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## Research Article

### Investigating Organizational Loyalty in Maritime Companies among Generation X and Millennials Using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling

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#### ABSTRACT

This study aimed to study job security, social stimulation, and opportunity to use one's abilities as factors that influenced Gen X (ages 36-54) and Millennial (ages 21 to 35) employees' organizational loyalty as part of a particular organization. Understanding organizational culture is crucial when examining loyalty among Gen X and Millennial seafarers in maritime companies. It has been recognized as a vital factor contributing to the success of business operations. Recently, many initiatives have been implemented to promote workforce development. Employers recognize that their workforce directly affects financial performance, and understanding organizational loyalty across generations is crucial for ensuring this. Sixty seafarers from three Philippine Manning agencies were asked to answer surveys and participate in follow-up interviews as needed to investigate the variables. Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) and multigroup analysis (PLS-MGA) were used to analyze the gathered respondent data. The findings indicated that social stimulation and the opportunity to use one's abilities were both groups' most significant predictors of loyalty. The subsequent PLS-MGA showed that job security was particularly a significant predictor for Gen X employees, while it was not a significant predictor for Millennials. The implications show that predictors of loyalty can change depending on the age of the seafarers. Therefore, it is recommended that leaders of the different Philippine manning agencies develop customized strategies for cultivating loyalty from Gen X and millennial employees. must ensure that employees understand a clear path for growth and development, and they should actively pursue these plans. Moreover, management can enhance social connections by forming partnerships and collaborating with maritime stakeholders. This approach can foster positive interactions among the various marine stakeholders.

**Keywords:** *Organizational loyalty, Job security, Social stimulation, Opportunity to use one's abilities, Partial least squares structural equation modeling*

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## **Introduction**

The manning and shipping industry has grown significantly over the years and has played an essential role in the economic progress of the Philippines. The country is considered the best and largest supplier of crew to the global fleet, according to the Philippine Association of Manning Agencies (PAMAS). Filipino seafarers have become crucial to the country's Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs). Remittances from OFWs serve as a significant source of US dollar earnings, which stabilizes the balance of payments, prevents foreign exchange instability, and acts as a buffer against drastic devaluations of the Philippine Peso that could lead to inflation. Politicians have referred to OFWs, including seafarers, as the "new heroes" in recognition of their economic role. The Philippines remains a major provider of seafarers to the global labor market. Global shipping corporations are consistently striving to reduce costs, streamline crew management, and comply with international labor and environmental standards. This has led to an increase in the diversity of multinational crews, with sailors coming from various countries around the world. According to Amante (2003), the Philippine economy is characterized by high unemployment, widespread poverty, and low national income, prompting many Filipinos to seek employment opportunities abroad.

Ship management, as defined by Lindgren and Nilsson (2011), is the administration and employment of seafarers by an organization. The MARINA-accredited manning agencies, where sailors report for duty, are examples of ship management. These organizations often employ and oversee the seafarers who will be assigned to various local and foreign vessels. According to Lindgren and Nilsson (2011), they require thousands of motivated and experienced mariners from diverse nations and cultural backgrounds. Additionally, they support their mariners and their families by generating employment opportunities, which benefits society as a whole. They will benefit in the long term from having the assurance that their seafarers are extremely capable, skilled, and appropriate for the roles they will be handling on board (Lindgren & Nilsson, 2011).

To enhance their skills beyond the STCW '95 standards, manning agencies that represent foreign principals require all crew members to participate in training and seminars at various MARINA-accredited Maritime Training Centers. In the late 1980s, the goal of hiring seafarers evolved into a human resource management project as foreign principals started establishing subsidiary offices in our nation. According to the agreements between management agencies and their overseas principals, several responsibilities previously assigned to the HR function are now part of the total expected service. The POEA currently grants licenses and authorizations to more than 406 shipmanning companies to hire Filipino seafarers (Richter, 2016).

