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Generational Communications In The New York City Public Sector Workplace

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Nathasha Brooks-Harris

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Walden University
2017

Abstract

Generational Communications in the New York City Public Sector Workplace

by

Nathasha Brooks-Harris

MA, Queens College, 2012

BA, Hunter College, 1981

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Public Policy & Administration

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June 2017

Abstract

There is a digital divide between Baby Boomers and Millennials in the way they communicate and use technology in the New York City public sector workplace. The purpose of this empirical phenomenological study was to explore the phenomenon of generational communications between Baby Boomers and Millennials in the New York City workplace and to understand their lived experiences of how they communicate and use technology in their job. The conceptual framework consisted of two theories: Cameron & Quinn's competing values framework and Prensky's digital natives/digital immigrants. A total of 21 New York City workers (10 Baby Boomers and 11 Millennials) from various agencies participated in semi structured interviews and answered the DISC Classic Profile, an instrument that showed their communication styles. The data were analyzed using the Stevick-Colazzi method and Dedoose data analysis procedure to find groups of meaning and themes. Research found benefits and challenges of technology that impacted communications; how organizational culture impacted technology use and communications; fears about using and learning technology; differences in relationships affecting Baby Boomers and Millennials; and differences in communication styles affecting management and subordinates. Recommendations for future research include conducting a similar qualitative study on Generation X and a quantitative study on Baby Boomers and Millennials. The findings of this study will contribute to positive social change through the implementation of reverse mentoring, knowledge management and transfer, succession planning, and human resource management.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Billy and Louise Brooks, and my uncle, Professor Fred R. Brooks—the three people who instilled in me a love of education, as well as started me on my quest of life-long learning. It is also dedicated to my dozens of relatives who died during the infamous Tuskegee Syphilis Study/Experiment due to being exploited and taken advantage of because of their lack of education. Your sacrifice will never be forgotten. It is in your memory that I complete this PhD journey and earn this degree. I love you all; may you rest in peace in the arms of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

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This journey would not have been possible without support and positive affirmations from those important to me. It has been said that it takes a village to raise a child. I have amended that to "it takes a village to cultivate a doctor." My village is huge and has kept me going throughout this grueling process. I thank God for bringing me to this amazing, but arduous journey. I had no idea why He put me on this path, but I was obedient, and the purpose was revealed to me. First, I'd like to extend many thanks to my Committee—without whom this would not be possible. Thank you so much, Dr. Mark Gordon, my amazing Chair who pushed me hard, but made sure I got the work done. Thank you, also, to my Committee member, Dr. Michael Knight, and my first URR member, Dr. Ian Birdsall (now deceased), and my current URR member, Dr. Michael Brewer. Extra special thanks go to my Emmanuel Baptist Sacred Arts, Total Praise, ACTS, and Prime Time church family; Esther Richardson; Darlene F. Mitchell; Tiffany White-White; Kerry Williams; Catherine Petrus; William F. Cooper; John Everett Sr.; Wendell Williams; and Dr. John H. White, who encouraged daily check-ins and kept the positive words of support coming . I have met three wonderful people along this journey who have made it so much easier and enjoyable. There are not enough words to say thank-you and how appreciative I am of them. Merci beaucoup, Patricia Lynn Smith, my fantastic study buddy and friend; Dr. Avon Hart-Johnson, my fabulous dissertation coach who was there unconditionally; Ethel Wilson-Lane, the sister of my heart whom I will love for life; and future doctor Tony Fennell, who checks on me regularly and nursed me from afar when I was down sick with the flu. I must also give props to my online PhD groups who have been there for me 24/7 and have heard my cries for help at 3 a.m.: PhD (Black Doctoral Network); PhD Sisters; PhD Women's Network; Minority Doctoral Network; Walden University PhD; Walden University School of Public Administration; Scholarly Flow Walden University; Black Academics; and the National Black Graduate Student Association. I could not have done this without you. Please know that I will always be there for others who need help and keep paying it forward.

Last, but certainly by no means least, a million thanks to Easton's Nook, the wonderful academic writers' retreat. There aren't enough words in the dictionary to describe this amazing place that offered me sanctuary and quiet where I wrote much of the final two chapters. If I had a thousand tongues, they wouldn't be enough to express my gratitude to Jacqueline and Nadine Mattis, the owner and chef extraordinaire at Easton's Nook. They made the Nook feel like home, like love, and fed my mind, body, and soul. Thank you for all you do and for your incredible encouragement.

If I forgot anyone, please charge it to my head and not my heart.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

The Bureau of Labor Statistics projected that over 50% of American workplaces could be comprised of mature workers age 40 and above by 2008, and that number would continue to rise through the years (Pitt-Catsouphes & Smyer, 2007). Currently, Millennials (Generation Y, born 1980-2000) make up 25% of the workforce, while Baby Boomers represent 38% of the workforce (Pitt-Catsouphes & Smyer, 2007). By 2020, the U.S. Department of Labor expects that Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964) will make up 22% of the workforce, and Millennials will be the fastest growing generational cohort in the American workplace (DeMeuse & Miodzik, 2010). The Baby Boomers and the Millennials currently represent the oldest and youngest generational cohorts at work. The disparity in their ages makes them approach workplace communications and the use of technology differently. The main reason why they communicate and use technology in divergent ways is because Baby Boomers are more traditional and prefer personal communication over technology and will use it when they absolutely have to because they are Digital Immigrants, while Millennials are naturally adept at using technology because they were born into it and are Digital Natives (Prensky, 2001a). The Competing Values Framework was the lens through which how organizational culture influences the reasons for how and why these two generations communicate and use technology the way they do was seen and analyzed.

What Baby Boomers share in common is that they grew up during the Civil Rights era, Cold War, the assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy. Having experienced those moments in history has had a profound effect on them personally and in the workplace (Pitt-Catsouphes & Smyer, 2007, Goldman & Schmalz, 2006).

In the workplace, Boomers work extremely hard, are team players, are process oriented, optimistic and positive about what they can do, and are creative thinkers (Goldman & Schmalz, 2006), Goldman and Schmalz (2006) also suggested that Baby Boomers will challenge leaders, thrive on public recognition, and credit for their contributions, and tend to enjoy yearly documented feedback (Goldman & Schmalz, 2006). Historically, Millennials shared the Oklahoma City bombing, 9/11, the President Clinton and Monica Lewinsky affair, Princess Diana's death, the Columbine school shootings, and the advent of the Internet (Goldman & Schmalz, 2006). In the workplace, Millennials depend heavily on technology in the workplace and want to know exactly what is expected of them for increased productivity (Goldman & Schmalz, 2006). Millennials also embrace demographic diversity more than the other cohorts but lack planning skills because of their easy access to, and dependence on, technology (Goldman & Schmalz, 2006). According to Goldman and Schmalz (2006), Millennials seek creative stimulation, respect from leaders, frequently feedback, and equal opportunities in learning, training, building skills.

This study is important because the Baby Boomers are at or are nearing retirement age and will be moving out of the New York City public sector workforce. Millennials will bridge the gap they leave in their workplaces. As the Baby Boomers leave the workforce, their vast years of experience will leave with them, and the Millennials will be left without key information if they do not communicate with the Baby Boomers and learn to do their jobs. The implications that the exiting of the Baby Boomers and the entrance of Millennials into their former jobs will be both plentiful and interesting to managers in the New York City public sector workplace. This study was also important because these two generations communicate and use technology so differently that conflicts are sure to arise. This study pointed up those differences and help managers to understand and embrace those differences, but use them to their advantage and help these two cohorts to work together harmoniously for increased efficiency and productivity.

Background

I examined the problem with generational communications from a general perspective then applied it specifically to the Baby Boomer and Millennial populations. Communications in the public sector has been an ongoing issue. The following are some of the issues with communications in the public sector: (a) establishing the reason for the communication; (b) directing it upward, downward, or laterally; and (c) whether to advise, direct, or impart some type of information about the agency (Gortner, 1977). Those issues are further exacerbated when there are four generational cohorts

(Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials) working side by side in the public sector workplace (Gortner, 1977). Each of them brings with them their unique ways of problem solving, culture, and worldviews. These viewpoints and ways of approaching problems will have a profound effect on the way they communicate and use technology in the public sector workplace. More specifically, generational communications is even more difficult when Baby Boomers, the oldest generational cohort (born 1946 to 1964) and the Millennials, the youngest generational cohort (born 1980 to 2000) work together in the public sector workplace because they are the two most divergent cohorts there (Gortner,1977) That is a major contributing factor to their clashing at work. The Baby Boomers are nearing retirement, while the Millennials are usually young workers for whom their career is also new and young. In addition, the Millennials were the first generation born into a world of technology and for whom using and communicating with it seems to come naturally (Prensky, 2001a). Historically, Howe and Strauss first introduced the term Millennial and the concept that it is important to understand generations by birth years rather than by age (Howe & Strauss, 2000).

The most popular study about generational differences in the workplace was conducted in 2008 by Gursoy, Maier, & Chi. In that study, employees of a hotel chain were interviewed in focus groups in order to ascertain similarities and differences in their generations. The purpose of that study was to help hospitality industry managers to improve recruiting and retaining the highest quality employees, while boosting the morale, efficiency, and productivity of the current employees (Gursoy, Maier, & Chi, 2008).

Another seminal study on this topic was conducted by Lester, Standifer, Schultz, & Windsor in 2012 on 466 employees at a Midwestern organization. The Baby Boomer, Generation X, and Millennial employees answered an online survey about the value they placed on work differences between their generations, as well as the value of communication to the company (Lester, Standifer, Schultz, & Windsor, 2012). The study found that the three generations surveyed valued leadership, feedback, work/life balance, teamwork, and becoming involved on the job differently, but did not differ too widely in how they valued technology (Lester et.al, 2012). However, they valued e-mail and social media communication, as well as felt that face-to-face communication was most effective when dealing with older generations (Lester et.al, 2012).

This issue is especially important now because of the current economic climate. The recession and world events causing volatility in the stock market cause workers to work longer because they cannot afford to begin retirement (Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2013). Baby Boomers are at retirement age and have a desire to retire, but decide to keep on working (Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2013). What can and will happen is that Millennials wind up becoming the Baby Boomers’ superiors (Zemke et al., 2013). Because of the differences in how they think and their attitudes toward work, they eventually clash because managers see the shifts in leadership and subordinate cohorts, but do not know or understand how to work around the differences.

Statement of the Problem

Effective communication is essential for the contemporary public sector workplace. However, given differences in personal attributes such as values and modes of communication across different generations can be a barrier with the contemporary multigenerational workers—especially with Baby Boomers and Millennials. Baby Boomers and Millennials work together but there is evidence that they do not communicate effectively (Howe & Strauss, 2000). The problem is that Baby Boomers and Millennials working in the public sector may not communicate effectively, ethical choices may differ, and value-based decisions may be influenced by a generational divide, rather than effective leadership, collaboration, and effective use of technology, possibly resulting in the loss of workplace productivity.

Baby Boomers and Millennials are labels that were first coined by Howe and Strauss (2000), authors who are considered authorities on American generations. It was found that the best way to understand why people experience communication difficulties communicating is to understand their generational cohorts by birth years, not by age (Howe & Strauss, 2000). Ineffective communication has negatively impacted leadership and productivity (Howe & Strauss, 2000). Generational misunderstandings happen when four generations come together in the workplace and problems happen with their choices at work and their ethical decisions (Bartley, Ladd & Morris, 2007). Some possible causes of this problem are age, culture, different attitudes toward technology use, and other age-related attitudes. Formal research into the causes will help administrators understand and minimize generational differences.

The purpose of the New York City public assistance workplace is to provide services to residents who are poor, needy, and are unable to help themselves. There are 41 agencies that provide welfare, cash assistance, public health insurance, food, nutrition, child support, adult and child protective services, and a host of other vital services to this growing population (New York City, 2010). However, the public sector workplace is dysfunctional in the areas of communication and communication technology, and that impacts the quality of the services delivered. There is dysfunction in communication in the public sector workplace, and the multiple generations contribute to it because each generation has its preferred way of communicating. Generational differences in various modes of communication cause significance problems due to communication style and mode. Wen, Jaska, Brown, & Dalby's 2010 study found that Baby Boomers favored face-to-face communication—the most media rich form of communication, while generations X and (Y) Millennials are more prone to using technology (Wen, Jaska, Brown, & Dalby, 2010). Wen et.al (2010) postulated that Millennials differ from the other generational cohorts because they choose communication types that give them immediate feedback, as well as they misunderstood generational differences that lead to conflict, miscommunication, low productivity, and high attrition rates.

The public service agencies in New York City are bureaucratic because they are managed from the top down and employ the chain of command administration system; they are governed by New York Civil Service Law, the Citywide Agreement, and several other minor civil service laws. The mayor is responsible for leading public service agencies and can enact changes at will. However, that is rare because unions demand to be heard whenever any changes are imminent. Because of the bureaucracy present in the New York City public agencies, communication is affected and is dysfunctional. Harshman & Harshman (1999) contended that management only disseminates "need to know" information; only a few employees are entitled to key information; it is assumed that employees are disinterested in knowing information; and they will abuse important information (p. 12). Important information is rarely shared with subordinates. Management withholds this information and shares it with other managers, never with the employees. Employees occasionally received nonimportant information that does not help them do their job better or advance their career or education. Communication is important because it influences how well an organization performs, represents the key values of the organization, and is evidence of the leadership's values and its beliefs (Harshman & Harshman, 1999).

Communication should be shared freely between generational cohorts, as well as between management and employees. When that does not happen, the process is dysfunctional and the agency is not able to efficiently and effectively achieve its intended purpose. However, communication is effective only when employees feel that it is honest, truthful, and they can trust the person who communicates it (Harshman & Harshman, 1999). Employees must believe that management is giving them important information for the right reasons and not assume that they do not want the information or do not know what to do with it when they receive it.

Technology has changed the way the workplace communicates. Information is exchanged and indicates that managers should understand the cultural costs that come with the benefits technology offers (Green, 2000). Although technology connects populations that were formerly unreachable, problems occur when the generational cohorts do not use the technology or use it improperly. If they overuse it, communication can be negatively affected because there will be a breakdown in face-to-face communication.

Some of the more forward thinking commissioners and newly hired chief integrity officers have proposed some of the tenets of the private sector's entrepreneurship to the public sector. What they proposed would strengthen communications and the positive use of technology by the multigenerational cohorts. Corporate entrepreneurship is the entrepreneurship that exists in the public sector that culminates in developing new and existing services, technologies, administrative techniques, and new improved strategies (Kearney, Hisrich, & Roche, 2007). Many new and innovative ideas have been proposed, discussed, and put into use to a small degree to test out how and if they would work.

It was explained that organizations with lots of bureaucracy have a weak link between promotion and performance, and interference from elected officials have a low risk culture (Bozeman & Kingsley, 1998). That is unlike the high level of risk culture found in the private sector, where it is encouraged to be creative, take risks, and think out of the box (Bozeman & Kingsley, 1998). Empirical studies by Rainey, Pandey, and Bozeman(1998), and Crow and Emmert et.al discovered that the hierarchal, red tape-filled public sector environment undermined a risk-taking culture (as cited in Bozeman & Kingsley, 1998). Perhaps that is why previous attempts at risk-taking have failed in the New York City public agencies.

Bozeman & Kinghsley (1998) posited that the two multigenerational cohorts that were affected most by hierarchal bureaucracy are the Baby Boomers, the now oldest generation in the public administration workplace, and the Millennials, the youngest multigenerational cohort in the public administration workplace. This proved an excellent vantage point from which to conduct a study because it offered great leverage for countless public administrators who are asked to do so much with finite human and financial resources.

There seemed to be greater understanding about communication and modes of communication in the private sector among Baby Boomers and Millennials than in the public. The literature review revealed significant gaps in such understanding. Balda and Mora (2011) stated that qualitative and quantitative studies should be done on the Millennials' new constructs of leadership that were heavily influenced by the close ties between knowledge and relationship fostered by technological advances. New theoretical approaches and definitions should be proposed (Balda & Mora, 2011). Further research on how interaction with supervisors and cohorts affected Millennials were experienced, how they adapted when interacting with Baby Boomers, and how Millennials have modified their communication to manage conflict between the cohorts was suggested (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative, empirical phenomenological study was to explore the essence of Baby Boomers and Millennials experiences with the digital divide, communication, technology driven behaviors, and decision-making processes in the New York City public sector workplace.

The specific purpose of this constructivist empirical phenomenology study was to explore the phenomenon of generational communications in the New York City public sector and to understand their lived experiences of how they communicate and use technology in their job. In order to understand this phenomenon, I conducted in-depth interviews with an accessible sample of 21 New York City public sector workers (10 Baby Boomers and 11 Millennials). Each currently worked for an agency in the New York City public sector.

It was intended that managers and other administrators in the City of New York could use the findings of this study to help them manage their Millennials and Baby Boomers for increased efficiency and productivity. Through thorough understanding of how these two cohorts communicate and use technology, placed in context with the other two generational cohorts, managers would be better able to manage them all. Professionals from state and federal public sector agencies could use the findings for similar purposes and create a healthy and productive work environment for their employees.

Key concepts in this study included communications, using technology, generational cohorts, Baby Boomers, and Millennials—all of which were incorporated in and aligned with the research questions.

Research Questions

Two of the four generational cohorts in the New York City public sector workplace were the Baby Boomers born from 1946-1964 and the Millennials born from 1980 - 2000, although there is currently an unresolved debate about the year this cohort ends. The years 1999 and 2000 were suggested, but most sources agreed on the end as the year 2000 (Tolbize, 2008). These two cohorts have many differences, for example, because while Baby Boomers have come to learn to use technology later in life, either by necessity or by choice, the Millennials were the first generational cohort to be born into technology and used it with ease and were called Digital Natives (Prensky, 2001a). Because these two divergent generational cohorts (Baby Boomers-the oldest in the workplace and the Millennials-the youngest in the workplace) differed in the way they use technology; they also differed in the way they communicated. Their generational differences and approaches to how they communicated and used technology on the New York City public sector workplace led to conflict. Such conflicts were more apt to happen because of “attribution and perception errors,” not because of their differences (Tolbize, 2008, p.5). Good communication is important in the public sector workplace because it led to respect between employees, as well as between managers, and across the two levels (Tolbize, 2008).

This study concentrated on just two of the four generational cohorts: Baby Boomers (the oldest cohort currently in the public sector workplace, and the Millennials, the youngest cohort in the public sector workplace), not the Traditionalists or Generation X. The Traditionalist generation is very small and have mostly retired or died; and Generation X is a large enough cohort that needs its own study.

The research questions that guided this study were:

RQ1: What were the opportunities and challenges in using technological tools to communicate among multigenerational New York City public sector workers?

RQ2: How did Baby Boomer and Millennial multigenerational workers differ in the way they communicate and use technology among New York City public sector workers?

Interview Questions

The following were interview questions for this study.

Interview Questions-Demographic Questions

1. Are you a male or female born during the years 1946 to 1964 (Baby Boomer) or 1980-2000 (Millennial)?
2. In which of the 5 New York City boroughs do you live?
3. In which New York City public agency do you work?
4. How long you have worked for the City of New York?
5. What are your nonmanagement or management job duties?

Interview Questions

1. Describe the types of technology is available for employees in your workplace?
2. What are some of the benefits of using technology in your position at your workplace?
3. What are some of the benefits of using technology in your job?
4. What are some of the drawbacks and challenges of using technology in your job?

5. What do you think would improve those drawbacks and change them into positive experiences?
6. Please explain if you are comfortable using technology. If not, why not? Please be specific.
7. If you are not comfortable using technology, what would make the experience more comfortable for you?
8. How does the culture at your agency impact how you use technology to perform your job with or without your coworkers? Please explain.
9. How do you communicate with your coworkers during your workday? Example: face to face, by phone, email, text messages, etc. Please describe and be specific.
10. How do you communicate with your management at work? Please describe and be specific.
11. How is the way you communicate with your coworkers different from how you communicate with management? Why? Please give an example or examples for illustration.
12. How do you use technology when communicating interacting with your coworkers or management at work? Please be specific.
13. When there is miscommunication between management and coworkers, what causes it? Please be specific.

14. What is your experience when communicating with older workers (Baby Boomers)? Please be specific?
15. What is your experience when you communicate with younger workers (Millennials)? Please be specific.
16. How is the way you communicate with Baby Boomers different from how you communicate with Millennials and why? Please give a specific example or two.
17. Which generational unit or age group do you prefer to communicate with—older Baby Boomers or younger Millennials? Why? Please be specific.

Closing/End Questions:

1. What suggestions can you make for better communication between coworkers and between coworkers and management? Please be specific.
2. Please add any response or comment that was not asked but pertains to this topic.
3. What additional questions do you have about communications or using technology you would have liked asked, but was not asked?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework that was the theoretical lens through which this study was based was the competing values framework (CVF). The major concept undergirding CVF was that there are four cultures (clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy) in the workplace and they were used to assess organizational culture, efficiency, employee productivity, and effectiveness (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). In fact, Cameron & Quinn (2011) reiterated the importance of changing the organizational culture in order for other areas to function properly, as well as for the proposed changes and improvements to be effective. The commonality shared between the clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy cultures was communication (Hartnell, Ou, & Kinicki, 2011).

At the upper left hand side of the CVF four-quadrant matrix is clan culture (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). The major principles associated with clan culture are collaboration and teamwork (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). This culture has a family-like feel and promotes the success of teams, not individuals (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). In agencies where clan culture was present, teams worked together successfully and there was an emphasis on staff development (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). The agency exerted great effort in training its staff and ensuring that they stayed on the cutting edge of new developments and technology in their field. Clan culture leaders mentored their teams, were committed to them and their work, as well as to the human development model (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Communication is frequent and well done in clan culture agencies because it was encouraged (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Leaders at these agencies facilitated and encouraged their teams to communicate with and to them. They wanted to hear what their teams had to say because they felt that it would garner increased productivity and efficiency (Cameron & Quinn, 2011).

In the upper right quadrant is adhocracy culture (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Its main principles are creativity and innovation because this culture is not fixed, but temporary and forms only on an as needed basis (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). This culture focused on individuals or teams, depending on the projects for which they are formed. They are in formation for specific periods of time to get projects completed then they disband. While they are in operation, there tended to be an excess of information, as these ad hoc sessions were so quick and specialized (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Good communication could happen in adhocracy culture because the leaders were visionaries, and they encouraged creativity, change, and welcomed change. They felt that employee effectiveness is best when there was innovation and open communication on all levels (Cameron & Quinn, 2011).

The two lower quadrants, hierarchy culture on the left and market culture on the right, were the two most stringent organizational cultures (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). The guiding principles of hierarchy culture were control and organization (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). There was bureaucracy, a hierarchal management structure, accountability, and an impersonal organizational climate in agencies with a hierarchy culture (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). The main goals of this culture were stability and efficiency (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). The principles that guided the market culture are competition, profit, and production (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). This culture is most concerned with the bottom line and leaders running agencies with this culture were rigid in that they did not want or promote change. They preferred to seek relationships that could help them improve production (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Successful communication was not found in either of these organizational cultures because management who controlled the agencies and did not promote change or encourage feedback or input ran them from their employees (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Their goal was for the employees to work and maintain the status quo, but little else.

Influences on The Researcher's Thinking

The CVF influenced my thinking because this study analyzed the organizational culture of the New York City public service agencies and discussed how it impacted communication and technology use in the New York City public sector. Corresponding to Cameron and Quinn's competing values framework (CVF) is Quinn's Rohrbaugh's competing value model. Each of the four quadrants corresponded to that of Cameron and Quinn's CVF model. The clan culture equated with the human relations model, while the adhocracy culture equated with the open systems model (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). The hierarchy culture corresponded with the internal process model; and the market culture corresponded with the rational goals model (Quinn, Hildebrandt, Rogers, & Thompson, 1991). Consistency and control were also hallmarks of the rational goal model (Quinn et al., 1991). Organizations and agencies wanting organizational growth, stability, and sound communication used the competing values model to understand its conflicts and competing values (Quinn et al., 1991). It was a tool through which managers compared and contrasted the organization's values.

The theory that influenced my thinking was Prensky's (2001a) digital natives/digital immigrants, a theory from the education field, but was very applicable to the field of public administration. It was posited that college students are digital natives because they speak the digital language of all things technological: computers, video games, the Internet, and instant messaging. Prensky (2001a) contended that by the time they became college graduates, they have logged in excess of 10,000 hours playing video games, 20,000 hours watching TV, and under 5,000 hours reading. When considering the public sector, the Millennials were the digital natives because they are very adept at using technology and are naturally comfortable with it and were drawn to it in the public sector workplace.

Conversely, Prensky's (2001a) definition of digital immigrants related to those who had learned to use technology later in their lives, but were not born into it. They learned to adapt to technology out of necessity, not by choice (Prensky, 2001a). Just as with other things digital immigrants learned to use, some of them learned it well and easily, while others continued to complete their tasks manually without the use of technology as they had always done (Prensky, 2001a). Prensky (2001a) called this "retaining their accent" because they never left their past (p.2). In the New York City public sector workplace, the digital immigrants were the Baby Boomers who learned technology because using it was a part of their job, not because they willingly wanted to learn and use technology. As Prensky asserted, they adapted (Prensky, 2001a).

Relationship of Theory to Study Approach and Research Questions

The working assumption of the framework of this study was that there is a digital and communication disconnect between Baby Boomers and Millennials in the New York City public sector workplace. The CVF concept and the digital natives/digital immigrants theory was the foundation on which this study was built, and it was developed using the empirical phenomenology approach. This study showed in which CVF quadrant the Baby Boomer and Millennials in New York City public sector's use of technology and communication styles fell. Using the CVF concept, this study showed how the organizational culture in the NYC public sector impacted and was related to how Baby Boomers and Millennials used technology and communicated (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). This study's research questions aligned with this conceptual framework and with the interview questions as the concepts were ensconced in them. Chapter two provides a more detailed explanation of the conceptual framework and the theory that guided this study.

The working assumption of the framework of this proposed study was that there is a digital and communication disconnect between Baby Boomers and Millennials in the New York City public sector workplace. The CVF concept and the digital natives/digital immigrants theory are the foundation on which this study was built, and it was developed using the empirical phenomenological research approach.

Assumptions

One of the first assumptions I made is that the participants would be honest and forthright about their experiences communicating with their coworkers and administrators and how they used technology in the New York City public sector workplace. It was assumed that they would be truthful in answering and not tell me what they thought I wanted to hear. It was assumed that both men and women would participate in this study. It was also assumed that both line and staff employees, as well as managers, would become participants in this study. Another thing that was assumed was that all participants would understand which generational cohort they fell within. It was also assumed that the participants would willingly answer the interview questions and answer them objectively without bias.

Limitations

This study was limited to a sample of 21 participants—10 Baby Boomer civil servants and 11 Millennial civil servants who worked for the New York City public sector. This study recruited these 21 participants who represented both line and staff employees, as well as management. Because of that number, there might not be the most accurate depiction of all New York City public service workers in those two generational cohorts. The participants were New York City public service employees who volunteered to share their lived experiences and were available. A limitation was that of the two generational cohorts, the Millennials had the shortest length of employments and less lived experiences than the Baby Boomer employees. Another potential limitation and weakness was that race, culture, and gender of these two generational cohorts would not be addressed. The emphasis was on their lived experiences in the multigenerational New York City public sector workplace. However, it was possible that during the interview process, culture, and background would influence their worldview in terms of their generational cohort, work ethic, and their overall work experience.

Limitations in Design and Methodology

One limitation of qualitative research design and methodology was that the presence of the researcher could have a profound effect on the participants' responses. One threat to trustworthiness was participant bias in that participants would tell the researcher what they thought they want to hear, but was not an accurate depiction of their experiences. They would glamorize an unfavorable situation instead of sharing the actual experience (Bowen, 2005).

Another limitation of qualitative research design and methodology was that rigor in the instrumentation could be problematic. Additionally, the researcher's role in the instrumentation could have been deemed as biased due to his discomfort threatening the data obtained; being unprepared to conduct data in the field, and conducting improper interviews (Chenail, 2011).

The small sample studied could have also been a limitation of qualitative research design and methodology. Because the number was limited to 21 participants, a wealth of data could come from an interview, but the focal point was on qualitative matters, not quantitative ones (Hycner, 1985).

Other limitations of qualitative research design and methodology were generalizability, validity, and replicability. Because of the random selection of and small number of participants, the research could not be generalized, but could possibly be phenomenologically useful about human beings in other ways (Hycner, 1985). The researcher must constantly confirm that the essence of the phenomenon being studied is captured through participant checks and researcher checks to ensure that the findings seem plausible, checks with the researcher's committee, and even with the scientific or lay community (Hyncer, 1985). Although replicability is not one of the hallmarks of qualitative research, it was important because embedded in this concept was objectivity. The results should have been able to be replicated in some way by other researchers and the findings should be meaningful enough to make replication possible (Hyncer, 1985).

Limitations Impact Reduction

It is almost inevitable that limitations will enter a research study. Understanding that, it was important to deal with it so that it does not have a negative impact on the study. The best step that I could take to reduce the impact of those limitations was to recognize it and to address it so that the readers would understand that I was aware that they were present and I was not overlooking them or pretending that they did not exist (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012).

Addressing limitations in the study also lets the readers know that the researcher has expected that the limitations can weaken the study. The researcher was also letting the readers know that the study took place with certain constraints and they could make their own decisions about applying it to other venues (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). I projected that there would be limitations in that the researcher's presence might affect how the participants respond to the interview questions. Also, there might be limitations because the Millennials had less lived experience working for the City of New York than the Baby Boomers, as well as this study would not focus on race, gender, and culture—just their lived experience. It was also possible that there would be limitations in the research design and methodology in the areas of instrumentation rigor, sample size, validity, and reliability.

Scope

The scope of this study concentrated on a snowball sample of 21 participants –10 Baby Boomers and 11 Millennials. All of the participants were employees of the New York City public sector and work for one of its 41 agencies. The sample was a purposeful sample because if the participants fit the inclusion criteria, the researcher would have the right people for the study. It would save time having to exclude participants who did not fit the criteria. Collecting data from this sample allowed the researcher to take an in depth look at these participants' lived experiences at how they communicated and used technology in the public sector workplace.

Delimitations

The delimitations that narrowed the scope of this study were location, population, and sample size. This study took take place in the five boroughs of New York City: Manhattan (county of New York), Brooklyn (county of Kings), Queens (county of Queens), and Staten Island (county of Richmond). The study was limited to just those five counties and did not include any of the counties within New York State. The sample population was composed of 21 workers who worked full-time for the 41 City of New York public agencies. This sample, established through purposive sampling, was composed of 10 Baby Boomer and 11 Millennial employees. New York State has similar public agencies, but they were excluded for the purposes of this study. Also, two of the generational cohorts (Traditionalists and Generation X) were excluded for the purposes of this study. These cohorts were excluded because I wanted to conduct the study on the youngest (Millennials) and the oldest cohort (Baby Boomers) currently working in the New York City multigenerational public sector workplace. The Traditionalists were also excluded because their numbers are extremely small in the public sector workplace. Many of them retired under the now-defunct Tier 1 retirement plan in which they could retire at age 55 with full benefits that the City of New York fully contributed for them. There are so few Traditionalists left now that there were not enough for a decent sample for a study. Workers in Generation X were abundant and could easily populate their own study. Including them in this study with the other two generational cohorts would yield too much data. This cohort deserved its own study so that it could be studied thoroughly, not understudied, and hidden between the two other generational cohorts so as to keep the dissertation a respectable length.

Significance of the Study

This study reached a population (Baby Boomers and Millennials) whose communication and technology use in the public sector workplace has not been researched in similar studies. Future research should ascertain if and how value differences affect workplace outcomes and the bottom line and examine the systematic variance on personal values between generations and how they influence work-related performances (Lester, Standifer, Schultz, and Windsor 2012). This information will contribute to the field of public administration by understanding how the differences between Baby Boomers and Millennials in technology and communication influence their interaction in the workplace within their multigenerational cohort, as well as between cohorts, and with management.

This study supported professional practice in that it concluded with recommendations on how both generational groups can better trust each other to enable them to work together, as well as underscored the correlation between work styles, needing feedback, independence, and communication issues between the Baby Boomers and Millennials (and the other two cohorts) in the New York City public sector workplace.

The potential findings of this study could support positive social change by identifying the need for inter-generational mentoring programs in public sector workplaces. For example, perhaps the Millennials can teach their Baby Boomer colleagues use of technology—how to use it and feel comfortable with it. The Baby Boomers could teach the Millennials how to communicate in person with their cohorts and management, as well as how to write professional and effective business correspondence, as opposed to their opting to use technology instead of having an in-person interaction. They could also teach the Millennials proper business etiquette and networking skills that they might lack because of depending on always communicating with their cohorts online instead of face-to-face.

Qualitative Methods Used and Research Questions

The two research questions in this study were answered by interviewing 10 Baby Boomers and 11 Millennials about their lived experiences communicating and using technology in their City of New York public sector jobs. These interviews were done in person in private spaces around New York City or by telephone. A short questionnaire was administered during the interview, and the DISC Classic Profile was administered in person at the interview. Member checking was done after the first interview, and participants were asked to do a second interview if more information or clarification was needed, as well as to identify disagreements, discrepant cases, or if anything were unclear. Member checking included the participants reviewing their transcribed interviews for accuracy. The DISC Classic Profile is a survey that indicates the participants' communication personality. After the interviews and completion of the DISC Classic Profile, the participants were debriefed in order to help them to fully understand the reason for the study as well as to allay their fears about any part of the study or anything related to the study.

Nature of the Study

The qualitative research design employed the use of a demographic questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, and the DISC Classic Personal Profile test. Participants were interviewed in order to learn about their experiences with communication and using technology in the New York City public sector workplace. The most compelling participant's experience was discussed more in depth in order to fully understand and illustrate how the multigenerational disconnect in communications and technology affected and informed it. Participants were asked what they have experienced with regard to cross-generational communication, and which contexts and situations mainly influenced or affected their experiences with the phenomenon. The qualitative method was appropriate because it was conducted in a natural setting by the researcher as a key instrument and used CVF and digital natives/digital immigrants theoretical lens (Creswell, 2009).

Phenomenology was the chosen research approach and best fits this study because it allowed me an opportunity to understand the participants' lived experiences with communicating and using technology in the New York City public sector workplace. It also allowed me to explore the essence of this phenomenon, as well as to increase understanding of it, as well as to better write about their experience in terms of how it related to this study's participants (Patton & Patton, 2002).

I used the specific method of empirical phenomenology to elicit the participants' shared experiences about how they communicated and used technology in their New York public sector jobs. They helped the researcher to understand that phenomenon through immediacy, open-ended questions, lively dialogue, and the researcher expounded on their experiences with reflections and analysis (Moustaskas, 1994).

Nestled in empirical phenomenology is what Schütz calls "meaning structure," the stories participants tell and how they communicate them (as cited in Aspers, 2009, p.5). Those stories are integral to the interview process and must be understood. Aspers (2009) suggested that the best way to find the participants' meaning structure is to use first-order constructs, how the researcher gets their stories, and second-order constructs, how the researcher integrates the story meanings with theories (Aspers, 2009). The only way for this process to work is there must be a mutual understanding between the researcher and participants (Aspers, 2009).

CVF and digital natives/ digital immigrants theories were the foundation of this study, so a new theory did not need to be developed. Therefore, grounded theory was not an option. The case study research method would not have worked because I wanted to interview at least 20 participants to understand their lived experiences. Biography and history were not appropriate for this study because they would not allow the researcher to explore the phenomenon being studied. Ethnography was also inappropriate for this study because the culture of this phenomenon and the participants' culture were not being studied.

The qualitative research paradigm was chosen because it lent itself best to interviewing the participants and encouraging them to share their lived experiences about how they communicated and used technology in the New York City public sector workplace. This study did not need statistics about this phenomenon, just with the participants' experiences with this phenomenon and hearing their stories told in their own words. The best way to get to those all-important stories was through using the qualitative research paradigm.

Research Design and Data Collection Categories

The statement of the problem, the conceptual framework and its philosophical underpinnings guided the research design in this study. The data collection and analysis were guided by the research questions and the qualitative research methods used in this study. In planning this study, I created a matrix as a visual guide to help develop the study. The matrix is linear in nature and displayed the specific parts of each part of the study and showed how they relate and interact (Maxwell, 2013). The matrix addressed the five components of research design: goals; conceptual framework; research questions; research methods; and validity (Maxwell, 2013).

The goals component sought to understand the meaning undergirding why Baby Boomers and Millennials communicated and used technology in the manner they do in the New York City public sector workplace. The conceptual framework component applied the CVF concept and the digital natives/digital immigrants theory to the study as data were collected and later analyzed. The research questions answered what needed to be learned as a result of doing this study. The research methods component guided how the data this study sought would be obtained. The validity component addressed why the study was important for scholars to read, its trustworthiness, researcher bias, and did it provide the data as intended (Maxwell, 2013).

Value of Ideas and Theories

The CVF concept and the digital natives/digital immigrants theory are valuable because they provided the theoretical lens upon which the study was presented. What was most valuable about the CVF concept was that it gave this proposed study a frame of reference. Specifically, the CVF concept helped place the organizational culture of the City of New York public sector agencies into one of the four quadrants of the CVF matrix, thus enabling a clearer understanding of why Baby Boomers and Millennials communicated the way they did. Prior to the study, it was assumed that the agencies in the New York City public sector fell into the hierarchy culture because that is the culture where control is important. In addition, these agencies are bureaucratic and operate with a hierarchal management structure that manages from the top down, thrived on constant employee efficiency and productivity, and customer service, as well as assessing the services provided to its clients (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). The quadrant might change after the data from the study are collected and analyzed. The CVF served as the theoretical lens through which to look at this study.

The digital natives/digital immigrants theory was equally as important to this study because it offered a good rationale for how Baby Boomers and Millennials communicated and used technology in the New York City public sector workplace. It explained how Millennials had a natural affinity to all things technological because they are native to it and were born into technology, while the Baby Boomers are immigrants because they came to technology by necessity to do their job or they are forced to. Baby Boomers did not usually choose the technological way to complete their work if they could do it manually (Prensky, 2001a).

Study Rationale

I selected the empirical phenomenology research approach because it enabled me to thoroughly explore how the participants dealt with and related to the phenomenon under study (Anderson, 2010). The best research approach that allowed the researcher to go out into the field, meet with the participants, and hear their stories was qualitative phenomenology. In empirical phenomenology, the participants shared the essence of their lived experiences through immediacy, open-ended questions, and dialogue (Anderson, 2010). I deciphered those experiences generally and specifically with reflections (Moustakas, 1994). In addition, empirical research allowed me to get to the heart of what Schütz calls the participants' "meaning structure" (as cited in Aspers, 2009, p.5). The suggested way to get to the crux of their meaning structure was by using "first-order constructs," eliciting the participants' stories and through "second-order constructs," combining the meaning of their stories with the appropriate theories (Aspers, 2009, p.3). Another reason for using this research design is because the qualitative research approach was flexible and allowed me to adapt to the process as new data are suggested or came up during data collection. I was able to explore that new data and adapted the analysis and study as needed.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data was collected from Baby Boomers and Millennials who worked for any of the 41 New York City public sector agencies. Baby Boomers are those participants born from 1946 to 1964, and Millennials are those participants born from 1980 to 2000 (Bartley, Ladd, & Morris, 2007). The sample population was composed of men and women and represented a cross section of various civil service titles. This sample will be comprised of participants who are both line and direct staff and management.

The data were analyzed using the Dedoose data analysis program, as well as second interviews for clarity and accuracy, and member checking. The DISC Classic Profiles were analyzed with the analysis material that comes with the profiles. That was incorporated into and compared with the other data from the interviews.

I anticipated limitations in gender and culture during the data collection process. It was possible that men and women communicated differently during the interview process. It was anticipated that women would be more loquacious and forthcoming, because women often gathered in small groups in the workplace and engaged in conversations, whereas New York City public sector men might be more prone to steer clear of small group exchanges, opting for more one on one communication.

