



How Do Young Employees Trust Their Supervisors

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ABSTRACT

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There has been a lot of talk about young employee's wellbeing in the workplace and also generally their wellbeing. There are many factors, that may hinder a young employee's wellbeing, it may be stress, personal issues, societal issues, and relationship issues. The purpose of this thesis is to identify how does young employees' trust relationship towards their supervisor affect their well-being and motivation towards work. The objective is to find how much does the trust relationship affect and how common is it in organizations. This thesis is an independent research, with no commissionaire.

Different studies and articles were utilized to first understand how important mutual trust is in the organization and also mutual trust between employees and their supervisors. An online questionnaire was made, that targeted 20-28-year-olds. They were reached out to by utilizing social media and the thesis writers own personal contacts. Quantitative method was utilized in making of the online questionnaire and a total of 34 responses to the questionnaire. There was a few background questions and questions about trust towards the young employee's supervisor.

The results of this thesis came out to be, that most young employees have a mutual trust with their supervisor, but young female employees have more trust issues compared to male responders. The responders who have trust issues also show that it negatively impacts their wellbeing and also motivation towards work. Furthermore more, nearly half of the respondents have had trust issues with their supervisors throughout their career. There is a need for further qualitative studies to further identify in what way trust is lacking between the two parties. Additionally, recommendation for organizations to tackle trust issues and expand on their supervisor training.

Key words: trust, generation z, millennials, wellbeing

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Thesis Topic

This thesis is an independent research that will utilize previous research, theories, and also data from an online survey, that is created for this thesis. The topic of this thesis is to see how much young employees trust their supervisors and does that effect their workplace wellbeing. A new generation of employees are starting out their career and there have been multiple headlines of young employees getting burnouts and overall workplace wellbeing is low in their early stages of their career. There are many factors that affect workplace wellbeing, but this thesis aims to see how does trusting supervisors and feeling trusted by them effect young employee's workplace wellbeing. For not be able to trust your supervisors or feel, that you are not trusted can create a stressful environment.

1.2 Thesis Structure

Thesis starts off with the introduction to the thesis and its topic. Briefly the thesis will go through, what is the purpose, objectives, and research questions. Additionally, what research methods and how data is collected to fulfil the thesis objectives.

In the theory part is written on why trust is important in the organization between employees and their supervisors. Also, the negative impact in mistrust in organizations. As the thesis focuses on young employees, there is a introduction for the generation and what do they look when applying for work.

Chapter 4 shows the results of the online questionnaire and how many people responded to each question. Then the thesis goes through the average scores and stating what can be seen. There will be a deeper analysis of the results to come with theories on why this is the case. Finally, at the end of the thesis is what further recommendations is needed for further studies and how organizations can address trust issues and what is the conclusion of this thesis.

1.3 Thesis objective, purpose, and research questions

The main objective is to identify, what is the average trust level with young employees on their supervisors. Secondary objective is to identify does the possible lack of trust affect workplace wellbeing and what trust issues young employees face.

In offices an employee or supervisor may hear different issues between supervisors and employees. The purpose of the thesis is to see concrete stats on the trust levels and the effects on the wellbeing of young employees. Additionally, in some organizations may have little to no leadership training for their supervisors and supervisors don't know how to lead, that may lead to trust issues. The purpose of this thesis is not to directly come up with solutions to help with trust issues, but to merely identify what the issues are.

There are three research questions for the thesis. The first one being, what is the trust level on how young employees trust their supervisor? Second question how does the trust or the lack of trust effect workplace wellbeing. Lastly, if the young employees have had several supervisors, has there been issues with trust before.

1.4 Research methods and data collection

Quantitative research method will be used to collect data for this thesis. It will be done with an online questionnaire with Google Forms. The questionnaire was answered 20–28-year-old people who are currently working or have work experience. Personal social media accounts such as Instagram, LinkedIn and WhatsApp will be used to reach out to people. On Instagram the thesis writer published a personal story that lasted 24-hours which the writers' followers could see. The story had the website link for the online questionnaire.

Quantitative research method is appropriate for studies and analysis in which it aims to statistically describe something on an overall level. The method is used to get an understanding of human behaviour or different opinions on a mathematical scale, in order to get a simple understanding of the results that are easy to read. From the results that have come into the quantitative research the aim is to find common law within the answers. Quantitative researches aim to find common regularities and how variables link to each other. Additionally, this type of method may address sensitive issues and be able to have scattered responses geographically. (Vilkka 2021, 66).

The most common disadvantage to this research method is the lack of responses to a survey. If the response rate is low, then the findings from the survey are not ideal to come up with a conclusion from the study. Additionally, people are more likely to ignore a survey request if it randomly pops-up in their email or social-media feed. This is why in this thesis; the survey is answered by personal network contacts.

The measurement tool that is used with quantitative research method is the questionnaire. Commonly the questions in the questionnaire are either multiple-choice questions, open-ended questions, or mixed form of questions. In this questionnaire will be only using multiple-choice questions. Multiple-choice questions are closed and structured questions that are a standardised format.

There are various aspects to analyse in the survey. Main aspect being what is the overall trust level of young employees and in what areas there is a lack of trust. For example, employees trust their supervisors but feel that they are not trusted. Descriptive statistics method is implemented while analysing the data from the online survey. The primary data for this thesis was gathered through surveys, while secondary data was sourced from books, articles, academic research, and webpages.

2 TRUST

2.1 The importance of trust between an employee and a supervisor

The theory is that if that an employee and supervisors trust each other and have a positive relationship, then both will show positive work behaviour and more commitment to the organization. Therefore, if there is a lack of trust then there is more likely to be issues with cooperation and making social interactions between the two parties more stressful and worsening the wellbeing in the workplace. When supervisors trust their employees, the employees are likely to be the recipient of more favourable benefits and to experience feelings of self-esteem (Pierce & Gardner, 2004).

If employees trust their supervisors but feel that they are not trusted by their supervisors may affect their motivation, wellbeing, and the ability to be vulnerable to their supervisors. (Kim, T., Wang, J., & Chen, J. 2018).

A result of a study suggests that having trust-based relationships between employees and supervisors, enhances work engagement and making it less stressful, while lessening the chances of a burnout by employees and supervisors. (Aamir, C. Marann, B. Barbara, F. 2014)

2.2 Good leadership creates trust

The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health has established standards for effective management. These standards have been categorized into five distinct areas: revitalization and involvement, proficiency and progress, inclusivity and uniqueness, collaboration and connections, and respect and trust. (Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, n.d.)

Trust establishes a fundamental factor of the social environment within a workplace community. Within professional circles, trust is nurtured through equitable

management, devotion to founded rules, interactions that respect others, accountability, honesty, and transparent communication. A dynamic and continuously evolving work environment flourishes on healthy internal trust. Engaging with diverse networks both demands and reinforces trust. (Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, n.d.)

Good leadership focused on building trust is essential to enable people to collaborate positively towards reaching the organization's core mission. Within a professional setting, the significance of trust and fair management becomes especially evident during periods of change showed by uncertainty about the future. Establishing trust, particularly between management and staff, is crucial for nurturing a cohesive and productive professional community. Keeping up with good trust is based on fair decision-making processes and unbiased treatment of individuals.

