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THE WORK ROLE IMPACT OF QUALITY OF LIFE: 
A BLACK FEMALE MILLENNIAL PERSPECTIVE

by

TSHEGOFATSO MABITSELA

A dissertation submitted in fulfilment for the Degree 
of 
Magister Philosophiae 
in 
Industrial Psychology 

Faculty of Management 
UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

Supervisor: Ms L Sekaja

2016
DECLARATION

I certify that the minor dissertation/dissertation/thesis submitted by me for the degree Master’s of Philosophiae (Industrial Psychology) at the University of Johannesburg is my independent work and has not been submitted by me for a degree at another university.

TSHEGOFATSO MABITSELA
(Name in block letters – no signature)
DEDICATION

I humbly dedicate this research study to my late supervisor, Professor Koos Uys. This study symbolises not just a requirement I was obligated to fulfil, but a personal journey that you and I were supposed to embark on together. Although you are no longer with us, and while we had to cut our journey short, I will always hold you dear to my heart. I walked blindly into my academic career, and only you understood what that meant. You removed the blinkers and bestowed your wisdom upon me.

This study was not without challenges but I kept your words in mind whenever I felt I could no longer go on: “Tshego, you are capable, you are one of the best students I have ever come across because you ask the right questions”. I did not know what your words meant at the time, however, they have made themselves clear to me. At the time, I was not sure what you saw in me. I was just amazed at how it could be that someone who was far beyond my age could understand my frequency of thinking and visa versa. Prof., I would like to leave these words with you: thank you for teaching me, in not so many words, that everything begins and ends in your mind, and that man often becomes what he believes himself to be.

May your beautiful soul rest in peace.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to give thanks to God for walking with me throughout this five-year journey. It has not been without challenges, however it has also been fruitful and worthwhile. Secondly, I would like to thank my parents, Frans and Virginia Mabitsela. All this would not have been possible had it not been for your love, support and encouragement. I thank you for investing all that you had in helping me further my education. To my sister, Palesa Mabitsela, I thank you for being supportive, constantly motivating and encouraging me. To my two friends, Reatlegile Lekalakala and Lerato Keele, words cannot express the gratitude and love I have for both of you.

To my current supervisor, Lusanda Sekaja, you took me under your wing and made me your very own. Also, you were very understanding but you did not accept anything below standard, and for that, I thank you. The completion of this study would not be so, had it not been for you and the mother that you were to me. No words can express the utmost gratitude and admiration I have for you.

Lastly, to my participants, I thank you for assisting me and investing your time in me.
ABSTRACT
Little is known in South Africa about how the work role impacts the quality of life of black female millennials. The objective of the study was to explore the relative impact of different factors in the work role that have an enhancing or inhibiting effect on quality of life. The study was approached from a qualitative, case study perspective, where eight participants were interviewed by means of semi-structured interviews. The participants were South African, black female millennials and had at least five years’ work-related experience, from various knowledge environments in Gauteng. It was found that all participants had aspects of their work role that impacted their quality of life, whether it was in an enhancing or inhibiting way. The specific themes that arose were those of work-home interface, relationships, growth and development, leadership, remuneration, legacy and personal mastery. The study adds to the existing body of knowledge of QOL and assists organisations in developing interventions to enhance QOL in work.

Keywords: quality of life, work role, black female millennial, case study, South Africa
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The current study explores how millennials experience the impact of their work role on their quality of life (QOL). Millennials are emerging as a dominant group in the workplace (Giddens, 2002). According to Hershatter and Epstein (2010), they are the future of organisations, hence it is important to take cognisance of how they experience and make sense of their QOL.

Work involves prescribed tasks, in which an individual or more persons agree to carry out work activities for their employer in the workplace (Macredie & Wild, 2000; Stansfeld, Shipley, Head, Fuhrer, & Kivimaki, 2013). Ingwersen and Järvelin, (2005) argue that the notion of work is synonymous with the concept of work task. Work is the assembly of closely inter-woven human activities that form part of a larger framework of work and associated to work are the goals and objectives (Bystrom & Hansen, 2005). Work can be manual; however, the nature of work has also become service- and knowledge-oriented within developed countries, which has meant that interpersonal interactions have become an increasingly prominent feature of work roles (Baumeister & Vohs, 2005; Daniels, Lamond, & Standen, 2001; Fraser & Gold, 2001; Lautsch & Kossek, 2011; Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002).

A work role is the set of work activities that are performed by an individual employee or groups of employees (Case, 2007). Huvila (2007) argues that the notion of work role implies a discrete group of tasks enacted by individuals. Fidel, Pejtersen, Cleal, and Bruce (2004) consider a work role to be a position that is occupied by individuals and organisations. Spinuzzi (2003) postulates that a work role comprises of repetitious work tasks that are a succession of a previous work task. For the purpose of the current study, the notion of work role refers to inter-linked work-
related tasks that employees perform, which may or may not be static in nature (Hornung & Glaser, 2009; Huvila, 2007).

QOL is, as suggested by Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith (1999), an overarching concept that encompasses life satisfaction, happiness, and well-being. Veenhoven (2000) considers QOL as an individual’s subjective evaluation of the range at which life is considered to be satisfactory. Bramston (2002) defines QOL as one’s biased evaluation of his or her life in relation to his or her beliefs, values and behavioural practices. Kim-Prieto and Diener (2005) argue that QOL refers to an assessment made by an individual of whether his or her life is satisfactory and whether a level of happiness has been achieved. For the purpose of the current study, QOL is defined as subjective emotional responses to events as well as cognitive judgments made by individuals (Russell, 2003).

Argyle (1996) postulated that QOL is influenced by the following elements: long-standing happiness; life satisfaction and the lack of ill-being. According to Argyle (1996) long-standing happiness is the affective factor, whereas life satisfaction represents a cognitive element of QOL. In order for QOL to be experienced, ill-being must not be present. Figure 1 provides a graphic depiction of the concepts.
The scientific discipline of QOL has grown rapidly (Sirgy, 2012). The rapid growth can be attributed to the fact that the Western population has attained a level of material abundance and health that permits them to go further than mere survival in seeking a satisfactory life (Inglehart & Klingemann, 2000). Individuals, internationally, are entering a “postmaterialistic” world, in which they are troubled with issues of QOL further on economic prosperity, therefore the QOL discipline grants respect to what people think and feel about their lives (Diener et al., 1999). Also, the discipline has become appealing because scholars have prospered in creating
scientific methods for investigating QOL (Rogers, Halstead, Gardner, & Carlson, 2011).

The exponential growth in the field of QOL has also been attributed to the association with positive outcomes, such as job satisfaction (Judge, Thorensen, Bono, & Patton, 2001). Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter, and Taris (2008) postulated that enhanced QOL results in engagement and happiness at work and are considered to be positive forms of QOL (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008). In contrast, negative forms of QOL include ‘workaholism’ (Schaufeli, Taris, & Van Rhenen, 2008) and burnout.

It can be assumed that employees occupying varying work roles may consider their QOL more satisfactory than others. However, there is limited knowledge pertaining to work roles and QOL and a lack of understanding how the work role enhances or inhibits the QOL of employees. By understanding the latter, it can be better understood how work roles can be better designed to enhance QOL.

Concerns pertaining to the QOL of young people have been raised as levels of depression and anxiety have been identified amongst such individuals (Craig, 2007; Twenge, 2006). Studies have revealed that age has no effect on the QOL (see Andrews & Withey, 1976; Cameron, 1975; Sauer, 1977), but it has been found that age is associated with the level of positive and negative effects experienced by individuals (Bortner & Hultsch, 1970). Similarly, Braun (1977) shows that younger people reported higher levels of both positive and negative effects, while older participants were found to experience greater overall happiness. Hsu (2010) suggested that the inconsistency in results may be indicative of generational characteristics and found that millennials experienced low levels of happiness in the workplace.

Millennials are defined by the time era in which they were born (Jeffries & Hunte, 2004). There is no single, precise, agreed-upon timeframe into which the
millennials fit. For example, in the United States this generation is said to be born between 1982 and 1999 (Kowske, Rasch, & Wiley, 2010), whilst in the South African context, millennials are defined as the generation that was born between 1980 and 2000 (Glass, 2007). For the purpose of the current study, therefore, millennials are considered as a group of individuals that were born between the years 1980 and 2000.

According to Sheahan (2005) millennials can be characterised as follows: They are optimistic, prefer working in teams and prefer collaborative decision-making. They are passionate, resourceful, seek to develop new skills and eagerly look for challenging work. This generation is ambitious and they embrace change. Millennials grew up with technology, such as portable computers and instant communication, and as a result they are socially active, innovative and are used to an instant exchange of information. Millennials strive for individuality. They have unique approaches to work and networking with others (Sheahan, 2005). Millennials are efficient, tolerant and prioritise their lifestyles over work (Anantatmula & Shrivastav, 2012; Gröpel & Kuhl, 2009; Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010).

Dorsey (2010) postulates that millennials have a novel approach to their work style. The standard notion of a 40-hour work week has become outdated (Sujansky & Feni-Reed, 2009). Dorsey (2010) suggests that millennials prefer work roles that are flexible and that provide a sense of autonomy as technology offers the basis for telecommuting. The former stems from seeing their parents encounter retrenchment, which influenced their work role preferences (Eisner, 2005). Mentorship is crucial to the work role of millennials (Morton, 2002). Through mentorship, millennials receive training and feedback on strengths and areas of development that have been identified, and as a result they are become capable of addressing challenges associated with their work role effectively (Hill, 2002).
It is suggested by Fenich, Scott-Halsell, and Hashimoto (2011) that millennials work best in environments that value collaboration amongst its organisational members, which is conducive to their working style. Twenge (2006) argues differently by stating that millennials prefer working in isolation as they self-efficacy has them to believe that they do not need the inputs of others. The work styles that appeal to millennials include those that are engaging, interesting and that are fast-paced as they have a low capacity to endure boredom (Inelmen, Zeytinoglu, & Uygur, 2010). Related to this, millennials have a sense of urgency to complete tasks, given their prompt ways of living out their lives (Sheahan, 2005).