In describing the Filipino seafarers, they continue to be an important source of financial support for the national government and their families. According to the MIDP for 2019–2028, between 2012 and 2017, they sent an average of over \$5.0 billion annually, which accounted for more than 25% of all OFW remittances. This amount was increasing at a rate of 3.3% annually. However, in 2017, there was a decrease of over \$1.1 billion in remittances, likely due to the government's ban on land-based OFWs working in conflict-affected countries to ensure their safety. Despite this, the number of Filipino seafarers continued to rise in various roles and across different boats in the following years. The Department of Tourism (DOT) has identified them as the most prominent nationality employed by various maritime transportation businesses worldwide (Philippines: Maritime Industry Development Plan (MIDP) 2019–2028, 2018).

When exploring organizational loyalty among Gen X and Millennial seafarers in maritime companies, it is crucial to understand organizational culture. Organizational culture has been identified as a critical factor in the success of business activities. This is because the people who comprise the organization determine its purpose and drive what it is mandated to be (Paredes, 2023). An organization's human resources are considered one of the most important components in shaping workplace culture as it fosters trust among employees, leading to loyalty and commitment (Dinh et al.,

2024). In recent years, many initiatives and tactics have been put in place to promote workforce development, as employers believe that their workforce directly impacts financial performance. To achieve this, management must ensure that workers are incentivized to feel happy and motivated to come to work. It is more important than ever for companies to prioritize the happiness of their employees in their positions (Bruck et al., 2002). This aspect has been the focus of extensive international research and is linked to both cost and financial benefits, as well as personnel.

### **Research Questions**

1. Do factors such as *Job security*, *Social stimulation*, and *Opportunity to use one's abilities* practically impact organizational loyalty, as seen in the context of the Philippine Manning Agencies?
2. Is the significance of these factors differentiated across generational cohorts among seafarers working in Philippine Manning Agencies?
3. What demographic characteristics of these generational cohorts provide an explanation for the impact of these factors?

### **Review of Related Literature**

#### **Generation Y**

Born between 1980 and 1994, millennials, also known as Generation Y, are currently aged between 29 and 43. The most recent estimates from the National Statistics Office (NSO) indicate that there are approximately 25 million members of Generation Y in the Philippines. As they enter the workforce and begin earning money, millennials are poised to influence how businesses operate and shape the economy significantly. According to Goldman Sachs, Generation Y is one of the largest generations in history and is approaching its prime. Additionally, about 2 billion people, or 27% of the world's population, belong to this generational cohort (Mashel & Peterson, 2017).

#### **Generation Y in the Workforce & Job Security**

Millennials, also known as Generation Y, are individuals born between 1980 and 1994, making them currently aged 29 to 43. According to

the National Statistics Office's (NSO) most recent estimates, there are approximately 25 million millennials in the Philippines. As a significant segment of the population, millennials are now entering the workforce and beginning to earn income. This generation, one of the largest in history, is poised to enter its prime and will likely have a considerable impact on business operations and economic development (Goldman Sachs). Globally, Generation Y comprises around 2 billion people, accounting for 27% of the total population (Mashel & Peterson, 2017).

#### **Generation X**

Generation X, often referred to as Gen X, comprises individuals born between 1968 and 1979. This group is known as the "baby-bust generation" because it is smaller than the baby boomer generation that preceded it. According to Tolbize (2008), Karp et al. (2002) noted that many Gen Xers grew up as "latchkey kids," often feeling neglected during a time of social, familial, and financial upheaval. Common characteristics associated with this generation include a strong desire for work-life balance, ambition to surpass their predecessors (Jenkins, 2007; Karp et al., 2002), and a notable sense of independence, autonomy, and self-reliance.

#### **Attitudes towards Job Security**

Perceptions of work ethic may be a primary cause of intergenerational conflicts in the workplace. Jenkins (2007) notes that Generation X is often labeled as the "slacker" generation, with concerns that younger workers are unmotivated and only put in the minimum hours required. In contrast, Baby Boomers are frequently seen as workaholics who initiated this trend (The National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration Office of Diversity, 2006), while Traditionalists are regarded as the most diligent generation (Jenkins, 2007). Consequently, the belief that younger workers exert less effort than their older counterparts persists.