2.3 Creating trust

Creating trust and keeping developing it takes time and effort. Whenever personnel changes happen, proper orientation is essential, requiring the involvement of the responsible supervisor. Familiarizing to a new professional setting not only consumes time and effort but also requires time to develop trust-based relationships. When managerial changes occur rapidly, there's not enough time for trust to develop between the manager and their employees. (Laine, N. 2010, 35).

In an environment of trust, employees feel comfortable expressing their thoughts openly, facilitating the delivery of even critical feedback. To encourage employees to provide feedback, they must have confidence that their manager will be receptive to it. When an employee trusts their supervisor, they believe that collaborating will contribute to achieving the organizations goals. When individuals perceive their manager and colleagues as reliable, collaboration becomes more seamless. Trust empowers individuals to express their thoughts and feelings without fear of repercussions or betrayal. (Laine, N. 2010, 36).

2.4 Organizational trust

Organizational trust refers to the trust among internal stakeholders, including personnel, managers, and supervisors. Effective organizational trust is essential for enabling effective and goal-oriented processes. When assessing organizational trust, employees evaluate their employers' capacity to achieve mutually agreed-upon objectives, their commitment to caring for their workforce and other pertinent stakeholders, as well as their perceived ethical, honest, and fair conduct. Organizational trust holds particular significance towards employees. Therefore, supervisors must ensure the removal of potential obstacles to trust and collaboration, along with addressing causes for mistrust. When the employee trusts their organisation and their supervisors, that would be considered the best scenario within the workplace. (Laine, N. 2010, 31)

It is the responsibility of a supervisor to uphold the trustworthiness of the company's image. Strong trust in a supervisor can alleviate any doubts one may have about the company or organization. Similarly, trust in an organization can mitigate distrust towards specific individuals. Trust is cultivated through regular interaction and communication, requiring support and involvement from leadership, as well as time.

When organizational trust diminishes, even the most competent supervisor struggles to prevent any further damage. A loss of trust undermines motivation and can leave individuals feeling disconnected and purposeless. Trust in leadership is strengthened when supervisors lead by example, demonstrate fairness, presence, and attentiveness, and harbour genuine intentions. It's crucial for supervisors to be receptive to their employees' feedback and ambitions for organizational improvement. Building trust relies on being dependable, honouring commitments, and prioritizing the collective welfare within the organization. (Pentikäinen 2014, 142)

2.5 Mistrust in the workplace

Mistrust towards an employee's company and mistrust towards their own supervisors are two different issues. Mistrust towards supervisors may create an us-against-them syndrome, that might have an impact on cooperation, motivation, and performance. (Gilbert, Tang, 1998)

An employee's mistrust towards their supervisors, makes them avoid interaction with them and act cautiously. The employee might feel fear that their supervisor will worsen their workload, reducing hours or changing the nature of what work the employee is doing. Once there is mistrust between employees and supervisors, that mistrust easily starts growing, leaving worse communication and problems are left unsolved. (Gilbert, Tang, 1998)

3 THE NEW GENERATION OF WORKFORCE

As the age group for this thesis are currently 20 to 28 years of old. There are two generations of in this group. They are the Millennials and Generation Z. This thesis will go briefly in what are they like as a workforce and what they are looking for in their work life.

3.1 Millennials

Millennial is a term to describe the people that was born in the years 1981-1996. Most of the Millennials have been working for some time now and have made a career for themselves. However, the youngest of the generation are still in their early career life and might be studying. There is also the term Zillennial's, that is a mix of younger millennials and older Generation Z people, that identify themselves with both generations. (Jaakko, K. 2021)

One of the biggest changes from the previous generation is that Millennials have the need to be more individual. They weight in more to what's important in life and it shows in their career. They expect more from their work but are less committed than the previous generation. Furthermore, Millennials respond more negatively towards organizational hierarchy compared to previous generations. (Jaakko, K. 2021)

Millennials trust in organizations that that build open, collaborative, and authentic conversations. They want that their supervisors are flexible, and they are there to listen in safe and open environment. Millennials want to work independently, and they do not want to be monitored by their supervisor or organization. (For millennials, leadership means trust, empathy, empowerment, n.d.).

3.2 Generation Z

Generation Z is the term to describe people who have born in the years 1997-2012. They are the generation that has born in the years of Wi-Fi and social media. They are now the current new workforce that is getting into their career. The digital world is a part of their communication and life. They like to build social communities that have similar values and interests. Generation Z has grown-up in a self-evaluated world, and they like to question truths and require justification for actions. Just like Millennials, Generation Z has the need to have individualism and to have a strong social network. They are also the most diverse generation so far. (Markkanen, V. 2023)

Similarly to Millennials, Generation Z trust in open and inclusive conversations in their career. They desire a safe environment and being able to independently. They want to be a part of an organization, that has a positive behaviour to the community and the environment.

4 THE QUESTIONNAIRE AND ITS RESULTS

In total there was 34 respondents to the online questionnaire. In the questionnaire there was 5 questions regarding the responder's background about their gender, age, work experience, and also their supervisors age and gender.

In the questionnaire there was 12 questions regarding the responder's trust between them and their supervisors, and how does it affect the young employee's well-being. A scale from 1-5 was used to identify, how the statement agreed with the respondents. Here are what each number of the scale represents.

1. I do not agree.
2. I somewhat don't agree.
3. Mixed feelings.
4. I somewhat agree.
5. I agree.

4.1 Background questions from the questionnaire

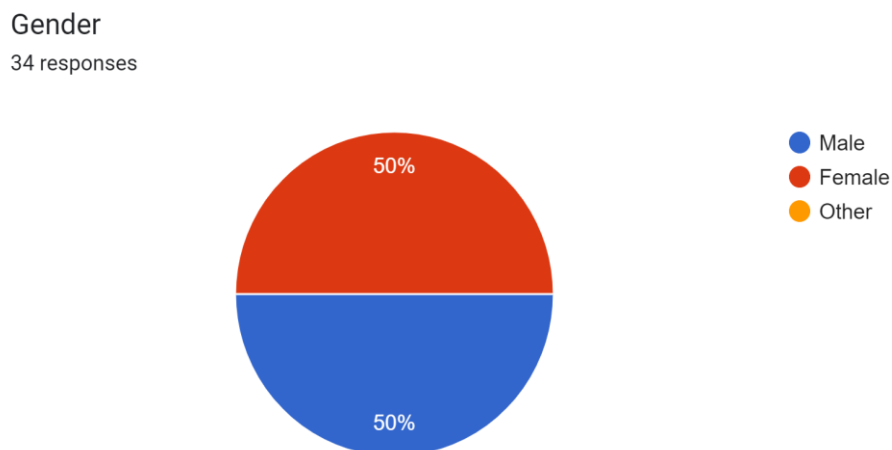


Figure 1: The Gender of the people who answered the questionnaire. (Google Forms)

Out of the 34 respondents, that answered the questionnaire were 50% female and 50% Male. There was no responder, that identified as another gender.

