ADVERSITY QUOTIENT IN IMPROVING MILLENNIAL GENERATION SALESPEOPLE'S PERFORMANCE IN THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION 4.0

Christian Wiradendi Wolor[1*], Aditya Pratama[2], Shandy Aditya[3], Nadya Fadillah F[4], Dedi Purwana[5]

[1,2,3,4,5]Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Indonesia.

Email: [*]christianwiradendi@unj.ac.id

Abstract

Purpose of the study: The paper aims to address the knowledge gap in understanding the relationship between AQ and the performance of millennial generation salespeople.

Methodology: This study uses a qualitative approach in a systematic review. This is used to synthesize(summarizing) qualitative descriptive research results.

Main Findings: The findings indicate that there is a positive relationship between adversity quotient on the performance of millennial generation salespeople.

Applications of this study: The study shows the importance of companies adopting AQ for millennial generation salespeople by training salespeople, especially in guiding them, to provide flexible space to make decisions, and explore their capabilities in the field of technology in achieving performance targets set by the company.

Novelty/Originality of this study: The results contribute to the literature by providing main factors of adversity quotient to achieve the performance of millennial generation salespeople on Industrial Revolution 4.0.

Keywords: Adversity Quotient, Millennials, Industrial Revolution 4.0, Performance.

INTRODUCTION

Providing satisfying services for consumers from companies is necessary for the current era of intense competition. In this case, the sales force is one of the company's human resources that has a role in achieving the company's goals in increasing the company's profit as the front guard. The contribution of salespeople in achieving an organizational goal in the form of results called performance is certainly expected by the company (Khuong& Hoang Quoc, 2016).

What is happening now is the sales force of the era of the baby boomers who are starting to retire and starting to be replaced by the millennial generation that dominates the current workforce currently, new employees who are in the company on average are filled by millennial generation who are tightly connected with technology, completely instant, giving up easily. Unlike the previous generations, it is one of the new challenges for the world of work (Pyöriä *et al.*, 2017). Generation X and Baby Boomers who never give up on everything, very different from the millennial generation who are less committed, they are more looking for opportunities for their own personal growth and development rather than focusing on work that wastes their time (Smith and Nichols, 2015). But in terms of technological utilities, it can cause them to change their work involvement faster than the previous generation (Pyöriä *et al.*, 2017). Millennials are often referred to as generations who like freedom and flexibility such as freedom of work, study, and business characterized by the use and adaptation of technology in their daily lives (Moreno *et al.*, 2017). If this is not noticed by the company, it will become a separate boomerang and can lead to misunderstandings and communication problems that affect productivity, employee performance, motivation, and employee involvement (Smith and Nichols, 2015), which ends will lead to loyalty problems and high turnover from employees (Özçelik, 2015).

Current economic instability encourages people to have a breakthrough in achieving optimal corporate performance. The problem that occurs is that there is a mismatch of treatment by companies that generalize ways, work systems, learning salespeople between the baby boomers and the millennial generation. Therefore, it is important to know that companies must pay attention to the sales force's Adversity Quotient to optimize the performance of these employees. Adversity Quotient (AQ) is how bad a condition experienced by someone, the person can face these challenges. Emotional, surrender, stop learning, is a sign of people who cannot overcome difficulties. (Paul Stoltz, 1997), (Vinas and Aquino-malabanan, 2015). In relation to company performance, research conducted by Hae Yong stated that organizations need to pay attention to and improve adversity quotient for their employees in pursuing better work performance (Woo& Song, 2015). Research conducted by Hema in relation to Adversity Quotient (AQ) revealed that some individuals had high IQs and EQs, but they failed to succeed. Therefore, we can understand that both IQ and EQ cannot determine a person's success, even though both play a role. So, this is a new concept, namely AQ, which is a lifelong influence for every individual (Hema and Gupta, 2015). Success in learning and high learning achievement is determined by the high AQ. Everyone has different levels of AQ that will cause differences in performance as well (Hastuti, Sari and Riyadi, 2017). When someone faces a difficult and dangerous situation, people who have a high AQ will perform optimally by adapting as best they can to various difficulties and stress and making the best solution for themselves(Hema and Gupta, 2015). Coupled with a positive and fast response to all the challenges that exist(Nikam and Uplane, 2013). Employees

who have high AQ tend to face challenging situations in the organization compared to low AQ employees. In general, the concept of AQ can be used in predicting success in performance and in the functioning of social life (Espaňola, 2016). Those who cannot overcome difficulties can become easily overwhelmed and emotional, then retreat and stop trying their efforts further (Rathee and Sharma, 2018). Organizations need to identify the AQ of all salespeople employees who are then developed to make them future leaders. Today is the industrial revolution 4.0 where new technology will have an impact on all disciplines, the whole value chain and challenging factor for the function of human resources (Alhajjar *et al.*, 2018), (Hecklau *et al.*, 2016).

