Influence of workplace fun on employee behavior, focusing on Millennials working in the banking industry: Replication Study

Albi Hasamemi

About the Author

Albi Hasamemi completed the International Management and Leadership Program at Lauder Business School. He graduated in 2022. This working paper corresponds to the excellent master thesis by Albi Hasamemi. The supervisor was Prof. (FH) Dr. Hanno Poeschl M.Sc., MBA.

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Submitted by:	Albi Hasamemi
Matriculation Number:	1910573008
Cohort:	IML 2019
Supervisor:	Prof. (FH) Dr. Hanno Poeschl M.Sc., MBA

Awarding body: Lauder Business School
Hofzeile 18-20
1190 Wien
Austria

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Statutory Declaration

I declare in lieu of an oath that I have written this master thesis by myself, and that I did not use other sources or resources than stated for its preparation. I declare that I have clearly indicated all direct and indirect quotations, and that this thesis has not been submitted elsewhere for examination purposes.

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List of Abbreviations

AVE	Average Variance Extracted
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
CR	Composite Reliability
EFA	Exploratory factor analysis
MA	Master of Arts
MOAQ	Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire
OCBI	Organizational Citizenship Behavior towards Individuals
PHD	Doctor of Philosophy
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SRMR	Standardized Root Mean Square Residual

Abstract

The banking industry is going through significant changes during the last two decades due to highly impactful events, such as new technological developments, the global financial crisis of 2007-2008, and most recently the global COVID-19 pandemic. These events have impacted organizational and individual motivation, work processes, productivity, as well as the hiring and retention of valued talents.

Under these premises, the main objective of this quantitative replication study is to test the extent Millennials' approach to workplace fun (i.e. Mindset) influences fun experienced at work, job gratification (satisfaction), perceived performance (task fulfillment), and employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI) in the banking industry in Austria, in order to further evaluate whether the resulting conclusions of the original research carried out by Choi, Kwon & Kim (2013) are still valid in the context of another industry and geographic location.

The study's conceptual model was tested via responses from 313 Millennial employees working in the Banking industry in Austria.

Results of the study showed that Mindset positively affects fun experienced at work; fun experienced at work positively affects job gratification (satisfaction); and job gratification positively affects task fulfillment. Fun experienced at work did not have a positive impact on task fulfillment, nor a significant impact on employee engagement with others within the organization. Job gratification did not have a significant direct impact on employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI).

Results of the study were limited due to the utilization of a convenience sample, as well as potentially social desirability bias. Additionally, the global Covid-19 pandemic and the instability resulting from it might have affected the banking industry employees' Mindset, making them less predisposed towards workplace fun.

Management needs to foster and endorse workplace fun, especially if they to take advantage of the benefits it provides to the organization and individuals alike.

This is the first empirical study on the influence of workplace fun in the Austrian banking industry.

Keywords: workplace fun, fun at work, employee behavior, job satisfaction, productivity, task performance, employee engagement, OCBI, Millennials, Banking industry, Austria

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Human capital is one of the most significant levers of competitive advantage. Organizations are soon going to be facing the challenging task of replacing retiring employees, as Baby Boomers (the generation born starting from 1943 and ending in 1960 (Costanza, D. P., Badger, J. M., Fraser, R. L. Severt, J. B. & Gade, P. A., 2012, pp. 378-379)) have almost entirely exited the labor market, while early Generation Xers (the generation born starting from 1960 and ending in 1979 (Costanza, D. P., Badger, J. M., Fraser, R. L. Severt, J. B. & Gade, P. A., 2012, pp. 378-379)) are currently exiting the labor market, and will eventually exit it entirely in the next twenty years. Faced with this situation, talent acquisition and retainment are crucial for ensuring the sustained growth and development of organizations and markets. Adapting organizational practices and core values towards this shift in the labor force is an important task that has to be fulfilled by medium and higher-level management (Twenge, J. M., Campbell, S. M., Hoffman, B. J., & Lance, C. E., 2010, p. 118).

According to the data published by the European Banking Federation (2020), which was collected in 2019, there were close to 544 credit institutions and 71,798 individuals working in the Austrian banking industry. The average age of Austrian banking industry employees rose to circa 42.1 years old in 2015, higher than the average age in other industries. This increase in age was due to the decline experienced in the employment of individuals between the ages of 20-35 years old. At the same time, even though the level of productivity in the banking industry in 2015 was still higher in comparison to other industries, after the financial crisis of 2007-2008 these levels had declined and banks still have not achieved a naturally sustained growth (Ritzberger-Grünwald, D., Stiglbauer, A., & Waschiczek, W., 2016, pp. 84-88).

Furthermore, according to Srinivas, Schoeps, Ramsay, Wadhwani, Hazuria & Jain (2019) the banking industry is experiencing significantly fast changes due to the rapid technological advancements of AI and robotics' research & development industry, as well as a result of the demographic shifts which produced these changes, especially the entry into the labor market of Millennials (also known as Generation Y, GenY or GenMe) with their tech savviness and future-oriented vision. The authors state that not enough consideration is being paid to the human resource capital when compared to the attention and investment towards new technology adaptation. Development and innovative solutions are closely linked to organizational culture and the workplace environment, so recommendations are given by

Srinivas, Schoeps, Ramsay, Wadhwani, Hazuria & Jain (2019) towards the increase of investments in enhancing the organizational culture, improving the workplace environment and fostering stronger relations in the digital era.

Stemming from the research of Choi, Kwon & Kim (2013) regarding Generation Y hospitality industry workers approach to workplace fun conducted in the United States of America, and their suggestions for future research, this study will replicate Choi, Kwon & Kim's (2013) research by focusing on Millennials, a.k.a. Generation Yers, namely the generation born starting from 1980 and ending in 2000 (Costanza, D. P., Badger, J. M., Fraser, R. L. Severt, J. B. & Gade, P. A., 2012, pp. 378-379) working in the banking industry, and will analyze the influence workplace fun exerts over job (satisfaction) gratification, job productivity and employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI).

Within their review on the job satisfaction – job performance literature and models, Judge, Bono, Thoresen & Patton (2001, p. 393) declared that even though after the 1980s the number of studies focusing on the aforementioned relationship has seen a decline, in particular from the studies performed by academics and researchers in the field of psychology, going forward more studies regarding this relationship should be encouraged and performed, pertaining especially to the changes, developments and/or evolutions of these concepts and their building elements or variations.

According to Fleming (2005, pp. 285-286), the promotion by academics, practitioners and cultural gurus of the concept of workplace fun, and that of working environments that encourage and support having fun at work, as well as fostering and developing social, playful, and entertaining connections, which earned traction in the 1980s, has not faded into oblivion and is still standing the test of time. Meanwhile, Ford, McLaughlin & Newstrom (2003, pp. 18-19) discovered that HR managers, as the people in charge of leveraging the potential of the human capital within an organization, notably retained that concept and role of workplace fun as a tool for improving talent acquisition and talent retention, as well as significantly increasing teamwork, collaboration and productivity, will not only strengthen its foundations in organizations' cultures, but will also expand and develop its influence on future evolutions of organizational culture and values.

As this type of study is being suggested and implemented for the first time in Austria, its results will be innovative and pose interest for academics, practitioners and researchers of various fields, in particular those of behavioral psychology and management.

A significant contribution of the current study, as well as replication studies in general, is testing the accuracy and soundness of previous research. By changing the industry and geographic location, the current studies' results shall contribute to further validate the generalizability and validity of previous studies' results.

The results obtained from this research will especially be of interest for practitioners, namely managers, employees, and various stakeholders in the banking industry. For managers and influential stakeholders, this studies' results can facilitate the understanding of the employee's perception and evaluation of the importance of workplace fun, as well as its potential perceived impacts on job satisfaction and job performance, thus enabling them to make changes to existing cultures and regulations and foster more productive workplace environments. Since the banking industry environment is generally perceived by managers and shareholders as needing to be serious and conservative in order to transmit a sense of stability and reliability, and attracting individuals that share and embody this perception, the results of the current study may contribute to changing this perception for the stakeholders within the industry: mainly the shareholders, management and employees. Management and shareholders need to realize that the implementation of workplace fun can produce significant positive effects, such as increased job gratification, higher employee commitment and loyalty, as well as more engagement and better teamwork within the organization [(Ford, R. C., McLaughlin, F. S., & Newstrom, J. W., 2003); (Karl, K. A. & Peluchette, J., 2006a); (Tews, M. J., Michel, J. W. & Stafford, K., 2013); (Fluegge-Woolf, 2014)].

After the economic crisis of 2008-2009, several industries have implemented budgetary cuts in order to decrease costs within the organizations, among which investments in leisure assets/activities and workplace fun which are seen as superfluous and/or non-value adding. Furthermore, the recent Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated the negative outcomes of work-related pressures and psychological stress symptoms, impacting the productivity, quality of work, motivation and mental health of employees (Yu, J., Park, J., & Hyun, S. S., 2021). The results of this research aim to show the significance of workplace fun, as well as its impact on task fulfillment and employee engagement with others within the organization, which are value adding activities/functions, thus motivating shareholders and managers to invest more attention, money, and effort into creating and promoting fun working environments, with the aim of improving employee gratification and consequently the productivity, dedication, and customer service within the organization.

For researchers and academics, this studies' results can be an encouragement and stimulus towards performing even more similar studies in the future, within other industries and/or with different parameters.

The current study aims to show that replication studies are necessary, and that through their results they can contribute to furthering knowledge and validating or questioning the results of previous studies. Another significant contribution of this study would be generating more discussion on this topic, thus contributing to a clearer definition and deeper comprehension of the concept and construct of workplace fun, and its impact in various organizations and/or industries.

1.1 Structure of the thesis

The current thesis was organized in six chapters. The First Chapter: Introduction has provided the background for the research and statement of the research problem. The Second Chapter: Literature Review has provided a comprehensive summary and critical review of the most relevant existing body of knowledge in regards to the analyzed constructs, namely Millennials and Attitude towards workplace fun, Fun experienced at work, Job gratification (satisfaction), Task fulfillment (productivity), and Employee engagement with others within the organization. The Third Chapter: Conceptual Model and Hypotheses has provided the development of the conceptual (structural) model and its main components (as mentioned above), as well as the hypotheses raised based on insights from previous research. The Fourth Chapter: Methodology has described in detail the research design, the sampling method and sample size, the characteristics of the sample, the data collection strategy, the questionnaire development, the data analysis strategy, as well as the justification of the designs, methods, and tests chosen. The Fifth Chapter: Results has provided the results of the analysis of the reliability and validity of the measurement model, as well as the results of the analysis of the structural model and hypothesis tests. The Sixth Chapter: Discussion and Conclusion has provided a brief Discussion of the thesis results in relation to findings from previous research (critically reviewed in Chapter the Second Chapter), the Practical Implications and Limitations of the thesis, Recommendations for future research and Conclusion.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter aims to define and critically analyze the constituents of this studies' conceptual framework (Figure 2): Approach to workplace fun (Mindset), Workplace fun (experience of fun at and/or during work), Job gratification, Task (execution) fulfillment, and Employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI), through the existing body of knowledge.

2.1 Millennials and Approach to workplace fun

Definitions

The definition given by Costanza, Badger, Fraser, Severt & Gade (2012) for the term Millennials (also known as Generation Y, Nexters, or GenMe), encompasses individuals born approximately between the years 1980 and 2000 (pp. 378-379). This grouping of individuals or cohort, having gone through almost identical significant major events during their early life, have developed mostly unchanging similar and comparable preferences, values, mindsets, and approaches to events or new concepts. The study conducted by Costanza, Badger, Fraser, Severt & Gade (2012), via the review and meta-analysis of 95 peer-reviewed articles examining the differences in workplace values among generations, revealed there were no significant differences when comparing the workplace values and mindset of the analyzed cohorts. Contrary to Constanza, Badger, Fraser, Severt & Gade (2012), Schewe & Noble (2000, pp. 131-134) argue in favor of the value of utilizing cohorts, such as Generation X or Millennials, when investigating and analyzing trends and behavioral patterns.

Aspects and Previous Research

Twenge (2010, p. 208) argues that Millennials might be less focused on work compared to previous generations; they place importance on entertainment and relaxation, making them challenging in terms of motivation and retention. Through her empirical review of studies on similarities and discrepancies between different generation in relation to job-associated attitudes & behaviors, Twenge (2010) found that Millennials are eager to embrace change and have a higher level of job satisfaction compared to previous generations, preferring to invest more in their personal life and work-life balance than their work and career (pp. 205-206). In consonance with these results, Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman & Lance (2010, pp. 1134-1139) maintain that Millennials place more importance on extrinsic

motivation compared to previous cohorts, and have a more individualistic nature. As a result of their study with data collected from high school seniors, the authors discovered the existence of subtle differences in the psychology and behaviorism of generational cohorts in regard to work mindset and attitude. A limitation to the study was the fact that part of the data was collected relatively early on in previous years, which might not reflect recent changes. Their findings are not in line with general assumptions regarding Millennials' values, as well as findings from other researchers, stating that Millennials value stability and are less inclined to leave their jobs than what managers and practitioners believe, though they place less value on extrinsic rewards making them challenging to motivate and retain (pp. 1123-1133).

Lub, Bijvank, Bal, Blomme & Schalk (2012, pp. 566-567) found that Millennials are less committed to their organizations compared to previous cohorts. They are more prone to leaving an organization if not motivated properly, thus making their retention more challenging in comparison to previous generations, supporting the results of Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman & Lance's (2010) study.

Eisner (2005) noted, through her study focused on the management of Millennials, that this generation or cohort has grown up with a strong influence of technology and social media developments, thus they have built a tolerance to change. They are flexible, adaptable, and have a strong desire for challenges and development, as well as a need for inclusive social environments where they can work with other employees that share their values. She found that Millennials' perception of the managers' efficiency in directing and motivating them, strongly affected their job gratification. She also found that Millennials perceived their managers to lack in their ability to incentivize them, and posed two interesting questions for future analysis regarding the reasoning behind this perception: whether this came from the managers' style of managing, or from their employed tools and techniques of motivating Millennial employees (pp. 6-8).

Choi, Kwon & Kim (2013) have shown, through their study conducted in the hospitality industry in the United States of America, that there is a positive relation between Millennials' predisposition and opinion in regards to workplace fun, and the actual fun experienced by them in the workplace. Furthermore, the fun experienced by employees at work has a positive relationship with the level of satisfaction achieved through their job (i.e. job satisfaction or gratification), task (execution) fulfillment, and employee engagement with others within the organization (i.e. Organizational Citizenship Behaviors Towards Individuals - OCBI).

A recent empirical study by Ruangkanjanases & Chen (2019, pp. 120-121) performed in Thailand by way of surveying 519 Millennial employees, provided results indicating that Millennial employees in Thailand have a positive and favorable predisposition (Mindset) towards workplace fun, assessing it as important and proper, as well as anticipating it to generate positive results. Furthermore, the authors found that employees experiencing fun at work reported higher level of satisfaction from their employment. However, the impact of fun experienced at work on task performance was not highly significant, though the relationship was mediated by job gratification.

2.2 Workplace fun

Definitions

Through their study, Ford, McLaughlin & Newstrom (2003) have provided a definition of fun working environments, focusing on terms of "the intentional promotion and support of activities that generate positive feelings and improve the efficiency and output of employees and teams" (p. 22). Contrary to Ford, McLaughlin & Newstrom (2003), Fineman (2006, p. 280) has defined workplace fun as "spontaneous, unexpected, and defiant of the existing status-quo". Meanwhile, Fluegge (2008, p. 15) defined workplace fun as "enjoyable and pleasant activities that are not affiliated with job responsibilities and work tasks". Lamm and Meeks (2009, p. 614) have also provided a similar definition of fun at work in terms of "enjoyable or pleasant activities".

Aspects

Taking into consideration the various broad definitions of workplace fun, research has focused on identifying and determining the components & aspects of workplace fun. Existing literature has categorized workplace fun into two groupings based on how fun is generated, namely organic (spontaneous) fun (Strömberg & Karlsson, 2009; Plester, Cooper-Thomas & Winquist, 2015) and designed (managed, task-related, and organized) fun (Lamm, 2009; Hunter, Jemielniak & Postuła, 2010; Chan, 2010; Tews, Michel & Bartlett, 2012; Plester, Cooper-Thomas & Winquist, 2015; Georganta & Montgomery, 2019).

Spontaneous fun transpires unconsciously and organically, as the term implies, sparked by interactions between employees within the workplace (Strömberg, S., & Karlsson, J. C., 2009). Meanwhile, designed (managed, task-related, and organized) fun is intentional and actively planned and/or organized by either management or employees. Managed fun is thoroughly planned by management to achieve the strategic goals of the organization (Plester,

B., Cooper-Thomas, H. & Winquist, J., 2015). Task-related fun ensues from employees engaging with their job-related tasks, generating amusement and joy while performing said tasks (Plester, B., Cooper-Thomas, H. & Winquist, J., 2015, p. 384). Organized fun, different from managed fun, is autonomously coordinated and arranged by employees, and is generally perceived to comprise of activities taking place mainly outside the workplace (Georganta, K. & Montgomery, A., 2019, pp. 320-323).

In this context, Ford, McLaughlin & Newstrom (2003) identified ten groupings of fun activities, resulting from their surveys conducted with 572 HR managers, which were classified in ten categories (listed in terms of relevance) comprising of:

> "*1) recognition of personal milestones, 2) social events, 3) public celebrations of professional achievements, 4) opportunities for community volunteerism, 5) stress release activities, 6) humor, 7) games, 8) friendly competitions among employees, 9) opportunities for personal development, and 10) entertainment*" (p. 21).

The combined implementation of these activities or components was noted to establish a positive affect towards the organization, as a fun and desirable workplace (pp. 21-22). In their research, Ford, McLaughlin & Newstrom's (2003) view of workplace fun was more closely related to the designed (managed and/or organized) fun category, and they encouraged management to actively implement components of workplace fun in a structured and organized manner (p. 22).

Meanwhile, Fleming (2005, pp. 299-300) notes that workplace fun seems to be achieved by blurring or tearing down the boundaries between work and personal life, and is in her opinion dubious of formal designed (managed and/or organized) fun, supporting instead the view of organic (spontaneous) fun as more appropriate in achieving the desired goal.

Consequences of workplace fun

In terms of potential consequences of workplace fun, existing literature maintains that outcomes can be either positive or negative, depending on circumstances, constituents, and subjective perceptions of individuals regarding workplace fun (Ford, McLaughlin & Newstrom, 2003; Fleming, 2005; Karl, Peluchette, Hall & Harland, 2005; Cook, 2008; Fleugge-Woolf, 2014; Plester, Cooper-Thomas & Winquist, 2015).

Ford, Newstrom & McLaughlin (2004) maintain a positive view of workplace fun and its potential outcomes, stating that fun at work can enhance organizational attractiveness to job-seekers, improve performance, motivation, retention, satisfaction and creativity (2004, pp. 117-118).

From another point of view, Fleming (2005, pp. 297-299) analyzes workplace fun from a more critical perspective, and denotes that while workplace fun should be integrated by management into organizations, due consideration should be given to the fact what employees consider fun.

Previous research

This section aims to critically analyze in detail the most relevant research on workplace fun.

Michel, Tews & Allen (2019) provide a comprehensive summary of existing relevant studies on workplace fun through their empirical review of predominant literature. The authors emphasize the need for further investigations concerning potential benefits associated with workplace fun, given the insufficiency and/or lack of academic research on the topic (p. 109).

Ford, McLaughlin & Newstrom (2003) performed a descriptive quantitative study via surveying HR managers across the United States of America, in order to discover the activities, benefits, potential disadvantages, and resistances, as well as the mindset of HR managers in regard to creating and supporting fun workplaces and work environments. The authors found that out of the 572 valid responses received, less than 25% of managers believed that their organizations had managed to provide a fun working environment, even though more than 90% of them maintained that fun at work had more positive benefits than drawbacks for both the organization and the employees, thus recognizing the value of implementing workplace fun (pp. 20-25). Ford, McLaughlin & Newstrom (2003) learned that the size of an organization had an inverse impact on the number of fun activities taking place at or during work, meaning that larger organizations or departments with more employees tended to incorporate less fun social activities and/or interactions in their daily work routines (p. 26). Another interesting discovery from this study was the fact that the age and education level of managers also influenced the number of fun activities, namely older and less educated managers resulted to be engaging less often in social events, as well as offering or enabling fewer opportunities and/or activities for employees to enjoy the benefits of workplace fun (pp. 27-28). Also, the authors identified high-level management as the main barrier inhibiting

workplace fun due to their negative perception of it, justified in terms of detrimental impact on costs and professional image (p. 28). An important fact of note is the failure of the authors to disclose any limitations to the study.

Karl, Peluchette, Hall & Harland (2005) examined workplace fun through an exploratory study aiming to identify differences between the private, public, and non-profit organizations pertaining to the attitudes, use, and types of fun, as well as the effect the element of trust has on workplace fun. The results of the study (2005, p. 11) revealed that employees had positive regard for workplace fun. There were no significant differences found associated with organization type, implying that workplace fun is perceived similarly by employees from different sectors. Significant was the fact that trust played a crucial role in employees' approach to workplace fun, namely high levels of trust towards coworkers and superiors positively affecting the perception and evaluation of workplace fun. Karl, Peluchette, Hall & Harland (2005) acknowledged that the study was significantly limited due to the fact that the majority of respondents were women, thus having an over-representation of the female population, and an under-representation of the male population in the samples (p. 13).

