

Research Article

Do I Love My Job? A Study of Job Satisfaction Among Generation Z Employees in the Coffee Shop Industry

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Abstract: The growth of coffee shop businesses in Semarang has accelerated in line with the rising coffee consumption trend among younger generations. In this context, employees play a crucial role in ensuring service quality. However, job dissatisfaction triggered by work-related stress and excessive service load remains a significant challenge. This study aims to examine the influence of occupational strain, service load, reward fairness, supervisory support, and work-life balance on job satisfaction among coffee shop employees in Semarang. A quantitative approach was used through a survey method, utilizing a questionnaire distributed via Google Form. A total of 100 respondents from various coffee shops in Semarang were selected using a census technique. The results revealed that occupational strain and service load have a negative and significant effect on job satisfaction. Meanwhile, reward fairness, supervisory support, and work-life balance have a positive and significant impact on job satisfaction. These findings offer valuable insights for coffee shop owners in developing effective human resource strategies that promote employee wellbeing and maintain high service quality.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction; Occupational Strain; Reward Fairness; Service Load; Work-life Balance

1. Introduction

The rapid growth of the coffee shop industry in Semarang City has created new dynamics in the labor market, particularly for Generation Z, which has begun to dominate the workforce. This development not only reflects an urban lifestyle trend but also opens up employment opportunities in the informal service sector, largely filled by young workers. According to data from the Semarang City Department of Culture and Tourism (Disbudpar Semarang, 2023), there are 169 officially registered cafés, indicating that this sector has experienced significant expansion in recent years. Generation Z defined as individuals born after 1995 are digital natives who have grown up in the era of the internet, social media, and a fast-paced information culture (Mărginean, 2021). They hold high expectations for the workplace, such as a flexible environment that supports work-life balance, as well as opportunities for personal growth and self-actualization. Job security, financial stability, communicative leadership, and a collaborative, non-hierarchical work atmosphere are elements highly valued by this generation.

However, these expectations do not always align with the realities faced by Generation Z in the workplace, particularly in informal sectors such as the coffee shop industry. When the values of professionalism and structured work they expect clash with high-pressure systems, irregular working hours, and limited labor protections, the potential for tensions that diminish motivation and job satisfaction increases. Mărginean (2021) states that although Generation Z enjoys a relaxed and open work environment, they still require role clarity, consistent direction, and continuous opportunities for learning and development. The mismatch between expectations and reality can heighten the risk of job stress, emotional exhaustion (burnout), and a tendency toward frequent job changes within a short time.

The increasing dominance of Generation Z in Indonesia's workforce highlights the importance of understanding workplace dynamics that align with their characteristics. According to the National Labor Force Survey (BPS, 2024), out of 214 million people of working age, 149.38 million are part of the active labor force. The 15–27 age group

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comprising a large proportion of Generation Z represents a significant segment of this structure, with the highest open unemployment rate recorded among those aged 15–24 at 16.42%. Meanwhile, the employment sectors that absorb many Gen Z workers, such as coffee shops, generally fall within the informal category, characterized by micro-scale enterprises, low income, unregulated systems, and limited career progression. Yumna & Rakhmadi (2021) note that most informal businesses in Indonesia are not formally registered, employ only a small workforce, and tend to avoid expansion to escape administrative burdens. In this context, Generation Z who seek stability and self-development often find themselves trapped in vulnerable working conditions, without guarantees, and with limited prospects for long-term job satisfaction.

The working conditions faced by Generation Z in the informal sector not only affect economic stability but also carry significant psychological consequences. Yumna & Rakhmadi (2021) emphasize that most informal business units in Indonesia are micro-scale, unregistered, and lack labor protections. In organizational psychology, an unstructured work environment that operates under uncertainty and prioritizes service volume can trigger stress, emotional exhaustion, and psychological disengagement from work. According to Ochis (2024), such disengagement is often driven by work pressure and a lack of supervisory support, which may manifest as “quiet quitting” behavior. For Gen Z employees, who highly value meaningful work, opportunities for growth, and work-life balance, such misalignment may encourage job hopping as a form of resistance to what they perceive as inadequate work environments. Arifin et al. (2024) explain that job hopping among Indonesian Gen Z workers is influenced by intrinsic motivation, the need for self-actualization, and the influence of social media. Many of them even consider frequent job changes as a positive strategy to accelerate career development and improve quality of life, particularly when organizations fail to meet their personal values. This phenomenon poses a real challenge for human resource management in the informal sector, especially in maintaining the retention and loyalty of young workers.

To explore this phenomenon in a local context, this study focuses on coffee shop employees in Semarang City as the research sample, representing one of the fastest-growing informal service sectors in recent years. Based on data from the Semarang City Department of Culture and Tourism (2023), there are 169 officially registered cafés across various districts. Of these, 19 coffee shops were purposively selected as the research sample based on criteria such as active operational status, type of service, strategic location, and the presence of Generation Z employees.

