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Factors influencing Generation Z's intention to apply for jobs

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Abstract
Purpose: The objective of this research is to examine factors that attract labor, such as worker status, working conditions and environment, and career development opportunities, and to analyze their impact on Generation Z's intentions in deciding to apply for a job.
Methodology: This research uses a quantitative research method with a survey questionnaire technique and purposive sampling. The data analysis reduces the independent variables into four main factors: company support, work environment, work flexibility, and financial compensation.
Results: The results of the SEM-PLS analysis show that not all factors have the same level of influence on Generation Z's intention to apply for jobs. Among the four variables examined, only work flexibility and the work environment demonstrate a significant effect, while compensation and management support do not show a significant impact.
Conclusions: The results show that Generation Z's intention to apply for jobs is significantly influenced by work flexibility and the work environment, while compensation and management support have no significant effect. This indicates that Generation Z prioritizes non-financial aspects, especially work–life balance and a supportive, technology-oriented work environment.
Limitations: The study has limitations in its use of convenience sampling techniques with a relatively small number of respondents and its focus on Generation Z in Bandung City, so the results cannot yet be widely generalized.
Contribution: Given the results, managers are advised to prioritize offering competitive financial compensation packages to attract Generation Z job seekers. Furthermore, organizations should foster a supportive work environment, flexibility, and career development opportunities to enhance recruitment strategies for this generation.

Keywords: *Compensation, Gen Z, Management Support, Work Environment, Work Flexibility*

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1. Introduction

Currently, the work environment is composed of various generations, each bringing different mindsets, values, and characteristics (Firdaus, Ginanjar, & Hasnin, 2025). The diversity of this generation presents both opportunities and challenges for organizations, particularly in managing these differences to achieve common goals (Jumawan, Ali, Sawitri, & Rony, 2025; Phina, Patrick, & Nwabuike, 2022). Generational differences can affect how people communicate, solve problems, collaborate, and respond to organizational policies. If managed well, this diversity can be a source of innovation and competitive

advantages. However, without the right strategy, these differences have the potential to lead to communication gaps, conflicts, and decreased team performance.

According to the 2025 Indonesian Population Census, Indonesia is populated by generations from various age groups, including baby boomers, Generation X, Millennials, Generation Z, and Generation Alpha. Baby boomers (1946-1964) make up 1.87% of Indonesia's total population (270.20 million people). Generation X (1965-1980) accounts for 11.56%, Millennials (1981-1996) 21.88%, Generation Z (1997-2012) 25.87%, Generation Alpha (2013-2025) 27.94%, and Generation Beta (2025-2039) 10.88% (Nurhanisah, 2025). These figures indicate that Generation Z is beginning to emerge as a significant force in the workplace, shifting the dominance of previous generations to them. Supporting these findings, Dwidienawati and Gandasari (2018); Hanifah and Wardono (2020) estimated that by 2020, Generation Z would contribute 20% of the global workforce. Their presence brings a new dynamic to the workplace because each generation has different expectations, aspirations, values, and work behaviors (Nurqamar, Ulfa, Hafizhah, Fadhillah, & Rahmi, 2022).

Generation Z is a tech-savvy group that values flexibility, demands transparency, and prioritizes work-life balance. This characteristic influences how they choose jobs, evaluate companies, and decide to apply for positions. Based on research by Hanifah and Wardono (2020); Waworuntu, Kainde, and Mandagi (2022), the social environment is a primary factor considered by Gen Z when choosing a workplace, with Gen Z seeking a fun work environment, flexible work schedules, and high-paid leave. Additionally, Motivation Theory by Acquah, Nsiah, Antie, and Otoo (2021) and Expectancy Theory by Vroom, Porter, and Lawler (2015) can provide a deeper understanding of why factors such as salary and career development opportunities are so important to Generation Z. Chillakuri (2020) also revealed that Generation Z expects guidance from their superiors and good working relationships, indicating their preference for a pleasant work environment.

