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Trust as an antecedent of Employee Engagement

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Abstract

A cross-sectional, study that looks at the relationship between trust, age, and employee engagement during organizational change. Initially focusing on the importance of trust as an antecedent of engagement, it further investigates how age influences perceptions of trust in engagement. Despite the original intention to examine technological change, organizational restructuring became the focal point due to its greater impact. The study uses qualitative analysis to investigate stakeholder perspectives through semi-structured interviews. While younger employees as well as older employees show signs of less engagement and trust depending on the managers, both groups have a high level of trust in their co-workers.

Keywords: Trust, Vertical trust, Horizontal trust, Age, Employee engagement

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List of Abbreviations

SHRM	Society for Human Resource Management
UWES	Utrecht Work Engagement Scale
LMX	Leader-Member Exchange
GWA	The Development of the Gallup Workplace Audit
SET	Social Exchange Theory
TAM	Technology Acceptance Model
TRA	Theory of Reasoned Action
PU	Perceived Usefulness
PEU	Perceived Ease of Use
IU	Intention to Use
PEOU	Perceived ease of use
AU	Actual Use
EE	Employee Engagement
IS	Information Systems
BI	Behavioural Intention
TRA	Theory of Reasoned Action
IS	Information Systems
ADS	Airbus defence and space
TA	Thematic analysis
PCI	Problem Centred Interview
EE	Employee Engagement

Chapter 1. Introduction

Employee engagement, often known as worker engagement, is a business management term. An “engaged employee” is one who is fully involved in, and enthusiastic about their work, and will act in a way that furthers their organization's interests (Swarnalatha and Prasanna 2013). Kahn (1990, p. 694) was one of the earliest researchers on the topic of engagement and defined it as, “the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances”. When an employee is engaged, they have a greater sense of ownership and are motivated to go above and beyond for their co-workers, clients, and the company as a whole (Saks 2006). On the other hand, for the majority of employees, participation in planned organizational change is a lengthy, emotionally taxing, stressful, and exhausting process (Buono et al. 1989; Fugate et al. 2008; Kiefer 2005). Organizational change “is the process of constructing and sharing new meanings and interpretations of organizational activities” (Tsoukas 2005, p.98).

Various studies have explored a number of antecedents that lead to changes in employees' engagement with trust being a significant influence. Whitener et al. (1998, p.513) state that “trust involves some level of dependency on the other party so that the outcomes of one individual are influenced by the actions of another”. When a trustee realizes that a trustor has taken a considerable risk in trusting a person, in return this person tends to be motivated to engage in a trustworthy manner (Das and Teng 1998). In this context, when an employee realizes that their manager has taken a considerable risk in trusting them, they tend to be motivated to engage in a trustworthy manner. The author further hinted at the idea that trust helps to increase the perceived likelihood of the desired engagement and concluded stating that when a partner can be completely trusted, there is no need to control how they engage. Only when there is a lack of sufficient trust does control become an issue. A study by Downey et al. (2015) investigates the relationship between diversity practices and workplace wellbeing, specifically engagement, and claims that this relationship is mediated by the trust climate, the strength of which is increased when employees are engaged at the workplace. The findings showed that diversity practices are linked to a climate of trust, which is positively correlated with employee engagement. The above studies consistently demonstrate that trust plays a central role in influencing employee engagement. We see trust as an important influence that shapes the employees' engagement in a variety of contexts, thereby facilitating positive outcomes and successes. In this context, the managers' trust pertains to the level of trust that employees have in their respective managers or leaders, further affecting their engagement. A study by Bal et al. (2008) demonstrates a relationship between age and the reaction to psychological contract breaches. According to lifespan theories of ageing, the author predicts that as people get older and become more adept at controlling their emotions, they will react to violations of their psychological contracts with less emotion. Similarly in the same context, another study by Bal et al. (2011) looked at the effects of age and trust on the connection between procedural justice in turnover. It was discovered that younger workers responded more strongly to unfair treatment while older workers who had high levels of trust in their manager had weaker reactions. Lastly a study by Kordbacheh et al. (2014) focuses on the differences between older and younger workers in order to provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between employee engagement and age. The study's findings show that older workers' levels of engagement are less influenced by the presence of intrinsically motivating work values. However, younger workers are more impacted by low intrinsic motivation, which lowers their levels of engagement.

Although previous research has identified several factors influencing employees' engagement, it is still unknown how employees of different age groups react to managers' trust. Trust has been investigated extensively but age and trust together are neglected but still important because younger employees may not rely on managers' trust, while older employees actively seek it. Existing research has primarily focused on employees' trust from the employees' or managers' perspective, ignoring the crucial role that employees' ages play in developing trust in their managers. The current study

aims to close this gap by examining how employees' ages affect their trust in managers and its subsequent implications for employees' engagement during organizational change. Lastly, current research has predominantly utilized quantitative research methods, concentrating on various antecedents of employees' engagement (Jabeen and Rahim 2021) (Wang and Hsieh 2013) (Eldor and Harpaz 2016) (James et al. 2011). However, the current study departs from this trend by adopting qualitative research methods, specifically exploring the relationship between trust and age groups among employees, which is a novel approach in the field. A qualitative study would provide in-depth insights into the nuanced relationship between different ages of employees and trust in their managers in the context of employees' engagement during organizational change. By employing qualitative methods such as interviews, the current study would aim to capture the specific ways in which different age groups perceive, build, and respond to trust in their managers during organizational change. This approach allows for a richer exploration of the complexities involved, shedding light on age-related factors that may not be evident through quantitative methods alone.

Therefore, the following research question is formulated: How is trust and age related to employees' engagement during organizational change?

To answer the research question, first, a literature study is carried out to completely understand how managers' trust relates to different ages of employees' engagement. Using this literature, the empirical case is conducted by analysing how the employee' engagement is at a company (Airbus Defence and Space) using the technology acceptance model. The empirical case is conducted by interviews with a set of employees. In particular qualitative research with semi-structured interviews with features to strengthen the validity of the findings the focus being on employees and manager in the organization. User data from interviews will be used to analyse and evaluate the problematic areas. The reason why a qualitative approach is chosen is because it gives a unique depth of understanding which is difficult to gain from a quantitative study. A qualitative study seeks to comprehend the intricacies of unstructured information, which are often characterized by intricate relationships between the chosen variables in a business context. Such research may provide greater insight into why certain change implementation plans have not been successful and yield new strategies for addressing issues within organizations (Myers and Avison 2002).

There are six chapters in the current study, each with a distinct function. The study and the research's context are introduced in the first chapter. Relevant ideas from the theoretical underpinning are presented and covered in the literature review in the second chapter. Furthermore, the second chapter also consists of the research model. The third chapter then describes the methodology used for the current study's research. A thorough presentation of the results is given in the fourth chapter. The fifth chapter then dives deep into a thorough analysis and discussion of the results. The sixth and final chapter, which offers a summary and conclusion of the study, presents the closing arguments.

Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Background and significance of the study - Research problem and objectives - Research question
Literature Review & Research Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Theoretical foundation and concepts related to employee' engagement - Trust as a factor influencing employee' engagement - Age as a factor influencing employee' engagement & Trust - Theoretical Background of the Research Module & Conceptual Model
Research Method & Data Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research design and approach – Qualitative - Data collection methods - Interviews - Case Study and data analysis techniques
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation of collected data - Findings related to trust and its impact on employee engagement with age
Discussion and Interpretation of Findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interpretation of the results and their implications - Comparison with existing literature - Practical Implications - Discussion of any limitations or challenges faced during the research and Further Research
Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conclusions are drawn from the study

Table 1.1 - Structure of The Paper

Chapter 2.1 Literature Review

2.1.1 Employee engagement during organizational change

Employee engagement is characterized variously by practitioners, organizations, and academic researchers, resulting in significant variances in conceptualization.

Some of the earliest research on engagement was done by William H. Kahn (1990, p. 694), who described it as “the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances.” The cognitive component of employee engagement examines employees' impressions of the organization, its leaders, and working conditions. The emotional component focuses on employees' sentiments toward the business and its leaders, as well as how they perceive each of the three components (physically, cognitively, and emotionally). The physical component of employee engagement refers to individuals' physical attempts to fulfill their tasks. Thus, being involved in an organizational function entails being present both physically and psychologically.

Similarly, Kahn (1990, p. 700) defines engagement as “the simultaneous employment and expression of a person's 'preferred self' in task behaviours that promote connections to work and to others, personal presence (physical, cognitive, and emotional), and active, full role performances”.

Each form of interaction builds on the one before it, eventually culminating with complete engagement. Schaufeli et al. (2002, p. 74) defined Employee engagement as “...a positive, fulfilling work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption”. Vigour is described as having a lot of energy and being eager to work hard. Dedication entails becoming thoroughly interested in one's job and experiencing a sense of significance, excitement, inspiration, pride, and challenge. The third component, absorption, requires entire attention on one's task to the point that time seems to fly rapidly and it is difficult to disengage oneself from work. The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) is one such tool that assesses these three dimensions - vigour, dedication, and absorption (Eriksson Hallberg 2005).

Robinson et al. (2004, p. 2) define engagement as “a positive attitude held by the employee towards the organization and its values. An engaged employee is aware of the business context and works with colleagues to improve performance within the job for the benefit of the organization. The organization must develop and nurture engagement, which is a two-way relationship between employer and employee”. They claim that engagement coincides with commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour, but it is a two-way street and “one step up” from commitment.

Engagement has also been broadly defined as a state of significant emotional and cognitive investment, and it is widely accepted across firms and cultures (Harter et al. 2003). Furthermore, Harter et al. identify engagement as “individual's involvement and satisfaction with as well as enthusiasm for work” and thus provide a conceptual link between engagement and measures of employee satisfaction (Harter et al. 2002, p. 269).

Dell Inc. defines employee engagement by stating, “To compete today, companies need to win over the minds (rational commitment) and the hearts (emotional commitment) of employees in ways that lead to extraordinary effort” (Vance 2006, p. 5). Seijts and Crim (2006) confirm that employee engagement has an impact on people's mindsets. Seijts and Crim (2006, p. 1) state that “an engaged employee is a person who is fully involved in, and enthusiastic about, his or her work.” Interestingly, Rutledge (2009, p. 14), author of *Getting Engaged: The New Workplace Loyalty*, states that really engaged individuals are drawn to and inspired by their jobs “I want to do this”, committed “I am dedicated to the success of what I am doing”, and captivated “I love what I am doing”. Employees

who are engaged care about the company's future and are prepared to go above and beyond the call of duty to ensure the organization's success. In his book, Rutledge recommended that managers should develop retention plans to retain their finest staff. The need to do so is supported by Michaels et al. (2001) book, "The War for Talent", which found that a shortage of talented workers is a growing trend.

As per Saks (2006, p. 601), "employee engagement has been defined as an emotional and intellectual commitment to the organization or the amount of discretionary effort exhibited by employees in their job." Cook (2008, p. 3) defines engagement as "how positively the employee thinks about the organization, feels about the organization, and is proactive about achieving organizational goals for customers, colleagues, and other stakeholders".

Employee engagement essentially assesses employees' satisfaction with their employment, the work environment, and performance level efficiency. Managing positive employee mood may be advantageous to any organization. Employees are more committed to their employers when they have high involvement. Employees who are dynamically engaged are productive for the firm. Organizations with high levels of employee engagement are more productive and beneficial than those with low levels of employee engagement (Khanna 2020).

According to the Gallup (2017) Institute, merely 13% of employees globally are completely involved in their jobs, while the remaining 87% are disengaged, or actively disinterested in their employment. In the latest report, this number has gone up with 15% engaged and the remaining 85% disengaged. According to Moore (2014), the cause of this "disengagement crisis" is insufficient support for employees in achieving significant milestones and realizing personal gains from their accomplishments. Teresa Amabile of Harvard Business School, published in Forbes that company returns and profitability have dropped due to low levels of employee engagement.

Harter et al. (2002) found similar results as those of Saks, in a meta-analysis of data collected by the Gallup organization, citing the strong effects that employee satisfaction and engagement can have on turnover and levels of customer satisfaction and loyalty. A weaker, yet statistically significant, relationship was discovered between measures of engagement and satisfaction and business-level outcomes. According to Mollen and Wilson (2010), the concept of engagement, as defined by the Gallup organization, encompasses an individual's active participation, contentment, and passion for their work, characterized by emotional attachment to colleagues and heightened cognitive awareness. Such a relationship develops over time and produces mutual trust, loyalty, and commitment, but only if the parties follow certain exchange rules (Cropanzano and Mitchell 2005).

There are many factors that can affect engagement. Dhir and Shukla (2018) investigated the impact of demographic factors on employee engagement and performance. Their research emphasizes the importance of personal demographic variables such as gender, education, age, the management level of working managers, and tenure, in addition to organizational demographics such as organizational size, ownership structure, employee engagement, and job role performance. The interconnectedness between these personal and organizational demographic elements highlights their importance. The findings contain some intriguing discoveries that contribute to a better understanding of the engagement process.

Swarnalatha and Prasanna (2013) focus on the various factors that lead to employee engagement and what companies should do to engage their employees. Employee engagement builds a positive attitude towards the organization among its employees. Appelbaum (2000) investigated 15 steel mills, 17 apparel manufacturers, and 10 manufacturers of electronic instruments and imaging

equipment. It was noticed that workers in high-involvement plants demonstrated more positive attitudes, including trust, organizational commitment, and intrinsic enjoyment of their work. Swarnalatha and Prasanna (2013) and Appelbaum (2000) lay the groundwork by emphasizing the positive impact of employee engagement on organizational attitudes, especially trust. This is consistent with the idea that engaged employees are more likely to be positive during organizational change. The current study adds to the existing literature by investigating whether age specifics influence the relationship between engagement and trust during change processes.

On the other hand, disengagement refers to an employee disconnecting from their job roles. This is primarily done to protect themselves psychologically and physically against perceived or real threats. This disconnection can be operationalized as having to separate work life from home or outside activities or beliefs, a failure to find meaning in one's work, a lack of belief in the organization's purpose, or a sense that one is powerless to overcome stagnation and frustration in the workplace (Wollard 2011). Disengagement has an impact on earnings, worker efficiency, security, attrition, theft from employees. Wollard expands on Kahn's idea of disengagement and provides a comprehensive overview of the research on the disengagement. Kahn (1990) investigates how individuals engage or disengage with their selves in work roles, focusing on the psychological conditions of meaningfulness, safety, and availability. Qualitative studies of summer camp counsellors and architecture firm employees were conducted to better understand the factors that influence personal engagement and disengagement at work. The conceptual model developed for the study emphasizes various influences at the individual, interpersonal, group, intergroup, and organizational levels. By focusing on specific moments of role performance, the study sheds light on the complex dynamics of person-role interactions. The research methodology emphasizes the importance of understanding the microcosms of work role performance in order to unravel the complexities of personal engagement and disengagement.

Importance of Employee Engagement in Organizational Change Context

Organizations are cooperative systems that depend on their members' willingness to act in a way that benefits the organization (Barnard 1938). Helms-Mills et al. "organizational change can be defined as an alteration of a core aspect of an organization's operation." (Helms-Mills et al. 2008, p. 4).

Vance (2006) states, "The greater an employee's engagement, the more likely he or she is to 'go the extra mile and deliver excellent on-the-job performance.'" As a result, if employees are involved in a change management initiative, they are more likely to have increased buy-in and better performance, thereby supporting business success.

According to De Jager, "the idea that anyone who questions the need for change has an attitude problem is simply wrong, not only because it discounts past achievements, but also because it makes us vulnerable to indiscriminate and ill-advised change" (De Jager 2001, p. 25). Here we see De Jager advocating for a balanced approach to change management that values past achievements and involves thoughtful consideration of the potential consequences of proposed changes. This approach can help ensure that well-informed changes have a higher chance of success while maintaining a culture of open communication and a collaborative relationship between employees and management.

Kozlowski and Klein (2000) discovered that the manager's function is to promote belief, open communication, respect, and cordiality, all of which are essential for trust. The current study expands on the idea of trust in the context of organizational transformation by identifying particular managerial functions. It expands on previous studies by giving practical components that contribute to employee

engagement, and insights that can be used across age groups. Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005) discovered in their study that the quality of supervision, trust in leadership, job components, pay system, and incentives were all motivators for engaged employees. This is consistent with the larger view that trust is an important factor in encouraging engagement, and their identified motivators contribute to this understanding. This paper expands on earlier research by identifying a variety of factors that might impact participation during organizational transformation, providing a more nuanced perspective that goes beyond a narrow focus on age-related dynamics.

According to Guy and Beaman (2005), the keys to successful change management fall under three categories: organizational competency, alignment & engagement, and competitive pressure.

Organizational competency includes:

- Leadership knowledge and competency,
- Capacity or competence, and
- Resources

The top three variables for alignment and engagement are:

- commitment,
- employee involvement, and
- a relationship between sponsorship and mission & values.

Employee engagement falls under the heading of “alignment and engagement”, emphasizing the importance of commitment, employee involvement, and the link between sponsorship and mission/values in accomplishing effective organizational change. Getting complete employee engagement was rated as crucial to success by nearly three-quarters of the executives surveyed.

Price and Chahal (2006) created a change management method based on literature analysis, case studies, interviews, and personal experience. Their strategy consists of six steps:

- (1) Prepare the organization,
- (2) Develop the vision and the implementation plan,
- (3) Check or review,
- (4) Communicate and involve the workforce,
- (5) Implement, and
- (6) Evaluate.

They realize that the process has to be adjusted, believe that this may happen at the local level, and perceive the entire process as a never-ending loop that finally becomes the catalyst for fresh transformation. Employee involvement is regarded as critical, particularly at step 4. This emphasizes the importance of actively incorporating and engaging the workforce throughout the change process to ensure effective implementation and continued development. Similarly, Saks (2006, p. 614) argues “managers should understand that employee engagement is a long-term and on-going process that requires continued interactions over time to generate obligations and a state of reciprocal interdependence”. We notice that Saks highlights the need for a long-term, continuing process in which managers should connect with staff regularly to create commitments and foster a sense of mutual dependency.

Hornung and Rousseau imply that employees' proactive nature, coupled with on-the-job autonomy, fosters their positive reactions to structural change. Hornung and Rousseau display that there is less

discouragement when employees think they can freely control the way they perform their jobs. When employees assert their work autonomy, it builds up their confidence in accepting wider job roles and their willingness to perform in innovative ways (Hornung and Rousseau 2007).

Anitha (2014) observed in her study that all recognized criteria were predictors of employee engagement and that the interaction between employees and co-workers, as well as the working environment, had a significant impact on employee engagement. The current study extends Anita's research by emphasizing the importance of contextual factors in creating involvement throughout the organizational transformation and providing findings that may be integrated into conversations about the function of trust and age. According to Kim and Koo (2017), Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) has a strong effect on creative behaviour and job engagement, but not on organizational engagement. Job engagement had a large impact on innovative behaviour and organizational engagement, but it had little effect on job performance. Organizational involvement had a considerable impact on job performance, but it had no meaningful influence on innovative behaviour. Innovative behaviour had a substantial impact on job success. In the context of LMX, examining how age dynamics influence trust and creative behaviour during organizational change could provide an expanded view of engagement outcomes.

The Perrin (2003) research on engagement found emotions and rationality as key components. They discovered that emotional aspects are related to an individual's satisfaction in life as well as their sense of inspiration and affirmation from their job and being a part of their organization. According to Cooper (1997), research demonstrates that if emotions are correctly handled at work rather than suppressed, they may promote trust, loyalty, and commitment, as well as significant productivity improvements for individuals, teams, and organizations. As per Towers Perrin, developing engagement is a never-ending activity that is built on the foundation of a meaningful and emotionally satisfying work experience. It is also not about making people happy or even paying them more money. Pay and perks are crucial in attracting and maintaining employees, but they are less significant in engaging employees in their jobs. Strong leadership, responsibility, autonomy, a sense of control over one's surroundings, and possibilities for development were identified as important aspects of engagement; there are no alternatives for these basics. Interestingly, non-profit participation is significantly greater than in any other industry which is studied by Towers Perrin. This seems obvious, considering individuals are drawn to this area for a feeling of meaning rather than for the potential of high salary or wealth creation. This conclusion is also consistent with the many definitions and perspectives on engagement, which identify a 'passion for work' as a critical component (Brim 2002; Holbeche and Springett 2009; Truss et al. 2007). Indeed, the fact that the non-profit industry is usually not a high-paying one, in comparison to the others analysed, emphasizes the notion that it is not feasible to 'buy' involvement in the typical sense, by delivering above-average monetary rewards. In contrast, in another study evaluating the public and private sectors, Truss et al. (2007) surprisingly discovered that the public sector had a more negative work experience, where employees reported more bullying and harassment than those in the private sector, and were less pleased with the opportunities to use their talents.

Work engagement has also been proven to be influenced by personal connections (Crabtree 2005; Moore 2004). According to Moore (2004), family stress and work-related stress may be connected. In a survey conducted by Gallup, employees were asked if they experienced three or more days in the previous month when job-related stress caused them to act poorly with their family or friends. According to the data, 51% of actively disengaged employees answered yes, compared to 35% of not-engaged employees and 18% of engaged employees. Relationships at work have also been proven to influence 'meaningfulness,' which is related to engagement (May et al. 2004). Locke and Taylor (1991) recognized individuals' relatedness requirements, stating that individuals who have

fulfilling relationships with their co-workers sense more significance in their employment. It was also proposed by Kahn (1990), that for some people (e.g., camp counsellors), client interactions might play a part in creating a meaningful work experience.

Employee involvement is recognized as a fundamental function of the efficacy of a change management endeavour in much of the research on change management techniques. Schmidt and Jackson (2005, p. 5) the author of 'Managing Paradoxes in Change: Six Steps for Building a Balanced Culture' state the fourth step to a balanced culture -communication- is "where engagement, ownership, and empowerment are built". Goodman and Rousseau (2004, p. 18) explain the reasoning behind the second part of linkage analysis, which involves mapping the change pathway to identify impediments thereby establishing a "positive feedback system where knowledge sharing improves engagement performance, which leads to more knowledge sharing, which, in turn, accelerates knowledge sharing and the subsequent cycle". In Price and Chahal's (2006, p. 248) six-step method, they include "communications and workforce engagement" as stage four. Guy and Beaman (2005, p. 22) identify "engagement and alignment" as one of the three primary factors for successful change management. Furthermore, commitment is listed as the leading component of engagement and alignment, emphasizing an ongoing issue regarding the crossover of the concepts of engagement and commitment, and highlighting the need for research into the relationship between employee commitment during change management.

2.1.2 Antecedents of Engagement: Trust & Age

2.1.2.1 Trust

We start by exploring the definitions of trust by different authors, starting with Das and Teng who define trust as "Trust is the degree to which the trustor holds a positive attitude toward the trustee's goodwill and reliability in a risky exchange situation" (Das and Teng 1998, p. 494).

Trust is defined as a readiness to accept vulnerability in exchange for favourable expectations of trustworthiness (Mayer et al. 1995; Rousseau et al. 1998). And importantly, Trust is defined by Lewicki as "confident positive expectations regarding another's conduct" (Lewicki et al. 1998, p. 439).

Bhattacharya defines trust as "Trust is an expectancy of positive (or non-negative) outcomes that one can receive based on the expected action of another party in an interaction characterized by uncertainty" (Bhattacharya et al. 1998, p. 462). The importance of trust in a situation where there is uncertainty is shown by Bhattacharya's definition of trust. This definition states that trust is a party's view or expectation of the favourable or favourable results they may experience as a result of the activities of another party.

Battilana and Casciaro build on the bond between two actors, which is trust that drives one "to treat the other in positive ways, or at least not to do something that would hurt the other" (Battilana and Casciaro 2013; Krackhardt 1992, p. 219). This trust foundation has been demonstrated to promote collaboration across organizational sub-units during a crisis, hence increasing an organization's adaptive performance in response to external and internal shocks. On the other hand, Tyler has argued that we attempt to control the behaviour of persons we don't trust whenever necessary (Tyler 1996). The discussion of the relationship between employees and management and its impact on employees' reluctance to change is in line with Tyler's perspective. Both studies stress how crucial trust is to this connection. Tyler argues that attempts to control conduct are a type of struggle since they result from a lack of trust.

Individuals who can be trusted are more inclined to take risks “Where there is trust there is the feeling that others will not take advantage of me” (Porter et al. 1975, p. 497). If an employee trusts his or her manager, he or she is prepared to take more risky actions without fear of being penalized by the supervisor if his or her ideas and actions do not provide the desired outcomes (Hughes et al. 2018). They contend that trust is critical in motivating people to take chances and be more proactive in their actions. Trust in management can create an environment in which people feel comfortable taking chances without fear of negative consequences.

Lewicki et al. distinguish between trust and distrust, arguing that while both relate to expectations about future conduct, trust focuses on the possibility of a desirable behaviour occurring, whereas distrust focuses on the likelihood of undesirable behaviour. Consequently, distrust not only produces a refusal to accept vulnerability, but it also allows for preventative and defensive actions to be undertaken (Lewicki et al. 1998). When employees trust management, they have confidence that the company and its executives have their best interests in mind. They have faith that the suggested modifications will be advantageous and that their concerns will be taken into consideration. Employees are more eager to participate in the change process and are more open to vulnerability as a result of this trust, which lays a strong basis for their acceptance of the change. Employees are more prone to oppose change when there is a lack of trust or when they feel distrusted by management. Distrust breeds mistrust and an expectation that the suggested changes will bring about unwelcome actions or detrimental effects. Employees react defensively and with opposition to safeguard their interests and avert potential harm as a result of this belief. As Lewis and Weigert pointed out, “When we see others acting in ways that imply that they trust us, we become more disposed to reciprocate by trusting in them more. Conversely, we come to distrust those whose actions appear to violate our trust or to distrust us.” (Lewis and Weigert 1985, p. 971). The acts and actions of others can have an impact on trust and mistrust, resulting in a dynamic relationship where trust is reinforced and mistrust is caused by betrayals or a lack of trust. As we see trust is a concept of great significance across various disciplines, further trust is seen as crucial in managerial relationships, between supervisors and top management, and within organizations. As in any relationship, trust is one of the essential characteristics that maintains commitment and engagement, the employee-employer relationship is no exception. Relationships develop over time into trusting, loyal, and mutual commitments as long as the parties follow the “rules” of the exchange (Saks 2006). Trust is a necessary component of every positive exchange relationship (Gould-Williams and Davies 2005).

