Examination of Relationships Between Generation Cohorts and Managerial Effectiveness

in the Federal Government Workplace

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By

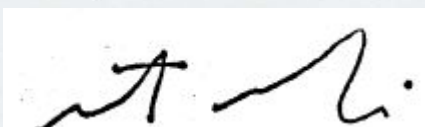Glenda Brunner Arrington

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Abstract

For the first time, in the 21st century, four generational cohorts, including Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, and Millennials, are working alongside one another in the federal government. Members of the four generations bring their beliefs to the workplace. Recognizing and understanding diverse views of multiple generations challenges managers. Such diversity can affect the perception of managerial effectiveness among employees. The research problem was managerial challenges that leaders faced related to supervising a multigenerational workforce. The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the relationship between generational cohort and cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness within the context of the federal workplace. Quantitative archival secondary data were used to examine the relationship. The data were derived from the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey. Respondents included 421,748 full-time, part-time, and nonseasonal federal government employees geographically dispersed across the United States and overseas who responded to the 2015 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey and were included in this research. The results of the study indicated that ratings of managerial effectiveness by all four generational cohorts for all three levels of managers studied were relatively high. The findings and hypothesis decisions for the study's three research questions were very similar—the relationships among various associations of generational cohorts and managerial effectiveness were high with correlation coefficients ranging from .96 to .99. However, the only cohort association that consistently had a statistically significant relationship with managerial effectiveness across all three levels was Generation Xers and Millennials. The p value for this relationship was $p < .05$ for all three managerial levels studied. Based on the study's data, there was little difference in perceptions

regarding managerial effectiveness among the four cohorts. Recommendations for future research should consider adding perspectives from Generation Z employees who are now entering the federal workforce. Additionally, studying how supervisors rate their own supervisors, given their unique managerial experience and perspective within the context of their generational cohort, would add to the body of knowledge on managerial effectiveness among generational cohorts.

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I dedicate this journey to my dear mother and father, Janette and Leon Brunner. You instilled in me not only the importance of education but also the spirit of pursuit to what some declare the impossible. You will live in my heart forever. I miss you dearly.

I would like to thank my sons, Christopher II and Jarrett Glenn; my siblings; and my family members who supported me and tolerated my travels with two suitcases during family celebrations--one with clothes and one with dissertation work products.

As I traveled along the way, I could not have completed this journey without the encouragement and support of Dr. Karren Bailey, Dr. Lisa Brown, Dr. Charles Conyers, Dr. Monette Dutch, Dr. Rocky Dwyer, Dr. Elizabeth Flanagan, Dr. Roderick French, Dr. Annie Green, Dr. Stephen Lee, Dr. L. Peyton McCoy, and Dr. April Toussaint.

This chapter of my life is now written. Praise the Lord!

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Employees from multiple generations make up the federal government's workforce. According to Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman, and Lance (2010), this multigenerational workforce includes Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, and Millennials. Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, and Millennials are referenced as four generations or cohorts throughout this document. Traditionalists were born between 1922 and 1945, whereas the Baby Boomers were born between 1946 and 1964. Generation Xers were born between 1965 and 1980, and Generation Y or Millennials were born between 1981 and 2000. These four generations make up the current employees in the federal workforce.

Historically, the federal workforce had been shared by generations with less diversity; however, presently, the changing workforce requires that managers understand the dynamics of each generation in today's federal workforce (U.S. Government Accountability Office [GAO], 2015). Research further suggests that, for the first time in the 21st century, four generations are working alongside one another. Members of these four generations bring their goals, values, and beliefs to the workplace, requiring managers to understand multiple generations effectively to manage the workforce (Shragay & Tziner, 2011).

The different views of an organization result from an evolving workforce that now includes these four generations (Lyons & Kuron, 2014). With this information in mind, managers must understand the relationships between each generation's views and perceptions of effective management practices (Ferri-Reed, 2012). For this reason, recognizing and understanding the diverse views of workplace differences without showing preference among the four generations challenges managers (Dixon, Mercado, & Knowles, 2013). Moreover, managers must understand the differences in each

generation to lead an effective organization (Mencl & Lester, 2014).

Interestingly, the employees' views of management practices improve as managers understand the impact of each generation's view of what constitutes effective management practices (Shragay & Tziner, 2011). Managers who understand the differences of views that employees have of their management practices will be better equipped to supervise effectively each of the four generations in the workforce (Lester, Standifer, Schultz, & Windsor, 2012). This awareness can provide managers with tools to increase organizational effectiveness in the workplace (Lester et al., 2012). Fundamentally, managers should remain cognizant of the influences that affect their employees such as generation-based views that can influence the effectiveness of the organization (Thompson & Gregory, 2012).

The presence of multigenerational cohorts in the workforce produces the single biggest challenge to leaders within the workplace (Venus, 2011). Each generation represents a varied set of morals and values influenced by the generational cohort in which they were born (Parry & Urwin, 2011). According to Woodward, Vongswasdi, and More (2015), the generational cohort has been established since the 1940s. Currently, each of the four generational cohorts brings a variety of knowledge, skills, social experiences, values, and motivations to the workplace (Mencl & Lester, 2014). These skills and social experiences shape the value system of each generational cohort. However, Helyer and Lee (2012) suggested that this multigenerational diversity of experiences and values based on different cohorts can cause challenges in the workplace.

Because each generational cohort has its unique attributes, senior leaders and managers should possess management styles that adapt to the differences of each generational cohort (Mencl & Lester, 2014). Mencl and Lester (2014) suggested that generational differences do exist. Further, their research indicated that workplace

characteristics across generational cohorts may be more similar than different.

Having three or more generations in the workplace requires flexibility in managing the multigenerational workforce (Solnet, Kralj, & Kandampully, 2012). Managers face challenges of responding to employees' perceptions, which can affect organizational values. Solnet et al. (2012) suggested that a workforce with diverse skills can bring new techniques to the organization, thereby, strengthening the effectiveness and capability of the organization. Therefore, managers must tailor the leadership style to suit the employees and not the preference of the managers.

Recognizing generational disparities is crucial to achieving success to meet mission requirements for an effective organization (Mencl & Lester, 2014). Similarly, understanding employees' views among the four generations assist managers of the federal workplace in opportunities to excel and manage difficult challenges (Parry & Urwin, 2011). Federal managers can use employees' views to support more effective management practices (Srinivasan, 2012). Indeed, more precisely, a better understanding of employees' views among the four generations in the federal government is essential to the success of the federal workplace (Srinivasan, 2012). Creating an effective organization is an impetus for managers to understand their employees' views of management (U.S. GAO, 2015).

Background

The root causes of unhealthy workplace relationships and ineffective organizations are systemic, which could conceivably engender a deficit in relationship building throughout the organization (Brown, 2012). Simplification and generalized differences among groups of employees can have significant implications on the effectiveness of an organization (Costanza, Badger, Fraser, Severt, & Gade, 2012). Not

surprisingly, no aspect of potential differences across generations has received as much attention as the differences between the work-related attitudes and values of the multigenerational workforce. These differences can influence perceptions and organizational effectiveness (Ferri-Reed, 2012). For this reason, managers must recognize and acknowledge differences among employees and explore viable means of creating workplace cohesion (Balda & Mora, 2012).

Ignoring generational differences led to an ineffective organization (Costanza et al., 2012). As generational differences were better understood, employee working relationships were better understood and, therefore, improved (Costanza & Finkelstein, 2015). Researchers suggested the need for more empirical data about the generations, the impact of the multigenerational workforce, and the generations' views of management practices in the organization (Parry & Irwin, 2011). The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between generation cohorts and cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness in the federal government. The four-generation cohorts for the study are identified as Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, and Millennials (Lester et al., 2012).

Statement of the Problem

The general problem addressed in this study was that leaders faced managerial challenges related to supervising a multigenerational workforce in the federal government. These managerial challenges associated with supervising a multigenerational workforce could influence the effectiveness of the workforce. Specifically, managers must recognize and understand the employees' views of their management practices to supervise effectively four generations in the federal government (Dixon et al., 2013). This diversity of a workforce, made up of four generations, requires

managers to focus on understanding employees' views to supervise this multigenerational workforce effectively (Curry, 2015). Differences in views among the four generations may affect the integrity of the work environment, thereby, increasing a gap in organizational effectiveness as evidenced by a loss of productivity and personnel (Ramkumar & Priyal, 2013).

The specific problem of interest for the study was that the relationship between generational cohorts and perceptions of managerial effectiveness within the context of the federal workplace needed better understanding. The findings from this study could increase management's understanding of the relationships among the views of four generations of federal employees and how these generations perceived managerial effectiveness in the federal workplace. This understanding could serve to help address managerial challenges leaders face when supervising a multigenerational workforce. Without this type of applied research, employees' views from a generational perspective in the federal workplace remained unclear, and managers continued to encounter challenges in understanding how these views affected the perception of managerial effectiveness (Deal et al., 2013).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between generational cohort and cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness within the context of the federal workplace. The researcher examined how employees from each of four-generational cohort groups viewed managerial effectiveness at the three management levels of senior leader, manager, and supervisor. The four-generational cohort groups included Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, and Millennials. Managerial effectiveness was operationalized and measured using archival

data from the 2015 administration of the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS; U.S. Office of Personnel Management [OPM], 2015). Respondents to the 2015 FEVS included approximately 421,748 full-time, part-time, and nonseasonal federal government employees. The respondents were geographically dispersed across the United States and overseas. Examining the relationship between generational cohort and cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness within the context of the federal workplace amplified the overall success of the organization. Studies of this applied dissertation topic increased the understanding of managerial effectiveness from the perspective of four generations (Lyons & Kuron, 2014).

Research Questions

Three research questions guided the study to the achievement of the study's purpose. Answers to the following three research questions provided the results necessary to demonstrate achievement of the purpose for this study:

Q1. How do generational cohorts relate to cohort perception of managerial effectiveness at the senior leader level in the federal workforce?

Q2. How do generational cohorts relate to cohort perception of managerial effectiveness at the manager level in the federal workforce?

Q3. How do generational cohorts relate to cohort perception of managerial effectiveness at the supervisory level in the federal workforce?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to align with each of the study's three research questions:

H1$_0$. There is no statistically significant relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perception of managerial effectiveness at the senior leader level in the federal

workplace.

H1$_a$. There is a statistically significant relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perception of managerial effectiveness at the senior leader level in the federal workplace.

H2$_0$. There is no statistically significant relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perception of managerial effectiveness at the manager levels in the federal workplace.

H2$_a$. There is a statistically significant relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perception of managerial effectiveness at the manager levels in the federal workplace.

H3$_0$. There is no statistically significant relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perception of managerial effectiveness at the supervisory level in the federal workplace.

H3$_a$. There is a statistically significant relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perception of managerial effectiveness at the supervisory level in the federal workplace.

Nature of the Study

Quantitative research involves exploring relationships between independent and dependent variables (Bansal & Corley, 2012). For this study, quantitative archival secondary data were used to examine the relationship between generational cohorts and perceptions of managerial effectiveness within the context of the federal workplace. In addition, quantitative research relies on collecting data and analyzing numerical data to reject or fail to reject hypotheses.

Quantitative researchers analyze the concepts and trends among variables

mathematically to project results onto a larger population by using numerical data for generalizations and inferences (Cronholm & Hjalmarsson, 2011). The design for this study was a correlation design. A correlation design is appropriate when a researcher wants to study relationships among variables (Jonker & Pennink, 2010). The independent variable for the study was generation cohorts, including Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, and Millennials. The dependent variable was managerial effectiveness.

Data for the study were archival data from the U.S. OPM (2015). The instrument originally used to collect the data for the independent and dependent variables was the FEVS. A Pearson's *r* analysis was conducted to determine how the independent variables, the four generational cohorts, related to the dependent variable. Pearson's *r* analysis is appropriate when the researcher wants to examine the relationship between multiple independent variables and one dependent variable (Jonker & Pennink, 2010). The results of the analyses were used to answer the research questions and to make the decision whether to reject or accept the hypotheses. The answers to the research questions represented an achievement of the study's purpose.

Significance of the Study

Changes in generational cohorts in the workforce challenge federal managers to understand differences of values, views, and beliefs of the four generations (Roodin & Mendelson, 2013). Limited research exists on generational differences and the impact on organizational effectiveness within the federal government (Lester et al., 2012). As pointed out by Lester et al. (2012), managers must recognize that generational differences in the workplace exist and must manage the organization effectively. Likewise, Hannay and Fretwell (2011) believed that most managers face challenges of multigenerations in

the workforce. The significance of this study was providing a comprehensive understanding of generational relationships among Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, and Millennials and managerial effectiveness in the federal workforce. Studies involving attitudes and the behaviors of different generations are pertinent because they identified strategies for managing a multigenerational workforce, thereby, increasing the organizational effectiveness (Roodin & Mendelson, 2013).

The results of this study should help federal government managers identify improvements needed in leading a multigenerational workforce. Additionally, the information from the study should assist managers in making a thorough assessment of the organization's effectiveness and assist in achieving strategic goals. Fundamentally, the information from this study should be critical to the organization's effectiveness, employee satisfaction, and perceptions of leadership. In addition, this study added to understanding the generational cohorts' perceptions of managerial effectiveness and further tested the generational theory.

Definition of Key Terms

Baby Boomers. These individuals are born between 1946 and 1964 and are comprised of approximately 44% of the population in the workforce (Eastman & Liu, 2012).

Civil service employee. This is a person appointed in the civil service engaged in the performance of a federal function under the authority of the law or Executive Act 5 U.S.C. of 2015 (as cited in Condrey, Facer, & Llorens, 2012).

Employee engagement. This is a person's cognitive, emotional, and behavioral state as directed toward the desired organizational outcomes (Wollard & Shuck, 2011).

Federal government employee. This is an employee who is appointed in the

civil service and is engaged in the performance of a federal function under the authority of law or Executive Act 5 U.S.C. of 2015.

FedScope. This is a tool that provides statistical data of the federal employees on the payroll in the federal government (Enterprise Human Resources Integration-Statistical Data Mart [EHRI-SDM], 2013; U.S. OPM, 2015).

Fiscal year. This designates a period of time, other than a calendar year, that is used for calculating annual financial statements (U.S OPM, 2015).

Generation. This refers to a group of people or a cohort who share birth years and similar life experiences as they move together through time (Twenge et al., 2010).

Generational cohort. This is a group of individuals born during the same period of time with a well-defined lifestyle from historical experiences (Park & Gursoy, 2012).

Generation Xers. These individuals are born between 1965 and approximately1980 and are comprised of approximately 34% of the population in the workforce (Eastman & Liu, 2012).

Manager. This is an individual who is responsible for planning department goals and directing employees to achieve a higher level of success within the organization. A manager is an intermediate, middle, or senior who holds blue or white-collar occupations in public or private industries (Nygard, Siukola, & Virtanen, 2013).

Managerial effectiveness. This is the successful execution of a critically evaluated plan that provides direction to employees building trust, relationships, and positive outcomes (Muller, Geraldi, & Turner, 2012).

Millennials. These individuals are born between approximately 1981 and 2000 and are comprised of approximately 12% of the population in the workforce (Barford & Hester, 2011).

Office of Management and Budget. This is the largest component of the Executive Office of the President. Individuals in the Office of Management and Budget are required to report directly to the President of the United States (U.S. OPM, 2015).

U.S. OPM. This is an independent agency of the United States where people manage the Civil Service of the Federal Government (U.S. OPM, 2015).

Organizational effectiveness. This refers to the organizational personnel's long-term ability to achieve strategic and operational goals in a consistent manner (Rieley, 2014).

Perception. This is an organized and interpreted sensory impression about an environment or process (Robbins & Judge, 2012).

Psychological climate. This is the employee's perception and interpretation of all aspects of his or her work environment (Kataria, Garg, & Rastogi, 2013).

Senior leaders. These are individuals who lead government-wide human capital policy for the organization, ensuring that the executive management of the government of the United States is responsive to the needs, policies, and goals of the nation (U.S. OPM, 2015).

Supervisor. This is an individual who is responsible for the day-to-day operations, ensuring employees are working on assigned tasks (U.S. OPM, 2015).

Traditionalists. These are individuals who are born between 1922 and 1945 and are comprised of approximately 10% of the population in the workforce (Berkowitz & Schewe, 2011).

Weighted data. These are representations of data from which the population sample is drawn (FEVS, 2015).

Work engagement. This refers to a two-way relationship between employee and employer (Strom, Sears, & Kelly, 2014).

Summary

The topic for this study was the relationships between generational cohort and cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness within the context of the federal workplace. Research indicated the importance of understanding the perceptions of generational cohorts and the effectiveness of managers in the federal workplace (Costanza et al., 2012). The research problem was that the managerial challenges that leaders faced while supervising a multigenerational workforce in the federal government could influence the effectiveness of the workforce. Managers must recognize and understand the generational cohorts' views and perceptions of their managerial practices in order to supervise four generations in the federal government effectively (Dixon et al., 2013).

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship among generational cohorts and cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness within the context of the federal workplace. Additionally, this study examined how employees from each of the four generations viewed and perceived managerial efficacy at the following three management levels: senior leader, manager, and supervisor. This was achieved using quantitative methods with a correlation design. Archival secondary data collected through the administration of the FEVS were utilized. The significance of the study was that information would be provided to understand better generational relationships among Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, and Millennials with managerial effectiveness in the federal workforce. Although researchers studying the perceptions of generational differences offered an important element of effective management, they

should also be encouraged to dig deeper into the understanding of this complex and

fascinating phenomenon (Lyons, Urick, Kuron, & Schweitzer, 2015).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Business administration scholars focus on critical areas such as general business, organizational leadership, organizational management, public administration, and industrial organizational psychology (Miller & Cameron, 2011). Effective organizations are consistently productive, adaptable, and efficient (Kataria et al., 2013). The major aspects of effective organizations include being irrepressible in times of diversity and being willing to assist managers in achieving a better understanding of their management practices within the organization (Strom et al., 2014). Moreover, these critical areas emphasize the application of research to develop strategic approaches for managing organizations. Organizational leadership from a macro perspective measured the impact the organization has on society. Alternately, organizational leadership from the microperspective views employees' interaction with organizations' measured effectiveness (Shragay & Tziner, 2011). For the purpose of this study, the substantive area of focus was organizational leadership.

