

Generational differences, Leadership styles and Team climate

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Preface

This graduation thesis completes my Master study Human Resource Studies at Tilburg University and at the same time ends my student life. These days, because of the aging workforce, a lot of changes take place in the labour market. With this thesis I want to contribute to both theory and practice by exploring preferences of people from different generations and therefore create awareness on how to manage these changes in the workforce. Working on this thesis I have experienced as an educational and enjoyable time. Especially doing qualitative research by having focusgroups with employees of Philips, made this project interesting and made me even more enthusiastic on the topic of research. I am honoured that my research will be used as input for the project of social innovation at Philips Nederland B.V.

Naturally I did not write this master-thesis without the help of others. And I would like to take this opportunity to thank some people. In the first place, I would like to thank my supervisor Drs. Hans van Dijk. His constructive feedback and fresh insights during the whole process have contributed to the quality of the end product. Also, I would like to thank my second supervisor Prof. Dr. René Schalk for giving critical feedback in the final stage. Next to that, I would like to thank Yvonne van den Berg and Selma Oskam. Without their enthusiasm on the research topic, help in facilitating the focusgroups and getting Philips Lighting to support this study, this all could not have been possible. Of course I also want to thank all those that participated in the focusgroups. The data derived from these focusgroups made this thesis into what it is today.

Finally, I want to thank my family, colleagues and friends for their support, interest and commitment during my entire study, but also for providing me with the necessary distraction and relaxation. Above all, I would like to thank my boyfriend Peter, for being all ears and supporting me in times when I felt stuck in the materials. Without all these people I would not have come this far. Thank you.

Enjoy reading,
Margot van Zeist
Tilburg, June 2011

Abstract

This study examined the differences and similarities between leadership preferences of different generations and how these generations expect that this relationship influences team climate. This study is explorative and used a qualitative research method. The data was collected at a multinational organization with the use of focusgroups and was then coded and analyzed to answer the research question. 74 out of the 201 randomly approached employees participated in this study. The results showed that all employees, indifferent from which generation they are, preferred the supportive leadership style of the path-goal theory the most and the directive leadership style the least. The results also showed that team commitment and clarity are the two main important factors of the six factor theory of team climate. From these results it can be concluded that a leader needs to adapt a supportive leadership style and take the factors team commitment and clarity into account when managing his or her subordinates.

Key concepts: *generations, generation management, leadership preferences, team climate*

Table of contents

1. Introduction	5
2. Theoretical Framework	
2.1 Generational differences	7
2.2 Leadership	9
2.3 Team climate	11
3. Method	
3.1 Research design	13
3.2 Sample	14
3.3 Data analysis	16
4. Results	17
4.1 Leadership	17
4.2 Team climate	21
4.3 Other findings	22
5. Conclusion and Discussion	24
5.1 Limitations and recommendations	26
5.2 Implications for practice	27
5.3 Overall conclusion	28
6. References	29

Appendices

1. Introduction

Many countries are facing demographic changes, such as ageing. It is expected that the number of people that enter the labor market will decrease, while the number of people who retire will increase. This will have consequences for the composition of the labor market and the workforce of organizations (Bovenberg & Oosterwijk, 2008). Today's workforce is comprised of people from different generations that work together (Konrad, 2006). The current workforce represents three age cohorts; generation Babyboom, generation X and generation Y (Hu, Herrick & Hodgins, 2004; Smola & Sutton, 2002; Piper, 2008). These three generations consist of employees that are born within the same time span. The Babyboom generation is the oldest and are about to retire and leave the labour market, followed by generation X, the youngest employees are those of the generation Y, who are just entering the labour market (Hu et al., 2004; Smola & Sutton, 2002; Piper, 2008; Farag, Tullai-McGuinness & Anthony, 2009; Yu & Miller, 2005). Because people from the same generation are born in the same time span, they have common life experiences and characteristics (Mannheim, 1952; Piper, 2008; Weston, 2001; Hu et al., 2004).

Due to these different characteristics between generations, there are differences towards work values between the three generations (Weston, 2001; McNeese-Smith & Crook, 2003). An important aspect of these different work values is that people from different generations also have different preferences for leadership (Weston, 2001; McNeese-Smith & Crook, 2003). Since there are many challenges in managing a changing age diverse workplace, it is important to understand these generations and generational differences in organizations (Joshi, Dencker, Franz & Martocchio, 2010). Given these changes at the labour market, it is interesting to gain more insight on how people of different generations think about leadership styles. There are different questions that rise when gaining more insight on this topic; what are the characteristics and preferences of employees in different generations and what is the best way to manage these employees? What kind of leadership should be adapted to manage employees in different generations?

In addition, it is interesting to investigate how different generations expect that preferences for leadership influence team climate, because team climate has not only proven to be related to important business processes and outcomes (Houldsworth & Machin, 2008) but it also shapes and influences employee's behaviour (Snow, 2002). A team climate that is perceived as "good" has shown to positively affect important processes and outcomes including job satisfaction (Harris et al., 2007; Proudfoot et al., 2007; Bartel & Saavedra, 2000; George, 1990; Mastrangelo, Eddy & Lorenzet, 2004), commitment (Bartel & Saavedra, 2000; George, 1990; Snow 2002, Cullen, Parboteeah & Victor, 2003; Loke 2001), motivation (McColl-Kennedy & Anderson, 2002; Parker et al., 2003) and

performance (Bartel & Saavedra, 2000; George, 1990; McColl-Kennedy & Anderson, 2002; Pirola-Merl , H rtel, Mann & Hirst, 2002; Snow 2002, Cullen et al., 2003). Managers play an important role in influencing the team climate (Bono & Illies, 2006; Erez, Misangyi, Johnson, LePine, & Halverson, 2008; Johnson, 2008; Sy, Cote, & Saavedra, 2005). This role of influencing team climate by the manager depends on the perception of team members towards their leader (Baeza, Lao, Meneses & Rom , 2009). In this study the preferences of people from different generations for leadership and team climate are an example of these perceptions that are important for a manager. Because the labour market is changing, the presence of the three generations in the workforce is changing as well. And it is important for a manager to know how to adapt their leadership style to the current changes.

The main research question to be answered is; *What are the differences and similarities between leadership preferences of different generations and how do these generations expect that this relationship influences team climate?*

In order to answer the research questions, this research consists of a few steps. A case study was conducted within one sector of Philips Electronics NV, an international electronics company. In order to give an answer to the explorative research question above, qualitative research was held by organizing focusgroups within Philips. These focusgroups investigate to what extent employees of different generations have different preferences for leadership and how these generations expect that this relationship influences team climate.

The relevance of this study is multiple; firstly organizations can benefit from the results of this study, concerning how different generations may have different preferences for leadership and how these generations expect that this relationship influences team climate and therefore affect important processes and outcomes within the organization. In this way the study provides awareness and grip on how to manage employees from different generations and provide insight to managers on how to adapt their leadership style to be more effective and to create a better work climate for their subordinates.

There are many studies on how different generations behave at the work place, what important leadership behaviour is and why team climate an important factor is for organizational success. But search in scientific literature has proven that research lacks investigation to relate these topics to each other and therefore it is interesting to study the relations between generations, leadership and team climate. This study pays attention to in what ways different generations have different preferences for leadership and how these generations expect that this relationship influences team climate.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 Generational Differences

Today's workforce can be divided into different generations. In this study generational differences will be measured according three groups; generation X, generation Y and generation Babyboom, which are the most common generational cohorts in literature. The term generation refers to people that are born in the same time period and that share key historical and social events and life experiences (Smola & Sutton, 2002; Piper, 2008). People from different generations have common experiences that influence their thoughts and behaviour, therefore every generation has its own characteristics (Mannheim, 1952).

