

Saskia Dietrich

**THE USE OF GENERATION Z'S KNOWLEDGE IN DESTINATION  
MANAGEMENT COMPANIES**  
INSIGHTS FROM MANAGERS IN FINNISH LAPLAND

Tourism Research, TourCIM

Master's thesis

Autumn 2021

**University of Lapland, Faculty of Social Sciences**

Title: The use of Generation Z's knowledge in destination management companies: Insights from managers in Finnish Lapland

Author: Saskia Dietrich

Degree programme / subject: Tourism Research, TourCIM (Tourism, Culture and International Management)

The type of the work: Pro gradu thesis \_x\_

Number of pages: 80

Year: 2021

**Abstract**

Knowledge management is a process of capturing, distributing and using knowledge. These aspects make it to a complex process as 99% of human actions are knowledge-based. Moreover, it can help companies to innovate, create knowledge and to improve economic performances. Nowadays generativity plays an important role in companies as previous other studies have shown that there is a need for further research of knowledge management related to the generation currently entering the labour market. The current generation entering the labour market is called Generation Z which also poses the research of this thesis. Special attention is drawn towards destination management companies who act as tour operators as the previous studies have already focused on accommodation businesses. Generation Z is defined as an age group being born roughly between 1995 and 2009, as well as the first digital native generation now entering the labour market, which makes it a current discussion topic.

This study aims to understand how the managers of Lappish destination management companies use the knowledge of Generation Z. The theoretical framework focusses on knowledge management as well as on Generation Z. Empirical data was collected through semi-structured interviews with Lappish tourism managers, after which a theory-driven content analysis was applied. Close attention is drawn to tacit and explicit knowledge in Lappish destination management companies, the managers' opinion of the young workforce and their knowledge transfer methods. Special focus is on Lapland as a destination, because of its rapidly growing tourism sector which influences the need for work force, especially due to the seasonal nature of tourism there.

The research's findings indicate that tacit knowledge is valued most. At the same time, it is the only knowledge Lappish tourism managers transfer in their trainings. This is done preferably via a knowledge transfer method called 'tandem-partner-process', which is also known as 'shadowing'. Technologies and digital devices play an important role in dealing with Generation Z. Nevertheless, the findings show that the Socialization, Externalization, Combination and Internalization (SECI) model is not completely applied in reality. Also, Generation Z is not a homogenous group and experiences with them differ to a great extent from the Lappish tourism managers. Furthermore, the study shows that training needs to be done by the new young employees, no matter which academic background or experience they may have. This indicates that previous knowledge is not relevant. Neither is knowledge which is developed during the training as it is a learning and knowledge creating process. Moreover, this research found differences between the management styles of the companies and expectations of Generation Z expressed in literature.

Keywords: Generation Z, Knowledge management, tourism labour, human capital, qualitative research

Further information: I give a permission the pro gradu thesis to be read in the Library \_x\_

# CONTENT

- 1 INTRODUCTION ..... 6**
  - 1.1 Background of the study ..... 7
  - 1.2 Previous research ..... 9
  - 1.3 Research questions and purpose ..... 12
  - 1.4 Data and methods of the research ..... 14
  - 1.5 Structure of the study ..... 15
- 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK ..... 16**
  - 2.1 Defining and understanding knowledge management ..... 16
    - 2.1.1 Methods of knowledge transfer in businesses ..... 22
    - 2.1.2 Knowledge management in tourism and hospitality ..... 25
    - 2.1.3 Relation between knowledge management and generations ..... 28
  - 2.2 Defining Generation Z ..... 30
    - 2.2.1 Values of Generation Z ..... 31
    - 2.2.2 Role of Generation Z in society ..... 33
    - 2.2.3 Generation Z members as employees ..... 34
- 3 DATA AND METHODS ..... 38**
  - 3.1 Empirical context: Lapland as tourism destination ..... 38
  - 3.2 Semi structured interviews ..... 40
  - 3.3 Data collection ..... 41
  - 3.4 Content analysis ..... 44
  - 3.5 Research ethics ..... 45
- 4 FINDINGS ..... 47**
  - 4.1 Knowledge management understood by Lappish DMC's ..... 47
  - 4.2 Knowledge transfer and the role of its methods in Lappish DMC's ..... 50
  - 4.3 The role of tacit knowledge in Lappish DMC's ..... 53
  - 4.4 Lappish tourism managers experience managing Generation Z employees ..... 55

4.5	Generation Z related to knowledge transfer .....	59
<b>5</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b> .....	<b>62</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	<b>65</b>
	<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	<b>67</b>
	<b>APPENDIX 1: Interview guide</b> .....	<b>76</b>
	<b>APPENDIX 2: Letter of consent</b> .....	<b>79</b>

## **List of Figures**

Figure 1: SECI model from Nonaka & Takeuchi .....	19
Figure 2: Three stages of the knowledge management .....	21
Figure 3: Lapland's tourism hubs.....	39

## **List of Tables**

Table 1: Summary of the current generations at work.....	29
Table 2: Background of the interviewees.....	43

## 1 INTRODUCTION

[...] even in today's relatively tight labour market, most managers hardly lie awake nights thinking up ways to better customize their message for particular generations of workers [...] (Wharton, 2019)

The quote above shows that managers do not put much effort or thought into how to adapt to always upcoming reservations. Nowadays it is a current topic that Generation Z is entering the labour market. Similar discussions about how generations change or might change the work force also appeared in the past years for other generations, for instance when Generation X entered the labour market. Also, it is stated that Generation Z has less work experience than previous generations. In 2018, only 19% of Generation Z worked when they were between 15-17 years old. From Generation X 30% had worked in that age already (Wharton, 2019). Furthermore, Wharton (2019) focusses on strategies how companies may best adapt to the upcoming generation. This made me wonder, if all companies of Finnish Lapland consider Generation Z as different, which would consequently mean, that procedures within the company in regards to the challenges and changes associated with Generation Z may need to be adapted. Contradictory, Bidwell in Wharton (2019) comments that managers are getting older and with that they forget how they have felt and acted when they first entered the labour market. Did they forget how it felt or do they just not want to adapt? These thoughts nicely highlight the start of my wonderings how much effort the managers put into getting to know the new generation and if they value the knowledge and skills they bring to a company, which differs from previous knowledge sets as they were raised with technologies. Besides that, it is also argued that Generation Z lacks tacit knowledge like the following statement shows:

People in the workforce lack a lot of the tacit knowledge that managers have learned over the years about things like the appropriate ways to behave – the ways to present yourself, all of that sort of thing. That takes time to learn, and you should be concerned but not horrified that younger people don't know it. (Bidwell in Wharton, 2019)

This thesis' aim is therefore to find out whether this is also the case in Lappish destination management companies (DMC's), as well as how the knowledge of the new young workforce (Generation Z) is used by the managers. In evaluating this matter, attention is drawn to previous research and the background of the study. Also, in the following subchapters the study purpose is examined as well as the research questions, data and methods, and the general structure of this study.

## 1.1 Background of the study

Generally speaking, knowledge transfer is complex and largely dependent on how well knowledge is noticed, transported, interpreted, and absorbed (Hamm et al., 1989 as cited in Simonin, 1999, p. 597), which makes it more difficult for managers to grasp and use it. According to Silvi and Cuganesan (2006), by investing in knowledge management, a competitive advantage should be generated by understanding resources, activities within an organization, focus on the development of capabilities, as well as paying attention to knowledge types. This is also shown by the following quote from Houlder (1977 as cited in Simonin, 1999, p. 614): “Managing knowledge is expensive but the costs of not managing knowledge is enormous”. As a basis, the value chain of a company should be known and analysed focusing on costs and values. Moreover, it is important to specify the knowledge types of the different activities and examine its costs drivers. Also, it should be identified which activities have an advantage and influence on the company and lastly, how the resources can be organized. With this framework, companies can improve and analyse their effectiveness and efficiency of knowledge management aiming at a competitive advantage (Silvi & Cuganesan, 2006). The quote as well as Silvi and Cuganesan's (2006) framework highlight the importance and the complexity of the value of managing knowledge. Additionally, the quote from Houlder (1977 as cited in Simonin, 1999, p. 614) above shows it can be expensive but when using the right, it is still less expensive than not focusing on knowledge management at all.

I observed this also for the first time when working in a destination management company in Rovaniemi, Lapland. Although knowledge from previous studies and work existed, I felt that it was not important or relevant for the company as the training started from scratch and needed to be completed by everyone. Consequently, the already existing knowledge base of each individual worker seemed not to be important at all, even though that very pre-existing knowledge could have potentially contributed to the value of actions of the company and thus helped to improve their competitive advantage. I hoped that my personal knowledge could be used to benefit the companies in Lapland because there will be the chance for the businesses to get to know and to apply new work methods, attitudes, procedures, skills, and knowledge. As Lapland is an important destination in tourism, these benefits were thought to help to develop and improve tourism. Moreover, Lapland's tourism has been growing since the 1980s (Maher et al., 2014). With increased tourism, additional workforce is also needed which is why House of Lapland, a marketing company and Lapland's official marketing and communication house, is trying to attract workers and seasonal workers to Lapland especially for the tourism sector.

Due to the strong emphasis on seasonality and strong fluctuation of visitors throughout the year in Finish Lapland, there is a strong turn-over in the high seasons and each season new workers are needed. Because of need of new workers also new knowledge is also brought to the industry every season and it connects knowledge management and tourism. In Lapland, tourism had 6.300 employees in 2017. In the travel agencies and other reservation industries, 350 workers are employed (Statistics Finland, 2017). This underlines the potential of Lapland as a destination, and that workforce is needed. Besides, the growth of the hospitality demand, the hospitality industry, including the tourism industry, offers up to 33% of part-time jobs. These have a wage which is for young people not attractive as it includes laborious work and variable working hours. This situation makes it not easy to attract new workers, which is why the hospitality industry trade association sees a need for 10,000 new employees in the next four years in that sector and is struggling to find new employees (Yle, 2020b). Apart from seasonality, reasons for the labour mismatch in the Finnish tourism industry are profitability, lack of housing, and a drastic change of services as many interrupt or close during low season, like for example restaurants, souvenir shops, and touristic attractions. There are difficulties hiring skilled people who are willing to commit to a place this far north. Also, it is very costly to connect the persistent need of new employees with the amount of training they require (Rantala et al., 2019). A lack of housing in the area where workforce is needed is a problem as well as zero-hour contracts, which does not provide long lasting career opportunities. Besides, the tourism industry in Lapland is not highly valued and is often seen as a not ‘proper’ job (Rantala et al., 2019). As Generation Z is still entering the labour market in Finland 30% of the workers in the tourism sector are under 26 years old (mara.fi, n.d.) and thus belong according to definitions to the Generation Z (see Chapter 2.2). This shows that the workforce in Lapland consists of young workers which includes me too.

Above all, there are more tour operators and travel agents in Finland than ever before selling and promoting the country and its activities. Selling includes a complex network with whole-sellers, consolidators, tour operators, travel agencies, online travel agencies, and other platforms (Mende, 2019). According to a report of Visit Finland, tour operators in Lapland were doing well in 2019-2020 (Mende, 2019). Businesses which are doing well and a huge amount of workforce willing to work were seen as a good start to analyse if the young workforce is indeed beneficial or not for the businesses and if their knowledge which they have from their studies and cultures is enriching the work and companies. Additionally, the topic has its origin in a personal matter, as I belong to Generation Z. This generation is currently entering the labour



market as the newest generation (Vetter, 2017, p. 28). At the same time, I noticed that many fellow Generation Z members are still studying, reaching now adulthood, or will achieve working age in a few years. Many people entering the labour market as soon as possible is very favourable for the tourism industry, as it is a current topic in the news that Generation Z is the new target of the workforce in tourism. Companies try to attract them before they enter the workforce for instance with social media connections as Generation Z is using social networks more than any other generation (Wein, 2019). Also, this is the first generation who has fully grown up with internet, social media and smartphones (digital natives) (Desjardins, 2019). Consequently, being a member of Generation Z and having worked in Lapland's tourism industry, there is a strong personal interest to find out how much the already gathered knowledge young workers hold is appreciated and used by the managers.

The COVID-19 pandemic makes it this year (2020/2021) almost impossible for young workers to find jobs as most of the tourism businesses in Lapland only hire seasonal workers. Therefore, it was deemed best to analyse how beneficial the knowledge was, that was used by companies in the previous years. Furthermore, some businesses have remained closed for this season, for instance the North European Invest group, which owns Lapland Hotels and Lapland Safaris, and normally employs 1.700 seasonal worker and generates an annual turnover of some 100 million euros (Yle Lapland, 2020). Nevertheless, it can be said that Generation Z is entering the workforce and there will be changes. This study will show how knowledge management is seen by managers in tourism businesses related to Generation Z's knowledge.

## **1.2 Previous research**

It is important to consider and to keep in mind that research and studies of knowledge management and tourism are limited (Pyo, 2005 as cited in Xiao, 2006, p. 147). Hallin and Marnburg (2008, p. 372) list previous studies of knowledge management in hospitality. Most of the studies are done within the hospitality industry like hotels like Bouncken (2002 as cited in Hallin & Marnburg, 2008, p. 372) did of the Accor Hotel Group. Baum and Ingram's (1997) study focuses on the relationship between a company and its operating experience concerning failure. Fretchling's (2004) study showed that academic journals are rarely used for research knowledge. Moreover, Yang and Wan (2004 as cited in Shaw & Williams, 2009, p. 330) found in their study that in hotels knowledge is often transferred via "gossip" including customer-related information, product knowledge, or problem-solving knowledge. But as Wong and Aspinwall (2004 as cited in Xiao, 2006, pp. 151–152) state, small businesses share different

characteristics of implementing knowledge management and lack a proper understanding of knowledge management. All in all, these previous studies are not that much of help as the research in this thesis focusses on small- and medium-sized businesses. Previous research was conducted in the hotel industry, or in fields like knowledge management, knowledge management related to tourism, tourism and generations, Generation Z, and Generation Z in relation to tourism. Several studies are presented in short below as they are relevant for the understanding of the research conducted in this thesis, and outline the gap which I attempt to fill.

Besides transferring knowledge, the awareness of knowledge increases as Løseth (2018) emphasizes, as her research focuses on knowledge development in adventure tourism businesses. Her study takes place in Norway and New Zealand and she outlines that small tourism businesses there do not have big problems finding staff, especially not guides. These are usually people who do these outdoor and adventure sports in their free time and have already gained the basic knowledge. Through interaction and demonstration, tacit knowledge can be transferred (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995, pp. 59–60). There is not much need for in-house training as most of the special skills needed for adventure tourism are learned outside and during leisure time (Løseth, 2018). Other research highlights that knowledge can be embedded in different interactions of people as well as in tools; tasks which create when transferred a basis for a competitive advantage of companies (Argote & Ingram, 2000). Moreover, the study of Argote and Ingram (2000) outlines that knowledge transfer often takes place in organisations but at the same time the transfer is often not completed. In this people play a critical key role, as they influence knowledge as well as adapt that knowledge situationally, thus apply it to different contexts. It is also found that people in knowledge transfer can have a double role. They can be seen as a positive influence since people are adapting to them. At the same time, people can show differences in subnetworks where people can make knowledge transfer more complicated (Argote & Ingram, 2000).

Additionally, previous research was done related to knowledge management and crises in tourism, which is important as the current COVID-19 pandemic influences tourism strongly. Crises have a strong impact on tourism. Crises knowledge management is therefore of high interest in the tourism industry as the study from Paraskevas, Altinay, McLean and Cooper (2013) outlines. It is important to invest into crisis management as with the right toolkit of knowledge it is easier to improve one's resilience against hazards, mitigate damages and allow to go back to normalcy faster than without crisis management. The right knowledge is thus

essential for it. The research focuses on crisis knowledge of tourism executives worldwide identifying four common types of crisis knowledge. They can be procedural, behavioural, third-party knowledge, and learned ignorance knowledge. Most of the study participants came from the hotel industry which makes the result applicable to the hospitality sector but not 100% applicable to the tourism sector focusing on small Lappish tourism businesses (Paraskevas et al., 2013).

Thus, previous research was conducted about tourism especially in Lapland focusing on the employees which shows that there is a need to understand and investigate the managers' side. As most of the tourism workers are seasonal workers and often work as guides, it is important to see their relation to the companies such as what Penttonen (2018) analyses within her research on the wilderness guides' wellbeing and working conditions in Lapland. Due to anonymity, no age was mentioned so it is not clear if some are members of Generation Z. At the same time, it shows the need for generational research to make studies more explicit. But as the wellbeing and the working conditions were analysed it reflects also the company's structure and values. The study concludes that businesses require wilderness guides to work in a short amount of time many hours and to be flexible. Especially a lack of psychological wellbeing was noticed as the workload was a lot, but still, the wilderness guides were satisfied with their work and considered the work environment to be good. Some deficiency in the working condition was outlined with a special focus on hygiene factors which is the responsibility of the businesses hiring them (Penttonen, 2018). As mentioned previously, hospitality and tourism work is according to Yle (2020b) not an attractive industry. This highlights a contrast to Penttonen's research, stating that guides are satisfied with the work. But, as Lapland belongs to the Arctic regions, having in mind that there is a desire for economic growth in tourism, as pointed out by Maher (2017, p. 219), is important as it is affecting also the workforce. At the same time, Maher (2017, p. 219) underlines that it is essential to keep in mind that increasing tourism can injure nature as there is so far no solution found as to how tourism can increase without harming nature.

Overall, research is rather limited regarding Generation Z working in tourism, but a study was conducted by Rohula and Kariuki (2020) in Finland showing which factors Finnish Generation Y and Generation Z members motivate or demotivate in their employment and when searching for job offers. Generation Y is defined by people born 1981 till 1994 and also called in further chapters Millennials. It is the generation before Generation Z. Generation Z starts in the year 1995 (Rohula & Kariuki, 2020) (see Chapter 2.2). As pointing out differences and similarities

of Generation Y and Z, this is also done by Špindler (2018), who highlights traits of all generations through the lens of tourism including Generation Z. Moreover, Robert Half (2015) analyses expectations and values towards their bosses and companies of Generation Z. Furthermore, Klein (2016) did similar research focusing on the characteristics required in organizations by Generation Y. It shows that Generation Y expects from the managers good management skills and support. Feedback is required but needs to be given in a sensitive way, as well as an appreciation for the work is valued by Generation Y. Working in teams should be accompanied by the management and aims and instruction clearly defined. A manager is expected to be authentic, giving diversified tasks, having sympathy, appreciation, and to be thoughtful about individual preferences (Klein, 2016). Doing this research in Finnish Lapland should fill the gap as previous research done by several scholars targets the tourism behaviour of Generation Z members from different nationalities (e.g., Baltescu 2019; Niemczyk et al., 2019). Research done on Generation Z and their values as a new workforce regarding their well-being during their first work experiences in tourism and hospitality has been conducted by Tang, Tosun and Baum (2020) about Chinese Generation Z.

To summarize, it can be said that previous research is done on single empirical phenomena like knowledge management or Generation Z, but a more connective approach to those topics in Finland is limited. Nevertheless, the previous research highlights the importance of knowledge management in companies as well as characteristics of Generation Z and the changes Generation Z will bring to the labour market. As tourism is a wide industry, having to deal with many changes and crises like the current COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of using the right knowledge properly is tremendously high. Also, as Lapland is a growing destination, there is the need to research and understand the use of knowledge as also more workforce is needed. To fill this gap, the aim of this study is to find out how the management of Lappish tourism businesses uses the knowledge Generations Z workers have.

### **1.3 Research questions and purpose**

The previous research demonstrated that there is a lack and a need for research focusing on Generation Z and knowledge management. Both is studied separately but not connected and related to tourism. This research will narrow it down to the Lappish tourism businesses and aims at looking into the relationship of managers and Generation Z's knowledge. In doing so, it will analyse through a critical lens the relation between knowledge management, Generation Z, and managers in order to see how the use of Generation Z's knowledge can be improved.

The present study has the main research aim in finding out how the management of Lappish DMC's uses the knowledge of Generation Z employees.

