Dr. Leon J. Mohan
Saint Leo University, Saint Leo, Florida, United States

Dr. Dene Williamson
Saint Leo University, Saint Leo, Florida, United States

Dr. Lionel Thomas
Saint Leo University, Saint Leo, Florida, United States

The impact of generational differences among working professionals in sport

Dr. Leon J. Mohan, Dr. Dene Williamson and Dr. Lionel Thomas

Abstract
Sport is one of the prominent facets in our society with billions of dollars pumped into this industry annually. The wins and losses stretch beyond the playing field or playing court. Sport organizations may thrive as a result of these wins and losses but also thrive because of the leadership of their management teams. The purpose of this study is to find how the sport industry can create an organizational culture that embraces and supports the attitudes of a multigenerational workforce that includes members from three different generations that currently make up 92% of the workforce: the Baby Boomer Generation, Generation X, and Generation Y.

Keywords: Multigenerational, sport business, baby boomer, generation X, generation Y

Introduction
Americans love sports (Brubaker & Austin, 1992) [2]. When one contemplates the role leaders plays in the sport industry, one's mind would automatically shift toward the idea of player and coach (Hoye, 2004) [10]. The idea set forth here is to shift from thinking merely of the players and coaches of an organization to thinking about the nucleus of the organization: the administrative staff. The visible aspect of the sport industry are the coaches and players, however their role may not be possible without individuals who have specialized managerial skills in the sport industry. Administrators who work in the sport industry have key roles by overseeing, organizing, and planning sports and fitness activities (Heitzmann, 2004) [9]. The sport industry cannot neglect to understand the impact of the different attitudes of three generations working together. Understanding the generation gap and attitudes in the workforce includes understanding generational differences with a desire to strengthen work relationships among employees (Sessa, Kabacoff, Deal, & Brown, 2007) [22, 4].

For the purpose of this research, three generations will be considered: the Baby Boomer Generation (those born between 1946 and 1964), Generation X (those born between 1965 and 1981), and Generation Y (those born between 1982 and 2000) (Kupperschmidt, 2000) [14].

Generational differences and attitudes in the workforce
Northouse (2007) [18] defined leadership as "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (p. 166). Leaders dealing with different generations simultaneously are going to have a difficult road ahead of them as they work to create a cooperative workforce. For those individuals who are part of the Baby Boomer Generation, understanding and guiding Generations X and Generation Y will be a challenge. Similarly, those who are part of Generations X and Generation Y who have accepted leadership roles, are overseeing employees old enough to be their parents. Members of Generation X may not feel comfortable supervising either the Baby Boomer Generation or Generation Y (Kunreuther, 2007) [13].

Generational differences have not been an issue in the past because the Baby Boomer Generation were in charge of leading and delegating tasks to younger employees. Today a more multifaceted work environment exists, a workplace where younger employees are leading those of the Baby Boomer Generation and must be sensitive to potential age-related issues in order to be effective leaders (Stauffer, 2003) [24].

Correspondence
Dr. Leon J. Mohan
Saint Leo University, Saint Leo, Florida, United States

Twenge of San Diego State University indicated that there have been a number of articles and books published on how generations vary, but there has been very little statistical analysis with speculation regarding these differences (Bryner, 2010) [3]. Understanding attitudes and beliefs in the workforce is important because the potential confusion, accusations, and aggravation can be directly linked with how each generation views the concept of work (Ansoorian, Good, & Samuelson, 2003) [1].

Managers and leaders must take the initiative to value and make use of the strengths and attitudes in their multi-generation workforce. Salopek (2006) [21] stated that "this multigenerational workforce has major implications for organizations and, in particular, for managers and leaders who must harness the diverse talents of these groups to operate productively" (p. 22). Also supporting this theory, Lovely (2008) [15] indicated, "cross-age differences are more glaring as administrators witness generational lines being drawn in the sand over work ethic, collaboration, job assignments and compensation" (p. 8). Generational attitudes have much influence on how people are perceived in the workplace. Having an understanding of what individuals from different generations like and dislike will assist in motivating, retaining, training, and recruiting of workers (Nicholas, 2009) [17].

