

Generation Diversity and Job Satisfaction at Universiti Malaysia Sabah

Aishah Binti Tamby Omar

Sabariah Sharif

University Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia
University Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia
aisyah@ums.edu.my
sabariah@ums.edu.my

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Abstract. Workforce diversity in organizations is often being highlighted in 21st century organization. One of the elements about workforce diversity is the generational differences. Each generation has their own values, beliefs and opinions in daily life. Meanwhile, in a workplace, each generation provides a different view to the work performed. Therefore, the managers should aware of each generation's behavior because it can contribute to their job satisfaction. This study examines the difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of payments, promotion, supervision, additional benefits, contingent rewards, operating conditions, coworkers, nature of work and communication. 106 employees were drawn randomly from University Malaysia Sabah. They were selected because they possess the information required by this study. Data was analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). The results demonstrated that there is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of payments, promotion, supervision, additional benefits, contingent rewards, operating conditions, coworkers, nature of work and communication. This paper provides an insight into how the generational groups think about their satisfaction in workplace. Thus, it will be able to form a team and reduce conflict within the organization.

1. Introduction

Organizations in the 21st century are becoming more complex as the diversity of sources inherent therein. The diversity of resources consists of financial resources, human resources, technologies and etc. Human resource is one of the most important resources to the organization because it is the driving force to the success of an organization. Human resource consists of diversity of age, gender, education and generation. Therefore, organizations have to emphasize seriously on diversity in providing human resource needs. Generation diversity has been discussed widely in this century (LEAD, 2011). Increasing on generation diversity becoming a focus in the organization because of the demand for skills and experience to fulfill specific

positions and increase the average retirement age. According to Lancaster and Stillman (2002), generation diversity is divided into Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y. Generation diversity is one of the challenges for human resource management in addressing diversity issues in the workplace. In order to face these challenges, organizational leaders need to create an effective human resource planning to balance the different needs among generations. In Malaysia, there are 12 million labor force participations in 2011 filled by 34% of Generation Y, 40% of generation X and 26 % of Baby Boomers generation (Lee and Angeline, 2012). Workforce diversity based on Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y can also be seen in the public, private and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Every generation has its own advantages in terms of value system (Kupperschmidt, 2000, Zemke, Raines & Filiczak, 2000) and work behavior. Their advantages are one of the internal strengths for the organizations (Lancaster and Stillman, 2002). Therefore, the generation diversity should be given a priority by the management because it can give a different job satisfaction among the generations. Previously, most of the job satisfaction survey conducted is only focusing on organizational factors. Emphasized on generation diversity also contributes to the development of an organization. Generation diversity specified clearly explains that there are similarities and differences between each generation. These similarities and differences should be examined by the management because the level of job satisfaction has a relationship with the generation differences and similarities (SHRM, 2010). The management failure in focusing on the generation differences and similarities can give negative impact towards individuals, groups and organizations development. From the individual aspects, it can cause stress, low job performance and morale. In terms of organization, management faced a conflict (Hankin, 2004, Lancaster & Stillman 2002, Siebert 2008) in managing generation diversity. In parallel, Lee and Angeline (2012) found that 60 percent of employers are facing problems in managing generation. Low productivity, employee absenteeism, turnover and job satisfaction will increase if the organization is incompetence in managing the generation. Consequently, organizations need to provide high administrative costs to improve all the impacts. Employers need to understand the generations' differences and similarities within the organization in order to help management planned more effectively. Therefore, this study was to identify differences between the generations with nine aspects of job satisfaction. This study is important because it can provide a huge impact on the success of individuals, groups and organizations in the future.

2. Literature review

2.1. Generation

Generation is a group of people who live in more or less the same time and they are also more or less the same age or whole (Kamus Dewan Fourth Edition). But also, a generation is a group of individuals who have similar attitudes and beliefs through life experiences (Fogg, 2008, Patota, Schwartz, & Schwartz, 2007). The similarities in experience of life they forge a unique features. Whereby, the passage of time makes them grow and learn something new. However, exposure to new things does not make their views change quickly. In the context of work force, the unique characteristics possessed by each generation also influence their thinking and acting in terms of job expectations, leaderships and attitudes in job (Deidre, 2008). The generation that will be discussed in this study refers to four generations in the workplace that has been

introduced by Lancaster and Stillman (2002). The four generations consists of Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y.

