



# GENERATIONS AND COMMITMENT IN DIFFERENT BRAZILIAN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT CONTEXTS

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## **GENERATIONS AND COMMITMENT IN DIFFERENT BRAZILIAN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT CONTEXTS**

### **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study is to analyze human resource management in organizations operating in Brazil, in connection to generational issues and commitment. A multi-case study was carried out in two companies: Dow and Promon. Questionnaires were applied to 331 Dow employees (out of a total population of 2465) and 298 Promon employees (out of a total population of 1800). As for generational management, results demonstrated that such management is not carried out in a formal manner, but rather takes place only informally through other programs that achieve this duty indirectly. At Promon, hierarchical position causes such a variation, whereas in Dow it is due to time at the company. Such differences are explained by the particular characteristics of the organizations. Such management takes place only informally, through other programs that achieve this duty indirectly. From this result, and from the display of the importance of productive coexistence among generations, the need for implementing formal policies that fulfill such a need can be observed. Generally speaking, although there is evidence of age-based generational differences in Brazil, there is evidence that human resource policies and practices, though not geared towards generational management, have the potential to make people commit in a similar manner, irrespective of their age.

### **Keywords**

Generations; Human resource management; Commitment.

## **GERAÇÕES E COMPROMETIMENTO EM DIFERENTES CONTEXTOS DE GESTÃO DE PESSOAS NO BRASIL**

### **RESUMO**

O objetivo deste estudo é analisar a gestão de recursos humanos em organizações que operam no Brasil em relação a questões geracionais e de comprometimento. Um estudo multicase foi realizado em duas empresas: Dow e Promon. Questionários foram aplicados a 331 funcionários da Dow (de um total de 2465) e a 298 da Promon (de um total de 1800). Quanto à gestão geracional, os resultados demonstraram que tal gestão não é realizada formalmente, porém, ocorre de maneira informal, por meio de outros programas que realizam essa função indiretamente. Na Promon, a posição hierárquica causa variações geracionais, enquanto na Dow é devido ao tempo de empresa. Essas diferenças são explicadas pelas características particulares das organizações. A partir desse resultado e da demonstração da importância da coexistência produtiva entre gerações, pode-se observar a necessidade de implementar políticas formais que atendam a tal necessidade. De um modo geral, embora haja evidências de diferenças geracionais baseadas na idade no Brasil, há evidências de que as políticas e práticas de recursos humanos, embora não voltadas para a gestão geracional, têm o potencial de comprometer as pessoas de maneira semelhante, independentemente de sua idade.

### **Palavras-chave**

Gerações; Gestão de recursos humanos; Compromisso.

## 1 Introduction

New, more horizontal organizational structures in more compact spaces are forcing people of all age groups to coexist in the workplace (Lepak & Shaw, 2008; Meister & Willyerd, 2010; Lyons & Kuron, 2014). In this sense, researchers warn us about the fact that greater proximity has the potential to create conflicts between different generational groups in organizations, because of their different values, ambitions, expectations, and preconceptions (Meister & Willyerd, 2010; McGuire, Todnem & Hutchings, 2007; Zemke, Raines & Filipczak, 2000).

Given this scenario, much has been written about generational differences in the work environment. Articles published in the media and books dealing with the subject are based mainly on the practical experience of authors or on stereotypes (Macky Gardner & Forsyth, 2008). In parallel, several empirical studies have tried to verify generational differences in terms of work values (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Smola & Sutton, 2002; Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman & Lance, 2010); motivators (Wong, Gardiner, Lang & Coulon, 2008); preferences (Westerman & Yamamura, 2006); beliefs (Dries, Pepermans & De Kerpel, 2008) and personality (Twenge & Campbell, 2008; Wong *et al.*, 2008).

According to Costanza, Badger, Fraser, Severt, and Gade (2012), research studies on the impact of generational differences in the workplace have focused primarily on commitment, job satisfaction, and intent of generations to remain in the company. Employees who work in environments that match their preferences are more likely to display commitment and behaviors that are better suited to the organization's expectations.

Although most of these studies find some differences between groups, such differences usually do not coincide, nor are they conclusive. In addition, managing people poses the challenge of managing interaction between generations (McGuire *et al.*, 2007). This fact suggests the need for further research on the topic in connection to how the situation is managed in organizations.

The relevance of this study is justified by the gap in the literature on generations and commitment, which prioritize personal perception approaches, primarily analyzing the individual level. Therefore, it is necessary to approach these subjects in association to company management, considering also the organizational level.

In Brazil, there is empirical evidence of age-based generational differences among professionals, particularly in how they lead their careers in organizations (Silva, Dutra, Veloso, Fischer & Trevisan, 2015; Veloso, Silva & Dutra, 2012; Veloso, 2012). However, similarly to studies from other countries, the authors did not consider the findings to be conclusive, which demonstrates that there is room for further research on the topic. It is therefore possible to assume that organizations with different characteristics and different human resource management structures have particular ways of managing people at different ages. Thus, the aim of this study is to analyze human resource management in organizations that operate in Brazil, in connection to generational issues and commitment. To reach this goal, a multi-case study was conducted with two companies operating in Brazil: Dow S.A. and Promon S.A.

In addition to this introduction and the closing comments, this article is divided into four sections. It begins by presenting the theoretical framework that underpins the study; the subsequent section describes the methodology that guided the research; the third part presents the findings from the study. Finally, the last section examines such results.

## 2 Theoretical Framework

The pioneer in generation studies was sociologist Karl Mannheim (1952). According to Weller (2010) Mannheim believed that a generation could be defined as such when individuals, with no physical or intellectual proximity, or any knowledge of each other, have a cultural similarity resulting from their participation in any given period of the historical process during their formative years.

Weller (2010) explains that Mannheim (1952) compares the positivist approach, which is predominant in liberal French thought, with German historical-romantic thought, claiming that the generation theme is approached by both schools of thought from different angles.

In the first angle, "positivists attempted to outline a general law for the rhythm of history, from the biological determinant of an individual's limited life span, the age factor, and its stages (Weller, 2010, p. 207). "In the second angle, it is understood that belonging to a generation cannot be immediately deduced from biological structures, but from a specific temporal, historical-social unit (Weller, 2010).

By employing Mannheim's generational concept in studies on generations, it is recommended to analyze the "primary intentions documented in actions and expressions by specific groups, instead of seeking to characterize their specificities as a group" (Weller, 2010, p. 219). Therefore, the generations would be investigated in an analysis of the historical, political, and social context, as well as the knowledge acquired by them.

