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PERCEPTION OF YOUNG EMPLOYEES ON COMMUNICATING AND SHARING WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH OLDER EMPLOYEES IN HIGHER LEARNING INSTITUTIONS IN MALAYSIA

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Abstract

This study investigates the perception of young employees (less than 40 years old) on their older counterparts (56-58 years old) pertaining to communicating and sharing working relationships. The main objective of the study is to analyze the perception of young employees on working relationships satisfaction with communicative teamwork, mutual learning, participative decision making, and communicating feedback of the older employees in higher learning institutions. A total of 575 employees in five Malaysian universities in the Klang Valley participated in the study. Survey research design was used for the study. Data were gathered using questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS WIN 16.0 for both descriptive and inferential statistics. Results indicated that, on the whole, young employees have positive teamwork relationships with the older employees. They learned a lot from the older employees as the older employees are helpful in sharing their experiences in decision making. At the same time, the young employees receive positive feedback from the older employees. However, the older employees hardly compliment the young employees for their achievements.

Keywords: *working relationships satisfaction, communicative teamwork, mutual learning, participative decision making, communicating feedback*

PERSEPSI PEKERJA MUDA TERHADAP KOMUNIKASI DAN PERKONGSIAN HUBUNGAN KERJA BERSAMA PEKERJA YANG LEBIH BERUSIA DI INSTITUSI PENGAJIAN TINGGI DI MALAYSIA

Abstrak

Kajian ini mengkaji persepsi dalam kalangan pekerja muda (kurang daripada 40 tahun) terhadap pekerja yang lebih berusia (56-58 tahun) tentang komunikasi dan perkongsian hubungan kerja antara mereka. Objektif utama kajian ini adalah untuk menganalisis persepsi pekerja muda terhadap kepuasan hubungan kerja mereka dengan komunikasi berpasukan, pembelajaran bersama-sama, penglibatan dalam pembuatan keputusan, dan pemberian maklum balas kepada pekerja yang lebih berusia yang bekerja dalam institusi pengajian tinggi. Seramai 575 pekerja muda dari lima buah universiti di Malaysia, yang terdapat dalam kawasan Lembah Kelang, terlibat dalam kajian ini. Kajian ini adalah satu penyelidikan yang berbentuk tinjauan. Data dikumpul menggunakan borang soal selidik dan dianalisis menggunakan program SPSS WIN 16.0 bagi statistik deskriptif dan statistik inferensi. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa, pada keseluruhannya, pekerja muda mempunyai persepsi bahawa perhubungan berpasukan mereka adalah positif dengan pekerja yang lebih berusia. Pekerja muda dapat mempelajari banyak pengajaran daripada pekerja yang lebih berusia kerana mereka mendapati bahawa pekerja yang lebih berusia suka membantu mereka melalui perkongsian pengalaman dalam membuat keputusan. Namun, pekerja yang lebih berusia jarang untuk memberi pujian kepada pekerja yang muda dalam pencapaian prestasi kerja mereka.

***Kata kunci:** kepuasan perhubungan bekerja, komunikasi berpasukan, pembelajaran bersama-sama penglibatan dalam pembuatan keputusan, pemberian maklum balas*

Introduction

The argument that older employees are less productive, predicated on the assumption that work necessarily involves physical strength, does not hold

true in an increasingly knowledge-based economy. Nowadays, people are not only living longer, they are generally staying healthier. This explains why the retirement age in many countries is being continually revised upwards. In many countries, the retirement age is well above 60 years old.

Some concerns have been voiced out over the adverse effect of the extended retirement age. Specifically, the effect would have some implications on current and future employees' opportunities and advancement as the result of the extension of the retirement age. Most researches tend to focus on the financial and economic impacts to the employers, and neglect the social impact of the employees. This study attempts to address the social aspects of the employees by examining the perception of young employees towards the extension of the retirement age. Specifically, how they feel about the issue since there will be less opportunity for them to get promoted because the senior officers are allowed to still work beyond their retirement age. In most cases, the senior officers are given a high post on contract basis. This study aims to find out the perception of young employees toward their older counterparts in terms of their communicating and sharing working relationships as a team.

