

**A review of the effectiveness of personal  
development plans of millennial managers at Nestlé,  
South African region**

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Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree  
Master of Management in Technology and Innovation

At

The Da Vinci Institute for Technology Management

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2023





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I declare that the research project, A review of the effectiveness of personal development plans of millennial managers at Nestlé, South African region, is my own work and that each source of information used has been acknowledged by means of a complete reference. This dissertation has not been submitted before for any other research project, degree or examination at any university.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the following individuals who significantly contributed in the completion of this dissertation.

I thank God the Father Almighty for the courage, strength, inspiration, to complete the study.

My wife Mrs Ainsley Mackrill for the unwavering support, motivation, and positive contribution throughout my journey.

To my son Liam Mackrill, thank you for being patient when I could not spend time with you and understanding when I asked a million little questions.

To my late son Luke Mackrill, I miss you every single day, but I felt your presence during every difficult moment on my journey.

My sincerest gratitude to my research supervisor Dr, John Mgwenya , for the supervision, the mentoring and the willingness to share so much of yourself.

The Da Vinci research office for the many calls, emails, advise and opportunity to study and be part of this great institution.

My colleagues, the management and staff of Nestlé South Africa for granting me the opportunity to conduct my research study, for participation and support.

## ABSTRACT

While extensive scholarly consideration has been given to “millennials” (those born between 1982 and 2000), little is known of this generation’s view related to their personal development from the context of millennial managers. Consequently, organisations must develop processes, tools and oversight to address the needs of the millennial managers. This research purports to provide insights to organisations to develop programmes or policies to retain their current and future cohort of millennial managers.

A phenomenological approach within a qualitative research design was employed to examine whether the Nestlé company’s personal development plan processes meet the development expectations of millennial managers. An inductive approach was adopted to document the lived experiences of the participants. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with research participants.

Companies, through their senior leadership, should ensure that appropriate environment and systems are established to enhance effective implementation of personal development plans for millennial managers. Future design of personal development plan systems, especially oversight processes, should be a priority for senior leadership. Oversight and monitoring systems must have the capacity to detect and identify gaps in the cycle of development of millennial managers to facilitate appropriate strategic support in a consistent manner.

The results reported that millennial managers focused their development on acquiring capabilities and skills. The results of the study confirm that millennial managers take personal responsibility and ownership for their development. Millennial managers’ intent to remain with the organisation is dependent on capabilities being acquired and therefore the study identifies effective oversight measures as a key component to improving the PDP system.

Keywords: millennial managers, personal development, management, engagement, retention

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ILO	- International Labour Organisation
SDG	- Sustainable Development Goals
UN	- United Nations
AU	- African Union
PDP	- Personal Development Plan
PWC	- PricewaterhouseCoopers
COVID-19	- Coronavirus disease 2019
IMF	- International Monetary Fund
Stats SA	- Statistics South Africa

# CHAPTER 1

## ORIENTATION

### 1.1 Introduction

The research presented here reviews the effectiveness of personal development plans (PDPs) of millennial managers at Nestlé South African region, using the organisational performance management and development practices as a benchmark. From a global perspective, more than twenty years ago, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) launched a new strategy which was titled *Decent Work Agenda*. The strategy was aimed at ensuring human-oriented development in the globalisation of working life (Rantanen Muchiri & Lehtinen, 2020:1). It became clear that new sets of skills were required to meet the needs of a new generation of managers and thought leaders in the new age of technological advances.

In orientating the study towards the effectiveness of PDPs of a typical millennial manager in the modern-day technological world, the researcher will ground this study by providing background and socio-political context of the study, as presented in this chapter. The researcher will further discuss the ontological stance, provide a problem statement, research aim and objectives, as well as research questions. Thereafter, they will present the epistemological posture, theory development, theoretical framework, conceptual framework, research design and significance of the study.

### 1.2 Background

In 2008, the International Labour Conference, under the auspices of the ILO's tripartite constituency—which is made up of governments, businesses and trade unions, constituency—adopted a set of conclusions. These conclusions addressed the investments in education and skills for women and men to assist economies to achieve dynamic growth with quality jobs as a priority in all global organisations (ILO, 2008:3).

Furthermore, in September 2015, the United Nations General Council adopted the *Sustainable Development Goals* (Persson, Weitz & Nilsson, 2016). The Sustainable

Development Goals (SDG) consist of 17 goals. Goal number 8 outlines the commitment to “promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all” (Department of Economic and Social Affairs Sustainable Development, 2015). Prior to the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals, the African Union, in the January 2013 summit, adopted *Agenda 2063* as Africa’s master plan for economic growth and sustainable development (AU, 2013). Agenda 2063 has been aligned with the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals by agreeing to a framework in January 2018 which related to the integration and implementation of the agenda (Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2019).

In tandem with the above developments, in 2013, Nestlé (the organisation that constitutes the focus of this study), launched its “Nestlé Needs Youth Initiative” (Youth Initiative) to focus on young people and equip them with skills they require to thrive in their future workplace environment (Nestlé, 2018:64). The Youth Initiative was expanded in 2017 and aligned with the UN SDG, incorporating PDPs for employees and prospective millennial managers in order to develop their management and broader operational skills (Nestlé, 2018:64).

A popular tool to support and enhance continuous learning is the PDP. PDPs are also referred to as portfolio development plans, logbook, or personal professional profile, and are one of the two most commonly used notions, alongside the portfolio assessment (Beusaert, Segers & Gijsselaers, 2011:3). PDPs have become popular and widespread tools in structuring and organising an employee’s learning (Beusaert, 2011:19).

The global economic crisis of 2008 impacted millennials, and how they view the world, by placing more emphasis on their own personal needs than on those of the organisation (PWC, 2011:1). Millennials are notorious for being focused on achievement, which leads them to seek out new learning opportunities (Smith & Nichols, 2015:40). They are motivated by learning opportunities which keeps them engaged and interested (Holmberg-Wright, Hribar, & Tsegai, 2017:16).

There are two important concepts that contextualise the employees’ engagement with the organization. The first of these is the concept of ‘intention to stay’ which refers to an

employee's willingness to remain in an organisation (Chaney, 1990:7). Employee retention, therefore, refers to an organisation's strategy and/or techniques adopted to keep or retain employees within the organisation (Kossivi, Xu & Kalgora, 2016:2). Consequently, it is incumbent upon the employer to introduce new strategies and programs that can influence an employee's willingness to remain with the organisation.

Another important concept in this context is 'anticipatory psychological contract', which may be defined as an individual's perceived obligation towards their employer and, conversely, the employer's obligation towards the employee (Turnley, Bloodgood & Bolino, 2002:188). An employee's psychological contract is more than just an economic exchange, but may be amended over time through engagements with the employer (Rousseau, 1989:123). Psychological contracts are also subject to breaches, or perceived breaches, which impact the behaviours and actions of the employee.

It is against this background that the research study purported to review of the effectiveness of PDPs of millennial managers at Nestlé, South African region. Using the organisational performance management and development practices as a benchmark, the study further establishes whether PDPs increase the millennial manager's intent to stay, and whether the current development practices meet the individual psychological contract.

### **1.3 Socio-political context**

The rapid global spread of COVID-19 has taken an unprecedented human toll, and disrupted millions of lives, which has, in turn, been coupled with the negative impact on the global economy with significant and far-reaching effects (Renjen, 2020:2). The threats posed by the pandemic emanate from multiple fronts, simultaneously affecting families, employees, customers, suppliers and business stakeholders like governments and communities (Nevins, 2020:1). The COVID-19 pandemic has "created fear among employees and stakeholders which has placed extraordinary demands on leaders" (D'Auria & De Smet, 2020:2).



On the labour front, the speed of technological advancements, and the nature of work that is continuously changing and increased global competition, have led organisations to realise that their employees' continuous learning drives business success (Beusaert, Segers & Gijsselaers, 2011:1). The 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution and its advancement of automation, digitalisation of manufacturing, consumption, and the deployment of artificial intelligence in the production of goods, and in the delivery of service, has changed and continues to change economies, countries and the current world of work (Pastore, Pop, Stefanik, Walsh, Gausas, Jotautyte, Mackeviciute, Martinaitis, Sadauskaite, Styczynska, Kulesa, Sichinava & Tratkiewicz, 2019:12). In addition, the rate of change in the workplace has increased and will continue to increase (PWC, 2017:6).

Most sectors of the South African economy have been either stagnant or contracting (IMF, 2020:2). The South African government accumulation of debt was projected as exceeding 60% of Gross Domestic Product by the financial year end of 2019/2020 (IMF 2020:2). The South African government debt is attributable to high expenditure and state-owned enterprise bailouts resulting in poor service delivery to ordinary South Africans (IMF,2020:2).

A United Nations report indicated that, in Sub-Saharan Africa, the working-age population, as a share of the total population, is anticipated to continue to increase between 2015 and 2040 (Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2019:16). South Africa's working-age population will reach 36.5 million by 2030 from 34.2 million recorded in 2016 (Bhorat, Naidoo, Oosthuizen & Pillay, 2016:7). Youth employment in the South African economy is just more than a third of all employment within South Africa (Maluleke, 2018:101). Figure 1 below, accurately depicts this scenario.

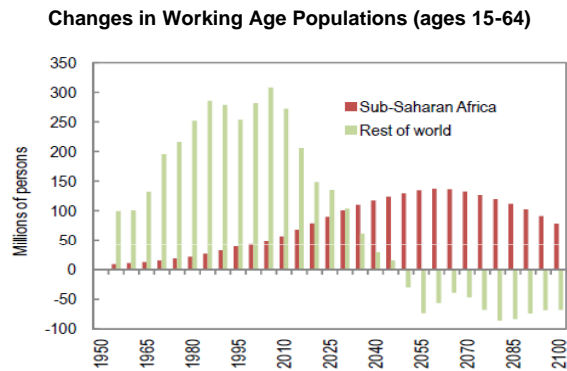


Figure 1: United Nations, World Population Prospects, 2012; and IMF staff calculation  
Source: United Nations, World Population Prospects (2012).

The Labour Force 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Report indicated the total number of unemployed in South Africa as amounting to 16.4 million in 2018 (Stats SA, 2018:6). The report further indicated that unemployment amongst educational categories showed that graduates only represent 1.7% of the total number of unemployed (Stats SA, 2018:12). Therefore, 50% of people who were unemployed in South Africa in 2018 had an education level below matric; this was followed by those with a matric qualification at 35,1%, and less than 2% of unemployed persons being graduates (Stats SA, 2018:12).

#### 1.4 Ontology

Crotty (1998:10) describes ontology as “the study of being”. Ontology concentrates on the nature and structure of things, independently of any deliberations, and even independently of their actual existence (Staab, 2009:1). Ontological norms are, therefore, concerned with what constitutes reality (Scotland, 2012:1).

Social ontology aims to provide overall accounts of the nature of social reality (Given, 2008:578). The social ontologist distinguishes between the objects of natural science, which are not produced by human action, and social reality, which are the result of complex arrangements of human action and interaction (Given, 2008:578). Ontological

assumptions concern themselves with the social world and are, thus, conceptualised and interpreted.

Epistemologically, interpretation is accepted as an effective way of knowing, and it is recognised that different researchers, and the scope of research conducted at different points in time, may arrive at different conclusions (Given, 2008:734). The researcher, in this study, is a Human Resources Business Partner with experience in human resources systems and processes. They play the role of providing oversight on the application of the PDP process by senior managers. Therefore, the researcher may have been biased towards the time, depth and quality of interactions between the senior managers and millennial managers in the conception, formulation, application and execution of PDP's. The researcher, therefore, endeavoured to approach the study with minimal conscious biases.

The researcher considers himself a constructivist due to the belief that people construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world through experiencing things and reflecting on those experiences and realities (Andrew, Pedersen & McEvoy, 2011). The researcher further believes that more than one reality may exist, and that they may exist simultaneously or side by side next to other realities about the same issue or subject.

This study focused on the lived experiences of the millennial managers and the process, conceptualisation and application of their PDPs. As stated above, the researcher's ontological stance allowed him to be open to believing that many realities exist simultaneously, which further allowed them to discover the underlying factors that give rise to the research problem and to subsequently discover opportunities and theories akin to the study. Derived from the above understanding of the ontological stance of this study, the epistemological stance is also pertinent to consider.

### **1.5 Epistemology**

Epistemology is the theory of knowledge, the scope of knowledge, the philosophical study of the nature, and the origin of knowledge (Moser, 2010:1). Epistemology is the study of what can be described as knowledge, where knowledge is found, and how knowledge

increases (Cunningham & Fitzgerald, 1996). Where ontology *is* reality, epistemology is the association the research makes with that reality, and methodology being the techniques used by the researcher to determine that reality (Sobh & Perry, 2006:1).

Researchers accumulate qualitative data in natural settings with a sensitivity to the participants under study, and they analyse their data inductively to establish patterns or themes (Creswell, 2007:51). The researcher and the millennial managers in this study were interactively linked, as will be expressed in the findings documented in later chapters of this study. A similar link between researcher and millennial managers is also noted in research conducted by Guba and Lincoln (1998:111). The researcher's own ontology underpinned the data collection process documenting the lived experiences of the millennial managers. This meant that the millennial managers studied may have unique lived experiences amongst themselves.

### **1.6 Problem Statement**

Millennials perceive that they only have some or a few of the skills required in business, and will, therefore, need to develop their capabilities (Deloitte, 2019:12). In addition, they also believe that business has the inherent responsibility to prepare them for the challenging work requirements (Deloitte, 2019:12). Companies that provide training and development programmes for their employees tend to achieve higher levels of employee satisfaction and lower employee turnover (Wagner, 2000). Therefore, the research problem, based on the background and context stated above, is identified as determining the extent to which the Nestlé company's PDP process meets the development expectations of millennial managers and how to increase the millennial manager's intent to stay with the organisation.

### **1.7 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study is to close the gap in knowledge regarding the skills required by millennial managers in order to make an effective contribution to the organisational sustainability of the Nestlé company in South Africa.

## 1.8 Research aims and objectives

The primary aim of the study is to develop effective PDPs for millennial managers at the Nestlé company which would, in turn, improve the company's operational skills and employment retention. A summary of aims and objectives is shown below:

Table 1: Research Summary

<b><u>Research Problem:</u></b>	
The problem that the study intended to address was to determine the extent to which Nestle company's personal development plan process meets the development expectations of millennial managers and how to increase the millennial manager's intent to stay with the organisation.	
<b><u>Aim:</u></b>	<b><u>Primary Research Question:</u></b>
The primary aim of the study is to develop effective personal development plans of millennial managers at Nestle company, to improve their operational skills and employment retention.	Do the existing personal development plans of millennial managers at Nestle company, assist in improving their operational skills and employment retention?
<b><u>Objectives:</u></b>	<b><u>Secondary Research Questions(SRQ) :</u></b>
Objective 1: To identify key components of current personal development plans of millennial managers at Nestle company.	SRQ1 What are the key components of current personal development plans of millennial managers at Nestle company?
Objective 2 To determine the perceptions of senior line managers in implementing personal development plans of direct reports including, improving their operational skills and employment retention	SRQ 2 How did Covid-19 pandemic affect the personal work goals and expectations of millennial managers?
Objective 3 To assess the effects of Covid-19 on the personal work goals and expectations of millennial managers.	SQR 3 Which are the best practice standards for personal development plans in global organisations?

<p>Objective 4 To identify the best practice standards for personal development plans in global organisations.</p>	
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**1.9 Theory development reasoning**

The primary aim of the study is to review the effectiveness of the PDP process, and identify effective measures which the Nestlé company could implement to improve the PDP process in order to meet millennial managers’ expectations of development needs thereby enhancing their intent to stay longer in the organisation. The ontological stance of the researcher, in adopting a constructivist outlook, compliments the research’s inductive approach by documenting the specific experiences of the millennial managers. The inductive approach limits its findings to the description and presentation of the most important themes and does not aim to build or link it to specific theories (Liu, 2016:130), as summarised in the below figure 2.



Figure 2: Schematic presentation of theory development process flow.

Notably, in organisational behaviour and psychology, inductive research has been purported to be a key vehicle of progressing knowledge: that is, developing theories that require experimental observation over long periods of time (Locke, 2007:12).

The study adopts a phenomenological approach which uses a combination of methods to collect data through conducting interviews, examining documents, watching videos, and/or visiting places, with the express purpose of understanding the meaning participants place in their daily lived work experiences (Ibrahim, 2016:9). This will be further elaborated on in Chapter 3. This study focuses on the lived experience of the millennial managers within the organisation that constitutes the focus of this study.

Therefore, the most appropriate type of data mining would be derived from inductive thinking which, in turn, starts with evidence that is specific and builds theories, explanations, and interpretations in order to reproduce or represent those specifics.

### **1.10 Sequence of the chapters**

Chapter 1 is structured around providing an overview of the study. It contains an introduction, background, context, ontological stance, problem statement, research aim and objectives, research questions, epistemological stance, theory development, theoretical framework, conceptual framework, research design and significance of the study.

