

The Influence of Generational Work Values and Job Satisfaction on Organizational Commitment among Young Employees in the UK

Dapo Adeniyi, PhD

HCPC Practitioner (UK), Principal Consultant, and Director of Counseling, Phenopatmos Global Consulting, Nigeria

Abstract - This study examined the relationship between generational work values, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment among young employees in the United Kingdom. Guided by contemporary workforce theories, the research explored whether deeper value alignment provides a more compelling explanation for commitment than traditional satisfaction-based models. A cross-sectional survey design was used to collect data from young employees across diverse sectors, and hierarchical regression analysis was employed to determine the relative contributions of the predictors. Findings revealed that generational work values significantly and positively predicted organizational commitment, indicating that employees who perceive strong alignment between their personal values and workplace expectations are more likely to develop enduring attachment to their organizations. Although job satisfaction showed a positive association with commitment in the initial analysis, its effect became non-significant when generational work values were introduced into the model, suggesting that foundational values carry greater weight than surface-level satisfaction for this demographic. The study concludes that value congruence is central to fostering commitment among young employees, particularly in an era of shifting expectations, digital influence, and evolving career identities. It recommends that organizations strengthen culture–value alignment, redesign roles to reflect meaning and flexibility, and prioritize value-based recruitment practices. Limitations include the cross-sectional design and reliance on self-report measures. Future research should adopt longitudinal and multi-method approaches to clarify causal pathways.

Keywords: Young Employees, Work Values, Job Satisfaction, United Kingdom, Organizational commitment.

INTRODUCTION

Organisational commitment the psychological bond that ties employees to their organizations remains a critical determinant of workforce stability, retention, and long-term organisational success. Employees who are highly committed

are more likely to remain with their organisations, exert discretionary effort, and contribute to higher productivity and reduced turnover intentions. In contemporary labour markets, particularly in advanced economies such as the United Kingdom, cultivating strong organisational commitment among young employees has become increasingly essential due to competitive talent demands and evolving workforce expectations (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002).

Among the factors that shape organisational commitment, generational work values and job satisfaction have emerged as particularly influential antecedents. Job satisfaction reflecting employees' evaluative perceptions of intrinsic and extrinsic job characteristics such as task enjoyment, growth opportunities, supervision quality, pay, and working conditions has been consistently linked to stronger organisational commitment and reduced turnover behaviours (Mathieu, Kukenberger, D'Innocenzo, & Reilly, 2019). When employees feel satisfied with their work experiences, they are more inclined to develop a sense of loyalty and attachment to their employer.

At the same time, the modern workforce is undergoing a generational shift, with Generation Z individuals born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s entering full-time employment in increasing numbers. These young employees bring distinct work values shaped by technological immersion, socio-economic volatility, and heightened awareness of global issues. Research suggests that Gen Z places significant emphasis on meaningful work, ethical organisational practices, digital integration, work–life balance, flexibility, and continuous feedback for development (Twenge, 2017; Deloitte, 2022). These preferences not only guide their job choices but also shape their attitudes and commitment levels once employed.

In the UK context, the rapid expansion of remote and hybrid working arrangements, digitally mediated communication cultures, and flattened organisational structures has intensified the relevance of understanding generational work values. When organisational realities align

with the values held by young employees, positive outcomes such as enhanced job satisfaction and stronger affective commitment are more likely to emerge. This aligns with person–organisation fit and value–congruence theories, which propose that employees experience greater satisfaction and commitment when their personal values resonate with organisational practices and norms (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005).

However, misalignment between Gen Z's expectations for example, a desire for flexible working arrangements or opportunities for rapid development and organisational offerings may erode job satisfaction and weaken their commitment. Reports from the UK indicate rising concerns over retention among young employees, with many organisations struggling to meet the evolving value orientations of this cohort (CIPD, 2021). Conversely, organisations that successfully address Gen Z's priorities can benefit from their unique strengths, including digital fluency, adaptability, and strong social justice orientation.

