

WORK-LIFE BALANCE AS A DETERMINANT OF JOB SATISFACTION: A STUDY OF GENERATION Z EMPLOYEES IN BANDUNG

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Abstract: Work-life balance (WLB) plays a vital role in determining job satisfaction, especially for Generation Z employees who highly value flexibility and mental well-being. This research investigates how WLB influences job satisfaction among Gen Z workers in Bandung, Indonesia. The study employed a quantitative design through a survey of 50 participants. Data were processed using SPSS version 26, incorporating descriptive statistics, normality and heteroscedasticity tests, as well as simple linear regression analysis. Results show that respondents perceived relatively high levels of WLB ($M = 21.30$, $SD = 2.14$) and job satisfaction ($M = 43.78$, $SD = 4.09$). The regression results demonstrate a significant positive effect of WLB on job satisfaction ($\beta = 1.182$, $t = 5.437$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, the model accounts for 38.1% of the variance in job satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.381$), with the F-test indicating overall model significance ($F = 29.561$, $p < 0.001$). These findings highlight the strategic value of developing organizational initiatives that support WLB to boost job satisfaction and improve retention of Gen Z employees.

Keywords: Work-life balance, Job satisfaction, Generation Z, Regression analysis, Bandung

1. Introduction

Significant transformations in the world of work over the past decade have positioned Work-Life Balance (WLB) as a crucial topic in human resource management. Globalization, digitalization, and demographic shifts in the workforce compel organizations to create work environments that promote harmony between professional demands and personal life (ILO, 2021; McKinsey & Company, 2022). WLB is commonly defined as an individual's ability to manage work and personal roles without prolonged conflict (Greenhaus & Allen, 2017).

In the modern era, organizations are expected not only to provide competitive compensation but also to ensure employees' psychological well-being. This is particularly relevant with the increasing participation of Generation Z (Gen Z) in the labor market. Gen Z born between 1997 and 2012 is recognized as a digitally native cohort with distinct expectations compared to previous generations, especially regarding flexibility, work-life balance, and meaningful career paths (Francis & Hoefel, 2018). A global survey by Deloitte (2023) revealed that 46% of Gen Z consider WLB a primary factor in choosing and retaining employment, ranking even higher than financial compensation. This indicates a notable shift in workforce preferences, urging companies to adopt adaptive human resource strategies.

This phenomenon is evident in Indonesia, where Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS, 2023) reports that 27.9% of the workforce consists of Gen Z, with a high concentration in urban centers such as Bandung. As a hub for creative industries, technology, and tourism, Bandung offers dynamic work environments requiring innovation and adaptability, yet it also imposes challenges such as tight deadlines and high performance demands. These pressures may lead to work-family

conflict, reducing work-life balance, job satisfaction, and employee retention (Putra & Yulianti, 2021; Hadi & Widyaningrum, 2022). In this context, WLB becomes a critical factor for sustaining employee well-being and organizational stability.

The connection between work-life balance (WLB) and job satisfaction can be understood through the lens of Role Theory and the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory. According to Role Theory, individuals engage in multiple roles such as employee, family member, and community participant and when these roles are not balanced, it can lead to stress and a decline in job satisfaction (Greenhaus & Allen, 2017). On the other hand, COR Theory (Hobfoll et al., 2018) suggests that people aim to maintain and protect valuable resources like time, energy, and social support. When work demands surpass these resources, it results in stress and lower psychological well-being, ultimately reducing job satisfaction.

Previous empirical studies consistently show a strong positive relationship between WLB and job satisfaction. Kaushik and Guleria (2020), through meta-analysis, confirmed WLB's significant role in enhancing job satisfaction across industries. Similarly, Putra and Yulianti (2021) found that flexible work schedules in Indonesia's hospitality sector increased employee satisfaction. During remote work implementation, Hadi and Widyaningrum (2022) reported that WLB reduced burnout and improved job satisfaction. Recent findings by Hajjar and Sary (2024) highlight WLB's contribution not only to satisfaction but also to loyalty among Indonesian Gen Z employees.

