

SOURCES OF INFLUENCE ON WORKPLACE ETHICAL ATTITUDES ACROSS DIFFERENT AGE COHORTS IN THE PHILIPPINES

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the degree to which various people and groups influence work related ethical attitudes in the Philippines. Exploratory factor analysis of potential influencers of ethical attitudes identified three factors, suggesting that respondents are influenced by people in the workplace, by educators and by people in the wider community. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was then used to determine whether the level of influence varied across three different age groups. Differences between responses from the younger and middle groups were identified for two of the factors, and between the younger and older groups for all three factors. No differences between the middle and older groups were found.

INTRODUCTION

The process through which employees develop their attitudes in relation to important business issues is a complex one. The literature suggests that humans model their behavior on people they admire, and that employees' attitudes are built on values learned in the home as children, shaped by lessons learned at school and work, modified by views expressed by friends, transformed by the examples set by prominent people in the community, and filtered through the lens of the mass media. One aspect of management behavior that has received a great deal of attention in recent years is business ethics. Many organizations have considered it necessary to inculcate a greater awareness of and adherence to ethical business principles and practices in their workforce, in order to attract and retain the best employees, and better meet the expectations of customers and shareholders. Consequently, studies that investigate perceptions about the relative influencing potential of various people are of theoretical and practical importance. This paper reports the results of an empirical study which examined the degree to which various players in the lives of people of working age influence ethical attitudes in a sample collected in metropolitan Manila, the Philippines.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The developing consensus in the business ethics literature is that ethical attitudes are a function of personal and situational variables. Personal values provide the predisposition to

behavior and action. They provide normative standards that individuals have internalized, accepted and use when making choices about how to behave (Parrott 1999). The normative characteristic of values distinguishes them from other constructs such as attitudes, opinions and preferences, because values specify socially desirable forms, or standards, of behavior (Ravlin & Meglino 1987). The predisposition generated by values is then moderated by situational variables, which may include peer pressure, training or company policy.

A body of theory called social learning theory (Latham 1989) has evolved to explain this process. Social learning theory is based on the ideas of Bandura (1977). According to this theory, people model their behavior on the behavior of others similar to themselves, or whom they respect. By observing the occurrence of certain behavior in social situations, and seeing the consequences of that behavior, people develop expectations that similar behavior on their part will lead to desired outcomes (Mak et al. 1999), a process known as vicarious learning. Davis and Luthans (1980) suggest that social learning has the potential to provide great explanatory outcomes. In their view, social learning theory retains all the theory developed through the study of operant and classical conditioning, but also takes into account the cognitive interactive nature of experiential learning and imitation. They maintain that a social learning theory approach that incorporates the person, the behavior and the environment is the most appropriate theoretical framework for understanding many aspects of human behavior.

Home and Family Influences

The view that values acquired in the home through socialization during childhood (Gilligan 1982), and through moral development in general (Kohlberg 1976), will influence attitudes to ethical issues has intuitive appeal and empirical support (Ashkanasy, Falkus & Callan 2000; Peterson, Rhoads & Vaught 2001; Trevino & Youngblood 1990). Values that are acquired at an early age and reinforced in daily life become deeply ingrained in people, and form the basis of behavioral standards at work, in social interactions, and in the home.

Work Influences

A number of recent studies (Pidd 2002; Xiao 1996) have examined variables that relate to role model behavior in the workplace, and the roles of supervisors and co-workers are commonly examined in many studies (Clarke 2002; Gregoire, Propp & Poertner 1998; Holton et al. 1997; Lim & Johnson 2002; Rouiller & Goldstein 1993). There is considerable evidence that supervisors and co-workers, influence a broad spectrum of employee behavior. Bartlett (2001), for example, found that social support at work was positively related to organizational commitment, while Butcher (1994) found a relationship between supervisor behavior and employee customer orientation. Au and Tse (2001) investigated some of the antecedents of managerial ethical attitudes, including money orientation, egoism, belief in retribution, religiosity, and gender. Their results suggest that high levels of money orientation are likely to lead to lower ethical standards, and a strong belief in retribution is likely to lead to higher levels of ethical behavior. Their study provides an unsophisticated model of ethical behavior based on self interest and fear of punishment, consistent with stage 1 of Kohlberg's (1976) moral development model. Kohlberg's model argues that moral behavior develops through six stages, predicated initially on obedience and fear of