Four generations of workers are in the current workforce. This multigenerational workforce includes Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, and Millennials (Cekada, 2012). Workforce generational-specific attitudes and values of significant life events about work are brought to work (Ascencio & Mujkic, 2016). In fact, these four generations bring their goals, values, and beliefs to the workplace requiring managers to understand the relationship of each generation in order to manage the workforce effectively (Shragay & Tziner, 2011). Each generational cohort emerged though chronological order and was a passage of successive entry into adulthood or life stages (Joshi, Dencker, & Franz, 2011). These successive entries, shaped by societal institutions, were associated with behaviors and expectations (Gurwitt, 2013). Then, it

stood to reason that the generational cohorts within the multigenerational workforce made up the population of managers and employees. Additionally, the age differences of the generational cohorts in the workforce led to challenges for managers because of significant perceived generational differences (Lester et al., 2012).

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness within the context of the federal workplace. The review of literature necessary for achieving this purpose includes a review of relevant topics that included (a) documentation, (b) theoretical framework, (c) federal workforce practitioner considerations, (d) organizational leadership, (e) federal workforce, (f) organizational effectiveness, and (g) a summary. The Documentation section describes the nature and sources of the references, library, and search engines sources. The Federal Workforce Practitioner Consideration section provides contextual awareness of the federal workforce administration. In the organizational leadership context, the discussion of individuals and groups between and across the roles of leadership positions are examined. The Federal Workforce section provides a view of the workplace through the lenses of each generational cohort's values, beliefs, and attitudes. The Organizational Effectiveness section examines the measured successfulness of a fully engaged workforce.

Documentation

Although practitioner and scholarly literature was examined, it was decided to include only scholarly literature in this document. The primary sources of this literature review were scholarly, peer-reviewed journal articles with the vast majority written within 5 years of this research. Searches were conducted using EBSCOhost, ProQuest,

SAGE Journals, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, and web search engines. Key professional journals were identified with keyword searches related to the overarching impact of generational cohorts in the workforce, effective organizations, and the overarching effects of the multigenerational workforce in organizations. Also included in the searches were the university's databases, secondary data methodology and analysis research, and journals as well as professional and scholarly research websites.

Theoretical Framework

The applied dissertation has a basis within generational theory (Mannheim, 1952; Twenge et al., 2010). Generational theory suggests that cohorts of individuals born in the same period of time experience significant life events in their formative years that predisposes them to similar values, attitudes, and beliefs (Mannheim, 1952). Whereas a generational cohort experiences similar life events, each cohort's reality is different due to the various stages of human development and collective group history (Twenge, Gentile, & Campbell, 2015).

Federal Workforce Practitioner Considerations

The federal government's geographical makeup includes the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and its territories (U.S. OPM, 2015). Federal employees within government agencies have responsibilities to enforce regulations and laws (U.S. OPM, 2015). These federal employees work at the Departments of Defense, Justice, Agriculture, Homeland Security, Veterans Affairs, and Housing and Urban Development. Whereas a majority of the federal government employees work in the United States, some federal employees also work abroad, thus, making a challenging, diverse workforce. Federal employees work in geographical locations throughout the United States and overseas to execute key government functions (U.S. OPM, 2015). More than half of the

federal civilian workforce consists of the executive branch, including the Departments of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Commerce, Labor, Energy, Education, Interior, Treasury, Transportation, and State (U.S. OPM, 2015).

Employees who execute the business of the government and who trust their managers view the organization as genuine and adequate (Otara, 2011). As indicated by Ascencio and Mujkic (2016), these employees view their managers whom they trust as effective; in contrast, employees who view their managers as ineffective lose trust. Employees' level of confidence impacts the fairness of management assessments; therefore, with trust, employees are inclined to accept decisions that are made. Managers' trust is paramount for employees to become well-rounded and effective in the organization (Linz, Good, & Busch, 2015). Likewise, Twenge, Campbell, and Carter (2014) suggested that trust leads to effective relationships. However, trust should be reciprocal between managers and employees to foster an effective environment (Ascencio & Mujkic, 2016). That said, federal government employees and managers of the multigenerational workforce in the federal government have differing levels of trust (Otara, 2011).

The discussion of generations in the federal workforce is a topic that challenges federal managers to understand the generational differences (Hansen & Leuty, 2012). The term *generation* arose from descriptions that strove to make sense of the principles between people born at different chronological times (Scherger, Nazroo, & May, 2016). Generational differences affect organizational effectiveness in the workplace with regard to communication, recruiting and retention, team building, change management, motivation, and productivity (Schullery, 2013).

The federal workforce includes approximately 1,845,662 workers in at least 350

occupations within 82 agencies (U.S.OPM, 2015). These federal workers include Traditionalists (1%); Baby Boomers (49%); Generation Xers (39%), and Millennials (11%). The unique mission of the federal workforce provides critical services and functions for the American people through the oversight of taxpayers' dollars and includes securing the nation's defense (U.S.OPM, 2015). The intricate work is based on positions, education, functions, agencies, employment or occupational categories, and job classifications.

Four Generations in the Workplace

A generation is defined as a starting period of a birth range ending with the decline of the birth range (Dixon et al., 2013). The four generations (i.e., Traditionalist, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, and Millennials) are categorized as a set of human beings who have taken possession of society based on the time in which they lived (Kaifi, Nafer, Khanfar, & Kaifi, 2012).

Traditionalists, also known as the silent generation, are individuals born between 1922 and 1945. Traditionalists make up 1% of the 1.8 million federal workers in the government (Stark & Farner, 2015). Traditionalists are viewed in the workplace as the brick builders for the corporate culture and are the oldest members of the workforce (Hansen & Leuty, 2012). This generation hold perceptions of the great American value system adhering to family values much more than other generations (Hansen & Leuty, 2012). Instilled in them early were family values of working together for a common goal.

Traditionalists grew up in a supportive family environment with their beliefs shaped by parental views. Traditionally, mothers are in the home, and fathers are the breadwinners. At a young age, they did not know luxury nor did they borrow anything;

they would save money and pay cash when required. Whereas education was a dream, they are hard workers who want a secure job to take care of the family.

Many in the traditionalist generation are loyal to the organization and anticipated working a lifetime in one organization (Brown, 2012). Although traditionalists are loyal to the organization, they are also disciplined and authoritative acceptance workers (Hillman, 2014). This generation possesses a strong work ethic with a strong commitment to hierarchical organizations. The traditionalists do not understand workers who do not sacrifice to improve the organization. Similarly, they do not understand other generations who opt to take the easy road up the corporate ladder (Omana, 2016). Traditionalists disengage with senior managers and coworkers if there is no respect for their wealth of experience or historical knowledge (Hansen & Leuty, 2012). Traditionalists are likely to follow rules, policies, procedures, and guidelines as a way to conduct business (Hillman, 2014). They place more importance on education as a way to get ahead and less emphasis on work-life balance.

Traditionalists are inclined to continue working for an organization until they retire or the organization downsizes (Hansen & Leuty, 2012). Traditionalists perform the same task for years; they do not complain and are thankful to have jobs (Hillman, 2014). Traditionalists exhibit the approach of "climb the ladder to pay your dues" (Lieber, 2010, p. 88).

Baby Boomers are individuals born between 1946 and 1964 (Stark & Farner, 2015). This generational cohort is dominant in the workforce, in part, due to working beyond retirement eligibility years (Stanley, Vandenberghe, Vandenberg, & Bentein, 2013). Although this generation is eligible to retire, they are reluctant to grow old. The Baby Boomers remain in the workforce for economic reasons due to college-age children

remaining or returning to the home as well as adult children returning home to live after from being on their own in the workforce (Boveda & Metz, 2016). These reasons are partly why Baby Boomers are working beyond retirement eligibility years (Stanley et al., 2013). Beyond economic reasons, social, mental, and physical health are significant reasons why Baby Boomers remain working. Additionally, Baby Boomers delay retirement because of loneliness when home alone and the belief that they are needed in the workplace (Hansen & Leuty, 2012).

Whereas Baby Boomers' beliefs are shaped by family and friends, they are also the generation that grew up and see the deterioration of the traditional family as divorce becomes popular (Fingerman, Pillemer, Silverstein, & Suitor, 2012). Mothers who work out of the home lead to an increase in divorces. Moreover, Baby Boomers focus on the mission of the organization, and they prefer meetings to discuss work matters, rather than individual settings.

Baby Boomers believe in money, title, and recognition and are loyal team members (Hansen & Leuty, 2012). They are self-indulgent and judgmental, and they are a generation of sharing workers (Srinivasan, 2012). Baby Boomers prefer face-to-face interaction, and they are concerned that growing technology will remove the ability for face-to-face interactions (Hansen & Leuty, 2012). This generational cohort grew up focusing on themselves with a belief in personal gratification (Williamson, 2013). Although forced to conform, they are also labeled as rebels (Hansen & Leuty, 2012).

Parents of Baby Boomers tend to follow rules. In contrast, Baby Boomers tend to challenge rules. Baby Boomers believe that rules have exceptions (Benson & Brown, 2011). Baby Boomers also believe that getting the job done requires paying their dues (Williamson, 2013). However, Baby Boomers enjoy learning and taking on new

responsibilities. They exhibit the live-to-work approach (Lieber, 2010).

Generation Xers are individuals born between 1965 and 1979 (Stark, & Farner, 2015). Their beliefs are shaped primarily by television and world events. Generation Xers are loyal to their supervisors and not only exceed expectations but also deliver results. Generation Xers focus on achieving results while demanding work-life balance (Stark & Farner, 2015). This generational cohort is also referred to as the sandwich generation; they may have feelings of inferiority, insecurity, ambivalence, and economic instability because they are told that they will never do as well as their parents (Woodward et al., 2015). The Generation X cohort is money conscious. They view education as a means to an end; as mentioned, work-life balance is important. Whereas the communication style is informal and sometimes abrupt, they crave feedback to determine how they perform. Generation Xers are individuals who want to change rules (Hansen & Leuty, 2012).

This generational cohort has a spirit of mentoring and entrepreneurship (Woodward et al., 2015). This generation refutes the notion of being lazy, disloyal, and unwilling to sacrifice for their families and freedoms (Wiedmer, 2015). They are doubtful of hierarchal organizational structures. This means that, when in doubt, they are not afraid to ask questions of people higher up the chain of command (Wiedmer, 2015). Generation X members exhibit the work-to-live approach (Lieber, 2010).

Millennials (Generation Y) are individuals born between 1981 and 2000 (Huppke, 2013). This generation identify with names of nexters, millennials, echo boomers, net generation, and the recession generation (Nightingale, 2012). The most popular name, however, is Millennials (Huppke, 2013). Like the Generation X cohort, the Millennial cohort's beliefs are also shaped by television and world events. Education is a huge

expense, and, like Generation Xers, work-life balance is important. Like Generation

Xers, they have workplace values, need meaningful work to accomplish goals, and

require continuous feedback.

The U.S. Census Bureau (2012) personnel estimated that Millennials make up the

largest generation in the history of the U.S. workforce (Nightingale, 2012). This

generation includes employees just out of high school, recent college graduates, and

employees who have been working in the workforce for a short period of time. This

generational cohort has ranges of skills, knowledge, and experiences (Watty-Benjamin &

Udechukwu, 2014). They desire opportunities and challenges for constant growth

(Hillman, 2014); they are leaders or will become leaders in the federal government.

Unlike the Traditionalists who follow rules, the Baby Boomers who challenge rules, and

the Generation Xers who change the rules, Millennials create rules for themselves

(Hansen & Leuty, 2012).

Millennials aspire to make an immediate impact in the workforce (Myers &

Sadaghiani, 2010). They are accustomed to constant change and, therefore, take risks.

Millennials are individuals who are highly recruited for their technology savvy and

multitasking abilities (Woods, 2016).

Parents of this generation are very compassionate, appreciative, and protective.

Such behaviors result in an extremely confident workforce (Hansen & Leuty, 2012). The

positive impact made by the Millennials in the federal government force managers to

challenge members of the other generations (Benson & Brown, 2011). Millennials

believe that they can master a job requirement more quickly than previous generations

(Woods, 2016). Millennials exhibit the work-to-contribute approach (Lieber, 2010).

Federal Workplace Managerial Levels

From Traditionalists to Millennials, managers represent the face of the organization (Nelson & Svara, 2015). At least three designated levels of managers face the challenge of understanding employees' perceptions of their effectiveness as managers. Senior leaders, managers, and supervisors represent the three levels of management within the federal government (U.S. OPM, 2015).

Senior leaders in the federal government are referred to as senior executive service, senior level, or scientific of professional members and are charged with leading the federal government workforce (U.S. OPM, 2015). These leaders are selected for their broad knowledge, perspective, and expertise of the federal government and public service. Senior leaders hold key positions of lower ranking professionals to top presidential appointees as the primary conduit between the presidential appointees and the rest of the federal workforce (U.S. OPM, 2015).

Managers in the federal government are responsible for the high-level success of a department or division. Those in management positions typically supervise one or more supervisors (U.S.OPM, 2015). The managers are responsible for providing guidance, planning goals, and directing employees to achieve mission readiness, thereby, ensuring overall department success (U.S. OPM, 2015). Managers must understand the general objectives of a department or division to articulate the mission to their subordinates.

Supervisors in the federal government are the first-line level supervisors responsible for overseeing groups of employees for day-to-day operations (Nygard et al., 2013). This level of supervision requires that the employees report directly to supervisors on all matters of work performance. Supervisors do not supervise other supervisors; typically, these supervisors are responsible for administrative actions such as employees' performance appraisals and leave approval. Supervisors assign, realign, or modify

workload and take corrective action to resolve employee challenges only after engaging with managers. Challenges from employees are due to supervisors' lack of knowledge regarding higher level organizational issues and concerns. The supervisors have the least amount of authority in the government hierarchy.

Federal Government Employment Categories

Federal government work is designated by employment categories. Specific employment categories include a particular tenure and appointment type based on the authority that established each type of employment (U.S. OPM, 2015). Accordingly, these categories of employees carry different characteristics. The following six types of employment categories exist in the federal government to distinguish appointment types: permanent (employed with no end date), full time (employed for a 40-hour workweek), full-time nonseasonal (employed for a 40-hour workweek), full-time permanent (employed for 40-hour workweek with no end date), and nonseasonal full-time permanent (employees who work a 40-hour workweek throughout the year with no end date; U.S. OPM, 2015).

The federal government employees' occupational categories of administrative, professional, technical, clerical, blue-collar workers, and white-collar workers identify skill sets and basic knowledge requirements of the position (U.S. OPM, 2015). The federal government system classifies jobs based on the following four systems of pay scales: the General Schedule (GS), the Federal Wage System (FWS), the Law Enforcement Officers (LEO), and Senior Executive Service ("Law Enforcement Pay Scale," 2016). Federal workers hold positions at various levels based on these pay scales. Education and experience also dictate the pay scales. The education levels of federal workers range from high school diplomas to doctoral degrees. Employee's education

levels, in some cases, equate to the grade levels on the federal pay scales (U.S. OPM, 2015).

The white-collar workers are those working in the GS scale, which begins with Grade 1 and continues through Grade 15 (U.S. OPM, 2015). Positions ranging from Grade Levels 1 to 4 are entry-level positions. The GS Grade Level 1 position does not require a high school diploma; however, a high school diploma is required at the GS Grade Level 3 and above.

An associate's degree is required to obtain a position at the GS Grade Level 4 ("Law Enforcement Pay Scale," 2016). Additionally, most positions that require a bachelor's degree range in GS Grade Levels 5 to 7 or equivalent experience. The journeyman position at the GS Grade Levels 9 to 12 require a masters' degree or equivalent experience. Federal workers who hold positions at the expert level range from GS Grades 13 to 15. Most supervisors or managers hold positions at GS Grade Levels 13 through 15 (U.S. OPM, 2015).

The blue-collar workers or FWS-covered federal employees are appropriate-funded and non-appropriate-funded, blue-collar employees (U.S. OPM, 2015). These employees receive hourly pay. This is to ensure that federal trade, craft, and laboring employees within a local wage area perform the same duties and receive the same rate of pay. The FWS includes 132 appropriate-funded and 118 non-appropriate-funded, local wage areas.

LEO employees maintain law and public order for worldwide federal organizations. The LEO workers' pay scale determines the job and the pay-grade step ("Federal Law Enforcement," 2016). In the federal government, over 130 organizations across the federal department within the United States and overseas are hired as law

enforcement officers, police, special agents, and investigators ("Federal Law Enforcement," 2016).

Organizational Leadership

For more than 50 years, studies were conducted to identify how managers improved the performance of organizations (Woodward et al., 2015). Although numerous studies were conducted, researchers continue to ask the question of why some managers are more effective than others (Woodward et al., 2015). According to DuBrin (2012), leadership from 50 years ago has morphed into a different meaning for leadership today. The increasingly complex technical and technological challenges require new processes and perspectives found outside of the existing knowledge base of the organization. DuBrin pointed out that future leadership skills will place an emphasis on soft skills such as building relationships and collaboration of individual and group competencies.

Jung and Lee (2016) underscored the importance of leaders understanding employees' perceptions of status quo behavior. Leaders' roles and leadership styles often influence organizational processes and choices that set values and policies. Senior leaders and managers are crucial drivers for policy implementation within the bureaucratic system. Moreover, bureaucratic systems govern what people do within the organization (Jung & Lee, 2016).

For the first time in history, the federal workforce is composed of a demographic of different generations who work alongside one another. There is no single management practice perspective to lead the four generations of federal workers successfully. A significant shift in the federal workforce demographics is occurring (Woodward et al., 2015). Managers are changing their leadership styles from the aging workforce to the

generational workforce but without an understanding of how to manage the four generations (Cekada, 2012). Federal workers of Traditionalist and Baby Boomer generations are working alongside Generation Xers and Millennials who are managers but young enough to be their children; the Traditionalist and Baby Boomers are old enough to be their parents. This mixing of generations has become ordinary for the federal workforce of today (Burch & Strawderman, 2014). Multiple researchers have shown how managers of organizations could leverage management practices that foster an understanding of generational differences in the workforce (Costanza & Finkelstein, 2015).