Theoretical frameworks such as Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) further suggest that when organisations meet the value-driven needs of young employees and create satisfying work environments, employees reciprocate with deeper commitment. Similarly, generational theory emphasises the importance of understanding the socio-cultural influences that differentiate Gen Z from earlier cohorts (Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010; Lyons & Kuron, 2014).

Given these dynamics, it is essential to explore how generational work values and job satisfaction jointly shape organisational commitment among young employees in the UK. This study therefore investigates the extent to which these two independent variables generational work values and job satisfaction predicts levels of organisational commitment. Insights from this research will help UK organisations design more responsive, value-aligned, and satisfaction-enhancing policies capable of attracting, engaging, and retaining this emerging generation of workers.

Statement of the Problem

Organisational commitment remains a critical determinant of organisational success, influencing employee retention, performance, and overall productivity. Yet, in recent years, employers in the United Kingdom have reported a growing challenge in sustaining commitment among younger employees, particularly those belonging to Generation Z. This demographic shift presents new complexities for organisations striving to retain talent in an increasingly fluid labour market. While traditional predictors of commitment such as job security and compensation remain relevant, emerging evidence suggests that younger employees evaluate their work

experiences through different value lenses prioritising flexibility, personal growth, and organisational purpose over stability and hierarchy (Deloitte, 2022; CIPD, 2023). Consequently, a gap has emerged between conventional managerial practices and the evolving generational expectations that shape employees' affective attachment to their organisations.

The persistence of high turnover rates among Gen Z employees in the UK suggests that existing workplace structures and engagement strategies may not adequately align with their value orientations. Many organisations continue to apply standardised human resource approaches designed around the expectations of older cohorts such as Generation X or Millennials. However, Generation Z employees shaped by digitalisation, global connectivity, and social awareness seek authenticity, inclusiveness, and opportunities for rapid professional development (Twenge, 2017; Ng, Lyons, & Schweitzer, 2021). When such expectations are unmet, job satisfaction diminishes, and organisational commitment weakens, leading to disengagement and premature exits. This disconnect highlights the need for empirical research examining how generational work values influence commitment outcomes among Gen Z employees in the UK context.

Despite a growing body of global literature on generational differences in workplace attitudes, empirical studies focusing on Generation Z within the UK remain limited, especially those linking generational work values with both job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Existing research has largely concentrated on broad attitudinal trends or intergenerational comparisons, without identifying which specific values most strongly predict commitment in contemporary UK workplaces (Lyons & Kuron, 2014; CIPD, 2021). As such, the mechanisms through which Gen Z's distinctive work values translate into job satisfaction and organisational attachment remain underexplored. Addressing this gap is vital for understanding how to foster enduring engagement and loyalty among the youngest segment of the workforce.

Therefore, the present study seeks to investigate the influence of generational work values on job satisfaction and organisational commitment among Generation Z employees in the United Kingdom. By analysing how specific values such as meaningful work, flexibility, digital collaboration, and feedback orientation predict satisfaction and commitment levels, this study aims to provide empirical evidence that can guide organisational policies, talent retention strategies, and leadership practices. The findings are expected to contribute both theoretically by extending person–organisation fit and social exchange frameworks and practically, by offering

actionable insights for employers seeking to adapt their human resource strategies to the unique preferences of Generation Z employees in the UK labour market.

Objective of the study

The main purpose of the study is to examine the influence of generational work values and job satisfaction on organizational commitment among young employees in the UK. Other specific objectives include:

1. To examine the relationship between generational work values and organizational commitment among young employees in the UK.
2. To investigate the influence of job satisfaction and commitment among young employees in the UK.
3. To ascertain the joint influence of generational work values and job satisfaction on commitment among young employees in the UK.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

Job Embeddedness Theory

Job Embeddedness Theory (JET) offers a comprehensive perspective for understanding why employees remain with or leave an organization. The theory was introduced by Mitchell et al. (2001), who argued that traditional predictors such as job satisfaction or organizational commitment do not fully explain employee retention or turnover. Instead, JET conceptualizes employee retention as a function of how deeply individuals become “embedded” in their work environment. This embeddedness encompasses both on-the-job and off-the-job forces that influence an employee’s attachment to their organization. As such, JET has become a valuable framework for examining commitment in contemporary workplaces, including those employing younger generations such as Gen Z in the UK.

