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The Influence of Workplace FOMO and Work-Life Balance on Work Motivation, Mediated by Social Media Use Among Gen Z Creative Workers in Yogyakarta

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the effect of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) in the workplace and Work-Life Balance on Work Motivation, with Social Media Use as a mediating variable on Gen Z creative workers in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. Data was collected through a survey of 124 Gen Z creative workers in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. A quantitative method was applied using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0. The results showed that: 1) FoMO in the workplace has a positive and significant influence on work motivation, 2) work-life balance shows a negative and significant effect on work motivation, 3) social media use is proven to significantly mediate the relationship between FoMO and work motivation, 4) but does not mediate the relationship between work-life balance and work motivation. These findings suggest that the desire to stay connected and updated through social media can boost Gen Z creative workers work motivation, while an overly comfortable life balance might reduce their drive for growth.

Keywords: *Fear of Missing Out in the Workplace, Work-Life Balance, Social Media Use, Work Motivation, Gen Z, Creative Workers.*

Introduction

Generation Z, generally born between 1995 and 2012, is beginning to dominate the workforce while bringing a new perspective on how to work and navigate professional life. Unlike previous generations who prioritized loyalty to the company and rarely considered mental health in the workplace, Gen Z holds different values aligned with their personal principles. This has led to Gen Z gaining a reputation for being problematic in the workplace. They are often viewed as the most difficult to work with, labeled as lazy, overly sensitive, and lacking productivity.

According to a Resume Builder survey (2023), 74% of managers and company leaders stated that Gen Z is the most challenging generation to work with. About 40% of them cited Gen Z's lack of skills and motivation, as well as their tendency to get bored easily, as key issues. The survey collected responses from over 1,300 managers and business leaders in the United States. Around one-third of the respondents said they preferred working with millennials. Furthermore, 44% believed that millennials were the most productive and technologically skilled, while 30% favored Generation X, and only 4% preferred working with baby boomers (Hutari, 2023).

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In contrast to these perceptions, a content creator who employs Gen Z workers at a tech company in Dallas, McDonnell, told the New York Post that the real difference lies in professionalism. He believes the COVID-19 pandemic played a major role in shaping Gen Z's behavior. "This is their first job after graduating college, and they spent their final academic years working remotely," said McDonnell to the New York Post.

One of the most discussed phenomena is this generation's tendency to work within clearly defined boundaries. Gen Z tends to adhere strictly to scheduled work hours, is unafraid to voice their opinions, confidently rejects tasks that fall outside their responsibilities, and prefers a mentally healthy work environment over merely pursuing financial stability. This behavior contrasts with previous generations that highly valued loyalty and were willing to work overtime to advance their careers.

This shift presents challenges for companies that employ Gen Z creative workers. On one hand, Gen Z has great potential to generate fresh and original ideas. On the other, they also have high expectations for a workplace that supports work-life balance and creative freedom. Therefore, understanding their work style and preferences is essential for organizations to develop effective strategies to manage creative talents optimally.

Moreover, technological development and digitalization have significantly influenced how this generation interacts with their work. For Gen Z creative workers, technology offers vast opportunities for expression, collaboration, and innovation. However, the rapid flow of information and the pressure to stay on trend can also become a stressor that affects their work motivation.

Literature Review

Work Motivation

According to Robbins (1998), motivation is defined as the willingness to exert a high level of effort toward organizational goals, conditioned by the ability of the effort to satisfy some individual needs. Similarly, Basalamah (2021) defines work motivation as an internal drive within a person to act or move directly through behavior aimed at achieving goals that have been mutually agreed upon within an organization or company. Wexley et al. (1992) also argue that work motivation is something that generates enthusiasm or work drive. Therefore, work motivation is often referred to as the driving force behind work spirit. In the Self-Determination Theory (SDT), Ryan and Deci (2000) explain that work motivation consists of two types: extrinsic and intrinsic motivation.

Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) in the workplace

Przybylski et al. (2013) define Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) as a pervasive apprehension that others might be having rewarding experiences from which one is absent. Expanding on this concept, Budnick et al. (2020) conceptualize a broader definition of FoMO that applies specifically to the context of workers, particularly in terms of social comparisons with other employees and access to valuable work-related opportunities. Therefore, FoMO in the workplace is defined as a pervasive concern that, compared to other colleagues, an individual might miss out on valuable career opportunities when they are away or disconnected from work matters. Based

on Budnick et al. (2020), the indicators of workplace FoMO include work output exclusion, information exclusion, and relational exclusion.

Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance is understood as the relationship between time and space dedicated to work and non-work activities within a society where income is primarily generated and distributed through the labor market (Felstead et al., 2002). Greenhaus et al. (2003) emphasize that employees inevitably allocate time simultaneously to both work and family domains. Daniel & Bond (2005) propose that work-life balance can be measured using several indicators. The indicators of work-life balance include time balance, energy balance, goal achievement balance, and tension balance.