Trust plays an important role not just in organizational and behavioural economics but in many other disciplines such as political science or law (Tyler 2003), leadership (Mineo 2014), cooperative behaviour (Blöbaum 2016), management by objectives (Scott 1980), managerial relationships (Atkinson and Butcher 2003), negotiation (Lewicki and Polin 2013), game theory (Milgrom 1997), Supervisors and Top Management (Dennerlein 2016) and mainly within an organization (Tyler 2003). Further research on trust in the workplace that represents theoretical and disciplinary that explores the nature of trust (Rousseau et al. 1998), the decline of trust (Elangovan and Shapiro 1998), the building of trust within and between organizations (Das and Teng 1998), the antecedents of trust and distrust (Lewicki et al. 1998), the building of managerial trustworthy behaviour (Whitener et al. 1998), the influence of trust on organizational performance, effectiveness and efficiency (Lewicki et al. 1998; Mayer and Davis 1999) and origins and consequences of managerial and employee trust and distrust (Wells and Kipnis 2001).

Dr. John Carter of the Gestalt Institute developed the trust triangle, which can be used by organizations as a guide to building trust. Straight talk is the first component of the triangle. Leadership and management are “sharing all the information available in an honest and forthright manner” (Axelrod 2002, p. 168). Moving to the right along the triangle’s base, the next component is listening for comprehension. By paying close attention to listening, more information is exchanged

between the employer and employee, and the receiver's trust in the sender grows. Making commitments is the third component in the triangle's foundation because most importantly, trust is built when commitments are kept (Axelrod 2002). If the organization is unable to fulfil its commitments, it must return to the first component of the triangle foundation (straight talk) to explain. Only after the foundation has been established can the organization progress to the next level of the triangle. The organization establishes reliability over time by following the foundation principles of leadership and management, eventually building up to the highest level of trust.

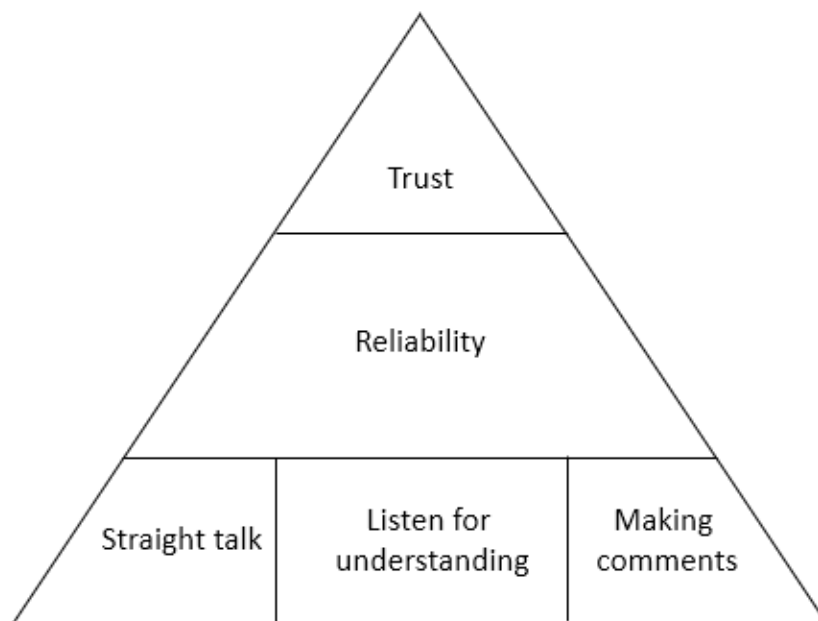


Figure 2.1 - The Trust triangle

Trust is clearly in the hands of the organization's leadership and management. To build trust within the organization, ensure that these individuals are not only personally involved in the organization, but also expose themselves to the same vulnerabilities and risks as their employees (Axelrod 2002). For example, if an organization requires 360-degree feedback for performance management, all leaders and managers should go through the same process. These individuals should serve as role models for employee behaviour. Employees who have a strong bond of trust are not only more likely to be engaged, but they also have faith and believe that the organization is a fair place to work.

The Gallup Organization decided in the mid-1980s to develop a better feedback process for large and small employers: an opinion-based tool that would both release and direct the powers of feedback.

Gallup has conducted thousands of focus group interviews over the last few years. Gallup created comprehensive surveys based on the focus group interviews, which included questions about all aspects of employees' work experiences. The primary goal was to identify and measure the elements of employee engagement that were most strongly linked to improved business outcomes - such as sales, growth, productivity, customer loyalty, and so on - and value creation. These questionnaires were then distributed to over a million employees (Buckingham and Coffman 2014).

Initially, five factors emerged; two of these five factors emphasized trust.

- Direct supervisor - This factor addressed issues concerning the immediate supervisor's behaviour, such as selection, recognition, development, trust, understanding, and discipline.
- Team/co-worker - This factor addressed employee perceptions of team members, such as cooperation, shared goals, communication, and trust.

The emphasis on trust in two of the first identified factors, namely direct supervisor and team/co-worker, is consistent with the importance of trust in fostering engagement. In addition, investigating how trust dynamics change with age during organizational change could help us better understand these trust-related factors. The contradiction may occur if trust and age interactions reveal unexpected patterns that challenge the conventional understanding of how trust influences engagement during organizational change.

The current study is consistent with Gallup's (2017) insights into the importance of great managers in fostering employee engagement. The study emphasizes the importance of managers in fostering an open and supportive workplace environment in which employees feel valued and encouraged to contribute. The data emphasizes the importance of trust and connection between managers and employees in influencing employee engagement levels. As Gallup suggests, the findings emphasize the importance of managers engaging their teams on multiple levels, resulting in a positive work environment and increased employee motivation.

The findings of an article written by Jesus Rios, Gallup Regional Director, in 2010, a Latin American national police corps launched a plan aimed at fostering a more humanitarian, trust-based relationship between police personnel and the communities they serve. Senior officials in this organization determined that it needed to transcend the legacy of a militaristic, "results at any cost" culture that frequently resulted in excessive workplace pressure, repeated staff relocations, and a disregard for officer work-life balance (Gallup 2017, p. 90).

According to Gallup's 2012 statistics, more than 80% of the country's employees are not engaged at work – that is, they lack an emotional connection to their workplaces and are not excited about their professions. Gallup Associate Principal Izabella Khazagerova suggested several ways to create a more innovative culture. One of the relevant points was to Promote a Culture of Trust and Integrity. To contribute to creating empowered and productive workforces, leaders who are determined to change should develop solid corporate governance and a zero-tolerance policy for unethical behaviour. These can include anonymous reporting mechanisms that are encouraged throughout the business to assist in fostering a culture of trust and integrity.

Gallup also asked employees to indicate the single most significant component in sustaining a sense of comfort and well-being at work in their own words (Crabtree 2005). The responses varied, but the most prevalent concern is communication and interpersonal interactions among workers: Respect, open communication, great connections with co-workers getting along with everyone, collaboration, and most importantly trust.

Colquitt et al. (2011) demonstrated that distinct forms of trust may be recognized. Further Colquitt also demonstrated the importance of understanding the roles that different aspects of trust play in different forms of trust. In other words, it is critical to understand what co-workers, bosses, or employees anticipate from one another. The research additionally shows that trust increasingly becomes different as work relationships develop. Although researchers have demonstrated a strong interest in trust, its study in organizations has been difficult for various reasons, this is why in this study, we prove that there is a relation with trust considering both the trusting parties and trust going both ways. Here, both parties would be the employee and management trusting each other and employees trusting each other.

Tzafrir and Eitam-Meilik showed that “trust is willingness to increase the resources invested in another party, based on positive expectations resulting from past positive mutual interactions” (Tzafrir and Eitam-Meilik 2005, p.196). Trust is a commitment by both parties to never act in a way that harms the other party or exploits their weaknesses (Morgan and Hunt 1994). While meta-analytic data from a variety of interpersonal trust research supports the implications of trust propensity and trustworthiness judgments on trust, it also demonstrates their direct consequences on several outcomes (Colquitt et al. 2007). The current study supports the claim that people who can be trusted are more likely to take risks. It recognizes the importance of trust in the workplace, particularly between employees and their managers. Employees who have faith in their managers are certain that others will not take advantage of them. This trust fosters an environment in which employees are willing to take more risky actions without fear of repercussions or penalties if their ideas and actions do not provide the desired results.

The foundation of organizational coordination and control is interpersonal trust (McAllister 1995). Because managers are so crucial in the employee engagement process, the effective transfer of power and authority to lower organizational levels may be highly dependent on managers' confidence that employees can be trusted (Manz 1993). According to McAllister, managers engage in less control-based monitoring activities in high-trust relationships, although his research focused on peer connections (McAllister 1995). The concept of interpersonal trust as the cornerstone of organizational coordination and control is consistent with the study of trust in the context of employee engagement during the process of organizational change. The emphasis on managers' roles in the employee engagement process, as well as their confidence in their employees' trustworthiness, is consistent with trust's important role in promoting effective organizational transformation. While McAllister's study focuses on peer relationships, applying similar trust dynamics to the specific context of age-related characteristics and their influence on employee engagement during organizational transition might be a topic for future research. Examining how trust relationships, particularly with managers, vary across age groups throughout organizational transition may provide significant insights into the larger debate of workplace trust and engagement.

In his paper, Tyler highlights the importance of voluntary cooperation in an organization such as following rules and demonstrating favourable attitudes and actions. These can be motivated by incentives and sanctions (Tyler 2003). However, Tyler argues, the voluntary forms are especially valuable because people are internally motivated to engage in these behaviours. They facilitate cooperation in the organization and save resources as no incentives must be provided and no credible system must be set up. “Internally motivated co-operation is a value-added for organizations” (Tyler 2003, p. 558). Employees can be internally motivated to engage in actions that aid the group. An engagement in action by choice and the desire of followers is a more reliable way to secure desirable cooperation than sanctions or incentives (Tyler 2003). However, Tyler argues that it is not just the old management style of command and control that gets lost, but the traditional social control mechanisms as well. These social control mechanisms mean informal networks of family and friends. People are more separate from others and more mobile. So Tyler increases the willingness to break ties with others and makes job turnover, shifting companies and even changing careers more frequent (Tyler 2003). “They are less loyal to any one employer. This is not the only such contingent arrangement [...] But, it is a salient one and one with consequences for trust.” (Tyler 2003, p. 557). Concerning this research, this viewpoint provides light on the changing nature of workplace trust and its possible impact on employee engagement. Employees' readiness to embrace change and trust management's objectives may be influenced if they grow less tied to specific organizations and more focused on personal advancement and self-interest.

Trust is a social motive that is internal or socially generated, it flows from within the person. Tyler argues that social trust is not based on judgments about the predictability or competence of others but on attributions about the motives of others. Our willingness to cooperate is extended if we trust those that we think have well-intentioned motivations (Tyler 2003). Leaders could create an

environment where employees feel empowered and determined to contribute to the success of the organization by focusing on internal motivation and encouraging a sense of choice and autonomy. Individuals are more likely to engage in cooperative behaviour and active participation when they genuinely want to do so.

Taylor found out that two social factors influence motive-based trust:

1. Shared background and values. There is more trust in the motives of people with whom we share a social background.
2. An understanding of why people are acting as they do. This is linked to judgment about whether a person feels they understand the character and motivations of another.

Motive-based trust influences deference to authorities. If there is trust that the authorities are motivated by a concern for one welfare, there is more willingness to go along with their decisions. Therefore, the degree to which a person thinks that they understand why someone is acting (i.e. they understand their motivations) matters (Tyler 2003). The topic of motive-based trust and its influence on cooperation and respect for authority is consistent with the study of trust in the context of employee involvement during organizational change. The emphasis on understanding others' motivations and the necessity of similar values in building trust is consistent with the importance of trust in the workplace, especially during times of transition. Individuals are more likely to engage actively when they are internally motivated, which emphasizes the link between trust, motivation, and employee engagement. While the text sheds light on the social elements that influence motive-based trust, the precise intersection with age and its implications for employee engagement during organizational transition requires more investigation.

Das and Teng analyse the concept of confidence in manager-employee cooperation and argue that it stems from two separate sources: trust and control. They argue that trust and control are parallel concepts and that their relationship plays a supplementary role in establishing confidence. Furthermore, they propose that control mechanisms influence trust level and that trust level moderates the effect of control mechanisms in defining control level (Das and Teng 1998). They also cover numerous methods for fostering trust within strategic alliances, as well as crucial alliance control mechanisms. The study by Das and Teng is relevant to this research for the relationship between employees and management, particularly in light of the ideas of control and trust. They examine how confidence in manager-employee relationships is influenced by trust and control. Similarly, this research investigates how trust and age relate to employees' engagement during organizational change. The significance of trust in employee engagement with their managers is acknowledged in both studies. However, Das and Teng focus on the more general idea of confidence in collaboration, whereas the focus of the current study is explicitly employee engagement. The current study can benefit from the insights offered by Das and Teng's research on nurturing trust and control mechanisms, which can be used to develop trust-building and change-management techniques within the context of the employee-management relationship.

In another study, Jarena et al. demonstrated that ability, integrity, and benevolence were related to team trust in global virtual teams (Jarvenpaa et al. 1998). As compared to this paper both studies stress the value of trust, but their respective research aims and circumstances are different. The study by Jarvenpaa et al. examines team trust in international virtual teams and reveals three crucial determinants: ability, integrity, and benevolence. Their study focuses on the situation of teams that are geographically separated working together via technology-mediated communication. In contrast, the focus of this study is on the interaction between management and employees in the context of change resistance. It looks into how trust and age are related to employees' engagement during organizational change.

Organizational Change and Employee Engagement and Trust

Chawla and Kevin Kelloway (2004) studied 164 workers to identify indicators that indicated an individual's commitment to organizational change. Their findings underscore the importance of procedural justice views in understanding organizational commitment. Communication and job stability were found to be both direct and indirect determinants of trust and openness (i.e. commitment). Employee participation (i.e. Employee involvement) was a direct and indirect predictor of trust, but only an indirect predictor of openness. Finally, trust and openness indicated an employee's desire to quit the organization adversely, whereas turnover intentions predicted neglect. Since organizational commitment and employee engagement maybe closely linked, Chawla and Kelloway's findings point to communication and trust as potential essential functions of employee engagement. Furthermore, they are two of the same essential tasks identified in the previous research on effective change management by (Guy and Beaman 2005) and (Porras and Robertson 1992). The findings of Chawla and Kelloway further emphasize the relevance of employee involvement in commitment and, engagement. This could also be considered collaboration, information flow, and successful problem-solving to be under the umbrella of employee involvement, this may be regarded as another major function shared with change management.

Employee commitment to change is connected to the level of support provided by their managers for change implementation (Meyer et al. 2007). Employees' engagement in the change project improves when they believe that their managers are actively involved in supporting and enabling the change. Furthermore, engagement may overlap with change recipient trust in managers (Hiatt 2006; Kotter 2005). Employee participation in the transition process is intimately tied to trust in managers. Employees who trust their managers are more inclined to participate in the change process because they believe their managers have their best interests at heart and will behave in a good and fair manner.

One of the top challenges in a study conducted by Guy and Beaman (2005) was addressing employee resistance and lack of trust. The current study dives deeper into the subtle link between trust, age, and engagement, providing insights that supplement the wider change in organizations' recognition of these problems. Guy and Beaman (2005, p. 23) study also states for achieving success "Trust is critical for achieving employee engagement and sustaining the change results." In other words, trust is vital for encouraging employee engagement and guaranteeing the long-term success of change programs by establishing a positive and collaborative work environment.

In a study by Price and Chahal (2006), came up with a change management strategic framework which was a six-step process. Interestingly one of the points of
Step One: Preparing the organization highlights how managers should ensure they act without bias with all the employees to avoid feelings of mistrust and resentment, which are the fundamental ingredients of resistance.

In Step Four: Communications and workforce engagement the implementation team should not only identify the groups, divisions, or departments that will be affected by the change but should also carefully assess the impact on people. To properly implement changes, the implementation team must understand the sequence of actions that people experience when presented with change, as these feelings impact their engagement. When these sentiments are recognized, they can explain a large portion of an individual's behaviour, making implementation less unexpected. To prevent alienating workforce sectors, new lines of communication must be developed and maintained: everyone should have access to the team to voice their issues. The implementation employees should collaborate with and alongside employees throughout the process, rather than just enforcing the change. Workforce engagement should begin as soon as possible and continue throughout the

implementation and assessment phases. This should lessen the amount of opposition experienced during the implementation phase.

And lastly Step Five: Implementation, if resistance is acknowledged in one of the points of analysis lack of faith and/or trust in management is mentioned.

The strategic framework developed by Price and Chahal is consistent with the importance of trust in organizational change. Step One emphasizes unbiased actions to prevent mistrust and resentment, which complements the understanding that trust is essential for engagement, a viewpoint that may differ with age. During Step Five, the acknowledgement of resistance due to a lack of faith and trust in management supports the notion that trust is a critical factor in overcoming opposition. This runs counter to approaches that may overlook the impact of trust on implementation difficulties. Overall, in few steps of Price and Chahal's framework add valuable insights to the understanding of how trust and engagement intersect during organizational change, while also providing practical implementation steps that align with and expand on existing knowledge.

According to Kotter and Cohen, for a coalition to work effectively, it must build trust among change recipients and employ appropriate communication methods. The collaboration also needs a common aim that includes striving for excellence (Kotter and Cohen 2012). Earlier work from Kotter argues that removing institutional obstacles like rules or job descriptions that may prevent individuals from operating in change-consistent ways is a crucial component. Another significant structural obstacle to empowerment is management's traditional conceptions of its function, which can be a barrier to empowerment if managers discourage employees from taking initiative or responding defensively to employee ideas for new practices (Kotter 1996). Kotter and Cohen's concepts for building trust and effective communication within a coalition for organizational change are relevant to this study of trust and age in employee engagement during organizational transition. Their emphasis on similar goals, excellence, and the elimination of institutional barriers is consistent with the larger notion of trust as an important aspect of successful change projects. Kotter's previous work on overcoming structural barriers and modifying management's traditional ideas of its job provides useful background for understanding how trust dynamics and age-related factors impact employee engagement throughout organizational change. This integration adds to a more thorough understanding of the relationship between trust, age, and engagement, providing insights into possible areas for improvement and successful change management tactics. When implementing changes, Kotter's work on change management emphasizes the necessity of creating trust which leads to good open communication among employees and management. This is essential since the relationship between employees and management is important in determining employees' unwillingness to change.

Trust which is found in the organization, the leader, the manager, or the team is critical to boosting the likelihood of engagement behaviour. Even for naturally motivated action, trust becomes vital since the conditions that promote self-investment necessitate what Kahn (1990) argues. This is the notion that people hold that they will "not suffer for their personal engagement" (Kahn 1990, p. 708). However, Kahn also supports trust with co-workers, claiming that workers are emotionally and cognitively engaged when they are aware of what is expected of them, have access to the resources they need to complete their work, have the chance to feel their work has an impact on the world, believe they are a part of something meaningful with trusted co-workers, and have opportunities to grow and learn.

According to Macey and Schneider (2008) this viewpoint, firms have to promote a sense of trust that employees will benefit from the psychological and behavioural relational contracts they engage in with the organization. Macey and Schneider's study 'The Meaning of Employee Engagement' draws on diverse relevant literature, and offers a series of propositions about three states of engagement: behavioural, psychological, and trait. Interestingly proposition number 13 states that feelings of trust mediate the link between leadership conduct and behavioural engagement to the point where

feelings of trust are the psychological state that exists between leader behaviour and behavioural engagement. Thus, leaders instil confidence in those who follow them, which are employees in this case and it is this trust that allows followers to engage in behavioural actions. In addition, the current study intends to look into the subtle link between age, trust, and engagement during organizational change, providing a more detailed view of how age affects the trust-engagement dynamic. However, if age-related dynamics show unanticipated patterns in the trust-engagement relationship that challenge or extend the prevailing understanding, a conflict may develop.

When people had some say over their employment, they felt safer. Managers' unwillingness to relinquish control conveyed the message that the employees could not be trusted and should not overstep beyond their boundaries. When managers were unexpected, contradictory, or hypocritical, this dread grew. An architect gave an example of such discrepancy. People in both companies found it difficult to trust the regularity of their work assignments or the control they were given at the time. It was difficult for them to feel secure enough at work to invest in any one path. Employees need to believe that their authority figures are competent and secure enough in their visions to carve out paths for subordinates to safely travel (Kahn 1990). Promoting psychological safety and stressing fairness and other trust antecedents may be crucial to the development of an engaged workforce (Kahn 1990; May et al. 2004).

As per Saks (2006), a stronger theoretical rationale for explaining employee engagement can be found in social exchange theory (SET). According to Saks (2006), SET provides a stronger theoretical basis for explaining employee engagement. According to SET, responsibilities are established through a series of interactions between mutually dependent individuals. A basic principle of SET is that relationships mature over time into trusted, loyal, and reciprocal commitments as long as the parties follow certain 'rules' of trade (Cropanzano and Mitchell 2005). These restrictions typically include reciprocate or payback requirements, which demand that one party's activities elicit a response or act from the other. For example, individuals feel obligated to repay and return to their organization after receiving monetary and socio-emotional resources. This is in line with (Robinson et al. 2004) depiction of employee engagement as a two-way street between employer and employee. One of the most influential conceptual paradigms for understanding workplace behaviour is SET. Relationships evolve into trusting, loyal, and mutual commitments, according to one of the basic principles of SET. In general, reciprocity produces better work relationships than negotiations because it allows people to be more trusting and committed to one another (Molm et al. 2000). One of the independent variables examined in the study was favourable/unfavourable treatment, and the dependent variable examined was positive emotional engagement (Cropanzano and Mitchell 2005). This study adds to SET by investigating how age influences the trust-engagement dynamic during organizational change, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of workplace interpersonal relationships. While SET provides a theoretical framework for reciprocal relationships that foster trust and commitment, this study investigates whether age modifies or influences the dynamics of this reciprocity during times of organizational change.

A paper by Vance (2006) is a complete approach to understanding, measuring, and improving employee engagement in firms. It underlines the significant benefits that engaged and dedicated employees provide. As per the findings managers who give enriched work (jobs with a high level of co-worker trust, meaningfulness, autonomy, and variety) encourage employee engagement and enthusiasm. In turn, employee engagement and excitement drive them to broaden their job descriptions. The broad description of job duties thus increases employees' readiness to take on challenges that go beyond their immediate allocated responsibilities. These challenges motivate people to innovate and proactively tackle issues. Vance takes a holistic approach to employee

engagement, stressing the significant benefits of engaged employees. The emphasis on enriched work, which is defined by meaningfulness, diversity, autonomy, and co-workers' trust, is related to the current research on trust and age during organizational change. Vance's findings supplement the current research by emphasizing the favourable impact of trust on employee engagement and excitement. The emphasis on extending job descriptions and building preparation for difficulties stems from the realization that trust is critical in enabling individuals to proactively innovate and solve concerns. This is consistent with the current research on how trust and age influence involvement throughout organizational change, providing useful insights into the dynamics of employee behaviour.

According to Perrin (2003), employees want to know what management thinks and believes, as well as how the organization intends to behave. They also want autonomous feedback. It is a component of the atmosphere of mutual trust, accountability, and responsibility that is essential for engaging individuals and gaining discretionary effort. According to one section of the research, all factors boil down to the type of culture and work environment that a firm cultivates over time. Such an atmosphere cannot be created overnight. Commitment, consistency, trust in employees' judgment, and a mixed perspective are required. Many organizations confuse communication for information transmission, focusing on basic facts rather than providing context, and analysis, and encouraging two-way debate. Employees want insights into management's thinking, attitudes, and action plans, as well as opportunities to give feedback. This interaction is critical for establishing a culture of mutual trust, accountability, and responsibility, which is essential for engaging people and eliciting discretionary effort. It is noticeable that the common factor is trust in Perrin's study which is connected to age. Perrin's study underscores the importance of building a conducive culture for successful communication and engagement, potentially impacting age-related dynamics in the workplace, in the context of this paper on trust and age in employees' participation during organizational change.

A study by Truss et al. (2007) on employee attitudes and engagement had a lot of interesting findings. The data was collected from across the UK to find out how they feel about their work and, crucially, what employers can do to raise levels of engagement. Based on an electronic poll of 2,000 employees some significant findings include the fact that 35% of employees are engaged in their employment. Engagement levels among people under the age of 35 are much lower than those in older age groups. It was also discovered older workers are more engaged than younger workers. Furthermore, 48% believe their senior managers have a clear vision of where the organization is headed, 37% trust their senior management team, and 34% believe their senior managers. Half of employees believe that if they have an issue at work, it will be handled fairly. Only 23% of employees are content with how managers and employees interact in their organization, whereas 35% are satisfied with how their organization is run. Women are more involved in their jobs than males, with 37% against 34%. 26% of those under the age of 35 are engaged, compared to 41% of those over the age of 35. Managers are more involved than non-managers, with 46% being more engaged. Employees over the age of 55 are more engaged than younger workers. Employees under the age of 35 are the least engaged. Employees under the age of 25 show higher faith in their senior management team than older workers. Employees in the public sector are more likely to believe their senior managers lack a clear vision for the organization and to have less trust and confidence in them. They also have a lower trust in organizational communication. A sizable number of people have poor regard for their top bosses and regard them as untrustworthy. The fact that there is a relatively high degree of distrust in the public sector is concerning, and it might be attributed to the amount of change that has affected large swaths of public sector personnel. Finally, it was discovered that levels of involvement are greater than previous research had predicted. According

to this survey, 35% of employees are actively involved with their work. Truss et al.'s study gives excellent insights into employee involvement and attitudes, finding significant trends related to age and trust. We also see the study by truss had more variables than the current study. Notably, the study found that engagement levels are lower among those under the age of 35 when compared to older age groups. This conclusion is consistent with the discussion of how age affects employee engagement. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the importance of trust, suggesting that confidence in senior management is connected with higher levels of engagement. The report also highlights trust discrepancies across age groups, with younger employees expressing minor trust in their senior management team. This complex investigation of trust, age, and involvement contributes to a thorough knowledge of these interactions throughout organizational transformation which the current study aims to add to.

Research by Downey et al. (2015) analyses the relationship between diversity practices and engagement in promoting trust, an essential part of workplace well-being. According to the findings, diversity practices are associated with a trusting environment, which is positively correlated with employee engagement. Furthermore, the findings revealed that inclusion affected the relationship between diversity practices and a trusting environment.

According to researchers, confidence in colleagues permits employees to become engaged and engrossed in their jobs by eliminating the need to watch or worry about harmful acts by colleagues (Mayer and Gavin 2005). Mayer suggests employees are more inclined to trust managers, employees take risks in their interactions with managers and divulge information, especially sensitive information regarding mistakes or deficiencies if supervisors exhibit high degrees of honesty, ability, and compassion (Mayer et al. 1995). Mayer et al. observed that a "willingness to assume risk" is a feature shared by most conceptualizations. (Mayer et al. 1995, p. 724). That is, individuals who trust are inclined to commit themselves to the possible negative repercussions of another's decisions or actions.

