

Work-Life Balance in Generation Z Employees

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ABSTRACT

Work-Life Balance is one of the factors that can make Generation Z employees willing to stay or actively engage in their work. The purpose of this study is to identify the life domains that are considered important by Generation Z employees and to provide an overview of work-life balance among Generation Z employees. This study employed a descriptive analysis design to understand the work-life balance among Generation Z employees. An online survey was conducted using a convenience sampling technique, and a total of 50 respondents from Generation Z employees were obtained. Data collection in the survey utilized two questionnaires, namely the life domain questionnaire and the work interference with life domains scale. The results of the descriptive analysis in this study indicate that the work-life balance of Generation Z employees is still disrupted, with a high percentage of 26% categorized as high, 62% categorized as moderate, and the remaining 12% categorized as low. Generation Z employees also consider Health, Family, and Family Management as the most important aspects of their life domains. Additionally, it was found that work-related interference equally affects Generation Z employees, regardless of gender or marital status.

Keywords: generation z, work-life balance

Introduction

Generation Z employees are one of the new workforce generations in the current job market and are predicted to account for 30% of the total workforce by 2030 (Callahan, 2022). In Indonesia, based on a population survey in 2020, the percentage of the Generation Z population has reached 27.94% of the total population (BPS Public Relations, 2020). However, recent studies have shown that the desire of Generation Z employees to leave organizations is still high (Afandi et al., 2022; Pinandito & Savira, 2022).

Born between 1995 and 2010, these Generation Z employees have grown up with several characteristics, such as a preference for flexible work patterns, emphasizing salary, benefits, job security, and workplace happiness (Chillakuri, 2020; Ivasciuc et al., 2022). These characteristics need to be taken into consideration so that organizations do not lose their potential resources in helping improve organizational performance. Ivasciuc et al. (2022) found in their research that 62.5% of Generation Z employees appreciate work patterns that help them create flexible work arrangements to achieve work-life balance. Work-life balance is considered an important goal or value for Generation Z employees (Chillakuri, 2020; Deloitte, 2022; Kirchmayer Z., 2017, 2018).

Work-life balance is defined as the extent to which an individual can adequately manage various roles in their life, including work, family, and other primary responsibilities (Haar, 2013). Balancing work and family demands is a major challenge for employees and organizations (Haar, 2013). The changing demographics of the workplace, with more women workers, dual-career couples, older workers choosing to remain actively employed, and workers with health issues or long-term disabilities (Gragnano et al., 2020; Haar, 2013; Keeney et al., 2013), present challenges in meeting personal needs and fulfilling work responsibilities in a balanced manner. However, it's not just limited to these factors, as the absence of children in married employees' households, responsibilities for caring for aging parents, relationships with siblings, friends, sports groups, and communities also impose additional demands on employees. The increasing number of single and living-alone employees also affects how the balance between life and work is understood in a broader sense (Haar, 2013; Keeney et al., 2013). For some employees, work-life balance will revolve around work and family, while for others, it may involve work and sports, or community, friendships, education, and so on (Haar, 2013).

Gragnano et al. (2020), in their research, explain that the aforementioned issues indicate that workers have different needs and interests outside of their jobs. While the family role remains central in non-work life, it is also important to recognize the value of other roles in shaping and measuring the concept of work-life balance, especially among Generation Z employees. Workers who are not parents also benefit from achieving balance and have a greater impact on life satisfaction, anxiety, and depression compared to workers who are parents (Haar, 2013). Meanwhile, recent research by Gragnano et al. (2020) has begun to focus on other non-work domains, such as Health.

The research by Keeney et al. (2013) found that individuals are able to distinguish between work interference with family and work interference with other life domains. Work has the potential to interfere with various non-work areas of life, but researchers are mostly interested in the intersection between work and personal life, particularly in the domains of work and family (Keeney et al., 2013). However, family life is not the only aspect of employees' personal lives that can be affected by work, as interference from other domains also impacts employee well-being (Keeney et al., 2013).

