

ความแตกต่างระหว่างเจเนอเรชันและความพึงพอใจใน
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มหาวิทยาลัยสงขลานครินทร์ วิทยาเขตภูเก็ต

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บทคัดย่อ

วัตถุประสงค์ของงานวิจัยนี้เพื่อศึกษาระดับความพึงพอใจในงาน และศึกษาความแตกต่างของทัศนคติต่อความพึงพอใจในงานของอาจารย์ มหาวิทยาลัยสงขลานครินทร์ วิทยาเขตภูเก็ตในสามเจเนอเรชัน ได้แก่ เจเนอเรชัน Y หรือ มิลเลนเนียล, เจเนอเรชัน X, และ Baby Boomers โดยใช้แบบสอบถามจำนวน 108 ตัวอย่าง จากการวิเคราะห์ความแปรปรวน พหุคูณทางเดียว โดยผล Wilk's lambda พบว่า มีความแตกต่างอย่างมีนัยสำคัญระหว่างความพึงพอใจในงานและกลุ่มของเจเนอเรชัน ที่ $F(12, 200) = 7.312, p < 0.05$; Wilk's $\Lambda = 0.483$, Partial Eta Squared =

0.305 ซึ่งผลการศึกษาพบว่า เจเนอเรชัน Y มีระดับความพึงพอใจอย่างมีนัยสำคัญสูงกว่า Baby Boomers และ เจเนอเรชัน X และผลการศึกษานี้ชี้ให้เห็นถึงความแตกต่างที่มีนัยสำคัญต่อความพึงพอใจในงานทั้งสามด้าน คือ (1) ลักษณะของผู้บังคับการ (2) ทรัพยากรและโอกาสในหน้าที่การงาน (3) ลักษณะงานและสิ่งแวดล้อม

คำสำคัญ: ความพึงพอใจในงาน, เจเนอเรชัน Y, เจเนอเรชัน X, Baby Boomers

Generational Differences and Job Satisfaction in Human Resources: A Study of University Lecturers at Prince of Songkla University, Phuket Campus

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Abstract

The aims of this research are to examine the level of job satisfaction and investigate differences in attitudes regarding job satisfaction across three generations of university lecturers at Prince of Songkla University, Phuket Campus. The data were collected from 108 lecturers through survey. Respondents were categorized as Generation Y or Millennials, Generation X, and Baby Boomers. A one-way MANOVA was tested to investigate the

differences in job satisfaction between the generations. A result of Wilk's lambda values showed a significant difference between job satisfaction and generation cohorts, $F(12, 200) = 7.312$, $p < 0.05$; Wilk's $\Lambda = 0.483$, Partial Eta Squared = 0.305. The results indicated that Generation Y were significantly more satisfied when compared to Baby Boomers and Generations X. The results also indicated significant differences toward job satisfaction in three aspects: (1) leadership styles, (2) resources and career opportunities, and (3) work and environment.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, Generational Differences, Generation Y, Generation X, Baby Boomers, Lecturer

1. Introduction

The study of job satisfaction has been investigated over the past decade. According to various job satisfaction definitions, it could be understood that job satisfaction refers to an employee's feeling which indicates happiness in working (Stello, 2014). There would be various factors determined the level of job satisfaction while different factors are possibly specific to different industries or occupations.

Several studies showed that job satisfaction has been related to enhance job performance, engage employees, decrease employee turnover, and burnout rates.

In addition, the study of Mehra and Nickerson (2019) found that the impact of generational gaps in the workplace has not been widely studied. However, there have been few empirical studies on the impact of generational differences on work performance, attitudes, and employees' behavior, but many studies still remain to be done. Therefore, there is a need for an empirical investigation on the generational differences toward job satisfaction as carried out in this present study.

Multigenerational workplaces now appear in many organizations included Prince of Songkla University, Phuket Campus. It leads to change in traditional approaches to leadership, learning, and workplace culture. In addition, Human Resource sector also needs to deal with a

generation gap among workforces to foster an organizational culture where diversity is respected and valued.