Globally, organizations implementing WLB policies demonstrate 35% higher retention rates compared to those neglecting it (McKinsey & Company, 2022). Moreover, the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2021) emphasized that promoting WLB and flexible arrangements enhances productivity and reduces work-related stress. These insights reinforce that WLB is not merely an individual concern but a strategic imperative for organizational competitiveness.

Despite growing global research, studies in Indonesia remain limited, especially regarding Gen Z's unique characteristics such as strong digital engagement, preference for flexibility, and desire for meaningful work (Hajjar & Sary, 2024). Prior research has predominantly focused on factors such as compensation, organizational commitment, and work climate (Ratnasari et al., 2020; Handriana & Wisandiko, 2017). Consequently, there is a research gap in understanding how WLB influences job satisfaction among Gen Z in contexts characterized by creative and high-pressure work environments, such as Bandung.

The research aims to contribute theoretically by expanding literature on WLB-job satisfaction dynamics among emerging workforce generations in developing economies and practically by informing HR policies related to flexible work schedules, remote work arrangements, and employee well-being programs.

2. Literature Review

Work-Life Balance (WLB)

Work-life balance (WLB) is defined as the capacity of an individual to harmonize work responsibilities with personal life demands, reducing role conflicts and promoting satisfaction across both areas (Greenhaus & Allen, 2017). Modern perspectives extend beyond time allocation, emphasizing the quality of cross-role interactions, which include both conflict dimensions (work-to-family and family-to-work) and positive aspects such as enrichment or facilitation (Wayne et al., 2019). Commonly used measurement dimensions include conflict, enrichment, and perceived balance (Allen et al., 2020; Haar et al., 2014). Post-COVID-19,

WLB has emerged as a strategic issue linked to work flexibility, boundary management, and technological support (Ipsen et al., 2021; Kossek & Allen, 2022).

Theoretical Framework Linking WLB and Job Satisfaction

The connection between work-life balance (WLB) and job satisfaction can be understood through several theoretical perspectives. Role Theory suggests that individuals fulfill multiple roles, and when resources such as time and energy are insufficient, role conflict may occur (Greenhaus & Allen, 2017). Similarly, the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory argues that people aim to protect and acquire valuable resources like time, energy, and social support; maintaining WLB helps minimize stress and promotes greater job satisfaction (Hobfoll et al., 2018). Furthermore, the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model identifies WLB as a personal resource that alleviates burnout and boosts engagement, thereby positively influencing job satisfaction (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Schaufeli, 2017).

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is defined as an individual's affective and evaluative response to their job as a whole or to specific aspects such as pay, coworkers, and work conditions (Judge et al., 2017). Key determinants include flexibility, fairness, organizational support, and WLB (Kaushik & Guleria, 2020; Hadi & Widyaningrum, 2022). Among younger employees, satisfaction is also influenced by generational values, career development opportunities, and life balance (Deloitte, 2023).

Generation Z in the Workforce

Generation Z (born approximately 1997–2012) is characterized as digital natives with unique preferences for flexibility, mental well-being, and meaningful work (Francis & Hoefel, 2018). Global surveys highlight WLB as a top priority for Gen Z when choosing and retaining jobs (Deloitte, 2023). In Indonesia, Gen Z represents a growing portion of the labor force, particularly in creative cities like Bandung, which demand speed, collaboration, and technological adaptation (BPS, 2023; Putra & Yuliati, 2021). Recent studies indicate that WLB positively contributes to Gen Z employees' satisfaction and loyalty (Hajjar & Sary, 2024).

WLB and Job Satisfaction

Over the last ten years, a substantial body of research has consistently demonstrated that work-life balance is positively and significantly associated with job satisfaction. A meta-analysis by Kaushik and Guleria (2020) affirms that WLB influences well-being and satisfaction across industries. Studies in Indonesia reveal that time flexibility, organizational support, and workload management improve WLB perception and job satisfaction (Ratnasari et al., 2020; Hadi & Widyaningrum, 2022). In remote work settings, effective WLB management has proven critical in boosting engagement and retention (ILO, 2021; Ipsen et al., 2021). Specifically for Gen Z, global (Deloitte, 2023) and regional research (Hajjar & Sary, 2024) highlight WLB as a key determinant of satisfaction and loyalty.

