# INTERGENERATIONAL KNOWLEDGE WORKERS IN INDONESIAN SERVICE INDUSTRY: A KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT VIEW

**IkaTriana, Bina Nusantara University**
**Dewi, Bina Nusantara University**
**Michael Aaron Tuori, Bina Nusantara University**
**Maria Grace Herlina, Bina Nusantara University**

## ABSTRACT

*The generational change has had an impact on the business world. Numerous studies show that intergenerational differences affect organizational success due to their disparate values and characteristics. This study aims to compare academic knowledge workers' intergenerational knowledge management behaviors. As is well established, education is a service sector that relies heavily on knowledge as an intangible commodity to survive. The method of the Rasch Model used to validate the research instruments and to analyze the data obtained. Rasch Model Analysis revealed that Gen Y knowledge workers exhibit a greater propensity for knowledge management. The findings suggest there are no intergenerational differences in knowledge management behavior statistically. Therefore, it is possible to establish a community of practice to exchange tacit knowledge among knowledge workers. Another strategy is to foster intergenerational cooperation through the development of a joint project. It has the potential to facilitate intergenerational learning.*

**Keywords:** Knowledge Management, Intergenerational Knowledge Workers.

## INTRODUCTION

Numerous types of research have shown that age-related factors affect organizational success. Additionally, distinct generations possess distinct beliefs, traits, habits, and behaviors (Reza & Sarraf, 2019; Simic, 2019).The term Millennial refers to Generation Y (or the Millennial generation). They are members of the generational transition generation; thus, they have become more technologically and computer-savvy (Reza & Sarraf, 2019; Simic, 2019).

Organizations made up of individuals with various skills. The two types of knowledge are tacit and explicit knowledge. Explicit knowledge refers to tangible business assets such as documents, processes, databases, and reports. These assets are easily transferable, precisely defined, and shared conveniently. At the same time, knowledge acquired over time colloquially referred to as implicit/tacit knowledge. This form of knowledge is more challenging to capture, communicate, or express (Mohajan, 2019; Sharma & Jaiswal, 2018).This study aims to compare the intergenerational knowledge management behaviors of academic knowledge workers. As is well established, education is a service sector that is highly reliant on knowledge as an intangible asset to survive.

# LITERATURE REVIEW

## Intergenerational Knowledge Worker

Karl Mannheim was a pioneer of the generation concept. He characterized a generation as a group of people who are all of the same age. They share a common history, culture, and circumstances, and therefore share similar ideas and thoughts. Consequently, it is critical to foster a diverse workforce for the organization to achieve its objectives, including knowledge transfer (Simic, 2019; Statnickė, et al., 2019).

A multigenerational workforce expected to acquire and share organizational expertise. It is critical for the organization's long-term sustainability (Simic, 2019; Stevanin et al., 2020; Toro, Labrador-Fernández, & De Nicolás, 2019). The demographic indicators emphasize the importance of intergenerational cooperation. They need an environment that fosters mutual partnership and intergenerational learning, described as the transmission of knowledge from one generation to the next (Gerpott, et al., 2017).

Generation X defined by its self-reliance, independence, and carefree attitude. These individuals make their efforts, are self-sufficient, and have their distinct approach to the company. However, they require that work involve activities that include significant personal or emotional fulfilment in addition to economic value and lifelong learning. Whereas Generation Y is the digital generation, as shown by mobile phones, video games, and experience with social media. They are predisposed to optimism, realism, and open-mindedness. Millennial embraces diversity and are result-oriented. They are always on the lookout for solutions at work.

Millennialsare better suited to operate in a new empowered world as long as their prospects and challenges are abundant (Simic, 2019; Stevanin et al., 2020; Toro et al., 2019; Veingerl Čič & Šarotar Žižek, 2017).Every attempt made to ensure that knowledge is transmitted successfully from one generation to the next. The perspectives of generations involved in sharing tacit knowledge are not always consistent, often varying with age (Bidian & Max Evans, 2018; Simic, 2019).