A cross-sectional study comparing individuals aged 27 to 40 and those aged 41 to 65, conducted in 1974 and again in 1999, indicated that both age groups placed less importance on feeling pride in their work in 1999 compared to

1974. This trend suggests that younger generations may not work as diligently as older ones. Between 1974 and 1999, the work values held by managers diminished for both age groups (Smola & Sutton, 2002). In 1999, members of both age groups were also less likely to believe that a person's worth was determined by their performance at work. Additionally, both age groups expressed in 1999 a diminished belief that hard work enhances one's character or that work should play a significant role in life (Smola & Sutton, 2002). Furthermore, compared to younger employees, older workers had a more realistic outlook on their jobs. It was hypothesized that employees might become less enthusiastic about their work due to a perceived lack of loyalty from their employers.

The idea that younger generations are becoming less ethical at work is not supported by information from other sources. Tang and Tzeng (1992), for example, discovered that reported work ethic declined with age, suggesting that younger workers had stronger work ethics than older ones. Similarly, according to the National Opinion Research Center Survey and the 1998 General Social Survey, 44% of workers between the ages of 18 and 24 said they would prefer to work longer hours, compared to 23% of workers across all age groups (Mitchell, 2001). This suggests that most younger workers were willing to work longer hours than the average worker. These results are not very new, though. Therefore, there is still a chance that the impressions regarding the fall in work ethics are true but have not been supported by research because there isn't enough of it.

There are many factors, beyond just generational differences, that influence employees' work ethics. For instance, an individual's work ethic can vary based on their income level, marital status, educational attainment, and whether they work full-time or part-time. Research has shown that an employee's work ethic can be stronger in those with lower educational qualifications. Additionally, full-time employees are generally less likely than part-time employees to endorse a Protestant work ethic, while married individuals and those with

lower incomes often report a stronger adherence to it (Tang & Tzeng, 1992).

Furthermore, the way people approach tasks can affect their self-perception regarding work effort. Baby Boomers, for example, are often seen as process-oriented, whereas younger generations tend to focus on results, regardless of where or when the work is done. Younger employees value productivity but prefer the flexibility to manage their own schedules and work at their own pace as long as they complete their tasks correctly and meet deadlines. However, current data does not adequately address this specific aspect.

### **Attitudes towards work**

One of the leading causes of generational disputes in the workplace is the perceived decline in work ethic. For instance, Generation X has often been labeled the "slacker" generation (Jenkins, 2007), with companies claiming that younger employees are not dedicated to their jobs and only do the minimum required hours. In contrast, Traditionalists are regarded as the most industrious generation (Jenkins, 2007), while Baby Boomers are often characterized as workaholics who initiated this trend (The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of Diversity, 2006). In reality, it is a common misconception that younger workers exert less effort than their older counterparts.

Whether the younger generations do not work as hard as previous ones is debatable; a cross-sectional comparison of 27 to 40-year-olds versus 41 to 65-year-olds in 1974 and 1999 indicated that both age groups felt that it was less important that a worker feel a sense of pride in one's work in 1999 than in 1974. In both age groups, work values among managers declined between 1974 and 1999 (Smola & Sutton, 2002). Both age groups were also less likely in 1999 to indicate that they believed that how a person did his or her job was indicative of this individual's worth. In 1999, both age groups were also less likely to believe that work should be an important part of life or that working hard made one a better person (Smola & Sutton, 2002). Furthermore, older employees had a less idealized view of work than younger workers did. Indeed, it was postulated that af-

ter witnessing the lack of employer loyalty toward employees, the latter consequently developed a less idealized view of work.

Other sources of evidence do not support the claim that there is a decline in work ethics among younger generations. For instance, Tang and Tzeng (1992) found that as age increased, reported work ethic decreased, indicating that younger workers reported higher work ethics than older workers. Similarly, the 1998 General Social Survey, National Opinion Research Center Survey indicated that 44% of those aged 18 to 24 indicated that they would choose to spend more time at work, compared to 23% of workers of all ages (Mitchell, 2001), indicating that most younger workers were willing to try to work more, more so than the average worker. However, these findings are not very recent. The possibility that the perceptions about the decline in work ethics are accurate, but simply unsubstantiated by research due to lack of research in the area therefore remains.