This main research aim should be answered by the help of the following research questions, which will be answered during this study. The five research questions are the following:

The first question is (RQ1): What is understood as knowledge management by the Lappish tourism managers? Getting answers to this research question should help to understand how and if managers are familiar with the term, the meaning and its actions. As the main research aim includes knowledge management it is relevant to know how it is understood by the respondents.

Secondly the question is (RQ2): How does knowledge transfer take place in DMC's in Lapland? Answering this question provides insights into the methods managers use in their companies to pass knowledge to new workers. Knowing how and if knowledge is passed is essential to know, following the main research aim as it provides information about how knowledge transfer takes place in Lappish DMC's.

Following the third question is (RQ3): How is the tacit knowledge of Generation Z employees used in Lappish DMC's? This question will answer indirectly if the terms tacit and explicit knowledge are known and also if managers can separate them. Also, it gives insights if there are different methods in the Lappish DMC's between tacit and explicit knowledge. Furthermore, it demonstrates how tacit knowledge is valued and used.

Moreover, the fourth question is (RQ4): What is the role of knowledge transfer methods, such as mentoring Generation Z employees, in supporting knowledge transfer in general in tourism companies? Knowing the importance of the most common knowledge transfer methods helps to know how the knowledge is transferred from and to the new Generation Z employees.

The last research question (RQ5) is: How do managers experience the management of Generation Z employees? This question came up after thinking and starting with the analysis. It is included as it presents a different angle of the managers-Generation Z relation. Personal experience of how they see themselves managing the new Generation Z provides reflection on their relation to the new workforce. Reflection, experience, and personal opinion can influence the effort they put into the new workers and their knowledge; therefore, this question is included.

This research aims to provide wider, more open, and exploratory answers (Elliot & Timulak, 2005) towards the research question and a deep insight into the management perspective of Lappish tourism businesses. Moreover, it will provide an overview of how the knowledge of Generation Z is used referring to methods of knowledge transfer and types of knowledge. To answer these research questions this study uses theoretical approaches to compare the literature with what the companies do regarding knowledge management and the characteristics of Generation Z. Therefore, the research should benefit the Generation Z workers as well as the managers of the businesses, by showing how the knowledge transfer is currently working and to most efficiently implement it. It should help the managers to get to know Generation Z including their values, behaviours, and attitudes, as well as help to understand them to be able to use their knowledge to the fullest. At the same time, it should help the Generation Z employees to be able to evaluate how their knowledge is used and to understand the managers' side of businesses.

#### **1.4 Data and methods of the research**

In order to follow the main research aim, how managers use the knowledge of Generation Z employees in Lappish tourism businesses, and answering the research questions, a qualitative research method is chosen. It is chosen because empirical data should provide insights and wide answers of companies' knowledge management and their opinion of Generation Z which are non-numerical. This is supported by seven semi-structured interviews which will provide the data for this research. The interviews were conducted with Lappish tourism managers from destination management companies (DMC's) such as tour operators specialized on outdoor adventure activities, nature, auroras, snowmobile, sauna and Lappish lifestyle among others. They took place online via Zoom and Microsoft Teams and one interview took place face-to-face in the time period of February 25<sup>th</sup> 2021 and April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2021. The conducted data has been afterward transcribed and analysed by content analysis. A mixture of conventional and directed content analysis is used to focus on the main research aim and to understand the use of the knowledge in Lappish DMC's as well as the connection to Generation Z. Also, the understanding of knowledge management will be evaluated with help of the content analysis as qualitative research method (see Chapter 3).

## **1.5 Structure of the study**

This study consists of six main chapters including the introduction chapter. The introduction chapter examines the purpose, background, previous studies, aim, and the structure of this research. The following other chapters represent the theoretical framework, research methodology, analysis and discussion, and lastly the conclusion. The second chapter of this research is the theoretical framework which draws attention to the theoretical approaches like knowledge and knowledge management. Moreover, knowledge management in tourism and hospitality as the empirical setting falls within that industry, is explained. In doing so, different methods of knowledge transfer are highlighted. Also, knowledge management is related to generations in general as it is connecting it to the studied generations, Generation Z. Generation Z's role and definition is outlined as well as their values and, how the Generation Z behaves in in society. Lasty, the theoretical chapter describes how Generation Z is as an employee, their expectation and also the viewpoint from the managerial side. The third main chapter highlights data and methods of this research. First the empirical context is given. Thereafter, the methods of data collection and its analysis are laid out before drawing attention to the research ethics and implications valid for this study. The fourth chapter discusses the findings and suggests how to improve the knowledge transfer before having a short discussion as summary as fifth chapter. This study concludes in the sixth chapter including further research suggestions and limitations.

## **2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This theoretical chapter starts with an introduction of knowledge management. The aim is to gain a basic understanding of knowledge and knowledge management. To achieve this, first, the relevant terminology needs to be defined and explained within the context of this thesis. Also, knowledge management is put into context of tourism and hospitality as it is the empirical setting of this research. Furthermore, different methods of knowledge transfer in companies will be examined. After that, knowledge management is connected to different generations in general before focusing on the relevant generation for this study, Generation Z. For this purpose, Generation Z is defined and described by their values. Furthermore, the role of Generation Z in society is outlined. The empirical phenomenon of Generation Z entering the labour market is described and connected with the theory of knowledge management. Also, what Generation Z expects from managers and vice versa is highlighted.

### **2.1 Defining and understanding knowledge management**

Nonaka (1995 as cited in Sarayreh et al., 2012) was one of the first scholars working continuously on knowledge and knowledge management. His first thoughts and models will be explained even though there is no common definition yet of knowledge nor of knowledge management. The following parts will explain and outline different definitions starting with knowledge as it is an important component of knowledge management. To be able to understand knowledge management, it will be defined and explained as well as put into historical context to see its development. Moreover, a special focus is drawn to the methods of knowledge transfer in companies. Lastly, knowledge management in tourism and hospitality will be explained, as those industries provide the empirical setting for this study.

So far, there is no clear and common definition of knowledge (Bolisani & Bratianu, 2018, p. 1). In business, knowledge is invisible and contributing to the family of corporate assets, like for instance management systems, customer information, or brand identity (Pascarella, 1997). Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995, p. 21) define knowledge as a dynamic human process of justified true personal belief. Moreover, Nonaka interprets the truth not as full the truth but as half-truths (Whitehead, 1954 as cited in Li & Gao, 2003, p. 8). This means that the belief of the truth cannot establish the personal true knowledge, so there is always a slight chance that the personal belief and truth is mistaken (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995, p. 21). Agreeing with Nonaka's point Allee (1997, as cited in Pascarella, 1997, p. 38) states, knowledge is a process, which starts



when the learned aspects are reflected (Allee, 1997, p. 5). But it can also be seen from different points of view according to Alavi and Leidner (2001, p. 109), for instance, besides a process, it can be seen as a state of mind, an object, a condition, or as a capability. Moreover, Tuomi (1999 as cited in Alavi & Leidner, 2001, p. 109) states that knowledge has to exist to be able to formulate and convert data into information. Knowledge can also be seen as critical because it does not exist outside the knower as it is shaped by the knower's needs and previous knowledge. In this research, knowledge is so far seen as a process “of applying expertise” (Alavi & Leidner, 2001, p. 111). To demonstrate the importance of knowledge, Wah (1999, as cited in Smith, 2001, p. 312) states that 99 % of actions humans do are knowledge-based. According to Xiao (2006, p. 147), knowledge can be described as converted information by data organization (Xiao, 2006, p. 147). Hence Nonaka (1994 as cited in Nonaka & Peltokotpi, 2006, p. 75) emphasises that knowledge underlies certain beliefs, engagement, perspectives, purposes, and actions that information does not include. Polanyi (1958 as cited in Hallin & Marnberg, 2008, p. 368) came up with different kinds of knowledge, called tacit and explicit knowledge. Explicit and tacit knowledge are considered as antitheses (Kreiner, 2002 as cited in Singh, 2008, p. 5) and often compete against each other in companies (Singh, 2008, p. 6). Nonaka (1994 as cited in Nonaka & Peltokorpi, 2006, p. 76) highlights the complementarity of tacit and explicit knowledge, whereas other scholars see it impossible to categorize knowledge as it is holistic (Brown & Duguid, 2001; Nahapiet & Ghosal, 1998; Tsoukas, 1996; all as cited in Nonaka & Peltokorpi, 2006, p. 76). Another problematic issue is that tacit knowledge is often seen as more valuable than explicit knowledge (Alavi & Leidner, 2001, p. 111) but Polyani (1975 as cited in Alavi & Leidner, 2001, p. 112) highlights the importance of both by stating that tacit knowledge forms the acquirement for assigning the formation to develop and portray explicit knowledge. For example, all knowledge is grounded on tacit knowledge (Polanyi, 1967 as cited in Nonaka & Peltokorpi, 2006, p. 76). In the following, both terms are explained to gain a clear understanding and to understand knowledge better.

Explicit knowledge is seen as the “know-what” or academic /systematic knowledge (Smith, 2001, pp. 314–315). As the name shows it can be gained through formal education or studies. It can be stored in databases because it is possible to codify it like for example manuals or patents. An advantage of storing knowledge is that it can be easily reused. (Smith, 2001, pp. 314–315) and transmitted among businesses or individuals (Xiao, 2006, p. 147). Ahmed et al. (2002 as cited in Cooper, 2006, p. 53) estimate that on average a company’s knowledge is around 10% explicit knowledge.

Contrary to explicit knowledge, tacit knowledge is known as the “know-how” of action-oriented knowledge. It can be obtained by personal experience and is mostly local (Smith, 2001, pp. 314–315). It can be referred to as intellectual capital as well as physical capability (Hallin & Marnberg, 2008, p. 368). Intuition (Bolisani & Bratianu, 2018, p. 8) and common sense are important components of tacit knowledge (Smith, 2001, p. 311). Tacit knowledge requires experiential knowledge, which is received through contact with the surroundings through the senses. Additionally, due to the sensory system that knowledge is acquired the actual lessons learned can change from person to person because it relies on perception and personal reflection (Bolisani & Bratianu, 2018, p. 8). Commonly, the value and benefit of tacit knowledge is underestimated by the managers and consequently often unrealized (Smith, 2001, p. 314). This seems contrary to the fact that 90% of a company’s knowledge is tacit knowledge and as it is important managers should focus mainly on it. Tacit knowledge can be gained through sharing and teaching information in communities, tours, job rotation, task forces, stories, and advisory boards (Smith, 2001, p. 317). In other words, tacit knowledge is learning by doing and through experience, whereas explicit knowledge is learning by studying.

Besides the distinction between tacit and explicit knowledge, which is used widely and as well in this research, there are further classifications. Other classifications of knowledge are declarative, procedural, causal, conditional, and relational knowledge (Nolan & Norton 1998; Zack 1998 both as cited in Alavi & Leidner, 2001, p. 113). As Polanyi’s thoughts of tacit and explicit dimensions of knowledge play an important role in Nonaka and Takeuchi’s (1995, pp. 62-72) SECI (Socialization, Externalization, Combination and Internalization) model of knowledge management they were explained in order to better grasp the model explained in this chapter. As the model explains knowledge management, first some definitions to get an overview are given, however since there are many definitions and publications, one single agreed upon definition does not exist (Nonaka & Peltokorpi, 2006, p. 74). Nevertheless, it is, for instance, seen as “the generation, representation, storage, transfer, transformation, application, embedding and projecting group and organizational knowledge” (Hedlund, 1994, p. 76 as cited in Nonaka & Peltokorpi, 2006, p. 74). Another viewpoint is that knowledge management concentrates on the process of sharing, creating, and distributing knowledge and IT is supposed to help to create a wider and deeper link among sources of knowledge flows (Alavi & Leidner, 2001, p. 111).

Its classic definition is mentioned by Davenport (1994) and claims that knowledge management is a process. It consists of first capturing knowledge, then distributing it, and lastly to use it effectively. However, the most cited definition is:

Knowledge management is a discipline that promotes an integrated approach to identifying, capturing, evaluating, retrieving, and sharing all of an enterprise's information assets. These assets may include databases, documents, policies, procedures, and previously un-captured tacit expertise and experience in individual workers. (Gartner Group, n.d. as cited in Duhon, 1998, p. 10)

The model commonly used in knowledge management is Nonaka & Takeuchi's (1995, pp. 62-72) matrix SECI model as Nonaka realized that knowledge needs to be transferable to be able to transform it into information. That is why he focuses on an intertwining dynamic movement including tacit and explicit knowledge in the model which is demonstrated below (Nonaka, Takeuchi, 1995, pp. 62-72).

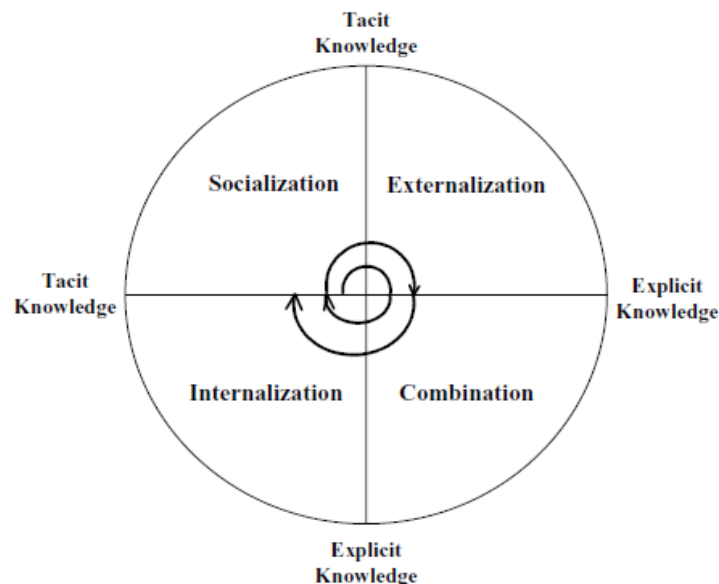


Figure 1: SECI model from Nonaka & Takeuchi

Source: Li & Gao, 2003, p. 7.

The SECI model shows in different processes that tacit knowledge is transferred to another person via socialization. Externalization describes turning tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge. This can be realised, for instance, by putting ideas into words among individuals in a group. Now there is explicit knowledge existing. This goes through the process of combination which is often done with help of IT. As explicit knowledge exists in e-mails, documents, and databases, it needs to be collected. The collection can also take place in groups

across organizations. The last process is internalization and consists of absorbing the explicit knowledge. Through this, it will be turned into tacit knowledge again (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995, p. 72). In 1997, Tsoukas outlined that tacit and explicit knowledge are inseparable (Schütt, 2003) and Nonaka introduced a successor for his model which is called 'ba'. This means:

Since knowledge is intangible, boundaryless, and dynamic and cannot be stocked, it has to be exploited where and when it is needed to create values. To exploit and create knowledge effectively and efficiently, it is necessary to concentrate on knowledge at a certain time and space. We call such a space ba (roughly translated 'place'). (Nonaka et al., 1998; Nonaka et al., 2001 both as cited in Schütt, 2003)

The SECI model was criticized by Sarayreh et al. (2012) claiming from an academic point of view it is seen as too simple. Moreover, not everything is possible to codify in that model. From the practitioner's point of view, the model was too abstract to be used in companies. On the other hand, Essers and Schreinemakers (1997 as cited in Sarayreh et al. 2012) praise the model as it includes the capacity for corporate actions but criticizes it for being subjective and not having included the commitment of different groups including ideas, creativity, and innovation. Furthermore, different scholars outline in a study on knowledge management a focus on conscious and systematic activities from managers handling knowledge (Inkinen, Kianto & Vanhala, 2015). Additionally, it examines how knowledge management practices influence the innovation and performance of firms. As data was collected in Finland, the findings were related to Finnish businesses. The innovativeness of a company is related to strategic planning as well as the implementation of it. Knowledge management helps in achieving innovation performance as it helps to find a lack of strategic knowledge and focuses on the need for knowledge creation, as well as new knowledge flows within the company. Moreover, the study highlights that usually workers are compensated based on their economic performance but firms would potentially do better, if they had a compensations system based on knowledge activities (Inkinen et al., 2015).

Literature does not provide an exact year the term knowledge management was found. Some source claims that the term knowledge management was first coined by the company McKinsey in 1987 as they were conducting a study about their information handling and its use (McInerney & Koenig, 2011 as cited in Koenig, 2018). But, according to Cooper (2006, p. 48) the first-time knowledge management appeared as an academic subject was in the 1980s. As third opinion, Tuomi (2002, p. 1) mentions that knowledge management has its origin in disciplines

related to information systems, and in 1995, knowledge management appeared for the first time in the strategy of consultants and conference organizers (Hallin & Marnburg, 2008, p. 367).

Having said that knowledge management has its origin in the consulting sector, it can be better described that it developed when the internet consumption arose and organizations realized that an intranet and in-house subset is necessary to make information accessible and shareable (Koenig, 2018).

Another perspective of the history of knowledge management is according to Sveiby (2001 as cited in Hallin & Marnburg, 2008, p. 367 and Cooper, 2006, pp. 49–50) putting it into three phases. The first phase starts in the mid- 60s and lasts until the mid-late 80s. Within that period, the focus was set on information technology and its growth. The second phase started in the mid-late 80s and lasted until the mid-late 90s. Here companies competed to offer the best services to the customers. The intellectual capital of knowledge management was noticed and valued as it can bring companies a competitive advantage (Sveiby, 2001 as cited in Hallin & Marnburg, 2008, p. 367 and Cooper, 2006, pp. 49–50). So, it was driven by human resources and corporate culture (Koenig, 2018). The last phase starting in the mid-late 90s continues into the current 21st century with basic knowledge not being seen as capital anymore but instead as an economic resource. Drucker (1993 as cited in Hallin & Marnburg, 2008, p. 367) claims that old knowledge was updated and new knowledge was created through improving every activity, developing new applications from success, and by being innovative. The last stage is still developing and expanding today, focusing on the taxonomy and content management as the awareness of the importance of accessibility of the content rose (Koenig, 2018). The last stage is also called the post-Nonaka generation (Schütt, 2003). These stages are represented summarized in the following figure.

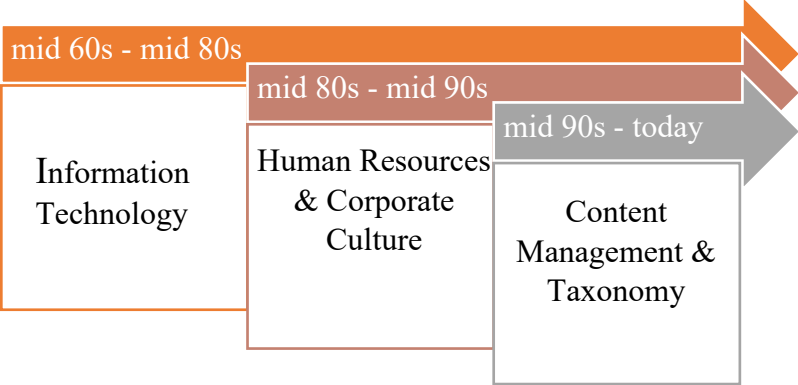


Figure 2: Three stages of the knowledge management

Source: Koenig, 2018.

As the history and origin of knowledge management cannot be defined exactly, the aim of it can be determined. According to Koenig (2018), knowledge management tries to accomplish rich, deep, and open communication as well as accessibility to information in not only one company but also worldwide. Also, situational awareness is often related to knowledge management. Once established, it should help companies and organizations to make the right decisions. Moreover, knowledge management systems consist of content management, expertise location, lessons learned, and communities of practice. Content management includes the distribution of the information and data and making it accessible for instance through dashboards and portals. Expertise location refers to the fact that often an expert is needed and the person needs to be found within a company or industry. Lessons learned databases provide common instructions of how the knowledge has been obtained and how to make it explicit. Communities of Practice are understood as groups, electronically or physically linked, which provide room to discuss a different topic and have an information exchange about the lessons learned (Koenig, 2018). Schütt (2003) also highlights the Communities of Practice as not all knowledge is possible to codify. As Communities of Practice are used only by a small percentage, the scholar suggests also debriefing and storytelling as methods (Schütt, 2003). Three methods commonly used in companies will be outlined in the next part.

