

## WORK ATTITUDES INFLUENCING JOB INVOLVEMENT AMONG 'Y' GENERATION

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### Abstract:

*The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of different work attitudes of Generation Y on Job Involvement in Turkey. Data is collected from Generation Y employees who work in various companies operating in different markets in Turkey through a questionnaire survey, which contains work attitude statements developed by Kamau et al. (2014) and the Job Involvement scale developed by Kanungo (1982). 258 respondents completed the survey. After sorting and removing duplicate submissions a net sample of 228 usable questionnaires remained. Exploratory Factor Analysis is conducted to job involvement scale which returned five items. Also multiple regression analyses are conducted using all 39 work attitude items, lead to finding out 7 which are explaining job involvement.*

*The findings indicate that, work takes a central place in the lives of Generation Y. They like to work and ambitious in their career pursuit. Such factors as, high commitment level to job related goals, strong motivational investment level to their careers, tendency to identify themselves with work are blurring the boundaries of work-personal life balance of Generation Y. Respecting educational differences highly, Generation Y discriminates work relationships according to the qualifications and the level of education with their colleagues. Generation Y also has respect to their bosses and cares less about salaries as compared to work itself.*

*The implications of the results are discussed and future research areas are suggested.*

**Keywords:** *Work Attitude, Job Involvement, Generation Y*

### 1. Introduction

There are several generations actively working in the business life today. Since every generation has their own nurture in relation with the era and surrounding conditions of their maturing period, majority of the generations in circulation on the work life namely Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y has developed different attitudes towards work. On the other hand, the developments which took place in last decade, have made concepts come to the forefront such as global competition, boundaryless organizations, virtual teams, distance working, e-learning, e-commerce, being continuously in connection etc. These concepts significantly effected work life and highlighted the importance of human resources, which is considered to be one of the most important competitive advantages in today's business world.

Taking into account of the structure of workforce in the global market, Baby Boomers whom are in their late 60's seems to be approaching –if not already there- to their retirement ages, making way for next generation, Generation X to climb hierarchical ladders and reach executive positions after them. Quantitative research conducted by ManpowerGroup containing sample of 11.000 working Generation Y members (also known as Millennials. Barr, 2007) and 8.000 ManpowerGroup millennial associates from 25 countries in 2016 about generations on global work force suggests that, by 2020 Generation Y will cover 35% of the overall workforce in the market, while Baby Boomers will be representing 6%, Generation Z 24% and Generation X 35% respectively (Millennial careers: 2020 vision, Manpower Report, 2016).

Since Generation X is expected to fill vacant positions in executive levels, it can be predicted that in the next decades, Generation Y will be occupying a considerable portion of employee seats in the labor market. Generation Y is different in terms of beliefs, values and attitudes as compared to generations before them (Kamau et al., 2014). Since these differences are creating communication problems and difficulties in reaching consensus, to understand generational discrepancies is important to identify sources of conflicts between managers, likely to be members of Generation X and workers representing Y Generation whom are increasing in the work life day by day. It is

becoming very important to address issues of not only leading but working with people whom differs significantly in their values, expectations, attitudes from generations before and after them.

Kupperschmidt (2000) has defined generations as “identifiable group that shares birth years, age, location and significant life events at critical development stages”. Although definition is clear and concise, defining generational clusters and setting borders to separate them is difficult. There are different distinctions in the literature regarding to generations which resulted critics (Jaeger, 1985; Joshi et al., 2010; Mannheim, 1952). In the present study years 1946, 1964 for Baby Boomers (Egri and Ralston, 2004), years 1965, 1982 for Generation X (Eisner, 2005) and years 1982, 1996 for Generation Y distinction has been adopted.

Kanungo (1982) defined job involvement as an individual’s psychological identification or commitment to her work. Since job involvement has important effects on motivation, effort and overall performance of the organization, it is desirable for leaders to understand and to foster it. Although concept is discussed through two distinct perspectives in literature, both individual characteristics and work characteristics are accepted to be important on having and maintaining job involvement. There are strong relations between concepts job involvement, engagement, performance, individual preferences and attitudes. Companies may use either work or individual characteristics approaches to induce improving engagement which will result to reach desired performance level through job involvement.

