



Job Satisfaction of Generation Z Employees in the Solo Raya Region

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Abstract: *This study aims to analyze the effect of work-life balance and workload on job satisfaction, with organizational culture serving as an intervening variable among Generation Z employees in Solo Raya. Using a quantitative approach and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), the study evaluates both direct and indirect relationships between variables. This study involved 200 Gen Z employees in the Greater Solo Area. The findings of this study indicate that Gen Z employees who balance work demands with their personal lives tend to develop positive perceptions of their jobs, ultimately leading to higher levels of job satisfaction. Well-managed workloads directly enhance satisfaction by fostering psychological adaptation, including increased tolerance and a strengthened sense of competence, which in turn contributes to greater job satisfaction. A supportive, inclusive, and adaptive organizational culture—particularly one aligned with Gen Z's characteristics—amplifies the positive effects of work-life balance and mitigates the negative impact of workload, resulting in higher overall job satisfaction. The mediating effect of organizational culture provides insight into how individual factors do not solely shape job satisfaction among Gen Z employees but are also strongly influenced by the organizational context. These findings show that HR strategies should reflect the new generation's unique characteristics, and organizations should build an inclusive, supportive work culture that supports individual balance to improve employee satisfaction and retention.*

Keywords: *Generation Z; Job satisfaction; Organizational culture; Work-Life balance; Workload.*

1. Introduction

Consumer satisfaction has increased in technology-based and digital service sectors due to perceived ease of access and efficiency, but declined in sectors experiencing supply chain disruptions and declining service quality (Mittal et al., 2023). Consumer satisfaction indices across countries have exhibited an unstable trend, with increases in the number of companies capable of delivering superior customer experiences and declines due to mismatches between expectations and service performance, particularly in digital interactions (Suchánek & Činčalová, 2024). Consumer satisfaction tends to increase with improvements in service quality and perceived value, but can decline significantly when consumers encounter issues such as service delays, lack of responsiveness, or insecurity in digital transactions (Soeharso, 2024; Wulansari et al., 2024). Changes in consumer satisfaction are dynamic indicators influenced by shifts in the business environment, technological innovation, and a company's ability to meet and sustainably manage consumer expectations. Organizational culture plays

a strategic role in shaping customer satisfaction because the values, norms, and work practices an organization adopts directly influence the quality of service it provides. A strong, customer-oriented organizational culture can increase service effectiveness and ultimately drive customer satisfaction by improving the quality of service interactions at every stage of the customer experience (Metz et al., 2020). A work culture that supports service standards and employee performance contributes significantly to customer satisfaction, both directly and through the mediating role of employee performance in delivering more responsive, higher-quality service (Achmad et al., 2025). An organizational culture that emphasizes customer orientation and service quality has been shown to increase customer satisfaction, which, in turn, impacts customer loyalty, thereby becoming a key factor in business sustainability (Situmeang & Sugiyanto, 2024). Organizational culture functions not only as an internal value system but also as a strategic mechanism that determines how a company creates superior service experiences and consistently meets customer expectations.

The dynamics of Indonesia's labor market organizations have undergone fundamental changes with the entry of Generation Z. This generation, born between 1997 and 2012, demonstrates value orientations that differ from previous generations, particularly in terms of flexibility, psychological well-being, and the need for a supportive work environment (Deloitte, 2025; IDN Research Institute, 2024). Various studies indicate that Generation Z places strong emphasis on work–life balance as a primary factor in choosing and retaining employment (Yulianti, 2025). Studies in Generation Z show that they are more responsive to organizational cultures that are adaptive, collaborative, and open to innovation (Putri, 2024). Work–life balance is not limited to time management; it also encompasses control, flexibility, and organizational support that enable employees to achieve a better quality of life. Work–life balance plays a crucial role in enhancing job satisfaction, particularly among younger employees who prioritize flexibility and well-being (Kundi et al., 2021; Deloitte, 2025). A balance between work demands and personal life allows employees to maintain energy, motivation, and positive emotional states in performing their work, which in turn enhances job satisfaction (Robbins & Judge, 2019). Work–life balance significantly improves job satisfaction and well-being across countries, particularly among younger employees who prioritize flexibility and quality of life (Haar et al., 2019). Therefore, for organizations seeking to improve job satisfaction—especially among Generation Z—strategies to enhance WLB, such as flexible working hours, adequate leave, and psychosocial support, are highly relevant.