The oldest generation in the current workforce, people born between 1945 and 1964, is called the *Babyboom generation*. (Hu, Herrick & Hodgins, 2004). These employees will retire within the next couple of years (Farag, Tullai-McGuinness & Anthony, 2009). Generally people from the Babyboom generation value individual freedom, tend to seek more immediate gratification (Bower & Fidler, 1994) and want to be recognized for their achievement (Weston, 2001). They do not tend to delegate authority to anyone easily (Bower & Fidler, 1994), but respect authority, expect and accept directions from their manager, and anticipate that the manager specifies the desired goals (Yu & Miller, 2005). Generally, people from the Babyboom generation are outcome oriented and believe in setting clearly articulated goals, they want to be asked their opinions and see results (Bower & Fidler, 1994). They also tend to have a drive for self reliance, personal fulfillment and social action (Tyler, 2007). Weston (2001) specified that employees from the Babyboom generation generally want to feel that they are contributing to their community and organizational growth, expect rewards for performance and appreciate empathetic supportive managers. Members of the Babyboom generation like to invest in lifelong learning, will contribute to a team they believe is doing valuable work and are willing to work long hours to insure success (Tyler, 2007).

The second oldest generation in the current workforce, born in 1965 till 1980, is called *Generation X* (Yu & Miller, 2005; Hu et al., 2004). Generally, both people from generation Babyboom and generation X appreciate individual considerations as well as motivating and supportive leaders, but people from generation X have less respect for authority, are less comfortable in a structured environment, less likely to agree with their manager's expectations and not as concerned with the formal organization (Farag et al., 2009). Generation X employees generally prefer a collaborative environment (Houlihan, 2008) also when it concerns decision-making (Weston, 2001; Wieck, Prydun & Walsh, 2002; Hu et al., 2004), while employees of the generation Babyboom are used to the leader giving a directive and then focusing on that one task until it is done (Houlihan, 2008). Members of generation X are on average more family oriented and place higher value on their work-life balance

(Houlihan, 2008; Tyler, 2007). They anticipate mentoring relationships while working with effective and knowledgeable leaders (Weston, 2001; Wieck et al., 2002; Hu et al., 2004). They generally want their manager to invest them in activities that help their personal growth and maturity and they look for self satisfaction (Yu & Miller, 2005). People from generation X like their manager to train and coach them, especially if it leads to career advancement, they appreciate autonomy, want their manager to inform them on the available resources and the required goals and then to leave them to function independently (Weston, 2001). Members of generation X, generally aim to get fast results (Houlihan, 2008) and want immediate feedback and gratification (Weston 2001; Wieck et al., 2002; Hu et al., 2004). Generally they work to get the job done (Tyler, 2007) and are focused on getting it done by relying on technology and multi-tasking (Houlihan, 2008; Tyler, 2007). On average they are also motivated by flexible work schedules and opportunities to express creative and new ideas (Tyler, 2007).

The youngest generation in the current workforce, people born after 1980, is called *Generation Y* (Hu et al., 2004), also known as the Millennial Generation, Millenials or Generation next. It is the demographic cohort following generation X and these people are the children of the Babyboom generation, who are the senior and leadership in organizations today. Members of generation Y are entering the workforce and create new challenges for leadership. They demand a different organizational culture to meet its needs. Organizations therefore face a balance to meet then new demands of this generation (Piper, 2008). Characteristics of this generation vary by region, depending on social and economic conditions. However, it is generally marked by an increased use and familiarity with communications, media and digital technologies. People from generation Y are on average more optimistic than people from generation X, which leads to pro-activeness and flexibility of mind (Woodward, 2009). Some of the characteristics that are mostly subscribed to generation Y employees are; sense of entitlement and the tendency to question everything, expectance to go straight to the top, self-absorbed and demanding, optimistic, no sense of loyalty to the job, friends and family are more important than work, need for recognition and appreciation on a daily basis, never faced struggle or sacrifice and low stress tolerance (Hira, 2007).

The work characteristics of the three generations, X, Y and Babyboom, as described above are an important issue for their leaders. As mentioned before, people from different generations are different in how they were raised in different socio-economical and political times and culture (Piper, 2008; Weston, 2001; Hu et al., 2004). The effects of these experiences tend to be relatively constant during people's lives (Smola & Sutton, 2002). And these key experiences in life create a unique personality of each generation (Smola & Sutton, 2002). Because of these facts, it can be assumed that growing up in a particular era influences the attitudes, ideas and values of an individual, which are shared by all people born during the same time period (Egri & Ralston, 2004; Joshi et al., 2010).

Cennamo and Gardner (2008) suggest that different generations have different work values because each generation started to work at another stage in time. This means that people from different generations might also have different expectations, preferences and ideas about leadership and how they prefer to be managed (Weston, 2001; McNeese-Smith & Crook, 2003). Research has proven that employees with different work characteristics prefer and will be more effective and productive with different leadership styles (Tulgan, 1996).

2.2 Leadership

Several studies (Yukl, 1989; Holleran, 2006; Kanter, 1993) state that research on leadership is an important and central part of the literature on management and organization behaviour for several years; the number of publications on this subject is still increasing and can be found in a large variety of journals in several disciplines. Because the behaviour of leaders can influence individuals within organizations but also the performance of the organization itself, it receives this much theoretical attention (Yukl, 1989; Holleran, 2006; Kanter, 1993). There are many definitions of leadership; it has been defined in terms of leader behaviour, individual traits, interaction patterns, follower perceptions, role relationships, influence on organizational culture, influence on task goals and influence over followers, there is no conceptual agreement or universal definition available of leadership and these different perspectives make leadership a complex, multifaceted phenomenon (Yukl, 1989). According to the meta-analysis of Yukl (1989) there is not one grand theory of leadership, but there are four general approaches to leadership effectiveness; power-influence approach, behaviour approach, trait approach and situational approach.'

This study looks at the path-goal theory of leadership which is a situational theory of leader effectiveness and is used to indicate leadership preferences and makes is therefore applicable in this study. Evans (1996) states that the path-goal theory; is a good theory of leadership, because it has been examined and adjusted frequently. This has led to the development of the current path-goal theory that consists of four distinctive leadership styles. These types of leadership behaviour are far apart from each other and are therefore able to distinguish different preferences for leadership. This study would like to examine what the preferences of three generations are for leadership, if this would be tested on a theory that consists of less than three types of leadership, it is inevitable that two or more generations prefer the same leadership style and would made it therefore more complicated to find differences between generations. Therefore the path-goal theory with its four distinctive leadership behaviours is appropriate for this study.

