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Addressing the New Workforce's Expectations in the Management Discussion

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Abstract

Management, due to its interdependence with many contingent factors of the world, is a concept in continuous evolution. One of the factors that drive this evolution is the workforce, which is also constantly changing. However, despite the importance of considering the expectations of the workforce towards management, more attention has to be paid to this factor in the discussion on management. Therefore, this study aims to inductively collect empirical information about the new workforce's expectations towards management. Afterwards, based on the findings, this research aims to scrutinise the management discussion's ability to address the expectations of the new workforce. The added value of this assessment is to formulate suggestions for possible improvements in the discussion - in order to better address the expectations of the new workforce towards management. Through this study, we conclude that the most recent parts of the management debate (i.e., the most recent theories on management) are mostly able to address the expectations of the new workforce towards management and are comparatively better than the older theories in doing so. Nevertheless, by paying more attention to issues such as the 'freedom and guidance' dilemma and the emotional intelligence ability of managers, the discussion on management would benefit in the form of an enhanced ability to address the expectations of the new workforce. Ultimately, the greater the ability of the management debate to correctly address the workforce's expectations, the better can management bring about the best outcomes through the workforce.

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1- Introduction

"Management, like the combustion engine, is a mature technology that must now be reinvented for a new age." (Hamel, 2009, p. 91)

1.1 Background

Since its inception, the concept of management has been in continuous change (Albach & Bloch, 2000; Koontz, 1980; Luthans, 1973; McDonald, 2011; Robbins & Coulter, 2012; van Baalen & Karsten, 2012) - a constant evolution aimed at better fitting the needs and the knowledge of the time (Ezzamel, Lilley & Willmott, 1994). Throughout this evolution, one among arguably many of the purposes of management has been to bring about the best outcomes through the workforce (Gibson, Ivancevich, Donnelly & Konopaske, 2012; Koontz, 1961; Zhaldak, 2021).

Since the formal study of management began in the late 19th century during the second industrial revolution, it has progressed through several stages as scholars and practitioners working in different eras focused on what they believed to be important aspects of good management practice for that moment in time (Ezzamel, Lilley & Willmott, 1994). In short, the evolution of management was signalled by the passage from the traditional school of management, to the behavioural school of management (developed during the first half of the twentieth century), to the quantitative school of management (which flourished during World War II), to the modern school of management (which began to appear in the second half of the twentieth century), up to the most recent schools of thought on management (Dahlgaard-Park, Reyes & Chen, 2018; Kitana 2016; Knight, 1986; Koontz, 1980; Korica, Nicolini & Johnson, 2017; Luthans, 1973; Pindur, Rogers & Suk Kim, 1995; Robbins & Coulter, 2012; Scott, 2001; Sridhar, 2016; Wren & Bedeian, 2009).

Historically, one of the major factors that have driven the continuous transformation of management has been the evolution of the workforce (Acsente, 2010; Dwyer, 2008; Ezzamel, Lilley & Willmott, 1994; Ware & Grantham, 2003; Zhaldak, 2021). Indeed, the various management schools were conceived in and for a specific moment of history, which was in turn characterised by certain predominant types of workforce (Ware & Grantham, 2003; Zhaldak, 2021). Jumping forward to the present, several changes such as the rise of

globalisation, the rise of disruptive technologies, and the overall improvements in socio-economic conditions (Ezzamel, Lilley & Willmott, 1994; Kreitner, 1999; McDonald, 2011; Ware & Grantham, 2003) have contributed to shaping the new generations in an unprecedented way. Simultaneously, these generations are gradually becoming the new workforce (Deloitte, 2016; Deloitte, 2017; Fry, 2018; Gallup, 2016; Hall, 2017; KPMG, 2017; ManpowerGroup, 2016; PwC, 2011; Robert Walters, 2015). Indeed, the new generations of today (represented, in our case, by people born approximately after 1992, in the last years of the so-called 'millennial' generation) display many differences, such as the average level of education, digital literacy, the type of aspirations, their approach to work, and their personal values, to mention a few (Acsente, 2010; Dwyer, 2008; Ware & Grantham, 2003).

As management is bound to a continuous evolution also because of the changing nature of the workforce (among many factors), a thorough understanding of the workforce's expectations towards work and management is paramount. Indeed, such an understanding is required to conceive more effective ways of doing management in relation to the new workforce - more effective ways to bring about the best outcomes through the workforce (Dwyer, 2008; Ware & Grantham, 2003). Hence, the nature and qualities of the workforce are factors that have to be accounted for when discussing the appropriate way of managing in present times and serve as guidance for such a discussion.

1.2 Problem Statement

With this introduction, we have seen how management is characterised by an ever-changing nature, simultaneously depending on and adapting to the conditions of any moment in history (Sridhar, 2016). At the same time, we have emphasised the importance of the workforce's expectations as a factor that has to be accounted for in the discussion on management. It is crucial when discussing both the appropriate way of managing in present times and the appropriate development of such a discussion.

In light of this consideration, we have found that not enough attention is paid to the expectations of the workforce towards management in the academic discussion on management. We were able to find a *corpus* of empirical studies that explore the new workforce and its expectations towards management (Chopra & Bhilare, 2020; Deloitte,

2016; Gallup, 2016; Kowske, Rasch & Wiley, 2010; Pînzaru, Mihalcea, & Zbuchea, 2017; Pînzaru, Vătămănescu, Mitan, Săvulescu, Vițelar, Noaghea & Bălan, 2016; PwC, 2013; Robert Walters, 2015; The Wall Street Journal, 2008; Twenge, 2009); we could also certify the extensiveness of the general discussion on management and the numerous normative theories proposed (Dahlgaard-Park, Reyes & Chen, 2018; Kitana 2016; Knight, 1986; Koontz, 1980; Korica, Nicolini & Johnson, 2017; Luthans, 1973; Pindur, Rogers & Suk Kim, 1995; Robbins & Coulter, 2012; Scott, 2001; Sridhar, 2016; Wren & Bedeian, 2009). However, there seems to be a lack of research in the interconnection between these two areas. In other words, we claim that more research is needed on whether the normative assertions advanced by the management literature address the expectations of the new workforce and whether there are any gaps between the two sides.

With such type of research, it would be possible to steer the discussion on management towards an increased alignment with the expectations of the workforce. Therefore, the present study aims to fill this knowledge gap by:

a. Inductively collecting empirical information about the new workforce's expectations towards management;
b. Based on the findings, scrutinise the management discussion's ability to address the expectations of the new workforce and formulate suggestions for possible improvements in the discussion.

1.3 Purpose and Research Question

The purpose of this study is to discuss empirically-based insights and suggestions for the development of the discussion on management in a way to address the expectations of the new workforce better.

The research question that we set out to answer to achieve the goal of the study was: *How does the discussion on management address the expectations of the new workforce?*

1.4 Delimitations

According to Theofanidis & Fountouki (2019), delimitations are, in essence, the constraints voluntarily imposed by us to limit the scope of the study. Thus, the most significant delimitation that we deem worthy of mentioning is that, while management is a vast concept

that encompasses different aspects and functions, many of them - such as strategy-making, planning, liaisoning, management control, and budgeting, to mention a few - will not appear in this research. The reason for this is that the study focuses on the workforce's expectations towards management and the ability of the management theories to address these expectations. Hence, most of the abovementioned functions will not be treated in this paper because they fell outside the scope of this research. Besides, we considered it more appropriate to illustrate the various decisions we made to narrow down the scope of our study as we move forward with the paper. In this way, it will be easier for the reader to contextualise and understand the choices.

1.5 Structure of the paper

To help the reader navigate more easily through this paper, we will now outline how it is structured. After this initial introductory chapter, we will proceed with a literature review: in chapter 2, indeed, we will make a summarised overview of management theories, to define the 'discussion on management' for the scope of this paper.

Afterwards, moving on to chapter 3, we will explain the methodology with which we conducted the empirical investigation of this research. In chapter 4, we will present the findings produced by our empirical research: the expectations of the new workforce towards management. Subsequently, chapter 5 will examine the ability of the discussion on management - previously defined and presented in chapter 2 - to address the expectations of the new workforce towards management (the findings of chapter 4).

Lastly, the conclusions of this study will be presented in chapter 6. In the final part of the paper, we will also address the identified potential shortcomings of the current discussion on management and the recommended areas for further research. Ultimately, we will make due considerations about the limitations of this study and its implications.

2 - Literature Review

"Researchers and practitioners need to understand the evolution of a discipline such as management not only for historical accuracy, but also because that history informs the theory of today" (Dent & Bozeman, 2014, p. 146)

In this section, we will conduct a brief historical *excursus* of how the discussion on management has evolved through the succession of theories, emphasising the approach to the workforce. Understanding the historical sequence allows us and the reader to engage in a more meaningful discussion on the development of management (Pindur, Rogers & Suk Kim, 1995). Additionally, it allows us to set the framework for the next chapter, where we will discuss how the various theories address the expectations of the new workforce. It is important to note that the terms 'school', 'theory', and 'approach' are used interchangeably. But, before we begin the review, there are a few things to keep in mind.

In doing this research, we acknowledged that reviewing and assessing the entire discussion on management is a massive and challenging task, especially considering the time constraints of this project. Therefore, we cannot overly emphasise that our review of the discussion on management does not aim to be a complete run-through but rather a summary of the most salient theories.

The choice of using a summary - a distilled version of the evolution of the management discussion - entails another problem: how to choose what is part of the summary and what is not? What can be considered as the 'most salient theories'? In this regard, the work of various scholars who, for different purposes, have produced summaries of the discussion on management does come in handy. After carefully reviewing several academic papers that proposed the outline of the historical debate on management (Dahlgaard-Park, Reyes & Chen, 2018; Kitana 2016; Knight, 1986; Koontz, 1980; Korica, Nicolini & Johnson, 2017; Luthans, 1973; Pindur, Rogers & Suk Kim, 1995; Robbins & Coulter, 2012; Scott, 2001; Sridhar, 2016; Wren & Bedeian, 2009) we could produce a synthesis that encompassed the most reoccurring theories. Therefore, for the purpose of this research, the discussion on management has been defined - summarised - thanks to this synthesis process.

However, we spotted a potential shortcoming in the process because most of the papers used to produce our synthesis did not capture the most recent developments in the discussion on management. To address this shortcoming, we took a certain degree of arbitrariness by including two other theories: the learning organisation theory and management 2.0. These two theories were integrated into our review mostly because we believed that they could generate relevant insights about the recent debate on management. They also complement the previously mentioned synthesis and, together with it, constitute the discussion on management as defined in this research paper. Having said so, we can now start delving into it.

2.1 Scientific Management Theory

During the Industrial Revolution, Frederick W. Taylor advanced the theory of Scientific Management, also known as 'Taylorism' (Dahlgaard-Parka, Reyes & Chenb, 2018). Taylor's principles of Scientific Management were: first, a scientific approach for every aspect of a person's work to change the old rule of thumb; second, the selection of employees, followed by training, education, and development; third, working with workers to ensure that all work was carried out following the principles of advanced science; and fourth, an almost equal division of labour and responsibility between management and employees (Knight, 1986; Robbins & Coulter, 2012).

Succinctly speaking, Taylor's framework for a successful organisation included principles such as clear delineation of authority, responsibility, separation of planning from operations, employee incentive schemes, exception management, and task specialisation (Hartley, 2006).

2.2 Administrative Management Theory

Henri Fayol's theory of Administrative Management subsequently reformed management (Voxted, 2017). While Taylor was interested in front-line managers and the scientific method, Fayol was interested in all managerial activities (Pindur, Rogers & Suk Kim, 1995). His belief that management was an activity shared by all businesses and governments led him to develop 14 management principles, which were fundamental management rules that could be applied to any organisational situation and taught in schools (Robbins and Coulter, 2012).

According to Kitana (2016), Knight (1986) and Wren & Bedeian (2009), the principles were:

a. Division of labour and specialisation;
b. Authority and responsibility (authority compatible with responsibility);
c. Discipline (obey or suffer the consequences);
d. Unity of command (orders issued by a single person);
e. Unity of direction (the plan is one-way);
f. Prioritisation of common interests (such as the organisation's or group interests) before individual ones;
g. Remuneration (equitable remuneration);
h. Centralisation (the manager must make decisions);
i. Hierarchy (communication from top to bottom);
j. Order;
k. Fairness (equal treatment for all employees);
l. Staff stability (avoid rotations);
m. Initiative;
n. Team player (fostering a sense of unity)

2.3 Bureaucratic Management Theory

Another vital contribution to the concept of management was made by Max Weber's Bureaucratic Management Theory (Pindur, Rogers & Suk Kim, 1995). He created a theory of authority structures and relationships based on an ideal type of organisation called a bureaucracy, which he defined as a type of organisation distinguished by division of labour, a clearly defined hierarchy, detailed rules and regulations, and impersonal relationships (Hartley, 2006).

In the analysis of Dahlgaard-Parka, Reyes & Chenb (2018), Knight (1986) and Wren & Bedeian (2009), Weber proposed six principles for Bureaucratic Management:

a. Formal rules and regulations (written directions and standard operating procedures system);
b. Formal selection (employees chosen for positions based on technical qualifications);
c. Managerial hierarchy (functions organised in a hierarchy with a clear chain of command);

d. Division of labour (jobs that are broken down into simple, routine, and well-executed tasks);
e. Impersonality (uniform application of rules and controls that are not based on personalities);
f. Career orientation (managers are career professionals, not owners of the units they manage) .

To summarise, Scientific Management (Taylor as the leading representative), Administrative Management (Fayol as the primary representative), and Bureaucratic Management (Weber as the main representative) emerged in the same historical moment, that is, between the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In this context, the factory system of manufacturing appeared, posing numerous management challenges in terms of production, people, and process, that had not previously been encountered to the same extent (Kitana, 2016; Sarker & Khan, 2013). Organising raw materials, tools, manufacturing units, employee selection and recruitment, training, scheduling operations, and dealing with disgruntled employees were among the most significant challenges that arose (Dahlgaard-Parka, Reyes & Chenb, 2018; Kitana, 2016; Pindur, Rogers & Suk Kim, 1995). In parallel, managers devised effective solutions, which resulted in the development of these three managerial theories. However, little thought was given to how people might be affected, how they reacted, and how they were likely to respond in the future (Sridhar, 2016).

