

**Project Summary for IAL Website**

The following information is for publication on the IAL website. Please be reminded not to include any confidential information.

<b>Project Title:</b>	Work, Well-Being and Resilience: Understanding Singapore’s Mature Workforce
<b>Project Number:</b>	GA18-04
<b>Year of Approval:</b>	2018
<b>Funding Source:</b>	WDARF
<b>Objectives and intended outcomes of the project:</b>	To understand the factors that influence work-related decisions, lifelong learning, and the well-being of mature workers in Singapore.
<b>Project Team</b>	
<b>Principal Investigator:</b>	Dr Kang Soon-Hock
<b>Co-Principal Investigator</b>	Dr Kalyani Kirtikar Mehta Dr Ng Weiting Dr William Tov
<b>Collaborator</b>	Dr Feng Qiu Shi
<b>Summary of Project (up to 300 words)</b>	
<p>This project seeks to investigate the factors that influence work-related decisions, lifelong learning decisions and activities, and the well-being of mature workers aged between 45 and 75. The outcomes include developing a corporate model in matching work motivators of the matured worker to the corporate structure that will enable the former to perform their jobs and maintain their employability, and as a resource to the policy agenda on the integration and retention of mature workers in the Singapore workforce.</p>	
<b>Summary of Project Findings, Deliverables and Impacts (up to 500 words)</b>	
<p>This research study moved away from existing age typologies and instead included workers not traditionally regarded as old, specifically those aged 45. It sought to study workers from 45 to 75 collectively referred here as mature workers. Both qualitative and quantitative methodologies were employed to examine the factors that influenced work-related decisions, lifelong learning, and the well-being of mature workers in Singapore.</p> <p>We observed that many workers found themselves working in intergenerational teams at their workplaces. The intergenerational nature of the workplace in and of itself was not an issue for mature workers. The qualitative study on intergenerational dynamics at the workplace found that older workers tended to work well in workplaces where they were supported and recognised for their past contributions. In such workplaces, these tended to have a positive impact on older workers mental and physical wellbeing.</p> <p>With mature workers staying longer in the workforce, the baseline quantitative survey on mature workers examined what affects the confidence of mature workers to compete in the job market. From the multivariate regression analysis, educational level, health status, and awareness of skills upgrading were seen as enablers for mature workers. Workplace culture also had an impact on mature workers’ confidence to compete in the labour market. Workplaces where mature workers did not experience discrimination had a positive influence on mature workers reporting confidence with competing in the labour market.</p>	

Through focus group discussions with mature workers, the qualitative study on work motivators and organisations' perspective on mature workers identified motivators that encouraged mature workers to continue working. These included working for financial security, working for a sense of purpose, working as a means of active ageing, and working due to a supportive organisational culture. Human resource (HR) practitioners were also interviewed for this study and from these interviews we gleaned further evidence to suggest that HR practices at workplaces had also evolved and were to a certain extent aligned with the motivations of mature workers in their organisations in relation to what would encourage them to continue working.

From this research study, we find that successful workplaces were those that had flexible and experienced leaders who were able to manage the mixture of positive and negative perceptions and interactions. Aside from having good leadership, proactive and forward-looking HR practitioners were necessary to put in place pertinent policy and programmes to tweak the workplace culture in view of the changing employee profiles. We observed that while the mature worker profile was diverse, e.g., varying educational levels and health profiles, it should not be overlooked that a positive workplace culture can have a significant positive impact on their confidence. Thus, new legislation that seeks to ameliorate negative outcomes at the workplace e.g., the workplace fairness legislation is a step in the right direction and will likely allow mature workers to continue working longer and act as a foil to counter the negative impact of a shrinking resident labour force in Singapore.