

Understanding Gen Z at Work: the Impact of Harmonious Passion, Work Environment, and Role Clarity on Job Performance Through Job Satisfaction in Indonesia's State-Owned Construction Sector

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ABSTRACT

Generation Z now constitutes the largest segment of Indonesia's workforce, bringing distinct values and expectations to highly structured sectors like state-owned construction enterprises (BUMN Karya). However, performance and engagement surveys indicate Gen Z scores lower in both job satisfaction and performance compared to other generations, highlighting a critical need to understand the drivers of their workplace effectiveness. This research aims to investigate the impact of harmonious passion, work environment, and role clarity on job performance among Generation Z employees in Indonesia's state-owned construction sector, with job satisfaction as a mediating variable. A quantitative approach was employed, using data from 265 respondents collected via online questionnaires. Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) was applied for analysis. The findings indicate that role clarity and work environment significantly affect job performance both directly and indirectly through job satisfaction. Harmonious passion, while not directly influencing performance, enhances job satisfaction, which in turn partially mediates its effect on performance. The research underscores the importance of fostering a supportive work environment, ensuring role clarity, and nurturing intrinsic motivation to improve job satisfaction and performance among Gen Z workers. Practical implications include recommendations for organizations to enhance communication, provide meaningful work, and create conducive working conditions to boost productivity and retention.

KEYWORDS Harmonious Passion; Role Clarity; Work Environment; Job Satisfaction; Job Performance



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INTRODUCTION

The modern workplace is undergoing rapid transformation due to technological advancements, evolving job expectations, and the increasing presence of Generation Z (*Gen Z*) in the workforce (Dhawan, 2025; Dieguez et al., 2024; Janssen & Carradini, 2021). As this generation continues to enter professional environments, understanding their unique work preferences is crucial for organizations (Aswani & Otiende, 2025). In Indonesia, *Gen Z* now represents the largest segment of the workforce. According to the 2023 census by the Central Statistics Agency, there are 78.02

million *Gen Z* individuals, accounting for approximately 27.99% of the population. On a global scale, the rapid rise of this generation is reshaping workforce dynamics, with many companies actively recruiting them to replace previous generations (Bencsik et al., 2016). Born in an era of rapid technological advancement, *Gen Z* is naturally adept at navigating digital transformations, making them valuable assets in modern organizations (Malik & Malik, 2024). Furthermore, they possess unique traits that distinguish them from earlier generations, including greater tolerance for diversity, high self-confidence, and openness to career instability (Bińczycki et al., 2023). As their influence in the workforce continues to expand, businesses must adapt to their preferences and expectations to attract, retain, and maximize their potential.

To effectively attract, retain, and maximize the potential of *Gen Z* employees, organizations must go beyond traditional workplace strategies and focus on factors that directly impact their job performance. One crucial aspect is job satisfaction. When employees are content with their jobs, they tend to be more motivated (Alanizan, 2023) and engaged (Vorina et al., 2017), leading to increased productivity and efficiency (Kabus et al., 2024). Satisfied employees often demonstrate higher levels of creativity and problem-solving skills, which contribute to improved overall performance (Tavares, 2016). Furthermore, job satisfaction helps create a positive work environment, reducing stress and absenteeism while promoting better health and well-being among employees (Ismi et al., 2023; Satuf et al., 2018). This positive atmosphere fosters teamwork and effective communication, further boosting performance. Additionally, satisfied employees are less likely to leave their jobs, which reduces turnover rates and ensures continuity and stability within the organization (Chan & Ao, 2019).

Another important set of factors that influence job performance are harmonious passion, work environment, and role clarity (Obeng et al., 2021; Shen et al., 2023). Harmonious passion refers to an intrinsic motivation where employees genuinely enjoy their work, leading to higher engagement and sustained effort in their roles (Vallerand et al., 2003). A positive work environment, characterized by flexibility, inclusiveness, and strong social support, further enhances employee well-being and motivation (Jonathan & Dewi, 2022), which in turn boosts their work performance (Zhenjing et al., 2022). Additionally, role clarity, defined as having well-defined job expectations and responsibilities, plays a crucial role in enhancing employee efficiency by reducing uncertainty and improving task performance. Role clarity significantly enhances employee efficiency by aligning tasks with organizational goals, improving work pace, ensuring proper use of resources, fostering self-assessment, and reinforcing commitment to workplace regulations (Samie et al., 2015). Role clarity, along with performance feedback, significantly correlates with employee satisfaction and perceived performance, emphasizing the need for clear roles and structured feedback (Lynn, 2015). However, the impact of these factors on job performance is not always direct; job satisfaction plays a crucial mediating role in strengthening these relationships. Employees with high job satisfaction are more likely to translate their passion into higher performance, leverage a

