



Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development

**A STUDY ON THE RELATIONSHIP OF DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP
STYLE AND ABSENTEEISM WITH JOB SATISFACTION AS A
MEDIATOR.**

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Masters

PhD

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Abstract

The goal of this research is to see if there is a link between democratic leadership, absenteeism, and job happiness. A total of 57 employees from a private company in Kuching, Sarawak took part in this study. The responders were given 5-point Likert-scale questionnaires. To examine the mediator, the data were analysed using basic linear regression and the Sobel test. According to the findings of the study, there was a significant association between leadership style and work satisfaction, with a p-value of .000, which is less than .05. The p-value for the connection between job satisfaction and absenteeism was 0.075, which is greater than 0.05, indicating that the relationship is not statistically significant. Meanwhile, the link between leadership style and absence has a statistically significant p-value of 0.035. The p-value for the sobel test, which we used to establish the mediation impact of work satisfaction toward the association between democratic leadership style and absenteeism, was 0.285. As a result, there is no statistical difference. The study's implications were addressed in the conclusion section, followed by recommendations for the organisation and future researchers.

Keywords: democratic leadership style, job satisfaction, absenteeism.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.0 Introduction

In several respects, the notion of job satisfaction has been established. In organizational study, the most used concept of job satisfaction as stated by Locke (1976), who defined job satisfaction as a pleasant or positive emotional state resulting from the assessment of one's work or work experiences" (p. 1304). (Klinger, 2008)

Leadership is one of the widely term used in various areas of human activity. As stated by (Silva, 2016) in the journal "what is leadership?" , Stogdill (1974) claimed more than four decades ago that "there are almost as many different definitions of leadership as there are individuals who have attempted to define the concept" (p. 7). As mentioned by (Silva, 2016) in the journal, Leadership has been seen for many centuries as only a personal attribute. Confucius, the great Chinese thinker who lived some 2,500 years ago, did not suggest any concept of leadership, but insisted that leaders should be noble and take care of the people around them. For him, serving the people is the primary aim of a leader (Confucius, circa 475 BC/1998). The leader should be wise to Plato, who many remember as the founding father of philosophy (Takala, 1998). Machiavelli claimed that to have the love of the people, the leader should have good virtues and should be smart (Machiavelli, 1513/1992).

Employee absenteeism means that an employee is absent from the workplace. Absenteeism is induced by the labor's reluctance to come to work, the willingness to come to the office is believed to be the key factors in deciding how employees are absent. Absenteeism is a trait that can never be eliminated by companies, but they can monitor and handle it instead. Basically, employers do not have absence policies that

are so rigid that even though they are sick, they practically compel staff to come to the office to work. Organizations should learn to understand that they should tolerate a certain degree of absence.

1.1 Background of Study

A cross-sectional study that has been done to explore the relationship between managers' leadership styles and employees' job satisfaction in Isfahan University Hospitals, Isfahan, Iran, 2004. Employees reported less satisfaction with wages, benefits, working conditions, advancement and contact as more fulfilling variables and more satisfaction with variables such as the essence of the job, co-workers and variables of the form of supervision. The use of leadership behaviours and workers and job satisfaction have been significantly correlated ($p < 0.001$). (Ali Mohammad Mosadegh Rad, 2006)

From a practical point of view as stated in by (Boso, 2020) in his writing, as workers are likely to indulge in absenteeism as a way of minimising their feelings of imbalance, and because absenteeism is a costly practise, eliminating these high costs will be in the best interest of the employer. It is up to managers to consider the variables that contribute to absences being legitimised. In doing so, participation management programmes and techniques that would delegitimize some of these variables could be introduced, thus enhancing attendance and potentially increasing efficiency and job satisfaction, and minimising turnover intentions.

In this particular research, researcher will relate leadership and absenteeism. Based on the reading that the researcher have made, there are many researcher relates their research on job satisfaction and absenteeism.

Based on a research by (F. Jordan Srour, 2016) the absenteeism rate was on average 7 percent (%) for unskilled employees, compared to 4 % for professional workers and 0.6% for foremen. This result is consistent with that of Hopkins (2014) Who noticed that workers with greater contractual ties to the parent company were less likely to be absent. (F. Jordan Srour,

2016). In the same article, the researcher mentioned that A correlation between the absenteeism rates of the three employee levels showed that a clear positive correlation exists between the employee levels.