A generation is defined as a distinct group of individuals who share a common birth year, age, and key life events during critical periods of development. There are distinctive experiences that form certain attitudes, expectations, beliefs, and work styles for each generation. Different beliefs, point of views, and attitudes can lead to misunderstandings, miscommunications, and conflicting messages, all of which can have a negative influence on work culture, morale, and productivity.

1.1 Research Objective

- To examine the level of job satisfaction across three generations of university lecturers at Prince of Songkla University, Phuket Campus.
- To investigate the differences in attitudes regarding job satisfaction across three generations of university lecturers at Prince of Songkla University, Phuket Campus.

2. Literature Review

The perception of job satisfaction in this study has been defined as the positive emotional response to individual's work, and also the alignment of a job with an employee's work values (George & Zakkariya, 2015). However, recent empirical studies

indicated that differences in job satisfaction can be due to a number of variables such as employee relations, leadership styles (Pang & Lu, 2018), salary and rewards, and resources and career opportunities (Li et al., 2020).

The understanding of job satisfaction was placed within social exchange theory. This theory developed by Blau (1964) which generates the relationship between an employer and an employee based on the process of something is given and something is returned where it is emphasizing on exchanges for carrying on a good relationship between two parties as these exchanges indicate trust and equity. In the present study, it is showed that an organization should contribute the employment relationship by producing conducive work environment in the form of favorable HR practice. This encouraging contribution leads to employees feeling motivate to do work and increase job satisfaction level, which it will result in the organization receiving a positive productive outcome in return (Martin & Gert, 2017). The study also found empirical support for the theory when organizations employ human resource practices, including security policy offering (Benjamin & Ilker, 2014), compensation (Saman, 2020), suitable of work itself, and staff relations supportive (Elisa & Adriana, 2021). When these contributions are put into practice, employees basically realized they are being supported and

hence, often produce job satisfaction. When employees are satisfied with their jobs, it will eventually result in employee engagement (Vorina et al., 2017) and organizational performance improvement (Omah & Obiekwe, 2019).

2.1 Generational Differences in the Workplace

Although differences in job satisfaction can be attributed to a variety of factors, including the character of the labor, the labor market, cultural interactions, colleagues, supervision, wages, social values, employee attitudes, and personality (Robbins & Judge, 2017), generational differences is one of the main variables that warrant further study.

According to generation theory, individuals who grow up in the same time range are exposed to common social circumstances and historical developments, and therefore will share similar perceptions and attitudes, which contribute to the workplace.

The primary generations related to working age are referred to in the generational cohort theory (Ryder, 1965) as follows: Generation Y or Millennials, this generation covers 1979-2000, Generation X covers 1965-1978, and Baby Boomers covers 1946-1964.

Baby Boomers referred boomers from 1946 to 1964, as mentioned by Fenich et al. (2011) family and caste structures

have a strong impact on this generation. Many who were able to relocate to other countries went to study in areas such as the United Kingdom and the United States. The study of Saileela and Thiruchanuru (2017) found this generation is characterized as being optimistic, focus on accomplishments, strong work ethic, and disciplined. However, face-to-face communications seem to be more pleasant for Baby Boomers than digital interactions (Ng & Parry, 2016).

For Generation X who was born between 1965-1978, involved people who grew up at a time of rapid economic and social development. These professionals are dedicated to balance their work and personal life and value work-life balance in the workplace (Sanchez et al., 2019). The study of Cogin (2012) also found that Generation X prefers corporate contact through the Internet and e-mail and when compared to Baby Boomers, is found to be technologically competent. The implications of Generation X are being able to perform things fast and being less likely to spend hours of overtime to complete work.