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To find out the level of satisfaction working with the older employees;
2. To determine the level of communicative teamwork experience working with the older employees;
3. To explore the level of mutual learning, participative decision making, and communicating feedback experienced and shared in working relationships with the older employees;
4. To analyze the relationships between the levels of satisfaction with communicative teamwork, mutual learning, participative decision making, and communicating feedback.

Of late, there are several researches that have been conducted on the older employees. However, most of these researches focused on older workers' motivation and job satisfaction (Claes & Heymans, 2008; Groot & Brink, 1999; Kooij et al., 2008), older workers' attitude towards retirement (Desmette & Gaillard, 2008), older workers' competency (Kroll, 2003; Maurer et al., 2008), the perceptions of employers of older employees (Magd, 2003) and the human resource policy on older workers (Brooke, 2003). Research on the young employees' perception over their older counterparts is rare. Thus, this study is significant because the findings of this study will reduce the knowledge gap in managing career development for young employees. It would provide useful insights to the managers and supervisors into managing team and to better understand their young employees and older employees since failure to address age diversity can add to the problems of the war for talent. Overall the findings of this study will improve the public's understanding about the extended retirement age.

Retirement in Malaysia

The Malaysian population currently stands at 28.3 million. Three major races (Malay, Chinese, and Indian) and numerous ethnic minorities made up the country's multi-ethnic population. In the past, Malaysia adopted the British retirement system where mandatory retirement for the government servants is set at 55 years old. The government also introduced a system of optional early retirement, at 40 years old for women and 45 years old for men, to provide opportunity for a career change. After repeated calls, in 2008, the government raised the retirement age to 56 years. The retirement age of a civil servant in Malaysia is 56 years old, one of the lowest in Asia. This is still relatively lower than many Western countries as well as those of Malaysia's own immediate neighbors. Thailand and Singapore set the mandatory retirement age at 60 years old and 67 years old, respectively; while the Philippines set it at 65 years old (Mohd. Rashid, 2000). At 56 years old, most people still have much to contribute, particularly in experience and know-how. Thus, in July 2008, the Prime Minister of Malaysia has agreed to the demand made by the Malaysia Congress of Unions of Employees in the Public and Civil Service (CEUPACS) to extend the retirement age from 56 to 58 years old. The CEUPAC with 1.2 million members had been fighting at this for the last 15 years. Early 2012 the retirement age has been extended to 60 years old.

Given the fact that the extension of retirement age in Malaysia is very new, there are many possible reactions, especially among the young employees. Some concerns have been voiced by the Malaysian public over the adverse effect of the extended retirement age to the young employees. The job opportunities and advancement of junior staff in the civil service would be affected by the extension of the retirement age as the senior officers are allowed to work for another two years. In most cases, the junior staff members are the young ones. There will be less opportunity for them to get promoted. However, according to Vasudevan et al. (2008), the Deputy Minister in the Malaysian Prime Minister's Department assured that the job opportunities in the civil servants will not be adversely affected by the extension of the retirement age, as there were 200,000 vacancies available. He further added that this amendment would not affect the advancement of the junior staff because all promotions are decided based on ability and merits and not solely by age. According to the Malaysia Public Service Director-General, the older employees may continue to work because they are in a strategically important position. Some of them are still relevant and making some differences. It is either they want to work longer, or the employer may want them to work longer (Damis & Selvarani, NST online, May 18, 2008). The young employees will face difficulties to prove to their employers that they are equally needed by the employers.

Theoretical Framework

Many studies refer the term “older employees” to employees from the age of 40 years to those aged over 75 years old, depending on the purpose and field of study (Desmette & Gaillard, 2008; Kooij, et al., 2008). The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 which prohibits discrimination in employment also applies to people who are 40 or older (Gomez-Mejia, et al., 2007). Thus, the term “young employees” used in this study refers to employees below the age of 40 years old.

