

EXPLORING GENERATION Y AND Z PERSPECTIVES ON WORK-LIFE BALANCE

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Abstract

Background – Employee well-being, both physical and mental, is crucial, as previous research has shown its impact on organizational success and goal achievement. These conditions encompass experiences, skills, emotions, and behavioural patterns and are influenced by individual characteristics, including generational differences.

Aim – This research seeks to explore the state of work-life balance by examining three key dimensions: Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL), Personal Life Interference with Work (PLIW), and Work and Personal Life Enhancement (WPLE) influence employee performance and happiness within two generational groups: Generation Y and Generation Z.

Design / methodology / approach – This research applies a quantitative and explanatory approach, with questionnaires distributed to 770 respondents, including employees from government, private sectors, entrepreneurs, and other categories. The data was analyzed using PLS-SEM with SmartPLS version 4.

Results and Discussion – The analysis results indicate that all three dimensions significantly influence the performance of employees in Generation Z. However, for Generation Y, only the WIPL and WPLE dimensions have a significant impact on their workplace performance. Both generations experience significant increases in happiness through WIPL and WPLE. Happiness is positive and significant effects on performance and only mediates the relationship with performance in Generation Z for PLIW negatively and for the WIPL and WPLE on performance for both generations with a stronger effects in Generation Y.

Conclusion - This study concludes that work-life balance dimensions influence employee performance differently across generations, with stronger effects in Generation Y than Generation Z. These findings highlight the need for flexible work arrangements to optimize employee performance and happiness.

Research implication – These findings have implications for work patterns, recruitment systems, and company policies, suggesting the need for effective and comfortable working methods tailored to employees from different generational categories.

Limitations – The study's limitations include the combination of all job categories, which may introduce bias in perceptions of dimensions, character, and performance. Additionally, cultural aspects should be considered as an external factor influencing individual behavior patterns and work methods.

Keywords: Work-Life Balance, Performance, Happiness, Employee, Generation Z and Y.

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Abstrak

Latar Belakang - Kesejahteraan karyawan, baik fisik maupun mental, sangatlah penting, sebagaimana penelitian sebelumnya telah menunjukkan dampaknya terhadap keberhasilan organisasi. Kondisi ini mencakup pengalaman, keterampilan, emosi, dan pola perilaku serta dipengaruhi oleh karakteristik individu, termasuk perbedaan generasi.

Tujuan - Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi kondisi keseimbangan kerja-hidup dengan mengkaji tiga dimensi utama: Gangguan Pekerjaan terhadap Kehidupan Pribadi (WIPL), Gangguan Kehidupan Pribadi terhadap Pekerjaan (PLIW), dan Peningkatan Pekerjaan dan Kehidupan Pribadi (WPLE) memengaruhi kinerja karyawan dan kebahagiaan dalam dua kelompok generasi: Generasi Y dan Generasi Z.

Desain / metodologi / pendekatan - Penelitian ini menerapkan pendekatan kuantitatif dan explanatory, dengan kuesioner yang didistribusikan kepada 770 responden, termasuk karyawan dari sektor pemerintah, sektor swasta, wirausahawan, dan kategori lainnya. Data dianalisis menggunakan PLS-SEM dengan software SmartPLS Versi 4.

Temuan - Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa seluruh dimensi work-life balance terbukti berpengaruh signifikan terhadap kinerja karyawan pada Generasi Z. Sementara itu, pada Generasi Y, hanya dimensi WIPL dan WPLE yang menunjukkan pengaruh signifikan terhadap kinerja. Temuan juga menunjukkan bahwa kebahagiaan berperan sebagai variabel mediasi pada hubungan antara PLIW dan kinerja khususnya pada Generasi Z, meskipun arah pengaruhnya negatif. Selain itu, kebahagiaan berpengaruh positif terhadap kinerja dan turut memediasi hubungan antara WIPL dan WPLE terhadap kinerja pada kedua generasi, dengan efek langsung maupun mediasi lebih dominan terlihat pada Generasi Y.

Kesimpulan - Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa dimensi work-life balance memengaruhi kinerja karyawan secara berbeda antar generasi, dengan pengaruh yang lebih kuat pada Generasi Y dibandingkan Generasi Z. Temuan ini menekankan pentingnya pengaturan kerja yang fleksibel untuk mengoptimalkan kinerja dan kebahagiaan karyawan.

Implikasi penelitian - Temuan ini memiliki implikasi terhadap pola kerja, sistem rekrutmen, dan kebijakan perusahaan, yang menunjukkan perlunya metode kerja yang efektif dan nyaman yang disesuaikan dengan karyawan dari berbagai kategori generasi.

Batasan penelitian - Keterbatasan penelitian ini mencakup penggabungan semua kategori pekerjaan, yang dapat menyebabkan bias dalam persepsi terhadap dimensi, karakter, dan kinerja. Selain itu, aspek budaya perlu dipertimbangkan sebagai faktor eksternal terhadap pola perilaku individu dan metode kerja.

Kata kunci: Keseimbangan Kehidupan Kerja, Kinerja, Kebahagiaan, Karyawan, Generasi Z dan Y.

INTRODUCTION

The issue of work-life balance remains an intriguing topic that continues to evolve due to the various factors influencing it. This stems from the affirmation that an employee's happiness significantly impacts their productivity in the workplace (Bataineh, 2019). Employee well-being, both physical and mental, is crucial, as previous research has shown its effect on organizational success and the achievement of goals (Koubova & Buchko, 2013). Therefore, it is

essential for organizations to prioritize the work-life balance of their employees to ensure that their performance and contributions positively affect organizational outcomes (Priya et al., 2023).

Achieving a balance between professional and personal life is recognized as a significant contributor to employee happiness within the workplace (Elnanto & Suharti, 2021). As stated by (Rini, 2024), happiness plays a vital role in supporting individual well-being, encompassing



emotional experiences across different aspects of life. When employees succeed in maintaining a balanced lifestyle between work and personal responsibilities, it tends to foster greater happiness, which can subsequently improve their job performance. Moreover, happiness is considered a strategic asset by organizations aiming to optimize employee productivity (Joo & Lee, 2017). Content and satisfied employees often influence their peers positively (Shaffer et al., 2016), thereby enhancing overall organizational outcomes (Sondakh et al., 2023).