Amid rapid societal and technological development, employees are required to perform professionally while managing the various workloads imposed by organizations. Workload can increase psychological pressure and reduce job satisfaction if not properly managed. The excessive workload directly contributes to decreased job satisfaction through increased stress and work fatigue. Generation Z tends to be more sensitive to work-related stress and to experience dissatisfaction more quickly when workloads are poorly managed. This aligns with the characteristics of this generation, which prioritizes mental

health and personal well-being in the workplace. When workload increases without adequate organizational support, their job satisfaction declines significantly (Yulianti, 2025).

Excessive workload can reduce employees' sense of competence, hinder goal achievement, and create role conflict, thereby negatively affecting job satisfaction. Therefore, proportional workload management is essential to maintaining employee well-being and job satisfaction. A measured and challenging workload can enhance performance and satisfaction when supported by a healthy work environment. In this relationship, organizational culture plays an important role as a variable explaining the mechanism by which WLB and workload influence job satisfaction (Robbins & Judge, 2019). A supportive organizational culture can strengthen the positive impact of WLB on job satisfaction while simultaneously reducing the negative effects of workload. This is further supported by another study, which found that a positive organizational culture can mitigate the adverse effects of excessive workload and enhance overall job satisfaction, particularly among younger employees who value supportive and flexible work environments (Al-Ali et al., 2019).

Several studies have identified differences in the focus of analysis, the role of organizational culture variables, and the context of the relationships between the variables studied (Yulianti, 2025). They emphasize organizational culture as a factor that strengthens the relationship between work-life balance (WLB) and job satisfaction through emotional support and work flexibility, thus positioning culture as a key driver of positive employee perceptions of the organization. Other research posits a more direct relationship in which organizational culture and WLB simultaneously contribute to job satisfaction, without explicitly positioning culture as a moderating variable (Bataineh, 2019). This perspective aligns with another conceptual view of organizational culture as a buffer that reduces the negative impact of workload on job satisfaction through organizational norms and values (Robbins & Judge, 2019). Another study provides a contextual contribution by highlighting the characteristics of Generation Z, who are more sensitive to work pressure and thus require an inclusive organizational culture oriented toward emotional well-being (Putri, 2024). Based on this, the main differences between these studies lie in the position of organizational culture as a reinforcing variable between WLB and job satisfaction, as an independent variable with a direct influence, or as a buffering mechanism against the negative impact of workload, as well as the generational context and work environment dynamics that are the focus of each study.

Although numerous studies have examined work-life balance, workload, organizational culture, and job satisfaction, empirical research that specifically focuses on Generation Z employees in the Solo Raya region remains limited. Solo Raya has unique economic characteristics, encompassing MSMEs, creative industries, educational institutions, public organizations, and start-up companies, all of which require contextual understanding, as organizational dynamics in this region differ from those in metropolitan cities. Existing local studies on Generation Z work preferences in Solo Raya have largely focused on employer branding (Baasitha & Mathori, 2026), leaving a research gap

regarding the relationships among WLB, workload, organizational culture, and job satisfaction in this population. Theoretically, this research contributes to the literature on organizational behavior in an era dominated by younger generations in the workforce. In practice, it provides strategic insights for organizations in Solo Raya to design human resource policies that are responsive to Generation Z's needs.

2. Literature Review & Hypotheses Development

2.1. Literature Review

The grand theory underlying the variables of work-life balance, workload, organizational culture, and job satisfaction in Industrial and Organizational Psychology shows that the balance between work demands, the organizational environment, and the fulfillment of individual needs influences employee well-being and attitudes toward work. The concept of work-life balance can be explained through Boundary Theory and Role Theory, which emphasize balancing work roles with personal life to reduce role conflict and improve well-being. Workload is closely related to the Job Demand-Resources Theory, which posits that high job demands without adequate resources can reduce well-being and job satisfaction. Meanwhile, organizational culture is a system of values, norms, and basic assumptions that shape the behavior of organizational members and influence how individuals interpret their work. Various classical theories explain job satisfaction, the Two-Factor Theory and Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, which emphasize that satisfaction arises when individual needs are met, and work provides meaning and rewards. Thus, the integration of these four variables indicates that work-life balance, workload management, and a supportive organizational culture are important determinants of employee job satisfaction (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Schein, 2010; Herzberg, 1959; Maslow, 1943).