### **2.1.1 Methods of knowledge transfer in businesses**

As there are currently four generations working in businesses (Robert Half, 2015, p. 3; Berkup, 2014, p. 219), it is important to have different methods of passing down the knowledge in businesses. Wohlrab (2014) mentions in her study that in life there are three working phases. Firstly, the socialization phase where the workers are trying to orientate themselves and to socialize in their job. Secondly, in the working phase, they focus on what they have learned before and work. The last phase is retirement where they do not work but still get some money. At present, the Baby Boomers are retiring, the Generation X and Y are in their working phase and most of Generation Z is still in the socialization/orientation phase (Wohlrab, 2014; Adler, 2015, p. 38).

Generativity means in the connection to knowledge management, that knowledge is passed from older generations to younger ones (Noethen & Voelpel, 2011, p. 41). For the purpose of

more closely viewing the process of passing down knowledge, the methods of the tandem-partner process, storytelling, and mentoring are explained in the following.

### *Tandem-partner-process*

This method is seen as a very good and efficient one, (Adler, 2015; Renz, 2020) especially as older employees with much knowledge leave the company or retire (Renz, 2020). The tandem-partner-process can take place with two individuals or in small groups. The expert, also called knowledge provider, imparts his wisdom and experience on/onto younger colleagues by working collaboratively with them. Additionally, the successor can bring new knowledge to the company and the knowledge provider, normally an employee who works longer than the successor in the firm, can learn as well. As both partners learn from each other deficits and discrepancies can be identified, worked on and ultimately overcome, resulting in an overall strengthening of the company (Renz, 2020). In this method it is essential as the name describes to have both parties working on the same aim to gain and share knowledge, otherwise the knowledge transfer cannot take place. Both partners are equally important. However, in practice it is far more common in companies, that the transfer of knowledge only takes place from a senior to a junior level. Also, it is better to use the method with employees who work independently and are committed to work. Asking further and deeper questions from the knowledge receiver plays also an essential role (Voigt, 2009, p. 248–251). Furthermore, for a clear beneficial process of knowledge transfer, meetings with managers and the knowledge provider can be organized to talk about the progress or difficulties. Additionally, involving a manager in the process shows that the knowledge transfer is important for the company and that they support and value it (Renz, 2020). Ultimately, the goal of the tandem-partner-process is, according to Voigt (2009, p.253), that the knowledge receiver gains enough insights to take over the responsibilities entirely and is integrated into daily project business. Different, as well as too dominant characters may face a challenge in this method as well as insecurity of the receiver (Voigt, 2009, p. 255).

### *Storytelling*

Storytelling is a method which is used to draw out tacit knowledge from organizations. It requires not only personal activity – as it is a dynamic process – but also the willingness from the listeners to listen and pay attention to the told story (Whyte & Classen, 2012). In this method one employee talks about different aspects such as highlights as well as crises of the working life (Renz, 2020). With telling a story the listener learns from others experiences automatically

and connects the listener and the storyteller. Depending on the scholar it can be seen as a narrative or a non-linear collective (Wijetunge, 2012) but it is also seen as a management tool, as a told story is easier for listeners to understand and narrations stay longer in the memory of the listeners than merely listing facts (Renz, 2020; Whyte & Classen, 2012). For this method a neutral moderator could be integrated as a person to elicit more information and important information from the storyteller for the listeners. Nevertheless, the moderator should focus on not pushing the employees to share certain stories or details, so a certain freedom of sharing is granted to the employee (Renz, 2020). Other topics transferred by stories can be, norms, values, culture, but also past experiences, managerial skills, and critical skills can be shared according to Swap, Leonard, Shields and Abrams, (2001). Nevertheless, it is suggested by Whyte and Classen (2012) that companies use their knowledge management taxonomy to collect and create stories suiting their knowledge management. In that way knowledge can be created as well as reused within organisations. To reuse stories a digital repository of stories is one suggested method by Wijetunge (2012). As with all methods, there are also possible problems and risks of storytelling. These are that the importance of the story always depends on the perception of the listener as well as some aspects can be added or lost by telling as perception and importance differs from person to person (Sole & Wilson, 2002 as cited in Wijetunge, 2012).

### *Mentoring*

The knowledge transfer method mentoring has grown over the past decades. As the name suggests, it consists of a mentor, someone in a company with much experience and knowledge, seen as the informal teacher transferring knowledge as well as norms and values of the company to a mentee (Fleig-Palmer & Schoorman, 2011; Swap et al., 2001). Other benefits of mentoring are jobs satisfaction, and increased organizational knowledge (Swap et al., 2001). Besides having company knowledge, it is important for a mentor to have social capacities as it is important to have trust in order to pass down knowledge successfully (Deller, 2008 as cited in Adler, 2015, p. 44). Knowledge is transferred from mentor to mentee as well as vice versa like for instance in companies with new technologies it is often common to see younger generations teaching older generation employees how to use the new technologies (Piktialis & Greenes, 2008 as cited in Adler, 2015, p. 44). This method is similar to the tandem-partner-process but it differs as it is not focusing only on transferring knowledge. It mainly focuses on socialization and should help the new workers to integrate into the new company by learning the unwritten rules of a company (Zimmermann, 2005, p. 28 as cited in Adler 2015, p. 43). Moreover, it focuses on the mentor tasks which can be coaching, sponsorship, and assignments. Exposure as



well as visibility include a socializing factor. Also, trust plays an important role in this method as it is seen as the integral aspect of relationships (Kram, 1985 as cited in Fleig-Palmer & Schoorman, 2011).

### **2.1.2 Knowledge management in tourism and hospitality**

Cooper (2006, p. 47) states that researchers and business managers work together better in other fields than in the tourism industry. In the hospitality sector, knowledge management becomes more important as the processes of services are becoming knowledge-based and intensive as information and communication technologies have a great impact to achieve through interactions a high customer satisfaction (Kahle, 2002 as cited in Hallin & Marnburg, 2008, p. 368). Moreover, Sheldon (1997, as cited in Hallin & Marnburg, 2008, p. 368) claims that tourism and hospitality businesses are one of the sectors using information technology (IT) most.

However, the tourism industry is adapting slowly to the knowledge management strategies, as Yun (2004 as cited in Hallin & Marnburg, 2008, p. 369) states because tourism concepts are complex, require skills in statistics, data mining, and tourism management. It is important to have two dimensions of knowledge management in mind when relating knowledge management to the hospitality and tourism sector. Firstly, knowledge can be seen as static, which means to operate known steps. Also, it can be seen as dynamic which means to operate continuously, changing steps and having new ideas. Secondly, management needs to evaluate, if knowledge should be turned into explicit knowledge and how it can be measured and controlled (Hallin & Marnburg, 2008, p. 369). In tourism, tacit knowledge is often neglected as individuals prefer not to share knowledge in order to not lose their competitive advantage. Nevertheless, tourism businesses are rich in tacit knowledge sources (Cooper, 2006, p. 52). Tacit knowledge in tourism needs to be identified, captured, and converted to explicit knowledge to transfer knowledge into capabilities (Bukowitz & Williams, 2000 as cited in Cooper, 2006, p. 53). Cooper (2006, p. 54) sees a challenge in having an effective knowledge transfer and using old knowledge to enrich the competitiveness.

Besides the different kinds of transfers, there are also two models for knowledge transfer. One model that is used in tourism is the model of absorptive capability. Absorptive capacity encompasses the ability to evaluate as well as utilize external knowledge. This is seen as a component of the level of prior related knowledge, which includes basic skills or the most recent

scientific or technological developments in a certain field. With that, there develops the capability to recognize the value of new information and to grasp and apply it to commercialize it (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990, p. 128). In the model, organizations have to answer to the given inputs, and depending on their abilities the input will influence their existing knowledge (Cooper, 2006, p. 56). Another commonly used model, as well as the earliest, was developed by Meehan and Beal (1977, p. 22 as cited in Xiao, 2006, p. 149) and describes the movement of knowledge in six stages. This model's first step is knowledge production, then followed by knowledge management. Thirdly, it includes knowledge translation, then product development, as fifth the product dissemination, and as the last step the product adaption and utilization (Meehan & Beal, 1977, p. 22 as cited in Xiao, 2006, p. 149).

In companies, a competitive strategy is reflected by knowledge management as it aims to create value for the customer (Hansen et al, 1999, p. 109). Knowledge management is defined as a bottom-up process that is ongoing, brings value and uses the raw information that is shared within the company (Bonner, 2000 as cited in Smith, 2001, p. 313). To handle the knowledge transfer efficiently in the sense of using tacit and explicit knowledge in a way that brings value to the company is according to Bonner (2000 as cited in Smith, 2001, p. 313) difficult for companies. Most companies use a mixture of explicit and tacit knowledge to be successful stated in Smith (2001, p. 318). In companies, the knowledge gets codified in three stages to be able to provide it to the right people at the right time. This codification process is ignored in the tourism industry, as it is often seen as controversial to the company's politics. The first step is to identify the strategic objective of knowledge management and secondly, a source of it needs to be found. As a third step, the knowledge needs to be determined and codified with appropriate methods (Cooper, 2006, p. 54). Singh (2008, p. 5) claims that organizational learning has to exist and be considered before knowledge can be created and managed.

A firm is seen as a knowledge system according to Holzer and Marx (1979) and Pentland (1995 both as cited in Alavi & Leidner, 2001, p. 115) which has the four following processes to enact knowledge. The first is creation, second storage, third transfer, and fourth application. Besides creating and learning knowledge empirical studies show that firms also forget knowledge (Argote et al., 1990; Darr et al., 1995 both as cited in Alavi & Leidner, 2001, p. 118). The knowledge creation process consists of four modes according to Nonaka (1994 as cited in Alavi & Leidner, 2001, p. 116) which are socialization, externalization, internalization, and combination. All are strongly connected and interdependent. Knowledge storage can be seen as divided, as some literature describes it as an individual and some as organizational (Alavi &

Leidner, 2001, p. 118). Individual storage is established from a person's personal observation as well as experience and action (Argyris & Schon, 1978; Nystrom & Starbuck, 1981; Sanderlands & Stablein, 1987 all cited in Alavi & Leidner, 2001, p. 118). In contrast to that, organizational memory consists of the individual characteristics of a firm's culture, transformation, company structure, ecology, and archives (Walsh & Ungson, 1991 as cited in Alavi & Leidner, 2001, p. 118). Summarizing, organizational knowledge creation is the combination of subjectivity and objectivity, as the created knowledge is used by individuals to embellish their tacit knowledge (Nonaka & Peltokorpi, 2006, p. 80).

Knowledge transfer in tourism can also be carried out in four ways according to Nonaka (1991 as cited in Cooper, 2006, p. 55). These correlate with Nonaka and Takeuchi's SECI model (see Chapter 2.1). First, it can occur tacit to tacit, for instance in a process of socialization with communication. Secondly, it transfers from tacit to explicit, which is possible through externalized problem-solve thinking and the use of developers. This transfer is often used in tourism. Thirdly, a transfer from explicit-to-explicit knowledge, which is, for example, to move knowledge around one organization to another. The last possible transfer is from explicit to tacit, here the explicit knowledge is seeing as the basis and generates new ideas from it (Nonaka, 1991 as cited in Cooper, 2006, p. 55; Nonaka & Peltokorpi, 2006, p. 79). Nevertheless, the transfer is often restricted as tourism organizations are geographically widespread and the industry fragmented (Cooper, 2006, p. 56). Additionally, knowledge applications can favor workflow automation and can take place in a different location. However, the competitive advantage of knowledge is the application of it and not the knowledge itself (Alavi & Leidner, 2001, pp. 122–125).

Another crucial point of knowledge management is that cultural barriers interfere with it which can neither be taken off nor be effectively reduced by using IT applications (Alavi & Leidner, 2001, p. 126). Also, it is stated that even though there is the chance to get and apply new knowledge, many workers do not have time to make knowledge available as the workload, as well as the pressure to meet deadlines is generally too high (Glazer, 1998 as cited in Alavi & Leidner, 2001, p. 127). Consequently, a routine to capture knowledge will help companies to benefit from their knowledge of workers working for them. A different issue is that employees are often not aware of their learned knowledge so they cannot intentionally spread and share it. Also, there is the risk of misuse of knowledge, which can furthermore be misapplied or not updated (Alavi & Leidner, 2001, p. 127).

### **2.1.3 Relation between knowledge management and generations**

A new challenge to face for managers arose and is currently going on as four different generations (Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y, Generation Z) with different values, worldviews, work methods, and ambitions are in the labour market together (Robert Half, 2015, p. 3, Berkup, 2014, p. 219). The study of Adler (2015) analyses the knowledge transfer within generations in businesses. The focus of this research is on intergenerational learning within businesses. It is outlined that within different generations at work it can lead to conflicts as the learning behaviour is different. As the best possibility to transfer knowledge is highlighted the tandem-partner-process with one person having expert knowledge, as consequently, both participants learn from each other by the non-expert trying to imitate the expert (Adler, 2015). It shows that generations learn differently which also connects with Rauchmann's (2014) research highlighting that every employee, regardless of their age, can learn and transfer knowledge and that the different generations at work influence this process. Rauchmann (2014) focuses in her study on the older work force (50-64 years old) as protagonists in a knowledge transfer process at work, with a special focus on the library as a workplace. The study shows that this working generation is motivated by internal and external remunerations, but they have also a generativity and altruistic behaviour. The assumption that the elderly learn not as well as younger people is according to that study wrong, as it shows that they learn differently, but not worse than younger people. This is related to the different generations as they all learn differently. It is also highlighted that the elderly often know the essential information but not always the details (Rauchmann, 2014). Also, Špindler (2018) focuses in his study on the differences between the generations in general and at work. Additionally, he outlines tourism through the eyes of the different generations (see chapter 1.3). Moreover, Špindler (2018) highlights that the Baby Boomer generation is flexible and adaptive, and that their management style is favoured. At work, they prefer a democratic approach and struggle with non-traditional ways of working as it is done by younger generations. A positive attitude and being goal-oriented has also shaped that generation. In contrast to that, Generation X pays strong attention to a work-life balance. Moreover, at their workplace, they are self-reliant, appreciate feedback and recognition, like to work independently and separate private and work life. Besides, Generation Y has like Generation Z a close relation to its parents. Also, Generation Y understands and use technologies well as they grew up in the early era of them. They see their employment as temporary and unreliable but at the same time have high expectations towards it. With putting minimal effort into work, that generation likes to get recognition and rewards.

Focusing on Generation Z, they are good at multitasking and like to socialize in networks. The importance of work-life balance is extended to focusing on a balance between also communities and self-development (Špindler, 2018, pp. 188–189). The characteristics of the different generations are summarized in the following Table 1 to get an overview and to understand them better.

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Baby Boomers (1945-1960)</b>	<b>Generation X (1961-1980)</b>	<b>Generation Y (1981-1995)</b>	<b>Generation Z (Born after 1995)</b>
<b>Experiences</b>	Cold War, Moon landing, Woodstock, family-orientated	Fall of Berlin Wall, Live Aid, First PC, End of Cold War	9/11, Invasion of Iraq, social media, first Play Station	Economic downturn, Climate crises, terrorism, Produce own media
<b>Aspiration</b>	Job security	Work-life Balance	Freedom & Flexibility	Security & Stability
<b>Relation towards technologies</b>	Adapt to IT	Digital immigrants	Digital experts	Digital natives and addicts
<b>Communication</b>	Telephone	E-mail & text messages	Tablet & smartphone	Hand held communication devices
<b>Communication preference</b>	Face-to-face or phone/email is needed	E-mail & text messages	Text messages	Online but face-to-face (facetime)
<b>Preferred way of decision making</b>	Face-to-face, or online if needed	Online as face-to-face requires more time	Face-to-face	Online face-to-face

Table 1: Summary of the current generations at work

Source: Adapted from Sheehans (2019)

## 2.2 Defining Generation Z

Generation Z is difficult to characterise and define as, although they mark the youngest demographic group turned to adulthood, the majority of that generation are still underage. Therefore, Generation Z is quite a homogenous group. Generally speaking, belonging within this generation can be defined by the state of mind or by date of birth (Novak, 2007, p. 31 as cited in Špindler, 2018). A generation, a group of people who are born in similar birth years, share the same events and critical developments (see Table 1) (Kupperschmidt, 2000 as cited in Ozkan & Solmaz, 2015, p. 477). Whereas, generations differ due to their life experiences, life, career stages, and work experience (Ahmad & Ibrahim, 2015). A generation is approximately 17-20 years in length (Maloni, Hiatt & Campbell, 2019), to define Generation Z, here it must be agreed on the time the generation is born. In the literature, there are several points of views existing, and the majority of the sources define members of Generation Z as born between 1995 and 2009 (Goh & Lee, 2018, p. 21; Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018, p. 180; Goh & Okumus, 2020, p. 2; Priporas Stylos & Fotiadis., 2017, p. 376; Tang et al., 2020). Similarly, Schawbel (2016) defines Generation Z as born between 1994 and 2010, which is very close to the other sources. This means they are mostly raised by members of Generation X (Desjardins, 2019). Generation Z is also called the mobile generation (Ozkan & Solmaz, 2015, p. 477), or digital natives, or iGeneration (Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018, p. 181). To simplify matters, only the term Generation Z will be used.

To reconceptualise, generations are influenced by big experiences, mostly negative ones, like wars and international terrorism attacks. The Baby Boomer Generation had to deal with the Cold War and the holocaust (Matthews, 2008, p. 50). The attacks of 9/11 do not play an important role focusing on Generation Z because most of them cannot remember them. Moreover, attacks in schools influenced, for instance, the American Generation Z because there were more than 101 shootings in schools (Schenarts, 2019, p. 248). Furthermore, they observed and experienced the worldwide financial crisis in the year 2008; this has an impact on their behaviour towards money which makes them focus on education in lucrative fields (Schenarts, 2019, p. 249). This highlights that experiencing several crises has an impact on the education they choose. By knowing now how Generation Z is defined, their values and their role in society will be examined. Also, in the following, Generation Z is put into context of their working environment and related to knowledge management. For this research Generation Z is seen as a digital native generation born between 1995 and 2009. They value flat hierarchy, respect, ethical behaviour and fairness, democracy, equality, and are addicted to technologies.

Moreover, they are seen as a generation lacking soft skills and being emotionally not very mature, even though this generation is being raised in emotional and physical safety.

### **2.2.1 Values of Generation Z**

Matthews (2008, p. 50) notes that Generation Z values equality. That includes openness towards diversity and an anti-discrimination attitude. Individualism, equality and diversity are shown by rejecting gender pronouns and stereotypes (Schenarts, 2019, p. 247). However, this generation is considered pragmatic, risk-averse (do not take the risk due to the fear of failing), individualistic and aware of their financial responsibility (Schenarts, 2019, p. 248; Desjardins, 2019). Disliking risk makes the generation having backup plans (Twenge, 2017 as cited in Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018, p.181). Ovensik and Kozjek (2015, as cited in Špindler, 2018, p. 180), see Generation Z as emotionally open. A further trait they outline is that Generation Z likes to choose on their own terms what it means to work, and they want to be part of activities influencing their lives.

Moreover, Generation Z values authenticity and is spending much time online. Half of the generation spends more than ten hours online (Desjardins, 2019). Focusing on digital devices and the internet, Schenarts (2019, p. 248) found out that in 2019 92% of American children have established a digital footprint, which permanently stays on the web. The footprint can be made by the children or by their parents. There is also often a difference on how a person conducts themselves between the digital and physical world. Moreover, Generation Z tends to impugn less and less the information appearing online and sees them as the truth. Also, Beall (2017 as cited in Schenarts, 2019, p. 250) mentions that 40% of Generation Z considers itself addicted to digital devices. Social media like Instagram and Snapchat are preferred platforms (Desjardins, 2019). Accordingly, this technology consumption seems to make this generation believe that online connections are more relevant than traditional ways. Activities such as going out to movies or dinner tend to be losing their values day by day. Additionally, Schwieger and Ladwig (2018, p. 47), discover that 40% of Generation Z prefers and enjoys communicating with their friends online over real life.