The relevance of this relationship is further supported by the Spillover Theory introduced by Zedeck (1992), which emphasizes two central roles in an individual's life: the professional role and the familial role. Each role brings with it a distinct set of behaviours, emotional experiences, and skill sets (Khateeb, 2021). Importantly, these roles are not only shaped by situational factors but are also influenced by personality traits and individual characteristics—factors that have increasingly been linked to generational identities (Smith & Nichols, 2015). This theoretical perspective provides a useful lens for exploring how generational distinctions shape views on work-life harmony and well-being.

Generations refer to the classification of individuals by year of birth, with different terms used to define each generational

cohort. Generation Y or Millennials span 1981-1996, Generation Z comprises individuals born from 1997-2012 (Pradhana et al., 2023), and the latest, Generation Alpha, encompasses those born from 2013-2025. Furthermore, three attributes are associated with each generational category, which influence their social activities (Dencker & Martocchio, 2008). These attributes encompass: (1) *Perceived Membership*, which refers to a person's sense of inclusion within a group, particularly during adolescence and early adulthood; (2) *Shared Beliefs and Behaviors*, involving attitudes toward aspects such as family and personal life and (3) *Common Historical Context*, highlighting the impact of political changes and significant historical events, experienced during adolescence and early adulthood (Howe & Strauss, 2000).

According to data from BPS Indonesia, between 2020 and 2045, approximately 70% of the productive population will consist of individuals aged 20–40 years, which corresponds to Generations Y and Z. These two generations exhibit distinct behavioural and motivational characteristics in the workplace. Generation Y, or Millennials, is often described as highly driven to contribute to organizational success and demonstrates strong motivation to achieve high performance (Smith & Nichols, 2015). In contrast, Generation Z tends to value emotional well-being and places greater emphasis on personal growth and

development within the work environment (Waworuntu et al., 2022). However, in certain contexts, this pursuit of excellence or emotional fulfilment can lead to an imbalance, where employees work beyond healthy or recommended limits, ultimately reducing effectiveness and increasing stress (Manafe et al., 2025).

These generational differences become especially relevant when analyzed across diverse occupational backgrounds. In the province of East Nusa Tenggara, 88.27% of the labour force belongs to Generations Y and Z, making it a compelling context for this study. Previous research often examines each generation in isolation (Capnary et al., 2018; Ingsih et al., 2021; Larasati & Hasanati, 2019) limiting insights into how generational differences might interact or compare directly within the same organizational context. Additionally, other research focuses on the role job satisfaction and performance (Rathi & Islam, 2024; Waworuntu et al., 2022), yet does not explore happiness in the context of work-life balance as a predictor of performance, nor does it consider generational perspectives in this pathway. Therefore, this study aims to bridge the gap by investigating the relationship between work-life balance and performance through happiness as an intervening variable, while also comparing generational perspectives within a single, unified model. Happiness serves as a psychological bridge that connect work-life balance and

performance. Empirical studies have consistently demonstrated that employees with better work-life balance experience higher levels of happiness (Sirgy & Lee, 2018) and that happiness in turn, enhances job performance through increased motivation and resilience (Walsh et al., 2018). As such positioning happiness as a mediating variable provides a more holistic understanding of how personal well-being drives work outcomes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Spillover Theory

The most commonly recognized explanation of the work-family relationship is the spillover theory (Akinyele et al., 2016; Joshi, 2024), which describes spillover as the transfer of positive or negative experiences between work and family domains. In essence, favourable experiences at work tend to enhance experiences at home, while challenges at work may negatively affect family life (Okolie & Okereka, 2022). This theory emphasizes the interconnection between work and personal life, suggesting that individuals bring their emotions, attitudes, and behaviours from one setting to another. It presents a cause-and-effect dynamic where the impact from one area influences the other (Kiran & Batool, 2022).

Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance describes a person's capacity to harmoniously manage their roles

at work and within the family (Noerchoidah & Indriyani, 2022). Achieving a good balance positively impacts the work environment. This aligns with the idea of work-life balance as described by (Ötken, 2013; Zhenjing et al., 2022), which is contrary to the notion of work-life conflict. (Hayman, 2005) further divides this concept into three dimensions, each reflecting different conditions: Dimension 1 - Work Interfering with Personal Life; Dimension 2 - Personal Life Interfering with Work; and Dimension 3 - Enhancement of Work or Personal Life (aligned or harmonious).

Performance

The implementation of work-life balance bears directly on performance, which refers to the outcomes achieved by an individual or group based on job requirements (Weny et al., 2023). These job requirements are essential for accomplishing goals, often referred to as work standards (Damanik et al., 2023). Performance can be categorized into individual and organizational performance, which are closely interconnected. Individual performance serves as a determinant of organizational performance (Herliani & Priscilla, 2025), with the organization's vision and mission being achieved through various activities conducted either individually or in teams (Burin & Manafe, 2022).

Happiness

Workplace happiness goes beyond merely experiencing pleasure or momentary enjoyment; it also involves finding deeper meaning and fulfillment in one's professional life. According to (Elnanto & Suharti, 2021), individuals are considered truly happy when they consistently encounter positive emotional states. Happiness itself comprises two primary dimensions: the affective aspect, which includes emotions such as joy, enthusiasm, and delight, and the cognitive aspect, which relates to an individual's sense of satisfaction across different areas of life (Rini, 2024). When employees experience genuine happiness, the positive effects extend beyond personal well-being, contributing to a more productive and harmonious organizational environment (Shaffer et al., 2016).

Generational Perspective

From a generational perspective, for Generation Y, work-life balance fosters positive feelings and attitudes, which significantly help them deliver strong performance for their organization (Sismawati & Lataruva, 2020). Additionally, work-life balance facilitates a harmonious interaction relationship between employees and their organization, while reducing conflicts both in the workplace and in personal life (Capnary et al., 2018; Nizam & Kam, 2018; Waworuntu et al., 2022).



For Generation Z, work-life balance plays a crucial role in determining their fidelity to their workplace (Suslova & Holopainen, 2019). Moreover, Generation Z highly values and upholds the practice of work-life balance, often prioritizing it over their work, as they do not view work as their main focus (Skyler, 2022). This generation also demands greater attention from companies, particularly in fostering employee engagement with the workplace (Rachmadini & Riyanto, 2020). Notably, 90% of Generation Z respondents believe that work-life balance significantly impacts their satisfaction and performance (Suslova & Holopainen, 2019). This prioritization also leads them to adopt a more idealistic view of balancing work and personal life (Mandagi & Aseng, 2021; Rakhmatia Nabahani & Riyanto, 2020). This explanation highlights that Generation Z holds a different or higher perspective on the value of work-life balance for their performance in contrast to Generation Y.