Generational proportions are changing in work life rapidly. Therefore understanding the relationship between Generation Y work attitudes and job involvement may help especially Generation X leaders to better communicate, motivate and engage them efficiently. The paper is organized as follows. Next section reviews the literature of the Generation concept and ways of defining them, also discusses work related values of each generations as well as Job Involvement concept, different perspectives and approaches regarding to it. Third chapter describes research methodology and findings. Fourth chapter concludes and discusses the relationship between Generation Y work values and job involvement.

### **Problem Statement**

According to the Millennial Careers: 2020 vision, Manpower Report (2016), Generation X and Y members will be representing 35% each of overall workforce by 2020. Taking into consideration of age and tenure differences between two generations, it is reasonable to predict that Generation X members will have to lead Generation Y members in business life within next years.

Having and maintaining job involvement is one of the most important goals of managers. It is very important for them to understand employee’s positive and negative feelings towards work to enable continuous involvement. Since there is little known about work attitudes of Generation Y, it will be beneficial to investigate work attitudes of Generation Y as well as the relations between job attitudes and job involvement. Therefore, the following research questions have been formulated:

What are Generation Y’s attitudes towards work?

How does Generation Y work attitudes effect job involvement?

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between work attitudes of Generation Y on job involvement in Turkey. Data for this research is collected through a questionnaire survey. The work attitude statements developed by Kamau et al., (2014) and the job involvement scale developed by Kanungo (1982) are used in this research. Data for the study is collected from the Generation Y employees who work in different departments and companies which are in different markets in Turkey, 258 respondents completed the survey.

### **Research Questions**

**H1:** Generation Y work attitudes has an impact on job involvement

### **Significance of the Study**

Understanding the relationship between Generation Y work attitudes and job involvement may help managers to be more effective especially when leading Generation Y employees. Findings also can be used for having efficient communication, managing conflicts, most importantly understanding millennials motives towards work. Since there

are few studies in Turkey exist about the relationship between Generation Y work attitudes and job involvement, this paper may help future researchers and professionals as well.

### **Definitions**

Generation - "Identifiable group that shares birth years, age, location and significant life events at critical development stages" (Kupperschmidt, 2000).

Job involvement - Individual's psychological identification or commitment to her work (Kanungo, 1982).

## **2. Literature Review**

### ***Generations at Work***

Baby Boomers are defined as the people born between 1946 and 1964 (Egri and Ralston, 2004). They are born into the golden era of economic and social growth which takes place after World War II and their attitudes towards work and life are influenced and shaped by both their parents' negative memories of war conditions and their own preferences towards work. Baby Boomers have conservative values like loyalty, hardworking, competitiveness (Crampton and Hodge, 2007), they are willing to make sacrifices for their families and satisfied with tangible awards (Kupperschmidt, 2000). Baby Boomers value success, team work, challenge, maintaining a good relationship with their superiors and other employees as they value loyalty and commitment to the workplace (Shragay and Tziner, 2011).

On the other hand, Generation X is born after Baby Boomers prosperous era, whom has to cope with unfavorable circumstances like unstable economy, epidemic diseases like AIDS, ethical scandals involving high level executives of companies and governments. Strongly effected by incidents and new conditions like bankrupting firms, parents losing their jobs, lack of lifelong jobs offered by profitable companies, absence of predictability and security at work, Generation X relied on their individual initiatives and developed lack of trust towards companies they are working for (Johnson and Lopes, 2008).

Generation X is self-confident, independent, dislikes supervision, wants to have fun and achieve goals at work (Shragay and Tziner, 2011). Instead of being loyal to the organization, they are loyal to their jobs, colleagues and managers (Neil, 2010). Members of Generation X has more commitment to their own careers than to their organizations (Lyons, 2004; Miller and Yu, 2003) and prefer organizations which value skills development, productivity and work-life balance rather than status and tenure (Smola and Sutton, 2002).