Social Media Use

Correa et al. (2010) defined social media use as a specific form of digital or internet-based media consumption, distinct from traditional information media use, emphasizing its role in maintaining communication and interaction among individuals through instant messaging and social networking sites. According to Jenkins-Guarnieri et al. (2013), the social media use consists of ten components, including feelings of social disconnection, preference for using social media as a primary communication tool, emotional dependence on social media, emotional reactions when unable to access social media, reliance on social media for communication, the role of social media in interpersonal relationships, enjoyment of social media interaction, negative attitudes toward social media use, integration of social media into daily life, and engagement in social interaction through social media.

Hypothesis

H1: Fear of Missing Out in the Workplace has a positive influence on Work Motivation of Gen Z Creative Workers in the Special Region of Yogyakarta.

H2: Work-Life Balance has a positive influence on Work Motivation of Gen Z Creative Workers in the Special Region of Yogyakarta.

H3: Social Media Use mediates the influence of Fear of Missing Out in the Workplace on Work Motivation of Gen Z Creative Workers in the Special Region of Yogyakarta.

H4: Social Media Use mediates the influence of Work-Life Balance on Work Motivation of Gen Z Creative Workers in the Special Region of Yogyakarta.

Methods

Sampling and Procedures

The sample in this study is Gen Z creative workers in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. The method chosen was purposive sampling. Digital questionnaires created using the Google Form were distributed via social media, including through several WhatsApp groups. The data collected were 124 respondents from Gen Z creative workers located in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. There were 9 items from all variables that were invalid or not meeting the eligibility criteria of the study.
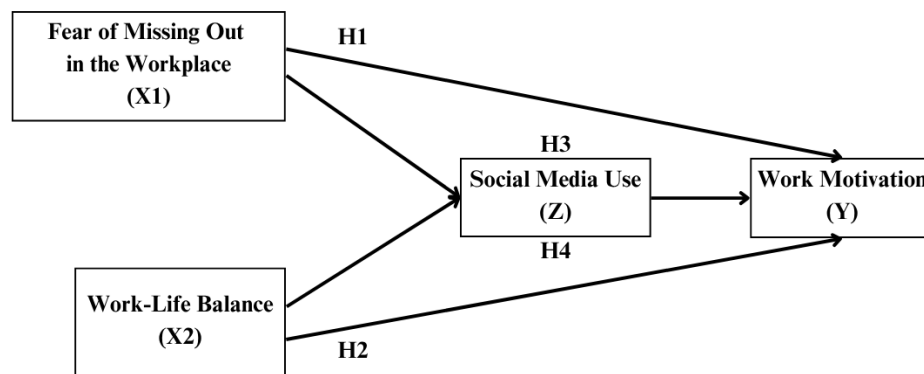
Figure 1. Research Model

Measures

Work Motivation is measured using an instrument developed by Uno (2009). Responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale from very disagree (1) to very agree (5). The instrument consists of 16 items.

Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) in the workplace is measured using an instrument developed by Budnick et al. (2020). Responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale from very disagree (1) to very agree (5). The instrument consists of 10 items.

Work-Life Balance is measured using an instrument developed by Daniel & Bond (2005). Responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale from very disagree (1) to very agree (5). The instrument consists of 8 items.

Social Media Use is measured using an instrument developed by Jenkins-Guarnieri *et al.*, (2013). Responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale from very disagree (1) to very agree (5). The instrument consists of 10 items.

Data Analysis

This study employed quantitative analysis, specifically using the Partial Least Square (PLS) approach to examine the relationships between the independent, mediating, and dependent variables. The analysis followed several steps:

Outer Model Analysis: The validity and reliability of the measurement model were assessed through convergent validity, discriminant validity, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Composite Reliability, and Cronbach's Alpha to ensure that all constructs were measured accurately and consistently.

Inner Model Analysis: The structural model was evaluated by testing the relationships between variables using R-Square (R^2) to determine how well the independent variables explained the dependent variable.

Hypothesis testing: The study conducted hypothesis testing using bootstrapping to obtain the t-statistic and p-values for each relationship in the model. The hypotheses were tested using the following regression equations to evaluate the direct, indirect, and mediating effects:

Step 1: Step 1: Direct Effect of X on Y

$$Y = a_1 + c_X + e_{1Y} = a_1 + c_X + e_1$$

In this step, the study examined whether Fear of Missing Out in the Workplace (X1) and Work-Life Balance (X2) had a significant direct effect on Work Motivation (Y). The significance of the c coefficient was tested.