Furthermore, the part of Generation Z who is still growing up tends to have more trust in people online (influencers) than in an advertisement (street or television ads) as they are constantly exposed and thus influenced by it and overall display a very sophisticated interaction with and use of media and computer technologies (Schroer, as cited in Špindler, 2018, p. 180). For

example, if an influencer uses a product and stresses how good it is, the generation will trust the influencer and buy the product. In other words, an influencer is more potent in comparison to TV ads. However, the use of television is decreasing, and platforms such as Instagram and YouTube are increasingly taking over TV ads. The same goes for physical appearance, which is getting more critical; one of the reasons why are aesthetic products which are often advertised online through social media platforms (Spooner, 2018). In the same research, Spooner (2018) pointed out that Generation Z tends to have more trust in people (influencers) who use technologies. Generation Z posts less online than Generation Y, and at the same time, it is more careful about putting or posting information online because from their point of view Generation Y posted too openly (Schenarts, 2019, p. 249). Besides being technology-oriented, innovative, and creative in terms of their curiosity, Generation Z wants to discover the newest technologies, yet escaping reality once in a while for a short time (Priporas et al., 2017, p. 376).

Due to the use of technologies, the attention span is decreasing when comparing the Millennials and Generation Z. While Millennials could focus ten minutes, Generation Z displays an attention span of only six minutes. When using a digital device, the attention span decreases to eight seconds (Powell, 2018 as cited in Schenarts, 2019, p. 249). A short span of attention can be generated through monotony and repetition. The generation learns best by doing and watching videos; for instance, mathematics teaching videos on YouTube (Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018, p. 183). Also, members of Generation Z want to be important, want to have access to and be able to use all information which is provided online (Ovensik & Kozjek, 2015, as cited in Špindler, 2018, p. 180).

Also, it needs to be outlined that through the high use of electronic devices, Generation Z suffers from a lack of necessary social communication skills as well as oral ones. This increases the risk of mental health problems like isolation, anxiety, insecurity, and depression (Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018, p. 181). Other health problems were found by Matthews (2008, p. 49) who argues that Generation Z would likely be overweight due to unhealthy nutrition. In the same research, Matthews (2008, p. 51) reveals that in the future, there would be an increase in language skills, especially for Mandarin and Spanish. From my point of view, unhealthy nutrition and overweight are related to the lack of movement and laziness which is also mentioned in Finanzguerilla (2019). For example, having to sit at work for eight hours more or less without movements has an impact.



Their values and behaviour are also reflected in their tourism behaviour. They are influenced and inspired by social media. The smartphone is the key device in the planning process for a destination as well as when being on vacation. Furthermore, they are budget-conscious and value crossing things off their bucket list as well as enjoy relaxing on their vacations (Špindler, 2018). Haddourche and Salomone (2018 as cited in Špindler, 2018) state that Generation Z shows modesty and wants destinations, providers, and restaurants to catch their attention by telling them why they are worth visiting, which should be highlighted with pictures.

### **2.2.2 Role of Generation Z in society**

Generation Z is the newest generation entering the labour market (Vetter, 2017, p. 28). Since not all members of Generation Z have entered the labour market yet, their work life experience, characteristics, values, and role in society still continue to be studied (Berkup, 2014, p. 224). But, Goh and Lee (2018, p. 21) note that until 2022, Generation Z will contribute to 20% of the labour market. According to Lewis & Webster (2014), Socrates, the Greek philosopher once said that the youth enjoy luxury, has bad manners, and contempt for authority. However, children are tyrants, and bossy in the households, and do not respect older generations. Moreover, they confront their parents, eat hurriedly food and tyrannize their teachers. However, this shows what many people thought already in the past about the then newest generation. It is not a new way of thinking about new generations as Socrates statement is already around 2000 years old. It is a pattern of the human mind which is nowadays also in line with what many people think about the newest generation, called Generation Z. Mostly, thoughts are restricted to disrespect, e.g., being bossy and having a strong will which is seen as the only option. Moreover, they are seen by society as naive and arrogant, not sporty, lazy, addicted to technologies and social media (Finanzguerilla, 2019). This comes because they are raised in “safetyism”, which includes physical and emotional safety in all life aspects. With this, parents are trying to protect them from the society and bad events happening in the world. Schenarts (2019, p. 248) revealed that for 60% of Generation Z, the parents have the most significant influence on them. As bad influence for their children, parents probably see the international terrorism and school shootings. Other generations had to deal with the Cold War, the holocaust (Matthews, 2008, p. 50) or 9/11 attacks which for Generation Z do not play an important role as Generation Z is too young to remember it well. As Generation Z is influenced by technologies and by social media (Schenarts, 2019, p. 248), they are also influenced by the

negative aspects of the web, like cyber-attacks and bullying (Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018, p. 180).

As Sinek (2016) explains, in the society and from the point of view of companies the Generation Z is seen as self-interested, narcissistic, unfocused, lazy and entitled. Their traits are formed by failed parenting and according to Sinek (2016), the Generation Z itself is not to blame. The generation is growing up with lower self-esteem than previous generations due to parenting, technologies and impatience (Sinek, 2016). These make it difficult for them to fit into society as it is the first generation which is not able to form deep-meaningful relationships, is the most impatient and cannot deal with stress.

As their traits differ from the previous generations, they will bring a huge change to society. They will influence the labour market and the whole society with their characteristics and expect the society to adapt to their values, attitudes, behaviour and mind-set, as they grew up being told that they can achieve anything they want. However, the reality is not like that, so their expectations crash with the real world and often lead to even lower self-esteem and depression. They are experts in pretending to the outside to be fine and happy, especially in social media, even though they are depressed (Sinek, 2016). Moreover, Generation Z is seen as the most potent generation related to production and consumption. In their era, both socializing and shopping are done online. However, visiting a traditional shop would help Generation Z to talk to real people and indirectly encourage their emotional and social communication skills (Schwieger & Ladwig, 2018, p. 51). Moreover, it could help them to integrate into society.

### **2.2.3 Generation Z members as employees**

Generation Z has just and is still entering the labour market, therefore these findings and observations are seen as predictions as the entering is continuously going on and is and will be further researched. As this generation is born into a world where the internet and smartphones already exist, they expect these two aspects to be provided at their workspace. Thus, Vetter (2017, p. 28) claims that 57 % of Generation Z wants to have an office (physical workspace) instead of working remotely. They are seen as a workforce that wants to build its businesses and being their own boss, which is related to the fact that 33,3 % see themselves in a management position later on in their life.

To this extent, frequent feedback is welcomed by the workers instead of annual feedback (Schawbel, 2016). To reach the desired position, Generation Z is ready to work hard to have

faster success (Deloitte, 2015). In addition, before having the sought-after success, the generation thinks that they will be unsuccessful. However, Generation Z is tenacious as 40% of them see having failed as a new opportunity to try again (Deep Focus, 2015 as cited in Schwieger & Ladwig, 2018, p. 47).

Therefore Schawbel (2019 as cited in Schenarts, 2019, p. 250) points out that Generation Z is seen as a group that is not motivated by money, whereas only 28% are motivated by money. For 74% another motivation to work harder is to have excellent opportunities in having a career, and to get positive feedback and credits (Stillman & Stillman as cited in Schenarts, 2019, p. 250). They are perceived as intellectual due to being highly educated (Priporas et al., 2017, p. 376) and the majority (67%) want that their career to have a positive impact on the world (Schenarts, 2019, p. 249). Moreover, members of Generation Z are self-confident and independent. Happiness at work is related mostly to their workplace and the environment, and this generation tends to quit their job, if they experience a lack of happiness (Ozkan & Solmaz, 2015, p. 480). Another reason to start searching for a new job is when companies cannot provide opportunities and promotions for Generation Z workers (Robert Half, 2015, p. 11). That is the reason why managers should be highly involved in and engaged with the hiring process of Generation Z applicants and demonstrate social responsibilities as well as integrity which can be of personal or corporate nature. Also, exact examples of having opportunities for advancement should be explained (Robert Half, 2015, p. 14). To connect with Generation Z managers should show respect and value the ideas the Generation Z members contribute and furthermore provide the newest technologies to work with.

One desire voiced by employees falling into Generation Z is to work in more than one single country during their career. This is easier to realise for more renowned companies than in smaller companies with no rotational programs or subsidiaries in other countries (Schawbel, 2016). That is why Generation Z prefers to work in middle and large sized companies (Desjardin, 2019). Besides exploring various jobs in different locations, Generation Z desires as well to explore distinct industries and roles. As well, they expect to have a competitive salary (Maloni et al., 2019). Companies should be on social media to get real-time updates and to have access to professional connection online pages like LinkedIn. They prefer face-to-face communication (Schawbel, 2016; Desjardins, 2019). Schenarts (2019, p. 246) agrees with Schawbel's point of view that in their working environment face-to-face communication is very important as well as the aspect of working first alone and then contributing the efforts to the

team. Generation Z requires flexibility in how they work, which means taking days off spontaneously for emergencies or glide time (Schawbel, 2016).

However, Generation Z expects their managers to be honest and to have integrity. A management structure following the top-down management is perceived as inauthentic. (Robert Half, 2015, pp. 17–18). On the contrary to the “top-down” management is the “bottom-up” approach. In the “top-down” approach the power is “centralised” in the management levels as goals, decisions, and tasks are decided and then communicated to the team. Consequently, the “bottom-up” approach decides certain aspects in their teams and communicates them up to the managers’ levels (Tsai & Beverton, 2007, pp. 8–9). As equality is an important value of Generation Z (see Chapter 2.1.1), it coincides with their preference of having a “bottom-up” management approach and being involved in tasks, decisions, projects, and processes. Therefore, they wish for their knowledge to be actively incorporated and to be taken into consideration in management processes. Knowing Generation Z’s expectations, it is also important to outline the employer’s point of view.

A study found that managers do not see that Generation Z “takes personal responsibility, and good care of themselves outside of work so they come to work healthy” (Tulgan, 2015 as cited in Robert Half, 2015, p. 10). Moreover, it states Generation Z does not “maintain a positive attitude, has no rigorous self-evaluation as well as no good self-presentation, which includes timeliness, organization, productivity, quality, follow-through and initiative” (Tulgan, 2015 as cited in Robert Half, 2015, p. 10).

The study from Magano et al. (2020) supports Tulgan’s result as they claim that the soft skills of Generation Z need to be improved. It states that they especially have a lack of recognizing and being aware of their traits, low self-esteem, act impulsive, and cannot handle criticism well. Also, emotional self-control and emotional maturity are missing. As Magano et al. (2020) analyse, project management skills, communications skills and teamwork skills of Generation Z should be improved as employers request skills like teamwork ability, communication, and skills to solve problems from that generation (Schwieger & Ladwig, 2018, p. 49). Furthermore, Schawbel (2019) confirms the lack of soft skills in Generation Z and states that it is frustrating the current managers. In his study, one-third of the Generation Z participants claimed that technologies have weakened their abilities to interpersonal relationships and people skills. Moreover, it outlines that neither high school nor college are teaching soft skills (Schawbel, 2019).

After having more closely viewed what moves, motivates, and defines Generation Z, it is also important to briefly explore the attributes this generation values management-wise. Firstly, it is important to mention that according to Wagner and Sternberg (1987, p. 301), the most successful managers are the ones rarely considered the most intelligent ones. The ones having the highest IQ are considered moderately successful in their careers as they often lack patience or can only think in analytical ways. To have the ability to obtain tacit knowledge indirectly is an important characteristic to be successful (Wagner & Sternberg, 1987, p. 311). Špindler (2018) sees as a good way to win-over Generation Z with music and humour. Moreover, managers have the task to administer motivation and efficient communication (Debowski, 2006 as cited in Singh 2008, p. 6), which coincides with the wishes of Generation Z. Another important mission for a manager is to act as a role model and explain the processes as well as tasks to the employees to make sure that everyone knows their role in achieving the goal together (Debowski, 2006 as cited in Singh 2008, p. 6).

To briefly summarise, the values of this generation such as equality, respect, ethical behaviour, and fairness are also reflected in their working environment. More specifically, it is deemed essential to have the listed aspects in a working environment and also, unique in the digital world to have open and transparent communication (Schwieger & Ladwig, 2018, p. 46), potential career chances as well as an empowering work culture (Desjardins, 2019). Moreover, their attention span is shorter and many of them consider themselves addicted to technologies. From managers they expect transparency, authenticity, being involved in processes and respected when having opinions or ideas. Managers claim that this generation lacks soft skills. Focusing on knowledge management it can be said that it is a complex process and slowly common and known in the tourism and hospitality industry. Knowledge can be divided into tacit and explicit knowledge. Also, it can be transferred from one form into another via different knowledge transfer methods. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that knowledge management includes identifying, capturing, evaluating, retrieving, and sharing knowledge, skills and information. This is also highlighted in Nonaka and Takeuchi's (1995, pp. 62–72) SECI model. In that model four knowledge transfer processes are shown and explained. Some are how tacit knowledge is transferred to explicit one and from explicit knowledge back to tacit knowledge.

### **3 DATA AND METHODS**

This chapter of data and methods gives an overview of the empirical context and the conducted interviews. To be able to answer the research questions a qualitative research method was selected. It is supported by empirical data which consists of seven semi-structured interviews. The interviews were conducted with managers of DMC's in Lapland as their own experience and opinions of knowledge management and Generation Z workers will be later on analysed. Due to that, a qualitative research methodology was chosen as quantitative research would not sufficiently be able to grasp the very intangible and immeasurable components of knowledge transfer. Furthermore, the personal experiences and viewpoints of the interviewees which are at the core of this research are seldom quantifiable. Another reason why qualitative research was chosen due to its focus on a wideness of different aspects (Elliot & Timulak, 2005) regarding the answers the managers provided in the interviews. Moreover, this chapter gives insights into the process of data collection, as well as analysing said data. For the latter, the analytical framework of content analysis was chosen. The method of content analysis aims to identify the content of large amounts of written content data pages, like transcribed interviews (David & Sutton, 204, p. 197; Smith, 2010, p. 201). And lastly, different research ethics that were followed and considered are presented.

This research aims to outline the viewpoint and the understanding of managers towards knowledge management in Lappish tourism businesses. Once highlighted what is understood by knowledge management, it will be put into the context of Generation Z to find out how managers see it. In this research, the paradigm of qualitative interpretivism is suitable as this research focuses on exploring how managers understand knowledge management within their particular organisational context. Moreover, it focuses on how knowledge is gained in an interpreting way of trying to understand humans connected to their actions (O'Reilly, 2009, p. 119).

#### **3.1 Empirical context: Lapland as tourism destination**

As tourism takes place in most areas in Finland, it includes also remote areas like Lapland. Thus, tourism in Lapland has been a fast-growing key development since the 1980s (Maher et al., 2014). The tourism in Finnish Lapland consists of "the holy trinity" which are Santa Claus, snowmobiles, and huskies (Kugapi, Höckert, Lüthje, Mazullo & Saari, 2020, pp. 17–18). It is an important industry in Lapland with a turnover for accommodation surpassing 128-million-

euros in income in the 2019/2020 season (Infographics, n.d.a). Each year, Lapland attracts visitors from 140 countries (Mason, 2015, p. 40 as cited in Penttonen, 2018, p. 5). Lapland tourism hubs are Rovaniemi, Levi, Inari-Saariselkä, Ylläs, Sea Lapland, Pyhä-Luosto, and Salla. These are highlighted in the map below:

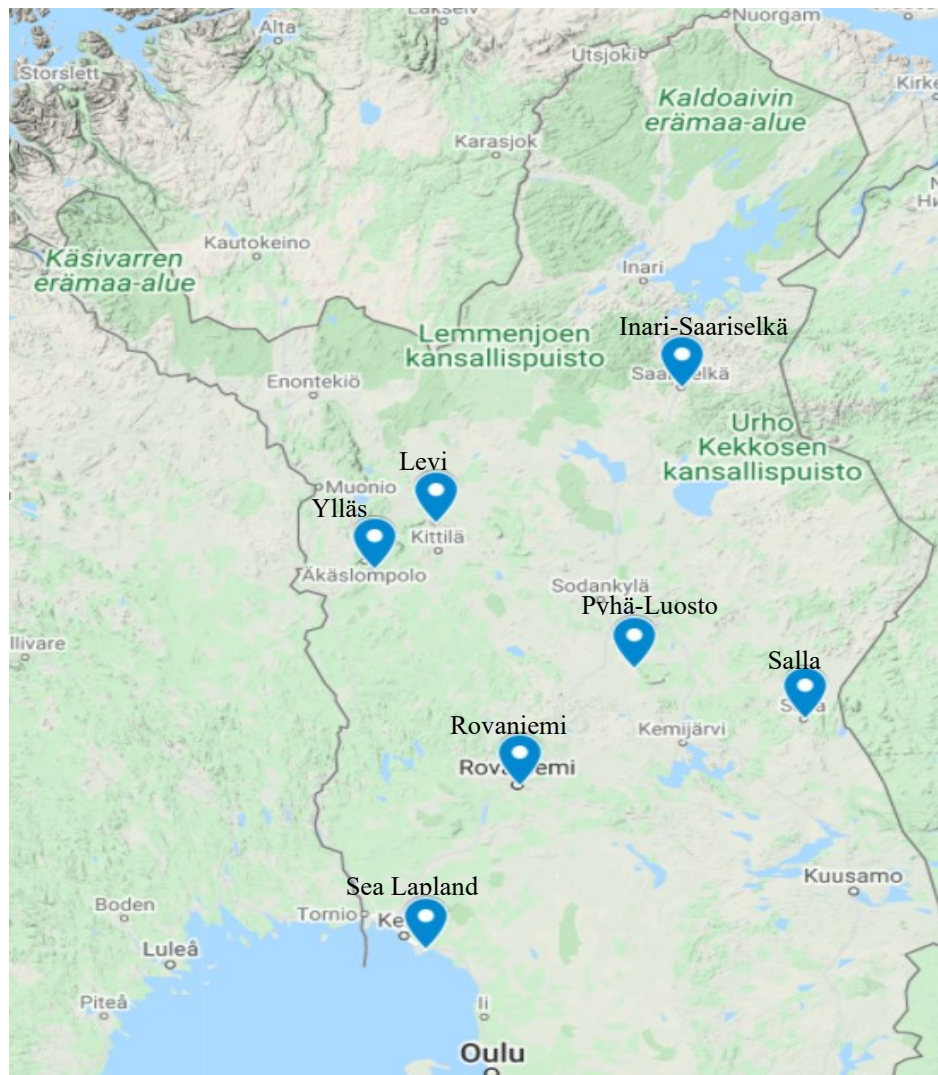


Figure 3: Lapland’s tourism hubs

Besides that, main tourism takes place in winter but also in summertime many tourists visit Lapland to see the midnight sun (Business Lapland, 2020a, p. 6). Moreover, most tourists come from Great Britain, central or southern Europe like France and Germany, and Russia (Yle, 2020a) and stay on average for 2,9 days long (Infographics, n.d.a). In 2019, Lapland had 1.8 million overnight stays which equals 25% of the share of all overnights in Finland, underlining how important Lapland as a tourism destination is. From those overnight stays, 7% came from Scandinavia, 6% from Russia, 3% from America, and 65% from other European countries which makes Europe the biggest target group (Business Finland, 2020). Lappish tourism was growing strong until the current COVID-19 pandemic hit, which especially affected the tourism

industry in Lapland. Therefore, in the winter season, from November 2019 to April 2020 15% fewer overnight stays were counted than in the previous year (Infographics, n.d.).