Generation Y is the last generation born in the 20th century. Raised in the era of technological breakthroughs, communication and information technologies, globalization, internet where they can easily reach to the sources they require to obtain knowledge and share their personal views freely, Generation Y is influenced by intensive exposure of the messages, information flow, advertisement wielded by mass media and different other organizations which led them to be skillful on collecting and processing information, multitasking, working well in groups and seeking for individual consideration. "Generation Y has never known life without Internet, cell phones, fax machines, voice mail and chat rooms. Weaned on technology, this generation has no personal reference for a time before ATM's, VCR's, PC's, CD's, MTV and MP3's" (Kamau et al., 2014).

Generation Y members are on the center of attention during their childhood and expectations from them are very high. Having strong self-confidence, Generation Y believes that if they lost their main income tomorrow, they could find equally good or better work within three months (Millennial Careers: 2020 vision, Manpower Report, 2016). According to the same report, 60% of the Generation Y is expecting to work past age 65 and rather than one long job for life, since they understand the requirement for continuous skills development to remain employable, they prefer working for different organizations to that end. Research shows that although salaries and benefits are still important to Generation Y, these are significantly less important than these values are to Generation X members (Schullery, 2013). Generation Y especially differs in valuing leisure rewards at work, self-paced work, having time for other things in life, increased vacations compared to Generation X. Even though roots of motivation are different, Generation Y is sharing same attitude with Generation X when it comes to loyalty to their current employers. Deloitte Millennial Survey (2016) is indicating that only 16% of the generation Y workers see themselves with the current employer a decade from now, while 44% of them say that they will quit their jobs in two years if given choice to join a new organization or to do something different.

Believing that financial results are not the only indication to measure business success, Generation Y value behaving ethically, responsibility to society, employee satisfaction, trust and openness in the workplace, honest treatment to customers. Deloitte Millennial Survey (2016) indicates that Generation Y chooses employers whose values reflect their own and almost half have been reported to choose not to undertake a task at work because it went against their personal values or ethics. It is not an easy task to motivate Generation Y with tangible rewards since they prefer flexible working hours, time to travel and enjoy life, a good work-life balance more than salaries (Broadbridge et al., 2007).

Cennamo and Gardner (2008) suggested that there are significant generational differences exists for individual work values involving status and freedom but not for extrinsic, intrinsic, social and altruism related values between generations and no differences in perceived organizational values. Since their research suggests differences between generations on individual and perceived organizational values, but only for two of the six values, it can be commented that Baby Boomer, Generation X and Generation Y has some differences in work values but fewer than expected with respect to criteria mentioned.

“Meeting Generation Y demands for work where they enjoy and require unlimited fun, shows a lack of leadership in Tulgan’s view (2009). He instead advises strong leadership and commitment to “high maintenance management” to provider, not what Generation Y want, but what they need.” (Schullery, 2013) In order not only to manage conflicts efficiently, but to provide guidance, mentorship, and support to Generation Y, it is useful to understand their attitudes towards work and others in work place.

### ***Job Involvement***

Regardless of the generation, working individuals are either spending an important portion of their time in the workplace or with the work related activities. Since her deliberate actions define who that person is, work and personal values effect each other inevitably, resulting positive or negative feelings towards work. In the strictest sense, these positive or negative feelings that are considered to be the attitudes, has a significant effect on both job involvement and organizational performance.

Job involvement has been defined as the identification of the individual with the job and as a psychological self-investment of the individual in the work as a means of seeking some expression of the self at work (Lodahl and Kejner, 1965). Job involvement also involves the internalization of values about goodness of work or the importance of work in the worth of the individual (Lodahl and Kejner, 1965). Ekmekçi (2011) states that from an organizational perspective, job involvement has been considered the key to employee motivation and competitive advantage and from an individual perspective it is key to personal growth, satisfaction and related to leader consideration, participative decision making, communication.