The Path-goal theory proposes that leaders motivate higher performance by acting in ways that influence subordinates to believe valued outcomes can be attained by making a serious effort. Aspects of the situation such as the nature of the task, subordinate attributes and work environment

determine the optimal amount of each type of leader behaviour for improving subordinate motivation, satisfaction and performance (Evans, 1970; House, 1971; House & Mitchell, 1974). House (1996) reformulated the path-goal theory in a later stadium to a meta proposition of leader behaviour that enhances subordinate empowerment, satisfaction and effectiveness and work unit. It addresses the effects of leaders on individual and work unit performance, but also on the abilities, environment and motivation of subordinates (House, 1996). The path-goal theory consists of four distinctive types of leader behaviour:

The first type of leader behaviour in the path goal theory is *directive leadership*; this is one form of clarifying leader behaviour. It is behaviour of a manager that directs towards providing psychological structure for subordinates by clarifying expectations of employees, gives specific guidance as to what and how it should be done, maintains definite standards of performance, goal attainment and task environment, schedules and coordinates work to be done, establishing communication networks, makes his or her part in the group understood and clarifies standard policies, procedures, regulations and rules (House 1971; House & Mitchell, 1974; Sims, Szilagyi & McKemey 1976; Larsen, 2010; House, 1996).

The second type of leader behaviour is called *supportive leadership*, this type of behaviour is directed towards the satisfaction of subordinates needs and preferences, a manager is approachable, helpful and friendly, does things to create a more pleasant work atmosphere, shows concern for the status, well-being of employees and treats members equally, creates a facilitative task environment of psychological support, mutual trust and respect, accentuates accomplishments of employees, looks out for their welfare, attempts to establish mutual interest and builds a team climate (House, 1971; House & Mitchell, 1974; Larsen, 2010; House, 1996).

The third type of leader behaviour of the path-goal theory is *participative leadership*, this type of leader behaviour is directed towards encouragement of subordinate influence on decision making and work unit operations; consulting with employees, solicits their suggestions and opinions and take these suggestions into consideration before making a decision, it lets employees share a significant degree of decision-making power with their superiors to increase congruence between employee goals and organizational goals, because employees have influence on their assigned goals and therefore would select goals they highly value, but also to increase employees involvement, commitment, autonomy and ability to carry out their intentions that lead to greater effort and performance (House, 1971; House & Mitchell 1974; House, 1996).

The last type of leader behaviour is *achievement-oriented leadership*, this behaviour is directed toward encouraging performance excellence by setting challenging goals, emphasizing achievement of difficult tasks, continuously seeking improvement, expecting employees to perform at their highest level and show a high degree of confidence that the employees will assume

responsibility, put forth effort, and accomplish challenging goals and attain high standards of performance, where a manager should create an environment in which employees have more confidence in their abilities to achieve their goals (House 1971; House & Mitchell 1974; House, 1996).

Each leadership style is more effective and productive in a different situation (Tulgan, 1996). The effectiveness and productiveness of a leadership style depends on the work values of different generations that are created by their common experiences (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008). But the success of a leadership style also depends on the ideas, expectations and preferences members of a specific generation have for leadership (Tulgan, 1996; Weston, 2001; McNeese-Smith & Crook, 2003).

2.3 Team climate

Looking at the different leadership styles it is interesting to find out what the expected influence is on team climate. Despite the growing interest in studying climate, there is conceptual inconsistency and ambiguity in defining, validating and measuring climate at work. Climate and culture have frequently been used interchangeably (Sleutel 2000). In efforts to distinguish between climate and culture, researchers have suggested that culture reflects the overall organizational values, norms and beliefs, whereas climate is how the employees perceive and feel about different practices and procedures within their organization (Sleutel, 2000). This study is interested in how people perceive and what they prefer in leadership, therefore climate is a more suitable subject to use in this study.

Team climate has an effect on the behaviour and interactions of its members (Anderson & West, 1998) and is characterized by open communication, allows experimentation with new ways of working and doing things, frequent and open exchanges of feedback and the practice of new skills without fear of appraisal (Anderson & West, 1998; Edmondson, 1999).

Several studies have shown that team leaders play an important role in influencing and creating a good team climate (Bono & Illies, 2006; Erez, Misangyi, Johnson, LePine, & Halverson, 2008; Johnson, 2008; Sy, Cote, & Saavedra, 2005). Specifically, some studies have shown the importance of leadership styles and leaders' characteristics (Bono & Illies, 2006; Pescosolido, 2002; Popper, 2004). Fiol, Harris and House (1999), state that a manager who cares about and discusses team functioning and team work should enhance a positive climate. Consequently it is expected that leaders that frequently interact with team members and discuss work related issues will have a higher impact on a good team climate than leaders that do not. The relationship between a manager and a good team climate depends on the team perceptions of the leaders' influence to decide about the team's work and the frequency with which the leader interacts with the team (Baeza et al., 2009). The manager should also be held responsible for an environment characterized by trust, in which attention goes out to respectful behaviour and trusting relationships among members, because trust

has shown to be an important factor of a good team climate (Anderson & West, 1998; Edmondson, 1999; Al-Beraidi, 2003; Bierhoff & Müller, 2005; Heinz, Baga, Gebert & Kearney, 2006).

Researchers often use the study of Litwin and Stringer (1968) to define climate as “a set of measurable properties of work environment, perceived directly or indirectly by the people who live and work in this environment and assumed to influence their motivation and behaviour” (p. 1). They identified nine dimensions of climate. But more recently Houldsworth and Machin (2008) suggested that a six-factor structure would be more appropriate and revised it to the factors of: flexibility, responsibility, standards, rewards, clarity and team commitment. Flexibility is achieved by minimizing bureaucracy and encouraging innovation. Second, responsibility is achieved when there is sufficient autonomy and reasonable risk taking is encouraged. Excellence is the standard in the third factor where continual improvement is encouraged. The fourth dimension of climate is rewards; good performance is recognised and this recognition or rewards are performance based. Clarity is the fifth factor of climate where the work unit’s mission is clear and how roles relate to it are understood. The last dimension is team commitment; this occurs when there is pride, dedication and cooperation among work unit members (Houldsworth and Machin, 2008). This six factor structure of team climate is used to answer the following sub research question; *What behaviour or qualities should a leader poses to ensure a good team climate?*

3. Method

3.1 Research design

This is an explorative study, because it is designed to understand underlying concepts, values and norms of the participants in this study (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). The aim of this study is to understand what the preferences of employees (the underlying values and norms) from different generations for leadership are and how these generations expect that this relationship influences team climate. This explorative study involves a number of broad questions, derived from the research question, which encourages the participants to express and explain their preferences (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Because this is an explorative study, the research questions will therefore be examined in a qualitative manner. This is done by acquiring data by means of focusgroups.

A focusgroup is a qualitative research method that obtains information through interviews from a group of individuals or a team that is managed by one or two moderators (Hannum, 2004) that actively encourage group interaction (Barbour & Kitzinger, 1999). Focusgroups are group discussions exploring a specific set of issues, focusing by involving some kind of collective activity, such as debating a set of questions (Barbour & Kitzinger, 1999). Participants in focusgroups have an interactive discussion and share information from their personal experience about the specific, focused topic of research (Hannum, 2004), which will be the preferences for leadership of different generations in this study. In focusgroups the managed interaction between participants is used to generate the rich details of complex experiences and the reasoning behind their actions, values, assumptions, expectations, attitudes, perceptions, emotions and behaviours (Hannum, 2004; Gibbs, 1997). Hannum (2004) argues that this method can be used to explore new ideas. It uses explicitly the interaction of the group to gather insights and data that are less accessible without interaction. By observation of this interaction it is possible to gain insight into the group dynamics. Participants were encouraged to determine to what extent they have the same or different ideas and experiences of leadership compared to others. The participants were able in the focusgroups to express their feelings, ideas and opinions about leadership and had a discussion in which they could react and interact on each other's statements. Because of this discussion, participants were able to come up with ideas, feelings, opinions and memories which they might not have had when answering a survey or participating in an interview. This is an important reason why this study included focusgroups as research instrument. Because focusgroups are useful when it comes to investigating what participants prefer and think. It is a good instrument to study the research question; to gain insight into the thoughts of and preferences for leadership style of different generations. And by observation of interaction between participants it is possible to conclude if people from different

generations have the same or different preferences for leadership styles and what impact this has on team climate.