The selected coffee shops are distributed across both central and peripheral areas of the city such as Semarang Tengah, Tembalang, and Banyumanik thereby providing a diverse representation of working conditions in the informal sector. The complete list of selected coffee shops is presented in the following table:

Table 1. Name of the Coffee Shop

No	Area	Coffee shop name
1	Semarang Tengah	Boskaf Coffee
2		Antarakata Ahmadyani
3		Old Town White Coffee
4		Antarakata Tugu
5	Semarang Selatan	Pelangi Restaurant
6	Banyumanik	Kopi maju 57 Pedalangan
7		Peacockoffie
8	Semarang Barat	Ruang Interaksi
9		Honest Coffee
10	Tembalang	Wayang Kofie
11		Anantari Coffee
12	Gajahmungkur	Linds Gajahmungkur
13		Strada Coffee
14	Candisari	Encycoffeeedia
15	Semarang Timur	Anetos Coffee and Brunch
16		Casa del Caffe
17		Siblings Bar
18	Gayamsari	Kopi 57 Jolotundo
19	Semarang Utara	Linds Plombokan

Source: Disbudpar Semarang (2023)

Table 1 presents the 19 coffee shops selected as the sample from a total of 169 cafés officially recorded by the Semarang City Department of Culture and Tourism (Disbudpar) in 2023. The selection was made based on the classification of businesses that met the criteria of a coffee shop and were then grouped by district. Semarang Tengah recorded the highest number with four units, followed by Semarang Timur with three units. Meanwhile, other districts such as Gajahmungkur, Banyumanik, and Tembalang each had between one and two

units. This distribution indicates that the growth of the coffee shop industry is not solely concentrated in the city center but has also spread to surrounding areas. Such expansion reflects the potential for developing the culinary sector driven by young entrepreneurs and provides an important basis for analyzing labor dynamics and human resource management strategies across different urban zones.

To further explore these dynamics, the researcher conducted a preliminary survey of employees from the selected coffee shops in Semarang City. Based on responses to 25 statements, several key categories of job satisfaction were identified. The survey results revealed that salary and financial compensation, including bonuses, forms of appreciation, and paid overtime, were considered the most important aspect by respondents (55.6%). Other factors mentioned included a supportive and non-toxic work environment (14.8%), opportunities for growth, learning, and facing new challenges (14.8%), good leadership from supervisors or owners (11.1%), flexible working hours (7.4%), and positive teamwork with supportive colleagues (7.4%). These findings indicate that job satisfaction among Generation Z employees in the coffee shop industry is not solely determined by financial compensation but is also significantly influenced by the psychosocial conditions in the workplace.

In addition, the researcher developed a separate section in the preliminary survey to capture the initial conditions of the five main variables to be examined: occupational strain, service load, reward fairness, supervisory support, and work-life balance. Each variable was represented by two statements, answered using a simple "Yes" or "No" format, and structured as follows:

Table 2 Pre-survey

No	Statement	Answer %		SUM TARGET
		YES	NO	
Job Satisfaction				
1	I am satisfied with my work.	36%	64%	100%
2	I often thought about quitting this job.	72%	28%	100%
3	I quite enjoy my day-to-day work.	40%	60%	100%
Supervisory Support				
1	My boss made it clear what I had to do.	40%	60%	100%
Work Life Balance				
1	I have enough time to fulfill my personal interests.	28%	72%	100%
2	I have enough time for my family and friends.	28%	72%	100%
Reward Fairness				
1	I feel satisfied with my current salary.	32%	68%	100%
Service Load				
1	I invite others to be involved in completing the work.	68%	32%	100%
Occupational Strain				
1	I feel tired and bored because of my work.	64%	36%	100%

Source: Primary data processed by the author, 2025

Based on the results of the preliminary survey, most respondents reported being satisfied and enjoying their jobs. However, several respondents also exhibited signs of work-related stress, such as fatigue and the intention to resign. This imbalance indicates a gap between job demands and the resources available in the work environment. According to the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model developed by Demerouti and Bakker (2011), stress and a decline in job satisfaction occur when job demands such as workload and emotional pressure are not balanced by job resources, such as supervisory support, fair compensation, and flexible work schedules. Conversely, the presence of such resources can enhance employee motivation and wellbeing. Therefore, the findings from this preliminary survey reflect the importance of maintaining work balance in shaping job satisfaction among Generation Z employees, particularly in the informal sector, which demands high flexibility but often lacks structural support.

Job satisfaction reflects a positive psychological state arising from an individual's evaluation of their job, influenced by both internal and external factors. In this study, five variables are examined as determinants of job satisfaction: occupational strain, service load, reward fairness, supervisory support, and work-life balance. High levels of work pressure and service demands can decrease motivation and comfort in the workplace. Conversely, fairness in compensation, supportive leadership, and a balance between work and personal life contribute to enhancing employee job satisfaction. These factors are particularly relevant in work environments such as coffee shops, which require flexibility, fast service, and intensive customer interaction.

Research on job satisfaction has been extensive, yet the findings remain inconsistent, particularly regarding the influence of service load and reward fairness. Excessive workload significantly reduces job satisfaction as it increases pressure and diminishes psychological wellbeing (Saputra & Nawangsari, 2025). Meanwhile, reward fairness tends to have a positive

impact when compensation is perceived as fair and commensurate with employee performance (Saputra & Nawangsari, 2025). However, in different contexts, compensation perceived as misaligned with expectations may create pressure and negatively affect job satisfaction (Navila & Kurniawati, 2025). In addition, conceptual debates continue regarding approaches to work stress, such as eustress and distress, as individual responses to pressure are highly influenced by personal perception (Bienertova-Vasku et al., 2020). Therefore, further research is needed to examine the simultaneous effect of service load and reward fairness on job satisfaction in a more contextualized manner.