2.2. Traditional

Traditional generation born before the year 1945. During the year, various events have occurred during the generation development. For example, the recession period, World War II and the Korean War. The events cause the generation live in inadequate. Hardships had a profound impact and influence their daily lives (Dries et al., 2008). In Malaysia, Traditional generation is exposed to the threat as well as the colonial era of the various great powers during the period (Lee and Angeline, 2012). This generation is also experiencing difficulties in navigating life at that time. However, there is an ambiguity about the events experience with their daily life and working environment experience. From those events, traditional generation has shaped the nature of hard work, dedication, respect for rights and the law within themselves (Mary, 2010). Nature or beliefs that exist in this generation have an impact on the working environment. Traditional generation has a very high work ethic (Martin & Tulgan, 2002), disciplined, valuing and loyal employees tend to serve longer. The nature of the traditional generation has influenced the structure of the organization at that time. The organizational structures are more on work specialization, chain of command and formalization (Zemke et al., 2000). Each generation has differences and similarities level of job satisfaction. The differences and similarities are influenced by the environment and their experiences. Job satisfaction can be seen in many aspects. Traditional generation does not put their job satisfaction level on the payment they received with only 30% (Society for Human Resource Management, 2010). Instead, this generation has a greater job satisfaction on payment when they are able to perform their jobs well (Lancaster & Stillman, 2003). Similarly, with promotion aspect. Cecile (2011) found a mean value of 3.75 is the highest achievement by traditional generation compared with other generations on the promotion aspect. Consistent with Deidre, (2008) findings, Traditional generation has a high level of job satisfaction through promotion provided by the organization. Supervision aspect also influences job satisfaction among traditional generation. This generation will result in job satisfaction when the supervisor help, implement the process of supervision, encouragement, inspiration and give feedback on job task (Deal, 2007). This generation has a high mean value of 3.75 compared to other generation on supervision aspect (Cecile, 2011). Furthermore, Kogan (2001) states that traditional generation are satisfied with the supervision aspect in their organization. Next, in terms of job satisfaction with additional benefit , this generation gave the highest percentage of 40 % compared to other generations and very satisfied with all the benefits provided (SHRM, 2010) and (Lancaster and Stilmann,2002). The contingent reward aspect gave a high job satisfaction when this generation can perform assigned work perfectly (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). Satisfaction with operating conditions used in the organization provides a high job satisfaction for this generation (Deide, 2008). Finally, traditional generation has a high level of satisfaction in coworkers, nature of work and communication aspects.

2.3. Baby Boomers

Baby Boomers are the second generation of traditional generation. This generation was born in the year 1946 to 1964. Among the events that happened in the year was the Cold War, the moon landing, Sex Revolution, Vietnam War, Women's Rights and Freedom Demonstration and introduction of the contraceptive pill. Of the events, social environments were changed on this

year (Erickson, 2010). When social environments changed dramatically, it affected the economic development. Furthermore, the volatile economic environment also occurred this year. The impact of social and economic instability has developed certain characteristics among Baby Boomers generation. Baby Boomers are optimistic, work in a team (Zemke et al., 2000), self-development and self-worthy. Due to very high birth rates on this year, Baby Boomers are the largest generation in the workforce. As the number of generations is too many in the organization, they need to keep up for getting chances (Elsdon & Lyer, 1999). This competition makes them appreciate themselves, be more creative, fulfill their own needs. Not only has that, Baby Boomers had a desire to make themselves different from other individual because of too many competitors. In a working environment, varieties of management styles were introduced during Baby Boomers generation. The management style being introduced consists of teamwork, participation in decision-making, restructuring, merging and downsizing. The spirit of teamwork has formed a good communication skills, work ethics and managing emotions among Baby Boomers.