2.4 Behavioural Management Theory

As explained by Pindur, Rogers, and Suk Kim (1995), many people became convinced in the 1920s and 1930s that Scientific Management was short-sighted and incomplete. In opposition to it, a concern towards human factors like social needs, motivation and psychology was advanced by the Behavioural Management Theory.

According to the researchers who contributed to the Behavioral Management school, social norms or group standards were the most important determinants of individual work behaviour (Robbins & Coulter, 2012). Elton Mayo, a key researcher for this theory (Pindur, Rogers & Suk Kim, 1995; Sridhar, 2016), discovered that people's behavior and attitudes were inextricably linked, group factors had a significant impact on individual behaviour, group standards determined individual worker output, and money was less important in determining

output than group standards, group attitudes, and security (Sridhar, 2016). These findings prompted a renewed emphasis on the role of human behaviour in organisational management, as well as a renewed interest in human behaviour in organisations (Robbins & Coulter, 2012).

To summarise, the Behavioural Management Theory (also known as the Human Relations Movement) emerged during the radical social and cultural changes of the 1920s and 1930s, signalling an increasing shift in focus towards people: it stressed the importance of group dynamics, complex human motivations, and the manager's leadership style (Sridhar, 2016). It also emphasised the employee's social and economic needs, the impact of the organisation's social environment on the quantity and quality of work produced, and its emphasis on two competencies: communication and teamwork (Robbins & Coulter, 2012).

2.5 Quantitative School of Management

Management was viewed as a system of mathematical models and processes by the Quantitative Management school of thought (Pindur, Rogers & Suk Kim, 1995). This school of thought held that organising a mathematical or quantitative model could help resolve complex enterprise management problems (Robbins & Coulter, 2012). According to the Quantitative Management school, management, organisation, planning, and decision-making could all be expressed logically in terms of mathematical symbols and relationships (Dahlgaard-Parka, Reyes & Chenb, 2018).

The major contributions of Quantitative Management included the development of complex quantitative techniques to aid in decision making and problem-solving and the use of mathematical models to increase knowledge and comprehension of complex organisational processes and situations. It served as a tool for implementing organisational planning and controlling processes and it also emphasised the use of computers in decision support systems (Pindur, Rogers & Suk Kim, 1995).

2.6 Systems Approach

Beginning in the 1960s, management researchers began to investigate what was happening outside the organisation's boundaries, as most of earlier approaches were centred on the concerns of managers within the organisation (Robbins & Coulter, 2012).

These efforts resulted in the Systems Approach to management, which defined a system as a collection of interconnected and interdependent parts arranged to produce a unified whole (Koontz, 1980; Sridhar, 2016). Individuals, groups, attitudes, motives, formal structure, interactions, goals, status, and authority were all envisioned as interdependent factors in an organisation in the Systems Approach (Pindur, Rogers & Suk Kim, 1995).

As managers coordinated work activities in various parts of the organisation, they ensured that all of these parts were working together to achieve the organisation's goals (Robbins & Coulter, 2012). In other words, when one segment of an organisation was affected, managers were supposed to look at the entire organisation and the effects on various elements of an organisation. This approach was founded on continuous, high-quality communication among all parts of a company and all external stakeholders, emphasising the significance and interconnectedness of relationship webs (Dahlgaard-Parka, Reyes & Chenb, 2018).

2.7 Theory X & Theory Y

Douglas McGregor emphasised the importance of understanding the relationships between motivation and human nature in the late 1950s; he believed that managers tried to motivate employees in one of two ways (Pindur, Rogers & Suk Kim, 1995).

On the one hand, McGregor defined Theory X as the controlling/authoritarian manager's belief that most employees disliked working and would only work at the required level of productivity if forced to do so through the threat of punishment (Hartley, 2006; Knight, 1986). Theory Y, on the other hand, was defined as the democratic/participative manager's idea that employees could be trusted to reach production targets without being intimidated and that they would commonly seek extra responsibility because they loved the satisfaction of being creative and extending their talents (Hartley, 2006; Knight, 1986).

2.8 Contingency Approach

The so-called Contingency Approach dominated the 1970s (Robbins & Coulter, 2012). In order to achieve the best results when using this approach, a manager was expected to find the appropriate technique that suited the situation under specific circumstances and at a particular time (Sridhar, 2016). The contingency approach compared various theories' approaches to increasing employee motivation (Kitana, 2016). For example, while job

specialisation might be beneficial and widely used, it could lead to over-specialisation; while bureaucracy could be desirable in many situations, other structural designs could be more effective (Robbins & Coulter, 2012). Thus, Robbins & Coulter (2012) argued that management was not (and could not be) based on universal principles that could be applied in any situation. As a result, managers had to use various approaches and techniques in different and changing situations (Koontz, 1980).

To summarise, the following were the most commonly used contingency variables, according to Dahlgaard-Parka, Reyes, and Chenb (2018):

a. Size of the organisation (as the organisation grows in size, so do the coordination issues;
b. Routineness of task technology (an organisation employs technology to achieve its goals);
c. Uncertainty in the environment (the degree of uncertainty caused by environmental changes affects the management process);
d. Individual differences (individuals differ in their desire for growth, autonomy, ambiguity tolerance, and expectations).

2.9 Total Quality Management

Total Quality Management (TQM) has been recognised as one of the most popular management theories for improving management capabilities, improving performance, and achieving quality and excellence since the 1980s (Dahlgaard-Parka, Reyes & Chenb, 2018).

TQM was a management philosophy devoted to continuous improvement and meeting customers' needs and expectations (Pindur, Rogers & Suk Kim, 1995). Anyone who engaged with the organisation's products or services, whether inside or externally, was referred to as a customer (Pindur, Rogers & Suk Kim, 1995). It included both employees and suppliers and those who purchased goods or services from the organisation (Robbins & Coulter, 2012). Continuous improvement was impossible without accurate measurements, which necessitated the use of statistical techniques to measure every critical variable in a company's work processes, and these measurements were compared to standards to identify and correct problems (Robbins & Coulter, 2012).

In other words, Total Quality Management, as defined by Robbins and Coulter (2012), could be summed up by the following concepts:

a. Complete customer focus;
b. A desire for continuous improvement;
c. Process-oriented;
d. Improvement of the organisation's overall quality;
e. Precise measurement;
f. Employee empowerment.

2.10 Learning Organisation

Moving on to more recent developments in the management debate, we come across Peter Senge's Learning Organisation approach (Watkins & Golembiewski, 1995). This approach was based on the underlying assumption that traditional management practices and organisational structures were no longer effective in today's changing environment, which one writer aptly described as “permanent white water” (Worrell, 1995, p. 351).

According to Otala (1995), a learning organisation was similar to a living organism, consisting of empowered, motivated employees living in a perceived symbiosis, sharing the feeling of common destiny and profit, striving towards jointly defined goals, eager to use every opportunity to learn from situations, processes, and competition to adapt to changes in their environment in a harmonious manner and to improve their own and their company's competitive performance continuously.

Senge defined five ‘core disciplines’ that comprised the basic principles of his Learning Organization theory (Worrell, 1995):

a. Personal mastery entailed people clarifying what is essential and learning how to see reality more clearly on a continuous basis, to master as many different aspects as possible;
b. The discipline of learning organisations to be constantly identifying, testing, and improving the mental models of their members;
c. The principle of shared vision, according to which a shared sense of identity and mission needed to be created in the mental images of the people;

d. Team learning, a process of improving a team's capacity to generate the desired outcomes and learn from different experiences;
e. Systems thinking, serving as a foundation for the rest of the principles, was the capacity to understand the interconnectedness within an organisation.

To summarise, the learning organisation approach was based on the assumption that today's organisations deal with unprecedented environmental and technological change (Otala, 1995). The learning organisation was one in which all employees identified and solved problems, allowing the organisation to continuously improve its ability to grow, learn, and achieve its goals (Worrell, 1995). The learning organisation's organising principle was problem-solving, not efficiency, and the learning organisation theory emphasised three key aspects: a team-based structure, empowered employees, and open information (Otala, 1995).

2.11 Management 2.0

Last but not least, we will examine a recently proposed management theory, so-called Management 2.0, as developed by McDonald (2011). The author presented a management model capable of dealing with the most significant changes that have occurred - and continue to happen - in recent times. He advocated for:

a. Employee trust and teamwork (a mutually beneficial relationship based on trust in which the employee, in collaboration with his or her peers, assumes full ownership and responsibility for the specification, provision, and quality control of the outputs);
b. Interpersonal relationships within fluid and adaptable communities (dealing with complexity with fluidity and adaptability);
c. Managers as cultivators and brokers within network structures (a new role involving organic coordination functions that are unrelated to traditional hierarchical status);
d. Fun, frivolity, and creativity combined with work-life balance (a new approach to work that can meet the values of future generations);
e. Workplace diversity and multiculturalism (a critical shift for navigating the global world);
f. Integration of sustainability and CSR into management education (in order to meet the new, rising expectations of a broader set of stakeholders).

After going over the major theories with which we have defined the evolution of the management debate, the stage is set for us to discuss its ability to address the expectations of the new workforce. Afterwards, we will be able to make considerations about its appropriate development to address such expectations better. But before then, let us delve into the methodology of the empirical investigation through which we explored the expectations of the new workforce towards management.

3 - Research Methodology

This chapter outlines the methodology of our research. It will first describe our research design. Secondly, it will present our strategy for data collection and the sampling and selection of the research participants. Followingly, it illustrates how we analysed the data collected. Subsequently, it explains the choices we made to ensure trustworthiness and to comply with ethical standards. Finally, the chapter discusses and problematises the limitations of the research methodology we adopted.

3.1 Research Design

In order to deliver on the purpose of this research, it was necessary to understand the expectations of the new workforce towards management and work. A keystone consideration to be made within this framework is that "the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit" (Patton, 2002, p. 341) and that the researchers are the fundamental tool for the study (Merriam, 1998). Through this tool - the researchers - the participants' lived experiences are first collected, then analysed, and finally interpreted (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). To achieve the result of accessing the expectations of the new workforce, we decided to adopt an inductive, qualitative research design based on interviewing particularly relevant people. The inductive approach is characterised by formulating general conclusions or theories through the analysis of patterns in the empirical data (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009).

When we set out to answer our research question, we realised that the most obvious way to get an overview of the new workforce's expectations would have been to rely on the numerous existing studies on the topic. Indeed, thanks to a cursory review, we come into contact with a reasonable number of studies about 'millennial' that would have allowed us to synthesise the expectations of the new workforce. Nevertheless, we opted for conducting inductive research based on interviews for various reasons. Firstly, the existing studies were mostly large-scale surveys: while this methodology has many benefits, it also entails some limitations regarding the type and quality of data collected and the inclination towards confirmatory mechanisms (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Secondly, many of the existing studies were conducted by consulting companies, and the respondents were sometimes the employees of the company - a criterion that affects the randomness of the sample and could

bias their answers. Thirdly, their study population was usually the entire millennial generation, comprising people born after 1981. Instead, we saw potential to increase relevance to present times by studying only the younger part of it (that we previously defined).

To sum up, these considerations gave us confidence that there was room to obtain new insights with an alternative methodology. Therefore, we decided to learn more about the expectations of the new workforce by talking directly to a representing, interesting sample of people (described later on). In doing so, we wanted to gather the most up-to-date empirical information on which to base our research; also, we wanted to have primary data to inform us, data that could lead us to original insights without being influenced by the already-existing reports. We also argue that we were in a good position not to be affected by the existing studies because our initial research did not delve into details, and we actually did not read any existing study. Additionally, we strived to neutralise whatever possible influence and bias through a so-called "willing suspension of belief" (Gioia, Corley & Hamilton, 2012, p.21). Ultimately, we chose the inductive, qualitative approach because it enabled us to collect a valuable dataset for the purpose of our study.

3.2 Data collection

To obtain the empirical data needed for this study, we deemed that semi-structured interviews constituted the most fitting technique.

Interviews as a data collection technique allowed us to conduct an in-depth exploration of the topic, leading to a richness of descriptions, explanations and opinions that can better grasp the complexity of a phenomenon, although being a more time-consuming process (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). The semi-structured approach to the interviews entailed a predetermined set of questions as a guideline for all conversations. It is important to note that the questions were designed to stimulate the respondents' thinking about the different dimensions of their values and expectations towards management. For example, the questions would refer to different perceptual aspects such as experiences, opinions, values and feelings (Patton, 2002). As an inductive approach implies, the interviews were not designed based on a predefined understanding of management theory. The complete interview guide is shown in Appendix A.

Thanks to the interview guide, we could ensure that the conversation topics remained relevant for our purpose throughout the interview while maintaining the necessary flexibility through tailored, follow-up questions. These tailored follow-up questions allowed us to delve deeper into emerging, unexpected topics of conversation that we found valuable for our research. Semi-structured interviews also proved to be a very effective data collection technique due to the possibility of stimulating further, more in-depth thoughts in the participants thanks to probing questions.

Except for the probing questions, the nature of the questions asked during the interview was open-ended. The rationale of framing questions in an open-ended way is that it allows for equally open answers - answers that the respondent can frame and develop as they see fit to best communicate their perspective (Roberts, 2020). Therefore, we have been very careful in the phrasing of questions, selecting the words that could produce the clearest understanding of what was asked, laid out in an open-ended, non-leading way. In addition, open-ended questions are particularly well-suited when the nature of the data is complex and ambiguous - potentially with substantial differences among the respondents' perspectives - and management represents a prime example of such a case (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009).

