health care settings, education and business research associated to TL was extensively conducted. (Giddens, 2018:118)

Wang, Oh, Courtright, and Colbert (2011), as cited by Giddens (2018:118), conducted a meta-analysis *comprising* 113 primary studies published over a twenty five year period. With these studies focusing on TL and the performance of followers, the following summarises the three primary findings:

- TL is positively related to individual performance, with a stronger relationship with contextual than task performance;
- TL is positively related to performance among teams and organisations; and
- TL enhances team and organizational performance to a larger extent than TAL, but this is does not hold true for individual performance according to Wang *et al.* (2011), as cited by Giddens (2018:118). An association between TL and lower workplace stress amongst workers, which may be attributed to a perception of them having psychosocial resources which are accessible (Schmidt *et al.*, 2014, as cited by Giddens, 2018:118)

TL encompasses four dimensions (Laureani and Antony, 2019:66; Giddens, 2018:118), which are described as follows (2.3.5.1 to 2.3.5.4):

2.3.5.1 Idealised influence

The leader practicing the TL style is regarded as being charismatic, which is considered to be “*the degree to which the leader behaves in admirable ways that cause followers to identify with the leader*”, states Laureani and Antony (2019:66). Idealised influence is utilised in order to grow the level of optimism, pride, respect, admiration, trust and confidence amongst the workforce. High expectations for the institution is displayed by the leader, consistently displaying alignment and commitment regarding a shared organizational vision and purpose, with a clearly expressed emphasis on others’ needs. The transformational leader exhibits desirable behaviours, associated to ethical and moral conduct, passion and commitment. The leader therefore acts as a role model (Allen *et al.*, 2016). The transformational leader’s conduct is such that it is identified with by followers, and therefore striving to emulate the leader. Two aspects associated to idealized influence, which is discussed below (Giddens, 2018:118):

- ***Idealised attributes***

Attributed (idealised) influence speaks to the leader’s socialised charisma, whether power and confidence is perceived to be associated to the leader, and whether ethics and higher-order ideals are perceived to be focused upon by the leader (Antonakis *et al.*, 2003:264). IA associates with motivating followers by developing a strong sense of organisational commitment towards a shared vision and strategy within them. Followers will therefore be comfortable with learning and development, without concerns regarding ridicule or judgement (Antonakis *et al.*, 2003:264).

- ***Idealised behaviour***

Behaviour which is associated to idealised influence, makes reference to the charismatic leaders’ ability to express actions which are focussed on a sense of mission, beliefs and values (Antonakis *et al.*, 2003:264). These leaders are identifiable Employees are able to identify with these leaders due to the values and behaviour they display. This is supplemented by extraordinary standards moral and ethics (Hellriegel and Slocum, 2010; as cited by Mathebula, 2016:19). Followers have confidence and admiration for leaders, whom encourages employee engagement. Followers eagerly extend themselves due

to the intrinsic rewards they obtain as opposed to extrinsic rewards associated to transactional leaders (Mathebula, 2016:19)

2.3.5.2 Inspirational motivation

Inspirational motivation (IM) refers to “the degree to which the leader articulates a vision that is appealing and inspiring to followers”, according to Laureani and Antony (2019:66). They are confident about the future, projecting an idyllic vision and communicate with enthusiasm to employees that the vision is achievable and that the future is better than the current reality (Antonakis *et al.*, 2003:264). The leader practicing the TL style, utilises IM to articulate a vision which is clear to the organization large, which can be understood and devotedly supported. Leaders engage, motivate, and persuade followers to envision and work toward “attractive future states” (Bass & Riggio, 2006; as cited by Giddens, 2018:118)

2.3.5.3 Intellectual stimulation

Intellectual stimulation (IS) refers to “the degree to which the leader challenges assumptions, takes risks, and solicits followers’ ideas” (Laureani & Antony, 2019:66). IS focuses on to leaders’ actions, calling on followers’ intellectual abilities by stimulating them to find solutions by thinking creatively about difficult difficulties (Antonakis *et al.*, 2003:264). The leader practicing the TL style encourages engagement with and amongst followers to challenge and question assumptions, approaching old challenges in new ways. The leader is ready to take risks and eliminate ineffective practices (Giddens, 2018:118).

2.3.5.4 Individual consideration

Individualised consideration (IC) is “the degree to which the leader attends to each follower’s needs and acts as a mentor or coach”, according to (Judge and Piccolo, 2004:755). The leader practicing the TL style, provides IC to each follower, emphasising achievement and growth. Individual needs and associated differences are identified and accepted. A variety of skills (including feedback, encouragement, listening, mentoring, empathy, advising, and coaching) are utilised to enable a supporting locale for success (Allen *et al.*, (2016) cited by Giddens, 2018:118).

Such an empowering environment supports the workforce to realise their full potential. This enables them to execute tasks successfully, enabling positive self-esteem and enhanced self-efficacy (Doody & Doody, 2012; as cited by Giddens, 2018:118)

2.3.6 Transactional leadership

TAL is premised on an “exchange process” grounded on the “fulfilment of contractual obligations” and is generally symbolised as the setting of objectives, then checking and controlling results. TAL is theorised to consist of 3 first-order aspects (Antonakis *et al.*, 2003:265):

- ***Contingent reward leadership*** - (*i.e., constructive transactions*)
CR is focused on transactions which are constructive, aligned with behaviours associated with role clarification, alignment of task associated requirements and providing followers with psychological or material rewards contingent on contractual obligation fulfilment;
- ***Management-by-exception active*** - (*i.e., active corrective transactions*)
MBEA - Active attentiveness of the leader, which is primarily focused on ensuring that criterions are fulfilled; and
- ***Management-by-exception passive*** (*i.e., passive corrective transactions*)
MBEP - Interventions only occur after nonconformity or mistakes had already occurred. (Antonakis *et al.*, 2003:265)

2.3.7 Passive avoidant leadership

Laissez-faire (LF) leadership is regarded as being representative of leadership absence/avoidance. These leaders avoid making decisions, hesitant to act, and absent when required. LF leadership may look like MBEP leadership, but scholars argue that LF leadership, due to leadership absence (TL or TAL), must be treated independently from the other transactional dimensions (Avolio, 1999; Bass, 1998; as cited by (Judge and Piccolo, 2004:756). Antonakis *et al.*, (2003:265) contends that it should be considered to be active, because the leader “chooses” to avoid taking action. The LF component is deemed to be passive and the most ineffective leadership form. (Antonakis *et al.*, 2003:265)

According to FRLT, as reflected in Figure 1, is the LF leadership, or rather the lack of leadership? It reflects that these leaders avoid involvement.

2.3.8 The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)

Antonakis *et al.* (2003:262) cites various commentators in stating that the MLQ is the most broadly utilised instrument employed to assess the nine components associated with the FRLT. The version of the MLQ, named “Form 5X”, was adapted from older versions, *comprising* 45 questions. Thirty six of questions represent the nine factors of previously described. (Antonakis *et al.*, 2003)

The MLQ instrument is published by Avolio and Bass (2004) and can be obtained via mindgarden.com. The MLQ instrument was developed by means of 81 seminal studies regarding TL and TAL (Antonakis *et al.*, 2003:264). This instrument has been utilised extensively in research associated to TL and TAL in the USA, along with 22 other countries, making it a suitable instrument for this study (Dimitrov & Darova, 2016).

The MLQ instrument has been expansively interrogated and validated by means of a 7,000 respondent sample. (Dimitrov & Darova, 2016). In a study by (Antonakis *et al.*, 2003) pertaining to the MLQ, consisting of 2279 pooled male and 1089 pooled female raters, support was found pertaining to reliability and validity for the leadership model proposed by Avolio and Bass, i.e. MLQ (Antonakis *et al.*, 2003:261).

2.3.9 Servant leadership

Eva *et al.*, (2019:114) states that the authoritative statement by Greenleaf (1977), often quoted and regarded as the definition of servant leadership.

“The Servant-Leader is servant first ... It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead.”

Eva *et al.*, (2019:114) contends that this unclear definition allows for misinterpretation and that poor conceptualisation makes it almost impossible to build meaningful theoretical rationale (Eva *et al.*, 2019). The following definition is proposed by them (Eva *et al.*, 2019):

“Servant leadership is an (1) other-oriented approach to leadership (2) manifested through one-on-one prioritizing of follower individual needs and interests, (3) and outward reorienting of their concern for self towards concern for others within the organization and the larger community.”