Generational differences play a significant role in how individuals perceive and respond to work-life dynamics. Generation Y (Millennials) and Generation Z are shaped by distinct socio-cultural and technological contexts, which influence their values, motivations, and behavioral tendencies in the workplace. While Millennials are known for their dedication to organizational success and high achievement orientation, Generation Z tends to prioritize emotional well-being, flexibility, and personal

growth (Smith & Nichols, 2015; Waworuntu et al., 2022). These contrasting traits may result in varying levels of influence from work-life balance dimensions namely, Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL), Personal Life Interference with Work (PLIW), and Work-Personal Life Enhancement (WPLE) on job performance and happiness.

Moreover, happiness is not only a desired emotional state but also serves as a potential mediator that can amplify or diminish the effects of work-life balance on performance (Jannah et al., 2020; Manafe et al., 2025; Rini, 2024). Previous research suggests that positive emotional states can enhance employee engagement and productivity (Shaffer et al., 2016), yet the strength of this mediation may differ between generations due to differences in psychological needs and coping strategies. Therefore, this study proposes to examine not only the direct influence of WIPL, PLIW, and WPLE on performance but also their indirect influence through happiness, comparing the responses between Generations Y and Z.

Therefore, the hypotheses developed in this study are stated as follows:

H₁. *The effects of WIPL, PLIW, and WPLE on employee performance will be stronger among Generation Z than Generation Y.*

H₂. *The effects of WIPL, PLIW, and WPLE on happiness will be stronger among Generation Z than Generation Y.*

H₃. *The effects of happiness on performance will be stronger among Generation Z than Generation Y.*

H4. The effects of WIPL, PLIW, and WPLE on employee performance through happiness as

a mediating variable will be stronger among Generation Z than Generation Y.

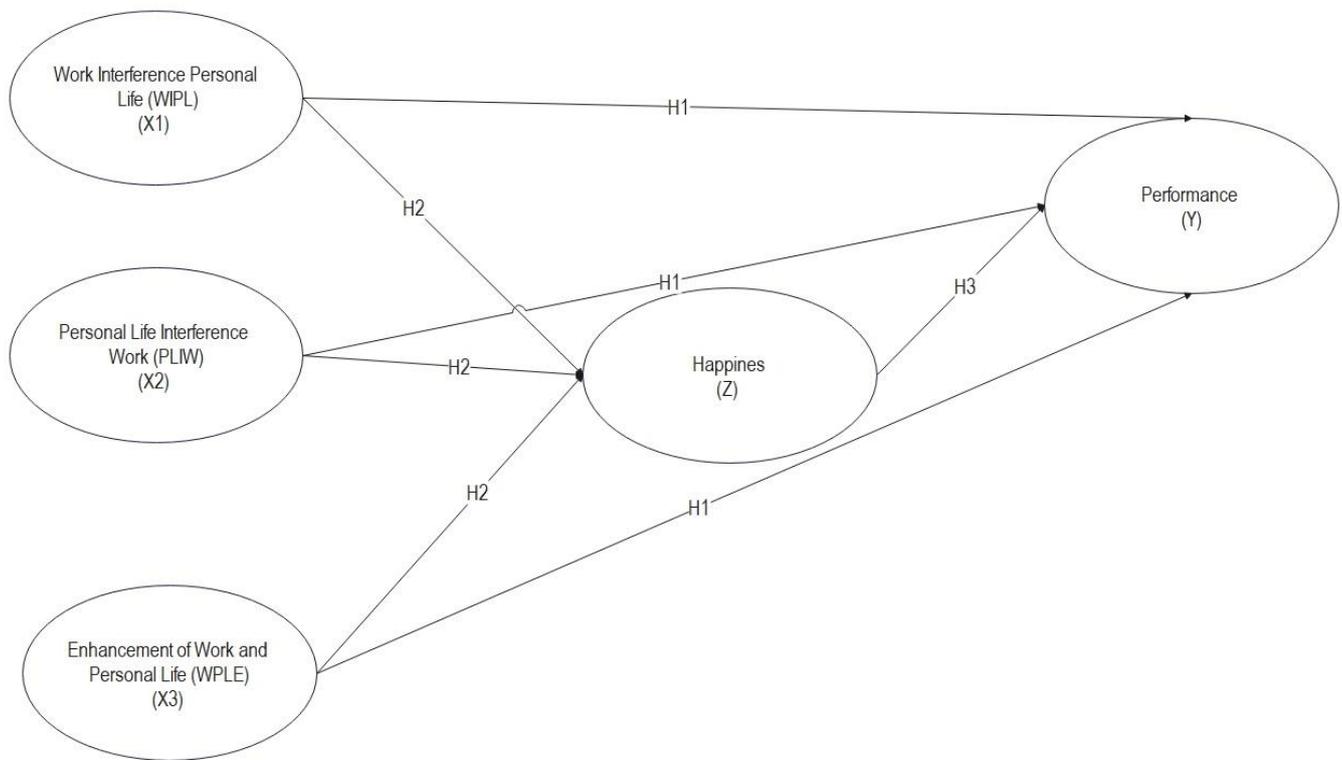


Figure 1. Research Model

RESEARCH METHOD

This analysis utilizes a quantitative method and an explanatory approach, relying on a questionnaire as the main research tool. The questionnaire uses a 7-point Likert scale for responses and is distributed via Google Forms. The population for this research comprises the entire workforce in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), totalling 2.990.716 individuals, who meet the following criteria: they work in either government or private organizations, have a total work duration exceeding 40 hours per week, and belong to either Generation Y (1981–1996) or Generation Z (1997–2012). This research is

conducted in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), where 88.27% of the workforce consists of Generations Y and Z, making it a highly relevant setting for examining generational perspectives on work-life balance, happiness, and performance. Since the study population encompasses the entire labour force in NTT, the region provides both a demographically significant and contextually meaningful basis for exploring how these younger generations experience and manage work-related well-being

The sample size was determined using the recommendations of Leavy (2017), who suggests utilizing online sample size

calculators to estimate the ideal sample size for specific studies. For this research, using the Qualtrics sample size calculator the sample size was computed and get 385 respondents (for each generation) with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. The collected questionnaire data were then

analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM).

