

GENERATION Y IN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING

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Abstract- Three generations of workforce has emerged in the ever progressive and dynamics world. The shifting power of work force in these three generations has given a great significant in performance of an organization, in this case the Institution of Higher Learning (IHLs). This does not exclude Malaysia as it is emerging as one of the many countries with high investment and focus on IHLs. IHLs in 21st century must recognize the important and impact of generations shift. Generation Y work force in IHLs is the new influence power of shift. Knowing and acknowledging the significant contribution of generation Y and their aspiration is a challenge for every IHLs. Therefore being sensitive towards generation Y will determine the progressive success of IHLs. Generation Y academicians in IHLs in their junior level has been increasing and factors such as demographic, Key Performance Index (KPI), quality research paper and other requirement by the government will play a vital role in sustaining and retaining the young academicians. Mobility of work force particularly generation Y has been a common trend and it's determined their staying power as well as their growth. The uniqueness of this paper focuses on the literature of generation Y, its sustainability and retaining of young academicians in IHLs.

Key Words- Generation Y, Academicians, Institution of Higher Learning

Introduction

In today business world generational studies is widely accepted and needs to sustain the organizational growth. A generation is defined as an identifiable group that shares birth and significant life events at critical development stages [1]. It includes those who share historical or social life experiences, the effects of which are relatively stable over their lives. These experiences influence a person's feelings toward authority and organizations, what a person values from work and how a person plans satisfy those desires [2]

In the era of globalization, academics and researchers are becoming interested in how the new generation called "Generation Y" "evolved" in the workplace. The much interested is based on the speculation that generations differ significantly in their goals, expectations and work ethics [3]. While this speculation is widely used in most of the organization and it has been found that very little studies was done on generation Y especially in IHLs. The aim of this paper was to explore generation Y in IHLs in work values in sustaining and retaining the young academicians.

In recent years there has been much discussion in management and organizational literature on these generational differences and how they may have an impact on workforce management. Now in any organizational the generation Y is highly recruited. Therefore, by knowing they capabilities and

characteristics will help the organization to achieve organization direction and goals. The generations Y may be the most adaptable yet in terms of technological skills and has been said to value intrinsic aspects of work such training, career and mentoring in order to remain marketable [4] In IHLs the intrinsic values are most important in order to maintain young academicians. This paper explores how generation Y constructs their identities in IHLs which is mainly managed by baby boomer and generation X.

The sector of IHLs is characterized by specific aspects which make it distinguishable from the business world. However, in IHLs, as well as business, generation baby boomer and generation X are dominant. Therefore this paper will focus on definition of generation Y, IHLs in Malaysia, and literature review on generation Y values and characteristics. The final section concludes the implication of generation Y in IHLs.

Definition

Tulgan and Martin (2001) described the generations Y as a new group of workers (born between 1978 and 1998) known as Net generations / Millennials / Generation Y which they have unique characteristics. The most common characteristics of generation Y are rich with information and "media savvy", has a strong work ethic, entrepreneurial spirit and sense of responsibility, comfortable with change, more open and tolerant

society, networking, interdependence to achieve goals, self-confidence and optimism about the future, values skill development thrives on mentoring and well educated.

Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs) in Malaysia

The higher education system in Malaysia comprises public and private IHLs, polytechnics, and community colleges. Both public and private IHLs offer certificate, diploma, bachelor degree, and masters and PhD. Public IHLs consist of universities and university colleges and private IHLs consist of universities, university colleges, colleges, overseas branch campuses, open universities, and virtual/e-universities. Polytechnics offer certificate and diploma as a source of semi professional workforce. Community colleges offer full time academic programs and short courses, based on the request of the local community. The Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) was established in March 2004 with the responsibility of providing strategic direction and overseeing the development of the sub-sector.

Under the aegis of the MoHE, two separate bodies are mandated to address quality issues in academic programs in private and public IHLs. The National Accreditation Board (LAN), which was established in 1996, is responsible for private IHLs; the Quality Assurance Division (QAD), which was established in 2001, is responsible for private IHLs. The Quality Management Units of institutions coordinate other activities, such as academic programs, libraries, administration, and management systems. Auditing exercises are also conducted externally by professional accreditation bodies, such as the Malaysia Medical Council, the Public Services Department, and the Engineering Accreditation Council. The Government of Malaysia (GOM) is currently in the process of developing a unified quality assurance framework that will review performance of all Malaysian IHLs under the Malaysian Qualification Framework.