There are many past research has discussed on job satisfaction and leadership, but it is unclear how does leadership effect on employees attendance which specifically on absenteeism especially in Malaysia context.

1.2 Research objective

To determine the relationship between democratic leadership styles, job satisfaction, and absenteeism.

- i) To determine the relationship between democratic leadership style affect employee's job satisfaction.
- ii) To determine the relationship between Job satisfaction and absenteeism.
- iii) To determine the relationship between democratic leadership style and absenteeism when consider democratic leadership style comes across job satisfaction to the absenteeism.
- iv) To determine the relationship between democratic leadership style affect employee's absenteeism.
- v) To determine the mediation effect of job satisfaction between democratic leadership style and absenteeism.

1.3 Research hypothesis

Ha1: There is significant effect between democratic leadership style and employee's job satisfaction

Ha2: There is significant effect between job satisfaction and absenteeism.

Ha3: There is significant effect between democratic leadership style and absenteeism when consider democratic leadership style comes across job satisfaction to the absenteeism.

Ha4: There is significant effect between democratic leadership style affect employee's absenteeism.

Ha5: There is significant effect of job satisfaction between democratic leadership style and absenteeism.

1.4 Research framework

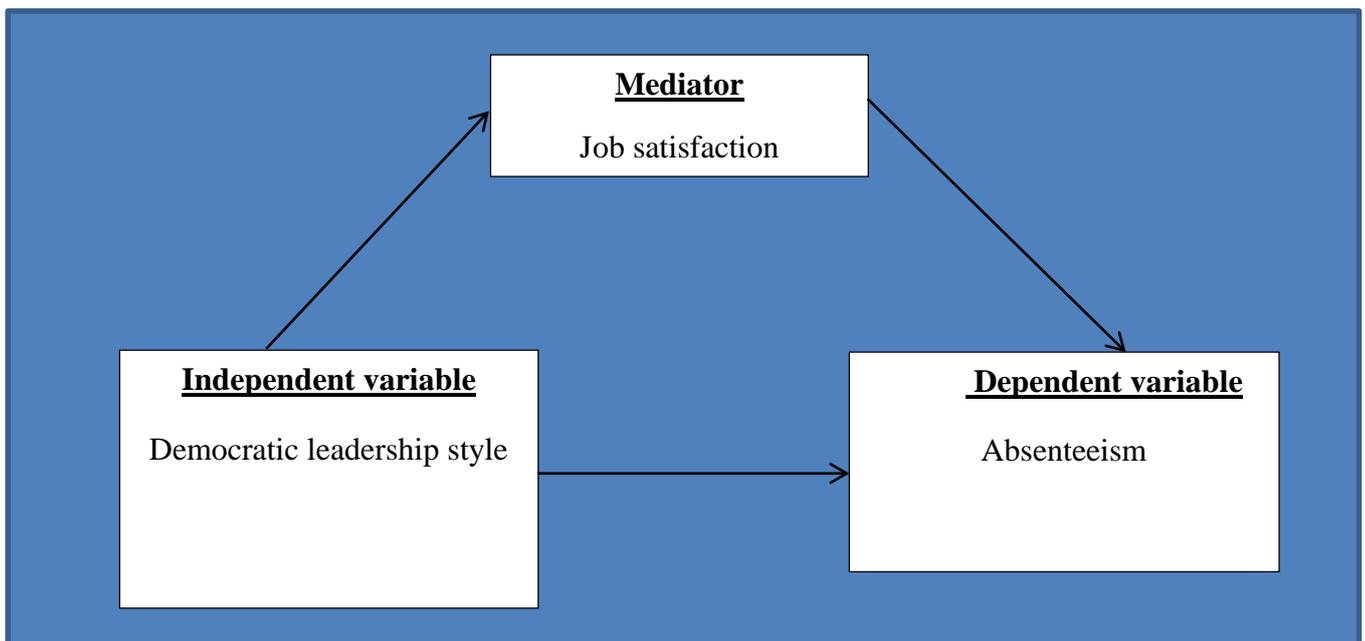


Diagram1: Sources: Author

T.A.J.S.C.A.D.R.G. (2021). *Essentials of Job Attitudes and Other Workplace Psychological*

1.5 Significance of research

The researcher has found that there are two importance of this research. This research is important for other researcher and new researchers in the future such as students and lecturer. The study conducted will serve as a forward-looking guide to assist prospective researchers in conducting research related to leadership and absenteeism with job satisfaction as mediator. Researcher believes that there are

people out there may be interested to study on leadership style and absenteeism. Therefore, the study conducted is hoped to be useful resource later when it is needed.