Bova and Kroth (2001) commented that in today’s situation, with multiple generations in the workforce, each with differing values and preference, the potential for conflict is higher than in those days when there was more homogenous workforce. In today’s workforce, there are young people who just entering the market, just being employed, climbing the career ladder; retiring; and those of extended age group. Each of these groups of employees will have different perception towards their employment. For instance, as highlighted by Binnewies et al. (2008) and Schulman (2007), young people just entering the job market come with a set of expectations and motivations. They are looking for a job that adds just as many opportunities as it takes away. Kidwell Jr. (2003) added that these young employees – those who entered the workforce within the last 15 years – have frequently being heard with reference to the self-employed philosophy, focusing on high compensation, extremely flexible work arrangements, and a healthy mix of independence and interdependence. Such strategies and opportunities, however, may not be an obvious good to many older employees who have spent much of their careers under more traditional work arrangements, based on loyalty and job security.

On the contrary, employers have often viewed older employees as liabilities, rather than as valuable resources (Desmette & Gaillard, 2008). As asserted by Patrickson and Ranzijn (2003), the employer’s attitudes have consistently indicated that the older employees might cost more or might potentially deliver fewer benefits than the younger ones, and thus, they would make less valued employees. Do the young employees perceive their older counterparts the same as the employers? According to Gomez-Mejia et al. (2007), among the most common negative assumptions about older employees are that they are less motivated to work hard, are “dead wood”, are resistant to change and cannot learn new methods, and they are “fire proof”. Older employees sometimes feel that their position and status are threatened by the “young bucks” eager to push “over-the-hill” employees out of the way. Another negative image identified with the older workers is marking time until retirement while hanging on to accrued leaves; companies have to pay high health care and pension contributions (Kidwell Jr., 2003). At the same time, many successful companies have implemented programs to use the knowledge and wisdom of the older employees to mentor the young employees. Companies do this by designing a team-based work design, involving the young and the older employees working

together in a team, with the intention that the young ones would learn from the older, and thus, would improve their performance.

However, working in a team with people who have different characteristics may pose potential problems. Kidwell Jr. (2003) mentioned that a potential lack-of-fit and the built-in biases toward the older employees may create conflict between groups of younger and older employees. This is due to the fact that members of each generation (young and old) have significant strengths as well as areas of potential weaknesses. As Grund and Westergaard-Nielson (2008) pointed that comparative advantages differ between young and older employees. When these two generations are in a team, the majority assigned advantages to the older employees for the characteristics of know-how, working morale, and awareness of quality. Young employees have advantages concerning the ability and willingness to learn, besides having physical resilience. Grund and Westergaard-Nielson (2008) further elaborated that the productivity of a certain employee might be affected by a colleague. It does matter whether this employee works together with a colleague of the same age or with someone from another generation. Several studies found relationship between age and group performance. For instance, Kilduff et al. (2000) and Pelled et al. (1999) found a positive relationship between age heterogeneity and group performance as evaluated by a team manager.

Organizational demography approach (Pfeffer, 1985) argues that social similarity is important for interaction, communication, and cohesion. Therefore, social dissimilarities between co-workers lead to dissatisfaction, less communication, and eventually to an alleviated efficiency of the organization. This is further supported by Gellert and Kuipers (2008), who state that the similarity-attraction paradigm found team members' similarity in terms of age, leading to positive aspects such as open communication, better understanding, positive feedback, more productivity than heterogeneous teams, and therefore, influences performance, positively. On the other hand, differences in age tend to be negatively associated with team performance and social integration. However, social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954) argues that individuals have an innate tendency to compare and to evaluate themselves with similar others. Grund and Westergaard-Nielsen (2003) emphasized that people would then try to act better than this comparison group, which may lead to rivalry and conflicts among people of the same age.

Based on the review of pertinent literature, thus this study develops the following hypotheses.

H1: The young employees are satisfied working with the older employees.

H2: The young employees have good experience working in team with their older counterparts.

H3: The young employees have positive working relationships with the older employees.

H3.1: The young employees have positive working relationships with the older employees with regard to mutual learning.