punishment, then on an appreciation of conformity and social accord, and finally on the application of ethical principles and personal values. Many employees are likely to fall in the middle and later stage categories of this model, which would require a better explanation of manager behavior than self interest and fear of punishment. Jackson (2000) investigated a number of corporate level influences on managerial ethical behavior, including organizational size, culture and the impact of training courses and peer example. He considers that employees may be influenced more by their perceptions of management and peer behavior than they are by company codes of ethics. He also suggested that peer influence is likely to exhibit more stability as an influencer of ethical attitudes across cultural boundaries. The workplace is a major influence in forming opinions and values. The values acquired from organizational life, through socialization and management example (Peterson, Rhoads & Vaught 2001; Sims 1992; Wimbush, Shepard & Markham 1997), are consequently likely to influence attitudes to ethical issues.

Educational Influences

Considerable evidence exists to support the view that education leads to a higher level of moral development. The literature suggests that education is one of the “strongest and most consistent correlates of cognitive moral development” (Wimalasiri 2001) p.621). King and Mayhew (2002) reviewed 172 studies that used Rest’s Defining Issues Test and found that tertiary education certainly appears to affect moral development. The reason for this, they argue, is that the thinking skills developed during tertiary education lead to a shift from the conventional to post conventional level of moral reasoning (Kohlberg 1976). The causes of this shift according to King and Mayhew are “the general intellectual milieu of colleges and universities that fosters the exchange of ideas, exposure to multiple perspectives regarding social issues, academic values of truth seeking and careful moral reasoning, or institutional values of academic integrity and personal responsibility” (p. 252).

Jones and Gautschi (1988) found that ethics education can help students recognise ethical issues more easily than students who did not have such training, possibly by developing appropriate schemata that can be used when ethical issues are encountered, a view supported by Desplaces et al(2007). Providing further support for the positive influence of tertiary education, Deshpande (1997) found that managers with advanced degrees have higher ethical standards. In addition, Dulaimi (2005) investigated the influence of academic education and formal training on employee behavior. His results suggest that behavior is to some extent a function of profession, influenced initially by education, but also influenced by experience in the workplace.

Despite the considerable attention given to education by ethics scholars, less research has investigated the relative influence of educators on employee ethical attitudes. Kanter (2005) considered the relative merits of academics and practitioners in influencing management thinking. She argues that management professors have for too long been seen as the best source of sound management theory. This perception has remained constant despite the fact that business schools have advanced theories that fail to reflect the realities faced by managers, that often promote popular ideology rather than objective science, and that tend to encourage the kinds of behaviors that have led to events like the collapse of Enron. The case for

education as the influencer of ethical attitudes seems well made, but the case for the educator as influencer needs further investigation.

Other Influences

In a modern society it is unlikely that the home, work and education will be the only sources of values and attitudes. Many people seem compelled to mimic the clothing, hair styles and accoutrements worn by celebrities, to adhere to the current wisdom as espoused by film and television personalities, or to argue the merits of an issue based on the views of the political leaders they support. It is consequently likely that ethical beliefs will be influenced not only by family, friends, work associates and teachers, but also by other people in the community. The values acquired through social learning can be expected to lead to a pattern in responses to views about the level of influence exerted by various groups and people. This should be reflected in a definite structure in the ethical influence construct, leading to the first hypothesis.

H1: Factor analysis of influence items will identify a multidimensional structure within the data for the influencers of ethical attitudes construct

Age

There is evidence in the literature to suggest that the needs of younger people in the workplace are quite different from the needs of older people (Conger 1998; Finegold, Mohrman & Spreitzer 2002). Consequently, it seems likely that role models chosen by younger people will be different from those chosen by older people. The question facing social science researchers is how best to measure age. Researchers generally use one of several alternatives, such as age in years, a dichotomous split at some arbitrary age, arbitrary age groupings (for example five years), or generational cohorts.

The proponents of generational cohorts argue that behavioral assumptions based on the Baby Boomer generation (those born between the mid 1940s and the mid 1960s), do not reflect the values and attitudes of the generational cohorts known as Generation X (those born between the mid 1960s and the early 1980s), Generation Y (those born after the early 1980s) and Generation Z (those born after the mid 1990s). The concept of generational difference stems from the notion that groups of people born around the same time will share common experiences, leading to common cohort attitudes towards such things as work, authority, relationships, and behavioural attitudes and standards. Over time this common view of the world becomes the perceived 'generational identity'. A synthesis of the literature suggests that there are significant differences in attitudes and values between the generational cohorts that make up most of today's workforce. Baby Boomers are usually portrayed as being idealistic, optimistic and inner-directed (Kupperschmidt 2000; Loomis 2000). Generation X is usually described as adaptable, team oriented, technologically competent and entrepreneurial, but at the same time cynical, sullen, contemptuous, naïve and arrogant (Ferres, Travaglione & Firms 2001; Jurkiewicz 2000; O'Bannon 2001). Generation Y has not yet attracted a great deal of academic attention, but they are generally described as smart, informal, and possessing the view that work is less central to their lives than is the case for