2.2. Hypotheses Development

In contemporary approaches, satisfaction is understood as a multidimensional construct encompassing cognitive and affective aspects, in which customers not only assess whether a product or service meets expectations but also experience specific emotions during consumption. Consumer satisfaction is strongly influenced by perceived value and the overall quality of the experience, particularly in the context of digital and technology-based services (Rather, 2021; Ali et al., 2021). Consumer satisfaction plays a key role in shaping loyalty and post-purchase behavior. High satisfaction drives repurchase intentions, positive word-of-mouth recommendations, and emotional attachment to a brand or company (Dam & Dam, 2021). Consumer satisfaction serves as a mediating variable between service quality, trust, and customer loyalty, thereby strengthening long-term relationships between companies and customers (Cuong, 2021).

Work-life balance refers to a condition in which individuals can adequately balance work and personal life demands, thereby preventing chronic role conflict (work-family conflict) or at least minimizing it (Bian et al., 2024). In contemporary studies, this balance is often measured through perceptions of job autonomy, schedule control, and support from the work environment. A meta-analysis shows that job resources such as schedule control, job autonomy, and workplace support are positively associated with perceptions of work-

family balance (Vaziri et al., 2022). Work–life balance helps reduce role conflict (work-to-family conflict) and psychological burden, thereby lowering stress and emotional exhaustion (Volk et al., 2024). This allows employees to bring positive energy and commitment to their work, which in turn enhances job satisfaction. Evidence from evaluations of the four-day workweek policy in a multi-country study: Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, the United Kingdom (UK), and the United States demonstrates that mediating factors include improved work ability, reduced sleep problems, and decreased physical and mental fatigue, which collectively increase well-being and job satisfaction (Fan et al., 2025).

H₁: Work–life balance has a positive effect on job satisfaction.

Workload refers to the amount of demands placed on individuals in performing their tasks, both quantitatively and qualitatively (Wang, 2024). In certain contexts, workload can generate positive effects when perceived as a challenge rather than a source of pressure. This occurs when adequate resources, organizational support, and opportunities for development accompany the workload. Job satisfaction is an emotional evaluation of one's job, influenced by both internal and external factors, such as job challenges, compensation, and the work environment (Hung et al., 2025). According to the challenge–hindrance stressor framework, challenge demands—such as high but achievable workloads—can enhance motivation, learning, and performance when supported by adequate resources and organizational support (Mazzola & Disselhorst, 2019; LePine et al., 2022). In such conditions, employees tend to perceive workload as meaningful and aligned with growth opportunities. Job satisfaction, on the other hand, is defined as an affective and cognitive evaluation of one's job, shaped by various internal and external factors including job characteristics, compensation, work environment, and interpersonal relationships (Judge et al., 2020; Ali & Anwar, 2021).

Empirical studies indicate that workload can positively contribute to job satisfaction when it is interpreted as a signal of the organization's trust and recognition of employees' competence and capability (Karatepe et al., 2020). This positive relationship is particularly evident in supportive organizational contexts where employees are provided with autonomy, feedback, and sufficient resources, enabling them to transform work demands into opportunities for achievement and professional development. Other empirical studies suggest that motivational support and a conducive work environment can transform workload into a work experience that promotes personal development, thereby contributing to higher job satisfaction (Putra et al., 2022).

H₂: Workload positively affects job satisfaction.

Organizational culture is defined as a set of values, beliefs, basic assumptions, and behavioral patterns that guide members' actions and interpretations of the work environment (Abdelrahman et al., 2025). Organizational culture can function as either a driver or a barrier to organizational effectiveness, particularly in innovation and strategic change. This is demonstrated in the study, which found that culture can serve as an enabler or inhibitor of ambidextrous innovation when organizational values align with strategic

goals (AlSaied & McLaughlin, 2024). A strong organizational culture not only shapes behavior but also creates internal consistency that influences overall performance. Another study explains that structured and supportive cultures provide direction for employees in performing their tasks and strengthen team cohesion (Tasyana et al., 2024). Adaptive cultures open to change tend to create work environments that foster creativity and competency development (Putra et al., 2024).

Work–life balance and workload interact in shaping organizational culture. When work–life balance is high, and workload is well managed, organizational culture develops in a supportive and harmonious direction. Novita et al. (2024) emphasize that work–life balance practices serve as a buffer, reducing the negative impact of workload on perceptions of organizational culture. Conversely, when workload is high and work–life balance is low, organizational culture becomes unhealthy, pressurized, and unsupportive of employee development. High job demands without balance foster harsh and unsustainable work cultures (Raditya & Supartha, 2023).

H₃: Work–life balance has a positive effect on organizational culture.