The GOM has recently linked the development of the higher education sector to the requirements of economic growth, articulating the following complementary policy objectives: (1) establishing a world class university system; (2) making Malaysia a regional education hub; and (3) transforming Malaysia into a knowledge-based economy. To respond to the objectives, the GOM carefully laid the foundation for the expansion of the higher education system in its Ninth Malaysian Plan (2006-2010). It emphasizes increasing accessibility to higher education to create a critical mass of trained, skilled and knowledgeable workforce who would sustain economic growth, increase competitiveness, and support a knowledge-based economy. The Plan provided for a series of measures to improve the quality of education, especially in science, mathematics and foreign languages for a more advanced technological future, and to promote and develop Malaysia as a regional center of education excellence. Finally, the Plan called for the

promotion of lifelong learning (Ninth Malaysia Plan, 2006).

In line with the efforts to strengthen the capability and credibility of IHLs, the quality of academic personnel has been enhanced by encouraging more lecturers to pursue their studies at PhD level, training, and practical experience. Those assistants encourage young graduates to pursue their postgraduate and joined the private and public IHLs. Therefore, the generation Y becomes a pillar in IHLs in Malaysia. In the year 2020, there will be generation Y controlled the entire education industry.

Literature Review

Over the decades and in the ever challenging workforce and workplace environment, we have witness the birth of various types of generation. A workforce generation can be define as an identifiable group of workforce with similar age, culture, belief, approach, working styles, leadership and supervision in which has similar working objective. A generation, then, is a cohort of people that share similar social or historical experiences, which affect the way members view and interpret the world, and these interpretations have a relatively stable effect on their lives [5]. According to Bell and Narz, (2007) the baby boomers workforce, are starting to retire and been replaced the by next generation, generation X while there is an abundance of studies that concentrate on the differences between the two generations that dominated the management levels of organization, the baby boomers and generation X, empirically supported research into Generation Y has been somewhat limited to this point [6]. Therefore, the generation Y presents in the workforce in IHLs dramatically felt and impacted. This study is to explore the young academics in IHLs in sustaining and retraining.

Generation Y is also known as the 'connected' generation'. This means that they always keep in touch with one another, not just during work, but around the world as well. This is to ensure that they always stay in touch to keep up with the phase of work. In the IHLs generation Y workforce are people who develop and create the usage of new technologies in connecting and communication. For example, employees and employers communicate and handle meetings via the World Wide Web (WWW) which is the social media [7]. Martin (2005) supported that technology has shaped generation Y learning style and information delivery. Moreover, the abilities to social network with people across geographic borders and cultures have been enhanced the socialization. Therefore, the networks have created a good working environment which will be benefits academic, student, and intuitions.

Foscht et al (2009) pictured generation Y as MTV generation, echo boomers, boomlets or the Millennium Generation. Generation Y mould by Nitendo in which work environment expectations can be described using a video game as a metaphor, having civic purpose, possessing grand ambitions and optimistic about future and also globally and environmentally conscious. People

in this age group have been accustomed to using computers from early age and therefore make intensive use of electronics media. Research into their experiences as students in higher education, suggests that generation Y enter university with "very different learning backgrounds, experiences preferences, attitudes and skills sets" which call for different pedagogies and learning style strategies together with new forms of learning environment [8].

IHLs has synchronize more sophisticated technology into teaching materials, as it is necessity for generation Y to work in institution because they prefer to be advanced in their performance and also update themselves when it comes to E- learning materials.

The ability of this workforce to maximize their effectiveness at work by utilizing technology has made many to label them as "lazy". However, generation Y workers may need to demonstrate that they are working just as hard as everyone else, but perhaps simply performing the job more efficiently. By being able to demonstrate that technology contributes positively towards results at work, generation Y workforce will be able to achieve not just the organization's goals but also their own achievements. In higher learning institutions, the generation Y workforce needs to be provided with tech-savvy products such as the personal computers, internet accessibility, and also equipment that makes teaching easier and effectively. Thus, the result will be more quality teaching by the generation Y workforce, a new innovative way of teaching that could improve students' learning abilities, and also indirectly a way to retain the generation Y workforce at the workplace.