Operational Definitions

Baby Boomers: This generational cohort was born during 1946 to 1964 after the soldiers came home when World War II ended. The result was a baby boom, hence the name Baby Boomers. The historical and social events that these cohorts share are Vietnam, the rapid growth of suburbia, economic prosperity, and rock & roll (Patota, Schwartz, & Schwartz, 2007).

Communication: The exchange of dialogue between coworkers, coworkers and management, or management and management, giving them guidance, making them aware of what’s going on in the agency, training, giving and receiving feedback, increasing managerial integrity with employees, taking specific steps toward improvement after performance evaluations, and disseminating information through email, voicemails, paper documents, and unit meetings (Tolbize, 2008); historical and social events separate each generational cohort from each other (Lester, Standifer, Schultz, & Windsor, 2012); and a combination of public relations, systems theory, and management information systems in the public information sector (Gortner, 1977).

Generational Cohorts: They are groups of individuals born during a specific time period and are alike because they experienced or were alive during important historical, social, or cultural events (Pitt-Catsouphes & Smyer, 2007).

Generational gap as applied to the workplace: Generational cohorts are separated by their job titles and duties, e.g. older workers in management and younger workers in subordinate or other positions. They stay within their own cohorts, rarely mixing within the others, and don't want to understand the other cohorts and learn how they function. They don't want to know anything about any cohort other than their own, and the bureaucratic organizational culture and management doesn't encourage them to do so (Gursoy, Maier, & Chi, 2008).

Millennials: This generational cohort was born from 1980-2000, and is the first generation to be born into technology; and are also called Generation Y (Howe & Strauss, 2000). The historical and social events that Millennials share are the Internet/Worldwide Web, 9/11, and the War on Terror (Patota, Schwartz, & Schwartz, 2007).

New York City civil service/public sector: This term is synonymous with the term public sector. In the civil service, qualified applicants take a civil service test for jobs in local government. The purpose of the civil service is to make the jobs fair for all because applicants who pass the tests are given the positions in list order. In New York City, after the new hires successfully pass one-year probation, they are granted permanent status. It is difficult to terminate employees from a permanent civil service job because it requires such a series of hearings, providing evidence, and establishing a history of employee misconduct that it only happens in extreme cases. A civil service job is very stable and offers one of the most comprehensive health care packages in the New York City metropolitan area (New York City Civil Service, 2016).

Use of technology: How workers use computers during communication at work and have access to computers on which to communicate (Losh, 2009); its use is thought to be necessary for progress, and there is no other way to communicate (Vijayalakshmi, 2013).

Sample, Data, and Interpretative Schemes

The sample scheme that was used in this study is collected data about how Baby Boomers and Millennials communicate and use technology in the New York City public sector workforce. This was done by interviewing 10 Baby Boomers and 11 Millennials about how they communicated and used technology in the New York City public sector workforce. This was done by interviewing 10 Baby Boomers and 11 Millennials who currently worked in any of the New York City public sector agencies about how they communicated with both their subordinates and leadership, as well as how they used technology at work. They answered a demographic questionnaire to ensure that they met the study's inclusion criteria. To complete triangulation, this researcher could have consulted New York City public sector agency and other documents pertaining to the subjects of generational communications, Baby Boomers, Millennials, and technology use. Triangulation enabled the researcher to collect a wealth of information, verify it for accuracy, and to enrich the lushness of the study's findings (Wahyuni, 2012). The data were analyzed with the Dedoose data analysis software to find similarities, differences, and themes. The data were interpreted through content analysis to identify recurring patterns and themes and coding the data (Wahyuni, 2012). Peer debriefing was a method to analyze the accuracy of the codebook and to indicate if and where revisions should be made (Wahyuni, 2012).

Potential Transferability

There was a reduced chance of transferability (external validity) in this study because the sample size was small and statistics were not used in analyzing the data. However, the data should be generalizable to other settings or populations. In addition, the researcher was not an instrument in this study. The researcher also did not give information about the participants or her relationship with them. Therefore, anyone reading the study might not be able to see how the results are transferable (Morrow, 2005).

Potential Research Biases

Unintended biases that happened during this study were addressed. Unintentional bias is more common than intentional researcher bias such as finagling the research for specific results (Sampson Jr., 2012). Bias is most apt to happen when the researcher creates a research question for self-serving results instead of for academic results; intentionally including or excluding certain literature; skewing operational vocabulary to point up a specific viewpoint; and including some points of discussion while leaving out others in the implications section of the dissertation (Sampson, Jr., 2012). Some possible types of bias in the dissertation research could include experience bias, population bias, and theory bias (Sampson, Jr., 2012).

Another source of unintended bias that could have happened during the study is researcher bias because I am a Baby Boomer who works for the New York City private sector. Understanding that this type of bias was a possibility, she did everything possible to avoid it and to maintain her objectivity throughout the study. One way in which I managed bias was through bracketing—seeing the participants' experiences from their viewpoint and not allowing my experiences, culture, or worldview to taint their responses (Hycner, 1985). I also addressed bias by doing a comprehensive review of the phenomenon being studied to learn as much as possible about it (Morrow, 2005). Another method that I used if bias happened was reflexivity, a way of acknowledging my feelings and keeping them at bay (Morrow, 2005). I kept a journal while conducting the study. The journal kept a record of my reactions, assumptions, experiences, and any degree of bias (Morrow, 2005). I also spoke to and brainstormed with my Committee Chair about the research approach being used should bias happen or seemed imminent. I also listened to the interview tapes and reread the transcripts multiple times to ensure that I fully understood what the participants imparted in their interview answers (Hycner, 1985).

What This Study Presently Does

Prominent in the literature related to the topic of generational communications is how it is influenced by and affects leadership. The literature also showed studies in retaining tacit knowledge in Baby Boomers; employee perception of their work environment in the multi-generational workplace; multi-generational employee engagement strategies; understanding generational perception of leadership; virtual collaboration and using virtual conferencing in multi-generational teams; how Communication Accommodation Theory increases employee morale and productivity ; how trust affects knowledge transfer in the multi-generational workforce; and communication satisfaction in a multi-generational organization.

A review of the literature found studies and articles that suggested a connection to multi-generational communications, but had little to do with communications. Instead, they focused on the topics named above and communications figured into the literature more as a sub-topic than the main topic.

The proposed study did what none of the other studies or literature could not do: it focused on how two specific multi-generational cohorts, Baby Boomers and Millennials, —the oldest and the youngest populations in the 21st century New York City public sector workplace communicated and used technology--definitely an integral and important part of communications. The study took a close look at this process in the New York City public sector workplace. This was the first study on this topic that looked at this phenomenon in this venue. This study took the subject of communications further than others because it broke communications down to show how it contains linguistic clues and codes in messages between cohorts and management and vice versa. Communications, small talk, and all verbal exchanges in the New York City public sector workplace affect their professional mobility in the agency and are drawn along gender and color lines (Rich, 1998).

Problems in Recruitment or Research Methodology

Although the qualitative research approach is the best choice for this proposed study, it does not come without some inherent problems. One problem is that the quality of the research is dependent upon the researcher's skill, and as such, there was a possibility that my biases might unintentionally skew the results. Another problem is that it was not easy to appraise and manage rigor using this method. Studies using qualitative methodology weren't as readily accepted in the scientific arena as those using quantitative methodology. Another problem is that there could be issues concerning anonymity and confidentiality when the findings are presented, as well as it was not easy presenting them using visual means with qualitative methodology. Finally, the high amount of data garnered from using this research approach could be tedious to analyze and interpret (Anderson, 2010).

Filling a Literature Gap

There was a gap in the research on generational communications when looking at the Baby Boomer and Millennial cohorts. Studies have been done about leading a multigenerational workforce where all four cohorts were considered in general terms. However, studies were not done that specifically concentrated on the Baby Boomers and Millennials, the oldest and the youngest cohorts in the workplace. Research has covered how the multigenerational cohorts responded to and were affected by leadership and virtual collaboration. More focus should be put on how value differences affected workplace outcomes and the array of systems related to individual and multigenerational values and their effect on workplace productivity (Lester, Standifer, Schultz, and Windsor, 2012). This study concentrated on these important two generations because their presence indicated major importance in the future of the New York City public sector workplace because as the Baby Boomers retire, the Millennials will replace them. The Millennial-run public sector workplace differed from that of the Baby Boomer's communication as they visited their culture of using technology upon their multi-generational cohort. A study got to the essence of this phenomenon and added some much-needed research to the existing literature and tightened the gap.

Public Administration Profession Benefits

The public administration field could benefit greatly from this proposed study. One way in which managers and administrators could benefit is that they would meet their subordinates where they are, on their level, and on their own terms. This would help management to improve their working relationship with them. Better working relations between management and subordinates could mean increased employee productivity and efficiency. The results of this study would be beneficial to New York City public administration because it would help administrators understand how Millennials communicated and used technology, as well as how it was different from how Baby Boomers used the same. This is especially important at this juncture, because as the Baby Boomers age and retire from the civil service, the Millennials will replace them and perhaps move into leadership positions. Savvy managers will want to do all they can to fully understand how Millennials approach communication and technology and technology in their jobs. In addition, this study will help managers learn and understand how Baby Boomers and Millennials feel about work in general because that will influence and affect how they use technology in the New York City public sector workplace. Managers who understand these two divergent generational cohorts' approach to communication and using technology would be able to increase their employees' overall efficiency and productivity, thus increasing the quality of their weekly statistical reports for their specific programs and services.

Potential Implications on Social Change

This study about generational communications in the public sector workplace could make an impact outside of the larger professional world and have a potential implication for social change. One way that this is possible is that it would provide recognition of employees who are excellent communicators and users of technology because they will do their jobs more efficiently and increase their productivity. This, in turn, would lead to their receiving merit increases and job promotions. As their success is recognized and identified, it could lead to the development of new programs and job opportunities for the New York City public sector agencies. This could also be translated to New York State public sector agencies that correspond to those in the New York City public sector. This could improve professional interaction between New York City public sector employees, managers, other administrators, and community stakeholders. The implications of social change because of this study could be far reaching if these stakeholders think outside of the proverbial box when applying the results to their programs or professional interests.

Summary

Chapter 1 introduced the proposed study which discussed the disconnect between Baby Boomers and Millennials in the areas of communication and using technology in the New York City public sector workplace. It was proposed that each generational cohort has its unique way of communication and using technology because the Baby Boomers aren't predisposed to using technology, like the Millennials who were born into it and know no other way. The problem statement discussed how there is a lack of communication between the two generational cohorts in the New York City public sector, as well as how there is a lack of literature about this issue as it pertains to Baby Boomers and Millennials, the oldest and youngest generations in the workforce. The research questions aligned with the purpose of this study, as well with the conceptual framework on which this study will be built. Several definitions of phrases that would appear throughout this study were provided for clarity and consistency. In addition, this chapter included possible limitations, delimitations, significance of the research, and how the results of the study will effect social change.

Chapter 2 will discuss the literature and the search strategy that found the right literature that corresponds with this study. Additionally, the theoretical framework—the CVF and digital natives, digital immigrants—the foundation of this study, is explicated. An analysis of the literature pertinent to the way generational cohorts communicated and used technology in the workplace and how it affects organizational culture, workplace ethics, and the language of communication is provided. Research methodology is reviewed and will segue into the conclusion.

Chapter three will discuss the qualitative research methodology used to construct this study. Specifically, the research method used will be empirical phenomenology, which was further broken down into first and second order constructs. The research questions were aligned with the conceptual framework and why this research method was used over the others. Other topics that will be addressed in this section include how the study was designed, how the population was chosen, the instrumentation used, how the data will be collected and managed, as well as the role of the researcher as it will apply to bias, and remaining ethical and trustworthy.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

There is a generational communication problem in the workplace. According to Johnson & Lopes (2008), there are 300 million residents in the United States, and four generations in the contemporary workforce. However, the study focused on the Baby Boomers and Millennials, the oldest and youngest generational cohorts in the workplace. In 1965-1975, the Baby Boomer generation entered the American workforce en masse (Weisner & Miller, 2008). They were the best educated generation at work at the time they entered the workforce, having finished high school and even completed some college (Weisner & Miller, 2008). However, what they learned through their lived experiences mattered most for them (Weisner & Miller, 2008). Baby Boomers were more inclined to change jobs than their parents and believed in having job security. They also identified with their profession, not with the actual company. Work, for Baby Boomers, was about more than making a living, but more about contributing to social change and their doing something about war, poverty, and air pollution (Weisner & Miller, 2008).

Millennials entered the workforce in large numbers during 1998 to 2008 (Weisner & Miller, 2008). Millennials are the best educated of all of the generational cohorts in the workplace because 88% of them hold Bachelor’s degrees, and 35% hold Master’s degrees (Weisner & Miller, 2008). A 2007 Robert Half International survey found that 73% of Millennials would return to school for higher education (Weisner & Miller, 2008). Like their Baby Boomer parents, Millennials value education. However, they differ in the area of technology. Millennials were born into increasing personal technology. As they matured, so did the technology. The Millennials were the first generation to regularly have computers in the classroom and are technologically advanced (Miller & Weisner, 2008). Millennials are always searching for meaningful employment and personal fulfillment in their career (Johnson & Lopes, 2008).

The implication is that as much as these generations are alike, they also differ. These differences can cause them to misunderstand each other in the workplace, with the potential for conflict. If each generational cohort understands the other, they will work better together, as well as increase their productivity and efficiency in the workplace (Johnson & Lopes, 2008). They will be able to work together as individuals, in groups and teams, as well as ask appropriate questions that are energetic, and thought-provoking, raise challenges, and get the generational cohorts communicating.

The purpose of this study was to learn what the generational communication problems were in the public sector workplace as they related specifically to Baby Boomers and Millennials, as well as to understand how the digital divide affects that phenomenon. The results of the study should help public sector leadership lead these two divergent cohorts more successfully and increase their organization's productivity and efficiency with workers who get along and understand each other and are willing to work together for the good of the organization.

Literature Search Strategy

Several searches were conducted to find current literature related to multigenerational disconnects in the areas of communication and technology in the public sector workplace. Searches were done on Google Scholar, ProQuest, Thoreau, Business Source, and SAGE. Keywords used were *Baby Boomer** or *generation Y* and *digital divide* and *public sector*. Several search strings were used to find pertinent information about the general topic of multigenerational communications and technology use. These search strings included: *multigenerational cohorts and workplace conflicts; dysfunction in the public sector workplace; communication issues in the public sector workplace; succession planning in the public sector workforce; generational communications in the public sector workplace;* and *generational differences*. That strategy was a very general approach. The search later became more specific with the use of several themes found during the general search string approach. Some of the themes searched included: *the language of leadership; organizational stories; human capital; reverse mentoring; bureaucracy; attribution theory; human performance technology; competing values framework; organizational culture; human resource management; work satisfaction; succession planning, ethical leadership; total quality management;* and *knowledge skills transfer*. Each search provided interesting threads, which were followed until all available information was exhausted. As the research was completed, new information was learned and subthemes were suggested. Those new leads and subthemes were researched and additional articles were pulled and read.

The search for literature on the general subject of generational communications began with the Walden Library and went on to include Google Scholar. The search on that topic began as broad as possible; then specific generational cohorts, the public sector workplace, and communication types and styles delimited it. Two concepts to frame the literature review were selected: CVF and digital immigrants/digital natives, a theory that is indigenous to education, but could easily be applied to the study about generational communications in the public sector workplace. Weber's bureaucracy theory from 1922 was found during the research phase of this literature review. Each of these theories was researched as topic of literature review. The databases were searched for preeminent people who wrote about these theories such as Cameron and Robert E. Quinn, who wrote about CVF, and Prensky, who is considered to be the creator of the digital immigrants/digital natives theory. A search was also conducted on Mannheim, the founder of generational theory, as well as Howe and Strauss, two prominent authors who are considered as experts on the subject of American generations. All of the literature located contained extensive references that led to further searches on the above-named topics.

Current literature about generational communications revealed information about the specific language of leadership, as well as how each organization—public and private—establishes its professional footprint through its stories. It was found that organizational culture, bureaucracy, and leader storytelling affected workplace communications (Driscoll & McKee, 2007). Ethical leadership, workplace aggression, and workplace bullying were also found to have an effect on how the generations communicated in the workplace (Merecz, Drabek, & Mościcka, 2009). The literature showed how trust was important in the communication process. The research showed that certain competencies must be achieved in order to have effective oral and other types of communication between the generations. The literature showed that there are problems with communication between the generations in the workplace but that knowledge transfer, mentoring, and reverse mentoring were some ways to improve it.

The literature showed that the generations were different in the way they viewed and used technology in the workplace. Overall, the literature supported the basic principles of the digital immigrants/digital natives theory that the older generations came to using technology late, used it because they had to, and were not necessarily comfortable with it; whereas the younger generations had an affinity for technology, enjoyed using it, and were comfortable with it (Prensky, 2001a).

During the search process to locate studies and articles related to how generations communicated and used technology in the workplace—specifically, the public sector workplace, several library databases and search engines were used. The library databases that were used included AB/INFORM Complete; Business Source Complete;

Dissertations and Theses at Walden University; ProQuest Central; SAGE Premier; Science Direct; Thoreau; and PsychINFO. The search engines used during the research process were Educational Resource Information Center (ERIC); Google Scholar; and Mendeley.

Conceptual Framework: Competing Values Framework (CVF)

CVF was created by Cameron & Quinn (2011) and gives a comprehensive guide with which change agents can use to effect organizational change in their companies. Cameron & Quinn claimed that their approach to diagnosing and realizing organization change is effective because it is practical, efficient, involving, quantitative and qualitative, manageable and valid. The part of CVF that is of particular interest to this study is the CVF chart, which shows four organizational cultures that have either an external or internal focus, and offers their employees either flexibility or stability, but is controlled (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). In the upper left and right quadrants are clan culture (flexible, internal focus) and adhocracy culture (flexible, external focus) (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Clan culture has companies that point up a family focus, staff development, and welcomes input from the employees (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Leaders are mentors, and everything is done to keep employees satisfied and to encourage them to remain loyal to the company (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Adhocracy culture is a temporary arrangement in companies that need special projects completed creatively and quickly (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). There are no formal structures or procedures in place, and they disappear once the project is completed (Cameron & Quinn, 2011).

On the lower left and right side of the quadrant are hierarchy culture (stable, internal focus) and market culture (stable, external focus) respectively. Hierarchy culture is composed of companies that are bureaucratic and are concerned with efficiency and ceaseless production (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Market culture has companies that depend on relationships with outside stakeholders like in a market, thrive on competition, production, and pay keen attention to its finances (Cameron & Quinn, 2011).

The CVF chart is an excellent resource that gives an indication of how successful communications will be based on the four organization cultures (see Figure 1). For example, communications would be optimal in the clan and adhocracy cultures because those cultures are flexible and welcome change (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). In the clan culture, followers are encouraged to question, comment, and express their opinions to each other and to their mentor-managers (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). They are part of a family and a group setting that supports them in every way. Whatever they say will be heard, considered, and perhaps even acted upon (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Communication would also go well in the adhocracy culture, because although projects under that culture are short-lived, creativity is at the root of it (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Thus, employees can freely speak and add their thoughts at any time in relationship to the projects on which they are working (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Lots of communication would have to happen so that the projects could be completed quickly and well within a short prescribed timeframe.

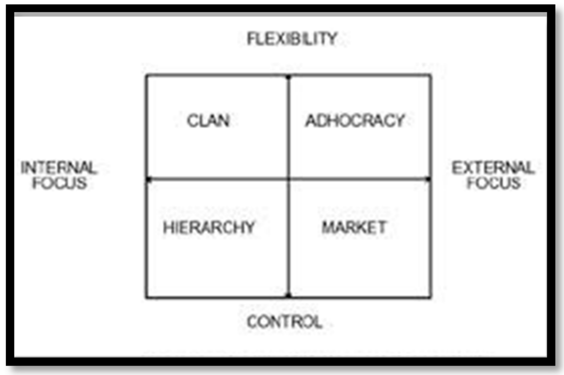

Figure 1. The competing values framework. Adapted from "Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture Based On The Competing Values Framework," by Kim S. Cameron & Robert E. Quinn, 2011, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA, p.39. Reprinted with permission (See Appendix A).

Key statements and definitions in the CVF

Cameron and Quinn are considered the creators of the CVF, a popular framework used by managers, teachers, consultants, efficiency experts, and anyone working in change management who want to change organizational culture (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). The key definitions used in CVF are found on the grid and illustrate the four culture types.

Hierarchy culture has companies with internally controlled environments, based on bureaucracy, and thrive best on efficiency, reliability, speed, and seamless production (Cameron & Quinn, 2011).

Market culture is composed of organizations that operate as markets in which transactions with outside stakeholders such as contractors, unions, and customers are made (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Market organizations are concerned with the bottom line, competition, productivity, and naturally assume that external environments are hostile (Cameron & Quinn, 2011).

Clan culture has organizations that have a family type of structure in which employees are considered as partners and managers are mentors, and employees are rewarded based on the strength of the team (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Teamwork and employee development are important in these companies, and employees are encouraged to contribute suggestions. Also, it is believed that happy employees will be loyal and committed to the company. The adage "take one for the team" is applicable to clan culture organizations (Cameron & Quinn, 2011).

Adhocracy culture is composed of organizations that want to develop products or services quickly (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). There is no formal power structure, just individuals or teams working on the products or services (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). As these structures are temporary, they disband after the completion of the project. There is usually no organization chart, formal space, and roles are short. This type of culture can be set up with one of the other cultures, and it lends itself to employee creativity (Cameron & Quinn, 2011).

Another dimension of CVM is how it relates to the workplace (See Figure 2). Each quadrant aligns with one of the four organizational theories (Quinn, Hildebrandt, Rogers, & Thompson, 1991). For example, the human relations quadrant on the vertical axis encompasses traits such as organization and self-esteem, and aligns with work values such as human resources and training (Quinn, Hildebrandt, Rogers, & Thompson, 1991). The open systems quadrant on the horizontal axis encompasses traits such as flexibility, growth and support (Quinn et al., 1991). The rational goal quadrant on the lower right encompasses such work values as productivity and efficiency (Quinn et al., 1991). The internal process quadrant, also on the lower right, is where work values such as communication and information management are found (Quinn et al., 1991).

Total Quality Management (TQM) is rooted in quality control in producing goods and services, and is impeded by focusing on short-term profits in the private sector, and on attractive results in the public sector (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). The major tenet of TQM is to create an organizational culture that is effective and will be permanent (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). The consensus view seems to be that the most successful and effective managers are competent in each of the four CVF quadrants, and lend themselves to being stable but flexible and also creative (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). They are paradoxical leaders because they can work from each of the quadrants with ease, but not remain in any of them to the point of harming the organization. They know the right blend to be successful leaders (Lavine, 2014).

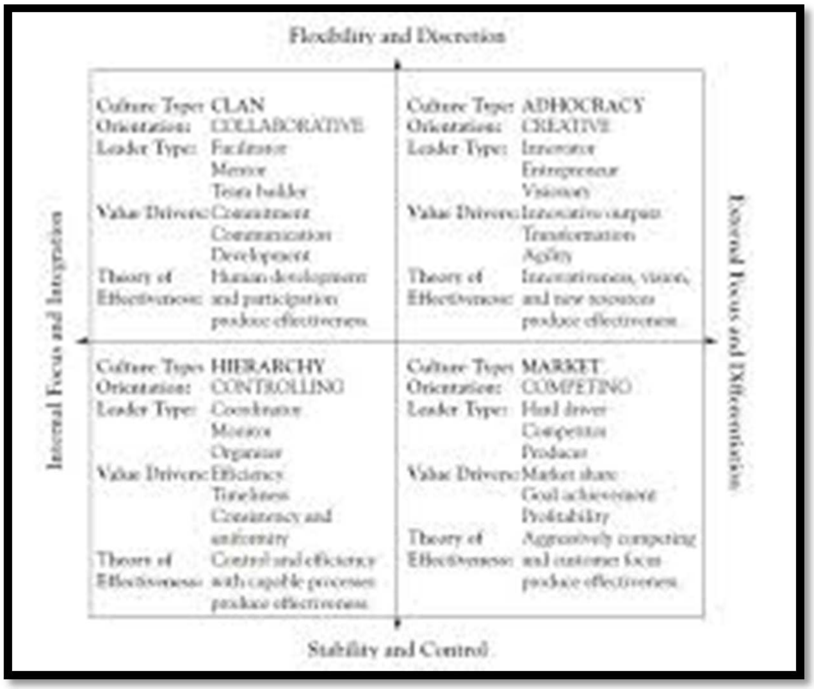

Figure 2: The competing values of leadership, effectiveness, and organizational theory. Adapted from "Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture Based On The Competing Values Framework," by Kim S. Cameron & Robert E. Quinn, 2011, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA, p.39. Reprinted with permission.

Conceptual framework: Digital natives, digital immigrants

The digital natives, digital immigrants concept is indigenous to the education field, but its main premise was easily applicable to the subject of generational communications in the public sector workplace. This concept was most applicable to Millennials and Baby Boomers because those generations corresponded to the digital natives and digital immigrants respectively. Digital natives speak the digital language of computer, video games, and the Internet (Prensky, 2001a). Their lives are immersed with digital technology at all levels. Students from kindergarten to college were the first generations to be raised with technology such as computers, video games, cell phones, video cameras, digital music players, and other sorts of digital gadgetry. Contemporary college students have read books for less than 5000 hours, but have played video games for over 10,000 hours, and watched TV over 20,000 hours (Prensky, 2001a). Their use of cell phones, e-mail, instant messaging, and the Internet figured into these statistics. Digital natives are Millennials, as they were the *first* generation to be born into technology and do not know life without it. When they were born, computers were just emerging on the scene and were followed by the Internet, PDAs, high tech video cams, and cell phones—all of which became important to Millennials (digital natives). These were not luxuries, but daily living necessities for them. All of the other generational cohorts were digital immigrants because they had to learn to adapt to this new environment, but they remained grounded in the past, which was akin to an immigrant learning the language of his new homeland, but remembering his native language and keeping his accent (Prensky, 2001a). An example of a digital immigrant's "accent" is that where a digital native would naturally gravitate to going to the Internet first to find out information, a digital immigrant would look it up in a library book first, then Google it on the Internet (Prensky, 2001a). Digital immigrants were the Baby Boomers who were still "old school" in their thinking when it comes to using technology. They didn't grow up with it, so it is not something they had to have. It is not disastrous if they don't have working technology because they will revert to getting the job done. However, the same is not true for digital immigrants (Baby Boomers). Technology and its use were new to them. They had to develop an affinity for it and learn to use it.

This concept plays out daily in the workplace in terms of communication because digital natives (Millennials) wanted their information readily accessible and they wanted it quickly. It was not uncommon to see digital natives talking on the telephone while typing on the computer and reaching over to text someone on the cell phone. They live for being logged on their computer and online, and their world ends when the network was down. They became lost and forgot how to survive without their technology (Prensky, 2001a). Communication, for them, had to be quick and they thrived on immediate feedback and instant gratification (Prensky, 2001a).

Digital immigrants (Baby Boomers) were just the opposite and wanted their information more slowly, a piece at the time instead of quickly and all at once. They were the generation that would print an e-mail out and read, instead of reading it on the computer. They had to practice using technology until they finally “got” it (Prensky, 2001b). Scientists contended that this new knowledge that digital immigrants learned goes into a different part of their brain because they learned it later in life (Prensky, 2001b). Neurobiologists and social psychologists confirmed that the human brain does change when new information is put into it, and it reorganized itself throughout our childhood and adult lives in a process called neuroplasticity (Prensky, 2001b).

As a rebuttal to the digital native, digital immigrants concept, Selwyn convincingly argued that digital natives may not be as adept with technology as they are thought to be. Digital natives had various degrees of using technology and aren't as skilled as they have been credited (Selwyn, 2009). The digital natives' use of certain digital technology has been documented, but less attention has been paid to how their use of digital technologies support and make their lives easier (Selwyn, 2009). Due to the changes on how children, teenagers, and young adults used technology over the past decade, it is now time to consider how those changes have affected their use of technology. It should be reassessed if digital natives are still highly skilled technology users, and if digital immigrants are as behind the learning curves as before. It must also be taken into account that the proliferation of websites and access to all kinds of technology may cause Millennials and those younger than them to be harmed physically, emotionally, and sexually—as well as their intelligence waning (Selwyn, 2009). Selwyn (2009) offers these challenges to Prensky's digital natives, digital immigrants concept and gives us room for pause. He also asserts that the notion of digital natives being so technologically savvy could ultimately lead to "a disempowerment of older generations" (Selwyn, 2009, p.369).

Rationale for the Conceptual Framework Choice

The reason for choosing Prensky's digital natives, digital immigrants concept is that it spoke so well to the issue of generational communications in the public sector workplace as it related specifically to the Millennials and Baby Boomers. This concept was primarily used in the education field to explain how children learn in the classroom and why some of them were better at using technology and communicated more readily than others. The two populations that Prensky discussed are the digital natives—who were naturals at using technology and were totally comfortable with anything digital, and the digital immigrants—who were skeptical when using technology and had to get used to it and grow in their comfort. Those two populations corresponded exactly to the Millennials and the Baby Boomers because Prensky's assessment of the digital natives and digital immigrants were how each of these two generations responded to using technology. His concepts were meant for education, but were perfectly transferrable to the public administration field, specifically the New York City civil service.

Generational Communications in the Workplace

Although there were studies done that addressed the subject of generational communications in the workplace, there was a gap in the literature. This still remained a young topic with scholars and other researchers. DeMeuse & Miodzik (2010) explained that peer-reviewed research did not cover important differences between the multi-generational cohorts in the workplace. The researchers expressed concern that managers would not know how to respond to the four generations since these differences remain uncovered (DeMeuse & Miodzik, 2010). A study showing how the four generations perceived their workplace should be conducted. The sample size should be at least 250 participants, with 15% or more each representing the Baby Boomers and the Millennials (Bell, 2008). Qualitative and quantitative studies of how Millennial leaders led their own networked generations should be conducted so that new theories, approaches, and vocabulary could be developed (Balda & Mora, 2011). According to Gladwell, Dorwant, Stone, & Hammond (2010), a qualitative study should be done about job satisfaction and the multigenerational workforce, as well as replicating the existing study to survey a national recreation and park professionals in America and Canada for better generalizability of the findings. A study should be conducted that shows how non-traditional, transformational leaders' stories differ from traditional, transactional leaders' storytelling (Driscoll & McKee, 2007). The literature lacked a study about how loyalty and professional respect applied to a communicative relationship between Millennial mentors and Baby Boomer protégés and measured their exchange in reverse mentoring (Chaudhuri & Ghosh, 2012).

Review of the Literature

The subsequent sections reviewed the literature particular to the language of leadership; technological ambivalence and preference for manual operation/touch and feel and face to face interaction; technological fluency and speaking the digital language of the Internet and technology; organizational culture; leadership and customer service in the public sector; and ethical leadership in the multigenerational public sector workplace.

The Language of Leadership

Multi-generations communicating in the public sector workplace had to have a common ground from which they can gain knowledge. That common ground is the language of leadership, which is very important to a high functioning workplace. It is important for leaders to have a language that they all understand, speak, is indigenous to the workplace, and makes sense to the followers. One component of that shared language is organizational storytelling, which is something that digital immigrants (Baby Boomers) do well because they are adept at face to face interaction and sharing their stories, as opposed to using technology as a communication tool. Stories in organizational storytelling offered leaders and followers a reflection of the human experience through which they see truth or mendacity (Forster et.al, 1999 in Driscoll & McKee, 2007). These organizational stories were thought to give leaders and followers a common ground in the workplace, but most of them lack spirituality and emotionalism. However, the stories united them to the workplace agency and to the agency's mission and purpose (Driscoll & McKee, 2007). Stories told in the workplace must be reliable and must include a dialogue with all parties involved--taking in account their views, culture, and background (Driscoll & McKee, 2007). What they brought to the stories made them that much more understandable, authentic, and would elicit listeners (leaders and followers) to buy into them.

Storytelling in the workplace was not done without thought or purpose. Stories that emerged in the workplace were an amalgamation of the leaders' and followers' life stories. As such, they were more likely to comprehend them and become invested in them (Denning, 2008). Along similar lines, Driscoll & McKee (2007) contended that one of two scenarios can play out with workplace stories: (a) leaders can control them; or (b) they can be a joint venture between leaders and followers.

The literature agreed that the goal of the language of leadership is to encourage people to think a certain way or to change their present thinking (Denning, 2008). Both conditions are an integral part of how leaders and followers communicate and use communication in the public sector workplace. In thinking in a certain or new way came fluidity and clarity in how both leaders and followers communicated with each other in the workplace. Public sector workers must know how to present their programs and materials clearly and concisely (Rich, 1998). In order to achieve that, they must leave their personal feelings out of their presentation and err toward professionalism, as opposed to emotionalism.

In order for the language of leadership to work, certain important steps must be followed. In today's busy workplace, workers are often swamped with more duties than there are hours in a day. Therefore, they do a lot of multitasking and don't really give any one thing their full attention. The first thing that leaders must do is to somehow get the workers to focus so the followers will give management their full attention (Denning, 2008). How do leaders get the subordinates' attention in the midst of all of the distractions? Davenport and Beck contacted an experiment on 60 executives and found that short personal messages from a trusted source that elicited an emotional response were received and responded to two times more than ones that did not have these elements (Denning, 2008). Again, stories remain the best way to get someone's attention in the workplace. Leaders who tell stories about their followers' problems, the severity of their problems, how they handled the same, and pose a challenge to them usually get their rapt attention (Denning, 2008). Leaders who want the maximum buy-in from the subordinates should appeal to their emotions and concentrate on pointing up everything positive, and they will be more likely to act because they want to (Denning, 2008). When leaders give their followers reasons that have flow and are resonant when they are most receiving them will inspire them to act (Denning, 2008). Basically, good leaders have to use whatever means are necessary to get their followers to *want* to change their thinking. In order for the language of leadership to be successful, it is incumbent upon them to include specific elements in it. True language of leadership is spirited, elicits laughter, upbeat, creates a dialogue, and provides the possibility of new and more challenging conversations (Denning, 2008). Conger (1991) agreed that the foundation of the language of leadership is built on stories with metaphors with cultural meanings that evoke emotions (p.41). One example of how the language of leadership was used successfully is Martin Luther King's "I Have A Dream Speech" in which he used his background as a fiery Baptist minister well. That speech was laced with metaphors, rich imagery, appealing to the attendees' emotions with his preaching-like delivery and examples of being discriminated against. He used vocal inflections like he did in church and charged the attendees to do something, thus putting some sense of responsibility on them, as well as making them a part of the change process. Conger (1991) supported King's use of speech techniques because he pointed up King's masterful use of rhythm and repetition in the "let freedom ring" line (p.42). The best communication used colorful and illustrative language, rather than typical and mundane words, as well as an array of speech techniques (Conger, 1991). Driscoll & McKee (2007) argued that leaders tell stories in organizations that are unemotional in terms of the daily duties, and they are not spiritual. However, they suggested that organizational stories should contain those important elements so that the subordinates will feel connected to the organization and its purpose and those stories will affect their heart and soul. The elements of effective organizational stories told by transformational leaders are compassion; pay attention to diversity; are respectful; appeals to the subordinates on a higher level; point up how they can develop individually; makes them ponder and reflect; and are spiritual and ethical (Driscoll & McKee, 2007).

Conger (1991) concurred that effective language of leadership explains the vision and purpose of the organization (framing), and uses passionate, figurative language that evokes emotions in the recipients (rhetorical crafting) (p.32). These so-called frames are the foundation on which leaders hang their words and requests they speak to their subordinates in the workplace. However, there is another level of framing called belief amplification (Conger, 1991) through which leaders elucidate the importance of the workplace's mission, the basis of its needs, information about any stakeholders with ideas contrary to the mission, and a projection of how likely the organization is to succeed.

The proposed study answered questions about the role that the language of leadership plays in and impacts multigenerational communications in the public sector workplace.

Technological Ambivalence, Preference for Manual Operation

Before the leaders and followers in the workplace can change other people's way of thinking, they must know how to communicate. They must be able to voice the problem at hand, weigh the options, then find the best one and solve said problem (Denning, 2008). Following that trinity of steps for communication, Denning (2008) gave the leaders and followers an excellent springboard from which they could hone their communications skills to an acceptable level for the workplace. Once they know how to communicate, they had to decide in which way they would communicate. The Media Richness Theory spoke to this well because it is based on various types of communications and how information is disseminated within a specific amount of time (Wen, Jaska, Brown, & Dalby, 2010). The basic tenet of this theory is that some communications are "richer" (Wen et.al, 2010, p.135) and better than others because the recipient of the communication would receive visual, auditory, verbal, and non-verbal cues (Wen et.al, 2010). One example of the richest of all communication is face-to-face because both parties can see and hear what is being said, as well as watch the other's body language. The conversation might say one thing, but one or both of the party's body language might tell a different story.

In the same vein, Kikoski (1993) contended that effective face to face communication incorporates the use of body language, a combination of open and closed-ended questions, paraphrasing what the other person (leader or subordinate) has said, a display of some kind of emotions, and feedback from leadership. The emotions displayed must be objective and appropriate to the communication. When leadership gives feedback, it must be clear, using current statements that are judgment-free and non-biased (Kikoski, 1993).

Wen et al. (2010) concurred that face to face communication is the richest communication type. Along this same line, two studies were conducted about oral communications as an important skill for college graduates who are entry-level employees and the importance of mastering how to follow directives, listening, proper discourse, and giving feedback (Maes, Weldy, and Icenogle, 1997). Both studies were done because of the contention that business schools weren't preparing students to communicate effectively orally in the workplace. Five hundred managers in the Greater Gulf Coast area of Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida responded to a survey asking them to rank a list of 10 competencies and skills that they felt were most important when hiring college graduates for entry level positions in their companies. They also answered demographic questions about their respective companies. The top five competencies that 231 managers who represented management of all levels were: (a) oral communication; (b) problem solving; (c) self-motivation; (d) decision making; and (e) teamwork (Maes et al., 1997). In fact, oral communication outranked written communication as the most important competency they look for when hiring recent college graduates for entry level positions for their companies. This finding suggested two research questions for the second study about the specific oral communications skills that were most important for college students' new entry into the workforce, and the frequency of the use of those skills (Maes et al., 1997).

A survey was developed for the second study to answer the above questions. There were 13 items that measured oral communications skills came from a scale created by Shockley-Zalabak, Staley, and Morley. (Maes et.al, 1997). The survey used nine of their skills in addition to four more which were added: (a) handling customer complaints, (b) taking customer orders, (c) communicating with the public, and, (d) following directives (Mae et al., 1997, p.74). The three-part survey ranked the importance of the skills for entry level jobs, as well as how those skills were used and demographic information about the respondents and their industry. The results of the second study found that in terms of skill importance, the managers ranked following instructions (mean

4.66); listening skills (mean 4.60); conversational skills (mean 4.47); and giving feedback(mean 4.00) as their top four choices (Maes et al., 1997). The managers ranked listening skills (mean 4.74); following instructions (mean 4.52); conversational skills (mean 4.53); and communicating with the public (mean 3.91) as the four most important frequently used skills (Maes et al., 1997). Overall, the second study supported the contention that oral communication skills are very important; and is used often in the workplace. It further supported the fact that managers of all levels want entry level employees who are adept at communicating well orally.

Mintzberg's classic 1973 study in which he did an investigation of communication skills in the workplace informed these two studies. Of the ten managerial roles he recommended, five of them were directly related to communication: (a) liaison, (b) monitor, (c) disseminator, (d) spokesperson, and (e) negotiator (Maes et al., 1997, p.69). These two studies are important to managers in the workplace because they confirm the importance of entry level employees just out of college having excellent oral communication skills. These skills are important in large, as well, as in smaller companies (Maes et al., 1997). The key element is that these skills come to the forefront whenever they deal with clients, customer, their cohorts, or leaders.