     Scholars made a clear distinction of contrasting leadership functions, behaviors, and styles (Kaiser, McGinnis, & Overfield, 2012). Dubin (1979), one of the first modern scholars, explicated the differences between leadership in an organization and leadership of an organization. As pointed out by Dubin (1979), interpersonal and face-to-face relationships are referenced as leadership in an organization. Solving organizational problems is leadership of an organization. Further, Dubin (1979) found that the one generalization of leadership with which most agree was that leaders in the organization have power. Additionally, a growing number of scholars distinguish two domains of leadership (Kaiser et al., 2012). These two domains of *the how versus the what* contribute uniquely to the impact leaders have on the effectiveness of the organization. Scholars with differences of views in leadership and domains argue the influence leaders have on these two domains. That being said, Kaiser and Overfield (2010) suggested that the simplicity of the complexity indicate that leadership's value chain is not simple. What mattered most is the overall effectiveness at the organization level; that is, there is sustainability in the performance of the organization. A deeper knowledge and

understanding of employees' views among the four generations of organizational demands, expectations, and beliefs in the federal workplace are essential for effective leadership and work accomplishment within the federal government (Srinivasan, 2012).

As Ashforth, Schinoff, and Rogers (2014) pointed out, effective managers shape the organization through vision, interpersonal skills, technical abilities, and personal identification, thus, delivering results. In addition, personal identification is necessary to measure the impact of the effectiveness of the organization. High levels of fit between organizational climate and people's preferences have positive impacts on the individual and the organization (Ashforth et al., 2014). Moreover, Hur, Van den Berg, and Wilderom (2011) suggested that a manager's style influences the effectiveness of the leader; effective leadership practices arise from a leader's focus on self, employees, and the organization (Kim, Kolb, & Kim, 2012). Concurrently, the U.S. GAO (2015) suggested that ineffective leadership creates challenges that negatively affect federal agency's productivity, resulting in the inability to meet mission goals. To manage four generations appropriately in the workplace, managers must recognize the differences by understanding their perceptions of management practices in the workplace.

As postulated by Hannam and Yordi (2011), once managers understand the employees' perceptions, they can build collaborative, interactive teams of generations and manage challenges that arise. At the same time, Bourne's (2015) review of current literature on leadership styles suggested that generational differences are central in determining if a leadership style is preferred more by a particular generation and how this preference affects organizational success. Through structured interviews of individuals from the various generations, Bourne determined differences and similarities in leadership styles of the generations. Eastman and Liu (2012) stated that, by

understanding generational differences and perceptions, managers can significantly improve the interaction among employees of different generations. Balda and Mora (2012) claimed that the generational cohorts share traditional work values. However, the generations differ on their views of the role of managers.

An essential element to the success of an organization is leadership and, in particular, effective leadership (Sadeghi & Pihie, 2012). The bottom line of management and leadership is the record of accomplishment for having a fruitful organization. From the perspective of Ashforth et al. (2014), managers and leaders are evaluated based on their contributions to organizational outcomes. From the viewpoint of Phipps, Prieto, and Ndinguri (2013), growth and development of effective managers are vital for an effective organization. Managers learn by experimentation about the opportunities and limitations of their roles and, therefore, are the first to acknowledge and accept the uniqueness of generational differences (Nelson & Svara, 2015). As explained by Omana (2016), the most efficient way to manage generational differences in the workplace is to understand the challenges of conflict between generational relationships and to improve the perception of managerial effectiveness. Semeijn, Van Der Heijden, and Van Der Lee (2014) submitted that managerial effectiveness evaluations occur at every level based on individual perception. The skills required to be effective managers are to recognize and understand behavior, attitudes, and views of the workforce (Rao, Rao, Sarkar, Mishra, & Anwer, 2013). These skills integrate employees' and managements' views, leading to an effective organization (Kaiser et al., 2012).

The federal government delegates managers at the three levels to shape the effectiveness of the organizations (Otara, 2011). It is critical for federal managers to create an environment to foster understanding of the perceptions among the four

generations (Burch & Strawderman, 2014). Research has shown that managers have considered devoting time and resources to understanding the demographic shift occurring in the workforce. Managers have learned to take advantage of the unique traits to overcome challenges of the demographic shift.

Since January 2011 and continuing through 2030, the most challenging issue facing managers is the transfer of knowledge from retirees to the generations remaining in the government (Costanza & Finkelstein, 2015). Managers who do not seek to understand the generational differences risk losing employees and resources (Bermiss & Greenbaum, 2016). Managers perceive that the multigenerational workforce create an unprecedented stress on work relations (Costanza & Finkelstein, 2015). A study that examined managers' reactions to hypothetical workplace situations determined that managers generally perceived the Traditionalist and Baby Boomer workers as less flexible and more resistant to change than the Generation Xers and Millennials (Capelli & Novelli, 2011). Failure to understand generational differences may cause misunderstandings and mixed signals (Dokadia, Rai, & Chawla, 2015). Once managers understand the differences, they will institute a thorough process to manage generation differences, moving toward an effective organization (Hannam & Yordi, 2011).

Managers and leaders influence society based on the generational cohort (Ahmad & Ibrahim, 2015). Tension in the workplace that occurs between supervisors and subordinates regarding generational differences is attributed to a lack of managers' understanding of generational differences (Deal, Altman, & Rogelberg, 2010). Individual preferences among the generations make managers uneasy when managing the differences. Before the leaders can manage the differences, they must first understand the differences of each generation. Generational employees who believe they are valued

and respected yield trust and respect to managers by working harder to reach greater challenges (Muller et al., 2012).

The federal government needs to create and nurture long-term relationships between managers and employees that are built on trust (Ascencio & Mujkic, 2016). Trust develops in the organization when managers and employees act only with integrity. However, organizational leaders need to be successful in fostering organizational effectiveness to obtain a level of trust (Ascencio & Mujkic, 2016).

Managers who understand generational differences add to the success of the organization. That said, managers who are sensitive to generational differences can leverage employee productivity, creating a model of shared vision of positive relationships. Generationally savvy managers view generational differences as an asset. Understanding these differences in the workplace is essential. Researchers determined that criticism or implicit assumptions are the root causes of generational misunderstandings (Linz et al., 2015). Articulation of differences among the four generations benefits the different perspectives. Generationally savvy managers who learn critical factors of each generation can better understand multigenerational differences. These managers place their preconceived ideas and stereotypes aside to be open-minded about each generation's value (Linz et al., 2015).

Challenges in Managing a Four-Generation Workforce

Managers face the issue of understanding of how to lead a multigenerational workforce in an effective manner (Lester et al., 2012). Indeed, they experience challenges with the integration of four generations in the workplace and the additional challenge of how each person from each generation views managerial practices in the federal government (Hansen & Leuty, 2012). According to typical popular literature of

generation stereotypes, American Association of Retired Persons (2011) indicated that generations have varying perspectives on workplace issues that lead to conflict, frustrations, and misunderstandings (see Table 1).

Table 1

Workplace Characteristics of Four Generations

Characteristic	Traditionalists	Baby Boomers	Generation Xers	Millennials
Outlook	Practical	Optimistic	Skeptical	Hopeful
Work ethic	Dedicated	Driven	Balanced	Ambitious
View authority of	Respectful	Love-Hate	Unimpressed	Relaxed
Leadership by	Hierarchy	Consensus	Competence	Achievement
Relationships	Self-sacrifice	Personal gratification	Reluctance to commit	Loyal
Perspective	Civic-minded	Team-oriented	Self-reliant	Civic-minded
Turnoffs	Vulgarity	Political incorrectness	Clichés	Condescension

These barriers pose concerns for those in managerial positions because each manager must understand how each of the four generations views their management practices in order to characterize work values (Hansen & Leuty, 2012). Managers who are sensitive to the views of employees among the four generations must reinforce a positive viewpoint or change a negative view (Otara, 2011).

There is a meaningful contribution in comparing employees' views of management practices among the four generations in the federal workforce (Lester et al., 2012). Managers often have a central focus on improving employees' views in order to achieve strategic and operational goals (Noruzi & Rahimi, 2010). In consequence, managers must be attentive to the differences and relations among each generation to

ensure the impact the organization's performance and outcomes are positive. Managers must acknowledge critical differences in characteristics among each generation and their perceptions of management practices.

There is a shift in organizational behaviors that is critical to the effectiveness of an organization (Kataria et al., 2013). Management requires employees to perform at the peak level of their potential; however, it is a two-way process (Noruzi & Rahimi, 2010). Efforts are needed on the part of the managers in the organization to develop employees to succeed at work. Organizational climate has a significant influence on organizational effectiveness (Kataria et al., 2013).

Managerial actions affect employees' views (Noruzi & Rahimi, 2010). These managerial practices are likely to have different performance expectations in the workplace. As such, the multigenerational workforce has its unique perspective on how it views work (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011). These perceptions create challenges for managers who must understand and support the four generational views (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011). The multigenerational differences in views and perspectives create a climate for conflict and create barriers with an employee versus manager mentality, resulting in high employee turnover and decreased productivity. Multigenerational conflicts create negative influence in the workplace. Such conflicts also cause conflicts among each generation as well as within each generation (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011). A loss of valuable work and negative influences consequently create more misunderstanding among managers (Kilber, Barclay, & Ohmer, 2014). Managers' lack of understanding of the multigenerational views adds to the generational confusion affecting the organizations' effectiveness (Wronka-Pospiech, 2016). Finding effective ways to mitigate misconceptions among managers and the four generations is essential to

meet the needs of the organization (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011). Negative influences result in loss of valuable workforce members and, consequently, create more misunderstanding among managers and the four generations (Woods, 2016). To minimize conflicts and maximize organizational effectiveness, managers are required to understand how each generation views management practices (Shultz, 2010).

Managers must devote resources to addressing motivation triggers of the generational cohorts (Shultz, 2010). Whereas each generational cohort is unique, characteristics of generational preferences are important to each member (Ahmad & Ibrahim, 2015). Understanding these differences are accomplished through the education and training of each cohort characteristics and views of management practices. Managers can specifically address the differences in each of the four generations by including them in workplace decisions. Given the dynamics of the four generations in the federal workplace and the views of each generation, organizations must adapt and change their practices to accommodate the diversity of the generations.

Different perceptions or work climates influence behaviors within an organization (Bonesso, Gerli, & Scapolan (2014). Organizational work climate is the shared perceptions of beliefs, goals, policies, and practices (Simha & Cullen, 2012). Managers can avoid the impact of negative employees' views by understanding the work climate of the organization (Simha & Cullen, 2012).

A guardian or parental upbringing influences employees' views among the four generations (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010). Worldviews brought to the workplace are based on generational upbringing (Shragay & Tziner, 2011). Employees' views among the four generations' upbringing are influenced by a guardian or parental (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010). Traditionalists and Baby Boomers view rules as hierarchical;

however, Generation Xers and Millennials do not (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010). Leaders at all levels can use this information to manage expectations of the generations.

Managers narrowing the gap between generational cohorts increase management understanding, thereby, improving organizational effectiveness (Colbert, Yee, & George, 2016). Reducing these gaps is essential to understanding reasons for employees' views among the four generations (Dixon et al., 2013). As such, managers bridge the gap between different generational cohorts to improve organizational effectiveness of divergent employee views and values. This creates an effective environment for managers, employees, and the organization (Colbert et al., 2016). Managers can leverage practices to foster employee perceptions of management practices (Bonesso et al., 2014).

Federal Workforce

Researchers concluded that generational backgrounds influence generational perceptions of the workforce (Fullerton & Dixon, 2010). As pointed out by Hansen and Leuty (2012), through the lenses of the four generations, the federal workforce dramatically shifted in cultural changes of values and belief. This means that generational diversity was fluid throughout the workforce (Abel-Lanier, 2016). Interestingly, the Success Factors study showed that 34% of executives were prepared to lead a diverse workforce (Abel-Lanier, 2016). Therefore, executives who were ill-prepared were ineffective in driving the organization to success (Abel-Lanier, 2016).

Researchers determined that four generations are now working side-by-side in the same organization (DelCampo, Haney, Haggerty, & Knippel, 2012). According to Hannam and Yordi (2011), the side-by-side generational working relationship is due to the generational cohorts' diverse backgrounds. As pointed out by Fullerton and Dixon (2010), managers must effectively manage the growing and evolving workforce of the

four generations. Cannon and Broach (2011) found that four generations in the federal workplace affected the organization's environment whether the effects were by beliefs, perceptions, or attitudes of each generation. That said, managers are challenged to understand the differences in each generational cohort to manage the workforce better (Hannam & Yordi, 2011).

In addition, there is an increase of generations in the workforce who are more technologically savvy than other generations in the workforce, causing conflict for managers to manage (Eastman & Liu, 2012). According to Hannam and Yordi (2011), the presence of a multigenerational workforce and the differences in each generational cohort require managers to utilize their experiences and their organization mission to develop strategies to support organizational effectiveness. Further, managers should understand that each generation has its unique worldviews, priorities, motivations, expectations, and perceptions of the federal workforce (Hannam & Yordi, 2011). As suggested by Hannam and Yordi, managers who understand how to succeed in separating generational differences are successful in leading an effective organization.

At this juncture, it is beneficial to point out that, as a result of the plummeting economy, two generations of federal workers are not retiring as predicted (Hansen & Leuty, 2012). Delay of retirement attribute to cutbacks, layoffs, and massive losses of retirement savings (Harter, Schmidt, Asplund, Killham, & Agrawal, 2010). The generations in which each cohort belong affect attitudes and behaviors in the workplace and shape their expectations of managers (Hannam & Yordi, 2011). As such, generational differences often lead to misunderstandings and, ultimately, affect perceptions resulting in workplace conflict (Comperatore & Nerone, 2011). Federal managers need to recognize generational differences and conflicts to understand and

reduce major confrontations and misunderstandings in the workplace better. According to Eastman and Liu (2012), managers who identify and understand the perceptions of each generation improve the relationship between each of the generations.

The U.S.OPM (2015) assessment rating tool allowed workers to assess program evaluation. The FEVS results identified that the best places included those places that valued management factors such as strategic management, teamwork, leadership, performance culture, training and development, work-life balance, management, and diversity. The limited indication from the performance assessment measures provided evidence that the aforementioned performance measures to which leaders would pay attention did align to some extent with the employees' views of management practices among the four generations in the workplace. Age variation was associated with particular life stage and maturity. Organizations understand the challenges associated with managing, communication, and motivating; however, they have been slow to address multigenerations (Schultz, 2010).

Generational Cohort Studies

Researchers suggested there were variations of birth years known as generations (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011). Lyons, Schweitzer, Ng, and Kuron (2012) examined the career patterns of four generational cohorts in the workforce. They further examined a traditional career model of long-term, upward career movement against a modern career model characterized by increased job mobility, organizational mobility, and multidirectional career movement in an effort to determine if there was a shift in career models. Younger generational cohorts tended to change jobs at a greater rate than previous generations. Previous generations were also more willing to accept nonupward career moves (Lyons et al., 2012). Historically, young people were recruited, trained,

and built careers with the same company as they ascended through the hierarchy (Lyons et al., 2012). However, this is no longer the career model. Lyons et al. suggested that long-term developmental opportunities are no longer a desire by the younger generations in the workforce today.

Ahmad and Ibrahim (2015) suggested that 21st-century challenges have expanded the need for leaders to adjust their approaches to diverse workforce co-ordination. The focus of competition has changed from contending to get a vast number of customers to pooling the current workforce knowledge for sustainment of the organization over a period of time. Ahmad and Ibrahim found that a pressing issue in organizations is the demographic shift on leadership associated with generational cohorts. The workforce encompassed generational cohorts of differing life experiences, career stages, and work experiences (Ahmad & Ibrahim, 2015). Managers who can better understand employees' differences can provide senior leaders with the tools to retain the best employees. Moreover, managers cannot expect loyalty from employees without recognizing generational differences in each cohort.

Twenge et al. (2015) examined birth or generational cohorts across time. The researchers found that generational cohort differences are stronger than time period effects. That being said, time lag studies captured period shifts and not just generational differences. For example, what is the Baby Boomer without musicians such as Bob Dylan or Jimi Hendrix (Twenge et al., 2015)? Likewise, what is the Millennial without technology; period effects such as widespread technology are intertwined with the generational identity of begin technologically savvy. Whereas these two effects are separate, it is likely to make less logic to do so. Generational change has close ties to cultural change. Moreover, the effects from the time period and cohort work together.

Hoole and Bonnema (2015) examined work engagement and the significance of meaningful work across generational cohorts. Work engagement, defined as an energetic connection between employees and their jobs, is an element of balance and resilience (de Beer, Rothmann, & Mostert, 2016). The researchers highlighted the consistency of work to make sense of the one-size-fits-all approach. Hoole and Bonnema suggested that, although age is a diversity factor to examine work engagement, a better understanding of generational cohorts is needed to design the correct strategy for effective organizations. Members of the generational cohort are born, educated, employed, and retired roughly during the same time period (Hoole & Bonnema, 2015). Similar to Twenge et al. (2015), Hoole and Bonnema agreed that experiences from generational cohorts influence thinking and attitudes and frequently affect behaviors. Moreover, each generational cohort displays specific characteristics and contributes to the workplace individually. Researchers suggested that managers should build work engagement and meaningful work strategies for each unique generational cohort (Hoole & Bonnema, 2015).

Boone-James, Mckechnie, and Swanberg (2011) explained that age should be a consideration when examining the employee's perception and value to the organization. As the workforce remained healthier and, therefore, worked longer, generational cohorts faced challenges of cultural differences in the workforce. Managers who expressed concerns of well-being of employees of all ages expected to be rewarded with reciprocal actions that benefited the organization (Boone-James et al., 2011).