Besides that, this research also important for human resources practitioners to hire a good leader for their organization. This data is important to know what is the main factors that caused someone fail to go to work.

1.6 Limitation of Research

There are many factors that become the barrier in conducting this research. One of the barriers is to find related articles. There are many factors that affect the researcher to search for articles in conducting this research such as problem in internet connection, and pandemic covid-19. This issues causing the researcher to have difficulty finding the related article or data on this research.

Another barrier for this study is that it takes a quite long time consuming. This is due to many factors such as the new normal of 2020 which we are required to follow the new Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) by the government and the organization itself.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

As stated by Peete, A. (2018), the continuous rise in teacher attrition rates has been recognized by previous researchers (Boyd et al., 2011; Hughes, 2012; Ingersoll, 2001b; Petty et al., 2012). Higher turnover of teachers will require new teachers to be employed and trained on a routine basis by school districts. Conversely, the growth of the community and culture of a positive school will decrease attrition of teachers and increase job satisfaction (Bektaş et al., 2012; Hughes, 2012; Nagar, 2012; Tentama & Pranungsari, 2016). Teacher job satisfaction often refers to the desire of teachers to stay, transfer, or leave (Mahmood, Nudrat, Asdaque, Nawaz, & Haider, 2011). In the last 5 years, teacher work satisfaction has decreased 23 percent, according to Markow et al. (2013).

Based on Peete, A. (2018), Two hypotheses, the contingency theory of Fielder (1967) and Schneider's (1975) the basis for the analysis was established by organizational culture and climate theory. The contingency theory of Fielder associated leadership effectiveness with two causes: the mission structure of the leader and relationships with employees. The organizational culture and climate of Schneider (1975) are focused on the willingness of leaders to establish practices based on practices and policies that create the organizational culture and atmosphere. The actions and activities that favour the company and the workers are also theories understood by the performance of a leader. Themes in the analysis of literature that framed the relevance of the causes the following were included in teacher job satisfaction: (a) activities of school leaders such as exhibiting considerate behaviours and initiating behaviours of systems, (b) job satisfaction of staff, and (c) organizational culture and environment.

Peete, A. (2018) stated that in urban school districts, educator turnover was approximately 20 percent, according to Varlas (2013). The attitudes of school leaders related

to the decisions of teachers to stay in their current teaching position and in the field of education (Boyd et al., 2011). This shows that leadership style give a huge impact to their staff especially on the turnover. A good leadership styles are able to make their staff to stay while bad leadership style are conversely.

Absenteeism without good cause is a usual pattern of absence from a duty or obligation. Absences are usually unplanned absences. Absenteeism has been used as an indication of weak individual efficiency, as well as a violation of an implied employee-employer contract. It is regarded as an issue of management and framed in economic or quasi-economic terms. Scholars have tried to identify the driver absence of staff and addressing the question, "Why do people do it?" When they are supposed to be there, do they skip work? The simple answer is, "They are unhappy with it." (Flynn, 2017). Workplace absence, according to withdrawal models of absenteeism as stated by Flynn (2017), is a behavioural response to disinterested situation (Hackett & Guion, 1985; Sagie, 1998), suggesting that job satisfaction should be a key driver of absence from the workplace. Job satisfaction can be described as the positive feeling one has about his or her job arising from an assessment of its features (Locke, 1976, p. 1304), or simply how much people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs (Fritzsche & Parrish, 2005).

“ Withdrawal and method models of participation, according to conduct, when they enjoy, individuals are more likely to attend work being there, although they do not, and are more likely to be absent (see Johns, 1997; Steers & Rhodes, 1978; Youngblood, 1984)”. (Flynn, 2017).

Based on the general discussion by Flynn in the journal that I have read, (Flynn, 2017) suggested one possible explanation which is work satisfaction is not a significant driver of absenteeism for all. Instead, individual differences can partly explain why work

satisfaction predicts absenteeism to the degree that workers are more driven to satisfy their own egoistic needs than to fulfil the expectations of suitable actions of others.