Nevertheless, numerous factors beyond generational factors affect the work ethics of employees. For instance, work ethic varies with education level, whether a person works full-time or part-time, income level, and marital status. The lower the level of education of an employee, the higher their work ethic has been found to be. People with full-time jobs were found to be less likely to endorse a protestant work ethic than people with part-time jobs, and people with low incomes and those who were married tended to report stronger protestant work ethic (Tang & Tzeng, 1992).

The perception of how hard one works may also be associated with how individuals themselves approach tasks as well. For instance, boomers have often been characterized as being process-oriented, while younger generations are being results-focused, irrespective of where and when the task is done. While younger workers focus on high productivity, they may be happier with the flexibility of completing a task at their own pace and managing their own time, as long as they get the job done right and by the deadline. However, current empirical evidence does not address this particular point.

Effectively managing human resources is essential for the success of businesses in the

maritime sector, particularly when it comes to seafarers. Striking a balance between meeting operational requirements and ensuring employees have the right qualifications can be challenging (Suprayitno & Husein Umar, 2020). To foster a healthy level of organizational loyalty among employees, it's important for human resources to align with organizational goals. This underscores the significance of organizational loyalty in the maritime industry. To better understand how to cultivate loyalty within this sector, various factors have been examined, including trust, the influence of human resource management (HRM), job motivation, and work-related stress (Suprayitno & Husein Umar, 2020).

In the maritime sector, higher levels of organizational loyalty have been linked to work motivation (Bhattacharya, 2015; Ayap & Macalalad, 2016). Just as motivation levels can vary based on workplace circumstances, they may also differ due to demographic factors such as age or significant life events.

## Hypotheses and Framework

The literature mentioned above suggests that organizational loyalty among seafarers in these maritime manning agencies is most influenced by factors such as job security, social stimulation, and the opportunity to utilize one's abilities. Based on the research, the following hypotheses are suggested:

*H1:* Job security has a significant positive effect on organizational loyalty.

*H2:* Social stimulation has a significant positive effect on organizational loyalty.

*H3:* Opportunity to use one's abilities significantly positively affects organizational loyalty.

To test these hypotheses, partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) was commenced using the SmartPLS 3.0 software (Ringle et al., 2015). Figure 1 diagrams the inner and outer structural model, represented by the discussed constructs as latent variables with reflective indicators. This research conducted a PLS-SEM multigroup analysis comparing Gen X and millennial employees to uncover new insights.