According to Junco and Mastrodicasa, (2007) expanded on the work of Howe and Strauss to include research-based information about the personality profiles of Millennials, especially as it relates to higher education. They conducted a large-sample (7,705) research study of college students and working adults. They found that generation Y college students and workforce, born from 1982-2003, was frequently in touch with others using technology at higher rates than people from other generations. In their survey, they found that 97% of these students owned a computer, 94% owned a cell phone, and 56% owned a MP3 player. They also found that student communication with their parents has increase an average of 1.5 times a day about a wide range of topics. Other findings revealed 76% of Generation Y workforce used instant messaging, 92% of those reported multitasking while IMing, 40% of them used television to get most of their news, and 34% of workforce surveyed used the Internet. The key argument here is that generation Y are very much into technology which will bring about changes into the workplace and the culture that they are in. Organizations that are current and use new technology in their workplace tend to attract more generation Y workforce whereby they are able to perform better and also create a pleasant atmosphere for them to work.

The last two decades the growth of education in Malaysia can be seen significantly. The demand for

young academicians has increased tremendously, thus, making the academic industry to face very similar challenges faced by other industry. According to Shaw & Fairhurst (2008), generation Y not only have various characteristics towards their entry into the workplace but paying attention on the importance of development programme such as influences of work environment preferences and the impact on work motivation. Generation Y also described as confident, independent and entrepreneurial and team oriented as a result of the way they grown up. Moreover, they get things done in their own way and seek for praise as such will create new state of challenges. Elkins J.M., McRitchie K., Scoones M. (2007) stated that the mission of the Y's is to play meaningful roles in meaningful work that helps others. They are forging a new youth ethic of teamwork and civic purpose. They will offer loyalty and expect it in return. They want to achieve a work/life balance. They believe in the future and see themselves as cutting edge. Generation Y lives in the moment. The Y's want immediacy and they have access to the tools that will fill that need. At the same time, they want to establish relationships and have people taken the time to get to know them. They want to be respected for what they bring to the table and they want to know when they have done a good job and when they haven't.

Twenge and Campbell (2008) noted that generation Y has high self-esteem, narcissism and decline in social rules helps to explain the why the generation Y are known as "job hopper". It is further commented by Twenge and Campbell, (2008) that with narcissism on the rise, more and more young people will at least perceive that they have many talents. In view of this, generation Y with high value of narcissism will have more difficult decision to make when it comes to choosing a right and meaningful career.

Generation Y typically motivated by a desire to enhance professional skills in order to remain marketable, therefore generation Y graduates concern more of the need for constant skill development. Moreover, the studies from Shaw and Fairhurst (2008) reveals that McDonald's restaurants on the staff under category generation Y shows 90% high level engagement because of career opportunity for development and promotion. As such, development programs allowing generation Y engaged and loyal to their respective organization.

Elson & Green (2006) has observed that the generation Y will move on only after a year at work. This is for them to gain prior experience and knowledge before they move on to another higher learning institute for further career advancement. Tandukar (2005) further argues that a commitment to one employer by generation Y will not prevent them from continuing to ensure there is not a better option somewhere else. Even if they like their position and role in the higher institution, this would not mean that the generation Y is loyal to their employers. When a crisis occurs, the generation Y would not stay and help out with the crisis. Instead, they will be the first to walk out from it. What happens next?

Generation Y is also portrayed as wanting to achieve greater success more quickly than the previous generations. This means that there is no sincerity and loyalty in the work they do. If they feel the work on the institution is not giving enough benefit, the generation Y will not hesitate to quit even within 24 hours (Shaik, 2010). Generation Y is interested in flexi-work environment which is opposed to the traditional working hour. By wanting to be more socially responsible and make a greater impact on themselves, generation Y workforce will be more likely to adopt a balance approach in work and as well as in their life.

However, Sheahan (2005) pointed that generation Y as a 'Stimulus Junkies'. The employers need to ensure that the Generation Y is always entertained in the workplace as such activities are developed to accommodate their needs. The generation Y are also said to be more optimistic and confident compared to the generation X and the Baby Boomers. This ensures that the generation Y in the higher learning institute will help in building and creating reputation for the institutions. This generation relies less on other's opinion in their decision-making process. They are critical thinkers who can come up with more innovate and creative ideas which indeed help in building the 'brand' of the IHLs.

Generation Y is the well educated workforce and partly because of the system and opportunities developed by the baby boomers generation. Generation Y workers believe their work should have a meaning. Moreover, these workers are seeking greater fulfillment and are only willing to work hard at jobs that provide it. Generation Y workers are more mobile, making it easier to move from one employer to another if they are unhappy with work. They were also raised during a period of world economy crisis and many have witnessed the heartache and frustration their parents felt and they do not want to experience that emotion. These may explain why generation Y are planning to start their own businesses.