Communication, on any level, whether with or between leadership or subordinates, can be tenuous at best if the messages aren't clear. First and foremost, the parties involved in communicating must understand what is being said. Through proper communication, professional messages can be imparted in the workplace, and the recipient is inspired to do something, and perhaps, even change his thinking one way or another about something. However, there are times when we respond to news or information that we do not believe in, and blame the source (Denning, 2008). Not only do we have the tendency to blame the source, but also think something is wrong with that person. That is a psychological concept called “confirmation bias” (Denning, 2008, p.15). Leaders might want the followers to change their minds, but they must be receptive to doing so. If they are reluctant, derisive, or malevolent, conformation bias will happen if the leader gives these people reasons when the communication begins (Denning, 2008).

The popular 1979 study conducted by Charles Lord and his cohorts at Stanford University speaks well to the issue of confirmation bias. In this study, 48 participants (24 for and 24 against) capital punishment, were given scientific studies to read. Some of the studies supported capital punishment, and others were against it. The study found that participants who read studies that supported their viewpoint, everything was fine. However, the participants found fault with any studies that disagreed with their viewpoints and called them frivolous. They even ended up being more unified in their thinking than before after their participation in this study (Denning, 2008).

In an effort to save time and money, some organizations in the contemporary workplace are now using virtual teams. These teams use technology across space, time, and location to communicate and work together due to the fact that many companies are now going global (DeRosa, Hantula, Kock, and D'Arcy, 2004). In one sense, virtual teams are a good thing because they offer employees a flexible workday with non-traditional hours, but they can be a communication nightmare because of cultural and language differences, as well as technology issues that could arise (DeRosa et al., 2004). Also, because the participants in virtual teams aren't face-to-face, they miss important nonverbal cues and body language that are so important to the communication process. They only get a portion of the process, instead of the whole part they would get if they were in person. In order for virtual teams to work, trust has to be at the heart of it.

The proposed study explored why and how Digital Immigrants (Baby Boomers) are technologically ambivalent and prefer face to face interactions and how that impacted generational communications in the public sector workplace.

Technological Fluency and Speaking the Digital Language

There is an ongoing debate about whether technology is important to an organization (Shepard, 1977). Technology influences such elements in the workplace as: work pace, strict control, workers' skill sets, job type, and how much hard work is needed to get the job done (Meissner, 1969 in Shepard, 1977). The most popular study on technology, satisfaction, and alienation was conducted by Blauner in the blue collar labor force. His study found that characteristics such as technology, division of labor, social organization, and economic structure set apart industries, as well as promoted alienation (Shepard, 1977). Blauner's visual of alienation was a U-shaped curve plotted on a graph which peaked during the mass production of technology during the twentieth century, and declined when automation happened (Shepard, 1977). Using Blauner's U-shaped curve and data, Shepard (1971) collected the same on 2000 office employees and found alienation in the office workers. In 1971, Kirsch & Lengerman also conducted a similar study on 150 white collar workers in the operations department in a major bank (Shepard, 1977). Fullan's study disagreed with the previous studies conducted by Blauner and Kirsch & Lengerman. The Fullan study found that technology determines worker integration in the workplace, but it also eases or hinders the process (Shepard, 1977).

It is important to note that several studies were done that went beyond technology and studied such characteristics as age, education, income, unionization, job history, and how long on the job. These studies found that, even in the workplace, workers attempt to have self-determination, self-initiative, independence, responsibility, self-integrity, and self-realization (Shepard, 1977). However, attaining these goals in often bureaucratic workplaces can be challenging. There is little room for workers to control how they do their duties or for creative thinking. In fact, typical bureaucratic environments create passive, dependent, and submissive employees (Shepard, 1977). Jain (2004) asserted that subordinates followed their leaders out of tradition, devotion, loyalty, and respect in the latter 19^{th} century, but the new model was more rational because leaders were obeyed out of logic, efficiency, and reason (1). Bureaucratic workplaces are formal, have a hierarchal structure, have a prescribed division of labor, and have existing rules in place by which leaders lead and use for decision-making (Jain, 2004). The bureaucratic workplace falls under the CVF's hierarchy culture.

The one area in which the studies agreed is that technology affects the kind of work and determines the division of labor—which, in turn, affects other job factors (Shepard, 1977). The area of disagreement between the studies is that technology has a profound effect on alienation and job satisfaction, and that the technology issue is overdone. There has not been any research that has negated Blauner's contention that technology and related job factors have anything to do with work attitudes and behavior since 1964 (Shepard, 1977).

Communication media fell into two categories: a) two-way communication (responsive); and 2) one-way communication (informative) (Mernan, 2006 in Wen et.al, 2010). The most common media used in today's workplace are telephones, fax machines, postal mail, direct person to person communication, cell phones, text messages, and internet technology, as well as social media sites (Wen et. al, 2010).

A study was conducted using a three-part questionnaire to find out how members of Generation X and Generation Y (Millennials) used and perceived media and technology. The population surveyed was obtained through several online classified ads placed on numerous websites. The usable surveys included responses from 79 members of Generation X and 57 Millennials. The survey asked questions about the respondents' demographics, their awareness of various media sources, and how useful and easy they found the media choices they claimed to use, and it also assessed how they reacted to hypothetical communication scenarios. The data gathered from this quantitative study suggests that how both generations regarded how easy it is to use landline and cell phone media wasn't too different. However, they differed in how easy they felt it was to use computer and internet types of media (Wen et al., 2010). There were significant differences in how both generations preferred to apply the two principles of media richness—multiplicity of cues and immediacy of feedback (Wen et al., 2010, p.144) when they dealt with two hypothetical communication scenarios. The study also found that both generational cohorts used traditional media in similar ways, but differed in how easy they found to use such media. Generation X used the internet to communicate, while Millennials (digital natives) preferred richer media and quick feedback, thus confirming previous research in their generational predispositions to communications (Kipnis & Childs, 2004; Dulin, 2008 in Wen et al., (2010). Overall, the research validated the fact that those who were exposed to highly developed communication technology disagreed with those who weren't in terms of how they use communication aids and in which types of media they considered rich (Wen et al., 2010).

There is a digital divide by age and gender--a knowledge and communication gap—due to unequal ownership of information and communication technology (ICT) and unequal access to getting online (Buchmüller, Joost, Bessing, & Stein, 2011). A study was conducted on 75 people, four groups of males and females ages 14 to 65, to research the issue of communication and the digital divide. Methodology included focus group discussions, role playing about common communication issues, a questionnaire, and paper prototypes. One issue that the study wanted to address is that age, in addition to a specific life phase, impacted the participants' use of ICT (Buchmüller et al., 2011).

The study found that there are generally marked differences in how families used ICT based on their age, generational cohort, and personal preferences with regard to how much they depended on ICT or were stressed by using it (Buchmüller et al., 2011). They preferred using voice telephony, e-mail, the Internet, and instant messaging (Buchmüller, 2011). Specifically, the results were very enlightening. It was found that men of all generations used ICT for entertainment. Women's use of ICT was more comprehensive than the men's:

- Older women used ICT more than younger women who were more stressed by it. Older women experienced a high degree of workplace problems.
- The degree of independence from ICT increased the older the women were.
- The oldest women (Baby Boomers) had a higher tolerance of stress than the younger women.
- Older women used ICT for their daily work, while younger women used it for social networking.

- Intergenerationally, there were time out, ICT availability, emotional communication, and wanting new types of social connection issues (Buchmüller et al., 2011).

The Media Synchronicity Theory (MST) had a profound influence on workplace communication. The main argument of the MST was that several communication processes are contained in most tasks and need specific media efficacy (Dennis, Fuller, & Valacich, 2008).

The authors spoke to the idea of using several media together such as in-person communication, reading documents, and a conference call. The other part of this argument is that once the worker understands the task, there is an increase in communication media, and there is no need for media with high synchronicity (Dennis et al., 2008). Rogers (1986) in Dennis et al., (2008) explained that communication happens when two parties create and share information that they both comprehend. That shared information requires the transmission of information between the parties and the processing of it by the other party (Dennis et al., 2008). The transmission and processing of information led to a state where participants communicated simultaneously and had a common goal. This is called media synchronicity (Dennis et al., 2008). Some examples of high functioning media synchronicity are in-person communication, video conferences, and telephone conferences, while asynchronous communications are fax and voicemail because participants do not work together at any time (Dennis et al., 2008).

Burke and Chidambaram's study found that groups who used synchronous media intermittent teams did better than face-to-face teams on difficult duties (Dennis et al., 2008).

The proposed study answered questions about how and why Digital Natives (Millennials) were so technologically fluent and favored using technology to communicate as opposed to face to face methods. The study also explored how it affects and impacts generational communications in the public sector workplace.

Organizational culture in the public sector workplace

Organizational culture is most assuredly one factor that affects how workers and management communicate within their groups and with each other. The culture at an organization should be as positive and professional, conducive to promoting productivity and efficiency. However, that is not always the case, and the organizational culture is less than optimal. One negative type of organizational culture is workplace aggression such as lone acts of aggression, pervasive violence, mobbing, sexual harassment, and being exposed to violent behavior (Merecz, Drabek, & Mościcka, 2009). A study was conducted on 1163 nurses, 165 transportation, and 226 postal workers (who represented the service worker industry) because international data identified those professions as being at a high risk of exposure to aggression, and is also related to the nature of the work (Merecz et al., 2009). They all were required to have a minimum of one year experience in their professions. They all voluntarily filled out a questionnaire about their exposure to workplace violence. The study found that the nurses experienced verbal aggression in the form of screaming and loud vocal communication from their patients and coworkers. However, they received more verbal aggression from their patients. A total of six percent of the nurses experienced direct physical aggression (2%), attempted physical aggression (2%), and dealt with physical aggression from their coworkers (Merecz et al., 2009). Ninety percent of the transportation workers (drivers) experienced verbal abuse from their passengers, and two percent of them experienced physical aggression. They experienced more aggression from their passengers than from their coworkers, like the nurses. However, the study found that 52% of the transportation workers were verbally abused by their coworkers. Twenty-four to fifty percent of the postal workers suffered verbal aggression from their customers (Merescz et al., 2009). The study further found that these instances of aggression affected not just communication between the workers, management, and the populations they serviced. It also affected their productivity, efficiency, and their physical and mental health. They experienced symptoms of burnout and job satisfaction (Merecz et al., 2009).

Along similar lines, another negative aspect of organizational culture, isolation, could have an effect on communications in the workplace. A study was done on 335 members from five organizations. The study looked at the effects of workers being isolated from formal authority, from the network of perceived actual control, from friends, and from esteemed coworkers (Miller, 1975). The study supported the hypothesis that the participants' organizational status would affect the level of their isolation from others in terms of their relationship with their managers and others up the chain of command (Miller, 1975). Isolation, on any level, affects communication because it alienates workers who feel isolated from their coworkers and management. If they feel as if they cannot interface with their coworkers and management, they might be more apt to figure out things for themselves and do their job alone. That is not necessarily a good decision because productivity and efficiency is at its best when all parties communicate well.

One form of organizational culture that is unfortunate, but happening more than can be imagined is workplace bullying. Workplace bullying comes in many forms—some of which include verbal abuse, sarcasm, intimidation, isolation, exclusion, threats, forced resignation, physical abuse, and assignment to unfavorable jobs (Sheehan, 1999). This form of organizational culture is toxic because it costs the organization money when workers call out sick because they are too stressed out to come to work and deal with being bullied. It also hinders communication between management (the bully) and the followers (the bullied). McCarthy et al., (1995) in Sheehan (1999) found that communication problems such as receiving confusing information from management, high-handed behavior, more conflict than usual, bullying, and vindictiveness ensued when restructuring happened in an organization (p.63). Before the bullying can be dealt with and stopped, it must be acknowledge, Then, change can begin. Some of the suggested ways to stop workplace bullying are to change legislation, confront the bully to solve the problem, not for punishment, and find ways to heighten communication between the bully and the bullied employee(s) (Sheehan, 1999). At the very heart of changing the organizational culture from negative back to positive so that there will be efficiency and productivity is communication—listening and interfacing with management—who, will in turn, communicate with the followers (Sheehan, 1999).

One element that is important and indigenous to organizational culture is trust. Management and subordinates must trust each other before they can properly communicate in the workplace. That trust must be mutual because it affects the workers' productivity and efficiency. One form of workplace trust is vertical trust, a two-dimensional phenomenon in which the subordinate trusts his supervisor, as well as the organization (Porumbescu, Park, & Oomsels, 2013). There are special problems in the public sector workplace that affect trust. Goal ambiguity and red tape are often present in the public sector, and employees feel powerless and unmotivated to cut through it and become dissatisfied with their job (Porumbescu et al., 2013). Van Slyke, (2007) in Porumbescu et al., (2013) stated that public organization supervisors contribute to subordinates' being able to trust through ongoing collaboration and appealing to their sense of interactional justice (Porumbescu et al., 2013). No matter what else happens during the management/supervisors' and subordinates' relationship, that relationship must be optimal in order for there to be effective communication and trust in the organization (Porumbescu et al., 2013).

A study was conducted on two small federal government agencies using the 89-question Federal Employment Viewpoint Survey (FEV). This online survey asked questions about how the participants communicated with management and their cohorts, job satisfaction, empowerment, work motivation, and trust in the organization and in their supervisor. The study found that how supervisors and their subordinates communicate influences trust in their supervisors and the organization. It also found that the level of trust that subordinates have in the organization is related to interpersonal communication. The results of this study support previous scholars' claims that institutional trust is the basis for interpersonal and interorganizational trust (Porumbescu et al., 2013).

Workplace satisfaction and organizational culture are related, because if the culture is positive and employee-friendly, the employees will experience workplace satisfaction. Organizational culture also has to do with how management and coworkers behave toward one another, as well how they feel within the company (Lovaš, 2007). Job satisfaction goes to how employees relate to each other and the organization (Lovaš, 2007). Locke (1976) in Lovaš (2007) stated that when employees experience job satisfaction, they are in a positive and happy state (p.215).

A study was conducted on 95 Millennials in various public administration settings in Košice, Poland. The sample consisted of 61 women and 34 men who answered a questionnaire about organizational culture that was divided into the four quadrants of Cameron & Quinn's CVF. The questionnaire evaluated several elements of organizational culture such as dominant features of organization, organization management, employee management, organization cementing, strategic values, and success criteria (Lovaš, 2007). The study found that the employees experienced job satisfaction when teamwork was present, as well as mutual trust, openness, and their seeing the organization as an environment that promoted growth and creativity (Lovaš, 2007). Employees who experienced a lack of information, employee incompetence, nonsense managerial policies, and unnecessary strictness experienced job dissatisfaction (Lovaš, 2007). In terms of the CVF model, job satisfaction had a positive correlation with the clan culture, and a negative correlation with the market culture (Lovaš, 2007).

One of the most optimal organization cultures is flexible, which falls within the clan and/or adhocracy cultures of the CVF. The Baby Boomers, the oldest generational cohort in the workplace, are retiring and will take their wealth of job knowledge with them. They will leave the Millennials, the youngest generational cohort, behind. They are heavily dependent on technology and have their ways of doing things that are not necessarily consistent with how the Baby Boomers work (Eversole, Venneberg, and Crowder, 2012). These generations desire workplace flexibility and want management to create an organizational culture in which there is accountability without power and control (Eversole, et al., 2012). Workplace flexibility options include flexible work schedules, job sharing, leaves to spend time with family, working on an as-needed basis, and retirement programs (Eversole et al., 2012), Based on Mannheim's Generational Theory and Vroom's Expectancy Theory, employees are best motivated, retained, and attracted to organizations that work equally to make all generations happy professionally and reward them for their best efforts (Eversole, et al., 2012). The seminal study conducted by Montenegro, Fisher, and Remez in 2002 on Baby Boomers and why they are not retiring as readily as they did years ago, sheds some light on why workplace flexibility is so important. The study found that the Baby Boomers desired to stay active, do something meaningful, and contribute to society, and to remain physically and mentally active. In order to do that, they stated that their organization must expand their knowledge base through staff development opportunities, accommodate their physical constraints, if needed, and flexible work options that would offer them work opportunities and let them spend time with their family as well as have some down time (Eversole et al., 2012). The notion of workplace flexibility is in direct opposition with organizational culture because it is that very culture that can impede it because if management practices transactional leadership and is not composed of forward thinkers, workplace flexibility will be disallowed. Also, the employees might believe that they will be retaliated against for requesting workplace flexibility options. Therefore, they might want workplace flexibility options, but are too afraid to voice it (Eversole et al., 2012). For example, the only workplace flexibility option currently in place in the City of New

York public agencies is flex-time, which gives eligible employees a core hour in which they can report. They can leave eight hours later minute for minute. It was implemented to lessen employee lateness. However, not all agencies chose to offer this for their employees. Several agencies are still on nine to five straight time. Also, the negative repercussions that employees fear are all too real because the City of New York does not provide benefits that are considerate of its employees and their family life. Maternity leave is offered, but if new mothers take more time than is given, they have to take an unpaid leave and stop their employment time clock. That gives them a new City Start Date, which matters for their future promotions and retirement. Of course, this affects workers' job satisfaction and hampers communication between management and workers because workers see management as cold, heartless, and caring about nothing but numbers, reports, and the bottom line.

Another study was conducted on 1340 state recreation and park association employees representing the four multigenerational cohorts to assess how receiving job benefits affected their job satisfaction. Although all four multi-generational cohorts received online surveys, only Baby Boomers (47.2%), Generation X, and Generation Y (26.4% each) responded. There was not any response from the Traditionalists (Gladwell, Dorwart, Stone, & Hammond, 2010). The participants represented Parks and Recreation administrators, certified pool operators, certified park and recreation professionals, licensed recreational therapists, and recreational specialists (Gladwell, et al., 2010). This study found the three generations placed value on job benefits including promotion, COBRA, and retirement choices, but there was no significant difference in relation to job satisfaction about these or any other job benefits, and rebutted the findings of the previously cited studies (Gladwell, et al., 2010).

Participative management is another factor that could possibly influence job satisfaction in the workplace—especially when seen through the lens of strategic planning and effective supervisory communication (Kim, 2002). A survey was given to 4,097 employees in the Clark County Department of Administrative Services in Clark County, Nevada which polled the participants about how managers used participative management, the presence of a participative strategic planning process, the effectiveness of supervisory communication, and job satisfaction (Kim, 2002). This study found that there was a positive correlation between effective supervisory communication and job satisfaction and the participatory strategic planning process. The study also found an association between the number of years worked in their department with job satisfaction. Participants who worked in their departments for a short period of time reported more job satisfaction than those with longer tenures (Kim, 2002).

Cheney (1995) supported Kim’s findings about participative management because it underscored the idea that workplace democracy and participative management are related and work together. In the democratic workplace, workers feelings and goals are valued, in addition to those of productivity and efficiency. The workers are encouraged to contribute to organization decisions which help with creating an equitable environment and policies for all (Cheney, 1995). In relationship to communication, the organization has to maintain a balance of open-mindedness and closed-mindedness in order for there to be workplace democracy (Cheney, 1995). The number of employees working in an organization matters to communication and workplace democracy. Communication with a group of fifteen or more is very difficult. Good face to face communication is best with small groups and lends itself to a democratic workplace (Cheney, 1995). However, Mansbridge (1973) in Cheney (1995) cited some challenges to any participative group: time management, expressions of intense emotions, and dealing with any kinds of inequalities (p.174). It is important that the Iron Rule of Oligarchy (when large groups of 3,000 to 5,000 people are ultimately controlled by a few) does not enter into the democratic workplace because the concept of democratic will be upset. If that happens, it opens up the organization to competition or outside forces (Cheney, 1995). In order for communication to be effective, there must be democracy in the workplace. That is not so easily achieved, but can be with hard work and dedication on the parts of management and followers. Once effective communication happens, all generations will be able to get along for the common good of the organization.

One theory, Muted Group Theory, explained how people in subordinate groups such as line workers, are virtually silenced because they have lots to say, but are powerless to say it without getting into trouble. Their voices are not heard because management doesn’t respect them or their intelligence (Kramarae, 2005). These employees are not a part of the clique, so there is no interest for management to hear what they have to say. When they do speak, their ideas and speech are berated (Kramarae, 2005). Thus, workplace communication is affected because it is not successful if one or more groups cannot speak freely.

Another theory under which workers’ voices are suppressed in the workplace is the Standpoint Theory. Under the Standpoint Theory, workers are marginalized because of race, sexuality, and class, and leaves room for management’s biases to come to the forefront through the workers’ point of view (Kramarae, 2005). The workers, whose views and voices are not heard under Standpoint Theory, internalize the labels placed on them and are excluded from workplace communications (Kramarae, 2005).

The study found out the role that organizational culture plays in and affects generational communications in the public sector workplace.

Leadership and Customer Service in the Public Sector Workplace

The foundation of leadership in the public sector is customer service. All services provided by leadership and followers are rooted in customer service and how to best serve the public. Customer service is an emerging management policy that strives to meet the customers’ expectations with efficient service and elicit their satisfaction. This policy is projected to become popular in the coming decade (Wagenheim & Reurink, 1991). Customer service is most effective when the concept is defined and understood and when the organization knows well what the customers need and why. The workers then are charged with fulfilling those needs quickly and efficiently. Good leadership makes sure that this happens without too many problems interrupting the process. Management's policies must be followed, and the success of the customer service must be monitored and measured. When these elements are in place, the customers' external and internal needs are met and they experience satisfaction, which leads to the workers providing effective service and maintaining a high level of proficiency (Wagenheim & Reurink, 1991). That, in turn, helps to keep the lines of communication open between management and followers. Open communication is good communication.

Motivation is a key element that employees should have if they are committed to the organization and giving the highest level of customer service possible. Motivated employees have a high morale that inspires them to want to keep working for their workplace. A study was done at a large New York State agency where 1,895 employees completed a survey about their work environment, human resource management practices, job alternatives, and demographic information (Wright, 2007). This study found that employees had high levels of work motivation, but expected extrinsic and intrinsic rewards. They also thought the goals of their organization were important (Wright, 2007).

Another lens through which organizational culture and the effect it has on the four multigenerations in the workplace is Human Performance Technology theory

(Bell,2008), a theory that attempts to solve workplace issues through understanding how workers perceive their work environment and provide any interventions to help them improve their performance. A study was conducted on 312 employees in a health care company and a home health care agency to compare how the multi generations perceived their work setting. The survey answered a Performance Environment Perception Scale (PEPS), which contained 25 statements that impacted employee performance. The five factors asked about communication and perception in the workplace, how the work was organized and designed, characteristics of the work setting, how the employees fit within the work setting, as well as how the work group fit into the setting (Bell, 2008). The study found that the four generations said that some of the elements such as coaching and coworkers in their work environment operated negatively and impaired their performance (Bell, 2008). The most important thing about this study is that each generation had its own perception of their work environment which could cause potential conflict and affect not only their performance, but communication within and between their generational cohort.

The study explored the ways in which leadership motivates employees to provide productive and efficient customer service to its clients and how it affects and impacts generational communications in the public sector.

Ethical Leadership and Communications

Communication could also be seen through the lens of management in the workplace. With management comes a unique set of communication issues that affect the employees' job performance. Sometimes, when they encounter problems, managers have to rethink their strategy so there will be change and improvements. One public sector developed a new strategic approach based on learning through experimenting (Pablo, Reay, Dewald, & Casebeer, p.687). These managers were challenged with how to get their employees to improve their job performance with a limited budget. The new approach enabled the managers to identify the employees' latent dynamic capabilities, reestablished trust between management and the employees, and bridge the gap between local stakeholders developing programs in the local community with the needs of the organization (Pablo et al., 2007). Once there is a change in strategy to alleviate any problems that managers might have with their workers in the workplace, communication between them will improve.

Mangers should be aware of and implement ethical leadership during their tenure. Maintaining an ethical workplace is very important. It is not the easiest thing for leadership to do, but is so necessary. Being an ethical leader means that leaders should be clear and point up the ethical part of all decisions they make, and to ensure that ethical principles are the foundation of their responsible leadership (Enderle, 1987). It is important that managers are ethical and lead an ethical organization so that they will be attuned to their followers, whom their decisions will affect, as well as to foresee potential conflicts and quell them before they escalate and cause damage (Enderle, 1987). Responsible, ethical leadership takes the followers into account and ensure that all actions and decisions involve their input through participative leadership. Effective, ethical leaders should be accountable to some sort of moral code and their conscience to keep them honest so they will do the right thing (Enderle, 1987). Ethical leaders should be responsible for the effect their decisions have on their workers, take responsibility for maintaining the organization's mission, and set the tone for an ethical work environment (Enderle, 1987).

Managers who want to be successful leaders must know and understand their staff. The contemporary workplace has at least three generations—sometimes, four--working together. They each have their own way of doing things and those differences affect the way they work, as well as the way they communicate and use technology in the workplace (Zopiatis, Krambia-Kapardis, & Varnavas, 2012). A study was conducted on workers in the Cyprus hospitality industry. A random sample of 1,000 questionnaires was given to workers at 75 hotels that asked questions about generational perceptions of the hospitality industry and perceptions about the other generational cohorts. The participants in this study included members of Generation X, Generation Y (Millennials), and Baby Boomers. Some of the study findings are that the Millennials and Baby Boomers were similar in being individualists vs. team players; career aspirations; management preferences; and local vs. global thinkers. Generation X and Baby Boomers think alike about authority; recognition; loyalty; work-life balance; work ethic; their need for supervision and guidance; and respect and reliability. Millennials are more easily motivated; question authority; more loyal to themselves than the organization; work harder less; need more direct supervision; seek more respect; and are less reliable than Generation X and Baby Boomers (Zopiatis et al., 2012). A perceptual gap exists between the three generations, but the study did not clarify if that gap is caused by misperceptions or true differences (Zopiatis et al., 2012).

Another study was done using the CVF to analyze 40 ethical codes randomly selected from 80 codes at a business school. This study found that ethical codes are progressive in the information they impart, are harbingers of change to some degree, defend the organization from its workers, and are written using idealistic semantics (Stevens, 1996).

Dubinsky, Skinner, & Whittier (1989) added another dimension that effective, ethical managers should use in the workplace: the performance evaluation (p.9). For managers, the performance evaluation is a useful tool because it can help them decide about employees' raises, promotions, proper job placement, and gives workers feedback about how well they're doing their job (Dubinsky et al., 1989). A study was conducted in which 800 questionnaires were sent to farm and power equipment dealers, managers, and sales people across America. Each of participants was given a scenario that described one of four treatment conditions and they had to pretend that they were sales manager of a fictional character named Bill. Each participant received the same background, work history, and failure to gain sales information. However, the job conditions section was manipulated. The participants were told to read the scenario and to respond to measures of attributions, responses, and manipulation checks, and apply them to why they thought Bill performed as he had (Dubinsky et al., 1989). The managers were asked if they should change his job attitude, his knowledge of his responsibility, and level of efforts because of his failures to make sales, and if they should offer Bill more competitive products or give him a new territory (Dubinsky et al., 1989). The study supported the hypotheses that internal attributions of a salesperson's failure will cause a supervisor to act upon the salesperson; and that internal attributions of a salesperson's failure will lead sales supervisors to act upon the situation. This study also supported the other hypotheses that supervisors will direct responses toward salespeople with poor work history than ones with good work history when the salesperson has failed, and task difficulty does not shape a supervisor's response to salespersons when they have failed (Dubinsky et al., 1989). Green & Mitchell (1979) in Dubinsky et al., (1989) asserted that there are differences between sales manager and salespeople's causal attributions and how they feel about the salespeople's responses will ultimately lead to miscommunication between the two groups.

Managers of public agencies have their own set of challenges and issues that are indigenous to the public sector. For example, the internal workings of those agencies were quite interesting and could give them pause. The public agencies were very bureaucratic, replete with red tape, and managers didn't have as much authority as they needed or thought because there were many levels of management that clashed, instead of working together to make cohesive decisions (Boyne, 2002). There is an ongoing discussion about New Public Management, a new reform in which public managers should incorporate successful techniques from the private sector into their leadership in the public sector (Boyne, 2002). However, it has been found, that on its face, the idea of New Public Management is good, but impractical and can lead to potential ethical issues. For instances, private sector workers can enjoy social outings such as good concert or ball game seats with their clients. However, New York City workers cannot accept such because it is considered ethical and lead to their termination. The public sector has some external issues that would make New Public Management near impossible. Public agencies are complex with the numerous stakeholders making demands on managers and hampering what they can and cannot do. Also, public agencies are at the whim of public needs and external events. Public agencies are unstable because policies and procedures change with each new administration taking office. They don't remain the same. Finally, public agencies have very little competition for the services they provide. Even when there is some semblance of competition, public agencies remain at the top of the market

(Boyne, 2002). Thirty-four empirical studies were conducted to assess management techniques in both the public and private sectors. However, the results were very limited that there are major differences between public and private management. The results did support the fact that public agencies are bureaucratic and full of red tape (Boyne, 2002). Brown (2004) argues in favor of New Public Management if more responsibility is given to supervisors and line managers if the management structures are flattened and internal programs are decentralized (p.307). Adopting New Public Management does not mean that the employees' salaries and benefits have to be reduced, and they will not lose opportunities for career development (Brown, 2004).

Attention must be paid to leadership leading an ethical organization. Anything less is negative leadership and has a marked effect on worker productivity, efficiency, and communication. Schilling (2009) contended that negative leadership is connected to such behavioral categories as "insincere, despotic, exploitative, restrictive, failed, laissez-faire, and active and passive-avoiding leadership" (p.102). Negative leadership is also linked to the organizational culture, internal workings, and policies and procedures (Schilling, 2009). Leaders must be aware of any destructive behavior that can have an adverse effect on their department or agency. Negative leadership breaks down communication, stops worker efficiency and productivity, and leads to a high level of worker job dissatisfaction (Schilling, 2009). A study was conducted on 42 middle and top managers at a German telecommunications company. They had a mean of 15 years managerial experience. They were interviewed with the use of open-ended questions about their perception of negative leadership. They made an average of thirty-six statements each. The results found that they felt that it was difficult to be effective leaders because of fear of leading, and not having sufficient knowledge to do the job due to a lack of proper formal training or succession planning. They felt unmotivated, not having a high enough work ethic, as well as not having any incentives such as rewards for a job well done. The participants' statements did not explain what caused destructive leadership, but on those that hindered effective leadership (Schilling, 2009).

The study sought to understand the role that ethical leadership plays in and impacts generational communications in the public sector workplace.

Filling The Literature Gap and Knowledge Extension

The major gap that my study filled was to concentrate on how Baby Boomers and Millennials communicated and used technology in the public workplace. The literature explored how the four multi-generational cohorts communicated and used technology in the workplace, not necessarily in the public sector workplace, but mostly in the private sector; sometimes, in the public sector. The literature looked at the four generations in a very basic way, briefly discussing how they communicated in the workplace and why they communicated like they did. It was indicated that there were problems between the Baby Boomers and the Millennials, but none of the articles addressed those specific generational cohorts. The communication problems with the Baby Boomers and

Millennials in the public sector that were hinted at in the research found for this literature review were thoroughly addressed in the study.

This study extended knowledge in the discipline by offering research on how Baby Boomers communicated in the public sector workplace. It showed their issues and problems, as well as present implications for practice for management in public agencies. Based on what the study found, it showed possible solutions for those problems.

Conclusion

Good communication in an organization should happen automatically, but it is not a given. The multi generations in the workplace with their different cultures, backgrounds, and beliefs complicate matters and exacerbate conflicts within and between generations. In order for the employees to be productive and efficient in their work, they must communicate with each other and with management. They must be able to speak freely and give feedback, understand and believe what they are saying and being told, and speak authoritatively and not condescendingly (Harshman & Harshman, 1999). The traits of communication cannot be compartmentalized, but must be used together in healthy organizations. Effective organizations provide two-way, open, and honest communication between the workers and management and vice versa (Harshman & Harshman, 1999). Effective communication is central to the organization, is done on an ongoing basis; congruent with actions; well-coordinated with actions and activities; courageous;

collaborative; and credible in order to build a positive relationship between employees of all generations (Harshman & Harshman, 1999).

Generations using technology in the workplace should use multiple media concurrently or consecutively for optimal communication performance (Dennis, Fuller, Valacich, 2008). The problem is that the Baby Boomers (digital immigrants) still have difficulty using technology to the level of Millennials (digital natives), who are very adept at most things digital. Effective communication and the generations using technology properly enable organizations to get immediate feedback, save time, maximize productivity and efficiency, and keeps both the workers and management accountable and honest (DeRosa et al., 2004). The proper and most effective communication and use of technology by the multi-generational cohorts in the public sector workplace has positive implications for leadership. Savvy managers would be wise to learn from the generations and how they communicate and use technology so they can lead them more efficiently. DeRosa et al., (2004) reminded us that no matter how complicated technology may seem, the human being is the most complex, flexible, and adaptive part of the system (p.228). The next chapter will explain how this study was executed, how the participants were chosen, the questions they were asked, and how the data were collected and analyzed.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this constructivist, empirical phenomenology study was to explore the phenomenon of generational communications in the New York City public sector. Specifically, this study's focus is on the phenomenon of how the Baby Boomer and Millennial generational cohorts communicated and used technology in the public sector workplace. The goal of this study was to seek an understanding of how the differences between two generational cohorts may create misunderstandings and conflicts in the workplace and possibly cause a communication divide between them, thus affecting their overall productivity and efficiency in the workplace. This study was designed to discover how public sector leadership can use the understanding of these differences between two cohorts to lead them to enhance workplace productivity and develop efficient practices as a result from this knowledge gained.

This chapter provides the rationale for the choice of qualitative research methodology. It also includes a discussion of my role as a researcher, potential biases and how they were mitigated. Sections of Chapter three also address sampling strategies, data collection, analysis, and management, bias and trustworthiness, and how ethics and preventing risk to the participants during their participation in this study were handled.

Qualitative Paradigm

Wahyuni's 2012 interpretivism paradigm influenced the overall design of this research. The interpretivism/constructivist paradigm postulated that social actors created reality and that people with their own worldviews and experiences added to that reality on a regular basis (Wahyuni, 2012). The worldview of interpretivism/constructivism is subjective and rejected the objectivity of postpositivism (Wahyuni, 2012). As an interpretivist/constructivist researcher, I interacted with the research participants, had a dialogue with them, and studied their experienced realities with the understanding that my experiences and values could affect the data collected. The basis of interpretivism is that the participants' realities are subjective, can change, and they might have multiple realities about the phenomenon under study (Wahyuni, 2012). However, of importance, is that participants made sense of these realities and assigned subjective meanings of their lived experiences. The epistemology behind interpretivism/constructivism is that there are subjective meanings and realities in the participants' words, actions, and situations (Wahyuni, 2012). The axiology behind the researcher's values is that the researcher naturally becomes a part of the research conducted, and consequently, becomes subjective (Wahyuni, 2012). I began the research design process with getting clues from the research questions and the research purpose. Those provided a solid foundation for building an empirical phenomenological study (Wahyuni, 2012). The qualitative research design was inductive, used to generate ideas, flexible enough to welcome a thorough exploration of the phenomenon under study, and situations were observed as they unfold (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012).

Role of the Researcher

In the role as researcher, I identified the participants for the study on generational communications in the public sector workplace, and posed questions to them in a safe and nonthreatening environment in which they would not be harmed in any way. As researcher, I looked for the overarching idea of the generational communication issue by looking for several points-of-view on the subject and looking at the various factors in a given situation. Creswell (2013) called this a “holistic account” (p.47). The main goal of my role as researcher was to gather data in order to complete the study, but most importantly, to create an environment of trust and confidentiality so that participants would share their experiences based on their personal stories in their own voices. I did this by managing power differentials, as recommended by Creswell, in an effort to remove any discomfort they might feel about the researcher-participant relationship. As a researcher, I was also mindful of the participants’ myriad realities of their experiences by taking every available opportunity to interface with them (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). Finally, I used the intended research study to answer the research questions through a connection to the problem, purpose, and research approach (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). Finally, as a researcher, I brought to this study a decade of experience working in the public sector. That experience enabled me to better understand the participants' experiences when they explained them during the data collection process.

Research Setting

Two research settings were selected to collect the data. The primary setting in which the data were collected was in-person interviews in private meeting rooms such as in libraries or community centers. Interviews took place in confidential meeting places at mutually agreed upon locations. The second setting was by telephone in my private office. I made myself available to the participants' willingness to be interviewed and to fill out the questionnaire and the Dominance, Influence, Steadiness, & Conscientiousness (DISC) Classic Personal Profile, a personal assessment test that helped the researcher to understand how the participants communicated, were productive, and utilized teamwork in the workplace.

Research Sample

The sample was a purposeful sample, comprised of 10 Baby Boomer and 11 Millennials from public service agencies under the auspices of the City of New York. Inclusion criteria for the study were: Baby Boomers who were born between the years 1946 and 1964; and Millennials born between 1981 and 2000. Individuals worked in one of the 41 New York City public sector agencies. To determine which cohort these participants would be assigned to, I used a demographic questionnaire. These individuals were selected because they exemplified the research and could bring clarity and an understanding to the central phenomenon being studied (Creswell, 2013).

Data Collection Procedures

Interviews with key stakeholders were the primary data collection method. The researcher utilized an interview protocol package and explained the details to each participant. The package contained an interview guide with the questions participants were asked, details about the interview, an informed consent form to sign or verbally agree to. I ensured that participants understood that there was no penalty for withdrawing from the study at any time, including during the actual interview, should they began to feel uncomfortable.

I conducted the interviews with prepared questions, but remained flexible enough to explore participant meanings and understand specificity, using probing questions. Sometimes, unplanned answers and nonverbal cues tell the real story, unlike the planned answers and cues that can be the participants telling the researcher what they think she wants to hear. The interviews were completed in person or by telephone, based on the interviewees' preference. I conducted follow-up interviews by phone if that was a participant's only availability. I was appreciative of the participants taking time out of their busy schedule to participate in this research study, and accommodated their schedules and preferred method of meeting as possible. Any in-person meetings were done in a private space, and only telephone interviews were done in my private home office.

I used memos and field notes to capture thoughts and reflections about the interviews that were used during data collection. I also kept a journal about the data collection process.

I projected that a maximum of three interviews would be completed per day, and all would be completed within three to four months. By allocating this timeframe, it would allow for schedule conflicts and prepare contingencies appropriately. That would allow time for real life and other emergencies that could stop the participants from being interviewed at their scheduled time. This plan would also allow for ongoing recruitment of participants as well as to account for sample attrition.

Informed Consent Process

The interview did not proceed until the informed consent form had been signed or verbally agreed to. The informed consent explained to participants that they should not anticipate any greater risk than what would be encountered during daily life situations. However, if they felt distressed or had any negative reactions associated with this study, they could withdraw at any time. Further, participants were provided with a community mental health and resource guide to ensure that they could seek these resources free of charge. This process should have helped participants to feel safe, as well as ensure that the interviewer adhered to ethical considerations and remained organized. Debriefing included providing participants with an explanation of what would happen next to the research data, and an opportunity to review a summary of their transcribed data and the final research report would be given. I also asked participants for permission to conduct a follow-up interview or member checking. Completed interviews were transcribed as soon as possible to ensure that nothing important was left out due to the researcher forgetting details. Data analysis took place at that time for the same reason.

Data Analysis

Before the data analysis began, everything that had been obtained through interviews and observations was read. Any taped recorded conversations between the researcher and the participants were reviewed (Maxwell, 2013). The purpose of reading and listening was to see what data had been obtained and to get a sense of whether additional data collection was needed or if what had been obtained was ready for analysis. I also read to discover themes, similarities, differences, and where patterns were revealed. Raw interviews were transcribed. A narrative was written that clearly told the participants' stories in the best way possible (Moustakas, 1994). Data were coded and analyzed using the Dedoose data analysis program, as well as hand coding. Particular attention was paid to ensure that the coded data were trustworthy by establishing and explaining coding categories; dropping the data into the defined categories; testing and measuring the reliability of the coding; and finding where the coding lacked reliability

(Gorden, 1992). Data analysis also included bracketing, clustering information for overt and hidden messages, and confirming my assessment of the data with the participants.

