

Chapter 7

A Critical Analysis of Multi- Logical Synergies

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ABSTRACT

Generation Y and Generation Z are the new emerging labour. Education, labour markets, work-integrated learning (WIL), and generational studies are all complex conceptualisations and present unique challenges. The chapter explores the nature of these synergies as they respond to these challenges. The chapter from a UK perspective addresses the labour challenges from a WIL, leadership, and CSR perspective. It incorporates the work and perceptions of GenY authors and applies a unique methodology to respond to the challenges with which it engages. Using auto/biographic bricolage, questionnaires, and interviews, insight gained is reflected upon in terms of addressing these challenges. The chapter concludes that Generation Z have had significantly different leadership style experiences and are not as ethically minded as scholarship depicts. The chapter then concludes reflecting upon the role of the supervisor and WIL facilitators on how they could better support students facing these challenges.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will focus upon the generational challenges facing Generation Y and Z as emerging labour. Goh and Lee (2018) state that it is paramount to note demographic and generational changes that confront and that will continue to confront different industries. In addition, rapid and erratic labour market changes suggest that 65% of students today will eventually work in roles that do not even currently exist

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(Borgen & Edwards, 2019). Negotiating labour volatility will therefore be a vital skill with an emphasis in this chapter on leadership and ethics. There is a large shift in culture and work environment as Boomers are beginning to end their working career, while Generation Z are predicted to make up over 20% of the workforce in the next four years (Goh & Lee, 2018). Generation X and Generation Y may be the one's managing this transition. Changes in labour demands, generations and Higher Education, all impact Generation Y and Z.

As a reflexive auto/biographical case study, this chapter will explore the synergies of two Generation Y graduates from different UK universities in relation to these labour market challenges. Both graduates had an experience of the workplace as emerging labour through their Work Integrated Learning (WIL) opportunities. One had a formal six-month WIL internship and the other had a full time three-year Higher Degree Apprenticeship. As part of their final research project, one chose to focus on the issue of leadership in the workplace while the other focused on business ethics i.e., Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). These choices were prompted by their own WIL experiences and workplace priorities. The production of this chapter provided the opportunity for collaborative conversations between the two students and their supervisor. "Biographies, and researching others' lives, can affect us in profound, interconnected ways" (Merrill & West, 2009, p.7). Based on the insights gained from these conversations, conclusions on how best to support graduates in WIL opportunities will be drawn.

Talbot (2019) recognises that those exiting the formal educational system are perceived by industry to be ill-equipped for the modern workplace. Insight gained on these synergies from/within emerging labour markets will therefore be addressed within this chapter, including reflexive auto/biographical accounts. The reflexive auto/biographical accounts will demonstrate the benefit of the integration of work and learning through WIL. In addition, the challenges academic staff face coordinating WIL and how they can enhance their support during this process will also be considered. The chapter will therefore proceed by describing what is meant by WIL and its link to the labour markets, generational studies and the two core issues of leadership and CSR within these markets. This will be followed by the explanation of the use of bricolage and auto/biography case studies as the method for this study. The final section will be the analysis of these synergies through the auto/biographical case study accounts and how WIL was a solution in their preparation for the labour market and what further can be done by those who supervise and support them in universities i.e. multi-logical synergies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Defining Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

The Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) network of Canada (CEWIL Canada) (2018) define WIL as an umbrella term for a model and process of curricular experiential education which formally and intentionally integrates a student's academic studies within a workplace or practice setting. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) (2014) refers to this kind of learning as Work-Based Learning (WBL), a subset of experience-based learning, an umbrella term for learning that occurs through undertaking real work, through the production of real goods and services, paid or unpaid. UK degree apprenticeship would be included in such a definition. However, Boud and Solomon (2001) as well as Raelin (2011) suggest that WBL is different enough to warrant a careful examination of its pedagogical methods and philosophical approach and what these may signify.

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