Eva *et al.*, (2019:114) explains that the aforementioned definition provides three features, capturing the essence of SL. i.e. motive, mode and mindset (Eva *et al.*, 2019).

Chiniara and Bentein (2016:126) state that SL theory advancement only gained traction within the last few years (Chiniara and Bentein, 2016; Eva *et al.*, 2019), in the form of empirical research, construct definition and psychometrical development. Chiniara and Bentein (2016:126), citing essays by (Greenleaf, 1977) and (Greenleaf, 1998), describes SL as a "way of life" and not a "management technique". Chiniara and Bentein (2018:333) further comments that "servant leadership is characterised by a focus on followers' growth and empowerment, altruism leaders, empathy, sense of ethics and community stewardship", citing Liden *et al.* (2008). The central focus of SL is humility, authenticity, and interpersonal acceptance (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011:1235).

Liden *et al.*, (2008) and van Dierendonck and Nuijten, (2011) state that SL is a multidimensional construct, with dimensions. Liden *et al.*, (2015) describes the dimensions as:

1. Conceptual skills, reflecting the leader's competency in solving work problems and understanding the organization's goals;
2. Helping subordinates grow and succeed, capturing the extent to which the leader helps followers reach their full potential and succeed in their careers;
3. Emotional healing, which involves the degree to which the leader cares about followers' personal problems and well-being;
4. Creating value for the community, which captures the leader's involvement in helping the community surrounding the organization as well as encouraging followers to be active in the community;
5. Putting subordinates first, assessing the degree to which the leader prioritises meeting the needs of followers before tending to his or her own needs; and

6. Empowering, assessing the degree to which the leader entrusts followers with responsibility, autonomy, and decision-making influence;
7. Behaving ethically, which includes being honest, trustworthy, and serving as a model of integrity. (Liden *et al.*, 2015:255)

Chiniara and Bentein (2018:333) states that SL research is still in its early stages, and although empirical results show evidence of the influence of SL on individual performance, research has only begun to establish a relationship between servant leadership and team performance. (Chiniara and Bentein, 2018)

Numerous scholars and research groups as cited by Laureani and Antony (2019:65-66), have proposed measures for SL, which have elicited 43 overlapping dimensions. Anderson and Sun (2015), as cited by Laureani and Antony (2019), synthesised these in the following 12 conceptually distinct dimensions, which includes, Altruistic calling, Persuasive mapping, Courage, Agapao love, Emotional healing, Forgiveness, Humility, A covenantal relationship, Behaving ethically, Authenticity, Creating value for the community and Accountability (Laureani and Antony, 2019)

Research has demonstrated that SL is related to follower outcomes, including job attitudes, organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB), and performance as well as outcomes at the team and organizational levels, even when controlling for two dominant leadership approaches, namely transformational leader behaviours and leader–member exchange. (Laureani and Antony, 2019)

2.3.10 Servant Leadership Scale - 7 (SL-7)

The SL-7 is among the most rigorously tested survey instruments, regarding construction and validation, associated to SL (Eva *et al.*, 2019:129). The SL-7 instrument, utilising a seven point Likert scale, was originally developed as having 28 elements (Liden *et al.*, 2008), but was refined and validated in 2014 to comprise of seven elements only (Long, 2017:83). Liden *et al.* (2008) conducted factor analysis, both **exploratory** (298 participants) and **confirmatory**, in their process of validation of the SL scale, which included 85 SL items.

The analysis (**exploratory**) was concluded with 7 dimensions having eigenvalues larger than one. The seven dimensions included are as reflected in 2.3.9, ended up

being the basis for the scale, with the top for four questions associated with each item selected, creating the SL-28 (Liden *et al.*, 2008).

The next analysis (**confirmatory**) assessed “goodness of fit”, resulting in good fit as a whole. Alternative models were tested, but did not deliver better fit (Liden *et al.*, 2008). The initial 28 dimension scale was reduced to 7 dimensions (Liden *et al.*, 2015). Research and validation utilised in developing the SL-28 was employed to conduct an **exploratory factor analysis**, which resulted in one item being selected from each of the seven dimensions, resulting in the SL-7 instrument (Liden *et al.*, 2015). Testing for **psychometric integrity** of the SL-7 was then attended to, in order to determine if it was the same as that found within the SL-28, with scale development procedures being employed in various studies (Liden *et al.*, 2015). Three studies, *comprising* six independent samples, were conducted to compare reliability and validity of the two instruments. Correlation between the two instruments were found to be high, thereby validating the seven dimension form of the survey instrument, i.e. SL-7. (Liden *et al.*, 2015)

2.4 SUMMARY

The purpose of the literature review was to obtain a broad view of the underlining literature supporting the concepts in question. The millennial cohort was firstly investigated, with the primary purpose being to determine what the concept of generational cohort theory entails and the dynamics associated with this theory. When this concept was gained insight into, the next step was to ensure that the formative years of this cohort was reviewed. Specific characteristics associated to this group was then looked into. A South African perspective was then sought, in order to obtain a local view, seeing that the majority of research had been done internationally. Limited research regarding millennials was obtain, but a good insight was obtained. Relating to the motivation of this group, only one South African study was found and was briefly discussed. Seeing that this study is primarily focused on leadership, this aspect was reviewed and briefly reported upon.

The investigation of the primary area of interest, which was leadership, was then then embarked upon. It is very clear that transformational leadership is very well researched and thoroughly developed. Seeing that TL is part of a whole, or a

leadership continuum as it is referred to within FRLT, it was clear that the subject of TL cannot be scrutinised in isolation, the associated areas of interest was reviewed to enable a broad understanding of the framework.

Although SL was found to be built on a noble premise, this leadership form still has to be developed in terms of clarifying its dimensions and developing it as a whole. The basis of the theory is inspiring, which has shown the potential to provide a leadership approach, which can create a truly invigorating workplace.

CHAPTER 3: EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapter, a review of the literature associated to this study was carried out, which concentrated on the millennial generational cohort and specific aspects of leadership. With the fundamental aspect concerning this study being leadership, two leadership styles, namely SL and TL were explored.

Chapter 3 will define the process of the research conducted, together with empirical feedback provided by survey participants. Contents of this chapter includes the study objectives, details regarding the collection of data, statistics associated with the feedback obtained and its analysis, then completing this chapter with concluding remarks.

3.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study was conducted in order to assess the leadership style preference, with reference to motivation, in a selected petrochemical organisation.

The specific objectives of this research are:

- To determine the extent to which the SL style facilitates motivation within the millennial cohort in the selected petrochemical organisation.
- To determine the extent to which the TL style facilitates motivation within the millennial cohort in the selected petrochemical organisation.
 - The TL style is considered to be part of a continuum within FRLT, therefore transactional and passive avoidant leadership needs to be explored in terms of its motivational facilitation.

3.3 DATA DESIGN

The study was chosen to be quantitative in nature, which implies that the associated conclusions reached, will be based on feedback from a great number of

individuals/respondents. Generalisation of findings and the replication of research studies are facilitated by quantitative methods of research, which is a benefit, states Harwell (2011:149). Theory explored in Chapter 2, formed the foundation for this research, and it therefore implies that the research will take a broadly deductive approach as discussed by Bryman *et al.* (2014:32) and Kumar (2011:103). Numbers and measurement are used in the quantitative research method (not words) to get to a solution. No interviews were conducted or 'interview-type' questionnaire feedback requested. Research was conducted from the perspective of the researcher, testing theory and concepts, comparing numbers statistically to obtain a solution. The conclusion will therefore be a generalisation of the population. The aforementioned research characteristics are associated with the quantitative research method (Bryman & Bell, 2014:51).

The study was cross-sectional in nature. The cross-sectional design is primarily associated with social surveys, although also associated with other methods (Bryman *et al.*, 2014:105). The critical elements of this type of study, as presented by Bryman *et al.* (2014:106), is aligned with the anticipated method of implementation. This includes multiple cases, at a single point in time, in order to determine patterns of association.