The Work-Life Balance variable is quantified using the indicators of the three dimensions developed by (Hayman, 2005), which are:

Table 1
 The Three Dimensions of *Work-Life Balance*

<i>Work-Life Balance</i>		
Dimension 1 - Work Interfering with Personal Life (WIPL) 1. Personal life is disrupted by work. 2. Work makes personal life challenging. 3. Neglecting personal needs due to work. 4. Sacrificing personal life for work. 5. Skipping personal activities due to work commitments. 6. Difficulty separating work from personal life. 7. Content with the time available for non-work activities (-).	Dimension 2 - Personal Life Interfering with Work (PLIW) 1. My personal life drains my energy for work. 2. Feeling too exhausted to perform efficiently at work. 3. My personal life interferes with my work. 4. Challenging to focus on work because of personal problems.	Dimension 3 - Enhancement of Work or Personal Life (WPLE) 1. My personal life fuels me energy for work. 2. Work energizes me to participate in personal activities. 3. My personal life enhances my mood at work. 4. A better mood because of my job.

Source: Psychometric Assessment of an Instrument Designed to Measure Work Life Balance (Hayman, 2005)

The performance variable uses 5 indicators, as follows :

Table 2
 Performance Indicator

Performance (P)
1. I complete my work according to the specified quality standards. 2. I complete my work according to the specified quantity within a given time period. 3. I complete my work on time. 4. I successfully achieve the goals set for the tasks I complete. 5. I am able to complete my work independently.

Source: Performance Indicators (Robbins & Judge, 2016)

The happiness variable uses 29 items according to The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire by (Hills & Argyle, 2002) as follows :

Table 3
 Happiness Indicator

Happiness (H)
1. I don't feel particularly pleased with the way I am (-)
2. I am intensely interested in other people
3. I feel that life is very rewarding
4. I have very warm feelings towards almost everyone
5. I rarely wake up feeling rested (-)
6. I am not particularly optimistic about the future (-)
7. I find most things amusing
8. I am always committed and involved
9. Life is good
10. I do not think that the world is a good place (-)
11. I laugh a lot
12. I am well satisfied about everything in my life
13. I don't think I look attractive (-)
14. There is a gap between what I would like to do and what I have done (-)
15. I am very happy
16. I find beauty in some things
17. I always have a cheerful effect on others
18. I can fit in everything I want to
19. I feel that I am not especially in control of my life (-)
20. I feel able to take anything on
21. I feel fully mentally alert
22. I often experience joy and elation
23. I do not find it easy to make decisions (-)
24. I do not have a particular sense of meaning and purpose in my life (-)
25. I feel I have a great deal of energy
26. I usually have a good influence on events
27. I do not have fun with other people (-)
28. I don't feel particularly healthy (-)
29. I do not have particularly happy memories of the past (-)

Source: The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (Hills & Argyle, 2002)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Sample Description

The final sample size for this study is 770 respondents, described based on gender, type of generation (Generation Y and Generation Z), educational background, type of employment detailed for each generation, and marital status. The demographic profile of the respondents is presented through crosstabulation tables to illustrate the distribution across key categorical variables. Specifically, the tables display cross-

relationships between gender and generation, gender and educational background, marital status and generation, occupation and generation as well as educational background and generation. These crosstabs provide a clearer understanding of the composition and diversity within the respondent population. The as summarized in the table 3.

The table 3 provides a detailed description of the respondents' demographics, showing a balanced

proportion of Generation Y and Generation Z at 50% and 50%, respectively. This balance is considered adequate for supporting further analysis of the hypotheses developed in this study. Another notable aspect is the distribution of respondents across two dominant employment categories: government and private sectors. Among Generation Y, the largest group works in the private sector (45%), followed by government employment (37%). In contrast, for Generation Z, the majority are also in the private sector (58%), with 18% choosing entrepreneurship. This trend is supported by the educational background of most respondents categorized by gender and generation who hold a bachelor's degree (S1).

Outer Model Measurement

The interplay between latent variables and indicators or manifest variables is measured through the outer model, which consists of construct validity and construct reliability. The minimum value for outer loadings is 0.7, while Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values should exceed 0.7. Convergent validity is gauged through the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), with a value greater than 0.5 (Legate et al., 2023).

As shown in Table 4, the outer loading values range between 0.6 and 0.7, indicating that the indicators for the variables exhibit good convergent validity with their respective constructs. It is important to note that the outer loading assessment was conducted in

two stages. In the initial test, several indicators did not meet the minimum loading threshold (indicator number 1 and 2 for Dimension 1-WIPL and indicator number 1, 2, 6, 10, 13, 14, 19, 23, 24, 27, 28, and 29 for Happiness variable); however, after refinement and retesting, the final indicators reported in table 4 met the required standards. This is further supported by satisfactory values of Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability, indicating strong internal consistency. Additionally, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values exceed 0.5, signifying that the variance of the indicators is effectively explained by their corresponding latent constructs (Legate et al., 2023).

Discriminant validity measures how well a latent construct can be distinguished from other latent constructs. In Table 5, the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) values are below 0.9, which aligns with the gold standard. This indicates that discriminant validity is achieved (Legate et al., 2023).

The R-Square (R^2) and Adjusted R-Square values serve to estimate the predictive ability of the model in justifying the variance of the dependent or endogenous variable. The Adjusted R-Square values in Table 6 indicate that the model's strength falls into the moderate category.

Inner Model Measurement

Figure 2 and 3 presents the results of the structural model testing conducted in this

study. The figure illustrates the strength and direction of the relationships among these variables, including path coefficients and their levels of statistical significance.

The findings are summarized in Table 7 (direct effects) and Table 8 (indirect effects through the mediating variable).

The hypothesis (H1), which stated that the effects of WIPL, PLIW, and WPLE on employee performance would be stronger among Generation Z than Generation Y, is not supported by the data. Although significant relationships were found for WIPL and WPLE with employee performance in both generations, the strength of the relationships is consistently higher among Generation Y. Additionally, PLIW is not a significant predictor for either generation. Therefore, the data indicates that Generation Y experiences a stronger influence of work-life balance dimensions on their performance compared to Generation Z.

The hypothesis (H2), which proposed that the effects of WIPL, PLIW, and WPLE on happiness would be stronger among Generation Z than Generation Y, is partially supported. Among the three dimensions, only PLIW (Personal Life Interferes with Work) shows a stronger (and significant) impact on happiness for Generation Z, although the direction of the effect is negative. For WIPL and WPLE, while both show significant positive effects on happiness for both generations, the magnitude of the impact is stronger for Generation Y.

Therefore, the overall evidence does not fully support the hypothesis, but suggests that Generation Z may be more sensitive to negative interference from personal life into work, while Generation Y benefits more positively from work-life balance factors in enhancing happiness.