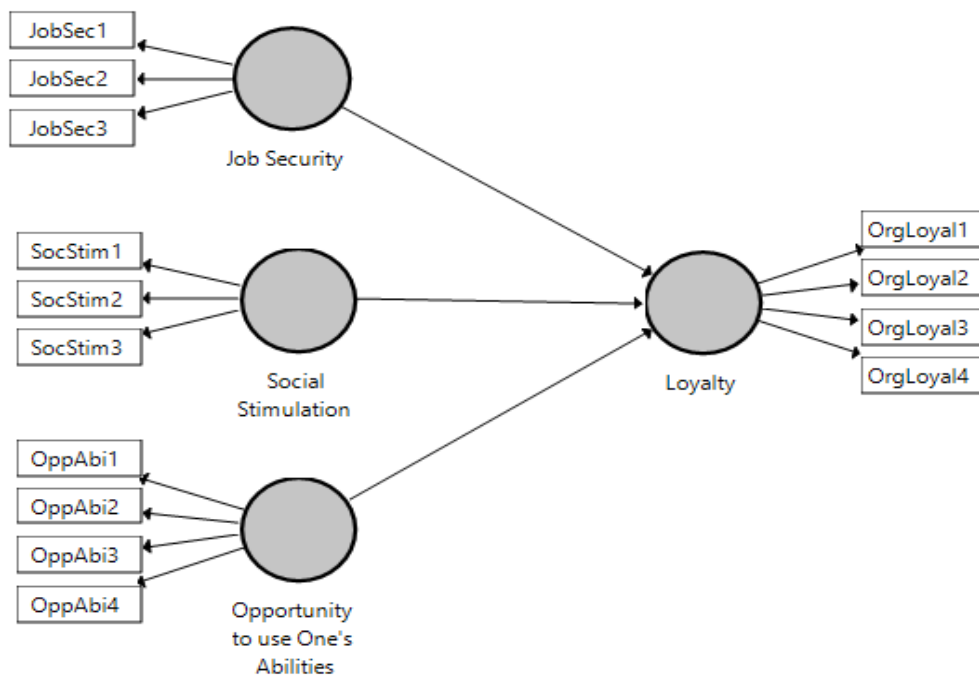


Figure 1. Proposed structural equation model of organizational loyalty

## Methodology

The researchers used a set of questions taken from existing literature to evaluate the job satisfaction and organizational loyalty of Filipino seafarers. Job satisfaction, according to the research, comes from feeling secure in one's position, being able to engage socially, which helps in analyzing outcomes, and having the opportunity to utilize their skills in their work. Three job security indicators were adopted based on the Job Security Index (JSI) developed by Hellgren et al., 1999. Three social stimulation indicators were drawn from the research of Allen and Meyer, 1990. Four indicators assessing the opportunity to use one's abilities were taken from the research of Judge and Bono, 2001. Additionally, four indicators for measuring organizational loyalty were adapted from Meyer and Allen's Organizational Commitment Scale. The questionnaire also included demographic items to help the researchers build profiles among respondents. Permission was acquired from the administrative management of the three manning agencies to distribute the questionnaires to the seafarers reporting to the organization. The questionnaires were handed to the different functional heads for dissemination upon their approval. Data

was collated and coded in preparation for data analysis. This study utilized the SmartPLS.

The researchers utilized Partial Least Squares - Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to examine the relationships between the variables and their alternative forms. This method enabled the researchers to provide valuable recommendations for manning agencies aiming to enhance the organizational loyalty of their seafarers across various age groups. In recent years, Multigroup Analysis (MGA) within PLS-SEM has notably expanded across different research fields, particularly in business. Recent studies in multiple areas have focused on comparing different groups due to their significant relevance. By doing so, researchers can identify differences among subgroups within the overall population that might be missed when only analyzing the entire sample (Matthews, 2017).

To determine the minimum sample size necessary for estimation, the minimum R-squared approach was utilized. The sample size calculations were based on the structural model of the research study, as outlined by Hair et al. (2019). According to their recommendations, there were three arrows from the determinant factors of organizational loyalty directed towards the dependent variable,

resulting in a total of three arrows. By setting a significance level of 0.05, anticipating a statistical power of 80%, and establishing a minimum R-squared value of 0.25, the recommended minimum sample size, according to Cohen's table (1992, as cited in Hair et al., 2019), is thirty-seven. PLS-SEM is a robust method that can effectively handle smaller sample sizes due to its capability to estimate parameters using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression, accommodate non-normal data distributions, and deliver consistent estimates even with smaller samples (Hair et al., 2017). The Cronbach's Alpha and Average Variance Extracted were utilized to assess the reliability and validity of the research instruments employed.

The Filipino seafarers who were chosen as research participants were either enrolled in a maritime training facility and taking part in their training programs, or they were currently working for a certain manning agency. The study looked at a number of characteristics,

such as work security, social stimulation, and the opportunity to use their abilities, that affect seafarers' organizational loyalty. Primary data collection was used to acquire this information. The crewing manager gave the researchers permission to collect data from their sailors. The crewing management from the different manning agencies was able to provide a total of sixty seafarers to take part in the survey which is more than the minimum required sample size. The median tenure of employees at a company is 4.1 years, according to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics for 2022.

### Discussion and Conclusions

Table 1 shows the profile of respondents, which is cross-tabulated by generation and gender. As expected of the seafarer industry, most of the respondents were males. Among the 60 respondents, there were 30 respondents for each group of millennials and Gen X employees.