Baby Boomers also have different levels of satisfaction with the previous generation. In terms of satisfaction with payment, this generation emphasizes on money and rank (Lancaster and Stillman, 2003, Deidre 2008). Consequently, the Baby Boomers are unhappy with the payment received (Kyles, 2005). Supervision is also one of the aspects that can contribute to job satisfaction. This generation will gain satisfaction when recognition is given to them. This generation would be satisfied when a supervisor help, implement job evaluation, encouragement and give feedback when needed (Deal, 2007). Overall, this generation has a high job satisfaction for supervision aspects (Deidre, 2008). Next, is the additional benefit, found that 58% Baby Boomers are satisfied with additional benefit compared to other generations (SHRM, 2010). Nature of work (Deidre 2008) and coworkers' aspect (Zemke et al., 1999) also contributes a high satisfaction among Baby Boomers (Deidre, 2008). In Malaysia, the event such as the Economic Recession, Independence, and New Economy Policy occurred in this generation (Tay, 2011). These events also had an impact on their daily lives. Social and economic impact also has similarities to generation in the West (Lee and Tay, 2012).

2.4. Generation X

1965 - 1980 is the year for generation X. Experienced by generation X includes the fall of the Soviet Union, Freedom for Women, introduction to computers, the internet network, AIDS, global energy crisis and the fall of the Berlin wall. In terms of family, many of this generation have been brought up in divorced parents and raised by a single parent (Howe & Strauss, 2007). Due to divorce, a single mother goes out to work to accommodate cost of living. Thus, generation X is guarded by his or her relatives and family friends when their parent goes out to work. Accordingly, generation X tends to be independent and act in diversity. During the year, exposure to mass media communication begins. Television is the most popular communication tool (Fredenburg, 2004) as well as computer (Dries et.al, 2008). Through television and computer, generation X have more access to information on current issues. The information they obtained to some extent influence their behavior and thought towards social, economic, political and technology. In a workplace, Generation X is an employee who is very concerned about the balance of work and daily life (Glass, 2007). Thus, generation X is more likely to be loyal to the organization. Their loyalty portrays the generation commitment to work and colleagues. In addition, the impact of the economic, social, technological and political has led generation X to

act alone, easy to adapt, creative, and technology savvy. Not only that, this generation also willing to take risks and prefers to work in an environment that is not stressful. There are also several negative attitudes amongst generation X that can be observed. Among the negative attitudes are impatient, low human skills, lack of experiences (Zemke et al., 2000) and less motivated (Fredenburg, 2004). These negative attitudes arise from lack of trust towards the organization and not willing to sacrifice to achieve success. Generation X also has its own level of job satisfaction. Payment does not provide a significant impact on their job satisfaction (Janiszewski, 2004). This generation will feel satisfied when they are given a freedom in performing their job (Lancaster and Stillman, 2003). SHRM (2010) found only 59 % feel satisfied with payment aspect. Instead, Generation X has a high level of job satisfaction on the promotion aspect (Eaton's, 2008). In parallel, generation X will strive for promotion and emphasizing on work (Smola, 2002). Deidre (2008) reveals that there is a satisfaction with supervision when their supervisors are helpful, implement the evaluation process, encouragement and feedback (Deal, 2007). Meanwhile, (Martin & Lulgan , 2002) states that this generation does not get satisfaction through supervision. Additional benefit also shows generation X does not have a satisfaction (Deidre, 2008). Findings from (SHRM, 2010) shows that only 62 % are satisfied with the additional benefit. This generation emphasizes appreciation upon completion a task (Janisweski, 2004). Appreciation is able to induce or affect their achievement. However, operating procedures, coworkers, nature of work and communications does not give a satisfaction to them (Deidre, 2008). In Malaysia, the events that they experience are very similar to the generation from the west. Among them are the introduction of computers, Internet network and the New Economic Policy that occurred during the year (Lee and Tay, 2012). Environment changes caused them to have a flexible nature.