As I am located in Rovaniemi, some participants for the interviews were found in the same area. Rovaniemi is Lapland's the largest and most international tourist destination (Tourism Strategy, n.d., p. 4). In the year 2019, around 738.000 tourists came to Rovaniemi which is an increase of 11 % from the previous year (Yle, 2020a). The number of International visitors dropped by 92% (Rovaniemi Stats, 2020). In the tour operator's industry, large tour operators make others compete by providing Christmas products. At the same time the level of services has increased in the last years as well as the product costs rose. As Rovaniemi is very dependent on the season as well as its tourism, the city aims to make the tourism in Rovaniemi year-round. With that aim, new tourism investment and enterprises could arise. Other tourism enterprises are dependent on tour operators which is a critical factor in tourism (Tourism Strategy, n.d., pp. 4–5). Rovaniemi has 70 activity companies listed that provide a wide range of different activities like, northern lights tours, snowshoeing, ice fishing, husky tours, snowmobiling, reindeer safaris, moose watching, hiking, jet-skiing, or river cruises (Visit Rovaniemi, n.d.).

### **3.2 Semi structured interviews**

For this research, the data to answer the research question consists of semi-structured interviews with managers of Lappish tourism businesses. Semi-structured interviews have predetermined open-ended questions and other questions developing from the dialogue between the two parties (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p. 315). This should allow the managers to give deeper, rich, and detailed answers about this research subject especially through deeper answers than yes, no or maybe (Rapley, 2004, p. 15). Moreover, these interviews aim to explore how the participants of this study feel and think (Smith, 2010, p. 109) about the knowledge management in their company of Generation Z employees. The experience, opinions and the understanding of knowledge management and Generation Z members of the participants will be put then into scientific context, following the chosen interpretivist paradigm (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 3).

Another reason why the method of the semi-structured interview was chosen is that it is the first time for me to conduct interviews. Consequently, by having some guidelines in the form of questions encourages and stimulates the talk itself, yet still leaves some freedom to receive additional, “off-script” information as the questions are open-ended (DiCicco-Bloom &



Crabtree, 2006, p. 315). The latter is due to the fact that it is important in interviews to have a high sensitivity to the context (Trinczek, 2009, p. 204).

While interviewing, it is important for the me, being the interviewer, to listen carefully to the answers and to understand the interviewee's point of view (David & Sutton, 2004, p. 87). As a part of the questions are pre-determined, this aims to have a lead and direction in the interview (David & Sutton, 2004, p. 89). In order to obtain deeper and detailed answers, the interviewer should ask new in-depth, follow-up questions, which are not planned beforehand, relating to the answers the participant gave. This form of interviewing therefore grants flexibility and also helps the interviewees to feel more comfortable within the talks themselves, as the interviewer shows an interest in what is being said in the given situation.

From 25<sup>th</sup> of February 2021 until April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2021 seven semi structured interviews were conducted. The interview questions are divided into four categories including background questions, knowledge management questions, Generation Z, questions and related and connected questions. The interview guide including the questions is attached in Appendix 1. It was created to help the interviewer to have some questions and topics to guide a conversation and when needed more detailed and specific follow-up questions were asked. The interview questions were the same for every participant, ensuring a sound and cohesive framework for the following analysis. Depending on the answers, further questions or a hint to get more detailed explanation or in-depth answers were done.

### **3.3 Data collection**

Before contacting Lappish DMC's, their size and the diversity-scale of different employees were taken into consideration to get diverse perspectives on the topic. All kinds of DMC's, not only tour operators and travel agencies were asked to participate because the companies have a good knowledge about managing different generations and how to attract Generation Z and how to use and deal with their knowledge. In this case, even though it was tried to get diverse companies, only tour operators of different sizes participated in this research. The size of the companies differs from micro to medium-sized companies according to the European Commission (n.d.). Companies with a few employees belong to the micro and small-sized enterprises as it is defined by turnover or balance-sheet and the amount of personnel (European Commission, n.d.). Of a medium-sized company participating in this study, several people of different service areas and locations volunteered in this research. Therefore, it needs to be

mentioned that three interviewees work for the same company. Each participant is working in different geographic locations in Lapland, which are more than 200 km apart from each other. Also, they work in different operational levels. Each participant had their own different perspective and opinion to share about knowledge management and Generation Z. Generally speaking, managers of the companies from all different operational levels were interviewed, participants were CEO's, HR managers, managing directors, and supervisors of seasonal and yearly tourism operations. This highlights that in the following the term managers includes also supervisors managing, training, being responsible, and in a most cases also hiring Generation Z workers.

All interview participants meet the criteria that they have currently or have had in the last season or the previous one Generation Z employees working. The last and previous seasons are included in this research as the current season is influenced by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in the fact that no real tourism can take place in Lapland in 2020/2021 (Business Lapland, 2020b). Another criterion was that the participant has a manager or supervisor role in the company at the same time as dealing with the studied generation. Besides managing the Generation Z workers, the participants, except one, were also responsible for the selecting and hiring personnel process in the companies.

The interview participants were selected with the theoretical sampling method (purposive sampling) in which my opinion as researcher and knowledge about an appropriate interviewee is used when selecting interviewees (David & Sutton, 2004, p. 152). Also, some were taken from the panel discussion participants list of the webinar about increasing internationality and future employment prospects in Fell-Lapland area organized by Fell-Lapland development in co-operation with Lapland University Attract project. After some interviews the snowball technique was used to search and find more potential interviewees. In this case the interview participants, the supervisor and friends knew someone who could participate also and they shared the contact information. This has led to two more interviewees.

The background information of the participants is summarized in Table 2 below as it provides an overview and will be connected to the findings in the analysis part. Moreover, it shows the variety of sizes of the DMC's and the managers experience and generation. The number of male and female respondents is balanced. Moreover, it shows that in average there are around 30% of Generation Z employees working in Lappish DMC's. The size of the companies varied a lot and also the educational background of the respondents is wide from having degrees and not

having a degree. Nevertheless, all companies of the respondents focus as main business on safaris and see themselves as safari companies. A few have other side products, like an accommodation, which were not relevant for this research.

	Company 1	Company 2	Company 3	Company 4	Company 5	Company 6	Company 7
	Interviewee 1 (I1)	Interviewee 2 (I2)	Interviewee 3 (I3)	Interviewee 4 (I4)	Interviewee 5 (I5)	Interviewee 6 (I6)	Interviewee 7 (I7)
<b>Focus of the Lappish DMC</b>	Outdoor adventure company	Nature, aurora and lifestyle company	Nature, aurora and lifestyle company	Snowmobile and sauna company	Snowmobile safari company	Nature, aurora and lifestyle company	Nature & Aurora company
<b>Gender</b>	M	F	F	F	M	F	M
<b>Responsible for how many workers (approx.)</b>	0-20	100+	50-100	0-20	20-50	20-50	50-100
<b>How many Generation Z workers</b>	40%	28-33%	33%	15-20%	35%	100%	30%
<b>Education of manager</b>	College education outdoor school	Second degree education in tourism	High/vocational school with tourism degree	Restaurant management school	No degree, wilderness guide education	Upper secondary school	University of applied sciences degree
<b>Years in that position</b>	5	16	9	16	16	6 months	13
<b>Generation of the manager</b>	Generation Y	Generation X	Generation Y	Generation X	Generation X	Generation Z	Generation X

Table 2: Background of the interviewees

In total seven interviews with the same number of participants were conducted. To conduct the interviews the online meeting platforms, Zoom and Microsoft Teams were used as well as one face-to-face interview took place in the manager's office. The interviews were conducted in English language. Especially attention and adaptation from me was needed as misunderstandings can arise more easily if the researcher, in this case me, and the interviewee had been living in different countries for a long time and have different cultural contexts (Rastas, 2005 as cited in Binaud, 2019) and mother tongues as most of the interview participants are Finnish and as mine is German. I am studying the degree program in English, which includes that all courses took place in English language. The invitations to participate as well as all further communication with the respondents took place in English. This might be a limitation and at the same time a possible explanation why not many companies participated in the study. As it is a second language from both sides, interviewees are usually not too comfortable and might not express themselves as well as they wished. At the same time, the research is limited

as I do not speak Finnish but attempt analyse Lappish tourism businesses. Also, it was noticed that the younger respondents had fewer problems expressing themselves detailed in English. This can be seen as a generational problem that older generations did not learn English in school and nowadays especially Generation Y and Z grow up learning English. A few contacted companies admitted that they do not speak English and therefore cannot participate in the study. Nevertheless, as tourism is important in Lapland it was assumed before conducting the study that the language barriers and the hesitance would not influence the study. To get the right interview questions as well as the right information out of the literature it was several times translated to the mother tongue and back, and forward and back again, to not loose anything in translation. For the same reason several times during the interviews it was asked if the terms and answers were understood correctly. Interviews were conducted until the answers started being similar and repeating each other and data saturation was reached.

### **3.4 Content analysis**

In total, seven interviews were conducted. One interview was done which took around one hour but it is not transcribed because in the middle of the interview it came out that the interviewee did not employ Gen Z workers at all. This made the interview invalid. The duration of the valid interviews lasted between 20 to 70 minutes, and all were recorded. Only the valid ones were transcribed. The transcription of the seven valid interviews comes up to a total of 48 pages of data which need to be analysed.

To analyse the data, content analysis is used which is a qualitative research method (Smith, 2010; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). This analysing method has the objective to identify the content of conducted data and to reduce it from a large to a smaller amount of data systematically (David & Sutton, 2004, p. 197; Erlingsson, & Brysiewicz, 2017, p. 94). In doing so, data needs to be categorized and codified (Alvesson, 2011, p. 59). As coding is crucial for this content analysis, it needs to be outlined that inductive as well as deductive coding were used in this research. To create a list of categories with existing data and to codify it is deductive coding. Inductive coding is to read and interpretate the data by making conclusions or categories during the analysis or after analysing (David & Sutton, 2004, p. 203–205). According to Hsieh & Shannon (2005) there are three types of content analysis. This research started with a theoretical approach, followed by interviews and the coding was done after collecting the data. This leads to a mixture of conventional and directed content analysis. The existing theory about tourism, Generation Z and knowledge management is limited which is an indicator for a conventional

content analysis. As codes are defined during the data analysis and derive from the data itself, is more like the conventional way. But as the study starts with theory even though it is limited which distinguishes also the directed approach.

Before starting to code, the conducted data was read through several times to get an overall understanding. In this process irrelevant parts, like personal life of the participants, small talk, not relevant information, were discarded (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017, p. 94). If some information was often repeated it was kept with the thought that the interviewee wants to highlight especially this information. Through this the data is like that put into smaller units focusing on that the core meaning of the units stays untouched. Also, the units need to be labelled and groups put into categories, as content analysis is a continuous process of coding and categorizing (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017, p. 95). Codes can be keywords, phrases, titles or themes (David & Sutton, 2004, p. 203). In this research the coding and categorizing was done by me manually. The themes were refined, combined and some discarded, so the remained ones are the following:

- Technology
- Motivation & eager to work
- Tandem-partner-process
- Inexperience
- Applying expertise
- Living in another world
- Silent knowledge valued

Going through the topics and keywords, they were put into categories so the analysis part can be started. For that, quotations from the respondents are connected with existing literature and then interpreted in the analysing part in the next chapter.

### **3.5 Research ethics**

This whole research was conducted according to the responsible conduct of research of the Finnish Advisory board (Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity [TENK], 2012). Especially the research ethics were strictly followed. This also includes that other researchers are recognized and mentioned in this whole study and the results are presented without falsification. Also, I am as the author aware that fabrication and misappropriation are not allowed by following the conduct of research (TENK, 2012).

The interviews took place online or face-to-face, whichever was preferred by the participants. Online interviews were possible via different online platforms due to the current COVID-19 situation. The one face-to-face interviews took place in a location suggested by the participant, like in this case the office. This shows that no physical harm was done to the participants as they choose the location. The questions were all about the research topic and company strategy and operations. Also, no psychological harm was caused as the interviewees could decide voluntarily how much and what information they would like to share. No third person was present during the interviews to secure that data cannot be abused by other parties. Moreover, I secured that neither social nor financial harm was brought to the interviewees because of the research.

One of the most important aspects of this research is to protect anonymity and to highlight that the subjects participated voluntarily. Ensuring that, an invitation letter was sent to the interviewees, stating that the participation is based on full-on voluntary participation and the withdrawal from the interviews and the study is possible at any time. Anonymity was promised to the participants during this whole research as personal and corporate information was given. Moreover, it was promised that I, as being the author, am the only one having access to the collected data which includes any names to provide anonymity. This information was given to the participants as a consent letter (Appendix 2) which was asked to be signed demonstrating with the signature that these rights were understood. Furthermore, the consent letter informed the participants again that the interviews were recorded and how and for only for the purpose of this research and its transcription. Another aspect is the storage of the data. Therefore, no public cloud services nor public computers were used as the chances of data leakage should be minimized. Nothing was promised in exchange for participating in this study.

As interviews aim to explore different emotions and opinions, they are sensitive matters (Renzetti & Lee, 1993) which is why carefulness and attention needs to be paid especially to privacy, confidentiality and ethical use. The whole research was conducted with objectivity which means that no personal opinions, feelings, or problems are taken into consideration. The collected data will be analysed objectively and careful (Resnik, 2015). The collected data is used anonymously, that is why quotations from the interviews are abbreviated with the letter *I* and the chronologic number of the interviewee, like for instance interviewee number 4 is *I4* in the following. Results of this content analysis are presented in the next chapter.

## 4 FINDINGS

The collected data provides findings answering the research main aim how the Lappish tourism managers use the knowledge of Generation Z employees. The collected and analysed data is put into context with regard to the literature to find deeper answers to the research questions. Firstly, findings illustrate what the Lappish tourism managers understand under the term knowledge management. Secondly, it will demonstrate how the knowledge transfer takes place in Lappish DMC's. Also, the role of knowledge transfer methods is analysed. Thirdly, empirical data presents the role of tacit knowledge and how it is used in Lappish tourism businesses. Fourthly, the experience of managing Generation Z employees from the viewpoint of Lappish tourism managers is outlined. Lastly, the knowledge transfer connected to Generation Z is discussed in the following.

### 4.1 Knowledge management understood by Lappish DMC's

Even though the term knowledge management is widespread among scholars, the research shows that it is not well-known among Lappish tourism managers. Interestingly though, however, companies are even less acquainted with the term knowledge management. In the upcoming section, discussion elaborates upon the managers' unfamiliarity with the terminology of knowledge management and how they define and understand it.

The unfamiliarity and not being able to define the term on the spot consequently raised emotional anxiety, discomfort or even led to small panic among the participants. This is shown as in most of the cases I had to repeat or rephrase the question. Also, a longer pause as in other questions and laughing occurred in this question several times like this respondent stated "What?... ahh...mhm...., that term..., maybe defining kind of the expertise things of my staff them using that" (I1). Uncertainty, unfamiliarity and confusion are expressed by the following statements of the respondents as well:

knowledge management.... mhm...knowledge management, that would be hard for me to explain.... I would say it is something considering under 25-year-old employees something you have to find out what they are capable to do, that is the most important thing over there, because usually they do not have much experience of anything. (I4)

oh no....hm...well..., I guess it is based on how you use your management style based on what you know, and if you know something is done on certain way you base your management style one that. I think, but it might be also wrong. (I6)

it is not familiar to me... we are trying to find out in interviews and see as much information as we can, to make a preliminary prepositioning for the different task, also during the work maybe even more important what kind of skills each person got and the final tasks depending of those. (I7)

These quotations show that the question was not expected, and the respondents were not prepared to answer. For the ones who were not able to define and to come up with any definition, the interviewer explained the term for the participant summarized based on Davenport (1994), Gartner Group (as cited in Duhon, 1998, p. 10) and Alavi and Leidner (2001) definitions. With that the interviewee was able to answer further interview questions based on knowledge management. Furthermore, it builds the base for further interview questions of this research as they are related to knowledge management. Nevertheless, one respondent defined knowledge management the following:

I am not sure, do you mean “tietojohdaminen” (knowledge management), then it means leading by gathering information and knowledge of certain things and using that information to lead people or operations, or procedures, or whatever, if its people related then you collect the people background, if you are an employer the employees background, and skills and knowledge and how you can utilize that in the current job or if it is a process or number you want to make work better, so you collect the information, what the current situation is or the past was and then you use that to embetter to whatever is there to embetter. (I3)

This understanding of knowledge management coincides with Alavi and Leidner’s (2001, p. 111) definition that knowledge management is a process of implementing knowledge. It also highlights the language barriers of this research as the respondent could first think only in Finnish and needed to translate the thoughts into English. At the same time, they were not sure if the “tietojohdaminen” means knowledge management and I did not know either because of the language barrier. The respondents came to the result that knowledge management mainly consist of using the expertise of their staff. “To find out what they are capable to do” (I4) and “the expertise of my staff then using that” (I1) imply the result. These two understandings of knowledge management are also in accordance with Alavi and Leidner’s (2001, p. 111) definition. But it highlights only a part of the most cited definition of Gartner Group (as cited in Duhon, 1998, p. 10) as the respondents do not consider capturing, evaluating, retrieving and sharing in their process of knowledge management. It mostly focuses on identifying and using knowledge.

Despite it also shows that there are big varieties of levels of understanding knowledge. Also, it might be influenced by the educational background of the managers. The results show that the



majority of the interviewees with no Bachelor's or Master's degree had more problems defining the term. Respondents with a degree or vocational school background came up faster with their definition. The one exception was one respondent who has a degree but could not define knowledge management at all. The respondents belong to Generation X, Y and Z. All generations could give explanations which shows that knowing the term or not, is not connected to the decade one person is born in. Additionally, there is no visible connection between the time-period the managers are already in that position and defining knowledge management. In equal measure, less experienced and more experienced managers had trouble with the term, but others, regardless the experience, could define it. Even though it was notable that the female respondents had more detailed answers and explanations than male respondents. It shows that male respondents had more problems and insecurity in defining their understanding of knowledge management. Because of that it can be assumed that gender has an impact on the leading style in the sense that female manager and supervisor know more about the theory and the background of their actions than male manager and supervisor. It tends to be that they are more action focused, also as they mentioned more times than female respondents the mentality of learning by doing.

Even though the knowledge management terminology was not easy for some to define, for most of the respondents, they state to use it consciously on a daily basis. It needs to be highlighted that one respondent argues about using knowledge management daily consciously the following:

I would say that in the beginning definitely not because I was just learning what I was doing and what this being in charge of something is, so definitely in the beginning not, but closer to the end, maybe in the last 3 years, definitely more and more and the last, last season I actually consider that I used it quite a lot, because the whole you know, I got comfortable with the job itself, because I was more and more responsibility constantly so it took some time to even understand what I am doing, and once I got comfortable with what I was doing only then I could take a little bit more into it, and I felt I was able to start thinking about these things more, so I did it quite knowing what I was doing especially in the last year of my career. Before that I can say that maybe the last 3 years, partially consciously and partially unconsciously [...], but definitely now as thinking of this, definitely the last year I tried to think of their abilities, special skills, special knowledges and then how I can use that in a job. For instance, people who were actors I would use more in this kind of task where you really have to put yourself in there, this kind of thing and so on. (I3)

This demonstrates, the more experience, the more managers think about using skills, knowledge and capabilities of their employees and how they can use it in their company and how it would

benefit and contribute to the company goals best. One example of using knowledge management daily was mentioned by a respondent as an example of a snowmobile safari. In that case, the manager plans and thinks which guide has which skills and capabilities with certain types of groups and needs to find an adequate one for a group who booked the safari. Skills and capabilities can vary in that example in endurance, languages, time restrictions, character, age and soft-skills. This shows that even though the knowledge management could not be easily defined and was not easily understood by the respondents they do think daily and consciously about how the expertise of their workers can be used and applied in their company adequately in order to serve the customers best. Moreover, it can be assumed as the respondents coherently agree on using knowledge management daily and as well consciously that they are not sure what it means and maybe even not sure how it works as the answers came promptly. Because if they know they use it consciously in their companies' tasks, I was wondering why it was hard to define in the earlier question of the understanding of knowledge management.

Additionally, it shows that managers of Lappish DMC's focus only on applying the expertise constantly in their work. But the knowledge management process is far more complex as the SECI model and its processes show. This and how the knowledge transfer works in the Lappish companies included in this study and which role it plays is discussed in the following.