Generation Y is also known to be multitalented, socially aware, demanding and resourceful in the workforce. This makes them to be different from the Baby Boomers and the generation X. In view of this, it is important for IHLs to formulate an effective structure of compensation and benefits packages to fulfill expectation of generation Y as they are known for their multitalented and resourceful workforce. Generation Y has grown up getting rewards for their good behavior and they are expecting the same return in their working environment. Since in their childhood the rewards have been a "tap on the back" or encouraging words. Generation Y workforce are expecting to receive a competitive salary and monetary benefits such as university tuition fees reimbursement. As such it is important that structure of compensation and benefits is developed and it is acknowledge by the generation Y as reward and as generation Y is considered as be an asset to an organization, if they were rewarded they will play a vital role in helping the institution to be world recognized.

In addition generation Y is a self reliant and independent because they were likely to be brought up in a single parent family and a family where both parents worked. Therefore they were force to fend for themselves from an early age and organization compensation and benefits are important to attract and retain generation Y. Gherson, (2001) argued that generation Y employees are behaving more like investors than assets, and are seeking the best return on their investment of time and energy with an employer". This resulted, the organizations must offer an appealing compensation package to attract and retain generation Y employees. A compensation package is a combination of different rewards and can include tangible rewards such as pay and intangible rewards, such as learning and development [9].

A psychological contract is the system of beliefs about obligation between the employee and the organization as such it is vital for organization to honor what is stipulated in the employment agreement. Whether we are involved in a leadership role of generation Y, a quality outcome is dependent on our understanding of them. Once we have a foundational grasp of their characteristics, communication styles and social attitudes, we will be well equipped to effectively impact this enormous and emerging generation in education industry. In addition, Generation Y appreciates authenticity- if what they are promised is not met, they leave. What they are promised is an interesting concept. Often what is written in the employee's contract is different from the employee's psychological contract [10] It is further concluded that individual differences like self esteem and narcissism can impacted the formation of contract as well as contributed to the perception that the organization has breached it. Incongruence in the expectations of the employer and employee can lead to perceptions that one or more obligations of the employer are unfulfilled [11, 12].

The working environment is very important for retention of generation Y. For generation Y the environment workplace is made of two elements that is the physical and the social environment. As such, retention program to be effective organization need to distinguish the compensation package to be awarded to the employee base on social environment need of Generation Y. Further argued that Generation Y does not wish to stay at the same position for a long time, instead they want change and development, preferably rapid. Generation Y tend to be aggressive and ambitious in their career growth, they are eager to achieve it in a very short span regardless their performance warrant it [13, 14]. That the only way to grow is up is no longer true, there are many career options available for an employee (Kaye & Jordan-Evans 2002). In recognizing this, it is important that the organization continuously monitor the behavior change of the employee in order to solve their career concerns and eventually to retain them. Organization should able to communicate with employees and evaluate their grievances to the organization goals. Kaye & Jordan-Evans (2002) describe the career conversation

as a five step dialogue between a manager and employee which will enable both party to express their achievements and desires. This can help clarify what is an outstanding issues arise between them.

Once in the labour market, generation Y is perceived to be high maintenance [15] in which generation Y are typically motivated by their career needs to enhance their professional skills and abilities in order to remain competitive with excellent value added to their KSAO's. Arguably, the reduction in lifetime employment has made generation Y graduates more aware of the need for constant skill development and updating and as a consequence more likely to play a proactive role in their career planning and execution [5]. While the generation Y graduates are constantly upgrading and enhancing their skills and knowledge, Twenge & Campbell (2008) have pointed out that today's young adults have grown up in a world of opportunities and have been told "you can do anything." This leads to a lot of options-perhaps too many options. Rysiew et al. (1999) found that when gifted graduates possess many vocational interests and abilities, they have more difficult time choosing one career path to pursue.

In reviewing the needs of the generation Y, King (2003) suggested that whilst employability is of major concern, many graduates do expect to develop it within the conventional organizational career model. Baruch (2004) further concludes that generation Y perceived challenges and meaningful assignments to be far more important for their self-development than lifelong employment. The understanding of generation Y on learning can be perceived as a generation whom are constantly seeks for self development and pursue in personal growth. They are characterized not only by a desire to have a portable career but even greater degrees of personal flexibility, professional satisfaction and immediacy, desire to learn and continuous learning, as a way of life [16].

