

THE INFLUENCE OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AMONG GENERATION Z EMPLOYEES IN MADIUN CITY

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ABSTRACT

Generation Z, individuals born between 1997 and 2012, are currently in their productive age range, particularly in Madiun City. Generation Z is known as the digital native generation, having grown up with the development of technology, the internet, and social media. Therefore, the researcher chose Generation Z as the research object. This study used a sample of 384 respondents from Generation Z employees in Madiun City, using proportional sampling. The data analysis technique used Multiple Linear Regression. Based on the results of data processing and hypothesis testing, the four hypotheses in this study, which include the influence of work-life balance and perceived organizational support on employee performance, were tested. The results showed that work-life balance has a significant positive effect on employee performance. Perceived organizational support has a positive and significant effect on employee performance.
Keyword: Work-Life Balance, Perceived Organizational Support, Employee Engagement

A. INTRODUCTION

Currently, Indonesia is entering a demographic bonus era, where the majority of the productive-age population is dominated by Generation Z. This phenomenon has a significant impact on the world of work. Generation Z is known as a tech-savvy generation, quick to adapt, and having high expectations for work flexibility, work-life balance, and meaningful work (Sakitri, 2020).

Generation Z, born between mid-1997 and early 2012, is now starting to dominate the labor market (Fotaleno & Batubara, 2024). They grew up with digital technology, have broad access to information, and are used to rapid change. Unlike previous generations, Generation Z tends to prefer a work

environment that is flexible, meaningful, and aligned with their personal values. They are also more vocal in expressing their needs and expectations regarding their jobs (Ekasani *et al.*, 2024)

A current issue is the low level of employee engagement among Generation Z, including in Madiun City. As Gen Z begins to dominate the workforce, they often show lower engagement with their jobs compared to previous generations. In Madiun City, this can be seen in the high number of young employees who change jobs in a short period, the lack of emotional attachment to their companies, and the tendency to look for more flexible jobs that match their personal values. Work environments that feel monotonous, lack of appreciation, limited opportunities for growth, and job demands that do not match expectations often trigger low engagement among this generation. In addition, Gen Z in Madiun generally expects an open work culture, transparent communication, clear career development opportunities, and meaningful work. When these needs are not met, their level of engagement tends to decrease.

Many Gen Z employees reject rigid and demanding traditional work patterns. They prefer jobs that offer flexible working hours, opportunities for personal growth, and clear boundaries between work time and personal time. When this balance is disrupted, they are more likely to experience stress, burnout, and even decide to resign (Dayanti, 2025). On the other hand, the development of digital technology and remote working systems has created opportunities for Gen Z to achieve a better work-life balance. However, challenges remain, such as unclear boundaries between work and personal time, pressure to always be online, and lack of company support in maintaining the mental health of young employees.

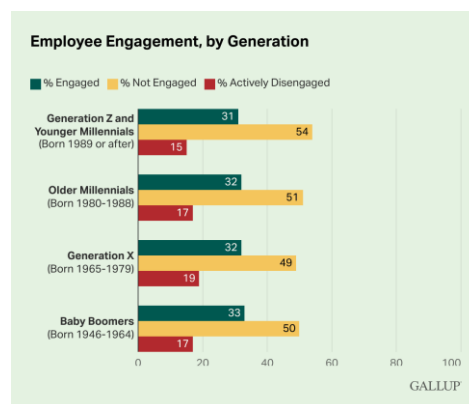


Figure 1 Employee engagement by Generation
Source: Leaderonomics.com, 2025

Figure 1 shows the level of employee engagement based on generation, which is divided into three categories: engaged, not engaged, and actively disengaged. In general, all generations have a higher percentage of employees who are not engaged compared to those who are truly engaged. Generation Z and younger Millennials both have 31 percent of employees categorized as engaged, while the majority, 54 percent, fall into the not engaged category. Older Millennials and Generation X each have 32 percent engaged employees, but Generation X shows the highest level of actively disengaged employees at 19 percent. Meanwhile, Baby Boomers have the highest level of engaged employees compared to other generations, at 33 percent, although their not engaged percentage remains quite high at 50 percent. This data indicates that regardless of generational differences, many employees still do not have strong engagement in their work. Therefore, organizations need to focus on strategies to improve engagement so they can be more effective across all age groups.

The phenomenon of low engagement among Generation Z employees reflects a shift in values, orientation, and expectations toward the workplace. Employee engagement is a psychological condition in which employees feel energized, dedicated, and fully absorbed in their work (Amaria et al., 2025). Wahyudi (2025) emphasizes that engagement will arise when employees feel psychologically safe and find meaning in their work, two things that are often not fulfilled for Gen Z employees who work in sectors with rigid structures and limited innovation.