Gentry, Deal, Griggs, Mondore, and Cox (2011) determined that generational cohorts represent events in the development time periods. For example, traditionalists' generational cohort, also known as the silent generation, represents World War II. Baby Boomers' generational cohort represents the increase in births following World War II.

Generation Xers represent the books written about them. Generation Y represents the last generation born in the 20th century (Gentry et al., 2011). Researchers on generational cohorts suggested that managerial practices, human resource management practices, and development strategies should take into consideration each generational cohort's differences. Differences across generations in the area of career management is understandable given the influence that career management had on the generational cohort of Millennials early in their careers as opposed to the influence that career management had on the generational cohort of Baby Boomers late in their careers (Gentry et al., 2011). Moreover, failing to account for differences among generational cohorts led to confusion, misunderstanding, and miscommunication (Gentry et al., 2011).

Researchers discussed for years whether generations should be identified by a surrounding event or an experience (Cutler, 2015). Cutler (2015) examined the differences between generation and cohort. Further, generational cohorts are identified by demographic data and multiple social and cultural events. Cutler defined cohort as a statistical concept of persons being born in a particular time period. Additionally, generation refers to shared experiences of a group of people born in an identifiable time frame (Cutler, 2015).

Researchers suggested there was no definitive answer on generations and cohorts since beginning and ending years because there have been multiple generational defining events. Cutler (2015) suggested that each generational cohort spans over 20 years and varies based on historical events and life cycle. Similarly, Lee and Coleman (2014) suggested that life cycle represented the chronological amount of time elapsed from birth. Each cohort group had a distinct life cycle and life phase biography. Moreover, generational cohorts navigate through four life phases in a lifecycle. Lee and Coleman

further explained that generational effects denote experiences, whereas period effects denote influences from people regardless of age.

Studies Utilizing the FEVS

Researchers use the FEVS as a means to gauge the pulse of the federal workforce and to evaluate whether federal agencies are meeting the desires of a successful organization (U.S. OPM, 2015). The straightforward implications from the survey indicators are critical in developing policy to improve agency performance. Goldenkoff (2015), a practitioner using the FEVS, suggested that the drive to improve performance and accountability of federal agencies elevates the significance for using the survey. This tool measures federal employees' attitudes, and the results from this tool could improve the effectiveness within organizations (Goldenkoff, 2015). Practitioners need to understand the strengths and limitations of the survey when utilizing the survey in efforts to improve management within the federal workforce. He further explained that the FEVS is the key to progress in strengthening the relationship of management levels and federal employees. Agencies that experienced success in changing the culture of the organization saw results after at least 3 years of efforts and surveying using the FEVS. This time period attributed to those drivers that were manifested over this period of time (Goldenkoff, 2015). Goldenkoff advised that ongoing dialogue with managers assist with refinement of the future use of the tool.

Additionally, Lee (2015) suggested that the U.S. OPM (2015) uses FEVS public data set to drive policy decisions with the current administration. Moreover, the FEVS is a tool that assists agencies in understanding the needs of employee populations to improve organizational performance. Whereas the U.S. OPM uses the tool to collect demographic, economic, and workforce statistic, the tool is more beneficial to balance the

demands for a strategic data implementation plan (Lee, 2015). One of the strengths of the survey is the ability to trend changes over time. The researchers who used the FEVS to identify journal articles in the public administration literature reviews found it gratifying. Although limitations of the survey include resources, logistic constraints, and public law, improvements to utility and quality of the data continue with the redesign of stratification and representation of employee feedback. Lee suggested that federal employees' responses indicate a remarkable degree of differentiability in the Likert-scale items in the FEVS. Finally, Lee argued that greater use of the FEVS public data set is invaluable for planning the workforce of the future.

According to Fernandez, Resh, Moldogaziev, and Oberfield (2015), surveys of federal government employees were conducted regarding their jobs for decades. These researchers stated that the surveys assessed employee perceptions and attitudes regarding performance in the workplace, organizational policies, coworkers and managers, and working conditions. Moreover, the FEVS responses are a barometer of organizational climate that serves as trends within the federal bureaucracy to external and internal stakeholders. Additionally, public management researchers use this survey to produce peer-reviewed articles and other publications to measure critical concepts and to understand organizational phenomena of leadership styles, approaches, and performance management practices. Fernandez et al. focused on two constructs of diversity management and employee empowerment to advance public management and theory using the FEVS. Although not the intended use of the FEVS, researchers use the data to examine central public management and governance of academia inquiries.

Fernandez et al. (2015) explained the opportunities and limitations of using the FEVS as an appealing source for empirical studies of public management and

organization. Strengths of the survey include representativeness, generalizability, the breadth and depth of management concepts, and degree of dependent and independent variables of interest to researchers. Whereas it is possible to aggregate data, a limitation within the FEVS is the shortcoming of the public data set to track subsamples of unique identifiers across time. Similar to Lee (2015), Fernandez et al. suggested that key phrases in the survey help aggregate search results for published articles and journals.

Callahan (2015) suggested the FEVS is the most powerful measurement instrument available to federal managers to improve the performance of the organization. As much as 10 years ago, very few federal managers were concerned with the federal employees' perceptions. The federal employees' perceptions are more important now than ever because employees' views are reflective of critical organizational outcomes. Further, this tool is powerful because of the 10-year collection of data that examined trends and comparisons of employee commitment and satisfaction in the workplace. The FEVS yields research that is more arduous. As such, the tool yields value in topics of appreciation, communication, trust, and perception of performance at all levels (i.e., individual, work unit, and organization).

Wynen and Op de Beeck (2014) examined the impact of turnover intention of employees within the federal government using the FEVS. Organizational factors may explain turnover behavior. Organizational factors of job characteristics, personnel policies, or work environment were a component of the main predictors of turnover intention. Wynen and Op de Beeck examined three determinants of turnover intentions, including external environmental factors, individual demographic and personal characteristics, and organizational and work-related elements. The researchers used FEVS data to examine the effects of financial and economic variables as related to

turnover intention within the federal government. The FEVS data provided a better empirical understanding of turnover in the public sector while taking exploring effects of the financial and economic crisis. A limitation of the study was the FEVS tracking of movement within the career path from private to federal government careers.

Organizational Effectiveness

According to Poksinska, Swartling, and Drotz (2013), organizational effectiveness is complex, controversial, and difficult to intellectualize. On the other hand, Schultz (2010) suggested that, although some organizations may understand challenges associated with managing, communicating, and motivating the workforce, they were slow to manage the perceptions that varied among the multigenerational workforce. Critical to the effectiveness of any organization is an effective leader with fully engaged followers (Sadeghi & Pihie, 2012). As such, fully engaged followers enhance positive work performance (Sadeghi & Pihie, 2012). Leaders shape the effectiveness of the organization; however, there is less of a willingness to assume significant roles to get the job done effectively (Murphy & Clark, 2016). Great leaders not only want to be in a position to lead, but also they have a high need for having power to have followers engaged (Woodward et al., 2015).

Woods (2016) defined organizational effectiveness as the measure of how successful an organization is in meetings or exceeding its vision and mission. Further, the ability to innovate effectively while focusing on core business practices impact the generational cohorts in the workplace. Organizational acumen is the power to distinguish truth achieved through experiences learned through trial and error. Organizational concerns now rest with the manager's ability to select the right managerial technique that addresses the concerns while, simultaneously, achieving organizational effectiveness

(Woods, 2016).

Guillaume, Dawson, Woods, Sacramento, and West (2013) pointed out that workplace diversity brings effectiveness to the organization. However, Avery and McKay (2010) shared the idea that diversity allows generations to embrace their uniqueness, therefore, rendering the organization as a more effective one for all employees and managers. According to Nelson and Svara (2015), the federal workforce generational diversity adds depth, breadth, and scope to an organization, but, in contrast, generational diversity can lead to a less favorable outcome if obstacles impede the attainment of broader organizational goals and results. To eliminate the barriers, Strom et al. (2014) suggested that organizational leaders must focus on promoting an environment that keeps employees inspired and confident about their jobs and the organization as a whole.

Effective organizations contribute to a positive, psychological climate. A psychological climate within the organization creates favorable conditions where individuals are more likely to invest greater energy, time, and effort (Wang & Ma, 2013). Kataria et al. (2013) contended that work engagement and positive psychological constructs are factors in which employees are emotionally and physically dedicated, enthusiastic, and energized toward the fulfillment of the organization's goal. Further, Kataria et al. found that work engagement is an essential element in enriching the effectiveness of an organization.

Leadership. Managers have become increasingly concerned with employees' views and positive organizational practices (Cameron, Mora, Leutscher, & Calarco, 2011). Leadership aims to establish meaningful goals to achieve the mission of the organization (Cavazotte, Moreno, & Hickmann, 2012). Accordingly, leaders must be

clear to communicate the mission, vision, and goals for the organization to be successful (Cavazotte et al., 2012).

Although researchers frequently defined leadership in association with research interests, most current definitions of the term include the concept that leadership is a process of individual influences of another individual or group of individuals in their thoughts and behavior (van der Voet, Kuipers, & Groeneveld, 2016). Leadership studies in the 20th century were primarily focused on leadership effectiveness, and most leadership research can be grouped into the following categories of the trait approach: the behavioral approach, the situational approach, the contingency approach, and the relational approach (van der Voet et al., 2016). Researchers concluded that there is evidence that positive practice of employees' worldviews produces positive views of employees in the federal workplace (Hendricks & Cope, 2012). The ability for managers to enhance a positive viewpoint for their employees is profoundly associated with sustaining an effective organization (Kataria et al., 2013).

Leaders must fully embrace organizational challenges and accept responsibilities for managing those challenges (Kim et al., 2012). Although leaders inspire and influence the motivation of employees, leadership is an observable process and not a position, title, or privilege (Cavazotte et al., 2012). The essential principles of understanding oneself include integrity, competence, and role model, making the journey toward leadership a rewarding experience. Employees require less supervision as they become more productive and efficient while engaged and motivated to exceed expectations. Leaders work hard to build the culture of the organization to deliver results while managing the challenges of the organization (Kim et al., 2012).

Before positive change can take place, managers must understand the relationship

between generation identifiers of Traditionalist, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, and Millennials and their perceptions of managerial effectiveness in the federal government. Historically, organizations were determined successful based on the level of accomplishments concerning meeting mission expectations. According to Woodward et al. (2015), leaders encountered different challenges than now. Effectiveness of the managers and the organization is the balance between the strategic vision development and execution (Woods, 2016). Although managerial effectiveness seems complicated and difficult to define, effectiveness, as it pertains to an organization, links to efficiency concepts. As a result, managerial effectiveness, generally accepted, is the measurement of success when an organization is meeting or exceeding its vision and goals.

The limited indication from the performance assessment measures provides evidence that the aforementioned performance measures to which leaders pay attention align, to some extent, with the employees' views of management practices among the four generations in the workplace. Amiable manager-employee relationships between generation cohorts provide greater organizational commitment in the workplace. This commitment safeguards organizational stability, contributing to the overall well-being of the employee, the manager, and the organization (Bonesso et al., 2014). Manager-employee stresses alter the productive behavior of the multigenerational workforce as they respond to organization ineffectiveness. Understanding the impact of multigenerational perceptions among the generations is vital to the overall success of the organization. The stronger the degree of relationship among generations of positive management practices, the more substantial the managerial effectiveness between each generation. When this happens, management can count on committed, productive, and creative employees. The key to effectively managing the workforce of four generations

is for managers not to make decisions about employees using generational shortcuts to their characteristics but to measure critical individual differences (Costanza & Finkelstein, 2015).

Managers can benefit from learned strategies to understand better the employees' views of managerial practices among the four generations in the federal government. At any time when a federal employee departs an agency, the mission is impeded by the void that is present (Barford & Hester, 2011). Supervisors who understand the employees' views of management practices among the four generations can lead to an effective federal workforce (Lawton, Tasso, & De Aquino, 2015).

Managing a multigenerational workforce for an effective organization begins with recognizing employee differences. That is, acknowledging, communicating, and clarifying expectations; assuring expectations are consistent with work demands and generational values; and fostering a language that reflects shared values, beliefs, and common purposes in recognizing employee differences. Managers who create workplace choices provide opportunities, acknowledge choices, and focus on results. Generational-savvy managers use principles of situational leadership to build and sustain trust (Linz et al., 2015). Researchers asserted that these savvy managers learn about generational differences by understanding their perceptions of them and the needs of each generational cohort (Cogin, 2012). Managers using generational characteristics as strengths may nourish retention of employees. Managers must not only understand generational differences but also foster a collaboration of understanding among the four generations. They must become scholars of generational differences, ensuring that they understand each generation's contribution.

Employees. Employees perform best when organizations align with programs,

processes, and people (Williamson, 2013). Although exceptions exist to the generalized morals, values, motivation, and perceptions of the four generations of workers, there is also overlapping of those characteristics within the groups (Hansen & Leuty, 2012. Managers who recognize differences of employees' views better understand how best to supervise workers (Lyons & Kuron, 2014). Employees' views are interpreted experiences; they are the sensory experiences of the world around them through which they gain information about elements crucial for existence (Otara, 2011).

Habits form unconsciously (Joaquin & Park, 2013). Researchers found that habits of managers affect the employees' views of management practices in the organizations (Thompson, 2011). As such, researchers determined that employees who are Traditionalists do not prefer managers' leadership styles that are too touchy-feely, indecisive, disorganized, and concerned with making unpopular decisions (Thompson, 2011). Additionally, Baby Boomers do not prefer managers' leadership styles that are bureaucratic, closed-minded, abrupt, and sends messages of my-way-or-the-highway. Like Baby Boomers, employees who are Generation Xers do not prefer managers who are bureaucratic, but neither do they prefer micromanagers and conversationalists who devote more time on the process and less on results. Last, employees who are Millennials do not prefer managers who are cynical, condescending, and inconsistent and discount the value they bring to the workforce because of their ages (Thompson, 2011).

Employees' views of senior leaders, managers, supervisors, and employees shape the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of an organization (Otara, 2011). As such, employees' inherent worldviews affect the effectiveness of the organization. Employees' views have become an important factor for organizational effectiveness (Khan & Rashid, 2012). However, employees' viewpoints may be lost even with good intention from

managers if the employees' skills are ignored when shaping the organization (Otara, 2011). Employees' views are critical for managers to understand so that senior-level executives in the organization can effectively establish strategic governing principles to meet mission requirements (Wronka-Pospiech, 2016). Understanding the general differences enable managers to motivate their employees in supporting organizational goals and objectives (Pitts, Marvel, & Fernandez, 2011).

The culture of an organization can have an impact on a productive or destructive employee perception (Khan & Rashid, 2012). As pointed out by Brink, Zondag, and Crenshaw (2015), knowledge of cultural differences enhances work relationships and organizational effectiveness. Employees are more committed when they have input on decisions that affect their work requirements (Marrilli, 2011). No two views, experiences, or interpretations are exactly the same when a person reacts to external influences (Otara, 2011).

Employees' views among the four generations possess characteristics based on the time frame in which they were born; therefore, each generation has its views of what is an effective organization (Mencl & Lester, 2014). Employees with positive attitudes about the workforce are likely to engage in dialogue and display positive attitudes (Harter et al., 2010). Positive practices leading to positive change can be a best practice for effective organizational performances (Cameron et al., 2011).

Employees' views of management practices improve as each generation sees the organization (Shragay & Tziner, 2011). Managers' understanding of the differences in views that the employees have of their management practices can effectively supervise the multigenerational workforce (Lester et al., 2012). Achieving increased organizational effectiveness and positive employee perception is the result of managers who understand

the employees' organizational perceptions (Lester et al., 2012).

Generations. The current workforce is dominated by four distinct generations in the federal government (U.S. OPM, 2015). This section examines notable differences of each generational cohort. A heightened awareness of these generational differences provides an understanding of each generational perceptions, values, and beliefs.

With four generations working alongside one another, workplace challenges seem to occur based on the generational relationship of differences in perceptions of management practices (Brown, 2012). According to Nelson and Svara (2015), federal workplace employees share common goals in the workforce whether they are older, middle-aged, or younger. In comparison, an examination by Dixon et al. (2013) of commitment levels and generational characteristics (intergenerational and transgenerational) identified that generational differences influence behaviors, loyalty, and commitment. Intergenerational refers to leader-followers' development of the younger generation (North & Fiske, 2015). The generational differences pose a challenge because the older generation has all the knowledge. Pinto, da Silva Ramos, and Nunes (2015) suggested that an aging workforce leads to difficulties between the young and the old. Change in employees' demographics present unique challenges for managers in the workplace with four generations working together (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011). By comparison, Mannheim (1952) recognized that each generation inherits differences of values, beliefs, and perceptions based on chronological age.

Empirical research provides support that interpretation of historical events is responsible for the generational perception differences (Twenge et al., 2015). In essence, ideologies of each generation, their beliefs, values, and goals change as the generations evolve from one generation to the next (Wronka-Pospiech, 2016). The Traditionalist

cohort shared the ideology of paying dues and working hard, whereas the Baby Boomer cohort shared the ideology if you have, it flash it. Generation Xers share the ideology of whatever, whereas Millennials want to make this world a better place. In contrast, each of the four generations has been observed to share the same form of identity, work expectations, and ideologies (Lawton et al., 2015).

Kapoor and Solomon (2011) reported that generational differences affect every aspect of the workplace. Following that premise, another research by Shim and Rohrbaugh (2014) indicated that generational differences in the federal workplace challenge the difficulty of separating the effects of related, yet different, factors. These associated factors include age, period of time, and cohort. The unique variance attributed to these factors is also the uniqueness of being independent of each other. According to Zopiatis, Krambia-Kapardis, and Varnavas (2012), whereas age is an essential element that characterizes the differences in individuals, the meaning is relative to only the experiences of one's cohort and the historical events that define the generation. Fundamentally, Shim and Rohrbaugh explained that period variation attributes to a particular historical time period in which groups of individuals share experiences and shape the individual. Campbell, Campbell, Siedor, and Twenge (2015) emphasized that the younger generation can be influenced by the older generation. Conclusively, theses researchers agree that, as views change, so do the generation of individuals born in that time period. Therefore, according to Johnson, Mermin, and Resseger (2011), each generation has varying ethical views and expectations of managers in the federal workplace. Thus, each generation has views of what makes an effective organization (Andert, 2011).