For the H3, as shown in the table, both Generation Y and Generation Z demonstrate significant relationships between happiness and performance, indicated by p-values of 0.000. However, the path coefficient for Generation Y (0.771) is higher than that of Generation Z (0.684). This implies that although happiness positively influences performance in both groups, the strength of this effect is greater among Generation Y. This finding does not support the initial hypothesis which assumed a stronger effect for Generation Z. Instead, the data suggest that Millennials (Generation Y) may be more likely to translate feelings of happiness into higher levels of job performance compared to Generation Z.

The hypothesis (H4), which proposed that the effects of WIPL, PLIW, and WPLE on employee performance through happiness as a mediating variable would be stronger among Generation Z than Generation Y, is partially supported. Specifically, for PLIW, the mediating effect of happiness is only significant among Generation Z, suggesting that this generation is more affected by personal life interference in the workplace, albeit negatively. However, for WIPL and

WPLE, although both generations show significant mediation effects, the strength of the indirect effect is greater among Generation Y. This indicates that Generation Y experiences stronger positive mediation of happiness between work-life balance and

performance, particularly when work enriches personal life or interferes with it in a manageable way. Overall, the results do not fully support H4, as the expected stronger mediation effect among Generation Z is only evident in one dimension (PLIW).

Table 3
 Crosstabulation Table of Respondent

Gender*Generation		Generation		Total
		Y	Z	
Gender	Male	201	168	369
	Female	184	217	401
Total		385	385	770

Marital Status*Generation		Generation		Total
		Y	Z	
Marital Status	Married	176	40	216
	Unmarried	209	345	554
Total		385	385	770

Education*Gender		Generation		Total
		Male	Female	
Education	SMA	119	104	223
	Diploma	23	46	69
	Bachelor	206	233	439
	Master	21	18	39
Total		369	401	770

Education*Generation		Generation		Total
		Y	Z	
Education	SMA	127	96	223
	Diploma	31	38	69
	Bachelor	209	230	439
	Master	18	21	39
Total		385	385	770

Occupation*Generation		Generation		Total
		Y	Z	
Occupation	Government Employee	142	46	188
	Private Sector Employee	173	224	397
	Entrepreneur	35	69	104
	Others (part-time job; etc)	35	46	81
Total		385	385	770

Source: Results of Primary Data Processing, 2025



Table 4
 Evaluation of Model Feasibility

Variable	Parameters	OL	CA	CR	AVE
WIPL	3WIPL	0.700	0.829	0.838	0.547
	4WIPL	0.699			
	5WIPL	0.811			
	6WIPL	0.700			
	7WIPL	0.757			
PLIW	1PLIW	0.834	0.836	0.861	0.665
	2PLIW	0.841			
	3PLIW	0.845			
	4PLIW	0.739			
WPLE	1WPLE	0.865	0.910	0.911	0.787
	2WPLE	0.884			
	3WPLE	0.901			
	4WPLE	0.897			
Performance	1P	0.943	0.914	0.915	0.891
	2P	0.949			
	3P	0.946			
	4P	0.952			
	5P	0.929			
Happiness	3H	0.838	0,936	0.946	0.719
	4H	0.831			
	7H	0.821			
	8H	0.861			
	9H	0.875			
	11H	0.810			
	12H	0.867			
	15H	0.884			
	16H	0.908			
	17H	0.890			
	18H	0.902			
	20H	0.785			
	21H	0.702			
22H	0.890				
25H	0.823				
26H	0.861				

Source: Results of Primary Data Processing, 2025

Table 5
 Discriminant Validity

Hypothesis	Heterotrait- monotrait ratio (HTMT)
WIPL <-> Performance	0.395
WIPL <-> Happiness	0.311
PLIW <-> Performance	0.158

Hypothesis	Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT)
PLIW <-> Happiness	0.120
WPLE <-> Performance	0.696
WPLE <-> Happiness	0.684
Happiness <-> Performance	0.857

Source: Results of Primary Data Processing, 2025

Table 6
 Coefficient of Determination (R²)

