

Aged governmental officers' motivation: What influence work efficiency?

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ABSTRACT

Aged workers were mostly questioned in terms of their work efficiency. However, as time changed and the structure of human resource in the organization also changed, older people became important part of all human resources in the organization. The study, hence, aimed 1) to study the level of work efficiency of aged workers; and 2) to study factors affecting work efficiency of aged workers. The study applied quantitative method using questionnaire as a data collection tool, collecting data from aged governmental officers in Nong Khai province, Thailand. There were 402 completed questionnaires which were taken for analysis. The finding presented that aged workers performed very high level of work efficiency using frequency, mean, and standard deviation techniques to analyze. To find the factors affecting work efficiency, the research applied multiple regression analysis. The finding presented that recognition and respect, fair evaluation, job design, and compensation were factors affecting work efficiency of aged governmental officers.

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1. Introduction

Thailand is facing aging society and that means the population structure has more aged people than younger ones. There are lower rate of birth and death. This affects the human resource structure of the workforce and there is a gap between old and young. When workers reach retirement age, younger ones cannot substitute in terms of skills and experiences and the work is discontinued. Fig. 1 presents the workforce of 55 years and older of human resources (Toossi, 2012).

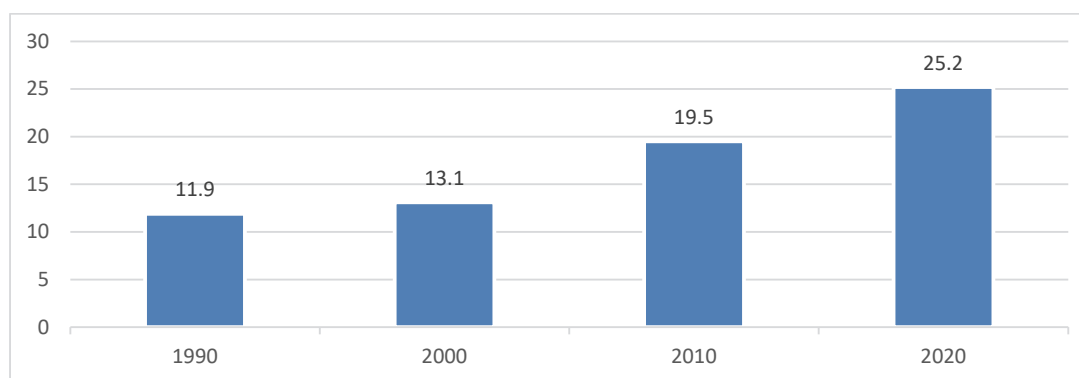


Fig. 1. Human Resource Structure between 1990-2020

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Toossi (2012) has outlined that labor workforce was gradually changing. More aged workers (55 years and older) gradually increase in the organizations. Therefore, in the near future, aged human resources are likely to play major roles in the organizations, and the organizations started to realize this. Many organizations solved this problem by extending retirement age, even in the public sector in Thailand. The government has announced the guideline to extend governmental officers' retirement age to 63 years old (OCSC's Rules regarding Governmental Officers who Reach Sixty Years Old Continue Working, 2019). However, the work efficiency of old workers is still in questions. Traditionally, older workers were found to have physical declines which affect work efficiency (e.g. Soer et al, 2012; Milanović et al, 2013). In contrast, some scholars presented the benefit of older workers (e.g. Ilmarinen, 2001; Vasconcelos, 2017). Therefore, this paper aimed to 1) study the level of work efficiency of aged workers; and 2) to study factors affecting work efficiency of aged workers because these aged workers are becoming main human resources in the organization.