In total, 25 interviews were conducted. Before the official interviews, two additional trial interviews took place: these trials have had the critical role of allowing us to adjust their questions and get an initial training ground for how to conduct an interview. They also allowed us to immediately identify some mistakes we were making (e.g. phrasing the follow-up questions in a leading way or overcomplicating the questions) and correct them. During the interviews, we discussed a variety of topics: we can trace many of those traced back to the topics identified in the interview guide, while others were unique to the specific interviews.

The interviews were conducted in the timespan from April 8th, 2021, until April 20th, 2021. In terms of duration, most of them lasted on average 30 minutes. The participants have been contacted in different ways: initially, we relied on a post in the LinkedIn group for LUSEM Alumni, where we made a call for participants; this approach led to getting in contact with the first 7 participants. Afterwards, we moved on to identifying the profiles that met the research requirements on LinkedIn and contacted them directly: in this way, we reached the

other 18 participants. In this initial connecting phase, the main aspects of the research were described.

After the participants had expressed their interest in participating in the study, we provided more details on the technical aspects of the interviews, schedule, topics of conversation and, most importantly, the ethical aspects of the participation. In this regard, all the participants were asked to sign a consent form to participate in the research. The consent form will be described and discussed in more detail in a later paragraph.

Due to the contingent circumstances - the COVID-19 pandemic - and the sparse geographical locations of the participants, we were left with no option other than to conduct the interviews online. We are aware of the fact that carrying out interviews online possibly reduces the quality of the data collected. However, we acted upon this potential weakness by paying particular attention to non-verbal communication (e.g., body language and gestures) to the extent possible and by establishing a friendly atmosphere that facilitated open verbal communication.

The chosen platform for the interviews was Zoom: every participant received an invitation to join one of the two researchers' Zoom room. Due to particular circumstances, two interviews were carried out on Teams, but that has had no impact on both interviews whatsoever. Moreover, due to time constraints, we have split to conduct the interviews, assigning roughly half of the interviewees to each. While this fact could potentially affect the consistency of how the interviews were conducted, it is essential to note that we took action to mitigate this risk by completing the first two trial interviews - and the first official one - jointly to build a common interview approach.

3.3 Sampling and Selection

First, it is important to mention that our unit of analysis has not been selected according to the criteria of large numbers chosen randomly, but rather we used a small number of participants selected for specific reasons. Indeed, the way we look at generalisation is to transfer lessons learned in one situation to another that may be comparable (Eisner, 1998; Peshkin, 1993).

For the purpose of studying the 'new workforce', we have chosen to interview recent graduates with certain characteristics (explained below) as people embodying the type of new workforce we refer to with this study. The participants of this study were chosen in accordance with the following criteria:

First of all, to be a recent graduate, defined by the researchers as to have graduated no more than three years previous to the commencement of this study (no earlier than 2018). This selection criterion was in line with studying the expectations of what we refer to as the new workforce, which is well-represented by recent graduates who have just entered the job market and can provide useful information regarding the generational expectations they embody. Another reason we chose to interview recent graduates as exponents of the new workforce - despite other sampling possibilities we had - is because of their high level of education, an important defining trait of the new workforce (as argued in this paper). Undoubtedly, this sampling choice entails issues, which we will discuss in the upcoming limitation sections.

The second requirement was to have a managerial educational background (i.e. management-related Master degree) since, we assert, individuals with such an academic background are generally those in a better position to have an active reflection on management-related topics. Arguably, their education sharpened their sensitivity towards these issues, and therefore they can contribute to the study in a richer way. In our specific case, we decided to select recent graduates from the Lund University School of Economics and Management, especially from three programmes: the Master in Management, the Master in International Strategic Management, and the Master in Managing People, Knowledge and Change. The reason for this choice is that, since we already had access to these alumni networks and their coordination services, we could contact people who presented all our selection criteria in a timely and efficient manner, which was partly necessary due to our time constraints.

Last but not least, the third criterion was to have at least one year of work experience after graduation, because we considered this as a period that allows for a more solid development, and a more refined understanding, of one's own expectations towards management.

Apart from these selection criteria, we have not tried to control other variables such as gender, nationality, type of industry the participants work in, or type of organisation they work for. The rationale is that we believed these additional criteria would not have added any value for this study and would not have helped us get a more accurate picture of the type of new workforce that we intended to study. Indeed, we expected this choice to enable us to identify diverse patterns and provide richer reflections.

3.4 Data Analysis

After the process of data gathering, the phase that transitioned the research to data analysis was the transcription of interview recordings. The process was carried out with the assistance of an automated transcription tool available online (Otter.ai), but we carefully double-checked each and every transcription: firstly, by the researcher that had conducted the interview and who had made the first review of the transcription; secondly, by the other researcher, who had to read and double-check the transcriptions of the interviews they were not part of. Additionally, upon request, we sent the transcription to the original interviewee to provide an opportunity to correct mistakes and make clarifications. The transcription process, considered a transition phase to the data analysis, proved helpful for both researchers to get familiar with the entire dataset and get an initial idea of the emerging patterns and insights (Patton, 2002).

Subsequently, we proceeded to analyse the data following the principles of the Gioia methodology (Gioia, Corley & Hamilton, 2012), which provides "a systematic inductive approach to concept development" (Gioia, Corley & Hamilton, 2012, p.15). Drawing from this proposed methodology, we approached the data through the following initial steps: first, we read all the transcripts to get better acquainted with the complexity of the data; second, each researcher individually conducted a scan of the data aimed at identifying what are called "1st-order concepts" - codes, terms, and expressions that stick faithfully to the informant and entail as little influence from the researcher as possible (Gioia, Corley & Hamilton, 2012). At this stage, each researcher transcribed their identified "1st-order concepts" into their own spreadsheet; third, each researcher started looking at similarities among the vast number of their own "1st-order concepts" in order to cluster them into a more manageable number of categories (Gioia, Corley & Hamilton, 2012).

Once we completed this first stage, we engaged in a discussion about the identified “1st order concepts” to critically reflect upon any possible deeper structure, any possible emerging theme “that might help us describe and explain the phenomena we are observing” (Gioia, Corley & Hamilton, 2012). This phase signalled a shift to a researcher-centric, “2nd-order” level of the analysis, during which “2nd-order themes” were created. Specifically, each researcher initially proposed several themes and a discussion about each of the proposed themes followed, during which we critically reflected upon the meaningfulness of that theme. Afterwards, we went back to our spreadsheets for each theme and found all the “1st-order concepts” related to that theme: supporting arguments, opposite points of view, and additional considerations. Followingly, with the data for each theme at hand, we discussed the relevance of each of the proposed themes for our research purpose again and kept the most relevant ones while discarding others. The next step was to delve in-depth into every selected theme and recognise the insights that each of them could provide: we achieved such an objective through a prolonged, critical discussion in which we challenged each other on the meaning of the data and its interpretation. In addition, during this process, the exploration and use of the existing literature around the selected themes also played a crucial role in helping us achieve a more solid discussion about them and allowed us to formulate valuable insights “without reinventing the well-ridden wheels” (Gioia, Corley & Hamilton, 2012, p.21).

Ultimately, after many cycles of back-and-forth between the “2nd-level” analysis and the “1st-level” empirical data, we agreed that the themes were legitimately capturing the essence of the data. Then, the focus shifted on identifying overarching dimensions that could catch on an even higher level the interconnections between the different themes and could help us explain and make more profound sense of our insights. Eventually, once we completed this final step, the analysis process was concluded, and we shifted our attention on faithfully presenting the data and the related insights, as can be found in the following chapter.

3.5 Ensuring Trustworthiness

Within the broad discussion on how to ensure the value of any qualitative paper, we have decided to follow Guba's (1981) constructs - four criteria that can address the trustworthiness of a qualitative study: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The choice of ensuring trustworthiness derives from the fact that Guba's (1981) constructs are

among the most authoritative and “have been accepted by the many” (Shenton, 2004, p.64). This section will go over in detail which provisions we used to meet Guba's (1981) four trustworthiness criteria.

To begin with, we needed to answer the following question regarding the credibility criteria: How well do the findings match reality? To meet this criterion, we took the following steps.

Firstly, we used well-established research methods in both qualitative research in general and information science in particular. In this regard, we relied on the Gioia methodology (Gioia, Corley & Hamilton, 2012) to structure our research and, in particular, our data analysis process.

Secondly, we devised strategies to ensure interviewees’ honesty when providing data. Indeed, we established and maintained cordial and friendly relations with the interviewees throughout the experience. We also sent a consent form ahead of time to make the interviewees feel at ease with what we would ask and stress the voluntary character of the participation in the project. As a result, we made sure that only those who were genuinely interested in participating did participate. We also fostered their most honest answers by creating a friendly and reassuring environment, not least by ensuring anonymity throughout.

Thirdly, we asked questions in an iterative manner. For example, while we were interviewing the participants, we paid close attention to discrepancies in the narrative of the respondents and returned to those topics to ensure clarity and consistency of the information received. In general, our interviews included many questions which - at the risk of being redundant - would go over the same topic from a different angle; this way, we made sure that the respondent could provide us with a consistent version of their thoughts and opinions.

Fourthly, we held regular debriefing sessions between the two of us throughout the process. During these discussions, our individual visions broadened as the other party shared their experiences and perceptions. These sessions not only helped to expand our understanding of the phenomena we were studying, but also to test our developing ideas and interpretations. Not lastly, probing questions from the partner helped us recognise our own biases and preferences.

Fifthly, our research project was subjected to several rounds of peer review. These occasions occurred between us, our peers, and the project supervisor. The fresh perspective that such individuals brought enabled us to challenge our assumptions and potential biases.

Additionally, we kept a 'learning journal' throughout the project, where we addressed our concerns and evaluated the project as it progressed. This learning journal assisted us in recording our initial impressions of each data collection session, patterns that emerged in the data collected, and theories generated.

Finally, each interviewee was given the option of reviewing the final transcript. Some of them did it, while others did not. This choice allowed us to have a degree of triangulation of the transcripts by involving the respondents themselves in the process, who could also make changes to clarify what they meant when saying something.

Considering the transferability criteria, we have provided an account of the contextual factors that influence the present research to allow comparisons to be made. To assess the extent to which the findings may apply to people in other settings, we maintain that similar projects, using the same methodology, but conducted in different environments, could be beneficial.

Furthermore, in terms of the dependability criteria, we made an effort to write the adopted methodology (the current chapter) as thoroughly as possible, allowing future researchers to potentially replicate the work faithfully.

Last but not least, complying with the confirmability criteria, we took steps to ensure that the work's findings were based on the interviewees' experiences and ideas rather than our characteristics and preferences. For example, we held discussions in which we addressed interview results one by one. Additionally, to improve confirmability, the limitations of this study have been extensively discussed in a later section of the paper.

3.6 Data Handling, GDPR and Ethical Considerations

A keystone of research is the ethical considerations connected to it. In doing this research, our guiding ethical principle has been the avoidance of any type of harm to any person associated with the study, foremost the participants (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). In

this sense, all the most important ethical aspects of the research, from data collection to data storage, data handling and privacy norms, were present in the interview consent form (see Appendix B), that every participant had to sign to take part in the study.

To sum up, the consent form covered aspects such as the main topics that we aimed to cover during the interview, the estimated duration of the interview, the voluntary nature of the participation and the possibility of withdrawing from the research. It also described how the data was collected (recorded and transcribed), how the data was going to be stored and handled, the confidentiality and anonymity of the information collected. Lastly, it explained the possibility that we quoted what was said during the conversation, the possibility of correcting the transcripts and our complete availability for any questions, doubts or concerns. More details can be found in Appendix B.

3.7 Limitations of the Study

According to Theofanidis & Fountouki (2019), the limitations of any particular study refer to potential flaws outside the researchers' control. Considering this definition, throughout the process, we have been aware that this study has its own limitations that need to be accounted for.

First of all, we need to say that our selection strategy has its limitations: we only chose people signed up on LinkedIn. This choice points to the fact that we necessarily excluded potential respondents who would have met our selection criteria but did not possess a LinkedIn account. Although we have not found specific traits that distinguish people who have a LinkedIn account and people who do not (especially in the age range of interest for this research), it is still important to keep this fact in mind as a potential limitation.

Another limitation that we have observed is that our sample is characterised by a European cultural influence, as all respondents were European natives (except for one respondent). Therefore, it is important to consider that the expectations they have expressed have originated within a European context, which shapes their social and work interactions.

Additionally, a limitation derived directly from our selection criteria: all our interviewees graduated from the same school, namely Lund University School of Economics and

Management in Sweden. Therefore, it is likely that this common experience might have shaped their beliefs and mindsets in a similar way, which might be different from the mindset produced by other universities in the same country, or even more by universities in other countries.

Broadly speaking, there are other variables outside our control that could limit our research. For example, when asking a specific question, we were aware that the answer would inevitably be subconsciously influenced by a vast set of assumptions and variables (e.g. gender, nationality, personal character, previous life experiences, beliefs). For this reason, it is not possible to rely too much on the cause-effect relationships described by the interviewees.

Furthermore, it is essential to note that during the interviews, a limitation laid in the fact that we could not control the interview environment as all interviews had to be carried out online. In doing so, while we could see that the majority of interviewees took the call from their houses, some of them did the interview from what might have been their office. The problem is that we could not make sure the external environment was not biasing the respondents' answers. A prime example were people who had the interview from the office, where co-workers might have been present and might have influenced the way they answered our questions. Also, the fact that the interviews had to be via video call and not in-person meant that we could rely very little on parts of active listening such as body language and tone of voice.

Moreover, a limitation might lie in the fact that total anonymity was guaranteed to the interviewees. Indeed, we made this choice because we did not want to potentially endanger any of them because of their responses and, instead, we wanted to promote the most honest answers possible. The limitation stands in the fact that we cannot provide more background information about our respondents, which could have helped the reader have a more thorough overview of the study and make further sense of the findings.

