

## **Exploring the Relationship Between Job Satisfaction and Work Engagement Among Generation Z Employees**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Generation Z is a workforce group that is currently beginning to dominate the workplace and exhibits characteristics that differ from previous generations, making work engagement an important aspect to consider. One factor believed to be associated with work engagement is job satisfaction. This study aims to examine the relationship between job satisfaction and work engagement among Generation Z. The study employs a quantitative approach with a correlational design. The sample consists of 101 Generation Z employees selected using convenience sampling. Data collection utilized job satisfaction and work engagement scales that met validity and reliability criteria. Data analysis was performed using Pearson's Product-Moment correlation. The results indicate a positive and significant relationship between job satisfaction and work engagement among Generation Z, with a correlation coefficient of 0.582 and a significance level of less than 0.001. These findings suggest that the higher an individual's perceived job satisfaction, the higher their work engagement. These findings underscore the importance of job satisfaction as a key factor in enhancing work engagement among Generation Z.

### **Introduction**

Developments in the workplace in the digital age require organizations to focus not only on employee competencies but also on psychological factors that can support organizational productivity and success. Human resources are a critical asset that determines an organization's success, as they serve as the primary drivers in achieving the company's goals (Putra, 2024). Therefore, organizations need to consider various psychological factors that can enhance employee performance quality, one of which is work engagement. Work engagement is a positive psychological state characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption in one's work (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). Employees with high work engagement tend to demonstrate enthusiasm, commitment, and resilience in facing job

demands, thereby enabling them to make optimal contributions to the organization. Conversely, low work engagement can lead to decreased motivation, productivity, and employee involvement in their work.

The phenomenon of work engagement is becoming increasingly important to study among Generation Z, who are now beginning to dominate the workforce. Generation Z consists of individuals born between 1997 and 2012 who grew up in an environment closely intertwined with the development of digital technology (Francis & Hoefel, 2018). According to data from the Central Statistics Agency, Generation Z is the largest demographic group in Indonesia, numbering 74.93 million people—approximately 27.94% of the total population. The characteristics of this generation differ from previous generations as they prioritize work flexibility, opportunities for self-development, work-life balance, and the meaningfulness of work (Nugroho et al., 2025). On the other hand, these characteristics also lead Generation Z to have higher expectations regarding the work environment. If these needs are not met, they tend to experience a decline in motivation, job satisfaction, and commitment to their work.

Various studies and surveys indicate that Generation Z's work engagement remains a challenge for organizations. Gallup survey data shows that only about 35% of Generation Z feel actively engaged in their work (Harter, 2024). Other findings indicate that only about 32% of Generation Z employees feel truly engaged and have a desire to contribute more to their work (Widodo et al., 2025). Additionally, Deloitte (2022) found that approximately 40% of Generation Z plan to leave their jobs within two years if working conditions do not align with their needs and expectations. Data from Job Planet (2017) also indicates that the majority of Generation Z employees have work engagement of less than one year. This phenomenon suggests a trend of low work engagement among Generation Z, which has the potential to lead to “quiet quitting”—a condition where employees work only to fulfill their obligations without demonstrating optimal dedication and engagement (Jahrodin & Setiasih, 2025).

One factor believed to play a significant role in enhancing work engagement is job satisfaction. Job satisfaction refers to an individual's positive evaluation of their work, which arises when the job meets the needs, expectations, and values that the individual considers important (Spector, 1997). Employees who are satisfied with their work tend to exhibit positive attitudes, high work enthusiasm, and greater engagement in work activities. Conversely, job dissatisfaction can lower motivation and reduce an individual's emotional attachment to their work. Bakker & Demerouti (2008) state that the relationship between job satisfaction and work engagement can be explained through the Job Demands-Resources Theory (JD-R Theory). This theory explains that job resources—such as supervisor support, opportunities for self-development, good interpersonal relationships, a fair reward system, and a supportive work environment—can enhance motivation and generate positive work experiences. These positive experiences increase job satisfaction and ultimately foster work engagement.

The relationship between job satisfaction and work engagement has been demonstrated by various previous studies. Saputra & Bantam (2023) found a strong positive relationship between job satisfaction and work engagement among employees at PT KI in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. A study by Affandi et al. (2024) also indicated that job satisfaction significantly influences work engagement among manufacturing industry employees in Karawang. Similar findings were reported by Stella et al. (2024) and Atthahirah & Yusra (2025), who showed that job satisfaction has a positive and significant influence on work engagement. These research results indicate that job satisfaction is one of the key factors contributing to increased employee work engagement.