2. Conceptual Framework

Motivating factors were found to affect work efficiency of any workers at any age. In other words, if a worker is motivated, they are likely to work more efficiently and more productive. Aged officers in governmental organizations are playing an important role to the organization as it can be seen that the Thai government gazette issued on June 20th, 2019 has announced the guidelines for retirement age extension from 60 years old to 63 years old in many governmental organizations. This meant that aged workers are likely to spend more time working for the organization. Many studies found that people's ability is likely to decrease when they get old. For example, Soer et al. (2012) studied the physical capacity of workers aged between 20-60 years at the same length of working hours and found out that physical strength started to decline gradually at the age of 45 years old. Belbase and Sanzenbacher (2016) demonstrated that aged person often had Alzheimer disease especially in the people aged between 50-60 that started to show the symptom, and the disease was likely to increase 15% at the age of 65-74 years old. Regardless general declines, Ilmarinen (2001) has stated that actual age and mental age are to be distinguished. Some workers might be old at age but if they think that they are strong and young, they are able to work as well as the younger ones. The younger ones, on the other hand, if they think that they are old and feel tired, they are likely to show less efficient work performance. Therefore, age itself may not determine the work performance, rather the motivation and feelings that influence aged officers' performance.

Human resource practices were important to increase workers' motivation and satisfaction. Herzberg's classic two-factor theory presented motivators and hygiene factors as the main human resource practices (Herzberg, 1993). The factors included achievement, recognition, the work itself, advancement, growth, and responsibility as motivators, and company policies and administration, relations with supervisor, interpersonal relations with coworkers, working conditions, compensation, and status and security as hygiene factors. Later, these two factors were both found to influence workers' motivation (Yusoff, Kian, and Idris, 2013). Herzberg's theory was widely applied to many studies even in aged human resource. Kooij and Van De Voorde (2015) stressed that specific human resource practices to manage older workers should be applied because people started to satisfy on the different things. Armstrong-Stassen's (2008) presented four main practices that directly affected aged workers' work efficiency. They were recognition and respect, fair performance evaluation procedure, job design, and compensation. First, recognition and respect, this factor referred to the perception of workers toward being recognized and respected by other colleagues and supervisors in the organization. This included the appreciation and acceptance of their work performance. Second, fair performance evaluation procedure or in this paper called fair evaluation. The factor referred to the perception of being treated fairly on their performance evaluation. Third, job design referred to the perception of being suitable with jobs assigned and their ability. Fourth, compensation referred to receiving fair and satisfactory rate of wages and welfare. These four factors were mainly applied to further investigated in this study as the independent factors. In terms of efficiency, a classic Simon's (1960) formula described three main components was reviewed. First, output referred to the output of one's performance such as work pieces. Second, input referred to the materials and supported used or invested in order to perform a job such as equipment and training. Third, satisfaction referred to the workers' satisfaction toward job and organization. These factors were lately applied and discussed in many studies. Peters and Zelewski (2016) presented the benefits and concerns for the use of the formula and showed how the formula could be applied for future studies. Hence, the paper measured efficiency, taking into account all three main areas: output, input, and satisfaction. The conceptual framework for this study can be demonstrated in Fig. 2.