The research was initiated with the hope of achieving clarity, and more importantly, trying to identify the factors that shape and improve the AQ of employees, especially the millennial generation, in improving employee performance on industrial revolution 4.0. This study was designed to address the knowledge gap in understanding the relationship between AQ and the performance of millennial generation salespeople. Research gaps (Table 1).

Table 1: Research Gap

No	Previous Research	Research purposes	Research Gap
1	(Woo and Song, 2015)	The study investigates how much Emotional Intelligence and AQ nurses have compared to office employees	The study tries to identify the factors that shape and improve the AQ of employees, especially the millennial generation, in improving employee performance on industrial revolution 4.0 that has not existed in previous studies
2	(Vinas and Aquino-malabanan, 2015)	The study tested IQ levels based on demographic profiles	
3	(Hema and Gupta, 2015)	The study tested the AQ level of students based on gender, family factors, and family background.	
4	(Hastuti, Sari and Riyadi, 2017)	The study measured students' IQ levels based on the Classification Score based on Stoltz Theory	
5	(Tigchelaar and Bekhet, 2015)	The study tests the AQ level of employees based on the AQ (CORE) dimension	

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

This study has three main objectives, namely: first, to analyze and identify the key factors that shape and enhance the sales force's Adversity Quotient (AQ). Second, Analyse and identify the factors forming millennial generation in order to solve the problem of the company's approach to its employees who are starting to switch from generation X to millennial generation. Finally, providing a solution in the form of the main factor model of the impact of AQ on the performance of millennial generation salespeople in the Industrial Revolution 4.0. This model is based on the problems faced by the company regarding how millennial generation salespeople view and face difficulties with the characteristics of the millennial generation who give up easily.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Employee Performance

Employee performance is how much the contribution and work results given by employees to the company(Rizal *et al.*, 2014). Basically, performance is the result of a series of behaviors that are actually carried out by employees in work situations (Hartini, Fakhrorazi, &Islam, 2019) and determine the survival and profitability of the organization (Islam *et al.*, 2019). Performance is an important mechanism for management to explain the goals and standards of performance, to motivate the performance of individuals in the future for the sustainability of the organization. Employee performance is to evaluate whether employees do their jobs well within the organization (Shaki and Khoshsaligheh, 2017). Employee performance is also a form of employee ability evaluation and assessment conducted by many companies(Khuong and Hoang Quoc, 2016). Performance as a study center for management strategies as organizational guidelines in employee control functions (Utomo and Budiastuti, 2019);(Jessen, 2015). Employee performance has 4 indicators, which include quality, namely how well an employee completes his work, quantity, how much output is produced by the employee, implementation of tasks, namely how accurate employees are in carrying out their duties, and how employees behave towards the company and other fellow employees (Mangkunegara and Miftahuddin, 2016).

Millennial Generation

The baby boomer generation is the generation born between 1946-1964 and is the oldest generation in the workplace today. After the baby boomer generation, namely Generation X which was born between 1965-1980. (Murphy, Gibson and Greenwood, 2010). The next generation, those born between 1981 and 2000, are known as Millennial Generation,

Generation Net, or Generation Y. These are groups that have or will begin their careers, depending on the year of their birth (Özçelik, 2015). Millennials are the generation of individuals born in 1981-2000 (Yigit and Aksay, 2015). Millennials were born between 1980 and 2000 (Schultz, Schwepker and Good, 2012); born between 1980 - present (Murphy, Gibson and Greenwood, 2010). The millennial generation is characterized by the use of gadgets in their daily lives(Yigit and Aksay, 2015)

Millennials are known as the focus of achievement. They are more willing to go without social time, work overtime to help the organization. Millennials love to work in teams and are more tolerant than previous generations. Millennials focus on families and therefore need to have a better work/life balance (Smith and Nichols, 2015). Conversely, the younger generation is considered impatient, lacking in work ethic, selfish, and not loyal (Smith and Nichols, 2015);(Faulkner, 2013). Here I summarize the advantages and disadvantages of the millennial generation (Table 2).