For this, Parry and Urwin (2011) suggest intermediate analyses based on the classification of groups of individuals who shared experiences caused by relevant historic events to assist in identifying generations.

Howe and Strauss (2007) add that generations are formed not only by events that influenced people in early, formative years, but they continue to be shaped as individuals grow older. In this sense, it must be emphasized that the influence of age, which is a result of individual maturing, cannot be confused with the influence of the generation to which a person belongs (Smola & Sutton, 2002).

Generally speaking, in studies related to human resource management, the concept of generations is usually based on the theoretical assumptions by Mannheim, as the studies by this author refer to groups of people who, because they were born at a particular time, experienced social and historical events at crucial stages of their development, which greatly influenced their values, attitudes and beliefs (Westerman & Yamamura, 2007).

There are three age-based classes of generations that are widely disseminated both academically and in the business world. These classes are described as the Baby Boomer generation, generation X, and generation Y (Parry & Urwin, 2011; Westerman & Yamamura, 2007).

The Baby Boomer generation (born between 1946 and 1964) is composed of individuals who believe in lifelong jobs and demonstrate loyalty to the organization in which they work. Individuals of generation X (born between 1965 and 1985) are skeptical and suspicious of organizations. As such, they do not share the same commitment as Baby Boomers to the organizations in which they work. Young professionals from the beginning of this century are generally referred to as Generation Y, or *Millenniums*; in Brazil, this generation consists of individuals born from 1986 onwards (Silva, Dutra, Veloso, Fischer, & Trevisan, 2015). This generation tends to display restlessness, challenge, and even insubordination towards different aspects of daily life at organizations (Veloso, 2012; Veloso, Silva & Dutra, 2012).

In Brazil, the influence of interpersonal relationship aspects has also been noticed, which generate emotional ties and need to be considered in the generational management at the workplace. In other words, in the perspective of professionals, interpersonal relations within Brazilian companies are extensions of their personal lives, which also blend into their professional lives (Silva *et al.*, 2015).

In general, studies in this field have been conducted in North American and Western European contexts. The tendency of such studies is to discuss the American definitions of generations and whether they are universally appropriate. However, such definitions cannot be generalized if the historical, political, cultural, and technological events of countries outside these contexts are considered, such as Russia, China or Brazil (Costanza *et al.*, 2012; Parry and Urwin, 2011; Lyons & Kuron, 2014).

According to Joshi, Dencker, Franz, Martocchio (2010), there are two approaches other than Mannheim's to the study of generations, namely the cohort approach and the incumbency-based construct. The authors introduce the concept of generational identity as an individual's knowledge of a group or generational role. The approaches described by these authors are presented below:

- **Cohort-based generational identity** is based on a shared pool of knowledge derived from experiences for organizational socialization.
- **Incumbency-based generational identity** is associated with a set of experiences, attitudes, knowledge, and skills of a given position or role in a finite period of time.

Generational identities can be characterized by participation in age-based and cohort groups, as well as incumbency (organizational roles). For Joshi *et al.* (2010), the three types of generational identities can coexist in an organization; however, the prevalence of a particular identity and the nature of interactions between generations associated with this identity are dependent on the organizational context.

## 2.1 The Relationship Between Organizational Context Factors and Generations

In this study, two contexts were used to explain the organizational reality. According to Joshi *et al.* (2010), in organizations, generational phenomena can be displayed in several manners, to varied consequences. Although the organizational context can be characterized by several factors, the authors consider the structural and normative contexts essential in its understanding. The structural context is based on the concept of mechanic and organic systems, based on Burns and Stalker (1961). The second context, namely the normative context, is defined as a shared understanding of the policies, practices, procedures, goals, and behavior expected by the organization that merit being rewarded (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Mischel, 1973).

In organizations characterized by a mechanic structure and a strong normative framework, positions are specialized and hierarchically defined. Mechanistic organizations that emphasize a strong normative framework also conduct training, assessment, and monitoring of employee performance.

Training and performance monitoring are methods to improve understanding and interpretation by employees of their goals, norms, and responsibilities. These conditions, according Joshi *et al.* (2010), favor the prevalence of a cohort-based identity compared to other identities because employees, often of similar age, enter the organization more or less at the same time. The underlying relational processes of a cohort-based identity would be based on differences in skills and socialization experiences.

On the other hand, in organizations featuring an organic structure and a strong normative framework, there is greater appreciation of the skills that individuals bring to a particular role rather than specific skills acquired over time in the company. These conditions reinforce the prevalence of an incumbency-based identity (Joshi *et al.*, 2010).

According to Joshi *et al.* (2010), individuals adopt response patterns that they expect will lead to the results they believe to be desirable. Based on these findings, the concept of strength of the human resource management systems emerges. Bowen and Ostroff (2004) suggest that when a system of human resources management is characterized by high **distinction, consistency, and consensus**, it tends to create a strong context. These three factors are explained by the authors as follows:

- **Distinction:** Refers to resources that stand out in the environment, capturing attention and arousing interest.
- **Consistency:** Is related to the effect of human resource practices over time. It refers to the establishment of the perception of cause and effect regarding the human resources management system, ensuring that incentives are properly associated with performance of the desired behavior.
- **Consensus:** Consensus is a result of the agreement between employees and the human resource management system. When employee assignments on which behaviors lead to certain consequences are accurate, the chances of reaching a consensus are higher. Several factors can help foster consensus between employees and the human resource system, whereas system fairness is the primary factor, to the extent that the organization involves the employees in understanding the rules and in earning according to their contributions at work.

Generally, in organizations, the human resource management system is responsible for managing and guiding human behavior at work (Martín-Alcázar, Romero-Fernández & Sánchez-Gardey, 2005; Lepak & Shaw, 2008). In this study, human resource management policies and practices merit emphasis, as they are the most visible elements of this system (Lepak & Shaw, 2008).

According to D'Amato and Herzfeldt (2008), the intention to continue in the current organization and the emotional commitment gradually decrease among younger generations – namely, generations X and Y – when compared to Baby Boomers. In this aspect, human resource management systems should preferably meet the needs of these generations and influence integration between them through sets of policies and practices (Lepak & Shaw, 2008; Martín-Alcázar *et al.*, 2005; Mcguire *et al.*, 2007; Willyerd & Meister, 2010). While most studies on generations focus on the individual, this article contributes by highlighting the context of human resource management and its role in establishing the employees' personal commitment with the organization. Accordingly, we chose the approach developed by Joshi *et al.* (2010), who highlight the influence of context on the emergence of different generational identities.

