

## Generation Y in Malaysian GLCs: Relationship Between Herzberg's Motivation Factors and Job Commitment

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### Abstract

*Organization best HRM practices led towards committed employees, thus drive organizational success. In terms of organizational talents, Generation Y who is known as millennial generation is the new emerging workforce. However, several scholars termed Gen Y also known as millennial generation as disloyal workforces. Managing Gen Y effectively has puzzled many organizations. High turnover rate among millennial generation is now the concern of many organizations. Studies on what motivates Gen Y intrinsically towards job commitment in Malaysia are somewhat limited. Therefore, this paper intends to discover the relationship between Herzberg's motivation factors namely achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, and opportunity for advancement and growth and job commitment among Generation Y in Malaysian Government Linked Companies (GLCs). A total of 400 Gen Y from top 10 Malaysian GLCs within Klang Valley was chosen as respondents. The findings revealed that there were strong relationship between achievement ( $r=0.730$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), recognition ( $r=0.704$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), the work itself ( $r=0.715$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), opportunity for growth and advancement ( $r=0.711$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) respectively with job commitment. However, responsibility ( $r=0.189$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) was found to have a positive but weak relationship with job commitment. This study is hoped to enrich body of discussion on Gen Y and job commitment.*

**Keywords:** *Generation Y, Herzberg's Motivation Factors, Job Commitment, Government Linked Companies (GLCs)*

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### INTRODUCTION

According to Abd Rahim et al. (2015), it is important for organizations in today's competitive world to hire high performance employees in their organizations. A motivated employee is needed to guarantee the operational wellbeing of every organization. This is on the grounds that motivated employees can enhance the organization to be more significant and productive (McKenzie-Mohr and Schultz, 2014).

The current workplace in Malaysia consists of three different cohorts, namely Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y (Lamm and Meeks, 2009). Based on Department Statistics of Malaysia (2016), the total Malaysian workforce mostly being

conquered by 6.8 million of Generation Y, followed by 4.6 million of Generation X, and the least group employees consist of 2.2 million of Baby Boomers. According to William (2008) and Tay (2011), Generation X or called Lost Generation born between 1966 and 1976 and reaching their age of 38 to 48 years old as of year 2016. Thus, it indicates that there are 49 % of labour force in Malaysia consists of Generation Y (Department Statistic of Malaysia, 2016). Notwithstanding this, Janet Yap (2016) stated that these young generation will become the largest segment of the workforce starting in 2015 and by 2025, this group will account for 75% of the global workforces in Malaysia.

According to Zimmerman (2008) and Hess & Jepsen (2009), Generation Y people are those who were born between 1980 and 2000. Generation Y is well known as Millennials who are born between 1980 until 2000 (William, 2008 and Tay, 2011). In addition, according to Wan Yusoff et al. (2013) in Fadilah et al. (2015), Generation Y is the group of people who are born between 1980 until 2000, while Generation X is the group of people who are born between 1966 until 1976. Meanwhile, Beutell and Witting-Berman (2008) state that Baby Boomers are categorized in the group of people who are born around 1946 until 1964 (Fadilah et al. ,2015). In the recent years, Generation Y got an attention in many research studies because of the difference in characteristics in their generation compared to the previous generation. Thus, many researchers gave a various terms to label this generation. The terms namely Nexters, Echo Boomers, and, Millenial (Milliron, 2008; Eisner and Harvey, 2009; Hanzaee, 2009; Baldonado and Spangenburg, 2009; Lindquist, 2008).

Employee turnover is a common problem faced by many organizations and it involves all level of employees from lower level to the top level management. A study by Yee (2012) found that usually Malaysian workers stay with their organization with not more than three years. The statistics provided by AON Hewitt (2011) revealed that employee turnover of Malaysia is ranked in sixth place after China, Australia, India, Hong Kong and Indonesia in Asia Pacific for the year 2011 with 15.9 % attrition rate. Malaysia recorded the third highest voluntary turnover rate at 9.5% for the year of 2015 in South East Asia (“Key Insights to Attract,” 2015).