1.2 Problem Statement

It is vital that the QOL be investigated because a number of other positive outcomes, such as success in the workplace (Taylor, Hulda, Leigh, & Donovan, 2015), are associated with QOL, thus highlighting its importance in the workplace. That is, employees who experience frequent happiness are satisfied at work, they are effective and efficient employees, and their positive affect is further related to virtuous organisational citizenship, excellent relations with co-workers, and enhanced conflict resolution skills (Snyder & Lopez, 2002). In contrast, low levels of QOL may lead to increased stress, anxiety (Anderson, Coffey, & Byerly, 2002), increased levels of employee turnover, increased absenteeism and reduced performance (Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005). Consequently, the above are indicative of the importance of QOL and it therefore becomes important to capture subjective experiences of employees in order to gain an accurate understanding of the impact of the work role on QOL.

Globally an increasing number of women are forming part of workforces (Bianchi, 2000). This is true for women in the South African workforce, which is a
result of the transformation in legislation, such as the Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998 (Government Gazette, 1998a) and the Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998 (Government Gazette, 1998b). For example, the Employment Equity Act brought an end to discrimination against historically disadvantaged individuals, including women, in the workplace (Thomas, 2002). Historically disadvantaged women are considered to be the disabled, Indian, Coloured and African\(^1\) women, (Grobler, Warnich, Carrell, Elbert, & Hatfiled, 2006). However, the advent of the Employment Equity and Skills Development Acts paved the way for improved inclusion of women into the labour market (Bianchi, 2000).

The increased inclusion of women in workforces has diversified and dispersed women’s work roles, which may impact their QOL (Dwenda-Gjerdingen, McGovern, Bekker, Lundberg, & Willemsen, 2000). The work roles of women among the historically disadvantaged are changing rapidly due to economic globalisation and the restructuring of economic activities across the globe (Connerley & Wu, 2015). Work roles of historically disadvantaged women are currently largely characterised by temporary employment, work overload (Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutton, 2000; Korner, Reitzle, & Silbereisen, 2012) and job insecurity, which has led to concerns about their QOL (Parks, Lundberg-Love, Luft, Stewart, & Peddy, 2015). The above raise questions relating to the impact of the work role and the QOL of women that were previously disadvantaged.

It is pertinent for organisations to consider promoting the QOL of female employees as this may have beneficial outcomes for organisations (Linos & Kirch, 2008). Karnaki, Polychronakis, Linos, and Kotsioni (2008) suggest that mentally healthy females are more productive employees; however, the latter is not a current

\(^1\) For the purposes of the current study, ‘Black’ refers to those of African descent.
reality for the following reasons: women are reported to occupy work roles that are characterised by the absence of autonomy and task control, with limited opportunity of influencing work role activities and work role advancement. Women are also subjected to limited work role scope and few work role advancements due to promotions being based on the capability to work overtime and travel locally and internationally on business, as men are perceived as better able to fulfil these duties due to a lack of family responsibilities, such as caring for a sick child (Fu & Shaffer, 2001). Strazdins and Bammer (2004) found that work roles that are repetitive in nature have resulted in musculoskeletal disorders and were more persistent among women.

Graham (2005) argued that QOL differs substantially between racial groups in both developed and developing countries. For example, in both the United States of America and Latin America, studies have found black people to be the least happy racial group as a result of low income and work status (cf. Di Tella, MacCulloch, & Oswald, 2001; Graham, 2005).

QOL has also been investigated in countries such as Denmark where it was discovered that the inhabitants of this region experience greater levels of QOL as compared to the US, which was attributed to the equality in income encountered by the Danes (Biswas-Diener, Vitterso, & Diener, 2010). Studies on QOL in South Africa have explored which racial group (amongst whites, blacks, coloureds and Indians) is happiest (cf. Hinks & Gruen, 2007; Mahadea & Rawat, 2008). Ebrahim, Botha, and Snowball (2013) found black South African women to be the unhappiest demographic group, which he attributes to the responsibilities women are required to fulfil as mothers and wives in their homes.
Black women are reported to experience less QOL as they have to fulfil not only traditional roles such as the roles of mother and wife, but other multiple work roles (Ebrahim et al., 2013). In the South African context, studies have not explored the impact of the work role on QOL of black women, let alone black female millennials.

Kupperschmidt (2000) suggests that work roles differ according to the generational group individuals belong to. However, Sheahan (2005) argues that millennials are merely impacted and react differently to their work role as opposed to individuals belonging to other groups. Millennials prefer work roles that provide a sense of meaning, diversity, stimulation and that are challenging (Twenge, 2006). Millennials are also oriented towards work roles that offer original experiences and opportunities to enhance knowledge and skills, and flexibility (Dorsey, 2010). Social interaction is also an integral component to the QOL of millennials (Diener & Seligman, 2002). As such, technological tools offer millennials the opportunity to manage their social connectivity and essentially enhance their QOL (Kim & Lee, 2011). Although the above may be true, work roles may be experienced differently per individual and it is therefore important to explore how the work roles of the chosen group experience QOL.

1.3 Research Objective

Although there are studies that have been conducted on the QOL of millennials, I could not find literature on how the workplace improves the QOL of millennials in the South African context. In chaotic and complex times it is important to explore how millennials are making sense of their lives. With this in mind the research question for the study is: “How do millennials experience the impact of the
work role in their QOL?" 2 The prime objective of the study is to investigate the relative impact of different factors in the work role that have an enhancing or inhibiting (positive or negative) effect on QOL.

1.4 Research Design

To answer the question above, a qualitative design is required. Qualitative research is suitable for exploring research areas that are novel (Myers, 2009). The benefit associated with this design is that it offers the researcher an opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon of interest (Salkind, 2012). Qualitative research seeks to understand the area being researched from the perspective of participants (Sandelowski, 2000). Therefore, semi-structured in-depth interviews were employed as a means to collect data from participants. Semi-structured interviews comprise of a predetermined set of questions with a degree of flexibility (Seidman, 2013). The research approach employed in the current study was an interpretive case study approach. The approach assumes that there are multiple realities (Myers, 2009). The objective of the interpretive approach is to understand the meanings people assign to events (Andrade, 2009).

Thematic analysis was employed as a data analysis technique. Thematic analysis involves identifying patterns that emerge across the data set (Maxwell, 2012). According to Braun and Clarke (2006) thematic analysis comprises of six phases, namely: familiarising oneself with the data, which refers to transcribing the verbal interviews; generating initial codes, which is concerned with the coding of data; searching for themes, which essentially entails collating codes into themes; reviewing

---

2 The reader should note that the true title of the current manuscript is “The work role impact on quality of life: A black female millennial perspective”. However, the title was amended and registered incorrectly as “The work role impact of quality of life: A black female millennial perspective”. The latter does not reflect my intentions as the researcher.
themes, which constitutes cross-checking codes and their applicability to themes identified; naming and defining themes; and lastly, generating a report.

1.5 Structure of the Manuscript

Following the current chapter, the next chapter in this study will consist of an elaboration of the research design of the study. I have foregone the option of the literature review because I did not want my findings to be influenced by existing literature or have any expectations insofar as the findings are concerned. The third chapter provides a description of the research findings. Thereafter, the fourth chapter contains the interpretation of the findings of the study. Lastly, the fifth chapter concludes the study by restating the findings as well as providing managerial implications for organisations, its limitations, recommendations for future research, and contributions of the study.
CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH DESIGN

2.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 aims to acquaint the reader with the research design. A research design can be considered as the structure of the research (Creswell, 2003) and is the representation of the sequence of elements that constitute the research (Maxwell, 2012). According to Yin (2013), the function of a research design is to make certain that the research question is answered satisfactorily through sampling, data collection, and analytical techniques.

A research design provides the parameters and instructions that assist a researcher in answering the research question. In this chapter the methodology of the present study is discussed. Next the philosophical assumptions underpinning the study are provided. Alongside the former, the chapter presents the research paradigm. Subsequently understanding is provided into the research strategies, design and data collection methods utilised for the purpose of the study. Finally the chapter concludes by providing a discussion pertaining to how quality assurance was ensured, and how ethical standards were adhered to.
Figure 2. Research design (Adapted from Donaldson, 2011)

Strategies to ensure quality of research: Credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability

Ontology: Constructivist

Epistemology: Social constructivist

Research paradigm: Interpretivist

Research method: Qualitative research

Research strategy: Interpretive case study

Data gathering technique: Semi-structured interviews

Sampling: Snowball and purposive

Data analysis: Thematic analysis

Interpretation of results

Ethical considerations: Informed consent, confidentiality, institutional approval, voluntary participation, no incentives, avoidance of plagiarism and falsification of data, avoidance of harm, right to withdraw and respect for participants.
2.2 Research Method

In order to answer the research question, the qualitative research method is considered to be best. According to Marshall and Rossman (2006) qualitative research is characterised by the following features: it gives primary focus in understanding phenomena from the perspective of participants; qualitative research places emphasis on rich and comprehensive descriptions of phenomena; qualitative research also deliberates the importance and significance of the impact past events may have on current behaviours of participants. The qualitative method allowed me, as a researcher, to understand the impact of the work role on QOL from the perspective of the participants and allowed me to become the primary instrument in the study.

2.3 Philosophical Assumptions

As a researcher it is important to clarify my philosophical positions in terms of two fundamental issues, being ontology and epistemology (Schultheiss, 2005). The philosophical underpinnings of the study emerge from the research paradigm (Creswell, 2003). The assumptions that follow represent the lens through which I perceive the world and how I know of the world.

2.3.1 Ontology. Klenke (2008) suggested that ontology is a researcher’s theory and belief of reality. Ontology is concerned with the perception of reality (Crotty, 2003). I subscribe to the constructivist approach. Constructivism originated in the 1980s in cybernetic studies, and was developed by biologists Maturana and Verela (1987), theorists Von Foerster (1981) and Von Glaserfeld (1984). Constructivism assumes that individuals mentally construct their world of experience (Schultheiss, 2005). Therefore, social reality consists of various ways of interpreting a single or multiple events. In order for social realities to be understood it then becomes
necessary to understand the meanings that people attach to the experiences they encounter.

2.3.2 Epistemology. Epistemology relates to a researcher’s theory of knowledge (Ponterotto, 2005). Myers (2009) maintained that epistemology refers to an association between the knower and what is known also, how knowledge is to be acquired. I have adopted a social constructionist epistemology. Social construction assumes that discourse, dialogue and relationships influence how meaning is constructed of the world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2009). What is considered to be real is the product of social interaction (Hogg, 2000). As such, social artefacts play a critical role in how the world is understood within a given context (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2013). That is, social constructionism considers context pertinent to the creation of meaning (Ritzer & Smart, 2001). In the present study I will focus on the experience of different factors in the work context that have an enhancing or inhibiting effect on the QOL of millennials. As a member of this cohort, I had an interest in hearing the stories of other black female millennials as I would be better able to understand their subjective experience of the impact of the work role on their QOL and the associated meanings.

