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The Effect of Digital Communication Load on the Mental Health of Gen Z Employees in Educational Institutions with Fear of Missing Out as a Mediation Variable

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ABSTRACT

The transformation of organizational communication from conventional forms to digital platforms has reshaped the way individuals interact within the workplace. While the acceleration of information flow through digital media enhances efficiency, it also introduces new psychological pressures, particularly for GenZ employees who are highly connected online. This study aims to examine the effect of digital communication overload on the mental health of generasi Z employees in educational institutions, with Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) serving as a mediating variable. Employing a quantitative approach with Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), the research draws upon data from 253 respondents—consisting of lecturers and academic support staff aged 22 to 28 years—at Telkom University in Bandung. The findings reveal that digital communication overload has a significant effect on mental health ($\beta = 1.033$; $t = 111.882$; $p = 0.000$) and significantly increases ketakutan untuk ketinggalan ($\beta = 0.973$; $t = 272.540$; $p = 0.000$). FoMO exerts a negative effect on mental health ($\beta = -0.034$; $t = 3.581$; $p = 0.000$) and acts as a significant mediator in the relationship between digital communication overload and mental health ($\beta\_ind = -0.033$; $t = 3.586$; $p = 0.000$). This study underscores the urgency of implementing adaptive digital communication policies that are grounded in psychological well-being, particularly for young professionals in academic settings.

KEYWORDS *Digital Communication, FoMo, Mental Health, Gen Z.*

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of information and communication technology in the digital era has significantly transformed organizational communication patterns, particularly in educational institutions (Akour & Alenezi, 2022). The adoption of platforms such as email, WhatsApp, Telegram, Zoom, and Learning Management Systems (LMS) has enhanced efficiency, flexibility, and accessibility of communication. However, these benefits come with new challenges, notably digital communication overload, where employees are exposed to excessive, fragmented, and continuous information flows across multiple channels. This phenomenon can manifest through unread messages, constant notifications, overlapping deadlines,

and simultaneous demands, potentially leading to cognitive overload, reduced productivity, and mental fatigue (Smith et al., 2021).

In academic institutions, where coordination spans teaching, research, and administration, this overload can be particularly intense (Berg & Seeber, 2025). Among the most affected are employees from Generation Z—those born between 1997 and 2012—who, despite being digitally fluent and adaptable, are more vulnerable to blurred work-life boundaries, heightened anxiety, and stress (Pike, 2024; Wondwesen et al., 2023). Their tendency toward constant connectivity and rapid responsiveness can exacerbate the negative impacts of excessive digital engagement (Kuntsman & Miyake, 2019).

At Telkom University, a leading Indonesian private higher education institution with a strong digital orientation, communication processes are deeply integrated into daily academic and administrative tasks (Qurtubi, 2022). Young lecturers and academic support staff, many of whom are Gen Z, are expected to remain connected to coordinate curricula, manage student services, and collaborate across departments (Miller & Mills, 2019). While this supports agility, it also raises risks of emotional exhaustion and burnout if not properly managed (Fuad et al., 2025). The university's values of Harmony, Excellence, and Integrity provide a cultural foundation for healthy communication, but challenges persist due to the psychological dynamics of constant digital engagement (Adeoye, 2024).

A key factor amplifying this problem is the Fear of Missing Out (FoMO)—a psychological tendency to remain hyper-alert to updates out of concern for missing information or opportunities (Vaughan, 2015). FoMO sustains compulsive engagement with digital platforms, even outside working hours, disrupting recovery and increasing stress (Marsh, 2024; Przybylski et al., 2023). For Gen Z employees, FoMO may mediate the relationship between communication overload and mental health, turning tools meant to empower into sources of strain (Chakrabarti, 2024).

Mental health, as defined by the World Health Organization (2022), is essential for sustaining employee productivity and organizational effectiveness (Organization, 2022). Symptoms such as anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and burnout among Gen Z employees highlight the need to understand how digital work environments interact with individual psychological tendencies like FoMO (Marsh et al., 2024).