As stated by Zaid Alfayad (2017) “some scholars consider it purely about the content and happiness of the employees, for example: supervision or nature of work, in different words whether they like the job or not or the individual facets of jobs (Spector, 1997). It refers to how much their work is liked or disliked by employees and many faces (Locke, 1976)”.

The satisfaction of jobs is an essential factor in all industries so better retention of workers and better service delivery are required to be achieved. In addition, it seems that workers appear to perceive their jobs with unfavourable and favourable feelings such as the degree of job-related contentment and pleasure. As stated by Zaid Alfayad (2017), if workers strongly like their work, they are supposed to experience higher work satisfaction, while workers who are more happy are they would feel unhappy with their work if they do not like it (Ashwathapa, 2008).

Based on Herzberg motivator-hygiene theory as stated by Zaid Alfayad (2017), Herzberg's theory categorizes the variables into hygiene and motivational variables that affect job satisfaction. The hygiene factor such as organization Regulation, compensation, supervision and co-worker relationships, job security, and working conditions can contribute to job dissatisfaction, but the degree of job satisfaction cannot be increased. Although motivating factors such as acknowledgement, success, advancement, progress, employment, and accountability can contribute to job satisfaction, the level of dissatisfaction does not decrease (Herzberg et al.1959). However, in order to minimize work dissatisfaction, it is more important to focus on the motivating elements to enhance and maximize job satisfaction in order to satisfy the hygiene elements. Satisfiers or motivators are the component or

elements that are based on the essence of the job itself, whereas hygiene aspects, such as management and company policy, are linked to the work environment (Alfayad, 2017).

Human resource managers and practitioners need to be aware of the voice and job satisfaction relationship between workers (Alfayad, 2017). Contact openness as a form of voice and job satisfaction is positively linked, according to Wulandari and Burgess (2011). They concluded that the openness of contact in the workplace was positively related to job satisfaction. Employees feel content to share and say what they are about. They can easily view, exchange data and know that their supervisors and colleagues are able to listen to their thoughts, recommendations or reports on a regular basis with an open mind.

Employees will have more self-confidence and feel relaxed at work until workers feel like their representatives or leaders are interacting flexibly. Contact transparency in the workplace can be more likely to interact with the job satisfaction of the employee (Alfayad, 2017). Unfortunately, Genc (2010) concluded that improved contact gives workers a feeling of being taken into account by management and managers as it creates an environment of active involvement in the company, resulting in work satisfaction for employees. This suggests that the more workers feel engaged in the work atmosphere, the more likely they are to have a higher degree of satisfaction, which can contribute to greater organizational success and productivity. Sinha and Shukla (2012) observed that the higher the degree of contact from workers to management, the more work satisfaction is achieved. They will feel more comfortable than workers who cannot express and convey their ideas and opinions when employees feel like they can speak up and deliver their ideas, thoughts and recommendations to the management. Upward coordination within the organizational setting can provide a higher level of work satisfaction.

As for leadership style, Chen, Chang, and Lin (2014) considered leadership as a special force, with a group of individuals assuming that their actions could be controlled by another group of individuals. Karati and Yuksekbilgili (2014) pointed out leadership as the process of A's action affecting the actions of B, where B considered the process would adhere to individual goals as legal and changed behaviour. Besides that, there are many others research that define leadership style different from the two definition given above which is leadership as chiefs and superiors who direct subordinates to become a group with effective strategies and acts in order to accomplish tasks with mutual efforts (Acciaro, 2014). Hyettand (2015) considered job satisfaction as the physiological and psychological job satisfaction of employees; stressing the psychology of employees and meeting needs will alter attitudes and increase productivity. Boiral, Baron, and Gunnlaugson (2014) highlighted job satisfaction as an individual emotional orientation to the current position of work; optimistic job satisfaction Jobs attitudes were focused on work satisfaction, while negative attitudes indicated job dissatisfaction.

There are various kinds of styles of leadership that individuals can emulate, so not all leaders are created equal. This does not imply that one style of leadership is better than another; it implies that what works with one leader can vary from another. Some leaders favour one style of leadership over another, and some leaders may use a combination of a variety of styles of leadership. Different leadership styles yield different outcomes, just as different individuals are more appropriate for different styles of leadership (Doolen, 2020).