When discussing generational differences, Kunreuther (2007) [13] explored the involvement of older and younger people in organizations. Kunreuther found the following:
Many of the same qualities: commitment, concern, energy, interest and a strong belief in justice. However, differences are evident between those born in the Baby Boomer Generation and those who identify with Generation X with respect to their motivations to enter social change work, their concerns about the work/personal life divide and their views of the future. Understanding these differences can help build strong leadership for the future.

Additional information from Downing (2006) [5] supported the same findings. A 2001 survey found, "One-third of respondents said they were often offended at work by someone from another generation and a quarter of respondents said their generation is not viewed positively by the other generations" (p. 3).

Leadership qualities and attitudes may cause barriers in the workforce. Directors from the Baby Boomer Generation have a tendency to follow a more structured, corporate organization. The ideas from subordinates may be voiced and heard, but not necessarily put into practice. Younger directors clearly want to run organizations differently. Generations X and Y believe in having more than one person administering the organization. They believe in leadership teams, co-directors, and less hierarchy. Research supports that Generations X and Y are both feedback oriented, team orientated, and take opportunities to seek advice from peers (Downing, 2006; Moody, 2008) [16, 5].

An overall view of intergenerational attitudes in the workforce includes an examination of how these generations view their work. Lovely (2008) [15] explored these intergenerational leadership attitudes and concluded that the Baby Boomer Generation have a "strong need to prove self to others; may manipulate rules to get own way; [are] deferential to authority; put in long hours; and value product over process." The Gen X group, "strive for balance, freedom and flexibility; dislike for school politics, titles, rigid structures; expect to have fun at work; prefer minimal supervision; [are] good at multi-tasking; and value process over product"

(Lovely, 2008, p. 9) [15]. Characteristics of Generation Y include being "anxious to fit in; respectful of authority, but unafraid to approach leaders with concerns; [are] exceptional at multi-tasking; prefer career ladders and standardized pay" (Lovely, 2008, p. 9) [15].

Based on the research by Deal (2007) [4] and the Center for Creative Leadership, 10 principles were established. These are (a) all generations have similar values; (b) everyone wants respect; (c) trust matters; (d) people want leaders who are credible and trustworthy; (e) organizational politics is a problem regardless of how old or young one is; (f) no one really likes change; (g) loyalty depends on the context, not on the generation; (h) it is as easy to retain a younger person as an older one if leaders choose their interactions well; (i) everyone wants to learn more than anything else; (j) most people want a coach.

Deal (2007) [4] indicated throughout the research that the generation gap at work lacks substance and should be considered more as an appearance. This research indicates that people really want the same things from work despite their generational cohort. Additionally, Deal (2007) [4] indicated that people from all generational cohorts can work effectively together or manage people despite their generational cohort.

The purpose of one empirical study was to examine possible differences in the career needs of members of the Baby Boomer Generation and Generation X which addressed if there are real differences between them in their desire to be genuine, balanced, and challenged in the workplace (Sullivan, Forret, Carraher, & Mainiero, 2009) [26]. Little information has established how generational differences may impact work attitudes and behaviors in the workforce. The research team used the Kaleidoscope Career Model, which provided a theoretical framework for the examination of generational differences in workplace attitudes (Sullivan et al., 2009) [26].

The study sought to find if Generation X has a greater desire for authenticity, balance, and challenge than the Baby Boomer Generation. A total of 982 usable surveys were received from professionals located across the United States. Findings from the study indicated that Generation X did have a significantly higher desire for authenticity than the Baby Boomer Generation. This supported previous research that indicated that Generation X is more focused on obtaining a job that they enjoy and that allows them to communicate their personal morals (Sullivan et al., 2009) [26]. The findings also indicated that if there was a good fit between Generation X personnel and the organizational goals of the company they worked for, they were much more likely to stay with the organization. Additionally, members of Generation X had a significantly higher desire for balance between work and family in the workforce than those of the Baby Boomer Generation. As for the research pertaining to being challenged at work, both the Baby Boomer Generation and Generation X felt that being challenged was important (Sullivan et al., 2009) [26].

Govitvatana (2001) [7] conducted a study that focused on the generation gaps in the workforce between the Baby Boomer Generation and Generation X. The study was distributed to 100 human-resource managers who lived in the Milwaukee, Wisconsin area. A total of 57 questionnaires were returned and analyzed. One objective of the study was to see if there were different motivations between members of the Baby Boomer Generation and those of Generation X. A second objective looked to see if there were effective strategies to decrease the gap between the Baby Boomer Generation and Generation X.