#### **4.2 Knowledge transfer and the role of its methods in Lappish DMC's**

As explained in Chapter 2.1, the SECI model has four processes, the socialization, externalization, combination and internalization (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995, pp. 62-72). From the in this study participating Lappish tourism businesses only a few managers mentioned that they have a manual with instructions how to behave in certain situations, as well as safety and security measures. This displays that some knowledge was put into written form. Sharing and transferring tacit knowledge is done in Lappish DMC's in the training process most of the time via the tandem-partner-process. Nonetheless, it needs to be highlighted that the tandem-partner-process does not focus on socialization. Socialization is the main role in the mentoring knowledge transfer method, which the respondents do not use. Just the exchange and transfer of knowledge are important and not socializing and integrating in the company. Nevertheless, the socialization step of the SECI model is done in their trainings. It requires at least two people to exchange the tacit knowledge which is then a social interaction as tacit knowledge can be transferred verbally but also without using words like for instance via observation.

Externalization, was done as manuals exist but is not mentioned by any of the respondent that they turn tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge. The combination process is also not mentioned by the respondents, as well as the internalization process in which explicit knowledge is absorbed and turned into tacit knowledge again.

As mentioned, according to Alavi and Leidner (2001, p. 111) knowledge management focuses on sharing, creating and distributing knowledge. In this study knowledge is shared in the training process in participating Lappish DMC's, which includes the "preschool", tandem-partner-process, simulation and storytelling. The process of creating new knowledge is not mentioned by the respondents. The distribution can be seen as part of the tandem-partner-process in the training as knowledge is transferred from one person to another. So, summarizing it can be said, that Lappish tourism managers do not have a full understanding of knowledge management as only the use of and the transfer from tacit-to-tacit knowledge is considered in their companies. Moreover, it can be assumed, as it was not mentioned by the respondents, that the transferred knowledge can be further developed, deepened and probably improved by the new employees. This opportunity was not mentioned which leads to the interpretation that managers are not open to have new ways and new input on how procedures and operations are done, or at least have not yet taken those new ways of doing things into consideration. It is assumed that they prefer their own and how it is later in this analysis called "old-fashioned" way.

A few consider the application process as part of the way of how to make sure that the employees have the knowledge to perform their tasks. All respondents say that they have a training which the new employees have to go through. Answers like "we have like one week of training, and the rest is expected to learn at the job" (I6) or "they are put through a training, they have to shadow" (I1) demonstrate the result that training is the way to assure that the employees have the knowledge. Knowing that, it needs to be paid attention to the way the knowledge is transferred in the training. The mind-set and mentality the managers have for a training process is "learning by doing and hands on" (I1, I5, I6), which shows that training is performing the tasks and learn while doing the duties. For the training, knowledge transfer has among others three common methods, the mentoring, tandem-partner-process and storytelling. In the companies, knowledge is transferred in trainings. Even though the trainings vary depending on the company, the knowledge in most cases is transferred via shadowing. The minority mentioned that if the new worker already feels secure and works independently after a short training period, no tandem-partner is accompanying them for long. Even if previous

knowledge is already existing, a short training or working under supervision is done to assure the work is done properly. Consequently, this means that normally for all young new employees a training is provided. Socialization is not in the main focus and comes automatically when working according to one respondent (I6). Furthermore, company goals are more important than socialization. In one company knowledge can be transferred via the tandem-partner-process but mainly it is transferred during the training via simulations. Different scenarios like how to react at the pick-up with the customers, or in emergency cases like accidents are played and the new employees have to interact and learn from it. Only employees who feel very uncomfortable working alone after the simulation are paired up with some more experienced. Not enough time and a lack of experienced workers are reasons to have a simulation instead of pairing every new worker up. But as Ozkan and Solmanz (2015, p. 480) state, Generation Z, the young new workers, are independent and self-confident. Also, they are intellectual (Priporas et al., 2017, p. 376). Therefore, it is assumed that needing a tandem-partner is not often required and desired by the Generation Z, as they learn fast and independently. Working independently gives them also the desired room to figure out tasks alone which is important according to Robert Half (2015, pp. 17-18).

Also, the SECI model shows that tacit knowledge is transferred from one employee to another via socialization (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995, pp. 62–72). According to the respondents, in the case of Lappish tourism businesses the most used knowledge transfer method is the tandem-partner-process. It is seen as a part of the socialization process of Nonaka and Takeuchi's (1995, pp. 62–72) SECI model. There is also another method called storytelling which is used in the Lappish DMC's. Mostly it is used to transfer knowledge and values. With this method, knowledge is transferred from tacit-to-tacit knowledge. The respondents state that they use it to transfer experience and values, like Swap et al. (2001) highlight also. It is mostly done unconsciously according to them. Storytelling happens in the companies within the team and also from the managers and supervisors to the new workers, such as the following quote highlights.

I have the feeling I am quite a storyteller, so I probably did that a lot in the training, so I was the lead of training the new people, and I was in the lead of that for I don't know how many years. Many years. Six or seven years at least. And yeah, through examples and actual stories, yes, yes, definitely we use that as a training method. (I3)

An upcoming example during one interview was about risks and dangers of past tours of snowmobiling safaris in order to warn the colleagues and prevent accidents happening again.

In conclusion, it can be said, that knowledge transfer methods play an essential role as they are used by all to provide the new employees with the knowledge needed to perform their tasks. The knowledge transfer methods however do not vary much in the Lappish DMC's and focus only on transferring tacit to tacit knowledge. From this it can also be assumed that, as the used methods do not vary much, the companies are not open to explore and try new training methods. Moreover, it was inquired how the knowledge transfer methods will be further developed in the future adapting to the Generation Z values. No clear answers were given by the respondents except that probably technologies will be involved. This shows that they do not think deeply about changing their trainings suiting the new Generation Z, even though most of the companies have on average one third of members of that generation working for them.

### **4.3 The role of tacit knowledge in Lappish DMC's**

As the previous subchapter shows, the transfer of tacit knowledge is used most. Firstly, it needs to be outlined that the terms tacit and explicit, or in other words silent and academic knowledge needed to be explained to most of the respondents. It shows that the terms are not well known as it was the case with the previous term "knowledge management". The unfamiliarity with the term consequently caused emotional anxiety, discomfort or even small panic in the participants. Reactions like "oh, what?" (I1) or "ahm... this is a hard one (laughing)" (I2) demonstrate the small panic and unfamiliarity.

Nevertheless, tacit and explicit knowledge are inseparable according to Schütt (2003). As the managers could mention which they value more, it is assumed that they are not inseparable for them. Apparently, the majority of the interviewees of tourism managers in Lapland do not agree with Schütt's (2003) statement, as, the majority comments to value tacit knowledge more than explicit and does not bring tacit knowledge into context with explicit knowledge. "Definitely silent. In this job, it is nothing you can learn in school. [...] I consider more important the attitude, and correct kind of personality, the fact that they are out-going, and ready to do it" (I3), confirms the result as well as the following quotes illustrate:

when you are working with people it is usually more valuable if you know how to treat them and how to get along with the group, that is why, I am sorry but I think academic diploma is not helping much then. (I4)

The easiest for a staff member is to learn how to use knowledge tools for camera in photography, but the hard part is the good management with guests at minus 30 degrees, when you are tired and your guests have never been to the cold, so then comes the very

special part of the guide, who is able to like make things fun, make it interesting, making them feel safe, that is a very important aspect as a guide. (I1)

Consequently, an understanding of nature and people is valued. But to view tacit knowledge as more valuable in tourism businesses is seen as problematic, according to Alavi and Leidner (2001, p. 111). Only a few respondents claimed that too much tacit knowledge can also be a risk for their company. This coincides with Alavi and Leidner's (2001, p. 127) explanation as tacit knowledge can be misused. Therefore, sharing tacit knowledge is often refused as it jeopardizes sharing competitive advantage (Cooper, 2006, p. 52) which is also highlighted by this respondent's answer about the importance and value of the two knowledge types: "I believe that this silent knowledge, ahm partly, in my opinion, it can't be too big in too big role because it's it can be then a risk for a company" (I2). The minority of the respondents claim that explicit knowledge is a plus when new Generation Z workers have it. It is thus considered as an asset but not a necessity. Polyani (1975 as cited in Alavi & Leidner, 2001, p. 112) articulates that both, explicit as well as tacit knowledge, are important as tacit knowledge is the base for forming acquisition in order to develop and represent explicit knowledge. This shows also the strong connection and inseparability between both types of knowledge. An aspect which makes it even more difficult for managers to distinguish between tacit and explicit knowledge, is that knowledge is boundaryless, intangible and dynamic. Moreover, it cannot be stocked (Nonaka et al., 1998; Nonaka et. al., 2001 both as cited in Schütt, 2003).

Also, in the DMC's most of the jobs are related to different people, like customers, so it is wished for, that Generation Z workers are a "people person" (I6). "People person" is considered someone who can deal and handle different kind of people because of their soft skills. As all participants value tacit knowledge more, it can be assumed that managers, regardless how long they run their business and regardless how long they are in their managers/supervisor position, focus on know-how. Also, the generation and the size of the company are not influencing their focus on tacit knowledge. Therefore, it can be said that in the tourism industry in Lapland the company's focus on customer service and the relationships between the employees and their customers, for which according to the managers tacit knowledge is more important. Besides the customer-employee relation, there is also the manager-employee relation, which is important in a company. To this one the next sub-chapter pays attention. Special focus is drawn to the experience managers had when dealing and managing their new young employees, the Generation Z.

#### 4.4 Lappish tourism managers experience managing Generation Z employees

Following the main research aim and the research questions, it is important to know what opinion and experience they have of that generation. Generally, it can be said, that the respondent's experience with Generation Z employees varies from really good to bad. Said component of experience is described like the following:

it varies a lot, that would be my answer (laughing) it varies a lot. There are the ones, I am thinking like 'Oh my god, is this really the future?', is this the future of our society kind of a deal, but then there are the absolutely fantastic brilliant ones, which give me the hope. (I3)

Also, it is outlined like "some of them you wanna hit them in the face with a spade, and some of them are fantastic" (I1). The majority of respondents explained that the bad experience with that generation was mostly caused because the managers had the feeling Generation Z'ers are not ready to work. They live far away from reality in an idealistic world. Moreover, they are too coddled from home and have to wake up to reality. This reflects Schenarts' (2019, p. 248) "safetyism" as it can be seen in the Generation Z's as they are too coddled or in other words protected from their parents and their home so they have difficulties living, handling and coping with the real world. Also, escaping reality, even for a short time, is according to Priporas et al. (2017, p. 376) done via new technologies which they like to discover and they are native with as their name digital natives (Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2018, p. 181) highlights. Escaping reality might be caused by failed parenting which is claimed by Sinek (2016). Nevertheless, a few respondents explain that being far away from reality and not being ready might be because they are only starting out in the business world as the following quote shows:

for most of them it is their first job, and I think that comes really clear after the first work week that some of them are in their first job, because sometimes we have problems with when do you come to work, and when do you leave from work, and how you should be at work. (I6)

A few respondents comment that besides not knowing the basics about work and work-life, they also often do not know how to apply for jobs and how to communicate with companies and managers like answering emails to the manager in a not friendship way. This inexperience and not living and knowing how to deal in reality are aspects managers have to deal with frequently. Not knowing how to answer emails correctly and using an informal way, can show disrespect towards the managers. This is also demonstrated by the following: "...basic

situations like I send you an invitation to a job interview, and how you reply to an email, many kids were answering me like they were chatting to a friend or on WhatsApp” (I3). This coincides with what Creary (in Wharton, 2019) states that chains of command as well as structure are important in workplaces having Generation Z working as they expect a close relationship with the people who are higher in the hierarchy. A close relationship is described in that case as respondents stated also to treat the managers as they were their friends.

Moreover, it was claimed that Generation Z is less committed to the job than previous generations. To be overconfident due to lack of experience, is another stated characteristic. Besides negative aspects, positive aspects were mentioned too, as they are also considered perfect or brilliant by some managers.

I think sometimes it is easier to work with them because they have an open mind, want to learn new things. They are less stubborn than older employees. They have this, how is it called, enthusiasm and willingness to learn, they want to learn something new, every day is a big adventure to them and they share it and they show it, and they like to do everything they do. (I5)

The aspect mentioned above, Generation Z is easy to work with, was confirmed by a few respondents explaining that they are easy to work with because they communicate what they like and want and what not. Moreover, some have a playfulness in their work which makes them good in their work and easy to work with. An example given by the respondents was that the managers try not to behave like a boss, in order to be on one level with the young employees. In that case for example, mistakes are punished with push-ups, to create the team cohesion with playfulness.

if you are late, you are gonna do 5 push ups for every minute you are late, that’s so to say and I don’t enforce it, I am bring it more up to a laugh you know, it creates a quite nice of a team thing. (I1)

Enforcing on teamwork is assumed to be a good idea as working in a team is according to Schwieger and Ladwig, (2018, p. 49) requested by managers. Generation Z often lacks the ability. Moreover, Generation Z itself admits that technologies have weakened their people skills. This includes also teamwork-skills. In that sense, it shows that the technologies have a negative impact.

Additionally, most of the respondents mentioned that the use of technologies and digital devices is seen negatively. At the same time a few respondents see positively in their



internet/technology capabilities. Apparently, technology and its devices are conflicting topics. Technology makes it easy to reach them and they learn how to use technologies. Contradictory, being on the phone was mostly seen negatively. At the same time, that is the way of this world to reach Generation Z easiest and fastest. So, having the skills of the devices and technologies can be contributing positively, but also negatively to their work depending on the situation and how and for what the devices and technologies are used. Commonly, it got mentioned that using devices and social media for personal use is not particularly liked by the companies. The following quote highlights this situation of the use of technologies in a customer-service business:

I think the younger generation is nice to have sometimes with their ideas and their abilities to use technology but we are not a tech-company, we are a guiding company we require people to be present and it is hard to be present if you have technology. (I1)

The minority of managers requires that their employees are required to have social media accounts like Facebook and WhatsApp. Besides using it for marketing, they also communicate with each other and share important information, like work schedules. Using social media coincides with Maloni et al. (2019) claiming that companies should be represented on social media channels. Generation Z also expect the managers to answer also fast and to be reachable though different channels.

Moreover, Generation Z is according to the respondents more interested in the team, free time, and working atmosphere than in the salary and the working hours. This was seen as a positive trait and it is demonstrated by the following quote:

What they want to know is the, what kind of team and what I can do on my free time is it something that I can go with my team, ahm, worker to somewhere else and spent my free time also, they want to have a good atmosphere at the workplace, that's important for them, they are interested about the others. (I2)

This coincides with Schawbel's (2019 as cited in Schenarts, 2019, p. 250) point of view that Generation Z is not mainly motivated by the salary, which he states only 28% are. At the same time, it agrees and demonstrates that happiness at work is important as team, free time and working atmosphere are main factors for that. If happiness cannot be found, Generation Z is more likely to resign from a job (Ozkan & Solmaz, 2015, p. 480). Other positive attributes of Generation Z were according to the respondents that they are open-minded, have language skills and have motivation to work even though workdays can be very long and they have no experience with work-life. Furthermore, young employees are eager to work and still smile no

matter how long a day was. The respondents assume this positive attitude and motivation can be seen as consequence from the fact that for most this is their first job:

They have that energy and they are eager to learn, and it's their first job that is also kind of cool [...] I think what I like about the younger workers is that they have a really high work moral, like they are very eager to do things and show you things, and they are so happy, when they come after the work they are still smiling and like telling wow this went well and that was awesome. (I6)

The respondents experience is not confirming Finanzguerilla's (2019) assumption that Generation Z is naive and lazy. "I would say a lot of them are more open-minded" (I4), openness and being eager to work are the opposites of what Finanzguerilla stated.

Even though Generation Z is considered open-minded, the managers are trying to meet the expectations and adapting to their values. The majority of the respondents explained that the management style needs to change as more and more young workers are entering the labour force. Many management styles are old and outdated and that needs to change to keep up with the new Generation Z as the following respondent explains:

In the main management style there are quite normal people who are not highly educated, not educated into management, so there is a lot of substance knowledge within the people, they know so much about the work itself, but they don't know about the management. They don't have the management skills and when it comes to this new generation, I have the feeling those will be more important because they expect more. (I3)

It is assumed that with having an old management style the Generation Z expects the managers to change in order to be authentic and engaged in the recruiting process. Moreover, managers should value the ideas of Generation Z and show respect as well as providing the newest technologies to work with (Robert Half, 2015, pp. 14-19). At the same time, it can be assumed that the conflict between soft skills and technologies will stay in the companies as it is not seen that the Generation Z wants to reduce their technology consumption.

Besides the management style, companies can also adapt their appearance. A few companies claimed already having started a change in the online image and appearance of the company in order to make it easier to access. This is shown by the following statement of one respondent "...we don't wanna hide, some things that when you are in that point maybe you then get information about that so we try to prepare and give the information and make things visible" (I2). Contributing to that Schwieger and Ladwig (2018, p. 46) declare that Generation Z likes to have an open digital world and transparent communication, this coincided with the renovation

of the webpage as they aim to make it easier to understand and to find information. Agreeing to this Ovensik and Kozjek (2015, as cited in Špindler, 2018, p. 180) state that Generation Z appreciates having online access to all information transparently, so they are easy and fast available. Taking into consideration Generation Z, a few of the respondents explain also to have put more pictures and videos as the new generation learns well by watching videos according to Chicca and Shellenbarger (2018, p. 183). It can be assumed that because Generation Z wants pictures and videos as well as fast and uncomplicated access to information that they are not smart and capable enough to find it themselves and they are too lazy to do some work by themselves. Also, it can show that they are efficient and used to being provided all the desired information from scratch, as they grew up with the internet as an abundant information resource. This relates in turn again to the fact of being too coddled and raised in safetyism, protected from the real world where work and effort is needed.

Summarized it can be said that managers experience Generation Z employees as unexperienced but eager and motivated to work. Their name ‘digital natives’ shows they are skilled in the use of technology. Managers know this but see it as a difficult topic as it is hard for the young workers to stop being on the phone during work. It can be assumed that maybe the addiction is too strong or they are not mature enough to be able to separate personal and work behaviour. Their work-behaviour can be also reflected in having a closer look into the knowledge transfer process in the Lappish DMC’s.

#### **4.5 Generation Z related to knowledge transfer**

Knowledge transfer methods are essential in knowledge management. They are explained previously, but it needs to be also outlined that the tandem-partner-process, mentoring, and storytelling are methods which always include other people. Besides these training methods, also simulation interferes with other people. Therefore, it can be assumed that soft skills, like interpersonal-, communication-, and people-skills are important. Therefore, it needs to be highlighted that Tulgan (2015 as cited in Robert Half, 2015, p. 10) claims that Generation Z lacks soft skills. Most of the respondents agreed to that, as they have noticed a lack of soft skills. This includes according to the managers not having respect, not listening always, lacking empathy and often common sense, like the following quotes show:

I think pretty much all employees under 25 are soft as f\*\*k – yes, they lack soft skills. The biggest problems I have with the younger generation is, if I am running like a week’s

training session, I am explaining something and they are on their phone texting, like that's for me pretty insulting, so they do lack a little bit of that. You can tell them, you can tell the younger generation the problem is they are so soft, you tell them too hard they get upset, and ask you to treat them kindly. (I1)

... Common empathy - when there is the situation where a child is crying and you kind of walk away from that, you don't want to deal with that, or situations like that where you know you can help or might not know you can help but should be helping. When a person falls down in the slippery ice, you just don't walk away from that and don't do that stuff. But sometimes these things happen, we have feedback that these things happened, that a guide walked away when a person fell and hurt their hand. (I6)

The second quote highlights that common sense, action-oriented knowledge and intuition are missing. These all belong to tacit knowledge (Bolisani & Bratianu, 2018, p. 8; Smith, 2001, pp. 311–315). Tacit knowledge is valued strongly by the managers. But according to the respondents the form of the knowledge, explicit or tacit, does not play a big role as they focus on transferring tacit knowledge only. This is done in their trainings. Tacit knowledge including soft skills is taught as there is a lack of this. The tandem-partner-process, storytelling and simulation are used by the respondents and require listening skills, common sense, empathy, and communication skills. Multiple respondents and Schawbel (2019) explain the lack of soft skills as a consequence as they are not taught in school. It is assumed that it might be the best and most efficient way to teach soft skills using knowledge transfer methods which focus on tacit knowledge skills.

