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# **The modern organizational environment: Communication, Networking and new technologies as driving forces for sustainability, progress & strategic alignment.**

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## **Abstract**

The current study presents the driving sources and the challenges of the modern organizational environments. The New forms of communication, networking, the multicultural environment, and the structural issues in organizations as well as ethics are some of the challenges that the modern organizational environment deals with. We ask employees of different demographic background to evaluate all these new changes and challenges and we assess how people react towards these new characteristics. We also investigate how people believe organizations can integrate these new trends in compliance with an effective organizational performance. The use of the Conjoint Analysis and the scenario technique allow us to investigate and understand the significance of different characteristics or factors that influence the modern organizational environment and the coexistence of different generations in organizations. The Conjoint Analysis is a multidimensional analysis that can also provide information in a group but also in an individual level. This can help us to create interesting metrics for people and segmentations that lead to an organizational strategic design and sustainability. The present study can have applications in the business, social science, and politics environment.

**EL Classifications:** G34, G14, M41.

**Key words:** Strategic Alignment, Sustainability, Communication, Networking, Conjoint Analysis.

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## **1 Introduction**

Nowadays, the workplace has significantly changed. People share an organizational environment where various expectations, ethical considerations, personalities, values and point of views exist. It is important to understand that the way we communicate, the way we are connected with others and the role of technology exert an important influence on the modern collaboration and performance. In this modern environment there are people with different beliefs about the world and attitudes that belong to a different generation cohort but who are obliged and responsible to coexist with others (Valickas, & Jakštaitė, 2017).

Modern organizational environments develop strategies, manage the changes and the challenges that arise and try to find ways to optimize performance and achieve sustainability through people. The New forms of communication, networking, the multicultural environment, and the structural issues in organizations as well as ethics are some of the challenges that the modern organizational environment deals with. The new technologies and their assimilation in the modern workplaces have presented various new challenges for the management of Human Resources, such as talent war, mobility, instability and complexity

(Capotescu, Mălăieș, & Șoim, 2019).

Therefore, this study asks directly the people involved in this transformational process and presents the views and attitudes of them on the coexistence of different generations in the same workplace. We focus on the evaluation of all these new changes and challenges, and we assess how people react towards these new characteristics. We also investigate how people believe organizations can integrate these new trends in compliance with an effective organizational performance.

Our research aims at finding how employees evaluate different factors that influence generations' coexistence in an organizational environment. The quantitative research will reveal latent importance and will enhance the understanding of people's engagement, participation, contribution, and captivation. This study aims at contributing to the modern organizational environment by presenting a roadmap for integrating different generations in a smooth way in the working environment.

This paper provides insight on how communication, networking and the new technologies affect the organizational environment and concludes on how they can act as driving forces for sustainability, progress, and strategic alignment.

## **2 Literature review**

The coexistence of different generations in the same organizational environment is not a rare occurrence nowadays. The four main generations that coexist in the same environments include the Traditionalists or the Silent Generation, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y (Nakai, 2015).

Each generation perceives work ethic and loyalty to the organization differently (Harber 2011). The perceptions are directly linked to the socioeconomic background each generation was raised and in the different challenges each generation has faced. However, productive work can only be achieved when the employees are able to work individually and as a team member (Markaki & Chadjipadelis, 2011). Research has shown that generations are generally diverse and have their own strengths and weaknesses (Mencl & Lester, 2011). Moreover, members of each generation present their own understanding in three key areas: work skill levels, loyalty to the organization and work ethics.

In order to study the special characteristics of each generation, a common definition of each of the key areas is defined. Therefore, we adopt the definitions of Harber (2011) and define work skill levels as "the ability to communicate with coworkers, upper management, and customers and their ability to perform basic functions within their job descriptions". Loyalty to the organization is perceived as the protection of the image of the company within the employees and with customers and the pride that the employees feel for their position. Work ethics is defined by the active protection of the assets of the company and the fairness that comes in dealing with all customers.

Understanding the significant differences between the generations and how they affect their cooperation in the same workspace, requires the knowledge of the basic characteristics that members of each generation seem to have (Licata, 2007). We present a collection of characteristics that have been observed in previous studies and researches. In general, while the older generations tend to be particularly skilled in customer service and loyalty to an organization, the younger generations are particularly skilled in the technical areas and have the ability to transfer their technological knowledge to other employees to the benefit of the organization (Dixon, 2013).