The distance between two generations is routinely defined as 20 to 30 years and

can consist of three generations of the parent offspring and grandchildren coexisting in the same family group (Hansen & Leuty, 2012). As the generations move through the years, they change the meaning of social phenomenon for theirs and succeeding generations (Linz et al., 2015). Likewise, previous generations' values, beliefs, and attitudes are different. Values and beliefs result in a strong organization and good working relationships (Shragay & Tziner, 2011).

Each generational cohort has unique experiences that influence a variety of critical factors. Society-wide attitudes and changes in social, economic, and major events shape these experiences (Zopiatis et al., 2012). These shared experiences are the basis for cohorts' development of peer personalities or generational characteristics. Generational characteristics are generalizations; however, individual differences within each generation exist. Individual differences in acculturation strategies help managers to understand the perceptions and biases of each generation (Guillaume et al., 2013). Subsequently, generations interpret life experiences based on values, attitudes, preferences, and behaviors (Zopiatis et al., 2012). Further, these experiences influence every aspect of a generation's life day whether it is attitudes toward managers, authority, work-related needs, wants, or responsibility of the organization.

Summary

The literature review was organized with substantive areas of focus on (a) documentation, (b) theoretical framework, (c) federal workforce practitioner considerations, (d) organizational leadership (e) federal workforce, (f) organizational effectiveness, and (g) summary. The purpose of each theme was for the researcher to provide implications for senior managers to sustain a healthy and confident workforce. The purpose of the quantitative correlational study was to examine a synthesis of

relationships between generation identifier as Traditionalist, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, and Millennials and their perceptions of managerial effectiveness in the federal government. A better understanding of fundamental differences in employees' views among the four aforementioned generations in the federal government is necessary for an effective organization.

Generational differences represent a critical aspect of workplace diversity due to the growing numbers of young workers entering the workforce and the current workers remaining in the workforce. However, very little is known about how generational differences affect organizational effectiveness based on perceptions of management practices (Guillaume et al., 2013). Creating positive cultures of managerial effectiveness remains an unknown (Wortham, 2011). Last, there was little research about the relationship between employee generation identifier and employee views of managerial effectiveness (Joshi et al., 2011).

The specific research problem examined the relationship between generational cohort and cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness within the context of the federal workplace. It is believed that the outcome of this study could better equip managers in managing and leading a multigenerational workforce concerning the uniqueness of each generation. Understanding the effect of the employees' views from the four generations provides an opportunity for generations to share thoughts and insights that could remove biases that hinder working relationships (Taylor, 2014). To that end, the research further indicated that the relationship between employees and managers could be affected by traditional cultural values (Costanza et al., 2012).

Essentially, employees' views are their reality, and understanding the effects of the employees' views and the differences behind each generational view increase the

acceptance of agreements regarding the generational differences (Poksinska et al., 2013).

Effective managers can lead to effective organizations. The earlier managers understand

the impact of the relationship between employees' generations and employees' views of

management practices, the quicker managers can contribute to a more effective

organization (Lester et al., 2012).

This study addressed a vital issue of the fundamental differences in employees'

views among the four aforementioned generations in the federal government, as

necessary for an effective organization. The experiences and views that shape each

generation bring challenges to the workforce (Ciutiene & Railaite, 2014). This review of

the relevant literature demonstrated that managers' understanding of generational

differences is substantive for an effective organization (Ciutiene & Railaite, 2014).

Managers' strategies must be tailored for each generational cohort to promote

effectiveness within the organization. Research demonstrated that employees contribute

to the efficiency of the organization as managers understand the generational views

exhibited by each cohort that, in turn, increase organizational effectiveness (Caillier,

2011). Despite the differences among and between generations, managers must consider

the perceptions of the multigenerational workforce that have consequences regarding the

composition of the workforce (Winklemaan-Gleed, 2011).

Chapter 3: Research Methods

The general problem for this study was that leaders faced managerial challenges related to supervising a multigenerational workforce in the federal government. These managerial challenges associated with supervising a multigenerational workforce influenced the effectiveness of the workforce. Specifically, managers must recognize and understand the employees' views of their management practices to supervise effectively four generations (i.e., Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, and Millennials) in the federal government workforce (Dixon et al., 2013). The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between generational cohorts and their perceptions of managerial effectiveness within the context of the federal workplace. Additionally, the purpose of this study was to examine how employees from each of four generational cohort groups viewed managerial effectiveness at the following three different management levels: senior leader, manager, and supervisor. This study was timely for managers, employees, and scholar-practitioners who had a vested interest in improving organizational effectiveness and efficiency within the federal government.

Research Questions

Three research questions was used to guide the study to the achievement of the study's purpose. Answers to the following three research questions provided the results necessary to demonstrate achievement of the purpose for this study:

Q1. How do generational cohorts relate to cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness at the senior leader level in the federal workforce?

Q2. How do generational cohorts relate to cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness at the manager level in the federal workforce?

Q3. How do generational cohorts relate to cohort perceptions of managerial

effectiveness at the supervisory level in the federal workforce?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to align with each of the study's three research questions:

H1$_0$. There is no statistically significant relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness at the senior leader level in the federal workplace.

H1$_a$. There is a statistically significant relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness at the senior leader level in the federal workplace.

H2$_0$. There is no statistically significant relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness at the manager levels in the federal workplace.

H2$_a$. There is a statistically significant relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness at the manager levels in the federal workplace.

H3$_0$. There is no statistically significant relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness at the supervisory level in the federal workplace.

H3$_a$. There is a statistically significant relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness at the supervisory level in the federal workplace.

Research Methods and Designs

The methodology for this study was quantitative. Quantitative methodology is an approach that uses data gathered from preexisting groups that allow the researcher to explore relationships between variables (Quick & Hall, 2015). The methodology allowed for counts of experienced phenomena and the identification of incidences that existed between perceptions (Barnham, 2015). The data gathered were regarded as being scientific, justifiable, and based on facts reflected in exact figures (Jonker & Pennink, 2010). The quantitative methodology was appropriate for this study to explore relationships between variables. Quantitative methods are efficient when working with Likert-scale data (Koksal, Ertekin, & Colakoglu, 2014). Quantitative analysis is useful when comparing determinates that influence perception (Koksal et al., 2014). Three research questions were posed to enable examination of the relationship between generational cohorts and perceptions of managerial effectiveness within the context of the federal workplace. These three research questions were answered utilizing quantitative methods.

The design for this study was correlation. A correlation design involves collecting data to determine the degree to which a relationship exists between two or more variables. A correlation design was appropriate for this study because this study examined the extent of a relationship between two or more variables through statistical data (Koksal et al., 2014). This design was a practical way to organize diverse variables and provide meaningful interpretations.

The design steps in this study consisted of (a) understanding the context, (b) assessing existing public databases of demographic and employee view models to inform study design, (c) generating data, and (d) conducting the analysis and interpretation

(Yardley, 2014). This approach provided clarification and expanded the body of knowledge of generational cohorts and managerial effectiveness. The first step, understanding the context, began with the literature review of pertinent information relevant to the study. For this study, the literature review examined areas of generational cohorts, managerial effectiveness, theories, and designs to illustrate the purpose of the study. The second step examined existing archival secondary data and informed the study design. A public database was used to extract response data and demographics such as gender, pay, race, and education to conduct this multigenerational study (FedScope, 2015). The third step, generating data, commenced with assessing public archival data. The fourth step, conducting the analysis and interpretation, allowed the examination of relationships between generational cohorts and perceptions of managerial effectiveness. This step allowed the researcher to determine results from the archival data to be used in making the decision whether to accept or reject the hypotheses.

Population

The population for this study was 1,845,662 full-time, part-time, and permanent federal employees within the federal government during the first quarter in 2015 (U.S.OPM, 2015). These individuals constituted full-time and part-time employees; headquarters and field employees; supervisors and managers; veterans and nonveterans; individuals living with disabilities; individuals with varying educational backgrounds; members of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities; and multiple racial and ethnic groups, all of whom worked in a vast array of occupations that make up the federal workforce. Members of the population represented 350 different occupations, 82 agencies, 37 departments and large agencies, and 45 small and independent agencies within the federal government.

Sample

Sampling procedures designed and implemented by the U.S. OPM (2015) were utilized in the data-collection process, resulting in the archival data from which data for this study were retrieved. The U.S. OPM sampled 848,237 federal employees in the federal government from which 421,748 responses were received. The sampling frame was a comprehensive list of federal employees in the survey population that met the criteria for selection for the survey. The sample data were collected through an U.S. OPM administered online web survey. This size was more than sufficient to ensure a 95% chance that the true population value would be between plus or minus 1% of any estimated percentage of the total federal workforce (U.S.OPM, 2015). Federal employees and units were extracted from the personnel database managed by the U.S. OPM as part of the EHRI-SDM (2013). U.S. OPM statisticians stratified the sampling frame before selecting the sample of federal employees. This information indicated the hierarchical work units to which federal employees were assigned and provided more detailed information than was available from the EHRI-SDM. Organization code information, when provided, along with information about whether an employee was a senior leader, was used to create strata. Additionally, The U.S. OPM used a Graduated Proportional Sampling (GPS) plan. The GPS plan approach maintained the reporting breadth achieved and reduced the burden of time and financial costs.

The GPS plan included the following steps for the selection of samples (U.S.OPM, 2015):

1. Federal employees were stratified based on the lowest desired work unit or level identified by the agency.

2. Strata were identified for less than 10 individuals. These data were rolled up

into the next highest applicable stratum. This rolling up was performed to ensure a 100%

response rate was achieved and to eliminate a work unit of 10 that would be too small. If

there was no applicable higher level within the agency structure, the stratum was left as

is.

      3. Federal employees were placed into a separate stratum (e.g. senior leader

positions that constituted a subgroup of analytic interest). This ensured a sufficient

representation of agency sample.

      4. Once the final stratification boundaries were set, the sampling proportion was

assigned based on the size of the stratum and the goal of attaining at least 10 respondents.

After the necessary sample size had been determined, the agency's ratio of employees to

be sampled was examined.

      Steps were taken to protect respondent confidentiality for the release of the 2015

FEVS general version of the public-release data file. Because of the differing response

rates among the various demographic groups completing the survey, the data were

weighted to ensure further that the results were statistically unbiased. Adjustments to

response rates were made to account for over and underrepresented groups within the

sample (U.S.OPM, 2015). Weights were assigned to each respondent in the FEVS. The

weights provided an objective, unbiased inference regarding the perceptions of the full

population of federal employees. Additionally, the weights took into account the variable

probabilities of selection across the sample domains, nonresponse, and known

demographic characteristics of the population (U.S.OPM, 2015).

Instrument

      The instrument used to collect the data for this study was the FEVS. The survey

was developed by the U.S. OPM (2015). The survey was designed to take approximately

30 min to complete. The survey included 98 items that measured leadership styles and behaviors that affected employees. Further, the 14 demographic questions and 84 items included the scoring factors of work unit, agency, supervisor, leadership, satisfaction, work life, and demographics (see Appendix A). The instrument measured demographics, including age group, gender, race and ethnicity, disability status, previous military experience or veteran status, and workforce attributes (i.e., supervisor status and work location) at the government-wide level (U.S.OPM, 2015).

Survey questions reflected the overall goal of measuring how effectively agencies managed their workforce in the federal government (U.S.OPM, 2015). The FEVS focused on employees' perceptions that drove employee satisfaction and engagement in the federal workforce. The instrument measured the constructs for this study using a 5-point Likert scale. The FEVS item answer sets formed 5-point, Likert-type response scales. The following three scales were used: (a) *strongly agree*, *agree*, *neither agree nor disagree*, *disagree*, and *strongly disagree*; (b) *very satisfied*, *satisfied*, *neither satisfied nor dissatisfied*, *dissatisfied*, and *very dissatisfied*; and (c) *very good*, *good*, *fair*, *poor*, and *very poor*.

The researcher requested secondary FEVS data to be extracted by survey questions for each generational cohort from the U.S. OPM (2015) at opm.gov/2015/EVS data. The U.S. OPM used age derived from the EHRI-SDM (2013) to categorize by the following generations: Traditionalists (1922-1945), Baby Boomers (1946-1964), Generation Xers (1965-1980), and Millennials (1981-2000). The age data element in the employment population data file contained two data elements: AGELVL and AGELVLT (FedScope, 2015). The U.S. OPM provided collapsed survey response aggregate data counts by survey questions by generational cohort and demographics by generational

cohort.

Specific FEVS items related to the managerial effectiveness of senior leaders, managers, and supervisors were used to answer the research questions by determining any relationships between the generational cohorts and the perceived effectiveness for three managerial levels (see Appendix B). The specific FEVS items used for Research Question 1 were 53, 54, 61, 62, and 66. The specific FEVS items used for Research Question 2 were 56, 57, 58, 59, and 60. The specific FEVS items used for Research Question 3 were 47, 48, 51, 52, and 55.

Validity and Reliability

To establish reliability and validity, tests must be conducted throughout the data-collection process and analysis process (Olutwatayo, 2012). Validity is the extent to which the findings provide an accurate representation of participants' experiences, whereas reliability is the degree to which findings are replicable in other studies (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2012; Oluwatayo, 2012). For the FEVS, the independent testing for the validity and reliability ensured the highest accuracy of the data for each number within each report tested through several levels of quality control (U.S. OPM, 2015).

Validity. The subgroups of gender, race and ethnicity, disability status, previous military experience or veteran status, and workforce attributes (i.e., supervisor status and work location) for responses were calculated at the government-wide level (U.S. OPM, 2015). The electronic quality control was the first level of quality control by using Software and Solutions (SAS; U.S. OPM, 2015). The numbers were independently and electronically compared for matching. The staff members at the second-level quality control compared the input (i.e., SAS-produced results) to the output (i.e., the actual

report with the data incorporated into it). Each type of report had a streamlined process for quality control checks to ensure the highest level of accuracy since 2008.

Reliability. The U.S. OPM (2015) was designed to produce statistically reliable estimates of federal employees' perceptions of how effectively agencies were managing their workforces. The FEVS results were calculated to ensure representative results were reported for work units and leader status government-wide. Analysts calculated the standard errors for the collapsed positive estimates, which were then used to test for significant differences between estimates for two comparison groups (U.S. OPM, 2015). The analysts performed statistical testing to identify statistically significant differences in responses across subgroups containing more than 30 respondents. To reduce the likelihood of incorrectly concluding that significant differences existed when there were multiple subgroup comparisons such as supervisory status, analysts used SAS's Proc Multtest (the false discovery rate method) to adjust the significance-test probability (U.S. OPM, 2015). The Proc Multtest-revised procedure addresses the multiple comparisons of data for examining the effects on one level of a variable compared to another level of that variable. This testing was beneficial for examining hypothesis tests on the same data set (Kleinman & Horton, 2012).

Operational Definition of Variables

The following operational definitions for the predictor and criterion variables indicated how each variable was measured within the context of the study. The predictor of generational cohort was divided into the four categories of Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers and Millennials for the purpose of this study. The criterion was managerial effectiveness at the three different levels of management. The predictor variable of the generational cohort was classified as a categorical variable, and it was

operationalized by the FEVS questions that asked the participants to identify age group to determine which generational cohorts the respondents belonged to according to their birth years. The age data element in the employment population data file contained two data elements, age level (AGELVL) and age translation (AGELVLT; FedScope, 2015). This was used by the U.S. OPM (2015) in providing data per cohort group based on the researcher's data-extraction request.

Managerial effectiveness level was the criterion for the success of execution of a critically evaluated plan to provide direction to employees building trust, relationships, and positive outcomes. The first criterion variable was senior leader level of managerial effectiveness. Senior leader Items 53, 54, 61, 62, and 66 from the FEVS were used to operate this variable. The second criterion variable was manager level of managerial effectiveness. Managers Items 56, 57, 58, 59, and 60 from the FEVS were used to operational this variable. The third criterion variable was supervisors of managerial effectiveness. Supervisors Items 47, 48, 51, 52, and 55 from the FEVS were used to operate this variable.

Generational cohort. The predictor variable category to which a participant is assigned is based on the participant's response to the FEVS item asking the participant's age. The U.S. OPM (2015) used the participant's age to categorize into one of the four generational cohort categories of Traditionalist (1922-1945), Baby Boomers (1946-1964), Generation Xers (1965-1980), and Millennials (1981-2000) based on the researcher's secondary FEVS data extract request to the U.S. OPM for data to be retrieved and provided by generational cohort.

Manager level managerial effectiveness. This is the composite mean response percentage from each generational cohort for Items 56, 57, 58, 59, and 60 on the FEVS.

Senior leader level managerial effectiveness. This is the composite mean response percentage from each generational cohort of participants for Items 53, 54, 61, 62, and 66 on the FEVS.

Supervisor level managerial effectiveness. This is the composite mean response percentage from each generational cohort for Items 47, 48, 51, 52, and 55 on the FEVS.

Data Collection, Processing, and Analysis

For this study, the researcher engaged in a process of reflexivity by examining and, then, blocking out any knowledge, beliefs, biases, and experiences regarding the phenomenon. The researcher ensured the scope of the literature theories provided an impartial perspective of the topic. Moreover, the researcher remained open to any implications experienced during this process. The study was conducted using publicly available archival data collected by the U.S. OPM (2015). The FEVS information was reported, and the general public could access government-wide data. Data extraction of public-use files was available for the years from 2004 up to the current year. The public source for this information is the U.S. OPM. Another public-data tool to analyze human resource data were FedScope (2015).

FedScope (2015) was the online focal point for collecting statistical information about the federal civilian workforce. This public-data tool stored the data that were accessed to match and analyze data elements with the FEVS items of managerial effectiveness.