In terms of sectors, Malaysian GLCs contribute significantly to the nation economy. GLCs are a lawful substance made by a legislature to embrace business activities in the interest of a proprietor government. Their legitimate status changes from being a piece of government to stock organizations with a state as a normal stockholder (Boni, 2014). GLCs play an essential part in the advancement of the Malaysian economy (Rosni, 2005). With the retirement of Baby Boomer workforce, Generation Y become a substantial part of Malaysian workforce and turns out to be progressively larger as a greater amount of them are entering into the workforce (Abdelbaset et al., 2015). This study focuses on the Gen Y employees in Malaysian GLCs. Malaysia government has forecasted that GLCs employ around 5% of the national workforce and account for roughly 36% and 54% respectively of the market capitalization of Bursa Malaysia and the benchmark Kuala Lumpur Composite Index (Khazanah, 2013). The following section discusses on the motivation factors and job commitment among Gen Y in Malaysian GLCs.

## MOTIVATION FACTORS AND JOB COMMITMENT AMONG GEN Y

Generation Y is the latest generation of members into the work constrain. Generation Y is highly regarded in connection with various issues for organizations, with issue on being low levels of job commitment (Martin, 2005). Pay matter is less to this generation than to the previous generation as they are more particular whether the job will give them the adaptability to seek after objectives in different aspects of their life (Dulin, 2008). This generation is more concerned with the goal and accomplishment, they are not faithful to any organization and they need a life outside of work (Yeaton, 2008).

This study employs Herzberg motivation factors to gauge the Gen Y commitment towards their current organizations. The following section discusses about job commitment and factors that motivates Gen Y to engage with their organizations.

Job commitment is about feeling of belonging, the link between the employees and the organization, feeling as a part of the organizations, and also job commitment can influence the job performance, behaviour, and better performance of organization (Seok and Olshfski, 2002). Meyer and Allen (1997) explained that job commitment refers to a multi-based construct that includes affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment. Omar et al. (2012) mentioned that it is a bonus for the company to hire committed employees. The highly committed employees would think twice to leave the organization. In the same way, Hussain and Asif (2012) have confirmed that strong organizational commitment will lead organizational values that create a sense of belonging and ownership among employees, which can produce productive and loyal employees. Guest (1991) highlighted that high organizational commitment is connected with lower turnover and absence.

With respect to employee motivation, Carter (2015) stated that the motivation of employees is the strong reason in influencing their job commitment. Thus, motivation theory by Frederick Herzberg (1959) was chosen as it was significant to the study in identifying which factors that can motivate to job commitment. Herzberg (1959) has underlined that employees particularly be motivated with motivation factors such as achievement, recognition, responsibility, the work itself and opportunity for advancement and growth, and if the motivational factors are successfully combined; the employees will be more motivated and can perform greatly. These motivation factors are likely to have more deeper and longer term effect in influencing job commitment and job satisfaction of employees because they are inherent in individuals and not imposed from outside (Armstrong, 2006). Herzberg's motivation factors that the researcher found from literature were starting from achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, opportunity for advancement and growth were used in the study.

Achievement motivation is the desire to perform in terms of a standard of excellence or to be successful in competitive situations (Jansen and Samuel, 2014). The individuals who have high necessity for achievement undertake own duty for the resolution of tasks or problems, set moderately difficult goals, take calculated risks, and

have strong desire for feedback on their performance as indexed by compensation (Lawson and Shen, 1998). Most researchers agreed that achievement motivation is essential in the organizations and individual employees attempt to satisfy many needs through their work and through their relationship with an organization (Li, 2006). Based on the discussion above, therefore H1 is developed as follows:

H1: There is a significant relationship between achievement and job commitment among Generation Y in Malaysian GLCs.

Recognition is a key to any discussion of job commitment. Recognition may appear as money related or non-monetary grants, or a straightforward acknowledgement when job are done well. Whatever the way, recognition is very vital for keeping high level of job commitment, communication and respect. By giving this recognition and acknowledgment, the organization is fortifying the action that might want to see rehashed by different workers. Recognition and acknowledgment are additionally a strategy by organization to make workers feel appreciated and esteemed. At the point when workers are hardly recognized for a job well done, or when acknowledgment is given improperly, commitment will endure Yee (2012). Based on the discussion above, therefore H2 is developed as follows:

H2: There is a significant relationship between recognition and job commitment among Generation Y in Malaysian GLCs.