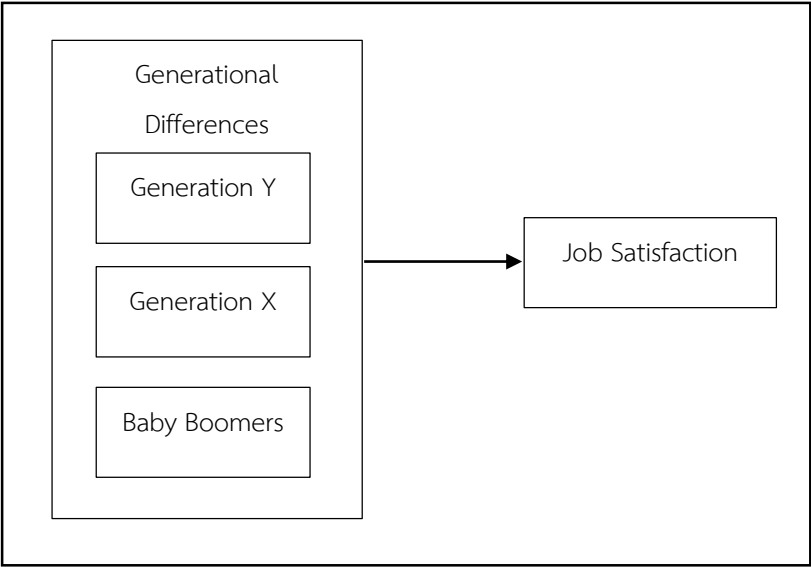
Lastly, Generation Y or Millennials who was born between 1979-2000 Generation Y has embraced lifelong technology, which has brought them new possibilities for globalization and exposure to different cultures (Sox et al., 2016). As Generation Y is the newest member in the workforce, they are considered the most

independent, need flexibility to conduct their tasks in their own way with less supervision (Anitha & Aruna, 2016).

2.2 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework which adapted to this study context and research interest from literature reviews.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



3. Methodology

3.1 Sample and Data Collection

The population of this study was university lecturers at Prince of Songkla University, Phuket Campus, Thailand. The study was conducted by using convenient sampling with the participation of 108 from a total population of 152 (PSU Statistic Planning Division, 2021) based on the theory of Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Online survey is conducted as the data collection in this study.

3.2 Content Validity Test

This study conducts Content Validity Test by using Index of Item Objective Congruence or IOC approach to indicate the experts evaluate on the degree to which the content of the questionnaire item is measuring the intended objective of the study. For this study, there were 3 experts in management field who had evaluated on questionnaire item; the total value of IOC for each questionnaire item in this study was over than 0.5, therefore the instrument is considered being valid.

3.3 Factor Analysis

An exploratory factor analysis was determined the underlying structure of a large number of variables. Six factors were identified as having a high level of interpretability, including:

(a) employee relations (b) leadership styles (c) salary and rewards (d) resources and career opportunities (e) employee benefits (f) work and environment. The six-factor explained 83.4% of total variance. All items were measured on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = Strongly Dissatisfied and 5 = Strongly Satisfied).

Internal reliability analysis was tested for each of the six factors and the measures of variables in this study were reliable. Reliability estimates Cronbach's coefficient alpha ranged from 0.72 to 0.93. The Cronbach's alpha of each factor were employee relations (0.93), leadership styles (0.83), salary and rewards (0.84), resources and career opportunities (0.84), employee benefits (0.86), and work and environment (0.72). All six factors showed the 0.72 and above level of reliability for measuring internal consistency, indicating that the six factors were internally consistent enough to produce valuable data.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Descriptive Statistics on Demographic Characteristics

The first section of this study showed the following demographic characteristics: Gender, Marital Status, Length of Work Experience, Employment Status, and Salary. Most of the respondent for this study was a female (57.4%, N= 62) under a university officer employment status. Most of the respondents were single (56.5%, N=61). 1.9% (N=2) of the sample indicated

less than 1 year of full-time experience in campus, the most common response was 6-10 years (34.2%, N=37). In terms of salary, 33.3% (N=36) of respondents indicated they earned between THB40,001-THB50,000 with the majority (55.6%, N=60) earning between THB30,001-THB40,000. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for the respondent characteristics.