Furthermore, Generation Z prefers work environments that offer freedom to develop their careers, as supported by Hanifah and Wardono (2020) research shows that Generation Z tends to seek places that support career advancement. Dwidienawati and Gandasari (2018) also found that Generation Z in Indonesia is realistic and requires security and stability, making salary-based incentives an important motivator driving employee performance. Egerová, Komárková, and Kutiák (2021) add that salary and career opportunities are two key factors motivating workers to choose a company. The findings of Zhenjing, Chupradit, Ku, Nassani, and Haffar (2022) indicate that companies generally offer career development opportunities, a conducive work environment, and training to prospective employees.

The differing characteristics of Generation Z make them more selective when choosing jobs. This poses new challenges for human resource management practices within organizations, considering that the phenomenon of demographic change in the workforce is becoming one of the most significant strategic issues in global human resource management (Siregar, WK, & Herlinda, 2023). According to Handshake data, 70% of Gen Z consider salary the most important aspect of their next job, and 65% view salary transparency in job descriptions as the biggest motivator when applying. Unconventional traits also characterize Generation Z (Bulut & Maraba, 2021; Fikri, Santoso, & Handaru, 2024), such as a preference for flexible working hours and a focus on work-life balance (Fodor & Jaeckel, 2018; Ichdan, 2024; Siddika, 2025; Sjarifudin, Widyastuti, Renwarin, & Suroso, 2025). Additionally, attractive work environment factors, recognition, appreciation, and opportunities for creative expression are key drivers influencing performance and engagement.

The problem that arises is that, despite extensive research on Generation Z's work preferences, studies specifically identifying the most dominant factors influencing their intention to apply for jobs, particularly in the Indonesian context, are still limited. This research gap is evident in the scarcity of studies that simultaneously analyze the influence of company support, work environment, career development opportunities, and salary on job application intentions. Additionally, there is still limited research that combines motivational theory and expectancy theory perspectives to comprehensively understand the behavior of Generation Z. This knowledge gap often makes it difficult for companies to design recruitment strategies that are relevant to the values, motivations, and expectations of Generation

Z, which differ significantly from those of previous generations (Nugraheni, Palupiningtyas, & Ardi, 2025; Prihantoro & Sutianingsih, 2025).

This study has a significant impact on two aspects. First, from a theoretical perspective, this study is expected to enrich the literature on generational behavior in the workplace, specifically regarding factors influencing job application intentions in Generation Z, while also testing the relevance of motivation theory and expectancy theory in the context of young people in Indonesia. Second, from a practical perspective, the findings of this research can guide companies in designing more effective recruitment strategies, ranging from transparent job description development and creating an attractive work environment to developing career paths that align with the aspirations of Generation Z. With the right strategies, companies can not only attract qualified young talent but also retain them in the long term, ultimately contributing to the organization's sustainability and competitiveness.

2. Literature review

2.1. Generation Z

Generation Z, also known as the Internet Generation, is a generational group born and raised alongside the massive development of digital technology. In 2015, Forbes Magazine conducted a survey of Generation Z in North and South America, Africa, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East (Burhan & Asmiraty, 2022). This survey illustrates that Generation Z is the first global generation raised in a social environment that is full of uncertainty and complexity. This condition shapes their worldview, particularly in terms of how they respond to change, accept diversity, and assess future opportunities. Thus, the social experiences of this generation contribute to their values and life orientation, especially regarding their attitudes toward work and learning.

As a generation born in the digital era, Generation Z has different expectations from previous generations in the context of the working world. Rani, Jalih, and Widyowati (2022) revealed that Generation Z is identified as a generation with a strong career orientation, ambition, and high levels of technical proficiency and language comprehension. This indicates that Gen Z not only demands broader opportunities for self-development but also emphasizes the importance of professional achievement as part of their self-identity. Thus, organizations need to understand that recruitment and human resource management strategies need to be adapted to the characteristics of this generation to attract and retain the best talent.