"Trust is key because it enables cooperation" (Tyler 2003, p. 556). Particularly in today's atmosphere where the old command and control style of management becomes difficult to implement effectively, organizations need a new type of cooperation. People work in dispersed groups that are multinational, without the social and physical elements of relationships and trust is essential when several workers operate remotely on a single schedule. Especially in times of crisis or change and in today's environment where many employees work remotely coming from all sorts of age groups. Furthermore, working in teams of equals is more popular today regardless of age, without multilevel hierarchies or a designated leader who is responsible for monitoring, pay, and promotion and who is involved in collaboration, discussion, and consensus building.

In this uncertain world and time of change, employees need to think that management will be motivated to make changes in ways that will take the welfare of the group members into account (Milgrom 1997; Tyler 2003). The work itself changed and is increasingly centred around intellectual labour that is hard to monitor and depends on willing engagement (Tyler 2003). The current paper tends to recognize the significance of trust and age in the relationship between employees and management, particularly in the context of organizational change. Furthermore, during times of change, trust allows employees to feel secure and sure that management will act in the best interests of the group members, according to Tyler's research. Trust creates a pleasant environment in which employees can willingly engage in their jobs and effectively contribute to company goals.

The paper written by Kahnweiler and Thompson (2000) investigates the impact of age, education, and gender on the intended and actual levels of employee participation in decision-making. Age and education appear to affect demand for employee engagement in decision-making processes, but gender does not appear to have an effect, according to an analysis of five decision-making aspects.

Interestingly, Kahnweiler and Thompson suggested likely that younger workers will enter the firm expecting to be involved in decision-making, only to discover that management has minimal trust in younger members of the workforce. As a result, younger workers may lower their expectations for their degree of engagement to reduce dissatisfaction with their jobs and/or the company (Rice et al. 1989). Kahnweiler and Thompson also suggested the more formal education employees may have, the greater the number of managers who trust them and, as a result, the more they seek their advice on non-co-worker concerns. Employees with higher education felt more in control of their positions, which may be attributable in part to the discovery that their bosses solicit their feedback on a variety of workplace issues to a noteworthy degree. This study adds to Kahnweiler and Thompson's research by expanding on the investigation of age's impact in the context of organizational development. While their work identified age as a decision-making element, this study tries to expand on that basis by investigating how age intersects with trust in the dynamic context of organizational change. Rather than refuting Kahnweiler and Thompson's conclusions, this research adds to them. While they emphasize the influence of age and education on general decision-making, this study investigates if age, when combined with trust, appears differently during organizational change. It acknowledges their larger context while focusing on the special obstacles of participating in transformational organizational stages.

Horizontal and Vertical Trust

In an organizational setting, people may trust their managers but distrust their co-workers, or vice versa. As a result, it is critical to distinguish between vertical and horizontal (also known as lateral) trust. Vertical trust refers to relationships between an employee and his or her direct supervisor or top management, whereas horizontal trust refers to relationships between an individual and peers or equals in a comparable work scenario (McCauley and Kuhnert 1992). Organizations can tackle trust-related issues by addressing them by having a clear understanding of the differences between vertical and horizontal trust. Organizations may put measures in place to boost trust, promote communication, and foster wholesome relationships both vertically and horizontally by understanding the distinct dynamics of each category of trust.

Trust is essential in several forms of partnerships. Trust can be horizontal (between co-workers), vertical (between managers and employees) or (between employees and managers), or institutional (between employees and organizations) (Hoe 2007).

The authors emphasize the significance of distinguishing two types of trust in an organizational setting:

- Vertical trust and
- Horizontal trust

Vertical trust refers to an employee's relationship with their immediate supervisor or top management, whereas horizontal trust refers to the relationship between employees and their colleagues or equals in a comparable work scenario. Individuals may trust their managers but not their co-workers, and vice versa. Furthermore, the writers underline the importance of trust in various sorts of organizational collaborations. Horizontal trust between co-workers, vertical trust between managers and employees, and institutional trust between employees and the organization as a whole are all examples of institutional trust.

Prior research focused on vertical trust between employees and managers, less on horizontal trust between co-workers, and seldom on trust between managers and employees (Wells and Kipnis 2001). Previous studies have shown that employees are vulnerable because they rely on their

supervisors for job assignments, performance assessments, and promotions (Knoll and Gill 2011; Wells and Kipnis 2001). In another study, we see managers are also vulnerable since they must rely on their employees to perform their responsibilities (Dirks and Ferrin 2002; Mayer et al. 1995). Employees may feel insecure since their success and growth are dependent on their managers' evaluations and judgments. They may also be prone to prejudices or subjective appraisals from their managers, which might limit their prospects for growth and development. On the other hand, managers are vulnerable since they rely on their staff to carry out their obligations effectively. They rely on their employees to help them achieve company goals and produce outcomes. They must have faith that their staff will complete their responsibilities successfully and satisfy the standards that have been established for them. Employees who fail to perform or produce substandard work reflect poorly on the manager's ability to lead and manage the team efficiently. Employees and managers' mutual vulnerability generates a dynamic connection in the workplace. Both parties rely on one another to carry out their respective tasks and obligations, and their success is dependent on one another.

People use a variety of cues to determine an actor's underlying motivations and determine whether an action is caused by dispositional factors (i.e., the actor) or situational factors (i.e., the context or situation) when seeking a causal explanation (Ferris et al. 1995). Comparing an actor's current action to past action is one of the most beneficial ways that people can look for meaning. For instance, studies reveal that people frequently accept unfavourable comments when they come from a source they like because they assume the source has good intentions. However, people frequently reject unfavourable feedback when it comes from a source they don't like because they don't believe the source has good intentions (Fedor 1991). The emphasis on how employees perceive their manager's intentions is consistent with the trust factor in age-related engagement dynamics. This debate contributes to the larger consideration of trust and age in the context of employee engagement by throwing light on the subtle ways in which perceived intentions impact responses to managerial actions throughout transformation processes. Employee responses to managerial actions may vary depending on how they perceive their manager's intentions, which could account for the contradictory findings in the literature on change. In particular, the attribution theory suggests that observers look for a reason for an actor's behaviour to understand it (Heider 1964).

"Trust in supervisor is correlated with increased innovative behaviour and satisfaction with supervisor and trust in the organization was related to higher organizational commitment and lower intention to leave". It is also crucial for employees to believe that the company will act in an advantageous way, or at least not destructive, to them (Tan and Tan 2000, p. 241). Employee trust in their managers is intimately related to this opinion of the organization's trustworthiness. Employees who trust their bosses are more likely to trust the organization's goals and actions about the change.

To assess trust, Wells and Kipnis utilized open-ended questions. Employees were asked to explain why they trusted their superiors and managers were also asked to explain why they trusted their subordinates. Personal factors were mostly mentioned by the employees on the other hand the supervisors discussed both work-related and personal factors (Wells and Kipnis 2001). According to the findings of the study, the three characteristics of trust may play various roles in different types of relationships. Wells and Kipnis investigate the dynamics of trust from the standpoint of both employees and supervisors. They investigate not just worker dependency and trust, but also the extent to which organizational members strive to exert control over those they do not trust. Lastly, this study investigates whether individuals rely on their trust in employees/managers on job performance or personal characteristics of the trustee (Wells and Kipnis 2001). Wells and Kipnis' study, which explores trust dynamics from several perspectives within the corporate context, has a wide scope, which concentrates on the interaction between employees and management. They look at the responsibilities of both employees and managers as well as variables like control effort and the effect of trust on work output. On the other hand, the impact of the relationship between

employees and management, particularly in terms of trust and how age-related, is specifically explored in the current study. Even while there may be some agreement in terms of the significance of trust within organizations, there are differences in the two studies' precise research topics and areas of attention.

Trust & the Technology Acceptance Model

A study by Gefen et al. (2003) focuses on experienced repeat online consumers, highlighting the importance of customer trust in online commerce, similar to recognized characteristics such as perceived utility and perceived ease of use in the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). According to the findings, these variables together account for a considerable portion of the variation in planned action. Furthermore, it identifies critical factors that contribute to online trust, such as the assumption that the vendor is not motivated to cheat, faith in the website's safety systems, and the provision of a standard, user-friendly design. The study combines these findings with the TAM model to improve the knowledge of the elements that influence online buying behaviour among repeat customers. While the Gefen et al. study has focused on customer trust in online commerce, particularly among experienced repeat consumers, this topic looks at the link between trust, age, and employee involvement throughout organizational change. Both studies stress the importance of trust in their particular situations. The elements impacting trust in online commerce research, such as the vendor's credibility and website security mechanisms, are similar to the value of trust in an organizational environment. Furthermore, this study broadens the conversation to include the age component, providing a new viewpoint on how different age groups may respond to organizational change in the context of trust and engagement. While the model used in the study is the same, (TAM) the method used to carry out the findings was different, this study uses qualitative while Gefen et al. study used quantitative analysis.

Kesharwani and Singh Bisht (2012) use the TAM to investigate the adoption of Internet banking in India, with a focus on security and privacy concerns. Drawing on Davis's TAM, the study proposes an expanded model that addresses "perceived risk" barriers to Internet banking adoption. The findings show that perceived risk has a negative influence on the behavioural intention to use Internet banking, whereas trust has the opposite effect. A well-designed website is identified as facilitating easier use and mitigating perceived risk in Internet banking. The study suggests that banks invest in user-friendly websites to improve users' perceptions of Internet banking services, reducing perceived risk while increasing perceived ease of use to gain trust. Compared to this study, although the specific contexts differ, both works share a common interest in investigating the impact of trust and other factors on behavioural intentions. To complement previous research on Internet banking adoption, this study could expand our understanding of trust dynamics and perceived risk in a different context of organizational change. While the paper recommends investing in user-friendly websites to increase trust, this research could focus on strategies for fostering trust and engagement during organizational change, considering age differences. Furthermore, the methods used to conclude would also be different this paper uses qualitative analysis while the other uses quantitative analysis.

McCloskey (2006) looks into how older Americans engage in electronic commerce, with a focus on the TAM and its modified application. The study was conducted quantitatively, with questionnaires distributed in retirement communities and senior centres throughout Pennsylvania. The findings show that ease of use, usefulness, and trust have a significant impact on electronic commerce usage among older consumers. Specifically, usefulness and trust have a direct impact on usage, whereas ease of use influences usefulness, and trust influences both. McCloskey investigates how ease of use, usefulness, and trust influence electronic commerce usage among older consumers, unlike

this research which investigates trust and age in employee engagement during organizational change. While both studies examine the impact of trust, McCloskey's research goes beyond organizational change and focuses on a different demographic and context. However, the current research might complement McCloskey's findings by providing insights into the specific dynamics of trust and age during organizational change, as well as a nuanced perspective on employee engagement through the use of qualitative research techniques.

Benbasat and Wang (2005) investigate the critical role that trust plays in the adoption of online recommendation agents, which help consumers navigate product options and make online selections. Trust is a challenging issue in the setting of technical objects, particularly when consumers are concerned about an agent's competence, integrity, and benevolence. The study applies the idea of interpersonal trust to trust in online recommendation agents and assesses its validity using an integrated TAM. A laboratory experiment's findings support the nomological validity of trust in online recommendation agents, demonstrating that consumers see these agents as "social actors" with human-like traits. The study emphasizes the role of both the perceived usefulness of the agents as tools and consumer confidence in the agents as virtual assistants in shaping intentions to utilize online recommendation agents. Benbasat and Wang help to better understand the complex dynamics of trust in technological environments, giving useful insights for the larger literature on technology adoption and trust. In comparison, this study complements the current study on trust and age in employee engagement during organizational change by providing insights into nuanced trust dynamics in a technological setting, contributing to a broader understanding of trust across different contexts and age groups.

Wu et al. (2011) conducted a meta-analysis to investigate the impact of trust on the TAM, a common paradigm for explaining technology adoption. The study, which focuses on user behaviour in the context of e-commerce, evaluates previous TAM studies to provide reliable insights into the role of trust. The study looks at the moderating effects of topic type (student or non-student) and context type (commercial or non-commercial) on TAM components. The data indicate that trust has a significant impact on TAM, with moderating effects found in the majority of pair-wise relationships. The findings are applicable to both researchers and service providers, since they give important insights into the dynamics of trust in the context of technology adoption.

Since the end of the nineties, academics in the information systems (IS) research area have been urged to employ more qualitative research methodologies instead of only relying on quantitative ones (Hirschheim and Klein 2012). For example, Lee et al. (2003) performed a meta-analysis and discovered that questionnaire-based field studies were employed in more than 90% of acceptance studies. Only three out of the 101 TAM publications included qualitative data, such as content analysis. While the latter remains dominant, a trend toward increased adoption of qualitative methodologies is emerging. Especially, the growing number of articles confirms this growth (Palvia et al. 2003). In contrast to American publishers, European publications and conferences have typically paid a bit more attention to qualitative-oriented research (Chen and Hirschheim 2004). The reasons for the dominance of quantitative approaches in IS in general have been extensively examined. However, qualitative approaches are rare, and crucial and significant issues may be overlooked. Complex organizational contexts, as they are typically offered while investigating in the IS sector, may usually be explored utilizing qualitative research methodologies (Palvia et al. 2003). Given the historical dominance of quantitative methodologies in information systems research, there is a strong case for conducting a qualitative study in this area. While quantitative approaches have been widely used, they may not fully capture the complexity of organizational contexts inherent in IS research. As a result, a qualitative study provides an opportunity to close gaps, broaden perspectives, and contribute to a more complete understanding of a topic.

2.1.2.2 Age

'Age' is an attribute of the counting unit 'person'. An operational definition would be that 'age' is calculated by calculating the time elapsed (usually in complete years) between the date of birth and a specific point in time, (For example, the date of a particular survey) (Statistics 1999). In the 21st century, the ageing of the world's population is becoming increasingly visible. The older generation will outnumber the under-15 population by 2050 (Fund. 2012). Some of the most prevalent causes of this trend include lower fertility and longer life spans (Fund. n.d.). The ageing of the baby boomers, economic conditions that allow for later retirement, and proportionately lower birth rates in the late twentieth century are some of the reasons that have contributed to a rise in the frequency of older people in the workforce (Kanfer and Ackerman 2004). More than half of respondents in the Society for Human Resource Management's "Older Workers Survey" claimed that their companies failed to establish and monitor policies and practices aimed at hiring and keeping older workers (Lockwood 2003). Managers must understand the implications of emerging age trends and how they will directly impact organizational systems such as hiring, training, retaining, and employee motivation (Shultz and Adams 2007).

James et al. (2007) investigated the link between employee engagement and age. Younger employees were categorized as those aged 54 and under, accounting for 88% of the sample, while older employees were defined as those aged 55 and beyond, accounting for the remaining 12%. Based on survey data from over 6,000 employees ages 18-94 from a U.S.-based retail firm, their findings demonstrated that older workers (ages 55 and up) were much more engaged than younger workers (ages 54 and down). Avery et al. (2007) investigated the impact of employee age, perceived co-worker age mix, and happiness with co-workers on employee engagement. According to their findings, age influenced the association between employee engagement and co-worker satisfaction. More precisely, perceived age similarity with co-workers was connected with greater levels of involvement/engagement in older workers (55 and older) when they were highly happy with co-workers of the same age group than in younger age groups (40 or younger).

The study by Kordbacheh et al. (2014) presents statistical evidence in favour of Chalofsky and Krishna's (2009) conceptual framework about the relationships between intrinsic motivation, meaningfulness, and employee engagement. The study digs deeper into the link between employee engagement and age, focusing on the variations between older and younger workers.

The current study builds on the work of Kordbacheh et al. (2014) and Chalofsky and Krishna (2009), the current study considers age as a factor impacting employee engagement during organizational change. It enhances the current paradigm in this way, offering a more thorough understanding of how trust, age, and engagement interact in the dynamic context of organizational changes. While Chalofsky and Krishna's framework provides core knowledge, this study looks at possible differences between older and younger workers, intending to identify variations that may question or strengthen established conceptions.

A study by Sharkie (2009) wants to contribute to the debate on employee performance by discussing the relevance of trust in encouraging performance. Sharkie concludes that high levels of trust are necessary to promote cooperative behaviour, assist the creation of communication networks, and improve employees' willingness to share their expertise with others for the benefit of the business where discretionary effort can be provided or withheld. Employee evaluation of the level of support provided to them by management has a significant impact on their willingness to reciprocate in the form of loyalty to the company and willingness to engage in discretionary extra-role behaviour. Based on how employees view managers' values, moral character, generosity, and general reliability, given how important trust is to the employer-employee relationship, management must seek to increase employee confidence in their ability to be trusted by obtaining and disseminating the evidence.

Islam et al. (2021) study investigates the relationship between employee championing behaviour, transformational leadership, and trust in leadership during organizational change. To confirm the findings a questionnaire survey was used to gather information from 300 full-time banking personnel in Bangladesh. According to the study, transformational leadership has a substantial impact on how much employees trust their leaders and how supportive they are of organizational change. Additionally, in the context of organizational change, trust in leadership was found to operate as a mediating factor between transformational leadership and employee-championing behaviour by linking social bond theory and psychological contract theory. The relationship between transformational leadership and employee championing behaviour during organizational change is established using a theoretical model that makes use of the social bond theory. Bonding between a leader and an employee, according to social bond theory, reduces an employee's bad conduct, which ultimately removes a barrier to achieving corporate goals (Hirschi 2015). Furthermore, this study reveals how trust between transformational leadership and championing behaviour mediates the impact of organizational transformation utilizing psychological contract theory. According to Rousseau (1995), a psychological contract is an unwritten agreement between an employee and their employer. The psychological contract fosters a bond between a leader and their followers, which ultimately motivates followers (who see their leaders as trustworthy) to perform admirably in the face of organizational change.

The current study builds to the understanding of how employees' trust in their managers can affect their behaviour during times of change. Furthermore, this study will concentrate on the immediate manager, unlike Islam et al.'s study which collected data from all levels of managers.

Hope-Hailey et al. (2010) investigate how job grade, age, and length of service affect trust levels among both local line managers and employer/senior management. A comparative technique to examine the disparities in trust levels between employers and local line managers across firms is used. Specifically, whether trust in the local line manager comes before trust in the employer is extensively explored. Finally, given the importance of cultural diversity, it is investigated whether job grade, age, and length of service influence the relationship between trust in the local line manager and trust in the employer. On the other hand, the current research centres on the relationship between trust, age, and employee engagement during organizational change, there are several points of intersection and complementarity with the discussed research. While both topics address the significance of trust within organizations, albeit from different perspectives. The study from Hope-Hailey et al. examines trust in the context of leadership and organizational structures, this topic expands this focus to explore how trust, particularly influenced by age, relates to employee engagement during periods of organizational change. The exploration of age as a factor in trust aligns with this topic's emphasis on age-related dynamics.

As new employees join an organization, they seek to establish trustworthy relationships with their colleagues and managers. New employees are a bit more flexible as they haven't invested much time in getting used to the status quo, furthermore, managers who are somewhat removed from the main power structure might tolerate the process (Carr et al. 1996). Yet, some top-level management or process heads in the organization would approach it as a threat to their skills, status, positions, behavioural patterns, and the process to undermine their competencies (Carr et al. 1996). As stated by Carr et al. this paper agrees with trustworthy relationships being the foundation of an employee with its colleagues and manager. The aforementioned study specifically emphasizes the effects of newly hired employees joining a company and attempting to build trusting connections with other employees and managers. It implies that new hires may be more adaptable and less resilient because they have less invested in the status quo which would logically be a less waste in their minds. The investigation of new workers building trustworthy connections is consistent with the larger

issue of trust in the organizational setting, connecting to the topic of trust and age in employees' participation throughout organizational change. Carr et al.'s findings on newly hired employees being more adaptable due to lower interest in the status quo are consistent with the adaptability element of age-related dynamics during organizational transformation. The statement of potential opposition from top-level management to new recruits corresponds to the wider organizational difficulty of trust during change, implying that this dynamic may vary by age group. This conversation contributes to a better understanding of how trust evolves throughout organizational change across different age groups, as well as useful insights into the dynamics of engagement in response to change.

Using both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, Ferres et al. (2003) study looks into the differences in trust, commitment, procedural justice, and turnover intention between Generation X (aged between 25 years and 34 years) and older employees (35+). It had 234 participants, comprising 83 Generation X and 151 older, non-Generation X individuals. The survey discovered no difference in affective commitment or trust between Generation X and older employees. When compared to older employees, Generation X employees demonstrated lesser continuance commitment, larger turnover intentions, and weaker perceptions of procedural justice. Importantly, the associations between the variables were consistent in both groups. These findings have important implications for effectively managing Generation X employees. In comparison to this topic on the relationship between trust, age, and employee engagement during organizational change, Ferres et al. shed light on how age differences, notably among Generation X employees, affect numerous organizational outcomes. While the current topic investigates the general relationship between trust, age, and engagement during organizational transformation, the Ferres et al. study focuses on particular outcomes such as commitment, procedural fairness views, and turnover intentions across age groups. Furthermore, by investigating the relationship between trust, age, and engagement, the current research adds to the insights provided by previous studies, providing a more thorough picture of the dynamics at work within the workforce during times of organizational change. Furthermore, the current research may help to investigate potential techniques for managing employee engagement and trust throughout organizational change, taking into account age-related aspects.

Generational categories

A generation is described as an identifiable group that shares birth years, age location, and key life experiences at critical developmental periods, and is divided into three waves separated by five to seven years: the first wave, the core group, and the last wave (Kupperschmidt 2000). A generational group, also known as a cohort, is made up of people who have shared historical or social life experiences, the consequences of which remain largely constant throughout their lifetimes. These life experiences tend to differentiate one generation from the next (Jurkiewicz and Brown 1998). A cohort shapes a person's views toward authority and organizations, what they want from work, and how they intend to fulfil those aspirations (Kupperschmidt 2000).

Baby Boomers (Boomers) and Generation X (Gen X-ers) are the two generational groupings dominant in today's workforce. The following generation is known as the Millennials (www.census.gov), Generation Y-ers, or the Next Generation, and lastly Gen Z (Jennings 2000). The generation of baby boomers, dubbed 'Boomers' because of the increase in births between 1946 and 1964, grew up adopting the mentality of entitlement, expecting the best from life (Kupperschmidt 2000). Generation X grew up with financial, family, and societal insecurity; fast change; considerable variety; and a lack of firm traditions. This resulted in a preference for individualism over collectivism (Jurkiewicz and Brown 1998). Retaining Generation Z employees is getting increasingly challenging,

as the current generation is significantly more demanding than prior generations. According to Prossack (2019), one of the primary causes of Generation Z behaviour is the distinct desire to force change rather than accept the status quo as it is.

As we see in the below table there are clashes between the ages by different authors.

Categories	Born Between	Current Age
Baby Boomers	1946 and 1964	77 – 59
Generation X	1961 and 1981	62 - 42
Generation Y	1980 and 1999	41 - 24
Generation Z	born after 1995	28 and younger

Table 2.1 – Age by Generations (Appelbaum et al. 2005; Dimock 2019; Kupperschmidt 2000; Lissitsa and Kol 2016)

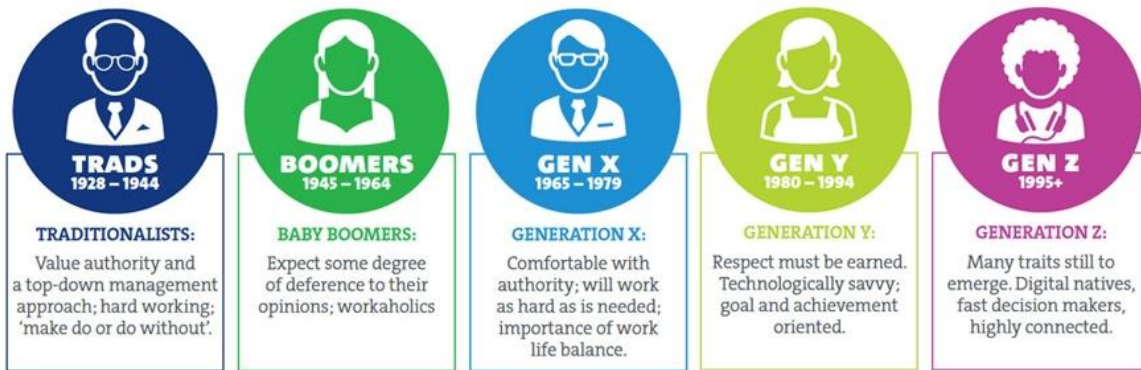


Figure 2.2: Generation typology (Consultancy.uk 2015)

2.2 Research Model

2.2.1 Theoretical Background

Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)

TRA was one of the first models used to study technological acceptance. TRA is a social psychology approach that examines the factors that influence conscious behaviour (Ajzen 1980; Fishbein and Ajzen 1975). This theory states that a person's specific behaviour is determined by his or her intention to carry out that behaviour, which is known as behavioural intention (BI). This BI is influenced by both the individual's attitude and subjective norms regarding the behaviour under consideration (Figure 2.3). The theory predicts individual behaviour based on intentions, personal attitudes, and subjective norms.

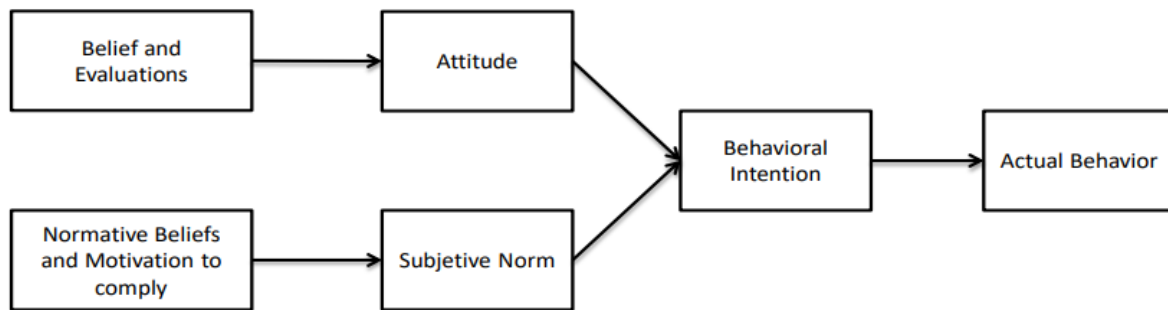


Figure 2.3: Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein & Ajzen 1975)

Technology Acceptance Model

Many studies in the field of information systems have discovered that information technology is underused in many organizations, resulting in significant economic losses for their firms. As a result, various technology acceptance theories and models have been created and utilized to investigate information technology adoption (Li 2010). The Davis TAM is one of the most often utilized models in information system adoption research (Davis 1986). The model was theoretically based on Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) expectancy-value theory and TRA (Ajzen 1985). According to the TRA, beliefs influence attitudes, which lead to intentions, which result in behaviours. TAM utilized the belief-attitude-intention-behaviour relationship to model user acceptance of IT. The goal of TAM was “to provide an explanation of the determinants of computer acceptance that is general, capable of explaining user behaviour across a broad range of end-user computing technologies and user populations, while at the same time being both parsimonious and theoretically justified” (Davis et al. 1989, p. 985). Davis et al. (1989, p. 986) state, “It is difficult to disentangle direct effects of Subjective Norm on behavioural intent from indirect effects via Attitude”. Attitude refers to an individual's degree of evaluative affect toward the target behaviour (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975, p. 216). A key component of the TAM is BI, which leads to the desired action, i.e. system use. BI has typically been defined as an individual's subjective probability that he or she will perform a specified behaviour (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975, p. 288).