Research Gap

Although global literature on WLB and job satisfaction is extensive, studies specifically examining this relationship among Gen Z in Indonesia remain limited. Most local studies focus on compensation, commitment, or multiple generations combined (Ratnasari et al., 2020; Hadi & Widyaningrum, 2022). Furthermore, little research explores the impact of WLB on job

satisfaction among Gen Z in creative sectors, particularly in Bandung. This study addresses this gap by investigating the effect of WLB on job satisfaction among Gen Z employees, providing empirical insights for HR practices tailored to generational preferences.

Hypothesis

Drawing from the theoretical framework and prior research, the study proposes the following hypotheses:

- H1: Work-Life Balance positively and significantly influences Job Satisfaction Generation Z employees in Bandung

3. Method

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative causal approach to examine the effect of Work-Life Balance on job satisfaction among Generation Z employees in Bandung. This approach was chosen for its suitability in explaining cause-effect relationships between variables using numerical data (Sugiyono, 2019).

Population and Sample

The population consists of Generation Z employees (born 1997–2012) working across various sectors in Bandung. A total of 50 respondents were selected using purposive sampling based on the following criteria:

1. Belonging to Generation Z (18–27 years old),
2. Employed in Bandung,
3. Willing to participate in the survey.

Data Collection

Data were collected through an online questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). The instrument measured two key variables:

- Work-Life Balance (X): Items reflecting respondents' ability to balance work and personal life.
- Job Satisfaction (Y): Items capturing overall job satisfaction levels.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS Version 26 through the following steps:

1. Descriptive Analysis to describe general characteristics of the research variables (mean, standard deviation, minimum, maximum).
2. Classical Assumption Tests, including:
 - Normality Test using Kolmogorov–Smirnov
 - Heteroscedasticity Test using Glejser method.
3. Simple Linear Regression to examine the influence of WLB (X) on job satisfaction (Y) using the equation:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X + \varepsilon$$
4. Coefficient of Determination (R^2) to measure the variance in job satisfaction explained by WLB.
5. t-test to assess the partial effect of the independent variable,
6. F-test to confirm overall model significance.

Testing Criteria

Hypotheses were accepted if the $p\text{-value} < 0.05$ at a 95% confidence level, following standard statistical testing procedures.

4. Result and Discussion

Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis was conducted to provide an initial overview of respondents' perceptions regarding the research variables, namely Work-Life Balance (X) and Job Satisfaction (Y). The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Result of Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Minimum	Maksimum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Job Satisfaction	40	50	43.78	4.10
Work-Life Balance	16	25	21.30	2.14

Source : Processed Data, 2025

As shown in Table 1, Job Satisfaction scores range from 40 to 50, with a mean of 43.78 and a standard deviation of 4.09. These results indicate that the job satisfaction level among Gen Z employees participating in this study is relatively high, approaching the maximum possible score of 50. This suggests that, in general, respondents are fairly satisfied with their current job conditions.

For the Work-Life Balance variable, scores range from 16 to 25, with a mean of 21.30 and a standard deviation of 2.14. These findings indicate that respondents perceive their balance between work and personal life as good. The mean value, which is close to the maximum score, suggests that most respondents feel they have a well-managed schedule between work and personal responsibilities. This aligns with the characteristics of Generation Z, who emphasize the importance of flexibility, work-life harmony, and mental well-being (ILO, 2021; McKinsey & Company, 2022).

Classical Assumption Test

Prior to regression analysis, classical assumption tests were conducted to ensure the model satisfies the requirements of linear regression.

Normality Test

Residual normality was tested using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, which produced a significance value of $p = 0.000 (< 0.05)$. From a statistical perspective, this suggests that the residuals deviate slightly from a perfectly normal distribution. Nevertheless, with a sample size of 50 ($n > 30$), the Central Limit Theorem (CLT) asserts that the sampling distribution can be considered approximately normal despite minor irregularities in the original data (Field, 2018). Therefore, the normality assumption is considered practically satisfied, and the analysis can proceed.