All FEVS responses were confidential. The U.S. OPM (2015) made every effort to ensure any responses could not be identified or linked with any individual. When data were reported to the agencies, they were provided in grouped or complied format so one person's opinions could not be ascertained. In any public release of FEVS results, no

data were disclosed that could be used to identify specific individuals.

Although the data-collection processes for this study did not involve any interaction with human subjects and no new data were collected, approval was obtained from the Northcentral University Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct the research using preexisting archival public data. The researcher did not abuse policy or bypass IRB oversight requirements during this study. The U.S. OPM (2015) took measures to protect respondent confidentiality for the public-released data files for the FEVS. Personal identifiers from the raw data such as name, e-mail address, and demographics were removed using SAS macromethodology of exhausted tabulation assessment (U.S. OPM, 2015). The researcher took measures to protect the public-released data. These measures included storing digital data used for this study on a password-protected computer and storing any paper data in a locked storage cabinet.

Data collection. The roster of federal employees eligible for participation in the FEVS was derived from a personnel database called the EHRI-SDM. The EHRI-SDM contained a wealth of information about employees. The data-collection period for the FEVS was April 27, 2015, to June 12, 2015. The data-collection period for every agency spanned 6 workweeks. The FEVS was a web-based, self-administered survey. The U.S. OPM (2015) e-mailed participating agencies promotion communication materials to explain the benefits of employee feedback to make improvement throughout their agency and the federal government. The U.S. OPM disseminated e-mails to sample employees to participate in the FEVS. Instructions for accessing the survey were provided. To improve response rates, the U.S. OPM sent weekly reminder e-mails and a final reminder to nonrespondents. Official government hours were approved for federal employees to complete the FEVS.

The U.S. OPM (2015) established a help center that served as a central point for co-ordinating and managing reported survey problems and issues. The help center consisted of one help center supervisor and one assistant help center supervisor; the data-collection task manager oversaw operations (U.S. OPM, 2015). Federal employees could e-mail questions regarding the survey to the help center. This resulted in responses to inquiries being prompt, accurate, and professionally managed in a consistent manner. Moreover, higher response rates during data collection were achieved by allowing respondents to obtain answers to questions, voice concerns, ensure the legitimacy of the survey, and remedy any technical issues with the survey. Thirty-one e-mail accounts were established for the purpose of co-ordinating and managing reported problems; one for each of the 29 large departments and agencies, one for the small independent agencies, and one for the large independent agencies (U.S. OPM, 2015).

In this study, the predictor variables included the four generational cohorts of Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, and Millennials. The researcher requested secondary FEVS data extract for the 15 pertinent managerial effectiveness survey items (see Appendix B) for each of the four generational cohorts from the U.S. OPM (2015) at https://www.fedviweopm.gov/2015/EVSDATA. The U.S. OPM used age derived from EHRI-SDM to categorize by the following generations: Traditionalists (1922-1945), Baby Boomers (1946-1964), Generation Xers (1965-1980), and Millennials (1981-2000). The secondary generational cohort data were collected from the U.S. OPM online database by completing the public release data request form at https://www .fedview.opm.gov/2015/EVSDATA. The U.S. OPM e-mailed the researcher the link to download the file, which included the managerial effectiveness data by generational cohort.

The researcher retrieved the data file. The data received by generational cohort were collapsed into three response categories, including positive, neutral, and negative with the frequency of responses for each category. Positive responses represented the two most positive item response choices on the 5-point scale of the FEVS such as *very satisfied* and *satisfied*. Neutral responses represented the neutral response on the 5-point scale such as *neither satisfied nor dissatisfied*. Negative responses represented the two most negative response choices on the 5-point scale such as *dissatisfied* and *very dissatisfied*. The data received from the U.S. OPM (2015) were organized into a spreadsheet format to use for analysis purposes.

To summarize the data-collection process for this study, the following steps were followed:

1. The researcher requested secondary FEVS data extract by survey questions for each generational cohort from the U.S. OPM (2015) at https://www.fedview.opm.gov/ 2015/EVSDATA. The U.S. OPM used age data element derived from the EHRI-SDM to categorize by the following generations: Traditionalists (1922-1945), Baby Boomers (1946-1964), Generation Xers (1965-1980), and Millennials (1981-2000). The age data element in the employment population data file contained the following two data elements: AGELVL and AGELVLT (FedScope, 2015). The U.S. OPM provided collapsed survey response aggregate data counts by survey question and survey item by generational cohort and demographics by generational cohort.

2. The researcher downloaded FEVS data extract received from the U.S. OPM (2015).

3. The researcher saved the original data extract files.

4. The researcher created a new research spreadsheet with worksheets containing

survey response data by question by generational cohort.

Data analysis. For Research Question 1, composite mean percentages of positive, neutral, and negative responses for FEVS items relative to cohort perception of managerial effectiveness at the senior leader level in the federal workforce were calculated for each generational cohort. These data were presented to provide a descriptive analysis for Research Question 1 variables. Tables are provided to illustrate these descriptive statistics. Next, a Pearson's *r* analysis was performed to determine relationships between the predictor variable cohorts and the composite mean positive, neutral, and negative response percentages for the FEVS items measuring the criterion variable. The information provided by this inferential statistical analysis was used to report direction and strengths of relationships between the variables. The information was used to make the decision whether to reject or fail to reject the hypotheses. Tables are provided to illustrate the findings for the Pearson's *r* analysis. After this step was completed, the same steps were followed for Research Questions 2 and 3. For these questions, response percentages for positive, neutral, and negative responses for each of the four generational cohorts were calculated. Then, a Pearson's *r* analysis was computed to determine the relationships between the generational cohorts and their perceptions of managerial effectiveness at the manager and supervisor levels.

To summarize the data-analysis process for this study, the following steps were followed:

1. The researcher obtained access to the IBM Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS), Version 23 (or above) statistical program, developed codes for each predictor variable, and entered the predictor variable into SPSS statistical software program.

2. The researcher calculated the criterion variable values and the mean composite of positive, neutral, and negative percentages for each managerial level for each generational cohort. The positive, neutral, and negative percentages were determined by the responses to specific FEVS survey items. For the calculation to determine the criterion variable value for each research question, the researcher used Items 53, 54, 61, 62, and 66 for the senior leader level; Items 56, 57, 58, 59, and 60 for the manager level; and Items 47, 48, 51, 52, and 55 for the supervisor level from the FEVS.

3. The researcher prepared a new worksheet with variable data values by question and by generational cohort.

4. The researcher used SPSS statistical software to run descriptive statistics such as frequency and range.

5. The researcher conducted a Pearson's *r* analysis for statistical significance of relationships at the .05 level of significance. The Pearson's *r* analysis consisted of multiple predictor variables (i.e., generational cohorts) and one criterion variable (i.e., the percentage values) for each research question.

6. The researcher interpreted data results and made the decision whether to reject or fail to reject the hypotheses.

7. The researcher reported the analysis results and findings.

Assumptions

The study involved four generational cohorts in the workforce. The primary assumption was that four generations of federal workers currently worked side-by-side and faced challenges in the workplace. It was assumed that the archival data were collected and entered into the database in an accurate and appropriate process as indicated in the U.S. OPM (2015) technical report. Additionally, participants all worked

for the federal government as members of the civil service. Another assumption was that federal personnel who participated in the survey participated freely and answered the questions seriously based on real-life experiences in the workplace. Further, an assumption was that the survey provided feedback for developing effective strategies and tools for driving continuous improvement of managerial effectiveness. Last, it was possible that participants in some cases may have felt uncomfortable answering questions via the web for fear of reprisal for stating their opinions.

Limitations

Limitations are those areas that might potentially weaken a study. To avoid validity threats in this research, the study required adequately defined variables for proper measurement (Creswell, 2009). Internal validity refers to the degree to which observed changes in a dependent variable ascribe to changes in the independent variables facilitating trustworthy interpretations about causal relationships (Halperin, Pyne, & Martin, 2015). Internal validity concluded that the independent variable produced the differences observed. External validity consisted of a determination of whether the results of the study could be generalized to an entire population from which the samples were drawn in the study (Dyrvig, Kidholm, Gerke, & Vondeling, 2014). The matter of external validity was secondary to and dependent upon the threats to internal validity (Halperin et al., 2015).

Threats to internal validity. A threat to internal validity for this study was length of employment for each generation (U.S. OPM, 2015). For example, Traditionalist, Baby Boomer, and Generation Xer cohorts may have worked longer in the workforce than the millennial cohort, thereby, having more years of employment and experiences working with each other. Millennial participants have less lived experiences

to share working in the multigenerational workforce.

Threats to external validity. A threat of external validity may have existed, depending on survey responses influenced by varying degrees of work experience (U.S. OPM, 2015). Moreover, the socioeconomic background of each participant may have affected their worldview of the different generations and work ethics (Timonen & Conlon, 2015). Another threat of external validity was self-reporting and was not the same as actual occurrence. A respondent may not have trusted that the web tool was confidential and, therefore, tracked the person to the answer; as such, the respondent provided answers to what they knew were true. Extreme caution was needed when linking survey results to administrative data.

Delimitations

The scope of the study was limited to the four generational cohorts. A challenge many researchers face was that archival data did not include data from the newest generation entering the workforce. The Generation Z cohort, the newest generation, is now entering the workforce (Stuckey, 2016). Members of the Generation Z cohort are individuals born between 1995 and 2015. This study excluded the Generation Z cohort as there are very few Generational Z workers employed in the federal workforce (Posnick-Goodwin, 2010).

Ethical Assurances

The intent of this quantitative study was to conduct research using secondary public archival data of generational cohorts and their perceptions of managerial effectiveness in the federal government. The U.S. OPM (2015), the source provider for the secondary data, ensured measures were taken to safeguard the raw data survey responses. Once the cross tabulation of demographic variables was finalized, which

could present a disclosure risk, the level of work-unit detail was collapsed. Archival data from a public website was used; however, all IRB requirements were met. The confidentiality of participants was protected by using collapsed data of identifiable demographic coding in the public archival database. The researcher took extreme care to handle and protect data for analyzing during the research and after the study was concluded. The researcher maintained documentation not only of the published work but also of the working file that supported the study. Data and other documents used for the study were handled in accordance with all IRB and ethical standards during and after the completion of the study.

Summary

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness within the context of the federal workplace. Levels of management were classified as senior level leader, manager, or supervisor. Three research questions guided the study, and the answers to these questions served as evidence of achievement of the study's purpose. Archival data were collected and saved to an original data extract file. The researcher, then, created a new spreadsheet with survey response data by generational cohort. The data-collection process included extracting and downloading FEVS data by survey questions for each generational cohort using the U.S. OPM (2015) website. The data were analyzed using SPSS statistical software. Descriptive statistics were calculated and presented. A Pearson's r analysis was conducted to provide inferential statistical information regarding relationships between predictor and criterion variables.

Chapter 4: Findings

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness within the context of the federal workplace. The study examined the relationships at the following three different management levels: senior leader, manager, and supervisor. The four generational cohort groups in this study were Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, and Millennials. Managerial effectiveness was operationalized and measured using archival data from the 2015 administration of the FEVS. The sample data were collected through an U.S. OPM (2015) administered online web survey. The sample size of 1,617,269 was sufficient to ensure a 95% chance that the true population value would be between plus or minus 1% of any estimated percentage of the total federal workforce (U.S. OPM, 2015). Federal employees and units were extracted from the personnel database managed by the U.S. OPM as part of the EHRI-SDM (2013). This chapter is organized around the research questions and hypotheses and contains a report of the results from the data collection and analyses. An evaluation of the findings is provided to explain the meaning of the findings with respect to the research questions and hypotheses.

Participant Results

The frequency and percentage of participant respondents from each generational cohort were consistent for each research question based on the five FEVS items used for each research question (see Appendix B). The average frequency and corresponding percentage of generational cohort respondents for which data were calculated included 17,716 Traditionalists (1.1%), 735,865 Baby Boomers (45.6%), 641,547 Generation Xers (39.6%), and 222,141 Millennials (13.7%).

Three research questions and corresponding hypotheses guided this quantitative study. The results of the analyses are discussed with respect to determining the relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness within the context of the federal workplace.

Research Question 1 Results

The first research question was, How do generational cohorts relate to cohort perception of managerial effectiveness at the senior leader level in the federal workforce? The hypotheses were as follows:

H1$_0$. There is no statistically significant relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perception of managerial effectiveness at the senior leader level in the federal workplace.

H1$_a$. There is a statistically significant relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perception of managerial effectiveness at the senior leader level in the federal workplace.

For Research Question 1, composite mean percentages of positive, neutral, and negative responses for five FEVS items relative to cohort perception of managerial effectiveness at the senior leader level in the federal workforce were calculated for each cohort. These calculations were based on data obtained by the researcher from the U.S. OPM (2015). Specifically, each cohort percentage was converted to a composite mean rating value in order to obtain a single value to represent the managerial effectiveness variable in the data analysis. This conversion used a two-step process. First, the mean percentage of responses for the five research survey items in each generational cohort was multiplied by a value of 3 for positive responses, by 2 for neutral responses, and by 1 for negative responses. Second, the resulting products were summed and, then, divided

by 3 to obtain the composite mean rating value. This value was used to represent the criterion (outcome) variable in the analyses. The composite mean rating values for senior-level effectiveness for each cohort were Traditionalists, 79; Baby Boomers, 73; Generation Xers, 72; and Millennials, 73. For analyses, a categorical variable value of 1 through 4 was assigned to each generational cohort, the predictor variable. Table 2 illustrates these descriptive statistics.

Table 2

Composite Mean Response Percentages and Rating Value for Senior Leader-Level Effectiveness by Cohort

| | | | Senior leader-level effectiveness | | | |
Cohort	*N*	Category	Positive %	Neutral %	Negative %	Composite *M* rating value
Trad	17,716	4	55	27	18	79
BB	735,865	3	46	28	26	73
Gen Xers	641,547	2	45	26	29	72
Mill	222,141	1	46	25	29	73

Note. Trad =Traditionalists; BB = Baby Boomers; Gen = Generation Xers; Mill = Millennials.

In the correlational analyses, the cohorts were categorized using the values of 1, 2, 3, and 4 for ease of analysis. The effectiveness-level variable was computed and represents the mean rating value for each cohort given the positive, neutral, or negative levels of response. The Pearson's *r* correlation statistic was used to determine the strength of the composite scores when each categorical group of cohorts (i.e., Traditionalists-4, Baby Boomers-3, Generation Xers-2, and Millennials-1) was compared with the other cohorts. Each correlation analysis generated six correlation coefficients or Pearson's *r* to show the relationship among the cohorts as follows: Traditionalists with

Baby Boomers, Traditionalists with Generation Xers, Traditionalists with Millennials,

Baby Boomers with Generation Xers, Baby Boomers with Millennials, and Generation

Xers with Millennials. Overall, there was a strong positive association as indicated by

the high positive Pearson's *r* values between generational cohorts and cohorts'

perceptions as related to managerial effectiveness at the senior leader level. The Pearson

r values for the cohort relationships as related to managerial effectiveness at the senior

leader level were Traditionalists with Baby Boomers ($r = .99$), Traditionalists with

Generation Xers ($r = .93$), Traditionalists with Millennials ($r = .92$), Baby Boomers with

Generation Xers ($r = .97$), Baby Boomers with Millennials ($r = .97$), and Generation Xers

with Millennials ($r = .99$; see Table 3).

Table 3

Correlation Analysis Results for Senior Leaders

	Traditionalists	Baby Boomers	Generation Xers	Millennials
Traditionalists	1.00000000			
Baby Boomers	0.98804106	1.00000000		
Generation Xers	0.92547429	0.97281576	1.00000000	
Millennials	0.92110917	0.97012092	0.99993541	1.00000000

An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was subsequently used to determine whether

to reject or fail to reject the null hypothesis at the .05 level of significance. The

correlation between only Generation Xers and Millennials in relation to managerial

effectiveness was statistically significant ($p = .01$) because the $p = .01$ met the criterion of

$p < .05$. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected for this cohort correlation. All other

correlations were not statistically significant ($p > .05$), and the alternative hypothesis was accepted for these cohort correlations. In summary, there was a strong correlation between the cohorts as related to managerial effectiveness at the senior leader level. However, although strong correlations were found for all cohorts in relation to managerial effectiveness, the association between only Generation Xers and Millennials was statistically significant (see Table 4).

Table 4

Analysis of Managerial Effectiveness by Senior Leaders
(Pearson's r With p Value)

Cohort	Pearson's *r*	*p* value
Traditionalists-Baby Boomers	.99	.10
Traditionalists-Generation Xers	.93	.25
Traditionalists-Millennials	.92	.25
Baby Boomers-Generation Xers	.97	.15
Baby Boomers-Millennials	.97	.16
Generation Xers-Millennials	.99	.01

Research Question 2 Results

The second research question was, How do generational cohorts relate to cohort perception of managerial effectiveness at the manager level in the federal workforce? The hypotheses were as follows:

H2$_0$. There is no statistically significant relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perception of managerial effectiveness at the manager level in the federal

workplace.

      H2$_a$. There is a statistically significant relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perception of managerial effectiveness at the manager level in the federal workplace.

      For Research Question 2, composite mean percentages of positive, neutral, and negative responses for five FEVS items relative to cohort perception of managerial effectiveness at the manager level in the federal workforce for each cohort were obtained by the researcher utilizing the U.S. OPM (2015; see Appendix B). These percentage data were converted to a composite mean rating value in order to have one value to represent the managerial effectiveness variable in the data analysis. As in Research Question 1, this conversion used a two-step process. First, the mean percentage of responses for the five research survey items in each generational cohort was multiplied by a value of 3 for positive responses, by 2 for neutral responses, and by 1 for negative responses. Second, the resulting products were summed and, then, divided by 3 to obtain the composite mean rating value. This value was used to represent the criterion (outcome) variable in the analyses. The composite mean rating value for manager-level effectiveness each were Traditionalists, 82; Baby Boomers, 79; Generation Xers, 77; and Millennials, 78. For analyses, a categorical variable value of 1 through 4 was assigned to each generational cohort, the predictor variable. Table 5 shows these descriptive statistics.