The Traditionalists or the Silent Generation includes people born approximately between 1922 and 1945 and were raised in disciplined nuclear families. They embrace a strong

sense of loyalty to their families, communities and devotion to the country. These values are also reflected in their working environments, as they are particularly committed team members and collaborators. They are considered to be loyal and are focused on career with a lasting contribution. They believe in strict hierarchy and the importance of the chain of command within an organization, but they do not excel in situations involving conflict (Dixon, 2011). The traditionalists consider their work as a privilege.

Baby Boomers were born approximately between 1946 and 1964 and are now the largest generational representation in the workplace. Generally, their childhood was marked by major changes in the world, such as the moon landing, the civil rights movement, the Vietnam War and the women's liberation movement. They are considered to be the hardest working generation and tend to often prioritize their work over personal life. As parents, Boomers are considered to be overprotective and their influence over political and cultural aspects is significant. They have a strong feeling that they must pay their dues to move forward. Boomers work later in life today, as a result of the fiscal crisis of 2008.

Generation X was born approximately between 1965 and 1980 and their childhood was characterized by the energy crisis, Watergate, the AIDs epidemic, Chernobyl, and the fall of the Berlin Wall. Xers were typically raised with two-income families and often with divorced parent as a result of the rising divorce rate of the period. Furthermore, women are for this generation normalized as members of the workforce in large numbers. Generation X has not yet been studied so widely, however some of their key characteristics tend to be their independence, adaptability and advanced technical skillset. They are linked to the concept of work-life balance, and they place work on a lower priority compared to previous generations (Buonocore, Russo & Ferrara, 2015). Xers values include freedom and responsibility and dislikes being micro-managed. They are eager to get ahead, are not afraid to change employers, and seem to adapt well to lifestyle changes (Haynes, 2011). The Xers do not strictly believe in authority, and they are more likely to question authority.

The last generation that today's workforce is comprised by is the millennials of Generation Y. They were born approximately between 1980 and 2000 and are considered to be the most educated and diverse generation. They are different from the older generations in the sense that they have grown up into technology and consider gadgets as a part of their everyday lives. Thus, they prefer to non-verbal means of communication, such as through e-mail or by text messaging and are technically savvy, as they prefer online technology and education to traditional modes. Yers are highly energetic, socially conscious and protective of their time outside their office. Generation Y is expected to comprise 75% of the workforce by 2025 (Big Demands and High Expectations: The Deloitte Millennial Survey, 2014).

Harber's (2011) study highlights that the older generations of the workforce (Traditionalists or Boomers) have a strong sense of ladder-climbing in their careers and feel that in order to progress they need first to work hard and pay their dues, while members of the younger generations (Generations X & Y) mainly work for the benefits that accompany their skills. As per the technical skills, Xers or Millennials have incorporated in their modus of working the skillset that an organization will require to move into the next century (Haynes, 2013). Working as a part of a team is perceived differently by each generation. Gen X excels at working within teams while the generation Y is characterized by avoiding face-to-face interactions and thus teamwork is for them applicable mostly in the online environment.

Bearing in mind the unique characteristics of each generation, as they are presented above, it is made clear that employers need to work on a common understanding of each person's role and contribution to the organization (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011). Modern organizations in order to remain sustainable must be ready to accept and lead change from internal and external sources, so as to remain competitive. Human Resources therefore need to expand and perceive the working force as the economies and the strategic plans indicate. Therefore, it is of great significance for the success of a company to ensure they understand

the values, working ethics and strategies of different generations and how they react and cooperate with one another when they coexist in a working environment (Lancaster & Stillman, 2003).

Technology has progressed forward causing employees to lack skills, on the one hand, and on the other hand, employees that can use it to advance the company in order to compete in the global market. In this environment, the challenge of integrating all the employees in the workplace is even bigger. Ensuring smooth cooperation and an effective transfer of knowledge equally to all employees can only have a positive outcome as a whole, from the company to its people. In this given, the management style should adapt to a more mentoring, team-based, non-hierarchical work style (Bennett et al., 2012). A high use of technology and collaborative workspaces can contribute to advancing the modern workplace.

This coexistence of four different generations For the first time in history, “We have four separate generations working shoulder-to-shoulder and face-to-face in a stressful and competitive workplace” (Lancaster & Stillman, 2003). Further research in this field would allow organisations, globally, to realise firstly that this multi-generational workforce is going to be a lasting phenomenon and also increasingly diversified in the future, and lastly, the importance of strategy and sustainability as guides for the modern working environment (Markaki et al., 2012).

### **3 Research Methodology**

The research was based on an online questionnaire to employees from different working sectors, demographic characteristics and socioeconomic backgrounds. The questionnaire was designed in 13 different questions sets that present a wholistic approach that presents how employees perceive coworking with people from different age groups.