Age

34 responses

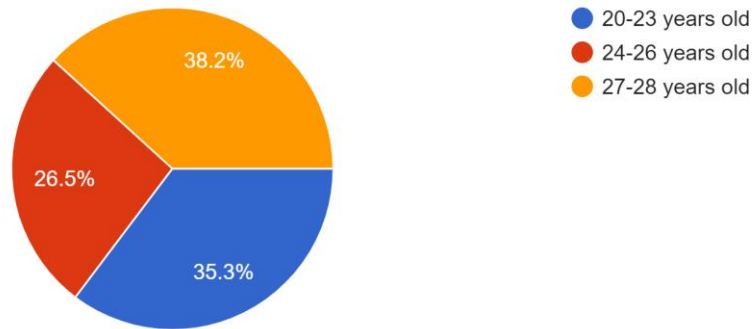


Figure 2: The Age of the people who answered the questionnaire. (Google Forms)

Out of the 34 responders, the age demographic was split into three different groups. 38.2% of the responders were the age of 27-28 years old. 35.3% of the responders were the age of 20-23 years old.

Work experience

34 responses

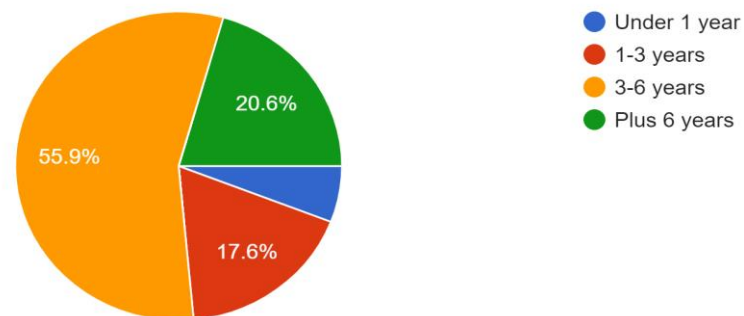


Figure 3: Work experience of the people who answered the questionnaire. (Google Forms)

The majority of the respondents 55.9% have work experience between 3-6 years. 20.6% of respondents have plus 6 years of work experience. Then 17.6% of respondents have 1-3 years of work experience and the rest have under 1 year of work experience.

What is your current or previous supervisors gender?

34 responses

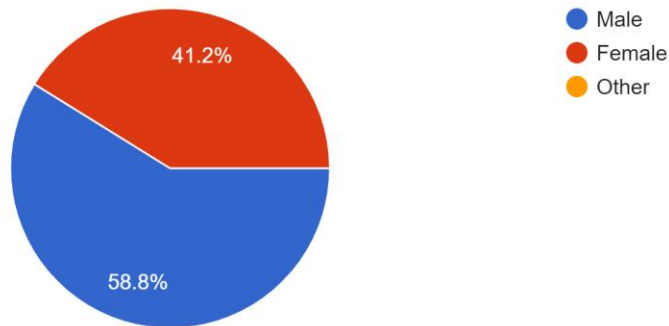


Figure 4: What is your current or previous supervisors' gender. (Google Forms)

The respondents current or previous supervisors were 58.8% male and 41.2% were women. There was no response that had a supervisor that identified another gender.

How old is your current or previous supervisor?

34 responses

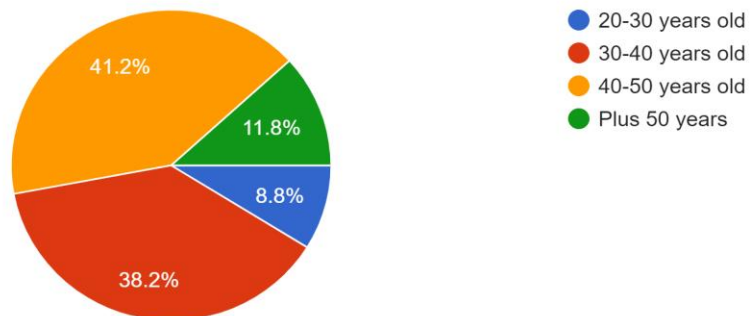


Figure 5: How old is your current or previous supervisor. (Google Forms)

41.2% of the responders, have a supervisor whose age is around 40-50 years old. 38.2% of responders, have a supervisor whose age is around 30-40 years old. 11.8% of responders, have a supervisor that are plus 50 years old and 8.8% of the responders have a supervisor the age between 20-30 years.

4.2 Questionnaire results on trust

I generally feel that I can trust my supervisor

34 responses

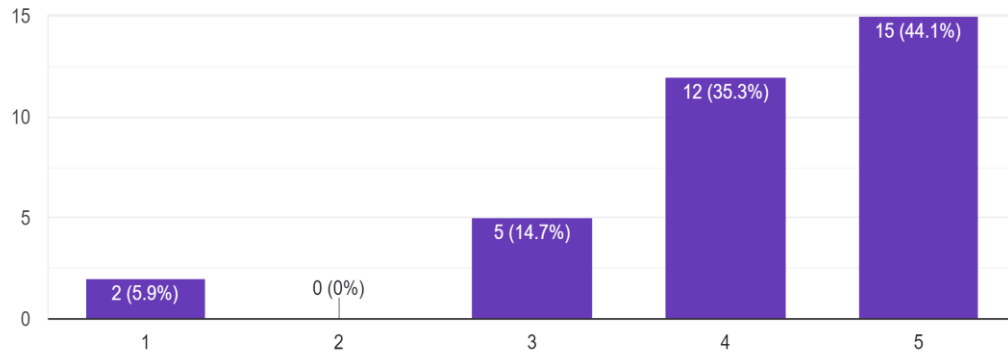


Figure 6: I generally feel that I can trust my supervisor. (Google Forms)

1. I do not agree. (2 responses, 5.9%)
2. I somewhat don't agree. (0 responses, 0%)
3. Mixed feelings. (5 responses, 14.7%)
4. I somewhat agree. (12 responses, 35.3%)
5. I agree. (15 responses, 44.1%)

I generally feel that my supervisor trusts me

34 responses

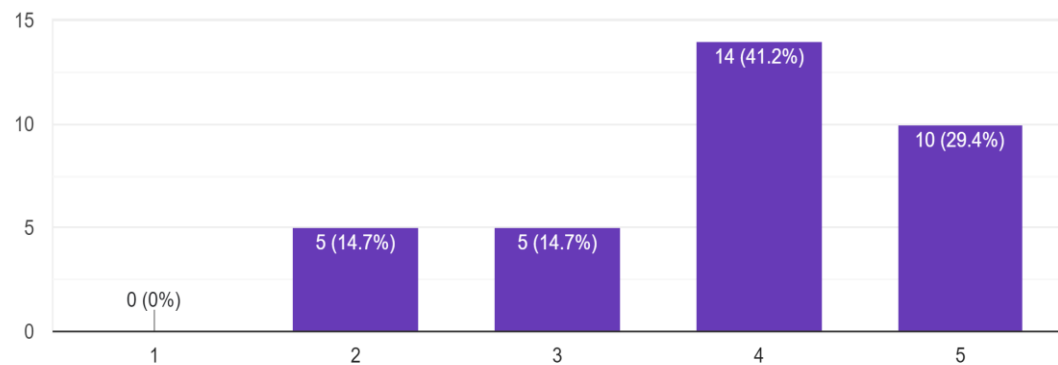


Figure 7: I generally feel that my supervisor trusts me. (Google Forms)