previous generations. However, while there is general consensus regarding these stereotypes (Kupperschmidt 2000; O'Bannon 2001; Pekala 2001), there is limited supporting empirical evidence. In addition, several empirical studies have produced results which run counter to the hypotheses typically put forward by researchers. Some studies have found many differences, some few differences, and some no differences. For example, when Jurkiewicz (2000) obtained rankings of fifteen workplace motivators, including salary, security, autonomy, prestige and opportunity to work as part of a team, she found significant differences in only three factors. The use of generational cohorts in social science research can cause problems. Because a generation is usually taken to be around twenty years, using generational cohorts may lack precision when used as a basis for predicting workplace values. There are also age related factors other than the year of birth which will impact upon values, and it is often difficult to accommodate all the relevant theory within the boundaries of generational cohorts. Notwithstanding these problems, the use of age groups of an appropriate length does remain an attractive way of providing parsimonious explanations for human behavior.

Finegold, Mohrman and Spreitzer (2002) suggest that, in addition to cohort effects, it is also necessary to address life stage effects and career stage effects. A number of age ranges have been put forward as a way of categorizing life and career stages. Some suggest that up till around age 35, people are focusing on establishing a career and a family in a transactional and instrumental way, and that after age 35, people are able to focus more on personal aspirations within a framework of mutual moral obligation (Doering, Rhodes & Schuster 1983; Hall & Mirvis 1996; Kegan 1982). Others suggest that there are two major life stage transitions, occurring around age 30 and again around age 45 (Levinson et al. 1978).

Peterson, Rhoads and Vaught (2001) found that age was a significant predictor of ethical attitudes. Adopting a dichotomous age variable of over or under thirty years, they found that older people possess higher ethical beliefs, and are less likely to be influenced by people around them at work and at home. This approach to the categorization of age has the advantage of simplicity, but the disadvantage of limited explanatory power.

The notion that ethical standards increase with age is intuitively appealing, is in line with a number of moral development models such as that proposed by Kohlberg (1976). The principle of evolutionary growth through a number of stages is generally accepted by scholars, despite the contrary findings of some studies, such as Cortese (1989). In summary, while there is conflicting opinion about the influence of age on ethical behavior, established theory supports the view that ethical behavior increases with age. The multiple group approach to measuring age common to generational cohorts, life stage effects and career stage effects appears an appropriate framework for investigating many aspects of human behavior. However, there are no studies known to the author that examine ethical attitudes across age groupings, or across life and career stages, leading to the second hypothesis.

H2: Ethical attitudes will increase with age across age groups.

METHOD

Participants

The sample for this study consisted of people in the Philippines ($n = 420$) who were currently employed or had a history in the workforce. Data were collected as part of a larger study into values and business ethics in metropolitan Manila. The sample contained 45% males and 53% females, with 2% missing gender data. While accurate details of the population are difficult to obtain, this is considered to be reasonably reflective of the population within the city. Age ranged from 18 to 66 years, with a mean age of just under 39 years, and a standard deviation of 12.17. Educational level varied across the sample, with 2% not having completed high school, 18% having completed high school, 19% having a technical qualification, 46% having completed a bachelor degree, and 4% having a masters or higher degree, with 11% missing data. Education levels within the sample are comparable to most urban centres within the Philippines, but are higher than would generally be found in provincial villages. Organisational level also varied, 52% being operational employees, 30% supervisory or middle management, and 6% senior management, with missing data amounting to 12%. Missing data were minimal, amounting to less than 1% in total. Missing values were imputed using the Expectation-Maximization (EM) method. Cases were split into three sub-samples based on age groupings. Group 1 consisted of cases aged up to 30 years ($n = 121$), group 2 consisted of cases aged 31 years to 45 years ($n = 154$), and group 3 consisted of cases aged over 45 years ($n = 145$).