The questionnaire includes three different parts: a. demographics and employment status, b. their views on the coexistence of different generations in the same working environment and c. assessment of different scenarios on the intergenerational cooperation.

In order to gather the views of employees regarding the evaluation of cooperation with different generations, we have incorporated 5 Likert-like scales. The questions include: the frequency of everyday interaction with colleagues of different generation (Not at all often – Very Often), the importance of collaboration for the completion of the everyday duties (Very Low Importance – Very High Importance) and the functionality of the collaboration with people of different generation (Not at all functional – Very functional). We have asked the respondents to assess a series of factors that can influence people of different age working together (Very Low Importance – Very High Importance). The factors included in the questionnaire were the following: different level of competency in the use of new technologies, response time – speed at work, different priorities (eg. Work – life balance), different educational level, communication issues (language, words, means), their value system, technical knowledge and the ability to follow the organizational process.

The questionnaire also includes the evaluation of the level of use of new technologies in different organizational functions in the respondents’ working environment (Not at all often – Very Often). This was assessed via the following working departments: Management, Production, Internal Decision-Making System, Financial Department / Accounting, Communication with customers/ people, Marketing, Sales and Human Resources Management.

Furthermore, we have included a set of factors in the form of scenarios that influence the smooth collaboration and coexistence of different generations in the workplace, that we have asked the respondents to assess: level of use of new technologies, methods of work (meetings/ teleconference), communication channels (open/ closed/ formal/ informal), sociability / Team building activities, well-defined vision, mission, culture of the organization, well-developed job description per position, respect towards differentiation and engagement

acts / culture of participation. The assessment in this question was a ranking order from the highest to the lowest in importance factor.

The questionnaire was held online and was activated in February 2019 and remained open for answers until the end of the year. It gathered a total of 311 respondents. For the analysis of the data, we have incorporated the methods of descriptive statistical analysis and a multivariable data analysis method, Conjoint Analysis. Both analyses were held in the SPSS 25 statistical analysis package.

The use of the Conjoint Analysis and the scenario technique allow us to investigate and understand the significance of different characteristics or factors that influence the modern organizational environment and the coexistence of different generations in organizations. The Conjoint Analysis is a multidimensional analysis that can also provide information in a group but also in an individual level. This can help us to create interesting metrics for people and segmentations that lead to an organizational strategic design and sustainability. The present study can have applications in business, social science, and politics. The Conjoint Analysis has been extensively used in research, such as marketing, in order to explore and capture the hidden and latent processes with which people form their preferences. Each preference is constituted by different characteristics – factors (Markaki & Chadjipantelis, 2017; Hainmueller, Hopkins & Yamamoto, 2014; Dawes & Corrigan, 1974; Green & Rao, 1971; Lancaster, 1971).

This method explores, via a complicated design, all possible combinations of factors. The combinations are presented in different profiles, arising from the main trunk of the script concerning the formation of political behaviour - preference. The different options that the respondent assesses during the survey are presented via different sets of characteristics.

TABLE 1  
**3: Conjoint Analysis Design**

| Use of IT  | Communication        | Organizational Culture            | Organizational Structure |
|------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Middle use | Open- Informal       | Not the same opportunities to all | Flat                     |
| Low use    | Open- Informal       | The same opportunities to all     | Many hierarchical Levels |
| High use   | Open- Informal       | The same opportunities to all     | Flat                     |
| Middle use | Bureaucratic- Formal | The same opportunities to all     | Many hierarchical Levels |
| High use   | Bureaucratic- Forma  | Not the same opportunities to all | Many hierarchical Levels |
| Low use    | Bureaucratic- Forma  | Not the same opportunities to all | Flat                     |
| High use   | Bureaucratic- Forma  | The same opportunities to all     | Flat                     |
| High use   | Open- Informal       | Not the same opportunities to all | Many hierarchical Levels |

Average values of the sample's most important accounting measures, namely: total assets, fixed assets, sales, receivables.

Below we can see how the above levels of factors are represented in different organizational profiles combining all these different characteristics.