Beyond service load and reward fairness, psychological factors and the integration of personal life also become the focus in job satisfaction studies, particularly through the variables of occupational strain and work-life balance. Occupational strain arising from challenging demands such as time management and high-performance targets can increase job satisfaction by fostering a sense of achievement and positive engagement (Ali & Anwar, 2021). Conversely, chronic mental and emotional stress can reduce satisfaction by causing fatigue and prolonged psychological strain (Jinlin, 2023). Similarly, a balance between work and personal life contributes positively to job satisfaction by providing recovery time and psychological reinforcement (Susanto, 2022). However, when role imbalance or time conflict occurs, the impact tends to be negative (Cho, 2023). Thus, it is essential to examine how perceptions of work pressure and life balance simultaneously influence job satisfaction in modern work environments.

Beyond individual factors and life balance, structural elements such as leadership style also play an important role in shaping employee job satisfaction. Supportive and achievement-oriented leadership has been proven to enhance satisfaction by providing clear direction, emotional support, and a sense of meaningful goal attainment (Cumar et al., 2025). In practice, however, not all leadership styles have a positive impact. Toxic leadership, on the other hand, creates an unhealthy work environment, reduces motivation, and weakens job satisfaction due to manipulative behavior, authoritarian practices, and abuse of power (Wolor et al., 2022). These differing effects highlight the importance of examining how variations in leadership style influence job satisfaction, especially in the context of complex and diverse organizations.

This study provides benefits in both academic and practical domains. From an academic perspective, it extends the application of the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) framework by testing its relevance in the informal service sector, particularly among Generation Z employees working in coffee shops. Empirical testing of variables such as service load, reward fairness, work-life balance, supervisory support, and occupational strain contributes to enriching the literature and offering a contextual perspective on workforce wellbeing in environments that are flexible yet lack structure. From a practical perspective, the findings of this study can be utilized by coffee shop owners and human resource management practitioners to better manage young workers. A deep understanding of the factors influencing Generation Z employees' job satisfaction can serve as the basis for designing fair compensation systems, proportionate workload arrangements, and supportive supervisory patterns. Such measures are expected to improve workforce retention, strengthen service quality, and encourage sustainable business growth. Based on the aforementioned background and benefits, this study aims to examine the influence of service load, reward fairness, work-life balance, supervisory support, and occupational strain on the job satisfaction of Generation Z employees in coffee shops in Semarang.

2. Literature Review

Demands–Resources (JD–R) Theory

The Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) theory proposed by Bakker and Demerouti (2011) explains that employee wellbeing and performance are influenced by two main aspects: job demands and job resources. Job demands encompass work requirements such as workload and emotional pressure that can deplete employees' physical and psychological energy. In contrast, job resources refer to various workplace assets such as social support, opportunities for self-development, and work flexibility, which can enhance motivation and employee engagement. An imbalance between these two aspects has the potential to cause fatigue, occupational stress, and reduced job satisfaction. Conversely, the availability of adequate job resources can foster work enthusiasm and strengthen commitment to the organization (Bakker & Demerouti, 2011). In this study, the JD–R theory serves as the foundation for examining the influence of service load, occupational strain, reward fairness, supervisory support, and work-life balance on employee job satisfaction.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a crucial aspect that reflects an individual's attitudes and emotional responses toward their work. Lee et al. (2022) define job satisfaction as the outcome of an individual's evaluation of their work conditions, which is closely related to positive and

negative feelings toward the work environment and the roles performed. Job satisfaction significantly influences employee loyalty, productivity, and long-term motivation. Kim and Yeo (2025) also emphasize that the level of job satisfaction plays a key role in shaping organizational commitment and determining employees' likelihood of staying with or leaving the company.

Furthermore, job satisfaction is not solely determined by financial compensation, but also by factors such as work-life balance, interpersonal relationships, and perceptions of organizational culture. According to Lee et al. (2022), job satisfaction can be measured through the following five key indicators: recognition of performance, work-life balance, salary and welfare system, organizational culture, and relationship with management. These five indicators were selected as they represent essential dimensions that can influence employees' psychological wellbeing and their attachment to the organization.

The Relationship between Occupational Strain and Job Satisfaction among Generation Z

Occupational strain is one of the key factors that can influence employees' psychological wellbeing and performance in the workplace. Martin et al. (2022) explain that job stress arises when individuals experience tension due to a mismatch between job demands and personal abilities or available resources. This condition can be exacerbated by time pressure, role ambiguity, and disruptions to work-life balance. In a constantly changing work environment such as during the pandemic and the era of digital transformation occupational strain has become a serious challenge for employees in maintaining emotional stability and work productivity.

Unmanaged job stress can lead to decreased performance, reduced job satisfaction, and an increased risk of turnover. Rao et al. (2021) emphasize that job stress has a direct negative effect on job satisfaction and significantly increases employees' tendency to resign from their jobs. This highlights that stress management is an essential aspect of retaining a productive and committed workforce.

Dodanwala et al. (2023) state that job stress is a psychological and physiological response to perceived mental and physical burdens in the workplace. The main causes of job stress are generally categorized into four key dimensions: role ambiguity, which refers to a lack of clarity regarding job responsibilities; role conflict, which involves conflicting demands within the job; role overload, which pertains to an excessive workload; and work family conflict, which refers to the tension between job demands and personal life.