Rizwan and Ali (2010) defined the work itself in the circumstance where the employees loving and hating of his or her job, and whether the job is pleasant or not. According to Elisabeth and Jan (2001) stated that the work itself has a strong relationship with job commitment. These elements includes in the work itself such as the scope of work, the value of work, working hours, location of workplace, and rest time which indicated as having a significant relationship with job commitment. Based on the discussion above, therefore H3 is developed as follows:

H3: There is a significant relationship between the work itself and job commitment among Generation Y in Malaysian GLCs.

According to Yazdani et al. (2011), responsibility in other way is working to offer an advantage to the organization, and make sense of belonging and pride among employees in the organization. It can be said that there is a win-win relationship between organization and the employees. By giving responsibility, it shows virtual human capabilities and capacities among employees in handling a job. When the employees are

given an empowerment and responsibility, they can focus on their job and this can bring to smooth process in the coordination and work procedure. An empowered employees also will perform well when they are empowered by their employers with the sense of belonging, as well as with as they know where they are stand for in their organization. Thus, when there is a sense of belonging, enthusiasm, and satisfaction, this will lead towards increasing job commitment among employees in the organization. Responsibility is a one of the Herzberg’s motivation factors influence job commitment which has been most cited in the research literature. According to the study conducted by Becherer et al. (1982), the findings showed that there is a relationship between responsibility and job commitment. Based on the discussion above, therefore H4 is developed as follows:

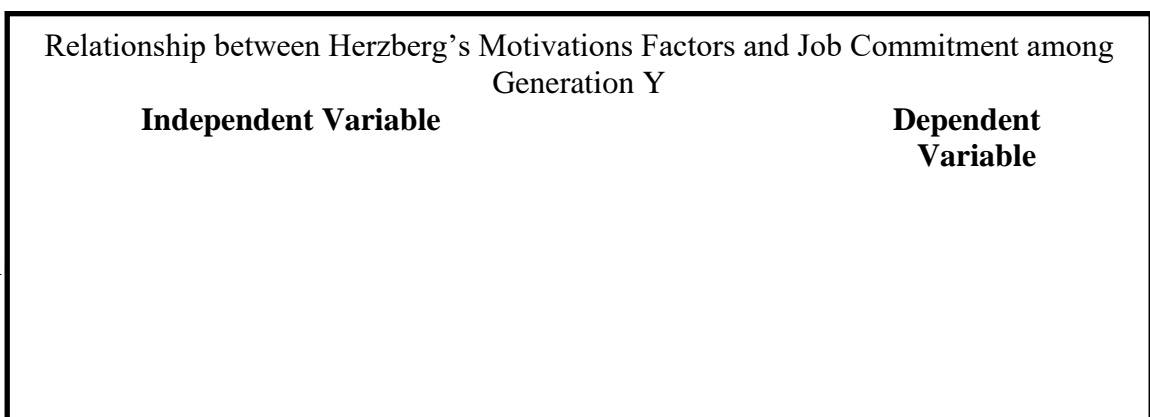
H4: There is a significant relationship between responsibility and job commitment among Generation Y in Malaysian GLCs.