2.5. Generation Y

Generation Y was born in the years 1981 to 2000 during the technological developments was extremely prevalent in this year. Among the events is September 11 , end of Apartheid policy , the Oklahoma City bombing , the attack on the World Trade Center (WTC) , the war started in Iraq as well as natural disasters such as tsunami and Hurricane. In this year, most generation Y parents' have a strong economic and education background. Thus, generation Y is more vulnerable to technologies development and has a good level of education. The explosion of technology has led Generation Y to know things or news through television, web sites (Martin and Tulgan, 2001) and a movie. Not only that, Generation Y acted as a reference for family members about the technology. Besides that, their parents put a high awareness in education (Martin and Tulgan, 2001). There are also some weaknesses from this generation as lazy and expose to social problems such as sexual promiscuity and drug abuse (Martin and Tulgan, 2001). However, they also have a positive characteristic such as confidence, achievement orientation (Huntley, 2006), diversity and optimism. In the organization, generation Y love to work as a team, work hard and multi-tasking (Devon and Diane, 2007). Generation Y requires supervision and a structured chain of command. They Y also have high expectations on themselves and employer. Rewards granted by employers must necessarily in kind with the job they are carrying out. While this generation will find a high level of job satisfaction if the aspect of promotion emphasized to them (Deidre, 2008 and Eaton's, 2008). In addition, the aspects of supervision, (Deidre, 2008, Deal 2007), contingent reward (Deidre, 2008, operating conditions (Deidre, 2008)

and coworkers (Kogan, 2001) provide a high level of job satisfaction. However, Generation Y feels less satisfied in payments, additional benefits and nature of work.

From the literature review, the hypotheses of this study are:

H1: There is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers,

Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of payment.

H2: There is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of promotion.

H3: There is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers,

Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of supervision.

H4: There is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of additional benefits.

H5: There is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of contingent rewards.

H6: There is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of operating conditions.

H7: There is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of coworkers.

H8: There is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of nature of the work.

H9: There is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of communication.

H10: There is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of payments, promotion, supervision, additional benefits, contingent rewards, operating conditions, coworkers, nature of work and communication.

3. Methodology

A total of 106 employees working at the Universiti Malaysia Sabah from various positions were chosen randomly. They were chosen because they possess the information required by this study. The instrument used in this survey was a questionnaire developed by Spector's (1997) namely Job satisfaction Scale (JSS). Data were collected and analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). For the analysis, ANOVA is an appropriate statistical test because it can be used for more than two groups (Bell, 2008). It can distinguish among four generations and thus can identify the acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis that has been developed.

Findings

H1: There is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers,

Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of payment.

Table 1: Analysis of Variance to Compare the Average Job Satisfaction- Payment Score among the generations.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	1.314	2	0.657	0.637	0.531
Within Groups	107.353	104	1.032		
Total	108.667	106			

Based on the findings in Table 1, job satisfaction with payments between traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y was not significantly different , $F (2,104) = 0.637$, $p > 0.05$. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted and concluded that there is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of payment.

H2: There is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of promotion.

Table 2: Analysis of Variance to Compare the Average Job Satisfaction- Promotion Score among the generations

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	1.236	2	0.618	0.919	0.402
Within Groups	69.960	104	0.673		
Total	71.196	106			

Based on the findings in Table 2, job satisfaction with promotion between traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y was not significantly different , $F (2,104) = 0.919$, $p > 0.05$. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted and concluded that there is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of promotion.

H3: There is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of supervision.

Table 3: Analysis of Variance to Compare the Average Job Satisfaction- Supervision Score among the generations

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	3.639	2	1.819	1.481	0.232
Within Groups	127.755	104	1.228		
Total	131.394	106			

Based on the findings in Table 3, job satisfaction with supervision between traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y was not significantly different , $F (2,104) = 1.481$, $p > 0.05$. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted and concluded that there is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of supervision.

H4: There is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of additional benefits.

