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Perceived Similarities and Satisfaction among Friends of the Same and Different Ethnicity and Sex at Workplace

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ABSTRACT

This study examined perceived similarities and satisfaction among friends who interacted at workplace. Respondents were 200 working adults in Malaysia. They were asked to identify the number of friends of the same and different ethnicity and sex at their workplace and then rate their satisfaction with these friendships. They were also asked to rate similarities with friends across nine domains (physical appearance, interest, life style, working style, thinking style, personality, values, general attitude, and intellectual ability). There were significant differences across domains and across categories of friends. More similarities were reported for working style and among friends of the same ethnicity. Lowest similarities were reported for physical appearance and among friends of different ethnicity. Differences in relationship satisfaction were rather minimal, whereas the highest satisfaction was with friends of the same ethnicity. Perception of similarities was associated with higher relationship satisfaction, with the strongest effect in the category of friends of the same ethnicity. Relationship satisfaction across all categories was negatively correlated with stress.

KEYWORDS

Friendship; Similarities; Ethnicity; Relationship Satisfaction; Stress

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