Nevertheless, most previous studies were conducted on the general employee population or in specific industrial sectors with diverse age ranges. Research specifically examining the relationship between job satisfaction and work engagement among Generation Z remains relatively limited. Yet, Generation Z possesses distinct characteristics, needs, and work expectations compared to previous generations. Furthermore, phenomena such as low work engagement, high turnover intentions, and the emergence of “quiet quitting” behavior indicate that work engagement among Generation Z remains an issue requiring attention. These conditions highlight a research gap that needs to be addressed through studies focused on Generation Z as the dominant workforce in the digital era.

Based on the above, this study was conducted to examine the relationship between job satisfaction and work engagement among Generation Z. The novelty of this study lies in its specific focus on Generation Z as the research subject. The research results are expected to contribute to the development of Industrial and Organizational Psychology, particularly in understanding the factors influencing work engagement among Generation Z, and to serve as a foundation for organizations in developing human resource management strategies aligned with the characteristics of this generation.

## Method

This study employs a quantitative approach using a correlational method to examine the relationship between job satisfaction and work engagement among Generation Z. The independent variable in this study is job satisfaction, while the dependent variable is work engagement. The study was conducted using a survey method with a questionnaire distributed online to respondents who met the study criteria. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to obtain data objectively and test the relationship between variables through statistical analysis.

The participants in this study were Generation Z employees working in the Greater Jakarta area. Participant criteria included individuals born between 1997 and 2012, who were active employees, and had a minimum of one year of service at the same workplace. The sampling technique used was convenience sampling. The minimum sample size was determined using the Lemeshow formula and resulted in a minimum of 96 respondents. This

study involved 101 respondents who met the research criteria and were willing to participate voluntarily.

Data collection was conducted using two psychological instruments in a five-point Likert scale format, namely strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), somewhat disagree (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5). Job satisfaction was measured using the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) developed by (Spector 1997) and adapted from Aura & Hutahaeon (2025). This instrument consists of 18 items measuring nine aspects of job satisfaction: salary, promotion, leadership or supervision, benefits, company recognition, work procedures, coworkers, nature of work, and communication. Validity test results indicate that all items are valid, with validity coefficients ranging from 0.478 to 0.756. The reliability test yielded a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.913, indicating that the instrument has excellent reliability.

The work engagement variable was measured using the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9) developed by Schaufeli & Bakker (2004). In this study, the researcher used an instrument modified from the scale used by Atthahirah & Yusra (2025). The instrument consists of 10 items measuring three dimensions of work engagement: vigor, dedication, and absorption. The validity test results showed that all items were deemed valid, with validity coefficients ranging from 0.555 to 0.764. The reliability test yielded a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.823, indicating that the instrument has good reliability.

The research procedure began with the selection of the research instrument and the conduct of a pilot test to identify items meeting validity and reliability criteria. Once the instrument was deemed suitable for use, the questionnaire was distributed online via various communication channels to respondents meeting the study's criteria. Before completing the questionnaire, respondents were provided with information regarding the research objectives, data confidentiality, and their voluntary consent to participate. The collected data was then checked for completeness prior to the analysis process.

Data analysis was conducted using JASP software. Before hypothesis testing, assumption tests were performed, including normality and linearity tests. The analysis results showed that the data for both variables were normally distributed ( $p > 0.05$ ) and had a linear relationship ( $p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, hypothesis testing was conducted using Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis to determine the relationship between job satisfaction and work engagement among Generation Z.

## Results

Descriptive analysis in this study was conducted to provide an overview of the characteristics of the data for the job satisfaction and work engagement variables. The results of the analysis show that the work engagement variable has a mean (M) of 39.76, a median of 40.00, and a standard deviation (SD) of 5.129. Meanwhile, the job satisfaction variable had a mean (M) of 66.54, a median of 67.00, and a standard deviation (SD) of 12.080. The descriptive statistics for both variables are presented in Table 1.

Table 1.  
Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

|                  | Mean  | Median | SD     |
|------------------|-------|--------|--------|
| Work Engagement  | 39.76 | 40.00  | 5.129  |
| Job Satisfaction | 66.54 | 67.00  | 12.080 |

Before testing the hypotheses, assumption tests were first conducted, including tests of normality and linearity. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of normality showed that the work engagement variable had a significance value of 0.498 and the job satisfaction variable had a value of 0.904. The significance values for both variables are above 0.05 ( $p > 0.05$ ), so the data can be said to be normally distributed.

Furthermore, the results of the linearity test show a significance value of  $< 0.001$  ( $p < 0.05$ ), indicating that the relationship between job satisfaction and work engagement is linear. The results of the assumption tests are presented in Table 2.