This study aims to examine the influence of digital communication overload on the mental health of Gen Z employees in educational institutions, with FoMO as a mediating variable. The research focuses on young lecturers and academic support staff at Telkom University as a case of a highly digitalized work environment.

The novelty of this research lies in integrating organizational culture values, generational psychological tendencies, and digital communication dynamics into one model, specifically examining FoMO as a mediating mechanism in an

educational context. By doing so, it not only addresses the negative consequences of excessive digital communication but also proposes strategies for creating more adaptive and humane communication systems in the digital workplace.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopted a quantitative explanatory design to examine the causal relationship between digital communication overload and the mental health of Gen Z employees, with Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) as a mediating factor. Explanatory research was used to systematically test hypotheses derived from theory and provide scientific explanations for social phenomena. Using a cross-sectional approach, data were collected at a single point in time to identify interrelationships between variables without long-term observation, offering a snapshot of the phenomenon in educational institutions (Abduh & Abdullah, 2022; Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

Table 1 Operationalization of Variables and Measurement Scale

No	Variable	Dimension	Indicator	Item No	Scale
1	Digital Communication Overload (X)	Overwhelmed by Content	Feeling overwhelmed by the number of incoming messages	X1	Ordinal
			Volume of work messages exceeding personal capacity	X2	Ordinal
		Immediacy of Response	Feeling pressured to respond to messages immediately	X3	Ordinal
			Concern about professional perception when responses are delayed	X4	Ordinal
			Obligation to stay responsive to work messages outside of work hours	X5	Ordinal
2	FoMO (Z)	Relatedness	Anxiety about missing out on others' experiences or activities	Z1	Ordinal
			Anxiety that others' experiences are better than one's own	Z2, Z3, Z4	Ordinal
		Self	Feeling the need to stay updated with popular trends	Z5, Z6	Ordinal
			Staying updated to share personal updates on social media	Z7, Z8	Ordinal

No	Variable	Dimension	Indicator	Item No	Scale
3	Mental Health (Y)	Stress	Feeling unable to control important things in life	Y1	Ordinal
			Feeling nervous or stressed	Y2	Ordinal
			Feeling overwhelmed by tasks to be completed	Y3	Ordinal
			Feeling angry about things beyond control	Y4	Ordinal
			Feeling that problems are piling up and cannot be overcome	Y5	Ordinal

This study applied purposive sampling to select Gen Z lecturers and academic staff at Telkom University, Bandung, with at least one year of work experience and active use of digital communication platforms such as WhatsApp, focusing on communication overload, FoMO, and mental health (Alruthaya et al., 2021). From a population of 353 individuals, the minimum sample size (188) was determined using Slovin's formula with a 5% margin of error. Data were collected cross-sectionally through an online questionnaire using a 4-point Likert scale, designed to encourage more decisive responses (Sun et al., 2025). Instrument validation included validity testing (Pearson's $r > 0.361$; $p < 0.05$) and reliability testing (Cronbach's Alpha > 0.70). Data analysis employed PLS-SEM using SmartPLS, as it is widely adopted for handling complex models, small sample sizes, and non-normal data—while supporting both simple and conditional mediation analysis (PLS-SEM guidelines, 2023; Quality & Quantity, 2025).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study involved 253 respondents from a total population of 353 Gen Z employees at Telkom University Bandung. The sample size exceeded the minimum of 188 respondents, calculated using Slovin's formula with a 5% margin of error. Slovin's approach remains widely applied in social science research to determine representative sample sizes when population parameters are known (Ponto, 2022), and exceeding the minimum requirement is recommended to enhance statistical reliability and minimize sampling error (Taherdoost, 2022). Data were collected via an online questionnaire distributed through Google Forms between June and July 2025. Online survey methods are considered particularly effective for digitally literate populations such as Gen Z, as they align with communication preferences and can increase response rates (Baltar & Brunet, 2022). Additionally, online distribution enables rapid data collection, reduces administrative costs, and improves accessibility for geographically dispersed respondents (Yin et al., 2023). All responses met the inclusion criteria and were complete. Respondents consisted of lecturers and academic support staff within the Gen Z age range. Demographic

