

# IMPACT OF SELF-EFFICACY, PSYCHOLOGICAL CLIMATE AND AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT ON GENERATION Z EMPLOYEES' WORK PERFORMANCE IN A SELECTED LARGE – SCALE FOOD MANUFACTURING COMPANY

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## Abstract

Employee work performance is a key factor for organizational success, especially in labour-intensive industries such as food manufacturing in Sri Lanka. However, organizations often face challenges in maintaining consistent performance among Generation Z employees due to their unique attitudes, expectations, and behavioural patterns. This study examines the impact of self-efficacy, psychological climate, and affective commitment on the work performance of Generation Z employees in a selected large-scale food manufacturing company in Sri Lanka. A quantitative research approach was used, and primary data were collected from 88 Generation Z employees through a structured questionnaire using simple random sampling. The data were analyzed using SPSS version 27 with descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, validity testing, and regression analysis. The findings reveal that self-efficacy has a significant positive impact on work performance, while psychological climate and affective commitment have no significant impact. The study highlights the importance of strengthening individual psychological capabilities and provides practical implications for HR managers to design training, mentoring, and development strategies to enhance Generation Z employee performance.

**Keywords:** Work Performance, Self-Efficacy, Psychological Climate, Affective Commitment

## Introduction

In the current competitive and dynamic business environment, it has become a necessity for organizations to improve the productivity and performance of employees in order to sustain a competitive advantage (Prasetya & Kato, 2021). Employee work performance has emerged as an important factor for the success of organizations, as it directly affects productivity, quality of output, efficiency, and profitability (Sonnentag & Frese, 2002). Employee performance is

especially important in labour-intensive sectors such as food manufacturing, as the success of the business largely depends on the effective contribution of employees (Karunaratne & Dharmasiri, 2022). The food manufacturing industry in Sri Lanka makes a significant contribution to the country's economic development (Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 2023). However, the industry faces challenges in ensuring that the required performance levels are met by the younger generation of employees, particularly those belonging to Generation Z.

The employees belonging to Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012 (Schroth, 2019), form a rapidly increasing part of the country's workforce. These employees have different work values from the previous generations, such as higher expectations related to flexibility, autonomy, career development, and work-life balance (Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021). As a result, performance management of these employees has become a significant concern for organizations (Chillakuri, 2020).

Previous research was primarily conducted on organizational-level predictors of employee performance, such as compensation, training, and supervision (Wijesinghe & Galahitiyawe, 2021). Nevertheless, little emphasis has been placed on individual psychological variables such as self-efficacy, psychological climate, and affective commitment in the Sri Lankan setting (Perera & Weerakkody, 2023). Thus, this research study proposes to examine the effect of these psychological variables on the work performance of Generation Z employees in a large-scale food manufacturing company in Sri Lanka. Work performance of employees has a direct impact on the productivity, service quality, and competitiveness of organizations (Ariyasinghe & Selvaratnam, 2022). It has become increasingly difficult to sustain high levels of work performance in the food manufacturing sector of Sri Lanka due to the increasing number of Generation Z employees (Fernando & Sivalogathan, 2023).

Globally, the issue of employee disengagement has been identified as a concern (Gallup, 2022). Research has identified that younger employees are more likely to display higher turnover intentions and lower emotional commitment to the organization compared to previous generations (Lyons & Kuron, 2014). Although the significance of understanding the performance of Generation Z employees is important, little research has been done in the Sri Lankan manufacturing sector to explore the impact of individual antecedents on their performance (Jayawardana & Opatha, 2024).

Therefore, this study attempts to answer the following research problem: What is the impact of self-efficacy, psychological climate and affective commitment on Generation Z employees' work

performance in a selected large-scale food manufacturing company in Sri Lanka?

The objectives of this study are as follows,

To assess the impact of self-efficacy on Generation Z employees' work performance,

To assess the impact of psychological climate on Generation Z employees' work performance,

To assess the impact of affective commitment on Generation Z employees' work performance.

