

## Comparative Study on Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction Level between Generation X and Y

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### Abstract

The purpose of this research is to compare the level of employee engagement and job satisfaction of the generations X and Y in the Human Capital & General Affairs Division of PT. Karoseri. This type of research is a comparative descriptive study intended to examine differences the level of employee engagement and job satisfaction. The population of this study was all employees of the Human Capital & General Affairs Division with a total of 35 people. They are all used as the sample. The data analysis techniques were descriptive analysis, inferential analysis, and t-test which was used for comparison. The results showed that there was no difference in the level of employee engagement and job satisfaction between the generation X and Y. High level of employee engagement indicates that the two generations have already had feeling to *engage* with the company. Moderate level of job satisfaction indicates that the generation X and Y were quite satisfied with their current job.

**Keywords:** employee engagement, job satisfaction, generation X, generation Y

### INTRODUCTION

In order to maintain their existence in the highly competitive business, companies must be able to manage the human resources determines their success. Human resource of a company may consist of various generations. According to Dimock (2019), generations are categorized into *silent* generation born between 1928 and 1945, *baby boomer* born between 1946 and 1964, generation X born between 1965 and 1980, generation Y which is known also as generation millennial born between 1981 and 1996, and generation Z born in the range of 1997–2012. As the consequence, managers have to manage multigenerational dynamics in the work since generational differences in a company can create potential conflicts that can result in high level of employee *turnover* if not handled properly (Jiří, 2016). Turnover relates to the employees' level of job satisfaction and it is stated that job satisfaction is a strong indicator of turnover (Luh, Laksmi, Bagus, & Satrya, 2020). Moreover, employee turnover is influenced

by employee engagement and on other words turnover is driven by disengaged employees (Harter, Schmidt, & Killham, 2003).

PT. Karoseri (a pseudo name of the company for the reason of confidentiality) is one of the Indonesian largest auto body manufacturers. It has currently been experiencing high *turnover* rate of 15.96% (PT. Karoseri, 2020). The Human Capital and General Affairs (HG&GA) division is thus the important unit in the company for solving this problem. The division is the key for the company's success in finding the best strategy for increasing the level of *employee engagement* and job satisfaction. This study aims to provide the company insights related to *employee engagement* and job satisfaction in order to suppress the level of employee turnover.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is involvement of an employee psychologically with the work directly (Perrin, 2003). Employee engagement can motivate employees to improve their performance through commitment, a sense of belonging, feeling of pride, higher enthusiasm, and higher effort (Tahir, 2014). It is an emotional expression and commitment of employees to build and maintain the business performance (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Employees having high engagement will focus on attaining the company's goals (Endres & Mancheno-smoak, 2008) and care on the company's success and future (Perrin, 2003).

The three aspects of employee engagement comprising of vigor, dedication, and absorption are often used to measure the level of employee engagement (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). Vigor reflects willingness of an employee to give his/her total effort in doing the job. Dedication depicts employee's feeling such as enthusiasm, proud, and ready to take

challenges. Absorption refers to employee's eagerness in doing the job and want to engage with it. Referring to these aspects, employee engagement is considerably related to positive feeling of employee on the job.

Employees with positive feeling on their job usually have high job satisfaction and vice versa. Job satisfaction is a positive feeling about one's job which is the result of an evaluation of its characteristics (Robbins, 2013). Employees with high level of job satisfaction have positive feelings about work. Employees with high levels of satisfaction will be more friendly, cheerful, and responsive. In turn, satisfied employees create satisfied customers since according to Robbins (2013) employees with high job satisfaction will be more friendly, happy, and responsive. Lestari (2020) noted that satisfied employee will express their satisfaction in their attitude toward job, work situation, cooperation between employees, and reward received.

Job satisfaction can be explored through its dimensions. According to Luthans (2010), the dimensions of job satisfaction cover (1) the work itself, (2) salary, (3) supervisor's attitude, (4) coworker (5) promotion opportunity. The work can provide interesting tasks, opportunities to learn, opportunities to accept responsibility and advancement for employees. The work that meets the expected opportunities will give satisfaction to the employee. Salary gives satisfaction if the salary/wage earned are proportional to the effort and fair compared to those received by others in the same work position. The superior's ability to provide support for the work and technical assistance can help the subordinates to do their work satisfactorily and this create satisfaction on the job. Coworkers can support each other in doing the job and in interacting socially in the company. Such environment can produce satisfaction of the employees. Opportunities to be promoted to a higher positions of the organization can also create satisfaction.

Since human resource in a company becomes more multi generations and managers need to manage the dynamic of multigenerational in the work environment, many studied employee engagement and job satisfaction between generations. Generation X and Y are currently in the productive age. Generation X are those who were born 1965–1980. They have a fairly high level of loyalty and commitment. For them, work is very important and thus they are persistent and endure in their each job (Oktariani, Hubeis, & Sukandar, 2017). Those in generation X want to have authority at work and like to work at a calm and comfortable environment. They can work over time as far as the reward is worthy since salary and reward are considerably the symbol of their performance.