H3.2: The young employees have positive working relationships with the older employees with regard to participative decision making.

H3.3: The young employees have positive working relationships with the older employees with regard to communicating feedback.

H4: There are positive relationships between level of satisfaction working with the older employees and communicative teamwork, mutual learning, participative decision making, and communicating feedback.

Methodology : Population and Sampling Procedure

The extension of retirement age from 56 to 58 years old in Malaysia is relevant only to the civil servants. There are 1.2 million of civil servants in Malaysia. This study is then focusing on young employees in the civil services. Young employees refer to those employees who are less than 40 years of age. With more than 500,000 of young civil servants in Malaysia, it is necessary to restrict the survey to manageable proportions. The study is limited to Klang Valley only and is confined a particular sector. The sector selected is education. Education represents the biggest percentage of civil servants. Thirty-six per cent of the 1.2 million civil servants are in education: teachers and lecturers.

The study employed survey research design. This was used in order to tap the uniqueness of gathering primary data for unbiased representation of the population of interest, as well as for the standardization of measurement.

Data were collected from five universities in the Klang Valley, with the academic staff (language teachers and lecturers) and the administrative staff as the respondents of the study. The data collection was carried from May to June 2009. Trained enumerators helped in the data collection.

Instrumentation

Based on the literature reviewed, a specially-constructed questionnaire was developed for data collection. The questionnaire focused on two aspects of perception. First, the perception of the young employees on the issues of extended retirement age to their employment opportunity. Second, the questionnaire taps the experience of the young employees working with the older employees, and their level of satisfaction working with them. The questionnaire also includes questions on the employees' demographic characteristics and their employment background.

Measurement

Satisfaction working with the older employees and communicative teamwork

were measured using eight items, each. On the other hand, working relationships consists of three dimensions, namely, mutual learning, participative decision making, and communicating feedback. Each dimension was measured using five items. All items were measured using a 6-point Likert scale; ranging from very strongly disagree to very strongly agree. All items were analyzed separately and the overall perception scale was average out to form a concept of interest.

Data Analysis

The SPSS software was used to systematically analyze all the data obtained from the respondents, and to generate statistical information and detailed analyses of the survey results. Inferential Statistics were used to analyze the data in order to answer the objectives of the study and to test the hypotheses postulated. One-sample t-test analysis was used to test the hypotheses of the study. Correlations and Regression analysis were also carried out the hypotheses of the study.

Reliability test was used to check whether the items for each concept are homogeneous, measuring the concept of interest. It is found that the reliability for the research concept lies between 0.90 and 0.94. Therefore, no items were deleted. The items were transformed to meaningful concepts of interest for further analysis.

Findings : Demographic Profile of Young Employees

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents, the young employees. A total of 575 respondents were obtained for this study. It is found that two-thirds of the respondents (67.1%) are female. More than two-fifths of the respondents (44.3%) are aged between 26-30 years old, followed by 31-35 years old (21.4%). Almost all of the respondents (92.8%) are Malay. Almost one third of the respondents (30.4%) are diploma holders, followed by SPM/SPMV (27.1%), and Bachelor Degree (18.4%). There are an almost equal number of respondents for all the universities except for UKM (15.1%). Almost two-thirds of the respondents (64.4%) have been working for 1-5 years. Half of the respondents (51.3%) have income ranging from RM1001-2000, followed by 28.2% of the respondents having income between RM2001-3000.

Table 1: Demographic profile of respondents

Personal Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	189	32.9
Female	386	67.1
Total	575	100.0

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Age Group		
25 years old and below	111	19.3
26-30 years old	255	44.3
31-35 years old	123	21.4
36-40 years old	86	15.0
Total	575	100.0
Race		
Malay	532	92.8
Chinese	13	2.3
Indian	25	4.4
Others	3	0.5
Total	573	100.0
Level of education		
SPM/SPMV	156	27.1
STPM/Certificate	68	11.8
Diploma	175	30.4
Bachelor Degree	106	18.4
Master Degree	51	8.9
Ph.D.	11	1.9
Others	8	1.4
Total	575	100.0
Organization		
International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM)	129	22.5
Mara University of Technology (UiTM)	117	20.3
National University of Malaysia (UKM)	87	15.1
University of Malaya (UM)	120	20.9
University of Putra Malaysia (UPM)	122	21.2
Total	575	100.0
Length of Employment (years)		
1-5	367	64.4
6-10	136	23.9
11-15	43	7.5
16 and more	24	4.2
Total	570	100.0