Table 1. Cross-tabulation of generation and gender of respondents

	Females	Males	Grand Total
Millennials (21-35)	2	28	30
Gen X (36-54)	5	25	30
Grand Total	7	53	60

The quality criteria of the inner and outer structural models were measured using various tests. Measures of construct reliability and validity indicated that all exogenous variables had a Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability of at least 0.70, which is considered acceptable (Lowry & Gaskin, 2014). Tests of discriminant validity met the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio. Cross-loadings of the indicators were also evaluated through factor analysis. All indicators strongly correlated with their respective latent variables with factor scores of at least 0.700. No significant cross-loadings were observed, meeting the criteria of Lowry and Gaskin (2014), where the difference between the main values and cross-loaded values should not exceed 0.20.

Tests for multicollinearity showed that the variance inflation factors of the indicators were less than 4.00, indicating no significant multicollinearity among the indicators.

Since the reliability, validity, and multicollinearity tests have been met, we can analyze the structural model and its paths with greater confidence. The table below shows the path estimates and p-values, which were generated using the PLS algorithm and a bootstrapping procedure ( $J = 5,000$ ) in SmartPLS 3.0, following the recommendations of Hair et al. (2014) and Lowry and Gaskin (2014). Table 2 details the path analysis performed through PLS-SEM. The model explained 39.3% of the variance ( $R^2 = 0.424$ ), which is acceptable in the social sciences.

Table 2. Results of the PLS Algorithm and Bootstrapping

Exogenous Variables	General path estimates	p-value	Gen X path estimates	p-value	Millennial path estimates	p-value
<b>Job Security</b>	0.211	0.089	0.381	<b>0.018*</b>	0.203	0.302
<b>Opportunity to use One's Abilities</b>	0.344	<b>0.005*</b>	0.306	<b>0.037*</b>	0.440	<b>0.007*</b>
<b>Social Stimulation</b>	0.271	<b>0.039*</b>	0.252	<b>0.034*</b>	0.314	<b>0.049*</b>

The study showed that among seafarers from the three Philippine manning agencies surveyed, the opportunity to utilize one's skills and social interaction were important indicators of loyalty. There are differences between Millennials and Gen Xers that may explain why job security is less important for job loyalty. Millennials tend to prioritize flexibility and career development over job security (Goler et al., 2021). A Deloitte Millennial survey also supports this, showing that Millennials prioritize personal and professional growth over job security, as evidenced by their frequent job changes.

The results showed that among all surveyed seafarers, the opportunity to utilize one's skills and social interaction were significant predictors of loyalty. Conversely, the findings indicated that job security was not a significant factor for the Gen Y segment. According to the research of Katumpe and Kyongo, Millennials are inclined toward rapid job advancement and have a natural inclination toward capitalism. Despite being more productive at work due to their tech-savvy behavior, their impatience can have a negative impact. This was supported by Alvarez's research in 2021, which indicated that Millennials prioritize work-life balance over career advancement and may not prioritize job security as much because of this.

The study suggests that there is a significant and positive relationship between social stimulation and seafarers' loyalty to their jobs. One of the key characteristics of the Millennial generation is their increasing use and familiarity with digital technology, media, and communication. According to Ramadhanty et al.

(2019), Millennials prefer continuous dialogues over annual reviews. It is essential for them to be actively engaged and socially stimulated in order to truly benefit from social connections.

In a study by Vinerean (2015), it was found that people are more willing to go above and beyond if they believe they will be protected and rewarded in a way that matters to them. Employees must feel a sense of belonging to the firm because they become emotionally invested when they believe their job contributes to the growth of the company and offers them the opportunity to learn and grow within that specific setting. According to some research, employee engagement may have a significant impact on an organization's performance and success as it appears to have a bearing on productivity, loyalty, and staff retention (Andre and Sofian, 2012, as cited by Vinerean, 2015).

In terms of job security, as the Baby Boomer generation retires, Generation X will be the next cohort to enter retirement. It is essential to inform Gen Xers about the importance of investing now to secure a comfortable retirement. Many in this generation are beginning to realize the advantages of contributing more to their retirement goals. With their mortgages and student loans paid off, many Gen Xers find themselves in a better position to start saving. Having witnessed their parents experience significant financial losses during economic downturns, they tend to be more cautious about the risks associated with their investments (Morse, 2019). This cautious approach may also explain why job security is important to them. The Millennial generation is the most



technologically advanced and educated generation to date. They have experienced unprecedented events, such as the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. The anxiety and insecurity resulting from these events have led Millennials to prioritize job satisfaction, security, quality of life, and growth opportunities over monetary compensation. Unlike earlier generations, they emphasize living in the present rather than saving for the future, purchasing a car, or owning a home (Bogosian & Rousseau, 2017).