supportive work environment effectively, and navigate their roles with greater confidence and purpose. This suggests that organizations must not only cultivate a work environment that fosters passion, clarity, and support but also ensure that employees experience high levels of job satisfaction to fully unlock their potential.

Building on existing research on job performance, we aim to investigate the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between harmonious passion, work environment, and role clarity with job performance among *Generation Z* employees in the construction sector of Indonesian state-owned companies. The construction sector, particularly state-owned enterprises, plays a vital role in Indonesia's economic development, infrastructure expansion, and employment generation. However, the industry faces unique challenges, including demanding work conditions, high job turnover, and skill shortages, which can impact workforce productivity and organizational efficiency (Wibowo et al., 2024). As *Gen Z* employees increasingly enter the construction workforce, understanding the factors that influence their job performance becomes essential for improving retention rates, reducing turnover costs, and enhancing project efficiency. Unlike previous generations, *Gen Z* employees value work-life balance (Waworuntu et al., 2022), meaningful work (Azzahra et al., 2025), and a well-defined career trajectory (Reddy et al., 2024), making it imperative for construction firms to adapt their management strategies to align with these expectations. Failing to address these concerns could result in lower productivity, higher disengagement, and operational inefficiencies in an industry that heavily relies on workforce stability and expertise. A three-year performance evaluation at PT PP (Persero) revealed that the average performance score of *Generation Z* was the lowest among all generations, at 29.34, compared to Generation Y at 31.36 and Generation X at 30.81. Additionally, the 2024 Employee Engagement Survey conducted at this state-owned enterprise showed that *Generation Z* had the lowest job satisfaction level compared to other generations, scoring 75.59, while Generation Y scored 77.91, Generation X 84.30, and Baby Boomers 82.69. These findings highlight the need for further investigation into factors affecting *Gen Z*'s job satisfaction and performance. The declining performance scores and lower engagement levels among *Generation Z* warrant immediate attention, especially given the employee growth rate of approximately 5% per year. This demographic shift is expected to increase the proportion of *Gen Z* employees as retiring workers (at age 55) are replaced by younger professionals and fresh graduates. Addressing job satisfaction as a mediating factor in performance outcomes will be crucial in optimizing their contribution to the organization.

This research aims to examine the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between harmonious passion, work environment, and role clarity on job performance among *Generation Z* employees in Indonesian state-owned construction enterprises. The research objectives are threefold: first, to analyze the direct effects of harmonious passion, work environment, and role clarity on both job satisfaction and job performance; second, to investigate the mediating role of job satisfaction in these relationships; and third, to provide evidence-based recommendations for

enhancing *Generation Z* employee engagement and performance in the construction sector. The benefits of this research include providing practical insights for human resource management in state-owned construction companies, contributing to the theoretical understanding of generational differences in workplace motivation, and offering guidance for organizational strategies to optimize *Generation Z* employee potential. The implications extend to improved employee retention, enhanced project efficiency, and better alignment between organizational practices and generational expectations in Indonesia's critical infrastructure development sector.

This research contributes to the literature in several ways. First, while prior research has established that role clarity and structured performance feedback enhance employee satisfaction and perceived performance, there remains a gap in understanding how job satisfaction mediates the influence of harmonious passion, work environment, and role clarity on overall job performance. Given the physically demanding and often stressful nature of construction work, job satisfaction could be a critical factor in improving employee engagement, safety compliance, and overall efficiency in the industry. *Generation Z*, as the emerging dominant workforce, places high value on meaningful work, a supportive and flexible work environment, and clarity in their roles to achieve optimal productivity. Therefore, this research seeks to explore whether high job satisfaction strengthens the positive effects of these factors on job performance, emphasizing the need for organizations to cultivate an engaging and satisfying work culture to fully leverage *Gen Z*'s potential.

