



Research Article

Work Environment, Emotional Intelligence, and Motivation Affecting Gen Z Work Productivity in Jakarta

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Abstract

This study examines how work environment, emotional intelligence, and motivation affect employee productivity among Generation Z in Jakarta. Concerns regarding relatively low and inconsistent productivity among younger employees highlight the importance of identifying key factors that influence their performance. However, previous studies have largely examined these variables independently, with limited emphasis on their combined effects on Generation Z employees. This study addresses this gap by integrating organizational and psychological factors into a single analytical model. A quantitative survey was conducted involving 115 Generation Z employees in Jakarta. Data were gathered using systematically designed questionnaires and subsequently processed and examined through the Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach. The findings indicate that work environment, emotional intelligence, and motivation each demonstrates a positive and statistically significant effect on work productivity. Simultaneously, these variables play a role in enhancing productivity across different work settings. This study provides empirical evidence that improving work environment quality, strengthening emotional intelligence, and enhancing motivation are critical factors in increasing the productivity of Generation Z employees.

Keywords: Work environment, emotional intelligence, work motivation, work productivity, Generation Z.

JEL Classification: J24, M12, D91

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1. Introduction

Work productivity has become a central and strategic issue in both global and national economic development. The United Nations, through its *World Population Prospects (2024)*, reports that the the global population is estimated to be approximately 8.2 billion individuals, with more than 65% classified within the productive age group of 15–64 years. This demographic structure indicates that the world is currently experiencing a peak phase of productive age population, a period in which the majority of individuals possess the potential to actively contribute to economic growth and development.

However, the existence of a large productive age population does not automatically translate into high levels of productivity. Without adequate human resource quality, supportive working conditions, and effective organizational systems, this demographic advantage may instead become a latent burden rather than a major contributor to economic progress.

In the context of Indonesia, a large population size presents a significant opportunity in the form of a demographic bonus. This condition should ideally serve as a catalyst for accelerating economic growth and enhancing national competitiveness. Nevertheless, various reports suggest that labor productivity in Indonesia remains relatively low compared to other countries within the ASEAN region. This issue poses a critical challenge, particularly for urban economic centers such as DKI Jakarta, which functions as the hub of business activities, investment, and employment opportunities. As a metropolitan area, Jakarta is characterized by a high concentration of individuals within the productive age group, especially Generation Z those born between 1997 and 2007 who are now entering or have recently entered the workforce. Despite their growing presence, this cohort has not yet consistently demonstrated optimal levels of productivity, raising concerns about how their potential can be effectively developed and utilized.

Generation Z exhibits distinctive characteristics that differentiate them from previous generations, particularly in terms of work behavior, communication patterns, and responses to workplace challenges. Having grown up in a highly digital and technologically advanced environment, they tend to be more adaptive to innovation and rapid change. However, this generation is also more vulnerable to psychological pressures, including stress, burnout, and fluctuating work motivation. These tendencies suggest that improving their work productivity requires a more comprehensive approach that goes beyond technical competencies. It necessitates attention to psychological well-being, emotional regulation, and environmental support systems that can foster stability and engagement in the workplace.

A conducive work environment plays a fundamental role in shaping employee productivity. This environment encompasses not only physical aspects, such as workspace design, facilities, and safety, but also non-physical dimensions, including organizational culture, interpersonal relationships, leadership support, and communication climate. A supportive and well-structured work environment can enhance employees' sense of comfort, security, and belonging, which has a positive effect on influences their performance and productivity. In addition, emotional intelligence represents an essential individual capability, referring to a person's ability to recognize, understand, manage, and regulate their own emotions as well as those of others. Employees with higher levels of emotional intelligence are generally better able to manage work-related pressures, maintain positive relationships, and adapt to dynamic work demands.

Work motivation is another critical factor that significantly contributes to productivity. It serves as an internal force that guides individual efforts, persistence, and commitment toward achieving organizational goals. For Generation Z employees, who are often in the early stages of their careers, maintaining consistent motivation can be particularly challenging due to uncertainties, career exploration, and evolving personal expectations. Therefore, strengthening work motivation is essential to ensure sustained productivity and long-term performance improvement.