In their study, Keeney et al. (2013) attempted to broaden the construct of work-life balance into several domains, namely: (1) health, which includes all activities related to maintaining physical and mental health, such as exercising, visiting doctors, eating balanced meals, meditating, or engaging in activities to maintain a healthy appearance like getting a haircut or a manicure; (2) family, which involves activities with family members, such as visiting/caring for parents, spending time with siblings, attending family events, taking care of

children, or spending time with pets; (3) household management, which includes activities related to household maintenance, such as cleaning the house, grocery shopping, paying bills, doing home repairs, or taking care of the garden; (4) friendships, which involve any activities done with friends (not family members) outside of work, such as going to the movies, sharing meals, talking, or providing support to friends in need; (5) education, which encompasses educational activities such as reading materials, completing coursework for undergraduate or certification programs, attending seminars or conferences, or taking courses for self-development outside of work.

Furthermore, (6) romantic relationships, such as dating or spending personal time with significant others; (7) community involvement, which includes activities like volunteering, participating in political campaigns or fundraising, or attending meetings (e.g., town hall or city council) or community events; (8) leisure time, which involves engaging in recreational activities during free time, such as pursuing hobbies, playing, watching favorite shows, and leisurely rest time, such as reading or watching TV at home. Keeney et al. (2013) found that leisure time was the most neglected domain in fulfilling obligations in other life domains. Work interference with other life domains, such as family, resulted in stress that hindered an individual's ability to engage in satisfying leisure time.

As a new generation in the current workforce, understanding the interests and motivations of Generation Z employees is important for achieving optimal business success. The importance of work-life balance among Generation Z employees (Chillakuri, 2020; Deloitte, 2022; Kirchmayer Z., 2017, 2018) has led to research efforts to examine the current state of work-life balance among Generation Z employees. Additionally, building upon the research conducted by Herachwati et al. (2019) on Generation Y employees, this study aims to provide insights into work-life balance from the perspective of Generation Z employees. The objective of this research is to identify the life domains considered important by Generation Z employees and to depict the work-life balance among Generation Z employees.

Material and Methods

This study utilized a descriptive analysis design to explore the overview of work-life balance among Generation Z employees. The survey was conducted online using a convenience sampling technique, and a total of 50 respondents who were Generation Z employees aged 21 to 28 years old, with a mean age of 25.06 (SD=1.54), were obtained as the sample. The majority of the respondents were female (64%), single (76%), had a bachelor's degree (74%), and worked in the private sector (72%) (see Table 1).

Data collection in the survey was conducted using two questionnaires. The first questionnaire asked respondents to provide their responses regarding the importance of their

involvement in various domains of life. The life domains in this questionnaire were taken from the theory by Keeney et al. (2013), which included health, family, household management, friendship, education, romantic relationships, community involvement, and leisure time. The second questionnaire utilized the modified work interference with life domains scale from Keeney et al. (2013). The scale consisted of 17 items with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.940 and item discrimination ranging from 0.408 to 0.765. The data on work-life balance in this study followed a normal distribution ($p > 0.05$; Mean=47.06; SD=14).

Table 1. Demographic Data (N=50)

Demographic	f	%
Gender		
Male	18	36
Female	32	64
Marital status		
Single	38	76
Married	12	24
Education		
SMA/SMK	7	14
D3	4	8
S1	37	74
S2	2	4
Job		
ASN/PNS	10	20
Private sector	36	72
Freelance	4	8

Results

Based on the findings from 50 respondents who were Generation Z employees, an overview of the domains considered extremely important by Generation Z employees was obtained. Personal health maintenance was deemed the most crucial domain (58%), followed by family (56%), household management (46%), work and personal development (40%), leisure time (36%), romantic relationships (28%), spending time with friends (16%), and community involvement (12%) (see Table 2).

Health emerged as the most prominent domain among Generation Z employees. The data indicated that 58% of Generation Z employees considered personal health to be of utmost importance at present. The increasing cases of lifestyle-related diseases are likely influencing how Generation Z employees redirect their attention to prioritize their health (Figueredo et al., 2021). Gragnano et al. (2020), in their research, found that workers consider health to be equally as important as a family in the context of work-life balance compared to other non-work domains. Although this study did not differentiate between physical and mental health domains, a survey conducted by McKinsey & Company revealed that compared to older age groups, younger age groups are more likely to report physical health issues. This could be

because older workers, when facing physical health problems, tend to choose not to work (Dua et al., 2022).