Last but not least, an additional intrinsic limitation of this study (usually shared among qualitative, inductive researches) is that the room for interpretation of the data is ample. For this reason, it is vital to emphasise that what is to be found in the last chapters of this paper is our interpretation of the data collected. However, to mitigate the evergreen critique about the

arbitrary character of qualitative, inductive research, we have adopted a structured and transparent method, as explained in the section above.

4 - Findings

Before we present the study's findings, we would like to return to this research paper's purpose and research question. This study aims to discuss empirically-based insights and suggestions for the development of the management discussion to better address the expectations of the new workforce, while the research question is as follows: *How does the discussion on management address the expectations of the new workforce?*

To address both the purpose and the research question, we must first understand the expectations that characterise the new workforce. Therefore, in the first part of this chapter, we will present the findings of their empirical investigation on the interviewees' expectations towards work and management.

We will explain and back up our findings with quotations from the interviews. Additionally, there will be a section where we will also provide empirical evidence from external studies (which - as already mentioned - have been searched for after the data analysis process) that support the claims we advance throughout this chapter. Although already mentioned, it is worth reiterating that these studies have been consulted only after the data analysis process; moreover, they mainly refer to 'millennials': our sample is part of this generation, hence the relevance of these studies. At the end of the chapter, there will be a section where all findings are synthesised.

The findings have been organised into different themes to help the reader better understand what expectations the new workforce possesses. It is worth noting that we have decided to make careful edits to some of the quotes in this chapter. This choice depended on the fact that a *verbatim* approach caused certain quotes to be difficult to read and follow. Hence, we made minor adjustments regarding punctuation and grammar mistakes to help the reader follow the content of the quotations; at the same time, we have been cautious not to alter the meaning of the quotes or to change it as little as possible with our interference.

4.1 Theme 1 - Sense of Fulfilment

To begin with, eight interviewees out of 25 expected to find a sense of purpose coming from working for a common good. Interviewee 22, for example, said: "*So I guess we are here to work on* [...] *something that is better for everyone, for the whole community"*. Taking a different angle, interviewee 25 said that purpose was also found in "*supporting an important organisation"* which contributed to the upkeep of civil society.

Alongside the expectation of finding greater purpose in work, 12 interviewees out of 25 stated that they also value the possibility of making an impact, considered by them as a motivating factor. For example, interviewee 5 observed: "*This is something which is very motivating because I'm working on some projects, which will have a very good impact on the world in the future"*; interviewee 17, instead, said that the sense of making an impact could also lie in the feeling of contributing to the workplace. In a very similar way, interviewees 21 and 22 respectively stated that they expected "*a job where I can do something for my country in a positive social way"* and "*working for a greater good* [...]*, working for something better for society as a whole"*.

Combining both ideas, some interviewees expected not only to work for a purpose, but also to work for a company which can live up to that purpose. For example, interviewee 12 mentioned: *"It's also important that I can stand for what I'm doing. I don't want to work for a company where I can't relate to the values. I wouldn't go there, I wouldn't start working in the meat industry or the tobacco industry, I think I would never go into either, but* [I expect] *something which is a good business, and where I think I can do at least some good stuff to the world* [...]*"*.

4.2 Theme 2 - Learning and Growth

In addition to the expectation of a sense of fulfilment from the job, 18 interviewees out of 25 expressed their willingness to continuously learn more and more. For example, interviewee 5 pointed out that *"You should really try to learn, you should really try to work with people who know more than you"* and interviewee 24, talking about the possibility to have a personal development at work, said: *"I think this is why I enjoy my workplace so much"*. Other

interviewees stressed the importance of mutual learning with the manager, and interviewee 19 stated that learning and growth were the priorities.

Underlining the fact that this new workforce is eager to learn more and more, ten interviewees out of 25 said they valued learning from experienced individuals, foremost from the manager. For example, interviewee 10 pointed out: *"I have to perceive my manager is someone who is competent and that I can learn from. But working with people you don't perceive as someone who has knowledge of and skills and authority in a field, it's harder to accept, let's say, directions or advice".* In the same regard, interviewee 23 pointed out that getting orders from inexperienced superiors causes demotivation, implicitly pointing at the importance of having an experienced person by the side.

Furthermore, six interviewees expected to be granted the opportunity to learn through trial and error. For example, consider interviewee 19's highlight: *"Give me the freedom to make mistakes so that I can learn",* or when interviewee 6 complained about the fact that "*I am not expected to bring a problem but a solution"*, an approach that left them with little room to having stimulating dialogues and experimenting creative solutions. Similarly, interviewee 3 stated that "*I cannot present anything to a client, unless he* [the manager - ed.] *has looked at it before. So there's always kind of this pulling me back, and not perhaps letting me do trial-and-error, or like, learning-by-doing*" - a sentence that captured the interviewee's dissatisfaction about the inability to experiment and learn by trial and error.

Having the opportunity to learn more and more, learn from experienced people, and experiment with the trial-and-error system are factors that support the new workforce in pursuing an essential thing: career growth. Indeed, 19 interviewees out of 25 agreed on this; for instance, interviewee 6 expressed the expectation of the "*organisation as a platform to develop myself and others"* where "*to bring my skills to the next level".* Describing what they liked the most about their organisation, interviewee 24 argued it was the fact that "*it pushes me into growing and developing"* and, at the same time, interviewee 13 talked about a rising demotivation due to the inability to make career progress in their organisation.

The last finding related to learning and growth is the glue that keeps the pieces together: it explains how the new workforce expects to achieve this learning and growth. Indeed, 17 interviewees expressed expecting timely, quality, constructive feedback through which they

learn and grow. Interviewee 5 explained that they expected to receive a lot more feedback, especially as someone who has just started the job, and interviewee 8 talked about the need for more proactivity and constructive feedback. Similarly, interviewee 23 reported: "*I think my company should focus more on feedback*", and interviewee 24 also stressed that they expected more timely feedback or all kinds - "*not just the good one"*. Interviewee 8 also confirmed this *"In my case, for example, the manager was always satisfied. So I always had good feedback, which I mean, obviously, it's nice for me, and it's good to hear that they're satisfied with my project, with my work. But for example I like criticism or constructive criticism, because I always want to develop further"*. Furthermore, some interviewees expressed discontent because they have to constantly solicit feedback. For example, interviewee 3 said that *"I always have to ask for it, and be very specific. Ideally, I would like that my manager is like: if something went bad, he tells me immediately"*. Finally, capturing the essence of this theme, interviewee 25 explained: "*I would really like to have, like, direct feedback. And I mean, even if the feedback is not positive, then it's even more relevant to hear it right away"*.

4.3 Theme 3 - Ambition and Recognition

The following theme has to do with the ambitious mindset that we could find in the interviewees. Such a mindset drives them to be willing to prove their worthiness to themselves and others, especially if it means embarking on challenges leading outside of their comfort zone. Indeed, 11 interviewees out of 25 expressed this type of ambition: for example, interviewee 2 said: *"I'm really, really happy with my job. It's given me so much opportunity to grow and learn and experiment and develop* [...] *Every day is challenging and gives me a lot of new information. So that doesn't mean I'm always happy every day, certainly not. But I think my job puts me somewhere outside of my comfort zone, which is great, because then you have to learn"*. Instead, interviewee 17 described the expectation of finding challenges by saying: "*It's motivating being challenged in every fiber of your bones*", while interviewee 10 explained that "*What I would say works for me is having very challenging objectives, having the opportunity to develop and to do stuff"*.

The willingness to be constantly challenged by the work comes with the expectation of being entrusted with increasing responsibilities, as mentioned by 14 out of 25 interviewees. To begin with, interviewee 8 expected "*The feeling of having the responsibility of something, so*

that you're not only the little person who was just doing some excellent PowerPoint slides for someone; you produce content, valuable content". Looking at the same issue from the opposite angle, interviewee 22 said that "*having too little to do"* and "*feeling I am not contributing"* pushed the motivation down. Interviewee 12 mentioned how positive the sense of sharing responsibilities with the manager was, and interviewee 15 underlined the importance of giving responsibility to employees. Also, interviewee 11 explained that an underlying reason for this expectation and willingness to take on more responsibilities is that "*increasing responsibility is a measure of trust"* and trust - as we will see later - is a much-valued factor. However, we also found that a balance in delegating responsibility has to be there, as explained by interviewee 13, who expressed dissatisfaction in the manager not taking enough responsibility and overly delegating them: "*I would say, I'm the one responsible for everything that happens* [...] *I would say that it would be important for her* [the manager - ed.] *to be more responsible"*.

An additional finding we obtained is that 11 interviewees agreed on the importance of external recognition as an underlying motif. For example, interviewee 20 confirmed that "*when someone doesn't appreciate the job that you are doing, this can push your motivation down*" and interviewee 11 also pointed out that "*not being seen, and not being followed up on, can definitely kill my motivation. And the feeling of doing things that no one really puts attention to or sees, that's a motivation killer*". Interviewee 16 expressed expecting "*someone to see I am putting heart and soul into work"* and interviewee 25 highlighted the importance of "*feeling that my manager knows I am doing my best"*.

Similarly, having people that are not able to show appreciation for someone's work is demotivating (interviewee 24) and not getting enough recognition, especially in the beginning, can provoke work dissatisfaction (interviewee 23) because, eventually, "*it is a lot about being recognised"* (interviewee 23). Some interviewees (5) also mentioned the importance of a fair wage as a form of recognition. For example, interviewee 23 said that *"In the beginning, when I started, I felt like I was not getting enough recognition, especially with pay, for example, that was a little bit too low"*. However, it is important to note that two of our interviewees questioned the importance of a good remuneration by saying that the monetary part is not the most important (interviewee 4), and they are more motivated by "*soft stuff"* rather than money (interviewee 6).

4.4 Theme 4 - Human Approach to Work

Despite their ambitiousness and willingness to get increasingly more responsibilities, we have found one emerging theme that had to do with the perceived importance of a healthy, humane, social approach to work, shaping their expectations towards the work environment.

More than a third of the interviewees (nine) explicitly discussed the importance of a work-life balance. For example, interviewee 15 mentioned that "*you have to have that balance to succeed in your workplace"*, presenting it as a contributing factor to success at work. Interviewee 25 talked about this balance by saying that "*work doesn't have to be the most important part of my life"*, and interviewee 4 reiterated the concept in a catchy way: *"I work to live, I don't live to work"*. In the form of a recommendation to their manager, interviewee 9 advised: "*lessen your expectation on people needing to dedicate body and soul to a job"*.

On the other side of the coin, it is necessary to also notice that a couple of interviewees, e.g. interviewee 5, described their current situation as a "*bad work-life balance*". However, they did not mention it as a big concern or something that affected them negatively in a considerable way. Therefore, we can think that the genuine interest for a work-life balance is a shared theme, but not in a unanimous way.

We also noted that four interviewees reported an aversion towards an approach to work that focuses excessively on the money-making part, the business side. Referring to their will to spend time doing and learning new things other than working with clients, interviewee 9 suggested more flexibility to focus on things other than making money. Similarly, talking about their manager, interviewee 6 advised: "*don't focus too much on the business side, the money*". Interviewee 22 made a point on how task-focused environments and people were a cause of felt constraint and demotivation, while interviewee 18 expressed the repercussions of such an environment by saying "*I can survive a few years and then do something else* [...], *you don't feel attached to the company"*.

Shifting the perspective from which to look at the same matter, we found that a higher number of interviewees (ten) mentioned the felt importance of a people first approach. For example, interviewee 24 stressed how much they like being valued "*as a person, not as a resource*", interviewee 3 recommended their manager to be more attentive to people and, in a

similar fashion, interviewee 18 disappointedly said that the "*company forgets that this is about people.* [...] *Let the people know that you care"*.

At the same time, interviewee 18 also said that a performance-oriented way of working is "*fair because you are assessed on hours of work"*, and interviewee 9 also made a similar point. What we can understand from this - as stated by interviewee 6, who supported a balanced approach between people and business orientation - is that, while the importance of a people-focus stands firmly, the right dose of performance-orientation in the working culture has some merits for the new workforce, such as to facilitate getting recognition for extra efforts.

In describing their expectations on how to approach work, eight interviewees out of 25 expressly talked about the importance of having fun at work. They stated that a social environment - a culture - that promotes having fun among colleagues while working makes them motivated and generally improves their satisfaction with their job. For instance, interviewee 12 states: *"I would say that, for me, it's very important that I'm having fun at work. Not like, super fun every day. But in general, not like every Monday, I longed for Friday, and then every Sunday, I'm super sad, because the weekend and my two fun days in the week are over. I think I really value having a good time at work"*.

On a similar note, six interviewees talked about the importance of what we have decided to label 'the possibility of bringing their full selves to work' - meaning that they do not have to resort to a more professional identity, a more professional version of themselves, at work. In this regard, interviewee 24 enjoyed the fact that "*I can be myself at work"* and interviewee 22 was happy to tell us how it is "*nice to have a culture where you can go a bit away from your daily tasks and discuss new things"*, referring to having more personal type of conversations and relationships. Interviewee 19 explained how working in an environment where the people and the culture do not align with one's own values causes demotivation; interviewee 2 provided an example of how being able to talk about feelings makes respect deeper, and interviewee 20 expressed a positive judgement in "*getting to know your colleagues outside of work"*.

At the same time, we found a voice of dissent in interviewee 7, who firmly put forth the importance she gave to clearly defined boundaries between private and working life to

protect her private life from the potential influence of her toxic work environment. Additional findings that deal with the tradeoff between privacy and openness - regarding the manager-managee relationship - will be presented later on. For the sake of clarity, it is worth mentioning that we have chosen the term 'managee' to refer to 'a person who is managed' (Lexico, 2021).