Karl and Peluchette (2006a) discovered that enabling a fun and enjoyable setting in the workplace can mitigate the negative psychological effects perceived or experienced by employees in the healthcare sector, thus improving or increasing their level of work satisfaction and output. Also, they discovered that a positive approach of employees towards fun at work improved their experienced fun and work satisfaction while alleviating the negative effects of stress. Even though their studies' results substantiate the general claims regarding the benefits of workplace fun, there are limitations to their study such as the specific focus on healthcare employees, as well as the need for replications to support and further corroborate the results (p. 135).

Karl & Peluchette (2006b, pp. 9-10) found similar results to those mentioned above with a sample of students in the United States. Results showed that fun experienced at work had a positive influence on the satisfaction of employees, as well as perceived quality of service towards customers. Furthermore, predisposition towards fun at work affected the perceived level of fun experienced by employees. Finally, the authors disclosed the limitations to the study, namely the utilization of a convenience sample.

In another study, Karl, Peluchette & Harland (2007) examined the correlation and impact of individual psychological traits on workplace fun in the medical services sector by means of a quantitative study, surveying 152 working university students in the United States. The results of the research demonstrated a high level of acceptance and valuation of workplace fun among healthcare employees, especially for individuals with more extroverted and agreeable personalities, as well as a positive impact of fun on emotional exhaustion and gratification (pp. 432-433). Limitations of the research were related to the chosen sample and the analyzed variables, since respondents were specializing in administration and reported lower levels of emotional exhaustion compared to regular medical personnel, as well as not analyzing other potential variables associated with workplace fun and its outcomes (pp. 433-434). In conclusion, Karl, Peluchette & Harland (2007, p. 435) suggest that the application of fun in the healthcare sector would be beneficial, and potentially produce significant positive outcomes.

Karl, Peluchette & Hall (2008) investigated the impact of workplace fun on volunteers' attraction to organizations, and turnover intentions. The study revealed that volunteers perceived workplace fun as beneficial to both them and the organization. Moreover, individuals attributing a higher importance to workplace fun proclaimed greater levels of gratification, and were less inclined to leave the organization (pp. 86-87). The authors reaffirm that fun does not appeal equally to everyone, and workplace fun might not be the best strategy to attract all volunteers, however the inclusion of workplace fun in various social projects may increase the overall attractiveness and perceived benefits for participants (p. 89). Karl, Peluchette & Hall (2008) admit to their study being limited due to the small sample size, as well as the targeted organizations, thus making the generalizability of the results constrained (p. 90).

Plester (2009) investigated workplace fun and humor, as well as the impact of culture on boundary creation and/or elimination, through a qualitative exploratory study of four different organizations in New Zealand. An interesting observation from the study postulated that formal organizations and formal cultures within organizations are one of the boundaries constraining workplace fun and humor. Withing these organizations workplace fun and humor are perceived as inappropriate, an impression originating from higher-level managements' behavior and the established culture of business formality. Organizational and cultural limitations are imposed on what is considered acceptable fun and humor in the workplace by managers and/or employees themselves, which are then communicated either verbally or

tacitly to all members (pp. 595-596). Plester (2009) found that the constraints on workplace fun and humor were more rigid and narrower in larger organizations, probably due to the high hierarchy and stringent formal culture (p. 596). She concluded that the implementation and consolidation of workplace fun and humor is significantly related to the formal boundaries and cultural limitations established within an organization, therefor the identification and adjustment of said boundaries and/or limitations is pivotal for any change initiatives aiming to institutionalize workplace fun and transform organizational cultures (p. 597).

Strömberg & Karlsson (2009) analyzed one of the constituents of workplace fun, namely humor, through an ethnographic study conducted at a food company in Sweden. Through their observations, the authors dicovered that although workplace fun was not implemented by the management/organization, employees benefited from spontaneous fun at work generated through humor, social interactions and mutual support (pp. 637-638). Workplace fun, and more specifically humor, was expressed in various verbal and physical forms. Strömberg & Karlsson (2009) stated that workplace fun and humor are potentially esential and fundamental to any organization, and though formal designed (managed and/or organized) fun is gaining more recognition, some attention should also be directed to spontaneous fun and humor as established and unstopable constituents of workplace fun (pp. 643-646).

Grugulis, Dundon & Wilkinson (2000) studied the impact of culture and management control on workplace fun and the work environment. Through their qualitative study, the authors discovered that managements' efforts to enforce a workplace fun culture had adverse effects on employees, resulting in a negative perception of the created culture and environment as too artificial and forced (pp. 112-113).

Similar results were derived by Fleming (2005), who conducted a case study (qualitative research) intending to reveal the effects of the implementation of prescribed "fun cultures" by managers in an Australian communications company. An unexpected result when compared to expert recommendations of fun workplace outcomes was the cynicism generated as a byproduct of the managed fun imposed on employees, probably resulting from the lack of trust and blurring of the work-life boundaries (pp. 297-300). Fleming (2005, p. 300) cautions practitioners against the appropriation and imitation of fun in the workplace from other areas of life, as well as the management of fun cultures and use of managed fun.

Tews, Michel & Bartlett (2012) conducted research investigating the correlation between workplace fun and post attractiveness to applicants. The authors discovered that workplace fun is crucial to attracting more applicants for job positions. Additionally, especially early on in the recruitment process workplace fun resulted being more significant than remuneration and promotion prospects (p. 111). As disclosed by Tews, Michel & Bartlett (2012), the study was limited as a result of utilizing hypothetical scenarios for measuring and evaluating the participants' response, in this way restricting the generalization of the results. Another limitation was the use of undergraduate students who are theorized to be more accepting of and predisposed to workplace fun (pp. 111-112).

Plester, Cooper-Thomas & Winquist (2015) examined workplace fun, humor, and what constitutes fun for employees in New Zealand. The study unveiled three categories of the workplace fun conceptualization, namely "managed, organic and task fun" (pp. 388-390). The authors argue that these workplace fun categories coexist and contend for dominance within the work environment driven by pressures from personal, managerial, organizational, and work expectations and/or demands (p. 391). Plester, Cooper-Thomas & Winquist (2015) argue for the implementation and endorsement of organic fun on a larger/wider scale, as a more generally and universally accepted form of fun at work from employees (p. 393). Limitations to the study were associated to the geographic location and need for replication, in order to validate and support the generalization of the results.

In a recent ethnographic (qualitative) study, Mousa (2020) investigated the experience of workplace fun as perceived by the public banking sector personnel in Egypt. Results of the study showed that workplace fun has yet to be perceived and/or integrated into the public banks in Egypt. The author (2020, p. 696) discovered that managers were one of the most significant barriers to workplace fun, due to the power distance established with their employees, thus being unable to organize fun activities or social events with their subordinates. Mousa (2020, p. 698) stated that managements' low education level when compared to subordinates was also one of the factors inhibiting the introduction and development of workplace fun within the Egyptian public banking sector. Due to their low education level, managers were not able to comprehend the importance and value of workplace fun in fulfilling psychological and social needs for their organizations. At the same time, the formal and rigid cultural environment was another significant barrier to the acceptance and further development of fun at work within the public banking sector of Egypt (p. 698). In conclusion, Mousa (2020, p. 700) recommends the utilization of fun at work

within Egyptian public banks as a solution to potentially mitigating the negative effects of work pressures, such as increasing dissatisfaction, high employee turnover, and employee burnout. Meanwhile, the author discloses that the neglection of the private banking sector, as well as the exclusion of managers from the study, limit the generalizability of the results (pp. 700-701).

2.3 Job gratification

Definitions

Weiss (2002, p. 175) defined job gratification/satisfaction in terms of the favorable emotional evaluation of work and its setting. Meanwhile, Hofmans, De Gieter & Pepermans' (2013, p. 7) definition was more general, and job gratification was defined by them as "a comprehensive assessment of the job".

Aspects

Graham & Messner (1998) identified the most significant elements and factors affecting job (satisfaction) gratification and employee motivation, such as the work environment, rewards, and supportive co-workers (pp. 196-197).

Meanwhile, Judge, Bono, Thoresen & Patton (2001, p. 393) stated the necessity for further research on elements of job gratification, even though it has been previously studied extensively by behavioral psychologists, especially concerning new variants and developments.

Weiss (2002, p. 175) provided an indication of the significant impact of emotive state and emotional assessment of the individual on job gratification (satisfaction), aside from the previously recognized impact of behaviors and judgement.

Previous research

This section aims to critically analyze the most relevant existing studies on job gratification.

Weiss (2002, pp. 175-177) maintained that job gratification is not only a result of the intellectual assessment and behavioral outcomes, but should include the emotional assessment and connection of the subject to the job. As such, the author argues that job gratification is influenced by the values, expectations and experiences related to work. According to Weiss (2002, pp. 183-186), the assessment of the emotional connection and preconceived emotional state with relation to the job play a highly significant role in the level of job gratification an employee discerns to experience. Furthermore, he raises attention to the need for further

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studies regarding the impact of job gratification on performance through the underlying behaviors that contribute to an increased performance, and their relation to emotional and behavioral elements of job gratification. Intellectual and emotive reactions and assessment play a separate role in the measurement of work performance and gratification; and the assessment of gratification (satisfaction as a broad concept) involves several short-term, smaller scale emotive and intellectual evaluations throughout a long time period.

Peluchette & Karl (2005) examined the workplace fun approach and behavior tendencies of medical students in the United States, as well as the impact of fun on job gratification, through a quantitative exploratory study. The results of their study revealed that the medical personal had a favorable view of workplace fun, considering it appropriate and important, denoting that food-related events were the most favored fun activities by the hospital employees (p. 272). A relevant finding from Peluchette & Karl's (2005, p. 274) research was the significant correlation of fun at work with job gratification, confirming the hypothesis stipulating that an increase in the level of positive attitude and experienced fun can result in more satisfied and happier employees. However, although the results of Peluchette & Karl's (2005) research have provided interesting insights into workplace fun and its outcomes, the study was limited as a result of utilizing a convenience sample which makes it not viable for said results to be generalized.

Ilies & Judge (2002) investigated the impact of the personality, and psychological & affective states of individuals on their job gratification (satisfaction). The authors discovered that shifts in reported job gratification assessments were dependent on the psychological & affective state of participants, thus confirming the significant impact of the psychological & affective states of individuals on their job gratification (pp. 1132-1134).

In a successive study, Ilies & Judge (2004) offered a new method of measurement for job gratification, reaffirmed psychological & affective states as precursors of job gratification, as well as postulated that job gratification was an outcome of the analytical and emotional reaction to the job and the work environment (pp. 378-383).

Kim, Leong & Lee (2005) have focused their research on examining job gratification, with their study conducted in the hospitality industry. According to the authors, satisfied employees are more motivated, have better results at work, have a stronger affective connection to their colleagues, and are more loyal to the organization (pp. 173-175). The study showed that a potentially elevated sense of job gratification and higher employee

retention were dependent on managers creating fun work environments and endorsing workplace fun (p. 187).

Salazar, Pfaffenberg & Salazar (2006, pp. 11-14) found that the work environment and employee's predisposition have a significant impact on job gratification (satisfaction). Furthermore, the authors found that job gratification positively affects employee engagement, and their loyalty towards the organization, thus mitigating turnover intentions. Salazar, Pfaffenberg & Salazar (2006, pp. 11-14) noted that companies tend to hire individuals that fit the company, the culture and the position.

Baptiste (2009) expressed a critical view on workplace fun, rather preferring to address employee well-being and gratification through a sample of managers working for a British public institution. She found that monetary benefits were more important to managers than workplace fun, being seen as a higher-level need, thus the implementation of workplace fun had no significant positive impact on the employees' satisfaction level, instead causing dissatisfaction among managers. In the analyzed public sector organization, workplace fun initiatives were perceived in a negative view and were in dissonance with the already congested requirements of employees' and managers' daily work schedule. In closing, Baptiste (2009) argues that balance is needed between the implementation of workplace fun agendas and the improvement/fulfillment of employees' monetary compensation & professional recognition needs (pp. 609-610)

Chan (2010) showed that workplace fun is important towards providing employees a positive perception and experience of their work environment. According to him, employees value fun and sociable work settings, teamwork, and interactions within an organization. By implementing a fun work environment, with a positive atmosphere and productive social activities and interactions, employers can increase job gratification (satisfaction) and reduce employee turnover. Managers should support fun work settings, due to the positive influence on employee morale and motivation. Moreover, Chan (2010) identified four categories of workplace fun centered around employees, management, social event, and organizational policies. However, Chan (2010) does states limitations to his qualitative study, such as the small number of participants, the selected industry and companies, as well as the potential bias in the interpretation of the interview data (pp. 725-727).

Everett (2011, pp. 1-4) explored the application of workplace fun in libraries. She claims that while workplace fun can have positive outcomes, such as improving the quality of service and enhancing satisfaction (job gratification), it should be implemented with caution since it can cause employees to have a cynic reaction to it.

Choi, Kwon & Kim (2013, pp. 419-423) found that employees' approach to workplace fun positively impacted their perceived workplace fun experience, job gratification (satisfaction), task fulfillment (performance) and engagement with others within the organization (OCBI); coherent with previous findings from Ilies & Judge (2002); (2004), Karl, Peluchette, Hall & Harland (2005), and Karl & Peluchette (2006a).

Hofmans, De Gieter & Pepermans (2013) examined the relationship between job gratification and job benefits, namely extrinsic/monetary and intrinsic/psychological benefits, through three different empirical exploratory studies. Results from the study showed that though there were individual differences pertaining to the relationship of gratification with monetary rewards, psychological benefits were positively related to gratification for all participants (p. 7). The authors suggest that the application within an organization of only extrinsic/monetary benefits without utilizing intrinsic/psychological benefits might have too many limitations, and that the application of intrinsic/psychological benefits may significantly improve job gratification and motivation (Hofmans, J., De Gieter, S., & Pepermans, R., 2013, pp. 8-9).

Consistent with the extant body of knowledge, Chan & Mak (2016, pp. 30-35) found that workplace fun positively impacts job gratification for Chinese employees, mediated by the trusting relationship towards managers.

2.4 Task fulfillment (productivity) & Employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI)

Motowidlo, Borman & Schmit (1997) were the first to give a clear definition of task fulfillment, as an activity or set of activities that enable, sustain or facilitate the supply of final work output (be it a good or service). What stands behind task fulfillment are the behaviors that generate these actions, and their motivations (pp. 75-76).

A study conducted by Sparrowe, Liden, Wayne & Kraimer (2001) highlighted the fact that task execution/fulfillment (work performance) is not only dependent on the individual, but also on the team and the engagement with others within the organization. A significant part of the interactions between employees that affect performance is the informal

interactions, thus initiatives to voluntarily help others within the organization are an integral part of employee evaluation and productivity.

According to Sparrowe, Liden, Wayne & Kraimer (2001), the level of interaction of an employee with his colleagues, and the active participation in positive social events and interactions such as helping and mentoring others within the organization received a higher evaluation of their productivity and performance. Interconnectivity among employees, within their official duties and especially outside the formal requirement of the job, was deemed an essential and significant part for of the assessment of an employee's overall performance. Thus, the main contribution of this study was highlighting the role and impact of informal and/or social relationships and exchanges on work outcomes, teamwork and evaluations. However, the authors do acknowledge that their results may be biased, as well as facing several limitations due to the validity of the method implemented and employed sample size (pp. 321-324).

Tews, Michel & Strafford (2013) investigated the correlation of workplace fun with task fulfillment via responses collected in the United States from food industry employees. The study revealed the existence of a positive correlation between workplace fun and task performance among restaurant employees. A surprising result was the negative relationship between managements' endorsement of fun at work and task fulfillment (work efficiency), namely employees displaying a decreased task performance as a result of management's endorsement of fun at work, implying that excessive workplace fun might hinder task fulfillment. Management's endorsement of fun at work was still crucial to the achievement of the potential benefits of workplace fun, such as increased productivity, motivation, and desire to stay in the organization (pp. 378-379). Although the results of the study were significant, they were constrained due to the collection of data from a specific category of employees working for the same restaurant chain (pp. 379-380).

In another similar study performed with hospitality industry employees, Tews, Michel & Allen (2014) focused on examining the impact of workplace fun and employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI) on turnover intentions. The study revealed the significant impact that workplace fun had on reducing turnover intentions and improving employee retention, while employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI) had a moderating effect on turnover intentions (pp. 936-938). Tews, Michel & Allen (2014, pp. 941-942) reported similar limitations to the generalization of the study as those disclosed

by Tews, Michel & Strafford (2013), namely the sample selected being to homogenous and not representative of a wide range of employee categories and organizations.

Lee & Allen (2002, p. 132) noted that employees affective state and job gratification influenced positively their engagement with others within the organization (OCBI). The authors defined OCBI (Organizational Citizenship Behavior towards Others) in terms of "voluntarily assisting others within the organization, without having to do so due to professional responsibilities".

Romero & Cruthrids (2006, pp. 60-61) claimed that humor (which is an integral aspect and constituent of workplace fun) has several positive effects/outcomes, among which improving interactions and affective connections between employees, thus resulting in an increased level of employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI), better cooperation and easier integration of new employees. Other positive outcomes of workplace fun, according to the authors, are increased creativity, improved communication, reduced work-related stress, more effective leadership, and higher loyalty. Despite the significant beneficial outcomes, the authors state that humor is subjective and can have undesired and/or adverse effects when misused (2006, pp. 62-65). A shortcoming to the study, however, is the lack of a "limitations disclosure".

In her unpublished dissertation, Fleugge (2008) investigated the effect of workplace fun on aspects of employee performance and productivity, such as engagement with work and creative performance. She also utilized social exchange theory in order to explain employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI), as well as the impact of workplace fun on employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI), stating that boosting trusting relationships with colleagues through workplace fun facilitates having more interactions and engagements (p. 26).

In a successive study, Fleugge-Wolf (2014, pp. 961-966) further corroborated her findings regarding the impact of workplace fun on employee engagement, maintaining that social exchanges between employees foster better relationships which in turn stimulate colleagues to be helpful of others within the organization, as well as have a higher level of attachment to the organization.

Abraham (2012) investigated the correlation of job gratification with employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI) through a quantitative study via surveying 30 employees working at an insurance company in India (pp. 29-30). The studies' results showed that employee engagement and job gratification were moderately related, with

job gratification having a positive effect on employee engagement and performance. The study also revealed that extrinsic motivation had little to no effect on employee engagement and job gratification, while management support was essential for improving both factors (pp. 33-34). Due to the small sample size of only 30 participants, as well as the fact that other influencing and/or moderating factors were not taken into consideration, the results of the study have limitations in generalizability and should be interpreted under said constraints (p. 30).

Plester & Hutchison (2016) conducted an exploratory (qualitative) study aiming to identify and confirm the relationship between employee engagement and workplace fun. Through the analysis of previously collected data from their research with four companies in New Zealand, the authors found that the experience of fun in the workplace could potentially significantly enhance the engagement of employees with others within the organization (OCBI), as well as their engagement in work tasks (pp. 344-347).

Hudson (2001, pp. 47-48) showcased through anecdotal evidence the success story of how her organization (the Brady Corporation) succeeded in implementing a culture of workplace fun, and overcame difficulties while managing to significantly improve individual task execution/fulfillment, resulting in the important achievement of increasing the revenue and profits of the company. According to Hudson (2001), workplace fun can potentially strengthen the organization's culture, improve individual and overall performance, and increase corporate profits (p. 47).

Becker & Tews (2016, pp. 284-290) examined the effect of workplace fun on turnover and employee engagement through a survey conducted with hotel employees. Results of the study provided evidence in support of the claim that workplace fun has a significant impact on strengthening employee engagement, even though such positive findings did not directly extend to turnover. Workplace fun was found to improve social relationships among employees, strengthening bonds between individuals. The authors suggested that studies with young employees could provide a more complete view on the relevance of workplace fun for younger generations (p. 291).

Han, Kim & Jeong (2016, pp. 1401-1409) analyzed a sample of 271 employees working in the hotel industry in the United States, aiming to measure the impact of workplace fun on employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI), team productivity and teamwork. The findings from the study suggested that workplace fun is an efficient "tool"

for increasing productivity (task fulfillment), organizational loyalty and employ engagement with others within the organization (OCBI), with few drawbacks and easy to implement.

Tang, Liu & Liu (2017, pp. 1798-1900) analyzed the influence of workplace fun on productivity and motivation. The authors surveyed 233 employees from Chinese companies, and found that workplace fun had a positive relation with employee engagement, productivity, satisfaction and motivation.

In a recent study, Chan (2019, pp. 7-9) examined the precursors of fun at work through a qualitative study. Findings indicated that workplace fun is influenced by employees' aspirations and resulted in several beneficial outcomes for individuals and organizations, such as stress relief, increased productivity and efficiency, more engagement between employees, and improved customer satisfaction.

2.5 The evolution of workplaces

McDowell, Ehteshami & Sandell (2019) provide a comprehensive picture regarding the evolution of workplaces, starting from the 1900s until the 2020s. According to the authors, starting from the 1900s workplaces were strict environments where social interactions during work hours were prohibited and the focus at work was solely on productivity and profit. Workplaces started to change in the 1950s when management began placing attention on the higher-level individual needs of employees as human beings, such as socialization, thus loosening the restraints placed on workers in order to create more comfortable work environments. In the 2000s, the workplace fun concept steadily gained more traction, due in large part to new disruptive technological innovations and the demographic shift in the labor market, where millennials (Gen Y) replaced the previous generation (Gen X) as the majority in the workforce, thus affecting the way work was approached and performed. During this period, a significant transformation in the leading mentality and values of the labor force took place as a result of the demographic shift, transitioning from a previous mindset focused on stable and financially driven goals for Gen X, towards more flexible and dynamic careers in search for inspiration and self-realization for millennials (Gen Y). For the 2020s, the authors envision a workplace driven by social interaction and fun energetic environments, where workplace fun will play a more central and strategic role in differentiating organizations, as well as providing a significant advantage compared to competitors (McDowell. T., Ehteshami. S. & Sandell, K., 2019, pp. 135-137).