When using focusgroups to collect qualitative data it is important to take into account that managing the selection of the participants can become an issue and therefore also the number of participations (Hannum, 2004). In the next part of this method, it is explained how this study dealt with this issue.

3.2 Sample

To be able to answer the research question, focusgroups were held within Philips Electronics NV. First, data about the distribution of age groups within the organization was collected from an internal personnel data system called "PMS". In this system all employees in the Benelux that work for Philips were included. This resulted in an enormous amount of data (14.000 employees). The decision was made to concentrate only on one of the three sectors of Philips; Lighting, Consumer Lifestyle or Healthcare. This study focussed on the sector Lighting, which had 3206 employees at 3 January 2011, when the download of the personnel data system was made. Analysing the data from the download made it able to draw conclusions upon the presence of employees of different generations (Babyboom, X and Y) within Philips Lighting. The focus on one sector of Philips, Lighting, was a convenience sample. This is because the sample could be drawn from this part of the population due to the fact it was close to hand and readily available made it therefore easier to approach and reach employees.

To coordinate the group discussions there were two moderators that presented the open ended questions and coordinated the discussion during the focusgroups. In appendix I the discussion guide can be found; seven questions were set up beforehand to keep the discussion going and made the researchers able to gain information about preferences for leadership by the employees.

Focusgroups can be homogeneous and heterogeneous. When the focusgroups are more homogeneous it reduces conflicts and creates an environment for productive discussion. In this case a homogeneous group mean that based on demographic characteristics, generations, there is not much variation. When the purpose of the research is to compare opposite opinions or experiences, then it is better to form heterogeneous groups (Lucassen & Olde-Hartman, 2007). Both homogeneous and heterogeneous groups are present in this study. This is done because these different types of groups serve these different purposes (Lucassen & Olde-Hartman, 2007), which made it possible to have productive discussions and compare opposite opinions or experiences. The presence of both homogeneous and heterogeneous groups made it able to see if participants gave different answers when the composition of the group differs. The number of focusgroups is normally determined by the data collection and depends on the given situation. When you have high

homogeneity within groups you need less groups, with heterogeneous groups you need more groups (Lucassen & Olde-Hartman, 2007). Scientific literature does not show a direction of exact number of focusgroups that are needed or common in specific situations. But for this study, eight focusgroups were organized. These focusgroups lasted one hour each, which is most common, because most studies use a focusgroup that lasts one to two hours (Morgan, 1997).

The sample size can be determined by many things, including time and budget (Lucassen & Olde-Hartman, 2007). Hannum (2004) states that focusgroups mostly have a minimum of four and a maximum of fifteen participants (Hannum, 2004), therefore the aim was to have a participation rate of around ten people in every focusgroup in this study and at least four and not more than fifteen participants.

A total of 201 employees of Philips Lighting were randomly approached via email, with short information about the topic, and were asked to participate in the focusgroups. All participants were office workers, all from different function types and different hierarchies, from assistants to managers. Besides sending email invitations also posters were placed at coffee corners at different locations of Philips Lighting, to draw attention to the focusgroups and asked employees to participate in the discussions.

As presented in table 1, a total 74 employees of Philips Lighting, of the 201 employees that were approached, accepted the invitation and participated in the focusgroups; twenty-two employees of generation Y, twenty-one employees of generation X and thirty-one employees of the Babyboom generation. In the two focusgroups that were mixed, heterogeneous groups, employees from all generations participated. The first heterogeneous group had fourteen participants in total, of which seven employees were from the Babyboom generation, two from generation X and five from generation Y. The second heterogeneous group also contained a total of fourteen participants; eight people from the Babyboom generation, five from generation X and one employee from generation Y.

Table 1. Participants Focusgroups

Focusgroups	# total Participants	# Participants Generation Y	# Participants Generation X	# Participants Generation B
Heterogeneous group1	14	1	5	8
Heterogeneous group2	14	5	2	7
Generation Y1	12	12	0	0
Generation Y2	4	4	0	0
Generation X1	8	0	8	0
Generation X2	6	0	6	0
Generation B1	10	0	0	10
Generation B2	6	0	0	6
Total	74	22	21	31

3.3 Data analysis

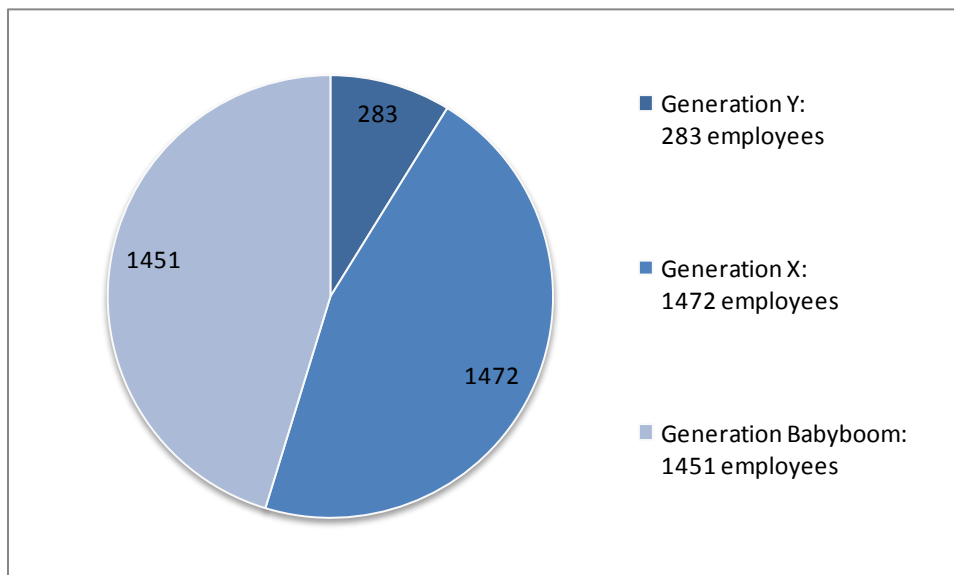
During the focusgroups, two researchers wrote down the comments, but also voice recorders were used to collect the data. The audio data was then transcribed as fully as possible. Before the focusgroups were held, keywords that came up from the theory were listed. After the focusgroups were held this list was completed. The list of keywords (appendix III) was used as codes to label the transcripts of the data from the voice recorders, the transcripts were coded three times by different researchers. Theoretical driven codes (given by the researchers based on the theory, by using the interview topics as labels) as well as in-vivo codes (based on the words of the respondents) (Mortelmans, 2007: 383) were then allocated to the sentences. In this way patterns of answers within a certain question were clarified (Swanborn, 1999). Data reduction is a central task in qualitative analysis (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003) which is done by paring and categorizing statements to their core meaning.