Measures

Two items from Peterson, Rhoads and Vaught (2001), and 13 additional items developed as part of the larger study were used to measure ethical influences. Participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with the proposition that their ethical standards were influenced by various individuals and groups such as their colleagues, managers, trainers and professors, immediate family, political leaders, celebrities, and the teachings of their religion. Responses were obtained on a five point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree).

Procedure

Data were collected as part of a study into values in a number of countries. The survey instrument was administered by a professional market research organization based in the Philippines, using systematic sampling with a random start in selected barangays (suburbs) across a range of municipalities in metropolitan Manila. Systematic sampling in this study involved predetermining which potential respondents would be sampled, for example every fourth or fifth household, depending on the size of the suburb. Once the system was determined every attempt was made to obtain data consistent with the system, even if this involved several visits to a selected household. Representatives of the market research organization called on potential respondents at their homes in the early evening, and asked if they would be prepared to complete the survey. Respondents were given the option of

completing the survey themselves or having the representative help them to complete it during a personal interview. A small gift of a ball-point pen with university logo was made to people who agreed to complete the survey. Hard copies of the completed surveys were passed to the research team, who undertook data entry and analysis.

Items were reverse scored prior to analysis, such that higher numbers represent lower influence, and consequently higher personal ethical standards, consistent with Kohlberg's (1976) model. A number of analyses were conducted. A correlation matrix was calculated for all influence items. Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations were calculated for each item across each sub-sample. Exploratory factor analysis was conducted to identify the underlying structure in the data. The internal consistency (Chronbach's alpha) of derived subscales was estimated in order to examine the reliability of those subscales(Chronbach 1951). Finally, a one-way ANOVA with post-hoc comparisons was used to investigate differences across sub-samples for each of the factors.

RESULTS

Correlations

Pearson correlations between items were calculated and are shown in Table 1. Correlations ranged from low to moderate, suggesting some redundancy in the items, although this may have been attributable to the large sample size in this study.

Descriptive Statistics

Means and standard deviations for each item across each age based sub-group are shown in Table 2. Mean responses ranged from 2.63 to 3.44 (Group 1), 2.90 to 3.81 (Group 2), and 2.83 to 4.03 (Group 3). Mean values increased with age across the three sub-groups. Examination of the means indicated that respondents believe that their ethical standards are influenced by religion and family, then work and profession, then people in the community, providing modest support for Hypothesis 1, although it is acknowledged that interpreting a comparison of raw mean scores carries considerable risk of Type 1 error.

TABLE 1: PEARSON CORRELATIONS FOR ALL ITEMS

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Influenced By:															
1. Colleagues	1.00														
2. Business leaders	.66**	1.00													
3. Supervisor	.62**	.70**	1.00												
4. Company	.61**	.65**	.81**	1.00											
5. Friends	.48**	.48**	.57**	.56**	1.00										
6. Immediate family	.39**	.38**	.43**	.48**	.59**	1.00									
7. Professors & tutors	.47**	.51**	.57**	.55**	.37**	.47**	1.00								
8. Trainers	.47**	.50**	.52**	.54**	.31**	.40**	.73**	1.00							
9. Religion	.32**	.28**	.38**	.36**	.42**	.50**	.46**	.42**	1.00						
10. Extended family	.37**	.37**	.41**	.37**	.53**	.44**	.41**	.38**	.42**	1.00					
11. Senior managers	.52**	.54**	.65**	.63**	.47**	.38**	.56**	.54**	.36**	.56**	1.00				
12. Profession	.43**	.46**	.53**	.49**	.39**	.26**	.47**	.44**	.21**	.47**	.69**	1.00			
13. Political leaders	.39**	.45**	.40**	.37**	.32**	.25**	.42**	.40**	.20**	.39**	.58**	.68**	1.00		
14. Clubs & assoc'ns	.36**	.35**	.33**	.30**	.39**	.37**	.31**	.24**	.28**	.50**	.47**	.53**	.57**	1.00	
15. Celebrities	.22**	.29**	.26**	.22**	.39**	.29**	.21**	.12**	.20**	.53**	.41**	.45**	.48**	.62**	1.00