Figure 1 The evolution of workplaces

How workplaces have evolved

1900s

Scientific management era

Using explicit measurement of individual performance and productivity, leaving little to no time for socialization at work

1950s

Humanization era

Increase of softer needs in the workplace such as increased smoke breaks where individuals could step away from work and socialize with one another

2000s

Engagement era

Booming socialization that is predominantly driven by a young, technology-driven generation

2020s

Workplace fun era

Amplified social enterprise leading to competitive benefits including a fun organizational climate

Figure 1. Borrowed from McDowell, Ehteshami & Sandell (2019, p. 136)

CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTUAL MODEL AND HYPOTHESES

3.1 The original study

Choi, Kwon & Kim (2013) investigated the influence of Millennials' attitude (Mindset) towards fun work environments and activities on the level of fun they perceived to experience during work; as well as the influence of the level of perceived fun on work outcomes such as the perceived level of satisfaction from their employment, perceived level of performance of job duties (task execution and/or fulfillment), and employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI).

The authors surveyed 234 students of management courses employed in hotels and restaurants in the United States of America through an online questionnaire. Through Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), the collected observations were analyzed via a pathway analysis conceptual (structural) model, in order to provide a realistic simulation of the mutual interaction and/or potential moderation effects among the variables (pp. 416-420).

Results of the study showed that the six hypotheses raised by the authors (pp. 413-416), based on evidence and suggestions provided from previous research, were all supported by the analyzed model and data. Attitude (Mindset) played a crucial role in the definition/identification and validation of the construct of workplace fun, exhibiting a significantly positive influence on the perceived level of fun during work. At the same time, the perception of fun during work had a positive impact on generating satisfaction from work, increasing productivity and work accomplishments, as well as enabling employees to foster closer relationships and engage more with each-other outside of formal interactions during the performance of work tasks, thus facilitating a "culture of fun" within the organization.

3.2 The current replication study

The main objective of this quantitative replication study is to test the extent Millennials' approach (opinion) regarding workplace fun (i.e. Mindset) influences the level of experience of fun at work, level of gratification (satisfaction) achieved through their employment (job gratification), perceived level of performance and execution of work tasks (task fulfillment), and employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI) in the banking industry in Austria, with the purpose of further evaluating whether the resulting

conclusions of the original research carried out by Choi, Kwon & Kim (2013) are still valid in the context of another industry and geographic location.

The research questions raised based on this purpose statement, in line with and adopted from the research performed by Choi, Kwon & Kim (2013), are:

1. How is approach (predisposition) to workplace fun (Mindset) related to the level of fun experienced during work?

2. How is fun experienced during work related to the perceived level of (satisfaction) job gratification?

3. How is fun experienced during work related to perceived (productivity) task fulfillment.

4. How is fun experienced during work related to employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI).

5. How is (satisfaction) job gratification related to perceived (productivity) task fulfillment.

6. How is (satisfaction) job gratification related to employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI).

3.2.1 Mindset and Fun experienced at work

Previous studies have not extensively researched the impact of employees' beliefs and predisposition towards fun at work on the actual perceived fun experienced at work. This study aims to fill this gap in knowledge by testing the impact of Millennials' approach to workplace fun (their Mindset and/or predisposition towards fun) on the experience of fun at work perceived by employees. Studies from Aldag & Sherony (2001); Karl, Peluchette, Hall & Harland (2005); Karl & Peluchette (2006a); Karl, Peluchette & Harland (2007), Karl, Peluchette & Hall (2008), and Choi, Kwon & Kim (2013) have identified and built a construct of workplace fun consisting of two main interacting aspects, namely the Attitude (Mindset) and Experience (Behavior). In line with the extant body of knowledge from behavioral psychology, the above-mentioned authors postulated a dependance of the exhibited behavior and perceived fun during work on the predisposition (Mindset) of the employee towards fun at work. According to the above-mentioned studies, if employees have a positive predisposition towards fun activities and events taking place during work, then their perception of the experience of fun will be higher, meaning that if employees see fun at work in a positive light, they will be more predisposed to organize and/or participate in activities

and events considered as fun by them, thus resulting in them acknowledging to have experienced more fun at work. Ford, Newstrom & McLaughlin (2004, pp. 117-118) stated that employees generally have a positive perception regarding workplace fun and its potential outcomes, believing that significant benefits can be derived from the implementation of fun in work settings.

According to Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman & Lance (2010, pp. 1133-1134), results of observations collected throughout a long time period showed that the importance placed on leisure has been increasing through the successive generations, and that intrinsic values have been prevalent in work settings for the Millennials generation. In another study by Twenge (2010, p. 208), Millennials are described as a generation with a stronger predisposition towards relaxation and fun, compared to previous generations, as well as highly valuing the balance between their work and personal life. Based on evidence from existing research, this study postulates that Millennial employees' approach to workplace fun (Mindset) will have a significant positive impact on the level of fun perceived to be experienced at or during work:

H1. Approach to workplace fun (Mindset) positively affects the level of fun experienced at work.

3.2.2 Fun experienced at work and Job gratification

Existing literature has not extensively explored job gratification (satisfaction) and its constituents in the context of work-related environments, and especially less so in the context of fun work settings. Nonetheless, previous studies have shown that humor and fun can potentially have a significant impact on job gratification (Strömberg, S., & Karlsson, J. C., 2009), and especially on the positive (emotional and cognitive) affective relation toward the organization and/or workplace, generated by a stimulating and pleasant work environment (Carnevale, P. J. ., & Isen, A. M., 1986); (Karl K. A., Peluchette J. V. & Harland L., 2007); (Choi, Y. G., Kwon, J., & Kim, W., 2013).

This study aims to test the impact of workplace fun on job gratification (satisfaction), predicting a positive effect of fun experienced at or during work on employee satisfaction with their work:

H2. Fun experienced at work positively affects job gratification.

3.2.3 Fun experienced at work and (performance) task fulfillment

Various studies on the impact of fun experienced at work on employee performance and task fulfillment have been conducted, mainly in the hospitality industry (Ford, R. C., McLaughlin, F. S., & Newstrom, J. W., 2003); (Choi, Y. G., Kwon, J., & Kim, W., 2013); (Han, H., Kim, W., & Jeong, C., 2016). Through their study conducted in the hospitality industry in the U.S., surveying 195 restaurant employees, Tews, Michel & Stafford (2013) found that fun experienced at work positively affected work performance and task fulfillment, and that the impact of managerial support actually negatively affected employee performance, though being central to the materialization of expected benefits from the application of fun in work environments (pp. 378-379). Moreover, anecdotal evidence from Hudson (2001, pp. 47-48) further corroborated the notion that workplace fun can increase performance and change organizational outcomes for the better, claiming that benefits from implementing workplace fun can be translated to monetary results for the company. Romero & Cruthrids (2006, pp. 60-61) also claimed that workplace fun can contribute to improving organizational factors related to performance, such as creativity and collaboration between employees, reducing stress and fostering communication. Additionally, Fleugge (2008, p. 81) found that workplace fun had both a direct and indirect impact on task fulfillment and employee engagement, concluding that the relationship between workplace fun and work efficiency may be legitimate and worth investigating in more detail. In line with findings from previous research, this study aims to test the impact of workplace fun on task fulfillment, postulating that:

H3. Fun experienced at work positively affects task fulfillment.

3.2.4 Fun experienced at work and Employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI)

The relationship between workplace fun and employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI) has not been extensively analyzed in past literature, instead being construed as part of Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (OCB) and the attachment and loyalty of employees to the organization. However, Sparrowe, Liden, Wayne & Kraimer (2001, pp. 321-324) highlighted the importance of identifying and measuring employee engagement outside their formal work obligations, emphasizing the significant impact of employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI) on individual and team productivity. The authors showed that workplace fun is positively correlated with employee engagement with others within the organization. These finding were further supported by

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Becker & Tews (2016, pp. 284-290), who suggested performing further studies on this issue with younger generations of employees. On these grounds, this study intends to analyze the relationship between fun experienced at work and employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI), and in accordance with previous findings postulates that:

H4. Fun experienced at work positively affects employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI).

3.2.5 Job gratification and (productivity) task fulfillment

Employee satisfaction and task fulfillment have been related in extant research, though the relationship has not been analyzed in detail. Salazar, Pfaffenberg & Salazar (2006, pp. 11-14) discovered that the positive impact of (employee satisfaction) job gratification resulted in increased productivity and efficiency on an individual and organizational level. Choi, Kwon & Kim (2013, p. 420) provided empirical evidence in support of the claim that job gratification can enhance task fulfillment. Additionally, Chan (2019, p. 11) further supported this claim, stating that the satisfaction level achieved from a fun work setting has a significant influence on individual's efficiency and productivity (task fulfillment) as happy employees produce better results. In agreement with results from existing literature, this study aims to examine the relationship between job gratification (satisfaction) and task fulfillment (employee efficiency and productivity), testing the hypothesis that:

H5. Job gratification (satisfaction) positively affects task fulfillment (efficiency).

3.2.6 Job gratification and Employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI)

Job gratification has been linked by existing literature to employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI) (Karl, K. A. & Peluchette, J., 2006a); (Chan, 2010); (Choi, Y. G., Kwon, J., & Kim, W., 2013); (Chan, 2019). Lee & Allen (2002, p. 132) stated that employees affective state and job gratification influenced positively their engagement with others within the organization (OCBI). The authors defined OCBI (Organizational Citizenship Behavior towards Others) in terms of "voluntarily assisting others within the organization, without having to do so due to professional responsibilities". Salazar, Pfaffenberg & Salazar (2006, pp. 11-14) found that job gratification positively affects employee engagement, and their loyalty towards the organization, thus mitigating turnover intentions. Abraham (2012) found that employee engagement and job gratification were

moderately related, with job gratification having a positive effect on employee engagement and performance. The study also revealed that extrinsic motivation had little to no effect on employee engagement and job gratification, while management support was essential for improving both factors (pp. 33-34). Choi, Kwon & Kim (2013, p. 420) provided empirical evidence that job gratification positively impacts employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI), as well as moderates the effect of workplace fun on employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI). On these grounds, this study intends to analyze the relationship between job gratification and employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI), and in accordance with previous findings postulates that:

H6. Job gratification positively affects employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI).

Figure 2 Conceptual Model
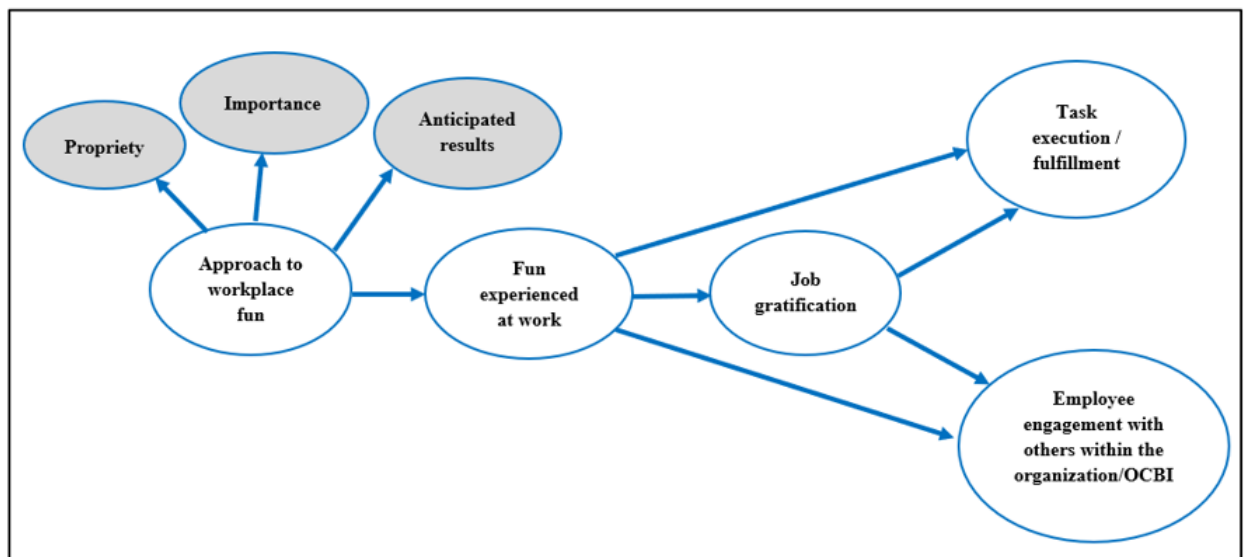
Figure 2. Conceptual framework (Structural Model) of the influence (standardized path analysis) of workplace fun on job gratification, task fulfillment, and employee engagement with others within the organization (Borrowed from Choi, Kwon & Kim (2013, p. 419)

3.2.7 Adopted definitions

There are various definitions of workplace fun, but for the intents of this paper we will be using the working definition provided by Ford, McLaughlin & Newstrom (2003): "A fun work environment intentionally encourages, initiates, and supports a variety of enjoyable and pleasurable activities that positively impact the attitude and productivity of individuals and groups." (p. 22). This definition was adopted since it encompasses a broader meaning and understanding of the term, as well as specifically focusing on designed fun (which requires intent and active participation by managers and employees for its creation).

Job gratification here will be defined as "a positive evaluation and/or feeling towards a job" (Weiss, 2002, p. 175). The adoption of this definition for the term was motivated by the incorporation of both the logical and emotional aspects of job gratification within the provided definition.

Task (execution) fulfillment (i.e. productivity) will be defined as "the successful accomplishment of activities that produce or support the production of materials and/or services for the organization" (Motowidlo, S. J., Borman, W. & Schmit, M. J., 1997, p. 75). This definition was adopted since it provides a simple and clear understanding of the term and construct.

Employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI) will be defined as "employees offering voluntary assistance and support to their coworkers, outside their job requirements" (Lee, K. & Allen, N. J., 2002, p. 132). This definition was selected since it clearly defines, clarifies and fits the construct this study intends to measure.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Design

In this section, it is intended to outline the design that was used to test the six hypotheses stated in the Purpose section. This study aimed to achieve the replication of the research conducted by Choi, Kwon & Kim (2013), in a different industry (the banking industry), and a different geographic location (Austria), in order to make it possible for the comparison and generalization of the results, since one of the most significant contributions of replication studies is testing the validity of theories and/or previous studies results.

In order to achieve its aim as described above, this study has employed the same research design as Choi, Kwon & Kim (2013, pp. 416-420): a (non-experimental) correlational design. The reason why the (non-experimental) correlational design was chosen is because this study did not aim to find the causality among the variables, but instead simply aimed to test and describe the relationships between the variables within the conceptual framework/model using a quantitative research method, namely multivariate data analysis (Bryman, 2011, pp. 350-352).

4.2 Sampling and Sample size

The target population of the current study was Millennials who are working or have worked in the banking industry in Austria: students of Banking study programs and employees working in the banking industry, aged 20-41 years old, with at least three months of work experience, and residing in Austria.

Since the aim of the study was the achievement of comparability with the original study by Choi, Kwon & Kim (2013), as well as the generalization of the present studies' results, the sampling method applied for this purpose was probabilistic sampling in order to minimize sampling error and/or bias (Bryman, 2011, p. 176).

 In order to achieve a representative sample, the stratified random sampling technique has been used (Bryman, 2011, p. 181), since two subgroups of the population (students and employees) have been identified, and simple random sampling has been used to draw a random sample of Banking study programs and banking industry organizations from each subgroup.

With the aim of determining the sample size need for the study, information was gathered concerning the number of Banking study programs and banking industry organizations in Austria. According to the European Banking Federation (2020) there were 573 banks and 71,490 employees working in the banking industry in Austria as of 2020. Additionally, as reported by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (2020), as of 2020 there were 9 Banking study programs in Austria.

Based on Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black's (2010, p. 22) recommendations, the sample size for a multivariate data analysis employing the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) method should be no more than 400 respondents, since larger sample sizes could render the statistical tests oversensitive. Via an online sample size calculator, the sample size needed for this study was determined to be 266 responses, with a confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval of 6 (from https://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm).

4.3 Characteristics of the sample

The data collection process of the current study resulted in a sample with a total of (N = 397) observations, collected from students of Banking study programs and employees of two the oldest and largest, by number of employees and market capitalization (Norrestad, 2020), private banking organizations in Austria (Raiffeisen Bank Group A.G. and Erste Group Bank A.G.). After the elimination of responses with missing values, 379 complete responses were left for the Millennials' sample.

Of the collected valid responses, 44% (n = 167) were female and 56% (n = 212) were male; 68% (n = 260) held a Masters' degree, 27% (n = 94) held a Bachelor or equivalent degree, 5% (n = 18) had completed a PHD, and only 2% (n = 7) reported having completed simply a high school level of education. A more detailed demographic description of the sample is provided in Table 1.

Due to the fact that the aim of the current study was to analyze the results of the hypothesized model based on the target population (Millennials) observations, respondents that did not belong to this generation/age group were further eliminated from the sample, producing a sample consisting of (N = 313) Generation Y respondents. However, in consideration of the fact that observations from older generations might help contribute to a higher degree of authenticity and a better overall representation of the banking industry employee population, both samples were used for the analysis of the conceptual framework and the respective results were reported in Chapter 5.

The Generation Y sample consisted of 44% females and 56% males. More than half of the respondents (69%) held a Masters' degree, 34% had a tenure of 6-10 years, and only 3% belonged to the 18-23 age group.

Table 1 Summary of Demographics

Generation Y			Generation X		
Gender	frequency	%	**Gender**	frequency	%
Male (18-41)	176	47%	Male (42-65)	36	9%
Female (18-41)	137	36%	Female (42-65)	30	8%
Total	313	83%	Total	66	17%
Age	Frequency	%	**Age**	frequency	%
18-23	10	3%	42-47	45	12%
24-29	101	27%	48-53	17	4%
30-35	103	27%	54-59	3	1%
36-41	99	26%	60-65	1	0%
			≥ 66	0	0%
Total	313	83%	Total	66	17%
Work Experience	frequency	%	**Work Experience**	frequency	%
< 1 year	10	2.7%	1 - 5 years	1	0%
1 - 5 years	91	24%	11 - 15 years	8	2%
6 - 10 years	106	28%	16 - 20 years	10	3%
11 - 15 years	67	17.8%	21 - 25 years	35	9%
16 - 20 years	37	9.9%	26 - 30 years	9	2%
21 - 25 years	2	0.6%	> 30 years	3	1%
Total	313	83%	Total	66	17%
Qualification	frequency	%	**Qualification**	frequency	%
High school Diploma	3	1%	High school Diploma	4	1%
Bachelor or equivalent	81	24%	Bachelor or equivalent	13	3%
Masters	217	57%	Masters	43	11%
PHD	12	3%	PHD	6	2%
Total	313	83%	Total	66	17%

4.4 Data collection Strategy

Data was collected utilizing the Survey method, via online self-completion questionnaires, which were designed with closed questions in order to measure the variables of interest. The choice of utilizing online surveys/self-completion questionnaires was made due to their wide and fast reach on the targeted group, the relatively low required cost/investment in time and money, as well as elimination of interviewer bias (Bryman, 2011, pp. 222-223). One of the disadvantages of online surveys however is the non-response rate, which is also a non-sampling error source (Bryman, 2011, p. 176).

After having selected the random Banking programs and companies/organizations from the banking industry that will be part of our sample via simple random sampling, the respective Director of studies and HR Directors were contacted, asking them to distribute the survey email link to their students/employees. Furthermore, following the suggestion of the HR Directors and HR employees of the participating banking industry organizations, a brief article (Appendix B) on the topic of workplace fun with a link to the online survey was posted on the companies' intranet in addition to the emailing "campaign".

Since after the first round of data collection, that started at the end of April 2021 and lasted until the end of June 2021, the appropriate number of respondents for the sample had not been reached and the model fit was inadequate as a result of the small sample size, the simple random sampling process was repeated and data was collected during a second round (starting from July 2021 and ending in September 2021) until the required number of observations was reached.

4.5 Questionnaire development

The current study utilized scales and items validated by the extant body of knowledge. Measurements were based on the individual perception of the respondents' emotional and intellectual assessment of each item.

4.5.1 Approach to Workplace Fun (Mindset)

Approach to workplace fun (Mindset) was assessed via the three subscales established by Aldag & Sherony (2001), and developed further by Karl, Peluchette, Hall & Harland (2005): Propriety (P), Importance (I), and Anticipated Results (AR). The first subscale (Property), measuring the assessment of whether workplace fun is considered proper by the participants, consisted of three items adopted out of the four items for this scale developed by Karl, Peluchette, Hall & Harland (2005, p. 17). The items were rated by respondents using a

5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). This subscale contained items such as "*Having a good time and doing a good job are an incompatible achievement*" (P2). The second subscale (Importance), measuring the assessment of whether workplace fun is considered important by the participants, consisted of five items developed by Karl, Peluchette, Hall & Harland (2005, p. 17). Again, items were rated by respondents using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). This subscale contained items such as "*If my job stopped being fun, I would look for another job*" (I2) and "*I prefer to work with people who like to have fun*" (I3). The third subscale (Anticipated Results), measuring the assessment of the participants assumptions pertaining to the potential results of having fun at work, consisted of five items adopted out of the eight items developed for this scale by Karl, Peluchette, Hall & Harland (2005, p. 17), and rated by respondents using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). This subscale contained items such as "*Having fun at work can enhance interpersonal relations and teamwork*" (AR1) and "*Fun at work can help reduce stress and tensions*" (AR2). The approach to workplace fun (Mindset) scale in its entirety is presented in Appendix A.