Considering the strategic role of Generation Z as a future driver of economic productivity, it is crucial to understand the factors that influence their work performance in a comprehensive manner. Previous studies have demonstrated that work environment, emotional intelligence, and work motivation each have a positive impact on employee productivity. However, most existing research tends to examine these variables in isolation or focuses on different generational groups, limiting the ability to capture their combined effects, particularly within the context of Generation Z.

Furthermore, empirical studies that simultaneously investigate these three variables among Generation Z employees, especially in urban settings such as DKI Jakarta, remain relatively limited. This is notable given that Jakarta presents a highly dynamic work environment characterized by intense competition, rapid organizational changes, and complex professional demands, all of which may significantly influence the productivity of young workers. The lack of integrative research that combines organizational factors (work environment) and psychological factors (emotional intelligence and motivation) highlights a clear research gap.

Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by providing empirical evidence on the combined influence of work environment, emotional intelligence, and work motivation on the work productivity of Generation Z employees in Jakarta. By employing a more integrated approach, this study aims to deliver valuable insights for organizations and policymakers in designing effective, adaptive, and sustainable strategies to enhance employee productivity, particularly among younger generations who will serve as a key factor in shaping the future workforce.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis

The work environment plays a crucial role in determining employee productivity. A conducive work environment, both in terms of physical aspects such as lighting, cleanliness, and layout, and nonphysical aspects such as work relationships, communication, and superior support, plays a crucial role in creating employee comfort and psychological stability. A good work environment enables employees to work with focus, efficiency, and minimal distractions.

Theoretically, Sedarmayanti (2017) argues that the workplace environment has physical dimensions, namely lighting, layout, and cleanliness, and non-physical dimensions, namely social relationships and organizational culture. Afandi (2018) defines the work environment as the setting in which employees perform their daily activities. A conducive work environment can help employees perform well and achieve optimal results. The work environment is seen as a strategic tool for improving employee well-being and performance sustainably.

Empirical research demonstrates the consistency of these findings. Purnomo and Fatimah (2021) demonstrated that a supportive employee productivity is significantly affected by the conditions of the work environment. Duru and Shimawua (2019) and Valianti and Hamzah (2022) emphasized that improving workplace conditions directly impacts employee performance and output. Furthermore, Hidayatullah (2023) and Enny (2019) also emphasized that "a conducive work environment can improve employee performance and motivation because individuals feel valued and supported by their surroundings." Emotional intelligence can be understood as the competence to perceive emotional cues and handle emotional experiences effectively within oneself and in relationships with others. In the current dynamic and highly competitive workplace, emotional intelligence has become an essential factor influencing work behavior, adaptability, and resilience to work pressure.

Goleman (2016) stated that work success is determined not only by intellectual intelligence but also by emotional intelligence, which encompasses self-awareness, emotional control, empathy, and social skills. Individuals who are characterized by a well-developed level of emotional intelligence are often observed to be more competent of coping with stress in the workplace, maintain interpersonal relationships, and maintain work motivation, thus positively impacting productivity.

Several previous studies support this relationship. Milinia and Andy (2023) found a significant the connection between emotional intelligence and employee productivity. Kurnia (2020) emphasized that "an individual's the ability to identify, understand, manage, and control personal and other people's emotions plays a role in increasing motivation and work enthusiasm". Research by Milinia and Andy (2023) and Mayer and Salovey (2017) also shows that "emotional intelligence positively contributes to increased work productivity and effectiveness". Work motivation can be viewed as a driving force that arises from both personal conditions and environmental influences,

shaping how individuals direct their efforts toward organizational objectives. When motivational levels are strong, employees tend to show greater dedication, persistence, and accountability in their tasks, which contributes to improved productivity.

Mathis and Jackson, as cited in Bangun (2019), define motivation as an inner desire that drives an individual to act in order to achieve specific goals. Thus, motivation is closely related to how individuals strive to achieve their goals and how others can influence that behavior. Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory explains that fulfilling physiological needs through self-actualization will encourage individuals to work more productively. Motivated employees tend to demonstrate consistent performance and are results-oriented.