This study is imperative because it addresses the burning need to identify the true factors that influence the work performance of Generation Z in the food manufacturing industry in Sri Lanka, an industry that is obviously dependent on a stable, committed, and efficient workforce. Nevertheless, despite the industry's 3 major contributions to the country's GDP and employment, companies are now facing challenges with the poor commitment, engagement, and performance of the younger workforce. Nevertheless, research on the psychological aspects that affect these outcomes is still unexplored in the region by examining affective commitment, psychological climate, and self-efficacy, and this study will give a better insight into the Gen Z workforce's perception and response to the workplace. This outcome will help companies develop evidence-based HR strategies, build a positive work environment, and boost employee retention and motivation. This will improve worker stability, productivity, and overall competitiveness in one of Sri Lanka's most important industries.

The objective of this research is to explore the impact of affective commitment, psychological climate, and self-efficacy on the work performance of Generation Z employees in a specific large-scale food manufacturing company in Sri Lanka. Employees belonging to Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012, and currently working in operational and administrative capacities, constitute the population of interest. To ensure a comprehensive analysis and relevance, this research is limited to a specific organizational setting in the food manufacturing industry. Millennials and Generation X are just a few

examples of generational groups, as well as other industries. The research is focused on the impact of the three independent variables on work performance, as measured by standardized scales. It is expected that the findings of this research would provide insight into similar large-scale manufacturing settings in Sri Lanka.

## **Literature Review**

### **Work Performance**

Work performance is a critical factor in determining organizational effectiveness and success." It is the behaviour and activities of people in their organization that help in achieving organizational goals" (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997). Employee performance is a critical factor in organizational performance because it affects organizational productivity, quality, and competitiveness. "Work performance is a multidimensional concept consisting of task performance, contextual performance, and counterproductive work behaviour" (Koopmans et al., 2011). "Task performance involves performing assigned job tasks effectively and meeting performance standards." "Contextual performance involves voluntary behaviour in support of the organizational context, such as helping others, getting along with others, and organizational citizenship behaviour" (Organ, 1998). "Counterproductive work behaviour refers to negative work behaviour that interferes with organizational productivity and performance, such as complaining" (Koopmans et al., 2013). In this study, work performance of Generation Z employees in a large-scale food manufacturing company in Sri Lanka is measured using standardized scales to determine the psychological factors influencing their work performance because Generation Z employees are different in their work values and motivation compared to earlier generations.

#### *Self-Efficacy*

Self-efficacy is the "degree to which a person believes in his or her ability to perform the task" (Bandura, 1997). It is an essential psychological factor that influences the behaviour, motivation, and performance of the employees. Individuals with high self-efficacy demonstrate more confidence, flexibility, persistence, and problem-solving skills. They

are more likely to set high goals and remain motivated, even under high pressure (Luthans et al., 2007). In this study, self-efficacy was found to be a major factor that influences the work performance of Generation Z employees working in a large-scale food manufacturing industry in Sri Lanka. Other research has also revealed that the work performance of the employees with high self-efficacy is more effective, and they are more flexible to work in a changing environment (Cherian & Jacob, 2013).

### **Psychological Climate**

Psychological climate is the employees' perception and interpretation of their work environment, including factors such as supervisory support, recognition, participation, teamwork, autonomy, and workload (Parker et al., 2003). It is the personal meaning that employees assign to the organization's policies, practices, and procedures, which may affect their motivation, job satisfaction, and work-related behaviour (Brown & Leigh, 1996). A positive psychological climate will generally motivate employees to feel valued, supported, and motivated, which may improve their level of engagement and productivity. When employees feel that they have a supportive work environment, they are likely to develop a positive attitude towards their job roles and perform better. But the degree to which psychological climate affects work performance may differ among various generations of employees (Clissold, 2017).

### **Affective Commitment**

Affective commitment is the emotional attachment, identification, and involvement that employees experience towards their organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Employees who experience high levels of affective commitment feel committed to the organization because of their own desires and not because of any external pressures or costs associated with leaving the organization. This emotional attachment enables employees to make significant efforts towards the achievement of organizational goals and also increases their willingness to go beyond their job descriptions (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). Previous research has shown that affective commitment is positively related to

organizational outcomes such as increased job satisfaction, decreased turnover intention, and enhanced work performance (Rhoades et al., 2001). In an organizational context, employees who are emotionally committed to the organization are more likely to align their personal goals with organizational goals and also tend to be more dedicated and involved in their work activities.