2.3.3 Research Paradigm. A paradigm signifies an implicit or explicit view of reality (Silverman, 2000). Myers (2009) considers a research paradigm as an all-encompassing perspective of reality. The research paradigm of the study takes the form of an interpretivist paradigm. Interpretivism is considered as an all-encompassing concept that comprises of a variety of paradigms, all pertaining to the assigned meanings of subjective experiences (Tulloch & Lupton, 2003). The main tenet of interpretivism is that phenomena cannot be objectively understood and claims that phenomena must be understood in the context from where it emerges (Walker & Dewar, 2000). The role of the researcher in the interpretivist paradigm is to
understand, rather than make causal explanations (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Adopting the interpretive approach would enable me to understand the enhancing and inhibiting factors associated with the QOL of female millennials.

2.4 Research Strategy

In order to understand the experiences of the impact of work role on the QOL of millennials, the case study research strategy was adopted and employed for the current study. Flyvbjerg (2006) contends that case study designs are frequently-utilised strategies in the social sciences. This qualitative case study is a technique to scientific inquiry that enables investigation of an event within its context by means of a variation of available information (Yin, 2013). I actively chose to use a case study strategy because it offers an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon. In addition, the strategy facilitates the exploration of the phenomenon. More specifically, multiple case studies were used in order to discover the impact of the work role on QOL of millennials.

Yin (2013) suggests that a case study design is to be employed when: (a) the research study aims to answer “in what way” and “why” questions; (b) when the researcher does not give focus to manipulating the behaviour of researcher participants; (c) when the context is significant in understanding a phenomenon of interest; or (d) when the characteristics involving the area of study is not explicitly clear. All of the above apply to the current study.

2.5 Sampling Technique

The sampling technique employed to select the participants of the study was snowball and purposive sampling. Snowballing is a non-probability sampling technique (Maree, 2011). The sampling technique involves initially-selected participants to identify and recruit additional participants who meet the criteria of a
study (Denscombe, 2010). Adhering to the guidelines of snowball sampling allowed me to identify participants who met the selection criteria, who were referred to me by participants, and who were willing to take part in the study.

Purposive sampling refers to the selection of research participants based on their understanding of a research area (Creswell, 2007). For the purpose of the current study, purposive sampling was utilised on the basis that it provided the researcher with the opportunity to include participants that fit the predetermined inclusion criteria of the study (Brink 2006). The criteria for selecting participants were based on the premise that participants were required to be black, female and of the millennial generation.

I used a sample of eight working women. With the research purpose in mind, I chose black women born between the years 1980 and 2000 (for example, those between 26 and 30 years old at the time of conducting the study). Saturation was reached after I had interviewed eight participants. Saturation refers to the point that which new participants no longer provide new information pertaining to the topic of inquiry (Brink, 2006).
Table 1

*Characteristics of participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Job</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years of tenure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant A</td>
<td>Tutor</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant B</td>
<td>Research engineer</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant C</td>
<td>Graphic designer</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant D</td>
<td>Administrative assistant</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant E</td>
<td>Administrative assistant</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant F</td>
<td>Data capturer</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant G</td>
<td>Project manager</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant H</td>
<td>Project administrator</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.6 Procedure

I corresponded with potential participants by telephone and email, and after clearly explaining the objective of the study, arranged a face-to-face interview to take place during working hours. The scheduling of the interviews was predominantly determined by the participants’ availability. Prior to the interview, I developed a rapport with each participant, by means of talking about general issues in order to set her at ease and to alleviate any potential nervousness. I then explained to each participant the objective of the interview and obtained consent. Prior to commencing with the data collection, I allowed them the opportunity to ask any questions they had, before we began with the data collection. Data were collected over a three-month period from March to June 2015. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes. No incentives were offered for participation in the study.
2.7 Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews were utilised in the study. According to DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006), such interviews are predominantly utilised in qualitative research and allow for flexibility and probing when interviewing the unit of analysis. Assessing the potential response of participants is indicative of successful probing (Myers, 2009). Semi-structured interviews allowed me to engage actively with the participants, which offered me the opportunity to enquire further with additional questions for the purpose of attaining in-depth knowledge of the phenomenon of the work role impact on QOL.

2.8 Research Setting

According to Fossey, Harvey, McDermott, and Davidson (2002) the research setting must be both appropriate and adequate. The participants of the present study were chosen from various knowledge environments. Knowledge environments are organisations that stimulate continuous learning and knowledge building and employ knowledge workers (Hemlin, Allwood, & Martin, 2004). I chose the various knowledge environments that were purposeful and representative of the phenomena being studied. To my knowledge, there were six knowledge environments that I approached in the Johannesburg and Pretoria region, where I had gained access to conduct interviews. Also, the interviews were conducted in each of the participants’ offices.

2.9 Entrée and Researcher Roles

Access was gained with the help of a gate-keeper. I explained the purpose of the study. Thereafter I was given permission to access the various knowledge environments. My role as a researcher was that of the human research instrument (see Denzin et al., 2009). The research was conducted through me. My role in the research
was etic in that I did not participate in the research, rather, I was an outsider to the experience of the participants as an objective observer (see Punch, 1998). I am qualified to conduct this study as I am a Master’s student who is interested in the life experiences of other young people like myself. I will also be joining the workforce after my studies as a black female millennial and it would be interesting to know the experiences of those similar to me where QOL is concerned.

2.10 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis is concerned with the entity that will be analysed in the envisaged study (Myers, 2009). Each case being explored by me is the unit of analysis. Therefore, for the purpose of the study, the individual millennial is the unit of analysis.

2.11 Recording of Data

Recording data ensures that information discussed during the interview is captured (Creswell, 2003) and available at a later stage. The data recordings determine the quality of the research study (Schensul, 2008). I informed each participant that the interview would be recorded. Interviews were recorded by means of a digital voice recorder. I further explained that during the course of the interview, I would be taking notes and as a result the participants should not be alarmed or perceive this as possible lack of interest in their story. I told participants that I would make eye contact with them to assure them that I was listening to them and to show my respect and empathy. After each interview was complete, I transferred the recorded interviews onto my laptop to ensure that the data would not be lost, and to the data safe as the laptop is password protected and therefore inaccessible to unauthorised individuals. Following the interviews, the data were transcribed.
To supplement the voice recording of the interviews, field notes were taken. Fields notes assist the researcher in reflecting on data collected by the researcher (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormston, 2013). I used field notes to supplement the interview and to recreate events that I had overlooked. Field notes are necessary in assisting me, the researcher, to reflect on data gathered, which are personal descriptions and assisted me in the data analysis process.

2.12 Data Analysis

Data analysis is defined as the process of separating data into component parts in the attempt to organise and interpret data (Flick, 2014). I followed the Braun and Clarke (2006) thematic analysis. Table 2 summarises the thematic analysis phases.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Description of the process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Acquaint self with the data</td>
<td>Transcribe data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Generating primary codes</td>
<td>Code data throughout data set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Discover potential themes</td>
<td>Organise codes into themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Analyse themes</td>
<td>Cross-check if codes relate to identified themes and across data set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Name and define themes</td>
<td>Generate clear names and definitions of themes and engaging in ongoing analysis refining themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Producing report</td>
<td>Engage in final analysis process of themes and communicate analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Braun and Clarke (2006)

The first phase involved the process of transcription. Transcription is the process of reproducing spoken words (MacLean, Meyer, & Estable, 2004). I achieved the latter by providing a word-for-word written account of the data. Transcribing the
interviews allowed me to become familiar with the data. I drew on the transcribed interviews as the primary source of the coding process.

During this initial stage of bringing order to and making sense of the data, I closely read and re-read the data line-by-line in order to identify as many ideas and concepts as possible. Re-reading the data also helped me answer the questions I had, which were as follows: What is going on? What is this all about? What is the meaning of it? What was the intent? What feelings or thoughts are being conveyed? Charmaz (2006) suggests that analysing the data line-by-line is more fitting for interview transcripts, as opposed to field notes.

The next step involved coding the data by means of extricating the data into discrete parts. The coding process involved multiple independent coders, that is, my supervisor and I, in the attempt to establish consistency in coding of themes. The actual coding was executed manually. Each line with the transcribed data was explored to identify meaningful key phrases and patterns that might lead to answering the research question. The phrases were highlighted. The same process was followed for the remaining seven transcribed interviews.

Once I was satisfied that the themes that emerged from the data produced a unifying pattern, I proceeded to define and describe the themes, taking care to ensure that each description was exclusive and unique to code and theme. Once I was satisfied with the themes, I reported on my findings, interpreted them and aligned existing literature to them as per Chapters 3 and 4.

2.13 Writing Styles and Representation

According to Schurink (2009) researchers vary in the manner that which they write up their research data. Sparkes (2002) further adds that there is a lack of homogeneity in the representing of research findings. When writing, it is crucial that
the researcher always be cognisant of the audience that is to read it. The following can be considered as the different forms of writing styles, namely the scientific, realist and confessional.

According to Sparkes (2002) there are several different types of writing styles. The scientific writing style represents the logical and traditional. This writing style is more applicable when the positivist paradigm has been adopted. Furthermore, the researcher utilises a passive voice to remain objective. Similarly, in the realist tale the author refers to themselves in the third person with the methodology section being the exception. In doing so, the author attempts to be maintain objectivity. Lastly the confessionals tales author refers to themselves in the first person and the writing style is predominately personal. For the purpose of the current study, a combination of the realist and confessional writing styles have been adopted.

2.14 Strategies for Ensuring Quality Assurance

Quality assurance relates to a researcher’s attempt to address the trustworthiness of the research (Bryman, 2003). Various strategies can be employed in the attempt to do so (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). According Lincoln and Guba (1985) several such strategies are as follows: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Below I discuss how I maintained each strategy.