Chapter 2 documents a review of literature related to the research question: Whether Nestlé's PDP process meets the expectations of the millennial managers? The chapter aims to describe the key concepts and constructs underpinning the millennial manager's experience.

The third chapter concerning research methodology records the steps taken by the researcher to collect and analyse the qualitative data. The chapter details the type of research methodology, the collection of data method through semi-structured interviews, the method of analysis, and ethical considerations pertaining to the collection of data.

Chapter 4 discusses the in-depth approach to the data collection, the detailed analysis of the data, the themes discovered through the in-depth interviews, as well as the findings.

Lastly, the fifth chapter presents the conclusion, and recommendations for future study are discussed.

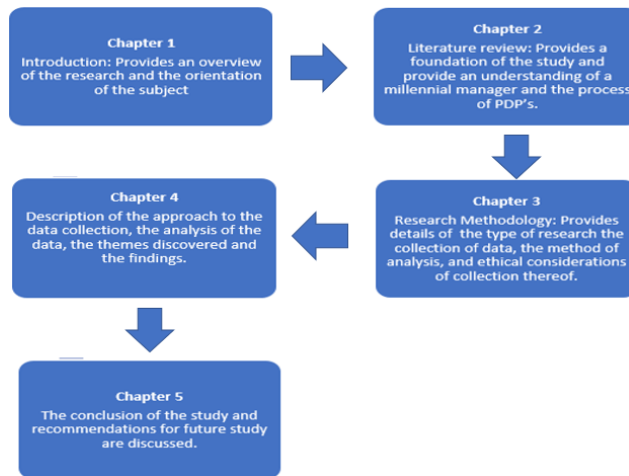


Figure 3: The sequence of the chapters in the study

### 1.11 Chapter Summary

The problem that this study intends to address is determining whether the Nestlé PDP process meets the development expectations of millennial managers. The chapter presented background and specific context of the research unit and explained concepts of ontology and epistemology in relation to the researcher's stance. The problem statement, aims and objectives were also highlighted. The next chapter presents a review of relevant literature to better orientate towards the context of the study within the broader general body of knowledge.



## **CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to critically examine the theoretical concepts underpinning generational skills requirements through consulting relevant literature in this regard. The primary research question is: *Do the existing personal development plans (PDPs) of millennial managers at the Nestlé company, assist in improving their operational skills and employment retention?* In answering the research question, the chapter begins with a discussion of phenomenology as a philosophy within broader qualitative research, followed by an explanation of generational theory, South African generational influences, four generational cohorts and their characteristics, human capital theories and the role of a psychological contract.

### **2.2 Phenomenology as a philosophy within qualitative research**

Lewin (1947) described research as “a means taking the next step from the known into the jungle of the unknown” (Lewin, 1947:6). Research of a scientific nature has two distinguishing elements: it contributes to a body of science; and it must follow a scientific method (Bhattacharjee, 2012:1). The purpose of conducting research is to contribute towards science by the systematic gathering, interpretation, and the evaluation of data in a planned and deliberate manner (Caparlar & Donmez, 2016:212).

Qualitative research is about drawing on people’s experiences to help us understand what is important for people, whereas quantitative research concerns itself with the pursuit of objective facts (Silverman, 1997:3). The aim of qualitative research is to interpret and understand social interactions (Johnson & Christensen, 2008:34). The purpose of qualitative research is to define and understand issues or phenomena systematically through the lens of the individual or cohort being studied, and to generate new concepts and theories (Haradhan, 2018:2). Linked to qualitative research is the discipline of sociology.

Sociology may be defined as a social science which attempts to explain, give details and understanding of human beings; it can be described as the systematic and objective study of groups, societies, and human social life (Itulua-Abumere, 2014:2). A basic sense of inquisitiveness is the foundation of *social science research*, or what could be defined as the act of interrogating the social world with the aim of better understanding or explaining how or why people conduct themselves the way they do (Marvasti, 2004:1). Therefore, social science has, as its centre, the study or re-examination of people with the purpose of better understanding them through systematic observations and logical explanations. The concept of 'phenomenon' is equally important in social research.

*Phenomena* are repeatable effects or processes that are unchanging, as well as potential substances of prediction through systematic explanation by theories, and which may serve as evidence for such theories (Woodward, 2000:163). '*Social*' is fundamentally concerned with the more-than-one, a reference to the multiplicity or plurality of being (Urry, Dingwall, Gough, Omerod, Massey, Scott & Thrift, 2007:6). Therefore, social phenomena involve behavioural processes that are carried out by human beings and have been described as the interaction between human beings, including their behaviour that influences these interactions (Cacciattolo,2015:1).

Phenomenology as a philosophy, affords researchers a theoretical frame to understand phenomena at a subjective reality level (Qutoshi, 2018:215). Van Manen (1990:10) argues that "Phenomenological research is the study of essences." The study of an individual's lived experience within the world is called phenomenological research and it is a type of qualitative research (Neubauer, Witkop & Varpio, 2019:90). Phenomenological approaches are based in an archetype of personal knowledge and subjectivity and highlight the importance of personal interpretation and perspective (Lester, 1999:1). The current study is, therefore, premised on phenomenological research based on Lester's (1999) conceptualisation.

### **2.3 Generational theory**

Sociology exposes the need to take a much broader observation of "why we are as we are, and why we act as we do as social beings" (Itulua-Abumere, 2014:3). Sociology has

concerned itself more with the vertical divisions (gender, class) within society than it has to the horizontal divisions, like those between generations and cohorts (Gilleard, 2004:107). The sociological phenomenon of generations is ultimately based on the biological pace of birth leading to death (Mannheim, 1998:168). Mannheim (1952) describes two important components to the term 'generation': firstly, a shared location in historical time; and, secondly, a different consciousness of that historical position which has been shaped by the events and experiences of that time (Gilleard, 2004:108).

Generational theory attempts to explain how various generations develop diverse value systems, and the effect that this has on how younger generations and older generations interact: with the world around them as a group or cohort, and with each other as individuals (Codrington, 2008:1). This notion resonates well with the current study of millennial managers and the need to understand their developmental needs.

Generational cohort theory postulates that each generation can be characterised by predictable traits directly attributable to events which are shared collectively that originated in their formative years (Duh & Struwig, 2015:91). Generational imprinting refers to people who are young adults, in adolescence, who form a shared memory of events which were particularly significant (national or international events) which will affect their future attitudes, preferences, and behaviour (Parry & Urwin, 2011:81).

### **2.3.1 What is a generation?**

A 'generation' is inclined to span about 20 years, representing very crudely the time from the birth of a group (or cohort) of people to the time they start having their own children (Codrington, 2008:2). Generation position is based on the existence of a biological tempo in human existence, or the limited duration of life and aging (Mannheim, 1998:167). Individuals who fit within the same generation share the same year of birth, and are bestowed with a common location in the historical dimension of the social process (Mannheim, 1970:167).

Generations are fashioned by the way historical events and attitudes shape their cohort's lives, and by how these events and reflections affect people very differently depending

on the point of life they occupy at the time (Howe & Strauss, 2007:46). Generations are brought together through their common experience (Drago, 2006:7). Generation location is based on the reality of biological tempo in human existence: like factors of life and death, a limited duration of life, and aging (Mannheim, 1998:167). In the South African context, it might be necessary to understand the generating influences to inform the pertinent intervention and developmental programmes for millennial leaders.

### **2.3.2 South African generational influences**

Research conducted in the field of generational difference on an international basis is vast, but in the South African context very limited studies are available (Martins & Martins, 2014:129). The social and political events that shaped and impacted South Africans of all generations was the system of apartheid instituted in 1948 (Close, 2015:64). Apartheid has been defined as "segregation on grounds of race," and refers mainly to the conditions in South Africa from 1948 to 1994 (Welsh, 2009:1). Therefore, this research study will consider how apartheid influenced generational characteristics and values of the South African generations and, specifically, of millennials. The characteristics of the so-call 'Four generational cohort' are worth reflecting upon.

### **2.4 Definition of the Four Generational cohorts and their characteristics**

There are four generational categories: namely, baby boomers, Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z:

a) Baby Boomers born between 1946 and 1964. This generation started almost exactly nine months after the Second World War had ended (Drago, 2006:7). They are known for having a strong work ethic and for being somewhat reserved from a social perspective (Bates, 2018:2). Boomers are very goal-focused and regularly work tirelessly to achieve them, often at the expense of their families and personal lives (Drago, 2006:7).

South African baby boomers spent most of their lives living and working under the system of apartheid (Close, 2015:65). Black South African baby boomers had limited access to education, whereas white South African baby boomers' education was supported through the system of apartheid (Duh & Struwig, 2015:94). By 1960, the average income of the

black population was less than 10% of the white population (Howitt, Dennett, Kenna, Bragg & Dixon, 2019:455). Under apartheid, black business development was strictly controlled and limited to specific areas, providing that it did not compete with any white business, which consequently limited economic activity and growth opportunities of black businesses operated by black baby boomers (Ponte, Roberts & Van Sittert, 2007:9).

Other key historical events that influenced baby boomers was when the apartheid government established the creation of homelands, or Bantustans: where Africans were supposed to develop along their own but separate racial lines (Welsh, 2009:146). The Sharpeville massacre of 1960 became the symbol of the international struggle against apartheid (Piotrowski, 2019:61); and the 1976 Soweto uprising resulted in *State of Emergencies* and country wide protest (Welsh, 2009:147).

b) Generation X born between 1965 and 1980. They're known for being autonomous and self-reliant, and they value freedom in the workplace (Bates, 2018:2). Due to their parents working long hours, Generation X grew up under the care of other members of the community, like nannies, and spent a lot of time at daycare (Drago, 2006:7). Generation X witnessed mass retrenchments during the 1980s, and this moulded their perceptions of work during the time of economic uncertainty (Parry & Urwin, 2011). As leaders, Generation X seek pragmatic and straightforward solutions which focus on recreating social frameworks that result in civic order (Howe & Strauss, 2007:50).

c) Generation Y, also referred to as *millennials*, born between 1981 and 1996. This group is the main subject of this study. The millennial generation is anticipated to be the largest generation. Its members mostly come from small families, resulting in their parents being able to provide a higher standard of living, which, in turn, has shaped their attitudes, values, and beliefs (Drago, 2006:11).

The members of the millennial generation are inclined to be optimistic, team-oriented, close to their parents, self-assured about their future, and they plan ahead of time (Howe & Strauss, 2007:42). Millennials seek out institutions and government agencies that offer work-life balance, protection against risk, and teamwork (Howe & Strauss, 2007:45). Millennials are exceptional at multi-tasking due to a mindset of working smarter, rather

than working harder (Bates, 2018:3). Furthermore, millennials will advance community norms based on rules, standards, and personal accountability which create a more structured, and civic-minded mentality (Howe & Strauss, 2007:50).

The *South African millennial* generation were the first to grow up in a post-apartheid era (Mosupyoe, 2014:57). South Africa's transition to democracy, which was strongly supported locally, regionally, and internationally ushered in a period of high hopes filled with expectation (Clarke & Bassett, 2016:183). South African millennials spent their formative years during a period of great anticipation for a better world following the first democratic election held on the 27 April 1994 (Mawson, 2010:12). Millennials who were born after the 1980s started entering the labour market in the 2000s (Pyoria, Ojala, Saari & Jarvinen, 2017:1).

The post-apartheid South African Generation Y are not only larger in number; they are also more educated than previous generations which has, in turn, led to increased job opportunities, increased earnings, and higher confidence and optimism (Duh & Struwig, 2015:99). The South African millennials emerge from a disadvantaged background due to apartheid and are significantly different to their global counterparts because they carry the responsibility of supporting extended family members while learning a different social etiquette (Burrows, 2013). The South African millennials are materially simplistic and frugal in decision-making related to purchases and their consumption practices (Naidoo, 2018:4).

d) Generation Z born between 1997 and 2015, making them the youngest generation in the current workforce. They are known for being flexible, self-reliant and creative. They constantly connect digitally and are considered the most tech-savvy of all generations (Bates, 2018:3). In at least one feature, Generation Z distinguishes itself as the only generation that has never experienced or seen the world without the Internet (Chillakuri, 2020:3). They are confident and independent, do not rely much on the parents, and prefer autonomy at work (Chillakuri, 2020:5).

## 2.5 Generational cohort

According to Crossman, a cohort is a group of people who share an experience or characteristic over time, with the word 'cohort' often being used as a method for defining a population for the purposes of research (Crossman, 2019:1). The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines a cohort as a group of individuals having a statistical factor (such as age or class membership) in common in a demographic study (Merriam-Webster, 2021). Alexander, Lopes, Richetti-Masterson and Yeatts (2015:1) describe a cohort, "a group of people with a common characteristic", which, for the purposes of this study, constitutes specific generational qualities.

Generational cohorts provide researchers with a tool to examine changes in views over time, which can provide a vehicle for understanding how different determinative experiences shape a population within a generation's views of the world (Dimock, 2019). A cohort generation contains individuals in a common age bracket, sharing a defined history through which their personality and behaviour are moulded (Strauss & Howe, 1997). There is, consequently, an emerging difference between 'cohorts' and 'generations' (Parry & Urwin, 2011:82).

South African millennials believe that they are 'entitled' to a certain way of life following the collapse of the apartheid system (Knoetze, 2018:3). Prior to democracy in South Africa, sanctions had severely impacted the technological advancement which experienced elsewhere in the world. The October 2015 #FeesMustFall movement by millennial students demonstrated how this generation employs technology in ways never used or anticipated by other generations (Mqombothi, 2016).

South Africa has a long history of segregation and dispossession, with the consequences thereof still in effect today (Roodt, 2018:12). Past experiences form the core of one's beliefs, sense of self, security, confidence, and identity (Toni & Olivier, 2004). South African millennials from previously disadvantage background experiences would be significantly different from the experiences of millennials from other geographies, especially the Americas and Europe, given our distinctive South African history of apartheid (Growth from knowledge, 2017).

With this specific South African History following the end of apartheid in the early 1990s the South African government enacted legislation and policies such as affirmative action, employment equity and black economic empowerment as measures to address the past (Roodt, 2018:1).

Mushariwa (2011:441) describes two schools of thought: firstly, historically disadvantaged individuals, also referred to as previously disadvantaged individuals, (PDI), encompass persons who were previously disadvantaged by unfair discrimination according to the following designated groups:

- a) men of African, Asian or coloured descent;
- b) women, irrespective of descent; and
- c) disabled persons, irrespective of descent.

The second school of thought describes historically disadvantaged individuals as those who were directly disadvantaged.

One such difference related to graduates from previously disadvantaged background is that they are morally responsible for sending remittance to parents and siblings, once they enter employment (Magubane; 2017:1). Sending remittance is a personal responsibility that previously disadvantaged individuals face to financially support their family networks (Whitelaw & Branson, 2020). This social and economic support through remittance is also referred to as 'Black Tax', as a means to support parent and siblings and includes money, shelter, food, clothing, amongst others (Magubane; 2017:58). The remittance sent to parents and siblings result in lower savings of the millennial and lower investment in themselves which in turn restricts upward mobility for the millennials due to this financial responsibility (Magubane; 2017:59).

The South African Generation Y, or the millennial generation, have had much more opportunities to study, to enter the labour market and wealth creation notwithstanding the continuing political and socio-economic legacy of apartheid (Duh & Struwig, 2015:94). South African millennials are not uninterested. Rather, they engage in politics, economics, and society. For millennials, the rules of engagement have changed, together with the platforms they use, in order to suit the times in which they live (Mqomboti, 2016). In order



to enhance behavioural and emotional understanding of millennials, it is important to review some theories of human capital in the workplace.

## **2.6 Human Capital**

Revenue received from land or from wages derived over time, which can be spent or placed in reserve and accumulated, is called or referred to as *capital* (Fisher, 1904:395). The unsolved increase in the economic value of man led to the notion of human capital (Schultz, 1972:1). Human capital is an economic notion that is based on source of future income (Schultz, 1972:5).

A human capital view considers how the productivity of people in the economy can change through investments in education, skills and knowledge (Becker, 1993:386). Human capital involves the concept that there are investments in people—like training, education, and health—that increase an individual's productivity due to these investments (Goldin, 2014:1). The concept of human capital can, therefore, be described as investments in education, health, information, on the job training and migration (Becker, 2010).

Training is defined as a planned procedure to change attitude, knowledge, skill, or behaviour through learning experience to achieve effective competence in an activity or multiple activities (Milhem, Abushamsieh & Arostegui, 2014:12). Organisations must develop their Human Resources to a strategic Human Resources level—resulting from training based on a training plan—and must be located within a strategic human resource management system (Milhem, Abushamsieh & Arostegui, 2014:12). Employee development can be described as a holistic set of coherent and planned programmes, provided over a period, to help ensure that all employees have the competencies necessary to perform to their fullest potential in the attainment of the organisation's goals (Jacobs & Washington, 2003:344).

Another important component of human capital practices is job analysis. The aim of a job analysis is the measurement of the tasks to be performed and the knowledge, skills, and capabilities required for efficient performance for a job as it is predicted to exist in the

future (Schneider & Konz, 1989:53). Job analysis is also known as systematic activities to execute the duties, tasks, and obligations needed for each job in an organisation (Repi, 2021:56). The Nestlé company utilises job analysis in the determination of remuneration offers within the organisation and not in the development process of employees.