## 2.2 Generations and Commitment in Human Resource Management

According to Kanter (1968), commitment refers to the willingness of social actors, herein represented by generations, to offer energy and loyalty to the social system in which they are inserted, in this case, the organizations. Therefore, we believe that the work environment can be an important conditioning to organizational commitment (Benson & Brown, 2011).

The three-dimensional commitment model by Meyer and Allen (1991) presents three bases for organizational commitment: the continuance commitment, which is the idea that people may continue on a given course of action after calculating the costs involved in stepping out of line; the affective commitment, involving the notion of affection for the organization, which encourages individuals to remain in an organization because they like it, share values with, and engage in organizational roles, named by Allen and Meyer (op. cit.); and the normative commitment, which suggests that, in some cases, individuals remain in the organization because they feel obliged to do so, after internalization of organizational rules.

Even though the three-dimensional model is the most commonly used, other studies suggest different commitment analysis models. One of those is the two-dimensional model, as proposed by Cohen (2007).

The first of these dimensions would be the instrumental commitment, which is the exchange between individuals and the organization and it is linked to the motivational process and perceived benefits in remaining in the organization. The logic in this type of commitment is based on a different set of experiences, both situational and organizational, which develops from the exchange with a specific organization. The second dimension interprets commitment as a normative or affective process, resulting from socialization or work experiences. Normative and affective commitment are the result of internalization of organizational goals, values, and rules.

However, according to Solinges, Olffen and Roe (2008), the current research agenda points to a return to a one-dimensional construct as a way of overcoming the problems in conceptualizing commitment. This line of argumentation suggests affective commitment as a single dimension, where other bases of the construct cannot measure the same phenomenon. In this view, one assumes from start that affective commitment is what best defines commitment, because it is related to favorable intentions to the organization, with intentions for extra effort, permanence, and sacrifice (Swalles, 2002).

In generational studies, commitment to the organization has been treated in a one-dimensional way, considering individual identification and involvement with a particular organization. Typically, this type of commitment includes belief and acceptance of the organization's values and goals, the desire to make considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and the desire to remain associated with it (D'Amato & Herzfeldt, 2008; Benson & Brown, 2011; Silva *et al.*, 2015).

Whenever possible, generations should be encouraged to interact as a means of sharing experiences at work (McGuire *et al.*, 2007; Meister and Willyerd, 2010). To this end, human resource management initiatives in the work environment can be arranged to facilitate greater generational interaction as well as a favorable work environment (McGuire *et al.*, 2007; Meister & Willyerd, 2010; Lyons & Kuron, 2014).

Joshi *et al.* (2010) adopt a multi-generational approach, which considers the influence of the organizational context in interactions among individuals. Joshi *et al.* (2010) suggest that the structural and normative context act together and influence the activation of a particular identity and generational interaction. For instance, the importance of some elements to the psychological contract of each generation may differ according to organizational context (Kultalahti & Viitala, 2015). The desire for mobility and skill development is more important in developed economies than among members of generation Y in Brazil (Silva *et al.*, 2016).

The prevalence of age-based generational differences would be more likely to occur in mechanistic organizations, where positions are hierarchically organized and employees generally start at lower levels and move forward in their careers, according to seniority and job openings. These characteristics tend to emphasize a correlation between age and position. In weak contexts, characterized by a lack of consensus and shared understanding of organizational policies, practices, goals, rewards, and expected behaviors, employees would resort to the values developed during formative years, rather than experiences with organizational socialization (Joshi *et al.*, 2010).

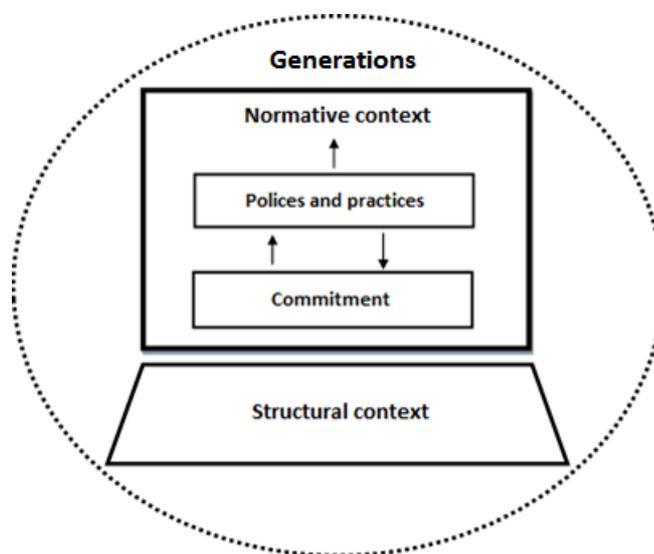
According to Fiuza (2010), people's values, their perception of the environment and the type of organization in which they work may affect their perception of human resource management methods, and whether they believe such methods are adequate and effective in achieving the organization's objectives, as well as in promoting employee well-being.

Therefore, human resource management systems should foster the integration of generations through a set of policies and practices, which can be classified into four categories: training and development, work conditions, involvement and compensation/rewards.

On the other hand, the reverse is also true. Human resource policies and practices also have the ability to influence employee perception. Therefore, organizations should seek the proper balance between policies and practices and personal characteristics of the employees, which can be analyzed according to their generational identity.

This work adopts the unidimensional perspective, interested only in emotional commitment. In parallel, Zeffane, Tipu, and Ryan (2011) demonstrated the importance of efficient communication within organizations in connection to commitment. In particular, those authors show that commitment does not happen by chance, it is rather forged and maintained by efficiency in communication.

The manner in which messages are sent, especially their clarity and frequency, tends to influence commitment and awareness by employees on the organization's normative context (Bambacas; Patrickson, 2008). Figure 1 demonstrates the relationship between commitment and the normative and structural contexts.



**Figure 1-** Conceptual model  
Note: Developed by the authors

Due to the constant search in human resource management for engaged and committed workers, this dimension will be used as a dependent variable for the following conceptual model. In this sense, the analysis will be based on a one-dimensional scope, considering only affectivity and the identification with the organization's values as the foundation for commitment (Solinges, Olffen & Roe, 2008).

The theoretical research framework is based on identification of differences or similarities among the *Baby boomers*, X, and Y generations, in connection to their commitment, which may be analyzed under the influence of human resource management policies and practices, which vary in their *distinction*, *consistency*, and *consensus*, according to their normative and structural contexts.