Generation Y also known as millennial are those who were born between 1981 and 1996. They can bring new perspective for an organization. Sujansky (2009) stated that organization which cannot adapt with the millennial will experience high turnover and lack of productivity. Millennial want to be happy with their work, are very open in expressing their wishes, want to have a strong mentor, and want a clear career path for their career opportunities (Devaney, 2015). They demand flexibility in the work, acceptable work environment quality, and want to work in an organization promoting work-life balance.

Studies indicate inconsistent results in the differences of employee engagement between generation X and Y. Atieq (2019) found that employee engagement of generation X differ significantly from that of generation Y. Meanwhile Kurniawati (2022) ended in the opposite result. Similarly it happens to job satisfaction. Pagan (2012) concluded that job satisfaction of generation X is significantly different from that of generation Y. On the contrary, Enkbaata, Gurbazar, and Choijil (2021) resulted in no significant difference between generation X and Y in their job satisfaction.

## METHOD

This research applied mixed method combining quantitative and qualitative methods. For the first method, tabulations and parametric statistical tests were used to analyze the data. Meanwhile the second method was to explore information on the condition of employee engagement and job satisfaction of the generation X and Y in the company. It is a census that used all 35 employees as the respondents.

The questionnaire was tested for its validity and reliability. The validity test carried out by comparing the  $r$  table to  $r$  value for each item and the test resulted in all items of employee engagement and job satisfaction were valid with the  $r$  value of each item is above 0.324. The reliability test presented in Table 1 indicates that the instrument is reliable since the Cronbach's Alpha of employee engagement (0.875) and job satisfaction (0.839) is more than 0.70.

**Table 1. Reliability Test Results**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Result</b>
Employee Engagement	0.875	Reliable
Job Satisfaction	0.839	Reliable

The reliable questionnaire was then distributed to the employees after the permission was given by the company. The questionnaire was given to the employee during the break time and was collected the next day after they completed it. Following the questionnaire, the interview was conducted to those who have strategic position in the company in order to explore and to confirm the information resulted from the questionnaire. The interview was at the evening after the working hour and thus it must be conducted several times for completing the questions.

The data from the questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive analysis to give description on the existing condition of employee engagement and job satisfaction of generation X and Y based on mean value. The analysis of t-test of independent sample was then conducted to test the hypothesis stating that employee engagement and job satisfaction of the generation X differ significantly from those of generation Y. The data from the interview was coded according to similarities and differences used to confirm the results gained from the questionnaire.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Of the total respondents, 20 persons are categorized as generation X and 15 persons as generation Y. Majority of the respondents are male (54.3%), have been working for up to 10 years (77.1%), and is bachelor degree for the educational background (45.7%). Table 2 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

**Table 2. The Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

Item	Characteristic	%
Gender	Male	54.3
	Female	45.7
Age	X gen	42.9
	Y gen	57.1
Working period	0 - 10 year	77.1
	11 - 20 year	11.4
	>20 year	11.4
Education	High School	37.1
	Associate's degree	8.6
	Bachelor	45.7
	Master	8.57

Table 3 presents the level of *employee engagement* in the generation X and the generation Y respectively. The results indicate the level of *employee engagement* generation X and generation Y is high. With the average of 3.55 and 3.56 for respectively generation X and Y, it can be stated that the level of engagement of both generations is relatively the same.

**Table 3. The Mean Value of Employee Engagement of the Generation X and Y**

Variable	Indicator	Gen X	Gen Y
Vigor	At my work, I feel bursting with energy	3.80	3.90
	At my job, I feel strong and vigorous	3.80	3.85
	When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work	3.73	3.45
	I can continue working for very long periods at a time	3.07	3.15
	At my job, I am very resilient, mentally	3.40	3.70
	At my work I always persevere, even when things do not go well*	4.07	4.00
Dedication	I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose	3.80	4.15
	I am enthusiastic about my job	3.73	3.90
	My job inspires me	3.93	3.65
	I am proud on the work that I do	3.47	3.80
	To me, my job is challenging	3.40	3.70
Absorption	Time flies when I'm working	3.87	3.85
	When I am working, I forget everything else around me	2.87	2.55
	I feel happy when I am working intensely	3.87	3.70
	I am immersed in my work	2.93	2.70
	I get carried away when I'm working	3.20	2.95
	It is difficult to detach myself from my job	3.33	3.60
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>3.55</b>	<b>3.56</b>

Job satisfaction of the generation X and Y presented in table 4 shows that the level of job satisfaction between X and Y generation is moderate with the mean value of 3.26 and 3.33 respectively. Based on the mean value, it can be seen that job satisfaction of the generation Y is higher than that of the generation X.

The t-test for equality mean was conducted to know if the similarity of employee engagement and the difference of job satisfaction between generation X and generation Y are statistically significant. Table 5 presents the test results on employee *engagement*. The sig value of the *equal variances assumed (2-tailed)* is  $0.951 > 0.05$ . This means that there is no average difference in *employee engagement* between generation X and generation Y. Thus, this result support the descriptive one.