Table 2.  
Assumption Test Results

|                  | Normality Test<br>(Kolmogorov-Smirnov) | Linearity Test<br>(Regression) |
|------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Work Engagement  | 0.498                                  | $<.001$                        |
| Job Satisfaction | 0.904                                  |                                |
| Description      | Normal Data                            | Linear Data                    |

Based on the results of the assumption tests, the research data met the assumptions of normality and linearity, allowing the hypothesis to be tested using Pearson's product-moment correlation analysis.

Hypothesis testing was performed using Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis to determine the relationship between job satisfaction and work engagement among Generation Z. The analysis results showed a correlation coefficient of  $r = 0.582$  with a significance level of  $p < 0.001$ . These results indicate a significant positive relationship between job satisfaction and work engagement. The results of the hypothesis testing are presented in Table 3.

Table 3.  
Pearson's Correlation Test

| Variable                      |             | Total X | Total Y |
|-------------------------------|-------------|---------|---------|
| 1. Total X (Job Satisfaction) | Pearson's r | -       |         |
|                               | p-value     | -       |         |
| 2. Total Y (Work Engagement)  | Pearson's r | 0.582   | -       |
|                               | p-value     | $<.001$ | -       |

The positive correlation coefficient indicates that the higher the job satisfaction among Generation Z employees, the higher their work engagement. Thus, the research

hypothesis stating that there is a positive relationship between job satisfaction and work engagement among Generation Z is accepted.

## Discussion

Based on the research findings, it was found that the levels of job satisfaction and work engagement among the respondents in this study fell into the high category. These results indicate that the majority of Generation Z participants in this study hold a positive view of their jobs and demonstrate a high level of engagement in carrying out their work tasks and responsibilities. The high level of job satisfaction suggests that the respondents feel the various aspects of their jobs align with their needs and expectations. Meanwhile, high work engagement indicates that the respondents possess enthusiasm, dedication, and strong engagement in performing their work.

The results of the hypothesis test show that there is a positive and significant relationship between job satisfaction and work engagement among Generation Z ( $r = 0.582$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). These results indicate that the higher an individual's perceived job satisfaction, the higher their work engagement. Conversely, the lower the perceived job satisfaction, the lower their work engagement. The moderate correlation coefficient suggests that job satisfaction plays a significant role in enhancing work engagement among Generation Z.

These research findings align with the Job Demands-Resources Theory proposed by Bakker & Demerouti (2008). This theory explains that job resources—such as managerial support, positive work relationships, opportunities for self-development, and a fair reward system—can enhance motivation and positive work experiences. These conditions foster job satisfaction, which ultimately contributes to increased employee work engagement. In other words, individuals who are satisfied with their jobs tend to exhibit higher levels of energy, enthusiasm, and dedication in their work.

The results of this study are also consistent with research conducted by Atthahirah & Yusra (2025), who found that job satisfaction has a positive and significant relationship with work engagement among Generation Z workers. Similar findings were also reported by Affandi et al. (2024), Saputra & Bantam (2023), and Dewinda et al. (2020), indicating that employees with high levels of job satisfaction tend to exhibit higher work engagement. The consistency of these research findings suggests that job satisfaction is a key factor in shaping employee work engagement.

Nevertheless, this study differs from previous research in that it specifically focuses on Generation Z as the subject of study. This focus is crucial given that Generation Z possesses distinct characteristics compared to previous generations, such as a need for work flexibility, opportunities for growth, work-life balance, and a desire to find meaning in their work. Therefore, the findings of this study contribute to enriching the literature on work engagement among Generation Z and demonstrate that job satisfaction is a factor that organizations must consider to enhance work engagement within this generation.



## Conclusion

This study aims to examine the relationship between job satisfaction and work engagement among Generation Z. The results indicate that there is a positive and significant relationship between job satisfaction and work engagement among Generation Z. This study shows that the higher an individual's perceived job satisfaction, the higher their work engagement. These findings reinforce previous research on the importance of job satisfaction in fostering work engagement and provide empirical evidence within the context of Generation Z as a workforce group with distinct characteristics and work-related needs.

Further research is recommended to examine other factors that may influence work engagement among Generation Z, such as work-life balance, organizational support, psychological well-being, and leadership style, by involving a more diverse sample to ensure the research findings have broader generalizability. Practically, organizations need to pay attention to aspects that can enhance job satisfaction, such as a supportive work environment, opportunities for self-development, and a fair reward system, in order to increase the work engagement of Generation Z employees.

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