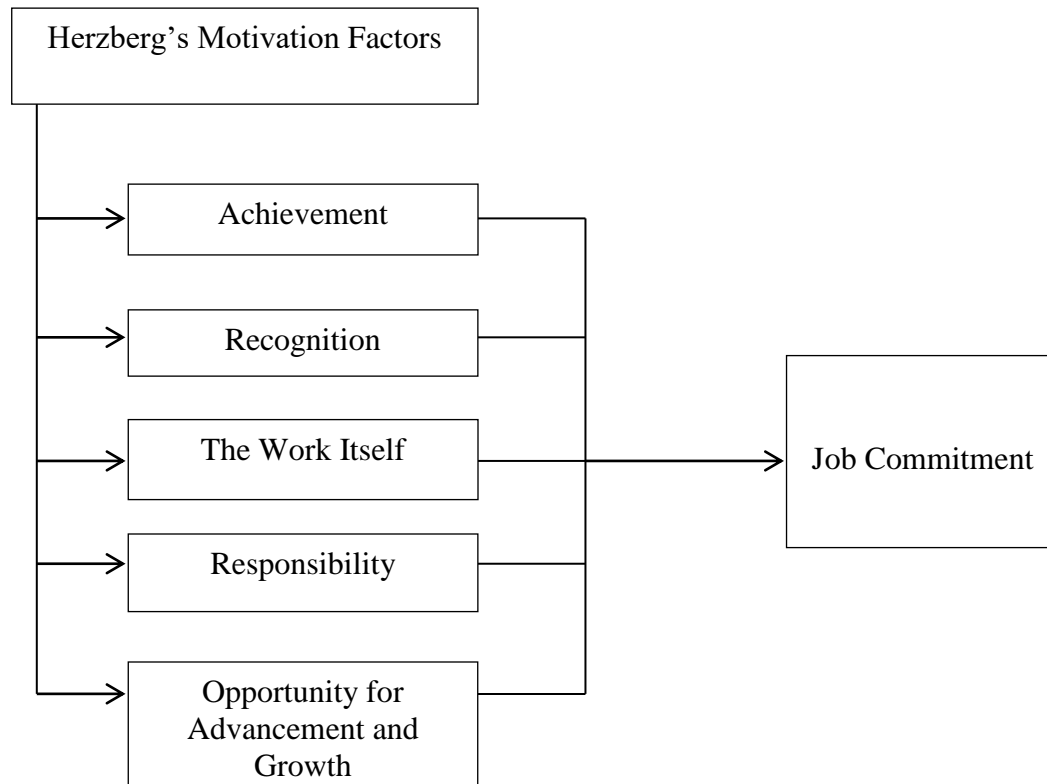
Opportunity for advancement and growth can be viewed as career growth which emphasized on career track that involve the process to plan career journey for the employees. The opportunity for advancement and growth will change employee’s belief that the organization cares about their career desires and goals (Allen, 2005). According to Wee (2013), opportunity for advancement and growth is the on-going process in developing and refining the career goals as the organization give opportunities and a chance to enrich employee’s personal skills, knowledge, abilities and also their potential throughout their career lifetime. Based on the discussion above, therefore H5 is developed as follows:

H5: There is a significant relationship between opportunity for advancement and growth and job commitment among Generation Y in Malaysian GLCs.

**RESEARCH FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES**

This proposed conceptual framework in Figure 1 is developed based on review of literature as discussed in the previous section. The independent variables (IV) identified in this study are achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, opportunity for advancement and growth, while job commitment is the targeted dependent variable (DV). This conceptual framework is further tested to ascertain the relationship between IVs namely achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, opportunity for advancement and growth and DV (job commitment) among Generation Y in Malaysian GLCs.





*Source: Adapted from Herzberg Motivation Factors (1959)*

**Figure 1: Herzberg's Motivations Factors and Job Commitment among Generation Y**

In order to test the framework and the hypotheses, this study employs specific methodology in order to determine the relationship between the abovementioned variables. The following section discusses on the methodological part of this study.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The design of this study utilizes cross-sectional method. Gen Y who work in GLCs within Klang Valley were chosen as respondents of this study. According to Department Statistic of Malaysia (2016), approximately Generation Y in Klang Valley consists of 6.8 million workforces. The sample size has been determined using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table of a known population. 400 respondents who work in top 10 Malaysian GLCs involved in this study namely Petrolia Nasional Berhad (Petronas), Malayan Banking Bhd (Maybank), Axiata Group Berhad, BIMB Holdings Bhd, CIMB Group Bhd, Malaysia Aiports Holdings Berhad, Sime Darby Berhad, Telekom Malaysia Bhd, Tenaga Nasional Berhad, and UEM Group Bhd.