	Performance	Happiness
R Square	0.727	0.441
R Square Adjusted	0.724	0.436

Source: Results of Primary Data Processing, 2025

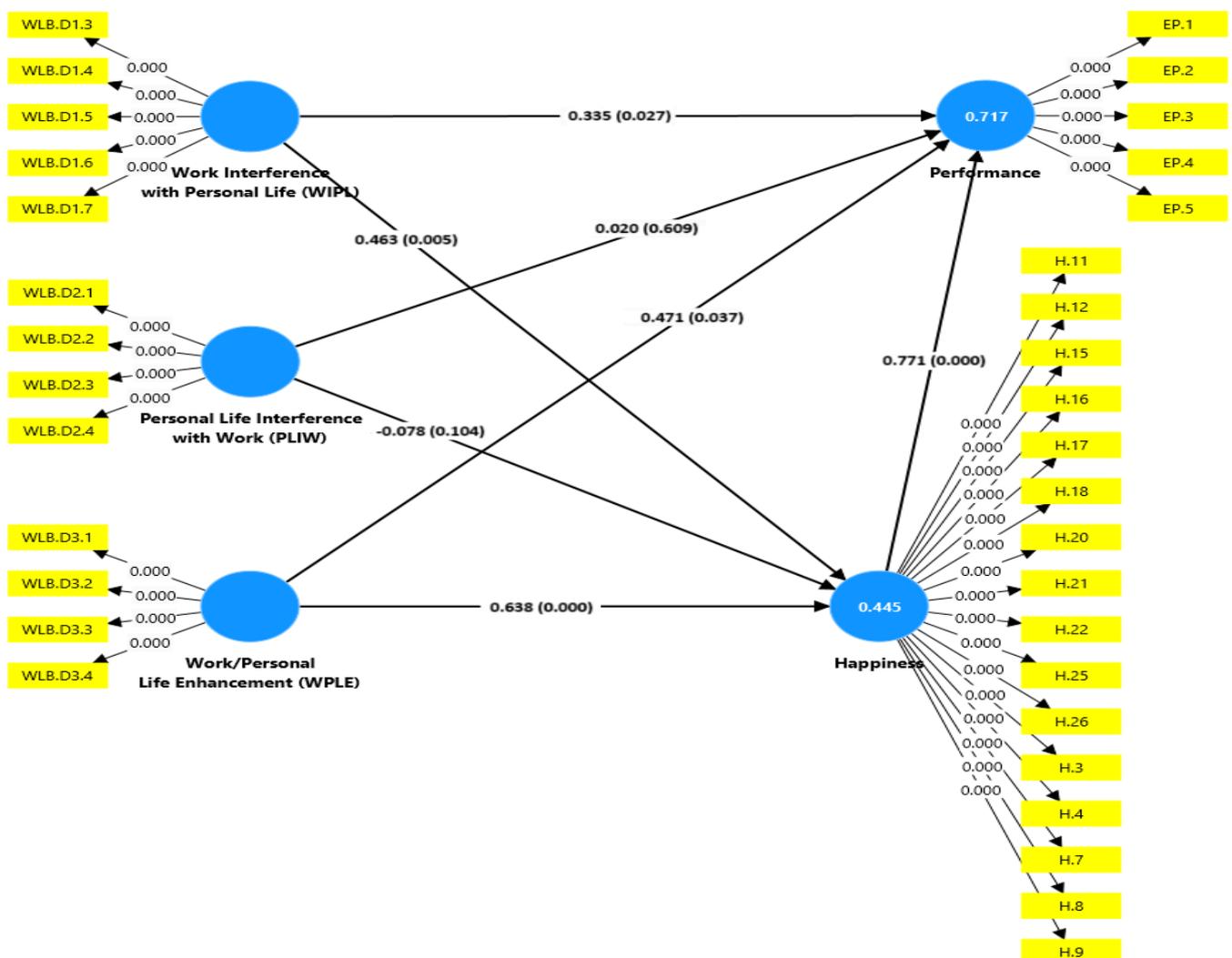


Figure 2. Result of the path analysis Generation Y



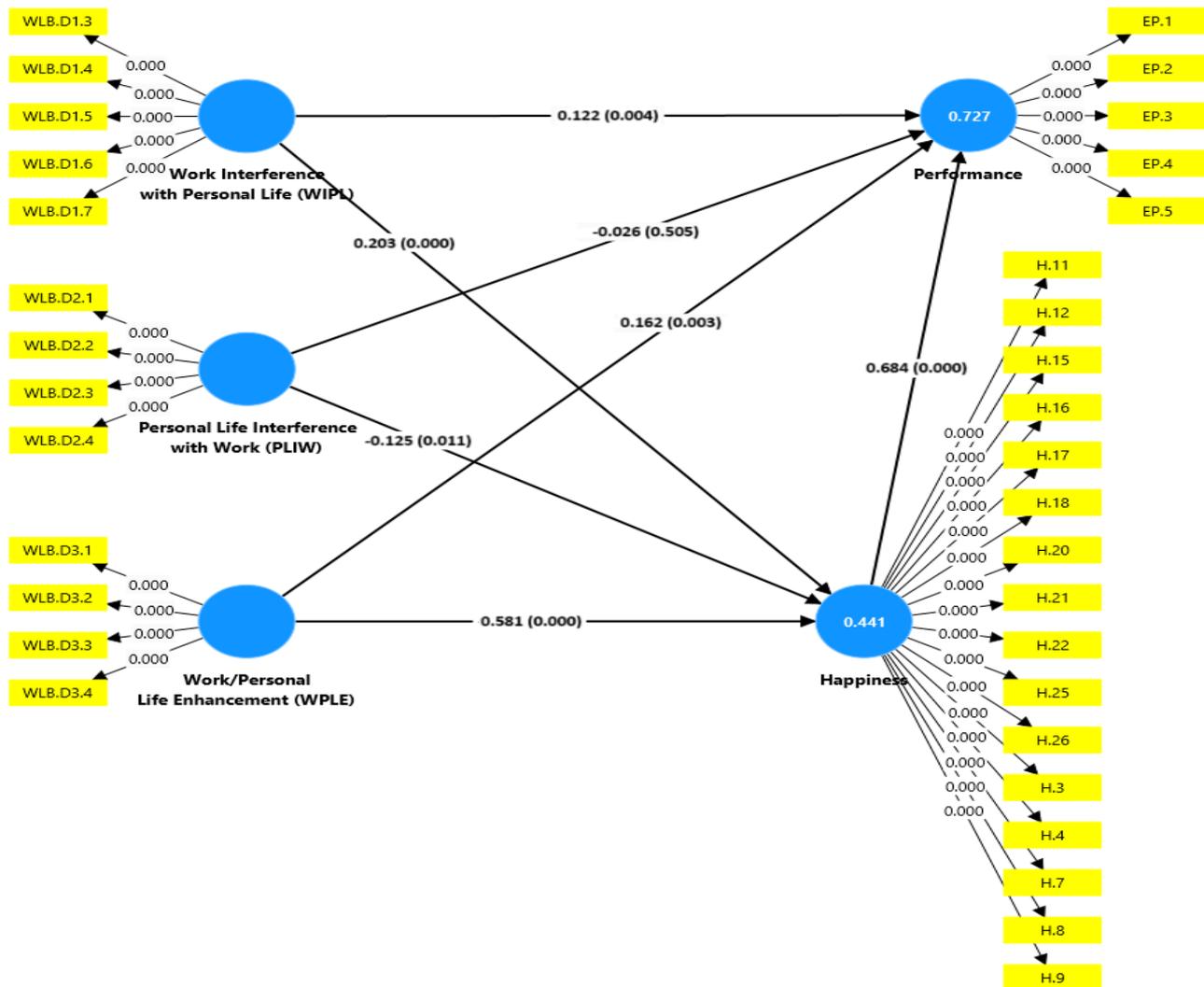


Figure 2. Result of the path analysis Generation Z

Table 7
 Hypothesis Test (Direct Effect)

Linkage between variable	Generation Y			Generation Z		
	Original Sample	T Statistics	P values	Original Sample	T Statistics	P values
WIPL → Performance	0.335	2.221	0.027	0.122	2.906	0.004
PLIW → Performance	0.020	0.511	0.609	-0.026	0.667	0.505
WPLE → Performance	0.471	2.087	0.037	0.162	2.949	0.003

Interpretation:

WIPL (Work Interfering with Personal Life):

- Significant for both Gen Y and Gen Z
- Effect is stronger for Gen Y – original sample (0.335) > Gen Z (0.122)
- Does not support H1

PLIW (Personal Life Interfering with Work):

- Not significant for either generation
- Not support H1

WPLE (Enhancement of Work or Personal Life):

- Significant for both Gen Y and Gen Z



- Effect is stronger for Gen Y – original sample (0.471) > Gen Z (0.162)
- Does not support H1

Linkage between variable	Generation Y			Generation Z		
	Original Sample	T Statistics	P values	Original Sample	T Statistics	P values
WIPL → Happiness	0.463	2.853	0.005	0.203	4.310	0.000
PLIW → Happiness	-0.078	1.624	0.104	-0.125	2.538	0.011
WPLE → Happiness	0.638	14.823	0.000	0.581	12.070	0.000