As organisations try to survive in dynamic markets and turbulent economies, such as those being currently encountered, strong emphasis must be placed on human capital to remain and be competitive and financially solvent (Nda & Fard, 2013:91). Training programmes directed directly towards an organisation's human capital development positively impact employees, customers, and owner/shareholder satisfaction, as well as other objective business measures of performance (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009:457). Other indirect benefits of training and development include improved employee turnover, organisation's reputation, and social capital to the more traditional measures of business performance (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009:459). A few pertinent theories related to human capital are discussed below.

Human capital involves aspects of succession planning. Succession planning is a formal means to strengthen organisational capability through leadership development, knowledge distribution, and technology advancement (Ikechukwu & Enudu, 2022:1). Succession planning is a formal process within organisations which is designed to recognise and develop their employee capabilities to advance them to leadership positions in their organisations (Bano, Omar & Ismail, 2022:2541). The Nestlé company does have elements of succession planning to strengthen organisational capability by identifying and developing individual capabilities.

Career planning could be defined as the method through which people make career-related decisions (Witko, Bernes, Magnusson & Bardick, 2005:35). The career planning process is a series of three chronological sections which include the procurement of career-related information, the identification of objectives or outcomes and the formulation of a strategy to attain the desired objectives or goals (Greenhaus & Kopelman, 1981:1). Within the Nestlé company, career planning is included in the development of a millennial manager's development plan, specifically the objectives and strategic plan.

### **2.6.1 Adult Learning Theories**

Organisational learning may be broadly defined as the process by which organisations learn (Chiva, Alegre & Lapedra, 2007:224). A well-designed learning and skills development training programme, which is impactful and continuous, is now commonplace in ensuring that organisations remain competitive by increasing their employees' adaptability and embracing technological skills, such as MS Office Suite or other innovations to attain their organisational goals (Salas, Tannenbaum, Kraiger & Smith-Jentsch, 2012:74). Andragogy is a European notion introduced to the U.S. by Malcolm Knowles in the late 1960s (Merriam, 2018). The term "andragogy" was developed by Alexander Kapp, a German teacher by profession, who was later associated to the work of Knowles, who reasoned that adults are differently experienced, motivated, and oriented than children (Mukhalalati & Taylor, 2019). Knowles believed there was a scale ranging from teacher-directed pedagogy on the one end, to student-directed learning andragogy on the other end (Merriam, 2018).

### **2.6.2 Andragogy**

Malcolm Knowles (1980) introduced the term 'andragogy' to distinguish adult learning from pedagogy. Knowles (1980:43) defined 'andragogy' as the science and art of helping adults learn. Andragogy can be described as the educational emphasis being on facilitating the attainment of knowledge through critical thinking about the content and its application in day-to-day practical settings (Pew, 2007:17). Andragogy means the thoughtfulness of the science and practice of adult learning (Graham, 2017). Andragogy posits that learning occurs on a continuum which continues throughout life (Taylor & Hamdy, 2013:1561).

### **2.6.3 Pedagogy**

Pedagogy may be described as the study of walking next to the student as a teacher or educator (McLaren, 2015:15). Pedagogy is concerned with what a teacher does to impact learning in others (Australia, 2017:1). Pedagogical theories advance how teaching should be done in order to bring students to learn (Rutto, 2017:2025). Herbart (1776-1841) is

regarded as the father of pedagogy as his works conceptualised pedagogy in which he identified five components of pedagogy:

Table 2: Five components of pedagogy

1. Component	Preparation	Involves priming or getting ready for the instructional process.
2. Component	Presentation	Refers to the process of concrete teaching and learning.
3. Component	Association	The development of conveying ideas or bring events together and making or referring to mental connection or relationships between thoughts, feelings, ideas, and/or sensations.
4. Component	Generalisation	Refers to cognitive reasoning from detailed facts to general principles or from general concepts to specific instances.
5. Component	Applications	Applying what was learnt or putting into practice what was learnt.

Source: (Johann Friederich Herbart 1776-1841)

Andragogy presents fundamental principles of adult learning that allows those designing and facilitating adult learning to create a more effective learning process for adults; it further has specific characteristics which align to a transactional model (Knowles, Holton III & Swanson, 1998:3).

Table 3: Pedagogical and Andragogical assumptions about learners

No	Aspect	Pedagogical Model	Andragogical Model
1	Need to know	Learners need to know what the teacher tells them.	Learner need to know why something is important prior to learning it.
2	Self-concept	Learner has a dependent personality.	Learners are responsible for their own decisions.
3	Experience	The learner's experience is of little worth.	The learner's experience has great importance.
4	Readiness to learn	Learners become ready to learn what the teacher requires.	Learners become ready to learn when they see content as relevant to their lives.
5	Orientation to learn	Learners expect subject centered content.	Learners expect life centered content.
6	Motivation to learn	Learners are motivated by external forces	Learners are primarily motivated by internal forces.

Source: Pedagogical and Andragogical assumptions about learners (Knowles *et al.*, 1998)

### Personal Development Plans

The ever-changing triad of organisation, technology, and employees is undergoing change (Chopra & Bhilare, 2020:1). Organisations and employees recognise that work will never be the same again and that constantly upgrading skills and capabilities is critical (Hall *et al.*, 2021:4). The World Economic Forum report of 2018 confirms that a reskilling revolution is needed to manage the adaptability required for the future. With the right skills, workers can become the actors of economic change rather than victims of it (World Economic Forum, 2018), and the researcher asserts that the PDP is integral to managing such change within organisations.

Organisations utilise PDPs for the following reasons: to assess an employee's suitability for promotion, salary increases, competency assessments and professional development purposes (Beusaert, Segers & Gijsselaers, 2011:1). This study concerns itself only with the professional development of the millennial manager. In this regard, an employee perceives the PDP as a tool for learning development to acquire new skills and knowledge (Beusaert, Segers & Gijsselaers, 2011:249).

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Millennial employees have a desire to learn continuously and move upwards through the organisation quickly, (PWC, 2011:3). Millennials are looking for strong mentors both in their education and work environment and want a road map to help them grow, (Chopra & Bhilare, 2020:2). While millennials expect to stay with the same organisation for much of their working careers, they demand organisations provide them with a variety of experiences to support their development, (Chopra & Bhilare, 2020:2). Organisations that can provide these life-long educational programs and apply the correct retention strategies will keep millennial employees longer (Thompson, 2011:27).

## **2.7 Psychological Contract**

The term 'psychological work contract' was first used by Chris Argyris in 1960 to describe an implicit agreement between workers and foremen that, when honoured by the foremen, guaranteed continued employee effort and performance (Argyris, 1960). The term psychological contract refers to an individual's beliefs related to the terms and conditions of a shared exchange agreement between that individual person and another party (Rousseau, 1989:123). Exchange has been defined as giving or taking one thing in return for another (Mills & Clark, 1982:29).

An exchange relationship refers to a contractual relationship with the purpose of exchange of interests between two parties who has interests (Yanhan, 2012:57). A key element in exchange relationships involves an expectation that personal costs or energies are matched by something of equivalent or greater value in return (Aggarwal & Larrick, 2012:115). The contractual relationship between employees and their organisation can be explicit (labour contracts) or tacit (psychological contract) (Yanhan, 2012:57). The conceptualisation of a psychological contract focuses on the employee's or individual's experiences and expectations they have with the other party (organisation), whereas, in contrast, organisations do not have a psychological contract with the individuals (Rousseau, 1989:126). Psychological contract theory describes contracts that are at an individual level that contain intellectual structures that reflect how people think about their exchange relationships (Hansen, Rousseau & Tomprou, 2015:1).

Within the context of the psychological contract, millennials perceive large companies as not moving fast enough, which results in millennials switching employers to learn and experience new and different things (Martins & Martins, 2014:130). Career flexibility has replaced the notion of lifetime employment (Hess, and Jepsen, 2009:261). Millennials have a need for immediate gratification, many have high expectations and are willing to put in the effort it takes to achieve their goals.

## **2.8 Chapter Summary**

The chapter presented generational theory as being concerned with how the era in which a person or cohort was born impacts the development of their view of the world. The concept of cohort was equally explained. Human capital was described as matching any stock of knowledge or features the worker possesses that contributes to his or her productivity. Training and development benefit the individual and organisation in the attainment of a strategic outcome. The concept of a psychological contract was explained as encompassing the obligations that employees perceive their organisation owes them and the obligations the employees believe they owe their organisation in return. The next chapter builds on this contextual literature and provides details of the appropriate research methodology for this study.

## **CHAPTER 3:**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This study intends to identify the appropriate measures the Nestlé company could implement to improve the PDP process to meet millennial managers' expectations and increase their intent to stay. The specific problem that the study purports to address is to determine whether Nestlé's PDP process meets the developmental expectations of millennial managers, and whether the existing PDPs of millennial managers at the Nestlé company assist in improving their operational skills and employment retention. This being a qualitative study, the focus required an interpretative, naturalistic approach to its subject matter (Denzin & Lincoln 2007:4). Qualitative research is, consequently, located within the world of lived experience, where individual belief and action interconnect with culture (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:9). This means that qualitative researchers study phenomena in their natural settings, trying to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). This study was conducted in the natural setting of the subjects to contextually orientate towards the antecedent factors which may influence a millennial manager's intent to stay or leave the organisation. The chapter attempts to address the research question through presenting a theoretical framework, research design, research strategy, validity, reliability, and ethical considerations in the study.

#### **3.2 Theoretical Framework**

The motivation for a framework is to aid the researchers in ensuring that they have outlined their research in a comprehensive way throughout (Green, 2014:8). A theoretical framework is the basis from which all knowledge is constructed, and serves as the support and structure for the justification of the study (Grant & Osanloo, 2014:12).

In qualitative research, theory can appear from research and it offers accounts of reality according to a constructivist logic (Camp, 2001). Conceptual frameworks have been described as the researcher's understanding of the research problem to be investigated,



the specific path the research will take, and the relationship between the different components in the study (Grant & Osanloo, 2014:17). They have also been described as an explanation, by the researcher, of how the research problem would be investigated (Adom, Hussein & Adu-Agyem, 2018:439). The conceptual and theoretical framework clarify the path of research and establish it according to theoretical constructs (Adom, Hussein & Adu-Agyem, 2018:438).

Ontology and epistemology are integral parts of the theoretical framework. Ontological norms are concerned with what constitutes reality (Scotland, 2012:1). Ontology concentrates on the nature and structure of things, independent of any deliberations, and even independent of their actual existence (Staab, 2009:1). Social ontology aims to provide overall accounts of the nature of social reality (Given, 2008:578). Figure 4 captures the relationship between these concepts and the theoretical perspective.

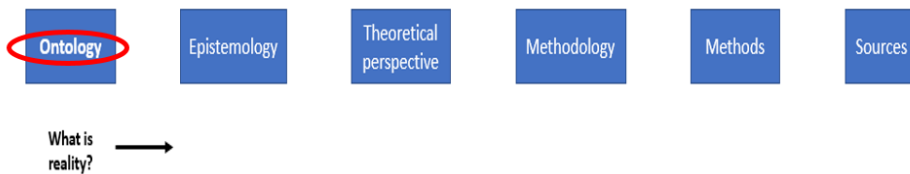


Figure 4: Research paradigm – Ontology

Source: Adapted from Research paradigm (Patel, 2015:1).

The researcher in the current study considers themselves as a constructivist and subscribes to the view that people construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world through experiencing things and reflecting on those experiences and realities. The researcher further believes that more than one reality may exist, and that they may exist simultaneously or alongside other realities concerning the same issue or subject.

This study focused on the real-life experience of the millennial managers and the process, conceptualisation, and application of their PDPs. The researcher's ontological stance allowed the researcher to be open to believing that many realities exist. This stance

enabled the researcher to discover the underlying factors that gave rise to the research problem, as well as to discover opportunities and theories that ensued during this study.

Epistemologically, interpretation is accepted as an effective way of knowing, and it may be accepted that different researchers, and research conducted at different points in time, may arrive at different conclusions (Given, 2008:734). The way knowledge is discovered, and what it is, is subjective (Scotland, 2012:14). Social constructivism, as the epistemology of the study, has been described as, "... a theory of knowledge in sociology and communication theory that examines the knowledge and understandings of the world that are developed jointly by individuals" (Amineh & Asl, 2015:13). Figure 5 locates epistemology as adjacent to theoretical perspective.

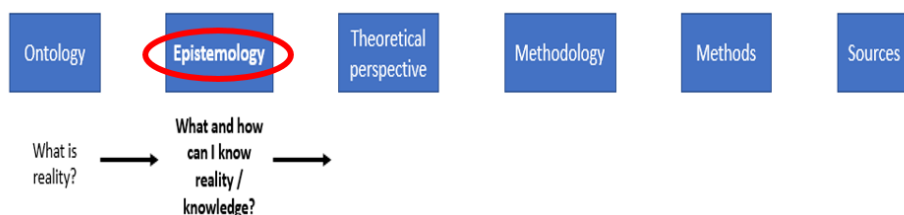


Figure 5: Research paradigm – Epistemology.

Source: Research paradigm (Adapted from Patel, 2015:1).

The constructivist psychology theorise about and examine how humans produce systems for meaningfully understanding their experiences and world's (Raskin, 2002:2). Accordingly, meaning is constructed through the collaboration between the world and consciousness and not discovered (Scotland, 2012:11). The researcher considers themselves to be a *constructivist* due to the belief that people construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world through experiencing incidents and reflecting on those experiences and realities.

A theoretical framework, as shown in Figure 6 below, is significant to all scientific work—whether it is quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods—and all research ought to have a binding theoretical framework to validate the importance and implications of the work

(Lederman & Lederman, 2015:597). A theoretical framework is the basis from which all knowledge is constructed and serves as the support and structure for the justification of the study (Grant & Osanloo, 2014:12). In qualitative research, theory can appear from research and offers accounts of reality, in a constructivist logic (Camp, 2001).

All empirical studies must be linked to concepts or literature that sustain the need for the study and its purpose, whether the study relate to qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods (Rocco & Plakhotnik, 2009:120). Theory provides researchers with a framework for constructing meaning from their observations by providing structure to their studies while also helping to clarify the phenomenon being studied (Yamauchi, Ponte, Ratcliffe & Traynor, 2017:11). Figure 6 reiterates the centrality of theoretical perspective in social research.

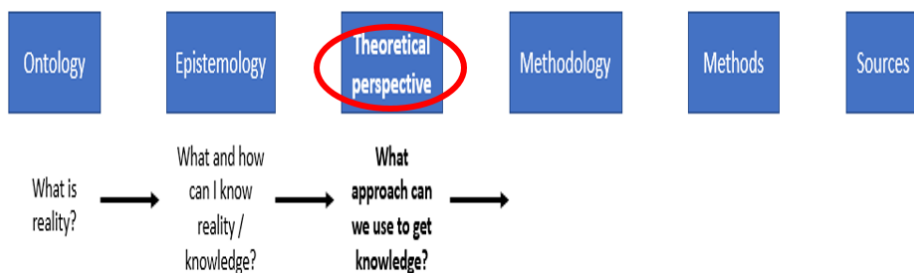


Figure 6: Research paradigm – Theoretical perspective

Source: Research paradigm (Adapted from Patel, 2015:1).

The focus of qualitative research involves an interpretative, naturalistic approach to its subject matter (Denzin & Lincoln 2007:4). Consequently, qualitative research is located within the world of lived experience, where individual belief and action interconnect with culture (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:9). As mentioned earlier in the chapter, this means that qualitative researchers study phenomena in their natural settings, trying to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Qualitative researchers are concerned with people's beliefs, knowledge, understanding and meaning from the viewpoint of the people (Haradhan, 2018:2). This study was conducted in the natural settings of the subjects so that the researcher could contextually comprehend the antecedent factors which influence a millennial manager to stay or leave the organisation. This study was not a quantitative study, attempting to prove or disprove several hypotheses. It was also necessary to capture the current status quo of PDPs from the subjective perspective of the study research participants.

This qualitative research was principally exploratory, used to gain an understanding of primary reasons, opinions, and motivations to provide understanding into the problem or helping to advance ideas (DeFranzo, 2011:1). Social constructivism sustains this study, and is based on explicit assumptions about reality, knowledge, and learning (Kim, 2001). This study gathered the experiences of the participants from their unique perspective and experience, which they constructed through their own reality and learning.

In Grounded theory and phenomenology, researchers collect the views of research participants; however, instead of theorising about these views and generating a theoretical model, phenomenologists describe what research participants have in common when they experience a phenomenon (Creswell, Hanson, Clark Plano & Morales, 2007:252). The focus of a framework is either conceptual or theoretical, and is used to support researchers: assisting in confirming that they have outlined their research coherently throughout the design (Green, 2014:38). This current study was conducted within the premise of phenomenology.