Research conducted by Fitriyadi et al. (2023) explain that Generation Z is the first generation to be highly dependent on the Internet for daily activities. Unlike previous generations, who were still going through a period of technological transition, Generation Z was born directly into the availability of digital technology. Instant access to information allows them to adapt more quickly while developing multitasking and innovative abilities. This condition also contributes to their preference for flexible, dynamic, and technology-based work environments.

According to Azzuhri (2024), Generation Z's familiarity with information and technology has made them an inseparable part of their lives. This has implications for the formation of more open values and life goals, tolerance toward other cultures, and an orientation toward efficiency and current information. In the context of employment, these characteristics are reflected in their tendency to choose organizations that are adaptable to change, provide access to modern technology, and create a work climate that supports creativity and collaboration. Therefore, understanding the characteristics of Generation Z is important for organizations in designing work policies that align with the expectations of this generation and to retain them.

2.2. Labor Pull Factors

Various studies have shown that each generation has different preferences and expectations regarding the world of work. Therefore, understanding the characteristics and needs of each generation is important for organizations in formulating recruitment strategies. Generation Z was born and grew up alongside the development of digital technology. Therefore, Generation Z's communication is highly dependent on information technology. In this case, companies are required to provide adequate

technological infrastructure to support daily work activities. Additionally, company attractiveness serves as a psychological factor that influences prospective employees' perceptions of the organization. The more attractive a company's image and reputation are in the eyes of candidates, the higher is the individual's tendency to apply to that company (Tsai & Yang, 2010).

One of the main preferences of Generation Z when choosing a job is flexibility in how work is carried out. This flexibility allows individuals to balance the demands of their professional and personal lives, contributing to increased job satisfaction (Stankiewicz-Mróz, 2020). According to Dwidienawati and Gandasari (2018), Gen Z considers income stability and work-life balance as important indicators when applying for jobs. Febriana and Mujib (2024) asserts that Generation Z expects flexible work schemes to support productivity and innovation. Therefore, policies such as flextime and remote working are appropriate strategies to attract talent from this generation.

Besides flexibility, compensation is also an important factor considered by Generation Z. Although they are known to be more oriented toward the intrinsic value of work, compensation is still considered a form of appreciation that reflects fairness and well-being. Dwidienawati and Gandasari (2018) state that Generation Z in Indonesia tends to be realistic and requires security and stability, making them more interested in companies that offer compensation commensurate with their skills and experience. This is supported by Putri and Zaman (2024), who assert that reasonable compensation increases a company's attractiveness and the likelihood of someone applying for a job.

However, Generation Z is not only concerned with financial aspects but also with the work environment offered by the company. They expect a safe and comfortable work environment that facilitates the use of digital technology to support daily work activities (Putri & Zaman, 2024). A supportive work environment with good interpersonal relationships creates a conducive work atmosphere and increases the interest of potential employees. Thus, developing an adaptive and technology-based work environment is a strategic factor in attracting Generation Z's attention in the labor market.

Support from management is also an important component considered by Generation Z. They prefer honest leaders with integrity who can create space for employees to contribute actively (Agarwal & Vaghela, 2018). In line with equity theory (Locke), perceptions of fairness and management attention can influence individuals' levels of satisfaction and motivation at work (Nugraha, Hakam, & Susilo, 2017). Therefore, companies must demonstrate management's commitment to providing career development opportunities and supporting employee initiatives as part of their employer branding strategy.

Changes in the external environment, particularly the accelerated technological transformation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, have further strengthened Generation Z's preference for organizational flexibility and adaptability (Rosiana & Yulianto, 2023). They are more comfortable working for companies that offer flexibility in determining the location and working hours, as long as productivity is maintained through technological support. Additionally, the preference for creative workspace designs, such as co-working spaces, coffee shops, and open areas, reflects this generation's need for environments that stimulate creativity. Thus, to attract Generation Z to apply for jobs, companies need to offer a balanced combination of work flexibility, fair compensation, a conducive work environment, and inclusive and adaptive managerial support.