Data was collected via questionnaire using 5-point likert scale ranging from (1) strong disagree to (5) strongly agree. The questionnaire consisted of 50 items and was divided into several sections namely Section A (Demographic Profile), Section B (Job

Commitment), Section C (Achievement), Section D (Recognition), Section E (The Work Itself), Section F (Responsibility), and Section G (Opportunity for Advancement and Growth). Job commitment instrument developed by Allen & Meyer (1990) was adopted in this study. Meanwhile for intrinsic motivation scales, items were adopted from Ewen et al. (1966), Graen (1966), Sergiovanni (1966), House and Wigdor (1967), Lindsay et al. (1967), Maidani (1991), Amabile et al. (1994) and Pizam and Ellis (1999). The following section discusses on the findings derived from this study.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

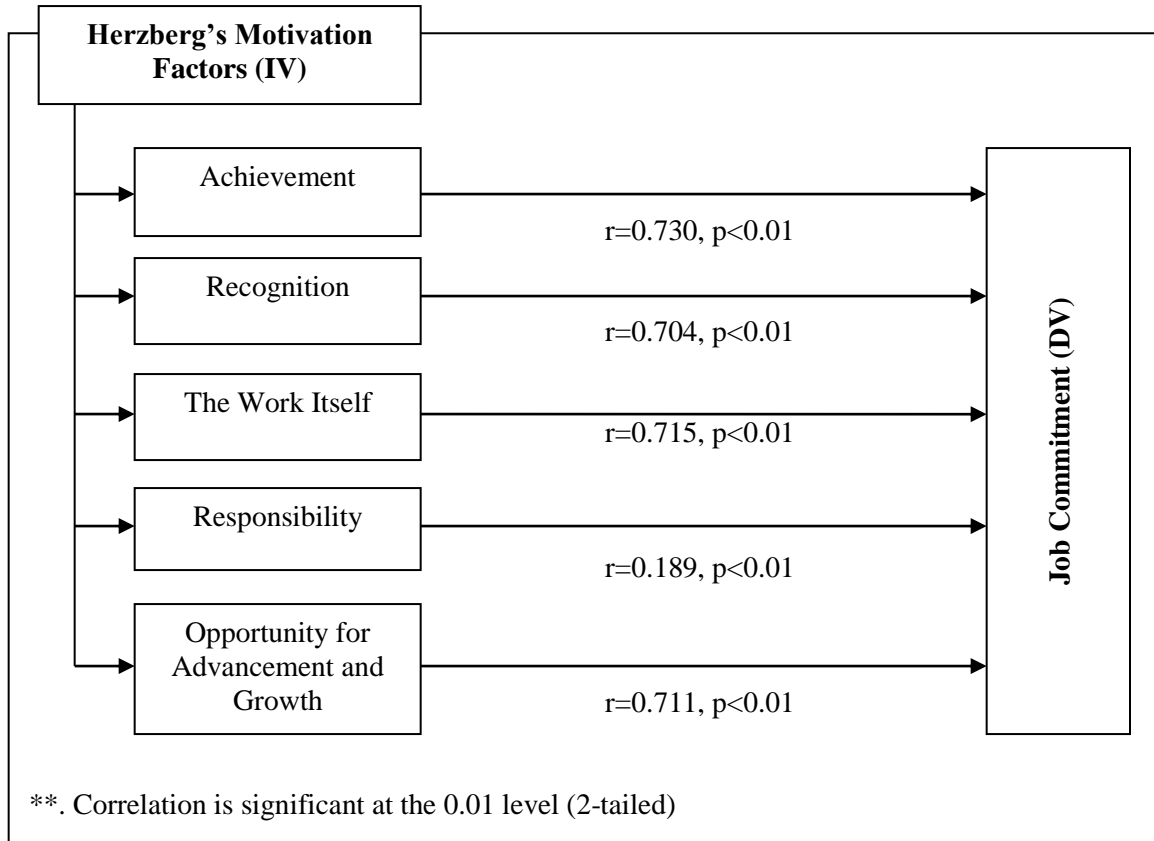
Table 1 below depicts the analysis on respondents' profile.

Table 1: *Profile of Respondents*

	Profile	Frequency	Per cent (%)
<b>Gender</b>			
	Male	206	51.5
	Female	194	48.5
<b>Age</b>			
	16-20	1	0.2
	21-25	140	35.0
	26-30	172	43.0
	31-36	87	21.8
<b>Working Experiences</b>			
	1-5 years	262	66.0
	6-10 years	74	18.0
	10 years above	64	16.0
<b>Educational Level</b>			
	SPM	13	3.3
	STPM	3	0.8
	Diploma	84	21.0
	Degree	266	66.5
	Master	27	6.8
	PhD	7	1.8
		400	100

Correlation analysis was computed in order to determine whether there is a significant relationship between Herzberg's motivation factors (achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, and opportunity for advancement and growth) and job commitment among Generation Y in Malaysian GLCs. Correlation analysis has been presented to test the hypothesis. Specifically, Pearson correlation coefficient was

employed to test several hypotheses namely (H1, H2, H3, H4, and H5). Below were the results on the correlation analysis using SPSS version 21.0, as depicted in Figure 2.