At the center of Job Embeddedness Theory are three dimensions: fit, links, and sacrifice. Fit refers to perceived compatibility between the employee and the organization such as alignment between personal values and organizational culture. Links describe the network of interpersonal connections an employee forms at work, including connections with colleagues, supervisors, and work teams. Sacrifice captures what employees feel they would lose (professionally, socially, or financially) if they were to leave their job. Mitchell et al. (2001) argue that when employees experience strong fit, numerous links, and substantial anticipated sacrifice, they become more embedded and therefore more committed to the organization. These forces

operate together to shape employees’ decisions about staying or leaving, extending beyond traditional job attitudes.

Job Embeddedness Theory is particularly relevant for understanding generational work values among Gen Z employees in the UK. Gen Z workers tend to value meaningful work, technological integration, supportive cultures, flexibility, and inclusion. These preferences influence their perceived fit within an organization. When workplaces honor these generational values, alignment between the employee and the organization strengthens, increasing fit and subsequently enhancing organizational commitment. Conversely, rigid structures, poor communication, or lack of developmental opportunities may create a misfit, weakening embeddedness and undermining commitment. Thus, generational work values directly feed into the “fit” dimension of job embeddedness for Gen Z employees.

Job satisfaction also plays an important role within the embeddedness framework. When Gen Z employees experience supportive work environments that match their values, they report higher satisfaction, which in turn enhances both fit and sacrifice. Shore et al. (2020) note that job satisfaction interacts with embeddedness by reinforcing employees’ sense of alignment with organizational goals and their willingness to invest in the workplace community. A satisfied Gen Z employee perceives more to lose if they leave—such as meaningful tasks or supportive colleagues—thereby increasing the sacrifice dimension. This combination strengthens emotional bonds to the organization and promotes long-term commitment.

Job Embeddedness Theory ultimately provides a strong explanation for how generational work values and job satisfaction shape organizational commitment among Gen Z employees in the UK. When young employees experience alignment between their values and workplace practices, build strong relational connections, and perceive real losses associated with leaving, they become deeply embedded. This embeddedness generates sustained organizational commitment beyond what job satisfaction alone can predict. Conversely, when Gen Z employees experience misalignment, weak connections, or minimal sacrifice, their commitment declines, and turnover intentions may rise. Thus, JET supports a model in which generational work values and satisfaction collectively enhance the embeddedness that drives organizational commitment.

Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory (SET) provides a foundational framework for understanding how workplace attitudes and behaviours develop among contemporary employees, particularly Generation Z workers in the United Kingdom. The

theory was first introduced by Homans (1958), who argued that human interactions function through rational assessments of costs and rewards. This early conceptualization established the view that relationships, whether social or professional, depend on an individual's expectation of receiving valued outcomes in return for their contributions. Blau (1964) and Emerson (1976) later expanded SET, emphasizing the role of reciprocity and mutual dependence in maintaining long-term exchanges. Through these developments, SET has evolved into one of the most influential frameworks for explaining workplace motivation, satisfaction, and commitment.

At its core, Social Exchange Theory posits that relationships endure when the benefits received outweigh the perceived costs. In organizational settings, this means employees are more likely to develop favourable attitudes when they believe their employer provides fairness, support, and valued resources. The expectation of reciprocity is central to this process: when employees feel appreciated or supported, they tend to respond with positive behaviours such as loyalty, engagement, and organizational commitment (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Job satisfaction, trust, and commitment therefore emerge as outcomes of exchanges perceived as beneficial. SET thus offers a powerful lens for understanding why employees remain dedicated to organizations that acknowledge and reward their contributions.