Trustworthiness

The main quality that was met in this qualitative study was validity to ensure that data obtained during data collection was accurate and as unbiased as possible. One criterion to ensure trustworthiness was credibility, a proverbial yardstick to help the researcher to carefully present the participants' thoughts and feelings during data collection and analysis (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). One way to be certain that credibility happened is that I confronted my biases brought to the study and kept a journal to record them during the study and keep them in check (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). I also used triangulation to collect multiple sources of data, and work in the field as often as possible to lend the most credibility to the study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). I had a review session with the participants to see the transcripts of their interviews, as well as the summaries of the interview to ensure accuracy and that my biases were not clouding their responses and overall results (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). I asked my committee chair to review interview materials and ask questions based on his findings to assure as much accuracy as possible, as recommended by Bloomberg and Volpe (2012). The other standard that was used to guarantee trustworthiness was dependability, which was met by establishing an audit track that the my committee could review whenever they wanted to, as well as having them to sample code some of my interviews for *inter-rater reliability* and lessen the bias of just the researcher doing data collection and analysis (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). Although reliability is a quantitative research standard, because the findings were not required to be generalizable to other settings, its qualitative parallel is transferability (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). I achieved transferability through the use of rich, thick description in the data analysis, as well as presenting detailed information about how the study was conducted and the participants' shared experiences about the phenomenon studied so that anyone reading the study in the future would have a good idea how a similar study might work in their environment (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012).

Protection of the Participant's Rights

One important part of the proposed study was the protection of the participants' rights. In order to ensure that the study remained ethical and none of the study's participants were harmed, an agreement was made that addressed such issues as confidentiality, anonymity, and accuracy of information obtained (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). The purpose of the study and the kind of research that would be done was explained to them. It was explained that their participation was voluntary and that they were under no obligation to participate in any part of the research process. Participants were told that they could stop their participation at any time if and when they felt uncomfortable or for any other reason. That was reiterated throughout the study. The participants were also told that they were free to ask any questions and they would be answered honestly and thoroughly. It was also explained that their privacy would be protected because they remained anonymous and fictitious names would be used. Careful attention was paid to making the participants feel safe and unthreatened.

Presentation of the Results

The results of the proposed study are presented in Chapters four and five. There was a lot of compiled data, so I had to sort through it and separate that which best answered the research questions and elucidated the purpose of the study. The reduction of the data allowed it to be shared and presented (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The best way to present the results was in narrative form as stories. Researchers are storytellers whose stories are clear, engaging, and enable the readers to live the participants' experiences through reading (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). I decided which stories to tell and how to best tell them so that they would best fit the research questions and purpose of the study. Quotes from the participants that spoke to the research topic and underscored what it was about would supplement the participants' stories (Sandelowski, 1988). Literary devices, such as metaphors, were used to keep the reading interesting because they made words cohesive, as well as enabled readers to understand the participants' experiences they shared, as well as any processes they described during their interviews (Sandelowski, 1988). Time-related devices, such as flashbacks, could be used to place and clarify events, as well as explaining how and when they took place (Sandelowski, 1998, p.380). Tables, charts, or a matrix to clearly show data or other information that needs to be emphasized were used. Most importantly, the findings were presented as objectively and bias-free as possible so that the readers will understand them, as well as the phenomenon studied (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012).

Research Questions

RQ1: What are the opportunities and challenges in using technological tools to communicate among multigenerational New York City public sector workers?

RQ2: How do Baby Boomer and Millennial multigenerational workers differ in the way they communicate and use technology among New York City public sector workers?

Central Concept(s)/Phenomenon(a)

The central concepts that were explored in this study were the generational divide in the public sector workplace and how it impacted communication, technology use, and workplace productivity. The study concentrated on the following concepts: (a) organizational cultural language of leadership; (b) technological ambivalence and preference for manual operation/touch and feel and face to face interaction; (c) technological fluency and speaking the digital language of the Internet and technology; and (d) ethical leadership and customer service in the public sector. These concepts drove the study and focused on the phenomenon of the generational divide between Baby Boomers and Millennials and how they communicated and used technology in the public sector workplace.

Baby Boomers used their lived experiences as learning opportunities and placed importance on their occupations, not in where they worked (Weisner & Miller, 2008). As the years progressed and the workplace changed, technology was introduced, and Baby Boomers were forced to use it in order to do their daily duties. However, they were ambivalent. They were the generation, who if given a choice, would opt to communicate face to face with their cohorts instead of sending them an email, text message, or instant message (Weisner & Miller, 2008).

Conversely, Millennials were very adept at using technology and are willing to use it to complete their daily duties and for communication because they were the first generation born into technology (Johnson & Lopes, 2008). This study's research questions and forthcoming interview questions created a lens through which to understand how these essentials affected the study's participants. Phenomenology was selected to answer those questions.

Research Paradigm

Qualitative research best answered my research questions because it allowed the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data that pertain to the world at large, specifically, to the phenomenon under study. This research method allowed for a thorough exploration to the principles that the participants enjoyed which were related to that phenomenon, and captured how they handled and related to and with them (Anderson, 2010). This study was not concerned with statistics about how multi generations communicated and used technology, but with how they communicated and used technology in the public work sector. I was most concerned with the meaning that the two groups assigned to facilitate or degrade communication across the generational categories. Therefore, the researcher had to go into the field or on the telephone and meet with the participants talk with them, and hear their stories. The best research method to accomplish that was through qualitative research design, specifically phenomenology. Qualitative research placed the study in the researcher's social, political, and cultural world in a natural setting made the researcher the main instrument, employed several data collection methods, and built their themes from the bottom up throughout the study (Creswell, 2013). Researchers use qualitative research when they want to understand and ascertain the whole story, the proverbial big picture of a phenomenon, and they also share how their background will impact the research through a process called reflexivity (Creswell, 2013). Empirical phenomenology encouraged researchers to explore the research field of interest prior to engagement in the subject research study. This is primarily performed so that the researcher becomes familiar with the actors as well as the domain studied to inform the research questions and to select the appropriate theory. My background afforded me the experiences to understand the field. See also my role as a researcher in the section above.

Why this Research Approach was Chosen Over the Others

Grounded Theory was an option available to this study, but was not used because the researcher did not need to create a theory because the CVF and digital natives, digital immigrants provided an excellent conceptual framework on which to hang this study. Case study was not used because the researcher wanted to focus on a group of participants and their stories and experiences, not just one or two or five. That number would probably not get to the saturation point. Biography and history were not applicable to this study and would not address the phenomenon being studied. Ethnography also would not have worked in this study because the researcher is going to study the participants' experiences communicating and using technology in the public sector workplace, not its culture or their culture. That method would not have fit this study. However, phenomenology was the best method for this study to gain an insight into the participants' shared experiences about communicating and using technology in the public sector workplace.

Empirical Phenomenology

Specifically, this study used the method of empirical phenomenology to collect data about the participants' shared experiences with communication and using technology in the New York City public work sector. Through the empirical phenomenology approach, participants provided the researcher with a full understanding of their experiences through sharing the essence of those experiences through immediacy, open-ended questions, dialogue, and the researcher interpreted those experiences from the general to the specific using reflections and analysis (Moustakas, 1994).

Philosophers Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, and sociologist Alfred Schütz are considered the founders of empirical phenomenology, which is based upon scientific concepts that are framed by meanings and messages imparted by the participants (Aspers, 2009). These meanings also come out of theories and “unintended consequences” can happen during the research process (Aspers, 2009, p.1). These characteristics are what distinguish empirical phenomenology from other forms of phenomenology.

At the heart of empirical phenomenology is what Schütz terms “meaning structure,” the stories the participants tell and how they communicate (Aspers, 2009, p.5). What the participants say is important and key to the interview process. Aspers (2009) explained that the way to arrive at the participants’ meaning structure is by using “first-order constructs” and “second-order constructs” (p.3). According to Aspers (2009), employing first-order constructs is how the researcher captures the participants’ stories and using second-order constructs helps the researcher tie together those stories and what they mean with theories. However, for this process to be successful, the researcher and the participants must communicate well verbally and non-verbally. In other words, they must have an “understanding” (Aspers, 2009, p.3).

Aspers (2009) outlined seven specific steps that researchers should use in order to conduct a successful empirical phenomenological study:

(1). Clarify the research question(s)

(2). Conduct a pilot study or review the study questions with the experts for feedback and eventual researcher revisions

(3). Select a theory on which to hang and guide the study

(4). Understand first-order constructs and bracket the theories

(5). Design second-order constructs

(6). Look for and be open to unintended consequences

(7). Connect the literature to what was discovered from the participants in the field.

Although second-order constructs called for researchers to apply theories to what they learned from the participants in the field, they must be flexible enough to see where the theories take them, i.e. a new theory or a reworking of the existing theories (Aspers, 2009). The application of the theories is driven by the participant's stories. However, the stories were not overshadowed by theories, but were used to give them and understand their deepest meanings.

The researcher studied the first-order constructs and bracketed the theories and constructed the second-order constructs and checked for unintended consequences through the use of field notes, observation, and triangulation. The researcher related the evidence to scientific literature and the empirical field of study. This iterative process safeguarded the participants' opinions while not downplaying the role of the theories.

The interrelated concepts must be grounded in the meaning structure of the participants studied. Their explanations are expressed by theory and grounded in their subjective experiences (Aspers, 2009).

Some strengths of qualitative research were that this phenomenon could be explored thoroughly; interviews were flexible and the researcher could follow any threads that came up and redirected at will; the research design was also flexible and could be reworked as new data suggested themselves; data about human experience were more convincing than that of quantitative statistics; non verbal cues and other details were obtained using this research approach that when using a quantitative approach; and findings were transferrable to other settings but were not generalizable to a larger population as in quantitative inquiry (Anderson, 2010).

Qualitative research is not without its limitations which include: the research is only as good as the skill of the researcher and the results may be colored by the researcher's biases; it is difficult to evaluate and maintain rigor; the high volume of data makes analyzing and interpreting it a long process; it is not accepted as well as quantitative research in scientific circles; and issues with anonymity and confidentiality can be problematic when findings are presented; and findings are difficult to be presented visually using this approach (Anderson, 2010).

Role of the Researcher in the Data Collection Procedure

I bring over a decade of experience working for three of New York City's public agencies and in its public school system. That practical experience informed this study because I thoroughly understood the participants' experiences and was able to relate to them. I had a frame of reference that was the lens through which their experiences were viewed. I am also a Baby Boomer and have certain ways in which I handle communication in the public sector workplace. However, my job has forced me to come out of my proverbial comfort zone and learn to use technology. I also brought that experience to the proposed study. I bracketed my biases by using an interview guide, journaling, and reflexivity.

Miles et al. (2014) postulated that the researcher becomes an instrument when conducting a qualitative study (p.42). During data collection, I ensured that I fully understood the phenomenon of generational communications in the public sector workplace, which was the basis of the study, as well as used a multidisciplinary approach (Miles et al., 2014, p.42). I also used journalism training and background to really listen to the participants' stories, make them feel comfortable talking to me, and encouraged them to include as many details as possible. I made them feel comfortable enough to truthfully share their experiences with researcher intrusion, and to objectively receive their information (Miles et al., 2014).

In my role as researcher doing data collection, I recruited a pool of participants composed of 10 Baby Boomers and 11 Millennials who currently worked for any of the 41 New York City public agencies. I scheduled their interview dates and times in a safe, comfortable, and friendly environment. At the interview, I recorded their experiences and took notes as a backup in case if the recorder failed.

Managing Researcher Bias

I understood that unintentional bias could come up during this study because I am a Baby Boomer, one of the generational cohorts under study, and I am a City of New York employee. I remained as objective as possible. One way that I managed bias was through bracketing. Through bracketing, I put aside my personal feelings, world views, definitions, and interpretations and experienced what the participants were saying through their eyes and their points of view (Hycner, 1985). Another way that I addressed bias is by immersing myself in the literature to learn more about the phenomenon being studied if bias began to happen (Morrow, 2005). Another method that I used to deal with bias was reflexivity, a way of being aware of myself and my feelings at all times. I kept a journal from the beginning to the end of the study to record my reactions, assumptions, experiences, and any biases however slight (Morrow, 2005). Another reflexive method I used was to consult with my Committee Chair to have him brainstorm with me and offer his opinions that reflect my approach to the research process if I felt I was biased during the study (Morrow, 2005). Finally, another way for me to address bias was to listen to the interview tapes a few times and read the transcripts a few times in order to get a sense of the entire interview and to get to what the participants were trying to say. My feelings were bracketed, and I recorded any issues heard or read in the materials as well as my general impressions (Hycner, 1985).

I did not have any significant relationship with the participants. The participants were people whom I know in passing or have seen at some point in my working for the City of New York. The participants were chosen because they fit the inclusion criteria for being a part of this study: actively working for one of the 41 agencies of the City of New York, and are either male or female Baby Boomers and Millennials. I purposely did not choose anyone I knew or worked with to avoid issues of bias and of validity and reliability in their responses. None of the participants had either a personal, ongoing professional, supervisory, or subordinate relationship with the researcher. There were not any power differentials because they did not exercise power over me in any way, nor did the researcher exercise power over them. Thus, they were excellent candidates to participate in the proposed study.

Researcher's Decision for Data Gathering

Data were gathered in person, at local private venues around New York City such as private rooms at the library or community centers for the filling out of the DISC Classic Profile, by telephone, and at any other private place the participants suggested. The main concern was making the participants feel comfortable and to gather data in places that were convenient to them. Telephone sessions were available for those participants who agreed to be a part of this study but had serious time constraints that prevented them from meeting with the researcher in person. Research participant recruitment included disseminating fliers and letters of invitation at churches, Facebook groups where Baby Boomer and Millennial local government workers frequent, and at community groups. There were many private places and rooms where interviews and other forms of data collection were done. I was open to places where data could be collected in order to keep the participant safe, comfortable, and feeling non-threatened at any time. In addition, none of the data were collected within the confines of any City of New York office because policy prohibited it due to endless files and materials on employees' desks and in their cubicles that contained highly confidential and privileged information. The information the participants shared did not ask anything about their job, only about the way they communicated and used technology. However, the City still did not allow data collection on its premises. They also said that data collection would interfere with daily work being done.

Study Population and Justification For the Decisions

The population that was studied was Baby Boomers and Millennials who worked in any of the 41 New York City public sector agencies. The Baby Boomer cohort will be composed of people born during 1946 to 1964 and Millennials born during 1980-2000. The criteria that were used to select them is that they fell within either the Baby Boomer or Millennial generational cohort and they currently worked in a New York City public service agency.

One reason that this population was chosen was because they were representative of people who have experienced the same phenomenon, i.e. working for a City of New York public agency and have communicated and used technology as part of completing their work duties (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). This purposeful sample was selected to obtain a good representation of the setting and participants chosen; to obtain heterogeneity of the population; to ensure that they will test and speak well to the study's conceptual framework and research questions; to highlight the reasons for difference in settings and individual participants; and to establish trusting professional relationships with them so they will feel comfortable enough to answer the research questions (Maxwell, 2013). Data triangulation was done by using different sources of data. The stakeholder groups were identified, e.g. Baby Boomers, Millennials, and by job titles/job levels. Thorough interviews were done with participants representing each of those groups to establish similarities and differences between them in relationship to the phenomenon under study. Triangulation happened when the different groups came to similar conclusions; therefore, I could reasonably assume that their responses were most likely true (Guion, 2012).

Sample Size

This research study had a sample of twenty-one: 10 Baby Boomers and 11 Millennials. What they had in common is that they each worked for a New York City public agency. Each agency provided some type of customer service to mostly underprivileged, underserved, and vulnerable populations in New York City. That number was chosen to have enough of a population to explore the phenomenon under study and was enough participants to properly address the research questions. Since this was a qualitative study, the sample number was not large, but just large enough so that if the population is lessened due to dropouts or incomplete data, a sizeable number would remain and the study could still be carried forth. A major component of sample size in qualitative studies was to get an in depth look at the participants, and to ascertain precise information (Creswell, 2013). In addition, this qualitative study did not have to address external validity or generalizability. The sample size chosen for this study was dependent upon what was being researched, the purpose of the study, what was believable, valuable, at risk and within a specified time period using specific capital (Patton & Patton, 2002). Patton and Patton (2002) contended that studying a large sample with specific experiences lends breadth, and studying a smaller sample with diverse experiences lends depth (p.244).

Relationship Between Saturation and Sample Size

The total proposed sample size used in this study was twenty-one: 10 Baby Boomers and 11 Millennials who worked for the City of New York. One reason that ten of each cohort was chosen for this study was because the qualitative study is interested in gleaning meaning from the data and a larger sample would not be the best choice (Mason, 2010). Green and Thoroughgood (2009) [2004] in Mason (2010) asserted that in qualitative interviews, little new data comes out of the transcripts after you have interviewed twenty or more people (para. 12). The sample of twenty was large enough to find out new information about how Baby Boomers and Millennials communicated and used technology in the public sector workplace and would be clear enough for the researcher to see once saturation has been achieved (Mason, 2010). The sample was purposive and criterion-based. The two cohorts required studying through normal means without anything special done with them such as intensive observation or doing a multiple study within the study during the interview process. This number was large enough to achieve saturation and discover all of the participant’s views on communication and using technology in the public sector workplace because if the population is too big, the data emerging from it would be redundant and not useful because nothing new is learned (Mason, 2010).

Eligibility Criteria for Study Participants

The eligibility criteria for the study participants are very straightforward. The participants had to be Baby Boomers (born from 1946-1964) or Millennials (born from 1981-2000). They also had to be current employees of any one of the 41 New York City public agencies. The participants could be any race, male, or female, supervisors or subordinates. The main criterion was that they were Baby Boomers or Millennials and current employees of the City Of New York. They all communicated in some way during their workday and they also used technology to some extent.

Procedures for Participant Recruitment

The participants identified for this study were representative of others in their generational cohort who also worked for the City of New York public agency. They were a portion of that larger population (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, 2014). Participants were chosen through snowball sampling and identified from among the researcher's business and personal associates. Snowball sampling fit this study well because few participants were needed, and there had to be mutual trust between the researcher and participants before the study commenced (Atkinson & Flint, 2001). Atkinson & Flint (2001) agreed that trust happens easily when new participants who have prior knowledge due to their lived experience about the phenomenon under study and they are recommended by their cohorts, as opposed to finding participants through more traditional means.

The participants were chosen because they are either Baby Boomers or Millennials who worked at a City of New York public agency. Those identified were contacted by e-mail, phone, face-to-face, or by letter. They were recruited from professional organizations, churches, private Facebook groups for local New York City, and from other professional venues in the local New York City area. An ad was going to be placed in local New York City newspapers such as the *Amsterdam News, A.M. New York,* and *Metro*, but there was no need. The researcher had identified a number of potential participants who fit the requirements for participation in this study. Once approval to conduct this study was given, they were invited until a committed sample of 20 (21) was obtained and they actually participated in the study.

Data Collection Procedures

I recorded nonverbal cues and anything that happened outside of the verbal portion of the interviews because those things were important and gave shades of meaning to the interviews. I also used a tape recorder to record the audio portions of the interview to ensure as much accuracy as possible during the analysis process. An interview protocol package was used. That package contained an informed consent form for the participants to sign before the interview, an interview guide, and a detailed explanation of what the interview is about, as well as a document letting the participants know that they were free from harm or risk during the study, and that their participation was voluntary and anonymous. They were reminded in that document that they were free to withdraw if they chose. They were provided with the name of a community mental health clinic if they needed help as a result of participating in the study. I also gave the participants a short questionnaire to answer, as well as a DISC Classic Profile, a resource that revealed their communication personality. I provided everything mentioned above.

Potential for Historical Documents as Data Source

I intended to use any library resources such as historical documents and any other informational materials that were applicable to this study as a source of data. These resources included documents and materials related to communication and technology use in the public sector. These resources were quite reputable because they were internal documents from the City of New York's public agencies and were fine for use by its employees. They would not be a primary source of data, but a supplement to the data collected in the field. It would be used in Chapter four and Chapter five, when I would have a voice. These materials were not the best choice of data, but could certainly complement the data collected during the course of the study.

Developing Data Collection Instrument and Content Validity

I developed a questionnaire for this study. That questionnaire supplemented the interview by asking the participants to respond to specific scenarios about communication with their cohorts and using technology in the public work sector. The basis for the development of this instrument was because I was not able to observe the participants communicating and using technology in their workplace. The next best thing was for them to participate in a survey showing how they would communicate and use technology at work.

An expert review of the interview questions was done to establish if they are appropriate for the study. If the experts felt that the questions addressed the research questions and would elicit good data from the participants, those questions remained and were used. If the experts find that the questions won't work or need to be reworked, they were revised accordingly.

The protocol for obtaining expert feedback was to show the proposed interview guide to four experts. Those experts were two Baby Boomers and two Millennials who worked in the New York City public sector. They are experts because they fit the same inclusion criteria as that of the study participants. Their expert review of the questions helped me to get the instrumentation correct, as well as to deal with bias. Problematic and ambiguous questions were identified during this process, as well as whether the questions would elicit response that addressed the research questions (Chenail, 2011). Based on the experts' feedback, adjustments such as rewording, shortening, clarifying, or discarding certain questions will be done.

Content validity was developed by using quantitative data to assist the qualitative side of this study in the areas of conceptual development and instrumentation. The quantitative results will validate, interpreting, clarifying the qualitative study (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). These elements will help the instrument test what it is supposed to test: how the participants respond to specific scenarios about communication and using technology in the public sector workplace.

Expert Review of Interview Questions

Several experts who worked for various New York City public agencies agreed to review my proposed interview questions. Their demographics were similar to those of the participants who would be recruited for the dissertation study. Three of them were Baby Boomers (born during the years 1946 to 1964), and two of them were Millennials (born during the years 1980 to 2000). The Baby Boomers worked for the NYC Department of Education and the Department of Transportation. The Millennials worked for the NYC Housing Authority and the NYC Department of Environmental Protection. Collectively, they have 75 years of experience working in the New York City public sector workforce.

Overall, their review provided sound advice to this researcher. It was helpful that their work experience gave them an excellent frame of reference from which they reviewed the questions. One suggestion was that the terms “communication” and “use technology” should be defined. It was also suggested that question nine, which asked about how workers communicate with their coworkers during the day should give a few examples to get the participants thinking before they answer.

It was also suggested that the questions should be made more quantifiable by adding a possible range of answers such as strongly agree to strongly disagree, as well as give them specific answers they could circle. While this was a good suggestion, I rejected it because quantifying the participants' answers would defeat the purpose of using the empirical phenomenology research approach. The purpose of using this research approach is so that the participants will talk freely and openly about their lived experiences communicating and using technology as New York City public sector workers. Quantifying the answers would stop the participants from sharing their stories and talking about their experiences. It would give them specific choices and offer them "the easy way out" and tempt them not to say anything further than what's offered.

In addition, the experts made general tweaks to some of the questions in terms of semantics. Their light edits made the questions read better and were welcome. In summary, this was a very useful process that helped me to create the most effective interview questions possible.

Data Collection and Additional Participant Recruitment

The data was collected at least three days a week, with the exception of Tuesdays. I conducted up to three interviews a day over a period of a month or two. The data was recorded on a tape recorder and manually. I created and posted a flyer on the church bulletin board, on bulletin boards near New York City public agencies, and on Facebook in private chat rooms for New York City public agency employees to recruit more participants.

How Participants Exit the Study

The participants were encouraged to ask any questions they had about the study and their participation in it. As soon as the data collection was completed, I contacted the participants by telephone to debrief them (Jackson. 2008). Debriefing helped the participants to have clarity about the study, as well as to stop any pain or uncertainty they felt about their participation. Jackson (2008) contended that debriefing helped the participants to understand how the research study helped them, as well as the world at large. At this time, I addressed any further questions and concerns the participants had about their participation in the study. I will allay any fears they had about anything related to the study.

They were given information about where they could receive help if they felt any stress from the study or were distressed by it. They would be referred to the New York City Free Clinic (a division of the New York University Langone Clinic), 16 East 16th Street, New York, New York, 10003, (212) 206-5200 or to several others. Please see Appendix F. These free to low-cost clinics offer mental health services if they should need help.

Follow up Procedures

The first follow up was done before the interviews took place. I sent a follow up email to the participants two days before the interviews to reconfirm the date, their attendance, time, and place. At the interview, I explained to the participants that a follow-up interview may be needed for clarification purposes and to ensure that their answers were recorded correctly. After I transcribed the interviews to see what data were obtained, a follow up interview was done if the transcription found disagreements, discrepant cases, or any information that was unclear. Specific questions were asked in an effort for the participants to explain and clarify anything that was unclear, discrepant, or in disagreement with the research questions. Even if the answers seemed straightforward, I scheduled a telephone session with the participants to review their interview summary and the themes found in the summary. That session allowed the participants to agree or disagree that the summary points up the essence of the experiences they shared. If they are in agreement, they were allowed to add new information at this time. If they disagreed, modifications would be done (Hycner, 1985).

Data Analysis and Working with the Data

Once the data was collected, I transcribed the interview tapes right away, and ran them through the Dedoose data analysis program, and incorporated any memos into them. My analysis showed literal statements, non-verbal and paralinguistic communications, with a wide space so that units of general meaning could be written in later (Hycner, 1985). I reviewed the transcripts several times to find units of general meaning that are pertinent to the research questions, and they were clustered as themes were discovered (Hycner, 1985). Summaries were written for each interview, along with the general and unique themes that came out of the data (Hycner, 1985). A follow-up phone interview was held so the summary could be reviewed with the participants. They agreed that the interview pointed up the essence of what they meant to share, or they could change their response, or add new information (Hycner, 1985). Once all of the interviews were completed, I wrote a composite summary that embodied the essence of the phenomenon under study. This composite represented the participants' experiences in general, but I cited individual experiences, similarities, and differences (Hycner, 1985). I looked at the data obtained from the questionnaires and began looking for similarities, differences, and themes in the participants' responses. They were analyzed in Dedoose. I used the analysis capability that came with the DISC Classic Profile and analyzed the participant's communication style and compared it with the other data obtained. All analyses were looked at in terms of the two research questions and I saw how it all aligned with the problem statement, and purpose.

Coding

The Dedoose data analysis software program was used to conduct data analysis. Each interview (case) was coded separately and was given a code name from a master list. I generated a report for each case. Based on what was in the report, I kept analyzing the data to the point of saturation while looking for similarities, differences, and any themes that emerged. I began the data analysis with light hand coding as a way of getting close to the data and understanding it. I looked for any similarities, differences, and emerging themes.

The questionnaire answers were analyzed the same way as stated above to the point of saturation.

I analyzed the data contained from the DISC Classic Profile using the analysis instruction that came with it. Once all the data were obtained from the three sources, it was analyzed together to find and understand all of the similarities, differences, and themes. At that point, I studied all of the findings and made sense out of it in order to write about them.

Data Analysis Software and its use

The data obtained during the collection process were analyzed with Dedoose, a qualitative software package. CAQDAS programs maintain data, clearly display codes given to data with graphics and have search and retrieval functions to create categories and test possibilities or suppositions (Huberman & Saldana (2014). Dedoose allowed me to code source data, retrieve and manipulate code source data, test suppositions about the data on any code or codes, and print data analysis. This software package is user friendly, has plain English instructions, and has a tutorial to teach users the fundamentals of its use and features. Other desirable features are the point and click interface, user friendly menus, click and drag selections, and keyboard shortcuts.

The reason that this software package is a good choice for data analysis is because there is plenty of support such as Dedoose e-mail discussion group, a number of online resources for qualitative data analysis, and two sample studies to practice with before analyzing the real study. I used Dedoose for data analysis of the interviews and the questionnaire. I ran the results of the DISC Classic Profile through Dedoose for coding and analysis.

Treatment of Discrepant Cases

If there were discrepant cases, I would have compared them with field notes, interview protocols, and agency documents to see how they fared. If the discrepant cases were less than the comparison data, that data would have been unwarranted. If the discrepant cases outnumbered the data, those cases would have been cited for further analysis. Discrepant cases that did not fit budding prototypes would have been revised so the data will have better representation (Freeman, deMarrais, Preissie, Roulston, & St. Pierre, 2007).

In empirical phenomenology, discrepant cases are also unintended consequences (effects). It is important to the empirical phenomenological research approach that I look out for and recognizes unintended consequences because they contain shades of meaning that take the participants' stories and their meanings in a different direction. That new direction will give me new avenues and new meanings to explore. All unintended consequences should be considered because even those that seem meaningless can be important—just as what is unimportant to the participants might be of vital importance to me (Aspers, 2009). Aspers (2009) suggests that researchers continue to use scientific theories to frame the interviews and to be careful to communicate to their professional cohorts, as well as to the participants in the study (Aspers, 2009).

I got to the crux of the participants' meanings during the interview process as they happened by using the A-Scheme (Aspers, 2009). The A-Scheme is a semi-structured interview guide that explores the participants' meanings as they are spoken and themes are suggested.

Trustworthiness – Credibility, Transferability, Dependability, and Confirmability

Credibility (internal validity) could be achieved through the use of triangulation; prolonged contact with the study participants; and the use of reflexivity. I used thick description of the participants' experiences with the phenomenon being studied and of the particulars of how they occurred. Data saturation could also be used to confirm how data sufficiency was evaluated (Morrow, 2005).

Transferability (external validity) happened when I became an instrument in the study and gave information about the participants and her relationship with the participants so readers would be able to understand how and if the findings would transfer. However, because of the small sample size and fact that there were not any statistics used in data analyses, it should not be said that the findings were generalizable to other settings or populations (Morrow, 2005).

Dependability (with the parallel criterion reliability) was achieved through keeping a clear and explicit audit trail of the research process, memos, and any possible themes and categories so that my Committee, peer researchers, or professional cohorts in the public administration field could peruse them (Morrow, 2005).

Confirmability (objectivity) was the hardest component of trustworthiness to achieve. As this study was done in the interpretivist/constructivist paradigm, there might be a bit of bias that enters the study. However, I was aware of this and did her best to quell it if it happened. The assumption, here, was that research was not objective and that honest findings were in the data and it was incumbent upon me to combine the data with and findings and make them palatable so I could confirm their veracity. Ways of achieving confirmability included having a clear audit trail, through reflexivity, and keeping subjectivity in check (Morrow, 2005).

Participants' Right to Privacy and Protection From Harm

I gave each potential participant an interview protocol package before they agreed to take part in the study. The interview protocol package consisted of several pages outlining the details of the study, a statement that their participation is voluntary, and that they were free to withdraw or not participate at any point they felt uncomfortable. There was also a statement in the interview protocol package stating that their identity would remain anonymous because fictitious names would be used and their confidentiality was guaranteed because no one other than those directly associated with this study would see the data obtained from it. Information about a free to low-cost Manhattan-based mental health clinic would provided for them to seek help should they experience stress or any other discomfort as a result of participating in this study. The protocol package also contained the questions they would be asked during the interview. There was a consent form that was mandatory for them to sign before their participation in the study would proceed.

I took specific steps to ensure that the study's participants' rights were protected and they remained free from harm. One step was to make the principle of voluntary participation clear. That principle underscored the idea that the participants were part of the study of their own free will and was not forced into it. That is important because studies in history depended on prisoners and students who were forced into their participation (Trochim, 2006). Also, another principle was clarified to the participants: informed consent. Before they agreed to take part in the study, I explained to them how the study was carried out, any risks that obtaining research might have had, and that their role in the study was voluntary, so they could withdraw from the study at any point. The participants gave their written content attesting to their understanding and willingness to participate in the study before they went any further (Trochim, 2006). Other standards that were upheld during the study were confidentiality and anonymity; namely, that only people directly involved in the study would have access to the data obtained in the study, and their names will not be used in the study, just aliases or numbers (Trochim, 2006). However, I explained to the participants that the completed and accepted study would be available to the public through ProQuest so that there was full transparency and honesty.

Institutional Permissions Needed

Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) permission was needed before I could begin data collection. In addition, I have completed the National Institute of Health's Protecting Human Research Participants training course. The purpose of this training was to ensure that I understand the importance of how to conduct a research study without harming human participants in any way. This study was conducted in such a way to protect all human participants' rights, privacy, and keeping them free from any harm or distress.

Potential Unpredictable Adverse Events

The interview protocol addressed issues such as participants' refusing to participate any further in the study, participate at all, or their response to predictable adverse events. The interview protocol clearly explained to them that their participation was strictly voluntary and as such, they were not obligated to continue if they chose not to. There was language in the protocol advising them that they could stop at any point in the interview process that they did not feel comfortable. They were also advised that they did not owe me any explanation, and they were in control of their participation so should feel comfortable at every step of the interview process. They were told that they should let me know if they do not feel comfortable and I would stop and address that feeling. It would be up to the participant to continue. If the participant responded negatively to anything during the interview process or to predictable adverse events, I would refer them for free or low-cost help at the New York City Free Clinic (a division of the New York University Langone Clinic), 16 East 16th Street, New York, New York (10003), (212) 206-5200.

Data Management

Although data collected during the course of the study were embedded in the Dedoose data analysis software package, it needed to be physically stored in order to ensure the participants' confidentiality. This physical storage will also maintain the integrity of the data. Raw material, field notes, transcripts, tape recordings, memos, coded data with all code keys, journals, and any drafts of any of the above (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, 2014) related to the data collection process was stored in a locked safe in my office for five years after the completion of the study. The contents of the safe will be destroyed after that time. CD and USB thumb drive backups will also be stored in the safe and destroyed with the other materials after the five year period has expired. The data were safeguarded and disseminated to my doctoral committee and to ProQuest as per Walden University's procedures. I was the only person who had access to the data and has kept them confidential and protected in a locked safe at all times.

Other Ethical Issues

The study was not be done in my work environment because conducting any research other than that authorized by the various agencies' Research and Data Analysis units was prohibited. It also was not conducted because it would be a conflict of interest because I am an employee of the City of New York, as well as I am I conducting the study. There weren't any power differentials because none of my seven staff members were selected to participate in this study. I did not offer any incentives to the participants to be a part of this study. The interview protocol package told them how much their participation was appreciated. I wanted them to participate for the right reason—because they wanted to be a part of researching generational communications and to help add to the knowledge base about this subject—not because they wanted to receive a gift or other incentive.

Summary

Chapter 3 outlined the rationale for my choosing qualitative methodology, specifically, empirical phenomenology. This chapter also reiterated the proposed research questions and how they fit into the qualitative paradigm. My role as the researcher in this study was discussed, as well as how trustworthiness will be maintained and bias will be addressed. Sampling techniques and setting, data collection, data interpretation, data management, and instrumentation that will be used in this study were also addressed. Chapter 3 also included strategies for maintaining ethics to protect the participants' confidentiality was protected, as well as how they would be kept from harm during their participation in this study.

Chapter 4 will provide the narrative for this research study based on research conducted on 20 participants. Their demographics will be given, as well as the research setting described and briefly recreated. A detailed account of how the data was collected will be discussed and how I handled bias and maintained trustworthiness. In conclusion, the results of this study based on data obtained during data collection will be discussed and analyzed.

Chapter 4 Results

Introduction

The purpose of this phenomenological research was to learn how Baby Boomers and Millennials communicate and use technology in the New York City public sector workplace. Through these generations' lived experiences, I endeavored to understand the differences and similarities in how they communicated and used technology in their daily work, as well as with their coworkers and management. I used the conceptual framework of CVF (Cameron & Quinn, 2011) and digital natives/digital immigrants (Prensky, 2001a) as the theoretical foundation of this study. Empirical phenomenology was used for data analysis. Moustakas (1994) explained that it is important to interpret what the participants' experiences mean and impart it to others based on the essence and shades of meaning analyzed from those experiences. This chapter presents a synopsis of the main results of the participants' stories about the experiences they shared during the data collection process. In this chapter, I will discuss the participants, how they were recruited, data collection, data analysis, the research setting, participant profiles, unintended consequences or unusual circumstances, ethical considerations, results, and the summary.

The Research Setting

I conducted my research for this study over 3 months in the five boroughs of New York City. Most of the interviews (16 of 21or79.19 %) were conducted as telephone conferences in my private office. Each participant was given a choice of how they wanted to be interviewed—either in person or by telephone—to conform to their busy schedules. I maintained a log book that contained their first names and contact information in an effort to keep their identities confidential. Upon their response to my flyer, letter of invitation, or from word of mouth through snowball sampling, we set up an interview method, date, and time.

Ethical Procedures

The ethical procedures outlined in Chapter three were followed. Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved the submitted application package detailing how this study would be conducted, as well as the interview protocol packet containing informed consent forms. These consent forms gave me permission to interview the participants in person or in a telephone conference. The IRB assigned approval number 02-16-16-0381369.

To maintain a professional and ethical interviewing environment, I followed the Patton and Patton (2002) Ethical Issues Checklist to ensure that all aspects of ethical data collection were covered. Some of the points explained in the checklist included explaining the purpose, risk assessment, confidentiality, informed consent, data access, and data collection methods (Patton & Patton, 2002).

The informed consent document was read to each of the participants explaining the purpose of the study, the 60 to 90 minute length of the study, and I reiterated that their participation was voluntary and they were free to stop the interview at any time during the process for any reason without explanation. The risks and benefits, as well as follow up procedures to clarify their answers and to ensure accuracy, were explained.

Participants who opted for face to face interviews were given the informed consent forms, the resource guide, as well as were asked several demographic questions to establish whether or not they met the inclusion criteria. Participants who opted to be interviewed by phone were sent the interview protocol package with the informed consent form by email so they could peruse them, as well as read silently as I read it aloud. After they gave successful answers to the demographic questions, and I was sure they met the inclusion criteria, I asked for their verbal consent to interview them. At that point, they stated “I Consent” into the tape recorder.

Before the interviews transpired, each participant was given a resource guide listing mental health clinics around the New York City area that could help them if the interview caused them any emotional discomfort or distress.

The participants’ confidentiality was ensured because each of them was given a unique numerical identifier and a pseudonym. Their true identity was known only to me. All subsequent data and cross referenced materials were stored in a locked safe in my private office. Each interview was transcribed and shown to each participant for accuracy. Upon the conclusion of member checking, the transcripts were added to the locked safe with the other related data and study materials until I needed them again. At the conclusion of writing my dissertation, everything related to this study was securely locked in the safe for five years, as stated in chapter three—after which they will be destroyed. Tapes containing the interviews were destroyed after they were transcribed and checked for accuracy. In addition, I conducted the interviews from my private home office or in private rooms in New York City as mutually agreed upon. None of interviews were done at my or any of the participants' workplace.

Demographics/Participant Profiles

The 21 participants who participated in this study are described in this section. They voluntarily participated and met the inclusion criteria. They also went through the process of signing the informed consent forms and were given the resource guide listing mental health clinics to which they could go if they experienced any adverse effects as a result of their participation in this study. I assigned each participant a unique numerical indicator as one way of keeping their identity confidential. I also gave each of them a pseudonym and honored them with car names to further protect their identities. Their true identities are known only to me. This allowed me to get to the core essence of their stories and garner in vivo quotes without editing them for fear that their true identities would be revealed. All information about the participants was learned during the interview process. Table 1 gives a synopsis of the participants' demographics, as well as a narrative description.