Taking more of a general perspective, we discovered how much the interviewees shared the expectation of a social, collaborative and inclusive environment: 23 out of 25 mentioned a positive social environment as a critical factor. To start with, interviewee 5 pointed out they felt that teamwork was more important than individuals, and interviewee 9 expressed their content in having a social environment defined by open communication and absence of "*political games*". Interviewee 10 highlighted how much they value "*human, honest, meaningful relationships* [...] *start[ing] from an optimistic and collaborative perspective"* and interviewee 15 talked about the perceived impact of a "*sense of belonging* [...] *feeling of togetherness*" in improving their motivation. This concept was expressed in a similar way by interviewee 17, and interviewee 24 described the importance of being with people, helping people grow, and being in a friendly team.

At the same time, several interviewees expressed how valuable this aspect was by talking about the negative consequences caused by its absence. For example, interviewee 7 said that an environment that she presented as not diverse and not inclusive made them feel excluded, and interviewee 8 told us that their "*negative, stressful*" environment reduced their motivation. Interviewee 15 said that the lack of collaboration and the pervasiveness of political discussions made them feel alone and highly pressured, which in turn had a substantial impact on their job satisfaction, expressed as "*I am not satisfied at all"*. Also, interviewee 16 said that a cause of demotivation is "*when not everyone is fully engaged",* and interviewee 25 reported feeling quite demotivated because they had no peers and not so many connections underlining, by contrast, the felt importance of positive social interaction. We also noticed that this issue had quite a considerable relevance because various interviewees stressed their discontent towards the current situation (home-working due to the Covid-19 pandemic). Interviewee 23 captured this demotivation well in "*sitting alone in my home and not having social contact"* precisely because of the importance of being immersed in a positive social context.

4.5 Theme 5 - High-Quality Relationship with Manager

Another emerging theme that plays a vital role in influencing how interviewees perceive management is the quality of the relationship with the manager. There are a handful of patterns we have found that can help us understand what is important in this relationship from the perspective of the new workforce.

First of all, we shall compare two opposite patterns that emerged: those who expect a close, friendly relationship and those who expect a professional one. We have found that about half of the interviewees (13) saw value in cultivating a relationship where the manager and the managee can be seen as friends. For instance, interviewee 6 said that "*when my manager sympathises with me, I can learn the most*", pointing at the beneficial effects on learning and development yielded by a close, friendly approach, and later adding that "*getting to see all the pieces of him adds value to him as a manager"*. Similarly, interviewee 10 claimed that a relationship that goes beyond work also helps in work. Interviewee 23 commented on their "*super friendly"* relationship as very positive because "*she* [the manager] *has an easy time to understand what I am talking about, understand my needs and feelings"*, therefore making a point about a better display of emotional intelligence thanks to a close relationship.

Other interviewees (10, 18, 19) commented on how big a part this friendly relationship plays in their overall happiness about work; for instance, interviewee 18 said: "*we have a really good relationship, which is maybe 80% of success* [...] *it affects me in a positive way.* [...] *This good relationship takes away a bit of the stress.* [...] *I know that my supervisor cares. And that makes me - even if I want to leave, I need to help him"*, or interviewee 19 who commented on their friendly relationship as "*the biggest mover in terms of your feeling every day"*. An additional insight was provided by interviewee 9, who said that their "*pretty friendly*" relationship made them motivated and had a positive influence overall. At the same time, interviewee 9 reported that this type of relationship made them (the interviewee) so enthusiastic to work that it ended up having a negative influence on their free time (i.e. work-life balance).

However, a contrasting pattern emerged from the interviews and found just slightly fewer supporters than the previous one (9): the value of structuring the relationship in a professional way. For instance, interviewee 8 described the relationship as "*definitely professional*" but

still "*nice"*, trustworthy, open to criticism and transparent. Interviewee 16 also talked about their professional, really good working relationship where they can learn from each other, where they created a "*team feeling"* that was "*super comfortable"*.

Other interviewees argued for the value of maintaining a professional relationship, such as interviewee 19 who said: "*first be professional and set boundaries before friendliness* [...] *our friendliness or friendship should not matter. It's about respect and professionalism".* Interviewee 18 also said: "*maybe sometimes it's better not to get too close with the manager, because then I know that he won't tell me what he is supposed to".* Additionally, interviewee 7 made a point about the excessive closeness desired from the manager - which caused the interviewee to feel more anxious and stressed - and would have been solved by steering the relationship towards a more professional one: "*I think sometimes it was too close. It was too personal. He was asking things about my personal life. And it was something that I don't want to share. Because I'm starting my career, I'm going to work, I would like to be professional*".

Ultimately, we acknowledged that the people who supported a friendly relationship between manager and managee were essentially balanced out by those in favour of a professional relationship. Despite the divisive nature of this issue - and the inconsequentiality of such a finding - by digging deeper into the interviews, we found some underlying aspects that the interviewees expected with a higher level of agreeance.

Following the thread, the first of such findings, which 11 interviewees mentioned, is that they expected having a manager who cares on a personal level, i.e. able to show a certain degree of emotional intelligence, regardless of the friendly or professional nature of the relationship. In this regard, interviewee 1 equated the ability of a manager to care for their people to the degree to which the people care (about the manager and the organisation). The interviewee also added that a caring manager is a crucial factor in fostering people's willingness to improve and develop. Interviewee 6 reported that "*I appreciate the most when he* [the manager] *puts himself in my shoes, sympathising with me"*; interviewee 13, by contrast, expressed deep disappointment in the fact that the manager would never check in on a personal level. Interviewees 12 and 15 highlighted the importance of caring for the small things (on a personal level) and the overall expectation of empathy from the manager. Finally, interviewee 14 said that they expected "*being able to say when you are not feeling well*", and

interviewee 20 was enthusiastic in telling us how much they liked it "*if your supervisor can listen to you and feel the way you are feeling"*.

With an even higher level of consensus, we found that the majority of the interviewees (17) mentioned and deeply valued and expected a relationship in which they felt having the possibility to speak up and be listened to. Interviewee 23 put it in a very straightforward way: *"my thoughts get taken into consideration. That is my favourite part"*. At the same time, some interviewees proved the importance of this aspect by showing the adverse effects of its absence: interviewee 7 expressed concern in the fact that it was not easy to raise issues and concerns, and they were not listened to anyway. Interviewee 13 said that "*it doesn't feel right to give feedback"* and that they were not being heard, which made her very unsatisfied about the job; finally, interviewee 9 showed frustration because their voice was not being taken into consideration when making choices that would have repercussions on them as well.

Lastly, an equally agreed-upon aspect (appearing in 17 interviews) is the expectation of continuous, open communication with the manager. Interviewee 1 discussed how constant open communication was one major factor that contributed to their willingness and openness to help each other constantly. Interviewee 2 showed that the presence of an open dialogue with the manager, although sometimes had led to "*heated discussions"*, would, in general, improve results and was perceived as playing a significant role in the interviewee not being scared of making mistakes. Moreover, many interviewees point out that constant open communication fosters critical discussion: interviewee 22 said "*I wouldn't be afraid to say basically anything to him* [...] *we love discussing ideas and thoughts"* Interviewee 17 stated the importance of a "*manager that challenges you"* through and open relationship and dialogue, and interviewees 8 and 13 stressed the expectation of open communication for achieving openness to criticism (from both sides) and different views. Highlighting the importance of communication, interviewee 16 sadly remarked that "*we are not in touch as often as I would appreciate"*.

4.6 Theme 6 - Supported Freedom

Last but certainly not least, we have found a theme encompassing the behaviours and practices managers can adopt to help the new workforce succeed and bring out their best.

First, nine of our interviewees mentioned that it is imperative for them to have flexibility in work. For instance, interviewee 15 said: "*I value freedom, the possibility to be in control of my own schedule"*. Also, interviewee 24 talked about the flexibility they have in terms of work organisation as a very positive factor, and interviewee 23 reported that they enjoy "*being able to play on my own time"*.

Another thing that appears to be crucial in what most of our interviewees (19) consider as good management is to be given ownership of their work and, together with it, freedom.

As interviewee 9 put it, they expect management to "*give the people below you the platform to perform"* and, as interviewee 22 said, provide "*opportunities to explore what I like to do myself"*. Additionally, interviewee 23 expected management to lay the foundations of a "*playing field where I can create and research what I want to do"*. Some interviewees also explained that a certain degree of ownership and freedom helps improve the feeling of contributing to the world, as discussed by interviewee 5: *"If you want to change something, if you want to do something better, if you want to bring something forward, I think it's really important that you have some freedom"*.

By contrast, we noticed that the interviewees who had experiences where they did not feel enough of this sense of ownership and freedom (15) talked about it as a central issue. For instance, we heard interviewee 25 explaining how feeling controlled reduced creativity, or interviewee 7 telling us that feeling micromanaged made them extremely unhappy. In this regard, interviewee 21 also said that a manager who is "*keeping eyes on everything"* had the result that "*I didn't feel comfortable. You feel observed all the time. You don't feel comfortable innovating.* [...] *The process takes longer"*. Interviewee 3 also added that the controlling attitude of the manager caused anxiety and procrastination.

At the same time, not all of our interviewees agreed on this matter and, actually, some of those who said they liked freedom and ownership were not totally convinced about it because it was true that they wanted it - but only to a certain extent. Indeed, 11 interviewees also discussed the perceived downsides of being given too much freedom in their work. For example, interviewee 11 told us that, within a *"you are your own boss"* culture, they felt lost and did not know how to handle that culture initially, which caused confusion and feeling unsupported.

Coming from a similar experience, interviewee 24 added that it "*sometimes can be overwhelming and come with some fear"*. Interviewee 5 discussed with us that the recurring doubt "*did I do something wrong?"* caused by the amount of freedom they are given makes them worried and sad. Similarly, interviewees 6 and 13 said that their environment - characterised by a lot of freedom and independence - made them feel "*being left to your own devices"* and "*feeling alone, not supported"*. This feeling escalated to the point in which interviewee 13 said: "*I don't have much trust left that I can develop myself within the company"*, as the (absent) manager was felt as a keystone in this path. Interviewee 16 also mentioned feeling sometimes "*too free"*, something that was remedied by creating discipline and structure or, as interviewee 15 said, "*with KPIs, it is much clearer to see a goal, to know what to do"*.

As divisive as the freedom-control dilemma seemed, we were able to identify an underlying red thread that encapsulated the managerial expectations of 19 of our interviewees, without any voice of dissent. Indeed, the fact that some of them liked being given freedom and ownership, while others preferred a more structured approach seemed to be dependent on another factor: the degree to which they received and felt support and guidance from the manager. Having a manager who is willing and able to support and guide them was described as a core expectation of our interviewees, especially at the beginning of their career: interviewee 21 said that "*at the beginning, you need someone watching you, giving you advices"* and interviewee 16 note that "*as I am sort of new in my position, sometimes I would need a bit more guidance"*. Additionally, interviewee 11 said that the lack of initial support made it difficult to interpret roles and relationships in a "*you are your own boss"* culture, and also interviewee 10 advised to "*be supportive in the beginning"*. Similarly, interviewees that were feeling to be left unguided showed disappointment in the fact that "*I have to ask explicitly for help"* (interviewee 6), or that the manager was providing no suggestions or advice on how to proceed (interviewee 13), or the fact of finding "*no initial support in learning or giving me tasks"* (interviewee 22).

Other interviewees enthusiastically said that "*I feel like I take on the world, and he has my back"* (interviewee 2), or that "[feeling supported] *inspires an entrepreneurial spirit in me because I just don't fear failure"* (interviewee 9). This feeling of support and guidance seems to enhance people's learning ability especially if "*I* [manager] *will never look down on you*

because I know more" (interviewee 5). Interviewee 14 expected the manager to be able to "*support 100%*" your people with everything they need - "*I need that support from my manager, I need my manager to have my back"*. Interviewee 15 described the expectations towards the manager as one who can "*guide, coach, set an example"*, and interviewee 19 wanted the manager to be a centre for help and guidance because that creates a feeling of protection. In addition, interviewee 19 said: "*I expect a manager who takes responsibility for my own growth and development",* and interviewee 20 agreed by saying that the manager is expected to support you and follow you in your career path. Finally, interviewee 22 concluded that a manager who supports the people "[...] *really suits a person who wants to explore the creativity and possibilities and try new things"*.

Alongside expecting a manager who can provide support and guidance, 21 of our interviewees emphasised the expectation of having a manager who can give them trust, and make them feel trusted. As interviewee 16 said, it is "*really nice to be trusted for a new one",* but also, as pointed out by interviewee 8, by giving trust you can expect that *"the employees will do their best"* and they will feel valued, or as explained by interviewee 21 "*when you do it* [giving trust]*, people answer in a better way"*. Additionally, interviewee 10 argued that "*when you trust your manager, you will be more comfortable going back to them and explain and try to find a solution"*. Moreover, some interviewees made a point about the need for trust within the relatively new context of distance-working: interviewee 23 said that "*now during corona* [Covid-19 pandemic] *there is not any other way to do it* [...], *there is not really a way to be able to micromanage as you would at an office"* and explained that trust is fundamental when everybody works from home; interviewee 1 also commented that "*with less defined tasks, the boss needs to trust people"*.

Ultimately, the majority of our interviewees (14) saw value in the manager's ability to recognise what managerial attitude works best for each person and act accordingly (as explained by interviewee 10). Starting with what interviewee 9 said, it is important to "*remember that every person has different values and aspirations",* and, according to interviewee 13, it is key to ask people how they feel about the way they are managed. Interviewee 24 also added that "*there are things I would do differently. But then again, we are two different people that are probably on two opposite sides of the emotion scale"*, reminding the importance of acknowledging personal differences. Interviewee 16 recommended managers to "*be adaptable and flexible according to the specific team members' needs"* and,

in particular, interviewee 25 added that *"I think you need a little bit different kind of management when you are junior and you are just graduated"*. Interviewee 11 explained how important it was for them to clarify with the manager the personal expectations about the relationship, the cooperation and the performance or, as interviewee 7 put it, understand a person's aspirations and start from there. Finally, interviewee 17 also talked about the expectation of the manager's ability to know the preferred learning style of their people, to adopt a style that facilitates their growth and development.