Table 2: Strength and Weakness Millennial Generation

Strength	Weakness
Competent users of Technology (Pyöriä *et al.*, 2017); (Schultz, Schwepker and Good, 2012) ; (Devaney, 2015) ; (Tan &Yusoff, 2012)	Impatient (Devaney, 2015) ; (Smith and Nichols, 2015)
Work-Life Balance (Pyöriä *et al.*, 2017) ; (Yigit and Aksay, 2015) ; (Devaney, 2015) ; (Smith and Nichols, 2015)	Disloyal (Schultz, Schwepker and Good, 2012) ; (Yigit and Aksay, 2015) ; (Smith and Nichols, 2015)
Ambitious and Focus (Schultz, Schwepker and Good, 2012) ; (Yigit and Aksay, 2015)	Orderly rules and time (Schultz, Schwepker and Good, 2012) ; (Devaney, 2015)
Teamwork (Schultz, Schwepker and Generational, 2012) ; (Tan and Yusoff, 2012) ; (Smith and Nichols, 2015)	Arrogant (Smith and Nichols, 2015) ; (Yigit and Aksay, 2015)

Adversity Quotient

Adversity Quotient (AQ) is a person's capacity to deal with and respond to life's difficulties such as stress, and the difficulties he faces (Tigchelaar& Bekhet, 2015). Adversity quotient from individuals plays an increasingly important role in reacting to the difficulties faced with greater uncertainty, demands, challenges, changes, and complications. When used correctly, In a challenging work environment, AQ is an important part of strengthening organizational leaders in facing various difficulties(Venkatesh& Shivaranjani, 2015).

Adversity Quotient is a theory that scientifically explains steps and strengthens, how people respond to various kinds of difficulties (Venkatesh and Shivaranjani, 2015). There are four dimensions of AQ which are commonly called CO2RE (Control, Origin, Ownership, Reach, Endurance) (Suprianto and Novanto, 2016), (Hastuti, Sari and Riyadi, 2017), (Hema and Gupta, 2015), (Paul Stoltz, 1997):

1. Control is how much someone is sure to have control over the problem at hand and can overcome all the difficulties that occur in him.

2. Origin and Ownership are how much someone blames himself or someone else for the problem he is facing.

3. Reach is how much the problem a person is having is good or bad affects the other activities he does.

4. Endurance is how long someone faces a problem that they experience

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative approach in a systematic review to synthesize qualitative descriptive research results. The systematic review is a research method for identifying, evaluating and interpreting all relevant research results related to certain research questions, specific topics, or phenomena of concern. The facts presented to policymakers are comprehensive and balanced because systematic reviews are used to synthesize relevant research findings. Qualitative systematic review includes the following steps: Formulating research questions, conducting systematic literature review searches, screening and selecting research articles that are suitable, Conduct analysis and synthesis of qualitative findings, Implement quality control, Prepare a final report (Perry and Hammond, 2002).

A qualitative approach is used to frame, analyze and solution in the form of a strategic model for the Company in improving the performance of millennial generation salespeople (Berkah and Sawarjuwono, 2019). After an in-depth review of the literature for analysis, several articles were selected as the main corpus.

DISCUSSION / ANALYSIS

The concept of AQ can be used positively for companies in recruiting potential employees, retaining employees who are performing well and developing employees (Venkatesh and Shivaranjani, 2015). A person's response to the difficulties they face is shaped by the influence of parents, teachers, peers, and other important people during childhood. Behind the

difficulties they have, there is a response in the face of difficulties that can reverse a person's condition from falling into success. Thus finding, measuring, and implementing the AQ concept enables companies to understand how and why some of their employees consistently exceed their targets and other employees who cannot reach the target, despair, and even leave the company. Someone who has a high AQ will benefit in all aspects of life because they will continue to try to face all difficulties until they manage to overcome them. Conversely, those who have a low AQ will have difficulty facing all difficulties and challenges because of their quieter nature (Venkatesh and Shivaranjani, 2015). Companies can categorize their employees based on the dimensions of AQ namely CO2RE (Control, Origin, Ownership, Reach, Endurance) so that companies can find out employees who have the potential to be developed with the hope that performance can be optimal and knowledgeable employees who perform below standard, so they must be fostered, rotated or dismissed.