      In this correlational analysis, the cohorts were categorized using the values of 1, 2, 3, and 4 for the cohorts and the mean rating value to represent the effectiveness level variable. The correlation statistic used the effectiveness composite scores for each categorical group of cohorts (i.e., Traditionalists-4, Baby Boomers-3, Generation Xers-2, and Millennials-1).

Table 5

Composite Mean Response Percentages and Rating Value for Manager-Level Effectiveness by Cohort

Cohort	*N*	Category	Manager leader-level effectiveness			Composite *M* rating value
			Positive %	Neutral %	Negative %	
Trad	17,716	4	61	25	14	82
BB	735,865	3	55	25	20	79
Gen Xers	641,547	2	54	23	22	77
Mill	222,141	1	56	22	22	73

Note. Trad =Traditionalists; BB = Baby Boomers; Gen = Generation Xers; Mill = Millennials.

Each correlation analysis generated six correlation Pearson's *r* coefficients to show the relationship among the following cohorts: Traditionalists with Baby Boomers, Traditionalists with Generation Xers, Traditionalists with Millennials, Baby Boomers with Generation Xers, Baby Boomers with Millennials, and Generation Xers with Millennials. Overall, there was a strong positive association between generational cohorts with regard to their perceptions of managerial effectiveness at the manager level. The Pearson r values for the cohort relationships as related to managerial effectiveness at the manager level were as follows: Traditionalists with Baby Boomers ($r = .99$), Traditionalists with Generation Xers ($r = .98$), Traditionalists with Millennials ($r = .97$), Baby Boomers with Generation Xers ($r = .99$), Baby Boomers with Millennials (r = .99), and Generation Xers with Millennials ($r = .99$; see Table 6).

An ANOVA was subsequently used to determine whether to reject or fail to reject the null hypothesis at the .05 level of significance. At the manager level, the correlation between Generation Xers and Millennials on managerial effectiveness was statistically

significant ($p = .01$) because the $p = .01$ met the criterion of $p < .05$. Therefore, the null

hypothesis was rejected for this cohort correlation.

Table 6

Correlation Analysis Results for the Manager Level

_____

	Traditionalists	Baby Boomers	Generation Xers	Millennials
Traditionalists	1.00000000			
Baby Boomers	0.99566413	1.00000000		
Generation Xers	0.97781093	0.99305822	1.00000000	
Millennials	0.96710126	0.98657185	0.99893454	1.00000000

_____

The remaining correlations were not statistically significant ($p > .05$), and the

alternative hypothesis was accepted for these cohort correlations. In summary, there

were strong correlations between the cohorts as related to managerial effectiveness at the

manager level. Although strong correlations were found for all cohorts in relation to

managerial effectiveness, most were not statistically significant with the exception of the

association between Generation Xers and Millennials (see Table 7).

Research Question 3 Results

The third research question was, How do generational cohorts relate to cohort

perception of managerial effectiveness at the supervisor level in the federal workforce?

The hypotheses were as follows:

H3$_0$. There is no statistically significant relationship between generational cohorts

and cohort perception of managerial effectiveness at the supervisor level in the federal

workplace.

H3_a. There is a statistically significant relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perception of managerial effectiveness at the supervisor level in the federal workplace.

Table 7

Analysis of Managerial Effectiveness by Manager Leaders
(Pearson's r With p Value)

_____

Cohort	Pearson's *r*	*p* value
Traditionalists-Baby Boomers	.99	.06
Traditionalists-Generation Xers	.98	.13
Traditionalists-Millennials	.97	.16
Baby Boomers-Generation Xers	.99	.08
Baby Boomers-Millennials	.99	.10
Generation Xers-Millennials	.99	.03

_____

For Research Question 3, composite mean percentages of positive, neutral, and negative responses for five FEVS items relative to cohort perception of supervisor effectiveness in the federal workforce were obtained by the researcher utilizing the U.S. OPM (2015; see Appendix B). The percentages from these data were used to calculate a composite mean rating value to have a single value for data analysis. This calculation followed the same two-step process as the previous two research questions. First, the mean percentage of positive, neutral, and negative responses were each calculated across the five research survey items for each generational cohort. These values were, then, multiplied by a value of 3 for positive response, by 2 for neutral responses, and by 1 for

negative responses. Second, the collective sum of these calculations was divided by 3 to determine the composite mean rating value. This composite mean value represented the criterion (outcome) variable in the analyses. The specific composite mean rating values for supervisor-level effectiveness were as follows: Traditionalists (87), Baby Boomers (84), Generation Xers (84), and Millennials (85). For analyses purposes, a categorical variable value of 1 through 4 was assigned to each generational cohort as the predictor variable. Table 8 provides these descriptive statistics.

Table 8

Composite Mean Response Percentages and Rating Value for Supervisors' Level of Effectiveness by Cohort

			Supervisor leader-level effectiveness			
Cohort	N	Category	Positive %	Neutral %	Negative %	Composite M rating value
Trad	17,716	4	70	19	11	87
BB	735,865	3	66	19	14	84
Gen Xers	641,547	2	67	18	15	84
Mill	222,141	1	69	16	15	85

Note. Trad =Traditionalists; BB = Baby Boomers; Gen = Generation Xers; Mill = Millennials.

The two variables in the correlational analyses were the generational cohorts and the managerial effectiveness value. The cohort variable was categorized using the values of 1, 2, 3, and 4 to represent each generation. The mean rating value represented the managerial effectiveness variable. The correlation statistic was run using the effectiveness composite scores for each categorical variable group of cohorts (i.e., Traditionalists-4, Baby Boomers-3, Generation Xers-2, and Millennials-1). Each

correlation analysis generated six correlation coefficients or Pearson's *r* to show the relationship among the four cohorts of Traditionalists with Baby Boomers, Traditionalists with Generation Xers, Traditionalists with Millennials, Baby Boomers with Generation Xers, Baby Boomers with Millennials, and Generation Xers with Millennials. Overall, there was a strong positive association among all generational cohorts in their perceptions of managerial effectiveness at the supervisor level. The Pearson *r* values for the cohort relationships as related to managerial effectiveness at the senior leader level were as follows: Traditionalists with Baby Boomers ($r = .99$), Traditionalists with Generation Xers ($r = .99$), Traditionalists with Millennials ($r = .99$), Baby Boomers with Generation Xers ($r = .99$), Baby Boomers with Millennials ($r = .99$), and Generation Xers with Millennials ($r = .99$; see Table 9).

Table 9

Correlation Analysis Results for the Supervisor Level

	Traditionalists	Baby Boomers	Generation Xers	Millennials
Traditionalists	1.00000000			
Baby Boomers	0.99886617	1.00000000		
Generation Xers	0.99604730	0.99914657	1.00000000	
Millennials	0.99454114	0.99838101	0.99987842	1.00000000

An ANOVA was subsequently used to reject or fail to reject the null hypothesis at the .05 level of significance. The correlation between Generation Xers and Millennials in relation to managerial effectiveness was statistically significant ($p = .01$) because the $p = .01$ met the criterion of $p < .05$. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected for this

cohort correlation. All other correlations were not statistically significant ($p > .05$), and the alternative hypothesis was accepted for these cohort correlations. In summary, there was a strong correlation between the cohorts as related to managerial effectiveness at the supervisor level. However, although strong correlations were found for all cohorts in relation to managerial effectiveness, the association between only Generation Xers and Millennials was statistically significant (see Table 10).

Table 10

Analysis of Managerial Effectiveness by Supervisor Leaders (Pearson's r With p Value)

Cohort	Pearson's *r*	*p* value
Traditionalists-Baby Boomers	.99	.03
Traditionalists-Generation Xers	.99	.06
Traditionalists-Millennials	.99	.07
Baby Boomers-Generation Xers	.99	.03
Baby Boomers-Millennials	.99	.04
Generation Xers-Millennials	.99	.01

Evaluation of Findings

Descriptively, the research showed great similarity in how all the cohorts rated managerial effectiveness. When considering the composite managerial effectiveness values, all the cohorts rated managerial effectiveness relatively high. More specifically, in a possible range of rating value from 33 to 100, all the ratings for each cohort were above 70 (see Tables 2, 5, and 8). The composite value for managerial effectiveness was

highest among the cohorts for managerial effectiveness by supervisors and lowest for senior leaders. Further, there was nearly a 10-point difference among the cohorts between these two levels. Another notable finding was the order of managerial effectiveness across the three management levels. The composite value of managerial effectiveness corresponded to the distance of managerial level from the employee. For example, the closer the manager was to the respondent, the higher the perceived managerial effectiveness. In other words, managerial effectiveness by the FEVS respondents was higher for supervisors (values ranged from 84 to 87) who were generally one management level away from the respondent (e.g., direct reports). Likewise, managerial effectiveness by the FEVS respondents was lower for senior leaders (values ranged from 72 to 79) who were generally two or more managerial levels away from the respondent.

For each research question, the perceptions of generational cohorts of managerial effectiveness at the three levels (i.e., senior leader, manager, and supervisor) in the federal workforce were tested. A correlation analysis was performed to determine if there was any relationship between generational cohort and cohort perception of managerial effectiveness at each of the three levels in the federal workplace. An ANOVA statistic was, then, used to identify which relationships were significant at the 95% confidence level ($p < .05$). The researcher reviewed generational cohorts and managerial effectiveness based on five selected questions of managerial effectiveness for each level of senior, manager, and supervisor. In some cases, the p value showed the relationship between two cohorts was very close to being statistically significant when $p < .05$. For example, the Traditionalists-Baby Boomers association as related to managerial effectiveness at the manager level was at the p value of .06 (see Table 7).

Although the data showed consistently strong relationships between all generations and managerial effectiveness at all three levels, only the cohort association of Generation Xers with Millennial was consistently significant for each research question. It is possible that the strong associations and low levels of statistical significance were due to the original data being retrieved in a composite, descriptive form instead of actual raw data from each individual survey respondent.

Summary

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness within the context of the federal workplace. The chapter began with a description of how the data were obtained to conduct the research. The data were analyzed to answer three research questions and test corresponding hypotheses. The results from the analyses indicated that there was a strong relationship among generational cohorts and cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness. However, overall, the alternative hypotheses were rejected for all three research questions because most of the relationships were not statistically significant.

Chapter 5: Implications, Recommendations, and Conclusions

The problem addressed in this study was that leaders faced managerial challenges in supervising a multigenerational workforce in the federal government, which could have influenced the effectiveness of the workforce. The generations were categorized based on birth years as Traditionalists (1922-1945), Baby Boomers (1946-1964), Generation Xers (1965-1980), and Millennials (1981-2000; U.S. OPM, 2015). The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness within the context of the federal workplace. This study was an attempt to understand better the relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness within the context of the federal workplace. A better understanding of the relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perceptions could be beneficial to managerial effectiveness.

The population for this study was full-time, part-time, and nonseasonal federal government employees within the federal government. The U.S. OPM (2015) sampled 848,237 federal employees in the federal government from which 421,748 responses were received. The instrument used to collect the data for this study was the FEVS. Selected questions from the instrument were used to measure how effectively agencies were managing their workforces in the federal government. Specifically, the instrument was used to measure the relationship between generational cohorts and perceptions of managerial effectiveness within the context of the federal workplace. Additionally, demographics, including age group, gender, race and ethnicity, disability status, previous military experience or veteran status, and workforce attributes (i.e., supervisor status and work location) at the government-wide level were measured (U.S. OPM, 2015). The

FEVS focused on employees' perceptions that influenced employee satisfaction and engagement in the federal workforce. The FEVS instrument was a survey consisting of 98 questions that measured leadership styles and behaviors that affected employees. Further, 14 demographic questions and 84 items included scoring factors of work unit, agency, supervisor, leadership, satisfaction, and work-life programs at the government-wide level. The FEVS data used for this study were collected between April 2015 to June 2015. The design for this study was a mixed-methods analyses using correlation analysis and an ANOVA to evaluate relationships between the independent and dependent variables. The independent variable for the study was generation cohorts (i.e., Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, and Millennials). The dependent variable for the study was managerial effectiveness.

Data were handled using ethical standards by taking measures to safeguard the raw data survey responses using cross tabulation of demographic variables and work-unit level data. Survey responses were flagged that presented a disclosure risk when conducting the comprehensive cross tabulations. For example, respondents were flagged as a potential disclosure risk if their demographic profiles were shared by fewer than three respondents. The confidentiality of these participants was protected by using coded, collapsed demographic data. This chapter is organized around the implications, recommendations, and conclusions of the research.

Implications

In this section, the implications for the findings for each research question and the corresponding decisions related to hypotheses are described. Due to the similarity of the research questions and the findings, the implications have been synthesized for all three questions, rather than discussing implications for each research question separately.

The findings and hypotheses decisions for all three research questions were very similar. In other words, the relationships between generational cohorts and managerial effectiveness at the three levels of senior leader, manager, and supervisor were very similar.

The finding for Research Question 1 was that, overall, there was no statistically significant relationship between generational cohorts and their perceptions of managerial effectiveness at the senior leader level in the federal workplace. Five of six combinations of generational cohorts for this level of managerial effectiveness were not statistically significant ($p > .05$). Therefore, the alternative hypothesis was accepted. Although there was a strong relationship between the combinations of all cohorts in relation to managerial effectiveness, the association between only Generation Xers and Millennials as related to managerial effectiveness was statistically significant.

Research Question 2 showed that, overall, there was no statistically significant relationship between generational cohorts and their perceptions of managerial effectiveness at the manager level in the federal workplace. Five of six combinations of generational cohorts for this level of managerial effectiveness were not statistically significant ($p > .05$). Therefore, the alternative hypothesis was accepted. Although there was a strong relationship between the combinations of all cohorts in relation to managerial effectiveness, the association between only Generation Xers and Millennials as related to managerial effectiveness was statistically significant.

The finding for Research Question 3 was that, collectively, there was no statistically significant relationship between generational cohorts and their perceptions of managerial effectiveness at the supervisor level in the federal workplace. Five of six combinations of generational cohorts for this level of managerial effectiveness were

statistically significant (*p* > .05). Therefore, the alternative hypothesis was accepted. Although there was a strong relationship between the combinations of all cohorts in relation to managerial effectiveness, the association between only Generation Xers and Millennials as related to managerial effectiveness was statistically significant.

This research investigated the problem that leaders faced managerial challenges in supervising a multigenerational workforce in the federal government, which could influence the effectiveness of the workforce. Therefore, a premise of the study was that a better understanding of the relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness within the context of the federal workplace could be helpful to federal leaders in working with multigenerations. According to Omana (2016), the most efficient way to manage generational differences in the workplace is to understand the challenges of conflict between generational relationships and to improve the perception of managerial effectiveness.

Information related to this problem and this premise for the study was supported in the literature of Semeijn et al. (2014) who suggested that managerial effectiveness evaluations occur at every level based on individual perception. Moreover, before leaders can effectively manage differences among the generational cohorts, leaders at the levels of senior, manager, and supervisor must first understand the differences in each generation as demonstrated by the implication that each generational cohort has an association of a level of significance. Further, this was supported by Schullery (2013) who stated that generational differences affect the organizational effectiveness in the workplace from communication, recruiting and retention, team building, change management, motivation, and productivity.

The findings for the study demonstrated that there was not much difference

between how the four generational cohorts viewed managerial effectiveness. This was in contrasts with Lester et al. (2012) who stated that differences of generational cohorts in the workforce lead to challenges for managers due to significant perceived generational differences. Further, the findings for this study were not consistent with a 2011 study that showed that multigenerational differences in views and perspectives could foster a climate for conflict and create barriers with employees and managers (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011). Such differences can cause conflicts among each generation as well as within each generation, ultimately causing a loss of valuable work and creating more misunderstanding among managers (Kilber et al., 2014). Based on these examples, agreement and disagreement relative to the results of the current study were found in the literature. Generally, there was agreement in the literature relative to the identified problem for this study, but most researchers disagreed with the overall results of this study.

The study results showed descriptive similarity of ratings of managerial effectiveness by each generational cohort for all three levels of managerial effectiveness measured in the study. The four generational cohorts rated managerial effectiveness at all three levels relatively high. More specifically, the ratings for each cohort were above 70 based on the rating value range of 33 to 100. The composite value for managerial effectiveness was highest among the cohorts for managerial effectiveness of supervisors with a cohort rating range of 84 to 87. The rating was lowest for senior leaders, ranging from 72 to 79. The composite value for managerial effectiveness at the individual survey item level was the highest for Traditionalist (83) and the lowest for Generation Xers (78). The results of the research study's descriptive statistics showed Traditionalists rated managerial effectiveness higher than all the other cohorts for all three management

levels. This supported the theory that traditionalists more so than Generation Xers were likely to follow rules, policies, procedures, and guidelines as a way to conduct business and were inclined to continue working without complaints in an organization until they retired or the organization downsized (Hansen & Leuty, 2012; Hillman, 2014). Leaders face any number of challenges as managers; however, the findings of this research indicated that managing multiple generational cohorts may not lead to distinct perceptions of managerial ineffectiveness based on cohort membership. Possible reasons for this and the findings for this study included cross-generational "buy-in" to organizational mission and goals. Another reason could be that federal workforce leaders were well-trained and practiced effective leadership qualities that worked for multiple generations. The strong associations between cohorts at each level of managerial effectiveness in this study were in contrast to the findings in studies by Hillman (2014) and Hansen and Leuty (2012).

Managerial challenges associated with supervising a multigenerational workforce influence the effectiveness of the workforce. The results of this study supported management's understanding of the relationship between the views of four generations of federal employees and how these generations perceived managerial effectiveness in the federal workplace. Most of the literature on managerial effectiveness among generational cohorts showed generations viewed managerial effectiveness differently, which was not the case for this study. The findings of this research did not support the majority of previous studies.

One major limitation in the study was not having the FEVS raw data for individual respondents. The challenge of not having raw, individual data for each respondent limited the scope of possibilities for statistical analysis. Due to this

limitation, it was possible that the likelihood of statistical significance was minimized because each respondent group was calculated using group composite data provided by the data source, instead of individual respondent data.