METHOD

This study employs a quantitative research design using a cross-sectional survey approach to examine the relationships between harmonious passion, work environment, role clarity, job satisfaction, and job performance among *Generation Z* employees in Indonesian state-owned construction enterprises.

Sample and Data Collection

This research was conducted in 2024 on employees belonging to *Generation Z* at four state-owned construction enterprises (*BUMN Karya*) listed on the Indonesian stock exchange: PT Wijaya Karya Tbk (Persero), PT Waskita Karya Tbk (Persero), PT Adhi Karya Tbk (Persero), and PT Pembangunan Perumahan Tbk (Persero). These four companies were selected due to their significant roles in supporting national strategic infrastructure projects, including the development of Indonesia's new capital city in Kalimantan. This reflects their wide operational scale and high project complexity (PwC Indonesia, 2021).

The target population of this research consists of *Generation Z* employees, defined as individuals born between 1995 and 2009 (Dreyer & Stojanová, 2023). The selection of these companies as research samples was based on several considerations. First, these firms represent a significant portion of the state-owned construction sector, with a substantial number of *Generation Z* employees. Second, their extensive operational scale and diverse project portfolios provide an ideal context for understanding

the dynamics and characteristics of *Generation Z* employees within *BUMN Karya*. The detailed population and sample distribution are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Research Population and Sample Distribution

No	Company	Total Employees	Generation Z Employees (Population)	Weight	Sample
1	PT. Pembangunan Perumahan	1.780	308	12.47%	32
2	PT. Adhi Karya	2.595	750	30.38%	77
3	PT. Wijaya Karya	2.269	450	18.23%	47
4	PT. Waskita Karya	1.517	961	38.92%	99
Total		8.161	2.469	100%	255

Source: Annual Reports of the Companies, 2023

Measures

Job performance in this research is measured based on the framework by Wu et al. (2019). Job performance refers to how well employees complete their core tasks, adapt to changes in the workplace, and exert maximum effort to achieve job-related goals. Job satisfaction is assessed by referring to employees' positive feelings toward various aspects of their work, including opportunities for self-actualization, sense of achievement, development opportunities, work pressure or intensity, sense of importance, interpersonal relationships, compensation, and promotion prospects (Sun et al., 2022).

The measurement scale for harmonious passion is based on the instrument developed by Vallerand et al. (2003), which remains relevant and has been adopted in several recent studies. Role clarity refers to the extent to which employees have a clear understanding of their job objectives, responsibilities, performance expectations, and authority levels. It reflects the degree to which individuals know what is expected of them at work, how their performance will be assessed, and where their decision-making boundaries lie. This construct is measured using indicators such as the existence of clearly planned job goals, understanding of job expectations, clarity of performance evaluation criteria, certainty about one's authority, and awareness of job responsibilities (Newman et al., 2015; Rizzo et al., 1970; Malhotra et al., 2007; Newman & Sheikh, 2012). The work environment construct includes three dimensions: bureaucratic (WB), humanistic (WH), and working relationships (WR), as found within an organizational context (Abun, 2021).

Data Analysis

This research employs Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) as the primary method of data analysis, utilizing SmartPLS software. PLS-SEM combines Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression (Mateos-Aparicio, 2011) and is suitable for complex models with relatively small sample sizes (Fornell & Bookstein, 1982; Hair et al., 2017). It is also well-suited for social science research where data may not meet normality assumptions (Aurellia & Perdana, 2020; Hair et al., 2012; Nitzl, 2016). PLS-SEM consists of two components: the

outer model, which analyzes the relationship between latent variables and their indicators; and the inner model, which tests the relationships among latent variables based on theoretical frameworks.

The outer model is evaluated through validity and reliability testing. Validity is assessed via convergent validity, using factor loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity, using cross-loadings and HTMT values (Ghozali, 2016). Reliability is assessed using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability, with acceptable thresholds above 0.70 (Ghozali, 2016).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Profile

Table 2 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents involved in this research. Out of 265 participants, a majority were male (58.49%), while female respondents accounted for 41.51%. In terms of educational background, most respondents held an undergraduate degree (71.30%), followed by diploma holders (16.20%), graduate degree holders (8.30%), and a small proportion who had completed senior high school (4.20%). Regarding employment status, the majority of respondents were permanent employees (66.41%), while the remaining 33.59% were contract employees.