Step 2: Direct Effect of X on Mediator

$$Z = a_2 + c_X + e_{2Z} = a_2 + c_X + e_2$$

Here, the study assessed whether Fear of Missing Out in the Workplace (X1) and Work-Life Balance (X2) had a significant effect on the mediator variable Social Media Use (Z).

Step 3: Mediating Role of Z in the Relationship between X and Y

$$Y = a_3 + c'_X + b_Z + e_{3Y} = a_3 + c'_X + b_Z + e_3$$

In this step, the study tested whether the mediator, Social Media Use (Z), influenced Work Motivation (Y) while controlling for Fear of Missing Out in the Workplace (X1) and Work-Life Balance (X2). The significance of the b coefficient was crucial in determining if Z acted as a mediator.

Deciding Mediation: The final step involved deciding whether the mediation was complete or partial:

Complete Mediation: If c' becomes non-significant in Step 3, and b is significant, then Social Media Use (Z) fully mediates the relationship between Fear of Missing Out in the Workplace (X1) and Work-Life Balance (X2) and Work Motivation (Y).

Partial Mediation: If both c' and b remain significant in Step 3, it indicates that Social Media Use (Z) partially mediates the relationship between Fear of Missing Out in the Workplace (X1) and Work-Life Balance (X2) and Work Motivation (Y).

Result and Discussion

Result

FoMO in the Workplace to Work Motivation

The results of testing the first hypothesis which can be seen in Table 1 show that fear of missing out in the workplace has a positive and significant effect on work motivation with a ρ value of 0.000 (<0.05), a t-statistic of 4.573, and an original sample value of 0.617 which can be seen in Table 1. Therefore, it can be interpreted

Table 1. Path Coefficients of FoMO in the Workplace to Work Motivation

Variabel	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Fear of Missing Out in the Workplace → Work Motivation	0.617	0.607	0.135	4.573	0.000

that if the higher the fear of missing out on information or opportunities in the workplace, the higher the individual's work motivation. This proves that fear of missing out in the context of work has a positive effect on work motivation.

Work-Life Balance to Work Motivation

The results of testing the second hypothesis which can be seen in Table 2 show that work-life balance affects work motivation with a ρ value of 0.006 (<0.05) and a t-statistic of 2.736 which shows the results of a significant effect of work-life balance variables on work motivation, but the original sample value is -0.148. This proves that work-life balance negatively affects work motivation.

FoMO in the Workplace and Social Media Use to Work Motivation

The results of testing the third hypothesis which can be seen in Table 3 show that the social media use is able to mediate the fear of missing out in the workplace on work motivation with a ρ value of 0.012 (<0.05), a t-statistic of 2.509, and an original sample value of 0.280 which shows the results of a significant effect of social media use variables mediating fear of missing out in the workplace of work on work motivation.This proves that the mediating effect of social media use affects the fear of missing out in the workplace and work motivation.

Work-Life Balance and Social Media Use to Work Motivation

The results of testing the fourth hypothesis which can be seen in Table 4 show that the social media use is not able to mediate the work-life balance on work motivation with a ρ value of 0.158 (> 0.05), a t-statistic of 1.413, and an original sample value of 0.058 which does not show the results of a significant effect of variable social media use mediating work-life balance to work motivation. This proves that the mediating effect of using social media has no effect on work-life balance and work motivation.

Table 2. Path Coefficients of Work-Life Balance to Work Motivation

Variabel	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Work-Life Balance → Work Motivation	-0.148	-0.148	0.054	2.736	0.006

Table 3. Path Coefficients of FoMO in the Workplace and Social Media Use to Work Motivation

Variabel	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Fear of Missing Out in the Workplace → Social Media Use → Work Motivation	0.280	0.273	0.112	2.509	0.012

Table 4. Path Coefficients of Work-Life Balance and Social Media Use to Work Motivation

Variabel	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Work-Life Balance → Social Media Use → Work Motivation	0.058	0.064	0.041	1.413	0.158

Discussion

FoMO in the Workplace to Work Motivation

The results of the analysis and data processing in this study show that fear of missing out in the workplace has a positive and significant effect on work motivation with a ρ value of 0.000 (<0.05), a t-statistic of 4.573, and an original sample value of 0.617. Therefore, it can be interpreted that if the higher the fear of missing information or opportunities in the context of work, the higher the individual's work motivation.

This finding is supported by research from Budnick et al. (2020) which states that a higher fear of missing out in the context of work can lead to motivational processes such as message checking behaviour for work-related communication and generate individual work engagement. Individuals check incoming messages to stay up to date and to reduce individual concerns about missing information. Therefore, the test results show that the first hypothesis is supported.