A conducive work environment is closely linked to individuals' ability to balance personal and work demands. Novita et al. (2024) found that organizations that offer work flexibility and support employees' personal needs tend to develop positive cultures because employees feel valued and appreciated. According to prior findings, work–life balance is a psychological factor influencing employees' perceptions of organizational culture (Anwar & Abrorry, 2024). When organizations provide facilities, policies, and supervisory support related to work–life balance, employees perceive the organizational culture as supportive and humane, thereby enhancing engagement and job satisfaction. High work engagement fosters a sense of belonging and commitment to organizational goals, reducing perceived work burden. Excessive workload increases stress and triggers burnout, particularly when organizations fail to provide adequate support or resources (Raditya & Supartha, 2023). A strong relationship between workload, stress, and declining performance quality (Lubis et al., 2024). These findings suggest that organizational cultures that fail to regulate workload proportionally may produce negative consequences for employee attitudes and behaviors.

H₄: Workload positively affects organizational culture.

Job satisfaction is a psychological state in which employees experience comfort, a sense of need fulfillment, and appreciation derived from their work. In modern work contexts, job satisfaction is shaped by daily work experiences characterized by job demands and organizational expectations. Therefore, job satisfaction cannot be separated from its influencing variables, particularly work–life balance and workload. Work–life balance and workload play essential roles in enhancing job satisfaction, especially when supported by a strong organizational culture (Nassani et al., 2024). Organizational culture represents a shared system of values, beliefs, and practices within an organization. Positive cultures—such as collaborative, supportive, and well-being-oriented cultures—strengthen the relationship between work–life balance and job satisfaction (Hui et al., 2026).

H₅: Work–life balance affects job satisfaction through organizational culture as an intervening variable.

AlSaied and McLaughlin (2024), in a UK study, demonstrated that healthy organizational cultures encourage innovation, open communication, and supportive work environments. Organizational culture bridges the relationship between work–life balance, workload, and job satisfaction. Putri et al. (2024) explain that work–life balance improves perceptions of organizational culture, thereby enhancing job satisfaction. Conversely, organizational culture also mitigates the negative effects of workload by providing structural and social support. Research in Toraja, Indonesia, has shown that strong organizational cultures reduce workload-related stress and increase psychological resilience, thereby helping employees remain satisfied with their jobs (Paembong et al., 2023). Accordingly, organizational culture serves as a crucial mediating variable in shaping employees' interpretations of work–life balance and workload in relation to job satisfaction.

H₆: Workload affects job satisfaction through organizational culture, which serves as an intervening variable.

3. Method

This study employs a quantitative, explanatory causal research design to examine the effects of work–life balance and workload on job satisfaction, as well as the mediating role of organizational culture. The quantitative approach was selected because the study aims to test relationships among variables and explain underlying mechanisms statistically. The research population consists of Generation Z employees (born between 1997 and 2012) working in the Solo Raya region (including Surakarta and surrounding areas) in the formal sector, such as government institutions, private companies, startups/SMEs, and educational institutions.

Sample size determination follows SEM/PLS-SEM recommendations, which recommend larger sample sizes for mediation testing to ensure estimation stability and construct validity. Therefore, this study aims to recruit at least 200 respondents to support PLS-SEM analysis and mediation bootstrapping tests. The minimum sample size of $n = 200$ is also consistent with common practices in organizational quantitative research involving moderately parameterized models (Hair et al., 2018). Purposive sampling was employed to select organizations meeting the criteria (with sufficient Generation Z employees), followed by convenience sampling at the individual level (employees willing to complete the questionnaire during the data collection period). This pragmatic approach is well-suited to regional contexts such as Solo Raya and is commonly used in organizational studies targeting specific generational subpopulations.

The data in this study were collected through a questionnaire survey distributed to respondents in person and online using platforms such as Google Forms. The use of questionnaires was chosen because they are effective for collecting large amounts of data and allow for structured measurement of respondents' perceptions. Work–life balance is an individual's ability to balance the demands of work and personal life, with the indicators used including the balance of time and satisfaction between work and personal life, and the

ability to manage work-personal life conflicts (Sutanto et al., 2024). Indicators of workload include the amount of work to be completed, time pressure (deadlines), task complexity, and mental and physical job demands (Lesener et al., 2019). Indicators of organizational culture include clear organizational values and norms, communication patterns within the organization, teamwork, innovation, and openness to change (AlSaied & McLaughlin, 2024). Job satisfaction is an individual's overall satisfaction with their work. Indicators used include job satisfaction, compensation satisfaction, and career development opportunities (Spector, 2022).