### 3 Methodology

The case study is a research strategy that seeks to understand certain dynamics in unique settings. With more than one case, the so-called multi-case studies, or a single event with more than one level of analysis, can be analyzed. Case studies can be used to meet many goals, which can be descriptive, or to test or generate a theory (Eisenhardt, 1989). This research study can therefore be classified as a multi-case study in two companies. We adopted a mixed approach through quantitative and qualitative data triangulation (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2001). Downey and Ireland (1979) mention the main favorable aspects to the adoption of mixed approaches, which justify their relevance in this research:

- increase in the researcher's ability to obtain some control over the biases resulting from use of quantitative methods, through understanding of the perspective of those agents involved in the investigated phenomenon (through use of the qualitative method);
- increase in the ability to identify specific variables (through use of the quantitative method) without compromising the development of an overview of the investigated phenomenon (through use of the qualitative method);
- increase in the conditions that favor the researcher's ability to complement a set of facts and causes associated to the use of the quantitative methodology with a perspective of reality's dynamic perspective;
- feasibility in the researcher's ability to enrich findings obtained from controlled conditions (typical in quantitative methods) with materials obtained in the natural context of their occurrence (characteristic of qualitative methods);
- increase in the conditions that favor the researcher's ability to reaffirm the validity and reliability of findings obtained by the concluded research by employing different, complementary techniques;

The idea behind interviewing representatives from both organizations was to achieve a better understanding of the rhetoric from the human resources area on generational management, through accounts by their main officers. In addition to interviews with individuals in charge of human resources within the organizations, descriptions of policies and practices relating to generation management were studied, which are available in documents prepared by the companies selected for the original purpose of participating in the "Best Companies to Work For" (BCWF) survey (Silva *et al.*, 2015). This survey is published on an annual basis by a major Brazilian publisher, and its methodology is defined by a top business school in the city of São Paulo. The importance of the BCWF survey is due to the fact that companies seek to stand out in the Brazilian market for their positive organizational environment and good human resource management practices.

To measure the perceptions of generations within the same database, responses from employees at both organizations were consulted. It was therefore possible to perform data triangulation considering accounts from interviews, source documents from the human resource management area, and employee perceptions.

The same sources were used by other scholars in their articles on generations (Silva *et al.*, 2015, Veloso 2012, Veloso *et al.* 2012). It is important to clarify that the full BCWF survey database is based on information collected from 500 Brazilian and multinational companies of various sizes and industries, and from different geographical regions. The universe of respondents is approximately 140,000 employees. The questionnaires were sent to professionals from different areas at these organizations, and minimum sample calculation ranged from 60% to 65% of the size of questionnaire batch that was sent, according to the proportion of the workforce. The original questionnaire contained 64 assertions related to various aspects of the organizational environment, with answers on a 5-point Likert scale (1-strongly disagree to 5-completely agree). For this study, five items related to commitment were considered: organizational pride, job involvement, approval and alignment of organizational objectives, and affection for the company (Silva *et al.*, 2015).

It should be noted that employee perception and the documentary material are secondary data obtained from this survey. In order to access such data, we were requested to agree to the terms and conditions for the use and publication of research findings made available by Fundação Instituto de Administração (FIA), which is responsible for the methodology of the BCWF.

The content of the interviews was obtained directly from the human resource managers at the two organizations selected in the case studies phase of the study, both of which had been on all BCWF lists at the time this study was conducted.

### 3.1 Case Study Protocol

Yin (2001) stated that when carrying out a case study there is a need to establish a protocol that, in addition to presenting the common contents of a data collection instrument, it must also establish the procedure and rules that will be followed during its use. The protocol was divided into the following parts: identification, introduction of field work procedure, and specific issues.

The interviews were conducted between March 1, 2013 and May 31, 2013, at the workplace and by phone in the surveyed organizations, using the specific questions of the interview script prepared with the support of the theoretical references presented in this article.

Content analysis was used for analysis and interpretation of the data obtained from interviews and the evidence book, using the proposition by Bardin (2002) as reference. Thus, four stages were organized for content analysis after gathering documentary material and transcripts of the interviews: pre-analysis, coding, categorization, and inference.

In the pre-analysis stage, the reading of the documents described in Table 1 and the transcripts of the interviews was conducted. Then, information from the material pertaining to the structural and normative context of these organizations was selected (Joshi *et al.*, 2010).

Table 1  
Information on Interviewees and Documents Obtained from the Organizations

Organizations	Interviewees	Documents
<b>Dow S.A.</b>	Interviewee: Organizational development manager	<i>Internal documents:</i> - BCWF evidence documents  <i>Public documents:</i> - Website - Corporate News press release
<b>Promon S.A.</b>	Interviewee: Director of human relations and communications	<i>Internal documents:</i> - BCWF evidence documents - "Corpo e Alma" ("Body and Soul") Compendium - Book that presents the history of the organization  <i>Public documents:</i> - Website - Management Report 2011

Source: Elaborated by the authors

Categorical analysis was applied for the formation of categories, taking into account the presence or absence of a given characteristic in fragments of the messages contained in the documentary material and in the interview transcripts. The fragments of the structural context category were related to the terms: "division of labor", "worker profile", "organizational structure", and "internal communication". In the normative context category, the terms were "human resource management system, and policies and practices" and generation management.

Lastly, inferential interpretations were performed where reflexive and critical analyses prevail. In this study, the interpretation of results also followed the recommendations of Miles and Huberman (1994), which instruct researchers to identify patterns, revisiting the data as many times as necessary in a cross-check, through contrasts and comparisons between groups.

In the analysis of employee perceptions at these organizations, we considered the temporal delimitation of Silva *et al.* (2015) for age-based identity, adapted to the Brazilian reality, in which those born between 1946 and 1964 belong to the Baby Boomer generation, 1965-1985 as generation X, and from 1985 onwards as generation Y. The length of employment time for cohort-based identity, and incumbency in the organizational structure (executive and non-executives) were considered independent variables in analysis of variance (ANOVA) or T test. The commitment-dependent variable was also measured according to the scale developed by Silva *et al.* (2015), considering the overall average obtained for its six assertions.

In this study, assertiveness questions had correlations between 0.50 and 0.60, being moderately correlated. Furthermore, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was applied, which has a null hypothesis that the variable distribution is normal, a fact confirmed in the variables analyzed. This test allows us to determine whether the total commitment scores follow a normal frequency distribution in the organizations under study. The commitment construct was within normal ranges, both at Dow (0.937;  $p > 0.05$ ) as well as Promon (0.879;  $p > 0.05$ ).