Various studies have identified a diverse range of factors that influence Generation Z’s career choices. Mabaso (2025); Hoàng (2023) found that income stability, opportunities for self-development, and work-life balance are the main factors considered by Gen Z when making career choices. Research conducted by Mawabagja, Kurniawan, Islami, and Utomo (2025); Pandi, Askiah, and Hadiyanti (2025) also confirms that work flexibility is a top priority for this generation, as it allows them to manage their work time more adaptively and remain productive without sacrificing their personal lives. Additionally, Candra (2025); Manurung, Simamora, and Yusmalinda (2025) emphasized the importance of a supportive and modern work environment, including the availability of digital technology that aligns with the digital native work styles of Gen Z. Another study by Hadun and Perkasa (2025); Ikhwanudin

and Wulansari (2025); Kolin and Maranata (2025); Nopiyanti, Supriadi, Valerie, Rofiq, and Zhafran (2024), showed that compensation is still considered important. However, it serves more as a supporting factor that strengthens interest when accompanied by an inclusive organizational culture and leadership that is open to new ideas. In general, these studies indicate that Generation Z tends to be drawn to organizations that offer financial benefits and provide room for flexibility, professional growth, and a healthy, technology-driven work environment.

This study tests several hypotheses related to the factors influencing a person's intention to apply for a job. Figure 1 visually represents the hypothesized causal relationship between independent and dependent variables.

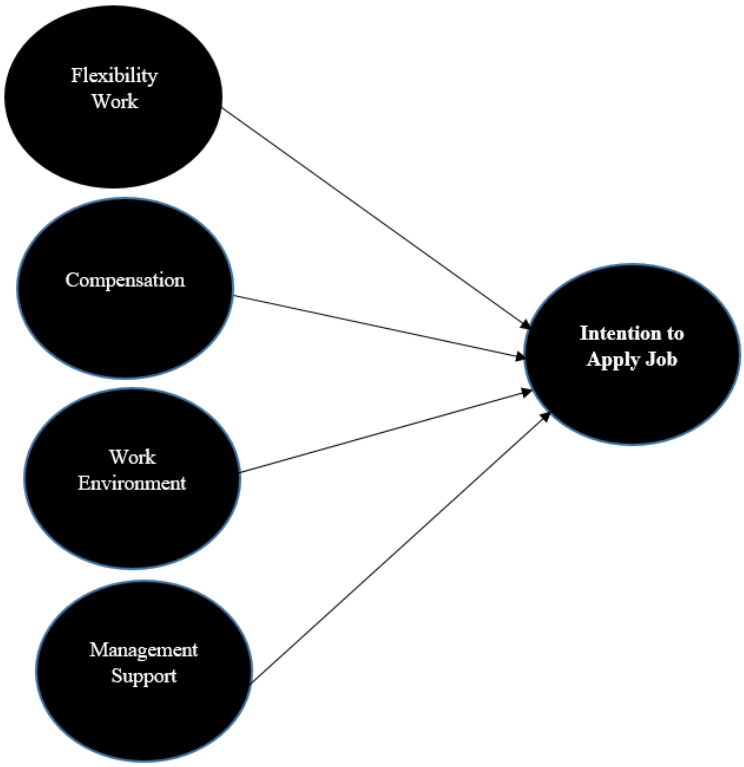

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework (Source: Own Elaboration, 2025)

H1: Work Flexibility has a positive and significant influence on Job Application Intention.
This hypothesis assumes that the more flexible the work environment offered, both in terms of time and location, the greater the interest of potential applicants in joining.

H2: Compensation has a positive and significant influence on Job Application Intention.
The assumption is that an attractive compensation package, such as a competitive salary and adequate benefits, will be a key factor driving potential applicants to apply for a job.