**Table 4. The Mean Value of Job Satisfaction of the Generation X and Y**

Variable	Indicator	Gen X	Gen Y
Satisfaction with the work itself	Satisfied with current job	3.33	3.30
	Given the freedom to do the job	3.53	3.40
	Feelings of pride in work	3.40	3.65
	Satisfied with the facilities provided by the company	3.20	3.25
Satisfaction with salary	Salary by the prevailing wage standards in the labor market	2.80	2.40
	Salary is compared by workload and responsibility	2.67	2.50
	Satisfied with the income compared by the work performance I have shown	2.53	2.55
	Satisfied with the income provided by the company	2.80	2.50
Satisfaction with the attitude of superiors	Communication is well-established in solving work problems	3.53	3.70
	Superiors provide input when there are difficulties	3.40	3.80
	There is feedback from superiors on work	3.40	3.65
	Appreciation for the success of employees in completing work assignments	2.93	3.65
Satisfaction with colleagues	When needed colleagues assist to complete the work on time	3.80	3.70
	Colleague support when facing difficulties at work	3.60	3.95
	The social needs of interacting with colleagues in the office are fulfilled	3.53	3.85
	The family atmosphere at work is well built	3.73	4.00
Satisfaction with promotions	All employees in this company are given the same opportunity for promotion	3.20	3.15
	The promotion policy in this company is appropriate	3.13	3.15
	The promotion process in the company is open to anyone with potential	3.27	3.15
	Promotion of employees in this company is carried out objectively	3.33	3.25
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>3.26</b>	<b>3.33</b>

Based on table 6 showing the result of t-test on job satisfaction between generation X and Y, it can be seen that the equal variances assumed results in sig. (2-tailed)  $0.568 > 0.05$ . This indicates no difference in the average of job satisfaction between generation X and Y.



**Table 5. The t-test on Employee Engagement between Generation X and Y**

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
EE	Equal variances assumed	1.925	.175	-.061	33	.951	-.167	2.717	-5.694	5.361
	Equal variances not assumed			-.066	31.672	.948	-.167	2.534	-5.331	4.998

**Table 6. The t-test of Job Satisfaction between Generation X and Y**

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
KEPUASAN_KERJA	Equal variances assumed	.083	.776	-.577	33	.568	-1.417	2.455	-6.411	3.578
	Equal variances not assumed			-.575	29.817	.570	-1.417	2.466	-6.453	3.620

**Discussion**

Employee engagement of the generation X and Y is considerably high, which means that they are engaged with the company. The generation X and Y’s job satisfaction is in the moderate level, which shows that both generations are quite satisfied with the job itself, salary, the attitude of superiors, co-workers, and promotions.

Employees with high level of employee engagement will have a sense of concern for the organization's operational environment and will be more committed to helping the company to achieve success. This brings benefits to the company because employees are able to work effectively which will bring out the potential to high performance and make the best contribution. Employees also have high enthusiasm at work and can work together with other employees so that teamwork becomes even more solid. Employees who are engaged with the company will speak positively about the organization. This can build a positive image and enhances the company's reputation in the community.

Job satisfaction in the moderate level indicating that the employees are quite satisfied with the work being done at this time. Both generations have also received enough of what the company has given. However, of the five dimensions of job satisfaction from Luthans' theory, salary satisfaction has the lowest average score in both X and Y generation. Employees are dissatisfied with the current compensation system. Dissatisfaction about the compensation could effect on increased absenteeism and *turnover*. Nonetheless, according to Giannouli (2017) an increase in salary does not mean an increase in the level of job satisfaction, because the salary is correlated and influenced by the sense of justice that is felt in the workplace. Therefore, companies need to evaluate the compensation system more fairly and appropriately, both financial and non-financial compensation.

## CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study comparing the level of employee engagement and job satisfaction of the generation X and Y in PT. Karoseri concludes that employee engagement of the generation X and Y is in high level, which means that the two generations are *engaged* with the company. Job satisfaction of the generation X and Y in PT. Karoseri is in the moderate level. Both generations are quite satisfied with the job itself, salary, the attitude of superiors, co-workers, and promotions.

Even though the level of employee engagement of the generation X and Y is high, the absorption aspect however has the lowest mean value. The company thus should try to increase the level of absorption by holding for example a family gathering to strengthen employees' emotions towards the company. By doing this, the employees will improve absorption aspect of the employee engagement. Companies should also organize up skilling training for the employees can be motivated in developing careers so that the level of absorption can increase.

The level of job satisfaction between generation in X and Y is in the moderate level. Among others, the aspect of salary has the lowest mean value which means the employees are dissatisfied with the salary. According to them, the salary they had received was below the standards and inappropriate with the workload and responsibilities. However, the employees admitted that the payroll system in this company is better than the others'. Therefore, companies should look for the reasons why employees feel dissatisfied with the salary and try to make more positive *mindset* about the salary.

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