profiles—including age, gender, employment status, and length of service—were collected because recent studies indicate that these variables may significantly influence both digital communication patterns and psychological outcomes. For instance, age and tenure can affect adaptability to technology (Baber, 2022), while gender differences have been linked to variations in susceptibility to digital stress and FoMO (Tandon et al., 2022). Incorporating these demographic factors into the analysis strengthens the interpretation of relationships between digital communication intensity, FoMO, and mental health within this population.

Figure 1 Respondent Distribution Based on Age
(Source: Processed by Researcher, 2025)

All respondents in this study were aged 22–28, identifying them as Generation Z—digital natives highly adaptable to communication technologies like WhatsApp. This age homogeneity aligns with the study's focus on digital communication overload, as Gen Z is intensely exposed to online workplace interactions, especially in educational settings, reinforcing the relevance of WhatsApp as a primary work communication tool.

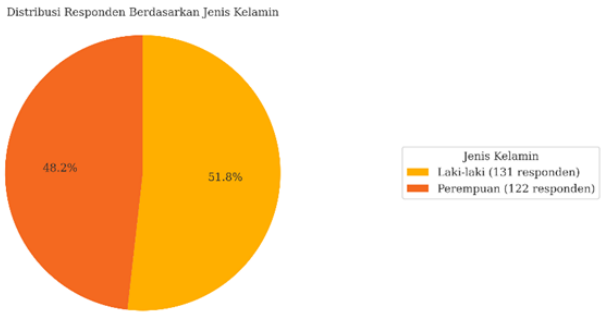

Figure 2. Respondent Distribution by Gender
(Source: Processed by Researcher, 2025)

The gender distribution in this study is nearly balanced, with 131 males (51.8%) and 122 females (48.2%) out of 253 respondents. This proportional

representation supports a broader analysis of gender-based perceptions of digital communication overload, enhancing the validity and generalizability of findings within the Gen Z context in educational institutions.

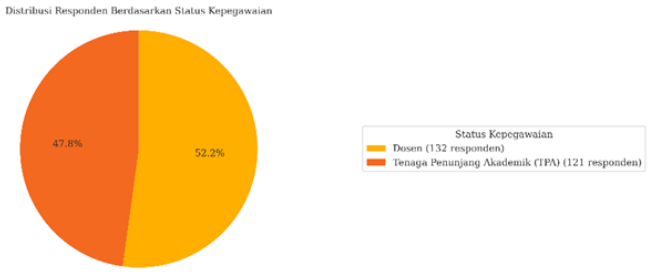

Figure 3 Respondent Distribution by Employment Status
(Source: Processed by Researcher, 2025)

Respondent distribution shows 52.2% lecturers and 47.8% Academic Support Staff, reflecting a balanced representation. Their differing roles offer diverse perspectives on digital communication overload, enriching the study's analysis.

Figure 4 Respondent Distribution Based on Length of Service
(Source: Processed by Researcher, 2025)

Based on data from 253 respondents, all participants had at least one year of work experience. This indicates sufficient exposure to digital communication dynamics in educational institutions, providing a strong basis for assessing their perceptions of digital communication overload.

Table 2 Respondents' Responses to The "Overwhelmed by Content" Dimension

Item	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	Total Score	Ideal Score	Score (%)	Category
X1	85	65	55	48	572	1012	56.52%	Moderate
X2	91	69	45	48	556	1012	54.94%	Moderate
Total	**176**	**134**	**100**	**96**	**1128**	**2024**	**55.73%**	**Moderate**

(Source: Processed by the Researcher, 2025)

The table shows that for item X1 (feeling overwhelmed by the number of work messages), 56.52% of the ideal score was achieved, while item X2 (focus disruption due to work messages) scored 54.94%. Both fall into the "moderate" category, indicating that respondents feel a noticeable but not extreme burden from message volume. Overall, the dimension "Overwhelmed by Content" scored 55.73%, also categorized as moderate. These findings suggest that while digital messages do not cause severe stress, they still affect work comfort and cognitive load. This highlights the need for better digital communication management to prevent potential psychological strain and promote employee well-being in educational institutions.