H3: The Work Environment has a positive and significant influence on the Intention to Apply for a Job.
This hypothesis posits that a supportive, conducive, and healthy work environment will increase potential applicants' intention to apply for a job at the company.

H4: Management support has a positive and significant influence on Job Application Intention.
This hypothesis assumes that prospective applicants' perception of strong management support, such as opportunities for self-development and recognition, will increase their interest in applying.

3. Methodology

This study used a quantitative research design to obtain measurable and objective data. Owing to time and access limitations, the sampling technique used is Convenience Sampling, which involves selecting respondents based on the researcher's ease of access to the research subjects (Golzar, Noor, & Tajik,

2022). The study population consisted of final-year students from a private university in Bandung City. The population was divided into two classes, with a total of 75 Generation Z students. The sample was obtained using a saturated sampling method, including the entire population. However, the sample size was relatively small. Given the limited resources available, this sample size was considered sufficiently representative to support the analysis conducted in this study. Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed using a Google Form link, making it easy for respondents spread across the research area to complete and submit.

The data processing in this study was carried out quantitatively using the Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) method, operated through the SmartPLS 3.0 application. SEM-PLS analysis was chosen because it can test the relationships between latent variables simultaneously and is suitable for relatively small sample sizes. The data processing stages began with instrument testing, which included validity and reliability tests to ensure that the indicators used accurately and consistently represented the research constructs. Subsequently, an inner model analysis was conducted to examine the causal relationships between latent variables and the significance of the relationships through the bootstrapping procedure. The results of this analysis provide an empirical basis for answering the research questions and testing the hypotheses.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Outer Model

4.1.1. Convergent Validity

The first stage of the research is the specification of the SEM-PLS model with the Outer Model or measurement evaluation. This model was used to ensure that the measurements in the study were accurate and reliable. Additionally, an outer model evaluation was conducted to analyze the relationship between each indicator and its related latent variable (Hakiki & Priantina, 2024). One method used to measure relative convergent validity is the outer-loading factor. Figure 2 shows the results of the outer loading factor, which must have an outer loading value of 0.7. A value of 0.7 indicates that the outer loading is acceptable, and values less than 0.7 must be excluded from the analysis. Initially, the research data showed that some construct variables were not valid or had values below 0.7; therefore, these variables were removed from the calculation. Based on Figure 2, all outer loadings have values above 0.7, indicating that the indicators of this research construct are convergently valid.