1. I do not agree. (0 responses, 0%)
2. I somewhat don't agree. (5 responses, 14.7%)
3. Mixed feelings. (5 responses, 14.7%)
4. I somewhat agree. (14 responses, 41.2%)
5. I agree. (10 responses, 29.4%)

I generally feel that there is a mutual trust between me and my supervisor

34 responses

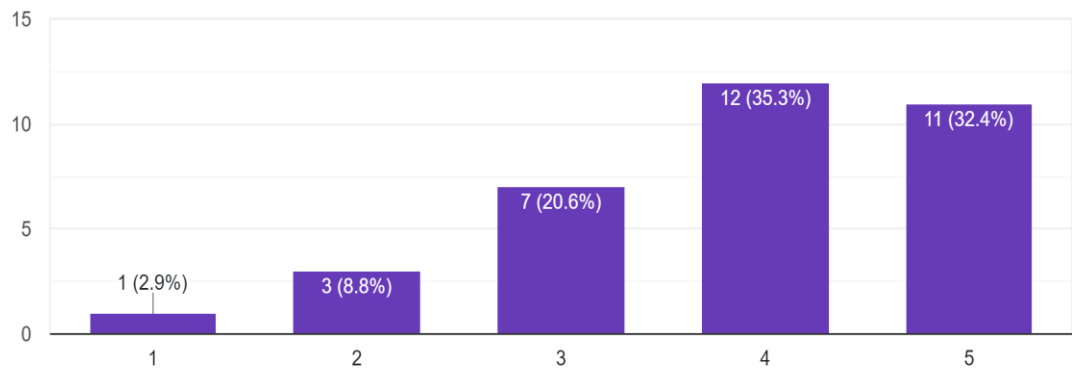


Figure 8: I generally feel that there is a mutual trust between me and my supervisor. (Google Forms)

1. I do not agree. (1 responses, 2.9%)
2. I somewhat don't agree. (3 responses, 8.8%)
3. Mixed feelings. (7 responses, 20.6%)
4. I somewhat agree. (12 responses, 35.3%)
5. I agree. (11 responses, 32.4%)

I feel that my supervisor trusts my work effort and its outcome

34 responses

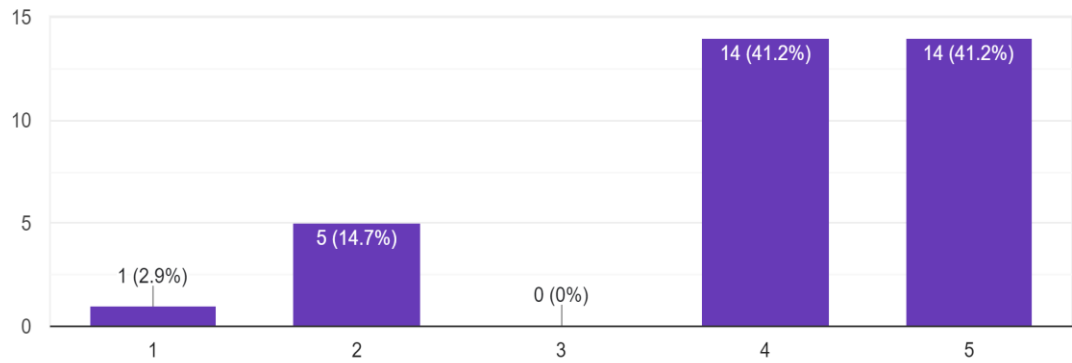


Figure 9: I feel that my supervisor trusts my work effort and its outcome. (Google Forms)

1. I do not agree. (1 responses, 2.9%)
2. I somewhat don't agree. (5 responses, 14.7%)
3. Mixed feelings. (0 responses, 0%)
4. I somewhat agree. (14 responses, 41.2%)
5. I agree. (14 responses, 41.2%)

I feel that I can trust my supervisor fixing an issue if something goes wrong

34 responses

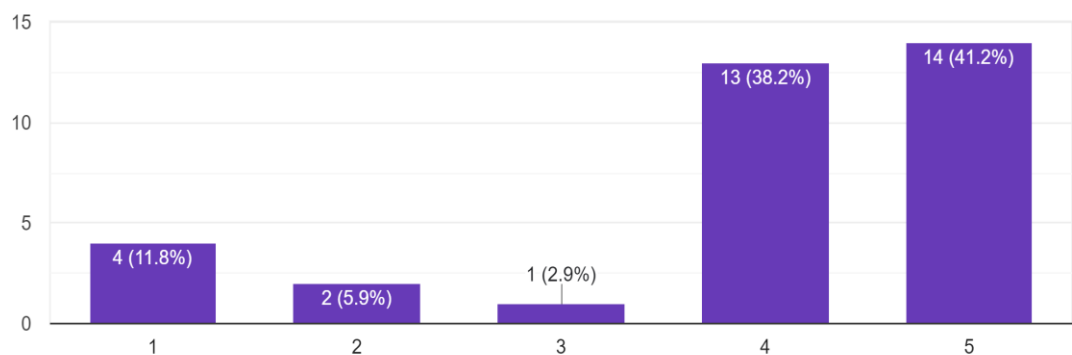


Figure 10: I feel that I can trust my supervisor fixing an issue if something goes wrong. (Google Forms)

1. I do not agree. (4 responses, 11.8%)
2. I somewhat don't agree. (2 responses, 5.9%)
3. Mixed feelings. (1 responses, 2.9%)
4. I somewhat agree. (13 responses, 38.2%)
5. I agree. (14 responses, 41.2%)

I feel that I can tell my supervisor personal issues and trust them that it stays between us
34 responses

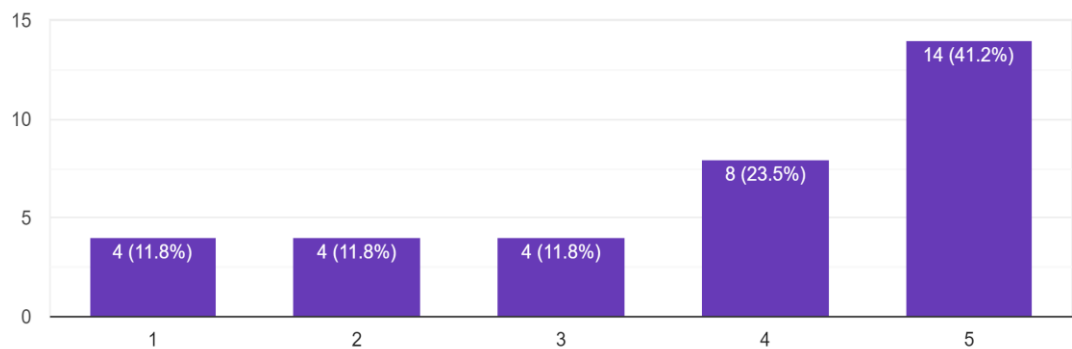


Figure 11: I feel that I can tell my supervisor personal issues and trust them that it stays between us. (Google Forms)