Govitvatana (2001) [7] explored ways to determine if there is an effective strategy to decrease the gap between members of the Baby Boomer Generation and those of Generation X. Respondents participating in the study were asked to identify any effective strategies that could decrease the existing generational gap. The top responses from both groups agreed that communication is the primary way to decrease the existing generational gap. Additional ways to decrease the generational gap included better team building, coaching, and mentoring. Respondents to the survey included that management style is one of the most important aspects to achieving positive results, despite the age of the employees (Govitvatana, 2001) [7].

Cooperation in the workforce is often questionable because of enormous differences between the generations. One example is change caused by technological advances. The Baby Boomer Generation is feeling "the threat of a new generation fluent in technology and willing to work 24/7. Corporate America seems to value experience less … but these younger, untested companies/employees have so much potential" (Kantrowitz, King, Downey, & Scott, 2000, p. 56) [12].

The Baby Boomer Generation sees Generation X as slackers, as a group that is unwilling to work beyond a 40-hour week, questioning their "loyalty" to their job. Members of Generation X think it is acceptable to leave work to attend family or social events but also finds it acceptable to check, and answer work e-mail while at home or through their wireless devices (Kupperschmidt, 2000) [14].

Generational differences are not always valued in an organization and leaders may neglect to address these differences. Often, failure occurs in the company before any type of action is taken. Leaders do not initiate open discussion between generations and neglect to understand the importance of retention on many levels. Many managers fail to recognize when they should redirect negative attitudes. Often, managers do not use the entire staff as active participants in planning and development. Leaders in the workforce must look at overall conditions and realize that they are responsible not just for recruitment, but also retention of employees from all generations. The positive attitudes of each generation should not be overlooked and should be used in the management setting (Sessa *et al.*, 2007) [22].

Many companies are taking the initiative to assist their senior-level employees with leadership-development programs (Salopek, 2006) [21]. Managers are taking initiative to "address generational differences head-on" (Kupperschmidt, 2000, p. 71) [14]. These same managers are willing to value generational differences and view them as strengths in the organization. Managers must "find ways to attract, motivate, and retain all of their bright, engaged workers, regardless of generation" (Downing, 2006, p. 5) [5].

Many organizations focus on the need for intergenerational leadership programs. These programs focus on attitudes and create a sense of cooperation and understanding across generations. These programs "extend beyond traditional mentoring strategies to include significant and structured interaction and monitored progress" (Phelan, 2005, p. 785) [19]. One particular study explored the generational differences in financial institutions, by understanding commitment, employee satisfaction, and motivation. This research found that there are generational differences in the workforce between generational cohorts. Members of the Baby Boomer Generation struggled to retain employees from Generation Y if they were not promoted quickly (Moody, 2008) [16].

Moody (2008) [16] explored whether there were any key factors for increasing commitment and motivation, and enhancing employee satisfaction in supervising the Baby Boomer Generation, Generation X, and Generation Y. The study goal was to seek a better understanding of the following questions: (a) To what extent are the differences with regard to commitment, motivation, and employee satisfaction at work among individuals classified as the Baby Boomer Generation, Generation X, or Generation Y? (b) To what extent do relationships, either positive or negative, exist between generation or age and commitment, motivation, or employee satisfaction? and (c) What, if any, are the actions that managers can take to more effectively manage an age-diverse workforce? (Moody, 2008) [16].

The intent of the research was to provide managers of all ages and at all levels of the organization ways to more effectively use individuals from different generations in their organization and in all industries (Moody, 2008) [16]. A mixed-method approach was used to gather information. For the quantitative aspect of the research, a survey was distributed to employees of nine financial institutions. Of the 365 surveys distributed, a total of 201 surveys were used. The second part of the research consisted of a qualitative aspect. A total of 9 bank officers holding managerial positions were interviewed (Moody, 2008) [16].