Phenomenological approaches are based on an archetype of personal knowledge and subjectivity and highlight the importance of personal interpretation and perspective (Lester, S.,1999:1). Phenomenology, as a philosophy, affords researchers a theoretical frame for understanding phenomena at the level of subjective reality (Qutoshi, 2018:215). A phenomenological study uses a combination of methods to collect data by conducting interviews, examining documents, watching videos, and visiting places, with the express purpose to understand the meaning participants place in their daily lived work

experiences (Ibrahim, 2016:9). Figure 7 locates the methodology and methods within the continuum of theoretical framework.

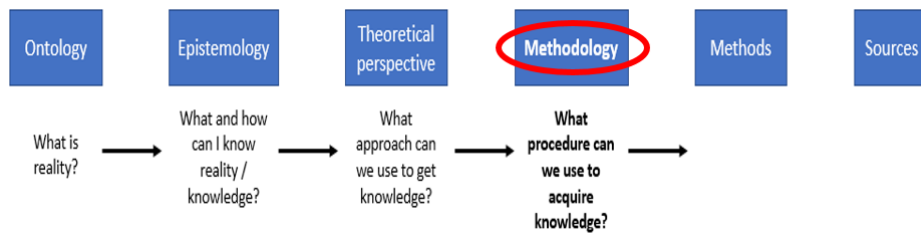


Figure 7: Research paradigm – Methodology perspective

Source: Research paradigm (Adapted from Patel, 2015:1).

The overall objective of this research was to gather information regarding the viewpoints of research participants about their experience of the Nestlé PDP system or as the study’s central phenomenon. The research design is further discussed in the section that follows.

### 3.3 Research design

There are many researchers who are in agreement about what the research design constitutes. The research design is the over-arching strategy of how the researcher intends to execute the study or project, and, at its core, it is concerned with the applied activities of arriving at an answer to the research question (Draper, 2004:13). Lelissa adds to this by indicating that it links the conceptual research problems with the relevant practical research (Lelissa, 2018:2). Akhtar describes research design as the concrete plan within which research is conducted (2016:2), and “as the structure of research it is the “Glue” that holds all of the elements in a research project together” (2016:68).

The research design communicates what data is essential, what methods of collecting the data will be used, how the data will be analysed, and finally how it is going to answer your research question (Van Wyk, 2012:4). A research design is the reasoning that joins

the data to be collected, and the conclusions that are drawn, with the original questions of the study (Yin, 2003:20). Research derived from a well-executed research design is, therefore, effective, valid and binding when a conclusion is precise or truthful.

A phenomenological study uses a combination of methods to collect data—by conducting interviews, examining documents, watching videos, and visiting places—with the express purpose of understanding the meaning participants place in their daily lived work experiences (Ibrahim, 2016:9). Table 4 locates the phenomenological study within the broad five types of research design for qualitative study.

Table 4: The five types of research design for qualitative study

<b>Type of study</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
Ethnography	To describe a culture's characteristics
Narrative	To describe and examine events of the past to understand the present and anticipate potential future effects
<b>Phenomenological</b>	To describe experiences of people as lived experiences
Grounded Theory	Theory development
Case study	describe in-depth the experience of one person, family, group, community, or institution

Source: Five type of research design for qualitative study (Adapted from Ibrahim, 2016).

The purpose of qualitative research is to interpret and understand social interactions (Johnson & Christensen, 2008:34), and the researcher's enquiry in this study is phenomenological in that it relates to the experiences of the millennial managers. The ontological stance of the researcher, being derived from a constructivist outlook, compliments the research and is underpinned by an inductive approach premised on documenting the specific experiences of the millennial managers. The aim and objectives of the study, as found in Section 1.8, is to identify measures which the Nestlé company could implement to improve the PDP process aimed at meeting millennial managers'

expectations of development needs, thereby enhancing their intent to stay longer in the organisation.

In addition, this qualitative study used inductive thinking or reasoning, since it moved from specific observations about individual experiences to broader generalisations and theories (Soiferman, 2010). The main aim of an inductive approach is to permit research findings to emerge from the raw data, without the restraints levied by structured methodologies (Thomas, 2003:2).

This study concerned itself with discovering, examining as a means of documenting the lived experiences of the participants and attempted to establish or identify measures the organisation could take to enhance the millennial manager's intent to stay. It did not test a hypothesis, which is what made the most appropriate research approach one that was grounded in an inductive perspective. This is because inductive reasoning is more open-ended and exploratory in its nature and approach (Trochim, 2006).

Furthermore, inductive reasoning moves from specific observations to broader generalisations and theories and is often referred to as the bottom-up approach (Trochim, 2006). The purpose of inductive reasoning is to develop theories related to millennium managers using planned observation and analysis of observations. Such similar "studies are not meant to test existing theories but developing new theories. Hypothesis testing is not used in these studies." (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2007). Inductive thinking starts with evidence that is specific and builds theories, explanations, and interpretations to reproduce or represent those specifics (Given, 2008:15), as seen in Figure 8 below.

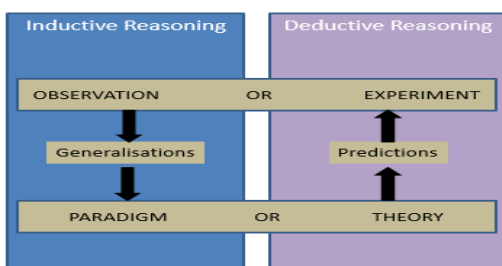


Figure 8: Modelling the antipodal connectivity structure of neural communities.

Source: Modelling the antipodal connectivity structure of neural communities (Karaman, 2015).

The researcher's goal was to describe the phenomenon as precisely as possible, abstaining from any preconceived framework, and remaining true to the facts (Groenewald, 2004:44). As such, the researcher's engagement in purposive sampling methods was based on the focus of the study rather than using representative or random sampling methods (Armstrong, 2010:881). The researcher intended to conduct interviews with participants who are millennial managers and had participated in the organisation's PDP process, as recommended by Polkinghorne (1989). The overall research design was based on the Research Onion by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2007) and adapted accordingly to align it more concisely to the research purpose and research question of this study.

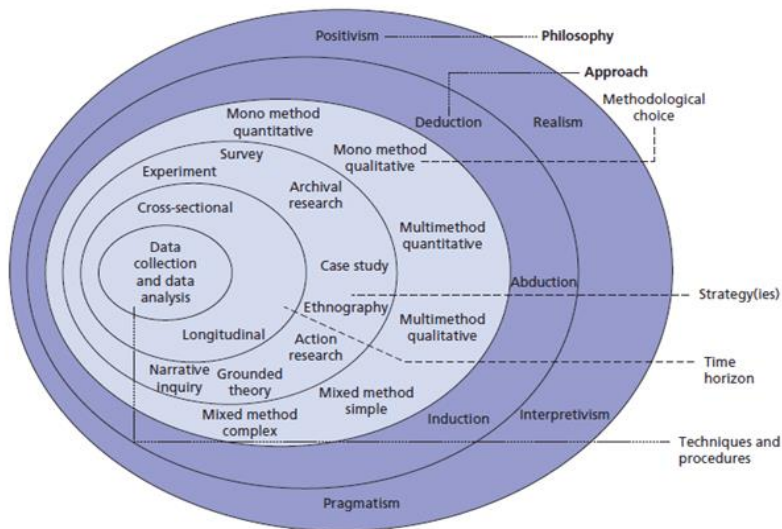


Figure 9: Research Onion Model

Source: Research Onion Model (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2007).



The research onion provides a framework for the research design. The philosophy selected for the study is constructivist. The research strategy is inductive, while the research design is qualitative, using case study and phenomenological approach as summarised below.

Table 5: Representation of research choices

RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY	RESEARCH STRATEGY	RESEARCH DESIGN	TYPE OF STUDY
Interpretivism	Inductive	Qualitative	Case studies, phenomenological

The current study is premised on a qualitative research design using phenomenological research approach. Van Manen (1990:10) explains that “phenomenological research is the study of essences”. The core tenet of phenomenology is that the examination does not start with the objective world ‘out there’, but with ‘mental directedness’, or that which the mind is about, or directed to (Aspers, 2009:2). Phenomenological research is an attempt at making sense of the world and of ourselves as we experience it and its essence (Shudak, 2018:4). Phenomenology research seeks to understand the lived experiences of research participants related to a phenomenon (Creswell, Hanson, Clark Plano & Morales, 2007:241). More clarity is provided in Figure 11 below, with a detailed explanation of each aspect of the research design having been provided above.

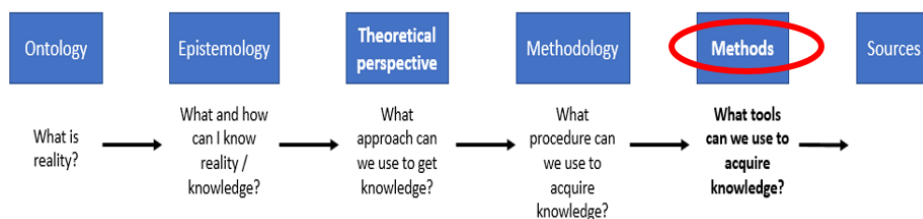


Figure 10: Research paradigm – Methods perspective

Source: Research paradigm (Adapted from Patel, 2015:1).

Following from the research design, as discussed in this section, the research strategy will be outlined next.

### 3.4 Research Strategy

Qualitative researchers make astonishing efforts to give voice to the “research participants’ submissions during the data gathering stage which creates rich prospects for discovering new ideas rather than the confirmation of existing concepts” (Gioia, Corley & Hamilton, 2013:17). Using appropriate data collection techniques guarantees that qualitative data is collected in a dependable and scientific manner (Harrell & Bradley, 2009:2). The qualitative methodology comprises gathering comprehensive data by means of open-ended questions, permitting direct quotations, and recording the description from the perspective of the participant (Groenland & Dana, 2020:30). The actual data gathering and the logistics required form part of the research strategy as located in Figure 12 below.

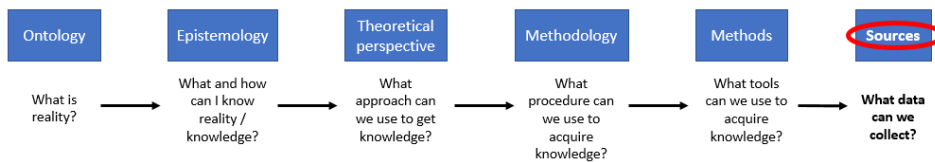


Figure 11: Research paradigm – Sources

Source: Research paradigm (Adapted from Patel, 2015:1).

Phenomenology shares some structures with grounded theory and uses similar methods to collect data. Phenomenology focuses on understanding how human beings experience their world and affords the researcher an opportunity to place themselves in the research participant’s position in order to better understand the subjective experiences from the research participant’s view (Austin & Sutton, 2015:1). In qualitative research, interviews are widely used as data collections tools (Frances, Coughlan & Cronin, 2009:309). Sampling strategy is an integral part of the research strategy.

### 3.4.1 Sampling Strategy

Sampling can be described as a selection of a subset of the population of interest in a research study to be undertaken (Turner, 2020:8). Gentles *et al.*, (2015:1175) defines sampling in qualitative research in its widest sense as the selection of specific data sources from which data is collected to report on the research objectives. Therefore, sampling has the purpose of addressing the research objectives through the selection of a subset of a broader population and record data on them as identified by the study.

This study has its target population identified as millennial managers who are employed with the Nestlé company. This study concerned itself with millennials who are managers and how they experience the Nestlé company's PDP system. In situations where an entire population group cannot participate in a study, or, where the members of the target group cannot all be identified, a sampling method is deployed to collect data that is assumed to be representative of that target group (Stratton, 2021:373). There are different types of sampling strategies that will be discussed next.

### 3.4.2 Probability Sampling and non-probability sampling

In qualitative research, the aim of sampling is to categorise specific groups of participants who either have characteristics or live in conditions relevant to the social phenomenon being investigated (Thompson, 1999:816). Sampling is employed to methodically identify a small number of representative research participants from a distinct population, who then serve as sources of data for observation or investigation in accordance with the aim and purpose of the research study (Sharma, 2017:749).

Non-probability sampling procedures assist researchers to subjectively identify data sets (Abubakar, Etikan & Alkassim, 2015:1). Non-probability sampling uses subjective decisions and employs convenient selection (Ayhan, 2011:1). Non-probability sampling research participants are identified from the population in any arrangement of a non-randomised manner (Tyrer & Heyman, 2016:58).

Perceptions and experiences are better understood through an enquiry which is subjective through a qualitative method (Kalu, 2019:2524). The distinguishing character

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of non-probability sampling is that subjective judgements play a role in the selection of the sample, in that the researcher decides which units of the population will be included in the sample (Tansey,2007:14). In non-probability sampling, subjective methods are utilised to decide which constituents are included in the sample and therefore, nonprobability sampling is a technique where the samples are gathered in a method that does not provide all the participants or units in the population equal chances of being involved (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim 2016).

Purposive sampling is extensively used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases related to the phenomenon being studied (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan and Hoagwood, 2015:1). Purposive sampling requires access to key informants in the field who can help in identifying information-rich cases (Suri, 2011:66). Patton (2002:230) defines purposive<sup>1</sup> sampling as;

“The logic and power of purposeful sampling lie in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry, thus the term purposeful sampling. Studying information-rich cases yields insights and in-depth understanding rather than empirical generalizations.”

The distinction between non-probability and probability sampling is shown in Table 6 below:

Table 6: Probability sampling vs non-probability sampling

Probability sampling characteristics	Non-probability sampling characteristics
Comprises some form of random selection in selecting the elements. Greater assurance can be placed in the representativeness of likelihood samples. This type of sampling involves an identification process in which each element in the group/population has an equal and fair chance of being selected.	The features that make up the sample, are selected by nonrandom procedures. This type of sampling is less likely than probability sampling to produce representative samples. Researcher can and do use non-probability samples.

<sup>1</sup> The researcher is assuming, based on the definition provided by Patton, that purposeful and purposive sampling are synonymous.

Commented [PP54]: These sources are dated. The method of sampling is PURPOSIVE, not purposeful.

Commented [MAP5R4]: See comment in reference list for Patton

Source: Probability sampling vs Non-probability sampling (Adapted from Landreneau, 2009:1).

### 3.4.3 Sample size

The sample size utilised in qualitative research enquiry is often smaller than that utilised in quantitative research enquiry (Dworkin, 2012:1319). Qualitative interview reviews may benefit from sampling approaches by shifting focus from numerical responses of participants to the contribution of new knowledge from the inquiry (Malterud, Siersma & Guassora, 2016:7). The acquisition of new knowledge is due to the focus of qualitative research methods concerning itself with garnering in-depth understanding of the phenomenon and extracting meaning (Dworkin, 2012:1319). In this study, other variables such as equal gender representivity, age, and qualifications were also considered in line with the requirements of a managerial position.

The notion of data saturation, defined as 'information redundancy,' is the point at which no new codes or themes appear from data (Braun & Clarke, 2019:1). Saturation arises when all the main deviations of the phenomenon have been identified (Guest, Bunce & Johnson, 2006:65). Therefore, saturation can be defined as the point when nothing significantly new emerges from the data. Data saturation was observed, especially discernible from participant number 10.

A study by Gentles, Charles, Ploeg and McKibbin (2015:1183), in which they researched sample size estimates from three research traditions, found that around *12 participants* was the recommended sample size for descriptive phenomenology research. Creswell (2013:126) suggested *3 to 10* as a sample size for phenomenological research study. In another phenomenological study related to the experiences of homeless people in the health care system, a *sample size of 15* was used (Martins, 2008:425). The researcher used a *sample size of 12*, as recommended by Gentles *et al.* (2015) while checking for saturation from 10 as suggested by Creswell (2013:126).

The researcher achieved data saturation after 10 interviews. To confirm saturation the researcher continued with 2 further interviews. The 2 further interviews confirmed that

data saturation was indeed reached after 10 interviews as no new codes or themes emerged.

### 3.4.4 Interviews

Interviews offer in-depth information, relating to participants' experiences and views of a particular topic (Turner, 2010:1). Qualitative interviews are particularly useful for researchers to explore, in an in-depth manner, opportunities that relate to the exclusive experiences of the participants—whether experienced or perceived—allowing for in-depth insights into the phenomena being studied (McGrath, Palmgren & Liljedahl, 2019:1002). Interviews were non-exclusively used as the data-collection vehicle for this study.

Interviews may be unstructured, semi-structured, or structured, and may include questionnaires, surveys, or special techniques that cover whatever is being studied (Morse & Richards, 2002:58). As such, interviews may be placed on a range or continuum of structure, from unstructured to highly structured (Harrell & Bradley, 2009:25). Rooted in this continuum is the knowledge of how much 'control' the researcher will have during interviews with their research participants (Harrell & Bradley, 2009:25). Figure 13 below reflects the amount of control as a continuum from unstructured (less control) to structured (more control).