2.14.1 Credibility. Credibility refers to whether the findings accurately represent the views of participants (Greenwood & Levin, 2006). Maxwell (2012) suggested that the following procedures employed in a study may enhance the credibility of a study namely: (a) how questions are presented to participants – data-gathering techniques must afford the researcher to obtain rich and accurate data, and data-gathering techniques must be congruent with previous similar inquiries; (b) establishing rapport prior to initially collecting data in order to generate trust with
participants of the study; (c) participants must be given the opportunity to withdraw from the study as this will ensure that their unwillingness will not result in dishonesty of data provided; (d) iterative questioning which involves the use of probes to clarify any ambiguities and discrepancies that might emerge; (e) frequent debriefing sessions between a researcher and supervisor that ensures that the researcher has presented the views of the participants in congruent manner. As can be seen in the sections above in the current chapter, (a)–(d) were carried out. Regarding (e), I debriefed with my supervisor in both face-to-face meetings, telephonically, as well as via email. In these sessions, I discussed with her issues I was experiencing, ran new ideas by her, and sought her advice. Also, multiple coding was engaged by both my supervisor and me in order to establish a congruent representation of the participants’ views.

2.14.2 Transferability. Transferability is concerned with the possibility to which the findings can be transferred to other contexts (Denzin et al., 2009). Creswell (2003) suggested that in order for transferability to be deemed as successful the following must be provided: (a) the quantity of corporate institutions participating in the research and their geographical location; (b) the sample criteria; (c) the sample size; (d) the data gathering techniques that were operationalised; (e) the quantity and duration of the data gathering meetings; and (f) the timeframe that which the data were gathered. These criteria were successfully achieved in the following ways: I provided the number of knowledge environments that I had approached and had gained access to, as well as a description of the research setting and the geographical area of location; the sample criteria and the sample size were provided; followed by the data gathering techniques employed and the description of each case. Also, the length of the interviews, including the time span of data collection, was discussed. The above will allow for the findings to be applicable in similar contexts.
2.14.3 Dependability. Dependability is concerned with whether the research process is structured and flows logically (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I ensured dependability by providing an accurate account of the research process in thorough detail. Doing so allows for the present study to be replicated.

2.14.4 Confirmability. Confirmability refers to the notion that the researcher must remain objective (Morrow, 2005). Although confirmability does not dispute that each researcher may have a distinct perspective on the study, it does necessitate that the researcher reports on any biases that may influence the use of appropriate qualitative methodological practices and the biases must be addressed accordingly. In order for me to remain objective, I admit that I am aware of my own bias as a black, female millennial and admit to how the former research has influenced the research process so that my results are true to my objectives as well as participant’s stories.

2.15 Ethical Considerations

For the present study, permission to conduct the research was sought from the University Research Committee. Ethical clearance was obtained from gatekeepers and permission was obtained for the use of tape-recorders. The participants were informed about the purpose and methods of the study and they were required to sign a consent form that stipulated that their details will be kept confidential and indicating their voluntary participation. Data were only accessed by myself and my supervisor and stored in a password-protected computer. Data were also only used for the intended purposes. No data was falsified during the execution of the research and credit was given to authors for all ideas.

2.16 Integration

In the chapter the research design was discussed in detail. In the next chapter I will discuss the stories of the participants and themes that I identified in the data
analysis. For the purpose of the study, the stories of the participants will be presented with optional aliases, for example the “average kid.”
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH FINDINGS

3.1 Introduction

In the data analysis section of the previous chapter, I explicated how I took care to maintain the guidelines of thematic analysis as conceived by Braun and Clarke (2006). In this chapter, I report on the research findings that arose from that process.

3.2 Themes and codes

From the data, themes and codes extracted were presented and thereafter each case reported along with the codes relevant to them. In searching for themes, I closely examined the codes, and deliberated how the various codes jointly formed an all-embracing theme. At this phase, I considered how the codes are related between themes, and between various levels of themes. This process resulted in 61 codes which appeared 132 times and 9 themes. All codes that I considered congruent, I merged. After reconsidering the resultant collective codes, I reordered the themes so that they appear from positive to negative. I then renamed the themes where necessary. As part of the improvement, I considered whether any theme contained any sub-themes, which they did not. After this process, I remained with 72 codes that appeared 123 times which aligned to 8 themes.

Table 3 below illustrates the codes and themes extracted from all the participants above.
Table 3

**Codes and themes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes and codes</th>
<th>Description of code</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Example of codes from interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WORK-HOME INTERFACE (11)</td>
<td><strong>The association between work responsibilities and home obligations</strong></td>
<td>32</td>
<td>“Experience I gained from work, I took them into my family environment and through that, I was able to appreciate them more.” P. F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-home interaction</td>
<td>The relationship between work and home responsibilities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>“Employees being home should be a priority for organisations.” P. F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telecommuting</td>
<td>Completing work tasks at home or away from the workplace</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>“I am here from eight until four, I do not take work home.” P. D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-life balance</td>
<td>The optimal functioning of individuals both in the work and life domain</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>“A crèche would be nice.” P.D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I can bring my son to work.” P. E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee assistance</td>
<td>Providing help to subordinates and colleagues</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>“Your legs get sore, you get cramps, your back gets painful and you do not enjoy work as you are supposed to.” P. F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of wellness</td>
<td>The state of being healthy mentally and physically</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>“Whether we like it or not, there are challenges in their lives they will bring into work.” P. B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home-work interference</td>
<td>The spillover of home responsibilities to the workplace</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>“During that time I was going through personal things, so I would arrive at work not so sober minded.” P. A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-home interference</td>
<td>The spillover of work responsibilities to home</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>“Taking work, home with me.” P. H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“You are going to pursue a career, you will have to climb up a ladder and chances are that your family will have to suffer.” P. D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of work-life balance</td>
<td>The insufficient optimal functioning of individuals both in the work and home domain</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>“People can work from home.” P. B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>“For me, it is about family.” P. C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I was on leave in November and I was asked to come back.” P. C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The system from eight-to-four, especially for us mothers, does not make sense.” P. H</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“A balance between home and work.” P. F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“My child could see her mom a little bit more.” P. D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excessive work hours</td>
<td>Engaging in work-related tasks in private time</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“There are time when you find yourself here on a Friday at 22h00 and you are still working, and that goes into your personal time.” P. C</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Sometime we would work the whole night.” P. H</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unreasonable deadlines</td>
<td>When time by which work tasks should be completed is too close</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Sales come in and they say, I just spoke to this client and they want a proposal tomorrow morning.” P. C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You would find that the deadline is the following day.” P. H</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work overload</td>
<td>Having too much work to complete in a short space of time</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“To much work to be shared amongst a small number of people.” P. C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELATIONSHIPS (11)</td>
<td>Existing social interactions</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmonious relationships</td>
<td>Dissent-free interactions</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“It is also good to work with people you get along with.” P. C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I just want to relate with people that positive and who are about moving forward in life.” P. F</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I wouldn’t survive without people around me in the office.” P. E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Seeing happy clientele makes me happy.” P. F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive relationships</td>
<td>Providing encouragement and emotional assistance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They motivate me at work, they never criticize me and they would rather help me in assisting me fix whatever I have not done well.” P. H</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diverse interactions</td>
<td>Having multiple acquaintances with people from different backgrounds</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I had the opportunity to communicate with people from a different language and background to mine. “ P. A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You get to interact with people from different backgrounds and learn a lot.” P. F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive intergenerational interaction</td>
<td>Healthy relationships across generational cohorts</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative intergenerational interaction</td>
<td>Uncooperative relationships across generational groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toxic relationships</td>
<td>Destructive interactions</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of trust</td>
<td>Little confidence in another</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unreliable colleagues</td>
<td>Undependable coworkers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putting up boundaries</td>
<td>Being firm to prevent being taken advantage of</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal politics</td>
<td>A system of social networking and use of power for personal gain</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult work relationships</td>
<td>Unhelpful interactions involving others</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LEADERSHIP (8)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Authority, direction and supervision</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Inspiring others</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence</td>
<td>Guiding and directing others</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive management</td>
<td>Providing emotional or tangible assistance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive intergenerational interaction</td>
<td>Healthy relationships across generational cohorts</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>“I also got to interact with older people on a mature level.”</td>
<td>P. G</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Negative intergenerational interaction</td>
<td>Uncooperative relationships across generational groups</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toxic relationships</td>
<td>Destructive interactions</td>
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<td>Motivation</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence</td>
<td>Guiding and directing others</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive management</td>
<td>Providing emotional or tangible assistance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I also got to interact with older people on a mature level.”</td>
<td>P. G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Elder people used to undermine me, because I was younger than them.”</td>
<td>P. A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Relationships make it impossible to make that satisfaction and quality of life.”</td>
<td>P. B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I do not like to have negative people around me.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You cannot talk to people freely.”</td>
<td>P. G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“People who bunk work and leave their bosses to become my problem.”</td>
<td>P. D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Some is messing up on their side… so it is a nightmare for me.”</td>
<td>P. E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You have to put your foot down.”</td>
<td>P. D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“There will always be internal politics.”</td>
<td>P. C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“There will always be politics at work.”</td>
<td>P. E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Yes you have people…and sometimes they get difficult.”</td>
<td>P. B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I motivate them whenever I like.”</td>
<td>P. A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I was involved in a union which was headed by me.”</td>
<td>P. A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“My line manager and her boss are very approachable.”</td>
<td>P. E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>Liberation for the purpose of self-actualisation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I have been privileged in some instances where the leaders that I have found myself under have empowered me and enabled me (P. B)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“He helped me be aware of myself and everything else that was happening around me.” P. A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I work with people that empower and that help me grow within my role.” (P.H)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“It builds you.” P. G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enablement</td>
<td>Helping to make possible</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“They have been enabling agents that played a role in aligning m beliefs to where I am going and helped me drive that ship.” P. B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Encouragement</td>
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<td>“My current boss pushes and encourages me.” P. G</td>
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<td>Lack of leadership</td>
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<td>Reporting to someone who is termed your supervisor and they were doing no supervision besides you reporting to them. They check your emails and your whereabouts but they are not playing the supervisory role.” P. B</td>
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**GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (7)**