TABLE 2  
**3: Scenarios**

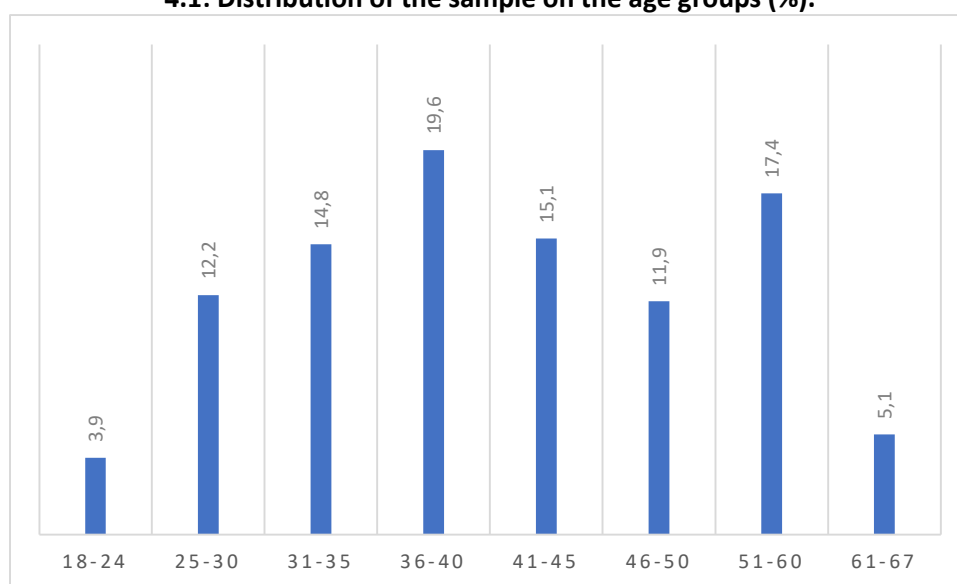
|   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | Organization with middle use of new technologies, with open communication processes, giving the same opportunities to all employees without many hierarchical levels.             |
| 2 | Organization with low use of new technologies, with open communication processes, giving the same opportunities to all employees with many hierarchical levels.                   |
| 3 | Organization with high use of new technologies, with open communication processes, giving the same opportunities to all employees without many hierarchical levels.               |
| 4 | Organization with middle use of new technologies, with bureaucratic communication processes, giving the same opportunities to all employees with many hierarchical levels.        |
| 5 | Organization with high use of new technologies, with bureaucratic communication processes, not giving the same opportunities to all employees with many hierarchical levels.      |
| 6 | Organization with low use of new technologies, with bureaucratic communication processes, not giving the same opportunities to all employees without many hierarchical levels.    |
| 7 | Organization with high use of new technologies, with bureaucratic communication processes, giving the same opportunities to all employees without many hierarchical levels.       |
| 8 | Organization with high use of new technologies, Organization with high use of new technologies, not giving the same opportunities to all employees with many hierarchical levels. |

## 4 Results

### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Of the 311 respondents, 51,8% were female and 48,2% were male. Regarding their age group, 3,9% belong to the age group of 18-24, 12,2% to 25-30, 14,8% to 31-35, 19,6% to 36-40, 15,1% to 41-45, 11,9% to the group of 46-50, 17,4% to the group 51-60 and 5,1% to 61-67.

FIGURE 1  
4.1: Distribution of the sample on the age groups (%).



Regarding the educational level of the sample, 61,1 per cent of those surveyed have finished postgraduate studies, 28,9% have accomplished a graduate degree, while only 5,5% have concluded a Doctorate and 4,5% have finished high school.

When asked to identify their respective position in the hierarchy of the company they work for, 36,7% responded they work as middle executives, 24,8% as senior executives, 20,9% as senior managers and 17,7% in junior positions.

Regarding the working sector that the organization belongs to, the majority of the respondents (88,4%) work in the private sector, while a percentage of 5,1% in the public sector and 3,5% under a public private law organization. A small percentage of 2,9% work in Non-Governmental Organizations.

A diversity in the working department within the company of the sample is observed. While 17% of the respondents' main occupation is Human Resources Management, 13,8% work as Senior Manager or Directors and 12,5% in the Sales Department.