3.4 COLLECTION OF DATA

3.4.1 Research procedure

There is a procedure in place within the petrochemical organisation in question to obtain consent for studies associated to social learning. Firstly, the motivation for this study was submitted to the Senior Manager: Learning and development, who then obtained permission from the vice president of the Human Resources (HR) division within the GT section of the petrochemical organisation. Finally, written consent was then obtained from the Senior Manager: Learning and development, after which information was provided to the researcher by a senior HR consultant. The senior HR consultant became the 'point of entry' regarding the population/database utilised for this study.

Existing, well researched questionnaires were utilised, named MLQ and SL-7, which will be discussed further in 3.4.2 below. Upon receipt of the memorandum providing written consent, which can be found in Appendix C, the MLQ questionnaire was purchased from Mind Garden. The questionnaire's details were populated onto survey development cloud-based software, named SurveyMonkey. The survey was then administered to the target population via electronic mail, based on the biographical detail provided by the senior HR consultant, focused on the specific age group of the millennial generational cohort previously described. Voluntary completion of the survey was requested, guaranteeing confidentiality and anonymity.

The survey was open for participation from the eighth of October 2019, until the sixteenth of October 2019. It was stated in the initial request for participation the survey that feedback would be provided to interested participants upon completion of the study. The questionnaire consisted of 46 questions in total. The questionnaires took an average of 10 minutes and 28 seconds to complete, as reported by SurveyMonkey Inc. (2019).

3.4.2 Research instruments

Upon receiving ethical clearance (Appendix B) to conduct this study, in addition to receipt of an employer memorandum providing consent (Appendix C) from the petrochemical organisation, questionnaires were provided to the participants to obtain empirical data, addressing research questions. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended and 'Likert-type scale questions (i.e. "Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neither agree nor disagree, Agree, Strongly agree"), which was utilised to obtain the required data. The questionnaires attempted to ascertain the leadership constructs (associated with the particular leadership styles) influencing motivation within the GT section of the targeted petrochemical organisation. The questionnaire was not sectionalised due to the demographic portion of the questionnaire only consisting of three questions.

The demographic portion of the questionnaire comprised questions focused on the individual with nominal and ordinal variables. It was initially envisaged that Section 1 would contain questions regarding age, gender, population group, highest qualification and last merit rating. Due to ethical considerations by the ethics committee, the removal of Section 1 of the survey was requested. Age is a fundamental part of the

study (i.e. millennials) and was therefore not eliminated and explained as such. Gender was also included as a means to determine the level of diversity associated to the responding sample.

After three demographic questions were posed, the balance of the questionnaire consisted of interval variable questions, relating to factors contributing to leadership traits desired (Bryman *et al.*, 2014: 313). The data provided was then grouped within relevant categories and compared, in order to draw conclusions regarding the primary research questions, thematically.

The questionnaire can be found in Appendix D, which includes a demographic portion, together with the MLQ and SL-7 instruments. It should be noted that only sample questions from the MLQ are reflected within the questionnaire in Appendix D, due to **copyright** laws described in Appendix F.

An extract regarding dissertations and theses are extracted from the purchased document:

"For Dissertation and Thesis Appendices:

You may not include an entire instrument in your thesis or dissertation, however you may use the three sample items specified by Mind Garden. Academic committees understand the requirements of copyright and are satisfied with sample items for appendices and tables. For customers needing permission to reproduce the three sample items in a thesis or dissertation, the following page includes the permission letter and reference information needed to satisfy the requirements of an academic committee."

3.4.2.1 Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)

The MLQ instrument was utilised to determine the measure by which the relationships associated with the TL style. The MLQ instrument is published by Avolio and Bass (2004) and can be obtained via Mindgarden.com. The MLQ instrument was developed by means of 81 seminal studies regarding TL and TAL (Dimitrov & Darova, 2016). This instrument has been utilised extensively in research associated to TL and TAL in the USA, along with 22 other countries, making it a suitable instrument for this study (Dimitrov & Darova, 2016).

The MLQ instrument has been expansively interrogated and validated by means of a 7,000 respondent sample (Dimitrov & Darova, 2016).

Questions associated with the various constructs within the MLQ, consisting of 45 questions, are tabulated in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Questions associated to the various transformational behaviour

Transformational Behaviours	
Idealised Influence (attributes)	M-10, M-18, M-21, M-25
Idealised Influence (behaviours)	M-6, M-14, M-23, M-34
Inspirational Motivation	M-9, M-13, M-26, M-36
Intellectual Stimulation	M-2, M-8, M-30, M-32
Individual Consideration	M-15, M-19, M-29, M-31
Transactional Behaviours	
Contingent Reward	M-1, M-11, M-16, M-35
Management by Exception (Active)	M-4, M-22, M-24, M-27
Management by Exception (Passive)	M-3, M-12, M-17, M-20
Passive Avoidant	
Laissez-Faire	M-5, M-7, M-28, M-33

Additional constructs indicated below, although not utilised as part of the study, are associated to the MLQ, specifically questions 37 to 45, as reflected below:

- Effectiveness: Reflected in questions M-37, M-40, M-43 and M-45;
- Extra effort: Reflected in questions M-39, M-42 and M-44; and
- Satisfaction: Reflected in questions M-38 and M-41.

3.4.2.2 Servant Leadership Scale - 7 (SL-7)

The SL-7 was used to assess the SL style (Liden *et al.*, 2015).

Questions associated with the various constructs within the SL-7, consisting of 7 questions, are tabulated in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Questions associated to the various servant leadership behaviour

Servant Behaviours	Questions (SL-7)
"My leader can tell if something work-related is going wrong."	S-1
"My leader makes my career development a priority."	S-2
"I would seek help from my leader if I had a personal problem."	S-3
"My leader emphasizes the importance of giving back to the community."	S-4
"My leader puts my best interests ahead of his/her own."	S-5
"My leader gives me the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way that I feel is best."	S-6
"My leader would not compromise ethical principles in order to achieve success."	S-7

3.4.3 Ethical considerations

The Senior Manager: Learning and development provided written consent, authorising the execution of this study and thereby allowing the author to administer the questionnaire to the target population. Particulars concerning the study, including the associated survey questions, were preliminarily reviewed by the research supervisor before scientific and ethical approval was sought. Details regarding the research and the associated methodology were scrutinised by the Research Ethics Committee of the NWU. Voluntary participation in the questionnaire was requested in the electronic mail sent to the target population. Participants were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality, along with non-disclosure of their individual details pertaining to this study, as reflected in Appendix C.

The Informed consent, included the approximate time the survey completion would require. Coded questionnaire feedback was provided to the NWU SCS, as provided by the survey tool (SurveyMonkey Inc., 2019), for analysis.

3.4.4 Research population

The GT portion of the petrochemical organisation consists of 439 employees. The target population is documented to consist of 217 individuals at the point at which data was obtained from the senior HR consultant. The information provided consisted of the names and email addresses of the individuals identified as being part of the target

population. Feedback was obtained from 70 individuals, which equates to more than 32% of the targeted population. The targeted population consisted of individuals from various role categories and respective departments, which included project managers; engineering managers; engineers; scientists; finance professionals; safety professionals; supply chain professionals; human resource professionals and administrative staff.

3.5 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

The demographic data distribution is presented graphically, based on three demographic questions, *comprising* age, gender and employment duration, which was presented in questions one to three of the survey, as reflected in Appendix D.

3.5.1 Age distribution

Table 3 reflects the age distribution of the individuals who completed the survey, which reflects a range between 24 and 38, which is expected due to the focus of this study being millennials. The lowest response rates obtained were from groups 27 and 28 years of age. The highest number of respondents, representing 10% each, are in the age groups of 30, 31, 32, 34 and 37. The age distribution is reflective of the range proposed by the PEW research centre (i.e. 23 to 38 years of age) in Figure 1 in section 2.2, which may not necessarily have been the same, and varies among practitioners Dimock (2019:5).

Table 3: Age distribution of respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative (%)
Valid	24	2	2,9	2,9
	25	2	2,9	5,7
	26	3	4,3	10,0
	27	1	1,4	11,4
	28	1	1,4	12,9
	29	6	8,6	21,4
	30	7	10,0	31,4

	31	7	10,0	41,4
	32	7	10,0	51,4
	33	5	7,1	58,6
	34	7	10,0	68,6
	35	6	8,6	77,1
	36	3	4,3	81,4
	37	7	10,0	91,4
	38	6	8,6	100,0

3.5.2 Gender distribution

Figure 3 reflects that the percentage distribution of female and male respondents are represented at 44.29% and 54.29% respectively. These values are representative of the millennial population within the national context, 49.26% female and 50.74% male (Statistics South Africa, 2019:10). One participant preferred not to share their gender.