## **Generation Z Employees**

Generation Z employees, born between the years 1997 and 2012, are bringing different work expectations and work values to the workplace. Generation Z is more focused on work-life balance, personal development, and doing meaningful work, unlike previous generations, which focused more on work progression. Generation Z is also more focused on organizations with high ethical standards, social responsibility, and a favourable working environment. Generation Z employees are also familiar with digital communication tools, flexible work arrangements, and training programs, as well as digital learning systems. Thus, organizations should adopt work practices that suit Generation Z employees' expectations, which is essential for enhancing employee motivation, productivity, and organizational performance.

## **Hypotheses and Conceptual Framework**

### **Impact of Self-Efficacy on Work Performance**

Self-efficacy has been widely recognized as an important psychological aspect that affects the behaviour of employees in the workplace. According to Bandura (1997), employees who have high self-efficacy are likely to show higher levels of confidence and persistence in performing tasks successfully. Employees who have faith in their ability to perform work-related tasks are more likely to set high goals and work harder to attain organizational goals. Previous studies have recognized a positive relationship between self-efficacy and the work performance of employees. Employees who have higher self-efficacy are likely to perform their work roles

more effectively. Hence, it can be hypothesized that:

H1: Self-efficacy positively impacts the work performance of Generation Z employees.

### *Impact of Psychological Climate on Work Performance*

Psychological climate is the perception of employees about their work environment and the interpretation they give to the practices and procedures of the organization (James & James, 1989). A supportive and positive psychological climate will help in enhancing employee motivation, participation, and job satisfaction, which may ultimately lead to improved performance outcomes. Employees who view their work environment as supportive and participative are likely to exhibit proactive behaviour and put extra effort into their job roles. Thus, a favourable psychological climate is expected to have a positive impact on employee work performance. Hence, it can be hypothesized that:

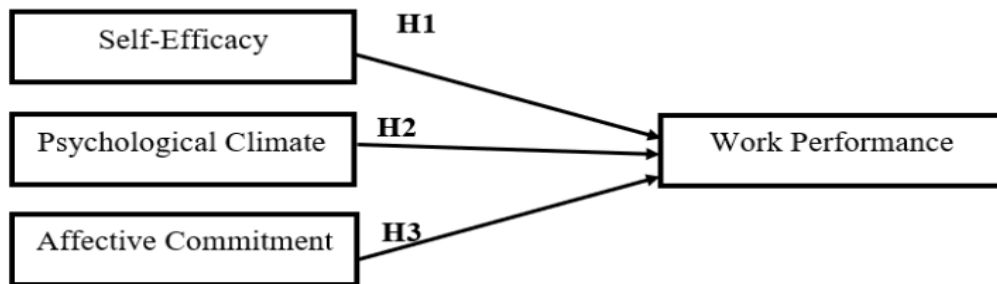
H2: Psychological climate positively impacts the work performance of Generation Z employees

### **Impact of Affective Commitment on Work Performance**

Affective commitment is the employees' emotional tie to the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Employees who have high affective commitment are likely to feel a sense of identification with the organization's goals and values, and they are more likely to be willing to put in extra effort in their job roles. From previous studies, it has been shown that employees who are emotionally committed to their organization are more likely to display positive behaviours in the workplace and have better work performance. Hence, it can be hypothesized that:

H3: Affective commitment positively impacts the work performance of Generation Z employees.

The relationships discussed above are graphically represented in Figure 1



Source: Survey data (2025)  
Figure 01: Conceptual Framework

## Methodology

This research used a quantitative research methodology to investigate the effect of self-efficacy, psychological climate, and affective commitment on the work performance of Generation Z employees in a selected large-scale food manufacturing company in Sri Lanka. As the aim of the research was to validate the relationships between the identified independent variables and the dependent variable, the research can be classified as explanatory research. A deductive research approach was used in this research to validate the hypotheses developed based on the existing theoretical and empirical literature.

The research was conducted as a cross-sectional field study where data was collected from the respondents at a single point in time without manipulating any variables. Thus, the researcher's intervention was minimal, and the research

was conducted in a natural organizational context.

The target population for this research included Generation Z employees in a selected large-scale food manufacturing company in Sri Lanka. Employees born between 1997 and 2012

were identified as Generation Z participants. Because of time and resource

limitations, a sample was selected from the identified population.