4.7 Supporting studies

As previously mentioned, we created this section to explore the already-existing studies on the expectations of 'millennials' (the generation of which our sample is part) to compare them with our insights. The main purpose of this section is to give more authority to our findings by backing them up with such large-scale research. Finally, in presenting the relevant extracts of the supporting studies, this section will follow the same order in which the findings have been discussed.

Starting with the first theme we presented - 'sense of fulfilment' - Deloitte (2016), in its 2016 Millennial Survey (that collected the views of nearly 7,700 millennials representing 29 countries around the world) reported that 70 per cent of millennials believe their personal values were shared by the organisations they work for. This type of evidence points to the fact that millennials prefer employers whose values align with their own. Indeed, 56 per cent of millennials have "ruled out ever working for a particular organisation because of its values or standard of conduct" (Deloitte, 2016, p. 11).

Regarding our second theme - 'learning and growth' - ManpowerGroup (2016), which conducted quantitative research across 25 countries and surveyed 19,000 millennials, showed that millennials display the need for continuous skill development in order for the work to remain employable. Indeed, 93 per cent of them wanted lifelong learning and was willing to invest their own time and money in additional training. When looking for a new job, four out of five millennials said that the opportunity to learn new skills is the most critical factor, and 22 per cent of them was planning to take a long break from work to gain new skills and qualifications.

Additionally, backing up what our interviewees said about the importance of career development, Robert Walters' (2015) Whitepaper Survey - which polled 302 hiring managers and 228 professionals - reported that millennials want more than just a job. Indeed, they want a career, with 69 per cent citing a clear path for advancement in the business as the most important factor in keeping them engaged. However, this also reflects the generation's ambition: millennials have grown up believing that they can accomplish anything, and this confidence has led to a desire for responsibility early in their careers.

To wrap up theme 2, with regards to the expectation of quality feedback practice, PwC´s (2011) Millennials Report, an online survey of 4,364 graduates from 75 countries, pointed out that millennials want and value frequent feedback. Indeed, 51 per cent of the polled millennials said feedback should be given frequently or continuously on the job, while only 1 per cent said feedback was unimportant. They expect to be provided candid feedback in real-time, emphasising positive contributions or improvements in key competencies.

Moving on to theme 3 - 'ambition and recognition' - to support our findings of the importance of fair remuneration, Robert Walters´ (2015) Whitepaper Survey reported that a competitive salary is important for all generations, but especially for ambitious millennials, whose earnings reflect their status and success. A competitive pay and bonus system was important to 96 per cent of respondents, and the salary was the top reason for 25 per cent of respondents to change jobs. Additionally, regarding recognition, Robert Walters' (2015) Whitepaper Survey pointed out that millennials want to know that their hard work is also publicly recognised. Formal recognition of individual achievements (such as an employee of the month program) was rated as one of the most important ways to keep millennials engaged by 32% of them.

Passing to our fourth theme - 'human approach to work' - PwC´s (2011) Millennials Report showed that work-life balance has always been a priority for millennials, with 95 per cent of respondents saying it was important to them and 70 per cent saying it was very important. Supporting our finding about the expectation of a human approach to work where business and money are not the only goals, Deloitte (2016) Millennial Survey showed that nearly nine in ten (87 per cent) respondents believed that the success of a business should be measured in terms of more than just its financial performance.

Regarding the importance of having fun at work, Robert Walters´ (2015) Whitepaper Survey indicated that 75 per cent of millennials considered an engaging and fun workplace, including work perks like free food and social events, important or very important. Concerning the general work environment, Deloitte (2016) Millennial Survey showed that millennials were more likely to report high levels of satisfaction in workplaces with a creative, inclusive working culture (76 per cent) than in workplaces with a more authoritarian, rules-based approach (49 per cent).

Moving on to theme 5 - 'high-quality relation with manager' - Gallup's (2016) Millennials Report, which surveyed 1,000 U.S. adults each day for 350 days per year, showed that when managers are open and approachable, when they make employees feel comfortable sharing their needs, challenges, and questions, employees are more likely to be engaged. According to Gallup, 59 per cent of millennials who strongly agree that they can discuss "non-work-related issues" with their manager are engaged. Also, supporting our finding of the expectation of open communication, the same study showed that employees who could communicate freely with their managers were more likely to stay with their company. The more conversations managers had with their employees, the more engaged their employees became.

Coming to an end, a study supporting our findings in theme 6 - 'supported freedom' - is Deloitte's (2016) Millennial Survey, which found that almost 88 per cent of respondents wished they could, within certain constraints, have more freedom to start and finish work when they wanted. Meanwhile, 77 per cent would have liked to have more mobile connectivity, such as tablets and smartphones. Finally, regarding the expectation of guidance and support, the same study confirmed that mentoring had a positive impact, and six out of ten (61 per cent) millennials were benefiting from having someone to turn to for advice or who helped develop their leadership skills.

4.8 Synthesis of the Findings

Having presented all the findings that our investigation produced, we shall briefly synthesise them to provide the reader with an overview that will help navigate the rest of the paper.

In theme 1, we explored the ‘sense of fulfilment’ that the new workforce looks for in their job: it can be achieved by having a varied, dynamic job that can be considered interesting, or by feeling to be working for and towards a higher purpose, or by feeling like being able to make an impact through one's own actions.

In theme 2, ‘learning and growth’, we presented the eagerness of the new workforce to continuously learn new things in their job, how they expect learning from more experienced people (who, in most cases, was their manager), and we also showed that the new workforce expects the possibility to experiment and learn by trial-and-error. In general, they expect to grow at work in many ways, and that is reinforced by how much they value having a career development; finally, we have seen that this willingness to learn and grow creates a desire for feedback, both positive and negative.

‘Ambition and recognition’ were the key concepts of theme 3, which catalyse the expectations of the new workforce of being able to prove themselves through new challenges and more responsibilities. This expectation points to a distinguished need for external recognition, not lastly in the form of fair remuneration.

Theme 4 explored how much they expect a ‘human approach’ to work. This point was well-conveyed by how work-life balance was valued and how a people-first approach from the management was expected instead of a money-first, business-oriented environment. We also discovered the utmost importance the interviewees give to a social, collaborative and inclusive environment, where having fun is the norm and everyone is free to bring their full selves to work.

In theme 5, we became acquainted with how the new workforce expects to have a ‘high-quality relationship’ with the manager. Surprisingly, what constitutes quality for them was not necessarily a ‘friendship’ type of relationship (since professionalism was almost equally valued), but instead feeling that the manager is able to and does care about them on a personal level, having the possibility to speak up and being listened to, and having continuous open communication with the manager.

All these findings build up to theme 6 where we deal with a duality in the new workforce's expectations: ‘supported freedom’. On the one hand, they expect to be left with the autonomy

and freedom to have ownership of their work and they resent feeling controlled or micromanaged. On the other hand, they complained about being given too much freedom, which would create a sense of being left unguided, alone. They demanded the presence of a manager who is there to support them and guide them whenever needed, who can trust them in their work and, above all, to understand the person in front of them and recognise what type of behaviour would help them release their potential.

5 - Discussion

The stage is set: we can now dedicate ourselves to going through the discussion on management, as presented in chapter 2, with the purpose of assessing its ability to address the expectations of the new workforce, as illustrated in chapter 4. In doing so, we aim to evaluate both the merits and the potential shortcomings of the theories on management and propose ways for the discussion to better address the expectations of the new workforce.

It is worth clarifying that we see value in taking into analysis not only the contemporary discussion on management but also the more dated part of it (i.e. starting from the first theories of management advanced in the late 19th century), as argued by Hartley (2006) and Kitana (2016). The rationale of this is that - although our assumption (about the adaptive and evolving nature of management) leads us to believe that there are slim probabilities that this is the case - we do not exclude *a priori* that 'old' theories do effectively address some of the new workforce's expectations towards management. An additional argument to why we find it relevant to discuss also the more dated theories is that their principles are still applied nowadays: globally-renowned companies still take managerial inspiration from the principles of traditional theories (Denning, 2011; Hartley, 2006). Therefore, discussing their merits or shortcomings in relation to the new workforce is still practically relevant, and it is not only an academic exercise detached from reality.

Additionally, a more comprehensive analysis of the historical discussion on management can lead to a more comprehensive set of insights: both on the managerial principles that would fail to address the expectations of the new workforce and those that might do it satisfactorily. The broader and more varied the insights we can produce in this discussion, the better we will be able to formulate recommendations for the development of the debate on management.

The chapter is structured as a succession of management theories (in the same order as the previous chapter), briefly recalling their main principles but without going again into details (which was the purpose of the literature review). Then, we discuss how the theories might or might not be able to address the expectations of the new workforce - represented by the themes derived from our findings.

5.1 Scientific Management School

Starting with the Scientific Management School, we shall quickly recall its main principles as the division of work and specialisation, task efficiency and productivity, a focus on the process and the importance of oversight and direction by the manager (Dahlgaard-Parka, Reyes & Chenb, 2018; Kitana, 2016; Knight, 1986; Robbins and Coulter, 2012; Sridhar, 2016).

Against this theory's background, we can begin by commenting on the principle that people should be selected for and allocated to perform the tasks they are best fitted for. While sticking to the tasks that a person can carry out in the best way can foster the sense of worthiness, competence and contribution (as presented in theme 3), we argue that such a managerial choice would be detrimental in the long term to the new workforce. Indeed, it constrains people for possible career growth; additionally, it flattens the potential learning curve, and it makes the job extremely monotonous rather than varied (important aspects outlined in themes 1 and 2). In addition, the underlying assumption of a top-down approach where managers make every choice regarding workers' selection, training and development is very much on the opposite side of the values of freedom and ownership in one's tasks, career and personal development (themes 2, 3, and 6).

The division of work and specialisation principles also appear to be going against the value of a social, collaborative, and open work environment (theme 4). Unceasing efforts to increase efficiency and productivity of the human resource falls inside the scope of a dehumanising managerial focus on business rather than valuing people - openly against other values of the new workforce outlined in theme 4. In addition, a non-promoted but very likely consequence of the ‘efficiency and productivity before all’ managerial mindset is a disregard for the work-life balance of the managees (theme 4). However, this is mitigated by the acknowledgement that excess in productivity should be corresponded by financial rewards (positively addressing the value of a fair remuneration as in theme 3). Another negative connotation is that this managerial approach is unforgiving to workers who do not comply with the imposed standard - ‘if you do not fit, you do not eat’ - utterly against the much-valued employees-as-humans mindset (theme 4).

The managerial duty to constantly monitor worker performance would arguably be felt as a form of micromanagement that entails a lack of any form of trust (theme 6), accounting for a quite heavy deficit in this managerial theory compared to the expectations of the new workforce. However, the principle of providing instruction and training when needed can be interpreted as a form of support and guidance from the manager, which is welcomed as according to theme 6.

To sum up, the Scientific Management School cannot be seen as an adequate approach for the new workforce. While some principles - such as the promotion of economic incentives related to productivity - do align with the desires of the new workforce to have fair remuneration, most of its principles go openly against many of the workforce's core values. Examples could be the expectation of being trusted (unnecessary under the assumptions of scientific management) or being given ownership and freedom at work. Additionally, the promotion of division of work and specialisation imposes strict limits on the learning paths, the personal development opportunities and the quality of the work environment overall. In general, the Scientific School fails to recognise and address the human values of the workforce - a criticism which we could also find in the literature (Sridhar, 2016) - such as thinking in terms of a manager that cares on a personal level, fostering open communication both ways, acknowledging the importance of feedback, reasoning about the needs of a work-life balance and having fun at work. Ultimately, it suffers in general from a predominant business orientation if compared to the values and expectations of the new workforce.

5.2 Administrative Management School

Continuing with the Administrative Management School, the managerial practices it promoted are well-expressed by its 14 principles, so we shall go through the most relevant ones for our analysis (Kitana, 2016; Knight, 1986; Pindur, Rogers & Suk Kim, 1995; Robbins and Coulter, 2012; Sridhar, 2016; Voxted, 2017; Wren & Bedeian, 2009).

Firstly, the division and consequent simplification of work goes against the desire of the workforce to have an intrinsically 'interesting' and varied job and also against the wish for a social and cooperative approach to work (themes 1 and 4). Secondly, the authority and responsibility principle is partly in line with the logic of interviewees, willing to get increased

responsibilities to fuel their career progression (theme 3); however, the emphasis on concepts like authority and discipline point to a relatively strict top-down approach where the managee is supposed to execute orders without questioning them: clearly, it is against the expectations of freedom, no micromanagement, and the possibility to learn by experimentation and trial-and-error (themes 2 and 6).

The principles of unity of command and direction also suffer from similar shortcomings: whereas they can affect positively specific values like clear communication and guidance (themes 5 and 6), they stand inside a management framework that fails to address the desire of the workforce of open communication, of being able to speak up and being listened to and of having a certain degree of freedom and independence in decision making (themes 4, 5 and 6). Similarly, the principles of centralisation and hierarchy proposed in Fayol's administrative theory would address the same expectations of the new workforce inadequately: suppressing possibilities of freedom, ownership, learning, development, and open communication.

Other principles - like the subordination of individual interest to the common good - might be somewhat beneficial by fostering a sense of higher purpose (theme 1, although it largely depends on what the 'common good' is). Still, this potential merit is arguably outweighed by the more likely degradation of perceived self-worth and individual contribution (against the values of themes 1 and 2). The Administrative Management School also recognises the importance of fair compensation practices, which is positively valued by the new workforce (theme 3). Also, somewhat offsetting the shortcomings of the theory in relation to the new workforce, the principle of 'team spirit' is quite in line with the expectations towards a social and collaborative workplace (theme 5); however, while this principle is good on paper, the question remains on how to reconcile it with the overarching principle of division of work.