The independent variables were the three generations surveyed and the dependent variables were employee satisfaction, commitment, and motivation. Results pertaining to employee satisfaction indicated that benefits were statistically more important for the Baby Boomer Generation and Generation X compared to Generation Y. Advancement was more important to members of Generation Y than to members of the Baby Boomer Generation (Moody, 2008) [16]. Results pertaining to commitment indicated that the Baby Boomer Generation had a greater commitment to their organization than both Generation X and Generation Y. The Baby Boomer Generation indicated that they would be "happy" to stay at their current company until retirement (Moody, 2008) [16].

Understanding motivational factors was the final variable explored. Results from the research indicated that members of Generation X believed it is of great importance to be able to speak openly and freely, compared to how Generation Y felt. Generation X placed much importance on having the freedom to be creative and wanted their voice to be heard, despite whether it was received well or poorly (Moody, 2008) [16].

Moody (2008) [16] indicated that more research must take place to assist managers to understand the Baby Boomer Generation, Generation X, and Generation Y employees with regard to job satisfaction, commitment, and motivation. Additional studies explored the generational cohorts and their attitudes toward work-related issues. One study of great interest to the researcher did not focus on one group or industry, but focused on a broader picture incorporating individuals who are teachers, factory workers, service workers, and hospital workers (Fletcher, Roberts, Gibson, Gibson, Cooke, Eldridge, Mundy, 2009) [6].

This particular research was conducted by faculty from Midway College, Business and Teacher Education Divisions. A total of 1,000 surveys were distributed to individuals who worked as teachers, factory workers, service workers, office workers, or hospital workers. Of the 1,000 surveys distributed, 834 were used as completed surveys for the analysis (Fletcher *et al.*, 2009) [6]. The quantitative survey consisted of 35 questions that explored generational attitudes toward retirement, technology, diversity, formality, and

loyalty. A 5-point Likert scale was used to analyze responses from each participant (Fletcher *et al*., 2009) [6].

Results concluded and ranked the top 10 values of each generation. Although some values were ranked the same between generations, many values were not ranked as a priority among the three generations. For example, all three generations ranked that they value their organization's loyalty to their employees as their primary value (Fletcher *et al*., 2009) [6]. The Baby Boomer Generation assess diversity as having great importance in the workforce and it was ranked as the seventh most important item. Generation X rated this as their Number 3 item of importance while Generation Y indicated this was the second most important value in the workforce (Fletcher *et al*., 2009) [6].

Results from the administered survey indicated that Generation Y valued "close supervision" compared to both members of the Baby Boomer Generation and Generation X. Although there were differences between the three generations surveyed, the Baby Boomer Generation, Generation X, and Generation Y all agreed that the following were of great importance in the workforce: performance appraisals, following the chain of command, good relationships with colleagues, and comfort working with a diverse group of people (Fletcher *et al*., 2009) [6].

The reviewed literature supported issues concerning intergenerational attitudes in the workforce. Individuals who are part of the workforce as either subordinates or leaders must take notice of the attitudes of employees surrounding issues and work to create an effective and cooperative way for all generations to work amiably together (Fletcher *et al*., 2009) [6]. Although each generation rated their top 10 values, findings from the research also indicated that all three generations understand the importance of maintaining positive relationships in the workforce (Fletcher *et al*., 2009) [6].

It is imperative for organizations to understand intergenerational differences and attitudes that shape individuals in work-related issues. Communicating and discussing differences assists employees' to refrain from complaining and behaving negatively, and enhances the ability to assist with different perspectives effectively (Kupperschmidt, 2000) [14]. Leaders in an organization should also assure their employees that they understand how being part of a different generation influences one's beliefs and attitudes about issues such as job security, loyalty to their employer, and their own interpretation of what is considered necessary to be a leader in an organization (Kupperschmidt, 2000) [14].

For the purpose of the present study, examination of the sport industry must be explored to understand generational differences in attitude in the workforce. Educational institutions that offer sport degrees were explored. Jobs and careers in sport management were considered as an integral part of this research.

Research Methodology

Based on the review of the literature, it is clear that a paramount problem exists in blending the generational workforce (Kunreuther, 2007; Lovely, 2008; Salopek, 2006; Sessa *et al*., 2007; Sullivan *et al*., 2009) [13, 21, 15, 22, 26]. Many managers want to address the generational gap that is plaguing the workforce, but know that they are unprepared to address these challenges (Kunreuther, 2007; Sessa *et al*., 2007) [13, 22].