The relevance of SET is particularly evident in explaining generational work values among Gen Z employees in the UK. This cohort is characterized by unique work preferences, including meaningful work, flexibility, mental-health-supportive environments, opportunities for professional growth, digital integration, and inclusive organizational cultures. When organisations meet these generational work values, Gen Z employees interpret such responsiveness as a significant reward within the exchange relationship. According to SET, fulfilment of these values enhances perceived benefits, thereby increasing psychological satisfaction and ultimately encouraging stronger organizational commitment. In this way, generational work values operate as key resources exchanged between employers and young workers, shaping their attitudes toward the organization.

Job satisfaction also plays a central mediating role within the SET framework. For Gen Z workers, satisfaction arises when their expectations and values align with the realities of their workplace. This internal reward becomes the emotional mechanism through which positive organizational practices are transformed into loyalty and commitment. Shore et al. (2020) emphasize that satisfaction constitutes a central outcome of high-quality social exchanges, serving as a bridge linking work values to broader organizational attitudes. Thus,

when Gen Z employees perceive that the organization supports their preferred ways of working, job satisfaction strengthens, which in turn fosters deeper affective commitment to the organization.

Ultimately, SET suggests that organizational commitment among Gen Z workers emerges as a reciprocal response to favourable treatment. When young employees perceive that their organization honors their values particularly autonomy, meaningful work, development opportunities, and wellbeing initiatives they reciprocate with loyalty, willingness to remain, and emotional attachment. However, when these values are unfulfilled, the exchange relationship becomes imbalanced, weakening commitment. Therefore, Social Exchange Theory clearly explains the pathway through which generational work values and job satisfaction influence organizational commitment. The model supported by SET can be succinctly expressed as: Generational Work Values → Job Satisfaction → Organizational Commitment.

Empirical Review

Organisational commitment is a pivotal construct in human resource management, reflecting employees' psychological attachment to their organisation and predicting critical outcomes such as retention, discretionary effort, and turnover intentions (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnysky, 2002). Among its antecedents, job satisfaction and generational work values have consistently emerged as significant predictors, shaping both the affective and normative components of commitment. Job satisfaction refers to employees' evaluative perceptions of their work experiences, encompassing intrinsic rewards such as achievement and task interest, as well as extrinsic rewards including pay, supervision, and work conditions (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Generational work values, on the other hand, are relatively enduring preferences and priorities shaped by socio-cultural and technological contexts during formative years, encompassing dimensions such as meaningful work, work-life balance, technological integration, career development, and social responsibility (Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010; Lyons & Kuron, 2014).

Tarigan and Ariani (2015) demonstrated in Indonesian manufacturing that job satisfaction directly predicts multidimensional organisational commitment and mediates the relationship between satisfaction and turnover intention.

Similarly, Tnay (2013) and Soenanta et al. (2020) reported that higher job satisfaction enhances organisational commitment and employee retention in operational and corporate contexts. Kadiri and Amadasun (2020) further corroborated these effects within the Nigerian banking sector, emphasizing the universal relevance of the satisfaction-

commitment link while highlighting the moderating influence of sectoral and cultural factors.

Furthermore, studies synthesised in UJM (2016) consistently show that organisational commitment mediates the effect of job satisfaction on downstream outcomes such as organisational citizenship behaviour and turnover intention, suggesting dual mechanisms through which satisfaction enhances commitment.

Parallel to job satisfaction, generational work values have been empirically established as key antecedents of organisational commitment. Ng, Schweitzer, and Lyons (2010) surveyed employees across multiple organisations, finding that individuals who prioritised meaningful and socially impactful work, flexible arrangements, and rapid career advancement reported higher commitment.