The assertiveness questions with an omitted data frequency above 5% were analyzed in connection to their systematic nature. At that point, a decision was made to exclude omitted cases from further analyses due to the randomness of omissions. Extreme multi-varied cases were verified by the *Mahalanobis* distance and were identified by presenting values above the critical value of  $\chi^2$  with significance at 0.01%.

### 3.2 Validity and Reliability

Gibbert, Ruigrok and Wicki (2008) recommend the use of four criteria in assessing the methodological rigor of the studies, which are: internal validity, construct validity, external validity, and reliability. The procedures adopted by this study are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

**Research Procedures**

Methodological criterion	Research procedure
<b>Internal validity</b>	The theoretical framework derived from the review of literature on generations and human resource management sought to increase the internal validity of results found in the interview stage, document analysis, and a survey of employee perceptions.
<b>Construct validity</b>	Data triangulation was based on analysis of information about human resource management policies and practices contained in interviews, and internal and public documents from both organizations. In addition, the impact on employee perceptions at the studied companies was considered.
<b>External validity</b>	Two organizations and their respective contexts were analyzed. The case selection was guided by Joshi <i>et al.</i> (2010). Thus, we sought to assess the generational phenomenon in different contexts, which favors external validity of this research.
<b>Reliability</b>	The protocol used in this study, the interviews recorded on audio and their transcripts have been archived for future reference. Authorization was also obtained to disclose the companies' names.

Source: Adapted from Gibbert, Ruigrok and Wicki (2008)

### 3.3 Organizations: Dow and Promon

The organizations selected for the survey were Dow S.A. and Promon SA., which represent the analysis units of the case study. Dow was classified as having a mechanical system because its employees demonstrate great concern with the technical improvement of their work; the rights and duties of each position are strictly defined; and there is a tendency for vertical interaction among the organization's members and for its industry to demand operational excellence and standardized products. On the other hand, Promon is classified as an organic system, because: tasks are viewed collectively, as a system of interrelated work situations; such tasks are constantly being adjusted and redefined through interaction among members; organizational communication is more horizontal than vertical; and the control, communication and authority structures are based on a network model.

The initial criterion for selection was organizations that provided evidence of a strong human resource management context. Participation in all editions of the Best Companies to Work For survey, from 1997 to 2012, was the main indicator of this criterion. It is noteworthy that only three organizations met this criterion, Dow and Promon being two of them. The individuals interviewed were representatives from each organization: at Dow, the Human Resources Director for Latin America (E1) and the Organizational Development Manager (E2), and at Promon, the Director of Human Relations and Communication (E1) and the Human Resources Coordinator (E2).

The second criterion was the structural context, classified according to the type of organizational system. According to Burns and Stalker (1961), the emergence of mechanistic and organic management systems is the result of the influence of environmental variables relating to production technology and the market situation of a particular organization.

Dow S.A. is an American organization that manufactures chemical, plastic and agricultural products, and operates in several economic sectors with numerous products. It is one of the largest chemical manufacturers in the world. In Brazil, the organization has 2,465 employees, 16 manufacturing units, 4 research centers, and the Diamond Tower, the company's Latin America headquarters, located in the city of São Paulo.

Promon is a national company headquartered in São Paulo, which has corporate offices in eight other Latin American countries, with 2,300 professionals, out of which approximately 1,800 work in Brazil. The company works in the engineering and telecommunications industries, and it is seeking to expand its operations to information technology.

As such, it was possible to obtain different elements for the analysis of structural and normative contexts from the perspective of the proposed research model. However, it was necessary for both organizations to present evidence of strong human resource management contexts, serving as benchmarks for the challenge of managing generations.

In measuring the perceptions of employee commitment, answers for Dow were obtained from 311 employees, with an average age of 39 years old and 12 years of employment, 72% men, and 85% non-executives. Promon had 298 respondents, with an average age of 37 years old and 7 years of employment, 70% men, and 72% non-executives. Thus, three control variables were adopted: age, time at the company, and hierarchical position (executive and non-executive), whereas each control variable served to measure the differences among individual generational identities.

## 4 Analysis of Results

In this section, the cases of the two selected organizations (Dow and Promon) are presented. The organization is firstly characterized, then the elements of human resource management are described, and finally, the generation management is reported.

### 4.1 Generations at Dow S.A.

Dow's strategic role is based on three pillars: people, sustainability, and innovation. The pillar referring to people is emphasized by the institution and is called the Human Element (Hu). Although not part of the periodic table, according to the manager interviewed, Hu is considered indispensable for overcoming the main challenges of the organization through innovative ideas.

Staff mobility occurs both vertically and horizontally. Each set of positions presents different challenges and requires specific profiles. Another concern of the organization is to assess the understanding of messages and key elements of the organizational strategy. Every year, employees respond to questionnaires about conflicts of interest in performing their roles. They also undergo online training, reinforcing the main guidelines for maintaining ethics and transparency in the corporate routine.

The three core competencies of the organization are: collaborate to obtain superior results, courageously lead, and produce innovative solutions, which were conceived to ensure that all employees understand how their work and their behaviors accelerate transformation and contribute to their individual and organizational success.

However, as it is a foreign company, many decisions and communication from the international headquarters are directed to the Brazilian subsidiary, as indicated below in the statement given by the Human Resources Director for Latin America during the interview: "Corporate communication is more top down than bottom up. However, leader committee meetings are held to provide information from the bottom of the pyramid to assist managers in their decision-making" (E1- Dow S.A)

This could represent a trait that is inherent to the organization's mechanical model, as it makes management become less flexible. On the other hand, tools are also made available to allow employees to evaluate and position themselves with regard to the strategies, thus contributing to improve corporate and production processes.

With regard to the organization's demographics, the findings indicate a balance between the participation of younger and older professionals. The same director stated in her interview that: "At Dow there is a balance when it comes to the participation of different age groups within the business units, departments and work teams. There are no areas whose professional profile is exclusively younger or older" (E1- Dow S.A)

Thus, interaction among these age groups is more likely in the daily work tasks within different areas of the organization.

When asked about the influence generational differences exert on the reported practices, the human resource management replied as follows:

I think the personality traits of professionals are inherent to the stage of their careers. However, managing generations is an important challenge for Dow with respect to the transfer of knowledge from more experienced employees to younger individuals who are joining the company and also with regard to attracting new talents (E2- Dow S.A.).