TABLE 3  
4.1: Working Department within the Company

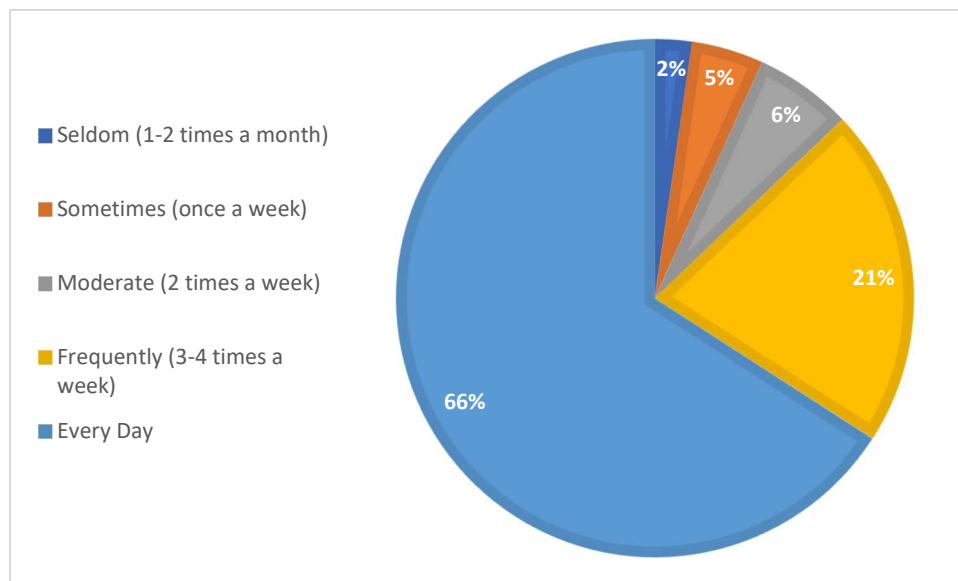
|                                      |      |  |      |
|--------------------------------------|------|--|------|
| Finance / Accounting                 | 7,4  | Human Resources Management                               | 17   |
| Marketing                            | 4,2  | Technical department                                     | 2,6  |
| Public Relations / Communication     | 4,2  | Customer service department                              | 4,2  |
| Sales                                | 12,5 | Internal control   | 1,9  |
| Operations                           | 7,1  | Reception  | 1,3  |
| Department of Informatics / IT       | 9,6  | Senior Management / Board of Directors / General Manager | 13,8 |
| Administrative - Secretarial Support | 4,8  | Production department                                    | 0,6  |



The respondents were asked a series of questions regarding the frequency, importance and functionality of intergenerational cooperation in their working environments. Furthermore, they were asked to evaluate the importance of different factors when working with people from different generations.

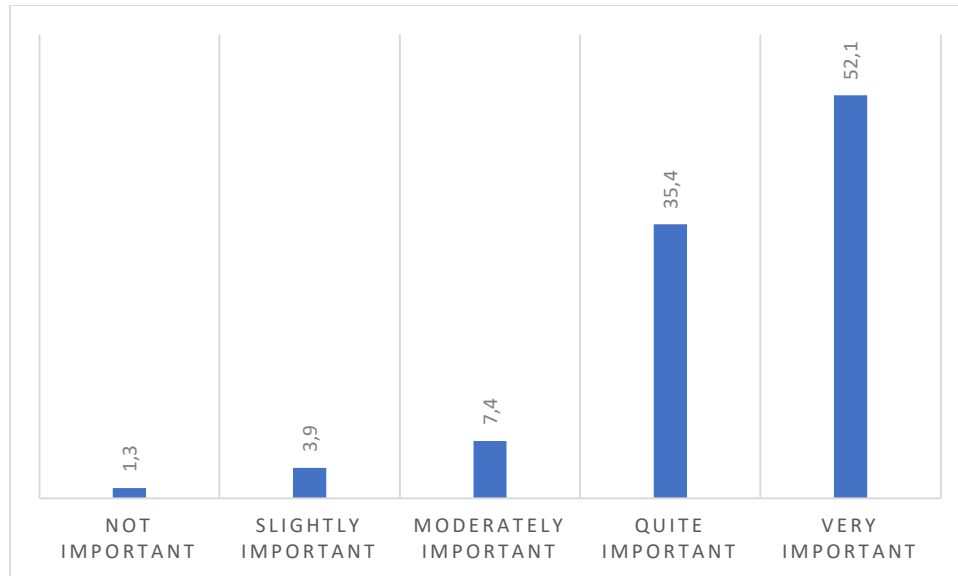
Specifically, when it comes to the frequency of intergenerational cooperation in the same working environment, a percentage of 66% indicated that it happens on a daily basis, while 21% stated a frequency of 3 to 4 times a week. A small percentage of 6% stated a moderate frequency (2 times a week), 5% once a week and only 2% a monthly basis frequency.

FIGURE 2  
**4.1: Frequency of intergenerational cooperation (%).**



The majority of those who were surveyed indicated the importance of the cooperation between people of different generations, as per the 52,1% it is deemed as very important and per 35,4% as quite important. Only a small percentage of respondents maintained a moderate or negative attitude.