Income per month (RM)		
Less than RM1000	32	5.6
RM1001-RM2000	295	51.3
RM2001-RM3000	162	28.2
RM3001-RM4000	56	9.7
RM4001-RM5000	18	3.1
Above RM5000	12	2.1
Total	575	100.0

Satisfaction Working with Older Employees (56-58 years old)

Table 2 shows the level satisfaction of the academic and the administrative staff in working with older employees (68.3%, $t=3.004$, $p=.003$). The results show that the respondents are satisfied working with the older employees for most of the items (ranging from 68.3-70.0%). There is no particular stance for “the contribution of the older employees” (67.8%, $t=1.890$, $p=.059$). But, they are not satisfied with the older employees in terms of the statement “I am satisfied with the older employees that I cannot challenge them” (63.2%, $t=-5.213$, $p.000$). This means that the young employees think that they can do better than the older employees. However, they are most satisfied with the learning experience gained while working with the older employees (70.0%). Therefore, the young employees are satisfied working with the older employees. As such, H1: The young employees are satisfied working with the older employees is support by the data.

Table 2: Satisfaction working with older employees (56-58 years old)

Satisfaction Working with Older Employees	Level of Agreement (%)*						Overall (%)	M	SD	t**	df	p
	1	2	3	4	5	6						
I am satisfied working with the older employees	1.6	3.1	12.7	54.1	22.8	5.7	68.5	4.11	0.92	2.775	574	.006
I am satisfied receiving high support and guidance from the older employees	1.7	1.6	15.7	52.9	22.8	5.4	68.3	4.10	0.90	2.546	574	.011
I am satisfied with the knowledge gained while working with the older employees	0.9	2.1	12.9	54.1	23.1	7.0	69.5	4.17	0.88	4.749	574	.000
I am satisfied with the older employees that I cannot challenge them	2.3	4.9	27.3	45.7	16.7	3.1	63.2	3.79	0.96	-5.213	574	.000
I am satisfied with the contribution of the older employees	1.2	2.6	15.8	53.4	22.3	4.7	67.8	4.07	0.88	1.890	574	.059
I am satisfied with the older employees' guidance in improving my performance	1.2	2.6	14.1	52.0	21.7	8.3	69.2	4.15	0.94	3.948	574	.000
I am satisfied with the learning experience gained while working with the older employees	1.4	2.4	12.0	51.3	24.7	8.2	70.0	4.20	0.94	5.118	574	.000
I am satisfied working with the older employees for their help to increase my tolerance	0.9	2.4	12.2	54.6	22.1	7.8	69.7	4.18	0.89	4.849	574	.000
Total							68.3	4.10	0.77	3.004	574	.003

*1=Very strongly disagree, 2=Strongly disagree, 3=Disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree, 6=Very strongly agree

** test value of 4.0

Communicative Teamwork Experience Working with Older Employees (56-58 years old)

There are varied experiences of the younger employees with the older employees in terms of communicative teamwork (Table 3). About seven in ten of the respondents give the highest score in relations to “older employees are likely to give suggestions and comments” (71.2%; $t=6.782$, $p=.000$), that the older employees like to share with others their knowledge and experience” (70.8%; $t=6.245$, $p=.000$) and that “the older employees help the group in decision making (69.8%; $t=4.579$, $p=.000$). However, the young employees felt that the older employees cannot listen to others openly (65.2%; $t=-2.165$, $p=.000$). The young employees perceived the older employees less, but not significant, in terms of “able to work with people of different ages”, “are good team players”, “put team goals above their own”, and “easy to coordinate the work with others”. Despite the negative perception on listening habit of the older employees, and other neutral perception of the older employees, the young employees still have high regard toward the older employees in terms of teamwork (67.8%; $t=2.175$, $p=.000$). Therefore, H2: The young employees have good experience working in team with their older counterparts is partially supported by the data.