However, it was possible to identify the low priority given to the influence that generational differences have on the adequacy of human resource management practices, as mentioned below:

Human resource management practices are not designed and implemented considering generational differences of employees. The practices are potentially considered for all employees. For example, the practice of flexible working, home office and flexible hours can be adopted, depending on the need, for any generation, not only for generation Y (E2-Dow S.A).

To complement the findings presented, concern about the transfer of knowledge from older to younger professionals was notable at Dow. That is, the importance of knowledge acquired over years of work by older professionals and the shortage of engineers in the domestic labor market indicate the challenge of managing generations based on cohorts, where the central element of distinction between professionals is knowledge, access or control over a set of skills or valuable resources, or a unique set of experiences that a generation has acquired over time (Joshi *et al.*, 2010).

#### 4.2 Generations and Commitment at Dow

The analysis of differences in commitment among respondents was conducted in the context of human resource management at Dow. Planned comparisons or post hoc tests were employed through the analysis of variance (ANOVA) in order to assess differences. The Scheffé method was used because it is the most conservative method in connection to the Type 1 error. Thus, it was found that there were no significant differences ( $F = 1.15$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ) on the averages of the three generations.

On the other hand, the average of the T technique, used to evaluate the statistical significance of the difference between two independent sample averages for a single independent variable, was adopted to examine the difference in averages between two independent categorical variables related to length of service in the organization. Two groups were considered, one of professionals with less than one year at the company, and one of professionals with more than one year at the company. The period of one year was considered the parameter for this analysis, given the time defined by the organization to integrate new hires. Significant differences ( $F = 5.10$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) were noted for the average commitment between the two groups analyzed (less than one year: 4.66; over one year: 4.40). The result of Levene's test rejected the null hypothesis of homogeneity of the respondents' commitment with respect to length of service in the organization, given that the calculated p-value was ( $F = 22.482$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). That is, the null hypothesis is rejected at 5% significance a level, which means that the commitment variances are different according to the range of length of service in the organization.

By assessing this result along with the content from the interviews, we can observe that it can be explained by the low turnover, as stated by the Human Resources Director: "Our turnover is very low: about 3%. Individuals employed at Dow usually develop a career with us". Thus, we are able to identify a direct relationship between hierarchical position and age:

Our talented professionals (individuals who present high potential and performance) represent about 6% of our staff. This percentage includes younger professionals working as Junior Analysts, as well as older professionals who undertake management roles. However, there is a relation between the professional's age and job position (E1 - Dow)

There are several initiatives aimed at developing young talents who are starting their career at Dow. These initiatives indicate the attractiveness of the organization for young professionals. However, it is common in the internship and trainee programs to align expectations between young individuals and the organization.

In the recruitment and selection process there is an alignment of expectations between what the professional expects from the company and what the company expects from the professional. In the first step of this process, an example is a young person whose career goal is to achieve a management position within three years, where Dow may not be the best company for this career plan (E2- Dow S.A.).

Therefore, the greater level of commitment from young people at the beginning of their careers is partly justified by the alignment of expectations about their career prospects in the company. In the trainee program, the initial activities involve programs that promote integration and knowledge of the organization. Participants meet with the leaders and carry out teamwork activities. Job rotation takes place in a second step. For three months, participants are assigned to different roles and locations at Dow Latin America, which are considered key to professional development and

to understand the Company and the business as a whole. After the job rotation, the trainees return to their area and develop a project, which must be presented to Dow Latin America's managers. The company also offers an internship program, for which individuals are selected twice a year.

#### 4.3 Generations at Promon S.A

Promon has a corporate model, which entails sharing the company's capital among all employees, and a participatory management style, but with differences from other corporations.

Employee participation in this model is voluntary and the percentage of purchase is equal for all. There is a limit that anyone can reach, which is not scaled by hierarchical level. According to the organization, it is a matter of consistency with the original principle of establishing a community of professionals, based on the spirit of cooperation.

The Administrative Board of Promon S.A., which is the highest body in the organization, is responsible for defining the goals and overall direction of the business. Board members are elected by shareholding employees for a tenure of three years. Its members need to have proven experience in business management and abide by the values and principles of the organization.

There are three committees that support the Administrative Board: The Strategy Committee, focused on analysis and monitoring of the group's macro strategy in all its perspectives, the Risk and Audit Committee, dedicated to analysis and monitoring of the management of key business risks and the work of internal and independent audits, and the Organizational Development Committee, in charge of discussing topics related to people, the management system, organizational culture, and model.

For the organization, the sense of belonging is inherent to the concept of community and it places priority on the management model because it brings awareness that each individual is responsible for the future of the group. From this perception arises the desire to actively participate and contribute to the collective success. In this sense, human resource would have the following duty:

We define ourselves as a community of professionals who are owners of the business. We want employees to perceive that if the result is achieved, wealth is generated. If this wealth is achieved, it will be distributed among all. Thus, the development of this sense of community is one of the tasks of human resource. In other words, it develops a sense of belonging in a collective sense (E1- Promon S.A.).

Therefore, it is possible to identify the role of human resources in promoting events and a strong framework that enables employees to understand what is happening (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004; Joshi *et al.*, 2010). It is therefore expected that employees become aware of the importance of positioning themselves actively within this context. The organization expects individuals to know how to cope with ambiguity and to be able to put their collective interests above their individual interests. However, human resources seeks to deal with the challenge of managing different roles and attitudes from professionals in the organization.

Human resource management practices also seek alignment with the principles of the model adopted by the company. For example, the organization does not pay commission for sales, because it believes that the salesperson must understand that selling is important to achieve the result of the organization and that if the result is generated, it will be distributed to everyone.

Every project has a transitory nature, so each employee is assigned to a professional level and a position or function. The level is an attribute of the professional, translating their seniority, and thus evolving according to their learning, maturity, and experience. The function or position reflects the role that the professional is playing at the moment.

As a high-tech enterprise, employees are encouraged to continuously learn inside and outside the organization. Through corporate education, professionals can make their own training proposals from a reference grid. The validation of individual training plans is performed by the centers of competence and the directors. The support of a mentor is essential at this point, who are often asked to give their opinion on the courses requested by the professional.

Promon also introduced the self-proposed wage procedure in the wage review process. This practice aims to ensure professionals research market wages and take a stand, justifying the parameters used, in relation to their earnings. As such, there may be cases of negotiation between employees and leadership.

The implementation and monitoring of management and behavioral programs are carried out by human resources, while coordinators are in charge of technical training, with support and monitoring from human resources.