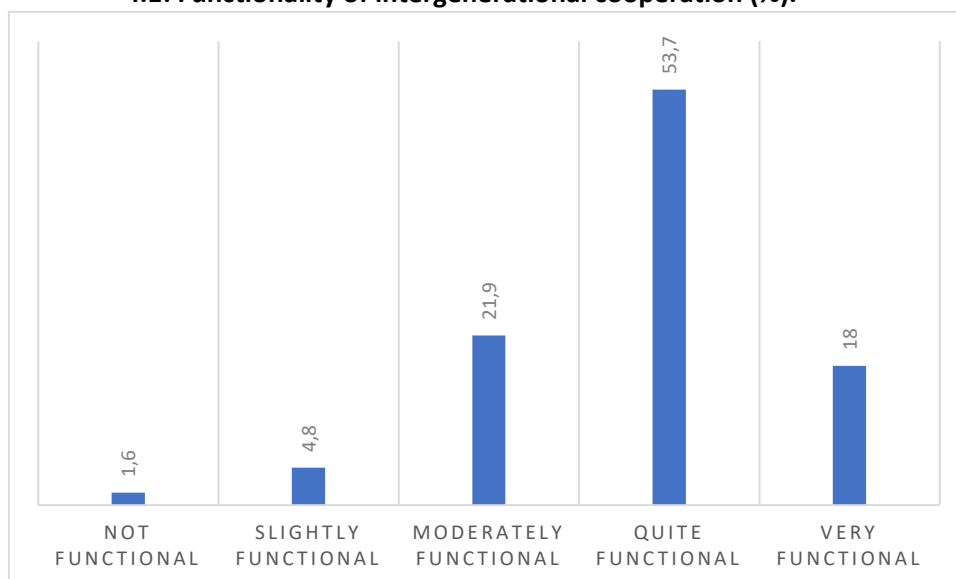
FIGURE 3  
4.1: Importance of intergenerational cooperation (%).



When it comes to the functionality of the cooperation, the majority of the respondents maintain a positive attitude, however, we observe a shift of the scale towards the moderate attitude. According to a percentage of 53,7%, the cooperation between different generations is quite functional, while for 21,9% is deemed as moderately functional.

The majority of those who were surveyed indicated the importance of the cooperation between people of different generations, as per the 52,1% it is deemed as very important and per 35,4% as quite important. Only a small percentage of respondents maintained a moderate or negative attitude.

FIGURE 4  
4.1: Functionality of intergenerational cooperation (%).



The respondents were asked to reflect on the difficulties that may arise in their collaboration with people from different generations and then evaluate a list of factors in

terms of their importance in such occasions. Of high importance was considered by those who were surveyed the differences in the perception of the “task”, the procedures that must be followed set by each organization (67,9%) and the speed of the work delivery (66%). The majority of respondents also indicated that of importance is to be considered the different level in technological knowledge and skills and the priorities in the work-life balance (62,4%). Significant was indicated the different approach on values (55%), while the education level (37%) and communication codes (33,2%) were not deemed as very important.

TABLE 4  
**4.1: Frequency of the use of technology in the working departments.**

|  | <b>Not<br/>important</b> | <b>Little<br/>important</b> | <b>Moderately<br/>Important</b> | <b>Very<br/>Important</b> |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Different level of technological knowledge</b>  | 5,5                      | 10,9                        | 21,2                            | 62,4                      |
| <b>Rate or speed of work / general response time</b>   | 3,9                      | 8,4                         | 21,9                            | 66                        |
| <b>Different priorities / objectives on a personal level (work-life balance)</b>               | 3,2                      | 9,3                         | 25,1                            | 62,4                      |
| <b>Different Education Level</b>   | 7,1                      | 20,6                        | 35,4                            | 37                        |
| <b>Communication codes (words, slang)</b>  | 15,8                     | 23,5                        | 27,7                            | 33,2                      |
| <b>Different Values</b>  | 5,5                      | 14,8                        | 24,8                            | 55                        |
| <b>Expertise / Knowledge of work object</b>  | 2,9                      | 10,9                        | 23,8                            | 62,4                      |
| <b>Different perception of the procedures defined by the organization and must be followed</b> | 2,9                      | 8                           | 21,2                            | 67,9                      |

Lastly, the respondents were asked to assess the use of technology in departments and processes of their company. From the results it is evident that technology has infiltrated in most of the processes used in various companies. However, the majority of the respondents indicated the use of technology with a high frequency and density in contacting the customers (71,4%), administration (70,7%) and the accounting department (70,4%). A lower percentage is observed in the Human Resources management (47,6%) and in the internal decision-making systems (50,5%).