1. I do not agree. (4 responses, 11.8%)
2. I somewhat don't agree. (4 responses, 11.8%)
3. Mixed feelings. (4 responses, 11.8%)
4. I somewhat agree. (8 responses, 23.5%)
5. I agree. (14 responses, 41.2%)

I feel stressed at work because the lack of trust between me and my supervisor

34 responses

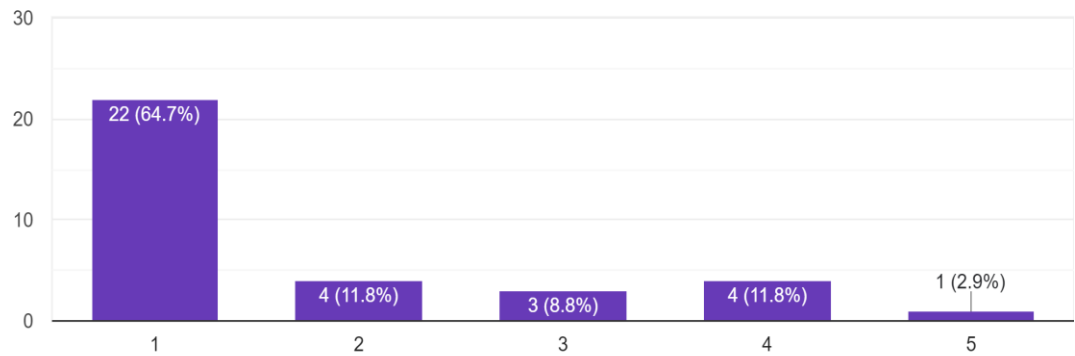


Figure 12: I Feel stressed at work because the lack of trust between me and my supervisor. (Google Forms)

1. I do not agree. (22 responses, 64.7%)
2. I somewhat don't agree. (4 responses, 11.8%)
3. Mixed feelings. (3 responses, 8.8%)
4. I somewhat agree. (4 responses, 11.8%)
5. I agree. (1 responses, 2.9%)

During my free time off from work, I feel stressed because of trust issues between me and my supervisor

34 responses

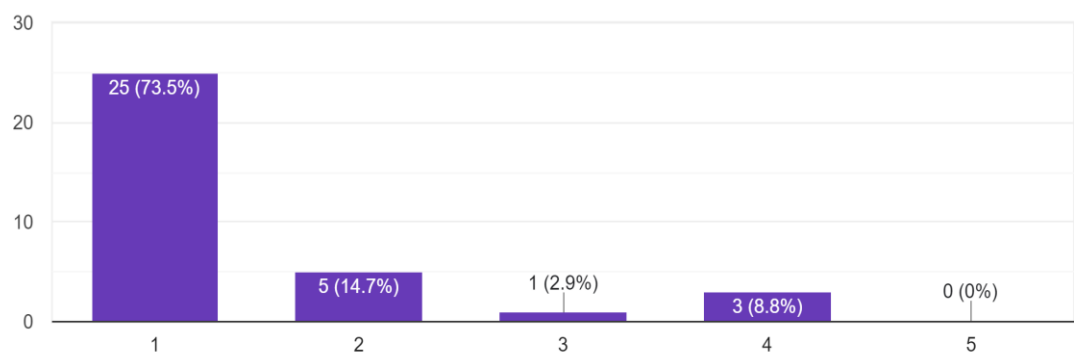


Figure 13: During my free time off from work, I feel stressed because of trust issues between me and my supervisor. (Google Forms)

1. I do not agree. (25 responses, 73.5%)
2. I somewhat don't agree. (5 responses, 14.7%)
3. Mixed feelings. (1 responses, 2.9%)
4. I somewhat agree. (3 responses, 8.8%)
5. I agree. (0 responses, 0%)

I think about quitting my job because of trust issues between me and my supervisor

34 responses

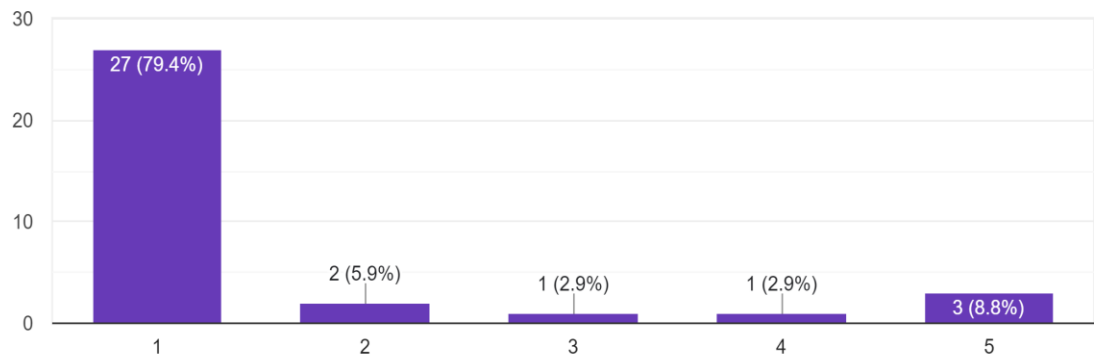


Figure 14: I think about quitting my job because of trust issues between me and my supervisor. (Google Forms)

1. I do not agree. (27 responses, 79.4%)
2. I somewhat don't agree. (2 responses, 5.9%)
3. Mixed feelings. (1 responses, 2.9%)
4. I somewhat agree. (1 response, 2.9%)
5. I agree. (3 responses, 8.8%)

I feel that the lack of trust between me and my supervisor affects my motivation and my work efficiency

34 responses

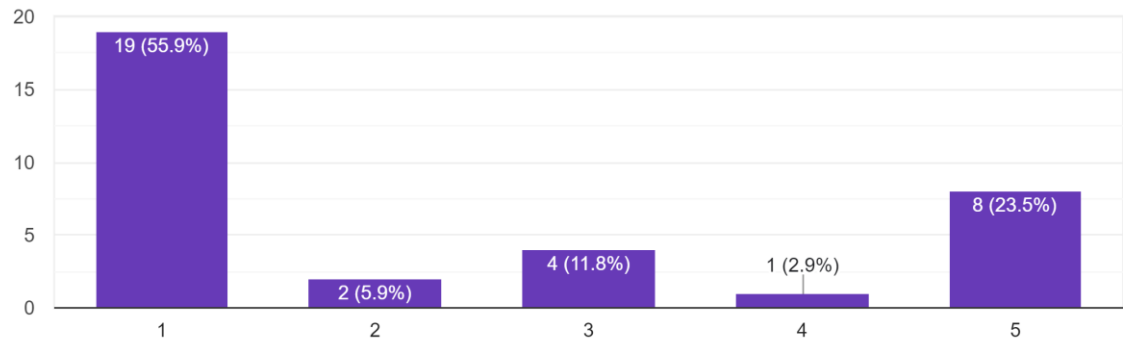


Figure 15: I feel that the lack of trust between me and my supervisor affects my motivation and my work efficiency. (Google Forms)

1. I do not agree. (19 responses, 55.9%)
2. I somewhat don't agree. (2 responses, 5.9%)
3. Mixed feelings. (4 responses, 11.8%)
4. I somewhat agree. (1 responses, 2.9%)
5. I agree. (8 responses, 23.5%)