4. Result and Discussion

The discussion of findings aims to provide a comprehensive explanation of empirical results concerning the effects of work-life balance and workload on job satisfaction, with organizational culture as an intervening variable among Generation Z employees in Solo Raya. This study involved 200 Generation Z employees in the Solo Raya area. Respondent characteristics were analyzed based on gender, age, and work experience.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Respondent Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
a. Male	91	45.50
b. Female	109	54.50
Age		
a. 14 – 25 years	96	48.00
b. 26 – 29 years	104	52.00
Work Experience		
a. 1 – 5 years	108	54.00
b. 6 – 10 years	92	46.00

Table 2. Validity and Reliability Test

Variable	Indicator	Loading Factor	Descript	Cronbach Alpha	Results
Work-Life Balance	WLB1	0.822	Valid	0.816	Reliable
	WLB2	0.853	Valid		
	WLB3	0.724	Valid		
Workload	WL1	0.805	Valid	0.793	Reliable
	WL2	0.832	Valid		
	WL3	0.706	Valid		
	WL4	0.785	Valid		
Organizational Culture	OC1	0.846	Valid	0.858	Reliable
	OC2	0.876	Valid		
	OC3	0.853	Valid		
	OC4	0.716	Valid		
	OC5	0.796	Valid		
Job Satisfaction	JS1	0.883	Valid	0.835	Reliable
	JS2	0.736	Valid		
	JS3	0.866	Valid		

The composition of respondents indicates that participation among Generation Z employees in Solo Raya is relatively balanced by gender, with women slightly more dominant than men (Table 1). This indicates that, in the context of this study, perceptions of work-life balance, workload, and job satisfaction are representative of both genders, so

the results are not biased towards any particular gender. By age, respondents are predominantly from the more mature age group within Generation Z (26–29 years). This indicates that most respondents likely have more stable work experience and a clearer understanding of the work environment than younger age groups. Thus, their assessments of job satisfaction and organizational culture tend to be more reflective and grounded in actual experiences, rather than in initial job expectations. In terms of work experience, the majority of respondents have relatively short- to medium-length experience (1–5 years). This condition reflects the typical characteristics of Generation Z as early-career employees, who are still in the stage of career exploration and adjustment to job demands. The implication is that perceptions of workload and work-life balance are very crucial because, in this phase, individuals tend to be more sensitive to work pressure and work-life balance.

Based on the validity test results, all indicators in the Work–Life Balance, Workload, Organizational Culture, and Job Satisfaction variables have factor loadings above 0.70; all items are declared valid and able to reflect the constructs being measured. The reliability test results show that all variables have Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.70, indicating reliability or consistency.

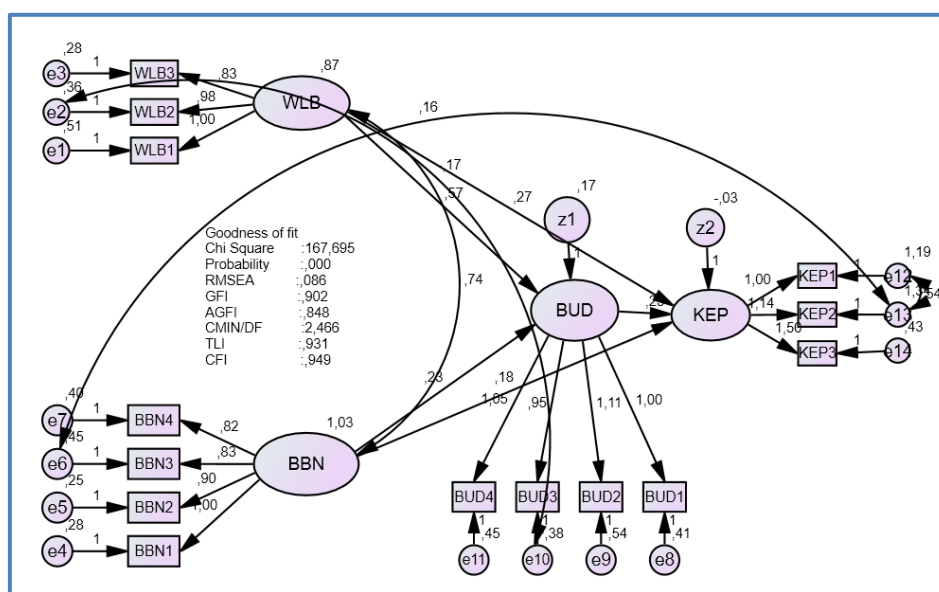


Figure 1. Model Testing Results

Table 3. Goodness of Fit Model

No.	Goodness of Fit	Cut off Value	Result	Description
1.	Chi-Square (χ^2)	Low value	167.695 (p = 0.000)	Marginal Fit
2.	CMIN/DF	≤ 3.00	2.466	Good Fit
3.	CFI	≥ 0.95	0.949	Marginal Fit
4.	TLI	≥ 0.95	0.931	Marginal Fit
5.	RMSEA	≤ 0.08	0.080	Good Fit
6.	GFI	≥ 0.90	0.902	Good Fit
7.	AGFI	≥ 0.90	0.849	Marginal Fit