A simple random sampling method was employed to give every individual in the population an equal opportunity to be selected for the study. A total of 123 questionnaires were distributed to the employees using an online survey platform. Of the responses collected, 88 valid responses from Generation Z employees were selected for further statistical analysis after the elimination of responses that were not from Generation Z.

## Data Analysis and Results

Quantitative data collected from respondents was analyzed by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27.0. The researcher employed descriptive statistics to analyze the data and results such as mean and standard deviation were reported in tabular form. Reliability and validity tests were also performed to test the internal consistency of the scales used in the study.

The researcher employed a cross-sectional survey method to collect data from respondents using a questionnaire. Of the questionnaires distributed, 88 valid responses from Generation Z employees were shortlisted for further analysis after removing incomplete responses and those who did not belong to Generation Z.

Demographic information included gender, marital status, age group, level of education, and department of employees. These

variables were employed only for the purpose of describing the characteristics of the sample employed in the study. Of the total respondents, 91% were male and 9% were female employees. In regard to marital status, 66% of respondents were single, and 34% were married.

About the distribution of ages, 56% of the respondents fell into the 1997-2000 age group, 27% into the 2001-2004 age group, and 17% into the 2005-2008 age group. Looking at the educational level, 52% of the respondents had Ordinary Level education, while 24% had Advanced Level education. The distribution of the respondents according to their departments showed that the largest number of respondents came from the PMG and Warehouse departments.

### Measurement Model

The measurement model was evaluated with the aim of establishing the validity and reliability of the measures used to capture each construct. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's Test of

Sphericity were used to ensure sampling adequacy and sphericity.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measures for self-efficacy (0.850), psychological climate (0.722), affective commitment (0.898), and work performance (0.748) were above the recommended level of 0.5, establishing adequate sampling for factor analysis. Furthermore, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant at  $p < 0.001$ , establishing suitability for exploratory factor analysis.

To ensure the reliability of the measurement, scales used in the study, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of internal consistency was used. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for self-efficacy (0.865), psychological climate (0.773), affective commitment (0.932) and work performance (0.856) were above the acceptable level of 0.70, which indicated strong internal consistency of the measurement items.

Thus, the findings have confirmed that the measurement model used in this study was valid and reliable for further statistical analysis.

**Table 1: Summary of validity and reliability statistics table**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>No. Of Items</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>KMO</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
<b>Self-Efficacy</b>	<b>09</b>	<b>0.865</b>	<b>0.850</b>	<b>&lt;.001</b>
<b>Psychological Climate</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0.773</b>	<b>0.722</b>	<b>&lt;.001</b>
<b>Affective Commitment</b>	<b>06</b>	<b>0.932</b>	<b>0.898</b>	<b>&lt;.001</b>
<b>Work Performance</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>0.794</b>	<b>0.748</b>	<b>&lt;.001</b>

*Source: Survey data (2025)*

From the above table, the methods used to measure Self-Efficacy, Psychological Climate, Affective Commitment and Work Performance were reliable in the context of the present study. All the variables were above the acceptable level of reliability of 0.7. The Cronbach's Alpha reliability test result for Self-Efficacy was 0.865, Psychological Climate was 0.773, Affective Commitment was 0.932, and

Work Performance was 0.794. This indicates that the internal reliability of all the instruments is satisfactory. Therefore, all the instruments have a high level of internal consistency reliability. To ensure the adequacy of the sample for factor analysis, the KMO value should be above 0.7 and the significance value should be less than 0.05. From the above results, it is clear that all the variables have

KMO values above 0.7 and significance values less than 0.05, which indicate that the correlation among the variables is significant and the adequacy of the sample is significant to proceed with the study.

### Structural Model

The aim of implementing the structural model is to determine the Pearson correlation coefficients calculated for self-efficacy, psychological climate, and affective commitment with work

performance in order to determine the strength of the relationships between the variables of the study. Correlation analysis was employed to determine the relationship between work performance and the independent variables of the study.

Based on the findings, self-efficacy was found to have a positive relationship with work performance among employees. In a similar manner, psychological climate and affective commitment were also found to have a positive relationship with work performance among Generation Z employees. The values obtained from the correlation analysis were within the acceptable confidence interval, and this suggests that the chosen psychological variables are related to employee performance within the chosen organizational setting.