Interpretation:

WIPL (Work Interfering with Personal Life):

- Significant for both Gen Y and Gen Z
- Effect is stronger for Gen Y – original sample (0.463) > Gen Z (0.203)
- Does not support H2

PLIW (Personal Life Interfering with Work):

- Not significant for Gen Y but significant for Gen Z negatively
- Support H2 for this dimension only, Gen Z is affected more even though negatively

WPLE (Enhancement of Work or Personal Life):

- Strong and significant for both Gen Y and Gen Z
- Effect is stronger for Gen Y – original sample (0.638) > Gen Z (0.581)
- Does not support H2

Linkage between variable	Generation Y			Generation Z		
	Original Sample	T Statistics	P values	Original Sample	T Statistics	P values
Happiness → Performance	0.771	18.744	0.000	0.684	12.904	0.000

Interpretation:

- Significant for both Gen Y and Gen Z
- Effect is stronger for Gen Y – original sample (0.771) > Gen Z (0.684)
- Does not support H3

Source: Results of Primary Data Processing, 2025

Table 8
 Hypothesis Test (Indirect Effect)

Linkage between variable	Generation Y			Generation Z		
	Original Sample	T Statistics	P values	Original Sample	T Statistics	P values
WIPL → Happiness → Performance	0.290	2.138	0.033	0.139	4.328	0.000
PLIW → Happiness → Performance	-0.060	1.617	0.106	-0.085	0.035	0.000
WPLE → Happiness → Performance	0.492	11.848	0.000	0.397	7.890	0.000

Interpretation:

WIPL (Work Interfering with Personal Life):

- Significant mediation in both Gen Y and Gen Z
- Effect is stronger for Gen Y – original sample (0.290) > Gen Z (0.139)
- Does not support H4

PLIW (Personal Life Interfering with Work):

- Only significant for Gen Z



- *Support H4 for this dimension only, although the effect is negative.*
- WPLE (Enhancement of Work or Personal Life):
- *Significant for both Gen Y and Gen Z*
 - *Effect is stronger for Gen Y – original sample (0.492) > Gen Z (0.397)*
 - *Does not support H4*

Source: Results of Primary Data Processing, 2025

Discussion

Work-life Balance and Performance

Based on the result, there are similarities and differences in the effects of the three dimensions of work-life balance on employee performance. Dimension 1 (WIPL) reflects a situation where work tasks and responsibilities interfere with personal life, causing work to dominate over family, rest, or recreational activities. The findings reveal that this dimension significantly affects both Generation Y and Generation Z, although the effect is stronger among Generation Y. This result indicates that Generation Y's performance is more sensitive to work-life interference, possibly due to the pressure of aligning work demands with their aspirations for personal development and autonomy. Despite their reputation for adaptability and independence (Kaifi et al., 2012; Kowske et al., 2010), a work environment that intrudes on personal life may still reduce their performance, likely because it conflicts with their values around life balance and flexibility.

Generation Z, although also significantly affected, exhibits a weaker response. This could be because Gen Z is more accustomed to flexible and boundaryless work environments, and may perceive work-life

interference as a normal part of achieving success early in their careers (Suslova & Holopainen, 2019). Nevertheless, the presence of a positive relationship suggests that, under structured conditions, Gen Z may still maintain or improve performance when work encroaches on personal life, possibly as a form of proving resilience or adaptability in early career stages (Skyler, 2022).

The second dimension of work-life balance (PLIW) refers to a condition where personal life interferes with work responsibilities, such as prioritizing family time, hobbies, or personal well-being over professional duties. However, the statistical test results reveal that this dimension does not significantly influence employee performance for either Generation Y or Generation Z.

Although previous literature (Andert, 2011) suggests that Generation Y places a high value on family and seeks harmony between work and personal life, the lack of statistical significance indicates that such interference does not necessarily translate into a measurable impact on their performance (Capnary et al., 2018). This may be because individuals in both generations have developed strategies to

compartmentalize or balance personal priorities without allowing them to disrupt work outcomes. Additionally, the negative but non-significant coefficient for Gen Z could imply a slight tendency for personal-life interference to reduce performance, but not to a degree that is statistically meaningful.

The third dimension of work-life balance (WPLE) reflects the mutual enhancement between work and personal life, where positive experiences at work spill over into personal domains, and vice versa. The test results show that this dimension positively and significantly impacts performance in both Generation Y and Generation Z, with a stronger effect observed in Generation Y.

For Generation Y, this alignment between work and personal life reflects a sense of responsibility and long-term planning regarding their life choices (de Hauw & de Vos, 2010). When work supports their personal development, they are more committed and perform better, emphasizing stability and meaning in both domains (Skyler, 2022; Suslova & Holopainen, 2019). Generation Z, while also positively influenced by WPLE, exhibits a weaker effect. Their performance increases when the workplace allows for flexibility, support, and emotional comfort (Koveshnikov et al., 2011). This generation tends to thrive in environments that support self-expression and well-being, but the connection between work-life enrichment and performance, while significant, is not as strong as in Generation

Y. This suggests that while both generations benefit, the impact is more pronounced in Generation Y, possibly due to their more integrated view of professional and personal growth.

Work-life Balance and Happiness

The results indicate that WIPL significantly influences happiness in both Generation Y and Generation Z (Jannah et al., 2020; Manafe et al., 2025), with a stronger effect observed in Generation Y. This suggests that interference from work into personal life leads to emotional strain, particularly for Gen Y. As workplace happiness is not merely defined by fleeting pleasure but also by consistent positive emotional states and life satisfaction (Elnanto & Suharti, 2021), disruptions to personal routines can compromise the affective and cognitive dimensions of happiness. The stronger response in Generation Y may reflect their deeper engagement in personal meaning through work, where such interference has greater psychological impact. According to (Shaffer et al., 2016), positive emotional states are closely tied to workplace engagement and performance, implying that happiness acts as a critical link in this dimension.

PLIW is not significant for Generation Y but is significantly negative for Generation Z, suggesting generational variation in how personal distractions influence workplace happiness. For Gen Z, personal demands

that encroach upon work life reduce their emotional well-being, possibly affecting focus and overall engagement. This aligns with the idea that happiness encompasses both affective states like calm and joy, and cognitive appraisals of life satisfaction (Rini, 2024). The fact that this pathway is not significant for Gen Y could indicate greater emotional regulation or boundary-setting between personal and professional roles (Wolor et al., 2020). Nevertheless, as (Shaffer et al., 2016) argue, such emotional disruptions can affect not only personal well-being but also downstream performance, underscoring happiness as a mediating force.