Consistent with this, various studies conclude that high levels of occupational strain are associated with lower levels of job satisfaction. Prolonged pressure particularly from workload and role conflict can reduce motivation, emotional comfort, and positive perceptions of workplace relationships, ultimately leading to a decline in overall job satisfaction (Rao et al., 2021; Dodanwala et al., 2023; Martin et al., 2022). H1: Occupational strain has a negative and significant effect on job satisfaction.

The Relationship between Service Load and Job Satisfaction among Generation Z

Service load refers to the full scope of job responsibilities that employees must perform in service-based businesses, such as coffee shops. These responsibilities include customer service, product preparation, workplace cleanliness, inventory management, and daily operational reporting. Kosch et al. (2023) state that excessive service load particularly in fast-paced environments that demand multitasking can reduce work effectiveness and negatively impact employees' work experiences. Weng et al. (2022) add that the complexity of tasks in intensive service systems can create an imbalance between job demands and individual capacity, directly affecting job satisfaction.

In the coffee shop context, Kim and Yeo (2024) explain that a high service load significantly decreases employees' job satisfaction. When the workload is unbalanced and not accompanied by adequate support or appreciation, employees tend to experience fatigue, demotivation, and a sense of being undervalued by management. This often leads to decreased loyalty and an increased risk of turnover. Relevant service load indicators, adapted from Kim and Yeo (2024) for the coffee shop context, include daily operational responsibilities, customer service responsibilities, administrative tasks, and performance expectations.

Nevertheless, a well-managed service load can provide a sense of achievement and enhance job satisfaction. However, when employees are continuously burdened with excessive tasks without sufficient compensation or support, service load becomes a significant source of stress and diminishes job satisfaction. Therefore, balance in the distribution of service responsibilities is essential for creating a healthy and productive work environment in the coffee shop industry. H2: Service load has a negative and significant effect on job satisfaction.

The Relationship between Reward Fairness and Job Satisfaction among Generation Z

Reward fairness refers to employees' perceptions of the extent to which the compensation they receive is proportional to their contributions and workload. Fairness in a compensation system not only involves the base salary amount but also the consistency of payroll practices, transparency in compensation management, and access to salary increases and benefits. When employees perceive that compensation is fair, they are more likely to feel satisfied, loyal, and motivated to perform optimally.

Aksoy and Adiguzel (2025) argue that perceptions of fairness in compensation systems are a key determinant of job satisfaction. Their study adopts indicators of reward fairness from the model developed by Heneman and Schwab (1985), which has been widely applied to measure satisfaction with compensation systems. The adaptation of this model allows for a more contextual and relevant assessment of reward fairness in today's work environment.

In this study, reward fairness is measured using four indicators adapted from Heneman and Schwab (1985) by Aksoy and Adiguzel (2025), namely: pay level satisfaction, which refers to the extent to which employees are satisfied with the amount of base salary received; pay raise satisfaction, which involves satisfaction with the amount and frequency of salary increases; benefits satisfaction, which pertains to satisfaction with additional facilities or benefits provided; and pay structure/administration satisfaction, which reflects perceptions of the management and administration of the compensation system.

Reward fairness, or perceptions of fairness in the reward system, is a critical factor in determining job satisfaction levels. Edmans et al. (2023) emphasize that fair compensation not only fulfills employees' basic needs but also serves as recognition of their contributions, thereby directly increasing satisfaction and commitment to the organization. This finding aligns with the results of Aksoy and Adiguzel (2025), which state that positive perceptions of the compensation system significantly contribute to higher job satisfaction. H3: Reward fairness has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction.

The Relationship between Supervisory Support and Job Satisfaction among Generation Z

Supervisory leadership plays a strategic role in shaping employee job satisfaction, particularly in service industries such as coffee shops, which require high levels of social interaction and work resilience. Supportive leadership defined as a leadership style that prioritizes employees' emotional wellbeing and individual needs can create a positive and appreciative work climate. Cumar et al. (2025) emphasize that supportive leadership significantly influences job satisfaction, both in intrinsic aspects such as a sense of achievement and job meaning, and in extrinsic aspects such as workplace comfort and the quality of interpersonal relationships.

In this study, the indicators of supervisory support are adapted from the Path-Goal Theory formulated by Cumar et al. (2025). These indicators include maintaining friendly working relationships, helping to overcome work-related obstacles, showing concern for subordinates' personal needs, and creating a comfortable work environment. Findings from Cumar et al. (2025) indicate that supervisory support not only enhances motivation but also strengthens employees' commitment and loyalty to their work. Supportive leadership facilitates open communication, improves conflict resolution, and fosters a sense of being valued, all of which directly impact job satisfaction. H4: Supervisory support has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction.

The Relationship between Work-Life Balance and Job Satisfaction among Generation Z

Work-life balance (WLB) refers to an individual's ability to manage work demands and personal life without experiencing excessive pressure. Fayaz and Gulzar (2025) explain that work-life balance is strongly influenced by organizational climate and employee self-efficacy, particularly in the context of women working in academic environments. In a broader sense, WLB not only reflects the proportion of time allocated between work and personal life but also represents the quality of a balanced life experience characterized by minimal role conflict and increased emotional and psychological satisfaction. A supportive work environment, both structurally and socially, has been shown to significantly contribute to individuals' ability to achieve such a balance.