4.5.2 Fun Experienced at Work

Fun experienced at work (coded FE) was assessed via three out of the five items for this scale developed by Karl, Peluchette & Harland (2007, p. 426). Respondents rated each item with regards to the level of fun they perceived having at work using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The scale contained items such as: "*Managers encourage employees to have fun at work*" (FE2) and "*We laugh a lot at my workplace*" (FE3). The fun experienced at work scale (FE) in its entirety is presented in Appendix A.

4.5.3 Job Gratification

Job gratification (coded JG) was assessed using two items adopted from the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire (MOAQ). The scale measured the overall level of gratification employees perceived they enjoyed from their work. Respondents rated the two items using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). According to Bowling & Hammond (2008, p. 72), MOAQ offers valid and reliable results with significantly less items compared to other job gratifications scales, as well as providing a more optimal measurement for the emotional aspects of job gratification. The job gratification (JG) scale in its entirety is presented in Appendix A.

4.5.4 Task Fulfillment.

Task fulfillment (coded TF) was assessed via four items adapted from Williams & Anderson (1991, p. 606). The scale measured the level of accomplishment perceived by employees in regard to the execution of their work tasks and official duties. Respondents rated each item using a 5-point Likert response scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The scale contained items such as: "*I adequately complete assigned duties*" and "*I meet formal performance requirements of the job*". The task fulfillment (TF) scale in its entirety is presented in Appendix A.

4.5.5 Employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI).

The employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI) scale (coded EE) was assessed via five items adapted from Williams & Anderson (1991, p. 606). The scale measured the perceived level of engagement of participants with other employees for reasons aside from their official duties and/or work needs/requirements. Respondents rated each item using a 5-point Likert response scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The scale contained items such as: "*I help others who have heavy workloads*" and "*I take time to listen to coworkers' problems and worries*". The employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI) scale (EE) in its entirety is presented in Appendix A.

4.6 Data analysis strategy

The present study has employed the use of primary data (collected through the survey method), measured in (nonmetric) ordinal scales: namely the Likert scale was employed, with a range of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Although many researchers maintain that Likert scales can be treated as interval scales, the data of the present study is analyzed as ordinal scales (Bryman, 2011, p. 342).

In order to assure the reliability and validity of the scores, a pre-test was conducted and the reliability and validity of scores of the survey were tested through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) tests/methods. Exploratory Factor Analysis was not necessary since the conceptual model was based on already tested theories/concepts, nevertheless Kaiser's (1960) eigenvalue, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin's (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were still performed to ensure maximal reliability and validity. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted via SPSS and SPSS Amos, and the following coefficients were analyzed in order to determine the construct's reliability and validity: Cronbach's (1951) Alpha, CR (Composite/Construct Reliability), MaxR(H)

(Maximal Reliability), AVE (Average Variance Extracted), and MSV (Maximum Variance Extracted). The Fornell & Larker (1981) test and HTMT (Heterotrait-monotrait ratio of the correlations) (Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M. & Sarstedt, M., 2015) were performed to assess the discriminant validity of the model.

The Construct/Model data was analyzed through inferential/inductive statistics, specifically through multivariate data analysis (analyzing three or more variables at the same time) (Bryman, 2011, p. 350). The conceptual model (framework) was tested via a pathway method, namely the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) method, in order to analyze the multiple relationships and/or pathways within the framework through multivariate structural analysis (Hair, J. F. Jr., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J. & Anderson, R. E., 2010, p. 13).

The variables in the current study are endogenous (dependent) variables/constructs, and exogenous (independent) variables/constructs (Gefen, D., Straub, D. W. & Boudreau, M. C., 2000, pp. 67-68). The exogenous (independent) variable/construct in this study is Approach to workplace fun (Mindset towards workplace fun), while the endogenous (dependent) variables/constructs are: Fun Experienced at work (FE), Job gratification (JG), Task fulfillment (TF), and Employee engagement with others within the organization/OCBI (EE). For each construct multiple item scales have been developed and measured through the online survey (Hair, J. F. Jr., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J. & Anderson, R. E., 2010, p. 21).

The reason for using the SEM method in analyzing the paths/dependence between the constructs/variables, is due to it enabling researchers to analyze simultaneously the mediating influence of endogenous constructs/variables, such as job gratification (JG) for example, on other endogenous constructs/ variables (Gefen, D., Straub, D. W. & Boudreau, M. C., 2000, pp. 29-32). In a real-world situation, the mediating influence of job gratification on task fulfillment cannot be held while testing its mediating influence between fun experienced at work and employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI). The statistical tests that have been performed in accordance with the SEM method are: Measurement model tests for the goodness of fit: Composite/Construct Reliability (CR) (Bagozzi, R. & Yi, Y., 1988) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) (Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F., 1981), and Structural model tests: factor loading tests – Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) , standardized path coefficients, and Comparative Fit Index (CFI) (Gefen, D., Straub, D. W. & Boudreau, M. C., 2000, pp. 37-47).

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

5.1 Measurement Model

In order to assess the reliability and validity of the hypothesized model, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) tests were performed via SPSS and SPSS Amos. Before assessing the validity and reliability of the constructs, a descriptive overview of the items and observations was provided.

5.1.1 Descriptive overview

The first three items of the Mindset construct comprised the scale (measurement) of Propriety of workplace fun, namely the belief of respondents with regards to how proper it is to have fun or participate in fun activities during work, and whether fun would interfere with their work. The items were formulated with negative sentences, thus were reverse-coded in order to facilitate their analysis. Respondents rated the three items of Property on average in the range of 4.55 to 4.76 out of 5, showing that employees regard workplace fun as being proper and compatible with their work.

The next five items of the Mindset construct comprised the scale (measurement) of Importance of workplace fun, namely how important respondents considered having fun at or during work. Results showed that respondents rated Importance on average in the range of 4.09 to 4.76, with item P2 having the lowest average score due to the fact that it measured the respondent's intention to leave their employment if they found it no longer to be fun. As shown by previous research, employees' intention to leave their job is related to workplace fun, however in most cases this correlation is not significant or highly significant, as other factor may be deemed more important as compared to workplace fun in regards to turnover intentions. Once more, items P4 and P5 were formulated with negative sentences and were reverse-coded.

The next five items of the Mindset construct comprised the scale (measurement) of Anticipated results of workplace fun, namely what respondents expect the outcomes of workplace fun to be. Results showed that respondents rated Anticipated Results on average in the range of 4.58 to 4.52, with items AR1 (concerning teamwork and interpersonal relations) and AR2 (concerning stress reduction) having the highest average score, thus showing that

employees perceive and expect workplace fun to have positive consequences in general. Item 4 was formulated in a negative sentence and was reverse-coded.

The fun experienced at work scale with its three items provided the most surprising result, namely with the second item (FE2) concerning managerial support and endorsement of workplace fun resulting in an average of 3.43 (N = 379) and 3.54 (N=313) out of 5, showing that on average employees perceive little to no support towards workplace fun from management. The average for the first and third items were in the range of 4 to 4.15 out of 5, showing that on average employees did perceive experiencing fun at work.

The two items regarding job gratification (satisfaction) were also rated on an average range of 4.11 to 4.19 out of 5, showing that employees were generally satisfied with their employment. Meanwhile, the four items concerning task fulfillment were rated on average in the range of 4.81 to 4.87 out of 5, showing that employees perceived their work accomplishments and performance to be rather high and generally agreed to fulfilling their obligations in an adequate and satisfactory manner.

The last five items measured the perceived level of engagement with others within the organization, with items measuring the level of support offered to colleagues, superiors, new employees, as well as listening to others and taking an active interest in learning more about coworkers. Supporting superiors and new employees received the lowest scores in the range of 4.07 to 4.20 out of 5, while offering support to coworkers and socializing received slightly higher scores, showing that outside of work obligations employees preferred to socialize and build relationships with colleagues, and were less predisposed to interact and offer support to new employees or superiors potentially due to the weaker bonds created with these categories. More detailed results are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2 Descriptive statistics of Items and Scales

Approach to Workplace Fun (Mindset)							

Case Processing Summary (left)

		N	%
Cases	Valid	313	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	313	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Case Processing Summary (right)

		N	%
Cases	Valid	379	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	379	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics (left)

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.894	.905	13

Reliability Statistics (right)

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.913	.919	13

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N		Mean	Std. Deviation	N
P1	4.76	.586	313	P1	4.73	.669	379
P2	4.73	.746	313	P2	4.73	.768	379
P3	4.61	.752	313	P3	4.55	.851	379
I1	4.54	.679	313	I1	4.50	.736	379
I2	4.18	.783	313	I2	4.09	.869	379
I3	4.76	.510	313	I3	4.72	.616	379
I4	4.61	.801	313	I4	4.55	.860	379
I5	4.65	.775	313	I5	4.62	.808	379
AR1	4.80	.497	313	AR1	4.80	.487	379
AR2	4.82	.455	313	AR2	4.81	.472	379
AR3	4.62	.650	313	AR3	4.58	.698	379
AR4	4.61	.849	313	AR4	4.59	.848	379
AR5	4.73	.586	313	AR5	4.73	.599	379

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items	Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
60.41	34.173	5.846	13	60.00	43.571	6.601	13

Fun Experienced at Work							

Reliability Statistics (left)

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.876	.884	3

Reliability Statistics (right)

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.878	.884	3

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N		Mean	Std. Deviation	N
FE1	4.15	.889	313	FE1	4.04	.949	379
FE2	3.54	1.124	313	FE2	3.43	1.142	379
FE3	4.09	.891	313	FE3	4.00	.930	379

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items	Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
11.78	6.839	2.615	3	11.47	7.398	2.720	3

Job Gratification							

Reliability Statistics | **Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.957	.958	2	.952	.953	2

Item Statistics				**Item Statistics**			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N		Mean	Std. Deviation	N
JG1	4.15	.798	313	JG1	4.11	.797	379
JG2	4.19	.773	313	JG2	4.17	.760	379

Scale Statistics				**Scale Statistics**			
Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items	Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
8.35	2.368	1.539	2	8.29	2.317	1.522	2

Task Fulfillment

Reliability Statistics				**Reliability Statistics**			
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.932	.934	4	.927	.929	4

Item Statistics				**Item Statistics**			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N		Mean	Std. Deviation	N
TF1	4.81	.462	313	TF1	4.82	.446	379
TF2	4.83	.446	313	TF2	4.83	.440	379
TF3	4.86	.408	313	TF3	4.87	.392	379
TF4	4.87	.385	313	TF4	4.87	.378	379

Scale Statistics				**Scale Statistics**			
Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items	Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
19.36	2.412	1.553	4	19.38	2.262	1.504	4

Employee Engagement with others within the organization

Reliability Statistics				**Reliability Statistics**			
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.866	.868	5	.861	.863	5

Item Statistics				**Item Statistics**			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N		Mean	Std. Deviation	N
EE1	4.40	.736	313	EE1	4.37	.718	379
EE2	4.07	.907	313	EE2	4.10	.898	379
EE3	4.35	.706	313	EE3	4.34	.702	379
EE4	4.20	.805	313	EE4	4.17	.811	379
EE5	4.23	.816	313	EE5	4.23	.811	379

Scale Statistics				**Scale Statistics**			
Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items	Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
21.25	10.337	3.215	5	21.21	10.063	3.172	5

5.1.2 Exploratory Factor Analysis

Since EFA was not really necessary due to the conceptual model being previously validated, only a brief description of the results was provided, as follows: Results of Kaiser's (1960) eigenvalue showed that five first order constructs were confirmed, and they explained more than approximately 69% of the variance for both of the analyzed data sets. At the same time, KMO values were 0.897 (N = 313) and 0.907 (N = 379), and Barttlet's test was not significant in both cases, showing that the analyzed sample was adequate for performing further factor analysis. The above-mentioned results are shown in full in Table 3 and Table 4.

Table 3 Millennials' Dataset KMO, Bartlett's Test & Eigenvalues (N = 313)

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.897
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	6073.606
	df	351
	Sig.	.000

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	9.938	36.807	36.807	9.938	36.807	36.807
2	3.056	11.318	48.125	3.056	11.318	48.125
3	2.435	9.018	57.144	2.435	9.018	57.144
4	2.051	7.597	64.740	2.051	7.597	64.740
5	1.081	4.004	68.745	1.081	4.004	68.745
6	.872	3.230	71.975			
7	.798	2.957	74.932			
8	.772	2.861	77.793			
9	.683	2.531	80.324			
10	.555	2.054	82.378			
11	.503	1.862	84.240			
12	.456	1.689	85.929			
13	.447	1.657	87.586			
14	.410	1.518	89.104			
15	.371	1.375	90.479			
16	.325	1.205	91.684			
17	.299	1.106	92.790			
18	.290	1.075	93.865			
19	.267	.988	94.854			
20	.250	.925	95.778			

21	.227	.840	96.618			
22	.212	.784	97.402			
23	.196	.728	98.130			
24	.162	.598	98.728			
25	.146	.540	99.268			
26	.133	.494	99.762			
27	.064	.238	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 4 Total Dataset KMO, Bartlett's Test & Eigenvalues (N = 379)

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.907
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	7316.049
	df	351
	Sig.	.000

Total Variance Explained

	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	10.196	37.764	37.764	10.196	37.764	37.764
2	2.784	10.312	48.076	2.784	10.312	48.076
3	2.752	10.191	58.268	2.752	10.191	58.268
4	1.895	7.017	65.285	1.895	7.017	65.285
5	1.086	4.023	69.308	1.086	4.023	69.308
6	.856	3.172	72.480			
7	.791	2.930	75.410			
8	.710	2.630	78.041			
9	.561	2.079	80.120			
10	.542	2.007	82.127			
11	.499	1.848	83.975			
12	.439	1.627	85.601			
13	.408	1.512	87.113			
14	.397	1.471	88.584			
15	.373	1.381	89.964			
16	.337	1.248	91.212			
17	.318	1.178	92.390			
18	.294	1.088	93.478			
19	.277	1.028	94.505			
20	.256	.948	95.453			
21	.234	.868	96.322			

22	.226	.837	97.158			
23	.215	.796	97.955			
24	.178	.661	98.616			
25	.160	.591	99.207			
26	.140	.519	99.726			
27	.074	.274	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

5.1.3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis: Construct Reliability and Validity

The first test performed in order to assess the internal consistency of the constructs/latent variables was Cronbach's Alpha (Cronbach, 1951). The analysis resulted in Alpha coefficients in the range of 0.750 to 0.957 (see Table 5 below) showing an overall good reliability of the constructs, since all values were above the cutoff value of 0.8 for the latent variables, and acceptable/above the cutoff value of 0.7 for the first order loadings of the Mindset construct (Cortina, 1993, pp. 103-104). However, according to Hu & Bentler (1999) and Cho & Kim (2015, pp. 214-215), the fact that the alpha coefficient was greater than 0.90 could pose a problem with overloading of the constructs and/or conceptual model.

Table 5 Cronbach's Alpha Estimated Values

Latent Variable	Cronbach's Alpha		
	N = 313	N = 379	No of Items
Approach to Workplace Fun (Mindset)	0.894	0.913	13
Propriety (First order loading)	0.750	0.793	3
Importance (First order loading)	0.784	0.836	5
Anticipated Results (First order loading)	0.787	0.806	5
Fun Experienced at Work	0.876	0.878	3
Job Gratification	0.957	0.952	2
Task Fulfillment	0.932	0.927	4
Employee Engagement with others within the organization	0.866	0.861	5

Notes: Approach to Workplace Fun (Mindset) is a second order construct, with three first order loadings, namely Propriety, Importance and Anticipated Results

In order to assess the construct reliability of the hypothesized model, Composite Reliability (CR) and Maximal Reliability (MaxR) values were analyzed through the Maximum Likelihood CFA. Convergent Validity was assessed by analyzing the significance of loading values for all factors, as well as comparing the values of AVE, CR, MaxR(H) and

MSV. Discriminant validity was assessed via the Fornell-Larcker (1981) table and HTMT (Heterotrait-monotrait ratio of the correlations) table (Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M. & Sarstedt, M., 2015).

The original conceptual model (Figure 3) was analyzed utilizing both versions of the data set, due to the fact that larger sample sizes contribute to a better model fit and especially because analyzing the Total dataset (N = 379) renders a more realistic view of banking employees' opinions and behaviors. Due to structural model fit issues, two additional models (with less items) were derived and analyzed for each data set (Figure 4 and Figure 5) in order to provide the best possible fit.
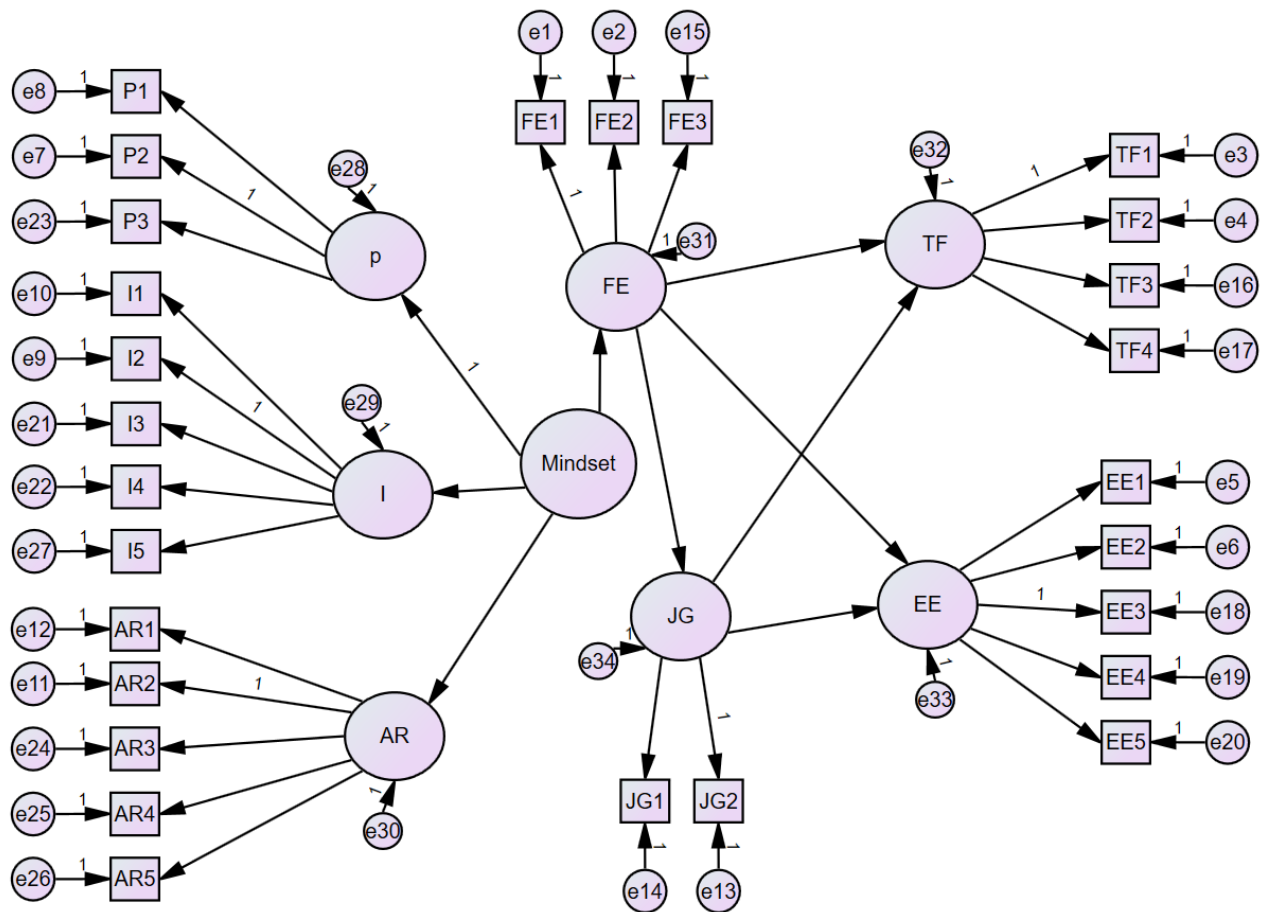
Figure 3 Model 1