Linear regression analysis was employed to test the hypotheses presented for the analysis of the impact of one variable on another variable. Based on the information presented, regression analysis was employed to test the hypotheses presented in the current study.

The findings from the regression analysis showed that self-efficacy positively affects the work performance of Generation Z employees. Nevertheless, psychological climate and affective commitment failed to show statistically significant results in terms of their impact on work performance in the chosen large-scale food manufacturing company.

Thus, based on the findings from the regression analysis, the first hypothesis (H1) was accepted, and the second (H2) and third (H3) hypotheses were rejected. The results from the structural model analysis generally imply that among the chosen psychological factors, self-efficacy has a more significant influence on the work performance of Generation Z employees.

H1: Self-efficacy positively impacts the work performance of Generation Z employees.

**Table 2: Regression Analysis Results – Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Sig.
1	0.264a	0.070	0.35696	.020

*Source: Survey data (2025)*

Table 2 presents the R and R Square values of the research model. The R-value is 0.264, which shows a positive relationship between self-efficacy and work performance of Generation Z employees. The R Square value is 0.070, which shows that self-efficacy can explain 7% of the variation in work

performance, and the significance value is 0.020, which is less than 0.05. Hence, it is statistically significant, and the first hypothesis (H1) is accepted.

H2: Psychological climate positively impacts the work performance of Generation Z employees.

Table 3: Regression Analysis Results – Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Sig.
1	0.221a	0.049	0.36092	.053

Source: Survey data (2025)

Table 3 presents the R and R Square values of the research model. The R-value is 0.221, which shows a weak positive correlation between psychological climate and the work performance of Generation Z employees. The R Square value is 0.049, which means that psychological climate accounts for only 4.9% of the variation in work performance. The significance value is 0.053, which is greater

than 0.05. Hence, the effect is not statistically significant, and the second hypothesis (H2) is rejected.

H3: Affective commitment positively impacts the work performance of Generation Z employees.

Table 4: Regression Analysis Results – Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Sig.
1	0.219a	0.048	0.36108	.055

Source: Survey data (2025)

Table 4 presents the R and R Square values of the research model. The R-value is 0.219, which shows that there is a weak positive correlation between affective commitment and work performance of Generation Z employees. The R Square value is 0.048, which indicates that affective commitment accounts for only 4.8% of the variation in work performance. The significance value is 0.055, which is greater than 0.05. Hence, it is not statistically significant, and the third hypothesis (H3) is rejected.

### Discussion of the Findings

In this current study demonstrated the first hypothesis is the positive impact of self-efficacy on Gen Z employees' work performance (0.264b,  $p=0.020$ ), showing

that employees who believe in their potential perform better at work. These results are consistent with Hadi's (2023) study, which

included 100 employees from manufacturing enterprises in Jakarta and showed that self-efficacy has a positive and significant impact on employee performance. The same results shown in the fast-food sector, where studies on employees in Ipoh, Perak, states that higher level of self-efficacy result in better job satisfaction and performance levels, underscoring the significance of trust in impacting workplace outcomes. the research of 176 managers and 357 non-managerial employees in banking sector in Sri Lanka revealed that self-efficacy is significantly and positively related to employee work performance, implying that employees who trust their ability to organize and carry out work tasks perform better and engage in more extra-role behaviors. As a result, the current study's findings demonstrate that self-efficacy is a strong predictor of employees' work performance.

In this study second hypothesis proposed that psychological climate has a positive impact on Gen Z employees' work

performance. However, the result did not support this relationship. A previous study repeatedly found that the positive impact of psychological climate on employee work performance. For example, a study conducted in Indonesia during the COVID-19 pandemic (N=316) found that the psychological climate had a positive, significant impact on work performance, emphasising its significance in motivation and adaptation to remote work situations (Hadi, 2023). Similarly, Brown and Leigh discovered that employees' judgements of a positive psychological climate increased workplace involvement, effort, and overall performance. Several reasons may have contributed to the current study's divergence from the start; the sample was primarily composed of Generation Z employees in the Sri Lankan food sector, a group recognized for its distinct work standards, preference for flexibility and increased reliance on technology, all of which may influence how they perceive and respond and respond to psychological climate. Further, sector-specific dynamics in this study mainly responded the workflow employees and also a small sample size, and cultural differences could have reduced the observed effect of psychological climate on work performance. this study findings indicate that the impact of psychological climate is context dependent and may differ between generations, industries and cultural situations.