Also the reliability of the research findings was taken into account, because it is important to see if the findings of this study are consistent, can be confirmed and trusted (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). The reliability of the findings depends on the likely recurrence of the original data and the way they are interpreted by the researchers (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). This study explicitly paid attention to the inter-rater reliability: the homogeneous groups were easier to transcribe and code, because all participants were from the same generation. But in the heterogeneous groups, employees from different generations participated, the participants were asked to state the name of the generation they belong to before giving their opinion and sharing their preferences for leadership, therefore it made it easier for the researchers to code the voice recorder data. Additionally, there were also two people that typed out the comments on their laptop with a note of which generation made which comment. To analyse the data obtained by focusgroups, a software programme called Nvivo was used. This is a tool that helps coding and analyzing qualitative data. To ensure inter-rater reliability, all transcripts of the focusgroups were coded three times by the three researchers separately and then discussed together to conclude to the final codes. After that, the results explained in the next paragraph could be derived from it.

4. Results

Data about the distribution of age groups within the organization was collected from an internal personnel data system at Philips, called “PMS”. The decision was to include all employees of Philips Lighting Benelux, which had 3206 employees at 3 January 2011 when the download of the personnel data system was made. Analysing the data from the download made it able to draw conclusions upon the presence of employees of different generations (Babyboom, X and Y) within Philips Lighting. As presented in figure 1, generation Y is underrepresented with 283 employees that are born after 1980. Philips Lighting had at the time of the download 1472 people in generation X and there were 1451 people in the Babyboom generation.

Figure 1. Results: distribution generations Philips Lighting Benelux



4.1 Leadership

In total 727 useful statements on leadership styles were derived from the focusgroups. This means an average of 9,8 statements per participant and an average of 90,9 statements per focusgroup. These statements have then been categorized and labeled into 57 categories (appendix III) and into four clusters based on the path goal theory used in this study, consisting of directive, supportive, participative and achievement-oriented leadership style.

Table 2. Results: Preferences of generations for leadership style

Generation	Rank	Leadership style	# Statements	Percentage
Y 329 statements				
	4	Directive	39	11,9%
	1	Supportive	124	37,7%
	3	Participative	80	24,3%
	2	Achievement-oriented	86	26,1%
X 134 statements				
	4	Directive	18	13,4%
	1	Supportive	66	49,3%
	3	Participative	22	16,4%
	2	Achievement-oriented	28	20,9%
B 264 statements				
	4	Directive	46	17,4%
	1	Supportive	116	43,9%
	2	Participative	52	19,7%
	3	Achievement-oriented	50	18,9%

In table 2 the ranking of the preferences of the three generations for the four leadership styles is presented. The supportive leadership style is the most preferred (Y: 37,7%; X: 49,3%; B: 43,9%) and directive leadership the least (Y: 11,9%; X: 13,4%; B: 17,4%) by all generations. But in second and third place there are some deviations between the preferences of people from the three generations. Both people from generation Y (26,1%) and X (20,9%) prefer the achievement-oriented leadership style second most, where people from the Babyboom generation rank this leadership style as third (18,9%) and place participative (19,7%) in second place of most preferred leadership style.

From all four leadership styles some results related to the three different generations can be derived. As an overview the results which have been gathered in this study are presented in the following table:

Table 3. Results: Deviation of generations within leadership style

Leadership style	# Statements	Generation	# Statements	Percentage table 2	Weighed percentage
Directive 14,24%	103	Y	39	11,9%	27,9%
		X	18	13,4%	31,4%
		B	46	17,4%	40,7%
Supportive 43,63%	306	Y	124	37,7%	28,8%
		X	66	49,3%	37,7%
		B	116	43,9%	33,5%
Participative 20,14%	154	Y	80	24,3%	40,2%
		X	22	16,4%	27,2%
		B	52	19,7%	32,6%
Achievement-oriented 21,99%	164	Y	86	26,1%	39,6%
		X	28	20,9%	31,7%
		B	50	18,9%	28,7%

Directive leadership style

As shown in Table 3, compared to the three other leadership styles, all generations are the least attracted to the directive leadership style. From the three generations the people from the Babyboom generation prefer this type of leadership the most (40,7%). In second place generation X prefers this leadership style the most (31,4%) and people from generation Y find this leadership style the least attractive (27,9%) compared to the other two generations.

The directive leadership style has a total of 103 statements and consists of twelve categories. The category “clarify expectations” is mentioned most frequent, 25 times, (Appendix II) within this cluster. An example of a statement in this category is:

Ik vind het ten eerste heel belangrijk dat een manager duidelijk tegen mij is. Als hij mij op een duidelijke manier weet te vertellen welke kant we op gaan met dit bedrijf en wat hij van ons verwacht, dat scheelt al een hele hoop. Door structuur aan te brengen in het werk wordt het voor ons allemaal makkelijker gemaakt.

Supportive leadership style

From the four leadership styles in this study, all generations prefer the supportive leadership style the most (Table 3). People from generation X prefer this type of leadership the most (37,7%), followed by generation Babyboom (33,5%). People from generation Y prefer supportive leadership style the least (28,8%) compared to people from the Babyboom and X generation.

Supportive leadership has a total of 306 statements and contains of nineteen categories. Within this cluster the category “Attention to preferences” is the most preferred category, mentioned 34 times (Appendix II) by all participants. Two examples of a statement in this category are:

Ik vind het fijn als er aan mij wordt gevraagd, wat vind je leuk? En dat we dan samen een plan uitzetten, he, de manager en ik, om te kijken hoe ik me kan ontwikkelen, hoe ik snel kan doorgroeien en kan leren, mezelf kan ontwikkelen dus. Dat mij kansen worden gegeven en dat ik ingezet wordt op dingen waar dat bij aansluit. Zodat ik enthousiast wordt gehouden.

Ik denk dat het persoonlijk is als iemand uitgedaagd wil worden en misschien wil de andere persoon niet uitgedaagd worden. Ik denk dat het een van de kwaliteiten van de manager zou moeten zijn hoe zijn werknemer is en wat hij wil. Misschien moet deze persoon uitgedaagd worden en dan is het oke dat hij probeert te begrijpen hoe deze persoon is en wat hij wil en dat kan verschillend zijn voor iedere werknemer. Dat is wat ik denk een van de kwaliteiten van een goede manager om te begrijpen wie iemand is en wat hij wil in zijn werk en wat hij niet wil in zijn werk.

Participative leadership style

People from generation Y prefer the participative leadership style the most (40,2%), followed by generation Babyboom (32,6%). People from generation X prefer this leadership style the least (27,2%) compared to people from generation Y and Babyboom (Table 3).

Participative leadership has a total of 154 statements and consists of eleven categories. The most frequently mentioned category is “increase autonomy employee” which has 45 statements (Appendix II) of participants that prefer attention to increase of autonomy. Two examples of a statement in this category are:

Ja ik vind het ook belangrijk dat ik zelf verantwoordelijkheid kan nemen, dat mij de vrijheid wordt gegeven, hè dat ik zelf ook een groot deel van het risico draag.

Een manager mag me ook wel mijn gang laten gaan. Dat ik wordt gevraagd iets te doen en dat ik daarbij zelf de autonomie heb om te beslissingen op welke manier ik dat aanpak. Als we van tevoren goed met elkaar communiceren zodat er geen misverstanden ontstaan, dan kan ik lekker mijn werk doen.

Achievement-oriented leadership style

Achievement-oriented leadership style is most preferred by the people from generation Y (39,6%), second by the people from the X generation (31,7%) and people from generation Babyboom prefer this leadership style the least (28,7%).

Achievement-oriented leadership has a total of 164 statements and fifteen categories. Within this cluster “confidence in employees” is mentioned most frequently, namely 36 times (Appendix II). An example of a statement in this cluster is:

De leiders moeten kunnen vertrouwen op de mensen die onder hun zitten bij de mensen die wel dichterbij het dagelijks reilen zeilen zitten en die moeten ze, ja volgen is niet het juiste woord, maar dingen aannemen en dat heeft te maken met vertrouwen.