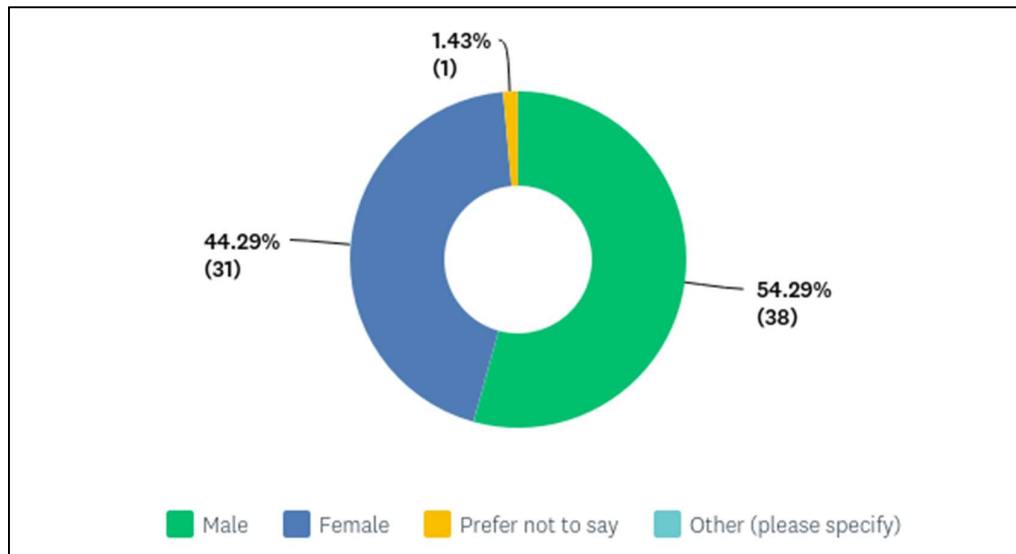


Figure 3: Gender distribution of respondents

3.5.3 Duration of employment

Figure 4 reflects the participants' duration of employment at the petrochemical organisation. One participant has been employed for more than 15 years, while the majority (37.14%) have been employed by the organisation for a period between 2 and 5 years, and 35.71% have been employed for a period ranging between 5 and

10 years. If one considers the age of the oldest members of this cohort (38), 50% have been working for the organisation for between 10 and 15 years, 33% between 2 and 5 years, and 17% have been employed for less than 2 years. The reason why this detail is of significance is that it has been stated that millennials do not stay with one organisation for an extended periods. Rodrigues and Rodrigues (2015), as cited by Kornelsen (2019:30), provides the term “Grasshoppers” to describe millennials, due to their frequent movement and lack of commitment (Kornelsen, 2019).

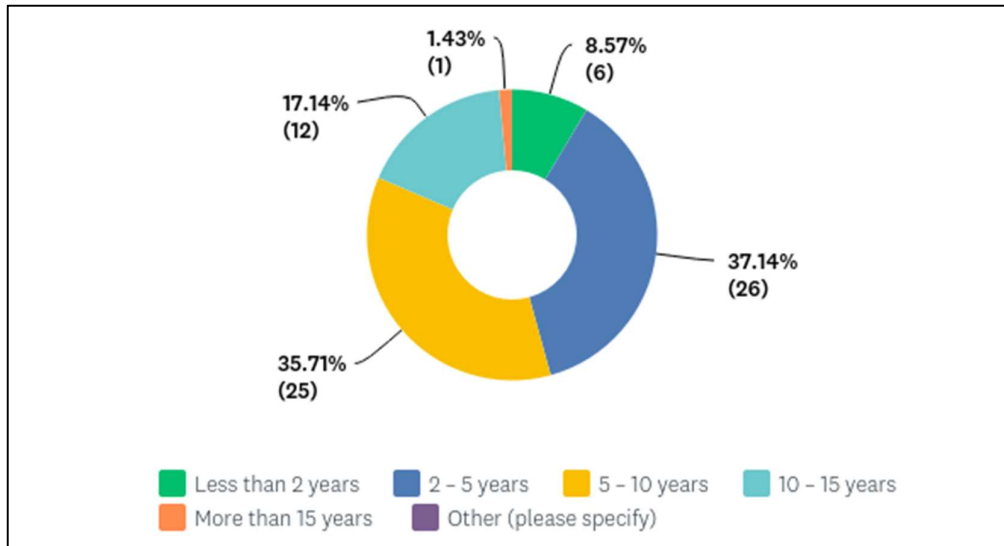


Figure 4: Duration of employment distribution of respondents

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Methods utilised during the data analysis process will be expanded upon in the subsections below. P-values were reported for completeness, but will not be interpreted, since a convenience sample, instead of a random sample was used.

3.6.1 Data coding

The data coding was electronically compiled by means of survey collection tool SurveyMonkey Inc. (2019), as discussed in section 1.8.2.4. The coded data was verified for completeness, by confirming individual values obtained on the tool.

A sample of 20% (14 surveys) were verified for any errors which may have been introduced by the electronic tool.

3.6.2 Mean and standard deviation

Extensive use will be made of the arithmetic mean within the analysis, analysing each of the leadership styles in question. A relatively simple and common manner in which central tendency is determined by calculating the “mean” values associated to the opinion of a group. In simple terms, it is commonly referred to as an average or mid-point. This allows one to obtain a reflective view of the perceptions of respondents.

This simplistic view, described in layman’s terms, aligns with the description provided by Levine *et al.* (2008:97). The arithmetic mean, as described by Levine *et al.* (2008:97), is “the most commonly used measure of central tendency which indicates the balance point in a data set”.

The standard deviation is the next measure which will be used frequently and is a more complex concept. The standard deviation, as described by Field (2014), explains that “a standard deviation of a sample as a measure of the extent of variation in a frequency distribution, which gives an indication of how close the data is to the mean – a higher standard deviation indicating a larger spread around the mean.” Levine *et al.* (2008:97) also indicate that 95% of the data obtained will be found approximately 2 standard deviations off the mean (Levine *et al.*, 2008).

3.7 RESEARCH RESULTS

This section provides an overview of the respective results obtained by means of the process described in the preceding sections. Data was verified and processed by the NWU’s SCS. The data analysis was conducted by SCS, by means of IBM’s SPSS (IBM, 2019). Sections 3.8 onward, presents details and results as obtained from SCS.

Feedback pertaining to the distribution of demographic data was presented first. In following sections results associated with the MLQ and SL-7, respectively, will be presented. Frequencies, descriptive statistics, reliability and correlations pertaining to the respective questions will be presented.

3.8 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The second part of the questionnaire, referring to the demographic data as being the first, consisted of questions from the MLQ and SL-7. The associated responses were extracted from the data collection tool, already coded as described within section 3.6.1, which enabled the statistical analysis to be conducted.

MLQ

A 5-point Likert scale was utilised in administering the MLQ, focused on various dimensions of the TL style. The following options were presented: Not at all =1; Once in a while =2; Sometimes = 3; Fairly often =4; and Frequently if not always =5 .

SL-7

A 7-point Likert scale was utilised in administering the SL-7, focused on the servant leadership style, which included the following options: Strongly disagree =1; Disagree =2; Somewhat disagree =3; Neither agree nor disagree =4; Somewhat agree =5; Agree =6 and Strongly agree =7 .

Data processing was executed and verified by SCS, North West University. Advice was sought regarding the methodology to employ, before the analysis was conducted. SCS utilised SPSS to conduct the analysis (IBM, 2019), which consisted of a frequency analysis, descriptive statistics analysis, reliability analysis and a correlation analysis.