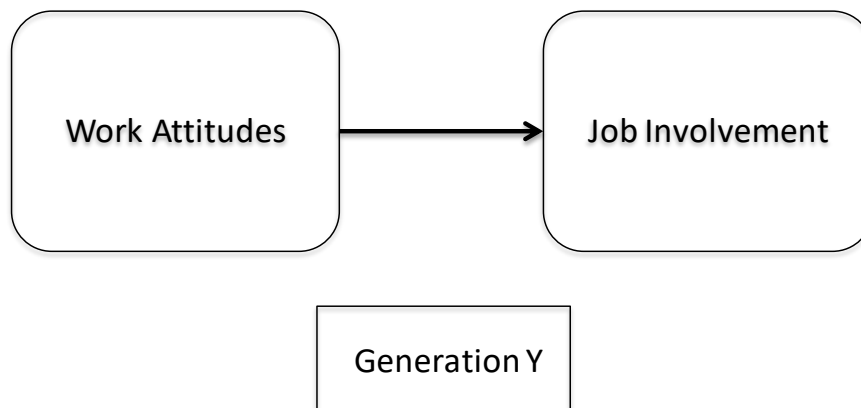
Job involvement concept has been approached from two different perspectives (Sekaran, 1989; Sekaran and Mowday, 1981). First approach viewed as an individual difference variable and job involvement is believed to occur when the possession of certain needs, values or personal characteristics predispose individuals to become more or less involved in their jobs. The second perspective views job involvement as a response to specific work situation characteristic. In other words, certain types of jobs or characteristics of the work situation influence the degree to which an individual becomes involved in her job (Chungtai, 2008).

For organizations, having and sustaining job involvement is an important target since it has strong relations with organizational effectiveness (Pfeffer, 1994). Katz and Kahn (1978) states that effective organizational functioning requires employees to not only perform their prescribed role but also to engage in behaviors that go beyond these formal obligations. Since involved individuals likely to perceive work as a very important aspect of their lives, it can be suggested that they will spend extra effort to reach organizational goals. Supporting this argument, Brown (1996) found that job involvement is positively effecting employee’s motivation and effort, leading to higher levels of in role job performance. Yet further research is needed to clarify how job involvement is related to other job attitudes.

Job involvement has been found to be related to the job characteristics of skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback from work itself (Hackman and Oldam, 1975; Rabinowitz and Hall, 1977). On the other hand there is a disagreement between researchers about job involvement being a personal characteristic which suggests that it is less likely to be influenced by organizational factors and more likely to be influenced by personal characteristics (Dubin, 1956; Rabinowitz and Hall, 1977). Carmeli (2005) is indicating that job involvement is unlikely

to be changed because of organizational factors since it is a relatively fixed attribute. Therefore the ultimate determinant of job involvement should be the value of ones work in life (Kanungo, 1979). Supporting this opinion Sekaran (1989) also suggests that employees usually join the organization bringing their own work values. Based on their experiences and interactions with organizational factors, employees make deliberate choices whether to involve in their jobs and invest them in work or not.

In this study, the relationship between Generation Y work attitudes and job involvement has been examined by adopting the point of view that job involvement is a personal characteristic which differs from person to person.



**Figure 1:** Conceptual Model

**H1:** Generation Y work attitudes has an impact on job involvement

In the light of literature presented above, the conceptual model is prepared.

### 3. Research Method and Findings

#### *Research Instrument:*

The primary objective of this study is to examine the effect of the different factors of work attitudes of Generation Y in Turkey on job involvement. Data for this research is collected through a questionnaire survey. A review of the literature yielded a number of measurement instruments that are employed to test the hypothesized model. Each scale has a history of reliable measurement. The work attitude statements are developed by Kamau et al., (2014) and the job involvement scale is developed by Kanungo (1982). The work attitude scale is measured with 39 items. Job involvement is measured with 10 items (See in Table 1 and Table 2). All scales employed in this study are measured on five-point Likert scales ranging from “1=Strongly Disagree” to “5=Strongly Agree”.