It can be concluded that in general (Table 3) the supportive leadership style is the most preferred leadership style of all (43,63%), the second most preferred leadership style is the achievement-oriented style (21,99%). Participative leadership can be ranked as third most preferred leadership style (20,14%) and the directive leadership style is the least preferred in general (14,24%).

4.2 Team climate

A total of 406 useful statements on team climate were derived from the focusgroups. This means an average of 5,5 statements per participant and an average of 50,8 statements per focusgroup. These statements have then been categorized and labeled into 6 categories based on the theoretical framework of this study, namely flexibility, responsibility, standards, rewards, clarity and team commitment (Table 4).

Table 4. Results: Generations- Team Climate

Team Climate	Generation	# Statements	Total statements	Weighed percentage	Rank per generation
Flexibility 52 statements	Y	14	111	12,6%	4
	X	21	121	17,4%	4
	B	17	174	9,8%	5
Responsibility 73 statements	Y	13	111	11,7%	5
	X	28	121	23,1%	2
	B	32	174	18,4%	3
Standards 36 statements	Y	19	111	17,1%	3
	X	7	121	5,8%	5
	B	10	174	5,7%	6
Rewards 35 statements	Y	8	111	7,2%	6
	X	3	121	2,5%	6
	B	24	174	13,8%	4
Clarity 99 statements	Y	24	111	21,6%	2
	X	28	121	23,1%	2
	B	47	174	27,0%	1
Team commitment 111 statements	Y	33	111	29,7%	1
	X	34	121	28,1%	1
	B	44	174	25,3%	2

The category; *team commitment* is the most frequently mentioned (111 statements). When comparing the preferences of the three generations within this category, people from generation Y preferred this category the most (29,7%). People from generation X (28,1%) preferred it less and people from the Babyboom generation preferred this category the least (25,3%) compared to the other two generations. Two examples of statements in this category are:

Ik vind het gewoon belangrijk dat een leider mensen bij elkaar kan brengen en die mensen met elkaar kan verbinden. Zodat mensen het gevoel hebben dat ze voor hetzelfde doel gaan. En daarmee krijg je de efficiëntie en ook de expertise die je nodig hebt. Kijk en dat moet je uit verschillende mensen halen. Want niet iedereen kan alles. Het is dus de kracht de juiste mensen bij elkaar te halen zodat dat goed... zo dat dat samen goed werkt.

Nou niet alleen maar zeggen "dit" moet er gedaan worden maar dat je daarin ook echt ondersteund en helpt. Dat die helpt met aanpakken en samen één kant uit gaat. Het team bij elkaar houden formeel en informeel.

As shown in Table 4, people from generation Y find the category *team commitment* the most important factor of team climate (29,7%), they mentioned the category *rewards* the least (7,2%). Also people from generation X find the category *team commitment* the most important (28,1%) and *rewards* (2,5%) the least important. People from generation Babyboom disagree and find the category *clarity* the most important (27,0%) and find the category *standards* (5,7%) the least important. It can be concluded that, as also shown in the last column of Table 4, *clarity* and *team commitment* are the two most preferred categories of team climate and *standards* and *rewards* are the least preferred.

4.3 Other findings

The literature discussed in the theoretical framework indicated that *trust* also is an important factor of team climate. Although this factor is not included in the six-factor structure of Houldsworth and Machin (2008), it is decided to code the data on *trust* as well. The results of this coding (table 5) show that *trust* has even more statements (148) than the most frequent mentioned category of the six-factor structure *team commitment* (111). This confirms the literature discussed in the theoretical framework, that *trust* is an important factor of team climate. Two examples of statements derived from the focusgroups on *trust* are:

Je zal wederzijds vertrouwen moeten hebben, hij zal vertrouwen dat jij dat probleem wel oplost, maar omgekeerd jij moet vertrouwen hebben dat hij de zaak wel goed organiseert.

Het is belangrijk dat je respect hebt voor elkaar ook al ben je het niet met elkaar eens.

When comparing the statements on *Trust* with the total statements given on team climate (Table 5), including the results from Table 4, it shows that people from generation X relatively find *trust* the most important (31,6%), generation Babyboom second (26,6%) and people from generation Y find *trust* the least important (20,7%) compared to the people from the other two generations. When comparing these percentages of *trust* with the percentages of *team commitment*, it shows that people from generation X and Babyboom find *trust* (31,6%; 26,6%) more important factor of team climate than *team commitment* (28,1%; 25,3%). But people from generation Y find *team commitment* (29,7%) more important than *trust* (20,7%).

Table 5. Results: Generations- Trust

<u>Team Climate</u>	<u>Generation</u>	<u># Statements</u>	<u>Total statements</u>	<u>Weighed percentage</u>
Trust 148 statements	Y	29	140	20,7%
	X	56	177	31,6%
	B	63	237	26,6%

Another interesting finding of this study is that during the discussions in the focusgroups it seemed that people from different generations think in a stereotyped manner of other generations. Three examples of this are:

Jongere mensen zijn minder impressed by authority denk ik en ook meer flexibel

Als je bekijkt dan denk ik dat mensen van oudere leeftijd eerder status en leidinggevend en op een sturende manier eerder accepteren dan jongere mensen, dat zie ik wel in mijn werkomgeving

En als ik dan naar de jongeren generatie kijk dan gaan die daar weer heel anders mee om. Ik zit ook thuis te werken maar ik heb iets van dat doe ik liever niet, maar jongere generaties maakt dat niet uit die zitten heel de tijd met dat ding rond te lopen met die blackberry enzo.

5. Conclusion and Discussion

The purpose of this research was to examine what the differences and similarities between leadership preferences for people of different generations are and how these generations expect that this relationship influences team climate. To explore these preferences, eight focusgroups have been conducted with employees of Philips Lighting Benelux. The focusgroups provided awareness on how to manage employees from different generations and provided insight for managers on how to adapt their leadership style to be as effective as possible.

The main conclusion from this study is that the supportive leadership style is the most preferred by people from all generations. This is surprising, because as stated in the literature, between the three generations there are differences in thoughts, behavior (Mannheim, 1952; Piper, 2008; Weston, 2001; Hu et al., 2004), attitudes, ideas and values (Egri & Ralston, 2004; Joshi et al., 2010), but also in work values (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008) and preferences for leadership (Weston, 2001; McNeese-Smith & Crook, 2003). Research has proven that employees with different work characteristics prefer and will be more effective and productive with different leadership styles (Tulgan, 1996). But the results of this study show that all people, indifferent to which generation they belong, prefer the supportive leadership style of the path goal theory the most. It seems that the behavioural characteristics of the supportive leadership style fit the preferences of all three generations the best. The fact that all people prefer the supportive leadership style the most can be explained by the fact that the current environment and period influence employees more than their time of birth and past life experiences, because the time we live in now is the experience all generations share. A second explanation could be that this study is done within only one company and therefore people show common characteristics and preferences because of their work environment.