Table 1.
Synopsis of Participant Demographics

Participant # and name	Gender	Generational Cohort	Birth Year	New York City Agency/ Employed/ Title/ Years Worked
1—Ford	Male	Baby Boomer	1964	A finance agency, Budget Analyst, 26 years
2—Corvette	Female	Baby Boomer	1957	A payroll administration agency, Associate Staff Analyst,10 years,
3—Lincoln	Male	Baby Boomer	1957	A children's administration agency, Social Work Manager, 27 years
4—Paige	Female	Baby Boomer	1949	A law enforcement agency, Civil Warrant & Internal Affairs Officer, 10 years
5—Lexus	Female	Baby Boomer	1960	A correctional agency, Correction Officer, 20 years
6—Honda	Female	Baby Boomer	1962	An education agency, Medical Assistant, 30 years
7—Tesla	Female	Baby Boomer	1957	A social services agency, Supervisor, 20 years
8—Saxon	Female	Baby Boomer	1955	A senior college, Adjunct Instructor, 4 years
9—Polaris	Male	Baby Boomer	1956	An education agency, Guidance Counselor, Administration, 30 years
10—Bentley	Male	Baby Boomer	1956	A social services agency, Borough Chief, 30 years
11—Mercedes	Female	Millennial	1984	A social service agency's satellite office , Certified Assistance

Participant # and name	Gender	Generational Cohort	Birth Year	New York City Agency/ Employed/ Title/ Years Worked
				Counselor, 2 years
12—Chevy	Female	Millennial	1984	A social service agency’s satellite office, Certified Assistance Counselor, 3 years
13-Maserati	Female	Millennial	1982	A homeless services agency, Associate Staff Analyst, 8 years
14-Infiniti	Female	Millennial	1984	A children’s services agency, Social Worker, 4 years
15—Avanti	Female	Millennial	1980	A social services agency, Eligibility Specialist II, 31/2 years
16—Ferrari	Female	Millennial	1980	A health and hospitals agency, Clerical Associate III, 3 years
17—Shelby	Female	Millennial	1984	A junior college, Adjunct Instructor, 4 years
18—Mazda	Female	Millennial	1983	An education agency, Technology Teacher, 3 years
19—Mercury	Male	Millennial	1980	A mental health and hygiene agency, Partnership Coordinator, 1 year, 3 months
20—Apollo	Male	Millennial	1986	A buildings agency Department of Buildings, Customer Service, Licensing Specialist, Counter Rep, 10.5 years
21—DeLorean	Male	Millennial	1982	A transportation agency, Inspector, 5 years

Note: Synopsis of the 21 study participants.

The data displayed in Table 1 was gleaned from the participants during the interview process. Each participant is profiled below.

Participant 1, *Ford*, 01-03202016-001, is a Baby Boomer who was born in 1964—the last year of the Baby Boomer generation. He is a budget analyst for a New York City finance agency. Unlike the participants working for most of the other agencies, he sometimes is allowed to work from home. He has worked there for 26 years.

Participant 2, *Corvette*, 02-04092016-002, is a Baby Boomer who was born in 1957, in the middle of the Baby Boomer years. She is a supervisor and technical writer for a New York City payroll administration agency. She has worked in New York City Civil Service for five years, but has worked just over one year at a payroll agency. Her mantra is that good communications will help both management and subordinates of both generational cohorts to work smarter, not harder.

Participant 3, *Lincoln*, 03-05012016-003, is a Baby Boomer born in 1957. He works for a children's services agency, where he is a manager. He has been there for 27 years, and is an advocate of open and meaningful communication between management and their subordinate staff.

Participant 4, *Paige*, 04-04302016-004, is a Baby Boomer, born in 1949, and is the eldest of the Baby Boomer participants. She is a civil warrants and internal affairs officer for a New York City law enforcement agency. She was the most forthcoming of all about her experiences with generational communications and shared some very interesting stories about working in the New York City public sector workplace. She has been there for 10 years.

Participant 5, *Lexus*, 05-050216-005, is a Baby Boomer, born in 1960. She is a corrections officer with a New York City corrections agency. She has an interesting outlook on generational communications—especially as it relates to management and subordinates as management and subordinates can work different shifts and not see each other face to face. She has been there for 20 years.

Participant 6, *Honda*, 06-05072016-006, is also a Baby Boomer, born in 1962. She works with a New York City education agency and is a medical assistant in a Staten Island public school. She also has an interesting take on generational communications, as her management is off-site, and she has lots of experience dealing with Millennials. That experience lends itself to how well she interacts with and understands them. She has worked there for 30 years.

Participant 7, *Tesla*, 07-05132016-007, is a Baby Boomer born in 1957. She works at a New York City social services agency, where she is a principal administrative associate II and is a unit supervisor. She has had probably more than her share of dealing with Millennials, and she readily shared her experiences and thoughts. She has seen quite a lot from the Baby Boomers and Millennials during her tenure with HRA. She has been there for 20 years.

Participant 8, *Saxon*, 08-05122016-008, is a Baby Boomer. She works for a public senior college. She is an adjunct instructor. She believes in clear communications between both generational cohorts. She also spoke about social media as it relates to the way that Millennials communicate. She has been in her position for 4 years.

Participant 9, *Polaris*, 09-05142016-009, is a Baby Boomer. He works for an education agency, where he is a guidance counselor. He is the third in line at his school and enjoys being in administration. He stressed the importance of all employees working together, as well as all parties sharing the available technology and not being proprietary with it. He has been there for 30 years.

Participant 10, *Bentley*, 10-05152016-010, is the final Baby Boomer who participated in this study. He works for a New York City social services agency, where he is a borough chief. He has had a wealth of experience working with Baby Boomers and Millennials in his management position. He shared some insightful ideas about how management and subordinates could bridge the communication gap between them and with using technology. He has been there for 30 years.

Participant 11, *Mercedes*, 01-03162016-101, is a Millennial. Mercedes was born in 1984. She is a certified assistance counselor at a New York City social service agency's satellite office in the brand-new marketplace division, created as a result of the changes in Medicaid due to the Affordable Care Act. She considers herself a true

Millennial because she has been using technology since she was a small child; and she does not know any other way. She has worked there for two years.

Participant 12, *Chevy*, 02-03172016-102, is a Millennial. She was born in 1984. She is also a certified assistance counselor at a New York City social service agency's satellite office in a new division. She is an advocate for better communication between management and staff, as well as for having meetings so everyone will understand each other. She was quite forthcoming about how to make that happen. She has worked there for three years.

Participant 13, *Maserati*, 03-04082016-103, is a Millennial. She was born in 1981. She is an associate staff analyst in a New York City homeless services agency. She spoke quite eloquently about bureaucracy and how it affects communication in the New York public sector workplace. Maserati has worked in her position for five years.

Participant 14, *Infiniti*, 04-04162016-104, is a Millennial. She was born in 1984. She is a social worker. Because of the nature of her job, she lends a different perspective to the generational communications issue. Her duties take her into the field, so that changes the dynamics of how management and staff communicates and use technology. She also introduced the concept of how attitude plays a key role in generational communications. She has been in her position for nearly four years.

Participant 15, *Avanti*, 05-042022016-105, is a Millennial. She was born in 1980. She is an eligibility specialist II at a New York City social services agency in the legal division. She was adamant that in order for there to be good communications between Baby Boomers and Millennials at work, both cohorts must be willing to make that happen and must participate in the process. She has been in her position for three and a half years.

Participant 16, *Ferrari*, 06-04182016-106, is a Millennial. She was born in 1980. Ferrari is employed by a New York City health and hospitals agency. She considers herself very adept at using technology and is very experienced communicating with both Baby Boomers and Millennials in her New York City public sector workplace. Ferrari has worked at the agency for six years.

Participant 17, *Shelby*, 07-04272016-107, is a Millennial. She was born in 1984. Shelby works as an adjunct instructor at a New York City senior college. She also had an interesting take on the Millennial generational cohort. She made it clear that she does not like the term Millennial. Shelby has worked at her job at the college for four years.

Participant 18, *Mazda*, 08-04302016-108, is a Millennial. She was born in 1983. She works for a New York City education agency, where she is a technology teacher and technology director. She is very technically savvy because of having early exposure, as well as because she works with it every day at her job. Mazda stressed the need for training and professional development to ensure proper communication between Baby Boomers and Millennials, as well as between management and staff. She has worked at her job for three years.

Participant 19, *Mercury*, 09-05052016-109, is a Millennial. He was born in 1980. He is employed at a New York City health and mental hygiene agency. He is a partnership coordinator. He shared that although he is often considered a Millennial, he does not consider himself as Millennial, but a member of Generation X. Mercury has worked at his job for a year and three months.

Participant 20, *Apollo*, 10-05062016-110, is a Millennial. He was born in 1986. He works at a New York City buildings agency, where he is a customer service representative, licensing specialist, and a courier representative. Apollo recognizes differences in how Baby Boomers communicate and use technology at his job and speaks to them well. He has been employed at his job for 10.5 years.

Participant 21, *DeLorean*, 11-05062016-111, is a Millennial. He was born in 1982. He works for a New York City transportation agency, where he is an inspector. DeLorean is sure that his Southern upbringing informs the way he communicates with both Baby Boomers and Millennials. He describes himself as "being comfortable using technology because he has used it since middle school." He has been at the agency for five years.

The Data Collection Process

The data collection for this qualitative study was conducted inductively using Empirical Phenomenology research methodology. Data collection began on March 16, 2016 after vigorous recruitment. Due to an assertive, sometimes aggressive recruitment period, I was able to recruit a sample of 21 men and women who currently worked for one of the 41 agencies that comprise the New York City public sector. They live and work in the five boroughs of New York City. I began my recruitment campaign the day after I received IRB approval to collect data. At that point, I began distributing flyers all over New York in places and spaces where City workers would visit or frequent. After permission was granted, flyers were placed electronically in private online Facebook groups and other social media where City workers could be found. Flyers were placed on church bulletin boards, in local coffee cafés, in supermarket community boards, on bulletin boards in public libraries, and on community bulletin boards around town. Verbal announcements about the study were made in some cases, as well as some recruitment was done by word of mouth. I gave letters of invitations to friends and associates who stated they knew potential participants who fit the inclusion criteria for the study. Potential participants contacted me by email, telephone, and in person

Recruitment

To recruit participants for my study, I used snowball and purposive sampling. Maxwell (2013) posited that specific people are selected purposely to expound on your research questions because the answers cannot be obtained anywhere else. That applies well to the population selected for this study because it had to be composed of Baby Boomers born from 1946 to 1964 and Millennials born from 1980 to 2000—representative of the oldest and youngest generational cohort in the New York City public sector workplace. No other population would have worked for the nature of this study. The common thread that these two populations had to have was to be currently employed in the New York City public sector workplace.

A Recruitment Letter used as a flyer (Appendix G) was placed on bulletin boards in New York City churches, public libraries, local community organizations, as well as given to people who expressed interest. Several of them stated that they did not meet the inclusion criteria, but they had coworkers and associates who did. They asked for flyers to hand out to them. Also, some of the participants gave me contact information for some possible participants and took flyers to give to them and would let them know to expect a phone call or email from me. Several of those leads worked out perfectly.

I also contacted the moderator of several private Facebook groups to ask for permission to post a flyer to recruit possible participants for the study. All of them said yes, and I posted those documents. The groups I contacted were groups for Brooklyn residents, City of New York workers, and graduate student groups with a large number of members from New York City.

Recruitment was far from easy. In fact, it was quite difficult because many possible participants wanted to be paid (see Appendix J). My explanation that they would be contributing to new research in the public administration field did not matter to them. They just did not care about anything except cash in their hands. I was finally able to recruit participants by following every lead that presented itself, and by taking flyers everywhere I went, and being assertive about recruitment. That strategy worked because I recruited 21 participants who were willing and fit the inclusion criteria. I was anxious to hear his story—his lived experience—because he might have had some new information to impart.

I had originally included a newspaper ad with my IRB packet as a possible recruitment method, but I didn't need it because snowball sampling provided all of the needed participants.

Interview Process

After I ensured that the participants met the inclusion criteria based on their answers to the demographic questions, I asked for and obtained informed consent either in person or by telephone. I explained the parameters of the interview to them, as well as the voluntary nature of the interview and that it would last from 60 to 90 minutes, but they could stop it at anytime they began to feel uncomfortable. I also let them know that they would be asked to complete the DISC Classic Profile, an instrument used to assess the participants' communication styles. As stated in my IRB application, I then gave them each a Resource Guide listing the names, addresses, and contact numbers of local mental health clinics to which they could go for treatment if the interview caused them any emotional stress. Telephone interview informed consent was received verbally and recorded. All in-person interviews took place in private rooms in New York City. Permission was received to tape the interviews and verbal consent was given. All materials related to this study were stored in a locked safe in my private Brooklyn, New York office.

During data collection, I elicited the participants' stories by using first-order and second-order constructs—getting to their meaning structure so they can be woven together and understand that meaning when held against the theories (Aspers, 2009). I used Aspers (2009) seven suggested steps so that a successful Empirical Phenomenological study would be conducted. I clarified the research questions; reviewed the proposed study questions with field experts and made revisions that became evident as a result of that review. Two theories CVF and digital immigrants and digital natives) were selected as the foundation that would ground the study and guide it. As the interviews progressed and I studied the transcripts, notes, and memos, I understood the first-order constructs (the participants' meaning structures), and I bracketed the theories. Additionally, as data collection progressed, I solidified how I would design the second-order constructs (meshing the participants' stories together and understanding how they worked against the theories) (Aspers, 2009). I was also on the lookout for and open to unintended consequences; and connecting the literature to the participants' stories; the final Aspers (2009) admonition, happened in the final two chapters of this dissertation.

Unintended Consequences/Unusual Circumstances

During the data collection process, I happened upon two unusual circumstances. The first was with Participant 19, Mercury. Although he met *all* of the inclusion criteria, he did not consider himself a Millennial, but a Generation Xer. He was so adamant about it that he even provided a link to PEW Research Center's website--a popular organization that is known for its extensive research in social sciences in research circles--to underscore his point.

According to Taylor & Gao (2014), Generation X gets lost and neglected because they are sandwiched between the Baby Boomers and Millennials, the two most popular cohorts receiving attention in the media. They are also a short 15 years from 1965-1980, while the Baby Boomers and Millennials generations spans 20 years.

Mercury was born in 1980, the first birth year for the Millennial generation. However, when asked how he communicates with Millennials at work, he shared that he doesn't consider himself a Millennial. When I delved into why he felt that way, he responded:

> Because I have Generation X and Generation Y [Millennial] tendencies. I think I always aspired to be straight up Gen X. As a matter of fact, I would also argue that everyone born in the late 70s/early 80s who achieved super success or even became a bonafide settled adult before 9/11, is actually a legit Gen X person. I feel that Gen Y comes from going to grad school straight from college and my early reliance on technology. My “millilenialness,” I believe, comes from adapting to the scarcity and ridiculousness of becoming a middle class adult in gentrified New York City. In short, I kind of think that saying Boomer and

Millennial leaves out the consideration of the nuances that make up Gen X and Gen Y. Gen X being more prevalent and defined of the aforementioned.

The second unusual circumstance occurred when another Millennial, Shelby, stated that she doesn't define herself as a Millennial. She was born in 1984 and also meets all of the inclusion criteria and is clearly a Millennial. When asked to add any response or comment that was not asked but pertains to the topic of generational communications, she stated:

> I do not define myself as a Millennial, perhaps Gen Y. I don't put myself in the same category as a 23 year old. Especially given that I teach 23 year olds and see a drastic difference in how they communicate. I teach students born in the mid to late 1990's, but a lot of older people and researchers group Millennials into one large group of people born in the early/mid 80's to the early 2000's, and I do not relate or communicate to/like kids/young adults born in the mid 90's or later. They are a very social media reliant group; they've always had cell phones; they've never even used a telephone book. I don't identify with that.

It should be noted that Millennials are referred to as Generation Y. The two terms are used synonymously.

Data Management and Tracking

All data collected from and associated with this study were maintained using very strict data management. The files were password protected and hard copy was locked in a secured safe until it was needed. My research journal, which contained the participants' contact information and various points I needed to follow up with them, as well as my impressions and other types of field notes, was kept on the desk in my locked office because I used it often. I stored the data exactly as I stated in my IRB application without any deviance from it. I assigned each participant a Unique Numerical Identifier and a car name as a pseudonym. All documents, folders in the Dedoose data analysis program, and the Interview Guide were cross referenced using the Unique Numerical Identifier, pseudonyms, and the generational cohort to which they belonged. All interviews and tapes were transcribed within two to three days of the interviews. All tapes were destroyed after the data were transcribed and rechecked.

Data Analysis

Interviewing 21 participants yielded a tremendous amount of data, both tape recorded and manual notes taken at various intervals during the interviews. I also wrote memos to capture my feelings, observations, and questions, assumptions, reactions, or comments that arose during our sessions. I also jotted down interesting points about the participants as we spoke. This was the reflexive method that I chose to quell bias (Morrow, 2005). After the interviews were over, they were transcribed verbatim. These massive amounts of data had to be organized and processed in order to make them ready for coding. Miles, Huberman, & Saldana (2014) recommended that data analysis should happen as data is collected because it helps me to think about current data and helps him or her to collect new and improved data. In addition, it helped to correct any embedded blind spots.

Moustakas (1994) explains data analysis through the lens of the Stevick-Colaizzi method. This method organizes and analyzes the data through understanding one's own experience of the phenomenon to finding the meaning and essence of the participants' experiences. This is achieved by grouping blocks of meaning into them derived from verbatim transcripts.

Data analysis was done by organizing the data and then coding them. First-level and second-level coding was done to identify keywords, categories, themes, similarities, and differences within and between the two generational cohorts—Baby Boomers and Millennials. My overarching goal was to organize, understand, and analyze mounds of raw data into categories and themes that would lead to understanding the participants' lived experiences with generational communications in the New York City public sector workplace (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014).

First Cycle Coding

First cycle coding was used to give meaning to chunks of information to move into the data analysis process, as opposed to merely preparing the data for higher order thinking about the study (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). The beginning step of first cycle coding was uploading all of the 21 transcribed interviews into the Dedoose data analysis software program. I had intended to use the HyperResearch data analysis program, but after my stay at Easton's Nook, a writer's retreat for academics, the host, a research methods professor, showed me how user friendly Dedoose was as opposed to HyperResearch. I decided to use Dedoose instead.

I analyzed each interview line by line to find concepts and words that repeated themselves. Those concepts and words were examined against the research questions. Those were then turned into excerpts, called Descriptors in Dedoose. In the Descriptors tabbed section, I created a table showing the ten Baby Boomers and 11 Millennials, their unique numerical identifier, generational cohort, gender, and the name of the New York City public sector agency for which they currently work. The excerpts section auto filled later when I copied and pasted in excerpts of their interviews later. This information created a table in the Media tabbed section and served as an excellent way to organize the demographic data.

In the Codes tabbed section, I typed in the codes that I had written manually. During the preliminary manual coding, I identified such codes as descriptive codes, in vivo codes (words and expressions in the participants' voice), process codes (gerunds to express their lived experiences), emotion coding, evaluation coding, and holistic coding (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). After all of the codes were typed in, I went through each transcript and blocked out excerpts to accompany each of the codes with which they aligned. There were a total of 813 codes and 473 excerpts.

I used the Packed Code Cloud and the Code Co-Occurrence charts to see which codes recurred. Looking at those charts helped me to find recurring words and concepts. Once I had entered all of the raw data, I began analysis.

Second Cycle Coding

Second cycle coding helped me to discover pattern codes—codes that explain or infer, and identify emerging themes (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). Second cycle coding was how I grouped the blocks of information identified during first cycle coding into fewer numbers of categories, themes, or constructs (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014).

In order to generate pattern codes, I studied the codes found during first cycle coding. I looked for similarities amongst the codes to begin grouping them together. They became themes and categories. I looked for codes that explained or caused the generational communications digital divide phenomenon. I then searched for relationships in and between the Baby Boomers and Millennials as it related to generational communications. Finally, I searched for theoretical constructs. As Miles, Huberman, & and Saldana (2014) predicted, the pattern coding changed as the data shaped up. I went back to the research questions when the data didn't suggest any specific themes or patterns because they would get me back on track and remind me of what was important, as well as point up the sections with important codes to which I should pay attention (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014).

In total, using first and second cycle coding methods, I identified eight themes that emerged during this study which will be discussed later in this chapter and in greater detail in chapter five.

DISC Classic Profile Coding and Analysis

At the conclusion of the interview, each of the 21 participants was given a DISC Classic Profile to complete. They looked at 28 sets of four-word groups from which they had to choose which one described how they communicate the most and the least. When that was completed, I hand coded their responses.

This instrument came with its own coding and analysis instructions. I followed them precisely. The first step was to rub off their answers with a coin to reveal the symbols in each box: a black square, the letter Z, the letter N, a star, or a triangle. Then I tallied the number of each of these symbols for the Most column and the Least column. Those numbers were subtracted from each other to find the difference. There were three graphs on which these numbers were plotted. Graph one represented the Most numbers; graph two represented the least numbers; and graph three represented the Difference numbers. Each of the numbers in the corresponding category named above were plotted on the Y axis on four lines which represented D (Dominance), I (Influence), S (Steadiness), and C (Conscientiousness), the four behavioral tendencies on which the participants' responses would be interpreted later. After the numbers were entered on the Y axis, I looked directly across the page at the X axis for each for a corresponding number. That number was written in the four boxes marked Segment Numbers under the graph. Each graph had a four-digit segment number which could be found on the Classical Profile Pattern Table on pages 10 to 13 in the booklet. Each of the four digits had a word written beside it that revealed that participant's Classical Profile Pattern. For example, one Baby Boomer's behavioral tendency (how he communicates and his desired work environment) were Most (4643-Promoter); Least (3655-Practitioner); and Difference (3655-Practitioner).

The first stage of interpretation was to read and understand what the four dimensions meant. Dominance emphasizes how the environment is shaped by overcoming opposition to accomplish results. Influence emphasizes shaping environment by influencing or shaping others. Steadiness emphasizes cooperating with everyone within your work environment to accomplish your work duties, and Conscientiousness emphasizes working conscientiously in one's current circumstances to ensure quality and accuracy.

The next step was to consider each DISC Behavioral Dimension separately. The words shown on the Dimension Intensity Index reveal the intensity of the participants' tendencies in each dimension. To find the words, graph three was used. A horizontal line was drawn straight to the left from each of the four plot points. A number corresponded with the D,I,S, and C dimensions. Then, I went to the Dimensional Intensity Index and found the number that corresponded with the number from graph three and used a coin to rub off the words for that number and for the three numbers above and below it. For example, the words for the Baby Boomer as referred to above are as follows:

Table 2.

Sample Baby Boomer Dimensional Intensity Index (Interpretation Stage II)

D	I	S	C
Self-reliant	Impulsive	Deliberate	Conventional
Calculated	Emotional	Amiable	Courteous
Self-critical	Self-promoting	Stable	Careful
Unassuming	Trusting	Mobile	Restrained
Self-effacing	Influential	Outgoing	High standards
Realistic	Sociable	Alert	Analytical
Weighs Pros and Cons		Eager	Sensitive

Analysis was done by looking up the segment numbers for each of the three graphs and finding the interpretation that aligned with the segment numbers. Those segment numbers were said to be based on the shape of the profile, high and low plotting points, or the relationship of the four DISC dimensions to each other. The Classical Profile Patterns are: Achiever, Agent, Appraiser, Counselor, Creative, Developer, Inspirational, Objective Thinker, Overshift, Perfectionist, Persuader, Practitioner, Promoter, Result-Oriented, and Specialist patterns. Each of these Classical Profile Patterns had interpretations that explained how participants who fell under these patterns would communicate and behave in their work environment.

I used this type of analysis for each participant and put the data aside until all of the interviews were transcribed. After they were all transcribed, I added this data to the interview data and looked at the DISC Classic Profile results by the generational cohort—first, the Baby Boomers, then the Millennials. Finally, I looked at them together and was able to clearly find similarities and differences between the two cohorts. I was also able to consider the data from the DISC Classic Profiles against the research questions, as well as how they aligned with the purpose statement and the conceptual framework.

Table 3.
Coding Sample: Communicating With Baby Boomers Vs. Millennials

In Vivo Text (From Participants)	Process Code (Gerunds)
"Like kind is of like mind. We've all been through the 'remember when we used to…' situations."	Sharing same experiences, worldviews
"Millennials may be engaged in other forms of social media i.e. Twitter and Facebook."	Engaging in social media
"Millennials are always too distracted and their attention is short, not focused on communication. "	Communicating without focusing
"I have to coddle Baby Boomers when communicating with them and have to explain every little thing."	Coddling Boomers for them to understand
"I deal with teenagers all day long. Baby Boomers don't get the trendy phrases and may need explanations."	Needing trendy phrase explanations
"I communicate with both, but I notice that older workers fear technology."	Fearing using technology
"With Boomers, I walk on eggshells more. You have to break everything down to them. They're sensitive to criticism. Millennials aren't as sensitive and will fix it."	Walking on eggshells more with sensitive Boomers

Results

Using first order and second order coding and analyzing the DISC Classic profile, eight themes were found in this study about generational communications in the New York City public sector. The first four themes answered research question one (What are the opportunities and challenges in using technological tools to communicate among multigenerational New York City public sector workers?). Those themes are: Opportunities for using technology; benefits of technology impacting communication; challenges of using technology and how it affects communication; and organizational culture impacting the use of technology and communication.

The last four themes answered research question two (How do Baby Boomers and Millennials multigenerational workers differ in the way they communicate and use technology among New York City public sector workers?). Those things are: fearing the learning and use of technology; speaking for understanding; differences in relationships affecting Baby Boomers and Millennials; and differences in communication styles affecting management and subordinates.

Research Question One Results

Theme 1: Opportunities for Using Technology

Research question one inquired as follows: What are the opportunities and challenges for using technological tools to communicate among multigenerational New York City public sector workers?

The first theme that was found was *Opportunities for Using Technology*. Several interview questions were asked that helped me to arrive at that theme. They were: Describe the types of technology available for employees in your workplace; How do you communicate with your coworkers during your workday? Example: face to face, by phone, email, text messages, etc. Please describe and be specific. Other questions were: How do you use technology when communicating and interacting with your coworkers or management at work? Please be specific, and what suggestions can you make for better communication between coworkers and between coworkers and management. Please be specific.

Sixty percent of the Baby Boomer participants had the opportunity to use technology to do their jobs. All of them stated that they commonly used desktop computers, digital scanners, copiers, facsimile machines, the Internet, the Microsoft Office package, emails, and the Intranet indigenous to their agency. They also stated that management at their respective agencies carried and used Blackberries.

Forty percent of the participants cited the use of different and unique technology to do their daily work. They used teleconferencing, webinars, and video teleconferencing. Those in management positions used agency laptops and digital phones. However, the most interesting opportunity for using technology at work was that used at the New York City Police Department (NYPD). Baby Boomer Paige explained that while they used all of the common and basic office machines, much of the technology used there is specific to law enforcement. For example, the NYPD employees use Lexus-Nexus, laser fingerprinting analysis, One Stop Transcriber, National Crime Information Center (NCIC), Facebook and social media, and Queues Enforth Development, Inc. (QED).

Paige explained in great detail the types of opportunities that elicited the use of this special technology:

> Laser Finger Printing Analysis is one of the agency's most debated systems. The old guard—officers and technicians who have been with the agency for thirty or more years—were resistant to the new laser fingerprint scanning device. They believed the only true fingerprint is done with ink stamping. The new technology does away with dusting, and another advantage is that it filters out undesired reflections, and in turn, helps detect fingerprints from surfaces that do not reflect light well, such as paper in the old ink stamp process.
>
> You would think that a law enforcement agency would have the most up to date technological equipment and methodology. That’s not always the case. The

number one reason is monetary resources, both city and county agencies, which are largely funded by the state and/or county (depending on where you are). Permit me to explain: city agencies are answerable to the state for expenditures, allotments, and enhancements. County agencies, also known as municipalities, are answerable to the community populace; and while this may not stop a particular investment, the expenditures must go through and be approved by a hierarchy of freeholders and committee members.

Cell phone towers are another practical technological advancement, as there was a time when there was no coverage for it, and the debate was that inmates smuggling in cells would have unlimited access to the outside to continue criminal activities.

On a positive note, a law enforcement agency *sans* outside communication, if needed, could prove dangerous.

Prior to other technological advancements, most agencies including those attached to the jail, probation department, and the court, were limited to tape recorders and court stenographers. New advancements of discs and mini recorders have been designed for the new and improved version of One Stop Transcription, which provides not only voice, but visualization as well.

QED Reporting is a system that links all agencies into one database so that inmates, fugitives, and scofflaws can be accurately reported. Previously, miscommunication or no communication from one law enforcement agent could and has resulted in either the missing of apprehension or the re-apprehension of someone who has already done his time, paid his fine etc., thus conceivably resulting in a large monetary lawsuit and unwanted negative publicity.

Facebook can be a useful technological tool for our agency as people tend to put any and all of their business on it for all to see. For example, we had an obligee who had been calling relentlessly for us to arrest her ex who had not been paying child support. He was finally arrested; and in order to be released, payment was necessary. He paid, and she immediately went on Facebook with her picture and held up the money, indicating that she had just gotten her child support from her (expletive) ex and she was on her way to Jamaica. Later, he used that post as proof to get his child support reduced.

Another instance: a wanted person we'd been searching for indicated to his friends on Facebook where he was working and where he would meet them that night. Needless to say, our detectives had no problem finding him.

Seventy percent of the Millennials attested to using standard digital office machines, computers, and copiers. Twenty percent of them stated that they use SmartBoards, Wifi, and laptops in their daily work duties. Ten percent of them said that they used radios, walkie-talkies, CISCO office phones, and tablets. The 30% of the participants who used this equipment used that which is indigenous to the fields of education and tablets. This type of office equipment streamlines their duties and makes them seamless. Millennial Mazda claimed that she used the tablet for taking attendance, managing her students' grades, and making her to-do list.

Millennial Mercedes had an interesting perspective on opportunities to use technology.

> These machines are used as a form of communication. For example, sometimes a client has to bring documentation into a center. With long wait times or far location, it may be problematic for the client. If that is the case, I would offer our fax number to expedite the consumers' documents.

Both cohorts were asked how they used technology when communicating with management or their coworkers. Ninety percent of the Baby Boomers stated that they used email or the telephone depending on the situation, in person meetings, and Blackberry technology.

Baby Boomer Lexus shared:

> I use e-mails to communicate when I want something communicated in writing and does not need to be seen immediately. I also use e-mails if I need proof of my communications with a person. If pressed for time and I need an immediate reply, I prefer to communicate in person or by phone.

It should be noted that they did not use email as easily as it sounds; many of them used it because they had no choice. They use emails to follow up on current projects, respond to queries, to give or respond information to staff, get data, check, attendance, and for report card information. In cases where they work in close proximity to each other, they opt for face to face meetings. The one thing about which they were unanimous was using email to establish proof of communications.

Baby Boomer Corvette explained it best:

> I use technology to write manuals and create learning materials for our departments. For these tasks, I usually use a computer with specialized software, digital printer, scanner, copier, and fax machine. When communicating and interacting with my coworkers and management, I usually opt for face to face meetings. If that is not possible, I will either email or telephone them—depending on the situation. If it is a short-term issue or problem that can be handled quickly, I will use the phone to communicate. If it is an issue that is complicated or will become a long-term one, I will use e-mail to communicate so I will have a record and a date and time to refer back to if needed.

Baby Boomer Bentley continued:

> Email because it's efficient and makes them responsible because they have to respond. It shows that you attempted to communicate with them on a particular topic on a specific day. "Woe unto them who don't check it. Email is probably the best thing invented in technology."

All of the Millennials stated that they used emails to communicate with their coworkers and managers in their New York City public work sector. Fifty percent of them also used phones and faxes. Thirty percent of them also spoke about how they made every effort to communicate with their coworkers and managers face to face as often as they could. They all had the standard fare of printers, fax machines, scanners, telephones, and computers. One of the Millennial participants also used a pager.

Millennial Chevy explained the opportunities she had to use technology and communicate with her coworkers and managers at work. She said:

> I use technology when communicating and interacting with my coworkers or management, through email and fax and most of the time by phone calls. As a Certified Assistance Counselor (CAC), my duty is to communicate with diligence and efficiency, and to facilitate getting great results for the consumers. These two types of communication help me with my daily work such as face-to face interview, email, fax, and by phone.

Millennial Maserati also shared her experience about the opportunities she has to use technology when she communicates. She elaborated:

> I use computers when I am writing reports, writing emails, and analyzing data. I use the scanner when I need to send documents within my agency and to other agencies, I use the fax machines to send documents when there is no other way to

send or receive them when I'm forced to or only when necessary. I try my best to use the fax only to receive documents when that is the only way to do so.

Theme 2: Benefits of Technology Impacting Communication

The second theme found during data analysis was Benefits of Technology Impacting Communications. Sixty percent of the Baby Boomer articulated that some of the benefits of technology impacting communications included getting information to everyone in the agency; reaching out to others in their job field; get or give information needed to complete their job; to interface with all (other) agencies); enables them to do their job better, quicker, and more efficiently; easier to get information to the staff; keeps workflow going; keeping productivity high; easy to contact customers and keep a documented record; makes it easy to obtain data; and allows for easy access; and accuracy and validity. In addition, technology allows Baby Boomer Ford to telecommute and work from home on occasion. Baby Boomer Shelby stated that technology helped her to enhance her students' learning experience. Baby Boomer Honda also cited that technology allows her to work independently.

Baby Boomer Lexus explained:

> The use of technology allows for mass dissemination of information to all employees at all levels of the organization. Another benefit is the luxury to reach out to others in my job field, throughout the world if I need additional expertise or advice. Technology tools allow for additional resources at my fingertips.

Only 40% of the Baby Boomer participants responded differently and offered unique ways about the benefits of technology impacted communications. They spoke about telecommuting from home; keeping track of their employees and their work; accuracy; and working smarter, not harder.

Baby Boomer Bentley shared:

> I can keep track of my people and their work better than if we did not have computers. This position is computer driven; all of the interviews are on computers. Work can get done faster. My job is information driven. Getting information faster and more accurately makes my job easier.

Another interview question that helped me to arrive at this theme asked about some of the benefits using technology in their specific job. Eighty percent of the Baby Boomer participants explained that some of the benefits of using technology in their particular job were working smarter, not harder; keeping documented records; getting information faster and more accurately; productivity; efficiency; working more independently; more access to gathering information; having needed resources at hand; and having the ability to interact with outside agencies.

Lexus explained:

> Working in a prison requires a vast amount of paperwork to be generated and stored for long durations of time. Use of technology allows for the fast and easy

storage of information using minimal space. Technology also allows for easy transmittal of information from prison to prison.

Baby Boomer Paige offered another very interesting perspective about a benefit of using technology in her specific job:

> Speed! Everyone knows that New York City is known for its speed. It brings to mind a movie I saw (*Baby Boom)* where a savvy, dedicated workaholic had been bequeathed an addition into her life—a baby from distant relatives. Her life drastically changed because now she had something else that demanded her full attention, thus intruding on her previous life of 20-hour work days, business lunches, and being able to travel at a moment's notice. One day, as she was walking with the child in a stroller on Fifth Avenue—a main business hub in New York known for its rat-race pace--she saw a young woman with a briefcase fast-walking with dedicated purpose to *wherever*. She, in turn, tried to speed walk with the stroller to keep pace with the woman, only to find that she couldn't. She wasn't that person anymore. Things had changed, and so had she. This is probably true with most business, local, city, and state agencies today. Millennials with their fast paced savvy and new techno-business ideas are the new trend. Is it a good thing? It isn't necessarily bad, but it should be a mix of old and new and somewhere in between there should be a cohesive solution.

Baby Boomer Lincoln added:

> I'm able to have the resources available to interact with other outside agencies and to make the job easier. It allows me to stay at my desk to find the information needed and not have to go beyond my desk to get things done. It's easier to complete the work because of not having to ask many people for information because the resources are at hand. Being able to put fingers on it, research, find it, Google it, or use the Intranet to find what is needed to do my job.

Only 20% of the Baby Boomer participants had different responses to this question. They spoke about a benefit of using technology was to store large amounts of paperwork easily, and easily transmitting information from prison to prison easily; and speed.

To the interview question about the benefits of using technology at work, 40% of the Millennials responded efficiency; another 40% responded enhancing communications; 10% said that technology enabled them to communicate from their desk; and the other 10% spoke about how using technology protects the clients' needs.

Millennial Chevy shared her experience thus:

> Using technology, I can protect their clients' records on electronic databases, and would make me feel more secure knowing that the documents from the clients will not be accidently lost or destroyed.

Millennial Mercedes added:

> Some of the benefits of using technology at work are that it makes it easier to process applications and look up information for our consumers. By having access to various types of technology in the workplace, employees are able to research or request client information at a wider range.

The other interview question that helped me to arrive at the benefits of technology theme was what were the benefits of using technology specifically in your job? 40% responded productivity and efficiency; 50% responded easier communication; and 10% responded improved student experience.

Millennial Infiniti's thoughts about the benefits of technology reached further than her agency:

> It is easy to communicate with many disparate stakeholders and other professionals, despite distance. It also allows us to communicate quickly with others.

Millennial Avanti explains even more benefits of using technology in her work:

> Some of the benefits of using technology in my workspace include the ability to access documents utilizing databases on the computer; the ability to type so that documents are legible; fax machines, scanners, and email access allow documents to be transmitted fast and available, telephones and email for easy communication, and overall, it makes the daily process of my work efficient.

Millennial Chevy's experience included empathy and concern for the clients. She recalled:

Using technology, I can protect their clients' records on electronic databases, and would make me feel more secure knowing that the documents from the clients will not be accidently lost or destroyed.

Millennial Mercedes continued:

The benefit of using technology in at my job is that I can further assist clients who may not have access or be comfortable using the Internet. Some other benefits of using technology in the workplace are speed, accuracy, and efficiency. By using technology at work, we can provide faster service to individuals. Computers and email allow us to communicate, document, and trace—all in one function. In addition to using the telephone and fax machines, we are able to receive responses in a timely manner.

Theme 3: Challenges of Using Technology And How It Affects Communication

The third theme found in this study was Challenges of Using Technology and How It Affects Communication. Interview questions four and five were used: what are some of the drawbacks and challenges of using technology in your job and what do you think would improve those drawbacks and change them into positive experiences? The overarching challenge of using technology on the New York City public sector workplace was technical. Fifty percent of the Baby Boomers spoke about there were constant system failures such as computer slowdowns, frozen screens, crashes, and total outages on occasion—especially on Monday mornings after a weekend migration to “make the system run better and faster.” They explained that these technical issues had a profound effect on their productivity and efficiency because that pointed up their over reliance on technology, caused them not to have the resources they needed, and they had to spend inordinate amounts of time waiting for the systems to come back up. Nestled within the technical issues, the Baby Boomers claimed that they developed constant eyestrain from staring at the computer monitors too long, as well not knowing how to fill out forms manually because they used the computers too much.

Baby Boomer Lexus commented:

> One drawback is that staff has no idea how to process forms manually. The reliance on computers to do all the work has limited many employees’ ability to use a pencil and pen.

Baby Boomer Corvette’s experience mirrored that of most of the participants from this generational cohort. She explained:

> One of the drawbacks of using technology in my job is that the equipment is old and outdated, so the systems are slow. We had the Windows XP operating system for the longest time, and it slowed me down tremendously because the computers kept freezing and locking. It was crazy. Then we got Windows 7 and the MS

> Office 2010 package, but it did little good because it was like putting more updated equipment on old hardware. It worked better, but not by much.
>
> A challenge is that MIS does constant migrations and updates over the weekends trying to make things better. In reality, they make things worse because Monday mornings are hell when I try to get my work done because the computer keeps buffering and won't load the programs. When they finally do load, they load slowly; and there's always some problem or glitch. Sometimes, important software programs disappear and that causes me turn in work late.

The other 40% of the Baby Boomer cohort stated that their challenges using technology were that it is impersonal and they preferred picking up the phone and speaking with their clients; they could get sucked into surfing the Internet instead of working; slow and old equipment; and that the Millennials are not in a hurry to do anything that's not on the Internet.

System failure was the number one challenge of using technology in their job that the Millennials cited. Forty percent of them reported that this was their biggest challenge and that inclement weather could cause that system failure, followed by 20% citing bureaucracy. The remaining 40% stated that their bosses expected more work because they could do more using technology; those bosses are obsessive about the Millennials' work product and check and recheck it; eyestrain from looking at a computer screen all day; and the inability to receive an answer quickly or immediately.

Millennial Mazda's response gave me pause because it is something I didn't expect or think about as she thought ahead of the system failure. She stated:

> Preparing for it to fail, (i.e. no Internet connection), is a challenge of using technology. That could mean a loss of Wifi because hundreds of students in the school are on it at the same time. Students do reading online, and I have to be prepared with their reading printed out if the system fails. It can freeze or time out when everyone is using it at the same time.