Leaders of higher education institutions have been found to exhibit an autocratic style of leadership (Chukwusa, 2018). An autocratic leader never permits staff decisions, according to Ardichvili and Kuchenke (2010) and Egwunyenga (2010), and the leader is usually very far from the staff. It is an organization's leadership, and it is sometimes referred to as coercive leadership (Baughman, 2008). Autocratic leaders are results-oriented and centered on

performance. They are renowned alone or with little feedback from others for making decisions. This sort of leader wants workers to do exactly what they're asked to do.

Social psychologist Douglas McGregor developed two opposing theories in the 1960s that illustrated how the views of managers on what motivates their employees can influence their style of management. He defined these as Theory X and Theory Y. Even today, these theories continue to be significant.

Managers of Theory X appear to take a negative view of their persons, and conclude that they are unmotivated and despise work naturally. As a consequence, to ensure that they accomplish their assignments, they feel that team members need to be continuously prompted, praised or disciplined. Work can be tedious in organisations that are run like this, and individuals are often driven by a "carrot and stick" strategy. In general, performance reviews and remuneration are focused on observable results, such as sales figures or product quality, and are used to regulate and "keep tabs" on employees. This management style assumes that their employees hate their job, avoid accountability and need constant guidance, have to be monitored, coerced and threatened with job delivery, need to be supervised at every stage, have little desire to work or ambition, and therefore need to be motivated by incentives to accomplish goals.

Managers of Theory Y have an ambitious, constructive view of their employees, and use a decentralized, participatory style of management. This promotes a trust-based partnership between managers and their team members that is more collaborative. People have more transparency, and supervisors allow them to improve their skills and propose changes. Appraisals are regular, but they are used to facilitate open communication rather than monitor workers, unlike in Theory X organizations.

Democratic leadership, which focuses on communicating with followers as peers, is also known as participative. As for autocratic leadership style that have been discussed above, it has its own pros and cons. Therefore, democratic leadership style also has its own strength and weaknesses.

A democratic style of leadership will improve employee engagement, dedication, and work satisfaction. By building confidence and respect, this leadership style also leads to deeper relationships between the leader and members of their team. Often, the team is more likely to come up with innovative solutions to challenges because a democratic leader allows people to voice their thoughts and share their ideas. Moreover, political leaders teach their teams valuable skills such as problem solving and strategic thinking by encouraging the team to work about concerns and decisions. These team members are in a stronger position over time to take on greater roles and work more independently.

According to Khajeh (2018), the potential for weak execution and in the democratic management style bad decision-making is strong. However, it is also understood that democratic leadership motivates workers to perform better, since their views and opinions are respected. Democratic leadership styles also have its positive impact on organizational performance where the democratic leadership enables staff to decide together with the group and manager. The impact of democracy leadership on organizational performance has also been discussed by Bhargavi and Yaseen (2016). According to their findings, democracy affects the organization's performance provides employees with the opportunity to express, execute and participate in the decision-making process. The democratic leadership style can also be used to improve organizational performance and productivity (Khajeh, 2018).

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the research methodology will be discussed in detail. This part will include research designs, research philosophy, research methods, sampling techniques research instruments and research procedure, and also ethical consideration.

3.1 Research Design

Research design is the methods and processes used in gathering the data for scientific research.

The study will be conducted in a form of a survey. In that survey, the researcher will distribute questionnaire to collect the data that is needed for this research. The questionnaire will be distributed to 150 bottom level employees or line worker that work under private sector in Kuching Sarawak as the sample for private sector employee population. Expected time frame to finish this research is three months where 2 months for collecting data and another one month for data analysis.

3.2 Population, Sample and Sampling procedure

Population

A population is a number of people or inhabitants in a country or region. In this research, the population refers to the people that work in the private sector. In addition, the study seeks to understand what the effect of democratic leadership style and job satisfaction towards absenteeism is by gathering the information through the target population.