## Knowledge Management Behavior

Knowledge is collecting perceptions, comprehension, learning, memory, and insights into how knowledge and expertise integrated. An organization comprises individuals, each with their unique ability to add value (Sharma & Jaiswal, 2018). Capability described as an experience, ability, know-how, capacity for learning, adaptability, and changeability (Mohajan, 2019). The process of knowledge management often referred to as product creation, decision-making, and business adaptation integrated (Gerpott et al., 2017).

A knowledge worker is a significant asset in the knowledge economy. Creatively solving problems requires knowledge workers to be perpetually on the lookout for new information (Jia & Fan, 2014). As a result, knowledge-based companies must prioritize developing team skills. In terms of human resources, knowledge management enables the generation to disseminate relevant knowledge to the appropriate personat the proper time (Ibragimova et al., 2017).

Knowledge management is a set of knowledge-based processes is consistent with knowledge management action. Knowledge-based activities include organizational habits and strategies, formal knowledge, human capabilities, and experiences. Organizations generate knowledge-based activity that makes good use of people's abilities, knowledge, talents, ideas,

and commitments. Incorporating these into the organization's information tools would improve its ability to achieve its objectives (Shamim et al., 2017). Knowledge-based activities enable the sharing, interaction, and addition of value to an organization's data, information, knowledge, and wisdom (Stevanin et al., 2020).

This study examines the patterns of behavior associated with knowledgecreation, sharing, and renewal. The research defines knowledge management behaviors (KMB) as a set of activities involving knowledge creation, dissemination and renewal (Razi & Habibullah, 2017). Based on the theoretical review, nineteen indicators developed to measure knowledge-based activities. In this perspective, generations involved in the transmission of tacit knowledge have divergent views, often varying with age; therefore, the research hypotheses proposed as follows.

### Hypotheses

***$H_1$:*** *There is a significant difference in knowledge management behavioramong academic knowledge workers based on an intergenerational view.*

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study aims to make intergenerational comparisons of academic knowledge workers. The research conducted in a higher education institution in Greater Jakarta, Indonesia. The study scheduled to conclude in March 2021. In response to the findings of the literature review, the KMB questionnaire created. While this study included 143 academic knowledge workers, only 104 responses are appropriate for further analysis. Female knowledge workers make up 51% of the workforce, while male knowledge workers make up 69%. 56% of them are gen X, and 44% are gen Y.

They hold a master's degree in 66% of cases and a doctoral degree in approximately 34% of cases. The Rash Model Approach used to evaluate the results, including the validity and reliability tests of the research instrument. The Rasch Model implemented in Winstep version 3.73. The Rasch Model is a statistical technique for converting ordinal responses of Likert rating scales to interval values. (Miftahuddin et al., 2020). Besides, it aids in accurately predicting respondents' answers to all objects. The Rasch Model converts item scores to a collection of ordinal values (measures) referred to as "unit of incentive logarithms" (logit) (Miftahuddin et al., 2020). The research instrument is a three-dimensional assessment of knowledge management behavior. These include knowledge creation, knowledge dissemination, and knowledge renewal. Rasch Model reveals that the Cronbach's alpha for measuring research instrument reliability is 0.90, indicating an excellent interaction between the items and the respondents' responses (Sumintono, 2014). The person's accuracy in their responses is 0.86, suggesting a consistent reaction of the respondents. The accuracy of the test item reliability is 0.94, meaning that the research instrument's items are also outstanding. The values demonstrate that respondents' answers are highly consistent, and the elements are of excellent quality for measuring the research variables (Sumintono, 2014). However, the validity test results indicate that all instrument items accepted since nooutliers as the logit values are below1.5 logit (Sumintono, 2014).

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The study focuses on the knowledge management behaviors of the academic knowledge worker. As illustrated in Figure 1, 21% of academicknowledge worker have always performed knowledge management behavior, 24% complete it often, 40% perform it occasionally, and 15% achieve it rarely.

The Rasch Model indicates that Gen Y knowledge workers are higher in their knowledge management behavior (3.12logit). The logit value is higher than the total mean logit (3.09 logit) at the 0.05 stage of significance. Furthermore, Gen X knowledge workers are lower in their knowledge management behaviour (3.07 logit), as mentioned by a lower logit value than the mean logit value (3.09 logit) at the 0.05 level of significance (Sumintono, 2014).However, the research hypotheses were rejected *"there is no significant difference in knowledge management behaviours between Gen X knowledge workers with those from Gen Y"*(probability value 0.859 > 0.05) at a significance level of 0.05.The results of this study corroborate previous research indicating that demographic indicators emphasize the value of intergenerational cooperation and learning, which described as the transmission of knowledge from one generation to the next (Gerpott et al., 2017; Goriup & Šoba, 2015).