The results of the model goodness-of-fit tests indicate that the chi-square statistic falls into the marginal fit category ($\chi^2 = 167.695$; $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). However, other fit indices demonstrate good model fit, including CMIN/DF with a value of 2.466 (< 3.0), CFI with a value of 0.949 (approaching the recommended threshold), RMSEA with a value of 0.08 (≤ 0.08), TLI with a value of 0.931 (approaching the recommended value), GFI with a value of 0.902 (> 0.90), and AGFI with a value of 0.849 (approaching 0.90). Overall, these goodness-of-fit results indicate that the proposed research model is acceptable, thereby allowing for hypothesis testing.

Table 4. Hypothesis Testing Results

Relationship Between Variables	Estimate	C.R.	p-value	Result
WLB → JS	0.265	2.968	0.003**	H ₁ : Supported
Workload → JS	0.181	3.212	0.001**	H ₂ : Supported
WLB → OC	0.567	5.763	0.000**	H ₃ : Supported
Workload → OC	0.233	2.878	0.004**	H ₄ : Supported
WLB → OC → JS	0.142	2.362	0.018*	H ₅ : Supported
Workload → OC → JS	0.058	1.923	0.053	H ₆ : Rejected

**Sig, 1%; * Sig < 5%

The results indicate that WLB has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction (**H₁: Supported**). This finding suggests that the better the balance between work demands and personal life, the higher the job satisfaction among Generation Z employees. This pattern is highly relevant given the characteristics of younger generations, who prioritize well-being, flexibility, and clear work boundaries when choosing and maintaining employment even when financial compensation is not the highest in the market (IDN Research Institute, 2024; Deloitte, 2025). Generation Z employees tend to reject rigid work cultures characterized by long working hours. Instead, they value flexible work arrangements, opportunities for growth without sacrificing personal life, and organizations that actively support mental well-being (Yulianti, 2025).

From a theoretical perspective, these findings support the role conflict model, which posits that an imbalance between work and family roles generates role conflict, ultimately reducing job satisfaction (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). When such conflict is minimized through flexible working-time policies, clear work-hour boundaries, mental health-friendly leave policies, and organizational cultures that support work-life balance, employees develop more positive job perceptions, leading to increased job satisfaction. Thus, this study not only validates previous empirical findings but also extends the understanding that work-life balance is a critical determinant of job satisfaction for Generation Z—a workforce segment that is increasingly dominating organizational structures (Deas & Coetzee, 2021).

Recent research shows that work-life balance directly contributes to increased well-being and job satisfaction, especially among younger generations who have a high preference for work flexibility (Fan et al., 2025). Furthermore, a study by Inegbedion (2024) also confirmed that work-life balance is a strong predictor of employee satisfaction and commitment in modern organizations. Conversely, workload has also been shown to positively affect job satisfaction, albeit with a smaller coefficient than work-life balance.

These results suggest that workload is not always negative but can have a positive effect when perceived as a challenge that encourages achievement and personal development. Within the framework of Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory, workload can function as a challenge demand that increases motivation and work engagement when supported by adequate resources (Bakker & Demerouti, 2021). However, it is important to note that these positive effects are contextual, as excessive workload without adequate support can lead to burnout and lower job satisfaction (Hu & Zhao, 2022).

Workload has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction (**H₂: Supported**). This finding demonstrates that workload does not always generate negative pressure; under certain conditions, it can serve as a motivational driver that enhances job satisfaction. This pattern is consistent with several empirical studies showing that workload can increase job satisfaction when it is perceived as a challenge that offers opportunities for growth, achievement, and recognition of individual competence (Hakim, 2025; Wang et al., 2022). Theoretically, these findings strengthen the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) model, which posits that job demands can lead to two different outcomes: exhaustion or motivation. In the context of this study, workload appears to predominantly activate the motivational pathway due to sufficient job resources, such as autonomy, task clarity, and support from supervisors and colleagues. When such resources are available, workload serves as a challenge that increases work engagement, which, in turn, directly enhances job satisfaction (Scholze, 2024).