Empirical research shows consistent results. Jayanto (2020) states that motivation is the effort and drive that arises from within an individual or from the surrounding environment to achieve preplanned and formulated goals, thus leading to the achievement of set objectives. Studies by Amaliyah and Amin (2023) as well as Pitriani and Mubarok (2023) demonstrate that work motivation significantly enhances employee work productivity. This finding is further reinforced by research on the relationship between rewards and motivation, which indicates that the provision of rewards is able to improve work productivity. The work environment, emotional intelligence, and work motivation are interrelated factors within the human resource management framework. A conducive work environment supports employee comfort and wellbeing, emotional intelligence helps individuals manage work pressure and social relationships, while work motivation drives consistent effort and performance.

Several studies show that the combination of environmental, psychological, and motivational factors has a stronger influence on work productivity. According to Sutrisno (2019), productivity is a measure of productive efficiency that describes the comparison between output and input. Research by Valianti and Hamzah (2022) indicates that work productivity indicators include capacity, increased output, work morale, personal development, and quality. Tambunan et al. (2021) added efficiency as a crucial element in measuring labor productivity.

A supportive work environment is believed to enhance employees emotional stability and motivation consequently resulting in higher productivity. Furthermore, individuals with strong emotional intelligence are more capable of managing workplace challenges, thereby maintaining their motivation and performance. Thus, the interaction between work environment, emotional intelligence, and work motivation serves as an important factor in shaping employee productivity.

3. Data and Method

This study adopts a quantitative research method with an associative approach to analyze the effect of the work environment, emotional intelligence, and work motivation on work productivity. A quantitative approach is considered appropriate as it enables hypothesis testing and the statistical examination of relationships among variables (Sugiyono, 2019). The associative design is specifically used to analyze both the individual and combined effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable.

The study was conducted in DKI Jakarta over a three-month period, from October to December 2025. The target population included Generation Z individuals born between 1997 and 2007 who were actively employed and had work experience in Jakarta. Due to the unknown population size, the minimum sample size was calculated using Cochran's formula, yielding 96 respondents. The sampling technique applied was purposive sampling, with specific criteria including individuals who belong to Generation Z and are currently working in Jakarta. This method was selected to ensure that the respondents are relevant to the research objectives however, this could result in selection bias, given that the sample may not fully reflect the overall population of Generation Z employees.

Data were collected through a web-based survey using Google Forms. All variables were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The measurement items for each construct were adapted from previously validated studies to ensure content validity. The independent variables in this study are work environment, emotional intelligence, and work motivation, while work productivity serves as the dependent variable.

Data analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach with the support of SmartPLS 4 software. The procedure commenced with an assessment of the measurement model (outer model), which included evaluations of indicator reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity using the Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) ratio, along with internal consistency reliability. The structural model (inner model) was then evaluated by analyzing the coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), and the significance of the proposed relationships through a bootstrapping resampling technique. In addition, model fit was assessed using the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), where values below 0.08 indicate an acceptable level of fit.

4. Results

This study involved a total of 115 respondents, consisting of Generation Z individuals born between 1997–2007 and domiciled in DKI Jakarta. Based on gender, respondents were dominated by males (55.7%), followed by females (44.3%). Respondents aged 25 years accounted for the largest proportion of the sample, indicating that most participants were in the early career stage. Based on educational background, senior high school was the highest level of education attained by most respondents and held undergraduate degrees. Respondents were predominantly domiciled in South Jakarta, reflecting the concentration of employment opportunities in this area.

All research variables, as reflected in the descriptive analysis, fall into the moderate to good category. The work environment variable recorded an average value of 3.87, suggesting that respondents generally view their work environment as supportive. Emotional intelligence also recorded an average score of 3.87, suggesting that respondents possess adequate emotional regulation and interpersonal skills. Work motivation achieved a mean score of 3.88, reflecting a relatively strong intrinsic and extrinsic motivation among Generation Z workers. Meanwhile, work productivity achieved the highest mean value of 3.89 suggesting that respondents generally themselves as having a good level of work discipline and task completion.