The third hypothesis proposed the impact of affective commitment on Gen Z employees' work performance; however, this impact was not found in the current study. Previous empirical work substantially supports this impact. For example, Gulzar (2020) discovered a substantial positive impact of affective commitment and work performance in a sample of 68 individuals from the communication sector in Saudi Arabia. Similarly, Umezulike et al. (2020) found that in a large-scale quantitative investigation of 528 administrative personnel in Nigerian tertiary institutions, employees with stronger affective commitment performed better. However, in the current study, affective commitment had no significant impact on employee performance. This discrepancy could be attributed to contextual differences such as the Sri Lankan food sector context, this is the psychological factor so that may be impact with country

culture and also small sample size, job type and most importantly, the characteristics of Generation Z employees, who priorities autonomy, rapid advancement, and work-life balance over emotional attachment to the organization. As a results, affective commitment may have a weaker influence in shaping Gen Z employees' performance than in other generational workforces.

### **Theoretical and Practical Implications**

From the findings of this research, it is evident that self-efficacy is one of the key psychological factors that influence the performance of Generation Z employees in their work. Employees who lack confidence in their work may not be able to perform their duties effectively. Thus, improving the self-efficacy of employees can have a positive impact on their performance. From the practical implications of this research, it is evident that organizations should concentrate on building the confidence and capacity of their employees through training and performance initiatives. It is recommended that organizations should develop a conducive work environment that promotes the development of skills and provides avenues for employees to enhance their skills. By adopting proper HR practices, organizations can increase the self-efficacy of employees, which will eventually lead to improved work performance.

### **Limitations**

Although this study offers insightful information about the productivity of Gen Z workers, there are a number of drawbacks that should be noted. First off, the study only looked at Generation Z workers from one organisation, which restricts the findings' applicability to other Sri Lankan businesses, industries, or age groups. A sample of 80 responders was deemed sufficient based on the Morgan table, even though business records showed that there were 100 Generation Z employees. 88 valid replies from verified Generation Z employees were gathered after the online survey was distributed to 125 employees. This reflects a somewhat tiny fraction 45 of the workforce, which may limit the range of opinions represented, even though it exceeded the minimum projected sample. This research focused on only three variables: psychological climate, affective commitment, and self-efficacy. There has been

no consideration for other elements that may impact performance from Generation Z within organizations, such as digital engagement, organisational culture, peer influence, and leadership style. Motivation and self-efficacy were also examined as overall concepts without further consideration of how internal and extrinsic factors might offer greater granularity of insight. While the study makes a valuable contribution to understanding the key drivers of

### **Directions for Future Research**

For the future studies could expand by including other companies in this sector also can take the different sectors (apparel industry) for this study which improving generalisability and allowing for cross context comparison. Additional variables, like leadership style, organisational culture, digital engagement, and peer support, should be included with work performance as mediator and moderator effect that may be provide a more complete picture of the elements influencing Gen Z performance. In addition to questionnaires. qualitative methods such as interviews or focus groups could be utilised to better understand about employees' motivations and attitude and experiences. identifying the extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors that indicate which drives have greater impact on performance.

Generation Z employee performance, the scope of population, sample size, data collection method, the selection of variables, and contextual factors suggest that the results should be interpreted with caution. The limitations identified in this research provide an opportunity for future research to develop a more comprehensive and generalizable view of Generation Z's performance in diverse organizational settings.

### **Conclusion**

The present study was carried out to examine the effect of self-efficacy, psychological climate, and affective commitment on the work performance of Generation Z employees. Accordingly, the researcher formulated hypotheses to fulfil the research objectives based on the literature review. Hypotheses were tested through the collection of primary data using a structured online questionnaire, and the deductive approach was mainly used. The data set was processed using SPSS based on 88 valid responses. Correlation analysis was employed to explore the relationship between variables, and regression analysis was performed to test the effect of independent variables on work performance. Work performance was found to be significantly and positively affected by self-efficacy, but psychological climate and affective commitment had insignificant effects. Hence, the first hypothesis was accepted, and the second and third hypotheses were rejected.

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