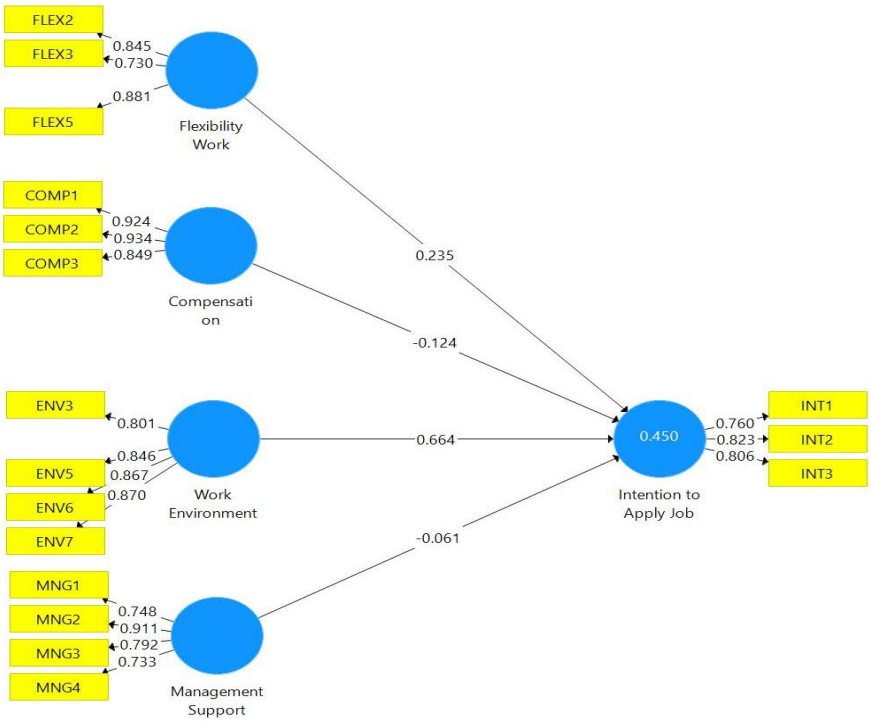

Figure 2. SEM PLS Algorithm
(Source: Processed Data, 2025)

The next test was conducted to ensure the quality of the measuring instrument used through the average variance extracted (AVE.). The purpose of this study was to measure the extent to which the indicators reflect the construct being measured. The AVE value is considered valid when it exceeds the threshold of 0.5 (Table 1). As shown in Table 1, all variables exceeded the threshold, and the measurement tool was considered usable in this study.

Table 1. AVE Value

Variable	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Description
Flexibility Work	0.674	Valid
Compensation	0.815	Valid
Work Environment	0.716	Valid
Management Support	0.639	Valid
Intention to Apply Job	0.635	Valid

Source: Processed Data, 2025

4.1.2. Discriminant Validity

The identification of adequate discriminant validity requires a higher connection between an indicator and the construct being measured, beyond the indicators of other constructs (Rezeki, Pasaribu, & Bahri, 2023). The following section specifies the values of discriminant validity for each indicator.

Table 2. Outer Loading Result

Indicator	Flexibility	Compensation	Work Environment	Management Support
FLEX 2	0.845			
FLEX 3	0.730			
FLEX 5	0.881			
COMP 1		0.924		
COMP 2		0.934		
COMP 3		0.849		
ENV 3			0.801	
ENV 5			0.846	
ENV 6			0.867	
ENV 7			0.870	
MNG 1				0.748
MNG 2				0.911
MNG 3				0.792
MNG 4				0.733

Source: Processed Data, 2025

According to Table 2, the discriminant validity or loading factor values for each variable exhibit a stronger association with their respective variables than with other variables. This is also evident in the indicators of each variable. This finding demonstrates that the positioning of indicators for each variable was executed accurately.

4.1.3. Composite Reliability

Next, reliability will be tested using Cronbach's alpha to assess the consistency and accuracy of the indicators in measuring a construct. Composite reliability will be used as a tool to assess the quality of the measurement instrument used (Firellsya, Kembau, Bernanda, & Christin, 2024). In this study, Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values were considered reliable if they exceeded 0.7. The test results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Description
Flexibility Work	0,774	0,860	Valid
Compensation	0,888	0,930	Valid
Work Environment	0,868	0,910	Valid
Management Support	0,830	0,875	Valid
Intention to Apply Job	0,711	0,839	Valid

Source: Processed Data, 2025

Based on the data in Table 3, all tested variables, namely Work Flexibility, Compensation, Work Environment, Management Support, and Intention to Apply for a Job, showed excellent levels of reliability. This is evidenced by the Cronbach's alpha values, which are above the threshold of 0.70 for all variables, with the highest value for Compensation (0.888) and the lowest for Intention to Apply for a Job (0.711). Additionally, the Composite Reliability values for all variables were also high, above 0.80, further strengthening the conclusion that the measurement instruments used for the five variables are consistent, reliable, and valid.

4.2. Hypothesis Testing

The comprehensive SEM model analysis not only evaluates the theoretical fit but also elucidates the existence or nonexistence of links among latent variables. Hypothesis testing was performed by evaluating the Path Coefficient values in the analysis of the internal model. The hypothesis is accepted if the T-statistic surpasses the critical T-value of 1.96 at a significance level of 5% ($\alpha = 0.05$). Therefore, if the T-statistic for each hypothesis surpasses the tabulated T-value, that hypothesis may be regarded as accepted or validated (Ghoza, 2024). Table 4 presents the findings of the hypothesis test, detailing the direct and indirect impacts of each variable.