* correlation is significant at .05 level

** correlation is significant at .01 level

TABLE 2- ITEM MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS

	Up to 30 (n = 121)		31 to 45 (n = 154)		Over 45 (n = 145)	
	Mean	Std Dev.	Mean	Std Dev.	Mean	Std Dev.
Influenced By:						
Religion	2.63	.97	2.95	.90	2.83	.96
Trainers	2.71	.99	2.90	.91	3.10	.96
Immediate family	2.73	1.02	3.03	.93	3.16	.86
Professors and tutors	2.81	1.05	2.94	.93	3.10	.89
Extended family	2.88	.94	3.45	.89	3.66	.84
Company	2.89	.99	3.18	.84	3.38	.82
Supervisor	2.93	1.03	3.34	1.67	3.37	.85
Business leaders	2.94	1.03	3.18	.91	3.52	.84
Senior managers	3.01	.94	3.25	.82	3.44	.84
Colleagues	3.01	.97	3.33	.90	3.42	.82
Friends	3.07	.91	3.45	.82	3.66	.78
Profession	3.21	.95	3.42	.81	3.63	.81
Clubs & associations	3.27	.87	3.72	.96	3.68	.89
Political leaders	3.39	.96	3.42	.96	3.76	.91
Celebrities	3.44	1.04	3.81	1.03	4.03	.95

Exploratory Factor Analysis

Exploratory factor analysis, using maximum likelihood extraction with promax rotation was conducted to identify the underlying structure in the data. Recent studies suggest that promax is now widely used in social science research, and has become one of the most popular oblique rotation methods (Tataryn, Wood & Gorsuch 1999; Yung & Hayashi 2001). The combination of maximum likelihood factor analysis and promax rotation has been used in prior studies in the psychology field, where correlation between factors is anticipated (Rawlings et al. 2000). Communalities ranged from .58 to .75. Three factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 were extracted which together explained 64.94% of the variance, but the factor structure contained a number of items which cross-loaded on more than one factor, and it was necessary to remove some items to obtain a clean structure. The order in which items were selected for removal was based on the procedure recommended by Clark (2006). Items that fail to load on any factor are removed first, followed by items that load on multiple factors. Next, items with factor loadings less than 0.30 and communality less than 0.50 are removed. Finally, communalities are used to choose which item to remove first when multiple items fail to meet the criteria of loading above .30 on one, and only one, factor.

There is little agreement about the minimum factor loading for retention of an item. For example, Tabachnick and Fidell (1996) suggest that as a general rule, only variables with a loading of .32 and above should be interpreted. Ford, MacCallum and Tait (1986) and Holman and Epitropaki (2001) suggest that only variables loading above .40 should be considered significant, and used to define a particular factor. Ticehurst and Veal (2000) consider that only variables with a loading of greater than .05 should be accepted as loading on a factor. The majority of studies involving factor analysis appear to use one of these three cutoff values. In a meta-analysis of 803 articles published in marketing and psychology journals, Peterson (2000) found that the most commonly used cutoff value was .40 (33%), followed by .30 (26%), and .50 (19%). As this study was exploratory in nature it was considered appropriate to use the lower value of .30.

Three items loaded above .30 on two factors. These items were removed one at a time with the analysis conducted again after removing each item. Removal of the items resulted in a three factor solution explaining 66.78% of the variance, with all items loading cleanly on one factor. Results of the factor analysis are shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3 - FACTOR ANALYSIS OF INFLUENCES

Item	Work	Education	Social
Influenced By:			
Company	.88	.07	-.14
Supervisor	.77	.01	-.12
Business leaders	.71	.07	.01
Colleagues	.70	.05	-.01
Friends	.70	-.18	.19
Immediate family	.40	.14	.14
Senior managers	.38	.26	.27
Trainers	-.03	.96	-.11
Professors and tutors	.06	.78	.01
Religion	.18	.33	.08
Celebrities	-.01	-.15	.84
Clubs & associations	-.02	-.00	.83
Political leaders	-.03	.27	.57
Eigenvalue	7.04	1.62	1.22
% of Variance Explained	46.94	10.83	8.15

Examination of the items loading on each factor suggested that the first factor consisted of influences in daily life, with the highest loading items being related to work life, and lower loading items relating to family and friends. The lowest loading item on this factor was the influence of senior managers, but this item cross-loaded across all three factors, so did not contribute greatly to the interpretation of the factor. The second factor seemed related to the influence of people whose role involved the provision of knowledge. The third factor related to the influence of high-profile people in the community. The first two items loading on this last factor were clearly about recreational influences, while the third item, the influence of political leaders, provided a lesser contribution to the interpretation of the factor. The multidimensional structure identified provides further support for Hypothesis 1.

ANOVA

One-way ANOVAs with post-hoc comparisons (Tukey's HSD multiple comparison test) (Tukey 1949) were used to compare means across the sub-samples. Levene's test for homogeneity of variance (Levene 1960) indicated no presence of heteroscedacity in the data. The results of the ANOVA and post-hoc tests are shown in Tables 4 and 5.