In general, the Administrative Management School advances some principles that, in themselves, seem to be somewhat in line with the important values of the new workforce. However, we believe that this managerial theory is still inadequate at meeting most of the new workforce's expectations because it reasons within a framework of 'orders and control', with the downside of downgrading the managees job with functionally no freedom and autonomy, no trust, and very little room for engaging with new challenges. Like the rest of the traditional management theories, its most impactful shortcoming is the lack of consideration for the human side of the organisation; such a shortcoming is also widely

recognised by the literature (Sridhar, 2016). Its concern is about helping managers to achieve the greatest outcomes by organising and controlling people in the 'best' way. In doing so, it fails to consider what the people want and need, and in conclusion, this management style would address the new workforce's expectations towards management negatively in many ways.

5.3 Bureaucratic Management School

Proceeding with the Bureaucratic Management School, its main traits could be succinctly described as rules and regulations, impersonality, and competence or expertise (Dahlgaard-Parka, Reyes & Chenb, 2018; Kitana, 2016; Knight, 1986; Robbins and Coulter, 2012; Wren & Bedeian, 2009).

Starting with the core principle of rules and regulation guiding the actions of employees, along with the principle of maintaining thorough documentation and records, we consider them to be against the central values of freedom, ownership and work flexibility (theme 6). However, we recognise that they might have the slightly positive outcome of providing the 'comfort' of clear guidance (theme 6). Moreover, the principles of impersonality (especially in the relationships between managers and managees) and rational behaviour of the manager seem to promote a mindset that is at great odds with a people-first approach, in which the managee can feel being valued as an individual and can feel personal care from the manager (themes 4 and 5). Nevertheless, we also find that this principle, along with the principle of assessing people for their competence, can potentially foster meritocracy (i.e. 'fair recognition') based on efforts and performance (which is valued by the new workforce as according to theme 3).

Furthermore, the bureaucratic theory advocates for principles like the division of labour and a hierarchical, authority-based structure, whose outcomes in addressing the expectations of the new workforce have already been discussed under the previous schools. An additional principle of the bureaucratic school is the promotion of a life-long career commitment by the employees, which does not seem to have intrinsic value in itself but could be beneficial for addressing the expectation of career growth (theme 3) if it's accompanied by actual opportunities to grow within the organisation.

To sum up, the Bureaucratic Management School seems to be quite far from addressing the most essential issues for the new workforce. Overall, while a couple of its principles might help create a sense of guidance, fair recognition and possibilities of career advancement, the majority of principles go in the opposite direction of addressing the core expectations of the workforce. Once again, this theory completely overlooks the human part of the equation, advancing a management style that is not necessarily concerned with caring for the individuals themselves, a criticism also pointed out by Robbins and Coulter (2012). It is not concerned also with creating a social, collaborative and inclusive environment, providing challenging and fun jobs in which the worker is trusted, creating quality human relationships between managers and managees and recognising the different needs of every person.

5.4 Behavioural Management School

Moving on to the Behavioural Management School, we can certify that the focus of this theory shifted to the importance of people rather than techniques and processes, and put the emphasis on the person and their work environment (Dahlgaard-Parka, Reyes & Chenb, 2018; Knight, 1986; Robbins and Coulter, 2012; Sridhar, 2016).

First, one principle put forward by this theory is the need for managers to recognise and take care of the group dynamics, both among workers but also between workers and managers. The underlying assumption is that the human factor is the most important element in the organisation system. For the first time, we observe a principle that straightforwardly addresses expectations of the new workforce such as a social, collaborative and inclusive environment. Additionally, it successfully promotes a personal relationship with the manager where personal care is cultivated and in which communication is key, and an environment which nurtures a people-first approach (themes 4 and 5). Moreover, this theory acknowledges the complexity of human motivation, which brings managers closer to understanding the importance of individual differences and urges them to be able to individualise their management style, along with a profound understanding of the person (very much aligned with the values of themes 5 and 6).

Additionally, the Behavioural School considers the employees' social and economic needs, which points in the direction of addressing expectations enclosed under themes 1 and 3: the importance of supporting a sense of gratification and fulfillment in the job and a work-life

balance. This also comes along with the proposition of a kinder managerial attitude, based on frequent expressions of gratefulness and encouragement instead of coercion - a proposition that addresses the foundation of the new workforce's expectation of external recognition. Overall, this school of thought highlights the fact that work satisfaction and thus performance are not only economic, but rather they are determined by factors such as a positive work environment, communication, teamwork, a positive managerial attitude, and encouragement, all aspects that address many expectations in themes 1, 3, 4 and 5. However, one potential shortcoming is the excessive disregard of economic incentives that are still generally valued by the new workforce (fair remuneration as in theme 3).

Overall, the Behavioural Management School addresses the important areas for the workforce in a much more satisfactory and thorough way than its predecessors. It covers crucial areas such as the work environment, the personal needs of the individuals and, to some extent, the different role of the manager in this framework. However, while dealing with environmental issues in a satisfactory way in comparison to the expectations of the new workforce, it still lacks a more-in depth coverage of certain dynamics such as the expectation of continuous learning and growth for the workforce, the possibility of working with a reasonable degree of freedom and trust, and providing a fun, interesting and impactful job that is related to a bigger purpose. Also, an excess of zeal in curating the human side might end up in overlooking important areas - as pointed out by Sridhar (2016) such as economic incentives.

5.5 Quantitative Management

Signalling a return to a positivist approach, the Quantitative Management Schools primary focus was on implementing mathematical and statistical tools to solve managerial problems such as organisation, planning and decision making (Dahlgaard-Parka, Reyes & Chenb, 2018; Koontz, 1980; Pindur, Rogers & Suk Kim, 1995; Robbins and Coulter, 2012).

Despite acknowledging that this was not intended to be a general management theory - but rather, a scientific tool for management, as explained by Koontz (1980) - the quantitative approach fell short of addressing fundamental human expectations in a similar way to the traditional schools of management. This is the core of the critique we can raise towards it: its narrative - focusing on the optimisation of the process and its outcomes - totally overlooks

central elements of management as in the expectations of the new workforce, basically failing altogether to create a discussion that addresses the 6 themes.

5.6 Systems Approach

Followingly, Systems Approach framed the organisation as a web of connections between all its parts and stressed the ability of managers to take a holistic view (Dahlgaard-Parka, Reyes & Chenb, 2018; Kitana, 2016; Knight, 1986; Koontz, 1980; Pindur, Rogers & Suk Kim, 1995; Robbins and Coulter, 2012; Sridhar, 2016).

One of the primary merits of this school is that it placed great emphasis on communication, which was seen as the fundamental ability of any well-functioning system. This recognition alone addressed many aspects of themes 4 and 5, like the new workforce's value of continuous open communication with the manager, the ability to speak up and be listened to and the desire for a social, collaborative and inclusive environment. Furthermore, systems approach highlights the importance of focusing on the holistic entity of the system without neglecting its components: we argue that this consideration pushes managers towards an increased understanding and valorisation of the single individuals, which is essentially a positive factor in relation to themes 3, 4 and 5. Finally, this approach seems to be the first one to implicitly point at the importance of striking a balance between business and people orientation, as they are both seen as interrelated parts of the same system (positively addressing elements of theme 4).

To sum up, systems approach is far from being a comprehensive management theory and, instead, it proposes a mindset from which to approach management. For this reason, many of the important aspects for the new workforce are not explicitly addressed by it. However, it has merits in addressing the importance of communication and the importance of any single individual, with their unique needs, values and desires, as a fundamental requirement for the proper functioning of the bigger system.

5.7 Contingency Approach

Moving on to the Contingency Approach, the central proposition under this school of thought is that a manager is expected to find the appropriate technique that suits the situation under particular circumstances, and at a particular time to obtain the best outcomes

(Dahlgaard-Parka, Reyes & Chenb, 2018; Kitana, 2016; Koontz, 1980; Pindur, Rogers & Suk Kim, 1995; Robbins and Coulter, 2012; Sridhar, 2016).

Although being some sort of all-encompassing advice, we credit this school for the main corollary that its assumptions entail: the need for managers to understand their people and individualise their management style accordingly. This proposition does actually address themes 5 and 6 in a way that meets the expectations of the new workforce.

Similarly to systems theory, we are bound to note that contingency approach does not represent a general management theory and therefore does not expressly address most of the themes of felt importance for the new workforce. However, we must credit it for the increased attention in the managers' need to be able to individualise their management style on the basis of a profound understanding of the persons in front of them.

5.8 Theory X and Theory Y

To continue with, Theory X and Theory Y postulated the existence of two opposite standpoints from which managers could look at the workers (Hartley, 2006; Knight, 1986; Pindur, Rogers & Suk Kim, 1995).

Since it should be almost self-evident that a Theory X type of approach (authoritative and control-oriented) would be utterly unsuited for the new workforce, we can focus on assessing the merits of the proposed Theory Y. Such an approach advocates for trust as the defining characteristic of the manager-managee relationship, a principle which is very much in line with the expectations of the new workforce (theme 5); also, it assumes that the workers will seek out for more responsibilities because they enjoy a richer job through which they can increase their own skills. This assumption points to a managerial attitude that would adequately address many expectations of the new workforce: the eagerness to prove themselves through increased responsibilities and the desire to have a varied, exciting job in which they can attain personal development, learning and career growth.

Another assumption of this theory is that employees are regarded as the most valuable asset to companies, suggesting a predominant people-first approach (addressing theme 4). Theory Y also postulates that close supervision is unnecessary (good for not creating a feeling of

micromanagement as in theme 6) and that the manager should relate to the managee in a personal way. This principle addresses the expectation of a manager that cares on a personal level (theme 5) and is likely to have good results for the general working environment (theme 4). However, this personal manager-managee relationship is presented in opposition to the teaching-based relationship between the two. In doing so, it suggests that the worker can (or should) be left without much guidance - an element that would not be appreciated by the new workforce (theme 6) - and seems to do a poor job at addressing the expectation of learning from a more experienced manager (theme 2).

In general, Theory Y addresses many of the essential elements for the new workforce, like the need for trust, the eagerness for increasing responsibility and autonomy at work, the willingness to learn and grow and the importance of a people-first approach. Additionally, it points to the importance of a personal relationship between manager and managee. Still, it does not cover to the proper extent the ability of the manager to provide constant support and guidance to the managee. Having said that, we believe that Theory Y provides a good managerial framework to meet the majority of values and expectations of the new workforce, despite recognising the theory does not adequately address some factors.

5.9 Total Quality Management

Proceeding with the Total Quality Management school, we find a theory concerned with the quality of the entire system to provide the maximum quality to the customer (Dahlgaard-Parka, Reyes & Chenb, 2018; Pindur, Rogers & Suk Kim, 1995).

First of all, we notice that this school seems to make the important recognition that high quality in an organisation can be achieved when there is high satisfaction among the employees. While it cannot be labelled as a people-first approach (in the sense of employees), we find merit in the fact that it aims to strike a balance between the business goals and needs (customer satisfaction) and the satisfaction of the workers (addressing elements of themes 4 and 5). Moreover, this approach stresses that quality improvements are a continuous effort which is carried out throughout the organisation, a proposition that implies that within this framework, people have the responsibility - and, to a certain extent, the autonomy - to look for continuous improvements. This managerial approach addresses expectations like the possibility of continuous learning and work development, as described in theme 2.

Additionally, the school does a good job at addressing points of theme 6 by fostering a certain degree of initiative and ownership in the workers, which also comes along with an improved sense of purpose and possibility to make an impact (which is suitable for the expectations of theme 1). Furthermore, the principle for which employees should feel free to ask questions and challenge the status quo goes straight towards meeting expectations like the possibility of speaking up and being listened to and having an open communication with the manager (theme 5). Finally, teamwork is presented as a paramount organisational ability in this theory, which aligns with the new workforce's expectation of a social, collaborative, and inclusive work environment (theme 4).

Total Quality Management appears to be an approach capable of addressing in a good way many of the aspects that are valued by the new workforce, such as the possibility to learn and grow at work, the fact of having a job that is imbued with purpose and through which the employee can feel making a contribution, the need of a certain level of freedom and ownership, and the importance of a collaborative work environment where it is possible to speak up. Within this school of management, expectations addressed in a good way outnumber the ones that are not addressed properly. One of these shortcomings might be, in our perspective, the lost emphasis on the personal relationship between the manager and the managee, the deeper layer of the relationship. Indeed, it is much valued and expected by the new workforce for different reasons, like perceiving to have a point of reference that cares about them on a personal level, mentors them, trusts them, understands their needs and feelings and is always there to support them.

5.10 Learning Organisation Approach

To continue with, the Learning Organisation Theory advocated for a management style that would promote continuous adaptation through continuous learning, empowerment of employees and information-sharing (Fillion, Koffi & Ekionea, 2014; Otala, 1995; Watkins & Golembiewski 1995; Worrell, 1995;)

We found the principle for which all employees should be involved in identifying and solving problems - which allows the organisation to continually increase its ability to grow, learn, and achieve its purpose - to be very much in line with the values of learning, growing, getting

new challenges and more responsibilities, and developing in work also thanks to a trial-and-error approach (addressing most elements of themes 2 and 3). Also, the promotion of a team-based structure is good at covering the value of a social, collaborative and inclusive environment (theme 4).

Generally speaking, the proposition of empowering employees is a concept that covers the values of theme 6 by underlining the importance of ownership, freedom, and the ability of employees to drive their own development under the trust of the managers. However, one point of contention that we found is that it might downplay the importance of the manager in the role of a guide and a supporter. Moreover, the core principle of maintaining an open flow of information is very good at addressing the qualities of the work environment that the new workforce looks for, and it also implies open communication with the manager, along with the possibility to speak up and be listened to (effectively addressing values expressed in themes 4 and 5). In addition, we find that an outcome of the fact of workers not being passive players anymore, but rather active agents in and for the organisation, is that people are much more likely to experience a sense of contribution through their work which renders their job more purposeful (meeting the expectations outlined in theme 1).