The author has a strong interest in the field of sport administration. The information that will be obtained for this analysis can be applied and used in this field. Little information has been found pertaining to the intergenerational workforce in the sport-management industry. The study investigates the research question of what attitudes and preferences are similar in different generations working in the sport industry?

Participants

The survey was distributed via e-mail to approximately 600 sport-administration alumni of a small Catholic University located in the southeast region of the United States. Alumni who are currently working in the sport industry were encouraged to participate in the research. Each participant is part of a designated generational cohort: the Baby Boomer Generation (1946–1964), Generation X (1965–1981), and Generation Y (1982–2000). Each participant was asked their year of birth, which in return linked them to a designated generational cohort.

Instrument

The researcher modified and used an existing instrument. The orginal source for the instrumentation was developed by Midway College Faculty from the Business and Teacher Education Divisions, located in Midway, Kentucky. The original research by Midway College indicated that they eliminiated two questions from their survey. Instead of eliminiating the same two questions for this research, the questions where simply modifed. The word "impromptu" was changed to "unexpected" for two survey questions. Midway College granted permission to the researcher to use the existing survey for this research.

A total of 44 questions were asked of participants. Eight questions pertained to demographic information, while a total of 36 questions used a 5-point Likert scale that focused on the exploration of differences between generational attitudes toward work in the sport industry. These attitudes cover the scope of retirement, technology, diversity, formality, and loyalty of each generational cohort. The following demographics were asked in the first 8 questions: gender, age, state, highest level of education, current sport environment, and title of current position. The 36 questions that were based on the 5-point likert scale pertained to pertinent literature, which suggests that there are differences among the generations' attitudes toward loyalty, diversity, formality, technology, and retirement (Fletcher *et al*., 2009) [6]. The scale contained five possible responses from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). Two open-ended questions allowed participants to indicate what efforts can be made to close the generation gap in the workplace.

Procedures

A pilot study was conducted using a convenience sample of professionals currently working in the sport industry. A total of five participants were surveyed for feedback on face validity. They were asked to respond and provide feedback regarding the ease of accessing and taking the online survey, the length of time required to complete the survey, the use of language, and the clarity of the instrument. There were no indications from the pilot test that any survey questions needed to be changed or adjusted for purposes of clarity.

For purposes of anonymity, the researcher did not contact the sport-administration alumni directly. A letter of consent outlining the purpose of the study and inviting alumni to participate was sent by e-mail by the Sport administration Graduate Program and Internship Coordinator to all

individuals in the sport-management alumni database. Participants who read the body of the e-mail and clicked on the provided link implied their consent to participate in the survey and were directed to the website that hosted the survey. Participants who moved forward by clicking the link spent approximately 10–15 minutes completeing the survey.

A web-based program was selected by the researcher as a way to collect survey responses. Survey Monkey, a survey tool found at http://www.surveymonkey.com, is a web based site which allows researchers to collect data from participants and allows each participant to remain anynomous throughout the research process.

SurveyMonkey also allowed the researcher to not only post the questionnaire, but to monitor and export results into Microsoft Excel or into a statisical-analysis tool directly from the web-based application. For this particular study, the questionnaire was comprised of a total of 44 questions. Eight questions pertaining to demographic information and 36 questions were based on a 5-point Likert scale and focused on the exploration of differences between generational attitudes toward work in the sport industry. The survey was designed to take participants between 5 and 10 minutes to complete and was posted online for 2 weeks. Participants could access the link at anytime during the 2-week time period. Participants had a 2-week window of opportunity to complete the survey from the time the first e-mail was sent.

All responses were collected anonomously through the SurveyMonkey Web Link Collector. As surveys were completed, they remained anonymous because there was no name or e-mail associated with a completed survey. The researcher established administrative settings on SurveyMonkey that did not enable the researcher to save the Internet Protocol addresses from participants. The researcher also established administrative settings so that no respondent's name or e-mail address was stored, ulitmately making this quantitative research both cofidential and anonymous.

The researcher logged on daily to SurveyMonkey and tracked the response rate. A response summary was reviewed and printed each day. After the survey had been posted for 1 week, a follow-up reminder was sent by the Sport Administration Graduate Program and Internship Coordinator in order to increase the response rate; this e-mail encouraged those who had not taken the survey to participate. Once the 2-week time period had been reached, the survey was taken offline and the provided link no longer worked if accessed by a potential participant.