Davis proposes that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use are the two most crucial individual perceptions about utilizing information technology. In its original version, TAM comes along with four constructs. The attitude toward using technology is constituted by Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEU). These constructs influence the Intention to Use

(IU) which in the model precedes the Actual Use (AU). Perceived usefulness is defined as “the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance” (Davis 1986, p. 26). The definition of perceived usefulness is based on the expectancy-value paradigm that underpins the TRA as well as from the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB). Perceived ease of use (PEOU) is defined as “the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort” (Davis 1986, p. 26). PEOU are key behavioural beliefs that influence both intention and action. Individuals are more likely to use information technology when they find it beneficial.

PU has a direct influence on the attitude toward using the system influence on BI to use. Even if an application is perceived as useful, it will only be used if it is perceived as easy to use, which means that the effort of using the system outweighs the benefits of usage.

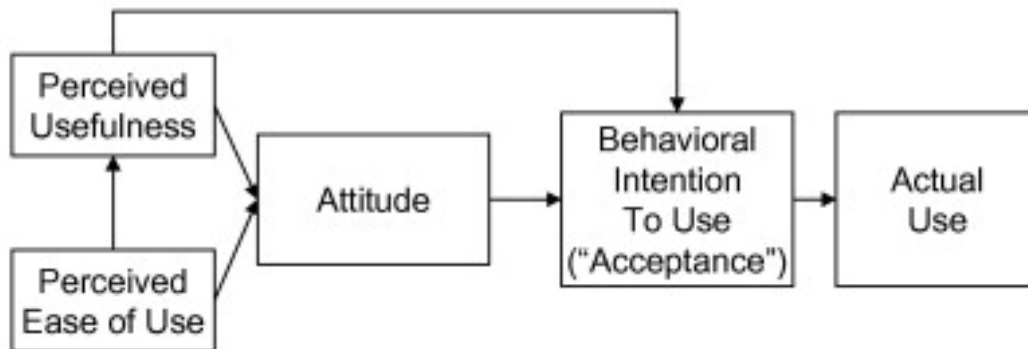


Figure 2.4 - Technology Acceptance Model (Davis 1985)

PEOU influences attitudes toward system use. These two determinants, PU and PEOU, have a direct impact on the user's attitude toward using new information technology, which in turn affects the user's BI. PEOU affects PU. PU has a direct impact on BI. And finally, BI leads to actual system use.

TAM itself suggests that users' intention to use is the most accurate predictor of actual system usage. An individual's attitude towards using BI determines their intention to use it. This attitude is shaped by two specific beliefs. Perceived usefulness refers to how users believe a system will enhance their performance, while perceived ease of use refers to how easy it is to use (Davis 1989; Davis et al. 1989). Although TRA suggests that attitude towards a behaviour (in this case, system use) completely mediates the impact of beliefs on intention, TAM and subsequent research have shown that perceived usefulness only partially mediates the effect of intention on use.

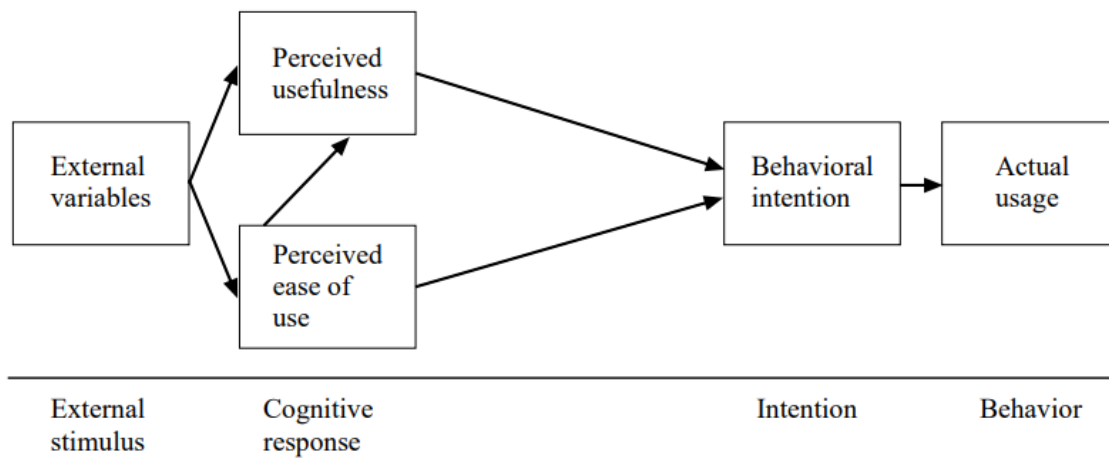


Figure 2.5 – Final Version of TAM (Davis and Venkatesh 1996)

Davis et al. (1989) explain this as the fact that in the workplace, people may use technology even if they do not have a positive attitude and affect toward it because it may improve productivity or be useful. In line with this, TAM's original theoretical conceptualization included the attitude construct. The final TAM model did not include the attitude construct as it did not fully mediate the effect of perceived usefulness on intention, according to empirical evidence (Davis et al. 1989: pp. 995 - 996). By removing the attitude construct and introducing the behavioural intention construct, the results obtained for the direct influence of perceived usefulness on actual system use as shown in 2.4 can be explained. An additional change made to the original TAM model was the consideration of other factors referred to as external variables that may influence a person's beliefs about a system.

2.2.2 Conceptual Model

Kahn (1990, p. 694) describes employee engagement as “the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances”. During the change process, employees' engagement in the change project improves when they believe that their managers are actively involved in supporting and enabling the change. Hiatt (2006) and Kotter (2005) argue that engagement may overlap with change in recipient trust in managers.

Employee engagement in the change process is closely related to the level of trust employees have in their managers. Employees who trust their managers are more likely to actively participate in the change process because they believe their managers genuinely care about their well-being and treat them fairly. Trust is an important factor in driving employee participation and commitment during times of organizational change. Among the factors identified by Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005), trust in leadership stands out as a fundamental motivator for engaged employees. Employees who trust their leaders are more likely to feel valued, supported, and empowered, leading to higher levels of engagement. From the literature, we notice an intersection of trust as a determining factor in employee engagement. We notice how important this relationship of employee-employer is and as in any relationship, trust is one of the essential characteristics that maintains commitment and engagement. The employee-employer relationship is not an exception to this intuitive understanding of the role of trust in relationships. Relationships develop over time into trusting, loyal, and mutual commitments as long as the parties follow the “rules” of the exchange (Saks 2006). Trust is a necessary component of every positive exchange relationship (Gould-Williams and Davies 2005).

Trust is essential in many types of partnerships. Trust can be horizontal (between co-workers), and vertical (between managers and employees) (Hoe 2007). It is clear that trust is important for relationships, but the factors that influence an individual's innate capacity for and receptivity to trust are not as well studied or understood. Understanding these factors may help managers and leaders know where to focus more effort and which relationships may need more effort for trust-building and this benefits colleagues by fostering stronger relationships based on trust, leading to improved a positive working environment. One such factor that is being explored here is age.

James et al. (2007) investigated the link between employee engagement and age. Their findings demonstrated that older workers (ages 55 and up) were much more engaged than younger workers (ages 54 and down). Avery et al. (2007) investigated the impact of employee age, perceived co-worker age mix, and satisfaction with co-workers on employee engagement. According to their findings, age influenced the association between employee engagement and co-worker satisfaction. Age looks like it could be a predictor of employee engagement in the research of James et al. (2007) and Avery et al. (2007), age influences employee engagement levels, with older workers generally being more engaged than younger workers. This implies that age diversity in the workplace can influence engagement dynamics. This targeted approach allows for a more nuanced investigation of how trust and age interact to shape employees' engagement and responses during times of organizational change.

TAM aimed to offer a comprehensive explanation of the factors influencing computer acceptance, applicable across diverse end-user computing technologies and user demographics, while maintaining simplicity and theoretical validity (Davis 1989). The initial plan for the current study was to measure a change in technology (from Microsoft office 2013 to Google suite), but both technologies were later decided to be in used in the organization (Airbus Defence and Space). Furthermore, Microsoft office 2019 was also implemented, and upgraded from Microsoft office 2013, hence the change wasn't deemed significant enough for this study. So, we zoom out from the technology change and we focus on an organizational change. After disappointing results from the financial year of 2022 for the company, a big reshuffle between the teams was decided. A lot of mid-level managers were moved out of their positions or replaced and given an advisor role or a position was demoted within the same team. Therefore TRA is a general model that can be applied to a wide range of fields, as it is not tailored to specific behaviours or technologies (Rondan-Cataluña et al. 2015). So, to meet the requirements of the current study we are utilizing TRA.

A meta-analysis conducted by Podsakoff et al. (2000), argues that employee engagement is positively related to a variety of work-related behaviours, which involves helping colleagues and exceeding job requirements. Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) developed the Job Demands-Resources Model which emphasizes that providing employees with adequate resources (opportunities for development, autonomy) to manage job demands promotes work engagement. In turn, engaged employees exhibit higher levels of organizational citizenship behaviours (OCBs), which again align with the TRA concept of behavioural intention. This supports the idea that engagement influences behavioural intention. According to TRA theory, attitude and subjective norms directly influence behavioural intention. Ajzen (1980) characterize external factors as those that only have an indirect effect through attitude and subjective norms. Engagement can be influenced by a different range of factors which fit the current study, such as trust and age as argued in the above section. Hence the endogenous dependent variable in the current study is employee engagement instead of BI and the external factors are trust and age.

Variable type	TRA	Conceptual Research
Dependent	Behavioural Intention	Employee Engagement
Indirect, Independent		Trust
Indirect, Independent		Age

Table 2.2 Adaptation of TAM to the Conceptual Research

Below we see Figure 2.6, which depicts a conceptual model to explain the relationship between trust, age, and employee engagement. The conceptual model explains the link between trust, age, and employee engagement during the process of organizational change. The model argues that trust and age have an indirect influence on employee engagement. In this study, we focus on the two types of trust horizontal and vertical. Age has an indirect influence on employee engagement via trust, which modulates the relationship between trust and age and employee engagement.

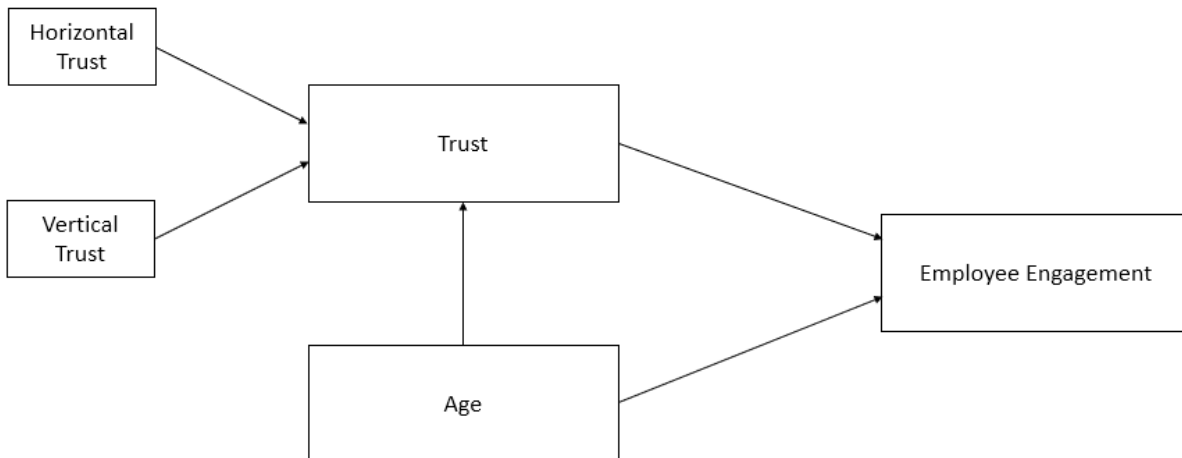


Figure 2.6 - Research Model

Hypothesis

The following paragraph addresses the relationship between trust and employee engagement. Trust is defined by Lewicki as “confident positive expectations regarding another’s conduct” (Lewicki et al. 1998, p. 439). Robinson et al. (2004, p. 2) define engagement as “a positive attitude held by the employee towards the organization and its values. An engaged employee is aware of the business context and works with colleagues to improve performance within the job for the benefit of the organization. The organization must develop and nurture engagement, which is a two-way relationship between employer and employee”. Such a relationship develops over time and produces

mutual trust, loyalty, and commitment, but only if the parties follow certain exchange rules (Cropanzano and Mitchell 2005). When employees believe in their organization, they are more likely to feel empowered to make decisions and take risks. This trust in the workplace develops gradually and results in mutual trust. Consequently, it could also be said that employees feel empowered when they are trusted. In Appelbaum's (2000) investigation it was noticed that employees in high-involvement plants (plants with high employee engagement) demonstrated more positive attitudes, including trust, organizational commitment, and intrinsic enjoyment of their work. This shows that trust has a substantial impact on how employees perceive their work environment and how engaged they are in their positions. When employees believe in their organization, they feel more comfortable and supported. This can result in a more favourable work atmosphere, which is linked to increased levels of engagement. The Gallup (2017) industry indicated that good managers engage their teams on several levels. They foster an open and happy work environment in which employees feel encouraged and engaged by developing strong, trustworthy connections with their employees. When employees trust one another and their managers, they are more inclined to collaborate and work efficiently. This leads to increased engagement since employees feel more connected to their team and their work. This underscores the importance of leadership trustworthiness in increasing employee engagement. By focusing on the relationship between trust and employee engagement, businesses provide managers with the skills and techniques they need to effectively establish trust and foster engagement. The literature suggests that there is a strong relationship between trust and employee engagement. When employees trust their manager, they are more likely to be engaged in their work and feel positive about their job. Hence the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: The higher the level of trust, the higher the level of employee engagement.

The following paragraph addresses the relationship between age and employee engagement. The concept of age is defined as the time elapsed between the date of live birth and a specific point in time, which is usually the date the data was collected (Statistics 1999). Truss et al. (2007) discovered empirical evidence suggesting that younger employees, particularly those under the age of 35, have lower levels of engagement than older employees. Older employees may have clearer career goals and financial security, potentially leading to a higher feeling of purpose and commitment to their work, which drives engagement. On the other hand, a sizable majority had a negative assessment of their senior supervisors, with just one-third believing they were trustworthy. This empirical finding highlights the importance of looking into age-related differences in workplace engagement levels. However, Truss et al. study was conducted on specific demographics in the United Kingdom, concentrated on several variables and with employees of both public and private sectors. The employees in the current study, however, are from different demographics, not limited to the UK, and concentrated on fewer variables such as employee engagement and age, with employees only from the private sector. Avery et al. (2007) investigated how employee age, perceived co-worker age mix, and co-worker happiness affect employee engagement. Age similarity with co-workers was linked to higher levels of involvement/engagement among older workers (55 and older), who were happier with co-workers of the identical age category than with younger generations (40 or younger). This indicates that age-related factors, such as interactions with co-workers of different ages, can influence engagement levels. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Younger employees exhibit lower levels of employee engagement compared to older employees

The following paragraph addresses the relationship between age and trust. “Trust is key because it enables cooperation” (Tyler 2003, p. 556). As trust fosters collaboration and mutual dependence among employees, higher levels of trust are expected to contribute to smoother transitions and improved teamwork throughout organizational change. Trust during organizational transition was found to be connected with different cultures, with the most important attribute being age (Hope-Hailey et al. 2010). Older employees, who may have had more tenure and experience inside the organization, may have acquired greater trust in their colleagues, supervisors, and the organization as a whole. While analysing the data it was found that Gen-X employees (aged between 25 years and 34 years) reported moderate to low levels of trust, while older employees reported reasonable levels of trust (Ferres et al. 2003). This empirical research supports the concept that older employees have higher levels of trust. Age-related maturity and experience may help to build trust in colleagues and organizational leadership. Gould-Williams and Davies (2005) emphasize the importance of trust in every positive exchange relationship. Investigating trust in the context of age diversity is critical for understanding how different age groups perceive and navigate relationships during organizational change. Given the importance of trust in promoting effective communication, collaboration, and teamwork, understanding how trust differs across age groups is vital. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Higher levels of trust are associated with older age among employees.

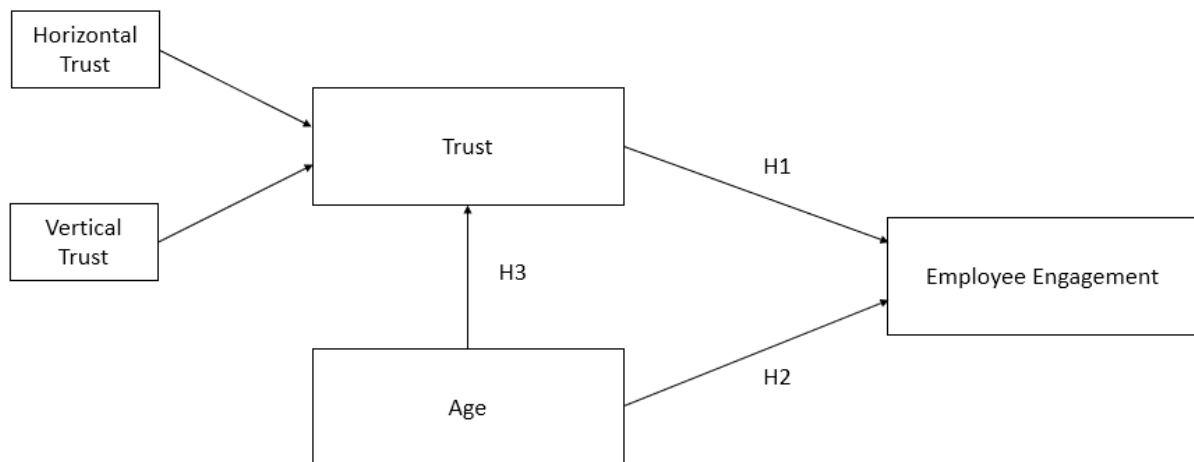


Figure 2.7 - The conceptual framework

Chapter 3: Research Method

3.1 Method

Lincoln et al. (2011) state that there are two approaches or methodologies accessible for research: quantitative and qualitative. The qualitative approach emphasizes processes and meaning that cannot be assessed in terms of number, amount, intensity, or frequency. The qualitative method gives a better understanding of the phenomena in its context. Cochran and Dolan (1984) draw a parallel between the qualitative-quantitative divide and the exploratory-confirmatory distinction. They view qualitative research as an exploratory approach, aiming to discover and understand phenomena, while quantitative research serves a confirmatory role, in testing and validating existing hypotheses.

Qualitative research methodologies were created in the social sciences to help academics examine social and cultural phenomena. Qualitative methods include action research, case study research, and ethnography. Qualitative data sources include interviews and questionnaires, observation and participant observation fieldwork, documents and texts, as well as the researcher's impressions and reactions (Myers 2019). The qualitative technique was used in this study to better understand stakeholders' perspectives since it involves learning through personally hearing, seeing, or experiencing study participants (Hevner et al. 2010).

The rationale for opting for qualitative research over quantitative research stems from the notion that human capacity for communication is the primary factor that sets us apart from the natural environment. Qualitative research methods seek to assist academics in better understanding individuals and the social and cultural contexts in which they live. Kaplan and Maxwell (2005) argue, that quantifying textual data mainly eliminates the purpose of comprehending a phenomenon from the participants' perspective and its specific social and institutional environment.

The current study used a qualitative approach to better understand stakeholders' perspectives. Qualitative research involves personally hearing, observing, or experiencing study participants' lives (Hevner et al. 2010). We will go on to discuss the reasons why we preferred qualitative research to quantitative research because it is impossible to say which approach is superior in advance because both methodologies have benefits and drawbacks. While researching this topic there were several papers and studies of quantitative research which was far too common. A qualitative investigation aims to delve into the complexities of unstructured data, which frequently involve intricate connections among selected variables in a business setting. Such research offers an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the reasons behind the failures of specific change implementation initiatives and may offer novel approaches for resolving organizational challenges. According to Smart (2010, p. 6), qualitative researchers do not "simply capture reality, they condense and represent it". They translate it and construct arguments based on the research expertise. In qualitative research to understand and interpret people's experiences, perceptions, and meanings, non-numerical data such as interviews, observations, and textual analysis are used (Labuschagne 2003). Qualitative approaches usually provide a plethora of comprehensive information about a much smaller number of people and circumstances. Through direct citation and detailed descriptions of settings, events, interactions, and observed behaviours, qualitative data provide depth and detail (Labuschagne 2003).

After a review of the existing literature, it revealed a scarcity of qualitative studies. This scarcity increased studies which examined the complex relationship between trust, age, and employee engagement during organizational change. The scarcity of qualitative research prompted the choice of this methodological approach for the present study. Using qualitative methods, we hope to gain a better understanding of the underlying mechanisms and dynamics that influence this complex interplay. The qualitative approach allows us to capture the nuances of individual experiences,

perspectives, and interpretations, revealing valuable insights that quantitative methodologies may have overlooked. By utilizing qualitative methods to investigate this understudied area, we contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the role of trust and age in shaping employee engagement during organizational change.

3.2 Data Collection & Case Study

Data Collection Methods

Qualitative data collecting methods include three types of data gathering:

- in-depth Interviews,
 - Observation, and
 - Focus groups
- Written documents include sources such as open-ended written items on questionnaires and personal diaries (Labuschagne 2003).

People's direct quotations regarding their experiences, opinions, feelings, and knowledge comprise the data from open-ended interviews. Observational data include extensive descriptions of participants' behaviours, staff activities, and the complete range of human interactions. Document analysis produces snippets, quotations, or complete sections from records, communications, official reports, and open-ended questionnaires.

Observational techniques are strategies for gathering first-hand data about programs, processes, or behaviours that are being examined. They allow evaluators to collect data on a wide range of behaviours, capture a wide range of interactions, and openly investigate the assessment issue. The evaluator can acquire a comprehensive view, i.e., an awareness of the context in which the project runs, by directly witnessing operations and activities (Frechtling and Sharp 1997). "The ideal in evolution is to design and negotiate that degree of participation that will yield the most meaningful data about the program given the characteristics of the participants, the nature of staff-participant interactions, the socio-political context of the program..." (Patton 1990, p. 267). In some circumstances, having two persons observe at the same time may be advantageous. This can improve data quality by increasing the volume of data and lowering the influence of observer bias. However, in addition to the additional cost, the presence of two watchers may create an unpleasant atmosphere for those being examined, causing them to change their actions. Further, this test subject would be a part of and exist in a natural, unstructured, and adaptable environment.

Interviews may take the form of "face-to-face interactions in which researchers typically pose questions that respondents answer" (Gephart Jr 2004). Interviews provide data that differs significantly from observations in that they enable the assessment team to gather the perspectives of project participants, workers, and others involved in the project. The use of interviews as a data collection approach requires that the participants' opinions are significant, knowable, and able to be expressed, and that their perspectives influence the project's success. In assessment research, two types of interviews are used: structured interviews, which include a precisely prepared questionnaire, and in-depth interviews, in which the interviewer does not follow a strict framework. The emphasis in the former is on obtaining responses to correctly phrased questions. To ensure uniformity in interview administration, interviewers are instructed to deviate only little from the question phrasing. On the other hand the interviewers in the latter, want to encourage free and open responses, and there may be a compromise between extensive coverage of themes and in-depth exploration of a relatively limited range of questions (Frechtling and Sharp 1997). An in-depth interview is a conversation between an experienced interviewer and an interviewee. Its purpose is to elicit abundant, detailed data that may be analysed (Lofland et al. 2022). Such interviews are ideally conducted in person while telephone or online interviews can be effective in some cases.

Interviewing and participant observation are both used in focus groups. The focus group session is, in fact, an interview (Patton 1990), not a debate or decision-making group. Focus groups are distinguished by the intentional utilization of group interaction to generate data and ideas that would not have emerged otherwise. The method provides for the observation of group dynamics, debate, and direct insights about the respondents' actions, attitudes, language, and so on (Frechtling and Sharp 1997). For this study focus groups were considered but it wasn't convenient to have everyone present at a specific time as the test subjects were spread across different locations. Furthermore, another problem with focus groups is the test subjects tend to speak over each other and may be intimidated if their managers are in the room.

To answer the research question, this study conducted one-on-one interviews with six employees' roles and one manager position who were all part of the same team within the organization. This approach allowed us to gather in-depth perspectives and insights relevant to the specific team context. The study was conducted with a team within Airbus Defence and Space (ADS). ADS is responsible for developing and producing the corporation's defence and space goods, as well as delivering associated services with its headquarters in Taufkirchen/Ottobrunn, Germany, with offices in Germany and all over the world.

The data for this study was collected as a Cross-sectional study. A Cross-sectional study collects relevant data at a specific point in time. A cross-sectional study does not include a time dimension because all data is collected at or near the collection date (Kesmodel 2018).

Written documents would include a range of

- Document Studies
- Public Records
- Personal documents

Document studies are typically existing records that frequently reveal information regarding an environment and/or group of individuals that cannot be viewed or documented otherwise. Document studies papers are classified into two types: public records and personal papers (Guba and Lincoln 1981).

Public records are documents prepared and retained for the purpose of attesting to an occurrence or providing an accounting (Lincoln 1985). First-person narratives of events and experiences are contained in personal documents. The following are examples of "documents of life": diaries, portfolios, photographs, artwork, schedules, scrapbooks, poetry, letters to the editor, etc. Personal documents can be used to better understand a participant's worldview and the message they intend to convey to an audience. Additionally, unlike other qualitative data sources, document data collection is largely undetectable and requires little participation from participants in the study's setting (Fetterman, 1989).

Case Study

A case study "consists of a detailed investigation, often with data collected over some time, of phenomena within their context" (Cassell and Symon 2004, p. 323).

Case studies are primarily descriptive analyses, typically of a small number of locations (small towns, companies, or schools), in which the investigator in charge becomes immersed in the community or institution and searches through the available documents, has formal and informal conversations with informants, observes ongoing activities, and develops an analysis of both individual and cross-case findings (Frechtling and Sharp 1997).