At the same time tacit knowledge can be gained through personal experience (Smith, 2001, pp. 314–315). It is considered that soft skills influence the daily life and are taught and needed daily. Also, the inexperience of the Generation Z influences the lack of tacit knowledge. Of course, it can differ as it relies on perception and personal reflection (Bolisani & Bratianu, 2018, p. 8) but as the mentality of the managers is learning by doing which is as well the motto of tacit knowledge, it is assumed that Lappish DMC's trainings are the right method as they focus on teaching soft skills.

Besides the learning by doing attitude, only a minority of the managers have manuals for their employees. In that case written knowledge is transferred instead of the other knowledge transfer methods where tacit knowledge is passed to the workers. Therefore, the socialization of the SECI model is used but also the externalization is used. However, two steps are missing in the knowledge management process of the SECI model. Moreover, having a manual can also be seen as a backup plan in case of a certain stress- or uncomfortable situation the workers forget

what to do and what they have learned. In such situations, the manual helps handling the situation, but whether the workers remember the learned aspects remains uncertain. Also, as the attention span of the young workers is generally short, having a manual could be helpful. However, a book is not the preferred channel Generation Z likes to receive information from, but it is probably better to have a manual in stress- or new situations, like for instance having a flat tyre, car accident or similar. Presumably, having how to proceed written down in a book is easier and faster than having a video in which it needs to be searched for the right spot where the problem is encountered and solved. Moreover, if the technologies should not work for whatever reason, like due to weather or battery failure, the workers would be helpless. So having a manual, or as it was called by a respondent (I6) “bible” seems smart and logical.

In a nutshell it can be said, that a training focusing on tacit knowledge is not only important for the companies, but also for the Generation Z as they develop greater traits to their personality. These will be needed and are helpful in all aspects in life. So, as tacit knowledge skills will be appreciated in work life as well as in their personal life, I as a researcher consider them as important. This shows that teaching tacit knowledge leads to a win-win situation for both parties. The next chapter presents the conclusion of this research among others answering the research questions as well as outlining limitations and suggestions for further research.

## 5 DISCUSSION

This qualitative research about the use of knowledge from Generation Z in Lappish tourism businesses has opened up new avenues for understanding and perceiving knowledge transfer of the interviewed Lappish tourism managers. The main research aim, how the managers of Lappish DMC's use the knowledge Generation Z, and the connected research questions will be answered in the following.

This research outlines that the majority of the interviewed managers are unable to separate knowledge and skills. Furthermore, the research highlighted that there is a general lack and uncertainty of knowing and understanding the term knowledge management. Also, following the research aim, it can be said that Lappish DMC managers do not use consciously all the knowledge of Generation Z. According to the answers of the respondent's, knowledge management is understood as using the expertise of their staff. Normally this should include knowing the knowledge as well as the skills of the staff so that there is only the need to teach the lacking knowledge. But as every new employee has to go through a training it can be also said that previous knowledge is not relevant. As training is the most used method in Lappish DMC's for transferring knowledge, it can be said that in these trainings the transfer is done by the majority via the tandem-partner-process. It is the preferred way of Lappish DMC managers, but also a few other methods are used. Consequently, storytelling and mentoring are less frequently used and do not play such an important role. This shows knowledge transfer methods are not irrelevant in the DMC's according to the respondents. Summarizing it can be outlined that the training existing of methods like the tandem-partner-process play an essential role in the process of knowledge transfer in Lappish DMC's.

Furthermore, managers consider the brought knowledge partly but they teach the needed skills and knowledge for the job, in order for the companies' operations remaining as they have always been. Therefore, they seem to be not too open to introducing new methods and procedures. This result is unfortunately like I expected, even though I had hoped that it would not be like that and my personal experience was just an unfortunate experience. I think that not using the knowledge is a waste of time and money. Time and with-it money could be saved by knowing exactly which skills the young new employees have and then it could be only worked on the ones lacking or the practical work. Also, it made me feel unappreciated as it felt like anyone can do that job because the expectations and what is required are very low. That might be connected to the big amount of workforce which is needed seasonally as it was the case prior

the COVID-19 pandemic, but nevertheless, the already gained knowledge does not play a big role unless it is previous experience in the exact same position.

Knowing now how the knowledge transfer takes place in DMC's in Lapland, it can be focused on the tacit knowledge and its use. Also, the terms silent and academic knowledge were not always known by the respondents. Nevertheless, the silent/tacit knowledge is required and desired by the managers in Lappish DMC's. Because of that, they teach it in their training, but how exactly they then use the tacit knowledge Generation Z employees already have, could not be answered in this research. But the research showed that tacit knowledge is more appreciated than an explicit one. Personally speaking, I see the importance of tacit knowledge, especially soft skills, but think also that they are very important in life generally and not only in the work-life. As they are, from my point of view, important for daily life, it shows and highlights again that Generation Z members lack them and that they are not prepared for life. This could also be related to the aspect that they live in a different world far away from reality. Also, I believe that Generation Z members should be mature enough to reflect on their own skills. If they know that they lack or have bad soft skills, they should be honest to themselves and do not apply to jobs like in tourism where having soft skills is the basis of good customer service which is the main aspect in tourism.

Focusing on the research question about the experience of the management dealing with Generation Z employees, this research outlines the following results. The management of Generation Z was experienced by the participating managers as intertwined. The motivation and eagerness to work is seen as very welcomed. Inexperience is noticed negatively as well as the needed to handle Generation Z sensitivity. This was described by respondents as that it is difficult to say critics right and give instructions without making them feel offended. Moreover, generally, experience with Generation Z workers is seen positively, as well as negatively, like it was mentioned often that they live far from reality and are addicted to technologies. Nevertheless, some common understanding of life and reality should be present. Additionally, it was noticed that through experience, like the provided training and work, the Generation Z members gain knowledge and could have new ideas and suggestions on how to improve and develop procedures. If no proactivism from the young workers takes place, the new knowledge and skills will not be used as the Lappish tourism managers do not consider and realize the chance of using them. Often young workers have a different cultural background. But I see big potential in improving the company by having different critical viewpoints or ideas from young employees with culturally different backgrounds. Consequently, this might lead to improving

the competitive advantage of the companies. So, managers claim to use the knowledge as they check the applications, but do they really use the knowledge brought to the company? I do not think so, rather they think they do but, in the end, decide to hire people because of the attitude towards work and not because of their skills and knowledge.

The findings of this research, like the term knowledge transfer is not understood by everyone, how tacit knowledge is exactly transferred in Lappish DMC's is not clear yet, tacit knowledge is more valued and preferred but most Lappish DMC's, matter as it gives a detail insight of the way Lappish DMC managers think and do their business. Also, the outcome that Lappish DMC managers do not transfer it to explicit knowledge in order to store it is from high value. It is important as there is high potential seen that the knowledge transfer can be more efficient and cheaper if managers would be aware of that possibility and use it. Theoretically, they would then as next step replace and adapt their knowledge transfer in their company, develop in a positive way their self-awareness of knowledge and deepen their own knowledge. As Generation Z is still entering the labour market it could be very beneficial as in the next years a lot of Generation Z workers will apply in their companies. Also, this research is from high importance as it includes what Generation Z expects from the managers and managers views and opinions of Generation Z. It is visible that there is no full concordance of the both sides and I think it is important from both parties to know and try to understand the other viewpoint. Moreover, this thesis gives managers the chance to get to know Generation Z better in order to be able to use their knowledge completely and efficiently. At the same time, this research is of consequence for managers as well as Generation Z as it gives them the chance to get several inside views of businesses and its knowledge transfers. It could help them to understand the businesses in order how to behave and to respect the given tasks, rules and environment. Ultimately, this research is offering a small overview of different knowledge transfer methods, it provides the Lappish DMs managers options of knowledge transfer of which they might not have thought of.



## 6 CONCLUSION

Concluding, it can be said that the research shows that Lappish tourism managers do not use all the knowledge Generation Z brings to the companies. Also, it outlines that, Lappish tourism managers teach the new Generation Z workers all knowledge they need, especially tacit knowledge, for the job irrespective of which knowledge the workers have gained previously. The managers still have untapped potential to work and improve their knowledge transfer in order to be more efficient and effective. Also, managers could pay more attention to the SECI model to get a wider understanding of the complexity of knowledge transfer. This research shows some positive and negative characteristics of Generation Z, which cannot be generalized. Also, it highlights that they still need to improve their soft skills to make the training and knowledge transfer easier in Lappish DMS's. Teaching tacit knowledge benefits also the private life of Generation Z as it is seen as essential to have. Furthermore, the digital addiction of the new generation plays an important role when Generation Z is working as they need digital devices. At the same time, it is seen as a contrast to the value of Lappish nature. Lappish nature represents silence and relaxation in which digital devices are not helpful and needed as I think being always available is one of the biggest stress factors. Nevertheless, Lappish DMC managers also appreciate the skills of technology and digital devices the new generation has, in order to be represented for instance in several digital platforms. Both sides are not perfect and knowledge transfer is a very complex and expensive process which cannot be improved and changes within a short time.

Nevertheless, this study has several limitations which could inspire other researchers to take this thesis as a basis and to deepen its topics. Few aspects which in the future research can be paid attention, as well as its restrictions, are listed in the following. It is important to mention business which have accommodation as main products, were not asked to participate in this research. Therefore, another avenue for new research could be to compare the use and benefit of Generation Z's knowledge in trainings. Besides focusing on the use of the knowledge, the methods, intensity, duration, results, success, number of participants, feedback, and aim of the training could be explored as well.

As qualitative research is largely context-bound, generalizing from the findings is never the aim of a qualitative study (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, Ormston, 2013, p. 263). It thus also needs to be highlighted that Finnish Lapland is a unique destination, the recommendations and behaviours are not automatically applicable for Swedish- or Norway-Lapland. Therefore, cultural

differences are the reason for it. Also, results are not applicable for other regions in Finland as there will be regional as well as cultural differences. Additionally, the type of tourism experiences offered in Finnish Lapland greatly differs from the more southern parts of Finland. For further research the same study could be applied to geographical similar areas like Lappish parts of Norway and Sweden to see if answers are culturally dependent.

Since tourism in Lapland is growing, also there is a large number of DMC's. The number of respondents only represents less than 10% of the 90 approached companies, which represents only a small part of the whole number of companies. Nevertheless, it needs to be considered that the COVID-19 pandemic hit tourism hard. Therefore, many tourism businesses struggle to survive as barely any tourists came to Lapland, leading to high numbers of bankruptcy among Lappish tourism businesses. Also, it was noticed that many companies could not participate as they stated that they are a one-man company and never had employees. This indicates that bigger-scaled research needs to be done with more participants of the tourism industry in Lapland

While there was a general variety of generations present in this research, the actual representatives of each generation were very few. Therefore, it is not possible to generalize from the select participants and for them to represent a whole generation of managers in this research. Consequently, further research with a wider variety of respondents is recommended.

Lastly, it needs to be acknowledged, that since the research is of a qualitative nature, the answers often reflect subjective opinions, experiences, and knowledge of the respondents. Although all efforts were made to keep the research objective and to get good qualitative research results, it is suspected that unconsciously I, as I did myself the interviews, had subjective thoughts during the interview as well as during the analysis. This is a common risk when conducting qualitative research and subjectivity is not seen as a bias in this study (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 21). Nevertheless, it was tried to be as objective as possible during the whole research and according to Slevitch (2011, p. 77) in qualitative research reality is based on the intersubjective creation.

Personally concluding, to think qualitatively for this research was a challenge as it was the first-time conducting interviews and doing qualitative research. Summarizing, it can be outlined that in knowledge management, Generation Z and the area of Lapland further research is needed. I hope that this research motivates other researchers to focus on possible further and deeper research to find out the relation between managers and their use of Generation Z knowledge.

## REFERENCES

- Adler, K. (2015). Wissenstransfer zwischen Generationen in Unternehmen–miteinander, voneinander und übereinander lernen. Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz, 38-44.
- Alavi, M., & Leidner, D. E. (2001). Knowledge management and knowledge management systems: Conceptual foundations and research issues. *MIS quarterly*, 109-127. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3250961>.
- Allee, V. (1997). *The knowledge evolution: Expanding organizational intelligence*. Routledge, 5.
- Alvesson, M. (2011). *Interpreting interviews*. Los Angeles: Sage, 59.
- Argote, L., & Ingram, P. (2000). Knowledge Transfer: A Basis for Competitive Advantage in Firms. *Organizational behavior and human decision processes*, 82(1), 150-169. <https://doi.org/10.1006/obhd.2000.2893>.
- Băltescu, C. A. (2019). Elements of Tourism Consumer Behaviour of Generation Z. *Bulletin of the Transilvania University of Braşov. Series V, Economic science*, 12(61)(1), 63-68. <https://doi.org/10.31926/but.es.2019.12.61.1.9>.
- Berkup, S. B. (2014). Working with generations X and Y in generation Z period: Management of different generations in business life. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(19), 219-224. <https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2014.v5n19p218>.
- Binaud, S. (2019). *In search for responsible partnerships: Postcolonial analysis of tourism development in Sri Lanka*. Lapin yliopisto.
- Bolisani, E., & Bratianu, C. (2018). The elusive definition of knowledge. In Bolisani, E. and Bratianu, C. (Eds.), *Emergent knowledge strategies: Strategic thinking in knowledge management* (pp. 1-8).
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful qualitative research: A practical guide for beginners*. SAGE, 21.
- Brinkmann, S., & Kvale, S. (2015). *InterViews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing* (Third edition.). Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 3.
- Business Finland. (2020). Foreign Overnights in Finland 2019, Business Finland Visit Finland. Last retrieved November 29, 2020 from <https://www.businessfinland.fi/4958c7/globalassets/julkaisut/visit-finland/tutkimukset/2020/2019-review---travel-in-finland.pdf>.
- Business Lapland. (2020a). Above ordinary Business opportunities in Lapland. House of Lapland. Last retrieved November 28, 2020 from [https://www.lapland.fi/uploads/2019/10/29792359-factscontacs-engl\\_paivitetty-5\\_2020.pdf](https://www.lapland.fi/uploads/2019/10/29792359-factscontacs-engl_paivitetty-5_2020.pdf).

- Business Lapland. (2020b). Big regional differences in Lapland's summer tourism – Finland's Covid-19 situation causes uncertainty for the winter season. House of Lapland. Last retrieved April 12, 2021 from <https://www.lapland.fi/business/big-regional-differences-in-laplands-summer-tourism-finlands-covid-19-situation-causes-uncertainty-for-the-winter-season/>.
- Chicca, J., & Shellenbarger, T. (2018). Connecting with Generation Z: Approaches in nursing education. *Teaching and Learning in Nursing*, 13(3), 180-183. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.teln.2018.03.008>.
- Cohen, W. M., & Levinthal, D. A. (1990). Absorptive capacity: A new perspective on learning and innovation. *Administrative science quarterly*, 128. Last retrieved March 18, 2021 from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2393553>.
- Cooper, C. (2006). Knowledge management and tourism. *Annals of tourism research*, 33(1), 47-56. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2005.04.005>.
- Davenport, T. H. (1994). Saving IT's Soul: Human Centered Information Management. *Harvard Business Review*, March-April, 72 (2).
- David, M., & Sutton, C. D. (2004). *Social research - the basics*. London: Sage Publications, 87-99.
- Deloitte Access Economics. (2015). Australian tourism labour force report: 2015-2020. *Australian Trade Commission*. Last retrieved May 3, 2021 from <https://www.tra.gov.au/Archive-TRA-Old-site/Research/View-all-publications/All-Publications/australian-tourism-labour-force-report-2015-2020> .
- Desjardins, J. (2019). Meet Generation Z: The Newest Member of the Workforce. Visual Capitalist. Last retrieved February 24, 2021 from <https://www.visualcapitalist.com/meet-generation-z-the-newest-member-to-the-workforce/?fbclid=IwAR29CD-Q0vJJByz8kB7NUMKA1ehP1QESRAsJMteP73zHI8C3VVLhmeerKwY> .
- DiCicco-Bloom, B., & Crabtree, B. F. (2006). The qualitative research interview. *Medical education*, 40(4), 315. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2929.2006.02418.x>.
- Duhon, B. (1998). It's All in our Heads. *Inform*, September, 12 (8), 10.
- Elliot R., Timulak L., (2005). Descriptive and interpretive approaches to qualitative research, *A handbook of research methods for clinical and health psychology*, 1(7).
- Erlingsson, C., & Brysiewicz, P. (2017). A hands-on guide to doing content analysis. *African journal of emergency medicine*, 7(3), 93-99. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.afjem.2017.08.001> .

- European Commission (n.d). SME definition. Last retrieved June 23, 2021 from [https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/sme-definition\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/sme-definition_en) .
- Finanzguerilla, (2019). Ruiniert die Generation Z unseren Wohlstand? Finanzguerilla. Last retrieved December 9, 2020 from <https://www.finanzguerilla.de/lifestyle/ruiniert-die-generation-z-unseren-wohlstand/> .
- Fleig-Palmer, M. M. & Schoorman, F. D. (2011). Trust as a Moderator of the Relationship Between Mentoring and Knowledge Transfer. *Journal of leadership & organizational studies*, 18(3), 334-343. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051811408615> .
- Goh, E., & Lee, C. (2018). A workforce to be reckoned with: The emerging pivotal Generation Z hospitality workforce. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 73, 21. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2018.01.016>.
- Goh, E., & Okumus, F. (2020). Avoiding the hospitality workforce bubble: Strategies to attract and retain generation Z talent in the hospitality workforce. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 2. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2019.100603>.
- Hallin, C. A., & Marnburg, E. (2008). Knowledge management in the hospitality industry: A review of empirical research. *Tourism management*, 29(2), 367-372. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2007.02.019>.
- Hansen, M. T., Nohria, N., & Tierney, T. (1999). What's your strategy for managing knowledge. *The knowledge management yearbook 2000–2001*, 77(2), 109.
- Harju-Myllyaho, A., Hakkarainen, M., & Vähäkuopus, M. (2020). Tourism work - Public management of the tourism workforce in Finland. In A. Walmsley, K. Åberg, P. Blinnikka & Johannesson, G.T (eds.), *Tourism employment in Nordic countries – Trends, practices and opportunities*. London: Palgrave.
- Hsieh, H., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis. *Qualitative health research*, 15(9). <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732305276687>.
- Infographics. (n.d.a). Infographic 10 Facts about winter tourism in Lapland 2019-2020. House of Lapland. Last retrieved November 23, 2020 from <https://www.lapland.fi/business/facts-figures/infographic-10-facts-about-winter-tourism-in-lapland-2019-2020/> .
- Infographics. (n.d.b). Infographic 10 Facts about tourism in Lapland 2019. House of Lapland. Last retrieved May 03, 2021 from <https://www.lapland.fi/business/infographic-10-facts-about-tourism-in-lapland-2019/> .
- Inkinen, H., Kianto, A., & Vanhala, M. (2015). Knowledge Management Practices and Innovation Performance in Finland. *Baltic Journal of Management*, 10, (4). <https://doi.org/10.1108/BJM-10-2014-0178>.