TABLE 4 – CRONBACH'S ALPHA, MEANS, AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS

	α	MEANS					
		Group 1 (n = 121)		Group 2 (n = 154)		Group 3 (n = 145)	
		Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev
Influenced by:							
Work	.87	2.96	.80	3.25	.82	3.43	.73
Education	.84	2.76	.91	2.92	.85	3.10	.90
Social	.79	3.37	.78	3.65	.84	3.82	.76

Note: Group 1 = Up to Age 30, Group 2 = Age 31 to 45, Group 3 = Over Age 45

TABLE 5 – ANOVAs AND POST-HOC TESTS

	ANOVAs		Post-hoc tests (F)		
	F	df	Group 1 v 2	Group 1 v 3	Group 2 v 3
Influenced by:					
Work	12.10**	2, 417	-.30**	-.47**	.17
Education	4.96**	2, 417	-.16	-.34**	.18
Social	10.93**	2, 417	-.28**	-.16**	-.18

Note: Group 1 = Up to Age 30, Group 2 = Age 31 to 45, Group 3 = Over Age 45

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

DISCUSSION

The three-factor structure identified suggests that respondents discriminate between work influences, education influences and societal or recreational influences. The finding that educators exert a stronger influence over ethical standards than people in the workplace or in the broader community is of particular relevance to employers and academics. For example, employers may find that involving academic institutions in employee development through programs such as MBA courses is a better way of improving ethical standards than simply introducing company codes of ethics, or expecting supervisors or the company culture to address the issue.

The differences in influence levels identified in the ANOVA provide a number of insights into the relationship between age and ethical influences, and also into life stages. A significant difference for work influences was found between the younger and the middle groups, and between the younger and the older groups, suggesting that younger people are less influenced by people around them at work. This is consistent with current thinking about the centrality of work for Generation Y employees. No significant difference was found for work influence between the middle and older groups, consistent with the views of (Hall & Mirvis 1996). This has implications for the understanding of workplace motivation and employee remuneration.

A significant difference for educational influences was found between the younger and the older groups. No significant difference was found for educational influences between the younger and middle groups or the middle and older groups. This may be

explained by the significant improvements to availability of education in the Philippines around twenty years ago, resulting in a dichotomy for this variable. The mean scores between groups for this variable may suggest a lessening of the influence of educators with age in line with moral development principles, or it may be that as educational memories dim, their influence seems to be less. Alternatively, it may be that modern educators possess better skills, and consequently exert more influence on students. A third explanation for this finding may be found in the trend towards life-long learning, and the interaction between educators and mature students with greater experience and better developed life skills.

A significant difference for societal influences was found between the younger and the middle groups, and between the younger and the older groups. No significant difference was found for societal influences between the middle and older groups. Perhaps this is due to the better communication infrastructure of modern life, such as television and the internet. It may also be due to the globalization of popular culture through media such as movies and the internet.

Some limitations of this study should be noted. The interpretation and labeling of each of the factors should still be considered tentative, particularly in view of the cross-loadings obtained in the confirmatory factor analysis. The removal of items during the confirmatory factor analysis relating to the influence of friends, family and religion improved the model, but leaves questions about the level of these influences unanswered. Further research is needed to confirm the results of this study, and to extend understanding of influences on employees. This might be assisted by the development of multi-item scales for measuring each of the original influence constructs (items). The use of self reports, although common in social science research, is not recommended, as it increases the possibility of common error variance and Type 1 error. A further limitation is that the study did not consider the reasons why differences exist, reducing the explanatory value of the findings.

CONCLUSIONS

This study examined the degree to which various people and groups influence ethical attitudes of employees in metropolitan Manila in the Philippines. It found that respondents differentiate between workplace, educational and community influences. Differences between responses from the younger and the middle age groups were identified for work and social influences, and between the younger and older groups for work influences, educational influences and social influences. No significant differences between the middle and older groups were found. These findings have implications for managers from a practical and theoretical perspective. The finding of age influencing ethical beliefs is not a new finding in the literature. However, much of the research previously reported involved samples from the United States of America. In the present study, the analysis of responses from a different culture, namely the Philippines, was interesting, in that it did not produce any findings that were inconsistent with previous research into the effect of age on ethical beliefs. This

result appears to support the view that despite cultural differences, we tend to develop and understand ethics similarly (Pinker 1994).

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