Figure 3 Original conceptual model tested with Millennials' Data (N = 313) and Total Data (N = 379)
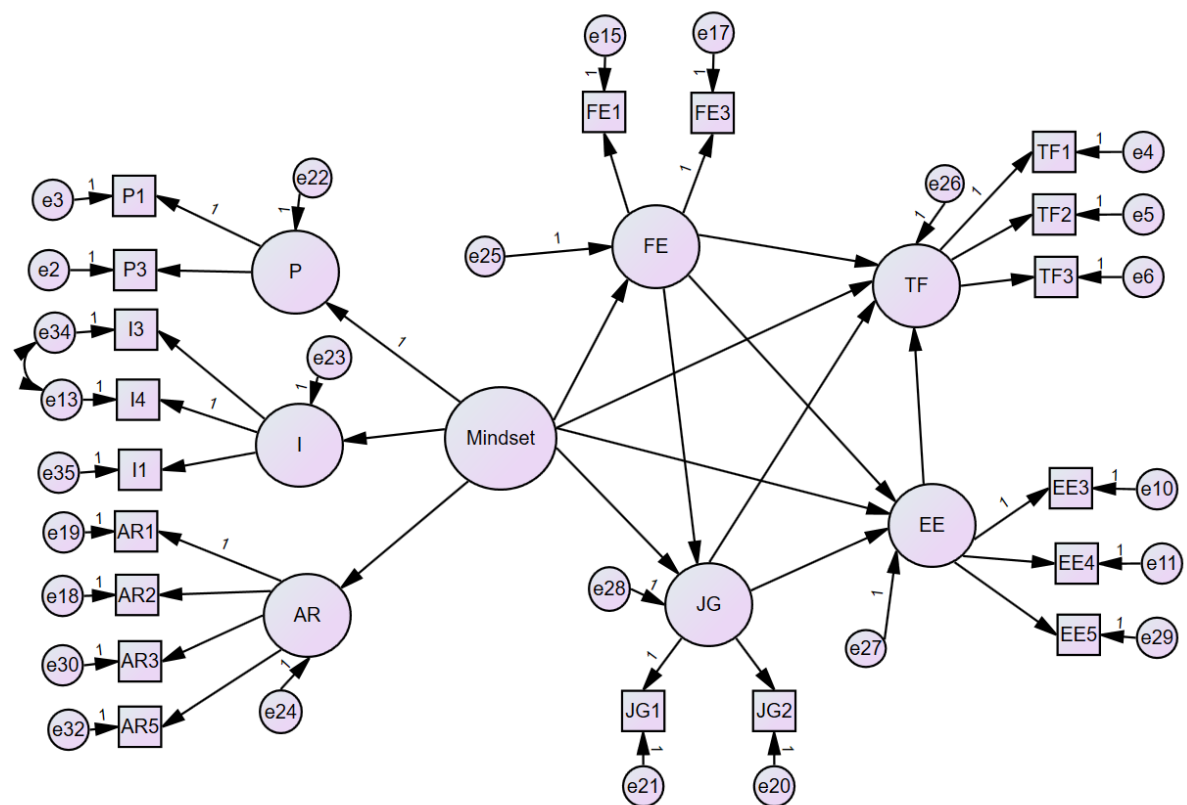
Figure 4 Model 2

Figure 4 Modified model with acceptable structural model fit when tested with Millennials' Data (N = 313)
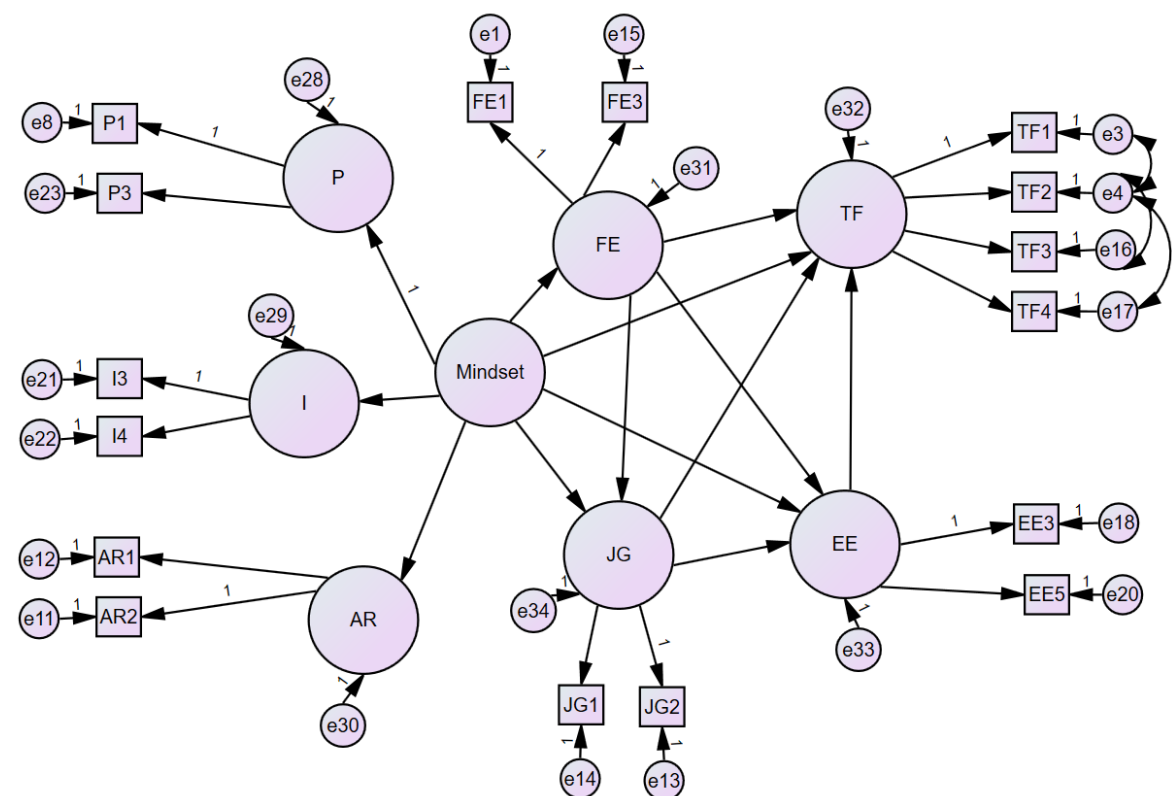
Figure 5 Model 3

Figure 5 Modified model with acceptable structural model fit when tested with Complete Data (N = 379)

Reliability (the indicator of the internal integrity/consistency of the measurement used) of all three models was established since both CR and MaxR(H) values were larger than 0.8 (see Table 6 and Table 9) [(Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F., 1981); (Bagozzi, R. & Yi, Y., 1988); (Hair, J. F. Jr., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J. & Anderson, R. E., 2010, p. 624)].

Convergent validity measures the degree of correlation amid variables, showing that items within the scale are measuring the predetermined construct (Hair, J. F. Jr., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J. & Anderson, R. E., 2010, p. 124). For Model 1 convergent validity was not established (see Table 8) when analyzed with the Millennials' Dataset due to the fact that (even though all the factor loadings were significant) the standardized factor loading for item 4 (AR4) of the Anticipated Results (AR) construct was lower than 0.5 (Hair, J. F. Jr., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J. & Anderson, R. E., 2010, p. 618). For Model 1 analyzed with Total data, as well as Model 2 and Model 3, convergent validity was established (see Table 8, Table 11, and Table 14 for the detailed factor loadings) on account of all factor loadings being significant and standardized loadings being above 0.5 and 0.7; AVE being above 0.50 (see Table 6, Table 9, and Table 12 below); AVE being larger than MSV; and CR being larger than AVE (Bagozzi, R. & Yi, Y., 1988); (Hair, J. F. Jr., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J. & Anderson, R. E., 2010, pp. 618-619).

Discriminant Validity, an indicator that each scale is significantly differentiated from other scales and measures what it is supposed to (Hair, J. F. Jr., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J. & Anderson, R. E., 2010, p. 619), was established through Fornell & Larker's (1981) and Henseler, Ringle & Sarstedt's (2015) tables. All three models (Figure 3, Figure 4, and Figure 5 above) fulfill the criteria for discriminant validity in view of the fact that: 1) according to the analysis of the Fornell-Larker table (see Table 6, Table 9, and Table 12 below), values of the square root of AVE in the diagonal are larger than the values of correlations between scales in the same row and column (Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F., 1981, pp. 45-49); and 2) based on the fact that all values within the HTMT tables of all three models (see Table 7, Table 10, and Table 13 below) are below the strict discriminant validity cutoff of 0.85 (Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M. & Sarstedt, M., 2015, p. 129).

Table 6 Reliability and Validity Indicators of Model 1

Millennials' Dataset (N = 313)								
	CR	AVE	MSV	Max R(H)	Fornell-Larcker Table				
					EE	TF	JG	FE	Mindset
EE	0.884	0.718	0.692	0.889	0.848ᵃ				
TF	0.934	0.779	0.265	0.934	0.268ᵇ ***	0.882			
JG	0.869	0.573	0.313	0.884	0.501 ***	0.443 ***	0.757		
FE	0.958	0.919	0.692	0.964	0.832 ***	0.323 ***	0.425 ***	0.959	
Mindset	0.931	0.820	0.313	1.001	0.504 ***	0.515 ***	0.560 ***	0.372 ***	0.905
Total Dataset (N = 379)									
	CR	AVE	MSV	Max R(H)	Fornell-Larcker Table				
					EE	TF	JG	FE	Mindset
EE	0.884	0.718	0.597	0.889	0.848ᵃ				
TF	0.929	0.765	0.170	0.929	0.270ᵇ ***	0.875			
JG	0.864	0.562	0.379	0.878	0.512 ***	0.412 ***	0.750		
FE	0.954	0.911	0.597	0.964	0.773 ***	0.333 ***	0.395 ***	0.955	
Mindset	0.932	0.820	0.379	0.958	0.585 ***	0.409 ***	0.616 ***	0.321 ***	0.906

Notes: EE = Employee Engagement with others within the organization)OCBI); TF = Task Fulfillment; JG = Job Gratification; FE = Fun Experienced at work; CR = Composite/Construct Reliability; AVE = Average Variance Extracted; MSV = Maximum Shared Variance; MaxR(H) = Maximum Reliability; ᵃ Square Root of AVE values along the diagonal; ᵇ Correlation values below the diagonal; *** p < 0.001

Table 7 HTMT estimates of Model 1

Millennials' Data (N = 313)					
	JG	**FE**	**TF**	**EE**	**Mindset**
JG					
FE	0.273				
TF	0.509	0.479			
EE	0.832	0.326	0.426		
Mindset	0.506	0.518	0.561	0.387	

Total Data (N = 379)					
	JG	**FE**	**TF**	**EE**	**Mindset**
JG					
FE	0.274				
TF	0.516	0.445			
EE	0.776	0.341	0.396		
Mindset	0.555	0.422	0.614	0.314	

Note: Cutoff for strict discriminant validity is 0.850, and for liberal discriminant validity is 0.900 (Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M. & Sarstedt, M., 2015).

Table 8 Standardized Loadings of Model 1

Millennials' Dataset (N = 313)								
Measure	**P**	**I**	**AR**	**Mindset**	**FE**	**JG**	**TF**	**EE**
P				0.827 ***				
P1	0.864 ***							
P2	0.656 ***							
P3	0.684 ***							
I				1.007 ***				
I1		0.634 ***						
I2		0.587 ***						
I3		0.798 ***						
I4		0.690 ***						
I5		0.568 ***						
AR				0.872 ***				
AR1			0.732 ***					

AR2			0.836 ***					
AR3			0.775 ***					
AR4			0.458 ***					
AR5			0.723 ***					
FE1					**0.**870 ***			
FE2					0.801 ***			
FE3					0.864 ***			
JG1						0.976 ***		
JG2						0.941 ***		
TF1							0.875 ***	
TF2							0.881 ***	
TF3							0.880 ***	
TF4							0.893 ***	
EE1								0.603 ***
EE2								0.727 ***
EE3								0.842 ***
EE4								0.763 ***
EE5								0.826 ***

Total Dataset (N = 379)

Measure	P	I	AR	Mindset	FE	JG	TF	EE
P				0.888 ***				
P1	0.851 ***							
P2	0.697 ***							
P3	0.753 ***							
I				0.964 ***				
I1		0.708 ***						

I2		0.674 ***				
I3		0.798 ***				
I4		0.758 ***				
I5		0.655 ***				
AR			0.855 ***			
AR1		0.725 ***				
AR2		0.840 ***				
AR3		0.786 ***				
AR4		0.541 ***				
AR5		0.707 ***				
FE1				0.864 ***		
FE2				0.799 ***		
FE3				0.875 ***		
JG1					0.982 ***	
JG2					0.927 ***	
TF1						0.875 ***
TF2						0.883 ***
TF3						0.880 ***
TF4						0.862 ***
EE1						0.617 ***
EE2						0.705 ***
EE3						0.820 ***
EE4						0.752 ***
EE5						0.833 ***

Notes: P = Propriety; I = Importance; AR = Anticipated Results; FE = Fun Experienced at work; JG = Job Gratification; TF = Task Fulfillment; EE = Employee Engagement with others within the organization (OCBI);
*** p < 0.001

Table 9 Reliability and Validity Indicators of Model 2

	CR	AVE	MSV	Max R(H)	Fornell-Larcker Table				
					EE	TF	JG	FE	Mindset
EE	0.911	0.774	0.259	0.915	**0.880ª**				
TF	0.859	0.671	0.267	0.878	0.356ᵇ ***	**0.819**			
JG	0.858	0.752	0.690	0.860	0.271 ***	0.487 ***	**0.867**		
FE	0.958	0.919	0.690	0.965	0.314 ***	0.413 ***	0.830 ***	**0.959**	
Mindset	0.944	0.849	0.267	0.997	0.509 ***	0.517 ***	0.500 ***	0.347 ***	**0.922**

Notes: EE = Employee Engagement with others within the organization (OCBI); TF = Task Fulfillment; JG = Job Gratification; FE = Fun Experienced at work; CR = Composite/Construct Reliability; AVE = Average Variance Extracted; MSV = Maximum Shared Variance; MaxR(H) = Maximum Reliability; ª Square Root of AVE values along the diagonal; ᵇ Correlation values below the diagonal; *** p < 0.001

Table 10 HTMT estimates of Model 2

	JG	FE	TF	EE	Mindset
JG					
FE	0.370				
TF	0.273	0.493			
EE	0.316	0.404	0.830		
Mindset	0.530	0.506	0.497	0.353	

Note: Cutoff for strict discriminant validity is 0.850, for liberal discriminant validity is 0.900 (Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M. & Sarstedt, M., 2015).

Table 11 Standardized Loadings of Model 2

Millennials' Dataset (N = 313)								
Measure	P	I	AR	Mindset	FE	JG	TF	EE
P				0.880 ***				

P1	0.785 ***						
P3	0.727 ***						
I				0.999 ***			
I1		0.612 ***					
I3		0.830 ***					
I4		0.671 ***					
AR				0.881 ***			
AR1			0.753 ***				
AR2			0.854 ***				
AR3			0.757 ***				
AR5			0.720 ***				
FE1					0.880 ***		
FE3					0.854 ***		
JG1						0.976 ***	
JG2						0.941 ***	
TF1							0.890 ***
TF2							0.905 ***
TF3							0.843 ***
EE3								0.864 ***
EE4								0.710 ***
EE5								0.875 ***

Notes: P = Propriety; I = Importance; AR = Anticipated Results; FE = Fun Experienced at work; JG = Job Gratification; TF = Task Fulfillment; EE = Employee Engagement with others within the organization; *** p < 0.001

Table 12 Reliability and Validity Indicators of Model 3

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR (H)	Fornell-Larcker Table				
					EE	TF	JG	FE	Mindset
EE	0.861	0.755	0.579	0.861	**0.869ᵃ**				
TF	0.914	0.726	0.153	0.920	0.255ᵇ ***	**0.852**			
JG	0.853	0.744	0.311	0.854	0.486 ***	0.379 ***	**0.863**		
FE	0.953	0.911	0.579	0.961	0.761 ***	0.334 ***	0.363 ***	**0.954**	
Mindset	0.935	0.830	0.359	1.053	0.599 ***	0.391 ***	0.558 ***	0.282 ***	**0.911**

*Notes: EE = Employee Engagement with others within the organization (OCBI); TF = Task Fulfillment; JG = Job Gratification; FE = Fun Experienced at work; CR = Composite/Construct Reliability; AVE = Average Variance Extracted; MSV = Maximum Shared Variance; MaxR(H) = Maximum Reliability; ᵃ Square Root of AVE values along the diagonal; ᵇ Correlation values below the diagonal; *** p < 0.001*

Table 13 HTMT estimates of Model 3

	JG	FE	TF	EE	Mindset
JG					
FE	0.260				
TF	0.489	0.357			
EE	0.758	0.341	0.361		
Mindset	0.556	0.413	0.551	0.270	

Note: Cutoff for strict discriminant validity is 0.850, for liberal discriminant validity is 0.900 (Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M. & Sarstedt, M., 2015)

Table 14 Standardized Loadings of Model 3

Measure	P	I	AR	Mindset	FE	JG	TF	EE
P				0.950 ***				
P1	0.776 ***							
P3	0.794 ***							
I				1.017 ***				
I3		0.763 ***						
I4		0.739 ***						
AR				0.743 ***				
AR1			0.766 ***					
AR2			0.931 ***					
FE1					0.871 ***			
FE3					0.867 ***			
JG1						0.973 ***		
JG2						0.936 ***		
TF1							0.843 ***	
TF2							0.787 ***	
TF3							0.882 ***	
TF4							0.892 ***	
EE3								0.873 ***
EE5								0.852 ***

*Notes: P = Propriety; I = Importance; AR = Anticipated Results; FE = Fun Experienced at work; JG = Job Gratification; TF = Task Fulfillment; EE = Employee Engagement with others within the organization; *** p < 0.001*

5.2 Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

Before testing the six hypotheses regarding the impacts of workplace fun on job gratification, task fulfillment and employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI), the structural model fit was analyzed through Confirmatory Factor Analysis via SPSS Amos. After determining the structural model with the most adequate/acceptable fit, the six hypotheses were analyzed.

5.2.1 Structural Model

Model fit of the three structural models was analyzed to determine the best model fit for the data. The Modified Models proved the best fit to the analyzed data after eliminating items that were overloading and/or causing problems to model fit. The model fit indicators of the three analyzed structural models (Figure 3, Figure 4, and Figure 5) are reported in more detail in Table 15 (below).

Table 15 Model Fit Indicators of Model 1, Model 2 and Model 3

Measure	Model 1 (N = 313)	Model 1 (N = 379)	Model 2 (N = 313)	Model 3 (N = 379)
CMIN	1255.327	1290.414	388.515	254.761
DF	315.000	315.000	138.000	88.000
CMIN/DF	3.985	4.097	2.815	2.895
CFI	0.841	0.864	0.937	0.961
TLI	0.823	0.848	0.922	0.947
NFI	0.800	0.828	0.906	0.942
SRMR	0.137	0.122	0.064	0.062
RMSEA	0.098	0.091	0.076	0.071
Assessment	**Poor fit**	**Poor fit**	**Acceptable**	**Acceptable**

Notes: CMIN = Chi-square; DF = degrees of freedom; CFI = Comparative Fit Index; TLI = Tucker Lewis Index; NFI = Normed Fit Index; SRMR = Standardized Root Mean Square Residual; RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation

As a result of the analysis of the model fit indicators from Table 15, two models with acceptable fit were identified, namely Model 2 (Figure 4) and Model 3 (Figure 5). Model 1 (Figure 3) displayed poor model fit with both datasets, despite the fact CMIN/DF was within the acceptable fit range of 3-5, on account of the fact that: 1) CFI, TLI and NFI were all below the acceptable fit cutoff value of 0.90; 2) SRMR was larger than 0.1, and RMSEA was larger than 0.08 (Bagozzi, R. & Yi, Y., 1988); (Hair, J. F. Jr., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J. & Anderson, R. E., 2010, pp. 579-582).

Model 2 (Figure 4; Millennials' dataset, with N = 313) displayed an overall acceptable model fit in view of the fact that 1) CMIN/DF was within the good fit range of 1-3; 2) CFI, TLI and NFI were above the acceptable fit cutoff value of 0.90; and 3) SRMR was smaller than the good fit cutoff value of 0.08, and RMSEA was smaller than the acceptable fit cutoff value of 0.08 (Bagozzi, R. & Yi, Y., 1988); (Hair, J. F. Jr., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J. & Anderson, R. E., 2010, pp. 579-582).

Model 3 (Total dataset, with N = 379) also displayed an overall acceptable model fit in view of the fact that 1) CMIN/DF was within the good fit range of 1-3; 2) CFI was above the good fit cutoff value of 0.95, while TLI and NFI were above the acceptable fit cutoff value of 0.90; and 3) SRMR was smaller than the good fit cutoff value 0.08, and RMSEA was smaller than the acceptable fit cutoff value of 0.08 (Bagozzi, R. & Yi, Y., 1988); (Hair, J. F. Jr., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J. & Anderson, R. E., 2010, pp. 579-582).

Meanwhile, in regards to the structural model, Mindset was largely determined by how important workplace fun was for respondents (β = 0,999, p < 0.0001, N = 313) & (β = 1.017, p < 0.0001, N = 379); how beneficial they perceived anticipated results to be (β = 0.881, p < 0.0001, N = 313) & (β = 0.743, p < 0.0001, N = 379); and lastly how proper they considered workplace fun to be (β = 0.880, p < 0.0001, N = 379) & (β = 0.950, p < 0.0001, N = 313).

Different from Choi, Kown & Kim (2013), the structural model of the present study was saturated with fewer items. For Model 2, the scale for propriety was measured by only two of the three initially suggested items (P1 & P3); importance by three of the five initially suggested items (I1, I3 & I4); and anticipated results by four of the five initially proposed items (AR1, AR2, AR3 & AR5). For Model 3, the scale for propriety was measured by only two of the three initially suggested items (P1 & P3); importance by two of the five initially suggested items (I3 & I4); and anticipated results by two of the five initially proposed items (AR1 & AR2).

Fun experienced at work for both Models (2 & 3) was measured by only two of the three initially proposed items (FE1 & FE3), with the second item (FE2) that measured managerial support for workplace fun not fitting the model, a fact which was also signaled by the low average rated score for the item showing that banking industry employees of the two surveyed organization did not perceive management as being supportive of workplace fun.