It can be concluded that the directive leadership style is the least preferred leadership style by all three generations. Although directive leadership is the least preferred leadership style according to the participating people from the Babyboom generation, they did prefer it more than people from generation Y and X. This is consistent with the literature on the characteristics of the Babyboom generation that states that they respect authority, expect and accept directions from their manager, anticipate that the manager specifies the desired goals (Yu & Miller, 2005) and that they believe in setting clearly articulated goals (Bower & Fidler, 1994). These characteristics fit with most of the characteristics of directive leadership style of the path goal theory; clarifying expectations of employees, giving specific guidance as to what and how work should be done, goal attainment and task environment, scheduling and coordinating work to be done, clarifying standard policies, procedures, regulations and rules (House 1971; House & Mitchell, 1974; Sims, Szilagyi &

McKemey 1976; Larsen, 2010; House, 1996). Generation Babyboom did prefer the directive leadership style more than the other two generations, but preferred the supportive leadership style the most. This can be explained by literature that states that people from the Babyboom generation also appreciate empathetic supportive managers, which is in line with the supportive leadership style (Weston, 2001; Farag et al., 2009).

As for the supportive and directive leadership style it is easy to say that they are the most and the least preferred leadership styles by all people indifferent from which generation they are. But for participative and achievement-oriented leadership style this is not the case. There are some deviations between the preferences of people from the three generations. Both people from generation Y and X prefer the achievement-oriented leadership style more than the participative leadership style, where people from generation Babyboom find the participative leadership style more attractive than the achievement-oriented leadership style. This can be explained by the fact that people from the Babyboom generation are the oldest employees within the organization, with the most experience. Within the participative leadership style they get the opportunity to do something with their knowledge build from experience, they get the opportunity to be part in the decision making and share their suggestions, ideas and opinions (House, 1971; House & Mitchell 1974; House, 1996). This they prefer more than the achievement-oriented leadership style, in which continuous improvement and focus on performance is important (House 1971; House & Mitchell 1974; House, 1996). Older employees seem to find this less important than the younger employees (people from generation Y and X).

When looking at what behaviour or qualities a leader should poses to ensure a good team climate, it can be concluded that factor *rewards* (recognition performance) and *standards* (continual improvement) are found to be the least important factors of team climate. The factors *rewards* and *standards* do not fit the description of the most preferred leader behavior; supportive leadership. This confirms that all three generations expect that *rewards* and *standards* are the least important factors of team climate and should paid less attention to by the managers. The three generations agree that both *team commitment* and *clarity* are the two main important factors of the six factor theory of team climate. From these results it can be concluded that employees would like to see their manager pay attention to team commitment and clarity in mission and roles to ensure a good team climate. *Team commitment* occurs when there is pride, dedication and cooperation among work unit members (Houldsworth & Machin, 2008). These characteristics fit with the description of the most preferred leadership style, supportive leadership; where a manager is helpful, creates a pleasant work atmosphere, mutual trust, respect and interests and builds a team climate (House, 1971; House & Mitchell, 1974; Larsen, 2010; House, 1996). This confirms that it is expected that the supportive leadership style has a positive influence on team climate. *Clarity*, clear work unit mission

and how roles relate to it (Houldsworth & Machin, 2008), does not match with the supportive leadership style completely, but has a better fit with the directive leadership style which is a form of clarifying behavior; where expectations, roles, policies, procedures, regulations and rules are clarified (House 1971; House & Mitchell, 1974; Sims, Szilagyi & McKemey 1976; Larsen, 2010; House, 1996). Why *Clarity* nevertheless is mentioned as an important factor of team climate, might be explained by the organizational changes the organization in which the data was gathered experienced. These changes might have brought uncertainty and employees would like to have clarity on what the new mission of the organization is and what this means for them in their role.

As literature discussed in the theoretical framework already indicated, *trust* is also an important factor of team climate. The manager should be held responsible for an environment characterized by *trust*, in which attention goes out to respectful behaviour and trusting relationships among members (Anderson & West, 1998; Edmondson, 1999; Al-Beraidi, 2003; Bierhoff & Müller, 2005; Heinz, Baga, Gebert & Kearney, 2006). This was the reason to include this factor in this study as well, although it is not one of the six factors according to Houldsworth and Machin (2008). The description of *trust* fits with the description of the most preferred leadership style, supportive leadership, in which attention goes out to mutual trust and respect (House, 1971; House & Mitchell, 1974; Larsen, 2010; House, 1996). And therefore confirms that it is expected that the supportive leadership style has a positive influence on team climate. It can be concluded that *trust* is even found more important than *team commitment* by people from generation Babyboom and X. Only people from generation Y found *team commitment* a bit more important, but still rank *trust* in second place. These results confirm the literature that *trust* is also an important factor of climate. It might be interesting for future research to study the impact of adding a seventh factor to the six factor model of team climate of Houldsworth and Machin (2008), namely *trust*. Because this study has proven that *trust* is an important appreciated factor of team climate as well.

5.1 Limitations and recommendations

This study has some limitations; some caution is needed with the interpretation of the results.

One of these limitations is the fact that this a case study because the sample was set out in one company, Philips Lighting. Therefore the conclusions obtained from the available data derived from the focusgroups cannot be freely generalized to other situations, companies or workers.

It can also be discussed whether the number of focusgroups is sufficient and information saturation was achieved. Future research should create a larger sample with more focusgroups, probably conducted in different organizations, that might support the conclusions drawn from this study and would make it more feasible to generalize the results. In this study both homogeneous and

heterogeneous focusgroups were present, but this study did not compare if the answers given by people from different generations differed when they participated in a heterogeneous or homogeneous group. It might be interesting to have more than two heterogeneous focusgroups and two focusgroups per generation, homogeneous groups, to be able to draw a conclusion if participants gave different answers when the composition of the group differs. Also more control over the composition of the heterogeneous groups is recommended, because in this study not all generations were equally represented in these groups (Table 1).

Subsequently, it might also be interesting for future research to see if interviews with only one participant show the same results, because in focusgroups there is less control on the participation of every individual. It might be that some people felt uncomfortable to express their opinions in the presence of other participants, which might have influenced their active role in the discussion.

It is also important to take into account that although the transcripts were coded three times by three different researchers separately and then discussed it together to come to the final coding, the interpretation of the data derived from the focusgroups is subjective. The inter-rater reliability is taken into account by this way of coding, but unfortunately some data was lost and made it therefore impossible to make the calculations of a inter-rater reliability, for example by calculating kappa.

Further, it must be noted that other aspects of diversity, such as gender, race and function (Tyler, 2007) are not taken into account in this study. It might be interesting to know if then the preferences of people from different generations differ. Also by applying this research in different branches or companies might show different results.

Finally, it is also important to take into account that the characteristics of the three generations are sensitive for stereotyping and that is something we need to be aware of, because not every member of a generation thinks or acts exactly alike. We need to keep in mind that the characteristics described are general trends on group level that allow for large individual diversity within the group.

5.2 Implications for practice

The organization that participated in this study needs to create an environment of support for applying the right kind of leadership style. It is also important to make everyone, not only managers, be aware of the fact that people from different age groups do not differ so much in their preferences for leadership. Tyler (2007) also states that many generations feel like they are not respected by other generations and often feel they are discriminated because of their age (age bias). The older generation complains that the people from a younger generation are speed-obsessed, too

informal and casual, unappreciative of traditional ways of doing things and technology dependent. But the younger generations complain that the older people are out-of-date, are not willing to take risks and are computer illiterate (Tyler, 2007). Everyone needs to be aware of this possible stereotyping behaviour and open their minds to what people really think, value or prefer. Especially when managers would like to manage their subordinates effectively, they need to pay attention to this. Also managers should be aware of the fact that the supportive leadership is the most preferred leadership style. Consequently the managers should be trained in how to apply this type of leadership.