Table 3: Communicative teamwork experience with older employees (56-58 Years Old)

Communicative Teamwork Experience	Level of Agreement (%)*						Overall (%)	M	SD	t**	df	p
	1	2	3	4	5	6						
Older employees are able to work with people of different ages	2.3	3.1	16.2	49.7	21.4	7.3	67.8	4.07	1.00	1.632	574	0.103
Older employees are good team players	1.9	2.8	17.9	53.7	19.0	4.7	66.5	3.99	.92	-0.227	574	0.820
Older employees put team goals above their own	2.1	3.5	21.7	46.8	21.2	4.7	66.0	3.96	.97	-1.073	574	0.284
Older employees are easy to coordinate the work with others	1.4	3.8	21.7	49.0	18.8	5.2	66.0	3.96	0.94	-1.104	574	0.270
Older employees like to share with others their knowledge and experience	1.0	3.3	10.8	48.7	27.0	9.2	70.8	4.25	0.96	6.245	574	0.000

Older employees can listen to others openly	2.6	4.9	22.8	44.9	18.8	6.1	65.2	3.91	1.04	-2.165	574	0.031
Older employees are likely to give suggestions and comments	1.0	3.1	9.7	49.7	26.8	9.6	71.2	4.27	0.95	6.782	574	0.000
Older employees help the group in decision making	1.7	3.8	10.3	50.1	26.4	7.7	69.8	4.19	0.97	4.579	574	0.000
Total							67.8	4.07	0.80	2.175	574	0.030

*1=Very strongly disagree, 2=Strongly disagree, 3=Disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree, 6=Very strongly agree

** test value of 4.0

Mutual Learning, Participative Decision Making, and Communicating Feedback Experienced and Shared in Working Relationships with Older Employees (56-58 Years Old)

The young employees have good experience working in team with their older counterparts. Working relationship with older employees is looked at from three different perspectives, namely, mutual learning, participative decision making, and communicating feedback (Table 4). The overall results indicate positive agreements by young employees towards the older employees on the three perspectives. Therefore, H3: The young employees have positive working relationships with the older employees is supported.

Mutual learning with older employees

Mutual learning with the older employees is positively received by the young employees (70.6%; $t=7.847$, $p=.000$). The young employees learned a lot from the older employees' experience (72.0%). In fact, they admit that they learnt from each other new skills (71.0%) and new knowledge to perform their work (70.6%). The young employees also learnt to accept comments positively from the older employees (70.8%). An important aspect that they learnt from the older employees is time management (68.8%). Similar to Westergaard-Nielsen (2008), the advantages of having older employees are their knowledge and experience whereas the young employees are willing to learn and have physical resilience. Therefore, the young employees gained by working with the older employees. Hence, H3.1: The young employees have positive working relationships with the older employees with regard to mutual learning is supported.

Participative decision making with older employees

When working in a team with diverse individuals, decision making can be difficult because consensus has to be agreed upon by all. However, the young employees admitted that the older employees motivated them to make decision (69.8%; $t=4.894$, $p=.000$), encouraged them to give ideas for decision process (60.7%; $t=5.034$, $p=.000$), taught them how to select the best alternative for decision making (69.7%; $t=5.177$, $p=.000$), guided them to prioritize for decision making (69.0%; $t=69.0$, $p=.000$), and helped them how to solve problems in decision making (69.1%; $t=3.984$, $p=.000$). Therefore, this study shows that the older employees are perceived positively in terms of participative decision making (69.3%; $t=5.129$, $p=.000$). Hence, H3.2: The young employees have positive working relationships with the older employees with regard to participative decision making is supported.