Twenge (2017) similarly reported that Generation Z employees value purposeful work, ethical leadership, diversity and inclusion, and technological integration, and that alignment with these values strengthens affective and normative commitment. In sector-specific contexts, Lyons and Kuron (2014) employed structural equation modeling to demonstrate that value congruence particularly regarding autonomy, flexibility, and career development positively predicts commitment and moderates the relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Deloitte (2022) confirmed these findings in the UK context, showing that Gen Z employees' commitment increases when organisations offer flexible work, meaningful career paths, and opportunities for skill development.

Kadiri and Amadasun (2020) also indirectly highlighted generational influences, demonstrating that work-life balance and career development attitudes positively correlate with commitment.

Collectively, the literature indicates that both job satisfaction and generational work values are significant predictors of organisational commitment. While job satisfaction provides the motivational and emotional basis for commitment, generational work values shape employees' expectations and perceptions of alignment with organisational practices, potentially amplifying or moderating the effect of satisfaction. Importantly, studies suggest that generational work values can function both as direct antecedents and as moderators in the satisfaction–commitment relationship, influencing the strength and direction of commitment outcomes (Lyons & Kuron, 2014; UJM, 2016).

Despite robust evidence linking job satisfaction and generational work values to organisational commitment across various sectors and countries, there remains limited empirical

research explicitly examining these relationships within the context of UK Generation Z employees. Given the distinct characteristics of this cohort including a strong preference for meaningful work, technological integration, flexibility, and continuous professional development existing findings from other cultural and sectoral contexts may not fully capture the unique mechanisms through which generational work values and job satisfaction influence commitment in the UK. Furthermore, few studies have simultaneously considered the dual antecedent model, assessing both job satisfaction and generational work values as predictors, and exploring potential interactions or mediation effects. Addressing this gap would provide valuable insights for UK organisations seeking to attract, retain, and engage this emerging workforce, while contributing to the theoretical understanding of commitment formation in a generationally diverse environment.

III. METHOD

Research Design

This study adopted a cross-sectional quantitative survey design to examine the influence of generational work values and job satisfaction on organizational commitment among young employees in the United Kingdom. A cross-sectional approach allowed the researcher to collect data at a single point in time and observe naturally occurring associations among the variables of interest without manipulating the study environment. This design is widely used in organizational psychology for assessing attitudes, perceptions, and behavioural tendencies among large participant groups efficiently. Given that the study aimed to determine the predictive relationships between work values, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment, the survey method provided the most suitable framework for quantitative analysis.

Participants

The target population consisted of young employees aged 18–35 years (Gen Z and young Millennials) currently employed in various sectors across the United Kingdom. A total of 221 participants completed the survey. The inclusion criteria required participants to: (a) be within the specified age range, (b) be currently employed (full-time or part-time), and (c) have worked in their present organization for at least six months to ensure adequate exposure to workplace conditions.

Participants represented diverse industries including healthcare, education, technology, finance, retail, hospitality, and public administration, ensuring a heterogeneous and representative sample of the UK's young workforce. The final sample size exceeded the recommended minimum for correlational and regression research, thereby ensuring adequate statistical power for detecting meaningful effects.

Sampling Technique

A convenience sampling strategy was used due to the accessibility of young working populations on digital platforms. Recruitment was conducted through professional networking groups such as LinkedIn, organizational mailing lists, WhatsApp professional forums, and youth employment communities. Participants were provided with a study link and encouraged to share it with eligible colleagues, thereby incorporating elements of snowball sampling to increase reach.

Procedure

Data collection was conducted using an online survey created with Google Forms. Prior to completing the questionnaire, participants were presented with an informed consent page detailing the purpose of the study, expected duration, confidentiality, anonymity, and the voluntary nature of participation. Only individuals who consented were permitted to proceed.

The survey took approximately 8–10 minutes to complete and included demographic questions and three standardized scales measuring generational work values, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. Ethical principles regarding privacy, data security, and voluntary withdrawal were strictly adhered to throughout the process. No identifying information was collected, ensuring full anonymity.