**Amount of control exercised determines place on interview Continuum**

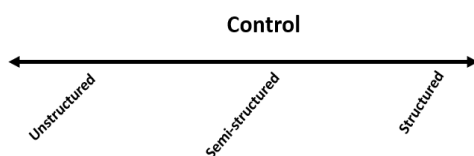


Figure 12: Interview continuum (Adapted from Harrell & Bradley, 2009)

The justification for the use of interviews in phenomenology is to allow for a descriptive, reflective, interpretive, and engaging style of inquiry from which the essence of an experience may be produced (Morse & Richards 2002:67). Studies have shown that

*phenomenological researchers use both structured and semi-structured interviews* during their studies (Guerrero-Castañedac, Menezes & Ojeda-Vargas, 2017:2). In relation to phenomenological methods, van Manen (2016) defines interviewing as containing a two-pronged purpose:

- a) as a means of exploring and developing a rich understanding of the phenomenon; and
- b) to develop a conversation around the meaning of experience.

Van Manen (2016), therefore, encourages a more conversational semi-structured interviewing style.

Semi-structured interviews are a method of obtaining rich, detailed and in-depth information about participants' experiences and views on a particular matter (Turner, 2010). Semi-structured interviews can be useful to obtain information through a dialog between the researcher and the research participants (Pathak & Intratat 2012:4). The term 'semi-structured qualitative study' refers to interviews and observations that have some unambiguous structure in terms of method or theory, but are not wholly structured (Blandford, 2013:2). The use of semi-structured interviews as an instrument achieves new opportunities for understanding phenomena by creating space for a narrative to reveal itself, which may be explored with participants (Galletta, 2013:2). In this study, interview questions were designed to be semi-structured to afford the study to profit from both structured and unstructured approach.

### **3.4.5 Pilot study**

A pilot study is defined as a smaller version of a research study or feasibility study, (Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001:1). A pilot study preceded the final version of interviews. Pilot studies are routinely associated with a quantitative approach to test a research instrument; however, the importance of pilot interviews has been expanded to qualitative inquiry in preparation for a larger study (Majid, Othman, Mohamad, Lim & Aziz, 2017:1074).

Pilot interviews guided the researcher in identifying uncertainties, making modifications to procedures, and executing the main research more efficiently. This is because pilot

interviews, as conducted within a recognised framework, can result in higher-quality research and may contribute to identifying valuable information to support researchers with their main study (Doody & Doody, 2015:1). In addition, undertaking a pilot interview can provide researchers with an opportunity to obtain and enhance the necessary skills prior to commencing the main study (Doody & Doody, 2015:1). Pilot interviews are particularly important because they provide the researcher with a snapshot of the time required for an interview, and assists in identifying unanticipated problems to prepare the researcher before embarking on the full study (Mason & Zuercher, 1995).

#### **3.4.6 Pilot interview size**

The research question relates to millennial manager. Millennials are described as the generation born between 1982 and 2000 (Howe & Strauss, 2009). The researcher followed early phenomenologists like Edmund Husserl by conducting individual interviews as a major source of data collection (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006:315).

The managers that this study intended to investigate were professionally qualified and experienced specialists/mid-management. Section 21 of the Employment Equity act (Employment Equity act 55 of 1998) defines this category as skilled technical and academically qualified/junior management/supervisors/foremen/superintendent.

This study focused on a research sample of 12 participants who are millennials as described above, who are in the employ within the ranks of the categories identified in the previous paragraph and are employed in a full-time capacity.

There is evidence to suggest that one to two participants is adequate to conduct pilot interviews. Kim (2010:8), in a 2010 phenomenological study, recruited two participants for a pilot study. Further, the researchers in the qualitative, phenomenological study conducted a pilot study, which consisted of one participant (Doody & Doody, 2015:4). For this study, the researcher conducted a pilot study with two participants, with the specific focus on identifying barriers, meaning and experiences, viability of interview technique, data analysis and reflection on the interview questions.



### 3.4.7 Pilot Interview Results

The researcher scheduled the pilot interviews following receipt of the participants signed consent forms. The pilot interviews were scheduled in the Hammanskraal district, north of Pretoria, close to research participants' place of work.

The following pilot interviews were undertaken, as summarised in the table below:

Table 7: Summary of Pilot Interview Participation

Assigned Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Date of Pilot Interview	Time of Pilot Interview
Hilda	F	29	17 August 2021	12h30
Patrick	M	39	17 August 2021	07h30

The pilot interviews revealed that an additional ten to fifteen minutes should be scheduled. While all the identified semi-structured questions were covered during the course of the interview, the interaction between the participant and the researcher felt rushed, which was specifically noted towards the end of the second pilot interview. Another minor change that was introduced following the pilot interviews was the need to approach the distribution and explanation of the consent letters differently. In this regard, the consent letters were explained to each of the participants in detail, as well as the estimated time their participation would require in contributing towards the study.

### 3.4.8 Rapport-building

Rapport-building, as part of the research strategy, is described as “getting along with each other, a harmony with, a conformity to, and affinity for one another” (Seidman, 2013:98) and as “convey[ing] empathy and understanding without judgment” (Patton, 2002:366). Building rapport recognises that research is conducted *with* the participants and not *on* them (Prior, 2017:2). Rapport, therefore, requires building personal connections that are established through mutual trust, respect and consent, while acknowledging the sensitivity to power relations to the co-construction of knowledge (Prior, 2017:2).

The researcher spent some time on building rapport with the participant interviewees by sharing common ground and common experiences at the beginning of the interview. Building rapport established a safe environment for communicating the interviewees'

**Commented [PP56]:** First describe the pilot study. When were they held, how many interviews, where, etc.

**Commented [MAP7]:** Here, I believe Prof. Singh is asking for more detail in terms of what date and time the pilot interviews were carried out. Noting date and time contextualises the pilot very specifically. The date and time of each of the pilot interviews needs to be noted (you could summarise this in a table, but such an addition should happen under the guidance of your supervisor.

**Commented [MMB8R7]:** Thank you. I will do a table and send to you.

personal experiences and attitudes as they occurred (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006:316).

#### **3.4.9 Thought provoking interjections**

Interviewing, as part of a qualitative research design, encourages the research participant to share rich accounts of phenomena while leaving the analysis or interpretation to the researcher (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006:314). Thought-provoking interjections were used during the interview to indicate to the research participant that the researcher would like to hear more about the issue being discussed (Pathak, 2012:5). The researcher sought for opportunities during the interview to ask thought-provoking questions, or interject at specific moments, to gain more in-depth data about specific issues.

#### **3.4.10 Critical event analysis**

Critical life events can illuminate details, reveal events and views in a holistic way, and provide depth and reveal qualities of the subject under investigation (Webster & Mertova, 2007:15). Such critical incidents are those events that a research participant perceives to be critical in influencing an outcome (Allen, 2017:1). The critical incident technique collects direct observations of behaviour experienced by the research participants to resolve practical problems and develop useful principles (Flanagan, 1954:327). The researcher encouraged the participants to describe critical events and talk about them in order to better understand the points under discussion and allow the participant to elaborate and exemplify the issues (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006).

#### **3.4.11 Data collection and management**

The strategy for data collection and management is based on Creswell's (2007:142) guidelines:

- a) Develop backup computer files.
- b) Use reliable audio-recording equipment during interviews.
- c) Ensure recording equipment is compatible
- d) Develop an index of the types of information collected.

- e) Ensure the anonymity of research participants.
- f) Design a data collection matrix as a visual lens of locating and identifying information for a study.

The researcher attempted to spend a significant amount of time in the field and on data analysis and review (Armstrong, 2010: 882). They endeavoured to guard their own experiences to fully describe how participants view the phenomenon (Creswell, 2007:61).

Phenomenological studies require the researcher to bracket, suspend, or diminish the any of their own preconceived ideas that might lead to a distortion of the thing itself. This implies a need to decontextualize and empty of oneself from the commencement of the study until conclusion in order to turn to the phenomenon under investigation (Shudak, 2018:4). The researcher of this study attempted to effectively observe these guidelines.

#### **3.4.12 Data Analysis**

Spradley (1979) refers to analysis as a systematic examination of something to determine its parts, the relationship among parts, and their relationship to the whole. Phenomenologists are meticulous in their analysis of the research participants, so that basic elements of the experience that are common to the research group, or all human beings, can be identified (Patton, 2002:106). Analysis can also be described as the systematic process of utilising procedures to identify crucial features and relationships with the view of transforming the data through interpretation (Groenewald, 2004:49).

Unlike quantitative research, the data collection and analysis in qualitative research are carried out at the same time (Soiferman, 2010:10). Data analysis involves addressing each one of the research questions against the raw data that is collected (Soiferman, 2010:9). After some data collection and reflection by the researcher in relation to a problem being investigated, the researcher in this study generated 'categories' which fit the data (Bryman & Burgess, 1994).

Qualitative researchers seek patterns or themes in the data (Soiferman, 2010:10). The data or transcripts of interviews, in this study, were read multiple times to identify themes and categories (Thomas, 2003:3). The researcher extracted patterns or unique themes

from the data collected and made a composite summary thereof (Groenewald, 2004:50). Through the meticulous examination of these composite summaries the researcher aimed to elicit the essence of meaning from these summaries within a holistic context (Groenewald, 2004:50).

### **3.5 Quality measurements**

Denzin and Lincoln (2011) contend that qualitative research measures the trustworthiness of research by using the concepts of dependability, credibility, confirmability and transferability, instead of quantitative measures in terms of validity and reliability. Dependability refers to the consistency and reliability of the study results. Credibility measures whether the study findings are correct and accurate (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The credibility of the researcher and their research methods are a yardstick for this measure (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Confirmability requires a demonstrated audit trail of each step of data analysis without any bias or influence (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Transferability refers to the likelihood of transferring results to other or similar situations (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Qualitative researchers study people's beliefs, experiences and meaning systems through the study of phenomena in a social context (Brink, 1993:35). Qualitative designs are naturalistic to the degree that the research takes place in real-world settings and the researcher does not try to manipulate the phenomenon of interest (Patton, 2002:39). The purpose of phenomenological analysis is to explore, in detail, how research participants make sense of their personal and social world, and the meanings that those specific experiences, events and states hold for those research participant's (Smith & Osborn, 2015:63).

The approach to analysis relates to the reduction of the research in order to extract its phenomenological essences when speaking about validity and reliability (Soderhamn, 2001:13). It is important to address the issue of validity and reliability in phenomenological research to be able to make knowledgeable claims which are defensible in phenomenological studies, and to gain acceptance within the scientific world (Soderhamn, 2001:13). In conventional measurement theory, validity refers to the degree

to which an instrument measures what it is meant to be measuring (Soderhamn, 2001:12). In qualitative research, validity, albeit a different terminology of credibility and transferability, should represent what exists; and a valid instrument or measure should measure what it intended or supposed to measure (Brink, 1993:35).

### **3.5.1 Dependability (Reliability)**

In quantitative research, reliability of an instrument is the degree of uniformity or consistency with which it measures the attribute it is meant to be measuring (Soderhamn, 2001:12). Reliability refers to the capacity of a research method to produce consistently the same results over repeated testing periods (Brink, 1993:35). When a description accurately expresses the intuited essence, it is then conceivable to speak of validity in a phenomenological sense, but it is only possible to make claims of presences or existence (Soderhamn, 2001:14).

*Dependability* in qualitative research refers to the consistency of findings over time and responds to whether research results can be replicated with the same or similar participants in a similar environment (Bitsch, 2005:76). Korstjens & Moser (2018:121) refer to the stability of findings over a period time. They state that dependability relates to participants' evaluation of the interpretation, findings, and recommendations of the study, and that this is supported by the data as recorded from the participants of the study. Therefore, dependability can be referred to as the consistency of findings, interpretation and recommendations, given the same data collection context, over a period of time.

The detection of the operational intentionality requires accounts within the reduction to be made apparent and understood (Soderhamn, 2001:14). Every stage of the qualitative research relies on the skills, training, intuitions, and capabilities of the researcher, qualitative analysis in the end depends on the analytical intellect of the analyst (Patton, 2002:433). The human feature of the researcher is of the great strength while at the same time the fundamental weakness of qualitative inquiry and analysis which represent a scientific two-edged sword (Patton, 2002:433).

### 3.5.2 Trustworthiness

Qualitative research has moved towards language such as *authenticity and trustworthiness* rather than objectiveness and subjectiveness (Patton, 2002:51). The search for the essence means to search for the most obvious meaning that can be assigned to the phenomenon within a given context (Soderhamn, 2001:14). The achievement of the essence is not the end of the analysis; it is only the vehicle to bringing the actual relationships of the experience to the fore (Soderhamn, 2001:14). Each qualitative study is unique, and, therefore, every analytical approach used is unique due to the application of guidelines which necessitates judgement and creativity (Patton, 2002:433).

While guidelines for analysing qualitative data can be found, and examples are available and exist, there are no formulas for determining their significance or methods to flawlessly replicate the researchers investigative thought processes (Patton, 2002:433). In short, no straightforward examinations can be adopted for reliability and validity (Patton, 2002:433). In the evaluation of a phenomenological study, the researcher adopted Creswell's (2007:215) guidelines by asking the following questions:

1. Has the researcher conveyed an understanding of the philosophical beliefs of phenomenology?
2. Has the author articulated a clear phenomenon to study in a concise way?
3. Has the author used procedures of data analysis in phenomenology, such as the procedures recommended by former researchers, like Moustakas (1994)?
4. Has the researcher communicated the overall essence of the experience of the research participants, and does this essence include a detailed description of the lived experience and the context in which it occurred?
5. Was the researcher examining of their own beliefs, judgments and practices throughout the study?

Polkinghorne (1989:57), when referring to validation, asks, "Does the general structural description provide an accurate portrait of the common features and structural

connections that are manifest in the examples collected?" He recommends that researchers task themselves the following five questions:

1. Did the researcher affect the contents of the research participant's descriptions in a way that the descriptions do not accurately reflect the participant's actual experience?
2. Is the transcription truthful, and does it convey the true meaning of the oral presentation of the interview?
3. In the analysis of the transcriptions, were there conclusions, or alternative conclusions, other than those offered by the researcher that could have been arrived at? And, if yes, whether the researcher identified these alternative conclusions?
4. Was it possible to go from the general framework description to the specific transcriptions, and to justify for the specific contents and associations in the original examples of the lived experience?
5. Is the framework description situation specific enough, or does it hold in general for the lived experience in other or similar situations?

Although the measures of validity and reliability assume different meanings in qualitative studies, they all serve as assurance measures to enhance the scientific rigour of the research study. In this study, the researcher used dependability, credibility, confirmability, and transferability as main measures for evaluating this qualitative study.

### **3.6 Ethical considerations to the study**

The essence of a qualitative research study involves collecting information from people and this means that the participants will have to be engaged in a manner that conforms to ethical standards. Ethics infers that people will live in accordance with a system of values which are shared and common and a system of agreed beliefs that control conduct, expressly based on morals (Groenewald & Dondé 2017:10). Ethical standards within the context of research, requires participants to be engaged with respect, care, and their dignity should be preserved, and the *confidentiality* of their responses should be

guaranteed (Bhole, 2015). This will safeguard the integrity of the study being undertaken and research process.

Historically, risk assessments in qualitative research have been used to examine and identify potential risks participants may face (Dickson-Swift, James, Kippen, & Liamputtong, 2008:1). At the commencement of the study participants must consent to their participation and be given the opportunity to withdraw their consent, even after they have verified their intended submissions to be true. It is a fundamental responsibility of the researcher to ensure the safety of all participants during and after the study has been conducted.

Any reliable and truthful research strategy also requires that the researcher adopts an attitude of neutrality in relation to the phenomenon being studied (Patton, 2002:51). Researchers must describe the steps taken to ensure participants are not harmed and record any ethical issues that arose during the study (Armstrong, 2010:882). No credible research strategy promotes influencing and or distorting data to serve the researcher's narrow vested prejudices and interest (Patton, 2002:51). Any research strategy requires credibility at the end-product for it to be useful (Patton, 2002:51).

Ethical considerations are always key for researchers who intend embarking on field research (Given, 2008:242). Both qualitative and quantitative strategies seek truthful, meaningful, reliable and empirically supported findings (Patton, 2002:51). Phenomenological interviews required during data collection reveal participants' experiences and emotions as they reflect on their experiences related to how they experienced the phenomena (Cilesiz, 2010:502). When the focus of the phenomenological study falls within an organisational setting, organisational permission must be obtained beforehand.

To preserve the academic integrity of the study, ethical clearance was obtained from the Da Vinci Institute of Management and Technology prior to commencing the research. Following receipt of the ethical clearance the study was informed by three ethical values, such as, autonomy, beneficence and non-maleficence (Greaney, Sheehy, Heffernan, Murphy, Mhaolrúnaigh, Heffernan & Brown, 2012).

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### 3.6.1 Autonomy

Informed consent has two main goals, firstly, to respect and promote research participants' autonomy and the second to protect participants from potential harm, not only during the research study but also thereafter (Jefford & Moore, 2008:486). Personal autonomy may be defined as the flexible quality of having agency to the extent that one has control of one's destiny (Fredholm, 2017:11). Research participants may, at any point of the research study, exercise their right and agency to withdraw or be excluded or to continue to participate in the research, giving meaning to autonomy (Townsend *et al.*, 2010).