When asked how to turn the challenges and drawbacks into positive experiences, 70% of the Baby Boomers responded to get updated, new computer systems instead of the refurbished systems The City usually buys. The remaining 30% cited their challenges as having limited access to certain websites; no real changes made to correct the problems, just tweaks or minor enhancements; and being forced to work with what they have. Baby Boomer Ford explained what he felt would turn the challenges into positives:

> Keep computers running smoothly. When drawbacks do come up, I believe management and staff should be abreast of the setbacks and figure out how to fix them. Keeping everyone in constant communication is always a good thing when it comes to organization.

Baby Boomer Paige also chimed into the discussion about turning the challenges of using technology into positives. She elaborated:

> This has not been easy; in fact, in some cases, you would have a better chance of nailing Jell-O to a tree than to get someone to understand why a certain thing works a certain way and why it has to be that way. Not everything can change or should be changed. Tweaked? Yes. Enhanced? Absolutely. But to disregard something just because it doesn't come with easy access as an app is ridiculous and unfair. It's not an easy process to combat when the entire media touts this thinking. In our line of work, rookies as we call them, and *newbies* as the Millennials like to be called, have to understand that they can't come with a stubborn set of thought processes without knowing what is already in place. If after they get the lay of the land and they have a suggestion, we can certainly brainstorm it.

Baby Boomer Bentley's response was more middle of the road and accepting of the challenges as they are. He shared:

> I don't know. It is what it is. Everything is set in stone. HRA is like a giant ocean liner. It reminds me of the interview with Maron, the president, confronting frustrations with the fact that he wasn't able to alter the world with the wave of a rhetorical wand, offered an alternative view of how big democratic societies work. "They are," he said, "like ocean liners; you turn the wheel slowly, and the big ship pivots." "Sometimes, your job is just to make stuff work." Obama said. "Sometimes, the task of government is to make incremental improvements or try

> to steer the ocean liner two degrees north or south so that ten years from now, suddenly we're in a very different place than we were. At the moment, people may feel like we need a 50-degree turn." And you say, "Well, if I turn 50 degrees, the whole ship turns over." The people are so entrenched in their thinking, in the way they deal with people that it takes time to turn them. All I can do is work with what I got.

Forty percent of the Millennials felt that the City of New York public service agencies should invest in new, improved computer equipment that works. The other 60% said that improvements to challenges of using technology included personal attitude; nothing; taking breaks from the terminal and using special computer glasses to ease eye strain; creating more service time for the public; and using the computer down time to catch up on manual paperwork.

Millennial Infiniti explains how the challenges of using technology can be made into a positive experience. She posited:

> Personal attitude helps… we can think of the time when technology doesn't work as a break, rather than getting stressed out about it. Also, if management were to understand that quality work is still time- consuming and lighten our workload, or were to provide a way for us to do our paperwork by hand, that would ease some of the stress that results from technology.

Millennial DeLorean added:

The utilization of an email system to disseminate information for the entire staff, a reduction in meeting hours, more hours to provide service to the general public and better reputation of service efficiency would improve the drawbacks and turn the challenges into positive practices.

Theme 4: Organizational Culture Impacting The Use of Technology and Communication

The interview question that revealed this fourth theme was: how does culture at your agency impact how you use technology to perform your job with or without your coworkers? The Baby Boomer cohort was in near total agreement that the organizational culture impacted the use of technology and communication in their public sector workplace. Eighty percent of the Baby Boomers attested to an atmosphere of sharing and making the technology accessible to everyone; communicating freely and flexibly as a result; training classes helping to make using technology and communication better; and the agencies being technologically savvy and encouraging the use of technology; and how all information is digitized, so the staff has to use technology. However, not all agencies came to embracing the use of technology willingly. At least one of them needed convincing and moving toward 21st century thinking.

Baby Boomer Paige explained:

My agency has some rather "old school" thought processes and was reluctant to embrace even the most needed technology. It forced me to forge ahead and gain as much knowledge as I could, and to them, it was like magic and "how did you do that?" or "where did that come from?"

That's when I knew I had to show, not tell them, and some (not all) were accepting of it. One example is, in a departmental database, they were listing certain jail criteria along with inmate numbers and associated data into a Word document. They had little notations in between each one, confusing the issue with data placed in the wrong space. Once I put it in an Excel spreadsheet in alpha order, comments, and formulas to add percentages etc. it was easy and embraced (by most).

Polaris shared his positive experience about how organizational culture at his New York City public service agency impacted how management and staff used technology and communicated. He shared:

I have to keep stats, and go in and check records and attendance. In order to do these duties, I need the technology to do it. It's very flexible. We all have access to the equipment; it's all about sharing. In some places, things become personalized where people say, "you can't sit here, it's my chair, or this is my computer." We don't have that where I work. We all share.

Baby Boomer Tesla continued along a similar line:

We pass info amongst each other; we communicate pretty well. We go from desk to desk for information. Thank God for hands on. Lots of times, we write our own format that we understand instead of following what's there because not everyone understands.

Baby Boomer Corvette responded from a "green" perspective-which is a goal that all New York City public agencies are aiming toward. She declared:

> The culture at my agency is pretty technology savvy. It comes from the top for us to "go green" and do most everything online and to go paperless. Technology is everywhere, and it is strongly encouraged for us to use technology as much as possible. So I do that as much as possible. If I need help with using it, I am not afraid or shy to ask for help.

The organizational culture at Baby Boomer Lexus' agency was the most unique as her job is based in a prison. She represented 10% of the Baby Boomer participants with a unique take on this issue because of the organizational culture at her agency. She explained:

> The use of technology in a prison system is very controlled. Use of computers for personal use is not allowed. All technology tools must be secured away from the inmate population for security concerns.

Baby Boomer Lincoln represented the other 10% of the participants who infused a different experience with organizational culture and how it affected using technology and communication at his New York City public service agency. He contended:

> The culture does not impact how we use the system; all employees are culturally diverse in understanding the systems. Adequate training is available.

The Millennials had a more diverse experience with the organizational culture and its impact on technology and communication. Sixty percent of the Millennial participants felt that the organizational culture at their agencies encouraged technology use. Ten percent felt that their agency's organizational culture was entrenched in fieldwork, which had a profound effect on technology use and communication. Another 10% explained that there were barriers to the flow of information in their agency, and there were more layers to what that agency did. Another 10% said that the organizational culture was limited at her agency. The last 10% felt that the organizational culture at her agency didn't interfere with how management and staff used technology at her agency.

Millennial Mazda's agency was probably the most receptive organizational culture that promoted the use of technology and open communication. She explained:

> The culture does affect it because it is very much technological; the culture is very supportive about technology. All teachers, despite the subject area, encourage their students to use technology in every classroom. Even the English teacher and the science teacher use technology in their classes and encourage its use.

Millennial Infiniti works for a New York City child protective care agency. Much of the work done there requires extensive field work and visits. That was an integral of the agency's organizational culture. She reported:

> Due to the nature of our job, people have to do fieldwork, so we must use phones to contact colleagues when they are not in the office. My agency also values teamwork among case planners, which means that there is more communication in general—some of which must be via technology.

Millennial Mercury had an interesting perspective about the organizational culture at his agency and its impact on technology use and communication. He shared:

> There are still barriers to the flow of information because of my agency needing some tighter systems of control on said flow. Thus, only a limited amount of us can have access to flash drives, which can make for a complex annoyance in the execution of presentations for the community.

Millennials Mercedes and Avanti respectively both work in agencies where the organizational culture encourages the use of technology and good communication. Mercedes explained:

> Allowing employees to use technology at work enables us to be able to help consumers that may not speak English as a first language. So, an employee may look up information in the clients preferred language to better assist them. If a consumer needs information to call for their health insurance, we have several languages available to better assist the client.

Millennial Avanti added:

> It is a normal thing to use technology at my workplace. Everyone uses it. There is no other way to do most of what needs to be done. It is part of the culture, and all coworkers use technology.

Millennial Maserati's viewpoint is interesting at best because she seemed to see one thing, while the agency's organizational culture shows something seemingly different. Maserati maintained:

> The culture at my agency is supposedly…um… "green." Uh…they claim to be paperless, but everywhere I look is a mountain of paper. We still print everything. It's my preference to do everything electronically on the computer, but that is impossible. The younger workers are more technologically inclined and know how to make maximum use of the computer, but the older workers are totally illiterate and dysfunctional when it comes to using computers and technology. That slows down and prohibits the extent to which I can use technology. I tend to use technology more when dealing with my younger coworkers and managers, and less when dealing with my older coworkers and managers. They wouldn't understand it, anyway!

Research Question 2 Results

Research question two inquired as follows: How do Baby Boomers and Millennials multigenerational workers differ in the way they communicate and use technology among New York City public sector workers?

Theme 5: Fearing the Learning of and Technology Use

The first theme found for the second research question is as stated above. The interview questions that helped me to identify that theme were: Explain if you are comfortable (or not comfortable using technology); what is your experience when communicating with older workers (Baby Boomers)?; and how is the way you communicate with Baby Boomers different from the way you communicate with Millennials and why?

Thirty percent of the Baby Boomer cohort attested that they are very comfortable using technology. Twenty percent said they were just comfortable using technology. Another 30% said they are comfortable using technology if and when someone trains or explains it to them.

Baby Boomer Paige took a different approach in her explanation. She related:

> I am pretty good with it, except for the fact that advertising rules everything now. Back in the day--and I mean *way* back in the day, advertisers vied for time and space on radio and television, and had to put on their best dog and pony show in order to get a spot. Now, it’s how much money are they are willing to pay? Who set this standard? The "Me" Generation, starting around the 1970's, and that was associated with Baby Boomers—which I wholeheartedly disagree now that I've seen where things are now, touted as focusing on self-fulfillment seemingly

against the traits that characterized the older generation such as our Depression-era parents. This could be said of us to the Millennials a.k.a. Generation Y.

Baby Boomer Lincoln explained:

I'm very comfortable using technology. Modern technology is very open and is composed of better systems because we can use them to complete the job as necessary. It would be a great advantage for the other agencies to have the same system to complete the job and make it universal so we would all be on the same page.

Baby Boomer Corvette added:

I am comfortable using technology as long as someone explains to me what to do. I can't just start using technology when I don't have a clue how to work it. I do sometimes approach technology with great trepidation if I have never used it before. But after I am given training or a tutorial, I am usually okay and use it just fine.

Baby Boomer Tesla is adamant about what makes her comfortable when using technology in her work:

I'm pretty comfortable. Most of the training is hands on. They can send you to 1000 trainings, but I won't get it until I work on it. We're not computer programmers or technicians so it takes a while to get it. Explain it in layman's

> terms so we'll know. Everyone's not computer literate e.g. reboot-must explain to turn it off on the brain—the computer tower.

The remaining 20% of the Baby Boomers explained that they are "computer friendly," but said that nothing beats pens and paper, and that they're fascinated by it, but have some issues with using technology. Bentley opined:

> Although I'm very comfortable, I'm fascinated by it. It's hurting us though, making us impersonal toward each other. There's too much of people's business on the computer. Too much of that.

Of the 50% of participants who said they were uncomfortable using technology (interview question seven), they gave some concrete suggestions as to what needs to be done to increase their comfort level. They cited fewer passwords because some of them have up to 30 passwords to remember at work. They also said that they would welcome more training and extensive training to teach them how to use technology.

When asked about their experience communicating with Baby Boomers, which included their experience using technology, it was found that 20% of the Baby Boomers admitted to fearing technology. Baby Boomer Polaris stated:

> With older workers, they have a fear of technology—especially emails. They don't check emails and miss meetings and ask if I can let them know. I tell them I will not do that, that they must check their emails and get into the flow of today. Some of them are supposed to put their stats in and they don't do it because they

> fear computers. I have to go and sit with them to put them in, and it's on a continuous basis.

The Millennials claimed total comfort with using technology. One hundred percent of them stated that they were very comfortable using technology. Of all of the responses, Millennial Maserati's sums it up best for that cohort. She shared:

> I am very comfortable using technology. I am the textbook Millennial who loves and lives for technology. I cannot be without it. I always have some form of technology around me, and when I don't, I am learning new technology. If I don't know how to work something technological, I learn because I learn quickly. I am always on the lookout for any new technology to learn and use at work and at home.

Although all of the Millennials said they are very comfortable using technology, 20% of them said that splitting tasks into two equal parts: working four hours on the computer and four hours manually and more training with explicit written instructions would make using technology even more comfortable.

Thirty percent of the Millennials claimed that their experience wasn't good when dealing with older workers (Baby Boomers) because they were not good with technology. Millennial Mercedes conveyed:

> My experience with "Baby Boomers" is that they may not know how to navigate the computers or phones as quickly as I am able to. The reason may be because I

learned how to use this type of technology as a child. The older generation may have learned to communicate with technology in their older years; it is a proven fact that information is harder to retain as one's age increases.

Theme 6: Speaking For Understanding

The next theme found was as stated above. The interview questions used to arrive at that theme asked how they communicated with Baby Boomers, Millennials, and how they communicated differently with each cohort. Fifty percent of them expressed the fact that they are easy to communicate with because they're "on the same page." Thirty percent stated no problem communicating with the Baby Boomers, and the remaining 20% claimed that the Baby Boomers feared technology as alluded to above with theme five.

Baby Boomer Paige shared an elaborate experience which addressed this issue well. She said:

> Since we are relatively on the same page, our interaction is similar. Since I am more susceptible to new things and always on the learning prowl, I have had occasion to have to explain and re-explain things to them and then tell them why it works and is beneficial.
>
> One example is, there was an argument as to why gang affiliations were not allowed to be put on the outside of the cover jacket of a warrant. A jacket is a large envelope that holds pertinent information about a wanted individual: it gives

> his pedigree, which is his race, scars, tattoos etc. The argument for the jail personnel was they didn't want to incite them if they or another gang member saw it. My argument was I have five detectives that go out on daily warrants and civil warrants and I did *not* want them walking into an unknown situation. If there was a *gang affiliation,* I wanted them to be aware and cautious going in. I won my argument and had the jackets reprinted with gang affiliation spaces.
>
> "Like kind is of like mind." There are just some things that Baby Boomers have experienced and know about and can relate. We've all been through the "*remember when we used to...*" situations. A millennial will not know that there was even a company called Frigidaire; they will never know or understand that there were letter in front of phone numbers like TW8594589. The acronym was *twining*.

The Millennials cited problems when communicating with Baby Boomers. Thirty percent of them stated that the Baby Boomers were not technologically proficient; Another 30% stated that it was tedious communicating with them because they required extra time to explain things to them and you have to dumb their words down to communicate with them. Forty percent of the Millennials said that they had a great experience dealing with Baby Boomers because of their wisdom, but there were still issues such as a lack of understanding some of what the Millennials are saying.

Millennial Maserati expressed discontent communicating with Baby Boomers:

My experience communicating with older workers is tedious, horrible, and makes me crazy. They want you to get up and come and talk to them face-to-face or call them. Yuck! It seems to kill them to text or do anything other than face-to-face communication. They are afraid to come out of their comfort zone. With Baby Boomers, you have to use very simple words because they are hard to understand most things. It’s almost like you have to create another language just for them!

Millennial Ferrari added:

Baby Boomers take too much time and you have to change the way you speak to them so they’ll understand.

Mazda lent even more clarification on this issue:

Communication is facilitated well. The conversation was more detailed-oriented. More details are exchanged.

Theme 7: Differences in Relationships Affecting Baby Boomers and Millennials

The way in which Baby Boomers and Millennials communicated spawned certain kinds of relationships between them. Those relationships were discovered during the data collection and data analysis processes. The interview questions that helped to identify this theme asked about communicating with Baby Boomers, Millennials, differences between communicating with both generational cohorts, and preferences of communicating with which cohort. For this theme, I will concentrate on the 50% of Baby Boomers who said that it was easy to communicate with Baby Boomers because they were on the same page. Baby Boomer Corvette elaborated:

> It is pretty easy communicating with Baby Boomers because they are old school and like to communicate face to face. They are so straightforward, honest, and forthright. I find that they mostly say what they mean and are very plain-speaking. There is little guesswork when communicating with them. It is refreshing to communicate the old-fashioned way and they make eye contact with me and get meaty responses, unlike communicating with younger coworkers who can't seem to tear themselves away from their technology.

In terms of communicating with Millennials, the Baby Boomers had some very interesting responses. Fifty percent of the Baby Boomers said they were easier and more receptive to technology. Forty percent said that the Millennials were stupid and always attached to something; and 10% said that there was no problem communicating with Millennials.

Paige had a somewhat biased response, but it speaks to the type of relationship she would have with the Millennials. She commented:

> As previously stated, it's trying to get them to understand that there are rules that supersede their super-speed. They *hate* to write, and have grown into the belief that we are or virtually should be a paperless society. They are reluctant to embrace the fact that while they can use abbreviations when texting privately, the

same cannot be done in our work environment. Law enforcement is specific and detailed. It is cumbersome to them and hard to embrace.

Baby Boomer Polaris continued:

They don’t have the issues of the older people. They check their emails and their work is done on time. They don’t have the fear of technology.

Baby Boomer Tesla claimed:

They’re more open and receptive. They’re not intimidated by email and technology. I love that. It helps me to be more receptive to it. I am in awe of these kids… Easier to talk with them verbally. If I send them an email, I have to let them know. “Don’t get excited” and explain what I need to know. People from the Boomer era want to be *told*. It’s something about that email that interferes with the interpretation. When I put it in writing, it’s not sealed in stone. Procedures come and go. It’s almost as if there is a breakdown in research, perhaps they didn’t have or know how to use the interpretation. We can blame everything in the technology; the system’s not working.

Only 20% of the Millennials claimed that they had great and wonderful experiences communicating with Baby Boomers. They attested to having great experiences with them and gaining a lot of knowledge from them. Sixty percent of them stated that communicating with Baby Boomers is not good, is tedious, and takes extra time. The remaining 20% said that they communicate more formally with them, and they're full of knowledge, not reliant on technology.

Millennial Chevy explained:

> My observation and experience working with elder co-workers, as well as with consumers, is extraordinary fantastic due to the fact that they are full of experience and not full of mechanisms [addicted to technology]. For some reason, I trust an elder person more being that they do not tell a story; instead, they *are* the vivid story. The older workers have a clear picture of what they want, of what they said, and do not feel guilty recognizing his or her mistake. However, they do get frustrated when it's time to open the email or read any type of memo.
>
> I can see how today's generation can manipulate technology and how fast their fingers speed. From my own experience, I have observed how my younger group of people is so rich in how to manipulate as well as being so extroverted in the area of communication through digital systems such as touch tone phones, internet, memos, and laptops. The way I communicate with my younger co-workers is through touch tone cell phones and emails, and the reason is self-explanatory. They can get the message faster than my calling them or trying to have a conversation with them. Therefore, I just go with the flow and try to be up to date and not be left behind with technology.

The way I communicate with Baby Boomer workers at my workplace is by explaining things with more detail. I worked with Mr. Jones, 64 years old, and Mr. Brown, 45 years old, I noticed that when I communicate with Mr. Jones, he likes things to be very concise. According to him, he does not have time to be checking his email. He likes things to be handled verbally. However, Mr. Brown is more extroverted and doesn't have any issue with communicating through email or Facebook. I constantly communicate verbally to Baby Boomers so they can feel reliable and comfortable. I basically communicate with the younger people through email.

I prefer to communicate with older people and younger Millennials because there are so many things to learn from both of them. I don't feel comfortable losing my roots… I mean the way my parents and my ancestors learned where the brain is forced to calculate and manipulate the mind. For example, being able to memorize telephone numbers, nowadays, is a challenge for this new generation, while for older people, it's easy. It is important at least to have an idea of new technology and how this generation is dealing with it or trying to manage it. My job requires me to constantly communicate with consumers of different ages. I have experienced that young people, even though they can manipulate the system, work I-phones, e-mail, or navigate the Web; they lack brain stimulation and have memory problems. I believe it's because of relying too much on technology. For example, I asked questions about their current and previous address and they can't answer it without looking at their cell phone. I enjoy working and communicating with these two age ranges. They teach me a lot, and there's a lot to learn and catch up.

Millennial Infiniti shared:

It depends on what I need to communicate. I prefer to communicate with Baby Boomers about job related tasks, because they are more likely to focus on the job task, rather than gossiping with others. However, I prefer to communicate with Millennials if I am frustrated and need emotional support, because then I don't have to worry about matching or respecting their communication style.

Millennial Mazda expressed:

With the Millennials, there is a great exchange of ideas, fresh ideas, and new perspectives about how to solve problems. Communication might not be as thorough (sparse communication) because of not enough details as in text messaging or through email. I communicate with both the same. If I am helping a colleague with using technology, I have to include more steps with the Boomers so they will fully understand. The Millennials are more tech savvy and catch on quickly. I communicate with both the same. If I am helping a colleague with using technology, I have to include more steps with the Boomers so they will fully understand. The Millennials are more tech savvy and catch on quickly.

Millennial Mercury felt that the lines are blurred when it comes to how Baby Boomers and Millennials communicate. He stated:

> It's actually becoming very similar how Baby Boomers and Millennials communicate. More Boomers text! The email thread where you never see each other face-to-face happens primarily with folks who are Gen X and Y. There was a shift in the late 90s/early 2000s where we started making sure things were "sent in an email" so they were "set in stone" and were "on the record" thus "holding all parties accountable." I find that Boomer and Millennials are similar in not wanting those kinds of constraints or conditions on their lives. Gen X and Y folks seem to crave giving and receiving that sort of control.

Mercedes explained through her experience why Millennials communicate and use technology as they do. She said:

> Millennials are quicker to jump on the band wagon when it comes to utilizing workplace technology. This is because it was mandatory in school, so it comes easier to us. Computer studies was a mandatory class for many of us. The education department incorporated these classes to prepare us for how technology is today. Every day, we use computers, cell phones, and other devices. Individuals from past generations did not have access to the various amounts of technology available today. So many of the Baby Boomers prefer not to try new technology because it is harder to grasp.

> The levels of communication may be limited between the two generational eras. For example, I may prefer to call or speak in person with a coworker who is a "Baby Boomer." From experience, older coworkers can be stubborn when it comes to certain workplace changes. Whereas, with a Millennial, I may prefer to use any of the examples I mentioned before: ex. fax, email, telephone. I've noticed that Baby Boomers are hesitant to try certain types of technology because it appears difficult. Maybe there are too many options or buttons. Millennials who were given the opportunity to learn about communication through modern technology can navigate easier when using improved modern devices. Personally, I am a well-rounded people person. I don't discriminate against a person because of their age or what they may know. Both can learn from each other, even though technology is very important in today's world. When it is down, we have to go back to the older methods--which did not include computers. That would be where a Baby Boomer would step in to help this Millennial. When a new application is added on for us to utilize at work, I will gladly help an older coworker familiarize themselves with the new upgrades.

Theme 8: Differences in Communication Styles Affecting Management and Subordinates

Sixty percent of the Baby Boomers stated that they communicate with their managers in person; 20% communicate with their coworkers by email; 10% by phone, and the last

10% by text messages. They further stated that 50% of them communicated with management by emails, by telephone, or through text messages, and 30% of them communicated with management face to face. Twenty percent of them used different verbiage with their coworkers, and cited having no problems with or being intimidated by their managers. Eighty percent of the Baby Boomers claimed to communicate professionally with management; while 20% said they treated management equally or the same as their coworkers. Ninety percent of the Baby Boomers said they use technology when communicating with their coworkers or management—usually email and texts on occasion. Ten percent of the Baby Boomers used a tablet for such communication, as well as taking attendance and for data retrieval.

Baby Boomer Lincoln explained about using different verbiage with coworkers and management. He said:

> The information I communicate with the managers is not the same verbiage I'd use with the coworkers. That is because my coworkers may not understand management terms. I have to break it down for them to a level they'd understand, e.g. the workers wouldn't understand the term productivity from a management point of view, so I would say something to them about working harder and break it down for them.

Baby Boomer Lexus has a unique situation because her superiors don't work the same shift she does so it affects the way she communicates with them and her coworkers. She stated:

> Working in a correctional environment requires me to use a variety of communication techniques. Most face to face communications are done at the start of each shift. Phone calls and the use of the radio are also major means of communications in a correctional environment because it makes communications more flexible. In an emergency situation; information must be passed quickly and accurately, so the use of phones and or radios are the best means to meet this requirement.
>
> Most of my communications with management is done by phone or email. There are little face to face interactions. This is mostly due to the different shifts staff work in relationship to their supervisor. For example, I may work a four to 12 a.m. or a midnight to eight a.m. shift, whereas my supervisor may work a nine to five p.m. shift. The hours make it difficult to meet face to face.
>
> My communications with my coworkers is a little more relaxed. We see each other every day. Usually two to four times a shift. Even though our communications and interactions with my coworkers are professional, we are very comfortable communicating with each other, no matter the method of communications we choose to use.

Baby Boomer Tesla used a certain method when dealing with her coworkers and management. She shared:

> With coworkers, "I keep it simple; I believe in the KISS method: keep it simple. With management, keep it professional: dot the I's and cross the T's." They want a report and expect it in that format. I have to be specific and they only want it one way. With coworkers, I can be more lax. With management, there's a certain decorum they expect.
>
> I communicate with management usually by email. Ninety-eight percent of the time, I'll put it in an email and send. The reason is to cover myself and it's more professional.

Corvette explained her more traditional stance:

> I am the type of person who likes to communicate with my coworkers in person. I'm known for picking myself up off my chair and going to speak with someone in person. I like to see the person's facial expressions and body language because that tells the true story, not just their words. They can say anything, but their body language says something else or the opposite. I also communicate by email if I want to establish a record or a paper trail. I tend to shy away from text messages because that is something that should be reserved for my personal time and not used for a professional environment.

> Like I said, I prefer to speak with them in person. However, I tend to put most correspondences with management in writing to establish a record. I have seen too many instances where management said one thing and did another and/or turned on the workers. My emails are like an insurance policy to protect me if I should have a problem and need to seek help from my union to defend me against management. They have the power, so I have to protect myself.

Sixty percent of the Millennials communicated with their coworkers by email, and 40% communicated with them in person. 60% of the Millennials stated that they communicated with their managers by email, and 40% communicated with them in person. In terms of how they communicated differently with their coworkers and management, 50% used technology with the management; 20% sent emails for the records and having documentation; and 30% cited no differences and said they communicated the same for both cohorts.

Millennial Mazda shared her very simple and direct way of communicating with her coworkers and management. She asserted:

> Communication with management is very concise and is about what needs to be done, very direct. Communication with coworkers can be more collegial, e.g., “How was your spring break?”

Millennial Maserati was adamant about her stance in how she communicated with her coworkers and management. She contended:

I'm an emailer. I communicate with my coworkers mostly by email. I'll even text them, if necessary. I have most of their cell phone numbers, so I'll shoot them a text. That's easier and more convenient to me. We're all attached to our phones and keep them with us at all times. I found that texting is way faster than emailing and yields a quick response time. If I don't text, I will email them. But go to see someone in person and talk to them, never! Unless, of course, one of my old bosses calls me to his or her office. Otherwise, no.

Management in my workplace is old. They can barely operate a computer or other technology. I usually call them and have an old-fashioned phone conversation with them. That takes forever because they are often hard to understand. I have to keep repeating the same thing over and over to them or give detailed explanations that feel like training instead of a conversation. I don't know why they just don't get and understand technology. They need training so that they will be comfortable and competent using technology. It would make their job so much easier and would make the younger employees happier because the work would be done quicker and easier and we could stay off management's radar. When we're forced to deal with them directly, they can find fault with our job performance or pick nits (sic) with what we do. It's easier to use technology. Keep them in their office, and our names out of their mind.

Another component of how Baby Boomers and Millennials communicate with their coworkers and managers is miscommunication. Seventy percent of the Baby Boomers stated that miscommunication happened because there was unclear information given, while the other 30% cited a breakdown in understanding the information, wrong perception of information, unnecessary gestures, and loss of meanings in messages/emails. Baby Boomer Paige elaborated on how miscommunication happened in her agency. She commented:

> This is why I like face to face contact. When a person is "writing" texting etc., it is subjective to the reader and can be taken the wrong way. In person, usually people get the point. Having said this, the older generation, who is not familiar with or refuse to resort to today's technology, prefer this method. The most common miscommunication in our line of work has been when there are "too many hands in the pot."
>
> For instance, almost two or three times a week, we are interviewing someone who has broken the law in our department. Sometimes, they are internal personnel, but mostly outside persons. For outside persons, most of the time, it is minor offenses that do not require any or much jail time. This could be shoplifting, no or stolen driver's licenses, disorderly conduct, etc. Our detectives are very good at what they do. However, when there is a major drug case involved, and it looks like it might turn into a photo op for the higher-ups; all of a sudden, there are a ton of

striped people crowded in my office--from colonels to captains. Somewhere along the line, someone communicated that this was happening and now they are in the way of the investigation, but we can't say anything because they have more stripes.

Other miscommunication between management and coworkers is when there is a public disagreement via radio. Resolution? Call them on carpet after the fact for discussion.

A last example is what I like to call "outside eyes," i.e. we had a video of an altercation between an inmate and a corrections officer. When I first read the written allegation, it appeared to be cut and dry, as these types of things occur all the time. There was no mention of a video; but I knew there is a video feed in the mess hall, and I needed to see it.

After viewing the tape several times, I had to disagree vehemently with the Corrections Officer's dissertation on behalf of the inmate. While there was no audio, it was clear that that the inmate was perturbed and constantly and probably loudly vocal to the guard; however, never did the inmate accost the guard first as was indicated in the written allegation. Clearly, the guard pushed the inmate first, and then she attacked the guard.

Had my "outside eyes" not viewed it, this would have resulted in another street charge for the inmate adding to her sentence. Someone communicated to me; and I communicated to a superior, and the case was revaluated.

Baby Boomer Lexus added:

Most miscommunications are caused when information in passes from verbally, from top to bottom, without any written instructions or follow-up. Lateral communications are a lot more effective.

Baby Boomer Tesla also spoke about miscommunication and what she did to quell it. She stated:

Two people are on the same page but they interpret it [information] differently. It’s in the interpretation. I’m from the old school. “I use the KISS method—keeping it simple, sweetie. I can’t go wrong.”

Baby Boomer Corvette commented:

Usually miscommunication happens because management doesn’t listen to the workers. They hear what they are saying, but they don’t listen to hear meanings and further information. Many times, they don’t understand what the workers are saying or they take the communications in the wrong way. When the two groups don’t understand each other, it is disastrous and miscommunication happens. The two sides must work harder to understand each other.

Eighty percent of the Millennials responded that miscommunication happened when the other party listened but did not understand what was said, certain tones of voice, lack of clarity, third party interactions, omission of details, and gestures. Twenty percent cited competing priorities and a complex reporting structure as the other causes of miscommunication between coworkers and coworkers and management.

Millennial Apollo stated:

Miscommunication usually caused by third party interactions which may adjust the overall tone or color of the instructions passed down.

Millennial Maserati continued:

Miscommunication between management and coworkers happen when they don't understand each other. I find that management has a hard time saying what they mean. They should keep their communication simple and clear, but they make things too wordy and complicated. They misuse terms as if they are uneducated. If we try to correct them, we are chastised with memos and given the cold shoulder in the future. They can also poison other employees and other managers' minds against us and we are given a hard time. That can cause a vicious circle of miscommunication. If we ask for clarification, that leads to an unwelcome and boring lecture.

Millennial Mazda chimed in and stated:

> Miscommunication is probably an omission of details and not enough time to review the details, not providing enough or the right details.

Millennial Chevy asserted:

> The inability to listen is a huge problem. Often, you will see coworkers interrupting speakers or planning what they will say next instead of effectively listening. They also feel reticent about approaching and talking to their manager. They also have ineffective education or lack of understanding or other inadequate knowledge foundation.

Finally, Millennial Infiniti added:

> There is sometimes miscommunication over technology (sometimes it's difficult to understand what somebody is saying over the phone), but most often, miscommunication stems from the fact that case planners feel that management speaks disrespectfully to them, and therefore become resentful.

DISC Classic Profile Results

Baby Boomers

After analyzing the DISC Classic Profile, it was found that Baby Boomers were most likely to be Objective Thinkers. The codes for that classification were found in the booklet. Inscape Publishing (2001) showed that Objective Thinkers are not aggressive, always want to be right, and are logical. They don't accept things at face value, but want facts, data, and evidence. They are analytical types, transparent, and make their views and opinions publicly known. They have the ability to think critically, and need facts to make important decisions. They are prone to do research and place a high value on accuracy. They are also very intuitive and will use their intuition, if need be. They are well prepared and will not present new skills or technology until they have mastered it themselves and can thoroughly teach/explain it. They value peace and serenity, and do not like people with a high drama quotient. They will do all they can to maintain a peaceful, serene work environment. Others think they are shy because they are hesitant about expressing their feelings. They are mild-mannered, but are capable of controlling their environment. They are big on requiring others to follow policies and procedures. They do not engage in wishy-washy situations and always aim for correct answers. They are not good at acknowledging mistakes, but will do thorough research that supports their position.

Baby Boomers were found least likely to be Perfectionists. They are people who are over-dependent on procedures and processes that worked in the past. They are flexible, interdependent, and believe in self-worth. They are diligent about doing work that requires attention to detail and accuracy. They take time to make major decisions. They question the motives of others, thinking they want something. They evaluate themselves and others by very high standards that are valuable to the organization (Inscape Publishing, 2002).

Millennials

The Millennials were found to be most likely Creative. Creative types are dominant and aim for unique accomplishments. They initiate and design changes at work. They are blunt, critical, and have a condescending attitude. They bore easily with routine work and like to work independently. They would be more effective if they were warmer, communicated more tactfully, cooperated more, and recognized existing sanctions. They long for tangible results, but have a strong drive for perfection. Creatives are aggressive, but sensible. They think and act quickly, but pull back to explore all angles and possibilities before making a decision. They are cool and aloof, and are not concerned about social poise.

Millennials were found least likely to be Objective Thinkers, as defined earlier in the Baby Boomers' section.

Issues of Trustworthiness and Credibility

Trustworthiness and credibility were achieved by my strict following of the steps I outlined in both chapter three of my dissertation and in my subsequent IRB application packet. The steps that I took to guarantee trustworthiness and credibility in this study were managing and securing the data obtained, reflexivity, and bracketing my biases through memo writing and setting aside my thoughts I felt bias infiltrating the study. I also completed 21 interviews with members of two generational cohorts: Baby Boomers and Millennials. I used several sources of data (interviews, eliciting communication style from the participants' answers on an instrument, and the categorization of the Baby Boomers and Millennials for the study) to achieve triangulation, did member checking after the transcription of each interview. In addition, I sought sound advice from my Committee chairperson and my academic peers, as needed. They also provided support as I needed it. My recruitment and fieldwork doing interviews and collecting data began in March through early May 2016.

Memos in which I discussed my feelings, observations, assumptions, and anything I felt needed addressing was the reflexive method I used to bracket my biases. I also did member checking by reviewing what the participants said at the time of my interview as well as show them the transcript for accuracy after the interview and they were transcribed. I also solicited the opinions of several of my doctoral cohorts about my coding as to whether my interpretation of the codes was theoretically sound. I stayed in contact with my Committee Chairperson throughout recruitment and data collection to get his advice and support.

Credibility

Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) reiterated that trustworthiness in qualitative research relates to how I addressed quantitative issues of validity and reliability in a qualitative study. Such issues in a qualitative study are: credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. As part of my doctoral research methods coursework, I was trained in trustworthiness and received certification from the National Institute of

Health Office of Extramural Research. This training and certification was designed to protect human participants in research studies. Credibility was maintained when I conducted my IRB-approved study and was professional and business-minded with all of the participants. I interviewed 21 participants and was able to elicit thick, rich description from them. Each participant received an interview transcript after the interview was over and was able to review it for accuracy.

Transferability

Transferability can be achieved by other researchers who wish to research the topic of generational communications because the participants' interviews are very detailed and fit neatly within the CVF and digital natives, digital immigrants theories that are a part of the conceptual framework. This can be compared to and held up against how the data was interpreted. I was careful to capture the participants' voices through precise coding and with the use of in vivo coding where possible. As a result, this data could be generalized by other researchers studying generational communications in other areas such in the New York State public sector or in other public sector agencies along the Northeast Corridor.

Dependability

Bloomberg & Volpe (2012) stressed the importance of establishing an audit trail that shows how the data were collected and analyzed so that other researchers could review it at some point. In addition to having an audit trail, I shared my coding with my

Committee Chair. My audit trail was established based on what was indicated in my IRB application package. I also used Dedoose data analysis software to house interviews, memos, and information from the DISC Classic Profiles into categories and themes for future synthesizing and interpretation.

Confirmability

Confirmability was achieved by checking and rechecking the data obtained. As data were transcribed, I checked them against the tapes and written materials. I also employed the use of member checking. Maxwell (2013) maintained that member checking is the best way of avoiding the misinterpretation of the meaning of what participants say, identifying researcher bias, and addressing misunderstanding of any observations.

Summary

Chapter four discussed the research setting, ethical procedures, the data collection process, and data analysis of study data and the DISC Classic Profile. Participant profiles were provided, as well as their responses as they figured into the research study's findings. The result of that study was that eight major themes about generational communications in the New York City public sector workplace. To recap, the eight themes found were:

1. Opportunities For Using Technology
2. Benefits of Technology Impacting Communication

3. Challenges of Using Technology and Its Effects On Communication
4. Organizational Culture Impacting Technology Use and Communication
5. Fearing the Learning of and Technology Use
6. Speaking For Understanding
7. Differences in Relationships Affecting Baby Boomers and Millennials
8. Differences in Communication Styles Affecting Management and Subordinates

These themes were shown as they arose from first cycle and second cycle coding. The themes, which also came about from answers to the research questions, were aligned with the appropriate one of the two research questions. Unintended consequences/unusual circumstances were discussed, as well as issues of trustworthiness and credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

In Chapter five, I will interpret my findings by aligning them with the conceptual framework of CVF and digital natives/digital immigrants. I will also explain connections to the literature presented in chapter two's literature review. Chapter five will also present the limitations of the study, recommendations, implications of the study, and how this study can be used to effect social change. It will end with my conclusions.

Chapter 5 Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this phenomenological research was to learn how Baby Boomers and Millennials who currently work in the New York City civil service communicate and use technology in their job. This was accomplished through capturing the 21 participants' lived experiences. When examining and making decisions about a research methodology for this study, I chose empirical phenomenology because it would help me best elicit these two generational cohorts' stories so it could be learned how they communicate and use technology in their New York City public work sector job, as well as how they were the same and different. I also endeavored to find out how these populations communicated and used technology with their coworkers and managers.

This study used CVF (Cameron and Quinn, 2011) and digital natives/digital immigrants theory (Prensky, 2001) as its theoretical foundation. While conducting the review on generational communications and the digital divide where using technology was concerned, there was very little research on the topic.

A recent search was completed to update my review of the literature, but there was little to no change. What little research had been done was what I had already found for the literature review, and it simply reiterated that there is a digital divide between generations when using technology, but there was not any specific information. The new search garnered no new information. Nothing found addressed specific generations or specific problems with generational communications in any public sector workplace. There were not many rebuttals to the contention that there is a problem with generational communication in the workplace. Giancola (2006) argued that unlike the generation gaps of the 1960s; today's conflicts are more myth than reality. All concerns are overstated, and there are gaps in the literature that are questionable and invaluable (Giancola, 2006, p.32). Proponents of generational conflicts acknowledged that academic research on the subject is intermittent, and is not very supportive (Giancola, 2006). Smith (2000) in Giancola (2006) claimed that no major academic articles on the generation gap were published in the United States in the 1990s, or in the past five years. That gap in the literature is now being filled by my research as a beginning and extends the knowledge in the public administration field.

The findings of this research study found out how Baby Boomers and Millennials—the oldest and the youngest generational cohorts in the New York City public sector workplace—communicate and use technology with their coworkers and managers. This chapter offers an explanation of the research findings, in addition to a thorough interpretation of each research question and alignment with the CVF and digital natives/digital immigrants theoretical framework. This chapter also discusses limitations, recommendations, implications for practice, positive social change, and my thoughts as the researcher.