Overall, we see that the Learning Organisation Approach is well-suited for addressing most of the expectations of the new workforce, starting with their eagerness to learn, grow and develop, the acquisition of new skills and responsibilities, to a people-first approach where a collaborative, open environment is promoted, and where freedom and ownership are cultivated. However, some shortcomings do emerge, for example, the lack of focus in the role of the manager as the primary sponsor of the learning and development of the individuals through constant, concrete guidance and support. Also, while it could be seen as a corollary to the rest of the principles, we believe that the learning organisation approach does not emphasise enough the importance of emotional intelligence abilities from the manager, which are sought after by the new workforce. Other secondary but still important aspects are put aside, like the importance of fair remuneration. To sum up, it is important to notice that the criticism towards this management school lies in the details because most of the principles address the expectations of the new workforce effectively.

5.11 Management 2.0 Approach - as proposed by McDonald (2011)

Lastly, our analysis will end with the so-called Management 2.0 theory as proposed by McDonald (2011) - a theory that, in our opinion, captures the main traits of the more recent discussion on management.

The first principle it advances is that the manager-managee relationship should be characterised by mutual trust, along with providing full ownership and responsibility of the work on the managee side: clearly enough, this principle addresses the new workforces' expectations of ownership, freedom, increasing responsibility - all of which in a trust-based relationship - right at the core (as for themes 3 and 6).

The second focal point is the role of the manager as a cultivator of relationships within network structures (focused on coordination more than anything else), a principle that has disputable merits. On the one hand, it underpins the emphasis on the 'human side of management', addressing the related set of expectations of the new workforce (primarily elements of themes 4 and 5). On the other hand, the manager as a cultivator of relationships might suggest an abdication of more practical, work-related functions that constitute the 'support and guidance' (theme 6) the new workforce expects so much, resulting in a scenario where the managees feel being left too much freedom without proper guidance (theme 6).

Another principle promulgated within the Management 2.0 theory is the importance of fun, frivolity, creativity, and work-life balance in the way work is managed. According to the proponents of the theory, this principle was conceived explicitly to meet the values of the new generation: indeed, after our research, we can corroborate the fact that this principle does address factors the are important to the new workforce, as presented in themes 1 and 4 (although we must precise that 'frivolity' has not appeared as a theme in any of our interviews and might need further investigation).

The theory also states the importance of workplace diversity and multiculturalism as concern factors for managers, a proposition that seems to address the expectation of inclusivity and the possibility to bring one's full self to work (parts of theme 4). Moreover, the model has the merit of increasing the attention towards the integration of sustainability and CSR within the

company's core values, as a way of improving the connection with workers. Indeed, we argue that this proposition is among the first that expressly address the new workforce's expectation of working for a greater good and making a positive impact - therefore imbuing the job with a purpose (theme 1).

Finally, this approach promotes a framework where participatory innovation is incentivised (implying a promotion of experiential learning, which addresses values of theme 2) and transparent communication along with knowledge-sharing are cornerstones - in line with various expectations like having a collaborative working environment, giving and receiving feedback, and maintaining continuous, open communication with the manager (as enclosed in themes 2, 4 and 5).

To summarise, Management 2.0 appears to be very much in line with the expectations of the new workforce on many aspects, and addressing them in an arguably good way. First, it addresses the expectations of freedom, ownership, being trusted, and getting increasing responsibilities. Second, it addresses many of the expectations towards the workplace like collaboration, a social environment, inclusivity and diversity and having fun at work. Third, it also highlights the importance of the manager in the role of a cultivator of such an environment where others can thrive. However, while this theory reflects an improved ability to address the expectations of the new workforce, it also presents some shortcomings. To begin with, it downplays the importance of the manager in the role of a supporter, a guide for the managees that is there despite their freedom (and what we have found is that, the freer the managee is left, the more this feeling of being supported is crucial). Moreover, this theory skates on thin ice in its attempt to be an all-encompassing theory on management in present times, without giving sufficient recognition to the fact that a much-valued managerial ability is to individualise the approach based on the individual needs of the people (as discussed in theme 6).

6 - Conclusions

At this point, we have seen that the workforce's expectations - towards work and management - change over the course of history (Ware & Grantham, 2003; Dwyer, 2008; Acsente, 2010). Management, in turn, is characterised by a constant evolution (Luthans, 1973; Koontz, 1980; McDonald, 2011; Robbins & Coulter, 2012) aimed at enabling the best possible outcomes through the workforce (Gibson, Ivancevich, Donnelly & Konopaske, 2012; Koontz, 1961; Zhaldak, 2021) of that specific period in time (Ezzamel, Lilley & Willmott, 1994). Therefore, in order to envision how the discussion on management could evolve for the best, we have conducted empirical research to understand the expectations towards work and management of our so-called new workforce.

After defining what appeared to be the most important aspects the new workforce expects to be addressed by management, we have used these insights to scrutinise how well the different management theories address these expectations. In doing so, our goal was to understand if and how the discussion on management has been able to address the expectations of the current workforce. Simultaneously, by spotting shortcomings in the specific theories or the overall discussion about the expectations of the new workforce, we aimed to provide indications about the direction towards which the debate on management could evolve. By doing so, we wished to fuel new thinking and research on important areas currently outside of the spotlight.

We have come to conclude that the management theories that fall inside the 'traditional management' category - while holding some merits - are generally not well-suited to providing the tool for managing the new workforce in a way that addresses their expectations about work and management. Progressively, theories of management like the Behavioural Management School and Theory X and Theory Y started showing an increased alignment with the expectations of the new workforce by proposing a managerial approach that would valorise the people as such, meeting many more values than the previous schools.

The Quantitative School of Management brought the discussion on management arguably backwards in its ability to address the workforce's needs, but Systems and Contingency Approach steered it back in a progressive direction. Indeed, they placed emphasis on managerial practices that would turn out to correctly address some of the expectations of the

current workforce. Afterwards, Total Quality Management provided a certain level of synthesis to the discussion on management until then, and indeed, this approach showed an overall improved ability to reconcile and address more expectations and needs of the workforce.

Finally, the Learning Organisation approach and the Management 2.0 theory signalled a further alignment with - and capacity to address - the expectations towards work and management of the new workforce. This was achieved by including in the management narrative aspects like continuous learning, a different role for the manager and a new type of work environment, and an increased understanding of the need for a bigger purpose for organisations.

What we conclude from our analysis - answering our research question "*How does the discussion on management address the expectations of the new workforce?*" - is that the discussion on management, through its constant evolution, has been increasingly better able to address the expectations of the new workforce. While the older theories overlook many important needs and expectations of the new workforce, the most recent ones are better suited to bring about the best outcomes through the new workforce.

In other words, our research lets us argue that the best ways to understand and approach management in a way that addresses the expectations of the new workforce - to enable the best outcomes through the workforce - are those indicated by the most recent theories on management. Vice versa, an understanding of, and approach to, management based on more dated theories such as 'traditional management' seem anachronistic in their inability to address many of the new workforce's expectations. Therefore, the older management theories are comparatively less suited to enable the best outcomes through the current workforce.

Nevertheless, in drawing these conclusions, we believe it is of utmost importance to acknowledge that even the most recent theories do not address the expectations of the new workforce in a perfect way, just as the traditional theories still hold some merits. In an ever-changing world, never should the discussion on management fall into the trap of believing to have reached the perfect understanding of management. Instead, we emphasise the importance of continuously refining the most up-to-date understanding of management.

For this reason, we believe that the field of management would benefit from more empirical studies similar to the present one because, under final scrutiny, they represent powerful tools to simultaneously corroborate and amend the discussion on management, with the outcome of improving its relevance to present times.

6.1 Recommendations for Further Research and Limitations of the Conclusions

As we have just seen, even in its best version (represented by the most recent theories), the discussion on management has room for improvement to better address the expectations of the new workforce. As part of our purpose, we are here to make recommendations about the appropriate development of management to better address the expectations of the new workforce.

Based on our discussion, we argue that the current literature is capable of addressing the expectations of freedom and ownership of the new workforce. However, it appears to be lacking sufficient consideration of the other, complementary side of the coin: the need for guidance, for support, for a point of reference to rely on, whose importance grows proportionally to the level of freedom granted. In light of our analysis, we believe that the current discussion could benefit from further exploring the freedom and guidance conundrum, discussing managerial approaches that take into account these divergent expectations of the new workforce.

Moreover, although we are aware that the topic is currently in the spotlight, we believe that the discussion on management could pay more attention to the importance of an idiosyncratic managerial approach based on sharp emotional intelligence abilities. Indeed, we recommend further research on the topic, as it would be beneficial by increasing the alignment of the debate on management with the expectations of the new workforce.

Additionally, we have the duty of pointing out the limitations of the conclusions we reached. As we already mentioned, the participants of this study were almost only of European cultural background. Similarly, the majority of the participants of the supporting studies we have used to back up our findings belonged to a Western-oriented cultural background. For this reason, our conclusions can be defended within such cultural systems, but we cannot

claim their validity in different social contexts. Hence, we believe that conducting similar research with participants from different cultural backgrounds could produce valuable insights in this regard.

Likewise, we must stress that a key concept of this research - the new workforce - was arbitrarily defined according to criteria that seemed reasonable to us (as explained in the methodology chapter). However, we recognise that there could have been different ways of defining it, and each different choice would have implied different results. Indeed, we must emphasise the fact that, for the purpose of this study, what we referred to as the new workforce has been represented by recent graduates. Therefore, the type of workforce we have studied and have been discussing is highly educated. The choice of this particular sample has already been motivated and was consistent with the purpose of this study. Still, it is nevertheless important to underline once again that our conclusions should not be interpreted as results that can be generalised to all the people in the age range we considered. With different methodology and different sampling approaches, future research could be able to substantiate any claims about generalisability of conclusions.

Additionally, we must underline that what we could call the independent variable of this research - the new workforce - is a factor that is bound to change in the future. According to how we defined the new workforce for the purpose of this study, the sample of recent graduates we have interviewed will not fit into this category anymore in two years after the end of this research (June 2023). Simultaneously, the discussion on management is expected to evolve, too. While there is the possibility that our conclusions remain valid for longer than we expect, we still wish to emphasise the value we see in reiterating this type of study in the future.

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Appendixes

Appendix A

INTERVIEW [n°]

Name of participant:

Date and time:

Interviewer:

Topic	**Consent (Y/N)**
Thank you / Present the research	N/A
Recording the session	
Possibility to receive the transcript	
Quotations / Code names	

DEMOGRAPHICS/INFO QUESTIONS

- When did you graduate from LUSEM?
- How long have you been working after graduation?
- What is your role in your company?
- Are you a manager?
    - No → How many managers do you have?
    - Yes → How many people do you manage?
- How many managers have you had after graduating?

Follow-up questions (to be asked throughout the interview):

- Why?
- Can you provide an example?
- Could you explain it in more detail?

MAIN QUESTIONS

- How would you describe the way that you are managed at your company?
- What would you say are the most important aspects of the way you are managed?
- What are your opinions about the way you are managed?
- What is your favorite part about being managed the way you are managed? Why is that?
- What are the things that you like about how you are managed? Why?
- What are the things that you don't like about how you are managed? Why?
- What causes you to feel stressed about your work? What gives you confidence?
- What are the things that keep your motivation up regarding your job?
- What are the things that push your motivation down in your job?
- What's the biggest bottleneck or blockers that affects you and your team doing their jobs well regarding the way you are being managed?
- How do you feel about your job? Does the way you are managed play a part in it?
- What role does your manager have in your team/organisation?
- What type of relationship do you have with your manager? Why do you think it is like that? What do you think and feel about it?
- How would you describe your work environment? What are your opinions about it? Does the way you are managed play a part in shaping the work environment?
- What would you say about the interactions with your fellow employees? Does the way you are managed play a part in it?
- What recommendations do you have for your manager(s)?
- What is the thing about your manager that you like the most? Why?
- What is the thing about your manager that you like the least? Why?
- What skills do you think are most important for your manager(s) to work on right now to help him/her advance?
- How would you describe your values and expectations about work (in general)? What do you value and expect from work?
- How does the way you are managed meet these values and expectations?
- What would you change about the way you are managed, or the general environment, to make it fit better your values and expectations?
- Would you like to share anything else about your experience being managed?

Appendix B

Interview Consent Form

Research project title

"An Empirical Investigation of Recent Graduates Perceptions of Management Practices"

Research investigators

Victoria Maria Cura Rodriguez

Nicola Dal Zovo

Research participant's name

……

Description of the research

This research investigates how recent graduates perceive the way they are managed at their workplace, based on their experience after graduation. The interview will focus on the participant's experience, opinions, and feelings about the way they are managed. This research aims to participate in the current discussion about the changing role of management based on the empirical findings collected.

Estimated duration of the interview

Approximately 30 to 40 minutes.

The research participant understands and confirms that:

- Participation in this research is voluntary.
- The participant has the right to stop the interview or withdraw from the research at any time.
- The researchers do not anticipate any risks associated with the participant's contribution.

- The participation does not entitle the participant to any financial compensation nor benefits.
- The interview will be held through the platform Zoom, via a link provided by the researchers.
- The interview will be recorded and a transcript will be produced.
- The access to the interview material (e.g. recording, transcript) will be limited to the researchers and the relevant academic stakeholders (e.g. supervisor).
- The information gathered during the interview will remain confidential and will be stored securely.
- The interview recording will be kept until the submission of the research report, then destroyed.
- The research report may contain direct or indirect quotations of the participant.
- Any summary of interview content, or any direct quotations from the interview, that will appear on the research report will be anonymised so that the participant cannot be identified.
- Care will be taken to ensure that any type of information that could identify the participant is not revealed.
- The participant can request a copy of the interview transcript and make edits as they feel necessary to ensure the effectiveness of the agreements made about confidentiality.
- The participant is free to contact the researchers to ask any questions about the research.

By signing this form, the participant agrees to the terms indicated above.

Planned date of the interview (dd/mm/yyyy)

……...

Date Signed (dd/mm/yyyy)

……...

Participant's Signature

……...

Researchers' Signature

…….