- The ongoing process of self-improvement | 14
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| **Learning**                   | Attaining skills and knowledge                                              | 5      | “As long as I am getting skills and growing.” P. B  
“I want to do courses on new methods and programs.” P.C  
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“I want to learn new things.” P. G |
| **Education**                  | The process of attaining an instruction at a university                     | 1      | I had to improve myself with growth and education.” P. A  
“The participant voiced that advancement within her work role is important to her QOL because she does not want to feel that she is not moving in her work life. She said: “For me it is about a chain that goes on after a couple of years…the succession plan. Advancing my work role is important to my quality of life, I do not want to feel stuck.” P. B |
| **Advancement**                | Higher work responsibilities                                               | 2      | “… And if need be you can get promoted to help sustain your quality of life.” P. D  
“The participant voiced that advancement within her work role is important to her QOL because she does not want to feel that she is not moving in her work life. She said: “For me it is about a chain that goes on after a couple of years…the succession plan. Advancing my work role is important to my quality of life, I do not want to feel stuck.” P. B |
| **Lack of skills transfer**    | Absence of training another                                                | 1      | “There is not enough skills transfer.” P. B  
“They is not enough mentoring.” P. B  
“I want a mentor.” P. G  
“There isn’t much space for growth.” P. C  
“After two to three years, there is really not much growth.” P. G |
| **Lack of mentoring**          | Absence of guiding, advising or training another                           | 3      | “They is not enough mentoring.” P. B  
“I want a mentor.” P. G  
“There isn’t much space for growth.” P. C  
“After two to three years, there is really not much growth.” P. G |
| **Lack of growth and development** | Insufficient acquisition of skills and knowledge                          | 2      | “There isn’t much space for growth.” P. C  
“After two to three years, there is really not much growth.” P. G |
| **REMUNERATION (3)**           | Work-related wages                                                         | 7      | “My quality of life was enhanced by my salary.” P.H  
“We all need money because we have needs.” P. G  
“Pays the bills.” P. D |
| **Salary**                     | Fixed regular payment                                                      | 5      | “My quality of life was enhanced by my salary.” P.H  
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<td><strong>PERSONAL</strong></td>
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<td>Dependence on oneself</td>
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<td>“You found that you needed to teach yourself.” P.H</td>
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From the table above, it can be seen that the factors of the work role that impact the QOL span across the organisation (e.g. growth and development), group (e.g. relationships) and individual (e.g. legacy) levels. Moreover, they were experiences across the participants regardless of their work roles or their level within the organisation (e.g. professional vs admin assistant). In order of salience, the emergent themes were as follows:

**Theme 1: Work-home interface**

This theme was the most common, consisting of eleven codes which appeared a total of 32 times. These codes included work-home interaction, telecommuting, work-life balance, employee assistance, lack of wellness, home-work interference, work-home interference, lack of work-life balance, excessive work hours, unreasonable deadlines, work overload. The theme is relevant to the study as roles that are demanding tend to take individuals away from their home and family, thereby decreasing their QOL.

**Theme 2: Relationships**

The constituent codes were: Harmonious relationships, supportive relationships, diverse interactions, positive intergenerational interactions, negative intergenerational interactions, toxic relationships, lack of trust, unreliable colleagues, putting up boundaries, internal politics and difficult work relationships. Relationships are an integral part of the work role as colleagues are dependent on one another to complete tasks. Moreover, employees can forms bonds and friendships at work which help bring enjoyment at work, therefore increasing the QOL of individuals.

**Theme 3: Leadership**

Leadership was the third most prevalent themes with eight codes occurring 16 times. The components of leadership are: motivation, influence, supportive
management, empowerment, enablement, encouragement, lack of leadership, lack of empowerment, lack of supervision and micromanagement. Leadership has ties to the work roles given that all employees either have a manager or they manage others. The leadership competencies of these managers determines their ability to lead as well as their style. This in turn determines the individual’s response to the manager in terms of performance, satisfactions and, of course, QOL.

**Theme 4: Growth and development**

The fourth most prevalent theme was that of growth and development with seven codes occurring 14 times in the data. This theme is made up of learning, education, advancement, lack of skills transfer, lack of mentoring and lack of growth and development. Growth and development is linked to the work role on many different levels. For example, in order to excel on the job, upskilling needs to occur; and in order to advance to greater responsibilities, development needs to occur. With learning, development, education, growth occurs, which opens up the possibilities of increased QOL. On the other hand, other jobs do not offer opportunities for growth and without that opportunity for lateral and upward mobility, stagnation occurs and that can decrease QOL.

**Theme 5: Remuneration**

Remuneration was the next theme and for the purposes of the current study, it was made up of three codes, that is, salary, inequitable pay and low pay. These codes made a total of seven appearances in the data. Different work roles attract different level of pay. This is further complicated by the fact that people in the same work role can earn differently. Whether the pay is fair or not, people work to earn a living and sometimes they choose work on the basis of it providing desired pay. When
employees are paid, they are able to pay bills and pursue life’s pleasures which in turn increases their QOL.

**Theme 6: Legacy**

The notion of leaving a legacy, although not as popular as the other themes, was still an important factor of the work role for some participants. Legacy is made up of the codes: making a difference and making an impact. It occurred a total of seven times in the data. For some, doing something of significance for the country that can be remembered for some time to come was an important consideration in the work role. The ability to do so everyday meant that they had an increased QOL.

**Theme 7: Personal Mastery**

Autonomy, initiative and self-reliance were all constituents of the theme, personal mastery. These codes made four appearances in the data, making it the least common theme. Work roles provide employees with the opportunity to use and hone personal competencies and some people value this prospect. For instance, people enjoy autonomy in their work roles because it means they can direct their work. If this were to be taken away, then they would have decreased satisfaction and work, which could lead to a decline in QOL.

### 3.3 Report on Cases

The current study employs a case study strategy. As such, below I report on the eight different cases in terms of their background as well as their roles as they relate to QOL.

**3.3.1 Participant A: The Tutor.** Participant A is a 29-year-old single parent to a 6-year-old boy and comes from a village in Limpopo. She holds a Master’s degree in Industrial Psychology and has 12 years of working experience in various fields such as radio, finance, construction, insurance and education.
According to the participant, some of the factors that enhanced her QOL in her work role were associated with the fact her work involved interaction with others. She expressed this in following words: “The job made me happy, because I was involved with the people in my job.”

For the participant, positively contributing to the lives of others enhanced her QOL. The participant described her experience as follows:

“What made me happy there was that I had the platform of changing people’s lives. Those are people that did not have anything close to what I had in terms of education. Those same people did not have matric and could not read or write and did not know many languages. I was fortunate to know many languages because I went to boarding school and when you go to boarding school you are forced to know these different languages, especially if you are black. I had the opportunity to communicate to people of a different language background than mine. That helped to get to know people and to understand them and as a result I got to help change their lives and that made me happy, I could sleep better at night.”

With the transition from working with elder people to working with young adults, the participant expressed that she felt that her work role enhanced her QOL in the sense that it gave her the opportunity to influence others and as a result she encountered feelings of satisfaction. She expressed herself as follows: “With education it is different. I am the older one and you have these kids that are looking up to me and hear what I have to say. So I use that platform to not only teach but to do what I think I am called for and that completed me. That I will take with me to the grave. With that comes great responsibility and great accountability. With education I got exposed to what it would do for me internally more than externally”.

The codes that were extracted are as follows:
3.3.2 Participant B: The Research Engineer. Participant B is a 29-year-old black female who holds a Doctoral degree in mechatronics. She designs and develops robots. The various robots that she develops have various applications in the medical (robots used in surgeries), mining (specifically concerned with the safety of mine workers) and farming industries. The participant’s work role provides her the platform to help address challenges that are not only encountered by South Africans but blacks on the entire continent. As such, having the opportunity to help resolve problems enhances her QOL. Her work role requires her to utilise her practical skills and knowledge, which ultimately brings her job satisfaction and gives her a sense of purpose. As a result, this positively impacts her QOL.

The participant is passionate about Africa and her work role positively impacts her QOL in the sense that it allows her the opportunity to apply her expertise in helping address some of the challenges that are currently encountered on her continent. She said: “How I could use my skills and competencies and whatever it is that I have learnt in addressing the challenges that face my continent. So for me then that ties, that presents a whole new picture so I get to work with the cutting edge stuff and forth but also how can I then use what I have to keep my skills as an engineer, my background being mechatronic engineering. And how do I use that in solving Africa’s challenges because uhm when, for me right now it is understanding how crucial Africa is close to my heart, even my own nation, South Africa and that is what brings
me happiness and satisfaction overall. And I cannot expect the people from Europe coming to solve the problems we face there.”

The participant is passionate about how her work role offers her the opportunity to develop herself and obtain practical knowledge. She also felt that her work role allows her to make a unique difference in the lives of others. She expressed the former and the latter in the following way: “In my job yes I do get skills and I do have moments when I feel that I am growing and that I am making an impact in the lives of others and that is how I feel my job positively impacts me you know, it influences my happiness. So then there can be a compromise somewhere but uhm because that’s what it’s all about. It’s not just about making money, what difference am I making ultimately.”

Given that Participant B specialises in the engineering field, technology is an important resource in her work role. Therefore, the employing of current forms of technology and being at the cutting edge of research allows her to prevent other employees, such as miners, from being in hazardous work environments and to generate solutions to challenges experienced in the South African context, including the broader African continent: “So our work role here would be how do we use robots to place humans out of danger and so forth. So that they can do those tasks where humans, which are hazardous, where human beings cannot. And uhm how we can apply robotics to uhm farming so the different kind of sectors in South Africa. So uhm that for me, on the one end its exciting uhm because then I get to work with somewhat cutting-edge technology, being on the edge of research that is happening globally, internationally and both locally and how you can use that to address the current challenges in South Africa but uhm when we speak about, what’s this, wholeness, what brings life satisfaction and happiness to me. My work role makes me happy in
that sense.” The participant voiced that advancement within her work role is important to her QOL because she does not want to feel that she is not moving in her work life. She said: “For me it is about a chain that goes on after a couple of years... the succession plan. Advancing my work role is important to my quality of life, I do not want to feel stuck.”

The participant expressed that that in her work role she is required to work closely with, and report to her manager. The participant stated that she felt that she did not receive the support from her superiors, which ultimately impacts how she performs in her work role. She said: “People are placed into positions of leadership and don’t have leadership qualities, they are not leaders by nature and you understand these dynamics that sometimes you don’t blame them but then unfortunately they are placed in a leadership role and that becomes detrimental to the development and that even affects how you are able to do your work ultimately and your performance and all these things. Those dynamics I have also learnt that how, again speaking to the things of how are some of the things that and how people of relations or some of the things that make it impossible for you to get that satisfaction and quality of life.”

Although Participant B felt that she is growing and developing within her work role, she voiced that the there is insufficient skills transfer, which she felt is critical for her work role. She expressed the latter as follows: “uhm skills transfer, those are critical things and how they could be monitored, you know, if I could see more of those being done along those lines because in that way I do my work properly and I will be able to help people in the best way I know how, which will ultimately enhance my quality of life. So with them not being there, I do not like that because I cannot do my work well and therefore I am not happy, it takes away from my quality
of life, what I have constantly found is that there are not enough people that where there is proper skills transfers and where its monitored, it does not help to bring in foreigners and some of these things, and they don’t put in processes in place to monitor that there are actual skills and people are being equipped so we can drive this nation forward and so forth.”