3.8.1 Transformational Leadership

An arithmetic mean **3.82** was calculated, based on the various questions associated to the elements of TL, as reflected in Table 1. The value obtained indicates that the millennial employees find TL behaviour motivational slightly less than “Fairly often”, based on the Likert scale associated to the MLQ. It can thus be concluded that the TL has a **strong relationship** with motivating this cohort. Table 4 reflects that the different elements of TL (i.e. IA, IB, IM, IS and IC) ranged from 3.69 to 3.95. All TL elements were found to be motivational “sometimes” (i.e. more than a score of 3). Idealised Attributes (IA), a subsection of Idealised Influence, were found to have the strongest

relationship with motivating this group in question, reflecting an arithmetic mean of 3.96. Attributed (idealised) influence refers to the leader’s “socialised charisma”: whether power and confidence is perceived to be associated to the leader, and whether **ethics** and higher-order ideals are perceived to be focused upon by the leader (Antonakis *et al.*, 2003:264). IB, the second of two subsections of Idealised Influence, were found to have the weakest relationship with motivating this millennial group in question, reflecting an arithmetic mean of 3.69. This transformational leader displays actions focused on a sense of mission (Antonakis *et al.*, 2003:264).

One more observation to note within Table 4, is the “Minimum” value reflected in the specific column. What is important is that each of these five elements consist of four questions, as reflected in Table 1. In order for the minimum to be 1, at least one participant needs to score all four questions associated to one element as “Not at all”, which corresponds with a rating of 1. That is how the minimum is calculated.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics associated with transformational leadership

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Transfor_IA	70	1,00	5,00	3,95	0,72218
Transfor_IB	70	1,50	5,00	3,69	0,81335
Transfor_IM	70	1,25	5,00	3,89	0,85300
Transfor_IS	70	1,50	4,75	3,71	0,77277
Transfor_IC	70	1,75	5,00	3,85	0,76529

3.8.2 Transactional leadership

An arithmetic mean **2.66** was calculated, based on the various questions associated to the elements of TAL, as reflected in Table 1. The value obtained indicates that the millennial employees prefer TAL behaviour less than “Sometimes”, based on the Likert scale associated to the MLQ. It can thus be concluded that the TL has a **moderate relationship** with motivating this cohort. Table 5 reflects that the different elements of

TAL (i.e. CR, MBEA and MBEP) ranged from 3.68 to 1.96. One TAL element was found to be motivational “sometimes” (i.e. more than a score of 3), which was to be expected when looking at Figure 1 and the positioning of Contingent Reward (CR). CR was found to have the strongest relationship with motivating this group in question, reflecting an arithmetic mean of 3.68. The transactional leader expressing CR displays confidence, anchored by socialised charisma (Antonakis *et al.*, 2003:264). It should be noted that MBEP is considered to be part of TAL according to theory (see **2.3.4**), but it is found to be in the passive avoidant portion of the domain. MBEP, as expected, the most passive element of the TAL construct, was found to have the weakest relationship with motivating this group in question, reflecting an arithmetic mean of 1.957. This value is very close to 2, which would indicate that that the TAL expressing this behaviour would be motivational to the millennial cohort “once in a while”. This transformational leader displaying MBEP enables interventions which only occur after nonconformity or mistakes had already occurred. (Antonakis *et al.*, 2003:265)

Table 5: Descriptive statistics associated with transactional leadership

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Transac_CR	70	1,25	5,00	3,68	0,80797
Transac_MBEA	70	1,00	4,00	2,34	0,71876
PA_MBEP	70	1,00	3,25	1,96	0,64405

3.8.3 Laissez-Faire

An arithmetic mean **1.68** was calculated for LF, based on the various questions associated to the elements of MBEP, as reflected in Table 1. The value obtained indicates that the millennial employees prefer TL behaviours less than “Once in a while”, based on the Likert scale associated to the MLQ. It can thus be concluded that

the LF has a **weak relationship** with motivating this cohort. Table 6 reflects the LF rating associated to the millennial group, presenting a weak relationship with motivating millennials.

Table 6: Descriptive statistics associated with Laissez-Faire

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
PA_LF	70	1,00	5	1,68	0,7898

3.8.4 Servant leadership

The SL-7 instrument comprised seven questions, with each addressing a certain behaviour. The aforementioned instrument was administered to the millennial cohort, in order to determine the degree to which SL enables motivation within the aforementioned group. A detailed description of this instrument can be found in section 2.3.10. A score of 7 would translate into one extreme regarding the facilitation of motivation and a score of 1 would reflect the other end extreme regarding motivational facilitation.

An arithmetic mean rating of **5.62**, based on the various questions associated to the elements of SL, as reflected in Table 2. The value obtained indicates that the millennial employees prefer SL behaviour less than “Agree”, based on the Likert scale associated to the SL-7, reflecting *relatively strong* agreement. It can thus be concluded that the TL has a **strong relationship** with motivating this cohort. Table 7 reflects that the different SL behaviour elements, aligned to descriptions located in Table 2. The arithmetic mean values ranged from 6.47 to 4.99. All SL elements were found to be motivational “sometimes” (i.e. more than a score of 3).

The SL behaviours associated with “behaving ethically” (see 2.3.9), presented the strongest relationship with motivating millennials at 6.47 (S7), which includes being honest, trustworthy, and serving as a model of integrity. What is noteworthy is that “creating value for the community” score the second highest at 6.19 (S2). The aforementioned The SL behaviours associated with “giving back to the community” and “putting subordinates first”, presented the weakest relationship with these two SL behaviours, scoring 4.99 (S4) and 5 (S5) respectively, which still presents a relatively strong relationship of “ Agree”. Another noteworthy observation is that S6 – putting subordinates first” has the lowest SD, and the various behaviours obtained a rating of 5 (with one negligible exception) and therefore equated to millennial employees agreeing somewhat that those leadership behaviours motivate them in the workplace. Overall, there is a moderately strong relationship between those SL behaviours and motivation of millennial employees.

Table 7: Descriptive statistics associated with servant leadership

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
S1	70	2	7	5,56	1,150
S2	70	1	7	6,19	0,967
S3	70	1	7	5,20	1,490
S4	70	1	7	4,99	1,489
S5	70	2	7	5,00	1,373
S6	70	3	7	5,97	0,868
S7	70	1	7	6,47	1,176

3.9 RELIABILITY

Field (2014) states that a survey is regarded as being reliable when it is expected to deliver results that are consistent and accurate, while (Neuman, 2007:119) indicated that it as the credibility of the survey findings.

The Cronbach's alpha was utilised in order to determine the reliability of the results obtained. Lee Cronbach developed a method to enable the measurement of internal consistency of a questionnaire scale in 1951, which was used to estimate reliability. (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011:53).

The Cronbach alpha coefficient was calculated using IBM (2019) for each of the MLQ constructs, as well as SL-7 as a whole. Table 8 reflects the results associated to the various constructs.

Table 8: Cronbach's alpha coefficients associated to MLQ constructs and SL-7

MLQ constructs	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha	Mean inter-item correlation
Idealised Influence (attributes) (IA)	4	0,684	0,36
Idealised Influence (behaviours) (IB)	4	0,763	0,45
Inspirational Motivation (IM)	4	0,833	0,56
Intellectual Stimulation (IS)	4	0,717	0,40
Individual Consideration (IC)	4	0,624	0,30
Contingent Reward (CR)	4	0,713	0,39
Management by Exception (Active)	4	0,543	0,23
Management by Exception (Passive)	4	0,497	0,21
Laissez-Faire (LF)	4	0,777	0,48
SL-7			
Servant constructs	7	0,674	0,25

Table 8 presents Cronbach's alpha coefficient results. The different constructs in the measuring instrument are above 0.5, with one exception indicated in red. This indicates that the measuring instruments utilised in this study were reliable. Cronbach's Alpha Indicates reliability or internal consistency. The guideline value for interpretation is above 0: above 0.5 can also be used but interpretation should be done with caution (Field, 2014). It should be noted that the Cronbach's alpha calculated regarding MBEP resulted in a value that does not confirm internal consistency. What

is important to note is that all Cronbach's alpha coefficient results associated to SL and TL is above 0.62 (referring to IC). This confirms validity to a large extent.

Upon assessing the mean inter-item correlation for the leadership constructs variables, it was concluded that multi-collinearity is not severe in this variable. The mean inter-item correlation for the variables should preferably be in the range of 0.3 to 0.6, which is the preferred range according to Field (2014). The majority of the values do fall within this range.

3.10 LEADERSHIP STYLE CORRELATIONS

P-values will be reported, as reflected in Appendix E, for completeness, but will not be interpreted, since a convenience sample, instead of a random sample was being used.