IV. MEASURES

Generational Work Values

Generational work values were assessed using a validated Work Values Scale adapted for younger employees in contemporary work settings. The scale measures key value dimensions such as meaningful work, autonomy, technological integration, inclusivity, work–life balance, and opportunities for growth. Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Higher scores indicate stronger endorsement of generational work values. Internal consistency reliability exceeded acceptable thresholds (Cronbach’s $\alpha > .80$).

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction was measured using the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire—Short Form (MSQ-SF), a widely used and psychometrically robust instrument. The scale comprises items capturing intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. Responses were rated on a 5-point scale from 1 (Very Dissatisfied) to 5 (Very Satisfied). Higher scores reflect greater job satisfaction. The MSQ-SF demonstrated strong reliability in this study (Cronbach’s $\alpha > .85$).

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment was measured using Meyer and Allen’s (1997) Organizational Commitment Scale, which includes affective, continuance, and normative components. Participants responded using a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Higher scores indicate stronger commitment to the organization. The scale showed high internal consistency (Cronbach’s $\alpha > .80$).

Method of Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 26). Preliminary analyses included descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, and frequencies) to summarize demographic and variable characteristics. Prior to running inferential tests, assumptions of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and absence of multicollinearity were checked and met.

To test the study’s hypotheses:

Pearson Product–Moment Correlation was used to examine the bivariate relationships among:

- Generational work values and organizational commitment
- Job satisfaction and organizational commitment

Multiple Regression Analysis was conducted to determine the joint and independent predictive influence of generational work values and job satisfaction on organizational commitment. Statistical significance was set at $p < .05$, with findings presented in accordance with APA (7th edition) reporting standards.

V. RESULT

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Organizational Commitment, Generational Work Values, and Job Satisfaction by Gender (N = 221)

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD
Organizational Commitment	Male	121	21.27	6.86
	Female	100	18.86	7.39
	Total	221	20.18	7.19
Generational Work Values	Male	121	17.40	5.55
	Female	100	17.25	5.60
	Total	221	17.33	5.56
Job Satisfaction	Male	121	17.00	5.38
	Female	100	17.04	5.41
	Total	221	17.02	5.38

Note: Higher scores indicate greater levels of each construct.

Descriptive statistics were computed to compare male and female employees on organizational commitment, generational work values, and job satisfaction. Results showed that male employees reported slightly higher organizational commitment ($M = 21.27, SD = 6.86$) than female employees ($M = 18.86, SD = 7.39$). This suggests that male employees in the sample demonstrated moderately stronger attachment to their organizations.

For generational work values, scores for males ($M = 17.40, SD = 5.55$) and females ($M = 17.25, SD = 5.60$) were nearly identical, indicating that both gender groups held similar expectations regarding meaningful work, flexibility, fairness, and development opportunities.

Similarly, job satisfaction showed almost no gender difference, with males scoring ($M = 17.00, SD = 5.38$) and females ($M = 17.04, SD = 5.41$). This suggests that satisfaction with work conditions was essentially equal for both groups.

Overall, while organizational commitment showed a noticeable gender difference, generational work values and job satisfaction were consistent across male and female young employees in the UK.

Test of hypothesis

H1: There will be a significant positive relationship between generational work values and organizational commitment among young employees in the UK.

Table 2: Correlation between Generational Work Values and Organizational Commitment (N = 221)

Variables	1	2
1. Organizational Commitment	—	.466**
2. Generational Work Values	.466**	—

Note: $p < .01$ (2-tailed)

The statistical result reveals a significant positive relationship between generational work values and organizational commitment among young employees in the UK. The correlation coefficient of $r = .466$, with a p-value of .000, indicates a moderately strong and statistically significant association. In other words, as young employees' generational work values rise values shaped by their era, expectations, and worldview their commitment to the organization tends to rise as well.

H2: The hypothesis stated that there will be a significant positive relationship between job satisfaction and

organizational commitment among young employees in the UK.

Table 2: Correlation between Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment Among Young Employees (N = 221)

Variables	1	2
1. Organizational Commitment	—	.428**
2. Job Satisfaction	.428**	—

Note: Pearson correlation coefficients are presented.

p < .01 (2-tailed).