WPLE significantly boosts happiness for both generations, with Gen Y again showing a stronger effect. This dimension captures the positive spillover where work enriches personal life, creating upward emotional momentum. Since happiness includes consistent experiences of enthusiasm, delight, and satisfaction (Elnanto & Suharti, 2021; Rini, 2024), WPLE can serve as a critical resource for emotional energy. The strong impact observed in both groups reinforces the notion that when employees perceive a harmonious connection between work and personal development, they are more likely to thrive (Rakhmatia Nabahani & Riyanto, 2020; Suganda, 2022). According to Shaffer et al. (2016), this state of happiness not only supports individual well-being but enhances performance through greater motivation and organizational engagement.

Happiness and Performance

The analysis revealed that happiness significantly influences performance across both generational cohorts, as evidenced by the path coefficients. However, contrary to the initial assumption that Generation Z would exhibit a stronger relationship due to their greater emphasis on emotional well-being and personal growth (Smith & Nichols, 2015; Waworuntu et al., 2022), the empirical results indicate that the effect of happiness on performance is in fact stronger among Generation Y.

This finding suggests that Millennials (Generation Y), despite being portrayed as achievement-oriented and organizationally committed, may derive substantial performance gains from positive emotional states such as happiness. Their relatively longer exposure to organizational structures and professional expectations may enhance their ability to channel emotional satisfaction into productive outcomes.

On the other hand, while Generation Z values happiness and flexibility, they may still be in a formative stage of their careers, where emotional satisfaction does not yet translate as directly into performance output. Additionally, their coping mechanisms or job expectations may not be fully aligned with organizational performance standards, thereby moderating the impact of happiness on their actual work outcomes.



Work-life Balance and Performance through Happiness

The results of this study indicate that happiness mediates the relationship between work-life balance dimensions and employee performance, but with varying strength across generations. Hypothesis 4 proposed that Generation Z would experience a stronger mediating effect of happiness between WIPL, PLIW, and WPLE on performance compared to Generation Y. However, the findings only partially support this hypothesis.

Specifically, for PLIW (Personal Life Interfering with Work), happiness significantly mediates the relationship only among Generation Z, and the effect is negative, suggesting that personal life disruptions impact Gen Z's emotional well-being more critically, thereby reducing their performance. This is consistent with prior research stating that Generation Z prioritizes emotional well-being and work-life balance more highly than previous generations (Skyler, 2022; Suslova & Holopainen, 2019). Gen Z's idealistic view of balance (Mandagi & Aseng, 2021; Rakhmatia Nabahani & Riyanto, 2020) and their emphasis on mental health and self-prioritization (Rachmadini & Riyanto, 2020) may explain their stronger emotional response when personal life interferes with professional duties.

In contrast, WIPL and WPLE demonstrate significant mediating effects of happiness in both generations, but the indirect effects are

stronger in Generation Y. This suggests that for Gen Y, happiness plays a more robust role in translating positive work-life experiences into higher performance. As noted by (Sismawati & Lataruva, 2020), work-life balance enhances positive feelings and work attitudes in Generation Y, helping them perform effectively. Moreover, their tendency to strive for organizational success and balanced relationships at work (Capnary et al., 2018; Nizam & Kam, 2018) may contribute to this stronger mediation.

From a psychological perspective, happiness comprises both affective (joy, enthusiasm) and cognitive (satisfaction and life meaning) dimensions (Elnanto & Suharti, 2021; Rini, 2024). These dimensions not only foster individual well-being but also support workplace harmony and productivity (Shaffer et al., 2016). As such, Generation Y's stronger mediation effects may stem from their ability to find meaning in professional tasks, even when facing work-life interference or enrichment.

Overall, while the concept of happiness as a mediator between work-life balance and performance holds for both generations, the generational differences in values, needs, and coping strategies (Smith & Nichols, 2015; Waworuntu et al., 2022) influence the strength of that mediation. Thus, H4 is only partially supported, with Generation Z showing stronger mediation only in the context of personal life interference, while Generation Y demonstrates broader and

stronger mediating effects in the other dimensions.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study conclude that each dimension of work-life balance: (1) Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL), (2) Personal Life Interference with Work (PLIW), and (3) Work and Personal Life Enhancement (WPLE)—has varying levels of influence on employee performance and happiness across generations.

For Generation Z, all three dimensions significantly affect performance. WIPL and WPLE show a positive relationship, whereas PLIW demonstrates a negative relationship, indicating that personal matters disrupting work can diminish their performance. In contrast, for Generation Y, only WIPL and WPLE significantly influence performance, with both showing a positive effect. PLIW does not significantly affect performance in this group. These results suggest that Generation Z is generally more sensitive to both positive and negative work-life balance experiences, while Generation Y tends to perform consistently unless positively enriched or personally interrupted.

Regarding the effect on happiness, both generations experience significant increases in happiness through WIPL and WPLE. However, Generation Y reports a stronger emotional response from these dimensions. For PLIW, only Generation Z shows a

significant but negative impact on happiness, confirming that personal life interference can lead to emotional strain in younger employees, while Generation Y appears more resilient in managing such interference.

In terms of the mediating role of happiness, the results partially support the proposed hypothesis. Happiness mediates the relationship between WIPL and WPLE on performance for both generations, but with stronger effects in Generation Y. For PLIW, happiness only mediates the relationship with performance in Generation Z, and the direction is negative. This highlights a key generational difference in how emotional well-being translates into work outcomes: Generation Z is more emotionally reactive to negative interference, while Generation Y leverages positive work-life synergy more effectively.

IMPLIKASI PENELITIAN

These findings suggest that happiness serves as both an emotional state and a strategic mechanism that links work-life experiences to performance, but the pathway differs between generations. Organizations should therefore develop customized strategies: promoting enrichment experiences and emotional support for Generation Y, while ensuring flexibility, boundaries, and mental health awareness for Generation Z. Theoretically, this study confirms that individual identity, emotional needs, and



generational values play an important role in shaping the impact of work-life balance on performance, in line with frameworks proposed by Khateeb (2021).

A limitation of this research lies in the inclusion of a broad range of job categories, which may affect the generalizability of

perceptions and responses. Future studies should consider segmenting job types and incorporating cultural factors as potential moderators to better understand how sociocultural contexts shape work-life experiences and behavioral outcomes.

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