Table 1: Demographic Statistics

Variable	Category	Generation Y	Generation X	Baby Boomer	N	%
Gender	“Male”	18	17	11	46	42.6
	“Female”	42	18	2	62	57.4
	Total	60	35	13	108	100
Marital Status	“Single”	36	23	2	61	56.5
	“Married”	18	12	9	39	36.1
	“Divorced”	6	-	2	8	7.4
	Total	60	35	13	108	100
Length of Work Experience	“Less than 1 year”	-	2	-	2	1.9
	“1-5 years”	7	8	-	15	13.9
	“6-10 years”	37	-	-	37	34.2
	“11-15 years”	16	14	-	30	27.8
	“16-20 years”	-	4	7	11	10.2
	“More than 20 years”	-	7	6	13	12
	Total	60	35	13	108	100

Variable	Category	Generation Y	Generation X	Baby Boomer	N	%
Employment Status	“Government Official”	1	4	4	9	8.3
	“University Officer”	56	30	9	95	88
	“Contract Employee”	3	1	-	4	3.7
	Total	60	35	13	108	100
Salary	“THB20,001- THB30,000”	5	2	-	7	6.5
	“THB30,001- THB40,000”	41	19	-	60	55.6
	“THB40,001- THB50,000”	14	10	12	36	33.3
	“THB50,001 or above”	-	4	1	5	4.6
	Total	60	35	13	108	100

Based on the literature review of generational cohort theory (Ryder, 1965) data were collected and recoded into three main age groups: Generation Y or Millennials (1979-2000), Generation X (1965-1978), and Baby Boomers (1946-1964). Table 2 presents the numbers of percentage within each generational cohort.

Table 2: Generational Age Cohorts

	N	%
Generation Y (1979-2000)	60	55.6
Generation X (1965-1978)	35	32.4
Baby Boomers (1946-1964)	13	12
Total	108	100

4.2 Generational Differences in Job Satisfaction

Descriptive analysis examined the level of job satisfaction based on a five-point Likert scale with 1 = “Strongly Dissatisfied”, 2 = “Dissatisfied”, 3 = “Neutral”, 4 = “Satisfied”, and 5 = “Strongly Satisfied”. Table 3 shows overall job satisfaction and facet of job satisfaction among Generation Y, Generation X, and Baby Boomers. Job satisfaction with resources and career opportunities showed the highest ($\bar{x} = 3.96$, $SD = 0.82$) and job satisfaction with employee benefits showed the lowest ($\bar{x} = 3.10$, $SD = 0.89$) among generation Y. Job satisfaction with both resources and career opportunities, and employee relations showed the highest ($\bar{x} = 3.79$, SD [resources and career opportunities] = 0.78, SD [employee relations] = 0.88) and job satisfaction with leadership styles showed the lowest ($\bar{x} = 3.16$, $SD = 1.34$) among generation X. Job satisfaction with employee relations showed the highest ($\bar{x} = 3.57$, $SD = 0.423$) and job satisfaction with work and environment showed the lowest ($\bar{x} = 2.69$, $SD = 0.70$) among Baby Boomers. The overall mean score of job satisfaction among generation Y lecturers ($\bar{x} = 3.52$, $SD = 0.93$) and generation X lecturers ($\bar{x} = 3.50$, $SD = 0.91$) were very close to satisfy compared to Baby Boomers ($\bar{x} = 3.26$, $SD = 0.54$), suggesting that generation Y and generation X lecturers who participated in this research were generally satisfied with their jobs compared to Baby Boomers.

Table 3: Generational Differences in Job Satisfaction

	Generation Y, (Mean)	Generation X, (Mean)	Baby Boomer (Mean)
<i>Overall job satisfaction</i>	3.52	3.50	3.26
<i>Employee relations</i>	3.44	3.79	3.57
“Working relationship with co-workers”	3.75	4.09	3.38
“Mutual trust”	3.30	3.94	3.15
“Team collaboration”	3.38	3.63	3.85
“Sharing knowledge and resources”	3.48	3.80	3.85
“Fostering honest and open communication”	3.30	3.51	3.62
<i>Leadership styles</i>	3.61	3.16	3.46
“The respect and fair treatment I receive from my leader”	4.02	3.31	3.62
“Leadership style and ability of my leader”	3.15	3.06	3.85
“The amount of recognition I receive from my leader”	3.63	3.17	3.85
“My involvement in job-related decision making”	3.65	3.11	2.54
<i>Salary and rewards</i>	3.28	3.50	3.10
“My Salary”	2.97	2.89	3.23
“The flexibility of my work schedule”	3.92	4.43	3.00
“My workload”	3.05	3.40	3.15
“The sense of accomplishment in providing recreational opportunities”	3.18	3.29	3.00
<i>Resources and career opportunities</i>	3.96	3.79	3.10
“Opportunities to enhance my knowledge and skills”	3.53	3.89	3.38
“Adequacy of physical facilities”	4.27	3.94	3.38