Task fulfillment was measured with only three out of the four initially proposed items for Model 2, namely the first three items from the task fulfillment scale (TF1, TF2 & TF3); while for Model 3 all four task fulfillment items provided a good fit to the model.

Employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI) was measured with three out of the five initially proposed items for Model 2, namely the third, fourth and fifth items (EE3, EE4 & EE5); while for Model 3 only two out of the five initially proposed items provided a good fit for the model, namely the third and fifth item (EE3 & EE5) measuring the social interaction level of employees.

5.2.2 Hypothesis Testing

The construct of approach to workplace fun (Mindset) was successfully established, with its first order loadings being all highly significant, namely for the Millennials' Dataset (see Table 8, $N = 313$) which formed the Structural Model 2: Property ($\beta = 0.880$, $p < 0.001$), Importance ($\beta = 0.999$, $p < 0.001$), and Anticipated Results ($\beta = 0.881$, $p < 0.001$); as well as for the Total Dataset (see Table 11, $N = 379$) which formed the Structural Model 3: Property ($\beta = 0.950$, $p < 0.001$), Importance ($\beta = 1.107$, $p < 0.001$), and Anticipated Results ($\beta = 0.743$, $p < 0.001$). This result proved the assumption that approach to workplace fun (Mindset) is determined by how proper and important workplace fun is for employees; as well as the anticipated results banking sector employees assume would come from the implementation of workplace fun within the organization, and their own participation in it.

The first hypothesis postulated that approach to workplace fun (Mindset) would have a positive effect on fun experienced at work. Results from the analysis of the Millennials' Dataset (see Table 12, $N = 313$), which were derived from the (Structural Equation) Model 2 (Figure 4), showed that the path/direct effect of approach to workplace fun (Mindset) on fun experienced at work (FE) was significant and positive ($\beta = 0.500$, $p < 0.01$). In addition, results from the analysis of the Total Dataset (see Table 13, $N = 379$), which were derived from the (Structural Equation) Model 4 (Figure 5), further corroborated to the support of Hypothesis 1 (H1.) in view of the fact that the path/direct effect of approach to workplace fun (Mindset) on fun experienced at work (FE) was also significant and positive ($\beta = 0.599$, $p < 0.01$).

The second hypothesis postulated that fun experienced at work would have a positive effect on job gratification. Results from the analysis of the Millennials' Dataset (Table 12) showed that the path/direct effect of fun experienced at work (FE) on job gratification (JG) was significant and positive ($\beta = 0.876$, $p < 0.01$). In addition, results from the analysis of the Total Dataset (Table 13) further corroborated to the support of Hypothesis 2 (H2.), in view of the fact that the path/direct effect of fun experienced at work (FE) on job gratification (JG) was also significant and positive ($\beta = 0.923$, $p < 0.01$).

The third hypothesis postulated that fun experienced at work would have a positive effect on task fulfillment. Results from the analysis of the Millennials' Dataset showed that the path/direct effect of fun experienced at work (FE) on task fulfillment (TF) was significant, however the direct effect of fun experienced at work (FE) on task fulfillment (TF) was negative ($\beta = -0.353$, $p < 0.05$). In addition, results from the analysis of the Total Dataset were in line with those mentioned above in view of the fact that the path/direct effect of fun experienced at work (FE) on job gratification (JG) was also significant but negative ($\beta = -0.476$, $p < 0.01$). Hypothesis 3 (H3.) was not supported by the results of both datasets analysis. However, when constraining to 0 the path/direct effect of: employee engagement with others within the organization/OCBI (EE) on task fulfillment (TF); approach to workplace fun (Mindset) on job gratification (JG), task fulfillment (TF) and employee engagement with others within the organization/OCBI (EE); as well as job gratification on task fulfillment (TF) and employee engagement with others within the organization/OCBI (EE), the path/direct effect of fun experienced at work (FE) on task fulfillment (TF) was significant and positive ($\beta = 0.336$, $p < 0.01$, $N = 313$) & ($\beta = 0.324$, $p < 0.01$, $N = 379$).

The fourth hypothesis postulated that fun experienced at work would have a positive effect on employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI). Results from the analysis of the Millennials' Dataset (Table 12) showed that the path/direct effect of fun experienced at work (FE) on employee engagement with others within the organization/OCBI (EE) was not significant ($\beta = 0.110$, $p > 0.05$). In addition, results from the analysis of the Total Dataset (Table 13) were in line with those mentioned above, in view of the fact that the path/direct effect of fun experienced at work (FE) on employee engagement with others within the organization/OCBI (EE) was not significant ($\beta = 0.076$, $p > 0.05$). Hypothesis 4 (H4.) was not supported by the results of both datasets analysis. However, when constraining to 0 the path/direct effect of: employee engagement with others within the organization/OCBI (EE) on task fulfillment (TF); and approach to workplace fun (Mindset) on job gratification

(JG), task fulfillment (TF) and employee engagement with others within the organization/OCBI (EE), the path/direct effect of fun experienced at work (FE) on employee engagement with others within the organization/OCBI (EE) was significant and positive (β = 0.563, $p < 0.01$, N = 313) & (β = 0.552, $p < 0.01$, N = 379). Moreover, when further constraining to 0 the path/direct effect of job gratification on task fulfillment (TF) and employee engagement with others within the organization/OCBI (EE), the path/direct effect of fun experienced at work (FE) on task fulfillment (TF) was still significant and positive (β = 0.520, $p < 0.01$, N = 313) & (β = 0.526, $p < 0.01$, N = 379).

The fifth hypothesis postulated that job gratification would have a positive effect on task fulfillment. Results from the analysis of the Millennials' Dataset (Table 12) showed that the path/direct effect of job gratification (JG) on task fulfillment (TF) was significant and positive (β = 0.390, $p < 0.01$). In addition, results from the analysis of the Total Dataset (Table 13) further corroborated to the support of Hypothesis 5 (H5.), in view of the fact that the path/direct effect of fun experienced at work (FE) on job gratification (JG) was also significant and positive (β = 0.516, $p < 0.01$).

The sixth hypothesis postulated that job gratification would have a positive effect on employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI). Results from the analysis of the Millennials' Dataset (Table 12) showed that the path/direct effect of job gratification (JG) on employee engagement with others within the organization/OCBI (EE) was not significant (β = 0.110, $p > 0.05$). In addition, results from the analysis of the Total Dataset (Table 13) were in line with those mentioned above, in view of the fact that the path/direct effect of job gratification (JG) on employee engagement with others within the organization/OCBI (EE) was not significant (β = 0.174, $p > 0.05$). Moreover, even when constraining to 0 the path/direct effect of: employee engagement with others within the organization/OCBI (EE) on task fulfillment (TF); and approach to workplace fun (Mindset) on job gratification (JG), task fulfillment (TF) and employee engagement with others within the organization/OCBI (EE), the path/direct effect of job gratification (JG) on employee engagement with others within the organization/OCBI (EE) was not significant (β = - 0.049, $p > 0.05$, N = 313) & (β = - 0.039, $p > 0.05$, N = 379).

In summary, Hypothesis 1 (H1.), Hypothesis 2 (H2.), and Hypothesis 5 (H5.) were supported by the validated Structural Equation Models (Model 2 - Figure 4, and Model 3 - Figure 5). Hypothesis 3 (H3.) was not directly supported, except for when the path/direct effect of approach to workplace fun and employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI) on task fulfillment were restricted to 0. At the same time, Hypothesis 4 (H4.) was not directly supported, except for when the path/direct effect of approach to workplace fun, job gratification and employee engagement with others within the organization were restricted to 0. Hypothesis 6 (H6.) was not supported under any conditions by the validated models.

The above-mentioned results show that Approach to workplace fun (Mindset) has a significant positive impact on Fun experienced at work. At the same time, Fun experienced at work positively influenced the perceived level of satisfaction derived from work (job gratification). Job gratification had a positive impact on task fulfillment, meaning that satisfied employees performed their tasks more efficiently or perceived having a better performance. Meanwhile, fun experienced at work resulted in a perceived negative influence on task fulfillment, contrary to what was initially hypothesized. Moreover, unlike what the current study postulated, job gratification and fun experienced at work did not result having a significant direct impact on employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI).

Table 16 Model 2 (Millennials' Dataset, N = 313) Hypotheses Results

Path			Total Effect	2-tail sig	Direct Effect	2-tail sig	Indirect Effect	2-tail sig
Mindset	--->	FE	0.500	0.008	0.500	0.008	---	---
FE	--->	JG	0.876	0.006	0.876	0.006	---	---
FE	--->	TF	0.023	0.870	- 0.353	0.022	0.376	0.019
FE	--->	EE	0.304	0.010	0.110	0.272	0.097	0.284
JG	--->	TF	0.402	0.009	0.390	0.007	0.012	0.182
JG	--->	EE	0.110	0.308	0.110	0.308	---	---
Mindset	--->	JG	- 0.091	0.005	- 0.091	0.243	0.438	0.005
Mindset	--->	TF	0.509	0.002	0.492	0.005	0.017	0.940
Mindset	--->	EE	0.517	0.007	0.375	0.013	0.214	0.006
EE	--->	TF	0.113	0.159	0.113	0.159	---	---
Constraining Mindset (on JG, TF and EE) and EE to 0								
Path			Total Effect	2-tail sig	Direct Effect	2-tail sig	Indirect Effect	2-tail sig
Mindset	--->	FE	0.517	0.007	0.517	0.007	---	---

Path			Total Effect	2-tail sig	Direct Effect	2-tail sig	Indirect Effect	2-tail sig
FE	--->	JG	0.743	0.009	0.825	0.009	---	---
FE	--->	TF	0.324	0.007	0.206	0.173	0.118	0.409
FE	--->	EE	0.526	0.011	0.563	0.007	- 0.041	0.694
JG	--->	TF	0.143	0.424	0.143	0.424	---	---
JG	--->	EE	- 0.049	0.676	- 0.049	0.676	---	---
Mindset	0	JG	0.426	0.005	---	---	0.426	0.005
Mindset	0	TF	0.167	0.006	---	---	0.167	0.006
Mindset	0	EE	0.270	0.007	---	---	0.270	0.007
EE	0	TF	---	---	---	---	---	---
Constraining Mindset (on JG, TF and EE), JG and EE to 0								
Path			Total Effect	2-tail sig	Direct Effect	2-tail sig	Indirect Effect	2-tail sig
Mindset	--->	FE	0.520	0.009	0.520	0.009	---	---
FE	--->	JG	0.826	0.010	0.826	0.010	---	---
FE	--->	TF	0.336	0.008	0.336	0.008	---	---
FE	--->	EE	0.520	0.012	0.520	0.012	---	---
JG	--->	TF	---	---	---	---	---	---
JG	--->	EE	---	---	---	---	---	---
Mindset	0	JG	0.430	0.009	---	---	0.430	0.009
Mindset	0	TF	0.175	0.007	---	---	0.175	0.007
Mindset	0	EE	0.271	0.009	---	---	0.271	0.009
EE	0	TF	---	---	---	---	---	---

Note: standardized effects

Table 17 Model 3 (Total Dataset, N = 379) Hypotheses Test Results

Path			Total Effect	2-tail sig	Direct Effect	2-tail sig	Indirect Effect	2-tail sig
Mindset	--->	FE	0.599	0.001	0.599	0.001	---	---
FE	--->	JG	0.923	0.001	0.923	0.001	---	---
FE	--->	TF	0.044	0.690	- 0.476	0.004	0.519	0.001
FE	--->	EE	0.237	0.004	0.076	0.653	0.161	0.075
JG	--->	TF	0.548	0.001	0.516	0.001	0.032	0.044
JG	--->	EE	0.174	0.089	0.174	0.089	---	---
Mindset	--->	JG	0.288	0.005	- 0.271	0.004	0.553	0.001
Mindset	--->	TF	0.386	0.002	0.423	0.005	- 0.037	0.604
Mindset	--->	EE	0.558	0.007	0.463	0.001	0.095	0.138
EE	--->	TF	0.183	0.048	0.183	0.048	---	---
Constraining Mindset (on JG, TF and EE) and EE to 0								
Path			Total Effect	2-tail sig	Direct Effect	2-tail sig	Indirect Effect	2-tail sig
Mindset	--->	FE	0.594	0.001	0.594	0.001	---	---

Path			Total Effect	2-tail sig	Direct Effect	2-tail sig	Indirect Effect	2-tail sig
FE	--->	JG	0.740	0.004	0.740	0.004	---	---
FE	--->	TF	0.302	0.003	0.120	0.255	0.182	0.018
FE	--->	EE	0.524	0.002	0.552	0.002	- 0.029	0.680
JG	--->	TF	0.246	0.020	0.246	0.020	---	---
JG	--->	EE	- 0.039	0.672	- 0.039	0.672	---	---
Mindset	0	JG	0.440	0.001	---	---	0.440	0.001
Mindset	0	TF	0.179	0.002	---	---	0.179	0.002
Mindset	0	EE	0.311	0.001	---	---	0.311	0.001
EE	0	TF	---	---	---	---	---	---
Constraining Mindset (on JG, TF and EE), JG and EE to 0								
Path			Total Effect	2-tail sig	Direct Effect	2-tail sig	Indirect Effect	2-tail sig
Mindset	--->	FE	0.598	0.001	0.598	0.001	---	---
FE	--->	JG	0.743	0.004	0.743	0.004	---	---
FE	--->	TF	0.324	0.002	0.324	0.002	---	---
FE	--->	EE	0.526	0.002	0.526	0.002	---	---
JG	--->	TF	---	---	---	---	---	---
JG	--->	EE	---	---	---	---	---	---
Mindset	0	JG	0.444	0.001	---	---	0.444	0.001
Mindset	0	TF	0.193	0.002	---	---	0.193	0.002
Mindset	0	EE	0.314	0.001	---	---	0.314	0.001
EE	0	TF	---	---	---	---	---	---

Note: standardized effects

Table 18 Hypotheses Test Results Summary

Hypothesis	2-tail Significance	Hypothesis test result
H1: (M -> FE)	+ Significant	Supported
H2: (FE -> JG)	+ Significant	Supported
H3: (FE -> TF)	- Significant	Not Supported
H4: (FE -> EE)	Not Significant	Not Supported
H5: (JG -> TF)	+ Significant	Supported
H6: (JG -> EE)	Not Significant	Not Supported

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter results from the hypothesis tests will be discussed in more detail, and compare with findings from previous research. Practical implications of the results will be addressed, limitations will be disclosed, and suggestions for future research will be provided.

6.1 Discussion

Workplace fun has been related to several positive outcomes, such as **increased employee satisfaction** [(Ilies, R. & Judge, T. A., 2002); (Ford, R. C., McLaughlin, F. S., & Newstrom, J. W., 2003); (Ilies, R. & Judge, T. A., 2004); (Ford, R. C., Newstrom, J. W. & McLaughlin, F. S., 2004); (Karl, K. A., Peluchette, J., Hall, L. & Harland, L., 2005); (Karl, K. A. & Peluchette, J., 2006a); (Karl K. A., Peluchette J. V. & Harland L., 2007); (Karl, K. A., Peluchette, J. V. & Hall, L. M., 2008); (Everett, 2011); (Hofmans, J., De Gieter, S., & Pepermans, R., 2013); (Choi, Y. G., Kwon, J., & Kim, W., 2013); (Chan, S. C. H., & Mak, W., 2016)]; **enhanced productivity** [(Lamm, 2009); (Tews, M. J., Michel, J. W. & Stafford, K., 2013); (Fluegge-Woolf, 2014); (Tang, J., Liu, M. S. & Liu, W. B., 2017)]; **heightened motivation** [(Ford, R. C., Newstrom, J. W. & McLaughlin, F. S., 2004); (Kim, W. G., Leong, J. K. & Lee, Y. K., 2005); (Chan, 2010); (Hofmans, J., De Gieter, S., & Pepermans, R., 2013); (Tews, M. J., Michel, J. W., & Allen, D. G., 2014)]; **reduced stress** [(Karl, K. A. & Peluchette, J., 2006a); (Romero, E. J. and Cruthirds, K. W., 2006); (Chan, 2019)]; **decreased turnover** [(Salazar, J., Pfaffenberg, C., & Salazar, L., 2006); (Karl, K. A., Peluchette, J. V. & Hall, L. M., 2008); (Chan, 2010); (Tews, M. J., Michel, J. W., & Allen, D. G., 2014); (Chan, 2019); (Mousa, 2020)]; **facilitated & increased employee engagement** [(Salazar, J., Pfaffenberg, C., & Salazar, L., 2006); (Romero, E. J. and Cruthirds, K. W., 2006); (Abraham, 2012); (Choi, Y. G., Kwon, J., & Kim, W., 2013); (Tews, M. J., Michel, J. W., & Allen, D. G., 2014); (Becker, F. W & Tews, M. J., 2016)].

In line with the extant body of knowledge, the present study intended to establish and analyze a conceptual (structural) model, in order to test the relationship between approach to workplace fun, fun experienced at work, job gratification, task fulfillment, and employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI) for Millennial banking industry employees in Austria, since previous studies on workplace fun have not managed to empirically analyze its impact in the banking industry. Consequently, the present study

empirically tested the relationship among the constructs of interest, thus contributing to extant knowledge on workplace fun with its findings.

Results from the current study regarding the impact of approach to workplace fun (Mindset) on fun experienced at work were consonant with findings from existing research from Karl, Peluchette, Hall & Harland (2005); Karl, Peluchette & Harland (2007); and Choi, Kwon & Kim (2013). The construct of Approach to workplace fun developed by Karl, Peluchette & Harland (2007) is reliable and valid in measuring the intended concept with its three subscales. Fun experienced at work was positively affected by how proper, important and beneficial the anticipated results of workplace fun were perceived to be for Millennial banking industry employees in Austria. This fact further corroborates the theories that predisposition of individuals towards workplace fun significantly affects their perception and awareness of experienced fun [(Karl K. A., Peluchette J. V. & Harland L., 2007); (Choi, Y. G., Kwon, J., & Kim, W., 2013)]. When like-minded individuals with similar predispositions towards workplace fun gather within an organization, it may lead to an easier establishment and fostering of workplace fun cultures within the organization, which is why person-organization fit and cultural fit have been widely utilized as a "tool" for the recruitment of new employees (Dangler, L. A. & Rahlfs, T. F., 2020).

Similar to results from previous research [(Karl, K. A., Peluchette, J., Hall, L. & Harland, L., 2005); (Karl, K. A. & Peluchette, J., 2006a);] and the original study by Choi, Kwon & Kim (2013), fun experienced at work was found to have a significant positive influence on (satisfaction) job gratification, and in turn job gratification was found to significantly and positively impact task fulfillment. The potential explanation for this result being that fun experienced at work was perceived as highly important by respondents, as well as employees believing in the beneficial results of workplace fun, namely stress reduction and improved social interactions. By experiencing workplace fun employees could feel less stressed (Romero, E. J. and Cruthirds, K. W., 2006), as well as potentially work and interact better with others within the organization (Abraham, 2012), which can contribute to them feeling more satisfied with their job [(Ilies, R. & Judge, T. A., 2002); (Ford, R. C., McLaughlin, F. S., & Newstrom, J. W., 2003); (Ilies, R. & Judge, T. A., 2004); (Ford, R. C., Newstrom, J. W. & McLaughlin, F. S., 2004); (Karl, K. A., Peluchette, J., Hall, L. & Harland, L., 2005); (Choi, Y. G., Kwon, J., & Kim, W., 2013)].

At the same time, as previously mentioned, happier employees work better by way of being potentially more engaged in their work; a conclusion that was also derived by previous studies from Ford, McLaughlin & Newstrom (2003); Ford, Newstrom & McLaughlin (2004); Karl & Peluchette (2006a); Chan (2010); and Choi, Kwon & Kim (2013).

The above-mentioned findings are extremely important by way of explaining the "chain of influence" of the predisposition of employees towards fun (Mindset) on fun experienced at work, fun experienced at work on job gratification, and job gratification on task fulfillment (Karl, K. A., Peluchette, J., Hall, L. & Harland, L., 2005); (Choi, Y. G., Kwon, J., & Kim, W., 2013). Since the impacts of the variables are positive (i.e. fun experience boosts satisfaction, which in turn boosts productivity), it means that endorsing workplace fun within the organization would have beneficial outcomes on both individuals and the organization (through job gratification and task fulfillment).

Furthermore, this means that Millennial employees in the banking industry have a positive view and predisposition (Mindset) towards workplace fun, confirming the results of findings from generational theories concerning Millennials by Twenge (2010, p. 208); and Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman & Lance (2010, pp. 1134-1139).

Contrary to findings from previous research and the original study by Choi, Kwon & Kim (2013), the present study found fun experienced at work to have a significant direct negative impact on task fulfillment; while no significant direct impact was found on employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI). A potential explanation for this result could be that in line with warnings from Fleming (2005); Plester (2009); and Tews, Michel & Strafford (2013) who found that managerial support for fun negatively impacted task fulfillment, having fun at work could be cutting into employees' time for performing their tasks or somehow impacting the perception of the employees' work achievements.

However, an even more probable explanation, due to the observed significant direct impact of Mindset on task fulfillment, as well as the significant positive direct impact of experienced fun at work on task fulfillment when the influence of Mindset was constrained, the effect of workplace fun might have been fully mediated by Mindset. Moreover, employees' expectations for having fun at work might not converge with the reality experienced in the workplace (in light of the fact that managerial support for fun was found to be lacking in the surveyed organizations), which could result in increased pressure, and a decrease in motivation and engagement in work tasks for employees; a potential dark side of workplace fun as postulated by Fleugge (2008).