Table 4: Analysis of Variance to Compare the Average Job Satisfaction- Additional Benefits Score among the generations

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	0.551	2	0.276	0.306	0.737
Within Groups	93.616	104	0.900		
Total	94.167	106			

Based on the findings in Table 4, job satisfaction with additional benefits between traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y was not significantly different , $F (2,104) = 0.306$, $p > 0.05$. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted and concluded that there is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of additional benefits.

H5: There is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of contingent rewards.

Table 5: Analysis of Variance to Compare the Average Job Satisfaction- Contingent Rewards Score among the generations

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	0.536	2	0.268	0.229	0.796
Within Groups	121.693	104	1.170		
Total	122.229	106			

Based on the findings in Table 5, job satisfaction with contingent rewards between traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y was not significantly different , $F (2,104) = 0.229$, $p > 0.05$. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted and concluded that there is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of contingent rewards.

H6: There is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of operating conditions.

Table 6: Analysis of Variance to Compare the Average Job Satisfaction- Operating Conditions Score among the generations

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	1.406	2	0.703	1.074	0.345
Within Groups	68.070	104	0.655		
Total	69.475	106			

Based on the findings in Table 6, job satisfaction with operating conditions between traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y was not significantly different , $F (2,104) = 1.074$, $p > 0.05$. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted and concluded that there is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of operating conditions.

H7: There is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of coworkers.

Table 7: Analysis of Variance to Compare the Average Job Satisfaction- Coworkers Score among the generations.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	0.951	2	0.476	0.627	0.536
Within Groups	78.939	104	0.759		
Total	79.890	106			

Based on the findings in Table 7, job satisfaction with coworkers between traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y was not significantly different , $F (2,104) = 0.627$, $p > 0.05$. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted and concluded that there is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of coworkers.

H8: There is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of nature of the work.

Table 8: Analysis of Variance to Compare the Average Job Satisfaction- Nature of the Work Score among the generations

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	3.874	2	1.937	2.955	0.056
Within Groups	68.178	104	0.656		
Total	72.051	106			

Based on the findings in Table 8, job satisfaction with nature of the work between traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y was not significantly different , $F (2,104) = 2.955$, $p > 0.05$. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted and concluded that there is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of nature of the work.

H9: There is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of communication.

Table 9: Analysis of Variance to Compare the Average Job Satisfaction- Communication Score Among the generations

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	0.093	2	0.046	0.048	0.953
Within Groups	100.408	104	0.965		
Total	100.501	106			

Based on the findings in Table 9, job satisfaction with communication between traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y was not significantly different , $F (2,104) = 0.048$, $p > 0.05$. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted and concluded that there is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of communication.

H10: There is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in the perception of payments, promotion, supervision, additional benefits, contingent rewards, operating conditions, coworkers, nature of work and communication.

Table 10: Analysis of Variance to Compare the Average Job Satisfaction Score among the generations

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	0.055	2	0.027	0.078	0.952
Within Groups	36.562	104	0.352		
Total	36.617	106			

Based on the findings in Table 10, job satisfaction among traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y was not significantly different , $F (2,104) = 0.078$, $p > 0.05$. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted and concluded that there is no difference relating to employee job satisfaction across Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y.

Conclusion

This study aims to identify the job satisfaction differences among generations. The results revealed that there is no significant difference in job satisfaction in a perception of payments, promotions, supervisions, additional benefits, contingent rewards, operating conditions, coworkers, nature of work and communications between Traditional, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y. From this analysis, each generation has the same perception of job satisfaction in Universiti Malaysia Sabah.

Although there are similarities in perception between generations, continuous improvement in workforce should be the main agenda setting in organization. Study of job satisfaction and generation is a great importance. From time to time workforce's changes will occur in the organization. So, generation diversity is a challenge that must be faced by every manager in organization. Identify the similarities and differences between generations can produce a valuable workforce to organization. In addition, strategic planning for human resource must be implemented to identify generation needs. When formulating human resource strategic planning, continuous improvement is the key for increasing job satisfaction among employees.

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