Heteroscedasticity Test

The Glejser test yielded a significance value of 0.142 (> 0.05), indicating no evidence of heteroscedasticity in the model. This suggests that the residuals have constant variance (homoscedasticity), thereby fulfilling the assumptions of Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression.

Overall, the classical assumption tests confirm that the regression model meets the necessary criteria for valid statistical inference. Meeting these assumptions strengthens the credibility of subsequent analyses, including simple linear regression and hypothesis testing.

Simple Linear Regression Analysis

Model Summary

The regression analysis results are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square
1	0.617	0.381

Source : Processed Data, 2025

The coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.381 signifies that Work-Life Balance accounts for approximately 38.1% of the variation in Job Satisfaction. This implies that about four out of every ten fluctuations in job satisfaction can be attributed to differences in work-life balance.

Although this figure is considered moderate (Cohen, 1988), it represents a practically significant effect, as job satisfaction is influenced by multiple external factors, such as compensation, career development, work environment, organizational culture, and leadership (Spector, 2019; Robbins & Judge, 2020). The remaining 61.9% of the variation is attributable to these factors, which were not included in the current model. This finding is expected because job satisfaction is a multidimensional construct influenced by fairness perceptions, rewards, career opportunities, and interpersonal dynamics at work (Locke, 1976; Judge et al., 2017).

F-Test (Simultaneous Significance)

ANOVA results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Result of ANOVA Test (F-Test)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	313.515	1	313.515	29.561	0.000
Residual	509.065	48	10.606		
Total	822.580	49			

Source : Processed Data, 2025

An F-value of 29.561 with a significance level of $p < 0.001$ demonstrates that the regression model is highly significant at a 99.9% confidence interval. This finding leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0), which proposed that Work-Life Balance does not influence Job Satisfaction. In other words, Work-Life Balance plays a meaningful role in predicting Job Satisfaction.

These results highlight that the independent variable offers considerable explanatory strength for the dependent variable, confirming the model's overall suitability. The very low p-value ($p < 0.001$) suggests that the observed relationship is not due to random variation but genuinely exists within the sampled population. From a practical standpoint, implementing organizational strategies that promote work-life balance can significantly enhance job satisfaction, leading to better employee retention, higher motivation, and improved performance.

t-Test (Partial Significance)

The t-test result shows that Work-Life Balance has a t-value of 5.437 with $p < 0.001$, which is well below the 0.05 threshold. This indicates a positive and statistically significant partial effect of Work-Life Balance on Job Satisfaction. Thus, the hypothesis stating that "Work-Life Balance significantly affects Job Satisfaction" is supported.

Table 4. Regression Analysis

	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error		
1	(Constant)	18.609	4.652	4.000	0.000
	Work-Life Balance	1.182	0.217	5.437	0.000

Source : Processed Data, 2025

The regression equation is:

$$\text{Job Satisfaction} = 18.609 + 1.182 (\text{Work} - \text{Life Balance})$$

The regression coefficient ($B = 1.182$) indicates that for every one-point increase in Work-Life Balance, Job Satisfaction rises by 1.182 units, assuming other factors remain unchanged. Additionally, the standardized Beta (β) of 0.617 demonstrates a substantial influence of Work-Life Balance on Job Satisfaction within the model.

This result supports Role Theory (Greenhaus & Allen, 2017), which argues that achieving equilibrium between work and personal responsibilities reduces role conflicts and improves overall job satisfaction. Moreover, these findings are in line with prior research (Kaushik & Guleria, 2020; Putra & Yuliati, 2021), showing that individuals who successfully maintain work-life balance tend to experience less stress and greater satisfaction at work.