The outer model evaluation demonstrates that all indicators satisfy the convergent validity criteria, as evidenced by outer loading values above 0.70 and AVE values exceeding 0.50. Evidence of discriminant validity was also observed from the comparison of indicator cross-loadings and the HTMT ratios, with each HTMT figure remaining under the 0.90 cut-off point. Moreover, the measurement the constructs demonstrated satisfactory reliability, as both Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values exceeded the recommended thresholds of 0.70 indicating that the measurement instruments demonstrated satisfactory reliability.

The assessment of the structural model reveals that the R^2 value for work productivity reaches 0.765, which indicates that the work environment, emotional intelligence, and work motivation collectively explain 76.5% of work productivity. Effect size analysis reveals that emotional intelligence has a strong effect, while work environment and work motivation exhibit moderate effects on employee productivity.

The results of hypothesis testing indicate that work environment ($\beta = 0.286$; $p < 0.05$), emotional intelligence ($\beta = 0.419$; $p < 0.05$), and work motivation ($\beta = 0.331$; $p < 0.05$). All variables demonstrated a positive and significant impact on employee productivity, indicating that all hypothesized relationships are accepted.

The findings demonstrate that a supportive work environment enhances productivity by fostering comfort, security, and positive interpersonal relationships. Emotional intelligence emerged as the strongest predictor, highlighting the importance of emotional regulation and empathy in managing

work demands among Generation Z employees. Work motivation also significantly contributes to productivity, emphasizing the role of recognition, personal growth, and intrinsic drive. These results are consistent with previous studies, reinforcing the relevance of psychological and environmental factors in improving work productivity among young workers.

Table 1. Results of Hypothesis Testing

Variabel	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics	P values
XI > Y	0,286	0,286	0,062	4,615	0,000
X2 > Y	0,419	0,420	0,045	9,272	0,000
X3 > Y	0,331	0,330	0,053	6,218	0,000

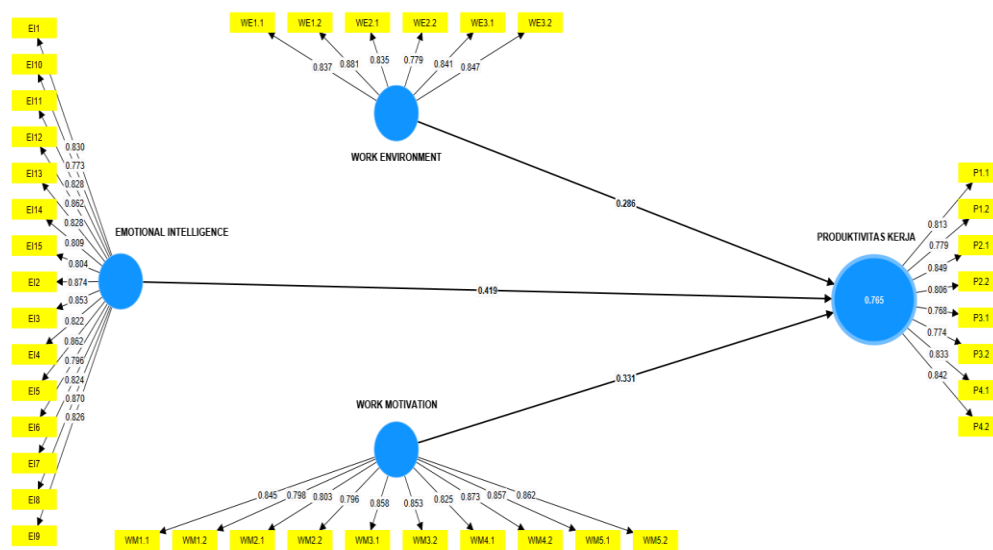


Figure 1. Empirical Results Model

5. Discussion

This study explores how the work environment, emotional intelligence, and work motivation are associated with the productivity of Generation Z employees in Jakarta. The analysis reveals that all three factors exert positive and statistically meaningful effects on productivity, whether assessed separately or together within the model.

The research findings show that a supportive work environment contributes to higher productivity. A safe, comfortable, and well-managed workplace helps employees focus on their tasks and perform more effectively. However, the relatively lower perception of harmonious coworker relationships suggests that interpersonal aspects still require attention to further enhance productivity. This may indicate that, despite adequate physical working conditions, social interaction and team cohesion remain underdeveloped. As a result, limited collaboration and knowledge sharing may hinder employees from achieving optimal performance.