As organization invests large sums for training and development in generation Y employees, there is an evidence that suggest that such programs may not necessarily will benefits the employers or meet the expectations of generation Y [17]. To achieve success, training and development should be a continuous program for generation Y as this generation would like to continue updating their knowledge. Awareness of types of training is vital; as such special training and development are created for this special generation. This kind of training is usually planned by the management, and could be individualized to a group of employees [18]. An organization can increase its capability in retaining its talent generation Y employee by offering multiple growth opportunity. Once we have a foundational grasp of their characteristics, communication styles and social attitudes, we will be well equipped to effectively impact this enormous and emerging generation in workforce world. In conjunction, higher institutions will face a difficult task of providing competitive compensation and benefit packages to employees in a cost effective manner [19, 20]. Attracting and retaining employees with knowledge, skills, abilities in order to effectively perform

their jobs and trying to have the organization remain profitable and it is also a challenge for the higher institutions [21].

Implication

In today's era of knowledge management, generation Y hungrily seek to develop their talents and consider each job as an opportunity to add to their added value. Indeed, generation Y is well aware that it is their own desires to venture out for more opportunities. Therefore, having to develop a strong sense and mastering in information technology by this community perhaps can be advantages in accessing a professional network. This desire and ability can lead to work as a team and may not impair the ability to conduct a successful working relationship. Generation Y will move forward in utilizing the sophisticated technology to their advantage and leaving behind the other previous generations.

As the world engages in the ever evolving phase of globalization, change is fast becoming inevitable. Corporations need to make changes to the way they conduct their businesses and more importantly find ways to hire and retain talented employees particularly the generation Y to further expand their businesses. This is vital as generation Y are becoming the dominant in the workplace.

The compensation is the key for generation Y as they are data driven. Generation Y have strong ideas of what they should be paid, based on the information gathered from various websites. However, monetary compensation is not the only factor that motivates generation Y whereas they also seek engagement or better relationships in the workplace. Moreover, generation Y is interested in social connectivity as such workplace flexibility in the workplace is essential. To respond to the demands of this growing segment of the workforce, employers may need to create novel compensation structures, but at the same time employers have to maintain fairness with other employee groups [14].

Compensation does not end merely with monetary gains yet must include more to it as well as benefits that the generation Y perceive to be vital. Generation Y does not stand still, meaning keeping this group constantly motivated and loyal to a particular organization is a challenge. Generation Y no longer yearn for good work appreciations or achievement awards as the previous generations. Their baseline requirements are practical, simple and straightforward: Money, Benefits, and Growth [14]. In this case, a proper structural compensation and benefits package need to be evaluated by any higher institution intending to lure more generation Y workforce into their workplace.

In the future, IHLs will be one that is markedly different than what we see today. Generation Y has a much different set of expectation and needs than established workers, therefore generation Y require a different management style. Therefore the need for management to adapt a phased change in their management style is required. Indeed the management must find the right mix

of policy and structure to retain their loyalty. For instance the management need to change policies allow for flex-time, telecommuting, volunteer service and career incentives that permit talented competent candidates to advance quickly within the IHLs ranks. Twenge and Campbell (2008) further supported that organizations and managers who understand these deeper generational differences will be more successful in the long run as they manage their young employees. As such finding ways to accommodate differences in some cases and rectify it to best interest of organization and the young employee will ensure the great success for both.

Conclusion

This study contributes to the generation Y literature in a number of ways. First, this study highlighted that element of the generation Y in the IHLs. In today's IHLs employed young graduates and this group have different work values and characteristics. In other hand employer seeks more talented, skills and knowledge people which generation Y equipped. This matches what they are expected and fit with what generation Y has.

Second, the study shows the effect of generation Y in IHLs. Generation Y has extraordinary skills such as IT savvy, communication, networking, individual talents, creative, career orientated and ambitious. Those points have influenced the employers to recruit and retain them in the today institutions.

Finally this study highlights the contribution of generation Y in the IHLs is vital and will be dominate force. As such the employer should understand the nature and their expectation. The Human resource department has burden to observing the trend of generation Y to balance up the expectation, challenges, results and supports to their employees to produce high level performance .Cooper and Clarke, (2003) stated that despite generation Y desire to have continuous constructive feedback this issue of rust-out highlights the importance of creating higher performance environment.

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