I have had trust issues with previous supervisors in my career

34 responses

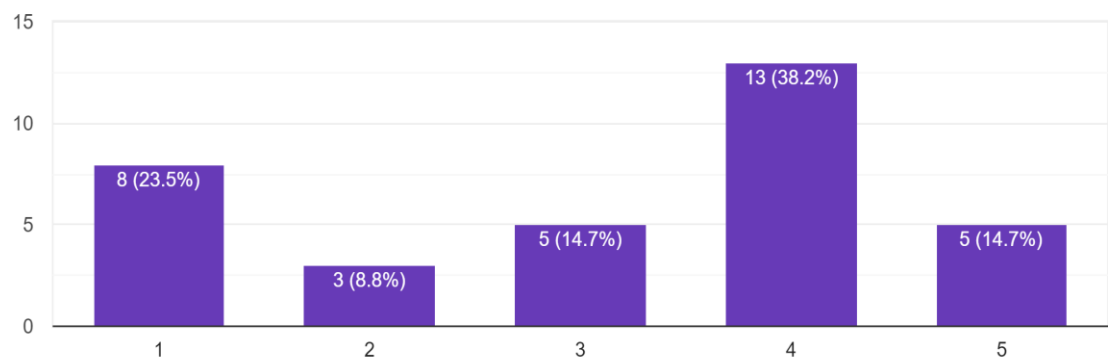


Figure 16: I have had trust issues with previous supervisors in my career. (Google Forms)

1. I do not agree. (8 responses, 23,5%)
2. I somewhat don't agree. (3 responses, 8.8%)
3. Mixed feelings. (5 responses, 14.7%)
4. I somewhat agree. (13 responses, 38.2%)
5. I agree. (5 responses, 14.7%)

I feel that it is important for me to trust my supervisor and that they trust me in order to enjoy being at work

34 responses

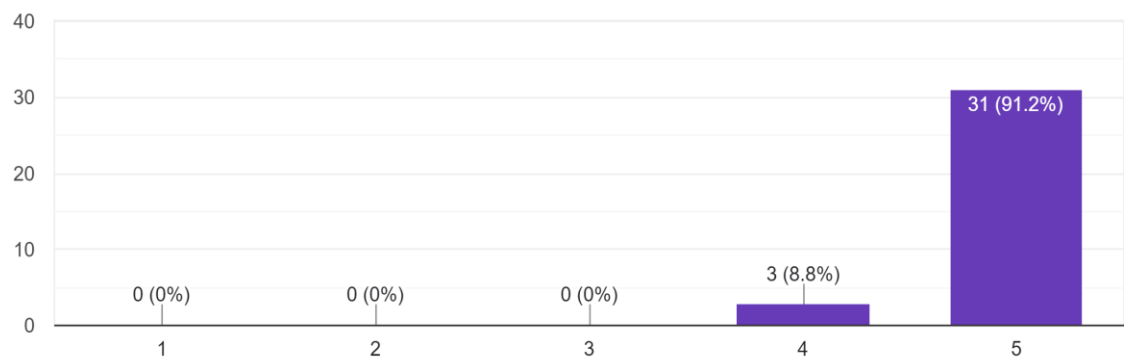


Figure 17: I Feel that it is important for me to trust my supervisor and that they trust me in order to enjoy being at work. (Google Forms)

1. I do not agree. (0 responses, 0%)
2. I somewhat don't agree. (0 responses, 0%)
3. Mixed feelings. (0 responses, 0%)
4. I somewhat agree. (3 responses, 8.8%)
5. I agree. (31 responses, 91.2%)

5 BREAKING DOWN THE ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

As stated earlier in this thesis, there was a total of 34 responses to the online questionnaire. From those 34 responses, there is 17 responses that were male and 17 responses that were female, with a mix of age between 20–28-year-olds. To calculate the average points and analysing the questionnaire in a deeper level, Google Spreadsheets was utilized to see the variables and regularities with the results.

5.1 Trusting the supervisor

Analysing the results of young employees trusting their supervisor. (Figure 6). The average score is 4.1, resulting in somewhat agreeing with the statement, that the respondents trust their supervisor. However, when looking at the gender of the respondents, the male responders average score is 4.4 and the female responders average score is 3.8. The female responders seem to trust less their supervisors, compared to the male responders.

When it comes to the supervisors age, the lowest scoring age group is 40-50-year-olds, having the average score of 3.7, with a total of 14 supervisors in that age group. Comparing the score to the other age groups 30-40-year-olds has an average score of 4.2, with 13 supervisors in that age group. The age group of 20-30-year-olds, with 3 supervisors and plus 50-year-olds, with 4 supervisors in the age group had both of the average score of 4.7. However, with the youngest and oldest supervisor age group having so little people in it, having a true conclusion for the average score cannot be determined.

5.2 Being trusted by the supervisor

The results of being trusted by the supervisor, (Figure 7) had the average score of 3.8, being lower than the average score of trusting the supervisor. The reason of this lower score, could have several reasons. For example, being micromanaged and feeling untrusted by simply being young or new in the organization.

Looking at the gender of the respondents, the male responders average score is 4.1, somewhat agreeing with being trusted and the female responders average score is 3.5, making in having mixed feelings of being trusted.

The lowest scoring supervisor age group is 20-30-year-olds, with the average score of 3.6, but as stated for being a small demographic in the questionnaire the true average score cannot be concluded. However, both 30-40-year-olds and 40-50-year-olds have bot of an average score of 3.7. Plus 50-year-olds have an average score of 4.5, but as stated for the demographic being small in the questionnaire, the true average score cannot be concluded.

5.3 Mutual trust

The average score of mutual trust between the young employee and the supervisor (Figure 8), is 4. The male response score average is 4.1 and the female response score average is 3.9, having a small difference between them.

The lowest scoring supervisor age group is 40-50-year-olds with the average score of 3.6 and 30-40-year-olds have an average score of 3.7. The youngest age group have a average score of 4.3 and the oldest age group have a score of 4.5, but as stated both of the demographics being too small in the questionnaire, the true average score cannot be concluded.

5.4 Trusting the work effort and its outcome

The average score of young employees feeling trusted by their work effort and its outcome is 4. (Figure 9). However, the is a noticeable difference between the male responders and the female responders. The male score average is 4.5 and the female score average is 3.6, having a 0.9 difference in score. From the online questionnaire, there is no way to identify why there is such a big gap between the male and female responders. However, both genders had the same regularities of “disagreeing” or “somewhat disagreeing” with the statement of feeling trusted by their work effort and its outcome when their supervisor was the age of 40-50-year-olds.

The lowest scoring supervisor age group is 20-30-year-olds, with an average score of 3.3, but as stated, the demographic is too small in the questionnaire, the true average score cannot be concluded for that age group. 40-50-year-olds had the average score of 3.9, making it somewhat agreeing with the statement. Plus 50-year-olds and 30-40-year-olds both have the average score of 4.2.

5.5 Trusting supervisors on fixing an issue

The average score of young employees trusting supervisors on fixing an issue is 4. (Figure 10) The male response score average is 4.3 and the female response score average is 3.8, having a 0.5 difference in score.