The codes that were extracted were as follows:

- Solutions
- Contribution
- Benefitting from skills
- Making an impact
- Advancement
- Lack of leadership
- Lack of growth and development

3.3.3 Participant C: The Graphic Designer. Participant C is a graphic designer in organisation of employment. The participant is 30 years old. She describes herself as having been creative and “artsy” throughout her primary and secondary schooling. For the participant art offers her the opportunity to express herself. To date she has worked in three organisations.

She currently works for an outsourcing company. Her work role involves creating bids, working in the marketing department as a graphic designer and designing tender reports. For the participant her work role allows her to express herself in the best way she knows how. The factors within her work role that positively impact her QOL will be discussed below.

Participant C perceives having support from colleagues as necessary in her work role as that enhances her QOL: “It’s also good to work with people you get
along with, people who all the time you see because that is how we learn to support each other and help each other at work. It’s no longer colleagues, like this is family you know…”

According to the participant her work role requires that she sacrifices some of her personal time in order to fulfil her work obligations. She said: “Like I said in the beginning, we are more sales support and this company is huge and it is in different regions, different countries, so we still sales support for other regions other than Johannesburg, so time is a factor. There are times when you find yourself here on a Friday like at ten o’clock and you are still working, and that’s gone into your personal time, you know. Or Saturday or Sunday even, and then you have to come in and do work.”

When Participant C was asked how her work role hinders her from achieving the QOL that she desires, she responded that she perceives there to be no room for growth within her work role: “What I also do not like is that because of the industry we are in it’s a bit secluded so there isn’t much room for design growth because uhm yeah, there isn’t that much space for design growth”.

The participant’s work role requires her to service her entire company and as a result she is overworked and has numerous deadlines to meet; in addition to this she is still the mother to a new-born baby: “I was on leave and in November I was asked to come back because they were not coping at work. They needed help with this and this and this. I understand that they needed help, and the pressure, so I said ok let me see what I can do. So when I say that it dips into your personal time, its times like that when I must leave my leave, you know, but then you understand the deadlines and so you make the time to come in, and then it’s like being at work till late. Yeah so then it is like ok then, I need to do what it is needed for tomorrow morning. We’ll have to do
what needs to be done so that that proposal is in, because at the end of the day they also have a deadline or a target so, that’s what happens.” The participant further voiced that she was overworked: “Our manager is in down in KZN assisting with a bid there. So it is just the two of us and so it’s like from the minute you walk in to the minute you walk out, it’s just work, work, work, work. And we put in like extra hours and added effort and you know, a whole lot.”

The codes that were extracted are as follows:

- Supportive relationships
- Harmonious relationships
- Lack of work–life balance
- Work-home interference
- Excessive work hours
- Lack of growth and development

3.3.4 Participant D: The Administrative Assistant. Participant D is a 32-year-old mom from Randfontein. She is the last born in her immediate family and is the only girl of three children. The participant described herself as the average kid and works hard to provide a life her daughter can be proud of. The participant works as an administrative assistant to a director and travels 15 minutes to get to work every day. Participant D has experienced her work role to impact both positively and negatively on her QOL.

Participant D voiced that there is opportunity for advancement within her work role: “…and if need be you can get promoted to help sustain your quality of life.” When the participant was asked how she perceived her work role’s impacting her QOL she expressed that she felt that her work role allowed her the opportunity to work longer in order to sustain her QOL: “My work role also allows me the
She further voiced that her work role positively impacts her QOL in the sense that it allows her to assist students that do not come from well-off backgrounds: “Helping out kids that do not have anyone. Students that really do not have nothing, it gives me meaning in life.”

The participant perceived her work role to consume the time she is meant to spend with her family, and when asked whether she considers the latter to hinder her QOL she responded as follows: “Yes it does affect it but it is a sacrifice worth being made, you know what I mean.” She also emphasised how unreliable she considered her colleagues to be, and that her colleagues did not adhere to the deadline submissions: “People who bunk work and leave their bosses to become my problem, that bugs me too. People that I ask documents from when deadlines are due, and then they do not submit.”

The participant further voiced that an additional factor that within her work role that negatively impacts her QOL is that when her employees were absent, she would be obligated to fulfil the work responsibilities of others and as a result she would experience work overload: “People are supposed to be doing their jobs and they do not. They do not do their jobs and I have to end up doing it for them.”

It can be concluded that the features of the participant’s work role, such as lack of family time, work overload and task repetition negatively impact her QOL. Therefore, the codes that were extracted are as follows:

- Advancement
- Unreliable colleagues
- Excessive work hours
- Work overload
3.3.5 Participant E: The Office Administrator. Participant E describes herself as a Xhosa girl from East London, who studied in Cape Town. She is 30 years old. Her father suggested that she pursue engineering and as a result she studied quantity surveying. However, upon going on site, she felt that she was not happy. She did not continue her studies, and instead got married and became a mother. The participant had other interests she wanted to pursue, such as human resources management and international relations. However, she feared travelling and the possibility of being expected to learn a new language. As a result she ended up working as an office administrator.

She perceives that socially interacting with others positively impact her QOL: “I mean I am happy at work and in my work role because I interact and build relationships with students.” Participant E believes that receiving support from her superiors in her work role positively impacts her QOL as she may approach her superiors with any problem she may encounter. She said, “My line manager and her boss are very approachable. If I have a problem that is impacting me in my work role, I can always go and tell them, which I feel makes me happier and satisfied”.

Participant E states that she does not take work home, which gives her time to be with her family: “I never, never have to deal with work things at home, which I appreciate because I can focus on my family and my work role does not conflict with my family time. I am here from eight am until four-thirty, and then and if I need to be here later than four-thirty, it doesn’t happen always. And I don’t take work home. I am home during weekends.” It can be assumed that her work role does not result in a lack of family time and that she compartmentalises her work tasks.

The participant expressed that on occasion she felt that her colleagues were incompetent. She said, “someone else’s problem has now become my problem and
you have to follow up with that person, and at that moment I forget about my quality of life because that situation does not enhance it at all; no one wants to take that responsibility.”

She also perceived that she did not have a sense of task control within her work role. She said, “We are not given enough power to be able to make certain decisions ourselves. We are always relying on the next person.” It can thus be assumed that the work role of participant E has both positive and negative impacts on her QOL and in order for the latter to be enhanced the former must be alleviated.

The codes extracted are:

- Harmonious relationships
- Supportive management
- Work-life balance
- Unreliable colleagues
- Lack of empowerment

3.3.6 Participant F: The Data Capturer. Participant F is a B.Com law graduate who is currently studying towards a higher certificate programme in business management, specialising in risk management, at a South African university. She is 28 years of age. The participant has worked as a receptionist at a well-known newspaper in the Johannesburg area. She worked for a period of six months and fulfilled an administrative role. Some of the tasks she was engaged in were answering phones, sending deliveries, making orders and distributing newspapers to staff.

The participant also worked at a jewellery store. To add to that she occupied the role of a casual sales consultant in which she worked weekends because she was at the time pursuing her undergraduate studies. The participant further found
employment at Truworths and Virgin Active in conjunction with her studies at UNISA. She currently works as a data capturer.

She believed that her work role should be structured in such a way that there is a balance between home and work: “A balance between home and work would help with my quality of life”. Participant F felt that home-based work should be made a priority within work roles. She expressed the latter in the following way: “So organisations must look at work role structure in order for people like us to work from home in order to enjoy our homes and families.” When the participant was asked whether her work role enhances her QOL she responded by saying: Seeing happy clients makes me happy”.

The participant felt that in her work role she experienced fatigue: “I would always get home tired.” Her work role also required her to stand at all times and to encourage the buying of products to clients, which resulted to her QOL being negatively impacted. She said: “For me that was strained my quality of life because they did not give you the option of having a chair behind the counter. The only time you got to sit down was during tea and the lunch break; even though I probably should have brought it up to my store manager I didn’t.” Participant F voiced that ultimately she felt that on occasion her work role took her away from her family: “I feel that my work role for me sort of took me away from my family”.

Therefore, the codes that were extracted include:

- Work-life balance
- Telecommuting
- Harmonious relationships Work-home interference
- Lack of wellness
3.3.7 Participant G: The Project Manager. Participant G is currently working for a university in South Africa, where she has been working for five years. She is 26 years old and currently resides in Soweto. The participant graduated in public relations and communications and is now studying project management. According to the participant she is furthering her studies in order to equip her with skills in marketing events and communication.

The participant voiced that the support of management is crucial in her work role as she perceived that this would positively enhance her QOL. She said, “My colleagues push and support me, the ones that I talk to.” For the participant, mentorship is an important aspect in her work role and disapproves of being mentored by anyone else other than her supervisors. She said: “I want to learn from your character, I want a mentor.” When she was asked what else she would like to see more of, she also emphasised that building relationships is of value to her, she said: “Building relationships with them. For me social contact is important for me in my work role.” Therefore, it can be concluded that receiving support from her superiors, being mentored and social contact with others are of importance to her and her perception of QOL.

The participant voiced that she perceived there to be no growth within her work role: “honestly I do not see any growth here within my work role.” She also communicated that she enjoys a challenging work role and that she perceived very few, if any, challenges within her work role.

Therefore, the themes extracted were as follows:

The codes extracted include the following:

- Supportive relationships
- Mentorship
• Diverse interactions
• Lack of growth of development

3.3.8 Participant H: The Project Administrator. The participant is an ordinary girl from Mohlakeng. She has six siblings of which she is the third born. She is 30 years old. She completed primary and high school in Mohlakeng. She describes herself as a woman with big dreams and hopes to one day have her own interior design business. In addition, she considers herself as an individual that genuinely loves people. Currently the participant is a project administrator.

The positive factors concerning her work role that impact her QOL include receiving social support from her colleagues. She said: “They motivate me at work, they never criticise me, they would rather assist me in fixing whatever I have not done well and that’s how I learn.” For the participant having the opportunity to learn and develop enhances her QOL: “Every time I come to work I know that there is something that I am going to learn.”

The participant also made mention of the fact that there are instances when her QOL is inhibited by her work role. She voiced some disapproval of her working hours: “Yes the system of eight to four, especially for us mothers, at times it does not make sense to me”. In her work role, she encounters deadlines: “You would also find that the deadline is the following day.” The participant perceived that she was given the responsibility of teaching herself within her role of which she found challenging: “You found that you needed to teach yourself.