According to Yin (1994), case studies, are a method for examining a modern phenomenon inside its actual setting, particularly when the distinctions between phenomenon and setting are hazy. Yin highlights two more explanatory factors that are particularly pertinent to the current study and that anticipate and support the justifications for the selection of this specific research technique that are provided below. Case studies give the researcher the technical flexibility to deal with unusual scenarios where there are many more interesting variables than data points. Additionally, they gain from the earlier creation of theoretical hypotheses that serve as a guide for data gathering and analysis.

Interviews

The Problem-Centred Interview (PCI) was developed by Witzel (1985). PCI is a qualitative face-to-face interview method that emphasizes openness, flexibility, and process orientation (Flick 2022). Murray (2016) suggests an egalitarian discourse between the interviewer and respondent to refine the research question or 'problem' collaboratively. PCI need a particular research technique and interviewing equipment. In addition to the interview guide, it is recommended that a brief questionnaire, recording devices, and a postscript be utilized in PCI to supplement the interview process. In most cases, the initial portion of the interview consists of a story, followed by specific follow-up questions. The goal is not to create a formal question-answer process, but to give researchers a thematic framework to guide their research topics. PCI enables a systematic comparison of acquired data (Döringer 2021). According to Scheibelhofer (2008), the interviewers begin with open-ended questions to elicit a narrative based on the individual's concerns. Following the narrative episode, the interviewer conducts specific explorations, including ad hoc questions. Researchers conduct specific explorations to uncover the workings of the relevant topics not previously mentioned by interviewees. Specific explorations focus on interviewees' accounts to gain deeper insights into their understanding and opinions. These questions and statements are based on prior knowledge or information presented during the narrative. Combining an open narrative with a structured interview section allows the researcher to remain open to the information gathered. This encourages interviewees to share their perspectives, clarify previous statements, and challenge the interviewer's assumptions. PCI allows researchers to reconstruct the implicit dimensions of expert knowledge by focusing on the interviewee's perspectives while also addressing specific topics relevant to the research focus (Döringer 2021).

For the current study, the below Questionnaire/Guide was followed for the interviews

Interview Guide

Introduction about myself, Thesis, Interview

The topic of Thesis:

My Thesis is about

Information about Interviewee

Name:

Place: Google Meet (Online)

May I have your permission to Record Voice:

Which year were you born in?

Employees' engagement

Please explain what engagement looks like in your daily working environment?

How would you describe your engagement in the workplace?

Trust

I Will Provide a Definition of trust from Literature

Please describe how trust works in your daily working environment?

What do you observe with trust in your work setting (With Co-workers/ Management)?

Note: During the interview, the questions for trust were broken down for trust with colleagues or trust with managers.

Age

Please elaborate on how you use your work experience in daily work?

Since the questions were open-ended the follow-up questions asked were different for the interviewees.

In the current study, the data collection process took place in December 2023. It started with a working student job where the topic was discussed and interested candidates were recruited. An in-person discussion or a short call was held to check if the participant was interested in the study. After a quick summary of the context of the study, the one-on-one interviews were scheduled online using Google Meet. The interviews were carried out regardless of location, which made it easier for the respondents to carry out the interviews at their desired times. Another advantage of the online interviews was that they were time and cost-saving, as participants did not have to travel and also enabled the sample to be expanded to include interview partners from all over. The subject's work location was located across 3 countries in Europe (Germany, France, UK) and had a wide range of experience in different fields. The interviews were chosen to be representative of different groups (For example. Age, Sex, and location) were also taken into consideration. The use of online interviews enables real-time transmission of the content discussed. The video option on Google Meet made it possible to have a conversation that was similar to a face-to-face conversation. The implementation went smoothly on the technical side, apart from 3 exceptions wherein 2 of the video calls the video was not used due to a poor internet connection, and in 1 the video was not used as the user does not have a webcam. However, this had no impact on the content of the interview. The conversations were recorded on the computer and smartphone for backup. A request was sent out to 10 chosen participants from various demographics and backgrounds but 3 out of the 10 were not able to participate due to various reasons. Out of the 7 participants, 6 were Team members and 1 was a manager (Interviewee B, Appendix 1). The Interviews were conducted in English, furthermore, the company's working language was English as it was the most common language among the different backgrounds. All participants were working with the company for more than 24 months except for 2 participants completing 18 months and 10 months. The interview was held by employees and managers who worked in their positions on a full-time basis except 1 employee who was a part-time employee (working student).

The manager and employees who were a part of the change projects participated in semi-structured, in-depth interviews. All interviews were recorded and transcribed for additional study. The interviews ranged in length from 15 to 30 minutes. The average length of a meeting was 20 minutes longer because of recording explanations and small conversations before and after. All participants provided verbal informed consent. The meetings began with a quick introduction of myself and the reason for the meeting, which was followed by an explanation of the verbal consent. During each interview, notes were collected for backup. This procedure aimed to improve transcript quality by addressing contextual aspects and recording quality issues if any (Poland 1995).

The semi-structured desired format of the interview was communicated to the participants. My questions were guided by a pre-structured topic guide. The participants were advised to take their time, recall their experiences, and narrate in their terms throughout the interview. If there was a clear

link to the research aims, deviations from the areas of interest were continued rather than being stopped. After discussing all of the major issues in the topic guide, the interviews ended when the respondents said they had nothing else to say.

The interview pool in Table 3.1 spans four generations, offering a diverse range of perspectives and experiences. G and E, both 25 and 28 years old, are classified as ‘Young’ representing Generation Z (born 1995-2012). Generation Y (born 1980-1994) is represented by C and B. While C, at 31, falls under the ‘Young’ category, B at 41, transitions into ‘Middle age’ and is also the only manager who took part in this study. The young employees (G, E, C) were fairly new joiners in the company (within 1 year) as per an observation. Representing Generation X (born 1965-1979) is F, classified as ‘Old’ at 57. Finally, D and A, both 61 and 62 years old, belong to The Baby Boomer Generation (born 1946-1964) and also are categorized as ‘Old’. This variety in age and generation promises a wealth of different viewpoints and experiences to be examined within the interview process. The classification of ‘Young’, ‘Middle age’ and ‘Old’ might be subjective and this classification would benefit this study or research objectives. Lastly, these are just broad generational categories, and individual characteristics and experiences can vary greatly within each group.

Interviewee	Generation	Current Age	Classifications	Classification in symbols
G	Generation Z – born 1995-2012.	28	Young	-
E	Generation Z – born 1995-2012.	25	Young	-
C	Generation Y – born 1980-1994.	31	Young	-
B	Generation Y – born 1980-1994.	41	Middle age	=
D	The Baby Boomer Generation – born 1946-1964.	61	Old	+
A	The Baby Boomer Generation – born 1946-1964.	62	Old	+
F	Generation X – born 1965-1979.	57	Old	+

Table 3.1: Interviewee Age & Classification

The three symbols (‘-’, ‘=’, ‘+’) in column ‘Classification in symbols’ to the right are a quick way of classification between the three classifications. First comes the “young” generation (Generation Z – born 1995-2012, Generation Y – born 1980-1994) then comes the “Middle age” generation (Generation Y – born 1980-1994). And the “Old” classification (Generation X – born 1965-1979, The Baby Boomer Generation – born 1946-1964).

Figure 3.1 shows the team structure, the team managers 1.1 and 1.2 are reporting to their manager and the same team managers 1.1 and 1.2 have team members in the team who are reporting to them. Out of the 2 managers, 1.1 agreed to the interview and 1.2 unfortunately couldn’t make time for the interview before the manager’s annual leave.

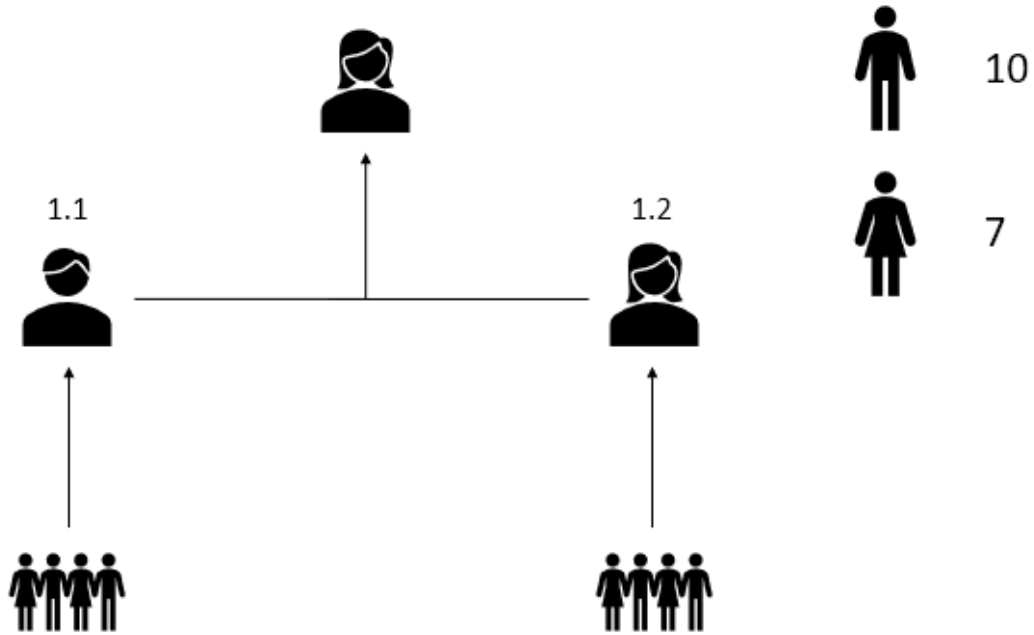


Figure 3.1: Team size and structure

Figure 3.2 displays the reporting of the team to their respected managers 1.1 and 1.2. As you may notice there are small clusters in the first line of the Senior employees below the managers, these are the project leads who lead different tasks and projects. Furthermore, within the team, there was one employee with an independent role under Manager 1.1. This employee didn't seem to show any differences when compared with the other employees in the same team.

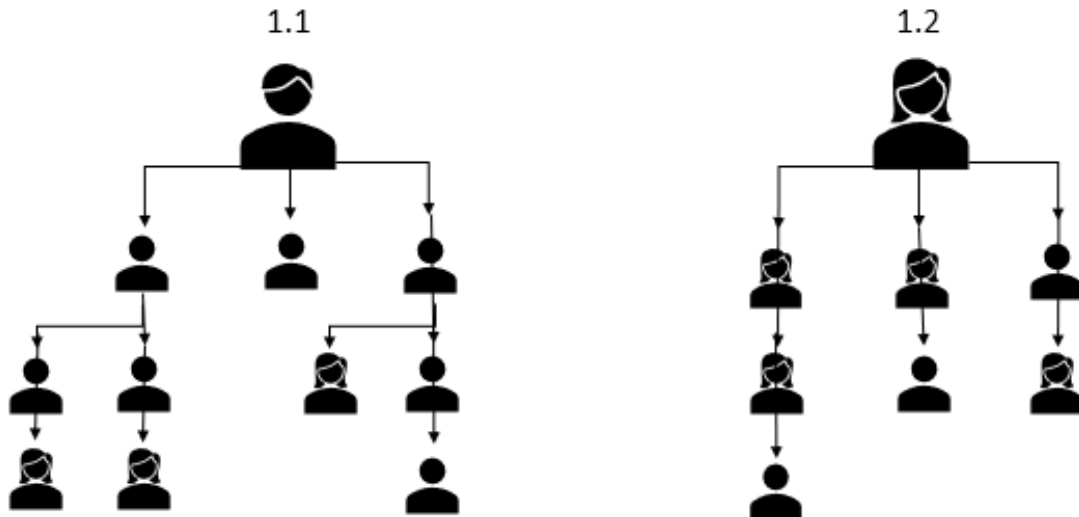


Figure 3.2: Team hierarchy

Transcripts

Researchers use two strategies for transcribing:

- Naturalized transcription and
- Denaturalized transcription (Davidson 2009).

Naturalized transcription involves thorough and unfiltered transcription. The analysis focuses on both content and discourse elements, including speech interruptions, laughing, muttering, involuntary noises, gestures, and body language. Denaturalized transcription presents 'laundered' data by removing socio-cultural factors and information that may impact research outcomes. Although it accurately describes discourse, it has limitations in describing accents and involuntary sounds. Accuracy refers to the essence of the interview, its interpretation, and its role in the discourse. Each method has benefits and drawbacks. Naturalized transcription can lead to inaccurate interpretations of recorded voices, potentially influencing research conclusions. However, detailed descriptions of the voices and topics discussed during the interview may provide a more complete and valid picture of the situation. In contrast to the naturalized transcription method, the denaturalized transcription approach produces unblemished results. While transcriptions may lose subtle socio-cultural characteristics, they can also be coherent and easy to read. Most researchers use a combination of these methods, as per Oliver et al. (2005). Forbat and Henderson (2005) question whether naturalized transcription accurately captures the interview's content. In this paper, a mixture of naturalized transcription approaches was chosen, which allows to capture of the richness of the data with naturalized transcription while simultaneously guaranteeing clarity and consistency in the presentation of the transcribed content by denaturalizing some features. This balance ensures that the transcripts are both detailed and readable, meeting the demands of diverse audiences. By combining components of both systems, the limits of each may be addressed. For example, whereas naturalized transcription can give rich insights into socio-cultural subtleties, denaturalized transcription can assist keep attention on vital material by removing extraneous information.

The Transcription of the audio recordings was done using a live transcriber by a Google application called 'Live Transcribe & Notification' on a cell phone as an interdependent device. Due to English not being the first language and the interviewees having different accents the transcripts needed to be corrected and reworded. The transcripts (see Appendix 1) served as the foundation for reviewing and interpreting the data gathered. As the review focused on the content of what was stated, linguistic anomalies were either partially rectified or not recorded. Similarly, nonverbal communication by facial expressions and gestures was only documented in rare circumstances. During the transcription process, data was additionally anonymized. For this aim, information that permits inferences to be derived about particular persons, such as proper names, place names or corporate names, was substituted in the text with pseudonymized names.

Data Analysis Technique

Qualitative data analysis is often viewed as complex, time-consuming, and lacking theoretical support. Inexperienced researchers may struggle with analysing qualitative data due to a lack of clear guidelines (Gephart Jr 2004). Qualitative data starts as raw, descriptive information on programs and the individuals who participate in them. The evaluator visits the program to examine program activities first-hand, sometimes even participating in those activities as a "participant observer". The evaluator typically interviews participants and employees about their experiences and perceptions, and records and documentation are also reviewed (Labuschagne 2003).

Thematic analysis (TA) investigates and evaluates patterns of meaning or 'themes' in qualitative data. TA differs from other qualitative analytic techniques in that it provides a method or technique, not a methodology, that serves as a theoretical foundation for research. TA offers systematic methods for identifying codes and themes from qualitative data. Codes are the smallest unit of analysis, capturing potentially relevant data features for research questions. Codes form themes and patterns of meaning based on a shared core idea. Themes help organize and report the researcher's analytic observations. TA aims to identify and interpret key features of data, guided by the research question, rather than simply summarizing it. It is important to note that the research question may change during coding and theme development, but this wasn't the case in this study. TA prioritizes producing rigorous and high-quality analyses (Clarke and Braun 2017).

This type of TA is distinguished by its flexibility in research objectives, sampling size, data collection methods, and approaches to meaning production, as well as theoretical adaptability. TA can detect patterns in data pertaining to participants' life experiences, viewpoints, behaviors, and practices. It is also used in 'experiential' research to understand their thoughts, feelings, and actions (Clarke and Braun 2017). TA can analyse both large and small datasets, including case studies with 1-2 participants by Cedervall and Åberg (2010) and interview studies with 60+ participants by Mooney-Somers et al. (2008) and homogenous and heterogeneous samples. Data analysis can include traditional qualitative techniques like interviews and focus groups, as well as newer methods like qualitative surveys and story completion such as in Clarke and Braun (2013). TA can be used for both inductive and deductive analyses in a study by Selvam (2013), capturing both explicit and underlying meanings.

Data Analysis Process

The coding process chosen was thematic analysis. This type of coding was chosen to identify, analyse, and report patterns, and themes. The coding process started with employee interviews and the transcripts were made from the interview recordings to understand "what is going on" (Morse 1999, p. 404). As English wasn't the mother tongue of many of the interviewees the transcripts needed to be corrected before the coding process. Reflection, open-mindedness, and adherence to participant narratives are key in this step. The texts were carefully studied and gave codes to pertinent paragraphs or segments to answer the study question and hypothesis. Using an inductive strategy to extract codes from raw data reduces the risk of researchers biasing the outcome. After rereading the transcripts, important topics and themes were identified (Braun and Clarke 2006).

Due to the complicity of the data, the data was then closely examined. It's challenging to strike a balance between a manageable number of codes and accurately capturing the complexity and diversity of data. Ultimately, the goal is to want to have a list of 50-70 initial codes. Codes can be checked for a second cycle of coding, creating higher-level themes from the initial list (Gioia et al. 2013). Hence the data was again examined to ensure that no relevant information was overlooked. From this process, patterns and codes were identified. This provided a detailed and granular understanding of the data, which was then clustered into themes. The 'keyness' of a theme depends on "whether it captures something important in relation to the overall research" (Braun and Clarke 2006, p. 82). The exact breakdown of the codes and the respective themes can be found in the themes and codes section in Appendix 2.

Chapter 4: Results

4.1 Transcripts to Codes

The results of the Case study were carried out through specific examples in the below figures (4.1, 4.2, 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.4 & 4.5) drawn from transcripts, the following text will illustrate how codes are formed and interpretations within qualitative research.

Figure 4.1 displays a screenshot taken from the transcript of the interview, the highlighted text is the text taken to form the code. The text “I seen that in some of the supervisor of them means trust” got coded as “Trust as a Component of Engagement” because the interviewer mentioned trust when he/she was asked to describe engagement.

broad as well. Also, something that maybe to recall but also, I think that goes from person to person so every, lead every manager in every team as a completely different level of order completely different definition of what engagement means. Um, I seen that in some of the supervisor of them means trust. And, what is the level of data trust to you? In other words, means efficiency, what is the level of. They respecting from you. From other one is engagement represents how to maintain you motivated to do the daily activities, your daily activities in the best way possible.

Figure 4.1 - Example of code “Trust as a Component of Engagement”

Similarly, in Figure 4.2 a part of the text “Especially between older and younger colleagues” engagement is not something that it's given or is not something that it's relevant to the date today to the daily business” was coded to “Age and Engagement”.

in different levels. So normally, when there is a project that it's for big relevance, it would normally it gets more engagement. I think that that's not a secret. What is interesting? Is normally yes, engagement comes more from Management or positions of lead. Especially between older and younger colleagues' engagement is not something that it's given or is not something that it's really relevant to the date today to the daily business. I don't foresee my colleagues which are not related to my projects, engaging to what I am doing. And what are my activities, especially I think that it's also relevant with the younger colleagues, be my younger colleagues are not. If they are not related to my world. Normally they do not intervene or not give this level of

Figure 4.2 – Example of code “Age and Engagement”

In Figure 4.3.1 a part of the text “people can trust me because they know that I have experienced” was coded to “Utilizing Work Experience for Trust Building”.

Interviewee: My work experience is useful for. As I said at the beginning for the trust so people can trust me because they know that I have experienced into procurement before engineering before, manufacturing in other company or the cultural environments. So, they trust me. Or they can give trust in me because we have this experience the same as another colleague. If you tell

Figure 4.3.1 – Example of code “Utilizing Work Experience for Trust Building”

The same code “Utilizing Work Experience for Trust Building” was used for the text “same mistakes having this experience provides me as this kind of Wisdom. It's a kind of wisdom not to repeat failures” in Figure 4.3.2.

With those experience that I have in the past, I can say that. I saw things. I have an understood the things. And I would it's as well for me trying to not redo. The same mistakes having this experience provides me as this kind of Wisdom. It's a kind of wisdom not to repeat failures or with this experience, I have the chance. To avoid doing. Failures.

Figure 4.3.2 – Another Example of code “Utilizing Work Experience for Trust Building”

In Figure 4.4 the text from the transcripts “But still it's the same because I'm young basically. It's always important in the beginning to gain the trust of people” was used to come up with the code of “Impact of Age on Trust Perception”

though, let's say for me, I've already worked like for five for four years full time. On the specific industry. But still it's the same because I'm young basically. It's always important in the beginning to gain the trust of people.

Because you literally don't know what will happen next. What I mean by that is that people perceive you as someone who is still new.

Figure 4.4 – Example of code “Impact of Age on Trust Perception”

In Figure 4.5 the text in transcripts “People that are older or they don't care about technology. May think that we require. Hours days were coded as “Perceived Age Advantage in Technology Proficiency”.

Let's say a computer Easy in. Uh, let's say, 10 minutes. People that are older or they don't care about technology. May think that we require. Hours days. So, whenever we do some of these tasks, they are a super happy that we have accomplished even though actually they're not, they don't require the time at all.

Figure 4.5 – Example of code “Perceived Age Advantage in Technology Proficiency”

4.2 Codes to Themes

Different codes are derived from the interview transcripts and then clustered together to form themes. The first theme “Communication and Collaboration” was chosen for these codes because they all deal with different aspects of communication and collaboration in a team or organizational setting. The codes focus on various aspects of communication, such as “Remote Team Communication and Collaboration”, “Multifaceted Communication Channels”, “Frequency and Patterns of Communication”, as well as “Communication Challenges and Frustration”. They also discuss the significance of “Effective Communication and Collaboration” for “Clear Communication for Objective Alignment”, “Shared Goals”, and the role of trust in encouraging mutual reliance and collaboration among colleagues (“Emphasizing Trust in Colleagues”). Furthermore, the codes discuss the relationship between communication, supportive leadership, and trust in team dynamics, emphasizing the importance of interpersonal trust and how it affects collaboration and progress.

The theme “Trust Dynamics in the Work Environment” was chosen because the provided codes all deal with different aspects of trust in the workplace. These codes cover trust relationships with co-workers (“Trust Dynamics with Colleagues”), managers with the code “Trust Defined by Supportive Managerial Relationship”, and teams, as well as the creation, restoration, and application of trust (“Quality of Work and Trust Impact”). They also discuss the “Impact of Trust on Relationships”, and overall “Trust Dynamics and Project Progress”. Thus, they collectively represent the broader theme of trust dynamics in the workplace.

Lastly, the theme “Adaptation and Growth in the Workplace” was chosen because the provided codes, all deal with different aspects of how people adapt to and grow in their work environment. These codes cover the process of gradually “Adjustment to Work Environment Over Time”, overcoming obstacles early in one’s career by code “Navigating Early Career Challenges”, and achieving professional growth through learning and development (“Learning Curve and Professional Growth”). This theme also emphasizes the importance of “Adaptation and Flexibility in Response to Changes”, as well as the “Value of Mixed Skill Sets in Teams”. As a result, they collectively represent the broader theme of workplace adaptation and growth, capturing the dynamic nature of people’s professional experiences and development.

In Table 4.1, one theme was selected from each variable category, aligning with a specific variable. Furthermore, in Table 4.1 the symbols are classified, and the

“-” represents the “Young” classification, the

“+” represents the “Old” classification and

“=” represents the “Middle age classification”.

* Not all codes are displayed for this theme

Communication and Collaboration*	Trust Dynamics in the Work Environment*	Adaptation and Growth in the Workplace
- Remote Team Communication and Collaboration	+ Trust Dynamics with Colleagues	- Adjustment to Work Environment Over Time
+ Multifaceted Communication Channels	- Trust-Based Management Approach	- Differentiation in Experience Impact
+ Frequency and Patterns of Communication	+ Trust Development Process	- Perception of Age and Patience in Work Environment
+ Structured Managerial Reporting	+ Trust in Colleagues Reliability and Confidence	- Navigating Early Career Challenges
- Impact of Trust on Collaboration	+ Impact of Trust on Relationships	- Learning Curve and Professional Growth
+ Communication Challenges and Frustration	= Utilizing Work Experience for Trust	+ Value of Mixed Skill Sets in Teams
- Effective Communication and Collaboration	= Lost trust is Lost	+ Adaptation and Flexibility in Response to Changes
+ Exchange with colleges	= Trust Four Dimensions Model	
+ Shared Goals	- Trust Building Actions	
- Efficiency and Purpose in Team Meetings	+ Trust in Collaborative Work Environment	
= Clear Communication for Objective Alignment	+ Fostering Trust in Collaborative Work Environments	
	Trust Defined by Supportive Managerial	
- Miscommunication and Managerial Response	- Relationship	
Barriers and Managerial Response Challenges in	Managerial Trust and Support	
- Expressing Concerns	-	
= Trust in Colleagues Mutual Reliance	- Care Fostering Trust	
= Emphasizing Trust in Colleagues	- Team Trust in Task Completion and Dependency	
- Communication and Supportive Leadership	+ Trust Dynamics and Project Progress	
- Communication and Trust	+ Quality of Work and Trust Impact	
- Interpersonal Trust within Team Dynamics	- Economic Considerations in Trust Building	
Perceived Trust Discrepancy Between Role and		
- Contribution		
- Acceptance of Positional Trust Dynamics		

Table 4.1 – Example of codes with them

Quotes

Code: Impact of Trust on Collaboration

Yes, because if, for example, if you work with someone, that has no trust with you, they are always going to double check or basically, if you give them your opinion, your input, they might actually not take them into account because if they don't trust you, they are not going to listen to everything you say. Or take your opinion into accounts simply, I believe.

Figure 4.6 – Example of code “Impact of Trust on Collaboration”

Code: Structured Managerial Reporting

Yeah, so basically, we have one scheduled meeting that it's like one to one me and my manager. But then, basically, every day we are also we have team meetings with

Figure 4.7.1 – Example 1 of code “Structured Managerial Reporting”

manager, I have also regular meeting. So, weekly meeting, dedicated time slot to discuss and to have an exchange on the on the status of information of the project and so on.

Figure 4.7.2 – Example 2 of code “Structured Managerial Reporting”

Code: Managerial Trust and Support

that that's what it shows trust. He was not requesting me results in any way. He was always, um, More interested in my well-being as an employee. And I think that that's a really different perspective of what engagement

Figure 4.8.1 – Example 1 of code “Managerial Trust and Support”

Yes, it is affected the quality of work is degrading. Honestly, the amount of progress is getting, it's decreased. Because there is not necessary

Figure 4.8.2 – Example 2 of code “Managerial Trust and Support”

then They come back with a with a solution from their perspective. Yeah. So, it's on the corporative work between employee's manager. So, it's more than

Figure 4.9 – Example 3 of code “Trust in Managerial Relationships”

4.3 Variables & Themes Identified

Variables

The dependent variable of the study is 'Employee Engagement', 'Trust' is one of the antecedents of 'Employee Engagement' which is Independent in this study. 'Age' is the next variable which is not only Independent but relates to both 'Employee Engagement' and 'Trust', which brings an interesting dynamic in this study.