The study by Fayaz and Gulzar (2025) also shows that the more positively employees perceive their work-life balance, the higher their job satisfaction and psychological wellbeing. This finding aligns with Faisal et al. (2022), who state that work-life balance significantly improves job satisfaction and psychological health, while also positively impacting performance. Therefore, organizations should create flexible and supportive work environments to enable employees to effectively manage their work and personal life roles.

According to Fayaz and Gulzar (2025), the indicators of work-life balance consist of four main aspects: balance of time between work and personal life, level of difficulty in managing work and non-work roles, perception of adequacy in time allocation, and confidence in achieving an overall balanced life. Work-life balance is an essential aspect of shaping job satisfaction, especially in the informal sector, which often demands high flexibility but provides limited structural support. Based on this, H5 posits that work-life balance has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction.

Previous studies have shown that work-life balance and organizational culture have a positive effect on job satisfaction and employee performance in coffee shops (Susanto, 2022). In line with this, another study found that work-life balance plays an important role in enhancing work engagement (Bayad Jamal Ali, 2021). However, different results were reported by Chen (2020) in a study of coffee shop employees in Ireland, where the integration of work and nonwork demands and resources only partially supported the proposed hypotheses. Furthermore, research in the hospitality sector revealed that job stressors do not directly influence job satisfaction but rather operate through other variables such as motivation and employee loyalty (Jinlin, 2023). Meanwhile, other findings emphasized that human resource management practices, including compensation, training, and performance appraisal, can improve job satisfaction and performance with employee engagement serving as a reinforcing factor (Jordan, 2023).

These differences indicate empirical inconsistencies regarding how job demands and job resources affect employee attitudes. Aligned with the framework of the Job Demands–Resources Model (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011), this study contributes by simultaneously examining occupational strain, service load, reward fairness, supervisory support, and work-life balance in relation to job satisfaction. The focus on Generation Z employees in coffee shops in Semarang represents the novelty of this research, as the informal service sector and younger workforce remain underexplored in a comprehensive manner. Thus, this study not only extends the application of the JD–R model but also provides practical implications for coffee shop management in maintaining job satisfaction and reducing employee turnover.

3. Research Method

Research Approach

This study employs a quantitative approach to analyze the influence of service load, compensation fairness, work-life balance, supervisory support, and occupational strain on job satisfaction among operational coffee shop employees in Semarang City.

Population and Sample

The population consists of all active employees working in various coffee shops across Semarang City, with a total sample of 100 respondents selected using a saturated sampling technique. All members of the population who met the criteria were included in the study, which required respondents to be at least 18 years old, currently employed as operational staff, and have a minimum work tenure of one year.

Data Collection

Primary data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms, enabling respondents to complete it flexibly without time and location constraints. This method was chosen for its efficiency in reaching respondents dispersed across the Semarang City area.

Research Instrument

The questionnaire consisted of 30 statement items adapted from previous research instruments and adjusted to the context of coffee shop operations. Each item measured respondents' perceptions of the research variables using a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree).

Operationalization of Variables

Operationalization of variables involved measuring job satisfaction using five indicators from Lee et al. (2022), including recognition, work-life balance, compensation, organizational culture, and relationship with management. Occupational strain was defined by four dimensions from Jinlin (2023): role ambiguity, role conflict, work overload, and work-family conflict. Service load was assessed based on Kim and Yeo (2024), covering operational tasks, customer service, administrative responsibilities, and performance expectations. Compensation fairness was adapted from Aksoy and Adiguzel (2025), focusing on base salary satisfaction, salary increases, benefits, and pay structure. Supervisory support was based on Cumar et al. (2025), which included interpersonal relationships, emotional support, instrumental assistance, and a supportive work climate. Finally, work-life balance was measured based on Fayaz and Gulzar (2025), incorporating time balance, role management difficulty, perception of time adequacy, and belief in balanced living.

Data Analysis Method

Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4 software, following three stages. The first stage was Descriptive Statistical Analysis, which described respondents' demographic characteristics (gender, age, employment status, work division, and length of employment) in percentage and frequency distribution. The second stage was Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model), where the reliability and validity of constructs were assessed using the following criteria: Factor Loading ≥ 0.7 , Average Variance Extracted (AVE) ≥ 0.5 , Composite Reliability (CR) ≥ 0.7 , and Cronbach's Alpha (CA) ≥ 0.7 . Additionally, discriminant validity was tested using the Fornell-Larcker criterion and HTMT ≤ 0.90 . The final stage was Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model), which examined relationships between latent constructs with the following criteria: $R^2 = 0.67$ (strong), 0.33 (moderate), 0.19 (weak); t-statistic ≥ 1.96 and p-value ≤ 0.05 ; Effect Size (F^2) = 0.02 (small), 0.15 (medium), 0.35 (large); and Predictive relevance (Q^2) > 0 .