	Generation Y, (Mean)	Generation X, (Mean)	Baby Boomer (Mean)
"Opportunities for promotion for further advancement"	4.07	3.54	2.54
<i>Employee benefits</i>	3.1	3.2	3.39
"Fringe benefits"	3.38	3.51	3.77
"Medical expenses claim benefits offered"	2.82	2.89	3.00
<i>Work and Environment</i>	3.71	3.57	2.92
"Job variety and challenges"	4.03	4.03	3.15
"Administrative policies, procedures, rules, and regulations"	3.38	3.11	2.69

4.3 Inferential Statistics

According to the objective of this research was to examine the differences in attitudes toward job satisfaction among generational differences of lecturers in university, Multivariate analysis of variance was run. A one-way MANOVA was used to investigate the differences in job satisfaction for the generations. In an analysis of Wilk's lambda values, there was a statistically significant difference shown between job satisfaction and generation cohorts, $F(12, 200) = 7.312$, $p < 0.05$; Wilk's $\Lambda = 0.483$, Partial Eta Squared = 0.305.

To examine the significant multivariate relationship, univariate ANOVA was tested for each of the dependent variables. The results of this analysis indicated statistical significance for job satisfaction with leadership styles, job satisfaction with resources

and career opportunities, and job satisfaction with work and environment as shown in Table 4. In addition, a post-hoc Tukey HSD test was conducted to explore which generation differed on overall satisfaction and each job satisfaction facet.

In overall job satisfaction, Generation Y reported higher level of job satisfaction than Generation X and Baby Boomers, but it was not statistically significant. Generation X showed higher level of job satisfaction with employee relations, salary and rewards than Generation Y and Baby Boomers, however it was not statistically significant. In addition, Baby Boomers showed higher level of job satisfaction with employee benefits than Generation Y and X, but it was not statistically significant.

In job satisfaction with leadership styles, Generation Y was significantly more satisfied than Generations X and Baby Boomers, and there was significant difference in job satisfaction with leadership styles only between Generations Y and X. While in job satisfaction with resources and career opportunities, the study also showed that Generation Y was significantly more satisfied than Generations X and Baby Boomers but there was no significant difference in job satisfaction with resources and career opportunities between Generations Y and X. Lastly, job satisfaction with work and environment, the study showed that Generation Y was significantly more satisfied than Generations X and Baby Boomers but there was no significant difference in job

satisfaction with work and environment between Generations Y and X.

Table 4: Post-Hoc Test, Multiple Comparisons of Job Satisfaction

Comparisons	Mean Difference	Std. Error	P	95% Confidence Interval	
Overall job satisfaction					
"Generation Y vs. Generation X"	-0.01	0.12	0.99	-0.29	0.26
"Generation Y vs. Baby Boomer"	-0.21	1.66	0.41	-0.61	0.18
"Generation X vs. Baby Boomer"	-0.23	1.76	0.40	-0.65	0.19
Employee relations					
"Generation Y vs. Generation X"	-0.35	0.17	0.10	-0.75	0.05
"Generation Y vs. Baby Boomer"	-0.13	0.24	0.86	-0.70	0.45
"Generation X vs. Baby Boomer"	-0.23	0.26	0.66	-0.84	0.39
Leadership styles					
"Generation Y vs. Generation X"	-0.45	0.18	0.04*	-0.87	-0.03
"Generation Y vs. Baby Boomer"	-0.15	0.26	0.83	-0.76	0.46
"Generation X vs. Baby Boomer"	-0.30	0.27	0.52	-0.94	0.35
Salary and rewards					
"Generation Y vs. Generation X"	-0.22	0.16	0.33	-0.59	0.15
"Generation Y vs. Baby Boomer"	-0.18	0.22	0.69	-0.71	0.35
"Generation X vs. Baby Boomer"	-0.40	0.24	0.21	-0.97	0.16
Resources and career opportunities					
"Generation Y vs. Generation X"	-0.17	0.16	0.54	-0.53	0.20
"Generation Y vs. Baby Boomer"	-0.85	0.22	0.00*	-1.38	-0.32
"Generation X vs. Baby Boomer"	-0.69	0.24	0.01*	-1.25	-0.12
Employee benefits					
"Generation Y vs. Generation X"	-0.10	0.15	0.77	-0.45	0.25
"Generation Y vs. Baby Boomer"	-0.28	0.21	0.37	-0.78	0.22
"Generation X vs. Baby Boomer"	-0.18	0.22	0.69	-0.72	0.35