Within the context of qualitative research, informed consent is an ongoing process which should, be continually visited (Townsend *et al.*, 2010:621). Orb, Eisenhauer and Wynaden (2001:94) describe informed consent as being dynamic in the research study process. This means informed consent should be continuously renegotiated at commencement, during, and at the conclusion of the study (Jelsma *et al.*, 2005).

The principle of informed consent has been applied with the research participants to effectively exercise their autonomy and agency. A letter of invitation was issued to all research participants which outlined the purpose of the study, its intended outcomes and what was required from the participants. The purpose of the invitation letter was to provide each research participant with all the relevant and necessary information that allowed them to make an informed decision.

The details of the researcher, together with the researcher's academic supervisor, were also included to allow participants to pose any questions and raise grievances in the case of alleged misconduct. A consent form was attached to the invitation to be read, signed and returned to the researcher by the participant as a condition of participating in the study. Following receipt of the signed informed consent forms, individual meetings were scheduled with each participant. The scheduled individual meetings were held at a venue of convenience for the research participant to ensure and provide privacy and address any potential confidentiality challenge.

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### 3.6.2 Beneficence

The process of achieving beneficence in human research involves classifying and assessing the risks and benefits of any anticipated human research study (Pieper & Thompson, 2016:3). Ethics relates to doing good, and evading and preventing harm through the application of suitable ethical principles (Orb *et al.*, 2001:93). Researchers have a duty of care towards research subjects in ensuring that no physical and/or emotional harm comes to them as a consequence of their involvement in research study (Dickson-Swift, *et al.*, 2008:135).

Non-maleficence is described as, “the duty to protect participants from harm” (Greaney *et al.*, 2012:40). To protect research participants, anonymity was applied in the study through participant names being withheld and replaced with pseudonyms. All identifiable information of a personal nature pertaining to participants was excluded from the study. Although gender, race and age ranges were reported in the study, such data was reported as a collective demographic characteristic which, therefore, could not be traced back to any individual participant.

The protection of all data was enforced to protect the confidentiality of the research participants’ information. All written notes which were taken were destroyed after being scanned and stored in an electronic format. The interviews had been transcribed and these data transcripts are stored in cloud-based folders and password protected.

All electronic data records, including scanned documents, were stored on a cloud server, and the researcher has exclusive access to these. Lastly, the interpretation and analysis of data was shared with all the participants, so that the recorded data could be checked for any distortion or misrepresentation by the researcher (Bhole, 2015:220). If the interpretation of data is experienced as a betrayal by the participants, this could be seen as a form of maleficence (Jelsma, Maclean, Hughes, Tinise & Darder, 2005).

### 3.7 Non-maleficence

The nature of a phenomenological study results in participants sharing lived experiences, which may contain sensitive and intimate information (Jelsma *et al.*, 2005). During the

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data gathering process, the researcher is obligated to apply non-maleficence during the sharing of sensitive information through adopting the practice of ethical listening (Townsend *et al.*, 2010:621). Rud and Garrison (2007:165) describe ethical listening as uncritical, impartial, inclusive, and indiscriminate.

Discussing events of a distressing nature or experience or discussing a result or outcome, during an interview may result in participants recalling a negative experience which could, in turn, result in psychological distress (Townsend *et al.*, 2010:623). This means that the researcher may have to look out for cues of emotional distress when the participant is responding to more sensitive questions. The prospect of emotional outbursts should be anticipated and planned for, and the researcher applied judgement to suspend or possibly reschedule the interview to allow the participant time to compose themselves.

### **3.8 Measures of Qualitative Research Quality**

#### **3.8.1 Dependability**

Dependability in qualitative research measures consistency and reliability of the study's results (Creswell, 2009). This study presents a clear and traceable process of the precise methods used for data collection, analysis, and interpretation within the context of the Nestlé company. Such a clearly articulated process enables theoretical replication by other researchers and generates significantly consistent results. The study is qualitative in nature and is based on a phenomenological approach, with the data analysis steps for this study being outlined in Figure 14, as found in Chapter 4.

#### **3.8.2 Credibility**

Credibility in qualitative research measures whether the study's findings are correct and accurate (Creswell, 2009). Qualitative researchers seek patterns or themes in the data (Soiferman, 2010:10). In this study, the data or transcripts of interviews were read multiple times to identify themes and categories (Thomas, 2003:3). As per the guidance offered by Groenewald (2004:50), the researcher extracted patterns or unique themes from the data collected and made a composite summary thereof. In addition, through the meticulous examination of these composite summaries, the researcher aimed to elicit the

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essence of meaning from them in the holistic context as proposed by Groenewald (2004:50).

### **3.8.3. Confirmability**

Confirmability in qualitative research refers to the neutrality of the research study, without due influence of the researcher's assumptions or biases (Creswell, 2009). Confirmability is often demonstrated by ensuring an easy audit trail of each step of data analysis for the client to view without the interference of researcher bias. In Section 3.4.10 (Data collection and management) the researcher outlines the auditable strategy that they followed. The strategy for data collection and management was based on Creswell's (2007:142) guidelines, which include the following:

- Develop backup computer files;
- Use reliable audio-recording equipment during interviews;
- Ensure recording equipment is compatible;
- Develop an index of the types of information collected;
- Ensure the anonymity of research participants;
- Design a data collection matrix as a visual lens of locating and identifying information for a study.

### **3.8.4. Transferability**

Transferability in qualitative research measures the extent to which the results may be "applicable within other contexts, circumstances and settings" (Creswell, 2009). For the purposes of this study, the researcher used comprehensive descriptions by providing sufficient details of the site, participants, and methods or procedures used to collect data during the course of this study. The intention of employing such an approach is that this data will enable other researchers to determine if the results are applicable within other, similar contexts.

## **3.9 Chapter Summary**

In the above chapter, the researcher stated that an inductive approach was adopted to document the lived experiences of the participants, as it highlighted the need for the

organisation to establish or identify the intervening measures to increase the millennial manager's intent to stay. The study was qualitative in nature and based on a phenomenological approach. Interviews were used to collect data to be analysed. The next chapter provides details pertaining to the data analysis and inferences.

## **CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents findings and analysis of the results in relation to the research question. This study was the first of its kind to examine the Nestlé company, millennial managers' views of their PDPs, and the system in which it is located. The findings provided researcher with an important understanding of the mindset of the millennial managers as they navigate the company's development tool. The context of this phenomenological study allowed the researcher insight into the experiences of the millennial managers, as they navigate the company's system of development. This system is considered by the company to be a leading development system within the South African workplace. The chapter will begin by considering the data collection context. Thereafter, it will revisit the research questions before looking at the profiles of the research participants. Lastly, the chapter will identify and discuss themes that emerged from the study, providing a summary of these consolidated main themes.

### **4.2 Data Analysis context**

Data analysis involves addressing each one of the research questions against the raw data collected (Soiferman, 2010:9). Analysis can be described as the systematic process of using procedures to identify crucial features and relationships, transforming the data through interpretation (Groenewald, 2004:49). Unlike quantitative research, in qualitative research, the data collection and analysis are carried out at the same time (Soiferman, 2010:10).

Semi-structured interviews were applied for this study. Such interviews are a method of obtaining rich, detailed and in-depth information about participants' experiences and views on a particular matter (Turner, 2010). Qualitative researchers seek patterns or themes in the data (Soiferman, 2010:10). The production of a verbatim transcript of the audio recording is of utmost importance in ensuring accuracy of the record (Pietkiewicz, 2014:11).

The use of coding, as a procedure during data analysis, results in the theoretical conception of the data (Holton, 2010:21). The process of coding is meant to assist researchers in breaking down participants' interview submissions into shortened, manageable, formatted statements (Alase, 2017:16). In this research study, coding included classifying, identifying, and cataloguing meaningful units of data (Malterud, 2012:797). Figure 14 sketches the data analysis steps followed in this study.

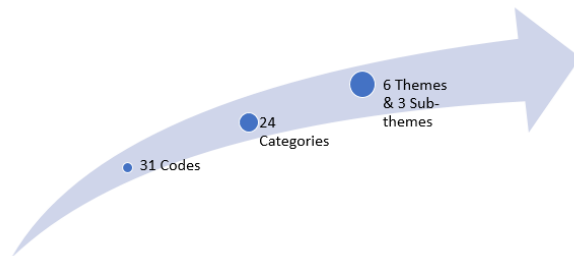


Figure 13: Representation of data analysis steps. Adapted from Spradley (1979)

Source: Data analysis steps (Adapted from Spradley, 1979)

Spradley (1979), refers to analysis as a systematic examination of something to determine its parts, the relationship between parts, and the parts' relationship to the whole. The researcher endeavoured to frame concise phrases through the coding of the data sets (Pietkiewicz, 2014:12). They utilised the codes to extract patterns or unique themes from the data and created a composite summary thereof (Groenewald, 2004:50), as indicated in Table 7 below.

Table 8: Themes and sub-theme of participants data sets

Total of 6 Themes	Theme 1: Owning your development	Theme 4: Capability improvement	Total of 3 Sub-Themes	Sub-theme Personal responsibility
	Theme 2: Nestle's PDP system awareness	Theme 5: PDP does assist in retaining participants to the organisation.		Sub-theme Authenticating growth
	Theme 3: Authenticating development	Theme 6: PDP effectiveness during Covid - 19		Sub-theme PDP experience since promotion

Themes are expressed and developed by investigating the various data categories or codes and evaluating the patterns between data sets (Gale, Heath, Cameron, Rashid & Redwood, 2013:2). Theme identification is described as one of the most essential tasks for qualitative researchers (Ryan & Bernard, 2000:12). Identifying themes is the starting point of developing the researcher's findings in a qualitative study (Bazeley, 2009:7).

Figure 14 summarises the data collection overview.

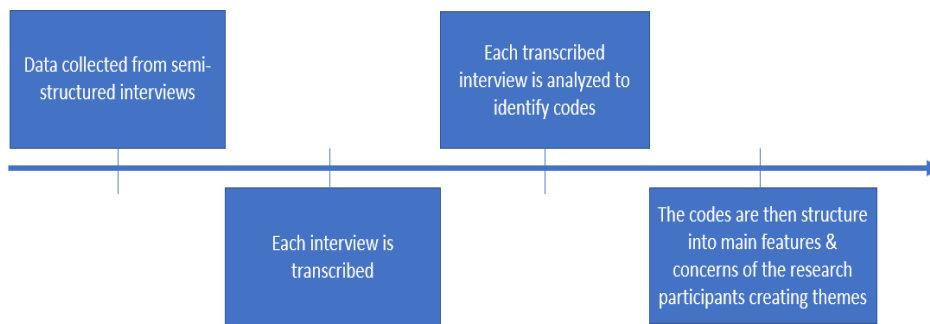


Figure 14: Data collection overview

Source: Data collection process (Adapted from Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2009)



### **4.3 Research questions**

This study focused on describing and understanding millennial managers' experiences with Nestlé's PDP system. The primary research question which this study addressed relates to whether the existing PDPs of millennial managers at the Nestlé company assist in improving their operational skills and employment retention.

Sub-questions which guided this study were:

#### *Personal Development Plan*

1. Did participants have any assistance in developing their PDP?
2. Did their PDP meet their expectations of what should be in a Personal Development Plan?

#### *Current Personal Development Plan*

1. Do participants' current PDPs identify developmental areas?
2. Do participants' PDPs identify actions to address those identified developmental areas?
3. Given the actions identified, do participants feel supported by their manager?
4. Has the company put measures/systems/processes in place for participants to have effective Personal Development Goals?
5. How does Nestlé personal development process compare with other companies of a similar size?

#### *Employment retention*

1. Prior to working at Nestlé was it always the participants plan to take time and effort to develop themselves?
2. Does having a PDP increase participants' willingness to remain with the company?

#### *Improved operational skills and competencies*

1. Has participants' PDPs improved their operational skills and capabilities?

2. Have participants' managers played an active role in their development through their PDP?
3. Are the systems/processes put in place by the company adequate to address participants' developmental areas using the PDP process?

*Covid-19*

1. Did Covid-19 impact participants' PDPs during 2020?
2. What measures/systems/processes, if any, can the company take to support participants' PDP during the Covid-19 pandemic?

Nestlé's personal development systems have very distinctive processes, commencing with joint identified development gaps between the line manager and the employee. These areas of development gaps relate either to the employee's current role or next potential role. The gap analysis stage is then followed by the identification of actions that would close the development gaps with the purpose of acquiring specific skills to attain the required capabilities. Figure 16 is a representation of the company's developmental trajectory for managers.

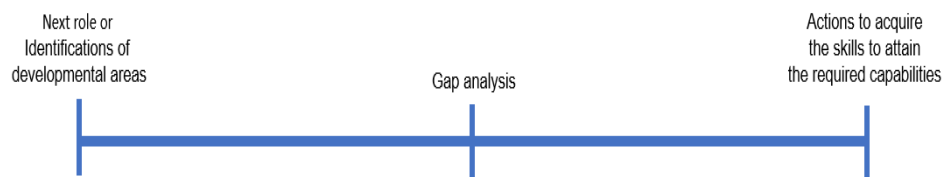


Figure 15: Representation of developmental areas, gap analysis and action

Research participants related their personal understanding of how they experienced and engaged Nestlé's PDP system: both in the past when they commenced employment; and in how they continue to engage the system following promotion.

**4.4 Profiles of research participants**

**4.4.1 Years of service**

The research participants were all employed with Nestlé between 2012 and 2017. Six of the participants were employed in 2016. Their average years of service at Nestlé was 7.8 years at the end, subsequent to evaluating the data.

Table 9: Research participants' years of service

Assigned Pseudonym	Years of service
Hilda	7
Luke	7
Liam	7
Patrick	9
Frank	10
Maureen	8
Mona	8
Chayale	7
Chris	7
Martin	9
Ralph	7
Colleen	11
Joy	6
Irene	7

**4.4.2 Gender**

The composition of research participants' gender profiles was as follows: seven females and seven males. The average years of service of the female participants was 7.7 years. Male participants' average years of service was 8 years.

Nine of the research participants entered Nestlé through its graduate programme. The research participants who entered Nestlé through the graduate programme did so between 2011 and 2016. Seven of the nine research participants who entered Nestlé through the graduate program entered in 2016, as summarised in Table 8 below.

Table 10: Overview of research participants

Assigned Pseudonym	Operational reportees	Gender	Age	Year of service	Graduate program participant
Hilda	Yes	F	29	1 Feb 2016 = 7	Y
Luke	Yes	M	31	1 Feb 2016 = 7	Y
Liam	Yes	M	29	1 Feb 2016 = 7	Y
Patrick	Yes	M	39	15 May 2012 = 9	N
Frank	Yes	M	33	15 Dec 2011 = 10	Y
Maureen	Yes	F	37	1 Apr 2015 = 8	N
Mona	Yes	F	30	1 Aug 2014 = 8	N
Chayale	No	F	30	1 Feb 2016 = 7	Y
Chris	No	M	30	1 Feb 2016 = 7	Y
Martin	Yes	M	35	1 Mar 2014 = 9	N
Ralph	No	M	30	1 Feb 2016 = 7	Y
Colleen	Yes	F	34	1 Feb 2011 = 11	Y
Joy	Yes	F	30	1 Mar 2017 = 6	N
Irene	Yes	F	31	1 Feb 2016 = 7	Y

All the research participants were promoted into managerial roles 36 months from the commencement of the study. Over the span of the research study, participants at Nestlé attained at least two promotional positions. In the case of the graduates, their average promotional cycle was every two financial years.

#### 4.5 Themes emerging form the study

Research participants described unique experiences which formed their current views related to their PDP experience. These shared views and experiences were captured, and similarities between them extracted. These shared experiences gave rise to common themes and sub-themes which emerged from the research participants' submissions.

##### 4.5.1 Taking ownership of development

Prior to joining Nestlé, participants had plans to develop themselves. Participants reported that they had a plan to allocate time and effort towards developing specific skills to increase their capability. This was derived from participants having a vision of future positions they identified for themselves in the company.

Maureen (Line 11), *“So I should have that courage to stand on my own and also that’s what I’m currently developing myself on. “*

Chris, (Line 23) *“Yes, in terms of where I want to be one day.”*

Colleen (Line 26), *“...it’s because you’re trying to improve yourself in so many ways.”*

#### **4.5.2 Nestlé’s PDP system awareness**

Participants only became aware that Nestlé had a personal development system following commencing their employment with Nestlé. Participants had no knowledge that Nestlé had a PDP system prior to being recruited. Therefore, Nestlé’s personal development system did not play a role in their application and/or interest in working for Nestlé.

Liam (Line 22), *“Erm, no, actually it was my first time erm, er my first time getting to know about this system.”*

Maureen (Line 8), *“...so, for me it was, it was more of the, they care about my development and where I should go from there and where, where my future is going.”*

#### **4.5.3 Personal responsibility**

Participants recognise that the PDP system is a tool that can assist them in their development. It is a tool that can address capability gaps to prepare them for their next potential promotional position or enhance their current positions. Participants submitted that, while the tool can be utilised as a vehicle, it requires personal responsibility and ownership.