Table 2. Percentage of Life Domains (Keeney et al., 2013)

Domains	Not important				Very important
	1	2	3	4	5
Work	0%	2%	12%	46%	40%
Health	0%	0%	8%	34%	58%
Family	0%	0%	14%	30%	56%
Household Management	4%	0%	30%	20%	46%
Friendships	0%	12%	36%	36%	16%
Education	0%	4%	14%	42%	40%
Romantic Relationship	10%	10%	24%	28%	28%
Community involvement	6%	20%	36%	26%	12%
Leisure	0%	2%	22%	40%	36%

In the research data, it was also found that only 12% of the subjects felt that being involved in the community was very important. In general, Generation Z employees enjoy forming connections with others and seeking new ideas or experiences through those relationships and community involvement. However, they are relatively vulnerable to stress and have difficulty coping with pressure (Park et al., 2022). Additionally, the demands of actively participating in work and the long working hours, especially for entry-level Generation Z employees, leave them with limited opportunities to engage in community activities, leading to a perception that community involvement is less important.

Based on the analysis of Generation Z employees, it was also found that 26% of them felt that their work interfered with their personal life to a high degree, 62% to a moderate degree, and the remaining 12% to a low degree (see Table 3). Specifically, out of the 8 life domains affected by work, 30% of respondents felt that they lacked time and energy to engage in community activities, and 28% felt this way regarding self-development. It is also worth noting that only 6% of Generation Z employees felt that their personal life interfered with their work. Therefore, it can be concluded that both the personal life and work domains experience an imbalance in the work-life patterns of Generation Z employees, with work being more disruptive to their personal life than the other way around.

Table 3. Categorization of the work interference with life domains scale (Keeney et al., 2013)

Interference	High	Moderate	Low
<i>Work interference with life domains</i>	26%	62%	12%
<i>HEALTH domains</i>	24%	32%	44%
<i>FAMILY domains</i>	26%	40%	34%
<i>HOUSEHOLD MANAGEMENT domains</i>	22%	42%	36%
<i>FRIENDSHIPS domains</i>	20%	46%	34%
<i>EDUCATION domains</i>	28%	44%	28%

<i>ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS domains</i>	14%	42%	44%
<i>COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT domains</i>	30%	34%	36%
<i>LEISURE domains</i>	16%	32%	52%
<i>Life domains interference with work</i>	6%	14%	80%

Researchers also conducted difference tests to see if there were differences in work interference with life domains based on gender and marital status among Generation Z employees. Based on the analysis using Independent Sample T-Test, it was found that there were no significant differences in work interference with life domains based on gender ($p>0.05$) and based on marital status ($p>0.05$). This proves that the disruptions arising from work equally affect Generation Z employees, whether they are male or female and whether they are married or single.

Conclusion

The results of the descriptive analysis in this study indicate that work-life balance among Generation Z employees is still disrupted, with 26% experiencing a high level of disruption, 62% falling into the moderate category, and the remaining 12% categorized as low. Generation Z employees also consider health, family, and family management to be the most important aspects in their life domains. Another finding reveals that the work interference equally affects Generation Z employees, regardless of their gender and marital status.

Limitation and Suggestions

This study has found that the Health domain is rated as more important than other domains. Therefore, as suggested by Gragnano et al. (2020) in their research conducted in Italy, companies in Indonesia also need to pay more attention to the Health domain, even if employees are not experiencing severe or chronic health conditions.

One of the limitations of this study is the limited sample size. A larger sample size is needed to improve the generalizability of the findings to the broader population of Generation Z employees. Additionally, this study used a questionnaire developed by Keeney et al. (2013), which measures not only 2 domains but 9 domains. Subsequent research can specify the measurement to focus on 2 domains, such as the scales used by Haar (2013), Valcour (2007), Hayman (2005), or Fisher et al. (2009).

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