At the same time, contrary to findings from previous research and the original study from Choi, Kwon & Kim (2013), fun experienced at work and job gratification were not found to have a significant direct positive impact on employee engagement with others within the organization. Socializing was found to be the determinant factor for employee engagement with others within the organization, while items related to helping others did not produce a good fit the analyzed models. Perhaps, this was one of the factors contributing to why fun experienced at work and job gratification did not have a significant direct impact on the employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI) construct. Additionally, approach to workplace fun (Mindset) was found to have a significant direct positive impact on task fulfillment and employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI), an instance which has not been extensively examined by previous research, thus potentially fully mediating the effect of fun experienced at work and job gratification on employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI).

6.2 Practical Implications

Based on the provided results, the current study offers several practical implications for organizations in the Austrian banking industry. First, Millennial employees and employees in general working in the banking industry share the same view on workplace fun as employees from other industries and sectors analyzed by the extant body of knowledge, namely a positive view and fun oriented predisposition (Mindset). Workplace fun is just as important for employees of the Austrian banking industry, as it is for employees from other geographic location analyzed by previous studies (The U.S., Australia, China & Thailand, to name a few).

Second, similar to findings from previous studies (Karl, K. A., Peluchette, J., Hall, L. & Harland, L., 2005); (Choi, Y. G., Kwon, J., & Kim, W., 2013), Millennial employees' Mindset resulted having a significant positive impact on fun experienced at work, which in turn resulted having a significant positive impact on satisfaction (job gratification), however managers were perceived as not supportive of workplace fun, thus potentially hindering the benefits that could be derived from the implementation of a workplace fun climate and/or culture.

In additions, this finding is even more distressing given the fact that job gratification resulted having a significant positive influence on task fulfillment, meaning that unless management changes its stance or manages to inspire confidence and support towards employees, significant potential gains will not be realized.

Given that the banking industry aims to attract and retain Millennial employees, who are acknowledged to have a high level of tech literacy and will play a crucial role in the future digitalization processes of baking industry services, changing the attitude of mid- and high-level managers towards workplace fun can help moderate the formal environment of traditional banks.

Furthermore, in accordance with findings from previous studies [(Ford, R. C., McLaughlin, F. S., & Newstrom, J. W., 2003); (Eisner, 2005)] employees might have diverging individual preferences and predispositions regarding what they consider to be fun, thus management is advised to not only implement and support workplace fun, but to actively test and discover the events and activities considered fun by employees before implementing them. Thus, facilitating and endorsing spontaneous and employee organized fun could be an optimal solution to this issue (Fleming, 2005, pp. 299-300).

6.3 Limitations

Even though the present research offered stimulating observations with regard to the interconnections between approach to workplace fun (Mindset), fun experienced at work, job gratification, task fulfillment, and employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI), the resulting outcomes need to be construed under several limitations.

The study utilized a sample of convenience, due to insufficient control resulting from the fact that participants themselves were not directly randomly selected, but were distributed by individuals within the organizations; as well as the fact that the online survey was offered only in English in a county such as Austria where the national and official language is German, thus limiting responses from specific categories of the targeted population. The characteristics of the sample were a limitation since 44% of respondents were female and 56% were male; as well as 70% of respondents having attained a high level of education (Masters' degree and PHD), thus resulting in an overrepresentation of males & highly educated employees. Another limitation could have resulted from social-desirability bias, in view of the fact that the online survey was distributed to employees by their respective organization (Directors and mid/high-level managers), and the results were shared with the organizations, consequently potentially inhibiting employees from sharing their sincere thoughts and feelings regarding the measured constructs (workplace fun, job gratification, task fulfillment, and employee engagement with others within the organization/OCBI). Additionally, employees from only two

large Austrian banks took part in the present study, thus limiting the generalizability of the resulting observations.

A significant limitation to the present research was the fact that it was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic, while the pandemic's repercussions on the economy, organizations, and employees have significantly affected the mindset and behavior of individuals, as a consequence of the increased level of unemployment and potential risk of further layoffs. On these grounds, the observations collected by this study might have been significantly affected by the ongoing pandemic, exacerbating the need for relaxation and fun as a result of home office and quarantine restrictions, while at the same time suppressing the level of perceived importance and/or benefits of workplace fun as a result of prioritizing financial needs and job stability.

6.4 Future Research

A first suggestion for future research is provided in light of the fact that this study employed a convenience sample comprised of 313 banking industry employees, aged 20-41 years old, thus merely a limited fraction of the population was represented in the present research. In response to this issue, the need became evident for further research on the topic of workplace fun, conducted with a wide range of population groups, and including a variety of demographic segments.

Furthermore, extending the research to other countries, industries, and/or organizations would contribute to validating the finding of the current and previous research, and might produce significant and insightful results in response to the fact that individual approach to workplace fun (Mindset) is affected by social, cultural and organizational backgrounds, as evidenced by Mousa's (2020) qualitative study of workplace fun in the banking industry of Egypt.

Stemming from the diverse results obtained from qualitative exploratory studies and quantitative empirical studies, the utilization of a mixed-methods approach could also contribute to a better and deeper understanding of workplace fun (its antecedents, components, and outcomes). The impact of organizational culture on workplace fun, as well as the impact of workplace fun on employee attraction and retention need to be analyzed in more detail, even though a stream of studies from Tews, Michel & Bartlett (2012); Tews, Michel & Stafford (2013); and Tews, Michel & Allen (2014) have made a significant initial contribution to opening this path of research.

6.5 Conclusion

The current study offers empirical evidence that Millennials working in the Austrian banking industry value workplace fun. Additionally, findings from the current study corroborate results from existing literature and the original study conducted by Choi, Kwon & Kim (2013) regarding the positive impact of workplace fun on employee satisfaction (job gratification). Fun experienced at work had a significant positive impact on job gratification. Furthermore, in consonance with findings from existing literature and the original study conducted by Choi, Kwon & Kim (2013), job gratification had a significant positive impact on employee productivity (task fulfillment).

Similar to findings from Ruangkanjanases & Chen (2019), fun experienced at work did not result having a significant positive impact on employee productivity (task fulfillment); nor did it result having a significant positive impact on employee engagement with others within the organization (OCBI). Additionally, job gratification did not result having a significant positive impact on employee engagement with others within the organization.

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Appendix A

Workplace Fun in the Banking Industry Survey

Please rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements using the following rating scale:

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree	Disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	Strongly agree

Approach to workplace fun (Mindset) – Aldag & Sherony (2001); Karl, Peluchette, Hall & Harland (2005)

Propriety

Joking, laughing, or having a "playful attitude" while on the job is immature and unprofessional

| strongly disagree | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | strongly agree |

Having a good time and doing a good job are an incompatible achievement

| strongly disagree | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | strongly agree |

If you are playing, you cannot be possibly working

| strongly disagree | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | strongly agree |

Note: The above items were reverse coded

Importance

Having fun at work is very important to me

| strongly disagree | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | strongly agree |

If my job stopped being fun, I would look for another job

strongly disagree   O   O   O   O   O   strongly agree

I prefer to work with people who like to have fun

strongly disagree   O   O   O   O   O   strongly agree

I don't expect work to be fun – that's why they call it work

strongly disagree   O   O   O   O   O   strongly agree

Note: The above item was reverse coded

Experiencing joy or amusement while at work is not important to me

strongly disagree   O   O   O   O   O   strongly agree

Note: The above item was reverse coded

Anticipated Results

Having fun at work can enhance interpersonal relations and teamwork

strongly disagree   O   O   O   O   O   strongly agree

Fun at work can help reduce stress and tensions

strongly disagree   O   O   O   O   O   strongly agree

When work is fun, employees work harder and longer

strongly disagree   O   O   O   O   O   strongly agree

When employees are having fun, they are typically goofing off and avoiding their work

strongly disagree   O   O   O   O   O   strongly agree

Employees with a healthy sense of humor tend to work well with others

strongly disagree   O   O   O   O   O   strongly agree

Fun experienced at work – Karl et al. (2007)

At my workplace, we try to have fun whenever we can

strongly disagree ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ strongly agree

Managers encourage employees to have fun at work

strongly disagree ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ strongly agree

We laugh a lot at my workplace

strongly disagree ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ strongly agree

Job Gratification - Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire (MOAQ)

All in all, I am satisfied with my job

strongly disagree ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ strongly agree

In general, I like working here

strongly disagree ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ strongly agree

Task Fulfillment - Williams & Anderson (1991)

I adequately complete assigned duties

strongly disagree ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ strongly agree

I fulfill responsibilities specified in the job description

strongly disagree ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ strongly agree

I perform tasks that are expected of me

strongly disagree ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ strongly agree

I meet formal performance requirements of the job

strongly disagree ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ strongly agree

Employee engagement with others within the organization - Williams & Anderson (1991)

I help others who have heavy workloads

strongly disagree ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ strongly agree

I assist supervisor with my work (when not asked)

strongly disagree ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ strongly agree

I take time to listen to coworkers' problems and worries

strongly disagree ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ strongly agree

I go out of my way to help new employees

strongly disagree ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ strongly agree

I take personal interest in other employees

strongly disagree ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ strongly agree

Demographics
Gender

☐ Male

☐ Female

Age

☐ 18 - 23

☐ 24 - 29

☐ 30 - 35

☐ 36 - 41

☐ 42 - 47

☐ 48 - 53

☐ 54 - 59

☐ 60 - 65

☐ ≥ 66

Work Experience (minimum 3 months experience)

☐ < 1 year

☐ 1 - 5 years

☐ 6 - 10 years

☐ 11 - 15 years

☐ 16 - 20 years

☐ 21 - 25 years

☐ 26 - 30 years

☐ > 30 years

Qualification

☐ High school Diploma

☐ Bachelor or equivalent

☐ Masters

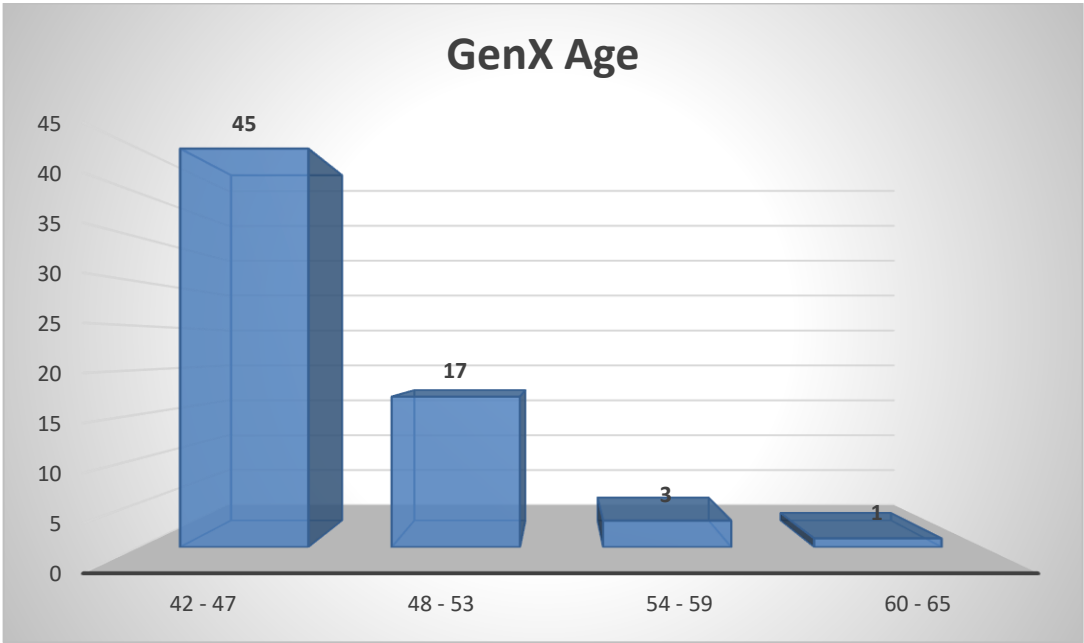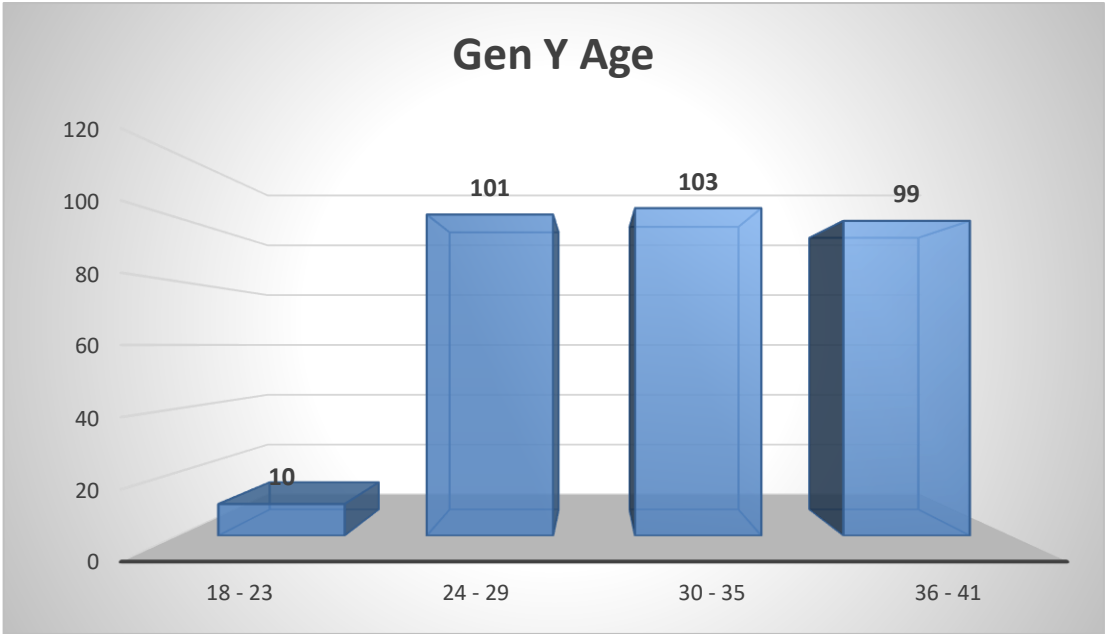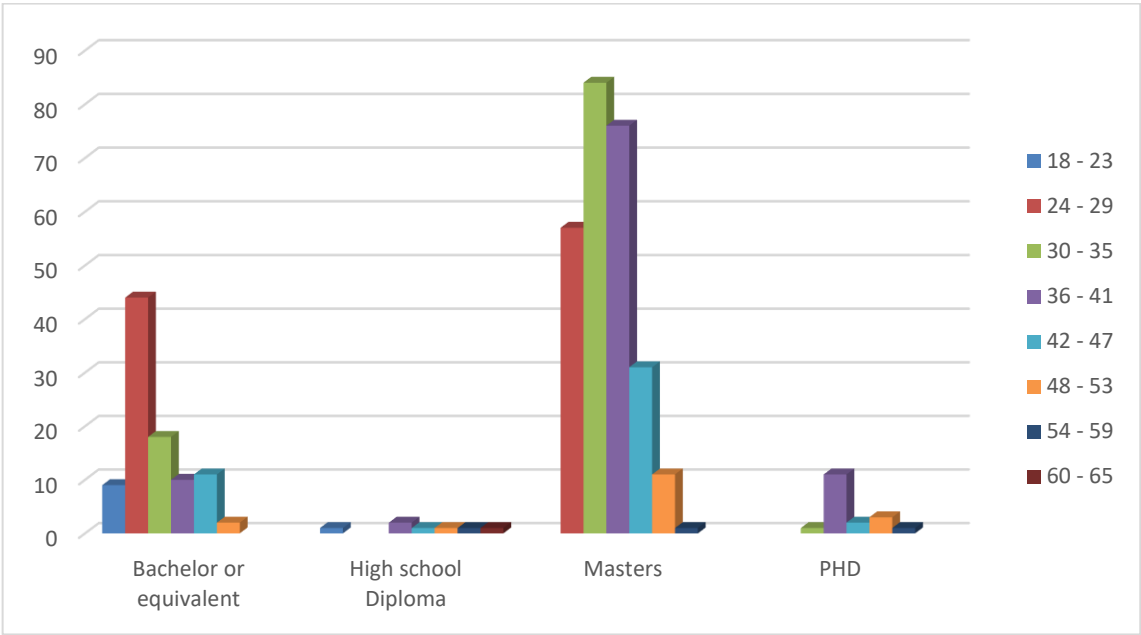☐ PHD