The results of this analysis serve to construct a valid and reliable theoretical model that accurately explains job satisfaction among Generation Z employees in the informal service sector. The following are the results of the analysis:

Table 3. Questioner

Variable	Statement
Job Satisfaction Lee et al. (2022)	
JS 1	I am generally satisfied with the responsibilities in my job.
JS 2	I enjoy working for this organization.
JS 3	I really like the working environment of this job.
JS 4	I am satisfied with the institution's policies and regulations.
Occupational Strain Dodanwala et al. (2023)	
OS 1	I feel emotionally drained because of my job.
OS 2	I feel completely burned out from my job.
OS 3	I feel frustrated at work.
OS 4	I feel tense while working.
Service Load Kim and Yeo (2024)	
SL 1	I often receive additional tasks beyond the usual workload at the coffee shop.
SL 2	Each day, I must complete more work compared to the previous day.
SL 3	I feel that my job demands excessive physical and mental energy every day.
SL 4	I often have to attend multiple team meetings or operational activities outside of main working hours.
Reward Fairness Heneman and Schwab (1985) by Aksoy and Adiguzel (2025)	
RF 1	I am satisfied with the salary I receive as a coffee shop employee.
RF 2	I feel that the payment system in this workplace is fair for every position.
RF 3	I believe the compensation I receive matches my effort and job responsibilities.
RF 4	I am satisfied with my salary compared to similar jobs at other coffee shops.
Supervisory Support Cumar et al. (2025)	
SS 1	My supervisor clearly explains what is expected from me, including behavior and performance.
SS 2	My supervisor provides clear instructions to the team on what to do and how to do it.
SS 3	My supervisor emphasizes the importance of following work rules and procedures.
SS 4	My supervisor communicates the performance standards that must be achieved by the team.
Work-Life Balance Fayaz and Gulzar (2025)	
WLB 1	I currently have a good balance between the time I spend working and the time available for non-work activities.
WLB 2	I have difficulty balancing work and non-work activities.
WLB 3	I feel that the balance between job demands and personal life is currently adequate.
WLB 4	Overall, I believe that my work and non-work life are in balance.

Source: Adapted from Lee et al. (2022); Dodanwala et al. (2023); Kim & Yeo (2024); Heneman & Schwab (1985) as adapted by Aksoy & Adiguzel (2025); Cumar et al. (2025); Fayaz & Gulzar (2025). Primary data processed by the author, 2025.

Respondent Characteristics Description

The demographic characteristics of the respondents aim to provide an overview of the participants' profiles in this study. The demographic information presented includes age, gender, work division, and length of employment. This description is important to understand the respondents' backgrounds, which may influence their perceptions and responses toward the research variables. In addition, presenting these characteristics ensures that the

respondents meet the study population criteria, namely Generation Z employees working in coffee shops in the Semarang City area.

Respondents' Characteristics Based on Gender

The characteristics of respondents by gender are presented in the following table:

Table 4. Characteristics Based on Gender

No.	Gender	Total Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Female	46	46%
2.	Male	54	54%
Total		100	100%

Sources: Primary data processed by author, 2025

Based on the results in the table, the total number of respondents involved in this study is 100 people. Of this number, 54 respondents or 54% are male, while 46 respondents or 46% are female. These data indicate that male respondents' participation is slightly higher than that of female respondents.

Respondents' Characteristics Based on Age

The characteristics of respondents by age are presented in the following table:

Table 5. Characteristics Based on Age

No.	Age	Total Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	18-20 Age	16	16%
2.	21-23 Age	66	66%
3.	24-25 Age	18	18%
Total		100	100%

Sources: Primary data processed by author, 2025

Based on the data in the table, the respondents in this study were divided into several age groups. The largest proportion came from the 21–23 age group, totaling 66 respondents (66%), followed by the 24–25 age group with 18 respondents (18%). Meanwhile, the 18–20 age group consisted of 16 respondents (16%). These findings indicate that the majority of respondents fall within the 21–25 age range, which represents the young productive age category and reflects the characteristics of Generation Z actively working in the coffee shop service sector.

Respondents' Characteristics Based on Length of Employment

The characteristics of respondents by length of employment are presented in the following table:

Table 6. Characteristics Based on Length of Employment

No.	Length of Employment	Total Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Less than 1 Year	8	8%
2.	1-2 Years	67	67%
3.	3-4 Years	24	24%
4.	Over 4 Years	1	1%
Total		100	100%

Sources: Primary data processed by author, 2025

The respondents' length of employment varied across three categories. The largest group had been working for more than two years, comprising 60 respondents (60%). This was followed by those who had worked for 1–2 years, totaling 25 respondents (25%). Meanwhile, 15 respondents (15%) had been employed for less than one year. These results suggest that most respondents possess considerable work experience in the coffee shop industry, which may influence their perspectives on the variables examined in this study.

Respondents' Characteristics Based on Employee Status

The characteristics of respondents by employee status are presented in the following table:

Table 7. Characteristics Based on Employee Status

No.	Employee Status	Total Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Contract	51	51%
2.	Daily Worker	49	49%
Total		100	100%

Sources: Primary data processed by author, 2025

Based on the data in the table, the respondents in this study fall into two categories of employment status: contract employees and daily workers. Most respondents are contract employees, totaling 51 people (51%), while the remaining 49 respondents (49%) are daily workers. This composition indicates that the workforce in the coffee shop service sector in this study is predominantly made up of daily workers, who generally have a more flexible work system but lower job stability compared to contract employees.