Overview

This research on generational communications in the New York City public sector workplace was conducted using the empirical phenomenology research method. There were 21 participants: 10 Baby Boomers and 11 Millennials who currently worked in any one of the 41 agencies in the New York City public sector. Structured interviews were used to collect data and to encourage the participants to share their lived experiences communicating with their managers and coworkers, as well as using technology. Although the interviews were structured, I followed the threads of all spontaneous and unsolicited data that emerged during these interviews because they offered the participants' true stories, not the ones they thought I wanted to hear. I adhered to traditional qualitative research methodology and elicited the participants' lived experiences, then followed them up, and conducted member checking for accuracy.

The two research questions that were the foundation of this study were:

RQ1: What were the opportunities and challenges for using technological tools to communicate among multigenerational New York City public sector workers?

RQ2: How did Baby Boomer and Millennial multigenerational workers differ in the way they communicate and use technology among New York public sector workers?

The research questions were aligned with the themes found, and the theoretical foundation (CVF and digital natives/digital immigrants).

There were eight themes found: (a) opportunities for using technology: (b) benefits of technology impacting communications; (c) challenges of using technology and how it affects communication; (d) organizational culture impacting the use of technology and communication; (e) fearing the learning and use of technology and communication; (f) speaking for understanding; (g) differences in relationships affecting Baby Boomers and Millennials; and (h) differences in communication styles affecting management and subordinates. These themes were the findings listed and analyzed in Chapter four.

The overarching results found that Baby Boomers prefer in person communication, but are slowly learning to use technology because their jobs depend on using technology of all sorts. And they have no choice in the matter. Their learning to use technology impacts the way they communicate in the New York City public sector workplace. It was found that Millennials are invested in using technology and feel lost and inadequate without it or whenever they cannot use it. This affects the way they communicate with their cohorts and management.

Interpretation of the Findings

Table 4.
Alignment of Research Questions with Themes and Theories

Research Questions	Themes	Theories
RQ1	Opportunities for Using Technology Impacting Communication	Competing Values Framework (CVF) Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants (DN/DI)
RQ1	Benefits of Technology Impacting Communication	CVF
RQ1	Challenges of Using Technology and How It Impacts Communication	CVF, DN/DI
RQ1	Organizational Culture Impacting The Use of Technology and Communication	CVF
RQ2	Fearing The Learning and Use of Technology	DN/DI
RQ2	Speaking For Understanding	CVF, DN/DI
RQ2	Differences in Relationships Affecting Baby Boomers and Millennials	DN/DI
RQ2	Differences in Communication Styles Affecting Management and Subordinates	CVF, DN/DI

Theme #1: Opportunities For Using Technology

Overall, there are ample opportunities for using technology in the New York City public sector workplace. Sixty percent of the Baby Boomers shared that they usually used technology to complete their daily duties in their jobs. Such technology commonly includes desktop computers, digital scanners, copiers, fax machines, the Internet, MS Office software package, emails, and in-house Intranet at each agency. Forty percent of the Baby Boomers attested to using unique and very up to date technology such as teleconferencing, webinars, video teleconferencing, agency laptops, and digital phones.

However, the greatest opportunity for using technology was at the New York City Police Department (NYPD).

The NYPD has special technology that is indigenous to that agency. For example, fingerprints are obtained with a laser system. Cell phone towers are important because they help with communication. A QED reporting system also makes communication that much better because it links all of the agencies into a database that reports inmates, fugitives, and scofflaws. This is in direct keeping with Cameron and Quinn’s (2007) suggestion with implementing hierarchy culture in the workplace. Cameron and Quinn (2007) suggested that a project manager build a common system that all departments can access anywhere when they go into the system. In the case of NYPD, the agency was the project manager, and the information can be accessed from anywhere by anyone in any agency that has the program.

The NYPD, as well as the other agencies, use Facebook not as social media, but as an investigative tool. It should be noted that only managers and the administration have access to Facebook. Employees cannot access Facebook because the New York City IT offices at all of the agencies block it and all other social media sites from their computers.

Seventy percent of the Millennials said that they used technology in their job. The opportunities are abundant. They use all of the standard office machines (desktop computers, digital printers, fax machines, scanners, digital phones, and copiers). Twenty percent had the opportunity to use such technology as Smart boards, Wi-Fi, tablets, and laptops in their teaching duties. Ten percent of the Millennials used radios, walkie-talkies, CISCO office phones, and tablets as the opportunities arose for them to do so in their agencies.

Such opportunities for using technology for both cohorts include doing their daily work, working on short-term assignments, as well as communicating on the linear and hierarchal level with management. They go up the chain of command and both cohorts explained how they use emails to communicate with management because it is a tracking mechanism with a time and date stamp that they can keep for their records in case that a problem arises later. Within the 60% who said they email management, others contact them by phone rather than going to speak to them in person. One Millennial was adamant about calling management, but did not seem to be aware of her ambivalence about it. "I call them. Management is old, hard to understand. A phone conversation takes forever. They repeat the same thing. I give detailed explanations. It feels like training instead of a conversation.” That was the general feeling I got from the Millennials when it came to calling their Baby Boomer managers. Although some of them said they call their managers, every indication was that they really preferred emailing them and not being forced to speak to them.

Ogbeide, Fenich, Scott-Halsell, and Kesterson (2013) elaborated that the Millennials' affinity for technology is because they have short attention spans, are impatient, and are hallmarks to their cohort.

Some of the Millennials stated that the type of technology used depends on with which level of management they are dealing. Their immediate supervisor is dealt with by phone, email, or face to face as a last resort, while all upper levels are communicated with by email for that a carbon copy of the communication. The difference in how they communicate with their coworkers and their managers is that 50% of the Millennials spoke about using a concise email that gets right to the point with management for proof of correspondence; whereas with their coworkers, they will email, call, or even text.

Ogbeide et al. (2013) found that Millennials preferred using technology when they communicate professionally, but also expected for it to also be available at meetings and other job-related events. It was further found that Millennials favored in person communications, then emailing, and sending text messages. They admitted that they liked using technology because it gave them immediate feedback and instant gratification. They did not have to wait for long periods to receive answers or requested information (Ogbeide et al., 2013).

Although an array of technology is available in all of the agencies in the New York City public work sector, both generational cohorts can decide if they want to use it. However, the results of this study show that the Baby Boomers use it because they are forced to and have to use it, while the Millennials naturally gravitate to using technology because they have a natural propensity to do so. These actions prove the tenets of the Fullan (1970) study in which it was found that technology determined worker integration at work but it could either help or encumber the process, as well as Blauner's (1964) study that technology was one factor that promoted alienation (Shepard, 1977). Some of the Baby Boomers attested to feeling alienated by some of the technology, saying that they need training and detailed explanations on how to use it.

Theme #2: Benefits of Technology Impacting Communications

For the Baby Boomer generational cohort, productivity was one of the biggest benefits of using technology in the New York City public sector workplace. Some of the comments they gave related to the relationship between technology and workplace productivity were:

- Technology enables me to do my job quickly and more efficiently.
- It keeps the workflow going and keeps productivity high.
- It [technology] allows me to get information faster and more accurately--productivity.

In addition to productivity, 60% of the Baby Boomers coined the phrase that technology helps them to "work smarter, not harder." They cited several examples of what they meant by that adage:

- [Technology] allows for mass dissemination of information to employees at all levels.
- It makes reaching out to others in my job field easier.
- It makes it easier to contact customers and keep a documented record.
- Efficiently, efficiency.
- More access to gathering information.
- I can have needed resources at hand.
- "I can stay at my desk and get all the information I need."
- I can interact with other agencies.

The 40% of Baby Boomers who offered different responses explained that technology allowed them to keep track of their staff and their work, made storing vast amounts of paperwork easier, and it is faster. The Baby Boomers were adamant that technology enabled them to be productive at work and in completing their specific job duties. They also added an unexpected asset of their using technology. It became a tracking and policing mechanism for them to keep up with their workers and what they were doing. Although some of them did not really want or like using technology as explained above, it worked in their favor and turned out to be an added benefit.

The responses from the Millennials were interesting because when it came to the benefits of their using technology at work, they concentrated on how using it eliminated lots of paperwork. That was interesting because the City of New York public agencies claim to be "green and paperless," but that is far from true. Some agencies are greener and more paperless than others, but there is still large amounts paper in most agencies because careful case records must be kept and disseminated to various employees, managers, judges, lawyers, and many other people as work is done on them. They cannot be given digital cases, but request paper cases. One Millennial stated: “[Technology] allows us to complete lots of paperwork neatly and quickly and allows us to contact clients, document our work, collaborate with other professionals so clients will get the services they need.” Another Millennial shared a similar comment: “Can protect clients' records on e-databases. It makes me feel secure in knowing that clients' documents won't be accidentally lost or destroyed.” Yet another Millennial explained her take on the benefits of technology at work: “The ability to access documents utilizing databases on the computer, typing so documents are legible; fax machines, scanners, and emails ensure documents to be transmitted fast and available. Telephones and emails allow easy communication, and makes daily work efficient.” The Millennials' responses related to the benefits of using technology to do their specific job duties were different from their responses to the benefits of using technology at work in general. Forty percent of the Millennials explained that the benefits of using technology to do their specific job duties were efficiency and productivity. One comment sums it up for this cohort:“[Technology] enables employees to be more productive because they can do more work in less time. It helps them to be more efficient by their making less errors using technology.” This is a key statement because in the agencies where the employees process cases and see clients, not making errors is important to management. It is so important that they use the workers' error rates to decide if they will be granted overtime and other privileges. Employees who make errors are written up in memos and are classified as not being good employees. That is used as a way to keep workers from progressing within their job title.

Fifty percent of the Millennials stated that the other major benefit of using technology to do their daily work is that it makes communication easier. One Millennial sums up what many participants of that generational cohort said: “Easy to communicate with stakeholders and other professionals. Using technology defies distance. It lets us communicate quickly with others.”

Both generational cohorts spoke about efficiency and productivity as benefits of using technology at work and to do their daily duties. The common thread that runs through all of the 41 New York public service agencies is that they do public service. They provide services to the public such as Medicaid, cash assistance, food stamps, housing, protection from crime, adult protective services, education, administering public roads and water systems. At the heart of all of the services that the city provides is customer service. Each of these agencies has its bottom line. They have to provide clear records showing the numbers of clients served and in some instances, numbers showing finances taken in, especially in areas where money is collected such as the New York City Department of Finance where water bill payments, property taxes, excise taxes, and payments for City-contracted jobs provided to New York City residents. These transactions and attention being paid to the bottom line is reminiscent of market culture (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Market culture is in the bottom right quadrant and represents competition, productivity, and is focused on the external environment, not internal affairs, and assumes that its clients are very particular and value is very important to them (Cameron & Quinn, 2011).

This finding about communication is easier using technology can be aligned with Dennis et al. (2008) findings that good communication happens when the parties involved create and share information they all understand. They communicate well, frequently, and have a common goal under the Media Synchronicity Theory (Dennis et al. (2008). Dennis et al. (2008) explain how in Burke and Chidambaram's study found that those employees who used synchronous media such as in person communication, video and telephone conferences did better than face to face teams with difficult duties. This seems to support both cohorts contention that they are more productive and work more efficiently when they use technology, as well as how it enables them to communicate with many other using it than if they didn't use it. One Baby Boomer works in the prison system where every day something could happen and/or go wrong. Her job can be called difficult given the population and possible security risk. She would certainly want the best and easiest way to communicate in that environment. She shared:

Technology makes for easier transmittal of information from prison to prison.

She also stated that technology makes communication easier inside of the prison where she works.

Theme #3: Challenges of Using Technology and How It Impacts Communication

Both the Baby Boomers and Millennials elaborated on how using technology in the New York City public work sector and to complete their daily work tasks have the benefits of increased efficiency and productivity, as well as how it makes communication easier. That holds true, but there are challenges and drawbacks when using technology in the New York City public work sector. The major challenge, according to 50% of the Baby Boomers, is system failures. Some of the problems they cited include system crashes and system viruses, computer failures, and computer slowdowns, and having to wait for the system to come back up.

Some of the Baby Boomers commented:

There is an overreliance on technology.

The system works improperly and doesn't allow you to get the information you need.

When the system goes down, resources are not available.

The Baby Boomers agreed that the when the system fails, the staff does not know how to process forms manually. That is when they over rely on technology.

The other 40% of the Baby Boomers said that some of the challenges of using technology in their work are that it is very impersonal, tempts workers to surf the Internet instead of working, slow and old equipment, and that Millennials are not in a rush to do anything that's not on the Internet.

This latter population is correct in their comments because the City buys computer hardware that seems new, but is refurbished and breaks down regularly. The software is old and outdated and is incompatible with the hardware. In fact, all of the computers in the New York City public work sector had the Windows XP operating system until it became obsolete and they were forced to upgrade. The operating system was upgraded to Windows 7 and the Microsoft Windows 2010 office package was installed. Because the hardware and software is so old, the system shuts down, as well as locks and freezes or buffers endlessly on Mondays after there was a migration (MIS working on the computers for various reasons all weekend) or when the weather is inclement. Sometimes, it is so bad that the employees are given two-hour lunches to allow them to fix the computers so they can do their work.

Fifty percent of the Millennials also cited system failures as the most major challenge of using technology to do their job in the New York City public sector. The next major challenge that twenty percent of the Millennials related is that bureaucracy is another challenge of using technology to communicate because it takes a long time to receive an answer directly or quickly, as well as the inability to receive an immediate answer.

The next major challenge of using technology to do their job and communicate that the Millennials shared was that bosses expect them to do more work and to do it quicker. Since technology enables them to be more productive, their bosses felt entitled to more work in a shorter period of time.

One Millennial explained:“The time-consuming part of the job isn't fixed by technology. Can't work unless the technology is operable.”

Ultimately, inoperable computer hardware and software affects communication. It either slows it down or makes it non-existent. The problem is that the Millennials, for example, are so used to using technology that it is difficult for them to switch from using the technology to doing the job manually. If they are forced to write something manually, they use abbreviations or in some instances, cyberspeak (shortened versions of words that they use when texting or sending a private in-box message on social media). Perhaps they can't help it because so much in their world is abbreviated--from abbreviations used on common products and services to many types of abbreviations used on TV. Baby Boomers aren't adept at their understanding their abbreviations or cyberspeak unless they have Millennial children at home, as one of the Baby Boomers pointed out. She explained how she is comfortable around Millennials because she understand them and their communication style because she has Millennial "children" at home who teach her their lingo. For Baby Boomers who don't have that advantage, their communication is negatively affected within their generational cohort, with the Millennials, and with their coworkers and management.

Baby Boomers are less affected by these challenges than Millennials because they can work manually or do other tasks that do not require using technology. The challenges affect Millennials more because they are so into using technology that if it isn't available, they get lost and are not able to function at their optimal level--especially if it means they have to write something manually. This cohort does not like to write, for the most part, because they don't have to; they are not used to doing it. A few keystrokes on a computer or device screen and their message are done. They are not into writing long paragraphs and documents like the Baby Boomers. Prensky (2001) outlines how Digital Natives (Millennials) like to receive information quickly, parallel process, multitask, random access, function best when networked, like instant gratification, constant rewards, and game-like activities over real work. In other words, when their digital network is taken away, they're usually not functional in doing their job. When the technology is in place and functional, it creates more teamwork and cohesion and appeals to the younger workers, and older workers fare well with it if it is similar to the technology they already know such as a smartphone (Putre, 2013).

The Baby Boomers and Millennials agree that these challenges and drawbacks would change into positive experiences if the City of New York would provide its employees with updated new hardware and software, train the employees on how to fix them when they malfunction, and keep everyone aware of what's happening through constant communication. Those actions would be great fixes for the challenges to using technology to do their work and to communicate within and without their agencies. However, that won't happen anytime soon because at the heart of these challenges is bureaucracy. It is also a hallmark of Hierarchy culture on the CVF chart. Under Hierarchy culture, the lines of authority is clear, must be followed, rules and procedures are rigid, day to day operations are standardized and impersonal (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). These attributes are present in all of the New York City public agencies. The chain of command must be followed for the most menial things on up to the most major things. It is almost a crime to bypass someone in the chain of command and speak to someone at a higher level in the chain. There is a policy and procedure for everything that could become an issue in the New York City public sector workplace. There is even a procedure for getting office supplies to do the job--from writing a formal memo or email requesting them to asking the office manager for them in the smaller less formal offices.

Theme #4: Organizational Culture Impacting The Use of Technology and Communication

The organizational culture in the New York City public work sector affects how its workers use technology and communicate with each other. Some of the agencies are more technologically savvy than others and encourage their employees to use it rather than manual operations. In agencies where all documents are digitized, such as in the prison system, it was reported that it cuts down on physical storage and provides easy access to documents. However, there can be two types of organizational culture in an agency because of the type of agency it is and the population it serves. Conversely, because of the nature of the correction system, one Baby Boomer expressed the following:

> The use of technology is controlled in prison. Personal computer use is prohibited and all technology tools are secured from inmates because of security concerns. In other agencies, using technology is encouraged and most of the employees are technologically savvy. Training classes are given to learn to use technology.

One of the Baby Boomers stated:

> Technology is accessible to everyone. We share it and are flexible. No one claims ownership of any of the equipment.

In such an environment, technology use is high and communication is optimal. The employees are able to voice their wants and concerns, and speak relatively freely. However, that is not always the case.

A Baby Boomer shared:

> [We] only have access to things that are pertinent to the job. Old school thought processes, reluctant to embrace the most needed technology.

It’s at agencies where technology use is not encouraged and where the administration is reluctant to embrace the most needed technology that technology use is low and communication is low and problematic.

Most of the Millennials (60%t) feel that organizational culture at their agency supports technology use and there are many layers to what is done at their agencies. However, technology is the foundation of it all. They feel that the use of technology is valued. The other 40% stated that the organizational culture doesn't affect or interfere with technology use and communication. Others felt that there is a barrier to the flow of information because the agency needs a tighter control on that flow. What another Millennial said spoke volumes:

> The culture is currently limited. We communicate more face to face than through technology.

How this aligns with CVF is that although the organizational culture supports and encourages technology use, communication is still limited because administration and the chain of command controls what technology is used, how much is used, and when and what circumstances it is used. Workers cannot arbitrarily make such decisions. The values in the hierarchy culture are control, establishment and maintenance of control, discipline, management and monitoring of employees and their performance, project management, and acculturation internally (Lavine, 2014). Until the workers are given some input into how, when, and where technology is used in the New York City public sector workplace, there will always be hierarchy culture instead of the more flexible Clan and Adhocracy cultures (Cameron & Quinn, 2011).

The one element that was missing from the participants in this study was workplace satisfaction. They were happy that they had a job and able to provide for themselves and their families, but they had complaints and expressed dissatisfaction about working conditions, technology, and communication throughout this study. In a study conducted on 95 employees in various public administration settings in Košice, Poland, it was found that employees needed teamwork, mutual trust, openness, and creativity and growth in order to have job satisfaction (Louvaš, 2007). What these participants found was that in many cases, the organizational culture supported technology--but only as the administration provided it and saw fit. There wasn't any attention paid as to how it benefitted the workers and helped them to do their job or increase communication. Also, there wasn't any opportunity for change or growth.

Another study with which these findings align is the study conducted by Montenegro, Fisher, and Remez in 2002 on why Baby Boomers weren't retiring as they had years ago. It was found that they wanted to remain active mentally and physically and feel as if they were contributing something meaningful to society and were being productive (Eversole et al., 2012). However in order to do that, they wanted a flexible workplace that embraced their knowledge, show them their appreciation, and gave them opportunities to work and spend time with their families (Eversole et al., 2012).

The Baby Boomers in the New York City public work sector are holding fast to their jobs. They aren't retiring as quickly as in past years. A large part of that is that the cost of living is oppressive and they cannot afford to retire. They enjoy working and having something to do every day. In addition, some stated that they are waiting for a buyout for "early retirement" because they don't have the years worked, but have the age.

Theme #5: Fearing the Learning and use of Technology

Sixty percent of the Baby Boomers reported being fine using technology—30% very comfortable using it and the other 30 percent feeling better using it if someone explains it to them. They seemed to adjust and adapt better to using technology if they were forced to use it or had been using it for a long time. Their comments ranged from "being very comfortable using technology to being not at all comfortable using technology of any type and everything in between. Some of were more confident if someone guided them through learning technology. However, the workers in the New York City public sector workplace do not have time to help workers who don't know how to use technology or are slow using it because they are inundated with huge amounts of work. That is because the workers who were lost through attrition were not replaced with new workers so the workers who are left are now doing their work and that of the lost workers.

Some of the Baby Boomers admitted to being very uncomfortable using technology of any type. They also spoke about needing extensive training to learn it. One

Baby Boomer was specific and graphic and talked about not liking to have to remember 30 passwords. That is a reality for workers in the New York City public work sector because not only are there a lot of passwords to remember, they have to be changed often and not all at once. One Baby Boomer proudly offered a solution to having to deal with so much technology. She contended:

There should be a half day working on the computer and the other half working manually.

No matter what the Baby Boomer participants said about their experiences using technology, fear was at the foundation of it. I called it "technological ambivalence/preference for manual operation. Their preference was doing things manually and speaking to their coworkers and management in person.

The Millennials were in agreement that they were fine and comfortable using technology. They felt that technology makes them work faster and allows them to multitask. They said that they'd been using technology since middle school and using it is like second nature to them. They realize that their generation is known for being technologically savvy and wise. It was curious, though, when one of the Millennial participants said that he was a little too comfortable using technology and enjoys when his phone dies. They are the generation that's known for always being connected to some type of technology. It seems as if he wants to be disconnected at times and enjoy some down time from technological devices. It is at that time that he actually speaks to people in person. If they had their choice, they'd use technology to communicate with their coworkers and management. One Millennial was frank about it. She said:

I'd rather send an email so I don't have to talk to anyone in person.

Not only were Millennials the first generation born into technology, by the time they reach college, they have been immersed in using technology such as computers, video games, cell phones, digital music players, video cams, emails, social media, and instant messaging (Prensky, 2001). It's even deeper than that according to Prensky (2001). The average college graduate today has spent less than 5,000 hours reading, but over 10,000 hours playing video games, and 20,000 hours watching TV (Prensky, 2001).

This finding aligns with the literature where the contention that some media are richer than others because they have visual, auditory, verbal and non-verbal cues, but face-to-face interaction is best and contains all of these cues (Wen et al, 2010). Technology is fine when communicating, but much of these cues are lost because the two parties cannot see each other. Meanings can become garbled or are lost in the transaction.

Theme #6: Speaking for Understanding

Fifty percent of the Baby Boomers claimed that it is easy to communicate with other Baby Boomers because they have experiences in common. They share history and the same worldviews. They can deal with other Baby Boomers by being open and honest, unlike being more pragmatic with the Millennials. Although they're not as computer literate as they should, they know enough to get by. One Baby Boomer saw a positive side to communicating with Baby Boomers. She explained:

> They tell vivid stories and have a clear picture of what they want.

Another Baby Boomer shared:

> They communicate more formally and respectfully. [I] communicate with them in person, by email, not phone. Overall, they seem to understand each other whether or not they like communicating with their own generational cohort.

Overall, they felt that communicating with the Millennials went both ways: sometimes good because they can manipulate and use technology well; they are straight and to the point; and they can communicate with them by email and never have to see them. The Baby Boomers also expressed that the Millennials are very excitable, hyper, and know everything. One Baby Boomer explained that she enjoys communicating with the Millennials because she sees it as an opportunity to share her knowledge and learn from them.

The Millennials explained that it's sometimes tedious, horrible, and time-consuming communicating with Baby Boomers because they are not able to navigate technology. They complained that Baby Boomers want to always do things in person and they don't have time for that. They complained that that they have to explain and re-explain things to the Baby Boomers.

The Millennials explained that it's sometimes tedious, horrible, and time-consuming communicating with Baby Boomers because they are not able to navigate technology. They complained that Baby Boomers want to always do things in person and they don't have time for that.

The real complaints came from the Millennials about communicating with the Baby Boomers because they have to break down everything to them so that they will understand what they mean. That slows the Millennials down from whatever they’re doing or are supposed to be doing. They said that communicating with Baby Boomers required more time-consuming steps than if they were dealing with their own cohort. On one hand, the Millennials voiced complaints about the Baby Boomers and having to speak to them for understanding; but on the other hand, they claimed to appreciate communicating with them because Baby Boomers focus on their work, not office gossip and they can help ward off issues that come up on the job, as well as help them with their personal life.

At the heart of speaking for understanding and creating a language that Baby Boomers will understand is productivity. Time is taken from the Millennials when they have to break things down for the Baby Boomers and that slows down their creativity. Productivity is found in the CVF market culture quadrant. This is where profitability, the bottom line, market niche strength, and a solid customer base are found (Cameron & Quinn, 2011).

In terms of how this scenario manifests in the New York City public sector workplace when the Millennial workers (or management) stop doing their work to speak the language of understanding to the Baby Boomers, they stop doing their duties. Their work ceases and they cannot process cases, write reports, or service clients. Thus, productivity plummets.

Perhaps one reason that Millennials have to create a language of understanding for the Baby Boomers (digital immigrants) is because their brains are physically different from the Millennials who had digital input growing up (Prensky, 2001a). When they learn a different language, it goes to a different part of the brain than it would have if they were younger (Prensky, 2001).

This breakdown in communication between the two generational cohorts poses a problem because they miss important codes and encrypted messages that are not meant for women and minorities. This is critical in advancing within the agency and is used to create inequities (Rich, 1998). These two generational cohorts cannot communicate properly to each other, so they are physically unable to hear the codes and messages given in the agency, as well as build key relationships through communication, spontaneous, and small talk (Rich, 1998). Another thing is that the codes indigenous to women and minorities keep others from understanding them, as well as severely limiting their upward mobility in the agency (Rich, 1998).

Theme #7: Differences in Relationships Affecting Baby Boomers and Millennials

There is a definite difference in the relationships affecting Baby Boomers and Millennials in the New York City public sector workplace. Fifty percent of the Baby Boomers felt that it is easy to communicate with other Baby Boomers because they have had similar experiences and "are on the same page." However, although they communicate well, they are said to fear technology. Said two Baby Boomers:

> It's pretty easy to communicate with them because they are old school and like to communicate face to face. They're straightforward, honest, forthright, plain speaking and mean what they say.

On the same page; interaction is simple; susceptible to new things; on the learning prowl.

Another Baby Boomer spoke to their fearing technology:

> They fear technology especially emails, and they miss meetings and ask me to remind them of meetings. They don't check emails. They also want me to put in [key in] their stats work for them.

Thirty percent of the Baby Boomers don't feel there is a problem communicating with other Baby Boomers, and 20% of them thought that this generational cohort fears technology.

The ones who agreed that it is easy for Baby Boomers to communicate with other Baby Boomers explained that they have a good relationship because they experienced such things as the Kennedy presidency, cried openly when he was assassinated, as they did when Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated. They also explained that they came of age during the Vietnam War and sang, sometimes prayed for peace. During their formative years, the big question was about what they were doing the day that President John F. Kennedy was assassinated. For the Baby Boomers, that was the day their world stopped turning, and they can recount that day as if it were yesterday. That one historical event unites them to this day.

Half of the Baby Boomers attested to it being easier to communicate with their Millennial coworkers, and they acknowledged that they are more receptive to technology than their Baby Boomer cohorts. Forty percent didn't agree with them, and called the Millennials "stupid and always being attached to something." Ten percent of the Baby Boomers said that there wasn't any problem communicating with their Millennial coworkers.

Several of the Baby Boomers offered some interesting perspectives about their Millennial coworkers:

> They are easier. They show me sometimes and are patient when they know you really don't understand.
>
> [They] don't have the issues of older people. They check emails, get their work done on time, and don't fear technology.

> They hate to write, believe we should be a paperless society. [They're] reluctant to stop using text language on the job. Got to understand that there are rules. Some of them are all over the place. They're so smart, they're stupid! They think they run the world, and that the world wasn't here before they got here. I talk to them, and I know they get me.
>
> [They're] always attached to something. Always distracted and can't focus. They love emailing, harder to communicate with than the Baby Boomers. Telephones force them to pay attention and listen.

Seventy percent of the Baby Boomers explained that it is different communicating with Millennials. The remaining 30% pointed up no differences. Two Baby Boomers best summed up what many of them felt.

> More apt to communicate with Baby Boomers face to face because they will listen and come to your desk or office, not sending a bunch of emails. More apt to communicate with Millennials by email or phone. In person communication doesn't seem to work well with them, because so many technological devices compete for their attention. Not focused on communicating. Always too distracted. Attention span always really short.
>
> Walk on eggshells more with Baby Boomers. I have to break everything down to them. They're sensitive to criticism. Millennials are not that sensitive. They'll fix

> it. They think they're perfect and listen out of respect for your position, not age. With Baby Boomers, it's about age, not position.

The Millennials responded differently about how they communicate with their Baby Boomer coworkers. Thirty percent of them concurred that communicating with Baby Boomers "is tedious, takes extra time explaining things to them, and they want to do everything in person. Thirty percent of the Millennials said that Baby Boomers are not good with technology, while 20% of them said that they were full of knowledge and they learned a lot from them. The remaining 20% stated that they spoke more formally with the Baby Boomers and that there wasn't any real difference in how they communicated with their Baby Boomers coworkers.

One Millennial seemed almost angry in her response:

> Tedious, horrible, makes me crazy! [They] want you to talk to them face to face or call them. It kills them to text. They're afraid to come out of their comfort zone.

Another Millennial seemed to understand the Baby Boomers' need for in person communication:

> Face to face is better, more substantive with anyone over age forty-five.

It was clear that the Millennials prefer to communicate with each other instead of the Baby Boomers. Forty percent of them stated that they use technology, while another 40% (20& and 20%) said they speak to other Millennials less formally, but straight and to the point and speaking to them is wonderful and like a dream because they do not have to see them. The remaining twenty percent (10% claimed that Millennials know everything, and the other 10% saw their communication as an opportunity to share knowledge earned from older workers (Baby Boomers).

Seventy percent of the Millennials claimed that there is a difference in how they communicate with Baby Boomers than Millennials. One Baby Boomer's response points up the feelings of those who feel that way. He explained:

> [Baby Boomers] see eye to eye and understand each other. With Millennials, there's a lot of texting and emails. Don't understand what they're saying in terms of common sense ain't so common. Stuff Baby Boomers take for granted has to be spelled out for them [Millennials]. I pick up the phone if it takes more than three emails.

The foundation of the relationship between the Baby Boomers and Millennials in the New York City public sector workplace is technological ambivalence coupled with technological fluency and speaking the digital language of the Internet and technology. Although the Baby Boomers claimed fluency with the technological devices in their office, they still used it reluctantly and only because they had to. If they had their preference, they would have resorted to manual methods. They shared how they used technology, but did not feel as comfortable as they should have unless they had help or someone teaching them with step by step directions.

The problem is that affected their relationships and communication with their Millennial coworkers because the Millennials are so adept at using technology that it became burdensome for them to take time out of their busy schedules to practically spoon feed the Baby Boomers. It affected their relationship in that having to tutor the Baby Boomers in how to use basic office technology causes the Millennials to resent them. The reason that Baby Boomers feel the ambivalence they did about using technology because they weren't as immersed with it at every turn as the Millennials. Television was their first technology of influence, as well as computers, which caused depersonalization and job dissatisfaction when they entered the workforce (Nadler, 1971 in Wesner & Miller, 2008). In as much as the Baby Boomers and Millennials are different, they are alike in the fact that they value education, but unlike the Millennials who change jobs frequently for better technology, the Baby Boomers don't just make a living: they try to effect social change in some way in their position (Wesner & Miller, 2008). The basic difference in the relationship between the Baby Boomers and Millennials in the New York City public sector workplace is that the Baby Boomers use technology when they have to, but many of them continue to approach it with great trepidation, while the Millennials readily embrace using technology and often look to use the most updated technology they can find.

Perhaps the answer is that the Millennials (Digital Natives) should learn the old manual ways the Baby Boomers (Digital Immigrants) like so much and firmly hold onto.

That is most unlikely because they refuse to go backwards because their brain might already be different, and they will resist learning a new language when their old one will do, and they have no patience for lectures or step by step instruction (Prensky, 2001).

Theme #8: Differences in Communication Styles Affecting Management and Subordinates

Sixty percent of the Baby Boomers communicate in person with their subordinates, while 20% communicated with them by email, and the remaining twenty percent communicated with them by phone and text messages. They explained that they followed up their initial communication with email.

Only 30% of the Baby Boomers communicated face to face with management. Fifty percent of them preferred to communicate with management by email, phone, or text. That is because they will have a written record of what transpired in case if they need it for proof in the future. The remaining 20% asserted that they "used different verbiage with management, and were not intimidated by management and follow their direction."

The Baby Boomers were eighty percent unanimous that they were professional in their communication with management. The remaining 20% explained that they communicated with management the same as they did with their coworker with no difference. Two Baby Boomers' explanations expressed what this cohort felt:

> Looser communication with your rank or lower. Respectful if of a higher rank. I walk away if I disagree [with management].
>
> Different level of respect with management. I use their title. I email, text, or communicate with them by radio.

Another Baby Boomer coined the vernacular in her response:

> "With my coworkers, I use the KISS method—keep it simple. With management, I keep it professional. They expect certain decorum."

No matter how the Baby Boomers try to respect their management and be professional when communicating with them, miscommunication sometimes happens. Seventy percent of them agreed that unclear information causes miscommunication. One Baby Boomer had an interesting perspective on the issue of miscommunication. She said:

> Management doesn't listen to workers for meanings and further communication.

Two Baby Boomers' comments summed up the feelings of the participants. They explained:

> [There is miscommunication] when information passes down verbally from top to bottom without and written instructions or follow up.
>
> Things can be taken the wrong way in emails and texts. In person, they get the point. Too many hands in the pot. The older generation prefers in person communication. Public disagreement via radio "outside eyes."

There is a lot of truth in their contention that miscommunication can happen and be taken the wrong way when communication mode is through email. The tone and tenor of the email can be misread or misunderstood because the recipient is seeing words on a page, not the senders face and body language. When those things are missed, some of the important parts of the communication process are lost.

The Millennials were 60% unanimous that they communicated with their coworkers by email, while only 40% communicate with them in person. They claimed to use email because it was quick, easy, and they did not have to speak to them. Sixty percent of them attested to communicating with management through email, and the remaining 40% contended that they communicated with them in person. In the case of the participants who worked in the prison system and in the school’s medical office, they used technology to communicate with their superiors because they are off-site. The other participants used emails because it was fast, and it gave them a tracking system in case if they needed to later prove a time and date that a correspondence was sent.

Half of the Millennials elaborated on how they used technology with their management and concise language, while 20% of them said that they used emails in order to have a record. The other 30% was adamant that they didn’t communicate with their management any differently than they did with their coworkers.

The Millennials seemed afraid for some reason and acted as if management had it in for them or was against them. Virtually everything that was said went back to their wanting documentation and having a written time stamped record of their correspondence. They seemed to always want to prove their words as if they were expecting something bad to happen. It is probably because just as in other offices, the office grapevine exists and sometimes runs rampant. One way to ensure that true information is spoken is by having written records that can prove what was said or actually happened.

When miscommunication happens, 80% of the Millennials attributed it to "management listening, but not understanding what people are saying, tones of voice, clarity, third party interaction, omission of details and gestures."

There was a major focus on management hearing what the workers say, but not listening. They are in decision-making positions, but are often set in their ways, the Millennials stressed. Their contention is that management must listen to their works and change their old way of doing things so that better communication will happen. One Millennial explained:

> Inability to listen, coworkers interrupt speakers, plan what they will say next. Reticent about approaching and talking to the manager with an ineffective education or lack of understanding or other inadequate knowledge foundation.

Another Millennial continued along similar lines:

[Miscommunication happens] when management and workers don't understand each other. Management has a hard time saying what they mean. Keep [communication] simple and clear, not wordy and complicated. They misuse words.

Communication is most optimal in the clan and adhocracy quadrants on the top left and right of the CVF chart respectively. That section points up flexibility and discretion internally and externally (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). In the clan culture, the employees are like a family and their input and vigorous communication is encouraged and welcomed (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). In the adhocracy culture, the employees work as teams on short-term, creative projects and communication is brisk and elicited, but it exists in a makeshift environment as this is not a permanent arrangement (Cameron & Quinn, 2011).

An excellent point was made about bringing the digital immigrants (Baby Boomers) up to the technological level of digital natives (Millennials). Rethinking should happen in terms of using the technology that's indigenous to Millennials, but not whether to use them, but how to use them to enhance what they already know and move them forward in becoming technologically knowledgeable (Prensky, 2001). In addition, Prensky (2001) recommends that the digital natives' techniques should be created for everyone (digital immigrants/Baby Boomers) to lead them in their quest to become technologically savvy.

DISC Classic Profile. The Disc Classic Profile analysis found that the Baby Boomers were Objective Thinkers. These are the managers and employees who think logically, have to have facts to corroborate them, and are very opinionated, analytical, and transparent. They aren't comfortable training anyone or using technology until they've mastered it and can explain it perfectly and effortlessly. They enjoy a quiet, peaceful work environment and will do their best to encourage and maintain it. They express their feelings in an as needed basis and are often mistaken as shy. They are cautious and even-tempered. They should not be mistaken for not controlling their environment because they do. They are known for making sure that employees adhere to the agency's policies and procedures. They are not quick to apologize or acknowledge their mistakes until they've gathered all necessary evidence to support their position to the fullest extent.

Chapter two offered the CVF as the conceptual framework for this study. CVF is based upon a four quadrant chart that indicates the organizational culture of an agency. Cameron & Quinn (2011) purported that organizational culture points up core values, assumptions, interpretations, and approaches that define an agency. Ingrained in the culture of the four quadrants indicate where the employees and management fall in terms of communicating and interacting with the agency. Based on the CVF chart, Baby Boomers who are Objective Thinkers fall within the hierarchy culture type on the lower left hand side of the chart. That area focuses on stability and control (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). These principles are present throughout the 41 New York City public sector agencies and are seen most clearly in the Baby Boomer population. These values are prominently displayed in how Baby Boomers communicate and use technology because they prefer face to face interaction when communicating, but will use technology when and if they have to.

Many of them (60%) claimed to feel comfortable using technology. Half of them attested to feeling "comfortable." Half of the Baby Boomer participants attested to feeling comfortable when someone trains them or explains it to them. Thirty percent of the said they felt very comfortable using technology. The other 10% were neither comfortable nor uncomfortable, but used technology only if they had to. Some of the most vehement comments were "I'm computer friendly, but nothing beats putting pen to paper," and " I'm comfortable with technology, and am fascinated with it, but it makes us too impersonal. "In reviewing their statements, the word comfortable is a relative word. What's comfortable to one is not comfortable to another. Comfortable seems to be a state that they're forced into and have to accept whether they like it or not. Some of them expressed their comfort, but in a way to make me understand that even if they weren't, they'd never voice it. Their having to be comfortable using technology is inculcated in their organizational culture.

The idea of Baby Boomers being comfortable (to some degree) using technology, but in some cases, not as comfortable as they would like their managers to believe, aligns with Prensky's digital natives, digital immigrants theory. Baby Boomers are the digital immigrants, a term that Prensky (2001a) created to mean those who adapt to learning technology while retaining their unique "accent." The accent of which Prensky speaks is exactly where their comfort zone lies. It is their tie to the past. The perfect example is what was stated earlier that technology is fine, but nothing beats a pen and paper. What this manifests as in the New York City public service agencies is when Baby Boomers print out their emails, printing out a work manual instead of reading it online, or doing a manual tutorial to learn how to operate a computer program instead of using the online version to teach them.