The concept of AQ is a measure of one's capacity to deal with problems in life. AQ can be improved through education and social support from the family to the work environment. Low AQ can be caused by a lack of family attention and parental support for their children's abilities. Higher AQ is found at higher levels of education indicating that experiences that occur in schools affect their ability to adapt and deal with problems that commonly occur in school. In addition to family support, the safety, comfort, and self-esteem of employees also affect AQ. The more secure, comfortable, employee confidence, the higher their AQ. This will have an impact on high productivity, employee performance and thus help achieve high-quality human resources (Listiawati and Sebayang, 2019). At present, the company's challenges are the era of millennial employees, especially salespeople. Millennials are generations that value flexibility in work settings and work-life balance which are important dimensions that they expect in the companies they work for (Özçelik, 2015).

The AQ concept for millennial generation salespeople who have an influence on performance has a close relationship. Millennials that are less committed, focus on looking for opportunities for their own personal growth and development, giving up and being instant (Smith and Nichols, 2015). But in terms of the utility of technology in work, it can cause them to change their work involvement faster, tolerant and can cooperate with teams better than the previous generation (Pyöriä et al., 2017). Companies can identify the AQ level of each salesperson's employee, and then can take steps to increase AQ at an optimal level in order to improve the performance of the employee. Rathee and Sharma's research found that Adversity Quotient has been found to be positively correlated with performance (Rathee and Sharma, 2018).

The approach that can be taken by the company in identifying the AQ level of its employees is starting from the level of employee recruitment and selection. This is because the first AQ level is the basis of a person, namely through education (Nikam& Uplane, 2013) ; (Venkatesh and Shivaranjani, 2015)between and second is the factor of family support which is the key to increasing AQ (Listiawati and Sebayang, 2019). Companies must analyze both factors before deciding to accept employees because both are outside the company's control. The third approach that can be done by companies is second, giving delegates leadership and enabling millennials to actively participate in shaping their leadership culture (Venkatesh and Shivaranjani, 2015) ; (Devaney, 2015). Fourth, develop forms of inter-generational social communication that enable greater discussion both online and face-to-face. Fifth, creating a flexible environment within the working time and employee learning system / virtual work where the millennial generation can develop their potential (Santos, 2012), (Hecklau et al., 2016). Sixth, sales training plays a key role in improving employee performance (Devaney, 2015).

Millennial generation on industrial revolution 4.0 is closely related to the digital world, requires companies to make work systems using digital media. (Schultz, Schwepker and Good, 2012). The technological capabilities of the millennial generation enable them to market the products they sell on the internet, especially on social media in terms of digital marketing. It also raises an effective communication relationship with consumers in maintaining long-term relations and consumer loyalty. Second, train corporate social network administrators to immediately respond to the demands of the instantaneous millennial generation that is closely related to technology and develop applications that make it easy for consumers (Moreno et al., 2017). This is, of course, beneficial in marketing salespeople in the industrial revolution era 4.0 and will have an impact on the company's performance. In terms of social relations in the current millennial generation, they may experience difficulties in gaining respect and credibility from the older generation in the workplace. Millennials prefer a flexible work environment and they must have the security they will get after retiring later. If this is not considered by the company, Millennials will look for new employment opportunities(Smith and Nichols, 2015). Here I summarize the Main Factors of AQ impact Millennial Generation Performance Salespeople on Industrial Revolution 4.0 (Figure 1).