Spearman's rho was utilised to determine the correlation between the extent to which the TL and SL styles motivate employees from the millennial cohort within the selected petrochemical organisation. As reflected in Appendix E, with a summarised version of the of the correlation coefficients reflected in Table 9, various positive (medium) practical visible relationships are highlighted, with the maximum value measured being $r_s = 0.428$, $p < .0005$. This is a reflection of the correlation between the extent to which each element of TL and SL motivates millennial employees. All the correlation coefficients reflected in Table 9 were found to be statistically significant, as reflected in Appendix E. The relationship S2 (Helping subordinates grow and succeed) has a positive (medium) practical visible relationship with various elements of TL (IA, IS, IC, and CR).

Table 9: Medium, practical visible relationships – Elements of transformational and servant leadership

	S2	S6	S7	SL
IA	0,356	0,258	0,230	0,233
IB	0,167	0,131	0,403	0,277
IM	0,114	0,150	0,322	0,175
IS	0,335	0,313	0,365	0,296
IC	0,428	0,309	0,211	0,320
CR	0,420	0,241	0,258	0,289

There are 10 medium, practical visible relationships reflected in Table 9. SL as a whole, shows a medium, practical visible relationship with IC (Individual Consideration) which is noteworthy and will be expanded upon in the findings.

3.11 RESEARCH FINDINGS

Results obtained from the empirical study were utilised to explore the extent to which certain leadership styles were motivation to millennial employees in the selected petrochemical organisation. Two questionnaires were employed, based on proven validity and general track record within the research fraternity regarding the specific leadership styles being explored. The age distribution of participants varied within the range of 24 and 38 years of age, reflecting the millennial generational cohort. The majority of the respondents were clustered around the age range of 29 to 34.

The results obtained reflect a good representation of gender, based on the South African population within the generational cohort. The predominant gender of the participants were male (54.29%), with one participant indicating that they would not like to share their gender, which equates to 1.43%.

The majority of the participants (37.14%) had been employed by the petrochemical organisation in question for a period of 2 to 5 years, 35.71% had been employed for 5 to 10 years. The coded survey results were analysed by NWU SCS, by means of SCSS software IBM (2019).

Cronbach alpha results reflected that an acceptable level of internal consistency, with the exception for the result of one of the FRLT constructs, MBAP. Predicting the internal consistency of the behavioural constructs within the TL style was of primary concern. The lowest Cronbach alpha result obtained for these five constructs, were 0,624 for IC, which is acceptable. The only other result associated with TL found to be below 0.7, was that of IA (0,684). It is therefore considered that an acceptable degree of internal consistency, therefore implied reliability had been obtained.

The next item which was attended to was correlations between constructs, and also specific constructs of TL, with relation to SL as a whole. One medium, practical and visible relationship of particular interest was that of Individual Consideration (IC) and

Servant Leadership (SL) as a whole. This is particularly significant, due to the characteristics of SL as a whole.

Feedback pertaining to the leadership styles identified as being motivational was as expected. TL and SL both rendered results which indicates that there is moderate to strong agreement regarding the motivational capacity of these leadership styles. Some elements regarding both leadership styles are strongly supported among the millennial cohort within the petrochemical organisation. Results associated with TAL and LF were also as expected, with the more “active” leadership behaviours (according to the scale in Figure 1) being were found to be more motivational.

Chapter 4 will present a detailed summary of the findings associated with this research. Recommendations to the selected petrochemical organisation will be made, as well as recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION AND SUMMARISED FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This quantitative study explored contemporary leadership styles which had been found to facilitate employee motivation within the millennial generational cohort (Long, 2017). Given that 75% of the global workforce will be made up of millennials by 2030 (Hays, 2014:1), it was deemed important to gain insight into which styles of leadership contribute towards motivating the millennial workforce effectively. Limited research is available regarding generational differences in a South African context (Martins and Martins, 2014:129), as well as research associated to leadership style effectiveness among millennials in the workplace (Amayah & Gedro, 2014). Transformational and servant leadership was explored, finding that both have a positive relationship with millennial employee motivation within the petrochemical organisation.

Chapter 3 presented the results obtained during the research, which was discussed with the interpretation of the results, motivated with statistical support. Chapter 4 summarises the findings. Limitations associated to the study will be presented and recommendations made to the petrochemical organisation in question, as well as future research proposed. This chapter will be ended with a conclusion, based on the findings.

4.2 SYNOPSIS OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 presented the problem statement, its background and the objectives were defined, as well as the anticipated method to be followed in the research study.

Chapter 2 presented a literature review, which focused on the millennial generational cohort and theories of leadership.

Chapter 3 presented details associated with empirical methods applied in this study, specifically clarifying the objectives of the research and descriptive details associated to the data (design, collection and analysis). In concluding Chapter 3, empirical results were discussed.

4.3 FINDINGS

The various leadership styles are discussed below, considering FRLT as a whole, summarising the findings of the research. Findings regarding specific behaviours associated to the different leadership styles and the extent to which it facilitates motivation will be focused upon. Findings related to correlations found to present “medium, practical visible” relationships amongst constructs of the TL and SL styles will also be expanded upon.

4.3.1 Transformational leadership

TL was found to be motivational to great extent. The behaviour being found to have the strongest relationship with motivating this group, was idealised attributes (IA). The behaviours found to be most motivational down to least motivational are as follows (in descending order): IA, IM, IC, IS and IB. It should be noted that the aforementioned TL behaviours were found to be at least moderately related to motivating followers.

Idealised attributes (IA), part of the idealised influence cluster, primarily centred on **ethics** and higher-order ideals, as described in 2.3.5.1.

4.3.2 Servant Leadership

SL was found to be motivational to a great extent. The behaviour found to have the strongest relationship with motivating this group, was associated to “Behaving **ethically**”. The behaviours found to be most motivational from a leader, down to least motivational are as follows, in descending order:

- Behaving ethically;
- Helping subordinates grow and succeed;
- Empowering;
- Conceptual skills;
- Emotional healing;
- Putting subordinates first;
- Creating value for the community.

It should be noted that the aforementioned SL behaviours were found to be at least moderately related to motivating followers.

4.3.3 Transactional leadership

TAL was found to be motivational to a much lesser extent than TL. The behaviour being found to have the strongest relationship with motivating millennials in the group of TAL behaviours, was contingent reward (CR). Contingent reward can be associated with “managing”, in which rewards are provided for results delivered, as described in 2.3.6. This leadership behaviour was found to be less motivational than the least motivational behaviour associated to TL.

4.3.4 Laissez-Faire

LF was found not to be motivational within the millennial cohort. Only one element was considered as part of LF (i.e. LF component itself). It should be noted that LF is one of two elements within the “Passive Avoidant” domain, the other is MBEP, which is considered to be part of TAL. The behaviour associated to LF was found to be less motivational than the least motivational behaviour associated to TAL.

4.3.5 Correlations

All the **maximum** correlation values associated within the various behaviours associated to SL within Table 9 will be briefly discussed below:

- S2 (0.428) IC: The first noteworthy observation is the number of TL elements having medium, practical visible relationships with S2, with the maximum value also identified in the entire table, as indicated in bold above (0.429). Question S2 is associated with the behaviour “Helping subordinates grow and succeed” within the SL scale. Individual consideration (IC), as reflected in 2.3.5.4 states that “the degree to which the leader attends to each follower’s needs, acts as a mentor or coach”, according to (Judge & Piccolo, 2004:755). These concepts are clearly aligned, indicating the need for individual coaching in order to enable growth.

- S6 (0.313) IS: This question is associated with the behaviour “Putting subordinates first” within the SL scale. Intellectual stimulation (IS), as reflected in 2.3.5.3, states that “the degree to which the leader challenges assumptions, takes risks, and solicits followers’ ideas”, according to (Laureani & Antony, 2019:66). Once again, these concepts are clearly aligned, indicating the need for individual focus, in order to enable growth.
- S7 (0.403) IB: This question is associated with the behaviour “Behaving ethically” within the SL scale. Idealised behaviour (IB), as reflected in 2.3.5.1, states that “the leaders’ ability to express actions which are focussed on a sense of mission, beliefs and values” (Antonakis *et al.*, 2003:264). Once again, these concepts are clearly aligned, indicating the need for ethical behaviour.
- SL (0.32) IC: SL as a whole, is focused on serving, the definition is presented as follows by (Eva *et al.*, 2019):

“Servant leadership is an (1) other-oriented approach to leadership (2) manifested through one-on-one prioritizing of follower individual needs and interests, (3) and outward reorienting of their concern for self towards concern for others within the organization and the larger community.”