Therefore, the extracted codes were as follows:

• Supportive relationships
• Learning
• Lack of work-life balance
• Deadlines

• Self-reliance

3.4 Integration

In Chapter 3, the themes and codes extracted from the data as well as the participant-specific themes were presented. Each theme or aspect of the work role was justified insofar as it related to QOL. In Chapter 4, I discuss the themes and consolidate with existing literature in order to make sense of the data.
CHAPTER 4: INTERPRETATION AND SENSE-MAKING

4.1 Introduction

The objective of the current study is to investigate the relative impact of the work role on the QOL of employees. In this chapter, I consolidate the research findings with literature in an attempt to interpret and make sense of the themes as identified in the preceding chapter.

4.2 Work-home interface

Employees constantly go between the two domains of work and family or home. This was no different for my participants. There seemed to be a struggled in keeping the two domains separate. Theory differentiates the following of techniques across these areas, that is, spillover, segmentation, and compensation (see Drobnic, Beham, & Prag, 2010). Firstly, spillover is when the experiences in one domain influence the experience of another life domain (e.g. family) influence experiences in another (e.g. work) and overall life. This was evident in many of the participants who complained that work interfered with their home life which in turn impacted the children and various other home aspects. Secondly, compensation is the process of attempting to find balance across domains. Put differently, individuals may desire to recompense for insufficient satisfaction in an area of their lives by attempting to search for more satisfaction in the other due to problems in the former (Drobnic et al., 2010). There was no real evidence of this mechanism from the data. Lastly, segmentation is the act of attempting to isolate life domains for the purpose of averting experiences that may transmitted amid various areas of life (Drobnic, 2010; Sirgy 2002). This was achieved by only one participant who successfully wove between home and work without the one domain affecting the other. A plausible
explanation for this is that her work demands are consistently at manageable levels and so the separation between the two domains is achievable.

Some participants identified telecommuting as a means to mitigate the challenge of spillover. This means is supported by literature and is further seen as a way to provide some level of work flexibility (see Drobnic, 2010). Telecommuting has been referred to as distance work, telework (Gray, Hodson, & Gordon, 1993) and remote work (Hamblin, 1995). In the exploration of the impact of telework on QOL, Hornung et al. (2009) discovered a noteworthy small positive association to exist amongst women participants. Teleworking has also been found to be associated with enhanced flexibility and autonomy (the latter being a determinant of another work role, that is, personal mastery; Lautsch et al., 2011), enhanced work–life balance (Rafnsdottir & Heijstra, 2011) and technological resources (Harpaz, 2002).

Similarly, Hackman and Oldham (1980) propose that telework would yield positive outcomes for employees, such as enhanced QOL. In contrast, Rothbard, Phillips, and Dumas (2005) argue that teleworking does not lead to enhanced QOL as employees have a preference to keep their work roles and personal lives separate. Hornung, Herbig, and Glaser (2008) contested the latter (in support of Hackman and Oldham, 1980) as they found that increased levels of QOL are due to teleworking programs. The benefits of telework on the QOL of employees can be associated to increased concentration, flexibility, and improved time management (Harrington & Hall, 2007).

Besides the benefit from the human perspective, characteristic of telework has support from government and organisations because it is a way of reducing emissions from city traffic and getting a more flexible staff and to reduce the need for office space. On the individual level, telecommuting several days increases concentration
and efficiency at work and reduces stress and thus enhances QOL (Vitterso, Akselsen, Evjemo, Julsrud, Yttri, & Bergvik, 2003).

Lastly, whilst high workload can interfere with the fine balance of work and home and thus decrease QOL, it was found by Martin-Fernandez, Gomez-Gascon, Beadmud-Lagos, Cortes-Rubio and Alberquilla-Menendez-Asenjo (2007) that having control over one’s work and avoiding increases in workloads, can increase perceived QOL.

4.3 Relationships

According to Field (2005), relationships are the interactions between persons where affection is reciprocated. Similar findings by Shier and Graham (2010), show that social relations amongst employees and with colleagues enhanced the QOL of social workers. Similarly, Requena (2003) found a strong relationship concerning QOL, life satisfaction and social relationships in the workplace. Apart from being a key aspect of QOL (Reis & Gable, 2003), relationships have also been found to be a pertinent component of psychological well-being (Keyes, 1998). For example, Myers (2000) suggests that relationships can be both beneficial and detrimental to psychological well-being.

Positive relationships existing in the work role impact QOL in the sense that individuals are found to be happy, given that they have close social ties with colleagues, family and spouses (Diener et al., 2002). Demir, Ozen, Dogan, Bilyk, and Tyrell (2011) argued that relationships impact on QOL in that individuals give more consideration to the friendships they share with others. Also, QOL is enhanced by relationships because positive interactions serve as emotional support and increases feelings of belongingness (Diener & Rahtz, 2000).
4.4 Leadership

In the current study, leadership was found as a theme that potentially impact QOL both positively and negatively. Leadership has been conceptualised in various ways (Van Niekerk, 2011). For example, Anderson, Ford, and Hamilton (1998) defined the concept as the act of dominance and authority. Baicher (2005) argued that leadership is concerned with the influence of others through shared beliefs and practices, and fostering co-operative relationships with subordinates with the aim of achieving a predetermined outcome. Similar findings were identified by Yang (2014), who found that leaders who exercise ethical behaviour positively, impacts the life satisfaction of employees and job satisfaction. Other studies, however, are not in complete agreement with the above. For example, leadership has also been associated with other constructs such as organisational climate (Eustace & Martins, 2014).

Eustace & Martin (2014) explored the impact leadership has on organisational climate and found there to be a positive relationship between leadership dimensions such as inspirational leadership and organisational climate. Leadership has also been studied in association with self-efficacy and emotional intelligence, where it was found that they positively impact leadership effectiveness (Ramchunder & Martins, 2014).

Leadership that is positive may enhance QOL of employees, as they may perceive their leaders as supportive and encounter the absence of burnout within their work roles (Eriksson et al., 2009). Howell, Chenot, Hill, and Howell (2011) suggested that when subordinates experience positive forms of leadership, such as being encouraged, being motivated and receiving guidance, their levels of happiness increases. The lack of leadership or supportive supervision may inhibit QOL in that employees may consider their supervisors to not be concerned about their well-being.
not to value their contribution in making decisions (Nielsen & Daniels, 2012). Also, QOL may also be negatively impacted in the sense that they may experience increased levels of distress (Tepper, 2000), become less happy with their jobs (Duffy, Ganster, & Pagon, 2002) and elevated levels of emotional exhaustion (Wu & Hu, 2009).

4.5 Growth and Development.

Bipp (2010) considers personal growth and development as factors that are inherent to the work role, as opposed to the work environment. Thomas and Wise (1999) consider personal growth and development as an organisational factor where employees perceive there to be advancement. The concept development alludes to continuous learning (Ng, 2004). In the current study it was found that millennials consider the opportunity to learn and develop as pertinent in the enhancement of their QOL. The theme was common for Participants C and G.

Similarly, the results of the study are in harmony with previous a study conducted by Vivoll and Vitterso (2015), which discovered that life satisfaction mediated the association amid personal growth and subjective health. Chun and Lee (2008) investigated personal growth in relation to spiritual change, social associations, personal strength and an appreciation for life. Personal growth is said to impact on QOL in that individuals are better able to cope with difficult situations, remain happy, and maintain a balanced QOL (Best, Streisand, Catania, & Kazak, 2001). The lack of personal growth impacts QOL in that individuals do not evaluate their lives optimistically and do not develop their problem-solving skills (Smola & Sutton, 2002).

When individuals perceive there not to be personal development in their work role it is an indication that their needs are not being met, which ultimately inhibits
their QOL (Sirgy, 2012). This theme is considered to inhibit their QOL because they become less productive in their work roles by virtue of the lack of skills, or skills having not been developed (Martin, 2005). The presence of personal growth impacts QOL in that individuals are able to accomplish more in life (Linley & Joseph, 2004). Lack of development inhibits QOL in that individuals are unable to develop their potential and advance within their work roles (Kim, Heo, Lee, & Kim, 2015).

4.6 Income

Income is conceptualised as the remuneration an individual receives as result of engaging in work-related tasks (Sirgy, 2012). Income was identified as a theme in the current study which positively impacted QOL. The finding is similar to what Seghieri, Desantis, and Tanturri (2006) found, which was, increased income resulted in elevated levels of well-being in work roles as a result of the possibility of satisfying personal desires. Schyns (2002) found that income was associated to life satisfaction. Scholars such as Diener and Oishi (2000) found that income was unrelated to life satisfaction which is a component of QOL, as such, their results were dissimilar to the findings in the current study. Also, income has been investigated as an objective indicator of QOL (Sirgy, 2012). Income has also been studied from the perspective of investigating income sources and family characteristics (Raffalovich, Monnat, & Tsao, 2009).

Income impacts QOL in the following way, individuals receiving what they consider as high pay encounter increased levels of QOL (Kasser, 2002). Dolan, Peasgood, and White (2008) suggested that QOL may be positively impacted by equitable income, while the lack thereof, would result in reduced life satisfaction. Sirgy (2012) confirmed that employees receiving an income and preferably if it is high, will experience more happiness and increased QOL in their work roles than
those receiving low income. Income was seen as an important work role aspect that gives rise to QOL. Receiving a fixed income is regularly seen as a significant leading factor of a high QOL in Europe (Clark, 2005; Haller & Hadler 2006), thus supporting my findings. This is not surprising because income is a way to make ends meet and pursue life’s pleasures (Drobnic et al., 2010), which was a common narrative amongst the participants.

4.7 Legacy

Legacy is conceptualised as the act of offering another what was once and may still be a prized possession (Ekerdt, Sergeant, Dingel, & Bowen, 2004). In the current study, legacy impacts QOL. Similar findings were discovered by Uhl (2008), who found that elder adults experienced high levels of life satisfaction when having and working towards a legacy. Legacy has also been studied from a health-related QOL perspective. A legacy measurement was created to investigate health-related QOL and it was found that the tool did not sufficiently capture health-related QOL (Huang et al., 2012).