Learning on the job; i.e., in projects, with a mixture of generations of employees, is mainly pursued. Another example of the motivation for this interaction is the creation of a nonprofit organization, called Promon Technology Institute, which aims to be a pioneering coaching pole for the future by generating and disseminating technological knowledge in energy, sustainable development and information, and communication technology sectors.

There are five technological observatories, which are structured as integrated networks for groups of young professionals and senior experts. In this approach, senior professionals have the support of young talents who also work as tutors for course participants. The knowledge produced or made operational from the modules is transformed into distance learning via internet, aimed at development and training of professionals.

In relation to managing generations, the following was stated:

I believe that today's young professionals do not have the same attachment to organizations as older professionals. They are attached to a purpose; if we manage to propose challenges that keep them involved, all right; otherwise, the bond with the company is weakened (E1- Promon S.A.).

#### 4.4 Generations and Commitment at Promon

Considering the contextual characteristics of Promon, which are different from those found at Dow, the division of respondents was carried out according to hierarchical position in the organization, separating professionals who were executives from non-executives. Therefore, the T test statistical technique was also adopted. Significant differences were observed ( $F = 13.3$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) in average of commitment between the analyzed levels (executives: 4.62; non-executives: 4.22). The result of Levene's test rejected the null hypothesis of homogeneity of the respondents' commitment with respect to hierarchical position ( $F = 16.082$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). On the other hand, through ANOVA, when the comparison was based on generation of the respondent, it was found that the average variation between the three groups remained the same ( $F = 1.69$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ).

Thus, Promon's main challenge in managing generations is the introduction of new forms of work and their influence on the relationship between coordination and subordinate roles in this new context, as for each of the guidelines of Joshi *et al.* (2010).

Young people work more easily through mobile and collaborative tools than older professionals. So we try to find ways to adapt the management of these older professionals to this new reality because the optimization of physical space is something important for our work. There are also cases in which older supervisors complain that younger professionals spend too much time chatting on the internet with others outside the work environment. Another issue is whether the young individuals consider their supervisor as a reference and are proud to work with them. (E1- Promon S.A.).

As it is a high-tech company, employees are encouraged to pursue continuous learning, inside and outside the organization. Career development depends only on the employee, as explained in this statement:

Promon is not a paternalistic company and it will not spell out everything the employee needs to learn, but we will provide opportunities to discuss his/her development with other people within the organization. Promon is an open project, developed based on the interest people have to develop it. (E2- Promon S.A)

Thus, since 1995, the mentoring program is the main activity implemented to support the professional development of its employees. Based on the criteria established by HR, the company defines the list of professionals who are able to take on the role of mentors: usually professionals holding executive positions who have been with the company for more than 1 year. Professionals can choose their mentor from this list. Annually, mentors and mentees must undergo a training session that addresses the mentoring process, its importance for the organization and for the professionals, and the best way to carry out the entire process of a mentor by the mentee.

With the mentor's support, the mentee must outline a development plan involving recommendations for actions to be taken to develop and harness the potential for future growth opportunities, such as formal and on the job training, visits, internships and other actions guided by

the organization's strategic plans, taking into account the individual potential and interests. These actions must be validated by the corresponding coordinators.

The differences between both organizations by analyzing and summarizing the findings obtained through the model used in this study are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

**Comparison of Case Studies**

Theoretical elements of the research		Dow	Promon
<b>Structural context</b>		Mechanical	Organic
<b>Normative context</b>	<b>Distinction</b>	<i>Hu</i> Element	Organizational Development Committee on the Board of Directors
	<b>Consistency</b>	Using the people movement model to guide career decisions	Aligning practices to the principles of the human resource management system
	<b>Consensus</b>	Translated and disseminated organizational skills into the individual skills of employees	Sense of community
<b>Generational identity</b>		Cohorts	Incumbency
<b>Commitment</b>		less than one year > over one year	Executives > non-executives

According to the model proposed by Joshi *et al.* (2010), Dow could be characterized as a mechanistic system with strong context, whose elements of distinction between generations are knowledge and experience in the organization. Promon, on the other hand, could be classified as an organic system with strong context, especially for the challenge of being able to separate the roles of employees and shareholders, as well as the supervisor and subordinate relationship, supported by new ways of working.

With the information obtained in analysis of the Dow and Promon cases, it was possible to gather evidence to produce the sections on discussion of results and final comments in this article, aiming at exploring human resource management in organizations that operate in Brazil, with regard to management matters.

## 5 Conclusions and Recommendations

We consider that the objective of analyzing the human resources management in relation to generational and commitment issues was accomplished when it was possible to relate Dow's and Promon's management policies and practices on the employees' commitment. With this, similarities and differences are noticed among generations according the organizational contexts where they work.

With regards to involvement policies and practices, it was possible to observe the importance of factors such as work environment related to work experiences aimed at the commitment and involvement to the strategy; the use of the relationship between co-workers and leaders; and awareness of the organization's role in society and its social responsibility with the external community. Essentially, co-workers, the work performed and leaders represent environmental elements that influence and are influenced by the human resource management system.

The employees' development in these organizations take into account the skills demonstrated in the job role and among different job roles. Both organizations under study seek to encourage a systemic view of the professional through activities that involve teamwork, including challenges and greater impact caused by his/her work in the organization and in the individual. In this sense, they seek to offer attractive career opportunities in the organization.

Both organizations emphasize the leaders' role in the workplace, by acknowledging it in a monetary and in a non-monetary way, as well as by acknowledging the connection between the employees' and the organization's expertise and strategies. Flexible schedules and quality of life are also considered elements of the remuneration package. Thus, in both cases, Promon and Dow, leaders have an active role in the effective deployment of activities that promote balance between private life and work. However, we have not observed, in neither of the two cases, an interference of more hedonist values by younger generations, as indicated by Twenge *et al.* (2010) and Smola and Sutton (2002).

Generally, policies and practices aimed at establishing a sense of justice and autonomy among employees. The importance given to non-monetary remuneration and development programs can be considered as alternatives to these purposes.

To discuss the differences among the results, it is important to mention the difficulty of positioning organizations in one single quadrant of the theoretical model of this study, due to the continuous factor that distinguishes the systems between mechanical and organic (Burns and Stalker, 1961). In the case of Dow, this difficulty was evident in the individual analysis of the company; however, its comparison to Promon allowed such differentiation. In the second company, the classification was evident as an extreme case of an organic system, mainly due to the unique qualities of its equity model. Moreover, the production technology adopted and the market performance according to standards by Dow and customization by Promon support this classification.