Individual consideration (IC), as reflected in 2.3.5.4 states that “the degree to which the leader attends to each follower’s needs, acts as a mentor or coach”, according to (Judge & Piccolo, 2004:755). These concepts are clearly aligned, indicating the need for individual coaching in order to enable growth.

4.3.6 Summarised findings

Characteristics associated with millennials are found in literature, which provides insight into challenges leaders face in the workplace. Drivers behind specific behaviours are expressed in literature to provide leaders with an appreciation for perceived differences between the millennial generation and themselves. This study provided some understanding regarding the relationship between leadership styles and motivation of the millennial cohort.

Upon considering the leadership styles collectively, it can be concluded that both TL and SL are positively related to motivation of the millennial cohort.

The empirical data reflects the level of motivation the various behaviours associated with the FLRT, enable. Motivation associated with these behaviours increase progressively, from Laissez-Faire up to TL. TL was found to have a strong relationship with motivating millennials in this study, across all behaviours. The TAL style had a strong relationship with contingent reward (CR) only.

SL was also found to have a strong relationship with motivation. What was interesting regarding the about the SL findings, was the strong alignment, form a motivational point of view, regarding behaviours associated to specific items namely, “behaving ethically” and “helping subordinates grow and succeed” (Aruna & Anitha, 2015:95). These findings align very well with literature, regarding preferred motivators associated with this cohort. It must be noted that the behaviour associated with the ethical conduct of the leader, presented an overwhelmingly strong relationship with motivation within this millennial cohort in question. What was expected, based on the literature reviewed, was that a stronger motivational relationship would exist between the millennial group and the SL behaviour associated to “Creating value for the community”. This SL behavioural element was found to have the lowest motivational relationship within this cohort.

As the literature reflects, there are great overlaps regarding these two leadership styles. This is reflected in the correlations between the elements of the two leadership styles. Statistical correlations indicate that there are strong motivational relationships between ethical conduct from the leader (primarily) and the personal needs for attention and individual consideration.

The findings, specifically regarding the strong motivational relationships these two leadership styles have with millennials, along with the need for ethical leadership behaviours, align very well with the results obtained from a similar study (Long, 2017).

4.4 RESEARCH STUDY EVALUATION

The purpose of this research study was to assess the leadership style behaviour preference in the Group Technology (GT) function of the selected petrochemical organisation and to answer the questions as stated below:

- To which extent does the Transformational Leadership (TL) style facilitate motivation within the millennial cohort in the selected petrochemical organisation?
- To which extent does the Servant Leadership (SL) style facilitate motivation within the millennial cohort in the selected petrochemical organisation?

With reference to the empirical research presented, supported by the summarised findings in 4.3, it can be concluded that the objectives of this study have been addressed conclusively.

4.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this research study, as well as literature reviewed, alluded to possible areas of improvement and proactive action by the targeted petrochemical organisation. The following recommendations are proposed:

- Revisit the plan to implement the use of a purely TL style within the organisation. Certain elements of the SL style can be implemented in conjunction with the TL style in order to obtain optimal results, therefore “blending” leadership styles. Note: Nqwababa (2018) indicated that the TL style will be implemented in the petrochemical organisation in question.
- Utilise this study as a basis and explore the other generational groups within the organisation, which would enable an informed decision regarding the leadership style or combination of styles to be implemented, focusing on the specific motivational aspects within each.
- Explore the “Ethical leadership style” (Hoch *et al.*, 2018:502) to determine elements of motivation, seeing that ethics or ethical conduct by leaders have been identified as being strongly related to motivation within the millennial cohort, within the targeted petrochemical organisation.
- Proactive preparation for Generation Z and their preferences and characteristics should be explored. The first individuals from this cohort were born in 2000 and have started entering the workplace (Dimock, 2019).

4.6 LIMITATIONS ASSOCIATED TO THE STUDY

Limitations associated to this study were identified as follows:

- Literature regarding the millennial generational group within South Africa is sparse (Martins & Martins, 2014:130). This does not even consider studies associated to leadership research, focused on generational differences. The results can therefore not be generalised.
- This study was focused on a single organisation, within one of its business units. This business unit employs primarily “knowledge workers” (i.e. engineers, scientists and the like), which is not representative of the entire organisation. A large portion of the organisation’s employees do not have an undergraduate degree. The results can therefore not be generalised.
- A quantitative study has the limitation of closed ended questions, therefore the individual’s complete perspective cannot be obtained.
- The study was cross-sectional in nature, therefore it is representative of a single point in time. Dynamics within the organisation can change and responses may be presented differently. The organisation in question went through a restructuring process just prior to this study, therefore responses may have been influenced.
- Time and resource constraints associated to the academic program were found to be a limitation, seeing that more organisations or business units within the organisation could have been explored.
- Stringent ethical clearance requirements forced the researcher to eliminate various demographic questions, which may have given better insight into the landscape.

4.7 FUTURE RESEARCH

Various recommendations regarding future research can be made, due the findings of this research study, as well as literature reviewed, which alluded to possible areas of interest. The following recommendations are proposed regarding future research:

- The “Ethical leadership style” (Hoch *et al.*, 2018:502) needs to be explored to determine elements of motivation, seeing that ethics or ethical conduct by

leaders have been identified as being strongly related to motivation within the millennial cohort in a localised setting. Not only by this research, but by (Long, 2017) as well.

- The general leadership landscape, with its various constructs associated with generational cohort theory should to be expanded upon within a South African setting.
- An analysis should be conducted to determine if there are specific gender preferences associated with the respective leadership styles or its constructs. Long (2017) found that there are different preferences regarding leadership among males and females.
- While taking ethical considerations into account, the leadership preferences associated to different racial groups needs to be explored.
 - Specifically those individuals born between 1948 and 1994, as described in section 2.2.5 by (Deal, 2010; as cited by Close, 2015:64).
 - Cox *et al.* (2014) posit that cultural differences also have an influence on preferred leadership styles.
- In addition to exploring the racial setting, the “localised household setting” of respondent while growing up needs to be considered. The number of siblings the individual has may have influenced the parenting approach, therefore the individual’s outlook may be influenced. Thus, the economic and social setting needs consideration as well.
- Research associated with Generation Z and their leadership preferences should be explored. The first individuals from this cohort were born in 2000 and have started entering the workplace (Dimock, 2019).
- Again, while taking ethical considerations into account, the highest qualification is requested due to (Karakitapoğlu-Aygün and Gumusluoglu, 2013) finding that knowledge workers have different leadership needs. As an example, the petrochemical organisation in question consists of a large number of knowledge workers, which may have a different outlook from others.
- This study should be replicated in a different area of the petrochemical organisation - Production and Maintenance - to see how different or similar the millennial employees here are, from the “knowledge worker”.

4.8 CONCLUSION

The research study explored two leadership styles, which were both found to be effective in motivating the millennial generational group within the selected petrochemical organisation.

The results associated with the empirical study provided great insight into the specific behavioural elements within the respective leadership styles, namely Transformational leadership and Servant Leadership. A strong relationship with motivating millennials was found with elements associated to ethical behaviour, for both transformational and servant leadership. Ethical conduct, in both cases, obtained the highest score from survey participants. Another theme that came through strongly with regard to motivation, was individual consideration from the leader in assisting subordinates grow and succeed. Both these results were as expected, based on the literature explored.

One unexpected result, contrary to literature, was the motivational relationship with the leader's behaviour towards creating value for the community. This item is related to corporate social responsibility. The insight gained by conducting this study was immense, from both a generational cohort theory point of view, as well as insight into the fundamentals associated with leadership terms used loosely by practitioners.

Results associated to full range leadership theory, were as expected, indicating stronger motivational relationships with the millennial generational group, as the leadership behaviour moved from the passive (i.e. Laissez-Faire), to the active domain within the "Full range leadership model". Although the research process provided great insight, further research is required to influence the workplace in a positive manner.

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APPENDIX A – Informed Consent

Dear Participant:

You are kindly requested to participate in an academic research study conducted by Carlisle Sampson, an MBA student from the North West University.