Comparisons	Mean Difference	Std. Error	<i>P</i>	95% Confidence Interval	
Work and Environment					
“Generation Y vs. Generation X”	-0.14	0.15	0.64	-0.49	0.22
“Generation Y vs. Baby Boomer”	-0.79	0.22	0.00*	-1.30	-0.27
“Generation X vs. Baby Boomer”	-0.65	0.23	0.02*	-1.20	-0.10

* $p < 0.05$

The results of the study showed the consistent with some literature, as the study of Marasinghe and Wijayaratne (2016) found that there were some differences and similarities in job satisfaction among employees across Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y. While Sarah et al. (2013) showed attitude differences among three generational cohorts of Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y in leisure services toward job satisfaction in terms of workplace environments and employee incentives. Maureen and Jonathan (2018) also found the statistically significant difference in job satisfaction levels between generations, as well as differences in the factors that influence job satisfaction.

The results of the study also showed overall mean score of job satisfaction among generation Y and generation X were very close to satisfy compared to Baby Boomers. In addition, under job satisfaction in resources and career opportunities indicated the highest differences in mean scores between Generation Y and Baby

Boomers in term of opportunities for promotion for further advancement. Baby Boomer respondents indicated less satisfaction compared to Generation Y, it might be a reflection of differences in attitudes between new employees and those who have been with the organization for a longer period of time. In contrast, the study of Maureen and Jonathan (2018) indicated the older employees had more satisfied in term of job autonomy and colleague relations.

According to the results of the study, it is imperative to enhance job satisfaction for older generations of lecturers in Prince of Songkla University, Phuket Campus. Strategies to enhance job satisfaction for older generations of lecturer may include managing leadership style for working with multigenerational lecturers, shared value where older lecturers are empowered to make decisions, and opportunities for further advancement.

5. Conclusion

Recognizing the generational differences is necessary to achieve a strong multigenerational organization because job satisfaction leads to increase employees' performance and contribute to the organization's productivity.

The results of the research showed there was a significant difference of job satisfaction in perception of leadership styles, resources and career opportunities, and work and environment

among Generation Y, Generation X and Baby Boomers. Generation Y lecturers have a significantly higher level in overall job satisfaction than Generation X and Baby Boomers. Generation Y has the highest level of job satisfaction in term of resources and career opportunities, while the Generation X has the highest level of job satisfaction in term of employee relations, and resources and career opportunities. Lastly, Baby Boomers have the highest level of job satisfaction in term of employee relations.

The results of this study will assist university administrators in determining the degree of job satisfaction among university lecturers. By enhancing the level of job satisfaction, the findings-based suggestions would be useful in creating a motivated and productive employee for organizational success. However, as the results of the study showed the differences level of job satisfaction in many facets, the study believed that the organization should seek to understand each generation and accommodate generational differences in attitudes, values, and behaviors. In addition, to understand the multigenerational attribute could enhance team-based productivity as human resources sector needs to implement the policy and encourage multigenerational working environment through coaching and mentoring by ensuring diversity across workplace.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended to conduct a qualitative research in order to get more in-depth and comprehensive understanding of the specific details or other dimensions to encourage job satisfaction. The study recommended that future qualitative data procedure could be achieved in the form of in-depth interviews or group discussions. The study believes that by conducting a qualitative investigation which uses group discussion or personal in-depth interviews protocol, it will encourage respondents to share more of their personal insights in order to gather a more meaningful investigation in an area of study.

Further research also can be carried out by enhancing the proposed model for adding some variables i.e. job autonomy, nature of work, organizational characteristics, and its relationship with job satisfaction of the individuals.

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