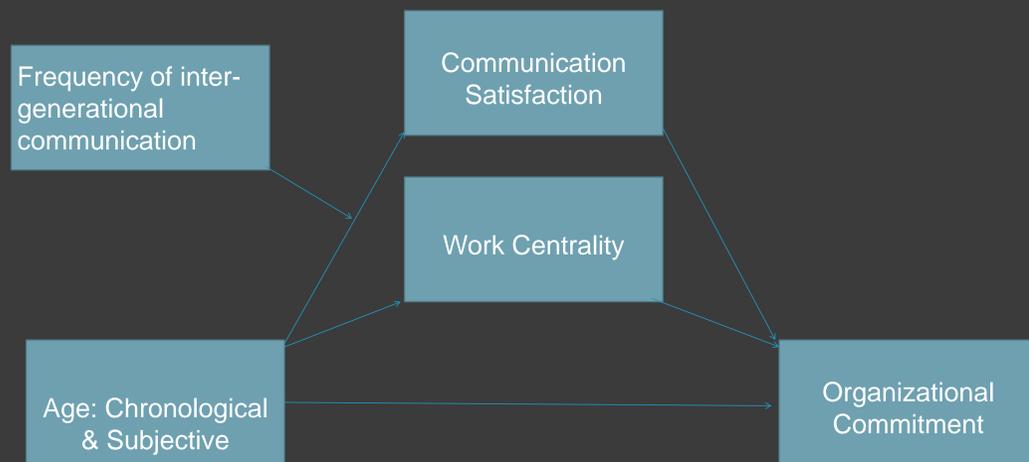


# THE GENERATION GAP: UNDERSTANDING COMMUNICATION, WORK CENTRALITY AND COMMITMENT

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## Conceptual Framework



## Measures

- Work Centrality
  1. Paullay et al (1994)
    - 12 item measure using a 6 point Likert scale
    - E.g., “Work should be a small part of one’s life”
    - “Overall, I consider work to be very central to my existence”
  2. Meaning of Work, Work Centrality Measure (1987)
    - 100 points allotted to 5 different facets of life (Leisure, Community, Work, Religion, Family)
- Communication Satisfaction
  - Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire (Downs and Hazen 1977)
  - 25 of 40 items (interpersonal and group communication) on a 7 point Likert scale
  - E.g., “Information about the progress of my job”
  - “Information about how I am being judged”
- Communication Frequency
  - Tailor-made measure (TBD)
- Organizational Commitment
  - Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (Meyer & Allen, 1997).
  - 18 item self-evaluative questionnaire using 7 point Likert scale
  - E.g., “I would be very happy spending the rest of my career with this organization”
  - “I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization”
- Subjective Age
  - Subjective age measure (Cleveland & Shore, 1997)
  - E.g., “Describe yourself as younger, middle age or older”

## Purpose

•**Goal:** To determine whether differences exist among different generations in relation to **work centrality**, their **ability and satisfaction in communicating** with other co-workers from different generations and how this affects their **organizational commitment**.

•**Generational differences in management:** Past studies have evaluated work centrality in different generations as well as their organizational commitment, but little research has focused on communication styles and satisfaction in relation to these two constructs. As well, **few studies have included Millennials** and **often use a student sample**. For example, Smola and Sutton’s (2002) sample had a minimal number of Millennials and, consequently, they were forced to eliminate that group during the analysis stage of their research and Montana and Lanaghan (1999) and Ng, Schweitzer and Lyons (2010), used a student sample of undergraduates and recent graduates, members not yet active in today’s workforce.

•**Purpose:** To further **expand the current literature on generations** by examining work centrality, organizational commitment and communication satisfaction in different generations of people employed in the advertising world. It is **hypothesized that work centrality levels in conjunction with communication will determine the level of organizational commitment** of particular generational cohorts.

## Participants

- 200 individuals working in media planning in buying in the Greater Montreal Area (GMA)
- Recruited from 5 agencies in the Greater Montreal Area



Baby Boomers

- 1946 - 1964
- Expecting the best from life
- Search for job security
- Highly loyal



Generation X

- 1965 - 1979
- Independent
- Aims to be more marketable
- Computer literate



Millennials

- 1980 - 2000
- Self-Assured
- Need stimulating work
- Searching for meaningful work

## Contributions & Implications

Though the current management literature is rife with generational characterizations and stereotypes, **empirical evidence provides little support for them**. As well, current studies have found contradictory findings. In this research, we propose that an **examination of potential moderating variables** may clarify these contradictory findings and drive consensus on the topic. Secondly, this study will use a sample of **participants active in the workforce**. This will increase the external validity of the study and provide a more accurate image of the three generations work preferences. It will also include Millennials into the sample. Finally **managerial practices** will be included in order to facilitate managing multigenerational workforces.