TABLE 5

**4.1: Importance of different factors in intergenerational cooperation.**

|  | <b>Not<br/>important</b> | <b>Little<br/>important</b> | <b>Moderately<br/>Important</b> | <b>Very<br/>Important</b> |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Different level of technological knowledge</b>  | 5,5                      | 10,9                        | 21,2                            | 62,4                      |
| <b>Rate or speed of work / general response time</b>   | 3,9                      | 8,4                         | 21,9                            | 66                        |
| <b>Different priorities / objectives on a personal level (work-life balance)</b>               | 3,2                      | 9,3                         | 25,1                            | 62,4                      |
| <b>Different Education Level</b>   | 7,1                      | 20,6                        | 35,4                            | 37                        |
| <b>Communication codes (words, slang)</b>  | 15,8                     | 23,5                        | 27,7                            | 33,2                      |
| <b>Different Values</b>  | 5,5                      | 14,8                        | 24,8                            | 55                        |
| <b>Expertise / Knowledge of work object</b>  | 2,9                      | 10,9                        | 23,8                            | 62,4                      |
| <b>Different perception of the procedures defined by the organization and must be followed</b> | 2,9                      | 8                           | 21,2                            | 67,9                      |

## 4.2 Conjoint Analysis

The organizational characteristics of a company are considered to be important factors for the good performance and collaboration between colleagues in the organization. Through the use of 8 different scenarios, participants were asked to prioritize their views on the profiles that would have the maximum impact on the expected results in a company.

From the 4 factors, as presented above, analyzed by their level of importance participants considered the IT and the Opportunities provided within the company, as the most important ones. While analyzing the utility of each factor, it is clear that respondents prefer an organization that strives for high level of technology use, open communicational system, non-hierarchical internal management and that gives the same opportunities.

TABLE 6  
4.2: Level of importance of each factor

|                          |               |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| IT                       | <b>34,538</b> |
| Communication            | 16,721        |
| Opportunities            | <b>34,08</b>  |
| Organizational Structure | 14,661        |

TABLE 7  
4.2: Utility of each factor

| Utilities                     |  | Utility Estimate | Std. Error |
|-------------------------------|--|------------------|------------|
| IT                            | Low level of use                       | -,622            | ,157       |
|                               | Middle level of use                    | ,039             | ,157       |
|                               | High level of use                      | ,583             | ,134       |
| Communications                | Open-Informal                          | ,356             | ,101       |
|                               | Bureaucratic-Formal                    | -,356            | ,101       |
| Opportunities in Organization | Gives the same opportunities to all    | ,991             | ,101       |
|                               | Gives not the same opportunities to al | -,991            | ,101       |
| Organisational Structure      | Non-Hierarchical-Flat                  | ,217             | ,101       |
|                               | Many hierarchical levels               | -,217            | ,101       |

|            |       |      |
|------------|-------|------|
| (Constant) | 4,345 | ,106 |
|------------|-------|------|

Comparing the means of each factor with the gender of the respondent, we find that there is not a significant statistical difference between the two genders, with women tending to consider more important the high level of technology, equal opportunities and the non-hierarchical flat structure.

TABLE 8  
4.2: Mean Comparison (Gender/Factors)

| Gender        |      | Low level of use | Middle level of use | High level of use | Open - Informal | Bureaucratic-Formal | Gives the same opportunities to all | Gives not the same opportunities to all | Non-Hierarchical-Flat | Many hierarchical levels |
|---------------|------|------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Male</b>   | Mean | -0,5657          | 0,0606              | 0,5051            | 0,2854          | -0,2854             | 0,9268                              | -0,9268                                 | 0,1894                | -0,1894                  |
| <b>Female</b> | Mean | -0,6667          | 0,0213              | <b>0,6453</b>     | 0,4120          | -0,4120             | <b>1,0420</b>                       | -1,0420                                 | <b>0,2380</b>         | -0,2380                  |
| <b>Total</b>  | Mean | -0,6220          | 0,0387              | 0,5833            | 0,3560          | -0,3560             | 0,9911                              | -0,9911                                 | 0,2165                | -0,2165                  |

While comparing the means of each factor with the age group of the respondent, we find that there is not a significant statistical difference, as younger employees (18-30) tend to prefer a structure that entails hierarchical levels, which can be explained by their lack of experience, managerial.