Additionally, the Challenge–Hindrancer Stressor Framework suggests that workload perceived as a challenge stimulates psychological energy, creativity, and feelings of competence, thereby contributing to higher job satisfaction (Horan et al., 2020). Recent studies show that eustress is positively correlated with job satisfaction and performance, owing to the psychological experiences of achievement and meaningful work (Hakim, 2025). Overall, these findings suggest that Generation Z employees in Solo Raya tend to respond adaptively to challenging workload, particularly when organizations provide supportive environments and flexibility in work arrangements. This reinforces the argument that workload is not merely a risk factor but can also serve as a driver of job satisfaction when balanced by a positive organizational culture and sufficient job resources (Hu & Zhao, 2022).

The test results show that work-life balance has a positive and significant effect on organizational culture (**H₃: Supported**). This finding aligns with the social exchange theory, in which the reciprocal relationship between employees and the organization plays a crucial role in shaping collective behaviors and values. When organizations provide flexibility and support for work-life balance, employees respond by increasing their engagement and contribution to the organizational culture. Research shows that reducing work hours and improving work-life balance contribute to improved well-being and healthier collective work dynamics (Fan et al., 2025). Organizations that systematically implement work-life balance policies will foster a culture that is more inclusive, collaborative, and adaptable to change. This reinforces the idea that work-life balance is not merely an individual factor but also a strategic element in shaping modern

organizational culture (AlSaied & McLaughlin, 2024). These results align with studies by Putri (2024) and Robbins and Judge (2019), which emphasize that daily work experiences shape employees' perceptions of organizational culture. When organizations support work-life balance and avoid excessive job demands, employees perceive the organizational culture as supportive, humane, and modern—an aspect that is particularly important for Generation Z. This finding aligns with research by AlSaied and McLaughlin (2024), which states that modern organizational culture is strongly influenced by management practices oriented toward work-life balance and innovation. Meanwhile, workload also influences organizational culture, indicating that work demands can shape work patterns, norms, and interactions within an organization. This suggests that the influence of work-life balance on job satisfaction occurs not only directly but also through the formation of a supportive organizational culture. A positive organizational culture can enhance work-life balance by fostering a supportive, collaborative work environment that promotes employee well-being. Research by Haar et al. (2020) shows that work-life balance indirectly affects job satisfaction through organizational factors such as culture and the work environment. This finding is further supported by a recent study showing that organizational culture plays a significant role in improving the quality of employees' work experiences (Inegbedion, 2024).

The test results showed that workload had a positive and significant effect on organizational culture (**H₄: Supported**). Although the effect was not as significant as work-life balance, these results still demonstrate that workload contributes to shaping organizational culture. This indicates that how an organization manages workload can influence interaction patterns, work norms, and team dynamics. From the perspective of Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory, workload can function as a "challenging demand" that drives performance and engagement when balanced with adequate resources. A structured and challenging workload can foster a productive, disciplined, and results-oriented work culture. Lesener et al. (2019) and subsequent studies over the past five years have shown that optimally managed workload can increase engagement and strengthen organizational work systems. However, this positive relationship is conditional: if the workload exceeds an individual's capacity without adequate support, it can cause stress and undermine organizational culture. Recent studies have shown that an unbalanced workload tends to create a toxic work culture and reduce the quality of social interactions in the workplace (Hu & Zhao, 2022). These findings indicate that employees' daily experiences, especially regarding work-life balance and perceived workload, are key determinants in shaping perceptions of organizational culture. This supports Putri's (2024) argument that perceptions of leadership and everyday work practices significantly influence how young employees evaluate organizational culture, particularly in organizations that demonstrate humanistic values through well-being-oriented policies.

Robbins and Judge (2019) explain that perceptions of organizational culture are shaped by employees' direct interactions with organizational structures, rules, and daily work experiences. Experiences of high workload may signal an unsupportive, result-oriented culture that insufficiently considers human aspects, especially for younger

generations who are highly sensitive to mental health issues. Among Generation Z, this phenomenon is particularly pronounced due to their expectations for psychologically healthy, flexible, and egalitarian work environments. Organizations that provide high levels of work–life balance are perceived as modern and human-centered. In contrast, organizations characterized by heavy workload tend to be viewed as authoritarian, conservative, and misaligned with digital-generation values. These findings underscore that organizational culture is not determined solely by formal corporate values but is strongly influenced by employees' everyday work experiences (Inegbedion, 2024).