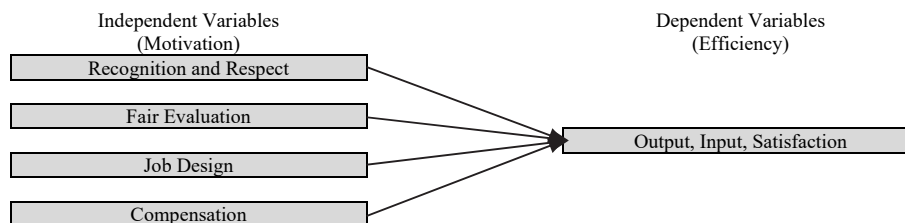


Fig. 2. Conceptual Framework

3. Research Method

The study applied quantitative method. The data was collected from governmental officers aged 55 years old and above in Nong Khai province using questionnaire as a main data collection tool. The researcher applied stratified sampling method by first classifying organizations into groups by its affiliation. The author randomly selected the organizations at the same ratio from each affiliation and sent out questionnaires to the aged officers in those selected organizations. The questionnaire used in this research contained three parts. Firstly, it asked general information of the sample. They were gender, age, education, and length of work in the organization. Secondly, it asked the current status of their work efficiency in three main areas: input; output; and satisfaction. Input inquired about organizational support such as equipment and working environment. Output inquired about the achievement and success of the jobs assigned. Satisfaction included likeness and happiness toward their job and organization. Thirdly, the questionnaire asked about the motivating factors. The study showed four important motivating factors that affect work efficiency of aged workers. They were recognition and respect, fair evaluation, job design, and compensation. These two parts using 5-point scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The 5-point scale were widely applied in terms of measuring opinions and attitude (e.g. Nonthapot & Wongsiri, 2019; Nonthapot & Nasoontorn, 2020). The reliability test from 30 aged officers who were not the sample using Cronbach's alpha analysis presented the value of 0.858. After receiving the returned questionnaire, the author filtered the completeness of received questionnaire before analyzing the data. The method used to analyze the data was frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation to see the general information of the sample as well as to analyze the level of work efficiency. Moreover, multiple regression analysis was applied to study factors affecting work efficiency of aged employees.

4. Findings and Results

The findings and results can be described in three areas: general information; work efficiency; and factors affecting work efficiency.

4.1 General Information

The total number of questionnaires that were sent to collect data was 450 and received 427 in return. After filtering the completeness of the data returned, 25 questionnaires were incomplete and were removed before analysis. The total number of cases analyzed was 402 (89.33%). The details of analysis are shown in Table 1.

Table 1
General Information

General Information	Number	Percent
Gender		
Male	237	58.96
Female	165	41.04
Total	402	100.00
Age		
55-56 Years Old	125	31.09
57-58 Years Old	160	39.80
59-60 Years Old	91	22.64
61 Years Old and Above	26	6.47
Total	402	100.00
Education		
Below Bachelor's Degree	120	29.85
Bachelor's Degree or Equivalence	221	54.98
Above Bachelor's Degree	61	15.17
Total	402	100.00
Tenure (Time Working for the Organization)		
Below 15 Years	140	34.82
15-20 Years	11	2.74
21 Years and Above	251	62.44
Total	402	100.00

Table 1 presents the general information of the sample. Most of them were male (n=237, 58.96%), followed by female (n=165, 41.04%); age mostly between 57-58 years old (n=160, 39.80%), followed by 55-56 years old (n=125, 31.09%), 59-60 years old (n=91, 22.64%) and 61 years old and above (n=26, 6.47%) respectively. They mostly held Bachelor's Degree or equivalence (n=221, 54.98%), followed by below Bachelor's Degree (n=120, 29.85%) and above Bachelor's Degree (n=61, 15.17%). The length of time the sample has worked for their current organization, so called tenure, presented that most officers have worked for more than 21 years (n=251, 62.44%), followed by below 15 years (n=140, 34.82%) and between 15-20 years (n=11, 2.74%).

4.2 Work Efficiency

The efficiency which was measured by the perception of aged officers has the following criteria for 5-point scale interpretation as follows (Srisa-ard, 2010).

1.00 - 1.80	Very Low
1.81 - 2.60	Low
2.61 - 3.40	Moderate
3.41 - 4.20	High
4.21 - 5.00	Very High

The details of work efficiency are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Level of Work Efficiency

No	Details	\bar{x}	S.D.	Interpretation
1	Output	4.11	0.79	High
2	Input	3.99	0.77	High
3	Satisfaction	4.19	0.71	High
Total		4.10	0.76	High

\bar{x} refers to mean

S.D. refers to standard deviation

Table 2 presents the level of work efficiency. Overall, it can be seen that the efficiency of aged officers' performance was at high level ($\bar{x}=4.10$, S.D.=0.76). Looking in details, the satisfaction was at high level ($\bar{x}=4.19$, S.D.=0.71), followed by output ($\bar{x}=4.11$, S.D. = 0.79) and input ($\bar{x}= 3.99$, S.D.=0.77). However, when this was calculated using Simon's formula above: $E = (O-I)+S$, the result is shown as follows.

$$\text{Efficiency (E)} = (\text{Output (O)} - \text{Input (I)}) + \text{Satisfaction (S)} = (4.11 - 3.99) + 4.19 = 4.31.$$

Efficiency from the formula presented the value of 4.31 which could be interpreted as very high.