Table 3 Respondents' Responses on The Dimension of Immediacy of Response

Item	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	Total Score	Ideal Score	Score (%)	Category
X3	66	73	70	44	598	1012	59.09%	Moderate
X4	66	80	64	43	590	1012	58.3%	Moderate
X5	81	74	58	40	563	1012	55.63%	Moderate
Total	213	227	192	127	**1751**	**3036**	**57.67%**	**Moderate**

(Source: Processed by Researcher, 2025)

All items in the Immediacy of Response dimension fall within the "Moderate" category, with X3 (59.09%), X4 (58.3%), and X5 (55.63%). This indicates that respondents feel consistent but not excessive pressure to respond promptly, even outside working hours. The average score of 57.67% highlights the need for clear digital communication boundaries to safeguard employees' well-being, especially for Gen Z in tech-driven settings.

Table 4 Respondents' Responses to The Relatedness Dimension

Item	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	Total Score	Ideal Score	Score (%)	Category
Z1	79	70	58	46	577	1012	57.02%	Moderate
Z2	66	73	70	44	598	1012	59.09%	Moderate
Z3	91	69	45	48	556	1012	54.94%	Moderate
Z4	85	65	55	48	572	1012	56.52%	Moderate
Z5	75	75	54	49	583	1012	57.61%	Moderate
Total	396	352	282	235	**2886**	**5060**	**57.04%**	**Moderate**

(Source: Processed by Researcher, 2025)

All items (Z1–Z5) scored within the "Moderate" range (54.94%–59.09%), indicating a moderate level of social sensitivity and digital connectedness among respondents. The overall score for the Relatedness dimension is 57.04%, suggesting a noticeable but not extreme sense of social obligation in workgroup

communication. This highlights the need to manage digital interactions to prevent hidden social pressure, especially for younger, tech-connected employees.

Table 5 Respondents' Responses on the Self Dimension

Item	STS (1)	TS (2)	S (3)	SS (4)	Total Score	Ideal Score	Score (%)	Category
Z6	84	63	58	48	576	1012	56.92%	Moderate
Z7	60	70	77	46	615	1012	60.77%	Moderate
Z8	85	65	55	48	572	1012	56.52%	Moderate
Z9	91	69	45	48	556	1012	54.94%	Moderate
Total	**320**	**267**	**235**	**190**	**2319**	**4048**	**57.29%**	**Moderate**

Source: Researcher's Processed Data, 2025

This dimension reflects personal anxiety from missing out on work-related WhatsApp communication. Item Z7 (stress from messages) scored highest at 60.77%, while others like feeling overwhelmed or pressured ranged from 54.94%–56.92%, all in the "Moderate" category. With an average of 57.29%, these results show consistent, moderate emotional strain—highlighting the need for mental health support to manage digital communication pressure at work.

Table 6 Respondents' Responses To The Stress Dimension

Item	STS (1)	TS (2)	S (3)	SS (4)	Total Score	Ideal Score	Score (%)	Category
1	85	65	55	48	572	1012	56.52%	Moderate
2	91	69	45	48	556	1012	54.94%	Moderate
3	66	73	70	44	598	1012	59.09%	Moderate
4	81	74	58	40	563	1012	55.63%	Moderate
5	66	80	64	43	590	1012	58.30%	Moderate
Total	**389**	**361**	**292**	**223**	**2879**	**5060**	**56.9%**	**Moderate**

(Source: Processed by Researcher, 2025)

The Stress dimension scored 56.9% (moderate), indicating consistent psychological pressure from work-related WhatsApp messages. The highest stressor was the inability to manage message volume (59.09%). Though not severe, the persistent nature of this stress highlights the need for organizations to adopt supportive, tech-aware stress mitigation strategies.