Table 4. Path Coefficients

Path Analysis	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Flexibility Work -> Intention to Apply Job	2.068	0,039
Compensation -> Intention to Apply Job	1.037	0,300
Work Environment -> Intention to Apply Job	6.809	0,000
Management Support -> Intention to Apply Job	0.389	0,698

Source: Processed Data, 2025

Based on Table 4, Work Flexibility has a significant and positive influence on Job Application Intention. This is evident from the t-statistic value of 2.068 and a p-value of 0.039, which is less than 0.05, respectively. This finding indicates that the higher the level of work flexibility offered by a company, the greater the intention of potential employees to apply for jobs at that company. Work flexibility, such as flexible working hours or remote work options, has become a significant draw for job seekers. The results indicate that compensation does not significantly influence the intention to apply for a job. With a t-statistic value of 1.037 and a p-value of 0.300 (greater than 0.05), the hypothesis of a positive relationship was rejected. This indicates that, although compensation is an important factor, in the context of this model, prospective applicants do not significantly prioritize compensation as the main factor in deciding to apply for a job compared to other factors tested.

The analysis shows that the Work Environment has a powerful and significant influence on the Intention to Apply for a Job. The very high t-statistic value of 6.809 and a p-value of 0.000 (less than 0.05) confirm that a positive and conducive work environment is a major determining factor for potential applicants. A comfortable, supportive, and physically and mentally healthy work environment is the most dominant factor in motivating people to apply for a job. The results of the hypothesis test indicate that Management Support does not significantly influence Job Application Intention. The t-statistic value of 0.389 and p-value of 0.698 (greater than 0.05) indicate that prospective applicants' perception of management support is not a significant determining factor. This could occur because potential

applicants might not have a clear understanding of the quality of management support before they apply or get the job.

4.2.1. The Influence of Flexibility Work on Intention to Apply for a Job

Generation Z views the balance between professional and personal life as a crucial aspect in determining job satisfaction. This is driven by the values that guide Generation Z, namely, the importance of maintaining mental health. Additionally, according to Generation Z, it is important to develop oneself outside the work environment and spend quality time with family or social circles. This perspective aligns with the Work-Life Balance attitude, which emphasizes the individual's need to balance work role demands and non-work roles to avoid role conflict (Hendriana, Christoper, Adhitama Zain, & Pricilia, 2023). In this context, work flexibility is a factor that can mediate the potential conflict between these two roles.

Acheampong (2021) assert that Generation Z tends to be more selective in choosing jobs and prioritizes organizations that offer flexible work arrangements. In subsequent research, Nurqamar et al. (2022) found that flexibility in work time and location is an important determinant of attracting Gen Z workers. This indicates that Gen Z's work motivation is not solely based on financial compensation but also on organizational support for work-life balance. With this flexibility, Gen Z can manage their work rhythm more adaptively, ensuring that productivity is maintained without sacrificing personal interests. Therefore, implementing flexible work policies (flextime and remote working) is a relevant organizational strategy in facing the increasingly dynamic labor market dominated by Generation Z.

4.2.2. The Influence of Compensation on Intention to Apply for a Job

The results indicate that the compensation variable does not significantly affect job application intention in the Generation Z group. This is shown by a t-statistic value of 1.037 and a significance level of 0.300, which is above the threshold of $\alpha = 0.05$. This finding indicates that financial compensation is not the primary factor driving Generation Z's decisions to apply for jobs. These results contradict the findings of Prasetyawati and Supriatin (2025), who stated that direct financial compensation is a dominant factor influencing job application intention. However, Handi and Safitri (2023) support the current study's findings by stating that compensation does not have a positive or significant influence on job application interest in Bekasi Regency.