Type of Variable	Variables
Dependent	Employee Engagement
Independent	Trust
Independent	Age

Table 4.2 – Variables of the study

Table 4.3 presents a structured format where the variables are listed in the column headings, while the themes identified are detailed across the rows

Each part of the interview process was converted to codes, these codes were clustered into themes. The themes in the table below were grouped into the respective variables as displayed in a heading in bold below in Table 4.3.

Employee Engagement	Trust	Age
Antecedents of Engagement	Engagement in a Trusting Environment	Perception of Age and Trust
Employee Engagement in Work	Trust Dynamics in the Work Environment	Effort and Solutions in Work Processes
Motivation in Engagement	Leadership and Objectives	Collaboration Preferences
Communication and Collaboration	Communication and Collaboration	Learning from Past Experiences
Collegial Engagement and Communication	Motivation and Engagement	Skill Development and Feedback
Managerial Support and Guidance	Disengagement in a Distrusting Environment	Adjustment to Work Environment Over Time
Cultural Diversity and Global Engagement	Autonomy in Employee Engagement & Trust	
Employee Engagement Strategies	Trust Dynamics in Professional Environments 1	
Trusting Decision-Making in Employees/Managers	Trust Dynamics in Professional Environments 2	
Employee Engagement Strategies	Trust in Collaborative Environments	
Autonomy in Employee Engagement & Trust	Trust Challenges and Impact on Work Relationships	

Table 4.3 – Themes Identified

Employee Engagement, Trust & Age

The first question in the interview process focused on the dependent variable, employee engagement, and was followed by questions about trust (Appendix 1). The discussion then shifted to the topic of age, with the assumption that an employee's age influences both trust and engagement. The interview's structured sequence allowed for a more efficient coding process: the first section of the transcripts was coded for engagement, the second for trust, and the final section for age.

The analysis yielded an intriguing discovery: the presence of codes related to one variable within another. During the interview, codes such as 'Trust as a Component of Engagement' and 'Age and Engagement' were identified for the employee engagement variable. These codes were organized around the theme of 'Antecedents of Engagement'. Similarly, mentions of 'Engagement at the workplace' and 'Disengagement in a Distrusting Environment' were noted in the trust variable. Furthermore, the phrase 'Utilizing Work Experience for Trust Building' was identified as an indicator of age dynamics. In contrast, the age variable included several mentions of codes from the other variables, resulting in the theme 'Perception of Age with Trust & Employee Engagement'.

The first line in Table 4.4 is the 'theme of the variable' which is written in bold. The codes are displayed below the themes.

Employee Engagement	Trust	Age
Antecedents of Engagement	Engagement in a Trusting Environment	Perception of Age with Trust & Employee Engagement
Trust as a Component of Engagement	Engagement at the workplace	Perceived Value of Youthful Energy and Enthusiasm
Age and Engagement	Disengagement in a Distrusting Environment	Adaptability and Efficiency in Task Completion
	Utilizing Work Experience for Trust Building	Impact of Age on Trust Perception
	Tailoring Engagement Strategies Individualized Approach	Perception of Carefree Attitude Among Young Professionals
	Employee Engagement Motivational Factors Identification	Challenges of Establishing Trust as a Young Professional
		Need for Enhanced Trust Due to Foreign Work Environment
		Perceived Age Advantage in Technology Proficiency
		Tailored Employee Engagement Strategies Addressing Individual Motivations
		Customized Engagement Approaches Understanding and Catering to Individual Preferences
		Personalized Engagement Individualized Approach
		Employee Engagement Strategies Motivation Factors

Table 4.4 – Variables present in other variables

Quotes

Code: Trust as a Component of Engagement

completely different level of order completely different definition of what engagement means. I seen that in some of the supervisor of them means trust. And, what is the level of that trust to you? In other words, means

Figure 4.10 – Example of code “Trust as a Component of Engagement”

Code: Engagement at the workplace

I was really motivated. I have to be, I was really good to propose solutions, to be, uh, active in the way I was proposing by the ways to do it. Different

Figure 4.11 – Example of code “Engagement at the workplace”

Code: Impact of Age on Trust Perception

Because you literally don't know what will happen next. What I mean by that is that people perceive you as someone who is still new.

Figure 4.12.1 – Example 1 of code “Engagement at the workplace”

And, That of course. Remove, some of the trust that they have in here, because of the inexperience, just because of the age, I do also believe that people at a young

Figure 4.12.2 – Example 2 of code “Engagement at the workplace”

The higher the level of trust, the higher the level of employee engagement.

The “Motivation and Engagement” theme in Table 4.5 includes several codes that shed light on the relationship between motivation and engagement in the workplace. “Motivation and Initiative in a Trusting Environment” focuses on how workplace trust promotes employee initiative and drive. “Trust as a Motivator” suggests that trust is a powerful motivator for employees to actively participate in their roles. In contrast, “Diminished Significance of Trust Post-Task Completion” suggests that the importance of trust may decrease after a task is completed. “Trust in Colleagues Mutual Reliance” emphasizes the critical role of trust in fostering mutual reliance among colleagues, which contributes to overall motivation levels. Furthermore, “Trust for Future Career Prospects” suggests that trust is critical in shaping employees’ career aspirations and development. Finally, “Lack of Trust and Its Impact” examines the negative effects of a lack of trust and its impact on the workplace. These codes highlight the complex relationship between trust, motivation, and employee engagement in the workplace.

The theme “Disengagement in a Distrusting Environment” is defined by a variety of codes that highlight the negative effects of distrust on employee disengagement in the workplace. The “Impact of Distrust on Team Dynamics” suggests that when distrust prevails, it has a negative impact on team cohesion and effectiveness. “Disappointment Due to Broken Trust” emphasizes the emotional toll taken by employees when trust is betrayed, resulting in disengagement. “Fear of Repercussions in a Distrusting Environment” demonstrates how the importance of potential consequences in a distrustful environment can lead to disengagement. “Role of Trust in Work Completion” emphasizes the critical role that trust plays in facilitating task completion and employee involvement. Furthermore, codes such as “Challenges in Establishing Trust Outside Defined Parameters & Environment” and “Trust Deficit and Work Quality Effects on Productivity” highlight the difficulties associated with cultivating trust and its negative impact on work quality and productivity, ultimately leading to disengagement. Overall, these findings highlight the significant link between distrust and employee disengagement in the workplace which is the opposite of what H1 hypothesises

Motivation and Engagement	Engagement in a Trusting Environment	Disengagement in a Distrusting Environment
Motivation and Initiative in a Trusting Environment	Engagement at the workplace	Rebuilding Trust Energies Allocation
Trust as a Motivator	Utilizing Work Experience for Trust Building	Impact of Distrust on Team Dynamics
Diminished Significance of Trust Post-Task Completion	Tailoring Engagement Strategies Individualized Approach	Disappointment Due to Broken Trust
Trust for Future Career Prospects	Trust in Colleagues	Trust Issues with Line Manager
Trust in Colleagues Mutual Reliance	Employee Engagement Motivational Factors Identification	Fear of Repercussions in a Distrusting Environment
	Lack of Trust and Its Impact	Loss of Motivation and Team Cohesion
	Role of Trust in Work Completion	Trust and Mistrust in Work Relationships
	Trust as a Component of Engagement	Impact on Company and Effort Expenditure
		Role of Trust in Work Completion
		Challenges in Establishing Trust Outside Defined Parameters & Environment
		Rebuilding Lost Trust Energy Allocation
		Challenges with Line Manager's Trust Impact on Work Relationships
		Trust Deficit and Work Quality Effects on Productivity
		Perception of Trust Discrepancy Between Interviewee and Colleagues
		Approach to Rebuilding Lost Trust Strategic Allocation of Energy
		Organizational Impact and Excessive Effort Consequences of Trust Deficiency

Table 4.5 – H1 Themes and codes

Quotes

Code: Lack of Trust and Its Impact

team. Let's discuss this. Let's do improvements. I think that with my second supervisor, I was more, scared like you say, I think that it's not that Correct board. I would say that I was more or it was not here to actually raise my voice. Because in the end, it will have to, we will become something of uh, t

Figure 4.13– Example of code “Lack of Trust and Its Impact”

Code: Trust for Future Career Prospects
 important coming. Yes, out of Out of Germany to think about the future because if you're manager doesn't trust you that also means that it's much harder in a way to stay in to stay in the job in the company.

Figure 4.14.1 – Example 1 of code “Trust for Future Career Prospects”

I'm young and these are like my first years working, I would like basic human manager to trust me in order to basically in order for me to have the chance to work to continue working here, let's say, for the next years Because I yes, it's always

Figure 4.14.2 – Example 2 of code “Trust for Future Career Prospects”

Code: Employee Engagement Motivational Factors Identification

then you be motivated of the people. And motivation motivate. Everyone has a different kind of motivation.

Figure 4.15.1 – Example 1 of code “Employee Engagement Motivational Factors Identification”

Some are motivated by autonomy. Others are motivated by social network within. Within the office. Others are motivated to reach a goal in the work. Others are motivated to learn new things within the Within the within the company by working.

And as well, it depends on the age of the people. Some people are keener to autonomy, maybe younger age or others are working to have this social network.

Figure 4.15.2 – Example 2 of code “Employee Engagement Motivational Factors Identification”

Younger employees exhibit lower levels of employee engagement compared to older employees.

In Table 4.6.1 the theme “Employee Engagement in Work” both younger and older employees received positive codes in Employee Engagement, with general work engagement, daily work, defined work environment, project relevance, and task variety. With Proactive Engagement, Younger employees were coded for “Proactive Engagement in Daily Work,” implying a higher level of initiative than other coded aspects. Regarding Motivation, both the middle-aged manager and older employees were coded neutrally for “Employee Engagement Motivation Factors” indicating that there was no significant difference in understanding individual motivations when compared to younger employees. Older employees were coded positively for “Personal Enjoyment and Fulfilment in Work”, indicating potentially higher levels than younger employees. Regarding Skill Application, younger employees were coded for “Application of New Skills in an Engaged Team”, which could indicate lower engagement in using new skills in a team setting.

For the theme of Managerial Support and Guidance, codes may indicate higher perceived managerial support and guidance for younger employees, such as “Managerial Influence on Engagement”, “Managerial Support and Guidance in One-to-One Meetings”, “Variability in Managerial Approaches to Engagement”, and “Structured Agenda and Task-oriented Discussions”. This could include feeling more influenced by their supervisor, and receiving less support in one-on-one meetings. The variability in managerial approaches could encounter inconsistencies in managerial approaches. Furthermore, they may notice micromanagement. The code “Challenges Arising from Unforeseen Issues” indicates that older employees may perceive managers as more supportive in addressing unexpected challenges and “Managerial Exchange” & “Proactive Collaboration and Support” show there is sufficient communication, collaboration and support between manager and employee.

Employee Engagement in Work	Managerial Support and Guidance
+ Engagement with Work	+ Managerial Exchange
+ Engagement in daily work	+ Proactive Collaboration and Support
+ Engagement with Defined Work Environment	- Managerial Support and Guidance in One-to-One Meetings
+ Project Relevance and Engagement	- Managerial Influence on Engagement
+ Task Variety and Engagement	- Variability in Managerial Approaches to Engagement
- Proactive Engagement in Daily Work	- Awareness of colleagues' activities and experiences
- Diverse Levels of Employee Engagement	- Structured Agenda and Task-oriented Discussions
= Employee Engagement Motivation Factors	+ Challenges Arising from Unforeseen Issues
+ Personal Enjoyment and Fulfilment in Work	
- Application of New Skills in an Engaged Team	
+ Structured Managerial Reporting	

Table 4.6.1 – H2 Themes and Codes

Motivation in Engagement	Collegial Engagement	Intuition
+ Intrinsic Motivation for Engagement	+ Engagement with Colleagues	+ Initial Impressions and Gut Feeling
- Motivation beyond salary	- Awareness and Support for Colleagues	+ Gut Feeling and Observation
+ Intrinsic Motivation Beyond Monetary Rewards	+ Positive Engagement with Colleagues	
	- Importance of communication with colleagues	
	+ Exchange with colleges	
	+ Value of Interaction and Idea Exchange with Colleagues	

Table 4.6.2 – H2 & H3 Themes and Codes

In Table 4.6.2 the coded data indicates potential differences in motivation for engagement between younger and older employees. Older employees may be motivated by intrinsic motivations beyond monetary rewards, codes like “Intrinsic Motivation for Engagement” and “Intrinsic Motivation Beyond Monetary Rewards”. On the other hand, younger employees indicate being motivated beyond monetary rewards, as indicated by the code “Motivation beyond salary”.

The coded data for Collegial Engagement and Communication indicates possible differences in how younger and older employees perceive and interact with colleagues. The codes indicate that older employees are more likely to engage with colleagues and maintain positive relationships. Codes “Awareness and Support for Colleagues” and “Importance of Communication with Colleagues” may indicate that younger employees perceive lower levels of awareness and support from colleagues. Regarding intuition, the findings indicate that older employees tend to rely more on intuition and gut feelings.

The codes “Personalized Engagement Individualized Approach”, “Tailored Employee Engagement Strategies Addressing Individual Motivations”, and “Customized Engagement Approaches Understanding and Catering to Individual Preferences” all emphasize the importance of taking into account individual needs and preferences when creating engagement strategies. This suggests a shift away from one-size-fits-all approaches and toward tailoring engagement initiatives to each employee’s unique motivations and preferences. The code “Employee Engagement Strategies Motivation Factors” emphasizes the importance of understanding what motivates individual employees. The theme and codes (Table 4.7) of this interview were found in interviewee B which is the Middle-aged manager interview. Hence the differentiation in theme and code is expected.

Tailored Engagement Approaches

Employee Engagement Strategies Motivation Factors
Personalized Engagement Individualized Approach
Tailored Employee Engagement Strategies Addressing Individual Motivations
Customized Engagement Approaches Understanding and Catering to Individual Preferences

Table 4.7 – Theme Tailored Engagement Approaches

Quotes

Code: Task Variety and Engagement

interesting to continue the work. So, I saw colleagues, which we're doing 40 times a day, the same work, the same action so it can't be Very clumpy, very interesting to, to make, to make such a work to make a stand on each paper

Figure 4.16 – Example of code “Task Variety and Engagement”

Code: Efficiency and Purpose in Team Meetings

We try not to elongate the meetings, as long as you say, let's say, half an hour. We try to keep half an hour.

Figure 4.17 – Example of code “Efficiency and Purpose in Team Meetings”

Code: Managerial Influence on Engagement

What is interesting? Is normally yes, engagement comes more from Management or positions of lead. Especially between older and younger

Figure 4.18 – Example of code “Managerial Influence on Engagement”

Code: Motivation beyond salary

See, simply Being motivated by you by your work.

Figure 4.19.1 – Example of code “Motivation beyond salary”

And Let me, I mean, quote unquote. Not working only for the salary.

Figure 4.19.2 – Example of code “Motivation beyond salary”

So, in my case, since I'm still in my studies, to get additional experience. And later opportunities in my career, it will be to learn new things related to the

Figure 4.19.3 – Example of code “Motivation beyond salary”

Code: Positive Engagement with Colleagues

But overall. The engagement with the colleagues directly on the subject. It's quite nice. Small Um, On the one side and on the other side with other

Figure 4.20 – Example of code “Positive Engagement with Colleagues”

Code: Gut Feeling and Observation

age at 60 years. I'm, I can feel, I can see, I can see the eyes. I can see the physical economics. In his face, I can see how he's moving something like that. It depends altogether to develop trust and that, maybe if I would be

Figure 4.21 – Example of code “Gut Feeling and Observation”

Higher levels of trust are associated with older age among employees.

The findings on trust dynamics in the workplace reveal several key aspects of trust and its impact on organizational relationships and processes, shedding light on various aspects of trust and its importance in the workplace, particularly among older and middle-aged employees. The symbol “+” denotes the older age group, whereas “=” represents the middle age manager. Older employees, as indicated by the “+” classification, prioritize trust in a variety of ways, including the “Trust Development Process”, “Trust in Colleagues Reliability and Confidence”, as well as the impact of “Trust in Collaborative Work Environment” and “Project Progress”.

Trust is prioritized by “Fostering Trust in Collaborative Work Environments”, trust in line managers, and the value of collaboration, particularly in industries such as aeronautics with the code “Importance of Trust in Aeronautical Industry”. Furthermore, they emphasize the importance of creating a “...Trustworthy Environment”, advocating for trust within the organization with the code “Need to Advocate for Trust”. On the other hand, in the “=” classification middle-aged managers value workplace trust as “Trust in Colleagues Mutual Reliance”, apply trust models in daily work environments with code “Trust Four Dimensions Model”, and use work experience to build trust as per code “Leveraging Work Experience for Trust Building Drawing on Past Experiences to Establish Credibility”. Finally, the code “Lost trust is Lost” implies a straightforward understanding that once trust has been broken or lost, it cannot be easily re-established or restored. Overall, these findings highlight the significance of trust in promoting positive organizational dynamics and relationships across the older generation of employees.

The findings on the theme of “Trust Challenges and Impact on Work Relationships” highlight various aspects of trust issues and their implications for professional dynamics. As per the codes and data, the older employees face challenges such as mistrust in work relationships as per code “Trust and Mistrust in Work Relationships”, “Trust Issues with Line Manager” (and Challenges with Line Manager's Trust Impact on Work Relationships), and the impact of “Trust Deficit and Work Quality Effects on Productivity”. They also understand the significance of “Role of Trust in Work Completion” and “Organizational Impact and Excessive Effort Consequences of Trust Deficiency”. Furthermore, a “Diminished Significance of Trust Post-Task Completion” was noticed. The code “Rebuilding Lost Trust Energy Allocation” & “Approach to Rebuilding Lost Trust Strategic Allocation of Energy” refers to the difficulties middle-aged managers encounter when attempting to build trust in situations that fall outside clearly defined parameters or environments.

Trust Dynamics in Professional Environments 1	Trust Challenges and Impact on Work Relationships
+ Trust Dynamics with Colleagues	= Disappointment Due to Broken Trust
+ Trust Development Process	+ Challenges in Trust Outside Defined Environment
+ Trust in Colleagues Reliability and Confidence	+ Role of Trust in Work Completion
+ Quality of Work and Trust Impact	+ Challenges in Establishing Trust Outside Defined Parameters & Environment
= Utilizing Work Experience for Trust	= Rebuilding Lost Trust Energy Allocation
= Trust Four Dimensions Model	+ Trust and Mistrust in Work Relationships
+ Trust in Collaborative Work Environment	+ Trust Issues with Line Manager
+ Fostering Trust in Collaborative Work Environments	+ Challenges with Line Manager's Trust Impact on Work Relationships
+ Project Progress	+ Trust Deficit and Work Quality Effects on Productivity
+ Trust and Managerial Relationships	= Approach to Rebuilding Lost Trust Strategic Allocation of Energy
+ Impact of Trust on Relationships	+ Organizational Impact and Excessive Effort Consequences of Trust Deficiency
= Leveraging Work Experience for Trust Building Drawing on Past Experiences to Establish Credibility	+ Impact on Company and Effort Expenditure
	= Rebuilding Trust Energies Allocation
	+ Impact on Company and Effort Expenditure
	+ Diminished Significance of Trust Post-Task Completion

Table 4.8.1 – H3 Themes and Codes 1

Trust Dynamics in Professional Environments 2	Trust in Collaborative Environments
+ Need to Advocate for Trust	+ Miscommunication and Managerial Response
+ Trust in Well-Defined Work Environment	+ Barriers and Managerial Response Challenges in Expressing Concerns
+ Trust with Line Managers	= Trust in Colleagues Mutual Reliance
+ Preference for Collaboration	= Emphasizing Trust in Colleagues
+ Importance of Trust in Aeronautical Industry	+ Communication Challenges and Frustration
+ Importance of Trustworthy Environment	+ Shared Goals
+ Experience Informing Relationships	
+ Desire to Build Trust & Resolution	
+ Importance of Trust in Relationship	
+ Trust in Colleagues	
+ Trust in Structured Environments	
+ Importance of Trust Completion	
+ Trust Development Process	
+ Need for Trust Advocacy	
= Lost trust is Lost	

Table 4.8.2 – H3 Themes and Codes 2

Quotes

Code: Trust Dynamics with Colleagues

So especially with my colleagues, I trust them, because if I ask them, I normally get a good reply. Which is, over the time. Recognize that it is

Figure 4.22.1 – Example 1 of code “Trust Dynamics with Colleagues”

Up to now. Of course, culture is differences. Yes, but normally they were happy with what I did, what I did and the way I did it. And it was a complete different set of work. Normally, they were quite happy.

Figure 4.22.2 – Example 2 of code “Trust Dynamics with Colleagues”

Code: Quality of Work and Trust Impact

Yes, it is affected the quality of work is degrading. Honestly, the amount of progress is getting, it's decreased. Because there is not necessary

Figure 4.23.1 – Example 1 of code “Quality of Work and Trust Impact”

difficulties. And, as my statement was at the beginning that we did in the wrong way. My manager assumes that I'm not willing to do it. Um, but in a lot

Figure 4.23.2 – Example 2 of code “Quality of Work and Trust Impact”

Code: Emphasizing Trust in Colleagues

Trusting my colleagues. Yeah, it's important because it's How I can count on them and how they can contact me. So, if I trust my colleagues I know that If I trust you I give you some task or can exchange on openly to a topic. It's this

Figure 4.24 – Example of code “Emphasizing Trust in Colleagues”

Decision making

The theme revolves around trusting decision-making in both employees and managers, emphasizing the importance of accountability and the ability to make sound decisions. It promotes a culture of trust in which both employees and managers believe in each other's competence and judgment (“Trust in Managerial Competence and Decision-Making”, “Advocacy for Trust and Collaborative Decision-Making”, “Role of Trust in Decision-Making”). The middle-aged manager is especially sensitive to this balance with the code “Balancing Risk Mitigation and Opportunity Harnessing Experience”, drawing on their experiences to guide his decision-making. Finally, trust is critical in decision-making across all levels of an organization, contributing to its overall effectiveness and success.

The theme “Informed Decision-Making Based on Experience” delves into the concept of informed decision-making based on experience, emphasizing the importance of accumulated work experience in shaping employees' ability to make effective decisions. The old employees consider the “Impact of Work Experience on Decision-Making” and recognize its influence on their decision-making processes. They value experience not only in task prioritization but also in adapting and remaining flexible in the face of changes (“Value of Experience in Task Prioritization and Urgency Assessment”).

Trusting Decision-Making in Employees/Managers	Informed Decision-Making Based on Experience
+ Importance of Responsibility and Decision-Making	+ Impact of Work Experience on Decision-Making
+ Advocacy for Trust and Collaborative Decision-Making	+ Value of Experience in Prioritization
+ Trust in Managerial Competence and Decision-Making	+ Adaptation and Flexibility in Response to Changes
+ Trust in Managerial Decision-Making	+ Influence of Accumulated Work Experience on Decision-Making
= Trust Daily Work Environment	+ Value of Experience in Task Prioritization and Urgency Assessment
= Balancing Risk Mitigation and Opportunity Harnessing Experience	+ Informed Decision-Making Based on Historical Context and Experience
+ Role of Trust in Decision-Making	

Table 4.9 – Decision-Making

Quotes

Code: Trust in Managerial Competence and Decision-Making

someone else is taking the action, I will trust them that they come back with a trustful solution of the problem. Yeah. So, it's not always that I see myself as

Figure 4.25 – Example of code “Trust in Managerial Competence and Decision-Making”

Code: Trust in Managerial Decision-Making

demonstrated results. I fully trust you. You have full automate and on a daily basis. I can trust you, like that. And I can keep you the tasks other people

Figure 4.26 – Example of code “Trust in Managerial Decision-Making”

Code: Trust Daily Work Environment

demonstrated results. I fully trust you. You have full automate and on a daily basis. I can trust you, like that. And I can keep you the tasks other people

Figure 4.27 – Example 1 of code “Trust Daily Work Environment”

you need to spend a lot of energy to build trust to ensure. Sorry trust is not something you give. Trust is something you built, you time to time you built it,

Figure 4.28 – Example 2 of code “Trust Daily Work Environment”

Autonomy in Employee Engagement & Trust

The theme investigates autonomy in employee engagement and trust, focusing on how different age groups perceive and prioritise these aspects in the workplace. Middle-aged managers used “Engagement as Motivation and Autonomy”, and they see autonomy as a critical component in fostering employee engagement. They advocate for a leadership style that delegates autonomy based on objectives, believing that this increases employee empowerment (“Leadership Approach Delegating Autonomy Based on Objectives”, “Leadership and Autonomy Delegation”). Middle-aged employees place a high value on trust in the workplace because they see it as the foundation for autonomous work cultures (“Trust in Daily Work Environment Trust-Based Autonomy”). Younger employees trust their co-worker’s autonomy, understanding the value of mutual respect and independence within the team. In contrast, older people emphasize the importance of managerial relationships in overseeing autonomy, preferring a balance of independence and collaboration. Overall, the theme emphasizes the importance of autonomy in increasing employee engagement and fostering trust among different age groups in the workplace.

Autonomy in Employee Engagement & Trust	
=	Engagement as Motivation and Autonomy
=	Leadership Approach Delegating Autonomy Based on Objectives
=	Leadership and Autonomy Delegation
=	Trust in Daily Work Environment Trust-Based Autonomy
-	Trust in Co-workers' Autonomy
+	Managerial Relationships, Autonomy, and Oversight
+	Preference for Autonomy
+	Balance between Independence and Collaboration

Table 4.10 – Autonomy

Quotes:

Code: Preference for Autonomy

yes. It (less oversight) is how I like yes. It's yeah and normally the result. Is appreciated by my line manager.

Figure 4.29 – Example of code “Preference for Autonomy”

Code: Engagement as Motivation and Autonomy

Engagement. For me, it's a synonym of motivation. It's like motivation.

Figure 4.30.1 – Example 1 of code “Engagement as Motivation and Autonomy”

Finding answers by themselves. Of being a bit having this autonomy in finishing the tasks. Doing the tasks. Yes. Okay. Yes, that's really nice.

Figure 4.30.2 – Example 2 of code “Engagement as Motivation and Autonomy”

Themes: Skill Development and Feedback & Adaptation and Growth in the Workplace

Skill Development and Feedback

The theme “Skill Development and Feedback” emerges from the codes provided by young employees with the symbol ‘-’, indicating a focus on various aspects of skill enhancement via feedback and learning opportunities. These codes emphasize the importance of feedback in skill development, the practical application of learned skills, and the cultivation of soft skills required for professional growth. They also emphasize the importance of continuous learning and skill improvement through experience, as well as the acquisition of communication skills and other necessary characteristics. On the other hand, the codes by old employees indicate a focus on using personal experience and promoting knowledge sharing across generations to improve skills. These codes emphasize the value of collaborative learning environments and encourage employees'

personal development. Older employees place a premium on using their experience to contribute to skill development initiatives and fostering an organization-wide culture of learning and growth.