Sampling

The sampling cycle comes next. Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals from a population to be the representative of the larger group. After the target population has been identified. For this research, a group of 150 employees of line worker from the private sectors based on the institution that have been chosen by the researcher will be considered as the sample. The sampling technique used is convenience sampling. Researcher chooses to use this sampling technique because it is convenience. The reason is this technique is save cost in data collection, and the sample does not concern about its ability to represent or not the population of the study. In this research, there will be 33 employees will be randomly selected as the sample for this study through the convenience sampling technique.

3.3 Research Instrument

For the research instruments that are used in the study, it is identified that the questionnaire will consist of three parts and these four parts are namely part A which is the demographics, part B will ask about democratic leadership style, part C which comprises of questions that are related to absenteeism matter and Part D consist of job satisfaction questions. These parts will be explained in detail respectively as followed:

Section A: Demographic

In this section which is demographic part in the questionnaire, this part will require the respondent to answer some questions that are related to their personal information. The questions that are going to be in this part is gender, period of working, job description, and department. The purpose of this section is to allow the researcher to know which gender and which age range of group that is related to satisfaction and not satisfied with their job.

Section B: Democratic leadership style

Section B is the second part after demographic in the questionnaire. In this section, the respondents are required to answer some question that are related to their feelings on their first line manager, and second line manager leadership style. The respondent will answer the question in this section based on the five options provided for every question in this section which are strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree.

Section C: Absenteeism

Next is section C that consist of six questions that need to be answered by the respondents. The six questions are related to absenteeism including what causes them not to come to work. The respondents require to answers all the questions in this section based on the five scales that are provided in every questions.

Section D: Job Satisfaction

For Section D in the questionnaire, this part requires the respondent to answer some questions that have been prepared by the researcher on the job satisfaction. The researcher will provide five options to be answered for every question in this section which are strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree. This part will allow the researcher to identify the common reasons for satisfying and dissatisfied of line worker with their job among the follower of the first line manager, and second line manager working in private sector.

3.4 Pilot test

In this research, the researcher are using pilot test to determine how to carry out a large-scale research project with the aid of a small preliminary analysis performed by researchers and how closely related a group of items is to one another. A researcher can

identify the estimated time required, resources that are a requirement and many other things via pilot study. This is to identify what need to be improved in that particular research to make the research better and clear. This pilot test will be conducted to a small number of people to before conducting the real research.

Instruments	Cronbach's Alpha	Items	Reliability
Democratic leadership style	.906	7	Excellent
Absenteeism	.891	6	Good
Job satisfaction	.745	10	Acceptable

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha value

3.5 Ethical consideration

Every respondent were told that their participation is voluntary and all of their information or data are not going to be exposed and will remain confidential by the researcher. In this research, the researcher will not ask about the respondent's personal information such as name, identity number and job position. The respondent were told that this data is only for this research only and not for other personal purposes.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

For the data collection part of this research, the researcher will distribute the questionnaires that have been prepared to 150 employees of line worker in the private sector. Each respondent are given 10 minutes to answer all of the questions in the questionnaire. The steps of the data collection are as followed:

1. Count and confirm the number of questionnaire that are going to distribute.
2. Distribute the questionnaire to the targeted sample.
3. Collect the questionnaire.

4. Recheck and calculate the number of questionnaire after collection.

3.7 Data Analysis Procedure

After collecting all the data, there are two type of tool that will be use to analyze the data. The data will be analysed by the researcher by using a tool named IBM statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The acquired data from the questionnaire will be transfer to SPSS software to get the result of this study. Next, the researcher will be using Sobel test calculator in Quantpsy.org to calculate the effect of mediator.

3.8 Summary

In conclusion, this research will be conducted to 150 employees in private sector. The data in this research will be analysed using IBM SPSS as this research is a quantitative research.

4.0 Findings and discussion

4.1 Introduction

In this section which is findings and discussion, researcher will explain on the findings based on the collected data. There were only 57 respondents answered this study instead of 150 respondents as expected by the researcher. Researcher only get that amount of respondents is due to some issue such as time constraints, uncontrolled collected data, and the spreading of the Google form or questionnaire.

4.2 Findings and discussion

Gender

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Male	22	38.6
	Female	35	61.4
	Total	57	100

Table 2

Table 2 shows there is no missing value in gender research part. In this research, female respondents are more than male respondents. There value of female respondents is 61.4%, which are 35 respondents out of 58 respondents. However, the respondents from the male are 38.6%, which are 33 respondents out of 58 respondents.