Joy (Line 18), *“...with all these tools presented to us then this makes more sense that, like I say, it’s individually driven more than anything.”*

Luke (Line 39), *“... responsibility also lies within me to actually define those or, or to define those actions for, for myself.”*

Patrick (Line 10), *“I want to become a better ana... analyst in terms of my, my, my work. Erm, to anticipate issues better. If I can be more analytical than I already am, that will help me to anticipate future problems or future trends or future.”*

Martin (Line 28), *“...type of person I am. I've always made sure that I improve if there's a skill I can learn, at least in a quarter or make sure there's always gaining skilled.”*

#### **4.5.4 Authenticating development**

Once employed, participants reported that they were either trained on what Nestlé's PDP system involved, or the line manager explained the system and organisational expectations. Participants reported that, once they were clear of what the PDP system was about, they calibrated their own independent development plans—which they had for themselves prior to joining Nestlé—with the development plans discussed and agreed to with their line managers after commencing employment at Nestlé. Participants reported that their introduction to the PDP system, and experience with it, prepared them for what they needed to do.

Joy, (Line 8), *“...prepared me very well I didn't struggle”*

Chayale (Line 8), *“That's up to you know. Like I said, short term, so that was you know, how do we satisfy the need? Ideally we would want something that could be more long term.”*

Liam (Line 20), *“Nestlé, has got the best PDP, I mean has got the best system in place that can actually develop someone to become erm, the next executive from whatever position he or she would be coming from.”*

Line managers, together with participants, identified the areas of development collaboratively. These identified development areas either focused on developmental

gaps for their current position, or for their next promotional position. Once developmental areas were identified, participants agreed with line managers on the actions that were required to work towards achieving developmental goals.

Colleen (Line 9), *“I think it’s a great concept because first of all having specific objectives that you’re working towards ...”*

Mona (Line 9), *“However, erm gaps that were identified and I attended through training were put in my PDP.”*

Chayale (Line 9), *“So I’ve been spoke with my line manager and gotten a main tool and they even guided me in terms of building, you know, concrete solid actions that were really long term.”*

Two sub-themes emerged from considering how development was authenticated. These were: the classification of PDPs as either being short-term or long-term; and how setting PDPs authenticated growth, either in current positions or towards future positions. These are discussed below.

#### *4.5.4.1 Short-term and long-term PDPs*

The agreed development actions were either classified as short-term (i.e. occurring within the next 3 to 6 months) or long-term (i.e. occurring within 6 month to 18 months). Participants and line managers would schedule check-ins (scheduled conversations), either every month or every 3 to 6 months depending on how the development actions were classified. The check-ins were used as an opportunity for the line manager to assess progress and resource allocation, offer guidance, and for participants to share difficulties, opportunities, or request additional support.

Maureen (Line 10), *“OK this is a tracking of my progress and the first, first time when they talk about the PDP is every three months. You need to sit with your boss and check your progress.”*

#### 4.5.4.2 *Authenticating growth*

The aim of the PDP system is to improve employee's capabilities with the view to make them better in the position they are currently in, or to prepare them for their next position. Participants submitted that their first PDP identified development areas that related to their role or next potential role relevant to what they wanted at the time. The development areas and actions were described as relevant to the participants.

Ralph (Line 10), *"Er I would describe the systems as great because erm he is the person who was concerned with my development."*

Luke (Line 7), *"OK, the first part of it was er specifically, specifically around where do you see yourself..."*

Patrick (Line 6), *"Line manager (sic), I'll try help you to achieve the goals ..."*

#### 4.5.5 **Capability improvement**

The joint identification of development areas and actions by the participants and their line managers was described as an effective PDP plan. Participants submitted that the PDP system used by their line managers has helped them address developmental gaps. The PDP system, as it is correctly applied, has improved the participants' capabilities.

Hilda (Line 51), *"Yes, 100% on my personal one, ja. "*

Maureen (Line 24), *"Yes it did a lot, alot. Cause when I joined Nestlé I didn't know anything about the rules and all these processes they have and all these standards and all those things. But for me, it really has. It improved a lot, 'cause I moved from team leader to process technologies from process technology is to end to end manager. Now as it an assistant production manager. So, it really does help a lot. "*

Joy (Line 12), *"I was able to achieve and develop myself personally so that I can be able to ensure that those weaknesses are tending to."*



Ralph (Line 27), *“Yes, early on in my career, but not anymore. I haven't seen this effectiveness now anymore.”*

#### **4.5.6 Promotion and retention**

##### *4.5.6.1 Promotion*

When asked whether PDP system assists in retaining them within the organisation, participants reported that it did. Participants drew a distinction between willingness to remain due to Nestlé having a PDP system and having an effective PDP system which improved their capabilities. The distinction related to an underlying feeling that the PDP should be effective.

Patrick (Line 21), *“I would say, having, having that plan actually gives me er more chances of staying at Nestlé but it doesn't say I will remain at Nestlé because of the plan.”*

Maureen (Line 23), *“At that point (commencement of employment: sic) you were like wow this is, this is... they're interested in my development, but then as time went on, now that you in the PDP, it feels like a tick box exercise for you.”*

Ralph (Line 25), *“I'm saying yes and no because yes, I know that there is very good training opportunities that are available and I have been fortunate enough to get an opportunity to do costing training in Asia, which was great. But, however, if we don't get the other smaller things that you'd have in their PDP, I think maybe we can do more to drive that or encourage employees to drive it themselves. So, I know there's plenty training opportunities available, but I don't think er our PDP covers that effectively enough sometimes.”*

Frank (Line 25), *“I don't know whether it's because maybe as millennials, that's how we view things, but for me the question is half because yes the*

*PDP would assist in that, but the question becomes whether the, the things that you have in the PDP actually become a reality.”*

Joy (Line 20), *“As long as you have the right people supporting you in terms of this PDP.”*

Colleen (Line 24), *“Yes, yes. Because like I said already. This process is meant to assist one as well with objectives.”*

Martin (Line 25), *“Yeah, that alone it's this is a very discouraging factor in a very big let-down. And I mean what I'm saying basing this provided that when I started I saw it live. You know, if I've already experienced the system working and being managed right. Well, according to me it was supposed to be managed.”*

#### *4.5.6.2 Experience of PDP since promotion*

Participants submitted that their introduction to the PDP system at commencement of employment was intriguing and, in one case, life-changing. Subsequent to being promoted—which also meant a change in reporting lines to other senior managers—participants' experience of the PDP system had also changed from what it had been earlier in their employment at Nestlé. The change related to a new focus on operational goals, specifically as it was applied by current line managers, which signalled the moving away from personal development. Focusing away from personal development towards operational goals was met with participant dissatisfaction.

Ralph (Line 13), *“I am yet to sit with my new line manager to discuss my PDP.”*

Joy (Line 22), *“So, it's very sad if you don't have a manager that really deems the importance of it, because if they don't see the importance of it, they will just be sort of like OK tick, tick exercise.”*

Hilda (Line 32), “Yes, erm, so what I find with the, the online PDP system and while its online and that’s, that’s all great, it still required continued focus which when you’re in the environment that we’re in, that continued focus is often shifted.”

Figure 16 below captures the declining levels of satisfaction.

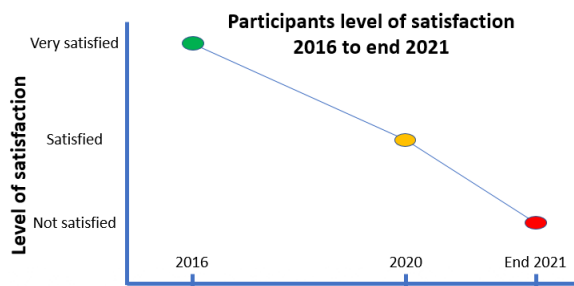


Figure 16: Levels of satisfaction

#### 4.5.7 PDP effectiveness during Covid-19

The impact of Covid-19 in 2020 resulted in uncertainty of the future for all employees, and whether the company would be able to continue to do business and operate. This uncertainty was informed by information overload, information which changed and information which was conflicting. Nestlé’s company focus, as an organisation, was solely on how the business could continue to operate during this unprecedented circumstances surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic.

Joy (Line 26), “Well in those two years I had that uncertainty, to be honest? I always had that anxiety when it comes to my job.”

During Covid-19—and specifically in 2020—most business-related travel was cancelled, including all scheduled training. The company focus was on operations and business continuity plans. Travel for operational business continued, but with exceptional authorisation. All managers, including the participants, had to focus on how to keep operations going, and to develop continuity plans based on a variety of scenarios.

Frank (Line 34), *"I had lost a year in terms of those development activities because we could not travel and so on."*

Participants submitted that, prior to Covid-19, conversations regarding their development had either not taken place, or their development discussion was approached as a tick-box exercise by their new line managers following their promotion. They further reported that no developmental areas for their new role or next possible role were discussed or identified.

Liam (Line 39), *"No impact because there was no focus on our PDP on our development goals. There's still no focus so, Covid, no Covid, there's nothing."*

Luke (Line 25), *"The actions or, or, or support that I would need from my line manager would be clear definitions in terms of what is expected in my current role for me to achieve my next role or to reach my next position or goal or developmental goal for instance."*

Participants reported that, given the focus of the company during the Covid-19 pandemic, to have or even raise personal development goals was not possible due to the prevailing organisational climate.

Hilda (Line 68), *"Look, for my manager, if he was maybe just a half a point more approachable and listened and was more of a listener than a talker, it would be and I have personally given him this feedback."*

#### **4.5.8 Lessons learnt**

PDPs have become popular and widespread tools in structuring and organising an employee's learning (Beausaert, 2011:19). They outline an individual's skills and capability gaps, either in their present or future roles. It should be noted that PDPs are living documents that are periodically updated as existing gaps are closed, or as individuals move to new positions within organisations.

These PDPs document and record the actions which should be taken to address the identified skills and capability gaps related to employees' existing or future roles. The process of identifying the development gaps and actions is done through discussion between the individual employee and their line manager. These discussions are captured and form the basis of the individual's agreed-to PDP with the organisation.

Within the context of this study, the interaction between line managers and employees when identifying development areas was seen as the start of the participants' journey to acquire new skills. The participants attribute great importance to this stage of the process due to the impact it would have, either in their current or anticipated new roles. The identification of action by line managers and participants provided a roadmap of what must be done to achieve developmental goals within the identified development areas.

The initial PDPs of participants had closed identified skills gaps. These skills gaps were closed through identified actions. At the core of closing the skills gaps, which led to the increase of capabilities of the participants, was the primary interaction between line managers and participants when identifying the development areas for their current or anticipated roles. As reported earlier in Section 4.5.4, the participants acquired new skills through the process of the PDP, which led to their development and subsequent promotions.

However, participants reported that, in the past or last 36 months, PDPs were no longer a focus for their line managers. Participants reference line managers as either approaching PDPs as a tick-box exercise or spending no time at all discussing development. Participants identified this change as an organisational change with the focus on operational or business plans, and less, or in some cases no, focus on PDPs.

Participants experienced a system through which they achieved their goal of development initially. They believed that the personal development system had merit given their own development experience and promotion. They believed that they could develop further and acquire more skills and capabilities if their line managers took the time and engaged productively and appropriately with the system.

#### 4.5.9 Retention

In this highly competitive labour market, there is widespread evidence that organisations are facing retention challenges (Serenko, 2022:9). The prevailing organisational climate has become very competitive and, therefore, skilled employees have become the major differentiating factor for organisations (Michael, Samuel & Chipunza, 2009:410). Lasting health and success of any organisation is largely dependent on the retention of key employees (Das & Baruah, 2013:8).

Participants reported that the PDP system must be effective as a condition for retention. They explained that an effective PDP identifies and records development gaps, as well as documents development actions to be executed through the allocation of resources and with the support of their line managers. Merely having a PDP system would not, on its own, retain them to the company.

Employee retention can be better attained by motivating employees in the following facets: employee reward programmes, transparent communication, career development program, recreation facilities, incentive-based bonus, and gifts (Sandhya & Kumar, 2011:1778). Employee development programmes undoubtedly play a substantial role in employee satisfaction, which influences and assists in employee retention (Shelton, 2001:44). Securing and retaining employees who are skilled plays a crucial role in a company's ability to be economically competitive (Kyndt, Dochy, Michielsen, & Moeyaert, 2009:1).

The Nestlé company PDP system can be described as a mature system, when compared to similar systems within the South African workplace. The participants' exposure to and participation in the PDP system at Nestlé has been over a period of more than 7 years. During this period of seven years, the participants, together with their line managers, identified skills gaps and actions many times, and executed those actions which, in turn, led to an increase of skills for the participants and an overall increase in capability within the company.

## **4.6 Summary of consolidated main themes**

### **4.6.1 Efficient systems**

The goal of an organisation is to develop skilled employees who are motivated to deliver services and products of high quality, and to manage the organisational culture in such a way as to inspire teamwork and trust through the development of coherent systems and practices that support the organisational goals (Barney & Wright, 1998). The Nestlé company has a personal development system which has been implemented to address employee skills and capability gaps. Furthermore, the Nestlé company's PDPs are documented in an electronic system.

This system allows employees and line managers to identify development areas and actions. Regular check-ins and reviews between the line manager and employees are recorded periodically. Participants in this study hailed the programme and the processes as the best in their class within South African workplace context.

The participants trusted the PDPs to deliver a system which increased their skills and capabilities. This perception was due to their previous experience with the Nestlé company's PDPs. The Nestlé company's PDPs rely on the participation of a fully engaged line manager and of employees, which also develops teamwork between these two stakeholders.

An organised and efficient development program with supportive systems will significantly support the organisation's ability to retain their most valued human resource (Jehanzeb & Bashir 2013). Organisational effectiveness is influenced by the actions, or non-actions, of its employees; therefore, employees that are competent play a key role. The Nestlé company currently has no organisational measures to determine the effectiveness or efficiency of its personal development system.

### **4.6.2 Personal Responsibility**

Brockett and Hiemstra (1991:26) describe personal responsibility as understanding "that individuals assume ownership for their thoughts and actions". During this study, the

participants submitted responses that were considered, thoughtful and reflective: articulating their role and personal responsibility for their own development. Once participants understood the PDP system, they took ownership for understanding what is required from them and from their line managers as constituting a psychological contract.

Psychological contract refers to an individual's assurance and understanding regarding the terms and conditions of a mutual exchange agreement between that principal person and another party (Rousseau, 1989:123). The participants' individual agency could be located in their psychological contract: specifically, in what they demand of themselves. Participants took the time and effort to close development gaps and developmental actions in accordance with the demands they placed on themselves.

#### **4.6.3 Line Manager responsibilities**

Line Managers and supervisors have an obligation to evaluate existing organisational practices and to make enhancements that will balance organisational and individual developmental objectives (Drake, Meckler, & Stephens, 2002). The Nestlé system, at its core is about engagement between the line manager and the employee. Line manager guide employee's development actions by identifying whether the action requires a training intervention or an experience. The Line manager must assess and evaluate the most appropriate type of development given the development area.

#### **4.6.4 Oversight that the system is working**

The objectives of a performance management system frequently include motivating performance, assisting individuals to develop their skills, building a performance culture, and determining who could be advanced in the organisation: all with the aim of implementing business strategies (Lawler, 2003:1). It is a waste for an employee to attend a training session and then not be supported (Shelton, 2001:45). It is also unproductive and inefficient for employees to document their career goals, but have no one assisting them in attaining their goals (Shelton, 2001:45).



Performance management is not about past successes, but about the future capability of the unit being evaluated (Lebas, 1995:23). While the Nestlé company has a personal development system, it does not have a system to track the system's effectiveness. Currently, no measures exist within the Nestlé company to determine whether its personal development system is meeting its requirements.

#### **4.7 Chapter Summary**

This chapter documents the data analysis undertaken and the findings drawn from this. This is the first study which intends to understand and document whether existing PDPs of millennial managers at the Nestlé company assist in improving their operational skills and employment retention. The researcher's analysis of the participants data sets resulted in 6 emerging themes which are of relevance to the primary research question.

1. Owning your development;
2. Nestlé's PDP system awareness;
3. Authenticating development;
4. Capability improvement;
5. Retaining participants to the organisation; and
6. PDP effectiveness during Covid-19.

In addition to the emergent themes, this chapter documented the emergent findings of the research conducted with participants individual semi-structured interviews with 12 Millennial Managers employed with the Nestlé company. Chapter 5 of the study will document the researcher's conclusions and recommendations to the Nestlé company. Chapter 5 will also contain the significance and limitations of this research study and recommendations for future studies.

## **CHAPTER 5:**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This study focused on the lived experiences of millennial managers as they navigated the Nestlé company's PDP system. This chapter outlines the researcher's key findings related to what millennial managers expect as being,

1. The key outcomes of PDPs.
2. The recommended oversight process to align company outcomes and millennial manager's outcomes.
3. The future recommended research to further the body of knowledge in the field of personal development.

#### **5.2 Research questions answered**

##### **5.2.1 Primary Research Question**

Do the existing PDPs of millennial managers at the Nestlé company, assist in improving their operational skills and employment retention?