Table 2. Respondent Profile

Demographic Respondent	N	(%)
Gender		
Male	155	58.49
Female	110	41.51
Education		
Senior High School	11	4.20
Diploma	43	16.20
Undergraduate	189	71.30
Graduate	22	8.30
Employee Status		
Permanent Employee	176	66.41
Contract Employee	89	33.59

Source: Author's Calculation, 2025

Measurement Model Evaluation

Table 3 presents the measurement model evaluation. The results indicate strong validity and reliability across all constructs. All factor loadings exceed 0.70, and AVE values are above 0.66, confirming good convergent validity. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) for all variables are well above the 0.70 threshold, with Job Performance and Work Environment showing excellent internal consistency (CR = 0.975 and 0.982, respectively). Furthermore, all HTMT values fall below the conservative threshold of 0.90, which confirms that discriminant validity is established among all constructs. This means each latent variable are empirically distinct and measures a unique concept within the model.

Table 3. Measurement Model Evaluation

Construct	Loading	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	HTMT
Job Performance (JP)		0.834	0.975	0.975	
JP1	0.903				
JP2	0.888				
JP3	0.925				
JP4	0.926				
JP5	0.933				
JP6	0.908				
JP7	0.917				
JP8	0.896				
JP9	0.923				
Job Satisfaction (JS)		0.679	0.932	0.936	
JS1	0.830				
JS2	0.775				
JS3	0.882				
JS4	0.873				
JS5	0.810				
JS6	0.834				
JS7	0.786				
JS8	0.798				
Harmonious Passion (HP)		0.731	0.938	0.941	
H1	0.849				
H2	0.881				
H3	0.886				
H4	0.869				
H5	0.768				
H6	0.892				
H7	0.834				
Role Clarity (RC)		0.662	0.872	0.875	
RC1	0.823				
RC2	0.819				
RC3	0.787				
RC4	0.860				
RC5	0.778				
Work Environment (WE)		0.668	0.981	0.982	
WB1	0.712				
WB10	0.802				
WB2	0.773				
WB3	0.747				
WB4	0.737				
WB5	0.715				
WB6	0.767				
WB7	0.718				
WB8	0.809				
WB9	0.777				
WH1	0.818				
WH2	0.760				
WH3	0.864				

Construct	Loading	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	HTMT
WH4	0.861				
WH5	0.833				
WH6	0.868				
WH7	0.852				
WH8	0.797				
WR1	0.887				
WR10	0.886				
WR2	0.824				
WR3	0.857				
WR4	0.883				
WR5	0.845				
WR6	0.842				
WR7	0.853				
WR8	0.890				
WR9	0.853				
JP <-> HP					0.844
JS <-> HP					0.805
JS <-> JP					0.766
RC <-> HP					0.762
RC <-> JP					0.759
RC <-> JS					0.778
WE <-> HP					0.799
WE <-> JP					0.793
WE <-> JS					0.713
WE <-> RC					0.818

Source: Author's Calculation, 2025

Structural Model Evaluation

Table 4 show the structural model evaluation. Harmonious passion (HP) has a significant positive effect on job satisfaction (JS) (Coefficient = 0.278, $t = 4.518$), while its direct effect on job performance (JP) is not significant (Coefficient = 0.061, $t = 0.934$). However, job satisfaction (JS) demonstrates a marginally significant positive effect on job performance (JP) (Coefficient = 0.127, $t = 1.818$), indicating that JS may serve as a mediating variable in the relationship between HP and JP. This suggests that employees with strong harmonious passion are more likely to feel satisfied with their jobs, and in turn, this satisfaction contributes to improved performance outcomes—implying an indirect pathway from HP to JP through JS.