Appendix B

Gen Y Age

GenX Age
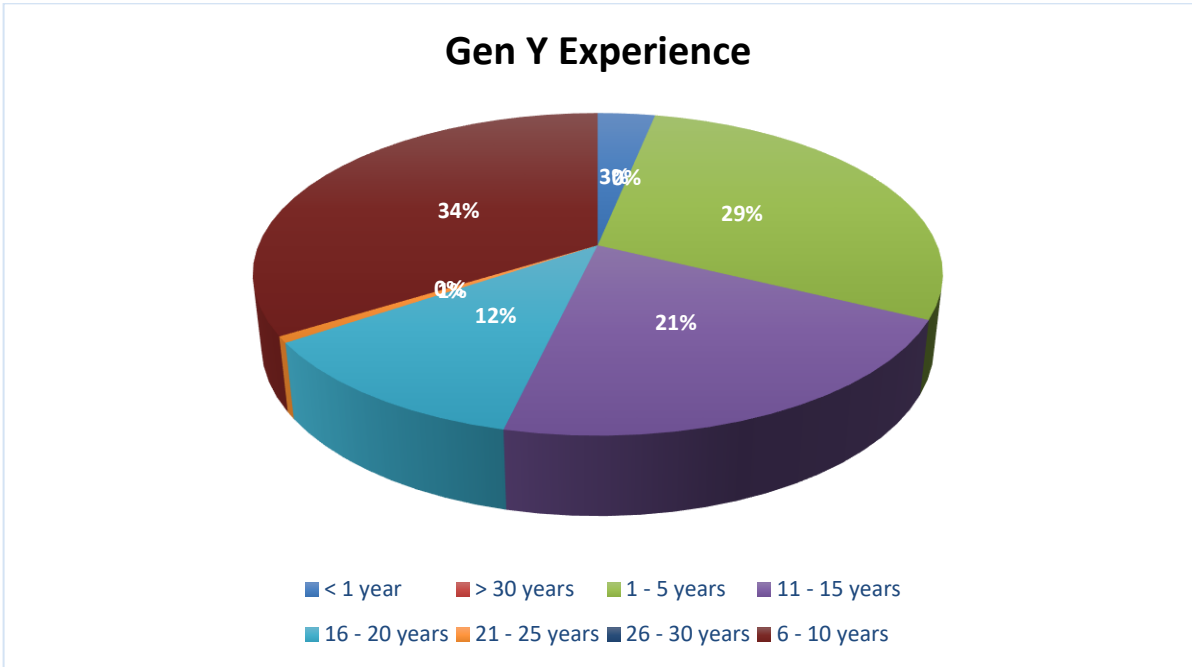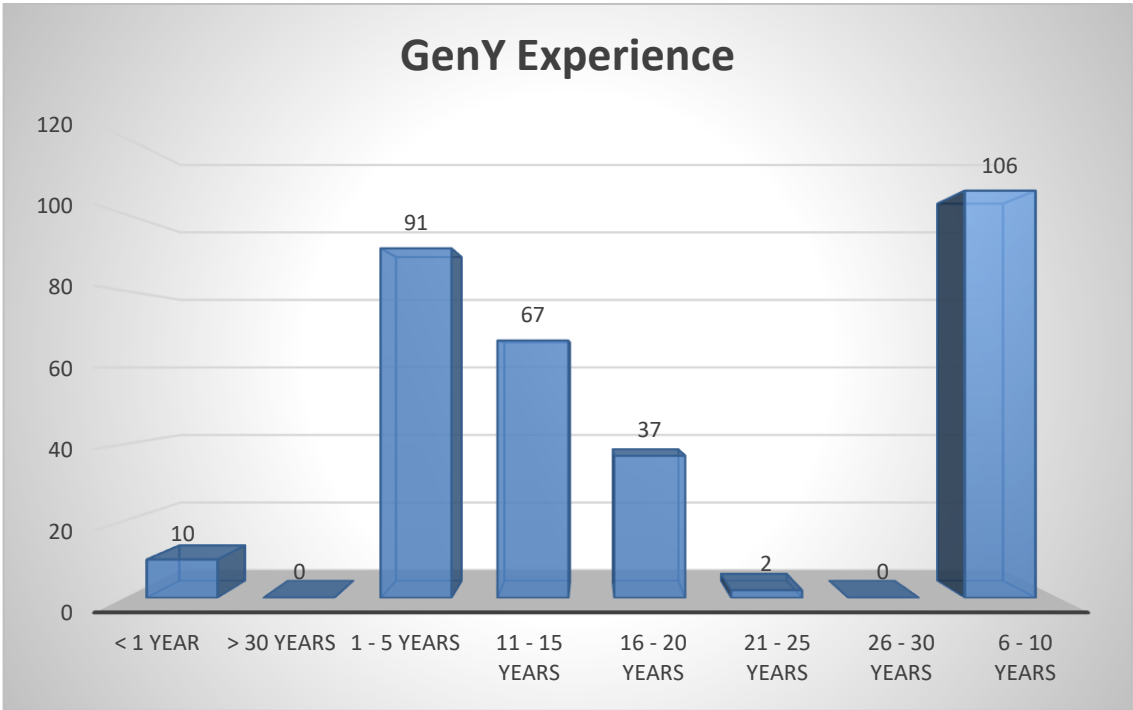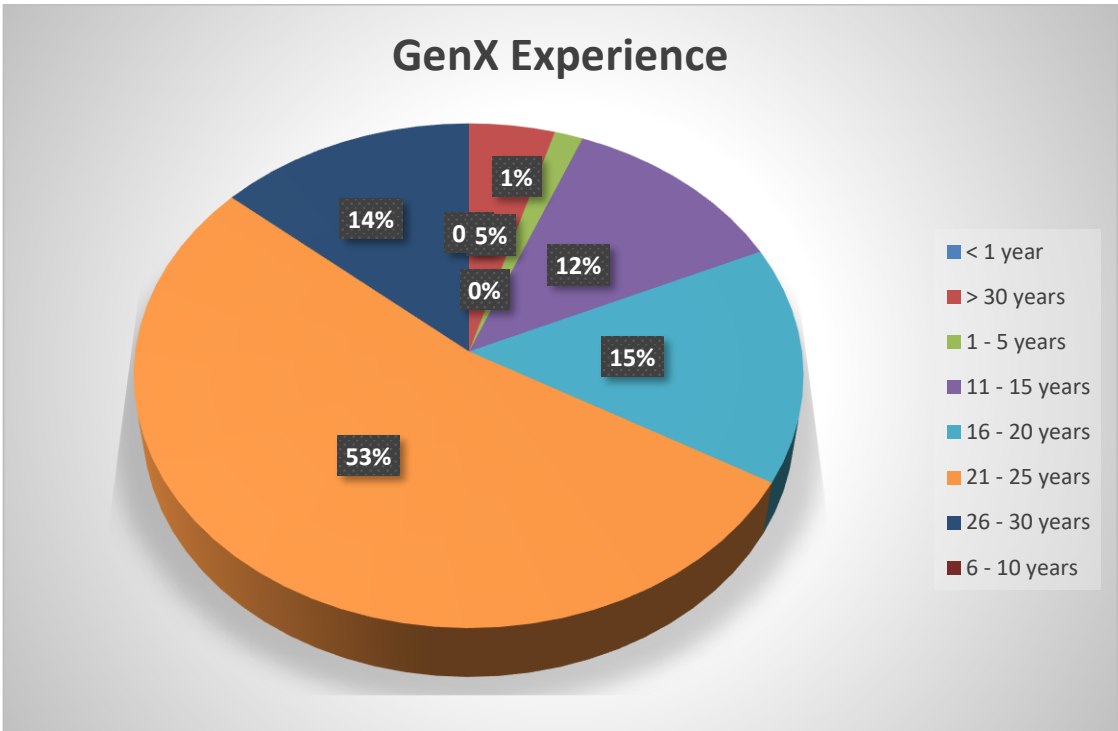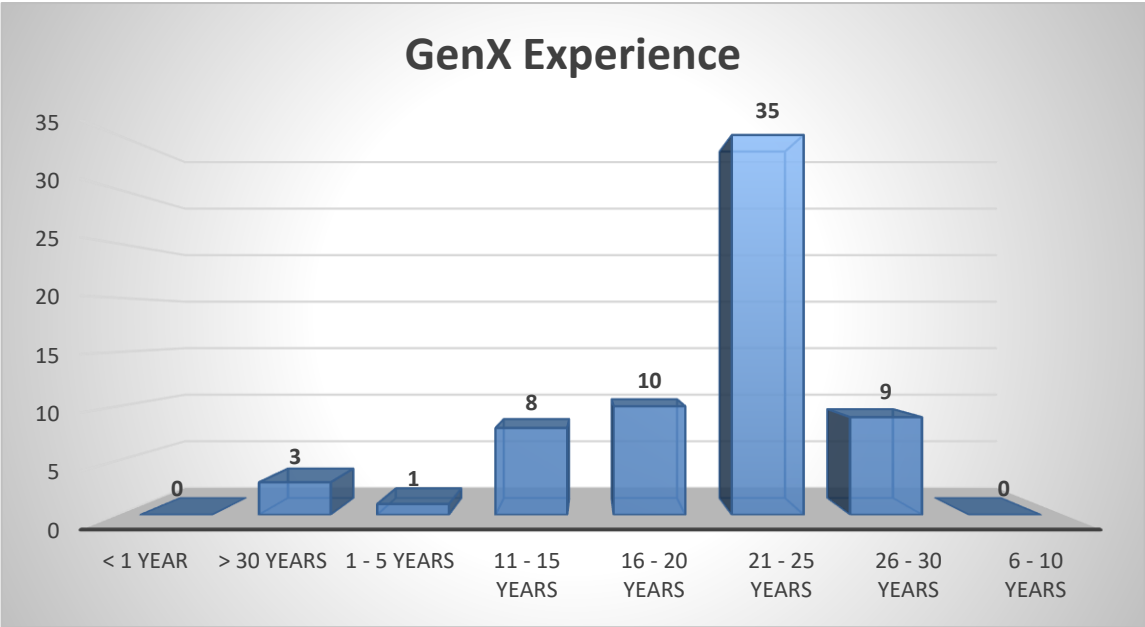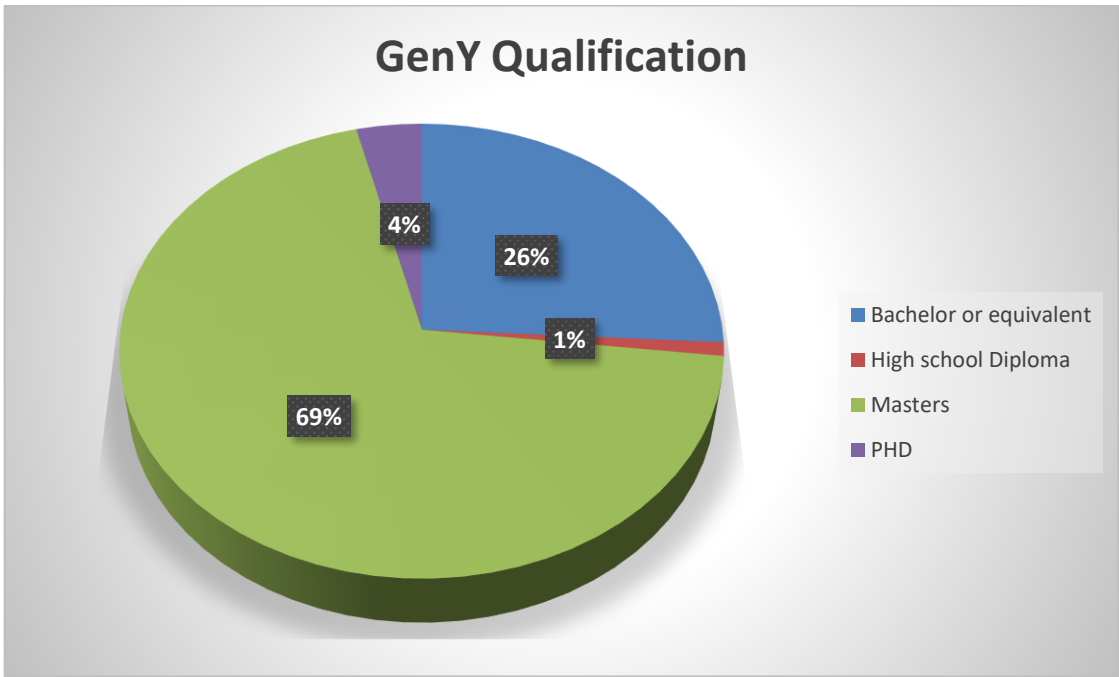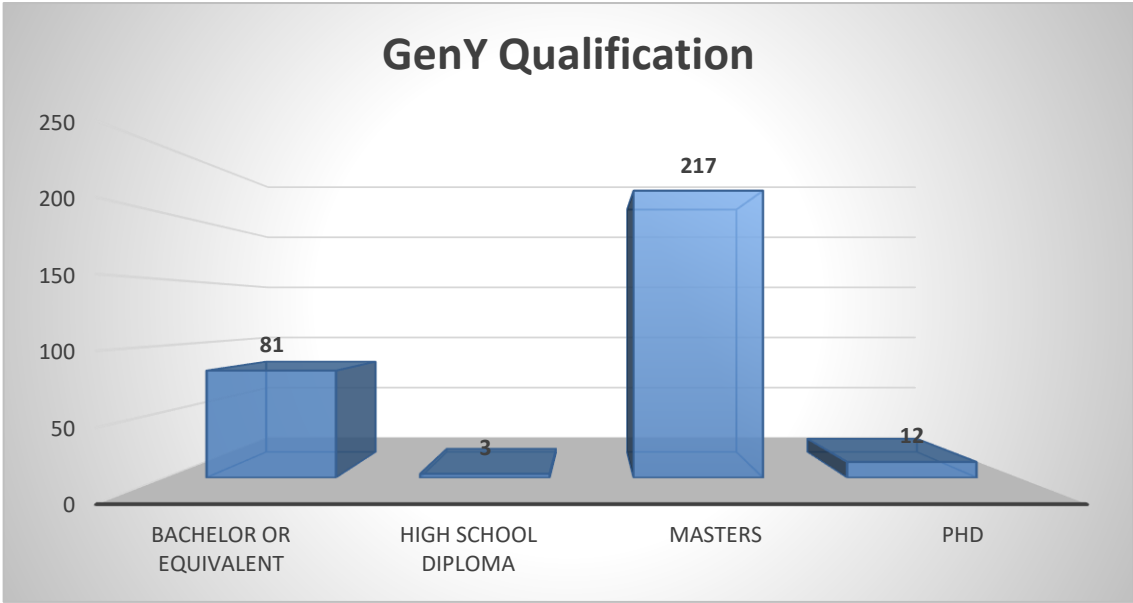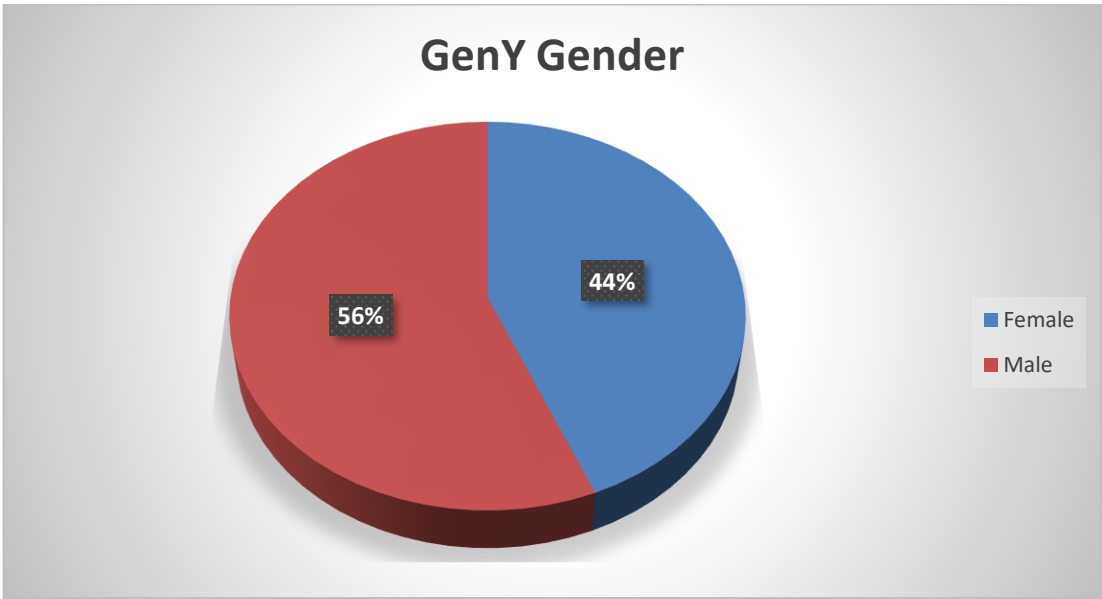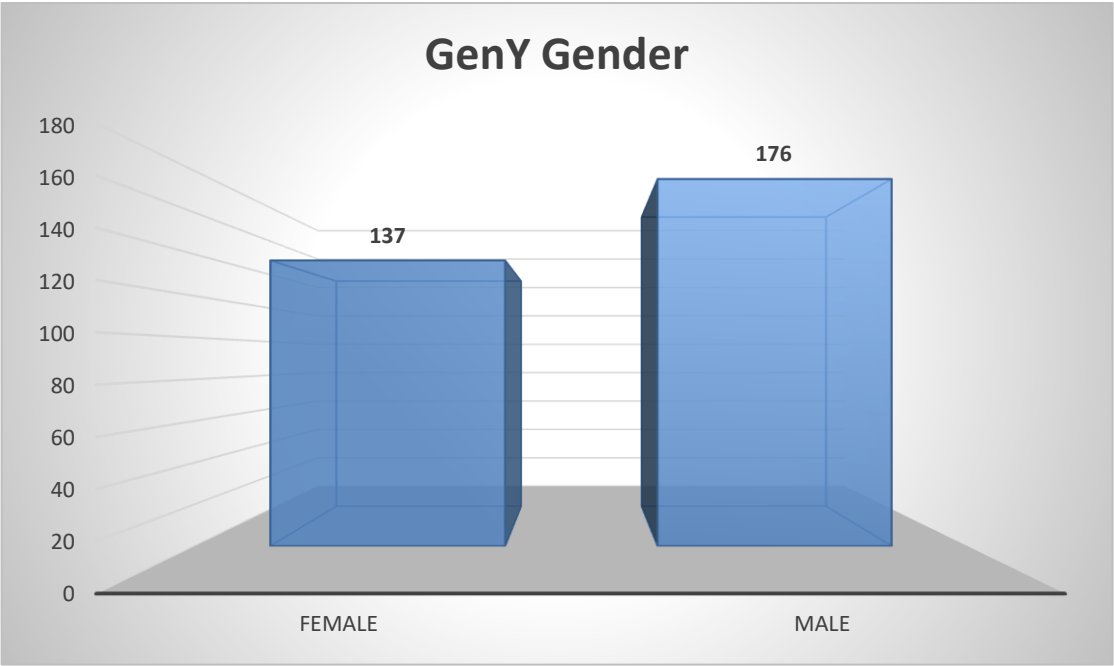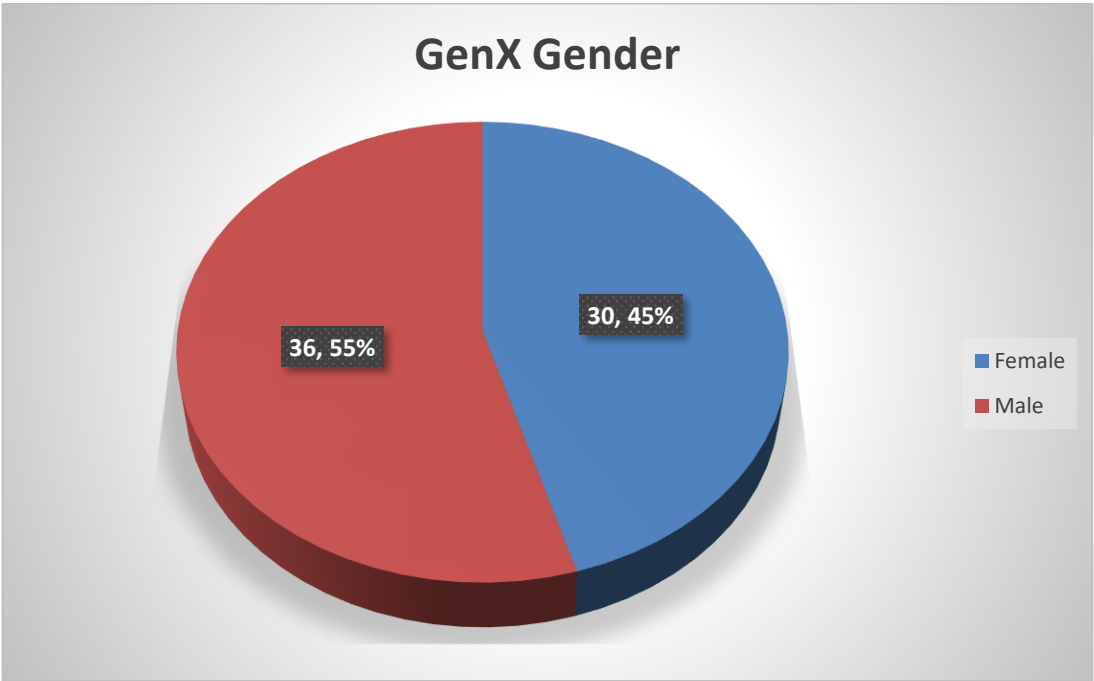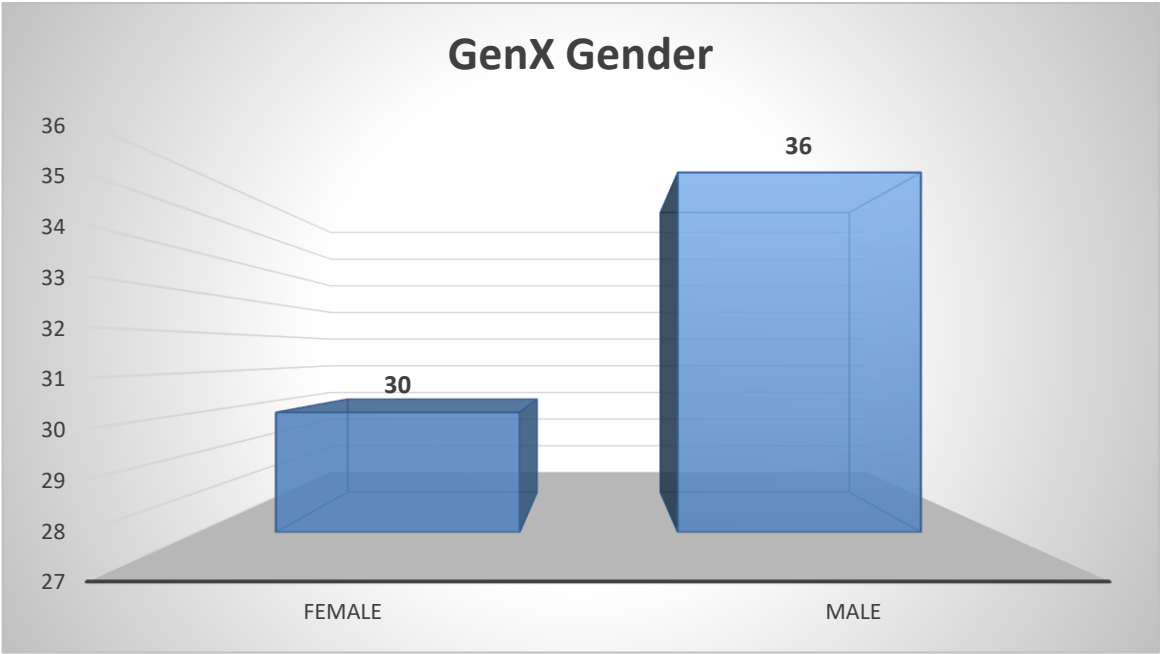
Qualification (Total Dataset)

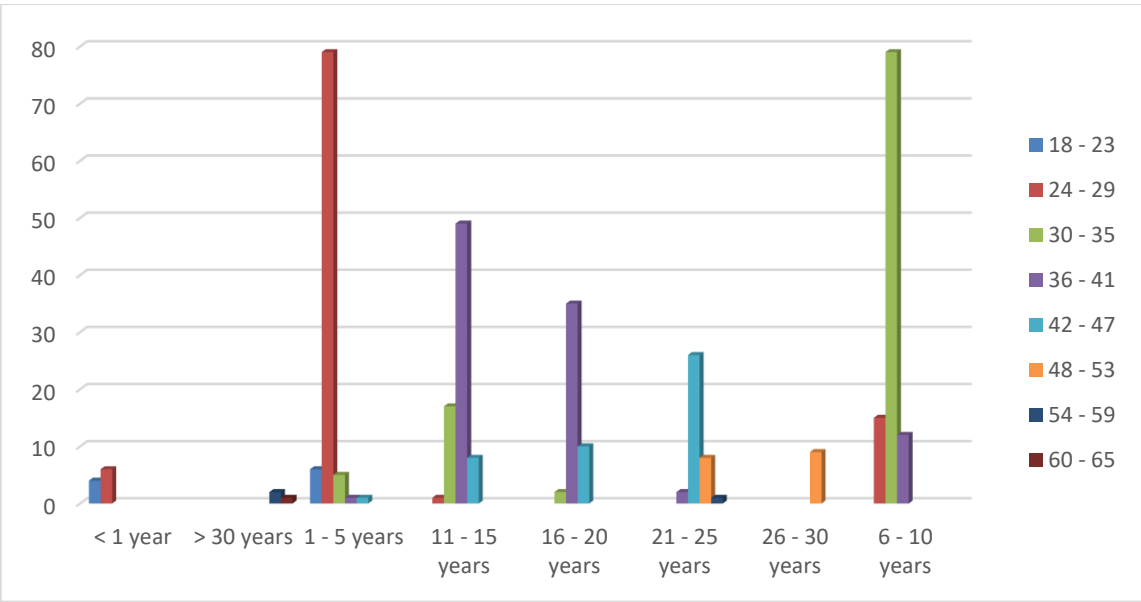## Work Experience (Total Dataset)

Gender (Total Dataset)