Discussion

The results of this research reveal that Work-Life Balance (WLB) exerts a positive and significant influence on Job Satisfaction among Generation Z employees in Bandung. This conclusion is supported by a regression coefficient of 1.182, a t-statistic of 5.437, and a significance value of $p < 0.001$, indicating that improved balance between work and personal life correlates with higher job satisfaction. These findings are in line with prior studies identifying WLB as a critical factor influencing job satisfaction within contemporary organizational environments (Kaushik & Guleria, 2020; Putra & Yuliati, 2021; Hadi & Widyaningrum, 2022).

From a theoretical standpoint, the results strengthen Role Theory (Greenhaus & Allen, 2017), which suggests that individuals who successfully manage both work and personal roles tend to encounter fewer role conflicts, fostering greater psychological stability and increased satisfaction at work. Conversely, a lack of balance can lead to heightened stress, fatigue, and diminished productivity, ultimately reducing job satisfaction (Greenhaus et al., 2017).

Additionally, the outcomes are consistent with the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory (Hobfoll et al., 2018), which emphasizes that individuals seek to preserve, safeguard, and obtain key resources such as time, energy, and social support. When employees can manage these resources effectively through WLB policies, they experience higher satisfaction and lower stress. Conversely, excessive job demands that deplete these resources lead to dissatisfaction and burnout (Hobfoll, 2018).

From a generational perspective, these findings are highly relevant to the characteristics of Generation Z, who strongly value work flexibility, mental well-being, and work-life balance (ILO, 2021; McKinsey & Company, 2022). Gen Z tends to reject traditional work models that require full-time office presence without personal life considerations. They prefer flexible work hours, hybrid or remote work options, and organizational support for mental health. Therefore, when companies accommodate these needs, Gen Z employees' job satisfaction improves, enhancing loyalty and reducing turnover intention.

The coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.381 indicates that Work-Life Balance explains 38.1% of the variance in job satisfaction a moderate effect size according to Cohen's (1988) criteria implying that while WLB plays an important role, other factors such as fair compensation, career development opportunities, supportive leadership, and positive organizational culture also significantly affect job satisfaction (Robbins & Judge, 2020; Spector, 2019). This opens opportunities for future research to integrate these variables into a more comprehensive model. Additionally, the F-test result ($F = 29.561$, $p < 0.001$) confirms that the regression model is statistically significant overall, validating WLB as a strong predictor of job satisfaction. These findings align with previous studies emphasizing WLB as an essential organizational strategy to enhance job satisfaction and employee retention (Allen et al., 2019; Haar et al., 2019).

These findings carry important implications for organizations, particularly companies in Bandung employing Gen Z workers. Implementing WLB-supportive policies, such as flexible working hours, remote work options, and mental health programs, can significantly improve job satisfaction, ultimately boosting productivity and employee loyalty. In the post-pandemic era, such policies are no longer optional but a strategic necessity for attracting and retaining competitive young talent.

5. Conclusions

This research demonstrates that Work-Life Balance (WLB) has a significant and positive impact on job satisfaction among Generation Z employees in Bandung. The regression analysis produced a coefficient value of 1.182 with a p-value below 0.001, confirming that an increase in WLB directly contributes to higher job satisfaction levels. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.381 indicates that WLB accounts for 38.1% of the variation in job satisfaction, while the remaining 61.9% is attributed to other factors, including compensation, opportunities for career advancement, leadership approaches, and organizational culture. These results align with Role Theory (Greenhaus & Allen, 2017) and the Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll et al., 2018), both of which highlight the importance of effectively managing roles and resources to create balance, minimize conflicts, and enhance job satisfaction.

From a practical standpoint, organizations should prioritize policies that support WLB, including flexible working hours, hybrid work arrangements, and mental health initiatives. These strategies not only increase job satisfaction but also reduce stress and turnover while strengthening employee loyalty. For future research, it is recommended to incorporate additional variables such as compensation, supervisor support, and career development into a

more comprehensive model and adopt a longitudinal approach to examine the long-term impact of WLB on job satisfaction. Academically, this study contributes to human resource management literature by reinforcing empirical evidence that WLB is a critical factor in fostering job satisfaction, particularly among younger generations who prioritize flexibility and life balance.

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