The lowest scoring age group is the ages between 40-50-year-olds, with an average score of 3.3, making in having “mixed feelings” about the statement. 20-30-year-olds have a score of 4, 30-40-year-olds have a score of 4.2 and plus 50-year-olds have a score of 4.5.

5.6 Trusting the supervisor with personal issues

The statement with trusting the supervisor with personal issues and trusting, that it stays between the employee and the supervisor, had an average score of 3.6. (Figure 11) The male respondents had an average score of 4.3 and the female average score is 3. This has one of the biggest gaps between the two genders. There could be several reasons on why is this case, but that’s for another study on focusing young female employees trust with qualitative interviews.

The lowest scoring supervisor age group is 20-30-year-olds, with an average score of 3.3, but as stated, the demographic is too small in the questionnaire, the true average score cannot be concluded for that age group. 40-50-year-olds had the average score of 3.6, making it somewhat agreeing with the statement. Age groups of 30-40-year-olds have a score of 3.7 and plus 50-year-olds have a score of 4.

5.7 Feeling stressed at work

Young employees, that felt stressed at work because of lack of trust with their supervisor had the average score of 1.7, making it leaning towards “somewhat disagreeing” with this statement. (Figure 12). The male responders average score is 1.3 and the female responders 2.2, having a 0.9 difference in the average score.

The lowest scoring supervisor age group is 20-30-year-olds, with an average score of 2.3, making it “somewhat disagreeing with the statement. However, as stated, the demographic is too small in the questionnaire, the true average score cannot be concluded for that age group. 40-50-year-olds had the average score of 2, making it “somewhat disagreeing” with the statement. 30-40-year-olds have the average score 1.5. The plus 50-year-olds have the average score of 1, however, as stated, the demographic is too small in the questionnaire, the true average score cannot be concluded for that age group.

5.7.1 Feeling stressed at home

Young employees, that felt stressed at home because of lack of trust with their supervisor had the average score of 1.4, leaning towards “disagreeing”. (Figure 13). The male responders average score is 1.3, making it leaning towards “disagreeing” with the statement. The female responders average is 2.2, making it “somewhat disagreeing” with the statement. Having 0.9 score difference between the two genders.

The lowest scoring supervisor age group is 20-30-year-olds, with an average score of 2, making it “somewhat disagreeing with the statement. However, as stated, the demographic is too small in the questionnaire, the true average score cannot be concluded for that age group. 40-50-year-olds had the average score of 1.4, making leaning towards it “disagreeing” with the statement. 30-40-year-olds have the average score 1. The plus 50-year-olds have the average score of 1, however, as stated, the demographic is too small in the questionnaire, the true average score cannot be concluded for that age group.

5.8 Quitting because the lack of trust

When asked in the questionnaire, that do young employees think about quitting their job, because of the lack of trust between them and their supervisor. (Figure 14). The average score came to be 1.7, making it leaning towards “somewhat disagreeing” with the statement. Both female and male responders had the average answer of 1.7.

The lowest scoring supervisor age group is 20-30-year-olds, with an average score of 2.3, making it “somewhat disagreeing with the statement. However, as stated, the demographic is too small in the questionnaire, the true average score cannot be concluded for that age group. 40-50-year-olds had the average score of 1.7, making leaning towards it “somewhat disagreeing” with the statement. 30-40-year-olds have the average score 1.3, leaning towards “disagreeing” with the statement. The plus 50-year-olds have the average score of 1, however, as stated, the demographic is too small in the questionnaire, the true average score cannot be concluded for that age group.

5.9 Trust effecting work motivation end effort

When asked in the questionnaire, that do young employees feel about the lack of trust effecting their work motivation and work efficiency, the average score came to be 2.3, meaning they “somewhat disagree” with the statement. (Figure 15). The male responders average score is 1.6, making it leaning towards “somewhat disagreeing” with the statement. The female responders average is 3, making it “mixed feelings” with the statement. Having 1.4 score difference between the two genders. To understand why there is a big gap between the two genders, there needs to be a second study with qualitative interviews with young female employees.

The lowest scoring age group is the ages between 40-50-year-olds, with an average score of 2.5, making it between “somewhat disagreeing and “mixed feelings” about the statement. Supervisor age group 20-30-year-olds, with an average score of 2.33, making it “somewhat disagreeing” with the statement. How-

ever, as stated, the demographic is too small in the questionnaire, the true average score cannot be concluded for that age group. 30-40-year-olds have the average score 2.2, making it “somewhat disagreeing” with the statement. The plus 50-year-olds have the average score of 1.75, leaning towards “somewhat disagreeing” with the statement. However, as stated, the demographic is too small in the questionnaire, the true average score cannot be concluded for that age group.

5.10 Previous trust issues with supervisors

When asked in the questionnaire, have the respondents had any trust issues with supervisors in their whole career, the average score is 3.1, making it “mixed feelings”. (Figure 16). The female responders average is 2.8, making it “somewhat disagreeing” with the statement. The male responders average score is 3.4, making it leaning towards “disagreeing” with the statement. Having 0.6 score difference between the two genders. 18 responders responded either “somewhat agreeing” or “agreed” with the statement, making it half of the responders have had trust issues with their supervisor during their whole working career.

5.10.1 The importance of trusting the supervisor

Every single responder either responded to “somewhat agreeing” or “agreeing”, with the statement that they feel it is important to trust their supervisor in order to enjoy being at work. (Figure 17). The average score came to be 4.9 and also both genders had the average score of 4.9.

6 SURVEY ANALYSIS

There are a few aspects to further analyse from the online questionnaire. This part of the thesis dives into a deeper analysis of the results of the online questionnaire. As the results show there are some trust issues with young employees on their supervisor and this part aims to analyse, why is this the case. The responders who answered the questionnaire are working in the different companies, that may have different culture and hierarchies. There could be several possibilities of trust issues that these young employees face from their supervisor in their organization.

6.1 Female responders

When analysing the results of the online questionnaire, the female responders have a lower score compared to the male responders. In some questions the score difference was slightly lower, but in several there is a bigger gap. Young female employees may face more trust issues in the workplace, with different reasons.

When looking at the young female responders' supervisors age range and gender. The gender of the supervisor does not seem to affect the overall trust level, for male and female supervisors had similar score. However, as stated before the age ranges from 40-50-year-olds had the lowest score when it comes to trust.