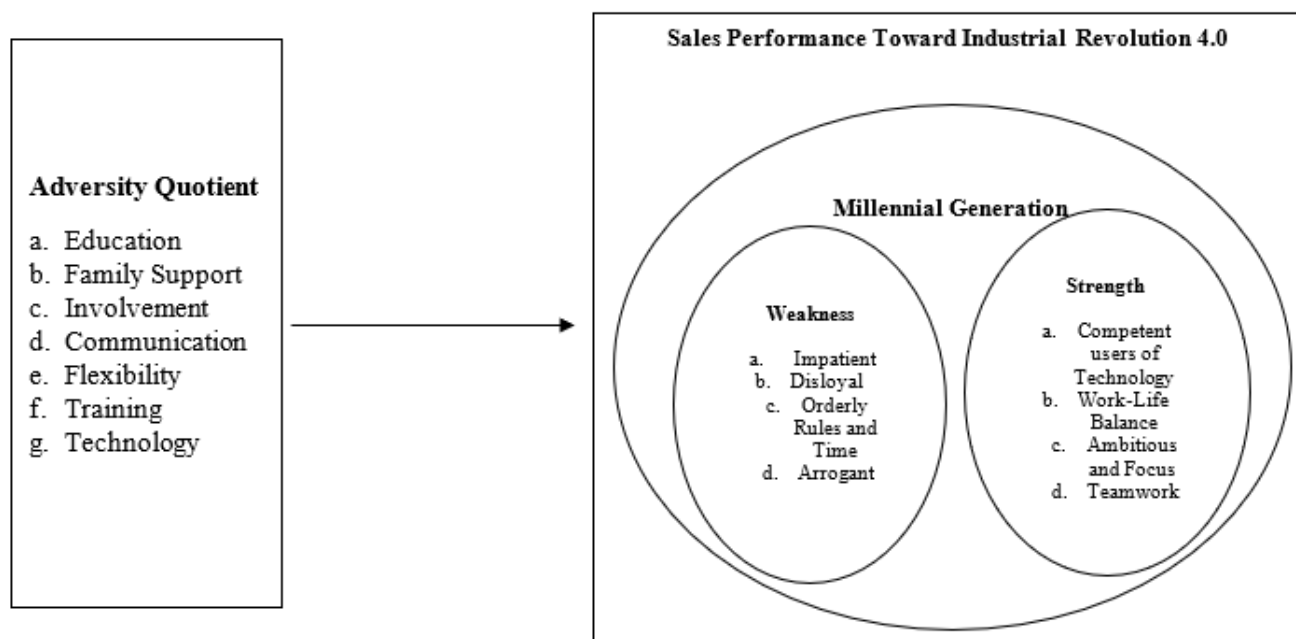**Figure 1:** Main Factors of AQ impact Millennial Generation Performance Salespeople on Industrial Revolution 4.0

CONCLUSION

AQ is a person's ability to turn difficulties into challenging life situations, and that must be increased from time to time. This is a basic need for human resources to succeed in life. It is important for companies to realize and develop the AQ of salesperson employees at an optimal level in order to improve employee performance. The AQ concept will tell a lot about the employees who may be the company or even the employees themselves do not know. The AQ concept provides transparent feedback and helps them to realize themselves, how they respond to situations that are harmful to themselves. C2ORE is the main tool for knowing Adversity Quotient. With this main tool, companies and employees can change the thinking process, change the dimensions of decision making to solve work-life problems and social life to achieve optimal success, prosperity, and performance.

The AQ concept for millennial generation salespeople who have an influence on performance has a close relationship. Management of the company must be able to understand and accommodate the expectations of employees of salespeople, especially the sales force of the millennial generation. This is due to the era of the baby boomer generation that began to retire and began to be replaced by the millennial generation that dominates the current workforce. There is a significant difference between the millennial generation and generation x in terms of characteristics and work style where generation X is more loyal and has a hard-working style compared to millennial who is self-focused, instantaneous and gives up easily. (Smith and Nichols, 2015). But in terms of the utility of technology in work, it can cause them to change their work involvement faster, tolerant and can cooperate with teams better than the previous generation (Pyöriä *et al.*, 2017).

Therefore, companies can change the employee's negative AQ, which is less committed, focus on finding opportunities for their own personal growth and development, giving up and being instantaneous towards being positive and developing positive AQ by providing flexible working hours, a work environment fun, career advancement, and digital learning, building relationships between generations, and reward systems. That way, employees of the sales force will feel loyal to the company, turn over low companies, and improve the performance of the employees themselves.

LIMITATION AND STUDY FORWARD

Since the study takes a qualitative perspective with research journal analysis, additional empirical research is needed such as adding quantitative data to more comprehensively identify the indicators that best reflect the AQ variables, preferences and values of the Millennial work environment so that this can improve employee performance and the company itself.

Further research can be carried out which will adopt a more systematic way of sampling and/or broader scope. We hope that our documents inspire future research to explore AQ for millennial generations in different contexts and industries. Longitudinal studies will be very useful. Apart from the continuous changes from this generation.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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