- Klein, H. (2016). Studie: Die Generation Y und deren organisatorische Implikationen (No. 56). *Weidener Diskussionspapiere*.
- Koenig, M.E.D. (2018). What is KM? Knowledge Management Explained. KMWorld. Last retrieved November 6, 2020 from [https://www.kmworld.com/About/What\\_is\\_Knowledge\\_Management](https://www.kmworld.com/About/What_is_Knowledge_Management).
- Kugapi, O., Höckert, E., Lüthje, M., Mazullo, N., & Saari, R. (2020). Toward culturally sensitive tourism. Report from Finnish Lapland. *Articsen*. 17-18.
- Lewis, J., & Webster, A. (2014). Sort your brain out: boost your performance, manage stress and achieve more. John Wiley & Sons.
- Li, M., & Gao, F. (2003). Why Nonaka highlights tacit knowledge: a critical review. *Journal of knowledge management*, 7-8. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13673270310492903> .
- Løseth, K. (2018). Knowledge development in adventure tourism businesses - the influence of serious leisure. *Annals of leisure research*, 21(5), 575-591. <https://doi.org/10.1080/11745398.2017.1406808> .
- Magano, J., Silva, C., Figueiredo, C., Vitória, A., Nogueira, T., & Pimenta Dinis, M. A. (2020). Generation Z: Fitting Project Management Soft Skills Competencies—A Mixed-Method Approach. *Education Sciences*, 10(7), 187, 1-24. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci10070187>.
- Maher, P. T., Gelter, H., Hillmer-Pegram, K., Hovgaard, G., Hull, J., Jóhannesson, G. T., & Pashkevich, A. (2014). Arctic tourism: realities and possibilities. *Arctic yearbook*.
- Maher, P. T. (2017). Tourism Futures in the Arctic. The Interconnected Arctic — UArctic Congress 2016 Springer Polar Sciences, 219. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-57532-2\\_22](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-57532-2_22) .
- Maloni, M., Hiatt, M. S., & Campbell, S. (2019). Understanding the work values of Gen Z business students. *The International Journal of Management Education*, 17(3), 100320. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijme.2019.100320>.
- Matthews, V. (2008). Generation Z. *Personnel Today*, 49-51.
- Mende, H., (2019). USA Market Report. Visit Finland, Last retrieved November 28, 2020 from [https://www.businessfinland.fi/49b0c0/globalassets/finnish-customers/02-build-your-network/visit-finland/julkaisut/market-reports/usa-2019---1-vf-representatives\\_market-report-may-2019.pdf](https://www.businessfinland.fi/49b0c0/globalassets/finnish-customers/02-build-your-network/visit-finland/julkaisut/market-reports/usa-2019---1-vf-representatives_market-report-may-2019.pdf) .
- Nonaka, I., & Peltokorpi, V. (2006). Objectivity and subjectivity in knowledge management: a review of 20 top articles. *Knowledge and process management*, 13(2), 73-82. <https://doi.org/10.1002/kpm.251>.

- Nonaka, I., & Takeuchi, H. (1995). *The knowledge-creating company: How Japanese companies create the dynamics of innovation*. Oxford University Press. 21-72.
- Niemczyk, A., Seweryn, R., & Smalec, A. (2019). Z GENERATION IN THE INTERNATIONAL TOURISM MARKET. *Economic and Social Development: Book of Proceeding*.
- Noethen, D., & Voelpel, S., (2011): Baby-Boomer-Wissen – Bye-Bye? Ein wissenschaftlicher Blick auf den intergenerationalen Wissenstransfer, *Ökologisches Wirtschaften*, 2, 41.
- O'Reilly, K. (2009). *Key Concepts in Ethnography*. SAGE Key Concepts. [119.https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781446268308](https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781446268308).
- Ozkan, M., & Solmaz, B. (2015). The changing face of the employees–generation Z and their perceptions of work (a study applied to university students). *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 26, 477-480. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2212-5671\(15\)00876-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2212-5671(15)00876-X).
- Paraskevas, A., Altinay, L., McLean, J., & Cooper, C. (2013). CRISIS KNOWLEDGE IN TOURISM: TYPES, FLOWS AND GOVERNANCE. *Annals of tourism research*, 41. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2012.12.005>.
- Pascarella, P. (1997). Harnessing knowledge. *Management review* (New York), 86(9), 38.
- Phillimore, J., & Goodson, L. (2004). *Qualitative research in tourism: Ontologies, epistemologies and methodologies*. London: Routledge, 4.
- Penttonen, S. (2018). “A good method of making money?”: Seasonal Wilderness Guides wellbeing in Finnish Lapland. *Lapin Yliopisto*.
- Priporas, C. V., Stylos, N., & Fotiadis, A. K. (2017). Generation Z consumers' expectations of interactions in smart retailing: A future agenda. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 77, 376. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2017.01.058>.
- Rantala, O., Barre, S. D. L., Granås, B., Jóhannesson, G. Þ., Müller, D. K., Saarinen, J., Tervo-Kankare, K., Maher, P.T., & Niskala, M. (2019). *Arctic tourism in times of change: Seasonality*. Nordic Council of Ministers. <https://doi.org/10.6027/TN2019-528>.
- Rapley, T. (2004). Interviews. In Seale C., Gobo G., Gubrium J. F., & Silverman D. (Eds.), *Qualitative research practice* (pp. 15-33) London: Sage Publications, 15.
- Rauchmann, S. (2014). Der Wissenstransfer zwischen den Generationen.
- Renz, S. (2020). Development and implementation of a knowledge transfer for the retirement of (older) employees. Personalprojekte. Last retrieved December 1, 2020 from <https://personalprojekte.com/development-of-a-knowledge-transfer/>.

- Renzetti, C. M., & Lee, R. M. (1993). Researching sensitive topics. *CRVAW Faculty Book Gallery*. 14.
- Resnik, D. B. (2015). What Is Ethics In Research & Why Is It Important?, NIEHS, Last retrieved November 08, 2020 from <https://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/resources/bioethics/whatis/> .
- Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., Nicholls, C. M., & Ormston, R. (Eds.). (2013). *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. Sage, 263.
- Robert Half. (2015). Get ready for generation Z. Robert Half Inc., 3-19.
- Rohula, E., & Kariuki, F. (2020). Motivation and hygiene factors in a multigenerational workforce: A study on millennials and Generation Z in Finland.
- Rovaniemi Stats. (2020). Accommodation and Travel Stats. Visit Rovaniemi-Visitory. Last retrieved November 23, 2020 from <https://www.visitrovaniemi.fi/wp-content/uploads/Rovaniemi-tourism-statistics-September-2020.pdf> .
- Sarayreh, B., Mardawi, A., & Dmour, R. (2012). Comparative study: The Nonaka model of knowledge management. *International Journal of Engineering and Advanced Technology*, 1(6), 45-48. Last retrieved March 13, 2021 from <https://www.oalib.com/paper/2087615#.YFR2yp1LhPZ>.
- Schawbel, D. (2016). Meet the Next Wave of Workers Who Are Taking Over Your Office. CNBC, Last retrieved 12 October 2020 from <https://www.cnbc.com/2016/08/31/after-millennials-comes-gen-z-meet-the-next-wave-of-workers-that-are-taking-over-your-office-commentary.html> .
- Schawbel, D. (2019). Why Gen Z is unprepared for Jobs of the Future. LinkedIn. Last retrieved January 28, 2021 from <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-gen-z-unprepared-jobs-future-dan-schawbel> .
- Schenarts, P. J. (2019). Now Arriving: Surgical Trainees From Generation Z. *Journal of Surgical Education*, 246-250. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsurg.2019.09.004>.
- Schütt, P. (2003). The post-Nonaka knowledge management. *Journal of Universal Computer Science*, 9(6).
- Schwieger, D., & Ladwig, C. (2018). Reaching and retaining the next generation: Adapting to the expectations of Gen Z in the classroom. *Information Systems Education Journal*, 16(3), 46-51.
- Shaw, G., & Williams, A. (2009). Knowledge transfer and management in tourism organisations: An emerging research agenda. *Tourism Management*, 30(3), 330. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2008.02.023>.



- Sheehans. (2019). Spaces That Work- Across Generations. Sheehansoffice. Last retrieved December 1, 2020 from <https://www.sheehansoffice.com/spaces-that-work-across-generations/> .
- Silvi, R., & Cuganesan, S. (2006). Investigating the management of knowledge for competitive advantage. *Journal of intellectual capital*.(7),3. <https://doi.org/10.1108/14691930610681429>.
- Simonin, B. L. (1999). Ambiguity and the process of knowledge transfer in strategic alliances. *Strategic management journal*, 20(7), 597-614.
- Sinek, S. (2016). The Millennial Question. Inside Quest with Tom Bilyeu. Last retrieved February 15, 2021 from <https://simonsinek.com/discover/the-millennial-question/>.
- Singh, S. K. (2008). Role of leadership in knowledge management: a study. *Journal of knowledge management*,4-6. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13673270810884219>.
- Slevitch, L. (2011). Qualitative and Quantitative Methodologies Compared: Ontological and Epistemological Perspectives. *Journal of quality assurance in hospitality & tourism*, 12(1), 77. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1528008X.2011.541810> .
- Smith, E. A. (2001). The role of tacit and explicit knowledge in the workplace. *Journal of knowledge Management*, 312-318.
- Smith, S. L. J. (2010). Practical tourism research. Wallingford: Cab International, 109-201.
- Špindler, T. (2018). The influence of Generations and their values in tourism product selection-theoretical overview In M. Gorenak & A. Trdina (Eds.), *Responsible hospitality: inclusive, active, green*. (pp. 165-192). University of Maribor Press.
- Spooner, A. (2018). REACHING GENERATION Z. *Greater Lansing Business Monthly*, 31(12), 22.
- Statistics Finland. (2017). Employment in the tourism industries. Visit Finland Statistics. Last retrieved November 23, 2020 from [http://visitfinland.stat.fi/PXWeb/pxweb/en/VisitFinland/VisitFinland\\_\\_Alueellinen\\_matkailutilinpito/060\\_ampa\\_tau\\_106.px/](http://visitfinland.stat.fi/PXWeb/pxweb/en/VisitFinland/VisitFinland__Alueellinen_matkailutilinpito/060_ampa_tau_106.px/) .
- Swap, W., Leonard, D., Shields, M., & Abrams, L. (2001). Using mentoring and storytelling to transfer knowledge in the workplace. *Journal of management information systems*, 18(1), 95-114. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07421222.2001.11045668>.
- Tang, J., Tosun, C., & Baum, T. (2020). Do Gen Zs feel happy about their first job? A cultural values perspective from the hospitality and tourism industry. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-04-2020-0261>.
- TENK. (2012). Responsible conduct of research and procedures for handling allegations of misconduct in Finland. Finnish Advisory board on research integrity.

- Tourism Strategy. (n.d.). Rovaniemi Tourism Strategy Summary, City of Rovaniemi and Rovaniemi Tourist Information - Santa Claus Tourist Centre. Last retrieved November 23, 2020 from <https://www.rovaniemi.fi/loader.aspx?id=3b56c475-2990-4989-80fd-01d82a09d50c> .
- Trinczek, R. (2009). How to interview managers? Methodical and methodological aspects of expert interviews as a qualitative method in empirical social research. In Bogner A., Littig B., Menz W (Eds.), *Interviewing experts*. (p. 204). Palgrave Macmillan, London.
- Tsai, Y., & Beverton, S. (2007). Top-down management: an effective tool in higher education? *International Journal of Educational Management*, 8-9. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09513540710716786>.
- Tulgan, B. (2013). Meet Generation Z: The second generation within the giant" Millennial" cohort. *Rainmaker Thinking*,125.
- Tuomi, I. (2002). The future of knowledge management. *Lifelong learning in Europe*, 7(2),1.
- Vetter, A. (2017). Managing Generation Z. *Accounting Today*, 31(7), 28.
- Visit Rovaniemi. (n.d.).Activity companies in Rovaniemi. Visit Rovaniemi. Last retrieved November 23, 2020 from <https://www.visitrovaniemi.fi/activity-companies-rovaniemi/> .
- Voigt, B. J. J. (2009). An effective knowledge transfer method: a theory of dyadic knowledge transfers in IT sourcing contexts. 248-255. <https://doi.org/10.5167/uzh-32616> .
- Wagner, R. K., & Sternberg, R.J. (1987), Tacit knowledge in managerial success, *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 301-311, <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01018140>.
- Wein, A. J. (2019). New target of the tourism industry-Generation Z. Tourism review. Last retrieved December 4, 2020 from <https://www.tourism-review.com/generation-z-is-the-focus-of-tourism-industry-news11083> .
- Wharton. (2019). Make Way for Generation Z in the Workplace. *Knowledge@Wharton*. Last retrieved May 23, 2021 from <https://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/make-room-generation-z-workplace/> .
- Whyte, G. & Classen, S. (2012). Using storytelling to elicit tacit knowledge from SMEs. *Journal of knowledge management*, 16(6). <https://doi.org/10.1108/13673271211276218> .
- Wijetunge, P. (2012). Organizational storytelling as a method of tacit-knowledge transfer: Case study from a Sri Lankan university. *The International information & library review*, 44(4). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iilr.2012.09.001> .
- Wohlrab, S. (2014). Baby Boomer trifft auf Generation Y. Sicher führen im Generationen Mix. Haufe Akademie. Last retrieved December 1, 2020 from [https://www.haufe-akademie.de/downloadserver/FB/Sicher\\_fuehren\\_im\\_Generationen-Mix.pdf](https://www.haufe-akademie.de/downloadserver/FB/Sicher_fuehren_im_Generationen-Mix.pdf) .

- Xiao, H. (2006). Towards a research agenda for knowledge management in tourism. *Tourism and Hospitality Planning & Development*, 3(2),147-152. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.ulapland.fi/10.1080/14790530600938436>.
- Yle, (2020a). Record number of tourists visit Finnish Lapland in 2019. Retrieved November 23, 2020 from [https://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/record\\_number\\_of\\_tourists\\_visit\\_finnish\\_lapland\\_in\\_2019/11186729](https://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/record_number_of_tourists_visit_finnish_lapland_in_2019/11186729).
- Yle, (2020b). Jobseekers don't bite as hospitality industry seeks 10K new workers. Last retrieved January 19, 2021 from [https://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/jobseekers\\_dont\\_bite\\_as\\_hospitality\\_industry\\_seeks\\_10k\\_new\\_workers/11187910](https://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/jobseekers_dont_bite_as_hospitality_industry_seeks_10k_new_workers/11187910).
- Yle Lapland. (2020). Union "shocked" as Laplands's biggest tourism group starts redundancy talks with 2k jobs at risk. Last retrieved November 28, 2020 from [https://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/union\\_shocked\\_as\\_laplands\\_biggest\\_tourism\\_group\\_starts\\_redundancy\\_talks\\_with\\_2k\\_jobs\\_at\\_risk/11520158](https://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/union_shocked_as_laplands_biggest_tourism_group_starts_redundancy_talks_with_2k_jobs_at_risk/11520158).

## APPENDIX 1: Interview guide

Today I welcome person xx to this interview. Shortly, again to the topic, I try to find out how does the management of Lappish destination management companies use the knowledge of Generation Z employees.

Generation Z is defined as a group of people who are born between 1995 and 2009. So, they are from 24/25 to 12 years old. Because of their technical capabilities, and 40% of people think they are addicted to digital devices, they are called mobile generation or digital native generation. They are expected to contribute to 20% of the workforce in the next years.

Of course, anonymity will be provided and at any time there is the possibility to withdraw from this study. Person XX would you shortly present yourself.

Background questions:

- In which decade were you born?
- Where are you from?
- What is your educational background?
- Which company do you work for?
- What is your role/position in the company? For how long already?
- How long time have you been working for this company? And how long time in tourism business?
- How old is the company?
- What is the size of the company?
- How many seasonal and fix employers do you have?
- How many workers under 25 years old do you have?

Knowledge management questions

- How do you understand the term knowledge management?

*(in case explanation is needed: 99% of human actions are knowledge-based. Knowledge can be seen as a process of applying expertise. Knowledge management is seen as a discipline to identify, capture, evaluate, retrieve and share companies' information which can be for example procedures, policies, tacit (silent) expertise. As knowledge is intangible, boundaryless, and dynamic it should be turned to be storable so it can be new absorbed from new employees.)*

- How often do you consider consciously knowledge management in your company's tasks?
- How do you make sure that your employees have the knowledge need to perform their tasks?
- Which methods or strategic tools do you use to facilitate knowledge transfer in your organization?

*(in case explanation is needed: common knowledge transfer methods are tandem-partner process, storytelling and mentoring. Tandem partner process includes having one employee with much knowledge, who is the knowledge provider is matched with someone employee who needs to gain the knowledge and by working together both learn from each other and pass knowledge. Storytelling is when one employee talks about highlights, crises and as it is a narrative real story is lasts in the memory of the listener longer than facts. Like that often norms, values, culture and experiences can be shared. Mentoring includes one mentor who has much knowledge who is the informal teacher who passes knowledge to the mentee's)*

- What do you value most in your organization, silent or explicit knowledge? Why?  
*(In case explanation is needed: Silent (tacit) knowledge is seen as the know-how and is obtained by personal experiences, including intuition, common sense, and influenced by perception and reflection. Explicit knowledge is the know-what, also called academic knowledge. It is obtained by education and studies and can be stored to be reused)*

#### Generation Z questions

- What are your personal experiences with employees under 25?  
(How would you describe your experience and the relation of your company with people under 25 in Rovaniemi/Lapland? In which role do you see young workers under 25 in Lapland?)
- From your point of view, which characteristics do they have? What makes them different from other workers?
- It is said that employees under 25 value equality, respect, ethical behaviour and fairness, and technology. Considering your personal experience, do you see these characteristics as an opportunity or challenge for your company?
- Do you think that the increasing number of employees under 25 will demand some changes in the management style of your organization? If yes, what kind of changes?

(Do you think that the increasing number of employees under 25 will demand some changes in projects/marketing aspects/management style of your organization?)

Knowledge management related to Generation Z

- It is proved that employees under 25 lack soft skills. Have you noted a lack of soft skills by employees under 25? Is that from your point of view influencing the knowledge transfer in your company? If yes, how is it affecting your company and its knowledge transfer?

*(in case explanation is needed: soft skills are habits and traits which show how a person is working alone or with others, this includes for instance interpersonal, communication, and listening skills.)*

- Can you think of ways adapting the knowledge transfer methods suiting the technology abilities and addiction of workers under 25?

And that was my last question, is there anything else you would like to add?



## **APPENDIX 2: Letter of consent**

### **LETTER OF CONSENT**

Dear XXX,

My name is Saskia Dietrich. I am Master student at University of Lapland, Rovaniemi, Finland under the supervision of Senior Lecturer José-Carlos García-Rosell (jgarcia@ulapland.fi, Tel. +358(0)404844190). You are invited to participate in my master thesis study entitled the use of Generation Z's knowledge by managers – an analysis of Lapland's tourism businesses. The purpose of the study is to find out how the management of Lappish tourism businesses use the knowledge of Generation Z employees. Generation Z is defined as a group of people who are born between 1995 and 2009. So, they are workers younger than 25 years old. The result of the study will be published as part of my master thesis. The thesis is conducted as part of the Master's Degree Programme in Tourism, Culture and International Management (TourCIM).

By signing this letter, you give consent to use the interview material confidentially and exclusively for research purposes. The research follows the principles for responsible conduct of research dictated by the Finnish Advisory Board on Research. The data will be handled anonymously. Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw your permission even after signing this document, by informing the below mentioned contact person.

I kindly ask you to take part of my research project. Your contribution to this research is very important. Please feel free to contact me or my supervisor, if you would need further information regarding the study and the use of the research data.

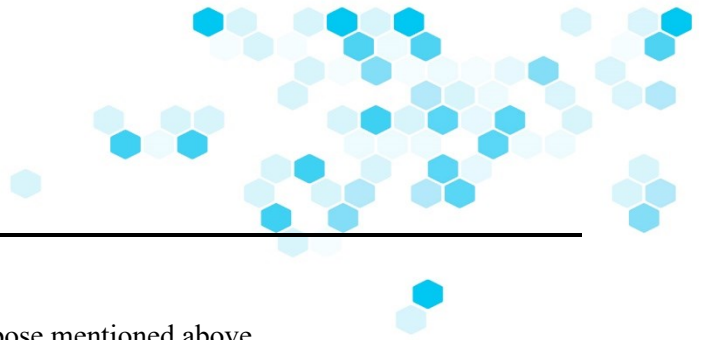
Sincerely,

Saskia Dietrich

TourCIM Master student

Phone: +358 402526009

Email: sdietric@ulapland.fi



---

I give consent to use the interview as data for the purpose mentioned above.

---

Signature

---

Date

---

Print Name