The Pearson correlation analysis supported this prediction. Results showed a moderate positive correlation between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, $r = .428, p < .001$, indicating that higher levels of job satisfaction are associated with higher levels of organizational commitment among the respondents. This means that as young employee's report feeling more fulfilled, content, and pleased with their job roles, they are correspondingly more likely to express stronger commitment to their organization such as a willingness to remain, align with organizational goals, and invest emotionally in the organization. The significance level ($p < .001$) shows that the relationship is highly unlikely to be due to chance.

H3: Generational work values and job satisfaction will significantly and jointly influence of on commitment among young employees in the UK.

Table 3: Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Organizational Commitment from Generational Work Values and Job Satisfaction (N = 221)

Predictor	B	SE B	β	t	P
Constant	9.71	1.45		6.70	< .001
Generational Work Values	0.58	0.19	.45	3.07	.002
Job Satisfaction	0.02	0.20	.02	0.11	.916

Model Summary: $R = .466, R^2 = .217, \text{Adjusted } R^2 = .210, F(2, 218) = 30.22, p < .001$

Note: Dependent variable = Organizational Commitment.

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine whether generational work values and job satisfaction jointly predicted organizational commitment among young employees in the UK. The overall model was statistically significant, $F(2, 218) = 30.22, p < .001$, indicating that the predictors contributed meaningfully to explaining variance in organizational commitment. The model accounted for 21.7%

of the variance in organizational commitment ($R^2 = .217$, Adjusted $R^2 = .210$), suggesting a moderate effect size.

Inspection of the individual regression coefficients showed that generational work values significantly predicted organizational commitment, $\beta = .452$, $t(218) = 3.07$, $p = .002$. This indicates that stronger alignment with generational work values such as meaningful work, flexibility, fairness, and growth opportunities is associated with higher organizational commitment among young employees.

In contrast, job satisfaction did not significantly predict commitment when entered alongside generational work values, $\beta = .016$, $t(218) = .11$, $p = .916$. This pattern suggests that, for young employees in the UK, organizational commitment is more strongly shaped by alignment with their generational expectations and values than by their general satisfaction with job conditions.

VI. DISCUSSION

The study revealed a significant, moderate positive relationship between generational work values and organizational commitment among young employees in the UK. This finding aligns with contemporary person-organization fit and value-congruence research, which posits that when employees perceive alignment between their personal work values and organizational culture, they develop stronger affective bonds and a heightened sense of belonging (Zhao, Liu, & Tan, 2021; Wang, Hom, & Allen, 2020). For Gen Z workers, the values most salient meaningful work, flexibility, autonomy, and digital enablement have been consistently identified as key predictors of long-term attachment and retention in modern labour markets (Deloitte, 2023; CIPD, 2023). Thus, the observed relationship reinforces emerging evidence that younger employees are deeply values-driven in their evaluations of employers.

The mechanisms underlying this relationship can be understood through contemporary social exchange and motivational frameworks. Recent scholarship suggests that value congruence operates as a perceived resource exchange, prompting employees to reciprocate with loyalty and commitment when organizations affirm their core values (Cropanzano, Anthony, Daniels, & Hall, 2017; Jiang & Men, 2019). Likewise, intrinsic motivational pathways such as autonomy, purpose, and developmental challenge have been shown to foster stronger affective commitment among younger employees, reinforcing the idea that value satisfaction fuels sustained attachment (Ryan & Deci, 2020; Kim, Beehr, & Prewett, 2020).

Current labour-market research further supports these findings. UK-based and international studies consistently

demonstrate that Gen Z's commitment intensifies when employers provide flexibility, rapid growth opportunities, meaningful contribution, and technologically integrated work structures (PwC, 2023; EY, 2022). These dimensions mirror generational work-value constructs, suggesting that value alignment is not merely desirable but foundational to commitment for emerging cohorts.