Adaptation and Growth in the Workplace

The theme of “Adaptation and Growth in the Workplace” emerges from the codes provided by younger employees, reflecting their experiences and challenges as they begin their careers. These codes emphasize their gradual adjustment to the work environment and the differences in the impact of experience on their perceptions. Younger employees emphasize the importance of patience in the workplace, as well as their experiences in overcoming early career challenges. The older employees’ value mixed skill sets in teams, recognizing the importance of diverse expertise for successful adaptation to changing work environments. They also emphasize the importance of adaptation and flexibility in response to change, emphasizing their ability to adjust and thrive in the face of changing workplace conditions.

Skill Development and Feedback	Adaptation and Growth in the Workplace
- Impact of Feedback on Skill Development	- Adjustment to Work Environment Over Time
- Application of Learned Skills	- Differentiation in Experience Impact
- Development of Soft Skills	- Perception of Age and Patience in Work Environment
- Improvement in Communication Skills	- Navigating Early Career Challenges
- Cultivation of Essential Characteristics	- Learning Curve and Professional Growth
- Continuous Learning Curve	+ Value of Mixed Skill Sets in Teams
- Skill Development Through Experience	+ Adaptation and Flexibility in Response to Changes
- Feedback and Learning	
- Soft Skills Acquisition	
+ Utilization of Personal Experience	
+ Knowledge Sharing Between Generations	
+ Collaborative Learning and Skill Development	
+ Encouragement of Personal Development	

Table 4.11 – Feedback and Adaptation

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Findings

The current study's research question is How are trust and age related to employees' engagement during organizational change?

The data indicates a positive relationship between trust and engagement in a variety of work aspects, including collaboration and motivation across all age categories of employees depending on their manager. This is consistent with existing research, which suggests that trust is critical for employee engagement during periods of stability (Chawla and Kevin Kelloway 2004). It is reasonable to believe that during organizational change when uncertainty and potential disruption exist, trust may play an even more important role in maintaining and strengthening employee engagement. The uncertainty falls in line with Bhattacharya's et al. (1998) definition of trust which underscores its significance in situations of uncertainty, emphasizing that trust entails the expectation of positive outcomes based on the actions of another party. The employees exhibited both trust and engagement, as well as distrust and disengagement, in their interactions with managers, while also demonstrating trust and engagement in their relationships with co-workers.

Regarding the age of the employee, the data suggests younger employees displayed slightly less use to adapting to change or taking initiative during disruptive times. This, in turn, has the potential to impact their engagement during organizational change. On the other hand, older employees indicate they are more intrinsically motivated and value collaboration, which could benefit their engagement during change.

Hypothesis Discussions

H1: The higher the level of trust, the higher the level of employee engagement.

The data show that trust fosters an environment in which employees are motivated to take the initiative and actively participate in their work. This suggests that trust promotes employee engagement. This statement aligns with the idea that trust contributes to a positive work environment and enhances employee engagement, as observed in high-involvement plants (Appelbaum 2000). The data suggest the Importance of Trust in Colleagues and how they are mutually reliant on each other Trust for future career prospects emphasizes the significance of trust among colleagues and within the organization, which fosters mutual trust and improves career prospects, factors associated with increased engagement levels. These points support the notion that trust within the organization contributes to employees feeling comfortable, supported, and more engaged in their work, as highlighted in the Gallup (2017) industry findings. Furthermore, the Gallup industry findings underscore the importance of leadership trustworthiness in increasing employee engagement which aligns with the current study with codes like "Communication and Supportive Leadership", "Leadership and Objectives", and "Leadership Approach Delegating Autonomy Based on Objectives", which highlight the significance of effective communication, goal alignment, and autonomy delegation in fostering trust and enhancing engagement. Trusted leaders communicate openly, align organizational goals with individual objectives, and delegate tasks based on clear objectives, empowering employees and ultimately increasing engagement levels.

Finally, "Tailoring Engagement Strategies Individualized Approach" and "Employee Engagement Motivational Factors Identification" codes were found in the manager's trust section (Appendix 1, Interviewee B), which indicates that trust is critical in tailoring engagement strategies and identifying

motivational factors, both of which are essential components of increasing employee engagement. These codes also indicate sufficient vertical trust from the managers' side towards the employees. Furthermore, "Utilizing Work Experience for Trust Building" emphasizes the importance of leveraging previous experiences to build trust, which leads to increased engagement. Overall, the codes in the themes "Motivation and Engagement" & "Engagement in a Trusting Environment" in Table 4.5 support the theory of the hypothesis that higher levels of trust are associated with higher levels of employee engagement. These codes align with Tyler's (2003) investigation of motive-based trust and its impact on cooperation and respect for authority. These codes emphasize the importance of trust in tailoring engagement strategies and identifying motivators, both of which are necessary for increasing employee engagement. Tyler's study emphasizes the importance of understanding others' motivations and shared values in building trust, which is consistent with the emphasis on trust in the workplace during times of transition. Employees are more likely to actively engage when they are internally motivated, emphasizing the relationship between trust, motivation, and engagement. While Tyler's study focuses on the social factors that influence motive-based trust, the current study focuses is to understanding how age interacts with trust dynamics and what this means for employee engagement during organizational change.

The below quotes are from interview C (Appendix 1), Generation Y from the young classification.

Code: Engagement at the work place

"I was really motivated. I have to be, I was really good to propose solutions, to be, active in the way I was proposing by the ways to do it. Different activities. I was really happy to also be involved in even projects that were completely out of my scope because this motivation reached more than just my position inside his team."

The interviewee indicates that the individual is highly motivated and engaged in their work. They express enthusiasm for suggesting solutions and actively participating in activities outside of their normal responsibilities. They appear to take the initiative and enjoy being involved in projects that go beyond their usual scope of work. This demonstrates a strong motivation and commitment to contributing to their team and organization. The individual finds fulfilment not only in their specific role but also in their overall impact and involvement in the team and across multiple projects.

On the other hand, code: Disengagement in a Distrusting Environment

"I was not eager to look for solutions or to improvements of the activities with my second one because I knew that it was going to be a completely different way of doing that it was going to be measured that it was not going to be, just something to improve the ways of working of my team"

The quote suggests that the interviewee feels disengaged and unmotivated in their work environment due to a lack of trust. They express reluctance to seek solutions or make improvements because they anticipate that their efforts will not be valued or recognized. The mention of a "completely different way of doing things" implies uncertainty or scepticism about potential changes, which may stem from a perceived lack of trust in the decision-making process or leadership. The interviewee feels that any proposed improvements will not be adequately acknowledged or implemented, leading to a sense of frustration and disengagement.

The “Lack of Trust and Its Impact” emphasizes the negative impact of trust levels on employees, which in turn affects engagement. This brings us to the code of theme “Disengagement in a Distrusting Environment” contradicts and proves the opposite of the hypothesis which is the higher the level of distrust, the higher the level of employee disengagement. “Disengagement in a Distrusting Environment” and “Impact of Distrust on Team Dynamics” demonstrate how a lack of trust in the workplace can lead to employee disengagement and have a negative impact on team dynamics. This suggests that trust does not always lead to engagement, as disengagement can occur in environments where trust is lacking. Furthermore, “Fear of Repercussions in a Distrusting Environment” and “Trust Issues with Line Manager” show that distrust can create a sense of fear and apprehension among employees, further lowering their engagement levels. Furthermore, “Challenges in Establishing Trust Outside Defined Parameters & Environment” and “Perception of Trust Discrepancy Between Interviewee and Colleagues” highlight the difficulties of establishing trust in specific contexts, which can impede engagement. The data indicates challenges which are covered in an investigation by Wollard (2011).

The mentioned data also authenticate Moore (2014) perspective on the “disengagement crisis” by showcasing how a lack of trust in the workplace leads to employee disengagement, further suggesting proof of the hypothesis that higher distrust levels correlate with higher disengagement. The difficulty of establishing trust outside of defined parameters and environments lends credence to the notion that trust deficiencies impede engagement. These findings support Moore's assertion about the negative impact of insufficient employee support on engagement levels.

Overall, these codes provide evidence that trust deficiencies can lead to disengagement and other negative outcomes, further supporting the assumption that higher levels of trust always result in higher levels of employee engagement. The difficulty of establishing trust outside of defined parameters and environments lends credence to the notion that trust deficiencies impede engagement. These findings support Moore's assertion about the negative impact of insufficient employee support on engagement levels. The codes mentioned validate Kahn's investigation by demonstrating how a lack of trust in the workplace can lead to employee disengagement, which is consistent with the idea that people may disengage with their selves while working. Themes such as “Disengagement in a Distrusting Environment” and “Impact of Distrust on Team Dynamics” demonstrate how distrust reduces engagement and team dynamics, reflecting Kahn's emphasis on the psychological conditions of meaningfulness, safety, and availability. Furthermore, “Fear of Repercussions in a Distrusting Environment” and “Trust Issues with Line Manager” highlight how distrust creates fear and apprehension among employees, adding to Kahn's (1990) exploration of the factors influencing personal engagement and disengagement at work.

H2: Younger employees exhibit lower levels of employee engagement compared to older employees.

The theme of “Employee Engagement in Work” in the code “Proactive Engagement in Daily Work” & “Diverse Levels of Employee Engagement” reflects differences in engagement levels across age groups, with older employees demonstrating more proactive involvement. Furthermore, the codes of “Managerial Influence on Engagement”, and “Variability in Managerial Approaches to Engagement” are consistent with Truss et al.'s discovery of a negative assessment of senior supervisors among younger employees, indicating a potential impact on their engagement levels. On the contrary as per the data, this also shows up depending on who the manager is, which is displayed in code “Variability in Managerial Approaches to Engagement” with the employee having different managers and comparing their engagement.

Similarly, Codes like “Managerial Influence on Engagement” indicate that younger employees are aware that employees come from management or positions of lead and also from your team. They may prefer autonomy and empowerment (Table 4.10), but this does not necessarily imply lower engagement. Codes like “Challenges Arising from Unforeseen Issues” could imply older employees are comfortable with managers who address unforeseen challenges, while younger employees might prefer proactive guidance to avoid such issues. This highlights the importance of adapting managerial approaches to suit different preferences.

Codes like “Managerial Exchange” indicate that older employees may receive more communication from managers. However, quantity does not equate with quality. Younger employees may value different communication styles or seek more specific guidance which is covered in code “Managerial Support and Guidance in One-to-One Meetings”. “Structured Agenda and Task-oriented Discussions” could suggest younger employees value flexibility and creativity over rigid structures. Codes like “Engagement with Colleagues”, “Positive Engagement with Colleagues”, and “Value of Interaction and Idea Exchange with Colleagues” indicate that older employees value and actively interact with their co-workers. Matching, the codes suggest younger employees who prioritize “Awareness and Support for Colleagues” and “Importance of communication with colleagues”. Therefore, while both age groups demonstrate engagement with their colleagues, their approaches may vary based on factors such as experience, communication style, and generational preferences.

The quote is extracted from interview C (Appendix 1), Generation Y from the young Classifications.

Code: Diverse Levels of Employee Engagement

“Well engagement, normally comes for sure, from your supervisor, also from your team. Indeed, I do have to admit, so that engagement comes in different levels. So normally, when there is a project that it's for big relevance, it would normally it gets more engagement. I think that that's not a secret. What is interesting? Is normally yes, engagement comes more from Management or positions of lead. Especially between older and younger colleagues' engagement is not something that it's given or is not something that it's really relevant to the date today to the daily business.”

The interviewee appears to be discussing the factors that influence employee engagement, noting that it is typically driven by both supervisors and team members. They acknowledge that engagement levels vary depending on the project's significance and suggest that it is higher for more relevant projects. Furthermore, they state that engagement is frequently influenced by management or leadership positions and that age differences may also play a role in employee engagement levels, implying that it is not always relevant to day-to-day business operations.

Subsequently, interview A (Appendix 1), from the Baby Boomer Generation in the Old classification.

Code: Engagement with Colleagues

“Yes, of course. So, it's work. But the work is very often related with other people. So, I'm engaged shortly with other people. Nothing asking or providing help for them. Okay, is the other way of Engagement if other people are having questions. Yes. Try to come together with these people or to have a good Discussion on the topic.”

This quote points out the importance of workplace engagement. The individual speaking recognizes that work frequently requires interaction with others, and they describe their involvement as tasks such as aiding or collaborating with co-workers. They indicate that their involvement includes actively participating in discussions and assisting colleagues with questions or tasks. According to the quote, engaging with co-workers entails not only performing individual tasks but also encouraging teamwork and collaboration by participating in discussions and aiding as needed.

The data suggests that older employees have clearer career goals and financial stability, which contribute to higher levels of purpose and commitment to their work than younger counterparts, which is consistent with Truss et al. (2007) findings of lower engagement levels among younger employees. Further, the data suggest that employees of various ages are satisfied with their managers and co-workers, which opposes the findings of Avery et al. (2007). This observation weakens the idea that previous research has supported employees' contentment within their respective age groups.

In summary, the Young classification contains both positive "Proactive Engagement in Daily Work" & "Application of New Skills in an Engaged Team" codes, indicating a mixed picture of engagement within this group. But in the realm of Employee Engagement in Work, it becomes clear that older employees demonstrate a slightly higher level of engagement across various aspects of their tasks, such as daily responsibilities, project relevance, and task variety, in contrast to their younger counterparts, who exhibit a slightly lower level of proactive engagement, as proactive engagement is needed in daily work. These findings are not consistent with James et al. (2007) findings where there were vast differences in the engagement with older and younger employees. Moving on to Communication and Collaboration, older employees demonstrate more effective communication patterns, utilizing multifaceted channels and Structured Managerial Reporting to ensure clear alignment with objectives which is again slightly higher than the younger employers.

Theme: Tailored Engagement Approaches

The theme "Tailored Engagement Approaches" delves into the strategies and methods used by middle-aged managers to increase employee engagement within their teams. This theme's codes, such as "Employee Engagement Strategies Motivation Factors" and "Personalized Engagement Individualized Approach", reflect a focus on understanding individual employees' unique motivations and preferences. Recognizing and addressing these individual factors allows managers to tailor their engagement strategies to better resonate with their team members, resulting in a more conducive work environment. The inclusion of codes such as "Tailored Employee Engagement Strategies Addressing Individual Motivations" and "Customized Engagement Approaches Understanding and Catering to Individual Preferences" emphasizes the significance of personalized approaches in increasing employee engagement. This suggests that middle-aged managers are aware of their team members' diverse needs and motivations, and strive to develop tailored strategies that effectively cater to each individual's preferences. Overall, the theme emphasizes the importance of customized engagement approaches in improving employee satisfaction, motivation, and overall workplace performance.

The next quote is from interview B (Appendix 1), from Generation X in Middle age Classifications.

Code: Tailored Employee Engagement Strategies Addressing Individual Motivations

“Everyone has a different kind of motivation. Some are motivated by autonomy. Others are motivated by social network within the office. Others are motivated to reach a goal in the work. Others are motivated to learn new things within the Within the within the company by working. And as well, it depends on the age of the people. Some people are keener to autonomy, maybe younger age or others are working to have this social network. Being older. And it depends off the people and it depends what age you are maybe today is one thing and maybe into 10 years, it will be another thing. And what is important for me as a manager is to detect that into the people into the team members.”

This quote stresses the importance of tailoring employee engagement strategies to meet individual motivations. The individual speaking recognizes that different people are motivated by a variety of factors, including autonomy, social connections within the office, achieving work-related goals, and learning new skills. They also acknowledge that motivation preferences may differ by age, with younger people potentially valuing autonomy more, whereas older people may prioritize social connections. The speaker emphasizes the importance for managers to understand these individual differences and tailor their engagement strategies accordingly. They emphasize the importance of identifying team members' motivations and tailoring approaches to effectively engage and motivate each team member based on their individual preferences and characteristics.

H3: Higher levels of trust are associated with older age among employees.

The presence of codes such as “Trust Dynamics with Colleagues”, “Trust Development Process”, “Trust in Collaborative Work Environment”, and “Trust and Managerial Relationships”, and data in the theme “Trust Dynamics in Professional Environments 1” & “Trust Dynamics in Professional Environments 2” in Table 4.8.1 & 4.8.2 indicates that trust dynamics and the development of trust are common codes in professional settings with older employees. The data is most likely influenced by employees' long-term interactions with colleagues (horizontal) and managers (vertical). Older employees, who have most likely accumulated more work experience and had longer tenures within the organization, may have had more opportunities to develop trust with their colleagues and managers. This is in line with Ferres et al. (2003) investigation regarding older employees.

The quote is from interview A (Appendix 1), from the Baby Boomer Generation in the Old classification.

The quote Code: Trust Dynamics with Colleagues

“So especially with my colleagues, I trust them, because if I ask them, I normally get a good reply. Which is, over the time. Recognize that it is trustworthy because it's, the truth or if you get another name. Then you, of course, then you also can trust that they don't know, but they have an idea to support you. It's the same I guess on the other side. If I answer some things, at the moment, the trust level to my line manager is not very high.”

This quote delves into the dynamics of trust among colleagues at work. The interviewee expresses a high level of trust in their colleagues, citing previous experiences with receiving reliable and truthful responses when seeking assistance or information. They emphasize that trust develops over time through consistent and honest interactions. Furthermore, the interviewee acknowledges that even if a colleague does not have a definitive answer, they are confident that the colleague will offer support

or ideas to assist. However, the speaker contrasts this trust with their current level of trust in their line manager, indicating that they do not have high trust in their manager at this time.

Regarding trust level with their line manager Interviewee D (Appendix 1), also from the 'The Baby Boomer Generation' in the Old classification had low levels of trust in their manager.

Code: Trust and Managerial Relationships

"It (Trust with my manager) can be very helpful, and it's the most important, always as, it's as you can trust the colleague, it should in the same like a manager, maybe, but the manager has very often more information. He cannot share with you, something like that. And That's the point you cannot clarify at that time because he is not able or is not willing or to share this information and that's always a working on the peak, it can be good or it can be bad. So, it's plus, of course it would be very vicious. I would wish to have a lot of more trust, maybe to our current, superior for example."

The person speaking promotes the value of trust in their relationship with their manager. They emphasize the importance of trust with a manager, just as it is with colleagues, but they also point out that managers frequently have more information than employees do. This lack of transparency can lead to uncertainty and challenges in the relationship. The speaker recognizes that, while trusting their manager is beneficial, it can also be risky, particularly when there is a lack of transparency or willingness to share information. The text indicates a desire for more trust in their current manager, recognizing the potential positive impact on their working relationship.

While the initial assumption may be that trust develops naturally with age in the workplace, codes such as "Need for Trust Advocacy" and "Trust Development Process" indicate that trust is an actively built phenomenon that requires dedicated effort. Organizations can foster trust by implementing strategies such as "Trust in Structured Environments" with clear expectations and "Advocating for Trust" among all members to foster a culture of open communication and dependability that benefits employees of all ages.

The provided codes paint a picture where trust is not just important, but essential for older employees, especially in critical industries. Codes like "Importance of Trust Completion" and "Importance of Trust in Relationship" highlight the need for trust to see projects through and maintain strong bonds with colleagues. The "Desire to Build Trust & Resolution" suggests a proactive approach to addressing issues and fostering a "Trustworthy Environment" (For both Vertical and horizontal employees). This is particularly crucial in the "Importance of Trust in Aeronautical Industry" where safety and collaboration ("Preference for Collaboration") heavily rely on mutual trust between experienced professionals. These codes and codes from the theme "Trust Dynamics in the Work Environment" align with Gould-Williams and Davies's (2005) study of how every positive exchange relationship leads to trust.

The combination of codes under the theme "Trust Challenges and Impact on Work Relationships" provides a comprehensive picture of the complexities surrounding trust in professional settings, as well as its profound effects on work relationships. The presence of codes such as "Disappointment Due to Broken Trust" and "Trust Issues with Line Manager" demonstrates the negative impact that trust breaches can have on work relationships, causing feelings of disappointment and undermining trust between employees and their managers (vertical) as well as co-workers (Horizontal). In the code "Disappointment Due to Broken Trust" the interviewee (Interview D, Appendix 1) was referring

to trust broken with a co-worker (Horizontal) and in “Trust Issues with Line Manager” the interviewee was referring to their manager where the trust with their manager (Vertical) was “Not very High” (Interview D, Appendix 1). Furthermore, the inclusion of “Challenges in Establishing Trust Outside Defined Parameters & Environment” emphasizes the difficulties in fostering trust outside of predefined work environments, which can put additional strain on work relationships. Furthermore, codes such as “Trust Deficit and Work Quality Effects on Productivity” and “Organizational Impact and Excessive Effort Consequences of Trust Deficiency” highlight the tangible consequences of trust deficits on productivity and organizational outcomes, demonstrating the far-reaching implications of workplace trust challenges. This observation highlights the fact that older employees face significant trust challenges, which affect the quality of their work relationships. It reinforces the claim that cultivating a culture of trust is critical to ensuring smooth operations within the organization.

The combination of codes under the theme “Trust in Collaborative Environments” in Table 4.3 suggests a nuanced picture of the relationship between communication, trust, and collaboration during organisational change. The presence of codes such as “Miscommunication and Managerial Response” and “Barriers and Managerial Response Challenges in Expressing Concerns” emphasizes the difficulties that can arise in communication, especially when conveying concerns or addressing misunderstandings by older employees. These challenges may have the potential to impede trust development and collaboration. On the other hand, the inclusion of codes such as “Trust in Colleagues Mutual Reliance” and “Emphasizing Trust in Colleagues” indicate the critical role of trust in promoting effective collaboration with younger employees. However, the presence of the code with older employees “Communication Challenges and Frustration” suggests that, despite the importance of trust, communication barriers and frustrations may persist, emphasizing the need for ongoing efforts to improve communication strategies and cultivate trust in collaborative environments. The data aligns with Gallup’s survey, which emphasized the importance of communication, collaboration and interpersonal interactions in sustaining a sense of comfort and most importantly trust (Crabtree 2005).

The quote is from interview B (Appendix 1), from Generation Y in the Middle age classification.

The quote Code: Trust Dynamics with Colleagues

“Trusting my colleagues. Yeah, it's important because it's How I can count on them and how they can contact me. So, if I trust my colleagues I know that If I trust you I give you some task or can exchange on openly to a topic. It's this open-minded topic that's speak up culture.”

The interviewee appears to stress the importance of trust among co-workers in their workplace. They argue that trust allows them to rely on their colleagues and vice versa, resulting in more effective communication and collaboration. They feel confident delegating tasks and engaging in open discussions on various topics because they trust their colleagues, which contributes to an organizational culture of transparency and open communication.

With age comes experience and older employees tend to be tenured within the organization, codes such as “Initial Impressions and Gut Feeling” & “Gut Feeling and Observation” in the theme “Intuition” emphasize the importance of using previous experiences to foster trust, which leads to higher levels of engagement which aligns with Hope-Hailey et al. (2010) of trust-building across cultures (age being in one of the most important attributes) which states a willingness to trust leads to successful engagement.

Theme: Trusting Decision-Making in Employees/Managers

The theme in table 4.9 explores the critical aspect of trust in organizational decision-making processes, with a focus on both employees and managers (older employees). The presence of codes such as “Importance of Responsibility and Decision-Making” and “Trust in Managerial Competence and Decision-Making” emphasizes the importance of trust in managerial roles, where employees rely on their managers' competence and reliability to make decisions. Furthermore, codes such as “Advocacy for Trust and Collaborative Decision-Making” and “Balancing Risk Mitigation and Harnessing Experience for Informed Decision-Making” emphasize the importance of trust-facilitated collaborative decision-making. This shows that trust is important not only for individual decision-making but also for creating collaborative environments in which employees and managers can effectively balance risks and opportunities based on their collective experiences. Furthermore, the code “Trust Daily Work Environment” implies that trust is an essential component of the everyday work environment, influencing decision-making processes at all levels of the organization.

A quote from Interviewee F (Appendix 1), from the ‘Generation X’ generation but also classified as ‘Old’.

Code: Trust in Managerial Competence and Decision-Making

“I will trust them that they come back with a trustful solution of the problem. Yeah. So, it's not always that I see myself as a best solution maker and Everyone have to trust in my potential. Yeah, my competence, so, but when you ask about work condition and trust, then maybe sometimes it could be maybe more bilateral exchange to get a resolution. maybe overall with the topics which are, well, defined like the objectives and so on. If that is running in this direction”

The speaker expresses confidence in their managers' competency and decision-making abilities. They state that they rely on their managers to provide reliable solutions to problems, recognizing that they may not always have the best solution themselves. The speaker emphasizes the importance of mutual trust and collaboration in reaching agreements, especially in work environments with well-defined goals. They argue that trust in managerial competence promotes a collaborative exchange of ideas and aids in effective problem-solving.

The themes in Table 4.9 “Trusting Decision-Making in Employees/Managers” & “Informed Decision-Making Based on Experience” emphasize the role of trust in organizational decision-making processes, fostering a culture in which both employees and managers believe in each other's abilities and judgment. This trust promotes accountability and collaboration, resulting in empowered employees who are motivated to take initiative and actively contribute to their work. By promoting trust and collaborative decision-making, the theme emphasizes the importance of mutual trust, loyalty, and commitment in the workplace, as highlighted by Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005). As trust grows over time, employees feel empowered and motivated to make decisions and take calculated risks, knowing that their organization is behind them. This is consistent with the data's suggestion that trust fosters employee empowerment and initiative.

Theme: Informed Decision-Making Based on Experience

The theme delves into how older workers accumulated work experience shapes people's ability to make informed decisions in professional settings. The various codes associated with this theme clarify different aspects of how work experience influences decision-making processes. “Impact of

Work Experience on Decision-Making” emphasizes how previous professional experiences have a direct impact on individuals' decision-making abilities, implying that the lessons learned from previous encounters inform current decision-making procedures. Similarly, “Value of Experience in Prioritization” and “Value of Experience in Task Prioritization and Urgency Assessment” emphasize the significance of cumulative experience in guiding individuals in determining task priorities and assessing urgency levels. Furthermore, “Adaptation and Flexibility in Response to Changes” emphasizes how experience improves adaptability, allowing people to respond effectively to dynamic and unpredictable situations. Finally, “Informed Decision-Making Based on Historical Context and Experience” proposes that individuals use historical context and previous experiences to inform their decision-making, acknowledging the importance of past encounters in shaping current choices.