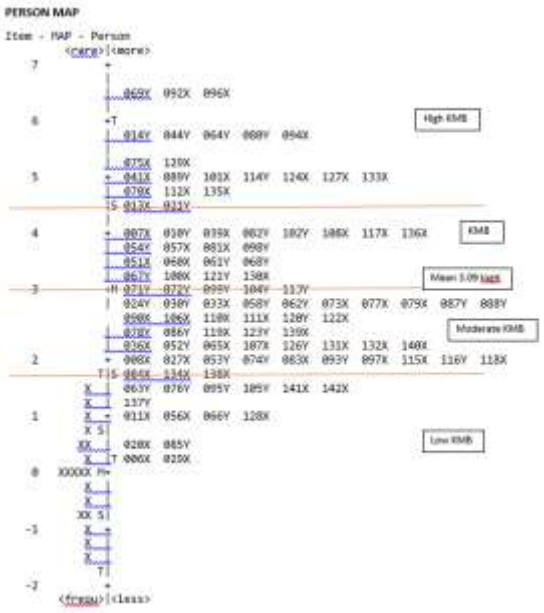


**FIGURE 1**
**THE KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT BEHAVIORAMONG KNOWLEDGE WORKERS**

Additionally, it confirms previous research that generation Y are prone to optimism, realism, and open-mindedness. The millennial generation is tolerant of difference. They are outcome-driven, and they are always on the lookout for work-related solutions (Saileela & Thiruchanuru, 2018; Simic, 2019; Statnickė et al., 2019; Stevanin et al., 2020; Toro et al., 2019).

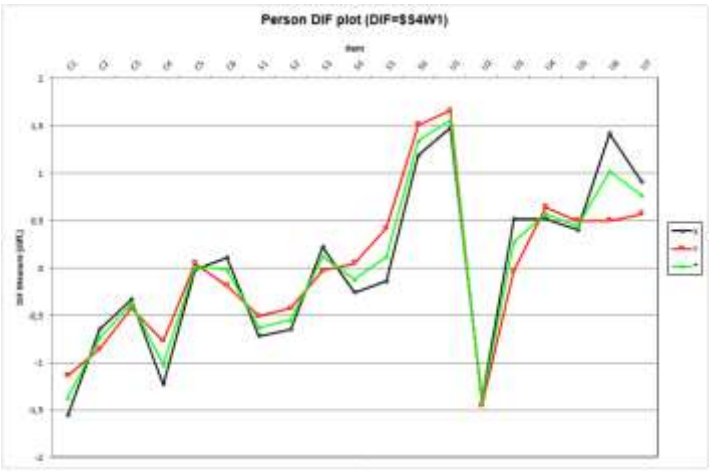


**FIGURE 2**
**THE KNOWLEDGE WORKERS INTERGENERATIONAL COMPARISON**

Furthermore, this finding explains as whole academic knowledge workers are willing to improve themselves and gather information to comprehend an issue and make decisions. Yet, they are less interested in benchmarking, storing knowledge for future usage, and exchanging past experiences for renewal. Gen X knowledge workers, in particular, enjoy recycling past experiences for knowledge renewal and collaborating on the creation of new knowledge. Meanwhile, Gen Y is more interested in benchmarking and honing their specialized skills.

## CONCLUSION

The shifting generation has had an impact on the business world. Numerous studies demonstrate that intergenerational disparities affect organizational performance because they have varying beliefs and characteristics. Generation X retains their sense of cooperation, their capacity for learning new skills, and their adaptability. Though Generation Y is technologically savvy, they are more innovative in the workplace.