Results in Section 4.6.1 (Efficient systems) indicate that PDPs for millennial managers partially meet the intended objectives because of the dependent variables: "The Nestlé company PDP relies on the participation of a fully engaged line manager and employees which also develop teamwork between the two."

##### **5.2.2 Secondary Research Question (SRQ)**

SRQ1: What are the key components of current PDPs of millennial managers at the Nestlé company?

Section 4.3 (Research questions) states that Nestlé's PDP systems have very distinctive processes, commencing with joint identified development gaps between the line manager and the employee. These areas of development gaps relate either to the employee's

current role or next potential role. The gap analysis stage is then followed by the identification of actions that would close the development gaps with the purpose of acquiring specific skills to attain the required capabilities (see Figure 16 for a representation of the company's developmental trajectory for managers as found in Chapter 4).

### **5.3 Contributions of the of the study**

This study contributes to earlier scientific knowledge related to millennial managers by providing key insight into millennial managers' expectations of what a PDP system should provide them with as an outcome. Companies, through their senior leadership, should ensure the appropriate environment and systems are established to ensure effective PDPs are developed for millennial managers. Senior leadership should focus on monitoring systems that can detect and identify whether millennial managers are supported during the development stage of the PDP and during the execution stage of the development actions. This study can contribute to the future design of PDP systems—especially the oversight component—from the onset and learn from the more mature Nestlé company's PDP system.

### **5.4 Integration with the TIPS™ Framework**

As depicted in Figure 18, the Da Vinci managerial leadership framework, referred to as TIPS™ or the TIPS framework, comprises of four key elements, namely, technology, innovation, people and systems thinking, which are interlinked in a synergistic fashion to improve organisational operations and attainment of defined goals. The current study is premised on the human interface component, that is, the managerial skills development of millennials, while interlinking with the other components of the framework.

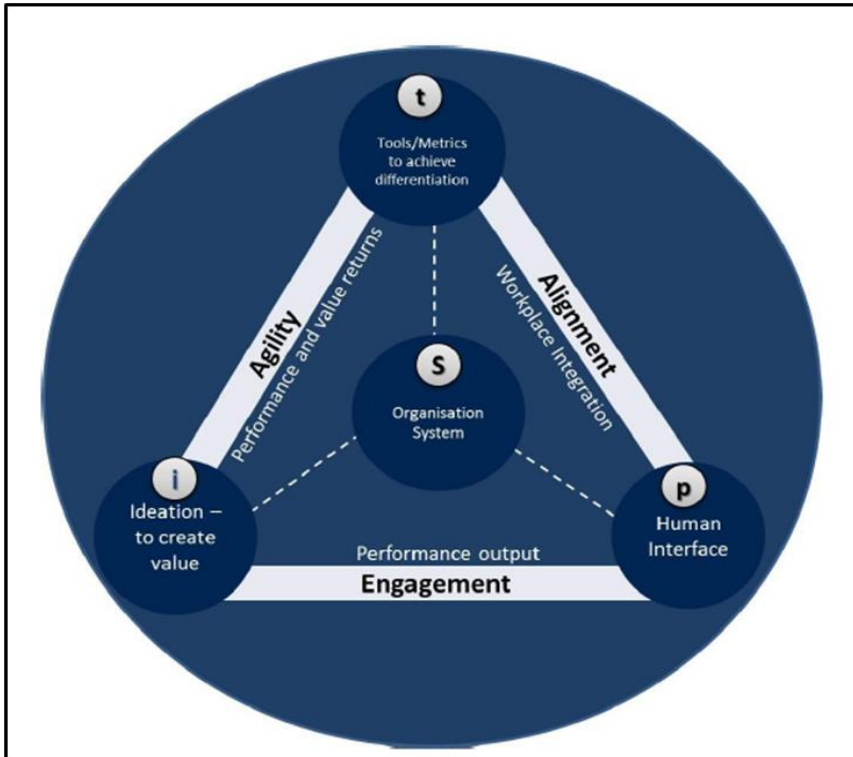


Figure 17: Core Elements of the TIPS™ Framework (Da Vinci Institute, 2019)

A systems thinking perspective is required to determine how the different parts of the organisational system are connected and interdependent to one another. Furthermore, the management of technology involves the ‘tools’ and system of measurements which organisations can use to produce goods or services better, more efficiently or more cheaply than its rivals, resulting in a competitive vantage market position. TIPS must be perceived as influencing the method of operation and may accommodate the use of anything from computers and high technology to simple hand-held tools. In the context of TIPS, the Da Vinci institute refers to the small ‘t’ in technology as alluding to the capacity of a company to manage their technology to uniquely position their products or services to create value and maximise their market share (Da Vinci Institute, 2019).

The management of people in the TIPS framework, involves the point of human interaction and relations. It willingly and enthusiastically embraces both the employee and the consumer or customer as important stakeholders. It is further predisposed to the various innovative vehicles that organisations deploy in engaging people, how people select their levels of engagement, co-creating and sharing knowledge jointly with all stakeholders. Innovative practices, enabled by technology, such as customised personal development systems, as proposed by the study, may result in increased motivational levels contributing towards long term viability of the organisation.

The systems thinking lens sits at the centre of the TIPS framework and, consequently, requires the components of the system to be explored individually. This study has revealed how the existing various sub-systems in the study area, namely the line manager, the millennial manager, and the environmental circumstance, interrelate and intersect with each other resulting in no or very little developmental opportunities. Consequently, the alignment of the study to the TIPS framework can be discerned as follows:

1. This study concerns itself with millennial managers development plans or the management of people. The Line Manager's disposition for not making employee development as an area of focus is indicative of a people-related matter, which leads to disengaged employees and high employee turn-over.
2. As documented in paragraph 4.5.6.2 of this study, dissatisfaction has emerged once development was no longer the focus for line managers, leading to decreased employee intent to stay longer. The unintended consequence of this employee disengagement resulted in little or no ideation for innovation in the current environment.
3. The results of the study suggest that process improvement related to oversight should be deployed to track specific documented conversations and actions which include audits by the human resource department.
4. The study supports an iterative systematic, innovative and technology driven system of performance development for millennial managers to enhance staff retention and promote organisational market hegemony and sustainability.

## **5.6 Return on Investment (ROI)**

Return on investment (ROI) can be defined as the value that has resulted from an investment of money, or time and or energy (Gould & Nazarian, 2018). Social Return on Investment has been described as an approach towards identifying and appreciating social value created (Arvidson, Lyon, McKay & Moro, 2013:4). Social return on investment is located in the established principles of accountancy and cost-benefit analysis that allocate monetary values to social and environmental returns to determine wider value creation (Rotheroe & Richards, 2007:33).

Managers within organisations can utilise the findings of this study to increase the retention of millennial manager. Millennial managers who consider their employment as stable participate in the local economy through everyday subsistence purchases (Ruiz, 2017:10). Millennial managers also contribute to the general economy when making purchases that attract interest like property purchases and credit card purchases, which increases the social return on investment.

Millennial managers value development within organisations. Due to this value that millennial managers associate with development, their intent to stay increase when they are being developed. The increase in intent to stay by millennial managers translates into longer service with the organisation leading to a greater organisational return on investment for the organisation through decrease cost of recruitment when intent to stay is high.

Millennial managers who participate in the organisation's PDP process leads to the acquiring of additional skills. These additional skills acquired by the millennial managers results in the millennial managers being more valuable for their own employer and for the industry. The increase in value of the millennial manager automatically results in an increase in return of investment for the millennial manager in the marketplace.

The PDPs process results in promotional opportunities for the millennial managers. These promotional opportunities of millennial managers, translates into increase disposable income for the millennial managers. This increase of disposal income of millennial

managers would also be considered as an increase in the return of investment for the individual millennial manager.

### **5.7 Applicability of the research study**

The study presented the personal developmental challenges faced by millennial managers, and the proposed practical ways to nurture their managerial capacity in a systematic and innovative manner. Best practice standards were proposed, both from within the organisation of study, as well as benchmarks from global organisations. It must be noted that the PDP system in the organisation of study must be seen as part of the other organisational systems, starting from recruitment system, PDP system, reward system, and eventual exit (retirement) system.

### **5.8 Recommendations for future research**

The current study employed non-probability sampling in the form of purposive sampling, hence interpretation of results was limited to the millennial managers in the Nestlé company. It is recommended that future research include other levels of employees to incorporate a wider population and utilising another sampling method. In addition, this study focused on millennial managers only; therefore, future research should include the line managers of the millennial managers: in particular, the capabilities and skills required of line managers to engage millennial managers regarding their development.

### **5.9 Summary of the research study**

The study investigated how to develop effective PDPs for millennial managers at the Nestlé company. The purpose of the study was directed towards improving the organisation's operational skills and employment retention. The study, therefore, makes key recommendations for implementation (return on investment and value for money), as described in Section 5.10 below. The research study found that millennial managers focused their development on acquiring capabilities that build critical thinking, emotional intelligence and sense making, as well as in attaining specialised management skills through exposure to specific environments and situations. Millennials' primary focus is on

capability development to prepare themselves either for their current role, or for their future role within this or any other organisation.

### 5.10 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Nestlé company include an oversight process to ensure that:

1. Development gaps and actions have been co-created between the millennial manager and the line manager.
2. Line managers submit regular reports (6-monthly) to a central point, and that the report should include what measures, timelines, and actions the line manager has put in place to support the millennial managers.
3. The Nestlé company's oversight should include an annual audit of at least 10% of all line managers' submitted 6-monthly reports, to ensure that what was agreed between the line manager and millennial manager was executed in accordance with the development plan.

The research study further found that millennial managers take personal responsibility and ownership for their development through constant evaluation. It is, therefore, recommended that:

1. The PDPs of millennial managers should record/document both the short-term career objectives and longer-term career objectives. This action will guide current and future line managers regarding the long-term career objectives of the millennial managers in order to align development areas and actions to these longer-term capabilities that would be required.

The research study further found that millennial managers' intent to remain with the organisation is dependent on capabilities, as outlined in Section 5.9 above, being acquired. In this regard, it is recommended that:

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1. Millennial managers and their line managers annually document what skills and capabilities were acquired by the millennial managers in the previous 12 months.
2. Millennial managers and their line managers also comment on whether the acquiring of new/additional skills or capabilities was because of an identified action.
3. The company's annual audit, as indicated above, should include a description of point 2 above.

This study identifies effective oversight measures as a key component to improving the PDP system. This study also recommends what measures and actions should be introduced by the Nestlé company, and any other organisation, to make the proposed oversight component effective in ensuring that millennial managers' PDPs result in them acquiring new skills and capabilities within the existing PDP system.

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**Commented [PPS20]:** This chapter must end with an overall conclusion.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A – Research Ethical Clearance

The Da Vinci Institute for Technology Management (Pty) Ltd  
PO Box 185, Modderfontein, 1645, South Africa  
Tel + 27 11 608 1331 Fax +27 11 608 1380  
www.davinci.ac.za



Reference: 02121  
Date: 11 June 2021

#### Ethical Declaration

#### Ethical Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the Masters Research of the student named below has received ethical clearance from The Da Vinci Institute Ethics Committee. The student and supervisor will be expected to continue to uphold the Da Vinci Institute's Research Ethics Policy as indicated during the application.

**Proposed Title:** A review of the effectiveness of personal development plans of Millennial Management at Nestle South Africa Region

**Student Name:** Mackrill John Hilton

**Student number:** 10844

**Supervisor:** Dr John Mgwenya

**Co-Supervisor:** N/A

**Period:** Ethics approval is granted from 2021/0/11 to 2022/05/14

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "HB Klopper".

Chairperson: Research & Ethics Committee

Prof HB Klopper  
Executive Dean: Research and Institutional Partnerships

Directors: B Anderson (Vice-President and Chief Executive Officer), B Mkhize  
Company Registration No. 2001/009271/07  
Registered with the Department of Higher Education and Training as a private higher education institution under the Higher Education Act, 1997.  
Registration No. 2004/HED/003

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## Appendix B – Invitation letter and participant consent form

The Da Vinci Institute for Technology Management (Pty) Ltd  
PO Box 185,  1645, South Africa  
Tel + 27 11 608 1331 Fax +27 11 608 1380  
[www.davinci.ac.za](http://www.davinci.ac.za)



### Appendix B: Informed Consent to Participants

#### Informed Consent for Participation

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in an academic research study conducted by John Mackrill under the supervision of Dr John Mgwanya towards a degree in a Master of Management of Technology and Innovation at the Da Vinci Institute. The aim of the study is to develop effective personal development plans of millennial managers at Nestle company, to improve their operational skills and employment retention. You were selected to participate in this study because you meet the requirements based on the target population being researched.

By completing this survey, you agree that the information you provide may be used for research purposes. All your answers will be treated as confidential, and you will not be identified in any of the research reports emanating from this research. The data will be stored on secure hard-drive and will not contain any information that may identify you. Your participation in this study is very important to us. You may, however, choose not to participate and you may also withdraw from the interview at any time without any negative consequences. The interview may not take more than 60 minutes of your time.

The research was reviewed and approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Da Vinci Institute. The researcher, John Mackrill can be contacted during office hours

Directors: M Burger (Interim), & Anderson (Vice-President and Chief Executive Officer)  
Company Registration No. 2001/009271/07  
Registered with the Department of Higher Education and Training as a private higher education institution under the Higher Education Act, 1997.  
Registration No. 2004/HE07/003

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at [Johnny.mackrill@za.nestle.com](mailto:Johnny.mackrill@za.nestle.com). The supervisor, Dr John Mgwenya, can be contacted during office hours at [JOHN.MGWENYA@gauteng.gov.za](mailto:JOHN.MGWENYA@gauteng.gov.za).

Please indicate your willingness to participate in the study in the check box provided below.

Yours sincerely

John Mackrill

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have read the letter and understand my rights with  
(insert name)

regard to participating in the research.

Kindly select the relevant option below.

Yes, I do consent	<input type="checkbox"/>
No, I do not consent	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C – Interview schedule

**Nestle company's personal development plan process meets the development expectations of millennial managers.**

### Demographic Questions

1. Which year were you born?
2. What position do you currently hold?
3. Do you have a Personal Development Plan?
4. When was the first time you entered into a Personal development Plan?

### Personal Development Plan

1. Did you have any assistance in developing your Personal Development Plan?
2. Describe the assistance you received?
3. Did your Personal Development Plan have any specific characteristic's?
4. Did your Personal Development Plan meet your expectation of what should be in a Personal Development Plan?

### Current Personal Development Plan

1. Describe your current personal development goal?
2. Does it identify developmental areas?
3. Are the identified developmental areas relevant to you?
4. Does your Personal Development Plan identify actions to address those identified developmental areas?
5. Will the identified actions, close the identified developmental gaps you may have?
6. Given the actions identified, do you feel supported by your Manager?
7. Has the Company put measures/systems/processes in place for you to have Personal Development Goals?
8. How does Nestle Personal Development Process compare with other companies of a similar size?

### Employment retention

1. Prior to working at Nestle was it always your plan to take time and effort to develop yourself?
2. Were you aware of the company's process of Personal development plans prior to commencing employment?
3. Having the knowledge of Nestle's process of Personal Development Plans play any role in your employment application to Nestle?
4. Does having a Personal Development Plan increase your willingness to remain with the Company?

### Improved operational skills and competencies

1. Has your Personal Development Plan improved your operational skills and capabilities?
2. Has your Personal Development Plan addressed all your skills and capability gaps?
3. Has your Manager played an active role in your development through your Personal Development plan?
4. What actions or measures can be taken by your manager to support you even further?
5. Are the systems/processes put in place by the Company adequate to address your developmental areas using the Personal Development Plan process?
6. What systems/processes if any, should the Company focus more attention on?

Covid - 19

1. Has Covid-19 impacted on your Personal Development Plans during 2020?
2. Has Covid-19 impacted on your Personal Development Plans for 2021?
3. What changes if any, did you have to make to your Personal Development Plans during the Covid-19 pandemic?
4. What measures if any, has your manager taken to support your Personal Development Plan during the Covid-19 pandemic?
5. What measures if any can your manager take to support your Personal Development Plans during the Covid-19 pandemic?
6. What measures/systems/process if any, can the Company take to support your Personal Development Plans during the Covid-19 pandemic?

## Appendix D – Themes

THEMES			
Theme Type	#	Code	Description
Main Themes	1	Owning your own development	Being responsible for one's own development.
	2	Nestle PDP System awareness	Knowledge of Nestle's PDP system prior to joining.
	3	Authenticating development	A process to prove that something is real, true, and is actually taking place.
	4	Capability improvement	Increase in skills and capability within a timeline.
	5	PDP assist in retention	Employers active processes and plan that results in an employee being retained within an organisation.
	6	PDP effectiveness during Covid-19	Whether the prescribed process related to PDP was undertaken during the period of Covid-19.
Sub Themes	1	Personal responsibility	The responsibility residing with the individual person.
	2	Authenticating growth	The process of the millennial manager to verify if a real/true increase in skills and capability has taken place.
	3	PDP experience since promotion	Experiences of the millennial manager since being promoted.