Theoretically, this phenomenon can be explained by a shift in work orientation among young people, who place greater emphasis on intrinsic job value. Examples of emphasizing the needs of Generation Z, such as opportunities for self-development, flexibility, and a supportive work environment, compared to financial benefits alone, include the following: Generation Z tends to evaluate organizations based on how much they prioritize well-being, work culture, and opportunities for professional growth. Thus, these results reinforce the view that effective recruitment strategies to attract Generation Z talent must prioritize non-financial aspects, such as career development programs, work-life balance, and an inclusive and collaborative organizational culture, as integral parts of the employer value proposition.

4.2.3. The Influence of Work Environment on Intention to Apply for a Job

The results indicate that the work environment has a positive and significant influence on Generation Z's intention to apply for jobs. This is evidenced by a t-statistic value of 6.809 and a significance level of 0.000, which is less than the significance threshold of 0.05. This means that the better the perception of the work environment offered by an organization, the higher the likelihood of Generation Z individuals applying for jobs there. This finding is consistent with the results of Arum, Widjajani, and Utomo (2025), who also showed that the quality of the work environment is one of the crucial factors in influencing the intention of Generation Z individuals to apply for jobs.

Conceptually, a conducive work environment is not only understood as the availability of adequate physical facilities but also includes organizational culture fit, a supportive work climate, and positive interpersonal relationships among members. Aligning organizational culture with the work environment preferences expected by potential employees has the potential to increase job satisfaction and engagement after they join, making it a strong attraction factor in the early recruitment stages. This

aligns with McClelland's need theory of motivation, which states that individuals need affiliation, meaning the drive to be accepted and build harmonious social relationships in the workplace. Therefore, organizations that can create a positive work environment and build a collaborative culture will find it easier to attract Generation Z talent to apply for jobs.

4.2.4. The Influence of Management Support on Intention to Apply for a Job

The results indicate that Management Support does not significantly influence Generation Z's intention to apply for jobs. This result indicates that the extent to which management provides support, guidance, and facilitation is not considered a primary determinant by Gen Z job seekers when deciding to apply. Interestingly, these results differ from those of Helbro and Petersson (2025), which highlighted that career development opportunities and structured support from management are important motivational factors for attracting Gen Z job applicants. The deviation of the current findings from previous research is due to a shift in expectations among Generation Z, where work flexibility and a positive work environment are given greater importance in the initial decision-making process.

Management support in the form of training, mentoring, and professional development programs remains relevant for long-term employee engagement and career advancement. Such support might be considered less important at the pre-entry stage when individuals are assessing the attractiveness of jobs. Barhate and Dirani (2022) noted that Generation Z values management support, especially in the context of career advancement and growth within the organization. This study indicates that the initial intention to apply is more strongly shaped by direct and tangible organizational attributes than by anticipated internal support mechanisms. Thus, it can be concluded that employer branding strategies aimed at attracting Generation Z not only need to emphasize management support but also highlight other non-financial values that align with Generation Z's expectations and preferences.

5. Conclusions

5.1. Conclusion

Based on the results of the SEM-PLS analysis, it can be concluded that Generation Z's intention to apply for jobs is significantly influenced by work flexibility and the work environment. However, compensation and management support did not have a significant effect. This finding indicates that Generation Z prioritizes non-financial aspects, such as the opportunity to balance work and personal life. Another priority is a comfortable and supportive work environment that aligns with their technology-based work style. Thus, companies looking to attract Generation Z talent must emphasize flexible work policies and create a conducive work environment in their employer branding strategies.

5.2. Limitations

This research is limited by its small sample size and the restricted scope of the industry sectors included. Most respondents were students who also worked part-time. The findings may not be fully generalizable to the broader population, particularly across different industries.

5.3. Suggestions

Companies should prepare for the increasing presence of Gen Z in the workforce. Understanding the behavior of this generation is crucial, as it is a key factor in shaping successful organizations. To improve work environments, companies should invest in workspace facilities and organize events that foster collaboration and teamwork, which aligns with the preferences of Generation Z.

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