Recommendations

One of the limitations of this study indicated the supervisor level of the respondents was unknown. Without this information, it was difficult to determine how those who supervise federal employees rated their own supervision or their supervisors who were levels above them. For example, it might be interesting to know if supervisors rated managerial effectiveness by supervisors more favorably because of their own positions. An added limitation was that, for the combinations of generational differences that were not statistically significant in this analysis, it was possible that, when using raw data instead of grouped data, there was a higher probability that all these highly correlated associations between cohorts would have been statistically significant.

Based on the findings of this research, there are two recommendations. The first recommendation is for the U.S. OPM (2015), the federal Human Resources Agency, to consider these results for Generation Z applicants and employees who are now becoming part of the federal workforce. Generation Z will comprise 18% of the world's population by 2020. Seventy-eight percent of leaders are ill-equipped to manage Generation Z requirements against the conflicting needs of Traditionalist, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials (Stuckey, 2016). According to Stuckey (2016), 36 per cent of leaders have received training on how to lead Generation Z employees. The disconnection of leaders' understanding of what will attract and retain Generation Zs in the workforce is no surprise.

Additionally, this generation will be in the position to make drastic changes in the

workplace influenced by their cultures, ethics, and values. Generation Z is Internet savvy and lives in the virtual world (Kick, Contacos-Sawyer, & Thomas, 2015). Further, Generation Z requires fewer directions because they are the generation with ready access to digital tools enabling them to think they can do anything (Renfro, 2015).   Because their formative years are largely in the technology world, they may demonstrate a lack of communication skills and interpersonal skills and may not be good listeners (Andrea, Gabriella, & Timea, 2016). Generation Z will experience new challenges as they become leaders as federal managers because of these unique differences.

Generation Z exhibits different traits as professionals and are not your typical 40 hour per week cubical worker (Renfro, 2015). This generation wants greater flexibility for problem solving and collaboration. Additionally, Generation Z expects to be able to work, study, and learn how they choose. Generation Z workers feel they require less direction and guidance because they have access to the answers (Wiedmer, 2015). This generation prefers to connect with peers via social media rather than traditional lecture-based presentations (Wiedmer, 2015). The federal government could use the FEVS data to improve managerial effectiveness across the generation cohorts, including the emerging fifth Generation Z, by understanding their culture working in the virtual world of technology.

Leaders and other generations must adapt to Generation Z's changing or missing social skills that are driven by technological advances (Renfro, 2015). To lead a multigenerational workforce effectively, leaders must understand each individual generation and accommodate employees' differences. Additionally, communication of workplace choices must be exercised to bridge differences and outlook on work life and balance (Wiedmer, 2015). Managers and supervisors should create a culture of

communication from the top-down and bottom-up for an effective organization.

The global workforce is fast-paced and ever-changing (Wiedmer, 2015). Leaders must assess current practices to determine if generations are being effectively led, managed, and challenged to be the best in the workforce (Wiedmer, 2015). In a multigenerational workforce, leaders must transfer knowledge among generations to optimize performance and success for satisfaction and rewards (Wiedmer, 2015). Multigenerational workforces are more effective when leaders recognize employees' generational work style differences ensuring engagement and satisfaction (Wiedmer, 2015). Leaders should embrace Generation Zs self-motivation, independent entrepreneurial strength, and drive of innovation and creativity (Stuckey, 2016).

The second recommendation is for the U.S. OPM (2015) to identify employees who are answering the FEVS as supervisors. Prompt feedback is critical to effective supervisor-employee relationships (U.S. OPM, 2015). Currently, the FEVS polls all levels of supervisors as one level in the database (FEVS, 2015). There is no delineation to identify categories of levels of supervisors in the survey. Therefore, there is no data to determine the effectiveness of immediate and higher level supervisors. Extending the study for deeper understanding about how supervisors rate their own supervision and management effectiveness and how they rate their supervisors, given their own managerial experience and perspective within the context of their generational cohort, would add to the body of knowledge of managerial effectiveness among all generations. As the Traditionalist and Baby Boomer generations soon disappear from the federal workplace, dynamics among the remaining generational cohorts may exert influence on generational perceptions of management effectiveness. A new opportunity to research managerial effectiveness perceptions among the evolving generation cohorts in the

federal workplace continues.

Conclusions

This study provided empirical research regarding generational cohorts and the relationship between cohorts and managerial effectiveness in the federal workplace. The study contributed to the body of knowledge relative to this topic. All generational cohorts had a very similar high rating for managerial effectiveness in the workplace. Overall, this study was not consistent with the most recent literature that suggests managerial effectiveness is not perceived effective across generational cohorts and that varying workplace perspectives lead to frustration and misunderstanding (Hansen & Leuty, 2012; Parry & Urwin, 2011; Srinivasan, 2012). Such differences caused conflicts among generations, ultimately caused a loss of valuable work and misunderstanding among managers (Kilber et al., 2014).

Historically, the federal workforce was shared by generations with less diversity; however, the workforce has changed and now requires managers to understand the dynamics of each generation in today's federal workforce (U.S. GAO, 2015). This multigenerational workforce represents individuals with varying beliefs, skills, knowledge, attitudes, and motivation. Such diversity affects communication, effectiveness, performance and level of respect. The one-size-fits-all management style is no longer relevant with the four generations that currently represents the largest portion of the federal workforce. These results were significant for managers to understand better the relationship between generational cohorts and cohort perceptions of managerial effectiveness within the context of the federal workplace. These results provided insight to current managers about how different generational cohorts viewed managerial effectiveness, which could further provide an opportunity to improve not only the

relationships with their employees but also how they manage overall. Multiple generations in the workforce require leaders to understand diverse generational differences (Wiedmer, 2015). Leaders who maximize their understanding of generational differences increase the success of any organization. Improving communication across units with top-down and bottom-up collaboration builds trust throughout the organization (Wiedmer, 2015).

Improved relationships and managerial effectiveness can be accomplished based on managers' understanding of generational differences of each generational cohort. Few managers are prepared for the arrival of Generation Z. Therefore, each manager should invest in management skills to understand generational differences and prepare for the collaboration among each generation in the workforce. In conclusion, this study supported that managers were doing a fairly good job as perceived by all generational cohorts. Moreover, managers appeared to be well-trained and using good leadership techniques; however, they should remain vigilant to the changing age demographics in the federal workforce.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Federal Employment Viewpoint Survey Instrument

Survey Content

FEVS questions reflect the overall goal of measuring how effectively agencies are managing their workforces in the Federal Government. The FEVS focuses on employee perceptions regarding critical work life areas that drive employee satisfaction, engagement, and ultimately, retention in the workforce. The 98-item survey included 14 demographic questions and 84 items that addressed the following eight topic areas:

Personal Work Experience. Questions 1–19 addressed employees' personal work experiences and opinions.

Work Unit. Questions 20–28 addressed employees' opinions regarding cooperation, recruitment, quality, and performance management in their work unit.

Agency. Questions 29–41 covered agency policies and practices related to job performance, performance appraisals, workplace diversity and fairness, as well as perceptions of employees' personal empowerment, safety and preparedness. This section also addresses employees' views of their agency.

Supervisor. Questions 42–52 addressed employees' perceptions of their supervisor. For instance, this section asked whether supervisors support work-life balance, provide opportunities to demonstrate leadership skills, and promote a workplace culture that supports staff development.

Leadership. Questions 53–62 asked about the effectiveness of the agency's senior leaders and managers overall, and in motivating employees, maintaining high ethical standards, communicating organizational policies, and generating respect.

Satisfaction. Questions 63–71 addressed employee satisfaction with various aspects of their jobs, including pay, job training, opportunities for advancement, recognition for work well done, and the policies and practices of senior leaders.

Work life. Questions 72–84 asked employees about teleworking and if they are satisfied with various employment benefits and work life programs.

Demographics. Appendix Questions 85–98 covered employee information, such as location of employment (headquarters vs. field), supervisory status, gender, ethnicity/race, education, pay category/grade, federal employment tenure, agency tenure, disability status, veteran status, and sexual orientation.

My Work Experience (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)
1. I am given a real opportunity to improve my skills in my organization.
2. I have enough information to do my job well.
3. I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things.

4. My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment.

5. I like the kind of work I do.

6. I know what is expected of me on the job.

7. When needed I am willing to put in the extra effort to get a job done.

8. I am constantly looking for ways to do my job better.

9. I have sufficient resources (for example, people, materials, budget) to get my job done.

10. My workload is reasonable.

11. My talents are used well in the workplace.

12. I know how my work relates to the agency's goals and priorities.

13. The work I do is important.

14. Physical conditions (for example, noise level, temperature, lighting, cleanliness in the workplace) allow employees to perform their jobs well.

15. My performance appraisal is a fair reflection of my performance.

16. I am held accountable for achieving results.

17. I can disclose a suspected violation of any law, rule or regulation without fear of reprisal.

18. My training needs are assessed.

19. In my most recent performance appraisal, I understood what I had to do to be rated at different performance levels (for example, Fully Successful, Outstanding).

My Work Unit (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)

20. The people I work with cooperate to get the job done.

21. My work unit is able to recruit people with the right skills.

22. Promotions in my work unit are based on merit.

23. In my work unit, steps are taken to deal with a poor performer who cannot or will not improve.

24. In my work unit, differences in performance are recognized in a meaningful way.

25. Awards in my work unit depend on how well employees perform their jobs.

26. Employees in my work unit share job knowledge with each other.

27. The skill level in my work unit has improved in the past year.

28. How would you rate the overall quality of work done by your work unit?

My Agency (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)

29. The workforce has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals.

30. Employees have a feeling of personal empowerment with respect to work processes.

31. Employees are recognized for providing high quality products and services.

32. Creativity and innovation are rewarded.

33. Pay raises depend on how well employees perform their jobs.

34. Policies and programs promote diversity in the workplace (for example, recruiting minorities and women, training in awareness of diversity issues, mentoring).

35. Employees are protected from health and safety hazards on the job.

36. My organization has prepared employees for potential security threats.

37. Arbitrary action, personal favoritism and coercion for partisan political purposes are not tolerated.

38. Prohibited Personnel Practices (for example, illegally discriminating for or against any employee/ applicant, obstructing a person's right to compete for employment, knowingly violating veterans' preference requirements) are not tolerated.

39. My agency is successful at accomplishing its mission.

40. I recommend my organization as a good place to work.

41. I believe the results of this survey will be used to make my agency a better place to work.

My Supervisor (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)

42. My supervisor supports my need to balance work and other life issues.

43. My supervisor provides me with opportunities to demonstrate my leadership skills.

44. Discussions with my supervisor about my performance are worthwhile.

45. My supervisor is committed to a workforce representative of all segments of society.

46. My supervisor provides me with constructive suggestions to improve my job performance.

47. Supervisors in my work unit support employee development.

48. My supervisor listens to what I have to say.

49. My supervisor treats me with respect.

50. In the last six months, my supervisor has talked with me about my performance.

51. I have trust and confidence in my supervisor.

52. Overall, how good a job do you feel is being done by your immediate supervisor? (Very Good, Good, Fair, Poor, and Very Poor)

Leadership (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, Do Not Know)

53. In my organization, senior leaders generate high levels of motivation and commitment in the workforce.

54. My organization's senior leaders maintain high standards of honesty and integrity.

55. Supervisors work well with employees of different backgrounds.

56. Managers communicate the goals and priorities of the organization.

57. Managers review and evaluate the organization's progress toward meeting its goals and objectives.

58. Managers promote communication among different work units (for example, about projects, goals, needed resources).

59. Managers support collaboration across work units to accomplish work objectives.

60. Overall, how good a job do you feel is being done by the manager directly above your immediate supervisor? (Very Good, Good, Fair, Poor, Very Poor)

(Very Satisfied, Satisfied, Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied, Dissatisfied, Very Dissatisfied)

61. I have a high level of respect for my organization's senior leaders.

62. Senior leaders demonstrate support for Work life programs.

My Satisfaction (Very Satisfied, Satisfied, Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied, Dissatisfied, Very Dissatisfied)

63. How satisfied are you with your involvement in decisions that affect your work?
64. How satisfied are you with the information you receive from management on what's going on in your organization?
65. How satisfied are you with the recognition you receive for doing a good job?
66. How satisfied are you with the policies and practices of your senior leaders?
67. How satisfied are you with your opportunity to get a better job in your organization?
68. How satisfied are you with the training you receive for your present job?
69. Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your job?
70. Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your pay?
71. Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your organization?

Work life
72. Have you been notified whether or not you are eligible to telework?
   Yes, I was notified that I was eligible to telework.
   Yes, I was notified that I was not eligible to telework.
   No, I was not notified of my telework eligibility.
   Not sure if I was notified of my telework eligibility.

73. Please select the response below that BEST describes your current teleworking situation.
   I telework 3 or more days per week.
   I telework 1 or 2 days per week.
   I telework, but no more than 1 or 2 days per month.
   I telework very infrequently, on an unscheduled or short-term basis.
   I do not telework because I have to be physically present on the job (e.g., Law Enforcement
     Officers, Park Rangers, Security Personnel).
   I do not telework because I have technical issues (e.g., connectivity, inadequate equipment)
     that prevent me from teleworking.
   I do not telework because I did not receive approval to do so, even though I have the kind of
     job where I can telework.
   I do not telework because I choose not to telework.

74 -78. **Do you participate in the following work-life programs?** (Yes, No, Not Available to Me)
74. Alternative Work Schedules (AWS)
75. Health and Wellness Programs (for example, exercise, medical screening, quit smoking programs)
76. Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
77. Child Care Programs (for example, daycare, parenting classes, parenting support groups)
78. Elder Care Programs (for example, support groups, speakers)

79 -84. **How satisfied are you with the following work-life programs in your agency?**

(Very Satisfied, Satisfied, Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied, Very Dissatisfied, no Basis to Judge)
79. Telework
80. Alternative Work Schedules (AWS)
81. Health and Wellness Programs (for example, exercise, medical screening, quit smoking programs)
82. Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
83. Child Care Programs (for example, daycare, parenting classes, parenting support groups)
84. Elder Care Programs (for example, support groups, speakers)

Demographics
85. **Where do you work?**
Headquarters
Field

86. **What is your supervisory status?**
Non-Supervisor: You do not supervise other employees.
Team Leader: You are not an official supervisor; you provide employees with day-to-day guidance in work projects, but do not have supervisory responsibilities or conduct performance appraisals.
Supervisor: You are a first-line supervisor who is responsible for employees' performance appraisals and leave approval.
Manager: You are in a management position and supervise one or more supervisors.
Senior Leader: You are the head of a department/agency or a member of the immediate leadership team responsible for directing the policies and priorities of the department/agency. May hold either a political or career appointment, and typically is a member of the Senior Executive Service or equivalent.

87. **Are you**:
Male
Female

88. **Are you Hispanic or Latino?**
Yes
No

89. **Please select the racial category or categories with which you most closely identify (mark as many as apply)**.
American Indian or Alaska Native
Asian
Black or African American
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
White

90. **What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed?**
Less than High School
High School Diploma/GED or equivalent
Trade or Technical Certificate
Some College (no degree)
Associate's Degree (e.g., AA, AS)
Bachelor's Degree (e.g., BA, BS)
Master's Degree (e.g., MA, MS, MBA)
Doctoral/Professional Degree (e.g., Ph.D., MD, JD)

91. What is your pay category/grade?
Federal Wage System (for example, WB, WD, WG, WL, WM, WS, WY)
GS 1- 6
GS 7-12
GS 13 - 15
Senior Executive Service
Senior Level or Scientific or Professional
Other

92**. How long have you been with the federal government (excluding military service)?**
Less than 1 year
1 to 3 years
4 to 5 years
6 to 10 years
11 to 14 years
15 to 20 years
More than 20 years

93. **How long have you been with your current agency (for example, Department of Justice, Environmental Protection Agency)?**
Less than 1 year
1 to 3 years
4 to 5 years
6 to 10 years
11 to 20 years
More than 20 years

94. **Are you considering leaving your organization within the next year, and, if so, why?**
No
Yes, to retire
Yes, to take another job within the Federal Government
Yes, to take another job outside the Federal Government
Yes, other

95. **I am planning to retire**:
Within 1 year
Between 1 and 3 years
Between 3 and 5 years
Five or more years

96. **Do you consider yourself to be one or more of the following? (mark as many as apply).**
Heterosexual or Straight
Gay or Lesbian
Bisexual
Transgender
I prefer not to say

97. **What is your U.S. military service status?**
No Prior Military Service
Currently in National Guard or Reserves
Retired
Separated or Discharged

98. **Are you an individual with a disability?**
Yes
No

Appendix B: Federal Employment Viewpoint Survey Selected Questions

Senior Leaders (5 items)

FEVS # 53 - In my organization, senior leaders generate high levels of motivation and commitment in the workforce.

FEVS # 54 - My organization's senior leaders maintain high standards of honesty and

integrity.

FEVS # 61 - I have a high level of respect for my organization's senior leaders.

FEVS # 62 - Senior leaders demonstrate support for Work life programs.

FEVS # 66 - How satisfied are you with the policies and practices of your senior leaders?

Managers (5 Items)

FEVS # 56 - Managers communicate the goals and priorities of the organization.

FEVS # 57 - Managers review and evaluate the organization's progress toward meeting its goals and objectives.

FEVS # 58 - Managers promote communication among different work units (for example, about projects, goals, resources).

FEVS # 59 - Managers support collaboration across work units to accomplish work objectives.

FEVS # 60 - Overall, how good a job do you feel is being done by the manager directly above your immediate supervisor?

Supervisors (5 items)

FEVS # 47 - Supervisors in my work unit support employee development.

FEVS # 48 - My supervisor listens to what I have to say.

FEVS # 51 - I have trust and confidence in my supervisor.

FEVS # 52 - Overall, how good a job do you feel is being done by your immediate supervisor?

FEVS # 55 - Supervisors work well with employees of different backgrounds.