Table 4: Working relationship with older employees (56-58 years old)

Working Relationship with Older Employees (N=575)*	Level of Agreement (%)*						Overall (%)	M	SD	t**	p
	1	2	3	4	5	6					
Mutual Learning:											
I learn a lot from the older employees' experience.	1.4	1.0	4.32	0.92	26.3	10.6	72.0	4.32	0.92	8.287	0.000
We learn from each other new skills to perform work.	1.2	2.1	4.26	0.84	21.9	5.7	71.0	4.26	0.84	7.421	0.000
I learn to accept comments positively from older employees.	0.7	1.9	4.25	0.84	26.1	7.0	70.8	4.25	0.84	7.267	0.000
We learn from each other new knowledge.	1.0	1.4	4.24	0.86	23.7	8.0	70.6	4.24	0.86	6.838	0.000
I learn to manage time properly from older employees.	1.0	1.6	4.13	0.87	26.3	6.8	68.8	4.13	0.87	3.609	0.000
Total							70.6	4.24	0.77	7.847	0.000
Participative Decision Making											
Older employees motivate me to make decision.	1.0	2.3	13.0	52.2	23.7	7.8	69.8	4.19	0.91	4.894	0.000
Older employees encourage me to give ideas for decision making process.	0.5	2.1	12.9	54.3	24.2	6.1	69.7	4.18	0.85	5.034	0.000

Older employees teach me how to select the best alternative for decision making.	0.9	1.7	12.0	55.3	23.7	6.4	69.7	4.18	0.85	5.177	0.000
Older employees help me how to solve problems in decision making.	0.9	1.6	12.7	57.4	22.1	5.4	69.1	4.15	0.88	3.984	0.000
Older employees guide me to prioritize alternatives for decision making.	1.2	2.6	11.3	56.0	23.0	5.9	69.0	4.14	0.83	4.183	0.000
Total							69.3	4.16	0.78	5.129	0.000
Communicating Feedback											
I receive sincere feedback for my work from the older employees.	0.3	1.9	12.5	53.0	22.8	9.4	70.6	4.24	0.88	6.566	0.000
I receive suggestions from the older employees for growth and development.	0.2	2.8	11.7	56.3	22.3	6.8	70.1	4.21	0.84	6.034	0.000
I receive sincere comments from older employees for work improvement.	0.3	1.9	12.0	55.0	23.5	7.3	69.7	4.18	0.84	5.162	0.000
Older employees appreciate my contribution in helping them.	1.4	2.6	18.1	53.4	18.4	6.1	69.1	4.15	0.91	3.968	0.000
I receive compliments from the older employees for my achievements.	1.4	2.4	12.0	55.7	20.9	7.7	67.1	4.03	0.91	0.820	0.413
Total							69.3	4.16	0.77	5.109	0.000

*1=Very strongly disagree, 2=Strongly disagree, 3=Disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree, 6=Very strongly agree

** Test value of 4.0

Communicating feedback with older employees

The young employees appreciate the old employees in giving them feedback (69.3%; $t=5.109$, $p=.000$). They claimed that they received sincere feedback for their work from the older employees (70.6; $t=6.566$, $p=.000$). They also received suggestions from the older employees for growth and development (70.1%; $t=6.034$, $p=.000$). The older employees' comments were thought to be receiving

sincere for work improvement (69.7%; $t=5.162$, $p=.000$). Besides that, the older employees appreciated the younger employees' contribution in helping them in return (69.1%; $t=3.968$, $p=.000$). Nonetheless, the older employees are not that generous enough in giving compliments for the young employees' achievement (67.1%; $t=0.820$, $p=.413$). In sum, the young employees benefited from the feedback communicated by the older employees to them for their betterment. Therefore, H3.3: The young employees have positive working relationships with the older employees with regard to communicating feedback is supported.