Completed online surveys using the Survey Monkey interface were used for the data collection. Surveys were exported directly from Survey Monkey into Statistical Analysis Software (SAS) version 9.1, for evaluation.

Method of data analysis
Frequencies of responses were tabulated based on the survey questions. The mean, standard deviation, and median were calculated and analyzed with a 5-point Likert scale. Strongly Agree was considered 5, Agree was 4, Neutral was 3, Disagree was 2, and Strongly Disagree was considered 1. For single questions, to establish if any differences exist among generational cohorts, a Kruskal–Wallis test for the one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was performed because it is more robust to the potential nonnormality than the F test.

The sum of these questions was also calculated and the Tukey's method for simultaneous pair-wise comparison was implemented.

Particpants were asked two open-ended questions; there were 68 respondents. Responses were anaylzed and commonalities or trends established. The qualitative questions were analyzed through categorization and comparison of major themes that emerged after reading the results from the open-ended questions on the survey. Themes were compared to one another and some specific examples and quotations were provided to substantiate major themes. Some participants' comments were included to support analysis or show the development of major themes.

The researcher analyzed the qualitative questions through categorization and comparison of major themes that emerged after reading the results from the open-ended questions on the survey. Themes were compared to one another and some specific examples and quotations provided emphasis for major themes. Participants' comments have been included to support analysis or show the development of major themes.

Results and data analysis
This study focused on the generation gap in the workplace, specifically in the sports industry, comparing the Baby Boomer Generation (1946–1964), Generation X (1965–1981), and Generation Y (1982–2000) employees. A survey consisting of 46 questions was distributed to alumni of a well-known sport-administration program. Eight questions sought to identify demographic information of participants; a total of 36 questions that were answered using a 5-point Likert scale pertained to their attitudes toward retirement, technology, diversity, formality, and loyalty in the workplace; two open-ended questions fullfilled the qualitiative component of the research.

This section will address demographic characterisics of participants of each cohort that participated in the research. The following research question will also be addressed:

Research Question: What attitudes and preferences are similar in different generations working in the sport industry?

A total number of 140 questionnaires (the response rate is about 23.33%) were completed through SurveyMonkey, the web-based survey collector. A total of 30 questionnaires (21.43%) were not analyzed for the statistical research because those participants are not currently working in the sport industry. For the purpose of this research, a total of 110 (78.57%) usable questionnaires were statistically analyzed. Surveys received were exported from SurveyMonkey, entered into a data file, and analyzed through Statistical Analysis Software (SAS) version 9.1.

Quantitative data analysis
The total number of respondents was 110. The Cronbach's α is 0.78 (raw) or 0.79 (standardized), which suggests a fairly high internal consistency of the instruments. The data regarding the gender of respondants is presented in Table 1.

Table 2 presents the data of respondents' generational cohort and distribution of subjects' age categorized in cohort groups.

Table 3 presents the data of respondents' highest level of education. The Baby Boomer Generation cohort had 5 respondents with a doctoral degree, whereas the Generation X cohort had 6 with a doctoral degree and Generation Y had 2 with a doctoral degree.

Table 4 presents the data of respondents' sport environment that best describes the organization where they are employed. Note that the highest number of respondents work in a collegiate environment.

Table 5 presents the data of respondents' organizational level that best describes their position in the sport organization they

work for. More than two thirds of respondents work in middle-management and upper-management positions.

Research Question: What attitudes and preferences are similar in different generations working in the sport industry?

Table 6 presents respondents' responses based on the 5-point Likert Scale. The questions were ranked according to their p values, which were generated by Kruskal-Wallis test. These p values are all above .05, indicating that the Baby Boomer Generation, Generation X, and Generation Y had no significant differences in their responses.

Discussion

The researcher explored the generational differences in attitudes in the workplace among three generational cohorts who work in the sport industry. Based on the findings and theoretical framework from the literature, the following discussion addresses the three research questions of the study. This study shall be considered the first to explore generational differences in attitudes in the workplace that focus solely on the sport industry. No other research or literature pertains directly to the sport industry. Due to the small number of participants, this is a descriptive study that points the way for further research. Specifically, the study examined the research question of "What attitudes and preferences are similar in different generations working in the sport industry?"