In both organizations, the three characteristics of strong human resource management systems can be observed, as in accordance with the guidelines of Bowen and Ostroff (2004): distinction, consistency, and consensus.

In **distinction** from other organizational practices, creation of the Hu Element is the greatest evidence of this characteristic in the case of Dow and, in the case of Promon, the organizational development committee within the Administrative Board. **Consistency** can be observed in guiding career decisions and in the instrumentality of the staff mobility model in the Dow model and in the alignment of practices fostered by Promon with the principles of the human resource management style. Finally, it is possible to identify the search for **consensus** from employees about what behaviors lead to certain consequences, where the best examples are the organizational skills of Dow, which are clearly translated and disseminated based on individual skills, and the sense of community at Promon.

Regarding generation management, according to the classification by Joshi *et al.* (2010), there is an indication that certain groups of older employees have their expertise valued by Dow, a fact that indicates generational cohort-based identity. On the other hand, at Promon, this identity can be linked to the roles played during certain periods by professionals in specific projects (incumbency-based identity), for example.

In reports from the interviews it is possible to note that, among the three forms of generational identities (age, cohort, and incumbency), the prevalence of one over the other varies according to the characteristics of the structural and normative context. This finding can be corroborated by employee commitment, which entails specific human resource management actions.

As for commitment, the results obtained at Dow showed that perceptions of generations, according to the age of the respondents, tend to be the same in organizational events; however, length of employment has a considerable influence on commitment perception. Professionals who have already become part of the organization for at least one year have lower perceived commitment than newly hired employees.

At Promon, the human resource management area reports little relevance on the challenges of managing generations based on age and greater weight on roles, which can be confirmed in employee perceptions of the organization, whereas executives tend to have more positive commitment perceptions.

Assuming that commitment includes belief and acceptance of the values and goals of the organization and understanding and acceptance of the normative context at Dow, challenges arise related to managing the knowledge gained through the organizational socialization of its employees.

Consecutively, at Promon there is the challenge of managing roles and responsibilities of professionals in their positions within the organizational structure.

## 5.1 Implications for HR Policies and Practices

In the interpretation of both organizations, generational differences based on employee age seem to be coming from the stage of their professional career. There were no identifiable differences in mindset resulting from the historical context that the employees experienced. In this respect, at both companies there is an intention to adopt human resource management that fosters interaction between employees of different ages, encouraging the exchange of knowledge and experience. However, at Dow this initiative happens more unilaterally, from the older to the younger professional. On the other hand, at Promon, this initiative seems to be multilateral, both from the older to the younger professionals, and from the younger to the older professional.

An important finding, which was obtained from accounts by officers and from analysis of documents from both organizations, is that generational management is not carried out in a formal manner. Such management takes place only informally, through other programs that achieve this duty indirectly. From this result, and from the display of the importance of productive coexistence among generations, the need for implementing formal policies that fulfill such a need can be observed.

## 5.2 Implications for Academia

For the literature on generations, it is possible to emphasize the fact that, although there is evidence of generational differences based on age in Brazil (Veloso, Silva & Dutra, 2012; Silva *et al.* 2015, Silva *et al.* 2016), the analysis of Dow and Promon cases showed that such differences do not imply adjustments in human resource management, which differs from suggestions by theories on the subject (Mcguire *et al.*, 2007; Lepak & Shaw, 2008; Meister & Willyerd, 2010; Lyons & Kuron, 2014). Both organizations have human resource management contexts with a tendency to guide human behavior according to the organizational management model, thus mitigating the effects of age-based generational differences.

As for commitment, by observing the control variables, which were age (age-based generation); time at the company (cohort-based generation) and hierarchical position (role-based generation), results demonstrated to be common in both cases that commitment does not vary depending on the age variable. Such results do not corroborate with the differences found on the researched subject, which did not include the organizational context in their analyses (D'Amato & Herzfeldt, 2008; Benson & Brown, 2011; Silva *et al.*, 2015, Kultalahti & Viitala, 2015). However, there were variations in the two other variables. At Promon, hierarchical position causes such a variation, whereas in Dow it is due to time at the company. Such differences are explained by characteristics of the organizations themselves and, therefore, it is possible to collaborate with generational studies related to the theory of commitment, whereas both fields of study should not be limited to the individual level, but also consider the organizational level (Joshi *et al.*, 2010).

The results can contribute to generational theory by inspiring other scholars to consider the influence of organizational level on the individual across different generational identities, based on the association between human resource management policies and practices, and the commitment in the Brazilian scenario. This study does that by combining different studies that had examined these issues separately (Joshi *et al.*, 2010, Costanza, 2012, Lyons & Kuron, 2014, Kultalahti & Viitala, 2015, Silva *et al.*, 2016).

## 5.3 Implications for Practice

It was found in this study that despite the latent business concern over generation management, human resource management in well-structured companies does not present any evidence of conscious adaptation of their practice to generational differences between Baby Boomers and generations X and Y. In this sense, one can state that in both cases studied, management focuses on variables that can be managed by the organizations; i.e., the knowledge inherent to the context of the organization. On the other hand, regarding commitment, it was noted that its occurrence in the work environment can vary between different profiles or different characteristics of professionals, according to their relationship to the structural and normative context of the organization.

## 5.4 Limitations

The main limitation of the study was the use of the case study approach, which does not allow the generalization of results. This technique only allows theoretical generalization at organizations, which seek to stand out in terms of human resource management (Eisenhardt, 1989).

It should be emphasized that since this research is classified as a cross-sectional study, we cannot confirm whether the differences between the groups occur due to the influence placed by the generation or the age of the respondents. Therefore, nationwide research is still required, in order to neutralize the effect of age on generational differences.

## 5.5 Overview of Results and Future Research

Although there is evidence of age-based generational differences in Brazil, the examination of commitment undertaken in this study offers evidence that human resource policies and practices, though not geared towards generational management, have the potential to make people commit in a similar manner, irrespective of their age. Such management can be associated to strong normative contexts of human resource management, which meet the consistence, distinction, and consensus criteria. At the same time, differences in commitment levels according to time in the company and hierarchical position provide evidence of new challenges to generational management related to generational identity, which emerges as a result of the interaction between the normative and structural context within each organization.

To extend the results of this research, we recommend future studies at organizations with diverse characteristics, especially public organizations and organization in the third sector, given the peculiarities and challenges in creating a strong contextual system of human resource management (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Joshi *et al.*, 2010; Lyons & Kuron, 2014). Moreover, to extend this vision, specific research questions for future studies may consider, aside from context, the relationship between organization and the professional him/herself.

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