Relationships between Satisfactions with Communicative Teamwork, Mutual Learning, Participative Decision Making, and Communicating Feedback

On the whole, the young employees are positively satisfied with the communicating and sharing working relationships with the older employees (Table 5). Specifically, there exist strongly positive relationships between satisfaction with communicating and sharing working relationships with the older employees in terms communicative teamwork ($r=.750$, $p=.000$) and mutual learning ($r=.621$, $p=.000$). The relationships between satisfaction with communicating and sharing working relationships are found to be moderately positive participative decision making ($r=.571$, $p=.000$) and communicating feedback ($r=.578$, $p=.000$). This implies that the young employees with high communicative teamwork, high mutual learning, high participative decision making, and high communicating feedback will experience high level of satisfaction on communicating and sharing working relationships with the older employees. Therefore, H4: There are positive relationships between level of satisfaction working with the older employees and communicative teamwork, mutual learning, participative decision making, and communicating feedback is supported.

Table 5: Correlation between satisfactions in communicating and sharing working relationships with selected communication variables

Communication Variables (N=575)	r	p
Communicative teamwork	0.750	0.000
Mutual learning	0.621	0.000
Participative decision making	0.571	0.000
Communicating feedback	0.578	0.000

In addition, even though all the hypotheses are supported and partially supported (H2: The young employees have good experience working in team with the older counterparts), Table 6 presents the contributions made by various predictors to satisfaction working with the older employees. It is found that only

three independent variables (communicative teamwork, mutual learning, and communicating feedback) are able to predict the model for level of satisfaction communicating and sharing experience with the older experience and included in the equation. Therefore, the model can be written as:

$$\text{Satisfaction} = 0.558 + 0.554 \text{ communicative teamwork} + 0.190 \text{ mutual learning} + 0.115 \text{ communicating feedback}$$

Table 6: Model summary for satisfaction with working relationships with older employees with selected communication variables

Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	p
1	Constant	1.158	.110		10.483	.000
	Communicative teamwork	.722	.027	.750	27.122	.000
	R=.750, R2=.562, Adj. R2=.561, R2Δ=.562, FΔ=735.593 (1,573), p=.000					
2	Constant	.632	.121		5.217	.000
	Communicative teamwork	.566	.031	.588	18.220	.000
	Mutual learning	.273	.032	.274	8.499	.000
	R=.782, R2=.611, Adj. R2=.610, R2Δ=.049, FΔ=72.241 (1,572), p=.000					
3	Constant	.558	.124		4.508	.000
	Communicative teamwork	.554	.031	.576	17.746	.000
	Mutual learning	.190	.045	.190	4.184	.000
	Communicating feedback	.115	.044	.114	2.616	.000
	R=.785, R2=.616, Adj. R2=.614, R Δ=.005, FΔ=6.843 (1,571), p=.009					

Variable excluded from the equation: Participative decision making

The model can now be visualized in term the following theoretical framework (Figure 1).

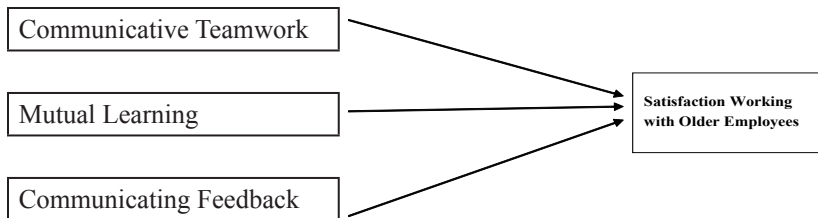


Figure 1: The relationships between satisfaction with communicative teamwork, mutual learning and communicating feedback

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the young employees have good perception of the older employees and they are satisfied working with them. In addition, the young employees have high regard toward the older employees in terms of teamwork. They gained a lot from the older employees because the older employees have experience and knowledge to share with them despite the fact the older employees are reluctant to listen to them openly. Some of the older employees might not be able to work with people of different ages, tend not to be a good team player at times, tend not to put teams goal above their own goal, and are not able to easily coordinate the work with others. However, the working relationships experienced and shared with the older employees are treasured and remembered. The older employees are the mentors for the young employees.

The communicative teamwork, mutual learning and communicating feedback are positive correlated with their working satisfaction despite the fact that the older employees are reluctant to give compliments to the younger employees for their achievements.

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