Table 4. Structural Model Evaluation

Variable	Path Coefficient	
	Coefficient	T-Statistic
HP -> JP	0.061	0.934
HP -> JS	0.278	4.518 ***
JS -> JP	0.127	1.818*
RC -> JP	0.468	5.453***

Variable	Path Coefficient	
	Coefficient	T-Statistic
RC -> JS	0.381	4.455***
WE -> JP	0.270	3.114***
WE -> JS	0.282	3.235***

Notes: * Significant at 10%; ** 5%; *** 1%

Source: Author's Calculation, 2025

Furthermore, role clarity (RC) has a significant positive effect on both JP (Coefficient = 0.468, $t = 5.453$) and JS (Coefficient = 0.381, $t = 4.455$), emphasizing its central role in shaping both attitudinal and behavioral outcomes. Likewise, work environment (WE) significantly influences both JP (Coefficient = 0.270, $t = 3.114$) and JS (Coefficient = 0.282, $t = 3.235$), indicating that a supportive and well-structured organizational setting enhances employee satisfaction and performance. Overall, our findings suggest that Job Satisfaction plays a partial mediating role, particularly in the relationship between harmonious passion and job performance.

The findings reveal that harmonious passion has a significant positive effect on job satisfaction, indicating that employees who find their work intrinsically fulfilling and aligned with their identity are more likely to feel satisfied. This supports Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which posits that fulfilling psychological needs, particularly competence and relatedness, will lead to higher satisfaction. This is further supported by Pathak et al. (2023), who found that harmonious workplace passion fosters job satisfaction through intrinsic motivation and emotional attachment to work. However, harmonious passion does not directly influence job performance, suggesting that although employees may be passionate, their performance outcomes are not necessarily enhanced unless that passion translates into positive job attitudes. Given the significant relationship between job satisfaction and performance, job satisfaction serves as a mediating variable, indicating that harmonious passion affects job performance indirectly through job satisfaction. Therefore, the hypothesis that harmonious passion positively affects job satisfaction (H1) is accepted, while harmonious passion positively affects job performance (H4) is rejected. However, the indirect effect is supported via the mediation of job satisfaction. These results align with findings by Benitez et al. (2023), who highlight the indirect performance effects of passion via satisfaction.

The results also confirm that a supportive work environment contributes positively to both job satisfaction and job performance. A healthy and inclusive work environment provides emotional support, reduces stress, and enhances employees' ability to perform effectively. The dual significance of these pathways suggests that part of the work environment's impact on performance occurs indirectly through job satisfaction. In other words, when employees perceive their environment as motivating and supportive, they feel more satisfied, which in turn boosts their performance. Therefore, the hypotheses that work environment positively affects job satisfaction (H2) and job performance (H5) are both accepted, and job satisfaction acts as a mediator in this relationship.

Similarly, role clarity significantly influences both job satisfaction and job performance. When employees clearly understand their roles, expectations, and responsibilities, they feel more confident and competent, leading to higher satisfaction and improved performance. The dual significance of these effects indicates that role clarity not only directly boosts performance but also enhances satisfaction, which in turn contributes to performance. Thus, job satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between role clarity and job performance. Consequently, the hypotheses that role clarity positively affects job satisfaction (H3), and job performance (H6) are accepted, and the mediating role of job satisfaction is also confirmed.

Finally, the link between job satisfaction and job performance is marginally supported, indicating that while job satisfaction contributes to job performance, it may be only one of several contributing factors. Nonetheless, this pathway validates the mediating role of job satisfaction in the broader model. Therefore, the hypothesis that job satisfaction positively affects job performance (H7) is accepted.

CONCLUSION

Job satisfaction plays a critical mediating role in the relationship between harmonious passion, role clarity, and work environment on job performance among *Generation Z* employees in state-owned construction enterprises (*BUMN Karya*). While harmonious passion does not directly affect performance, it significantly enhances job satisfaction, which in turn contributes to performance improvement. In contrast, both role clarity and work environment influence job performance both directly and indirectly through job satisfaction, underscoring the importance of clear job expectations and supportive organizational conditions. Based on the findings, it is recommended that *BUMN Karya* companies actively foster harmonious passion among their *Gen Z* workforce by creating space for meaningful work and innovation. Additionally, organizations should enhance role clarity by clearly communicating job expectations, responsibilities, and performance criteria. Improving the work environment through open communication, recognition, collaboration, and safe working conditions will also contribute to both job satisfaction and performance. These strategies are especially crucial for *Generation Z* employees, who value clarity, flexibility, and purposeful work. Investing in these areas will not only improve individual employee outcomes but also support the broader performance and competitiveness of the organization in the infrastructure development sector.

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