Conversely, according to the results obtained from the DISC Classic Profile, Millennials are dominant, holds others to high standards and judge them by their standards, and are not shy about expressing their forward thinking ideas about carrying out their job duties. These are the employees and managers who initiate and create change, and suggest creative approaches for projects as well as doing daily work. They can be blunt, plain speaking, and are often critical. Many see them as condescending because these employees and managers hold nothing back. They speak whatever comes to their mind--whether it is to their detriment or not. They work independently, need challenging work and duties as they bore easily with routine work. They like to be right and perfect, and want to see the results of their efforts. They understand that there are rules, policies, and procedures in place, but do not necessarily follow them. Their need for perfection supersedes their need to abide by the rules. They are aggressive and not concerned with social niceties. They can be aloof and standoffish.

The Millennial participants would fit nicely in the adhocracy culture--which is located in the upper right hand side of the CVF chart. The values of the adhocracy culture are creativity, being an innovator, visionary leadership, being open to change, and implementing changes as needed (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). They would either work on short-term projects independently or in small groups. Because they get bored easily, the constant change of projects keeps them alert, interested, and challenged. However, that is not how most of the agencies in the City of New York work. The daily work is mostly rote with little change. Perhaps that is why Millennials flock to overtime projects so readily because they are short term and are usually different work than what they do during their workday.

In terms of their comfort level with using technology, when the Millennials said they were comfortable using it, there was no doubt they meant just that. All of the 11 Millennial participants stated that they were comfortable using technology. That aligns perfectly with Prensky's digital natives, digital immigrants theory. Prensky (2001a) coined the phrase "digital natives" for Millennials they are the first generation born into technology and are "native speakers of the digital language of computers, video games, and the Internet." Computers, PDAs of all sorts, and the Internet were very popular when the Millennials were born. They don't know a world without technology and as a result, are very adept to it and are not afraid of it. One Millennial explained to me during our interview that they are not afraid to play with their technological devices until they learn them. They do it effortlessly without fear of breaking them or making them crash. That is unlike Baby Boomers, who won't experiment with or click on different functions in an effort to understand how to make their computers work, she explained.

The way that the participants use technology and communicate with their managers and vice versa aligns with the language of leadership, which at its heart, is composed of stories, rich metaphors with rich culture that will inspire the listeners to take action (Conger, 1991). That would manifest in the New York City public workplace as management giving the workers clear directives, while ensuring that their tones and gestures are also clear, and they should not only hear what their subordinates are saying to them, but should listen intently for understanding. Conger (1991) also explained that the purpose of the agency should be heard in the language of leadership, and such language should be spirited and filled with emotions to evoke action from the workers. If these components are in place, the workers will do what is asked of them and will feel an affinity to the organization (Conger, 1991).

Limitations

One limitation is that there were 21 participants: 10 Baby Boomers and 11 Millennials. They represented line and staff employees, as well as management. That small number was not the most accurate representation of New York City civil servants in those two generational cohorts. The 21 participants voluntarily shared their lived experiences about how they communicated and used technology in their work. However, there is a limitation in that of the two cohorts, the Millennials had the shortest tenure at their job--thus less lived experience than the Baby Boomers. Atieno (2009) purported that the purpose of qualitative analysis is thorough, lush description. However, frequencies in linguistic codes in the data for rare phenomenon aren't considered as much as frequent phenomenon.

Another limitation is really a weakness in that race, culture, and gender of these two cohorts will not be addressed because the emphasis is on their lived experiences in the New York City civil service workplace. Just as projected in chapter three, their culture and professional work background influenced their worldview in terms of their generational cohort, work ethic, and their total work experience.

It was stated in chapter three that the IRB could have found the rigor in the DISC Classic Profile lacking in intensity. However, it was my Committee that did not and accepted the instrument as it was without questioning its rigor. The IRB also didn't ask for the contents to be altered because it was an existing instrument available to any buyer for a fee on the open market.

Another research design and methodology limitation is that due to the small sample size, the research cannot be generalized and as a result, the findings must be checked and rechecked for accuracy. Atieno (2009) concluded that a major disadvantage of qualitative research is that it cannot be applied to a broad population with the same surety as in a quantitative study because there is no way of knowing of the findings are statistically significant or happened by chance.

Recommendations For Further Research

This study revealed a large amount of data and information that will be relevant to the public administration field; specifically in the New York City public sector workplace. This study showed how Baby Boomers and Millennials communicated and used technology in their New York City civil service job. However, this study analyzed only two generational cohorts and the location was limited to the five boroughs within New York City. As a result, there was a lot that was not learned that would be helpful for practitioners in the New York City civil service. Therefore, additional studies are needed in order to ascertain that information. Based on what was learned from this study, some recommendations for future studies are stated below.

The Baby Boomers and the Millennials are the largest generational cohorts working in the New York City public sector workplace. They are also the oldest and youngest cohorts respectively. Generation X represents the third largest generational cohort in the New York City civil service. However, because of their size, they were not included in this study. They deserve their own study and are sure to have very interesting lived experiences that could help managers lead their employees. A qualitative study--

either phenomenology or grounded theory--should be conducted to hear their stories, and managers could use the information for better practice.

Now that the Baby Boomers and Millennials' stories and lived experiences have been obtained, statistical data about *both* cohorts are needed. Specifically, a quantitative study could address this need. Its focus would also be on generational communications in the New York City workplace.

Another recommendation is for a case study to be done on each generational cohort: Baby Boomers, Millennials, and Generation X to understand how they communicate and use technology in the New York City public sector workplace. This would allow for a close, in depth look into the work lives of one or two participants from each of the three cohorts to understand how they communicate and use technology in the New York City public work sector. This case study could be adapted to the New York State civil service or to any of the 50 states.

One theme that was discovered during data analysis was speaking for understanding. That was a major theme because nearly all of the Millennials and some of the Baby Boomers complained about how the Baby Boomers need for anything technological to be broken down for them. The Millennials take offense to having to do that and they resent the "translation" and the Baby Boomers. A study should be conducted to delve into the speaking for understanding theme. The findings from such a study could prove to be quite enlightening to managers in the New York City public sector workplace.

Implications For Practice

Based on what was learned from the findings, the participants were very forthcoming with their suggestions about how to incorporate them into practice. Their responses and concerns indicated several propositions that would be excellent additions to the New York City public sector agencies as they would improve their efficiency and productivity. Although they did not use the formal terms to describe those propositions, they were sound and rooted in public administration traditions.

Reverse Mentoring

Most of the participants expressed how they felt that both generational cohorts had skill sets to offer, so they should mentor each other. Specifically, they stated that the Baby Boomers could teach the Millennials how to communicate better in person without the use of technology, as well as how to do their job functions manually should the technology fails. The participants also stated that the Millennials could teach the Baby Boomers how to use technology as well and as effortlessly as them, as well as how to stop doubting their ability to use it.

The research has shown that there is clearly a communication problem between the multi generations working together in the workplace. However, there are some ways that they can begin to bridge the gap between generations so they can begin to communicate better. One such way that they can put communicating better into practice is through reverse mentoring. Reverse mentoring involves two people, who can be from two different generational cohorts, to mentor each other, unlike with mentoring where an older worker helps a younger worker to learn something (Kulesza & Smith, 2013). This is a perfect choice for Baby Boomers and Millennials because the Millennials are so technologically advanced and driven, so they can teach the Baby Boomers those skills. Baby Boomers, in turn, can teach the Millennials about how to communicate face-to-face, as well as give them intense job training based on their many years of experience. There are great benefits from reverse mentoring such as stopping stereotypes, cutting down conflicts, and better communication between team members; and Millennials will learn more about the organization on micro and macro management levels (Kulesza & Smith, 2013). In addition, reverse mentoring helps two generations with different learning styles to learn more about each other's personalities, and it will help Baby Boomer bosses to learn how to motivate, lead, and give Millennials the feedback they desire (Kulesza & Smith, 2013). Reverse mentoring is also a great option for helping employees to improve their skill sets and knowledge base because it allows someone other than the boss to train them in an environment where they can speak freely about perceived weaknesses, problems, or issues. They would not be able to do that if the boss was the trainer, as well as the boss might not be the best person to train employees (Kulesza & Smith, 2013). Overall, the workplace that implements reverse mentoring into its daily activities increases its human capital (Kulesza & Smith, 2013). Reverse mentoring has an added dimension when the Social Exchange Theory is applied to it. Under this theory, social relationships are said to happen, continue, or end based on the perception of benefits to costs (Chaudhuri & Ghosh, 2012). This is important to Baby Boomers and Millennials because it enables a positive exchange between employees and the organization, and between the young mentor and the old protégée and vice versa (Chaudhuri & Ghosh, 2012). Under this theory, employees feel as if they matter when they are part of a reverse mentoring situation, and they are more inclined to fully support the organization's goals (Chaudhuri & Ghosh, 2012). Although reverse mentoring is based more on generation than age, Millennials have an advantage over Baby Boomers other than being technologically advanced: they are purveyors of diversity and multiculturalism. They developed a global worldview because of their vast Internet skills and communicating with people all around the world. That helps them to work easily with all kinds of people and practice diversity at all levels (Chaudhuri & Ghosh, 2012). Reverse mentoring lends itself so well to different generations communicating well and seamlessly with each other while learning their job.

Reverse mentoring would work so well within the New York City public sector workplace because although the employees receive formal training, they usually receive much more elbow training as it takes time to create training classes and fill them. It can take many months, even years depending on the type of class. While the employees wait, they are often paired with another worker and told to shadow him in order to learn the necessary job duties. Reverse mentoring could take that working relationship one step further if the pair is composed of a Baby Boomer and a Millennial. In addition to teaching his colleague daily work duties, he could also teach him communication and technology as experienced by his cohort and vice versa.

Knowledge management and transfer. As the Baby Boomers reach retirement age and prepare to retire, they will be taking years of knowledge and experience with them. To that end, the participants suggested that the agencies should harvest all of that information and impart it to the others who are left behind, so it is not wasted. Martin de Holan & Phillips (2004) in Stevens (2010) defined knowledge management as organizations creating, transferring, and retaining knowledge. Along the same line, knowledge management is an organization cultivating the knowledge that its employees have to accomplish the organization's mission (Stevens, 2010). Lesser (2006) in Stevens (2010) reports that 46 million younger employees [Millennials] will replace the departing older workers [Baby Boomers]. They will not have the experience that the exiting Baby Boomers will have, and they will need training. The best trainers would be the Baby Boomers who know the job and can transfer their wealth of knowledge to the younger workers (probably Millennials). Some modes of transfer that have proven effective are formal education and training, apprenticeships, simulations and games, storytelling and conferences, blogs and papers (Stevens, 2010). Other successful modes of transfer include classroom training by older workers, reverse mentoring, audio/video interviewing, and storytelling to gain knowledge from older workers (IBM & ASTD, Lesser, (2006) in Stevens (2010)).

A study was conducted by the International Business Machines Corporation, and the American Society of Training and Development found that 60% of participants transferred knowledge through mentoring, and 50% used document/heavy repositories to retain knowledge. The study also found that mentoring was best when mentors guided students in realistic situations in real time. The one-on-one relationship is the most successful way of transforming knowledge and bridges the gap between generations. The mentoring connection is essential for knowledge transfer to occur (Stevens, 2010). According to the Impact of Corporate Memory Loss, the workforce has 42% of corporate knowledge that goes with them when they leave the organization. Organizations suffer when that knowledge is lost (Stevens, 2010).

Workplace features such as architectural design, how walls and cubicles are laid out, doors, workspace size, spatial proximity to coworkers, furniture flexibility, ergonomic design, and windows can affect knowledge transfer (Kupritz & Hillsman, 2011). These workspace design features, in addition to sound, light, temperature in the space, influences how verbal and non-verbal cues are used and impart meaning during face-to-face knowledge transfer sessions (Kupritz & Hillsman, 2011). A study was also conducted to gauge how workplace design impacts knowledge transfer in the workplace.

During the study, 24 supervisors answered 17 interview questions in half-hour to hour sessions about how they felt that the work environment, design features, and other situations affected how they applied their new communication skills to the job. Before that, they answered questions about the communication skills they learned in the workshop. In part two of the study, 50 supervisors completed a survey questionnaire that contained a beliefs matrix and preference ranking (Kupritz & Hillsman, 2011). The results of the study found that the physical aspect of workplace design played an important role in promoting the communication skills transfer process. Other factors that were identified to help the process were: positive support from management; technology, resource availability, and favorable support from coworkers. However organizational factors such as organizational reward processes and transfer climate didn't come up in either part of the study (Kupritz & Hillsman, 2011).

Another important study was done about knowledge transfer that pointed up its importance. In this phenomenological study, 141 Baby Boomers who represented 14 municipal agencies in a North Texas municipality were interviewed about the phenomenon of the Baby Boomer experience related to the job knowledge they acquired at their respective agencies before they retired from the Texas civil service (Cummings-White & Diala, 2013). The participants were all managers in their agencies and Baby Boomers born between 1946 and 1964 and eligible to retire within a decade after this study (Cummings-White & Diala, 2013). There was major concern about knowledge loss in the public sector because tenure is indigenous to the public sector. Structured interviews were done with the participants to get their view on the definition of institutional knowledge, how to gain the knowledge in their current job, what information to secure; best ways to secure the information and transfer it; the appropriateness of written procedures; problems with knowledge retention; how retiring Baby Boomers with job knowledge will affect the agencies; and their suggestions to secure and transfer knowledge (Cummings-White & Diala, 2013). The results of the study found that the leaders were willing to cooperate with transferring their knowledge to younger, subordinate employees before their retirement. However, attrition; how they viewed communication; recovering knowledge and documents; excessive workloads and distractions; procedural changes; and not knowing the depth of the employees' current knowledge were reported as elements that hindered knowledge transfer. Some measures to capture knowledge such as mentoring, succession planning, and policies and procedures were present, but inconsistent. It was further found that the leadership realized the value of losing the Baby Boomers' knowledge, and they must figure out exactly what information to transfer, ways for successful knowledge transfer, and their goals for transferred knowledge (Cummings-White & Diala, 2013).

Knowledge management and transfer would be important assets in the New York City public sector because no effort is made to capture all of the knowledge the retiring workers (Baby Boomers) are taking with them. They know ways of completing tasks without technology and personally with their coworkers. That knowledge would be so helpful when the technology fails—as it often does on Mondays, after migrations when the computer programs are supposedly upgraded, and in inclement weather. Even informal knowledge management and transfer would work. In such instances, departing Baby Boomers could choose some of their Millennial coworkers with whom they are close and train them. Then the ideal situation is that those trained would pass on what they learned until all of the workers are privy to that knowledge.

Succession planning. Succession planning is one method of knowledge transfer. It is a major concern of public sector leadership where Baby Boomers are concerned. They are getting closer to retirement because 46.3 percent of government workers are age 45 or older. Baby Boomers fall within this number (Ibarra, 2005). When they retire, they will take their vast job knowledge with them unless it is captured and transferred to the younger workers who will remain. However, some leaders assume that some of them will return as consultants, so service will continue with little, if any, disruption (Ibarra, 2005). Succession planning fills job vacancies quickly, prepares workers for greater responsibility, and helps them to become better at doing their job duties (Ibarra, 2005). Succession planning contributes to organizational change and planning. It also has many benefits including ensuring leadership's long-term needs; maintains constancy of management; allows the organization to choose its own leaders; and ensures that human resources synchronizes with the organization's strategic plan (Ibarra, 2005). Successful succession planning identifies key positions and key employees with the potential for advancement; identifies their strongest knowledge; does a thorough gap analysis; chooses select training and staff development endeavors; spearheads management training; institutes development strategies; and tracks and assesses the progress of the succession plan (Ibarra, 2005).

Succession planning is a very important resource to knowledge transfer in the public sector because it is one way for the employees to maintain their productivity when knowledgeable Baby Boomers retire. The agency has to manage that knowledge and transfer it, but certain factors should be considered before successful knowledge transfer can take place. Leadership at all levels must be committed to the transfer and able to answer the employees' questions and concerns, and figure out who will be responsible for overseeing the knowledge transfer process. Leaders must understand how the knowledge transfer will be financed, which employees will receive the transfer, and how it will be monitored, maintained, and tweaked based on the results of the evaluation (Pynes, 2004). Problems can happen when there is not enough money to properly implement succession planning, as well as when the employees are resistant to change and won't accept the transfer. There might also be problems when politics and bureaucracy in the public sector undermine successful succession planning. In addition, it is equally important for leaders to select employees who are a good fit for the specific position and the organization to ensure effective succession planning (Pynes, 2004).

Crumpacker & Crumpacker (2007) stated that when implementing succession planning, HR must know the demographic profile of internal employees from which knowledge can be transferred, and the same from external talent from which the organization can cull. Some of the workers who are eligible for retirement decide not to retire because they cannot afford to or they do not want to be bored, and would rather continue working. However, the employees who do not retire and are still in the organization comprise two or more generational cohorts at any given time. Because of that, leadership must be prepared to adapt to whatever the current situation when it comes to succession planning (Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007). No matter how many generations are in an organization and are offered succession planning through knowledge transfer, the key is that they must all listen to and communicate freely with each other (Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007).

Succession planning would be very useful to management in the New York City public sector because it would help them to plan for employee loss better than what is currently being done. The training offered in the New York City public sector is some of the best offered and is offered to private sector employees. The trainers stay on the cutting edge of whatever they're teaching and get intensive training in those subjects. If would be beneficial to City workers if succession planning was a part of their training.

Human Resource Management (HRM). On another important and related level, Human Resource Management (HRM) is also an excellent resource for managers who want to lead an ethical and productive workplace. HRM ensures that the employees that an organization needs are there, and that recruitment, selection, and training guidelines are created and are functional. Employee compensation, rewards, termination, retirement, and resignation are also created and maintained under HRM (Ingraham & Rubaii-Barrett, 2007). Although HRM is considered a civil service or personnel function and not a management function, savvy managers would be wise to do their part in the HRM process and to familiarize themselves with it. If not, it will remain a problem in fully implementing HRM in the public sector workplace and for it to work properly (Ingraham & Rubaii-Barrett, 2007). HRM also has another much-needed function. There is still discrimination and unfairness in the workplace, and HRM works to guarantee that organizations comply with the Equal Opportunity (EEO) and Affirmative Action legislation (Shen, Chanda, Netto, & Monga, 2009). If discrimination and marginalization of any employees in the workplace is allowed to continue, it will lead to conflict, low productivity, low morale, and a high attrition rate. Diversity must be more than organizations complying with legislation, but should be thought of an improvement for the organization to have a diverse staff that brings its experience and knowledge and its new ideas (Shen et al., 2009).

HRM is an excellent resource that the New York City public sector should have. It would be a major step in the right direction and would help to increase employee productivity and efficiency. It would change the organizational culture and ensure that it is ethical and professional. That would help the employees to work better if they could just work and not have to spend time seeking help from their unions or filing EEO suits because they feel they've been wronged in some way. HRM would help to create a more positive work environment that would promote hard work.

Positive Social Change

One reason for conducting this study was to contribute to social change. The goal of the study was to learn and understand how Baby Boomers and Millennials communicate and use technology in the New York City public work sector so that the findings could be disseminated within the New York City public sector, as well as to other stakeholders. One of the main goals to effect social change is to share my findings with the New York City public sector, most likely in a condensed written form. I will seek opportunities to share my findings throughout the New York City public sector. It is my hope that by sharing this much needed information, new opportunities will abound.

I also want to disseminate the findings in an abridged form to the New York State public sector in agencies that are comparable to those in the New York City public sector. As with the New York City public sector, I would like to present the findings in written form manually and digitally on the Internet and on the agencies' Intranet. Hopefully, the dissemination of the findings will elicit improved professional interaction between New York City employees and their managers, other administrators and community stakeholders. This, in turn, will motivate an administrator to recognize employees who are excellent communicators and avid technology users because their productivity and efficiency will increase and perhaps even afford them promotional and financial opportunities.

What I want to do most is to present my findings at professional public administration, human services, and other related conferences in New York City and other states—even in other countries as the opportunities arise. I want to create a policy/legislative tie-in so as to present the generational communication findings at legislative conferences such as the Congressional Black Caucus. Generational communications, in a general sense, is becoming a popular topic in corporate America. I would like to pursue any opportunities to present my findings in that area and apply them to corporate America and explain why communications between Baby Boomers and Millennials is so bad. Eventually, I would like to publish a book based on my dissertation for the academic community and for use in college and university classes. My goal would be to raise awareness of the topic of generational communications; perhaps, it will help the Millennials and Baby Boomers to communicate better and have a less contentious working relationship.

Reflection

This phenomenological study enabled me to understand the lived experiences of twenty-one Baby Boomers and Millennials who work for the City of New York in terms of how they communicate and use technology in their job. Through the use of first and second order constructs—capturing the participants' stories and sewing those stories together in a scholarly fashion using the conceptual framework of CVF and the digital immigrants/digital natives theory—I was able to answer the research questions about the opportunities and challenges for using technological tools to communicate among multigenerational New York City public sector workers and how Baby Boomers and Millennials multigenerational workers differ in the way they communicate and use technology among New York public sector workers. Understanding the conceptual framework and literature before the study was conducted afforded me the opportunity to align it with my findings.

The most incredible experience of conducting this study was eliciting and hearing the participants' stories. Through those stories, I learned that the Baby Boomers had technological ambivalence about using technology and are not as technologically fluent as they should be, and that affects the way they communicate with their coworkers and managers in the New York public sector workplace. I also encountered a Baby Boomer gentleman who was a true Millennial, but felt that he also had Generation X tendencies because of his experiences and education, as well as a Millennial woman who did not consider herself a Millennial because she did not act like the younger Millennials. She was a mature older Millennial who was way past the silliness, neediness, and self-entitled attitudes of the younger Millennials. The nature of conducting an empirical phenomenological study allowed me to get to the essence of their experiences and interpret them and link them to the conceptual framework. In the future, I would like to conduct a qualitative study on this topic on Generation X New York City public sector workers, as well as a quantitative study on generational communications on Baby Boomers and Millennials who work in the New City public work sector. It would be quite interesting to see the rich data arising from such a study.

Conclusion

Eight themes were found in this study on generational communications in the New York City public sector workplace: (1) opportunities for using technology; (2) benefits of technology impacting communications; (3) challenges of using technology and how it affects communication; (4) organizational culture impacting the use of technology and communication; (5) fearing the learning and use of technology and communication; (6) speaking for understanding; (7) differences in relationships affecting Baby Boomers and Millennials; (8) differences in communication styles affecting management and subordinates. These findings will help extend the knowledge in the public administration field. The findings will help managers understand how Baby Boomers and Millennials communicate and use technology in their New York City civil service jobs. These managers will learn how to get increased efficiency and productivity from them. For the workers, their understanding each other's cohorts will enable them to work more harmoniously with each other. Their communication will be more professional and will require less effort as it will be like second nature to them. As a result of the positive increase of communication between the two generations and a clear understanding of how they use technology, big dividends will come to managers in the New York City agencies.

Several suggestions for optimal communication between Baby Boomers and Millennials and their managers were suggested from this research. Reverse mentoring, as well as knowledge management and transfers were some of them. Succession planning and Human Resource Management (HRM) were others. The participants in both cohorts concurred that there should be better training in how to use technology and how to communicate more effectively. They also agreed that management should give clear directives and learn to listen to their workers—not just hear them, but really listen. The results will be such tools for practice as reverse mentoring, knowledge management and transfer, succession planning, and Human Resource Management. These employment tools will be achieved if the two generations thoroughly understand how each other communicate and they work together based on those insights.

The analysis and interpretation of this study was hinged on two theories: CVF and digital natives/digital immigrants. These theories were applied to the eight findings. The CVF was the basis on which it was decided if an agency was open to communication, creativity, or was more prone to hierarchal bureaucracy. It also indicated where technology use fell. The digital natives/digital immigrants (DN/DI) theory equated the digital natives with the Millennals because they were adept at using technology and used it with ease. The digital immigrants were equated with the Baby Boomers because they were fearful of using technology and used it when they had to in order to get their job duties done. This research revealed that technological ambivalence drove the Baby Boomers, and technological fluency drove the Millennials when they used technology and communicated as a result of that use.

In retrospect, empirical phenomenology was the best choice of research methods to answer this study's research questions because it got to the core essence of the 21 participants' lived experiences with communicating and using technology in their New York City public sector workplaces. It is my hope that this study will be the catalyst for piquing other researchers' curiosity about the subject of generational communications enough to extend it or take it in a new and exciting direction.

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Appendix A: Permission for use of Competing Values Framework Diagrams

Dear Dr. Cameron,

My name is Nathasha (not Natasha) Brooks-Harris. I am a doctoral candidate at Walden University's School of Public Policy & Administration's Leadership and Management program. I am studying generational communications in the public sector workplace.

My dissertation will be a phenomenological study about how the four multigenerations (Silent, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y) communicate and use technology in the 21st century workplace. My concentration is on the Baby Boomers and the Millennials because they are the oldest and youngest cohorts currently in the workplace. I will frame it with the Competing Values Framework and the Digital Immigrants, Digital Natives concept.

During my research for the literature review, I came across Figure 3.1 The Competing Values Framework and Figure 3.2 The Competing Values of Leadership, Effectiveness, and Organizational Theory in your book, *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture,* and I studied them with great interest. They speak to my topic well and would be an asset to my dissertation to enable my committee and future readers to visualize the Competing Values Framework. May I please have your permission to use these diagrams in my dissertation?

I thank you in advance for your time and attention to this matter and look forward to your reply at your earliest convenience.

Respectfully,

Nathasha A. Brooks-Harris

Doctoral Candidate

School of Public Policy & Administration

Walden University

Mobile: (646)413-5279

nabrooks@aol.com

nathasha.brooks-harris@waldenu.edu

Re: Request For Permission To Use Diagrams For Doctoral Dissertation

Dear Nathasha,

You have my person to use the diagrams in your dissertation. I just ask that you include appropriate reference information.

Best wishes,

Kim Cameron

Kim Cameron

William Russell Professor of Management & Organizations

Ross School of Business

and

Professor of Higher Education

School of Education

University of Michigan

734-615-5247

kim_cameron@umich.edu

Appendix B: Letter To Participant

Participant's name

Address

City, State, Zip Code

Date

Hello,

My name is Nathasha Brooks-Harris. I am a doctoral candidate at Walden University. I am completing my dissertation and am researching generational communications in the New York City public sector workplace. Studies have been conducted about generational differences, but none addressing how they communicate and use technology in the New York City public sector workplace. This study will research those specific areas and how the Baby Boomer and Millennial generational cohorts deal with and are affected by them.

I appreciate your agreeing to participate in this study and the time you've taken out of your busy schedule. We will need to meet either online or in person at a location you choose for the initial interview. We might need to meet for a follow-up session to clarify your response from the initial interview. Again, the meetings will be at your convenience either online in person or in person at a location of your choice. Each meeting will not exceed 1 hour. During the interview meetings, you do not have to do anything with which you are not comfortable. You are also free to stop at any time you feel uncomfortable. Your responses and any resulting information will be confidential and will remain anonymous. Please contact me as soon as possible so that we can set up an interview time and venue. You may reach me at __________. You may also e-mail me at nathasha.brooks-harris@waldenu.edu. I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Nathasha Brooks-Harris
Doctoral Candidate
Walden University
Minneapolis, MN

Appendix C: Participant Thank-You Letter

Dear Participant,

Thank you for agreeing to allow me to interview you for my research study about generational communications in the New York City public sector workplace. It is my pleasure to work with you and to understand how you communicate with your cohorts and use technology in the public sector workplace.

Our interview session is scheduled for _____________________ on ___________________________ at _______________________________. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me.

Respectfully,

Nathasha Brooks-Harris

Doctoral Candidate, Walden University

IRB Approval #:02-16-16-0381369; expires on February 15, 2017

Appendix D: Demographic Screening Questionnaire

Generational Communications In The New York City Public Sector Workplace

Date:

The purpose of this document is to guarantee that potential participants fit the criteria for this study.

The participants in this study must fit certain prescribed criteria that can answer the research questions. This research in this study was composed so as to be risk-free not to harm human subjects. Please answer the questions below to ascertain if you fit the criteria for this study and can be interviewed.

To be read to potential participants:

1) Are you a male or female born during the years 1946 to 1964 (Baby Boomer) or 1980-2000 (Millennial)? What is the exact year of your birth?
2) In which of the 5 New York City boroughs do you live?
3) In which New York City public agency do you work?
4) How long you have worked for the City of New York?
5) What are your non-management or management job duties?

Exclusion Criteria:

You cannot participate in any way in this study if you are an employee, student, or mentee of the researcher.

If you qualify for this study, I will schedule a private interview with you and you will also be given a DISC Classic Profile, a questionnaire about your communication style, to complete. I will fully explain the study and ask you to sign an informed consent form giving me permission to interview you and include you in the study.

Appendix E: Interview Guide

<u>Generational Communications In The New York City Public Work Sector</u>

To the participant: This research is to learn about how you communicate and use technology in your job the New York City public sector workplace. During the interview, you might give specific examples. If that happens, please give as anonymous an account as possible to ensure confidentiality.

Based on what is stated above and the explanation of what this study is about, will you please continue with this interview?

Please note: For the purposes of this interview, communication means verbal and non-verbal interactions with your coworkers or management, and the phrase "use technology" means technological applications such as using computers, iPads, a Blackberry, or other technological devices that your agency provides.

Main Questions

1) Describe the types of technology is available for employees in your workplace?
2) What are some of the benefits of using technology in your position at your workplace?
3) What are some of the benefits of using technology in your job?
4) What are some of the drawbacks and challenges of using technology in your job?
5) What do you think would improve those drawbacks and change them into positive experiences?

6) Please explain if you are comfortable using technology. If not, why not? Please be specific.
7) If you are not comfortable using technology, what would make the experience more comfortable for you?
8) How does the culture at your agency impact how you use technology to perform your job with or without your coworkers? Please explain.
9) How do you communicate with your coworkers during your workday? Example: face to face, by phone, email, text messages, etc. Please describe and be specific.
10) How do you communicate with your management at work? Please describe and be specific.
11) How is the way you communicate with your coworkers different from how you communicate with management? Why? Please give an example or examples for illustration.
12) How do you use technology when communicating and interacting with your coworkers or management at work? Please be specific.
13) When there is miscommunication between management and coworkers, what causes it? Please be specific.
14) What is your experience when communicating with older workers (Baby Boomers)? Please be specific?

15) What is your experience when you communicate with younger workers (Millennials)? Please be specific.
16) How is the way you communicate with Baby Boomers different from how you communicate with Millennials and why? Please give a specific example or two.
17) Which generational unit or age group do you prefer to communicate with—older Baby Boomers or younger Millennials? Why? Please be specific.

Closing/End Questions:

1) What suggestions can you make for better communication between coworkers and between coworkers and management? Please be specific.
2) Please add any response or comment that was not asked but pertains to this topic.
3) What additional questions do you have about communications or using technology you would have liked asked, but wasn't asked?

Debriefing the Participants

- The researcher will explain how the data will be transcribed, as well as they may be recalled for a brief 30-minute follow-up interview.
- Confidentiality will be explained
- The Mental Health Referral List will be briefly reviewed with the participants to provide clarity
- The researcher's and Walden University's Contact Information on the Informed Consent Form will be highlighted for the participants

- The researcher will thank the participant for his/her participation
- All tapes and recorders will be checked for functionality; tapes will be marked and labeled appropriately
- Follow-up notes will be written and journaling will be done

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Appendix F: Resource Guide

Clinics Offering Free or Low-Cost Counseling

Thank you for agreeing to be a part of my study about generational communications in the New York City public work sector. I look forward to hearing about your experiences with communication and using technology in that venue.

I do not anticipate that you will experience any discomfort or stress while sharing your experiences about communication with your work cohorts or how you use technology in your job. However, if you do, I am providing information about where you go for free or low-cost counseling in the New York City metropolitan area. Below is a listing of resources should you require or want counseling services.

Nathasha Brooks-Harris

Walden University

1	New York City Free Clinic	16 East 16th Street New York, NY 10003	(212) 206-5200
2	ECHO Clinic	1894 Walton Avenue Bronx, NY 10453	(718) 583-3060 1-(800) 836-1316
3	Weill Cornell Community Clinic	595 E.70th Street New York, NY 10065	(212) 962-9222
4	Bedford-Stuyvesant Family Health Center	1456 Fulton Street Brooklyn, NY 11216	(718) 636-4500
5	Theodor Reik Clinical Center for Psychotherapy	150 West 13th Street New York, NY 10011	(212) 924-7440
6	Brooklyn Plaza Medical Center, Inc.	650 Fulton Street Brooklyn, NY 11217	(718) 596-9800

Appendix G: Recruitment Letter

Dear Potential Research Participants,

My name is Nathasha Brooks-Harris, and I am a PhD candidate in Public Administration at Walden University. I will be conducting a research study about generational communications in the New York City public sector workforce, specifically as it pertains to the Baby Boomer and Millennial generational cohorts.

I am looking for participants to interview in person, by telephone, or by Skype who meet the following criteria: 1) actively working for any of the 41 New York City public service agencies; and 2) born during the years 1946-1964 (Baby Boomer) or during the years 1980-2000 (Millennial). Males, females, and all nationalities are welcome.

Your participation in this interview is voluntary. The interview length will be from 60 to 90 minutes and will include your completing the DISC Classic Profile, a questionnaire about your communication style. A brief 30-minute follow-up interview for clarification may be needed. You may withdraw from the interview at any time if you feel uncomfortable with anything related to the interview process.

If you would like to participate in this study, e-mail Nathasha Brooks-Harris IRB Approval #:02-16-16-0381369; expires on February 15, 2017.

Respectfully,

Nathasha Brooks-Harris,

PhD Public Administration Candidate College of Social Science

Appendix H: Newspaper Ad

This ad will be placed in local New York City newspapers such as the *Amsterdam News, A.M. New York,* and *Metro*.

Research Study By Doctoral Student

Title: Generational Communications In the New York City Public Sector Workforce

Are you a Baby Boomer or Millennial currently working for the New York City civil service?

Selection Criteria: Must work for the City of New York civil service; and be born during 1946-1964 (Baby Boomer) or born during 1980-2000 (Millennial). Must sign an informed consent form giving the researcher permission to interview you for to 60 to 90 minutes either in person, by telephone, or on Skype video conferencing, and for you to complete a questionnaire about communication (DISC Classic Profile). A brief 30-minute follow-up interview might be needed for clarification.

Risks & Benefits: There are no known risks in participating in this study. The benefits are sharing your experiences about how you communicate with your coworkers and management and use technology in your daily employment.

If interested, please e-mail researcher Nathasha Brooks-Harris.

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Appendix I: Example Memos

In my Chapter 3 methodology chapter, I speak about using memos as a way of dealing with bias. Using reflexivity, I kept a journal during the data collection process. Based on some of notes, I created memos to deal with bias, as well as to reflect on data that evoked emotion, curiosity, or required me to get close to the data before the formal analysis (Morrow, 2005). This memo relates to an observation I made about the Millennials' dependence on technology and their disdain for using manual methods—even if they are forced to do so.

Observational Memo: Millennials' Dependence on Technology

I couldn't get past my thoughts about how the Millennial population seemed so dependent on technology when communicating. It was though they would fall apart if they couldn't work and communicate using technology. It begged a question: are Millennials so dependent on technology they won't use manual methods to communicate and get the job done if the technology stops working? Based on what they said during the interview sessions, the answer was yes; they would rather do without using manual methods if the technology malfunctioned or was non-existent. In fact, they were very blunt about it and didn't hide their strong dislike of using any kind of manual methods or processes to do their job. This memo was created in Dedoose.

One of the participants stated:

> I'm an emailer. I communicate with my coworkers mostly by email. I'll even text them if necessary. I have most of their phone numbers, so I'll shoot them a text. That's easier and more convenient to me. We're all attached to our phones and keep them with us at all times. I found out that text is way faster than emailing and yields a quick response time. If I don't text, I will email them. But go and see someone in person to talk to them or hand write a note if our system goes down, never! Unless, of course, one of our old bosses calls me to his or her office.
>
> Otherwise, no!
>
> Another participant claimed:
>
> I've been using technology since I was in elementary school. I can usually find my way around new and existing technology pretty easily. It's like second nature.
>
> Baby Boomers want to do things in person, and I don't always have time. Just send me what I need to know via email!

This brings to mind a short article I read called "Improving Multigenerational Communication in the Workplace" by Allison Madison. In it, she explains how Millennials have their preferred ways of communication—namely texting and emails as opposed to phone calls. Baby Boomers are frustrated with many text messages and emails that could be handled with one phone call (Madison, 2016). Madison (2016) contended that respect of each generation's communication style, values, and organizational culture could lead them to a mutually agreeable compromise (p.56).

Appendix J: Example Feelings Memos

I wrote a memo during the recruitment process as a way of dealing with my bias. I couldn't understand why recruiting participants was so difficult, and why they couldn't see the proverbial big picture of helping me to create new research in my field. I couldn't understand why they emphasized money so much and not understand what they could gain from answering a few questions about how they communicated and used technology in their New York City civil service jobs. I was baffled because I expected more willingness to participate and more excitement on their part. However, that wasn't the reaction I received. Instead, their reaction was nonchalant, as if they cared less if I ever found participants to interview. I jotted down some notes in my field notebook and turned it into a memo. I created the memo in Dedoose.

Feelings Memo: Recruitment and Snowball Sampling

It is very difficult recruiting participants for this study. All I keep getting is people asking "will they get paid, how much, and what's in it for them?" I explained to them that there is no payment because this is a school-related study to fulfill the last requirement to earn my PhD degree and that every word, every form, everything related to creating and carrying out this study was approved by the IRB. I explained that payment, whether money or in-kind, was frowned upon and was not approved.

That was not satisfactory to them, nor did they try to understand it in any way; nor did they care. I found them to be very cold toward my study and myopic because their attitude was no money, no participation in my study. Also, it didn't help that none of them (who didn't or wouldn't participate) appreciated the value of education. None of them had higher education, so they didn't have a clue as to the graduate school journey—good or bad.

I consulted with three of my PhD cohorts who were also conducting or have conducted their study. Their experience mirrored mine. They, too, had the same complaint. How they handled it was to ask everyone and anyone who fit their demographic, and they thought out of the box to find participants. One cohort stated that she stood outside of phone stores because she knew that her population frequented them. Another cohort said that she recruited anyone who moved and was within her population. They all expressed how stressful recruitment was and how they wanted to quit. I could relate to their feelings. However, my feelings were more of disillusionment and confusion about how little people cared about helping a scholar or about contributing to learning information that could ultimately help others in the Public Administration field.

I must remember to see people for how they are, not what I wanted them to be or imagined them to be. I must remember that no one is as invested in this study as I am. I must be prepared for such ignorance as people asking me if I am being paid for doing the study.

One of the then-possible participants stated:

> There has to be money offered. No one will give up their time for free. It's just not important. It's not important enough to them to answer questions and not be paid. If you offer money, you'll get everyone you need. If there's no pay, you won't find anyone to interview!

> Another then-possible participant claimed:

> What am I going to get out of answering a bunch of questions and participating in your study? You are the only one getting something out of it. You're getting a degree!

As I compose this memo, I am reminded of an article I read titled "Snowball Sampling Problems and Techniques of Chain Referral Sampling" by Patrick Biernacki and Dan Waldorf. In that article, they dismissed some of the problems that could arise during the data collection process. Biernacki & Waldorf (1981) spoke well to the issue of participants pretending to fit the inclusion criteria of being an active drug addict or telling the researcher what he wanted to hear to obtain the $20 honorarium (p.150).

When I thought about what the authors were saying, things began to make sense to me. Perhaps the people complaining most about "not being paid or not getting anything out of the study because I was the only one getting anything out of it" would not have been honest in their responses. Their answers would have been cursory or perfunctory. They probably would have told me anything they *thought* I'd want to hear just to get the money gift or the gift card had I been allowed to offer it. My explanation that they were helping me to create new research in the Public Administration field eluded them. They were not interested. Nor did they care. They wanted to get paid. Clearly, these were not the kind of participants I wanted. I realize now that their refusal was a blessing in disguise because I was later able to recruit participants who were open and transparent about their experience with how they communicate and use technology in the New York City public work sector.

Appendix K: Example Memos

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