TABLE 9  
4.2: Mean Comparison (Age Group/Factors)

| Age Group    |      | Low level of use | Middle level of use | High level of use | Open - Informal | Bureaucratic-Formal | Gives the same opportunities to all | Gives not the same opportunities to all | Non-Hierarchical-Flat | Many hierarchical levels |
|--------------|------|------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>18-24</b> | Mean | -0,4394          | -0,1667             | 0,6061            | 0,3409          | -0,3409             | 0,6364                              | -0,6364                                 | -0,0909               | 0,0909                   |
| <b>25-30</b> | Mean | -0,4107          | -0,1607             | 0,5714            | 0,0804          | -0,0804             | 0,6875                              | -0,6875                                 | -0,0982               | 0,0982                   |
| <b>31-35</b> | Mean | -0,9759          | -0,1206             | 1,0965            | 0,3618          | -0,3618             | 0,9408                              | -0,9408                                 | 0,3289                | -0,3289                  |
| <b>36-40</b> | Mean | -0,6042          | 0,0663              | 0,5379            | 0,5625          | -0,5625             | 1,2216                              | -1,2216                                 | 0,2386                | -0,2386                  |
| <b>41-45</b> | Mean | -0,5833          | 0,3167              | 0,2667            | 0,3750          | -0,3750             | 0,8917                              | -0,8917                                 | 0,2083                | -0,2083                  |

|              |          |                 |                 |            |            |         |        |         |        |         |
|--------------|----------|-----------------|-----------------|------------|------------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|
| <b>46-50</b> | Me<br>an | -<br>0,16<br>99 | -<br>0,07<br>37 | 0,24<br>36 | 0,250<br>0 | -0,2500 | 1,2308 | -1,2308 | 0,1442 | -0,1442 |
| <b>51-60</b> | Me<br>an | -<br>0,69<br>08 | 0,19<br>08      | 0,50<br>00 | 0,361<br>8 | -0,3618 | 1,0724 | -1,0724 | 0,3816 | -0,3816 |
| <b>61-67</b> | Me<br>an | -<br>1,24<br>07 | 0,20<br>37      | 1,03<br>70 | 0,416<br>7 | -0,4167 | 0,7500 | -0,7500 | 0,5278 | -0,5278 |
| <b>Total</b> | Me<br>an | -<br>0,62<br>20 | 0,03<br>87      | 0,58<br>33 | 0,356<br>0 | -0,3560 | 0,9911 | -0,9911 | 0,2165 | -0,2165 |

## 5 Conclusions

In this paper, we have tried to capture the different views and attitudes of generations coexisting in the modern competitive working environment. Our approach was three-fold. We have first presented the characteristics of each generation and their strengths and weaknesses through a compilation of outcomes from various research and studies. We then presented a quantitative approach to evaluating the coexistence of different generations in the same working environments through a questionnaire directed at employees from different age groups and backgrounds. Lastly, we have created an experimental scenario design that measures the impact of organizational characteristics of a company for the good performance and collaboration between colleagues in the organization.

The outcomes of the research has shown that the majority of employees today are forced to work in environments where different generations coexist. The employees find the cooperation with people from different generations as both important and functional in wide majorities (almost 6 out of 10). When asked to reflect on the difficulties that may arise in their collaboration with people from different generations, of high importance were considered the procedures that must be followed set by each organization (67,9%), the speed of the work delivery (66%) and the different level in technological knowledge and skills and the priorities in the work-life balance (62,4%). Significant was also indicated the different approach on values (55%). The education level of employees (37%) and the different communication codes (33,2%) were not seen as very important. Lastly, the results of the research have indicated the importance of technology in most processes, and specifically with a high frequency and density in customer support (71,4%), administration (70,7%) and the accounting (70,4%).

The results of the Conjoint Analysis clearly indicate that the use of technology and the opportunities provided within the company are significant factors for employees. An organization, according to the results as presented above should work under: high-level use of technology, open informal communication, non-hierarchical management and provide equal opportunities.

Therefore, in the modern workplace, employees despite their diverse backgrounds should effectively collaborate for a great performance (de Waal, Peters & Broekhuizen, 2017). use and competence as well as opportunities given in an organization can influence the effectiveness in an organizational environment (Angeline, 2011). More and more, technology (Digitalization/ AI/Big Data Management/ programming) will play a crucial role in the job delivery for all positions, the organizational sustainability and radically change the working environment, as we know it.

In order for an organization to adapt to the new challenges, it is clear that the leadership and the human resources management need to take into account firstly the differences of each generation and integrate them smoothly in the working environment but also understand the added value of coexistence (Putre, 2013). The diversity in mindsets, work ethics and values may arise difficulties in the understanding and cooperation, however, it also

is an opportunity to further develop and enhance the organization (Chadjipadelis & Markaki, 2011). Organizations should create tools for employee engagement, participation, contribution and to captivate their interest, while keeping the company in the front seat of the competition. What is seen as a great challenge, is at the same time a unique chance for an organization to reach its potential and support sustainability.

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