Emotional intelligence was identified as the most influential predictor of work productivity. This finding emphasizes the significance of employees effectively managing work-related demands through the recognition, regulation, and application of emotions. Although respondents generally demonstrate good emotional intelligence, the lower score related to maximizing personal potential indicates a need for better self-awareness and emotional self-regulation to achieve optimal performance.

Work motivation also exerts a significant influence on productivity. The strong desire of respondents to develop their skills reflects high intrinsic motivation. Nevertheless, the perception that opinions are not fully appreciated by supervisors may reduce motivation levels. Recognition and appreciation from leaders play a crucial role in maintaining employee motivation and productivity.

Overall, these findings emphasize that improving productivity among Generation Z employees need not only a supportive work environment but also high levels of emotional intelligence and consistent work motivation. These findings are consistent with the study's objectives and underscore the significance of human-centered management practices in enhancing employee productivity.

This finding indicates that a conducive work environment not only directly improves productivity but also creates conditions that support employees' psychological well-being. As a result, employees are more engaged and motivated to perform their tasks effectively. These findings are in line with prior research, indicating that workplace conditions play a crucial role in influencing employee performance.

6. Conclusion

This research investigates the effect of the work environment, emotional intelligence, and work motivation on the work productivity of Generation Z employees born between 1997–2007. A quantitative research design was utilized, applying the Partial Least Squares-based Structural Equation Modeling technique. The empirical information was obtained from 115 participants located in Jakarta. The results indicate that all proposed relationships are statistically significant and provide a comprehensive explanation of work productivity of Generation Z employees.

The quality of the measurement component can be considered robust. Indicators displayed strong levels of convergent validity, as indicated by outer loading values that consistently exceeded 0.80. Evidence supporting discriminant validity was also observed, alongside solid construct consistency. Composite Reliability coefficients for every construct were recorded above 0.90, while AVE values surpassed 0.60, indicating that the instruments employed in this study satisfy established standards of validity and reliability.

Within the structural component, emotional intelligence emerged as the most influential predictor of work productivity. Work motivation was identified as the second strongest contributor, followed by work environment, with both variables also demonstrating significant effects. The model demonstrates a strong explanatory power, indicating that a substantial proportion of the variance in work productivity can be jointly explained by these three factors, with the remaining variance influenced by variables beyond the scope of the model.

The managerial implications suggest that greater attention should be directed toward emotional intelligence development, motivation enhancement, and the establishment of a positive work environment to support productivity among Generation Z workers.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, organizations are advised to prioritize the development of emotional intelligence, which can be accomplished through targeted training programs that emphasize self-awareness, emotion regulation, and social skills. Enhancing emotional intelligence is expected to help Generation Z employees manage work pressure and optimize their potential more effectively.

Furthermore, companies should strengthen work motivation by implementing fair reward systems, recognizing employee contributions, and encouraging employee involvement in decision-making. Leaders are encouraged to foster open communication and provide appreciation to increase employee engagement and motivation.

Although the work environment shows a relatively smaller effect, it remains a significant supporting factor. A safe, comfortable, and collaborative workplace should be maintained, particularly by improving interpersonal relationships among employees to minimize workplace conflict.

To further enhance the practical relevance of these findings, these strategies can be translated into more operational and measurable actions through the use of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). For instance, improvements in the work environment can be monitored through employee satisfaction scores, workplace comfort indices, and internal collaboration ratings.

Emotional intelligence development can be evaluated through indicators such as reductions in workplace conflict, improvements in peer feedback scores, and participation in training programs. Meanwhile, work motivation can be tracked through employee engagement levels, frequency of performance feedback, and perceived recognition from supervisors. By implementing these measurable indicators, companies can more effectively monitor and continuously improve factors that contribute to employee productivity.

Limitations and avenue for future research

The current research is constrained by its focus on Generation Z employees located in Jakarta, which can constrain the broader relevance of the study outcomes. In addition, the analysis is restricted to only three key variables. Future research is encouraged to include additional variables, broader samples, and mixed-method approaches to obtain deeper insights.

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