*Figure 2: Correlation Analyses between Herzberg's Motivation Factors and Job Commitment*

As depicted in Table 1, it was found that achievement, recognition, the work itself and opportunity for advancement and growth have strong and positive relationship with job commitment. Meanwhile, findings of the study also revealed that relationship has weak but positive relationship with job commitment. Result of this correlation indicates that there is evidence to support the existence of relationship between Herzberg's motivation factors (achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, opportunity for advancement and growth) and job commitment among Generation Y in Malaysian GLCs. Therefore, the hypotheses (H1, H2, H3, H4, H5) were accepted.

## DISCUSSION

The result of current study showed that there is a strong relationship between achievement and job commitment. This finding is coincide with Chika and Emmanuel (2014), who claimed that achievement correlates significantly with career commitment



among bank workers,  $r = .635$ ,  $p < .05$ . Furthermore, Hasan Tutar et al., (2011) revealed that employee empowerment positively and highly affects achievement motivation ( $r = 0.743$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). Studies by Dodd-McCue and Wright (1996) & Mannheim et al. (1997) also concur that there is a significant relationship between the need for achievement and organizational commitment.

With respect to recognition and job commitment, strong relationship found in this study concurs with findings obtained by Lindner (1998), Salman et al. (2010), Maurer (2009), Jun et al. (2008), Reena and Shakil (2009) and Rizwan and Ali (2010). Salman et al., 2010 proved that job commitment is specifically connected with intrinsic work motivation of workers and it can develop and increase the commitment of the worker. Maurer (2009), Reena & Shakil (2009) and June et. al (2008) claimed that recognition is a vital factor to boost job commitment and specifically related to organization accomplishment (Jun et al., 2008). In terms of the work itself and job commitment, this study is an agreement with Rizwan and Ali (2010) whom discovered that there is a significant relationship between the work itself and work motivation and job satisfaction Chika and Emmanuel (2014) also found that the work itself significantly correlates with career commitment of bank workers. While Sock and Mui (2012) highlighted that the value of work itself enlightens 17% of the variance of career commitment.

For opportunity for advancement and growth and job commitment among Generation Y in Malaysian GLCs, the finding of this study is further supported Rizwan and Ali (2010) who claimed that promotional opportunities correlates significantly with work motivation and job satisfaction. This finding is also aligned with Coster (1992) and Hoole & Vermeulen (2003) who disclosed that the offer of promotion will give an impact meaningfully to increase employee's job commitment.

Although this study found that there is a weak relationship between responsibility and job commitment among Generation Y in Malaysian GLCs, nevertheless, a study by Fadilah et al. (2015) revealed that Generation Y employees have less enthusiasm to their work, less sense of belonging to the organizations and are less responsible. This finding is also concur with a study by Becherer et al. (1982). Beecher et.al argue that the stronger the responsibility, ability to control and power in the organization experienced by an individual, the higher the level of job commitment. The same wave of thought were also discovered in Coster (1992) and Hoole & Vermeulen (2003) that the more power to take actions and to exercise the authority and responsibility, the higher their job commitment.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper highlights the relationship between Herzberg motivation factors namely achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, and opportunity for advancement and growth and job commitment among Generation Y. Job commitment is

the crucial concern especially in managing Gen Y whom are narrated by many organizations as having less sense of belonging to their organizations, less responsible, and less enthusiasm to their work. This study found that all these five elements are correlates significantly towards employee commitment. The findings further revealed that Gen Y in Malaysian GLCs do recognize these five elements that boost their motivation that keep them engaged and committed to their present organizations. These findings impliedly suggest that Malaysian GLCS should be able to manipulate these motivational elements as suggested by Herzberg in order to boost their employee commitment particularly among Gen Y. These will eventually enhance employees' performance and productivity levels.

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