**Table 1:** Measurement items of Work Attitudes

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Measurement</b>
<b>Work Attitudes</b>	Wa1	I access information instantaneously
	Wa2	I am completely different from my parents as far as work attitude is concerned
	Wa3	I use modern media for communications in the work place
	Wa4	I do not live to work but work to live
	Wa5	I do not like work
	Wa6	I do care less about salaries
	Wa7	I prefer more flexible working hours
	Wa8	I prefer balancing work and social life
	Wa9	I am demanding and have high expectations in the work place
	Wa10	I am ambitious and hungry for success in career targets
	Wa11	I prefer to change jobs frequently
	Wa12	I like my freedom
	Wa13	I seek instant fulfillment in the work place
	Wa14	I have no respect for authority from my bosses
	Wa15	I generally cannot complete tasks in time
	Wa16	I require guidance from my manager in the work place
	Wa17	I create conflict with the other people in the work place
	Wa18	I access information quickly at work place
	Wa19	I take responsibility but lack total commitment to duty
	Wa20	I am highly receptive to new technologies
	Wa21	I do not want to be considered as young among colleagues at work
	Wa22	I do not want to be viewed as inexperienced in the work place
	Wa23	I believe that I deserve the position they I want at work
	Wa24	I can seek for a new job at any given time
	Wa25	I am flexible to work related changes
	Wa26	I want to start as a manager, or at least be one shortly
	Wa27	I expect to relate with my employers as with my parents
	Wa28	I discriminate relationship with colleagues on basis of education qualifications
	Wa29	I pick my colleagues on the strength of their wallets
	Wa30	My loyalty to work is based on meaning attached to it
	Wa31	Conventional eight hours work-day is a challenge to me
	Wa32	I prefer to extend leave days
	Wa33	I do not like working on weekends
	Wa34	I always visit social networks during working hours
	Wa35	I am the most technologically friendly employee in my current company
	Wa36	I freely communicate with my age mates at work place especially in coded language
	Wa37	Going work is not mandatory to me, If I do not feel like it I won't
	Wa38	I can fake sickness as an excuse from work
	Wa39	I question work methods

**Table 1:** Measurement items of Job Involvement

Construct	Item	Measurement
<b>Job Involvement</b>	J11	The most important things that happen to me involve my present
	J12	To me, my job is only a small part of who I am.
	J13	I am very much involved personally in my job.
	J14	I live, eat and breathe my job.
	J15	Most of my interests are centered around my job.
	J16	I have very strong ties with my present job which would be very
	J17	Usually I feel detached from my job.
	J18	Most of my personal life goals are job-oriented.
	J19	I consider my job to be very central to my life.
	J110	I like to be really involved in my job most of the time.

In the process of translation, the techniques of back translation and parallel translation have been adopted with the help of an academician fluent in English and Turkish. The authors of this paper further verified the final Turkish version of the questionnaire.

***Sampling and data collection:***

Data for the study is collected from the Generation Y employees who work in different departments and companies which are in different markets in Turkey. During a two-week period, 258 respondents completed the survey. After sorting and removing duplicate submissions, a net sample of 228 usable questionnaires remained. A total of 124 (54.4%) of the participants are female and 104 (45.6%) are male. Questionnaires are distributed and filled in by those employees whose level of education is graduate and above. The mean age of respondents is 32.19 years with standard deviation of 7.34. Data obtained from questionnaires are analyzed through the IBM SPSS 23.0 statistical program.

***Analysis:***

***Factor Analysis:***

To identify and test the underlying structure of job involvement scales, exploratory factor analyses (EFA) are conducted.

***Job Involvement:***

To determine the dimensions of job involvement an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with Principle Component Factoring and Varimax Rotations is conducted. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett test of sphericity tests are performed to test the appropriateness of data for conducting factor analysis (Sharma, 1996). Result of the tests (KMO=0.807,  $\chi^2$  Bartlett test (10)=310.669,  $p=0.000$ ) are satisfactory. The diagonals of the anti-image correlation matrix are all over 0.50, supporting the inclusion of each item in the factor analysis. Factors with eigenvalues over one are retained and items with factor loadings below 0.50 and items with high cross loadings are excluded (Hair et. al., 1998). Job Involvement is unidimensional as expected.

**Table 3:** Factor Analysis result of Job Involvement

Factor Name	Factor Items	Factor Loading	%Variance	Reliability
<b>Job Involvement</b>	I consider my job to be very central to my existence	0.803	54.67	0.790
	Most of my personal life goals are job-oriented	0.774		
	Most of my interests are centered around my job	0.758		
	I like to be absorbed in my job most of the time	0.730		
	The most important things that happen to me involve my present job	0.617		

By conducting exploratory factor analysis, we found that job involvement has five items. (See Table 3).