The research question sought to examine the similarities of attitudes of members of the Baby Boomer Generation (1946–1964), Generation X (1965–1981), and Generation Y (1982–2000) working in the sport industry. Although there were many similarities between the generational cohorts (see Table 6), there were a number of survey questions that provided insight into specific generational attitudes and how they compare to previous research.

Each generational cohort "strongly agreed" that job security is a "top priority" in their sport organization. The Baby Boomer generation has been labeled as "the largest proportion of workaholics in history" (Sessa *et al*., 2007) [22], thus implying that having a workaholic mentality secures one's job. As for Generation X and Generation Y, witnessing the downward spiral of the economy, having job security of any type is important.

For the survey questions "I prefer group projects to individual projects" and "Teams are more effective in accomplishing work projects than individuals" are examples of what the research indicates all three generations consider to be important. Downing (2006) [5] stated that Generation Y is "both feedback oriented and team oriented" (p. 6). However, the research conducted for this study indicated that there is no significant difference between the cohorts.

All three generational cohorts indicated that having a "balance between work and family" in the workplace is important. Previous research indicated that Generation X has a higher desire for balance in the workplace while this is not considered something significant for the Baby Boomer Generation or Generation Y (Kunreuther, 2007; Lovely, 2008; Sullivan *et al*., 2009) [13, 15, 26]. This research indicated that all three generational cohorts feel that having a balance between work and family is important, regardless of their generational cohort. Each generational cohort indicated that the number of vacation days and having time off from work is a strong incentive in the workplace.

The findings from this section of the study may be due to the possibility that working in the sport industry has different demands and different hours than does a standard 40-hour work week. Many jobs in the sport industry include working

irregular hours and extended hours, implying that finding a balance between their job and their family is important.

Each generational cohort considered themselves loyal to the sport organization at their site of employment, yet despite this loyalty, they can consider job opportunities at another sport organization. Additionally, each generation felt that it was important to "follow the appropriate chain of command." One of the reasons that those working for a sport organziation can still consider themselves to be a loyal to a sport organization while exploring other opportunities may be because of the vast number of opportunities in the sport industry. As stated before, the sport industry is one of the fastest and largest growing industries in the United States, providing many opportunities for individuals, regardless of their generational cohort (*Street Smith's Sports Business Journal,* 2009). Those from the Baby Boomer Generation, and Generation X hold the majority of positions, but as the Baby Boomer Generation begin to retire from their positions in the sport industry, those from both Generation X and Generation Y will use the vacancies to advance their career.

This study suggested that those currently working for a sport organziation indicated that having a "strong voice in decision making" while "being creative" is important in their current position. All three generational cohorts "Agree" that this is a key attitude to have while working in the sport industry. This information coincides with previous research that Generation Y is unafraid to approach leaders with their concncerns, and that Generation X feels it is important for their voice to be heard, regardless of whether it is percieved in a positive way by their coworkers (Lovely, 2008; Moody, 2008) [15, 16].

One particular survey question, "In general, I prefer to communicate in person or by telephone, rather than by electronic methods (e-mail, text, etc.)" indicated that each generational cohort had no specific preference as to how information was delieved in their workplace. The Baby Boomer Generation, Generation X, and Generation Y all answered this question in a similar way, indicating that they were "Neutral" about the way information was delieevered in their sport organzation. This indicates to the researcher that each generation feels that communicating through the use of technology in their sport organization is not of paramount importance. This does not fit with current research that the Baby Boomer Generation is resisting technology in the workplace (Fletcher *et al*., 2009; Joseph & Stone, 2005; Rosen, 2004; Stein & Berardinelli, 2009) [6, 11, 20, 25]. Therefore, additional investigation should be conducted on the attitudinal differences toward technology in the workplace. Specific questions based on technological advances or trends in the workplace should be considered for future quantitiative studies.

The research from this study clarified that there are many similarties between generational cohorts and how their attitudes working for a sport organization are similar regardless of generation membership. The themes include having similar attitudes that pertain to formality, loyalty, technology, and finding a balance between work and family in the workplace.

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