Respondents' Characteristics Based on Department

The characteristics of respondents by department are presented in the following table:

Table 8. Characteristics Based on Department

No.	Department	Total Respondent	Percentage (%)
1.	Bar	37	37%
2.	Kitchen	30	30%
3.	Server	23	23%
4.	Admin	5	5%
5.	Purchasing	5	5%
	Total	100	100%

Sources: Primary data processed by author, 2025

Based on the data in the table, the respondents in this study come from various work divisions within the coffee shop. The largest proportion is from the barista division, totaling 37 respondents (37%), followed by the kitchen division with 30 respondents (30%) and the server division with 23 respondents (23%). Meanwhile, the purchasing and administrative divisions each account for 5 respondents (5%). This distribution indicates that the majority of respondents work in divisions directly involved in the preparation and service process for customers, which may influence their level of job satisfaction within the coffee shop industry.

4. Results and Discussion

Measurement Model Evaluation

The measurement model evaluation was conducted to assess the validity and reliability of the indicators representing the latent variables in this study. This process aims to ensure that the instruments used accurately and consistently reflect the constructs being measured.

Validity test

Convergent validity

Convergent validity aims to ensure that the indicators forming a construct have an adequate level of internal consistency. The assessment is carried out by examining the Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) values. A Cronbach's Alpha value of ≥ 0.70 indicates good reliability, while a CR value of ≥ 0.70 signifies that the indicators consistently reflect the construct being measured (Hair et al., 2021).

Table 9. Outer Loading

	Job Satisfaction	Occupational Strain	Reward Fairness	Service Load	Supervisory Support	Work Life-Balance
JS 1	0,962					
JS 2	0,967					
JS 3	0,975					
JS 4	0,968					
OC 1		0,962				
OC 2		0,982				
OC 3		0,979				
OC 4		0,980				
RF 1			0,960			
RF 2			0,965			
RF 3			0,970			
RF 4			0,949			
SL 1				0,919		
SL 2				0,963		
SL 3				0,950		
SL 4				0,944		
SS 1					0,972	
SS 2					0,986	
SS 3					0,983	
SS 4					0,983	
WLB1						0,971
WLB 2						0,979
WLB 3						0,980
WLB 4						0,983

Source: Processed Research Data, 2025

Based on the results of the convergent validity test, all indicators of the variables Service Load, Reward Fairness, Work-Life Balance, Supervisory Support, Occupational Strain, and Job Satisfaction had outer loading values ≥ 0.70 . This indicates that all indicators are valid and capable of representing their respective constructs. No indicators were eliminated; thus, the instrument is deemed appropriate for use in the subsequent analysis stage.

Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) measures the proportion of variance in the indicators that can be explained by the construct, compared to the variance caused by measurement error. An AVE value ≥ 0.50 indicates that more than half of the variance in the indicators can be explained by the construct it represents, thereby fulfilling the criteria for convergent validity (Hair et al., 2021).

Tabel 10. Tabel AVE

Variable	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Job Satisfaction	0.937
Occupational Strain	0.952
Reward Fairness	0.924
Service Load	0.892
Supervisory Support	0.962
Work Life-Balance	0.957

Source: Processed Research Data, 2025

All variables in this study show AVE values above 0.50, indicating that they meet the criteria for convergent validity. High AVE values suggest that most of the variance in the questionnaire items can be explained by the constructs being measured. Therefore, all constructs are deemed valid and can be used in the research model.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity ensures that each indicator has a higher correlation with its intended construct than with other constructs. This test is conducted through cross-loading analysis, where the correlation value of an indicator with its original construct must be greater than its correlation with other constructs (Hair et al., 2021).

Tabel 11. Discriminant Validity.

Job Satisfaction	Occupational Strain	Reward Fairness	Service Load	Supervisory Support	Work Life-Balance
JS 1	0,962	-0,938	0,940	-0,898	0,922
JS 2	0,967	-0,932	0,915	-0,890	0,929
JS 3	0,975	-0,932	0,926	-0,895	0,929
JS 4	0,968	-0,926	0,922	-0,886	0,923
OC 1	-0,934	0,962	-0,934	0,888	-0,933
OC 2	-0,939	0,982	-0,951	0,898	-0,942
OC 3	-0,945	0,979	-0,941	0,897	-0,934
OC 4	-0,939	0,980	-0,938	0,903	-0,938
RF 1	0,939	-0,942	0,960	-0,895	0,934
RF 2	0,904	-0,915	0,965	-0,867	0,905
RF 3	0,921	-0,925	0,970	-0,874	0,911
RF 4	0,910	-0,925	0,949	-0,867	0,915
SL 1	-0,930	0,940	-0,929	0,919	-0,920
SL 2	-0,859	0,848	-0,844	0,963	-0,849
SL 3	-0,842	0,840	-0,833	0,950	-0,839
SL 4	-0,842	0,833	-0,827	0,944	-0,825
SS 1	0,930	-0,930	0,930	-0,889	0,972
SS 2	0,935	-0,947	0,943	-0,898	0,986
SS 3	0,947	-0,954	0,938	-0,897	0,983
SS 4	0,940	-0,938	0,930	-0,893	0,983
WLB 1	0,927	-0,937	0,925	-0,887	0,920
WLB 2	0,932	-0,939	0,914	-0,888	0,925
WLB 3	0,934	-0,938	0,921	-0,888	0,938
WLB 4	0,943	-0,944	0,928	-0,894	0,931

Source: Processed Research Data, 2025

Based on the results of the discriminant validity test, all indicators exhibited the highest loading values on their respective constructs compared to their loadings on other constructs. This demonstrates that each indicator can clearly distinguish its original construct from other constructs. Therefore, the model meets the criteria for discriminant validity and is suitable for further analysis.