**Multiple Regression Analyses:**

When we conducted multiple regression analyses to understand the relationship between job involvement and work attitudes, we prefer to use all 39 items in the regression that gives more deeply insight about relationship of the constructs. When we conducted multiple regression analyses to understand the relationship between work attitudes and job involvement for generation Y, we found out that wa10, wa6, wa28, wa5, wa33, wa27, wa14 explain job involvement ( $F=14.984$ ,  $p=0.000$  respectively,  $R=0.576$ ;  $R^2= 0.332$ ).

**Table 4:** Multiple Regression Analysis result

<b>Dependent variable: Job Involvement</b>			
<b>Independent variables:</b>	<b>Beta</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>p value</b>
Wa10- Its ambitious and hungry for success in career pursuit	0.262	4.493	0.000
Wa6- Cares less about salaries but	0.241	4.174	0.000
Wa28- They discriminate relationship with colleagues on basis of education qualifications	0.265	4.621	0.000
Wa5- Generation y does not like work	-0.149	-2.454	0.015
Wa33- Generation Y does not like working on weekends	-0.163	-2.768	0.006
Wa27- Expect to relate with their employers as with their parents	0.169	2.871	0.005
Wa14- Has no respect for authority from their bosses	-0.126	-2.213	0.035



As reflected in Table 4 Wa10, Wa6 and Wa28 have nearly same contributions ( $\beta_{wa10} = 0.262$ ,  $\beta_{wa6} = 0.241$  and  $\beta_{wa28} = 0.265$ ) respectively. Wa27 also has positive relationship with job involvement  $\beta_{wa27} = 0.169$ . Items Wa5, Wa33 and Wa14 have negative contribution on job involvement (see Table 4). H1 cannot be rejected.

## 4. Conclusions and Recommendations,

### Conclusions

The main objective of this study is to determine the relationship between Generation Y work attitudes on job involvement. According to the results of analysis, Generation Y considers their jobs in the center of their lives and also builds their personal lives around it. These finding is in line with the literature indicating that Generation Y are as hard workers as other generations and seventy three percent reports working more than 40 hours a week, nearly a quarter working over 50 hours (Millennial careers: 2020 vision, Manpower Report, 2016). Also, findings regarding to the relationship between Generation Y work attitudes and job involvement are suggesting that millennials like to work even on weekends, has respect for authority from their bosses, care less about salaries and have ambition for success in their career pursuit. Considering as a whole, it can be interpreted as Generation Y has strong psychological identification and commitment to their work.

Generation Y has been reported to have less loyalty to their current employer, need to like what they do at work, prefer to work for a cause that they can embrace. Supporting our findings, literature also suggests that if those needs are satisfied, they work hard and are less sensitive to financial income. 87 percent of Generation Y believes that success of a business should be measured in terms of more than just its financial performance; also business success shouldn't be measured in purely financial terms. Millennials promote loyalty when company pursues purpose beyond financial success (The 2016 Deloitte Millennial Survey). Generation Y has strong values and sensitive to ethical behaviors, believing that companies should put employees first; they should build and sustain a solid foundation of trust and integrity. Also business that they are in should have a positive impact on wider society.

One other finding is that millennials tend to discriminate their relationship with colleagues on basis of education qualification. This makes sense when taken into account with the literature indicating that Generation Y highly values continuous skills development and to that end they are not only willing to spend their own time and resources but to change jobs to enlarge their skill set. From this perspective, it can be said that millennials are not loyal to their employers or colleagues but to their abilities to produce and create in relation with their values.

### Recommendations & Future studies

The leaders and human resource managers can get insight from the findings of this study regarding to Generation Y attitudes towards work and effecting factors of their job involvement levels. Findings also can be used for having efficient communication, managing conflicts, most importantly understanding millennials motives towards work. Future research should look at the different mediators and moderators involved in the relationship between leadership and job involvement of generations.

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