Hypothesis testing in this study was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0. This method was chosen for its ability to handle complex models with multiple latent constructs and indicators, especially with smaller sample sizes. The analysis involved two main stages: evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) and the structural model (inner model).

The measurement model evaluation assesses the validity and reliability of indicators in representing latent constructs: Digital Communication Load (X), Fear

of Missing Out (Y), and Mental Health. Data were collected via questionnaires from 253 Gen Z employees in educational institutions. Convergent validity was tested using outer loading (>0.6), while construct reliability was evaluated using Composite Reliability (>0.7) and AVE (>0.5). These results determine whether the indicators accurately and consistently reflect their constructs.

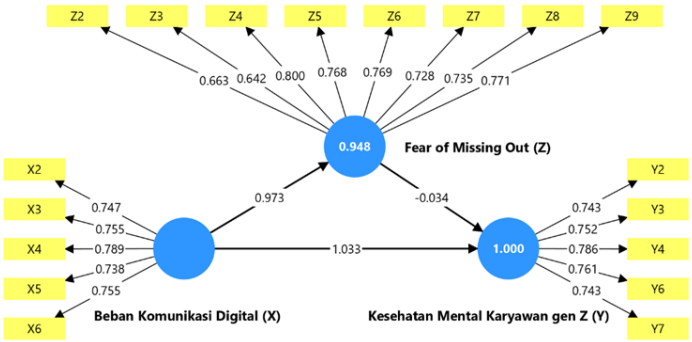

Figure 5 Measurement Model Evaluation Graph
(Source: Processed using SmartPLS 4.0, 2025)

Table 7 Measurement Model Evaluation Table

Variable	Item	Outer Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Digital Communication Load (X)	X1	0.747	0.814	0.870	0.573
	X2	0.755			
	X3	0.789			
	X4	0.738			
	X5	0.755			
FoMO (Z)	Z1	0.663	0.878	0.904	0.542
	Z2	0.642			
	Z3	0.800			
	Z4	0.768			
	Z5	0.769			
	Z6	0.728			
	Z7	0.735			
	Z8	0.771			
Gen Z Employee Mental Health (Y)	Y1	0.743	0.814	0.870	0.573
	Y2	0.752			
	Y3	0.786			
	Y4	0.761			
	Y5	0.743			

(Source: Processed using SmartPLS 4.0, 2025)

All constructs meet reliability and convergent validity standards, with acceptable Cronbach's Alpha, CR, and AVE values. Discriminant validity is confirmed through cross-loading, as indicators load higher on their respective constructs than on others.

Table 8 Discriminant Validity Results

Indicator	Digital Communication Load (X)	Fear of Missing Out (Z)	Gen Z Employee Mental Health (Y)
X1	0.747	0.769	0.743
X2	0.755	0.768	0.752
X3	0.789	0.800	0.786
X4	0.738	0.658	0.743
X5	0.755	0.679	0.761
Z1	0.707	0.663	0.712
Z2	0.687	0.642	0.692
Z3	0.789	0.800	0.786
Z4	0.755	0.768	0.752
Z5	0.747	0.769	0.743
Z6	0.661	0.728	0.658
Z7	0.666	0.735	0.662
Z8	0.702	0.771	0.699
Y1	0.747	0.769	0.743
Y2	0.755	0.768	0.752
Y3	0.789	0.800	0.786
Y4	0.755	0.679	0.761
Y5	0.738	0.658	0.743

(Source: SmartPLS 4.0 Output, 2025)

All indicators loaded highest on their respective constructs, confirming discriminant validity. Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.70 indicate strong internal consistency.