5.3 Overall conclusion

From this study it can be concluded that in general the supportive leadership style is the most preferred leadership style of all; the second most preferred leadership style by all generations is the achievement-oriented style. Participative leadership can be ranked as third most preferred leadership style and the directive leadership style is the least preferred style in general. It can also be concluded that team commitment and clarity are the two main important factors of the six factor theory of team climate.

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Appendix I

Discussion Guide

Preparation (15 min.)

Set up meeting room and test the presentation equipment.

Introduction of focus group (5 min.)

- Greeting, introduction by using powerpoint presentation
- Purpose of focusgroups
- Explain ground rules
- Role of moderator
- Recording equipment
- Confidentiality of comments
- Individual opinions (no right or wrong)
- Speak one at a time as clearly as possible and listen to each other

Warming-up discussion (5 min)

Introduction of the subject:

Relevance of the discussion and topic

Questions (45 min)

What are important characteristics of a leader?

What behavior or qualities should a leader poses to ensure a good work and team climate or culture?

What behavior or qualities should a leader poses to ensure high or good performance?

What behavior or qualities should a leader poses to ensure high satisfaction?

What behavior or qualities should a leader poses to ensure high engagement?

What behavior or qualities should a leader poses to ensure a good work-life balance?

What behavior or qualities should a leader poses to ensure trust?

Closing session (5 min)

Short summarize outcomes focus group

Any questions and comments

Thank respondents

Evaluation

After the participants have left, the researchers evaluate the focus group.

Appendix II

Code scheme

English	Dutch	# Statements
Directive leadership style		
1. Psychological structure employees	1. Psychologische structuur werknemers	4
2. Grip	2. Houvast	3
3. Clarify expectations	3. Verduidelijken van verwachtingen	25
4. Clarify perception employee	4. Verduidelijken van perceptie werknemer	12
5. Maintain standard performance	5. Behouden van standaard prestatie	0
6. Schedule work	6. Inroosteren van werk	0
7. Planning work	7. Plannen van werk	0
8. Coordinate work	8. Coördineren van werk	3
9. Giving specific guidance	9. Het geven van specifieke begeleiding	13
10. Clarify policies, rules and procedures	10. Verduidelijken van beleid, regels en procedures	24
11. Extrinsic reward (salary, promotion, job security)	11. Extrinsieke beloning (salaris, promotie, baan zekerheid)	3
12. Expected to do	12. Verwacht wordt te doen	16
English	Dutch	# Statements
Supportive leadership style		
1. Approachable	1. Manager is benaderbaar	28
2. Helpful	2. Manager is hulpvaardig	16
3. Friendly	3. Manager is vriendelijk	4
4. Attention to satisfaction	4. Aandacht voor tevredenheid werknemers	9
5. Attention to well-being/ welfare employees	5. Aandacht voor welzijn/gezondheid werknemer	21
6. Attention to needs	6. Aandacht voor behoeftigheden werknemers	28
7. Attention to preferences	7. Aandacht voor voorkeuren werknemers	34
7. Creating friendly supportive work environment	7. Creëren vriendelijke ondersteunende werkomgeving	30
8. Treats employees equally	8. Behandeld werknemers gelijk	12
9. Mutual respect	9. Wederzijds respect	14
10. Mutual trust	10. Wederzijds vertrouwen	25
11. Giving confidence	11. Zelfvertrouwen geven	18
12. Giving social satisfaction	12. Geven van sociale tevredenheid	17
13. Reducing stress	13. Reduceren van stress van werknemers	5
14. Alleviate frustrations	14. Verlichten van frustratie van werknemers	2
15. Increase performance	15. Verbeteren prestaties	9
16. Increase dignity	16. Vergroten waardigheid	11
17. Establish mutual interest	17. Bewerkstelligen wederzijdse belangen	6
18. Coaching	18. Coaching	17
English	Dutch	# Statements
Participative leadership style		
1. Consult employee	1. Raadplegen werknemers	20
2. Solicit suggestions employees	2. Vragen naar suggesties werknemers	4
3. Including suggestions employee	3. Suggesties meenemen	10
4. Considering suggestions	4. Suggesties overwegen	7
5. Encourage participation decision making	5. Aanmoediging werknemer participatie in beslissingen	10
6. Increase decision influence employee	6. Verhogen invloed beslissing werknemers	8
7. Opinion employee about decision	7. Mening werknemer over besluit	8
8. Increasing involvement of employees	8. Verhoog betrokkenheid werknemer	17
9. Increase cooperation employee	9. Verhoog medewerking werknemer	9
10. Increase autonomy employee	10. Verhoog autonomie werknemer	45
11. Increasing empowerment employee	11. Verhoog empowerment/macht werknemer	16
English	Dutch	# Statements
Achievement-oriented leadership style		
1. Encouraging excellent performance	1. Aanmoedigen excellente prestatie	16
2. High standards performance.	2. Hoge standaarden van prestatie	5
3. Setting challenging targets	3. Stellen van uitdagende doelen	24
4. Setting a mission	4. Stellen van missie	11
5. Setting targets	5. Stellen van targets	6
6. Continuously seeking improvement	6. Continu zoeken naar verbetering	17
7. Continue increase performance	7. Continue toename/progressie in prestatie	6
8. Emphasizing accomplish difficult tasks	8. Nadruk behalen moeilijke taken	1
9. Expect highest level performance	9. Verwacht dat werknemer presteren op hoogste niveau	4
10. Radiates self confidence	10. Straalt zelfvertrouwen uit	0
11. Confidence in employees	11. Vertrouwen in werknemers	35
12. Create environment confidence employees in their abilities to achieve their goals	12. Creëren van omgeving waarin werknemers vertrouwen hebben in hun vaardigheden om doelen te bereiken.	11
13. Increase responsibility employee	13. Zorgen voor verhoging van verantwoordelijkheid	19
14. Shows much effort	14. Toont veel inspanning	1
15. Achieve challenging targets	15. Bereiken/bewerkstelligen uitdagende doelen	8

English	Dutch	# Statements
Team climate		
Flexibility	Flexibiliteit	52
Minimizing bureaucracy, encouraging innovation	minimaliseren bureaucratie, aanmoedigen van innovatie	
Responsibility	Verantwoordelijkheid	73
Sufficient autonomy, reasonable risk taking	Voldoende autonomie, redelijk risico name	
Standards	Standaarden	36
Excellence is the standard, continual improvement, structure	Excellentie is de standaard, continue verbetering, structuur	
Rewards	Beloningen	35
Good performance is recognised, recognition or rewards are performance based. Practice of new skills/ ways of working without fear of appraisal	Goede prestatie is erkend/herkend, erkenning van beloning is gebaseerd op prestatie. Uitvoeren van nieuwe vaardigheden/manieren van werken zonder bang te zijn voor	
Clarity	Duidelijkheid	99
Clear mission, roles are understood. Open communication; frequent and open exchanges of feedback	Duidelijke missie and daaraan gerelateerde rollen zijn begrepen. Open communicatie; Frequentie en open	
Team commitment	Team betrokkenheid	111
Pride, dedication, cooperation among team members, support	Trots, toewijding, samenwerking tussen team leden, steun	
Trust	Vertrouwen	148
A trusting environment and relationships; Presence of/attention to respectful behaviours	Omgeving en relaties die gekenmerkt zijn door vertrouwen; Aanwezigheid/aandacht voor respectvol gedrag	