Theme: Autonomy in Employee Engagement & Trust

The theme investigates the relationship between autonomy, employee engagement, and trust in organizational settings. This theme's codes shed light on various aspects of autonomy and how they affect engagement and trust. The codes “Engagement as Motivation and Autonomy”, “Leadership Approach Delegating Autonomy Based on Objectives”, and “Leadership and Autonomy Delegation” emphasize the importance of autonomy as a motivator for employee engagement, particularly when leadership delegate responsibilities based on objectives, which fosters a sense of trust and autonomy among employees. However, “Trust in Co-workers' Autonomy” is the only code which came from younger employees, this code suggests younger employees are more likely to trust their older colleagues' autonomy in decision-making processes knowing that they can rely on their judgment and competence. In contrast, the codes “Managerial Relationships, Autonomy, and Oversight” and “Preference for Autonomy” emphasize the positive impact of managerial relationships and employee preferences for autonomy on engagement and trust. Furthermore, the code “Balance between Independence and Collaboration” emphasizes the importance of striking a balance between autonomy and collaboration, implying that excessive independence without collaboration may undermine trust and engagement.

The quote from Interviewee F (Appendix 1), ‘Generation Z’ generation from the ‘young’ classification.

Code: Trust in Co-workers' Autonomy

“So, Let's take an example, it will be, being able to Trust, if you are working. Talking towards a single task, it would be Trusting your co-workers to be able to perform this task, without needing your help. I mean, without basically needing you to be around and they can do the things, a certain level of autonomy in their work. So, this would be in the case of work, but also, it can be interesting them.”

The individual speaking discusses the concept of trusting co-workers' ability to complete tasks independently. They provide an example of trusting colleagues to complete a specific task without constant assistance or supervision. The speaker emphasizes the value of autonomy in the workplace, highlighting individuals' ability to work independently and make decisions without constant supervision. They argue that trusting co-worker's autonomy allows them to complete tasks efficiently and effectively, demonstrating a degree of independence in their work.

The data supports findings, which suggest that employee autonomy is critical in fostering positive reactions to structural change. The data emphasize the importance of autonomy as a motivator for employee engagement, demonstrating how objective-based leadership delegation can foster

employee trust and autonomy. Furthermore, the code “Trust in Co-workers' Autonomy” indicates that younger employees believe their older colleagues have autonomy, indicating a positive perception of autonomy in decision-making processes.

Theme: Skill Development and Feedback

The codes identified under the theme are captured among younger employees who reflect their emphasis on personal and professional development in the workplace. “Impact of Feedback on Skill Development” emphasizes the critical role feedback plays in shaping and improving people's skills over time. “Application of Learned Skills” denotes their proactive approach to applying newly acquired knowledge and abilities in real-world situations. “Development of Soft Skills” implies that they recognize the value of interpersonal skills in addition to technical expertise. “Improvement in Communication Skills” emphasizes their efforts to improve their ability to communicate ideas effectively. “Cultivation of Essential Characteristics” reflects their dedication to developing key qualities that contribute to their success in their roles. “Continuous Learning Curve” emphasizes their belief in the continuous process of acquiring new knowledge and skills. “Skill Development Through Experience” indicates that they understand the importance of hands-on experience in honing their skills. “Feedback and Learning” emphasizes their openness to feedback as a means of learning and development. And finally, “Soft Skills Acquisition” emphasizes the importance of acquiring and honing non-technical skills for professional success. On the other hand, the codes for older employees such as “Utilization of Personal Experience” imply that older employees use their accumulated knowledge and previous experiences to guide their skill development process. “Knowledge Sharing Between Generations” emphasizes their willingness to share their expertise and insights with colleagues of different ages. Seems like older employees’ value intergenerational collaboration and actively contribute to knowledge exchange within the organization. “Collaborative Learning and Skill Development” reflects their belief in the value of working together to improve skills. “Encouragement of Personal Development” indicates that older employees’ value personal growth and development for both themselves and their co-workers.

The identified codes among younger employees emphasize their proactive approach to skill development and continuous learning, with a focus on feedback, soft skill acquisition, and personal growth. In contrast, the codes for older employees demonstrate their commitment to leveraging personal experiences, fostering intergenerational collaboration, and encouraging continuous professional development in the workplace.

The quote from Interviewee C (Appendix 1), ‘Generation Y’ generation from the ‘young’ classification.

Code: Application of Learned Skills

“But I also how to communicated, for instance, or how to handle a difficult situation. So, I think that through the years I had, yes useful, that's been in and right now I'm just using what I learned in the last 10 years the if experience I had.”

The interviewee expresses that their experiences over the years have provided them with valuable skills and knowledge. They have learned how to effectively communicate and deal with difficult situations in the workplace. They emphasize that the skills and lessons learned over the last decade have been especially useful in their current position, demonstrating a reliance on their cumulative experience to navigate current challenges and situations.

Theme: Adaptation and Growth in the Workplace

The identified codes among younger employees reflect their journey of adaptation and growth at the workplace. The codes start with “Adjustment to Work Environment Over Time” which refers to their ability to adapt and evolve in response to the changing nature of their work environment. “Differentiation in Experience Impact” implies that they understand the various effects of their experiences on their professional development. “Perception of Age and Patience in the Work Environment” demonstrates their understanding of age-related dynamics and the value of patience in navigating workplace interactions. “Navigating Early Career Challenges” highlights their efforts to overcome obstacles common to early career stages. Finally, “Learning Curve and Professional Growth” emphasizes their dedication to lifelong learning and development, recognizing the learning curve as essential to their professional advancement. Then again older employees' identified codes reflect their perspectives on workplace adaptation and growth. “Value of Mixed Skill Sets in Teams” implies that they recognize the importance of diverse skill sets within teams, indicating a collaborative and inclusive approach to problem-solving. “Adaptation and Flexibility in Response to Changes” emphasizes their ability to adapt and be flexible in the face of organizational changes or challenges. This demonstrates their resilience and openness to new ways of working, emphasizing their ability to evolve and thrive in dynamic environments.

The codes discovered among both younger and older employees shed light on their journeys of adaptation and growth in the workplace. While younger employees demonstrate their ability to adapt to changing work environments, navigate early career challenges, and prioritize continuous learning and development, older employees show appreciation for diverse skill sets within teams as well as resilience in responding to organizational changes.

The quote from Interviewee D (Appendix 1), from the ‘The Baby Boomer Generation’ in the ‘Old’ classification

Code: Value of Mixed Skill Sets in Teams

“To mix it up, so it's just to use the chances, everybody is offering and to make a mixture, like a scrum. Yeah. So, I'm a scrum master by the way. So that's what, that's why I'm telling that with everybody, the chance. In a in a good environment and that's very important and a good environment to let everybody do the Best at what is what he's able to do. And to, to give them a chance to develop something.”

The interviewee appears to advocate for embracing diversity and leveraging all team members' skills and capabilities. They compare this approach to the concept of a “scrum” in agile project management, emphasizing the importance of creating an inclusive environment in which everyone can contribute their full potential. As scrum masters, they emphasize the importance of creating a supportive environment that promotes individual development and allows each team member to excel in their roles.

5.2 Contributions to Literature

Interdependency Found in Employee Engagement, Age & Trust

The findings in Table 4.4 exhibit a significant overlap and interconnectedness between employee engagement, trust, and age variables, emphasizing their complexity within organizational dynamics. This understanding is critical for effective management, indicating the need to address trust-building initiatives and age-related considerations in order to increase employee engagement. The “Personalized Engagement Individualized Approach” code demonstrates that tailoring engagement strategies to individual preferences is a promising approach. Furthermore, recognizing the impact of age on trust perception emphasizes the importance of creating inclusive and supportive work environments for employees of all ages. Overall, these findings highlight the importance of holistic approaches to increasing employee engagement, considering the interplay of trust and the age of the employee.

The data of the current study strengthens the findings of Downey et al. (2015) by highlighting how a climate of trust, positively impacts engagement. The data also partly fortifies a study’s findings by Kordbacheh et al. (2014) examining the relationship between age and employee engagement, but not intrinsic motivation, and meaningfulness which was also part of Kordbacheh’s study. The data also contributed to Hope-Hailey et al. (2010) study of trust building and how the age of the employee plays a role. The current study is different as it only concentrated on trust being an antecedent of engagement with the age factor and the study by Hope-Hailey et al. had multiple variables and more nuances such as Length of service, grade with public and private companies which were not covered in this study.

This finding reinforces the relevance and significance of the variables chosen for this study: employee engagement, trust, and age.

The data support Colquitt et al.’s findings by demonstrating the complexities of trust dynamics in the workplace. The trust-related data, demonstrate how trust manifests itself differently in different work relationships (including Horizontal and Vertical). Furthermore, the data’s emphasis on communication and collaboration indicates an understanding of the roles and expectations of various parties, including co-workers, managers, and employees. On the other hand, the recognition of trust evolving over time and its importance in organizational relationships is different as this study’s investigation of trust is across age groups and its impact on employee engagement.

While Porter et al. (1975) and Hughes et al. (2018) emphasize the importance of trust in encouraging people to take risks and be proactive, the data suggests otherwise. The emphasis on experience in the limited data suggests that individuals, particularly older employees with years of experience, prioritize risk mitigation over taking uninformed risks. Older employees, who may have faced a variety of challenges and learned from previous experiences, are more likely to approach decision-making with caution and a thorough examination of potential risks. Rather than relying solely on management’s trust to mitigate negative consequences, their experience has provided them with the skills and knowledge necessary to navigate complex situations and anticipate potential pitfalls.

The current study’s data supports (Kahn’s 1990) premise that trust at all levels (Horizontal as well as Vertical) of the organization is essential for encouraging engagement behaviour. Furthermore, the data supports the importance of trust among team members. Employees are more emotionally

and cognitively engaged when they feel supported and trusted by their colleagues, according to Kahn.

Truss et al. (2007) found that engagement levels are lower among employees under the age of 35 than in older age groups, which is consistent with the current study's finding as the current study found a slight difference in engagement dynamics between younger and older employees. This alignment suggests a broader trend across studies, emphasizing the importance of age as a factor in understanding employee engagement. Truss et al. found that younger workers have lower levels of trust in senior management and organizational communication than older employees. Similarly, the current study suggests that trust dynamics differ across age groups, with older employees demonstrating higher levels of trust. Truss et al. observed differences in engagement levels across sectors, focusing on lower levels of trust and confidence in senior management in the public sector. While the current study does not directly address sector-specific differences, its emphasis on trust and managerial relationships is consistent with the idea that organizational culture and leadership practices influence employee engagement in different ways across sectors. Both studies raise concerns about the level of distrust, particularly toward senior management. Truss et al. reported a relatively high level of distrust in the public sector, which is consistent with the current study's emphasis on the importance of trust in managerial relationships; however, the current study did not focus on the public sector.

Similar to Kahnweiler and Thompson's (2000) suggestion, the current study finds that younger employees may have expectations of being involved in decision-making processes, but these expectations may not always match the level of trust bestowed upon them by management. This disparity can cause younger workers to adjust their expectations in order to alleviate dissatisfaction, mirroring a pattern observed in Kahnweiler and Thompson's study. While Kahnweiler and Thompson focused on age as a decision-making factor, the current study goes beyond that by investigating how age interacts with trust dynamics in the context of organizational change. The current study expands on Kahnweiler and Thompson's findings by emphasizing the importance of trust in fostering employee engagement during periods of transition, providing deeper insights into the role of trust.

The current study's findings are consistent with Gallup (2017) insights on the importance of great managers in fostering employee engagement. The study emphasizes the importance of managers in creating an open and supportive workplace culture in which employees feel valued and encouraged to contribute. Specifically, the data demonstrates the importance of trust and connection between managers and employees in influencing employee engagement levels. Just as Gallup suggests, the findings highlight the importance of managers engaging their teams on multiple levels, resulting in a more positive work environment and increased employee motivation.

Similar to James et al., the current study looks into the relationship between age and employee engagement. Both studies acknowledge the potential influence of age on employee engagement levels by categorizing them as younger or older. In line with James et al., the current study finds slightly higher levels of engagement among older employees. This alignment suggests a consistent trend across studies, indicating that older workers are more engaged than their younger counterparts. Avery et al. emphasize the impact of age on the relationship between employee engagement and co-worker satisfaction. Similarly, the current study investigates age-related dynamics such as colleague trust and managerial relationships, which can have varying effects on employee engagement across age groups. According to Avery et al., perceived age similarity with co-workers can influence engagement levels, especially among older workers who are highly

satisfied with their co-workers of the same age. This finding is not consistent with the current study's findings of trust in co-workers and managers, regardless of them being in certain age groups.

On the other hand, the current study's data aligns with Carr et al. (1996) in several key ways, including the importance of developing trusting relationships between employees and managers. The current study investigates trust dynamics among colleagues and in managerial relationships, emphasizing the importance of trust in fostering employee engagement across age groups. Carr et al. contend that new hires may be more adaptable due to their lower investment in the status quo. This is consistent with the current study's examination of workplace adaptation and growth, particularly among younger employees who appear to be more flexible in response to organizational changes. According to Carr et al., top-level management may be resistant to new recruits because they perceive threats to their skills, status, and positions. Similarly, the current study recognizes the importance of trust dynamics between colleagues and managers in the context of organizational change, indicating potential differences in trust dynamics across hierarchical levels and age groups. Both studies acknowledge trust as an important aspect of organizational dynamics, especially during times of change. The current study's investigation of trust and age-related dynamics during organizational transition is consistent with Carr et al.'s findings on the difficulties and complexities of establishing trust in an organizational setting.

The current study looks at the effects of age on various organizational outcomes, such as trust and employee engagement. Ferres et al. (2003) examine the differences between Generation X employees and older people, whereas the current study investigates trust dynamics across age groups in the context of organizational change. Ferres et al. discovered consistent relationships between variables such as trust, commitment, procedural justice, and turnover intention among both Generation X and older employees. On the other hand, the current study's findings on trust and age-related dynamics during organizational change indicate that these associations may differ slightly, with younger age groups having lower trust than older age groups. Lastly, Ferres et al. use both qualitative and quantitative methods to examine differences in trust, commitment, procedural justice, and turnover intention, whereas the current study uses qualitative analysis to investigate trust dynamics in the context of organizational change.

The data indicate that trust is an important factor in managerial relationships and organizational dynamics. Themes such as "Trust in Co-workers' Autonomy" and "Trust in Managerial Competence and Decision-Making" emphasize the importance of trust in creating positive work environments and facilitating effective decision-making processes. Furthermore, communication codes emphasize the importance of open and transparent communication in developing trust among employees as well as between management and staff. This is consistent with Lewicki et al.'s distinction between trust and distrust, in which trust fosters confidence and cooperation while distrust leads to defensive behaviour and opposition to change. As a result, the data supports the notion that trust is critical for driving organizational success and facilitating smooth transitions during times of change.

The current data is partly consistent with Vance's (2006) study on employee engagement, particularly in emphasizing the importance of enriched work environments and trust in driving engagement. Themes like "Tailored Engagement Approaches" and "Skill Development and Feedback" emphasize the importance of giving employees meaningful, diverse, and autonomous work. According to the data, employees are more engaged when they believe their work is meaningful, have opportunities for autonomy, and trust their co-workers and managers. This is consistent with Vance's findings that enriched work environments, defined by meaningfulness,

variety, and autonomy, increase employee engagement. Trust in co-workers and management is identified as a critical factor in creating an environment in which employees are motivated and committed to their jobs. This supports Vance's assertion that co-worker trust is an essential component of an engaged workforce. According to the data, engaged employees are more likely to seek out new challenges and opportunities for growth, as evidenced by themes like "Learning Curve and Professional Growth" and "Skill Development Through Experience". Employees who feel engaged and supported at work are more likely to broaden their job descriptions and take on innovative tasks outside of their immediate responsibilities. This is consistent with Vance's claim that engaged employees are motivated to innovate and address challenges proactively.

The data backs up Hornung and Rousseau's (2007) arguments, indicating that employees value autonomy in the workplace. The theme "Autonomy in Employee Engagement & Trust" and its associated codes, such as "Preference for Autonomy" and "Trust in Co-workers' Autonomy", imply that employees value autonomy and trust. This supports Hornung and Rousseau's argument that employees respond positively to structural change when they believe they have control over their work. Furthermore, the "Encouragement of Personal Development" code among older employees lends credence to the notion that autonomy fosters confidence and innovation by encouraging employees to take on larger job responsibilities and pursue advancement opportunities. Overall, the findings highlight the importance of autonomy in encouraging positive reactions to change and increasing employee engagement.

The current study addresses a long-standing call from the IS research community to incorporate more qualitative research methodologies alongside traditional quantitative approaches. Recognizing the historical dominance of quantitative methods in IS research, this study addresses the need for a more balanced approach by incorporating qualitative data analysis. This approach is especially important given the complex organizational contexts inherent in IS research, which frequently necessitate nuanced understanding and exploration best accomplished through qualitative methodologies. By incorporating qualitative research, the study hopes to uncover significant insights that may have gone unnoticed in previous studies, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of this IS phenomenon.

As per the data, communication has contributed significantly to the literature starting with Engagement, trust and age.

Starting with codes that contribute to Schmidt and Jackson's (2005) concept of "communication" as the fourth step toward creating a balanced culture that fosters engagement, ownership, and empowerment. Effective communication channels, such as those identified in the codes, are critical to employee engagement because they ensure clarity, transparency, and alignment of goals and expectations. When employees feel informed, involved, and empowered to express their opinions and contribute to decision-making processes, their sense of ownership and commitment to the organization's goals grows. Thus, the communication-related codes identified back up Schmidt and Jackson's claim that communication is essential for creating a culture of engagement, ownership, and empowerment. Furthermore, The communication codes support Price and Chahal's (2006) six-step method by aligning with stage four, which focuses on "communications and workforce engagement". The codes emphasize the importance of effective communication channels in engaging the workforce during organizational change initiatives. Similarly, Guy and Beaman's identification of "engagement and alignment" as primary factors for successful change management is consistent with the role of communication in fostering engagement and alignment with

organizational goals. In essence, the communication-related codes support the idea that effective communication is essential for engaging the workforce and ensuring alignment with change initiatives, as emphasised by Price and Chahal and Guy and Beaman. The current study used age as a differentiating factor among employees, dividing them into younger and older age groups. This method enabled a comparative analysis of how factors like engagement, and trust, which the study set out to find out also found out how important communication and skill development differed between these two age groups.

The data adds to Kozlowski and Klein's (2000) findings by emphasizing the importance of open communication in promoting belief, respect, and cordiality, all of which are essential for developing trust within organizations. This is consistent with their emphasis on managerial functions that promote trust, as effective communication is an essential component of managerial behaviour. Furthermore, the study builds on previous research by providing practical insights into the factors that contribute to employee engagement, emphasizing the importance of communication across age groups. Similarly, the results are consistent with Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005), who identified trust in leadership as a motivator for engaged employees. Communication is essential for building trust in leadership and providing incentives, all of which contribute to employee engagement. Cropanzano and Mitchell also suggested variables like job components and pay systems which lead to engagement but the current study didn't set out to find the same results. On the topic of trust the data regarding communication add to Kotter and Cohen's framework by emphasizing the importance of establishing trust and using appropriate communication methods within coalitions to achieve effective organizational change. Effective communication is critical for building trust among change recipients and bringing them together around a common goal, such as striving for excellence.

The data with communication also contributes to Kotter and Cohen's framework by emphasizing the importance of building trust and using appropriate communication methods within coalitions to achieve effective organizational change. Effective communication is essential for building trust with change recipients and aligning them around a common goal, such as striving for excellence. The current study's emphasis on trust-building, and effective communication is consistent with the findings of this study, which investigates the role of trust and age in employee engagement during organizational transition. By addressing similar themes and strategies, the current study complements and expands on Kotter and Cohen's as a critical component of successful change initiatives.

The data collected data from communication codes contribute to Price and Chahal's change management strategic framework by being consistent with the communication part of Step Four, which emphasizes communication and workforce engagement as critical components of successful change implementation. Effective communication ensures that all stakeholders are aware of the change, understand its implications, and have the opportunity to express any concerns. Organizations can reduce resistance to change by maintaining open lines of communication and actively engaging with employees throughout the process, as well as fostering a sense of ownership and collaboration. This approach allows the implementation team to address concerns quickly and adjust as needed, increasing the chances of successful change adoption.

5.3 Practical Implications

Organizations can improve employee engagement and overall effectiveness by focusing on key drivers such as trust. Effective communication, collaboration, and strong managerial support are essential for fostering trust, teamwork, and mentorship, which leads to increased engagement. Accepting diversity and encouraging autonomy increases engagement and performance. Implementing comprehensive employee engagement strategies that address individual needs ensures that organizations prioritize employee well-being, morale, and professional development, resulting in a positive work culture. By focusing on these drivers, organizations can foster a work environment in which employees feel valued, motivated, and empowered to give their all.

The findings on trust discussed above have the potential to significantly impact the workplace environment and contribute to the field/industry in a variety of ways. Creating a trusting environment within an organization encourages employees to communicate openly, collaborate, and work together effectively. Leaders who prioritize trust dynamics in the workplace can increase employee engagement and commitment to organizational goals. Effective leadership and clear objectives foster trust among team members, empowering them to collaborate toward common goals. Communication and collaboration practices that promote transparency and inclusivity build trust and encourage active participation among employees. A trusting environment fosters engagement, resulting in increased productivity. In contrast, recognizing signs of disengagement in a distrustful environment allows for proactive intervention to address underlying issues and rebuild trust. Embracing autonomy in employee engagement and trust allows individuals to take ownership of their work while also contributing to accountability and innovation.

The age-related themes and findings can have a significant impact on a variety of fields and industries by informing organizational strategies and practices. To begin, understanding how people perceive age and trust can help organizations create inclusive and supportive environments that value the contributions of employees of all ages. Work processes can be improved by recognizing the diverse perspectives and experiences that people of different ages bring to the table, resulting in more innovative problem-solving approaches. Skill development and feedback mechanisms should be tailored to employees' individual learning styles and preferences at various stages of their careers, promoting continuous professional growth and development. Finally, organizations can help employees adjust to changing work environments over time by providing training, resources, and support networks that enable smooth transitions and adaptation to change.

To address the lengthy, emotionally taxing, stressful, and exhausting process of organizational change, organizations can implement comprehensive employee engagement strategies that are tailored to the needs of employees. Organizations can reduce the emotional impact of change by focusing on employee trust through open communication, leadership integrity, and a supportive work environment. Effective communication, collaboration, and managerial support promote teamwork and mentorship, reducing feelings of isolation and stress during transition. Accepting cultural diversity and giving employees decision-making autonomy allows them to contribute their unique perspectives and ideas, which promotes creativity and reduces the emotional burden of change. Overall, by addressing these factors and prioritizing employee well-being, organizations can reduce the challenges of organizational change while also creating a more positive and supportive work environment.

5.4 Limitations and Further Research

Limitations

While the study covers important aspects of engagement, it is important to recognize its limitations. One limitation is the reliance on self-reported data, which can introduce bias and inaccuracies caused by subjective interpretations or social desirability bias. In addition, the study's cross-sectional design may limit the ability to determine causality between variables, whereas longitudinal data would provide more robust insights into engagement dynamics over time. Furthermore, controlling for various factors that may influence engagement, such as job satisfaction, personality traits, perceptions of fairness, team dynamics or the nature of the organizational change, is critical to ensuring the findings' validity and reliability. Failure to adequately account for these variables may result in incomplete or misleading conclusions about the relationship between engagement and other factors. Therefore, future research could benefit from incorporating more rigorous research designs and methodologies to address these limitations and enhance the understanding of engagement dynamics in organizational contexts.

The focus on a private company in the case study may limit the generalizability of findings to the public sector due to several key differences between the two types of organizations. Public sector organizations often operate under different mandates, objectives, and regulatory frameworks compared to private companies. The participants for the case study, especially in the 'young' classification had more than expected professional work experience. Maybe finding younger employees having less professional work experience would let the data, analysis and a different outcome. Furthermore, each of the 3 employees in the young classification had different reasons to be motivated and these multiple factors led to them having trust in their management which led to engagement. Another observation was only one manager was able to be interviewed, interviewing the second manager would add new perspectives and insights to the dataset, providing a more complete understanding of why the employees distrust their manager. It would enable comparative analysis, validation of findings, and exploration of diverse perspectives, thereby increasing the research's robustness and depth. Furthermore, identifying unexpected insights and addressing potential biases would improve the study's validity and relevance.

Further Research

Employee engagement is a notion with multiple meanings, maybe no direct measure, and surprising overlap with other longer-standing ideas. As noted by McClure and Chambers (2010), engagement is not based on the notion of "one-size fits all" and Sonnentag et al. (2010) have found that employee engagement is situation-specific. Engagement has numerous effects on both the micro and macro levels of your organization. To reduce the overall ambiguity surrounding employee engagement, more research is needed to clarify and examine the relationship between employee engagement and a combination of different antecedents within organizations. Employee engagement and workplace fairness may be linked since individuals come from various backgrounds. Justice, trust, perception, and risk are only a few components of a larger picture. Lastly, there could have been a self-selection bias that may be happening, i.e. employees who develop trust in their co-workers and the organization, and who feel trusted in return, are more likely to stick around in the organization for longer. This could be further looked into.

A longitudinal study also could be explored if the aim is to track changes in employee engagement, trust dynamics, and other relevant factors over an extended period, such as several months or years during an organizational change. A company that wants to achieve manageable results through employee engagement as it currently stands ought to proceed cautiously, taking deliberate measures and expecting the development of a customized approach based on a thorough examination of the business's strengths and shortcomings, associated ideas, and the unknowns of engagement.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Throughout the current study, we've looked at different aspects of employee engagement, trust, age dynamics, and the implications for organizational change. From investigating the significance of trust and engagement to determining how age influences perceptions of trust in engagement. It is always beneficial to have engaged employees who demonstrate increased accountability and a proactive approach to exceeding expectations for their peers, clients, and the organisation. Coming to the organizational change which was selected to be analysed. Originally TAM was selected as the model to support during organizational change but a more important change was selected due to the change in technology not being significant enough. The change in organization was regarding the reshuffle between the teams, these changes brought about a lot of uncertainty in the organization for employees at all levels.

To answer the research question of how trust and the age of an employee affect employee engagement during organizational change, a qualitative analysis method was selected. This decision was motivated by the scarcity of existing research that used this approach, as well as a desire to gain a better understanding of stakeholder perspectives. The study used a semi-structured interview format with seven participants. The interviews were transcribed and thematically analysed. The data was interpreted using a coding and theme identification process, and the themes that emerged are presented and then further discussed.

Even though the current study set out to look into how employees of various ages respond to managers' trust and how age influences trust in managers, particularly in the context of organizational change. With younger employees displaying less engagement as well as trust. We noticed that younger employees are also engaged and have trust (Vertical trust) for their managers. As per the data even though there is a slight difference in the levels of engagement the younger employees have lesser engagement and trust than the older ages of employees with their managers. This slight difference could be explained by subjective factors with the younger generation and with the way the managers behave with the employees in their team. Still, there isn't a significant difference to conclude that employees of different ages display different levels of trust and engagement with their managers. On the other hand, when we speak about horizontal trust the data indicates the employees have immense trust in their co-workers. This reflects employees' trust and reliability in one another when working on tasks, projects, or initiatives.

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