Table 9 Composite Reliability And Cronbach's Alpha Results

Indicator	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Digital Communication Load (X)	0.814	0.815	0.870	0.573
Fear of Missing Out (Z)	0.878	0.880	0.904	0.542
Employee Mental Health (Y)	0.814	0.814	0.870	0.573

(Source: SmartPLS 4.0 Data Processing, 2025)

All constructs in this study demonstrate high reliability, as indicated by Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values exceeding the minimum threshold of 0.70. These values confirm that the indicators consistently represent the intended constructs. Furthermore, the structural model evaluation includes the R-square assessment, which measures the extent to which independent variables explain the variance in the dependent variables. R-square values apply only to dependent constructs and are presented in the following table.

Table 10 R-Square Values

Dependent Variable	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Fear of Missing Out (Z)	0.948	0.947
Mental Health of Gen Z Employees (Y)	1.000	1.000

(Source: SmartPLS 4.0 Output, 2025)

The R-square for Fear of Missing Out (Z) is 0.948, with an adjusted R-square of 0.947, indicating strong explanatory power of the independent variables. The R-square and adjusted R-square for Gen Z Employees' Mental Health (Y) are both 1.000, suggesting perfect explanation by preceding constructs and excellent model fit. Additionally, the Q^2 values—calculated using cross-validated redundancy—demonstrate the model's strong predictive relevance, with higher Q^2 indicating better accuracy and validity in predicting unseen data.

Table 11 Predictive Relevance Values

	PLS Loss	IA Loss	Average Loss Difference	T Value	P Value
Fear of Missing Out (Z)	0.584	1.184	-0.600	13.291	0.000
Mental Health of Employees	0.504	1.173	-0.669	14.758	0.000
Overall	0.553	1.180	0.627	14.144	0.000

(Source: SmartPLS 4.0 Output, 2025)

The PLSpredict evaluation shows that the PLS-SEM model demonstrates adequate predictive power for the analyzed endogenous constructs. For the Fear of Missing Out (Z) construct, the PLS loss (0.584) is significantly lower than the Indicator Average (IA) loss (1.184), with a mean difference of -0.600 and a p-value of 0.000, indicating statistical significance. Similarly, for the Mental Health of Gen Z Employees, the PLS loss (0.504) is also lower than the IA loss (1.173), with a significant difference of -0.669 ($p = 0.000$). These results confirm that the PLS-SEM model outperforms simple benchmark methods, demonstrating strong out-of-sample predictive relevance.

Hypothesis testing is conducted to evaluate the significance level of each variable through the analysis of t-statistic values. The following table presents the results of the t-statistic calculations used as the basis for decision-making.

To test the direct effects between constructs in the structural model, the analysis refers to the estimated path coefficients generated through the bootstrapping procedure in the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach. These coefficients indicate the strength and direction of the relationships between independent and dependent variables. Significance is assessed using the t-statistic and p-value to determine whether the relationships are

statistically significant. The results of the direct effect analysis are presented in the following table.

Table 12 Path Coefficient Values

	Original Sample (0)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Digital Communication Load (X) → Fear of Missing Out (Z)	0.973	0.974	0.004	272.540	0.000
Digital Communication Load (X) → Gen Z Employees' Mental Health (Y)	1.033	1.034	0.009	111.882	0.000
Fear of Missing Out (Z) → Gen Z Employees' Mental Health (Y)	-0.034	-0.035	0.010	3.581	0.000

(Source: SmartPLS 4.0 Output, 2025)

The significance test results of the structural model paths based on t-statistics and p-values. The path from Digital Communication Load (X) to Fear of Missing Out (Z) shows a t-statistic of 272.540 (p = 0.000), and from X to Gen Z Employees' Mental Health (Y) a t-statistic of 111.882 (p = 0.000), both indicating highly significant effects. Similarly, the path from FoMO (Z) to Mental Health (Y) is also significant with a t-statistic of 3.581 (p = 0.000). These findings confirm that all relationships in the model are statistically significant, supporting the proposed hypotheses and demonstrating strong structural validity through the PLS-SEM approach.