The test results show that organizational culture significantly mediates the effect of work-life balance on job satisfaction (**H₅: Supported**). This indicates partial mediation, in which work-life balance not only directly impacts job satisfaction but also does so through the formation of a positive organizational culture. Research by Haar et al. (2020) shows that work-life balance significantly impacts job satisfaction by improving the quality of the work environment. Furthermore, a recent study confirmed that a supportive organizational culture strengthens the positive effect of work-life balance on job satisfaction by fostering a psychologically safe, collaborative work environment (Inegbedion, 2024). This demonstrates the crucial role of organizational culture in optimizing the impact of work-life balance policies on employee outcomes.

Organizational culture functions as a psychological context that converts work experiences into affective evaluations (Spector, 2022). When organizations provide strong work–life balance through flexible schedules, manageable workload boundaries, and support for personal activities, Generation Z employees develop positive perceptions of organizational values and climate. These positive perceptions strengthen the belief that the organization embodies a supportive, humane, and modern culture, which in turn facilitates higher job satisfaction. This indicates that work–life balance enhances job satisfaction not only directly but also indirectly, through perceptions of organizational culture as a psychological frame that shapes work experiences. These findings align with organizational climate theory, which suggests that perceptions of organizational values and practices can amplify the effects of situational factors on work attitudes (Robbins & Judge, 2019).

The test results showed that the indirect effect of workload on job satisfaction through organizational culture was not significant (**H₆: Rejected**), although it approached the significance threshold. This indicates that organizational culture does not act as a strong mediator in this relationship. Theoretically, this result can be explained by the fact that workload has a more direct influence on individual psychological conditions, such as work stress, exhaustion, and burnout, than it does on organizational culture. Within the JD-R theory framework, workload is often categorized as a job demand that directly affects strain and job satisfaction. Research by Bakker and Demerouti (2021) confirms that job demands have a direct pathway to well-being, not always mediated by organizational factors.

Although organizational culture can increase job satisfaction, the negative effects of high workloads often outweigh it and cannot be fully compensated for by organizational

culture (Kundi et al., 2021). Therefore, these results indicate that interventions to address workload should be implemented directly, such as workload and stress management, rather than solely by strengthening organizational culture. High workloads tend to directly affect individuals' psychological states, such as stress and fatigue, which ultimately affect job satisfaction. Research by Kundi et al. (2021) shows that job demands directly influence employee well-being and performance, and are not always mediated by organizational factors. Therefore, workload management needs to be implemented directly through policies related to task distribution, time management, and work support. Overall, this study confirms that work-life balance is the most dominant factor in increasing job satisfaction, both directly and indirectly through organizational culture. Meanwhile, workload plays a more complex role, with its impact positive or negative depending on how it is managed.

5. Conclusion

The results of this study indicate that employee job satisfaction does not develop by chance, but rather results from a systematic interaction between individual and organizational factors. Work-life balance is the dominant determinant, consistently increasing job satisfaction, both directly and by fostering a positive organizational culture. This finding confirms that work-life balance is no longer merely an optional policy, but a strategic necessity for modern organizations to maintain employee well-being and productivity. Workload can have a positive impact when perceived as a challenge that drives performance, but it can also decrease job satisfaction if not managed appropriately. The finding reinforces that although workload influences organizational culture, it cannot increase job satisfaction through organizational culture. Thus, the effect of workload on job satisfaction tends to be direct and more sensitive to individual psychological conditions than to structural organizational factors. Organizational culture has been shown to play a strategic role as a reinforcing mechanism, particularly in bridging the influence of work-life balance on job satisfaction. A supportive, collaborative, and adaptive organizational culture can strengthen the positive impact of organizational policies on employee work experiences. However, this mediating role is not universal, as it does not apply to all relationships among variables, such as the relationship between workload and job satisfaction.

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results. First, the quantitative approach, with an explanatory causal design within the framework of industrial and organizational psychology, was cross-sectional, thus incapable of capturing the dynamics of relationships between variables over time and limiting the ability to draw strong causal conclusions. Future research is recommended to employ a longitudinal design or a mixed-methods approach to gain a deeper understanding of causal relationships and the dynamics of variables over time. Second, although the sample size met the recommendations for PLS-SEM analysis, limitations in the distribution of respondents across sectors and organizational sizes may also affect the generalizability of the findings. Therefore, further research is recommended to use a longitudinal design and

a mixed-methods approach, and to expand the scope by adding variables such as leadership and psychological well-being, especially for women (Bian & Sukor, 2024).

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