The purpose of this study is to conduct an assessment of **leadership styles** which are **motivational** with **millennial employees** within a petrochemical organisation. Information from you, the millennial employee, is therefore requested due to your experience within Group Technology. This study will be primarily focused on the Group Technology section of the petrochemical organisation.

Further background and items to be noted:

This study aims to present proposals to the leadership team of the Group Technology section of the petrochemical organisation, to enable positive change in the working experience of millennial employees.

I therefore request that you, the participant, answer all questions honestly. Furthermore, I guarantee your anonymity and overall confidentiality.

Upon completion, Carlisle Sampson will kindly provide the combined results of this study (final dissertation) to participants, upon request.

- The duration of the survey will be approximately 9 minutes.
- All the individual responses will be treated as confidential.
- Participation is voluntary, you may, therefore, end your participation in the survey at any point.
- The survey comprises of two sections, part one contains demographic questions and part 2 contains questions selected on a Likert scale (based on the participant's most appropriate response).
- The results will be concluded before the end of November 2019.
- The research will not bear adverse effects on any participant. Participants' perceptions and results will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and anonymity at all times (i.e. all phases of the study).

Please note: Ethical clearance had been obtained from North West University (ethical clearance number: **NWU-01334-19-A4**), together with HR clearance from Group Technology.

By following the link below, you verify that you have read and understood the information provided and give your consent to participate in the study voluntarily:

[Yes, I would like to take the survey](#)

Kind regards,

APPENDIX B – Ethical Clearance



Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Economic and Management Sciences Research
Ethics Committee (EMS-REC)
Tel: 018 299-1427
Email: Bennie.Linde@nwu.ac.za

25 October 2019

Prof J Visagie
Per e-mail
Dear Prof Visagie,

EMS-REC FEEDBACK: 25102019
Student: Sampson, CH (12850780)(NWU-01334-19-A4)
Applicant: Prof J Visagie - MBA

Your ethics application on, *An assessment of leadership styles which are motivational with millennial employees within a petrochemical organisation*, that served on the EMS-REC meeting of 25 October 2019, refers.

Outcome:

Approved as a minimal risk study. A number NWU-01334-19-A4 is given for three years of ethics clearance.

Kind regards,



Prof Bennie Linde
Chairperson: Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee (EMS-REC)
Potchefstroom Campus

APPENDIX C – Confirmation of Employer Consent

Memorandum

To: North West University

Cc: Professor Jan Visagie

From: Chris Klopper

Date: 09 April 2019

Subject: Permission to conduct a survey for MBA studies – mini-dissertation

Carlisle Sampson (student number: 12850780) is hereby granted permission / authorisation, as the primary researcher (North West University):

1. To engage with and issue a feedback questionnaire / survey to employees of [REDACTED] Group Technology.
2. To collect and publish information (limited to the topic researched) about [REDACTED] Group Technology, which is not publically available,

for the mini-dissertation titled:

An assessment of leadership styles which are effective with millennial employees within a petrochemical organisation.

This authorization is based on a mutual understanding that the above mentioned company's name **will not be mentioned** in the title and the mini-dissertation be restricted and not publically available.

The information provided by the employees / respondents or any other means (such as company's archived documents or reports) is purely for academic purposes and cannot be used for any other purpose.

The permission is granted with the condition and understanding that:

1. The findings of the mini-dissertation will be shared with Sasol Group Technology for learning purposes.
2. The mini-dissertation will be made available to the company upon completion.



C KLOPPER
(Senior Manager: Learning & Development)

9-4-19

DATE

APPENDIX D – Survey Questionnaire

An assessment of leadership styles which are motivational with millennial employees within a petrochemical organisation

Thank you for your willingness to do this survey. Kindly note, you need to be 38 or younger.

* 1. What is your age (at this point in time)?

* 2. Gender

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify)

* 3. Number of years employed within Group Technology

- Less than 2 years
- 2 – 5 years
- 5 – 10 years
- Other (please specify)
- 10 – 15 years
- More than 15 years

* 4. How frequently will your manager need to display this behaviour (described in the statements below) to **motivate** you at work?

	Not at all	Once in a while	Sometimes	Fairly often	Frequently, if not always
Avoids making decisions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Talks optimistically about the future	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Spends time teaching and coaching	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 13. You will be **motivated** at work if...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Your leader can tell if something work related is going wrong.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your leader makes your career development a priority.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You could seek help from your leader if you had a personal problem.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My leader emphasizes the importance of giving back to the community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 14. You will be **motivated** at work if...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
My leader puts my best interests ahead of his/her own	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My leader gives me the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way that I feel is best	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My leader would not compromise ethical principles in order to achieve success	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

APPENDIX E – Correlations

			S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	SL
Spearman's rho	Transfor_IA	Correlation Coefficient	0,084	0,356	0,094	0,194	-0,025	0,258	0,230	0,233
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0,491	0,002	0,437	0,108	0,839	0,031	0,055	0,052
		N	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70
	Transfor_IB	Correlation Coefficient	0,116	0,167	0,218	0,292	-0,047	0,131	0,403	0,277
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0,340	0,168	0,069	0,014	0,700	0,278	0,001	0,020
		N	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70
	Transfor_IM	Correlation Coefficient	0,076	0,114	0,088	0,200	-0,066	0,150	0,322	0,175
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0,532	0,349	0,468	0,096	0,589	0,216	0,007	0,148
		N	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70
	Transfor_IS	Correlation Coefficient	0,079	0,335	0,109	0,275	-0,008	0,313	0,365	0,296
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0,515	0,005	0,369	0,021	0,946	0,008	0,002	0,013
		N	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70
	Transfor_IC	Correlation Coefficient	0,004	0,428	0,252	0,174	0,078	0,309	0,211	0,320
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0,977	0,000	0,035	0,151	0,518	0,009	0,079	0,007
		N	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70
Transac_CR	Correlation Coefficient	0,121	0,420	0,115	0,152	0,076	0,241	0,258	0,289	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,319	0,000	0,343	0,209	0,532	0,045	0,031	0,015	

	N	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70
Transac_MBEA	Correlation Coefficient	0,164	0,110	-0,095	0,033	0,263	0,160	0,056	0,133
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,175	0,363	0,432	0,789	0,028	0,187	0,645	0,271
	N	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70
PA_MBEP	Correlation Coefficient	0,017	-0,020	-0,027	-0,140	0,182	-0,058	-0,169	-0,021
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,886	0,873	0,827	0,247	0,132	0,633	0,163	0,861
	N	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70
PA_LF	Correlation Coefficient	-0,034	-0,098	-0,026	-0,171	0,107	-0,195	-0,261	-0,142
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,781	0,418	0,832	0,157	0,378	0,106	0,029	0,240
	N	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70

APPENDIX F – Permission to administer MLQ

For use by Carlisle Sampson only. Received from Mind Garden, Inc. on July 4, 2019



www.mindgarden.com

To Whom It May Concern,

The above-named person has made a license purchase from Mind Garden, Inc. and has permission to administer the following copyrighted instrument up to that quantity purchased:

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire

The three sample items only from this instrument as specified below may be included in your thesis or dissertation. Any other use must receive prior written permission from Mind Garden. The entire instrument may not be included or reproduced at any time in any other published material. Please understand that disclosing more than we have authorized will compromise the integrity and value of the test.

Citation of the instrument must include the applicable copyright statement listed below.

Sample Items:

As a leader

- I talk optimistically about the future.
- I spend time teaching and coaching.
- I avoid making decisions.

The person I am rating....

- Talks optimistically about the future.
- Spends time teaching and coaching.
- Avoids making decisions

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Sincerely,

Robert Most
Mind Garden, Inc.
www.mindgarden.com

APPENDIX G – Proof of Language Editing

CERTIFICATE OF ENGLISH EDITING

This certificate confirms that the manuscript listed below has been professionally proof read for grammar, spelling, phrasing, punctuation and sentence structure; as well as contributions to intent of meaning. No alterations were made to intrinsic content. The acceptance of proposed edits was at all times under the control of the author. A copy of the document with editing mark-ups can be made available to the institution on request, with the written permission of the author.

Manuscript Title: An assessment of leadership styles which are motivational with millennial employees within a petrochemical organisation

Author: Carlisle H. Sampson

Date of issue: 25 November 2019



KARIN PETERSEN

B. JOURN AND COMM
MEMBER OF SAFREA
SACE-REGISTERED