6.1.1 Gender bias and power dynamics

Young women and generally women may face gender bias or discrimination, leading to distrust of supervisors if they feel unfairly treated or overlooked for opportunities based on their gender. Gender bias refers to a tendency towards favouring one gender over another. It manifests as an unconscious bias, also known as implicit bias, where individuals unintentionally assign particular attitudes and stereotypes to individuals or groups. These biases influence how individuals perceive and interact with others. (Reiners, 2023)

Power dynamics can significantly impact young female employees in a few ways. Young women may face unequal treatment by their supervisor at work. They may feel overlooked or marginalized compared to their male counterparts. This treatment can show in fewer opportunities in advancement, lower salaries and working hours, and less recognition for their involvement. (Workplace discrimination, 2023)

Microaggressions or subtle forms of discrimination from individuals in supervisor or management position can diminish the confidence and sense of belonging of young female employees in the workplace. Examples of such behaviours may include dismissive comments, frequent interruptions, or unequal treatment compared to their male counterparts. Additionally, power dynamics may cause young female employees to hesitate in expressing their opinions or concerns, fearing potential repercussions or dismissal by those in positions of authority. This reluctance to speak up can impede their capacity to share ideas, assert themselves, or address issues like harassment and discrimination. (Workplace discrimination, 2023)

6.2 Older supervisors

Due to the significant age gap and also generational differences, young employees and senior supervisors may have trust issues. Trust issues may arise from experience disparity and communication barriers. When looking at questionnaire answers and their average score, when it comes to older supervisors. Many felt that they do trust their supervisors, but do not feel trusted.

Older supervisors and also older employees have a long career with experience and knowledge. They might have a perceived bias towards younger employees, making them not trust young employees and their work outcome, making the young employees feel that they are being micromanaged. Additionally, young employees may feel that their older supervisors might question their viewpoint and challenges.

Organizations have different hierarchical structures and culture on how work is done, and people are managed within the workplace. Young employees may feel

hesitant to approach their senior supervisor with concerns about work or a certain task, fearing negative repercussions or feeling that their supervisor is unable to help them solve an issue. The questionnaire showed that young employees are hesitant to tell their older supervisors about personal issues. (Gilbert, Tang, 1998)

Older supervisor individuals may not have had access to the same professional development opportunities or leadership training programs that are now more common in many workplaces. As a result, some older supervisors may benefit from additional support and resources to further develop their leadership skills and adapt to evolving workplace trends. (Greenwood, 2023)

Supervisors of the age range 40-50-year-olds may have grown up in backgrounds characterized by conventional management frameworks and hierarchical leadership styles. In opposition, younger generations tend to favour collaborative and adaptable leadership methods. Older supervisors may find it necessary to adjust their management techniques to align with the preferences and expectations of younger staff members. (Greenwood, 2023)

6.3 Trust affecting motivation and increasing stress

When analysing the answers from the online questionnaire, the responders who have trust issues with their supervisor also feel stressed and affects their motivation and efficiency towards work. Additionally, some responders also feel stressed during their free time when not working and also thinks about resigning from their workplace. The trust relationship between the young employee and their supervisor plays an important part in workplace wellbeing and motivation towards the company. This uncertainty can lead to increased stress as young employees may constantly worry about their job security, the reliability of information provided to them, or the possibility of being undermined by their peers or supervisors. (Gilbert, Tang, 1998)

Half of the respondents have had trust issues with their supervisor during their career, making this a severe issue in organizations. The supervisors may lack the correct and proper training when it comes to leadership and creating a positive

relationship with their employees. Having trust issues is hard to fix, once its broken. Rebuilding trust through transparent communication, consistent leadership, and a commitment to fairness and integrity is essential for mitigating these negative effects and encouraging a positive and productive work environment. However, depending in what way the trust is broken and if there hasn't been any trust during the whole relationship it may feel almost impossible to fix it. Perhaps some things cannot be fixed if it never existed, in these types of cases resigning from the organization maybe the right thing to do from point of the young employee.

6.4 Mutual trust being important

Everyone of the responders agree, that its important for them to trust their supervisor and feel trusted by them in order to enjoy working at an organization. Having a mutual trust in any relationship makes both parties feel safe and relaxed. Creating an open environment with smoother communications and feeling of support.

The responders, that don't have mutual trust with their supervisor may more easily feel burnout and start resenting their organization. During this point the young employee might resign from the organization and when other people ask about the organization towards the resigned young employee, they may talk negatively towards the organization. This may affecting negatively towards future recruitment, when talented and skilled workers steer away from the organization.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

This thesis and the questionnaire showed what is the average trust level with young employees towards their supervisors. On the surface in most cases, young employees do have a mutual trust with their supervisors. However, it is shown that half of the respondents have had trust issues in their career and young female employees face more trust issues compared to their young male respondents. A qualitative study needs to be done to truly understand in what kind of trust issues young employees face or how have it's been broken in their cases. Additionally, focus on why young female workers face more trust issues with their supervisors. Furthermore, this thesis merely speculates possible different reasons on why there is trust issues between the young employee and their supervisor.

7.1 Recommendations for organizations

Organizations would find it beneficial to conduct a internal research on subject of mutual trust between employees and their supervisors. By doing so, the organization can identify what is their current trust average and to see if there is a need for any measures for further supervisor training in leadership and look into the actual training programme if there is a need to modernise it. Organizations may use the ABCD trust model to help with their training programme. The four characteristics for growing trust are A for able, B for believable, C for connected and D for dependable.

When you are able, you showcase your ability to others. Your work consistently maintains a high standard, you proactively use your initiative to resolve challenges, you can be trusted to assist others, and you continually strive to achieve your highest potential. The supervisor needs to focus on achieving high-quality results and committed making a difference in the team. (Mindtools, n.d.)

Supervisors that are believable have integrity. They are ready to admit when they are wrong, and supervisors don't undermine their employees behind their back. When a supervisor does not spread rumours or gossip, they create a sense of

safety within the workplace environment and makes the supervisor more trustworthy. Showing the employees you can be trusted with secrets and personal matters. (Mindtools, n.d.)

Supervisors that care about their employees and the people around them. Supervisors become empathetic, show interest towards their employees and those who are willing to share personal information helps to start a meaningful relationship. Use active listening to deepen the relationship and also give recognition for their work and give praise. Additionally, the willingness to be vulnerable makes others be vulnerable too. (Mindtools, n.d.)

When a supervisor is dependable, they keep their word and stick to it. Supervisors that are dependable are accountable and consistent with their work and their word. Another sign of dependability is being available and answering to requests, questions, email and calls in a timely manner shows that the supervisor is on top of their work. However, a supervisor needs to be honest with themselves about what they can say “yes” to and it's important for them to still manage their time and commitments, without them burning out. (Mindtools, n.d.)

8 CONCLUSION

To conclude this thesis about how young employees trust their supervisors. In the beginning of this thesis, it was said that there are three research questions. To answer the first question, what is the trust level on how young employees trust their supervisors? Currently most young employees have a somewhat mutual trust between them and their supervisors, but there is still room for improvement. Especially, young female employees have more trust issues and that is an issue, that needs to be addressed in the workplace and in our society.

Secondly, does the lack of trust effect the young employees workplace wellbeing. The results show that it does affect workplace wellbeing. Respondents that show a lack of trust towards their supervisors respond towards stress and lacking motivation towards work and even think about resigning because the lack of trust with their supervisor. Thirdly, to answer the question has there been trust issues before in the young employees' career, around half of the respondents have had trust issues with their supervisors. Making this a common issue in organizations, which needs to be addressed.

Further studies need to be done to further understand this issue, that organizations face. It is also important to remember, that supervisors are not superhuman and they also make mistakes, sometimes lack motivation, and get tired. However, they are first person who the young employees may come to when there is an issue regarding work, so there must be a standard for supervisors so that there is a mutual trust and open communication.

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