Rasch Model Analysis uncovered intergenerational differences in knowledge management behaviour even though the difference is not statically significant. This result explains as whole academic knowledge workers can collect information to comprehend a situation and make decisions. They are, however, less concerned with benchmarking, archiving knowledge for potential use, or sharing past encounters for renewal. Gen X knowledge workers, in particular, value recycling previous experiences and collaborating on the development of new knowledge. Gen Y, on the other hand, is more concerned with benchmarking and honing their advanced abilities. It is possible to build a community of practice where knowledge workers can exchange tacit knowledge. Another way is creating intergenerational collaboration through a collaborative project. It can support intergenerational learning.

The research has some drawbacks as a result of the limited sample size. It would be preferable to study knowledge workers' behaviors across industries. Additionally, future research may include additional variables such as leadership and other demographic variables and a different statistical technique such as inferential statistics.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to Mr. BambangSumintono, Ph.D, who taught us about Rasch Model Analysis and gave us opportunities to practice more using the Winstep software version 3.73 in Rasch Model Analysis.

## REFERENCES

Bidian, C., & Max Evans, M. (2018). Examining inter-generational knowledge sharing and technological preferences. In *Proceedings of the European Conference on Knowledge Management*, ECKM, 1, 95–103.

Gerpott, F.H., Lehmann-Willenbrock, N., & Voelpel, S.C. (2017). A phase model of intergenerational learning in organizations. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, *16*(2), 193-216.

Goriup, J., & Bezenšek, V. A. (2015). Knowledge management for knowledge society and intergenerational education. *International Journal of Management, Knowledge and Learning*, *4*(1), 109-126.

Ibragimova, B., Ryan, S., Windsor, J., & Prybutok, V. (2017). Understanding the Antecedents of Knowledge Sharing: An Organizational Justice Perspective. Informing Science: *The International Journal of an Emerging Transdiscipline, 15*, 183–205.

Jia, J., & Fan, L. (2008). Research framework of human resource development based on competency about knowledge enterprise. *International Journal of Business and Management*, *3*(11), 107-111.

Miftahuddin, A., Hermanto, B., Raharja, J., & Chan, A. (2020). City Brand Attractiveness on Tourism using Rasch Model Approach. *International Journal of Supply Chain Management (IJSCM)*, *9*(2), 150-156.

Mohajan, H.K. (2019). Knowledge Sharing among Employees in Organizations. *Journal of Economic Development, Environment and People*, *8*(1), 52-61.

Razi, M.J.M., & Habibullah, M. (2017). Determinants of knowledge management behavior among academics. ICIT 2017 - *8th International Conference on Information Technology, Proceedings*, 741–745.

Rehman, M., Mahmood, A.K.B., Salleh, R., & Amin, A. (2011). Review of factors affecting knowledge sharing behavior. In *International Conference on E-business, Management and Economics IPEDR* 3, 223-227

Sarraf, A. R. A. (2019). Managing Multigenerational Organizations. *Economic Alternatives*, (1), 93-105.

Saileela, K., & Thiruchanuru, S. (2018). *Capturing the Nature of Generations at Workplace*.

Shamim, S., Cang, S., & Yu, H. (2019). Impact of knowledge oriented leadership on knowledge management behaviour through employee work attitudes. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *30*(16), 2387-2417.

Sharma, K., & Jaiswal, N. (2018). Human Capital Management: An Emerging Human Resource Management Practice. *International Journal of Economics and Management Studies, 5*, 37–42.

Simic, K. (2019). The impact of generational diversity on organizational culture within the hotel industry. 1–54.

Statnickė, G., Savanevičienė, A., & Šakys, I. (2019). The relationship between work engagement of different generations and mobile learning. *Acta Universitatis Agriculturae et Silviculturae Mendelianae Brunensis*, *67*(6), 1627-1642.

Stevanin, S., Voutilainen, A., Bressan, V., Vehviläinen-Julkunen, K., Rosolen, V., & Kvist, T. (2020). Nurses' generational differences related to workplace and leadership in two European countries. *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, *42*(1), 14-23.

Toro, S.D., Labrador-Fernández, J., & De Nicolás, V.L. (2019). Generational diversity in the workplace: psychological empowerment and flexibility in Spanish companies. *Frontiers in Psychology, 10*, 1953.

Veingerl Čič, Ž., & Šarotar Žižek, S. (2017). Intergenerational Cooperation at the Workplace from the Management Perspective. *Naše Gospodarstvo/Our Economy*, *63*, 47–59.