It is suggested by Uhl (2008) that legacy impacts QOL in the following ways: Within an individual’s work role, a legacy may represent something meaningful for individuals, and may be utilised to the betterment of individuals and society at large, as such, increasing levels of satisfaction. Another plausible explanation could be that different forms of legacy such as making an impact and making a difference symbolise having empathy. For individuals who consider themselves as having such personal qualities, it could possibly enhance their QOL because they have a positive self-image of themselves (Maw, 2015).
4.8 Personal mastery

The theme personal mastery was found as a theme in current study. Personal mastery has been defined as continuous development of the self in any aspect of life (Garcia-Morales, Llorens-Montes, & Verdu-Jover, 2007). Peterson (1999) found similar results, where it was found that people that master themselves encounter high levels of QOL. Noor’s (2002) findings are in agreement with those of Peterson (1999) who found a positive association was found between QOL and personal mastery. As a result of individuals mastering themselves, individuals perform their work roles better. Other scholars found results that were not in agreement with findings of the study.

4.9 Integration

Chapter 4 was aimed at interpreting and making sense of the research findings from the preceding chapter. The seven salient themes were interpreted, discussed and linked to appropriate supporting and conflicting literature where plausible. Chapter 5 will conclude the study.
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

Having provided the findings of the study in Chapter 3, and with the interpretation and sense-making discussed in Chapter 4, in this chapter I provide a synopsis of the study, along with the main findings. I also provide the practical implications in relation to the findings, limitations of present research as well as recommendations for future research.

5.2 Synopsis of the Study

The objective of the study was to explore the relative impact of different factors in the work role that have a supporting or inhibiting effect on the QOL, from a black female millennial perspective. I first provided the background of the study as well as the problem statement, where I elaborated on the necessity of the study. Subsequently, the qualitative research method was explicated and justified. The specific issues discussed were the philosophical assumptions underpinning the study. As such, I adopted a constructivist ontological approach and a social constructionist epistemology.

The research paradigm was that of an interpretivist-constructivist nature, while a case study was employed as a research strategy. The sampling technique that I adopted was snowball sampling, while the procedure the interviews were arranged telephonically and by means of emails. The method of data collection was with semi-structured interviews, while the research setting involved various knowledge environments and the offices of the participants. Entrée of the researcher was gained through the help of a gate-keeper and my role as the researcher was that of the human research instrument.
I then discussed the unit of analysis, which was each case that I explored, while a digital voice recorder was employed to record the interviews. Data analysis was achieved through thematic analysis and the writing style that I adopted was a combination of the realist and confessional writing styles. Thereafter, I discussed the techniques to ensure the quality assurance of the research and the ethical considerations of the study. I then presented the research findings from the perspective of each participant. From each participant, a prevailing set of themes was identified and since each presented both supporting and inhibiting factors, the themes were divided into positive and negative themes. Finally, I interpreted and made sense of the data, presenting the most common themes amongst the participants that spoke to the work role and its impact on their QOL.

5.3 Main Findings

In the interviews that were conducted with a group of millennials, codes were identified which related to the work role and its impact on the millennials’ QOL. There were ultimately 72 such codes that occurred 123 times which aligned to seven themes. These themes and their related codes were as follows:

**Theme 1: Work-home interface** – Work-home interaction, telecommuting, work-life balance, employee assistance, lack of wellness, home-work interference, work-home interference, lack of work-life balance, excessive work hours, deadlines and work overload.

**Theme 2: Relationships** – Harmonious relationships, supportive relationships, diverse interactions, positive intergenerational interactions, negative intergenerational interactions, toxic relationships, lack of trust, unreliable colleagues, putting up boundaries, internal politics and difficult work relationships.
Theme 3: Leadership – Motivation, influence, supportive management, empowerment, enablement, encouragement, lack of leadership, lack of empowerment, lack of supervision and micromanagement.

Theme 4: Growth and development – Learning, education, advancement, lack of skills transfer, lack of mentoring and lack of growth and development.

Theme 5: Remuneration – Salary, inequitable pay and low pay.

Theme 6: Legacy – Making a difference and making an impact.

Theme 7: Personal Mastery – Autonomy, initiative and self-reliance

The themes identified have work role implications at an individual (e.g. personal mastery), group (e.g. leadership) and organisational (e.g. remuneration) level. Moreover, the themes were shared amongst participants regardless of their work. The findings of this study, as well as various other studies, have demonstrated the importance of giving due consideration to enhancing QOL in the workplace.

5.4 Managerial Implications

An understanding of the determinants of QOL for different racial, age and sex groups in South Africa is important, as the data can be used to design future policies aimed at improving QOL. This research helps promote what is important to black female millennials in terms of work roles and their impact on QOL. Based on the current research findings, the study has the following implications.

Managers should ensure the presence of social support by promoting such in various organisational structures. The promotion of social support can be achieved through expressions of emotional support and through the provision of tangible assistance. Organisations should establish co-worker support and team relationships as an attempt to enhance QOL.
Managers should encourage work–life balance as opposed to a lack thereof, by introducing work policies that promote part-time work and job sharing. Managers may also create workplace child-centres to assist female employees with childcare responsibilities and in managing work obligations. The above considerations assist employees in balancing their work and private lives.

The study showed that to enhance QOL, it is important to attend to teleworking opportunities. Organisations can achieve the promotion of telework by firstly adjusting human resource polices and introducing flexible workplaces, in an effort to foster co-ordination of telework across the organisation. Managers should provide supporting technological resources that will assist employees in addressing work-related tasks in locations of their choice.

Lastly, managers should take cognisance of preferred working hours of employees, and promote flexible work hours and work schedules. In doing so, managers should also encourage and allow employees who complete work-related tasks in the workplace, to leave the workplace early when they have done so.

### 5.5 Limitations and Recommendations

The study was not without its limitations. Firstly, I made use of one data collection method, that is, the semi-structured interview (along with field notes). I should have used triangulation in my data collection. By using, for instance, diaries to complement the interviews and field notes, higher quality data collection is ensured and an emergence of further data is made possible. A second limitation to the study is that no member checking was done in order to verify with the participants that I had captured the essence of their stories correctly. It would have been prudent to do so in order to increase the trustworthiness of my data. The reason this was not undertaken, however, was due to time constraints. The last limitation that I present here, is that
there was a large contingent of administrative workers involved in the study. The data was therefore in danger of being even more specifically about black female millennials in administrative positions. Caution should have been taken in this regard by including greater diversity in terms of occupations.

5.6 Recommendations for Future Research

Given the essence of the study, that is, QOL, a mixed-method approach can enhance the quality of the study. With the correct methodology applied, we could understand the trends within the population and generalise to the applicable population group. This is also true for a longitudinal study since QOL may change with time for an individual depending on the economy, their work and personal circumstances. Lastly, I recommend further research into exploring how the work role impacts the QOL of those in lower-end positions. This would be an important study, given the developing status of the economy of South Africa. Such research would also bring forth the state of QOL for the country’s majority.

5.7 Contributions

The current makes several theoretical and practical contributions to both research and industry.

5.7.1 Theoretical Contributions. The theoretical contribution of the study will be in adding to the current knowledge on the impact of the work role on QOL. Furthermore, since there is a dearth of studies on black female millennials, the currently study is an important one in understanding this particular cohort of employees.

5.7.2 Practical Contributions. The practical contributions of the study will be to equip organisations with knowledge so that they may develop interventions that promote QOL. The interventions may contribute to the QOL experienced by workers
at all organisational levels. The interventions may help to combat additional issues associated with the lack of QOL, such as staff turnover, lack of productivity, burnout and absenteeism. Also, the study hopes to lead to the re-examination of human resource policies and practices that stunt QOL amongst not only black female millennials, but employees in general.
REFERENCES


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EPILOGUE

Here I am in 2016 currently at the final stretch of my Masters qualification, without having any experience in any work role. Although I have applied to various organisations, I have received countless letters of regret and along with that, I have experienced feelings of frustration, inadequacy and belittlement. I question whether when I do finally receive employment, if my experience within a work role will be all I had thought it would be. I feel that organisations that did not appoint me questioned my level of competence and as a result I began to question my own level of competence. Having spoken to other Industrial Psychology Master’s students enrolled at other universities, I realised that they were undergoing a similar experience.

One Master’s student shared with me that, she had moments when she wanted to change her career path, which I told her not to. I had encountered similar thoughts after the eighth letter of regret. However, I came to the conclusion that, it is more conducive to have a positive outlook as opposed a negative attitude about this experience, because firstly, life is not without challenges. Also, having a positive attitude will allow me to view the process as a learning experience because essentially, every situation has something new to teach me about myself. As a result, I am excited about the possibility of one day becoming part of a work force and being part of solutions that glorify God and impact humanity. And as I close this chapter, having heard the stories of my participants, I cannot help but wonder, whether this path and my future work role will lead my family and I to a better quality of life that I have dreamt up for my ourselves. I can only be hopeful…
Appendix A: Consent Form

Consent Form:
Impact of work role on quality of life: A black female millennial perspective

Dear Participant,
I am, Tshegofatso Mabitsela, a current master’s students at the University of Johannesburg. As part of my Mphil (Industrial Psychology) programme, I am required to engage in a research project of significance. The purpose of this research is to investigate the work role impact of quality of life of millennial employees. You will required to be participate in a semi-structured interview with the researcher (me) which will take approximately an hour and possibly extend further than that. Please be advised that this process is anonymous therefore please be completely honest throughout the course of the interview for the data to be meaningful. Your response will remain completely confidential and anonymous. The personal information which you provide will only be used to identify themes within the data that are relevant for this study. Your participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time should you wish. There is no risk of any nature to any person, group or the organisation. No sensitive information about the organisation is obligatory.

Please consider this opportunity to express your opinion about the impact your work role has on your quality of life. The estimated time for the interview is approximately an hour and may go beyond the specified time. Please provide honest answers that express your experience. Should you require more information please do not hesitate to contact me at tmabitsela0409@gmail.com.

I hereby confirm that my participant in the research project is voluntary and I confirm that I understand the purpose of the study. _____________

Participant signature_______________
Researcher signature_______________

Thank you for your participation and collaboration!
Appendix B: Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Below is the set of semi-structured interview questions I asked. Each participant was asked the same questions, differing only in the probing questions, depending on their responses.

1. Please give me a general background of who you are, tell me your story.
2. Tell me about the work you do.
3. What is your understanding by quality of life?
4. How does your work role impact your quality of life? Be as specific as possible.
5. How does your work role inhibit your quality of life? Be as specific as possible.
6. How could your quality of life be enhanced by management?
7. Is there anything you would like to add to any of questions above?