Generation Z grew up in a fast-paced and open digital era, so they value work flexibility, work-life balance, and emotional support from the organization, known as perceived organizational support, more than blind loyalty to a company. They want jobs that not only provide income, but also offer meaning, opportunities for growth, and a sense of appreciation. Low engagement among Generation Z can also be linked to increasing psychological pressure and burnout caused by modern work styles that are always online, have high targets, and lack empathetic communication from supervisors (Syahwa et al., 2025). If companies fail to understand the needs of this generation, they are likely to become bored quickly, lose motivation, and eventually change jobs.

Many Gen Z employees reject rigid and demanding traditional work patterns (Mawabagja et al., 2025). They tend to look for jobs that offer flexible working hours, opportunities for personal growth, and clear boundaries between working time and personal time (Virgiawan & Kusmayadi, 2024). If that balance is disrupted, they are more likely to experience stress, burnout, and eventually decide to resign. On the other hand, the development of digital technology and remote working systems has created opportunities for Gen Z to achieve a more ideal work-life balance. However, challenges still exist, such as unclear boundaries between working hours and personal time, pressure to always be online, and a lack of company support in maintaining the mental health of young employees.

Work-life balance is a condition in which individuals are able to balance work demands and personal life in a harmonious way, without one aspect disturbing or sacrificing the other (Amaria et al., 2025). This balance is important so that employees do not experience exhaustion, prolonged stress, or decreased productivity (Kabir & Rahman, 2019). Currently, work-life balance between personal and professional life has become one of the main factors that determine employee satisfaction and loyalty to the organization (Adhitya et al., 2024). Generation Z and Millennials do not only look for jobs that offer high salaries, but also work environments that support well-being, flexibility, and opportunities for personal development (Nugroho et al., 2025). This shows that the balance between work and personal life has become an important priority for them. To better understand how these two generations value these factors, the following presents comparative data on job preferences between Generation Z and Millennials:

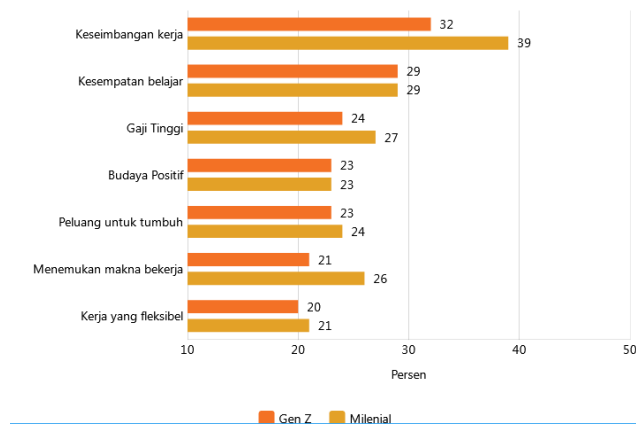


Figure 1 Work Life Balance Gen X and Gen Z
Source: Katadoks.com, 2025

Based on the table above, it can be seen that there are several differences and similarities in job preferences between Generation Z and Millennials. The most prominent factor for both generations is work-life balance. Millennials place this factor as their top priority at 39 percent, while Gen Z rates it at 32 percent. This shows that although both generations value a balance between work and personal life, Millennials tend to emphasize this aspect more strongly. Next, learning opportunities are an important factor for both generations, with the same percentage of 29 percent. This indicates that both Gen Z and Millennials have a strong desire to continuously grow and improve their skills through work experience. High salary is also a significant consideration, especially for Millennials at 27 percent, slightly higher than Gen Z at 24 percent. Meanwhile, positive work culture and opportunities for growth show the same percentage for both generations, at 23 percent, indicating that a healthy work environment and career opportunities remain key attractions. Interestingly, in terms of finding meaning in work, Millennials at 26 percent place more importance on purpose and values in their jobs compared to Gen Z at 21 percent. As for flexible work, both generations rate it almost equally, with Gen Z at 20 percent and Millennials at 21 percent.

Work-life balance plays an important role in building sustainable employee engagement (Mutiar et al., 2025). Employees who are able to maintain a balance between work demands and personal needs tend to have a higher level of engagement with the organization (Ratnasari et al., 2023). Good work-life balance not only improves employees' psychological well-being, but also strengthens their emotional commitment to achieving company goals (Fabanyo et al., 2023). According to Azkiya et al. (2024), work-life balance implemented through flexible working hours, organizational support, and a healthy work environment can encourage employees' emotional and cognitive involvement in their work. In addition to work-life balance, perceived organizational support is another important factor in employee engagement.

Perceived organizational support, or POS, refers to the extent to which employees feel that the organization they work for values their contributions and cares about their well-being. Simangunsong (2023) explained when an organization pays attention to employees' needs, such as career development opportunities, well-being, and recognition of achievements, it can increase employees' intrinsic motivation and work enthusiasm. Perceived organizational support also plays an important role in creating a positive work environment, which directly contributes to higher employee engagement.