4.3 Factors Affecting Work Efficiency

The findings and results for factors affecting work efficiency was analyzed using multiple regression analysis and the details are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Factors Affecting Work Efficiency

Motivating Factors	b	Beta	t	Sig.
Recognition and Respect	0.420	0.147	3.357**	0.001
Fair Evaluation	-0.020	-0.010	-0.194	0.846
Job Design	1.458	0.527	10.920**	0.000
Compensation	0.270	0.118	2.219*	0.027

R = 0.663 R² = 0.440 F = 28.716

** indicates significance level 99%

* indicates significance level 95%

Table 3 presents that there are three motivating factors affecting work efficiency of aged officers. The motivating factors ranking from the highest to lowest impact to work efficiency are: first, job design (sig = 0.000) is positively related. In other word, job design increases whenever efficiency is added 0.527. Second, recognition and respect (sig = 0.001) is positively related. It increases whenever efficiency is added 0.147. Third, compensation (sig = 0.027) is positively related. It increases whenever efficiency is added 2.219. Fair evaluation does not affect work efficiency of aged officers at the confidence level of 95%.

5. Discussions

The findings above have presented the work efficiency and factors affecting work efficiency of aged governmental officers in Nong Khai. It can be seen that the level of work efficiency of aged workers was at very high level. This was in line with Ilmarinen (2001) who stated that age itself was not the determining factors of work efficiency. Attitudes also played important roles. Van Dalen, Henkens, and Schippers (2010) also supported that there were many dimensions that influenced the productivity of older workers such as reliability and commitment, and cognitive and physical skills. Chantaplaboon (2020) who

interviewed governmental officers also found out that many governmental officers could still work as same as the younger ones, even better in some areas. The data presented that the older officers were better in terms of experiences, details of work, and making decisions because they knew and understood the work better than younger ones. Their experiences also supported their work well. Therefore, there was no surprise that the work efficiency was at very high level, even though that was not to be compared with younger ones because the definition of efficiency and expectation were different. Another aim of the study was to investigate factors affecting and four main factors were taken into account. They were recognition and respect, fair evaluation, job design, and compensation. Three factors were found to influence work efficiency. They were recognition and respect, job design, and compensation respectively. Aged officers were found to be motivated when they were recognized and respect. Chantaplaboon (2020) reflected in her study that aged officers did not want to be specially treated but their work experiences should not be disdained. Although many things changed with time, and older workers seemed to learn slower, their past work and experiences should be taken into account. Therefore, to stay working in the organization, aged officers wanted their work to be recognized by the organization, supervisors and colleagues. Job design as motivating factor was supported by the study of Vasconcelos (2017). The author said that older workers could work efficiently and the study outlined specific kinds of jobs that matched older workers. Older workers could work better as supporting roles to the younger ones. Job design that matched and motivated them to work was tasks that used more experiences than labor. Compensation was widely discussed at all age. This includes wages and welfare the officers received from the organization. Many aged officers decided to work after their retirement because of financial reasons. Some reflected that they wanted to work because the status and living quality were better than living with pension or being fostered by their children (Vasconcelos, 2017; Chantaplaboon, 2020).

6. Conclusion

Having said this, aged governmental officers, in their perception, performed their work at a high level of efficiency and motivating factors that influenced the efficiency was job design, recognition and respect, and compensation respectively. The findings imply important human resource practices for aged officers in order to increase their performance. First, job design for aged officers should focus on tasks that use experiences, skills, and decision making rather than using strengths or labor. Second, recognition and respect have implied that organization should promote respect in the organization, reducing generation gap by respect the older for their experiences and skills as supporting roles and promote recognition of work, or appreciation of work achievement. Third, compensation should be sufficient for the living for aged people. These three practices were found in this study to influence the level of work efficiency of aged officers. Although these practices do not sound surprisingly, the author would like to draw attention to the details of each practice such as the kinds of job for aged officers, rewards for work achievement, and the rate or definition of compensation. The future study is suggested to conduct qualitatively to further investigate these in detail.

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