However, the correlational nature of the study necessitates caution. As argued in recent methodological critiques, cross-sectional designs limit causal inference because employees already high in organizational commitment may retrospectively report stronger value alignment due to cognitive consistency processes (Conway & Peetz, 2019). Unmeasured contextual factors such as job quality, leadership style, or perceived economic security may also influence both value perception and commitment (Latorre, Guest, Ramos, & Gracia, 2020). Longitudinal and experimental designs are therefore essential to validate directional pathways.

The second major finding showed a significant bivariate relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, consistent with contemporary meta-analyses demonstrating that satisfaction remains a robust predictor of affective commitment across demographic groups (Meyer, Kam, Goldenberg, & Bremner, 2022). Recent work emphasizes that satisfaction functions as a reciprocal signal of fair treatment and meaningful work experiences, thereby motivating employees to invest more fully in their organizations (Shin & Hur, 2021; Hur, Rhee, & Ahn, 2022).

However, in the multivariate analysis, job satisfaction did not emerge as a unique predictor once generational work values were included. This aligns with newer theoretical developments suggesting that values operate as higher-order schemas shaping employees' interpretation of work experiences including satisfaction rendering satisfaction statistically redundant when value alignment is accounted for (Kooij, 2020; Rudolph & Zacher, 2021). Alternatively, methodological factors such as multicollinearity or restricted measurement variability may have attenuated satisfaction's unique contribution. Recent organizational behavior research encourages the use of longitudinal mediation models to determine whether job satisfaction mediates the effect of value congruence on commitment (Peng, Jiang, Chen, & Nie, 2023).

The broader pattern across analyses indicates that generational work values were the stronger and more stable predictor of organizational commitment compared to job satisfaction. This supports contemporary perspectives that organizational commitment among young workers is increasingly driven by identity-level alignment rather than

short-term evaluative states (Zito, Ingusci, & Cortese, 2021). Young employees with strong perceived value alignment are more likely to internalize organizational goals, display stronger identification, and demonstrate durable affective commitment (Jain, Gamage, & Härtel, 2023).

From a practical standpoint, the findings suggest that traditional satisfaction-enhancing strategies such as perks, pay, or general job improvements may be insufficient to foster lasting commitment among Gen Z employees unless integrated with deeper cultural and value-based alignment. Recent HRM literature underscores that employers must embed meaningful work, development pathways, flexibility, and technologically enriched environments into organizational structures to retain young talent (CIPD, 2023; Deloitte, 2023).

VII. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrated that generational work values are a significant and unique predictor of organizational commitment among young employees in the UK. While job satisfaction showed a positive bivariate association with commitment, it did not retain predictive power when generational work values were included in the model, suggesting that deeper value alignment rather than day-to-day satisfaction better explains long-term attachment to employers. The findings highlight the central role of value congruence, meaningful work, flexibility, and development-focused environments in shaping commitment among Gen Z employees. However, the cross-sectional design, self-report data, and sampling limitations restrict causal inference. Overall, the results underscore the strategic importance of aligning organizational culture and practices with emerging generational values.

Recommendations

1. Organizations should communicate and embody clear purpose, social impact, and meaningful work to reflect the core values of younger employees.
2. Work structures should emphasize autonomy, hybrid options, rapid learning opportunities, and digital enablement to meet Gen Z expectations.
3. Improvements in supervision, feedback, and recognition should be paired with broader value-driven initiatives to sustain commitment.
4. Recruitment and onboarding processes should assess and reinforce value alignment early to build stronger affective bonds.
5. Transparent communication and opportunities for employee input can enhance identification and attachment.

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Citation of this Article:

Adeniyi, A.O. (2025). The Influence of Generational Work Values and Job Satisfaction on Organizational Commitment among Young Employees in the UK. *International Research Journal of Innovations in Engineering and Technology - IRJIET*, 9(12), 41-50. Article DOI <https://doi.org/10.47001/IRJIET/2025.912006>