In addition to testing direct relationships between constructs, this study also examines indirect effects to identify the mediating role of the intervening variable. Indirect effects occur when an independent variable influences a dependent variable through a mediator. Mediation analysis was conducted using the indirect effect values obtained through bootstrapping, with significance assessed via t-statistics and p-values.

Table 13 Total Indirect Effect Values

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Digital Communication Overload (X) → Gen Z Employees' Mental Health (Y)	-0.033	-0.035	0.009	3.586	0.000

(Source: SmartPLS 4.0 Processed Results, 2025)

The Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) variable significantly mediates the relationship between Digital Communication Overload and the Mental Health of Gen Z employees. This is evidenced by an indirect effect coefficient of -0.033, a t-statistic of 3.586, and a p-value of 0.000, which is well below the 0.05 significance threshold. The negative coefficient suggests that higher digital communication overload tends to increase FoMO levels, which in turn negatively impacts employees' mental health.

Following hypothesis testing using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach, the next step is to interpret the results in greater depth. This discussion aims to understand the empirical meaning of both direct and indirect relationships among variables in the research model. A summary table of the hypothesis testing results is presented to facilitate identification of significant relationships, direction of effects, and the theoretical and practical implications of the findings.

Table 14 Hypothesis Testing Matrix

Hypothesis	Research Findings	Description
H1: Digital communication overload significantly affects the mental health of Gen Z employees in educational institutions.	Path coefficient: 1.033, t-statistic: 111.882, p-value: 0.000 (>99% significance)	Accepted: There is a highly significant direct effect of digital communication overload on mental health.
H2: Digital communication overload significantly affects the level of FoMO among Gen Z employees in educational institutions.	Path coefficient: 0.973, t-statistic: 272.540, p-value: 0.000 (>99% significance)	Accepted: Digital communication overload significantly increases the level of FoMO.
H3: FoMO significantly affects the mental health of Gen Z employees in educational institutions.	Path coefficient: -0.034, t-statistic: 3.581, p-value: 0.000 (>99% significance)	Accepted: FoMO has a significant negative effect on mental health.
H4: FoMO mediates the effect of digital communication overload on the mental health of Gen Z employees in educational institutions.	Indirect effect: -0.033, t-statistic: 3.586, p-value: 0.000 (>99% significance)	Accepted: FoMO significantly mediates the relationship between digital communication overload and mental health.

(Source: SmartPLS 4.0 Output, 2025)

The results of the hypothesis tests show that digital communication overload significantly affects Gen Z employees' mental health in educational institutions, both directly and indirectly through Fear of Missing Out (FoMO). High communication pressure—especially from apps like WhatsApp—leads to psychological strain, blurring work-life boundaries and increasing cognitive overload. This supports theories such as communication overload, communicative affordances, and technostress, emphasizing that features like instant responsiveness

and excessive content contribute to stress and declining mental health. Additionally, digital pressure fosters FoMO, a psychological response rooted in anxiety over missing important information, which further harms mental well-being. FoMO acts as a mediator, linking external communication stressors to internal psychological outcomes. This is especially relevant for Gen Z, who are digitally native yet highly sensitive to social connection and uncertainty. In Indonesia's collectivist work culture, especially at institutions like Telkom University, the demand to always be digitally present can lead to hidden psychological burdens. Thus, the findings stress the need for ethical and sustainable digital communication strategies to protect employee well-being.

CONCLUSION

This study concluded that digital communication overload significantly affects the mental health of Gen Z employees in educational institutions, both directly and through the mediation of Fear of Missing Out (FoMO). The constant pressure to remain digitally connected fosters stress, emotional exhaustion, and mental imbalance, while FoMO amplifies these effects by sustaining anxiety about missing important information. These findings underscore the importance of managing digital communication and addressing FoMO to promote a healthier work environment. The study suggests developing ethical digital communication guidelines, providing emotional digital literacy training, and recommends future research to explore additional psychological factors across various organizational contexts to validate and expand the model.

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