Krawczynska-Zaucha (2019) expresses that it is widely recognized that the values and beliefs of different generations vary and significantly influence the behavior of their members. In organizations with intergenerational teams, interactions among different generations tend to be very effective. The individual values and beliefs within each generation can differ, greatly impacting how members behave. Additionally, the relationships among generations in organizations with diverse teams are often strong. Globally, our perception of the world has changed dramatically due to widespread computerization and digitization. Different generational cohorts may experience varied social stimulation as their goals and preferences are shaped by the cultural and economic environment of their formative years.

In terms of using one's abilities, Generation Z and Millennials generally have higher expectations for their jobs, particularly regarding autonomy, flexibility, and meaningful work. They are more likely to seek employment elsewhere if they feel that their skills and abilities are underutilized. According to Farrell and Hurt (2014), Millennials are more accepting of diversity, prefer collaborative work environments, are proficient with advanced technology, and excel at multitasking.

Generation X, on the other hand, seeks a balance between stability and personal development. They look for opportunities to advance in their careers while valuing job security. A desire for collaboration, diversity, and effective transformation drives this generation. Unlike previous generations, they prioritize teamwork over competitiveness (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

Last, according to the research by Zemke, Raines, and Filipczak (2000), Baby Boomers prefer a collaborative and collegial work environment. They are particularly interested in enhancing workplace engagement and fostering a positive team spirit. They encourage open communication, share responsibilities, and respect each other's independence.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings above, the following recommendations and suggestions are provided to assist and guide the management and leaders of Maritime Training Centers and Manning Agencies in addressing the areas that have been identified as contributing to organizational loyalty. To enhance the seafarers' skills and encourage social interaction, the researchers are recommending the following:

- (1) **Involvement in Decision-making and Planning** - at the functional or department level, leaders may want to involve their employees more by holding meetings and brainstorming sessions whenever there are new directions or activities/projects that need to be addressed. Holding these sessions provides opportunities for people to be heard, to give their input, and to provide feedback. While there are decisions that have to be made at the highest level without employee consent, giving them autonomy and involving them in their respective areas will mean a lot to them and will ensure their buy-in in the long run.
- (2) **Career Management/Training and Development** - As technology and knowledge continue to advance, there is a growing need for our human resources to improve their skills in all areas. It is the responsibility of both leaders and employees to ensure the latter's development in their current roles and future careers. Providing training opportunities is important, but it is also crucial for leaders to discuss development plans with their subordinates. Leaders need to make employees feel that there is a clear path for advancement and development and that these plans are actively being pursued. Development plans should not only focus on the current job but

also on identifying areas for improvement and growth to meet employees' future needs.

In order to enhance the skill level of seafarers, competencies are divided into four groups: technical, social, methodological, and personal, as outlined by Hecklau et al. (2016). Technical competencies include tasks such as monitoring and analyzing operations, controlling and operating equipment, maintaining and repairing equipment, solving problems, processing information and data, and programming. Social competencies consist of emotional intelligence, negotiation skills, language proficiency, communication with others, teamwork, collaboration, adapting to cultural differences, willingness to compromise and cooperate, knowledge transfer ability, and leadership and supervision

- (3) Forge and harness partnerships and collaborations among maritime trade unions, manning agencies, government, and other stakeholders to promote social interaction. By forging alliances, partnerships, and collaborations among manning agencies, trade unions, and other stakeholders in the maritime sector, we can invest in developing healthy relationships among the different maritime stakeholders. Many manning agencies lack the resources to carry out certain activities, but with support from other sectors, they will be able to pursue their goals. A strong support group promotes a sense of safety, belonging, and security. For example, manning agencies might be interested in joining forces or collaborating with each other to pool their resources in establishing their own maritime training facilities, which will greatly benefit all seafarers associated with these organizations.

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