Work-Life Balance to Work Motivation

In contrast to the initial hypothesis, the results of the analysis and data processing in this study surprisingly found that work-life balance has a negative effect on work motivation with a ρ value of 0.006 (<0.05) and a t-statistic of 2.736 with an original sample value of -0.148. This can be interpreted that when Gen Z creative workers feel their lives are balanced, the motivation to work decreases.

This phenomenon is in line with research from Kühnel et al. (2020) which explains that an overly idealised work-life balance can actually result in a decrease in drive to work, especially in environments that demand high creativity and spontaneity. Therefore, the test results show that the second hypothesis is not supported. This proves that work-life balance has a negative effect on work motivation.

FoMO in the Workplace and Social Media Use to Work Motivation

The results of the analysis and data processing in this study show that the social media use is able to mediate the fear of missing out in the workplace on work motivation with a ρ value of 0.012 (<0.05), a t-statistic of 2.509, and an original sample value of 0.280. This means that the use of social media can strengthen the relationship between fear of being left behind and motivation to work better.

The research results from Tandon et al. (2021) support these findings by stating that social media provides a "fast track" for individuals who have a high level of fear of missing out to stay connected to social media, which in turn increases the drive to perform better. Social media provides easy access to communicate, get updates, collaborate on projects, and see colleagues' achievements, all of which can lead to increased motivation to keep up with others.

Research from Demircioglu & Chen (2019) explains that purposeful use of social media can increase motivation in competence and competition at work. However, it is important to note that the effectiveness of this role of social media depends on how social media is used. When used wisely to support work, social media has great potential to be a motivation booster. Therefore, the test results show that the third hypothesis is supported. This proves that the mediating effect of social media use affects the fear of missing out variable in the context of work and work motivation.

Work-Life Balance and Social Media Use to Work Motivation

The results of the analysis and data processing in this study show that the use of social media is not able to mediate the work-life balance variable on work motivation with a ρ value of 0.158 (> 0.05), a t-statistic of 1.413, and an original sample value of 0.058. Despite the initial expectation that social media use could be a positive mediator linking work-life balance to work motivation, the results of this study indicate that this hypothesis is not supported.

This finding confirms that not all forms of work-life balance will automatically increase individual work motivation if not accompanied by appropriate work strategies. Research from Tandon et al. (2021) found that the use of social media, especially when used to seek entertainment, cope with stress, and fill spare time, will actually have negative effects such as decreased work motivation. Zhou & Li (2023) found that employees who use social media actually increase work-life conflict because using social media can blur work and personal life roles which will have a negative impact on employee work motivation rather than improving work-life balance.

Instead of acting as a mediator to strengthen the positive relationship between work-life balance and work motivation, social media use may weaken work focus and make individuals easily distracted from their professional activities. Therefore, the test results show that the fourth hypothesis is not supported. This proves that the mediating effect of social media use has no effect on work-life balance and work motivation variables.

Conclusion

Based on the results of data analysis and discussion listed in this study, four conclusions can be drawn on four hypotheses, it can be concluded as follows:

- ☑ Fear of Missing Out in the Workplace has a positive and significant influence on Work Motivation of Gen Z Creative Workers in the Special Region of Yogyakarta, thus H1 is supported.

- ☑ Work-Life Balance has a negative and significant influence on Work Motivation of Gen Z Creative Workers in the Special Region of Yogyakarta, thus H2 is not supported (significantly negative effect).

- ☑ Social Media Use positively mediates the effect of Fear of Missing Out in the Workplace on Work Motivation of Gen Z Creative Workers in the Special Region of Yogyakarta, thus H3 is supported.

- ☑ Social Media Use does not positively mediate the effect of Work-Life Balance on Work Motivation of Gen Z Creative Workers in the Special Region of Yogyakarta, thus H4 is not supported.

☑ This conclusion shows the influence between variables on Gen Z creative workers in the Special Region of Yogyakarta.

Limitation

Based on the results obtained in this study, this research certainly still has limitations. The suggestions that can be used as a reference in developing human resources and further research include:

FoMO in the workplace can be a driver of work motivation, if directed positively. It is recommended that Gen Z use social media for networking and work information, not just entertainment.

Work-life balance does not necessarily increase work motivation. Gen Z creative workers still needs to set challenging targets so as not to get stuck in a comfort zone that demoralizes work.

Social media is effective as a mediating tool between FoMO in the workplace and work motivation. Therefore, it is recommended to use social media professionally and purposefully to support careers.

Companies need to direct the use of social media in the workplace. For example, through digital training and flexible work policies that still demand responsibility.

Excessive work comfort can reduce motivation. Companies should design work programs that are flexible but still challenging and encourage Gen Z's creativity.

It is recommended that future research separate work motivation into intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as two different variables in order to get different and more specific research results.

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