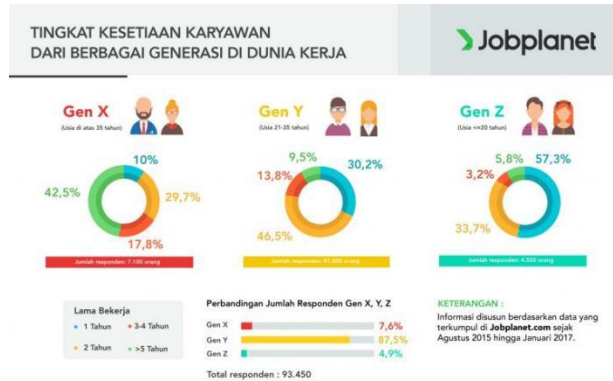


Figure 3 3 Perceived organizational support between Gen
Source: jobplanet.com, 2025

Based on the figure above, there are differences in employee loyalty levels across generations in the workplace. Generation X shows relatively high loyalty, with most respondents having worked for more than five years. Meanwhile, Generation Y or Millennials tend to change jobs more quickly, with the largest proportion having a work period of 1 to 3 years. This trend is even clearer among Generation Z, who have recently entered the workforce, where the majority, 57.3 percent, have worked for less than one year. The data shows that the younger the generation, the lower their level of loyalty or length of stay in one organization. This reflects changes in values and expectations toward the workplace, especially among Generation Z, who prioritize flexibility, work-life balance, and perceived organizational support over long-term loyalty alone. Therefore, companies need to understand the characteristics of this younger generation in order to create relevant strategies to improve employee engagement and retain top talent in the modern era.

The relationship between perceived organizational support and employee engagement shows that the support employees feel from their organization plays an important role in building strong work engagement (Anwar & Yuniasanti, 2024). According to Azkiya et al. (2024), perceived organizational support directly contributes to increasing employee engagement through feelings of being valued and recognized, which strengthen the emotional connection between employees

and the organization. In the context of younger generations such as Generation Z, organizational support becomes a very important factor because they have high expectations for a work environment that is inclusive, supportive, and provides opportunities for personal and professional growth (Sabid & Fitrianingrum, 2025). Therefore, the higher employees' perception of organizational support, the higher their level of engagement in their work. In the long term, this will have a positive impact on performance and loyalty.

B. METHOD

Madiun City was chosen as the study location because it is considered representative in reflecting the dynamics of Generation Z, where work-life balance and perceived organizational support have the potential to influence employee engagement among Generation Z in Madiun City. This study used a quantitative approach. The population consisted of all Generation Z individuals in Madiun City. The exact number of Generation Z in the area could not be determined. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, with a total sample of 384 respondents. The questionnaire was developed using a Likert scale with a scoring system, and the data were analyzed using SPSS.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The partial test is a statistical test used to examine a regression coefficient to determine whether one independent variable individually influences the dependent variable (Y) (Ghozali, 2018). Below is the result:

Table 1 Partial t-Test Results (t-Test)					
Coefficients ^a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	20,423	1,435		14,227	,000
X1	,214	,068	,158	3,168	,002
X2	,348	,065	,267	5,342	,000
a. Dependent Variable: Y					
Source: <i>Output SPSS,2025</i>					

The criteria for the t-test are as follows: H_0 is accepted if t calculated is less than t table, and H_0 is rejected if t calculated is greater than or equal to t table. The critical value is determined at a significance level of 5 percent. To obtain the t table value, a two-tailed test is used with a significance level of 0.05 and degrees of freedom calculated as n minus k minus 1, which is $384 - 3 - 1$, resulting in 378. The t table value is 1.966. Based on the results of the t-test using the SPSS program, the findings are as follows:

1. The Effect of Work-Life Balance on Employee Engagement among Generation Z Employees in Madiun City

The test results in Table 4.20 show that the t calculated value is 3.168, which is greater than the t table value of 1.966, and the significance value is 0.002, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted. This means the hypothesis is supported. In other words, work-life balance has a significant effect on employee engagement among Generation Z employees in Madiun City.

2. The Effect of Perceived Organizational Support on Employee Engagement among Generation Z Employees in Madiun City

The test results in Table 4.20 show that the t calculated value is 5.342, which is greater than the t table value of 1.966, and the significance value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, H_0 is rejected and H_2 is accepted. This means the hypothesis is supported. In other words, perceived organizational support has a significant effect on employee engagement among Generation Z employees in Madiun City.

D. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of data analysis and hypothesis testing conducted to examine the four hypotheses in this study, which include the effect of work-life balance and perceived organizational support on employee performance, the findings show that work-life balance has a positive and significant effect on employee performance among Generation Z employees in

Madiun City. Perceived organizational support also has a positive and significant effect on employee performance among Generation Z employees in Madiun City.

E. SUGGESTIONS

Future researchers are recommended to add other variables such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, or leadership style, and to expand the research area so that the results become more comprehensive and can be compared with findings at the regional level.

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