Reliability Test

The reliability test aims to ensure that the instrument used produces stable and consistent data. This assessment is conducted using two main measures, namely Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability, both of which evaluate the internal consistency of the indicators within each construct. The recommended threshold values for Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability are ≥ 0.70 (Hair et al., 2021).

Tabel 12 Reliability

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_c)
Job Satisfaction	0.978	0.984
Occupational Strain	0.983	0.988
Reward Fairness	0.973	0.980
Service Load	0.959	0.971
Supervisory Support	0.987	0.990
Work Life-Balance	0.985	0.989

Source: Processed Research Data, 2025

The results of the reliability test indicate that all variables in this study have Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values exceeding 0.70. This demonstrates that the items within each variable exhibit a high level of internal consistency. Therefore, the instrument used is deemed reliable and suitable for further analysis.

Inner Model

In this study, the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach was employed to analyze the relationships among variables within the proposed model. The structural model was evaluated by examining the coefficient of determination (R-Square) to assess the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables. The results of the inner model analysis provide insights into the strength of influence of each independent variable on the dependent variable, which are presented in the following visualization:

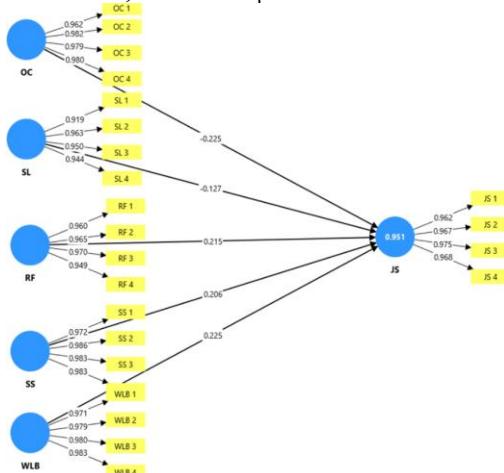


Figure 1. Inner Model

Source: Processed Research Data, 2025

Based on the results of the inner model analysis, the structural evaluation was conducted using the coefficient of determination (R-Square) to determine the extent to which the independent latent variables influence the dependent latent variables. Referring to Hair et al. (2021), an R-Square value of 0.67 indicates a strong effect, 0.33 a moderate effect, and 0.19 a weak effect. The R-Square values in this study are presented in the following table.

R-Test

The R-test table is used to assess the strength and direction of the relationship between variables in the research model. A correlation coefficient value approaching +1 indicates a strong positive relationship, while a value approaching -1 indicates a strong negative relationship. A value close to 0 suggests a weak or insignificant relationship.

Tabel 13. R-Test

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Job Satisfaction	0,951	0,950

Source: Processed Research Data, 2025

Based on the results of the inner model analysis, the R-Square value for the Job Satisfaction variable is 0.951, indicating that 95.1% of the variation in this variable can be explained by the independent variables in the model, namely Service Load, Reward Fairness, Work-Life Balance, Supervisory Support, and Occupational Strain. This value falls into the strong category as it exceeds 0.67, while the Adjusted R-Square value of 0.950 confirms the stability of the model even when considering the number of predictors. These results indicate that the structural model has a strong explanatory power for the dependent variable.

Hypothesis Test and Path Coefficients

Hypothesis testing was conducted to determine the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable through the path coefficient values, which represent the strength of the relationships between variables. The level of significance was determined based on a T-Statistic > 1.656 or a P-Value < 0.05 . The analysis was carried out using the bootstrapping method in SmartPLS, and the results are presented in the following table:

Tabel 14. Hypothesis

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ($ O/STDEV $)	P values
Occupational Strain -> Job Satisfaction	-0.225	-0.224	0.113	1.985	0.047
Reward Fairness -> Job Satisfaction	0.215	0.222	0.090	2.380	0.017
Service Load -> Job Satisfaction	-0.127	-0.124	0.045	2.827	0.005
Supervisory Support -> Job Satisfaction	0.206	0.203	0.093	2.223	0.026
Work-Life Balance -> Job Satisfaction	0.225	0.225	0.096	2.341	0.019

Source: Processed Research Data, 2025

Based on the hypothesis testing results using path coefficients with the bootstrapping method, the relationships between the variables in this study can be explained as follows:

- Service Load has a negative and significant effect on Job Satisfaction, with a coefficient value of -0.127, a T-statistic of $2.827 > 1.656$, and a P-value of $0.005 < 0.05$. Thus, Hypothesis 1 is accepted.
- Reward Fairness has a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction, with a coefficient value of 0.215, a T-statistic of $2.380 > 1.656$, and a P-value of $0.017 < 0.05$. Thus, Hypothesis 2 is accepted.
- Work-Life Balance has a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction, with a coefficient value of 0.225, a T-statistic of $2.341 > 1.656$, and a P-value of $0.019 < 0.05$. Thus, Hypothesis 3 is accepted.
- Supervisory Support has a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction, with a coefficient value of 0.206, a T-statistic of $2.223 > 1.656$, and a P-value of $0.026 < 0.05$. Thus, Hypothesis 4 is accepted.
- Occupational Strain has a negative and significant effect on Job Satisfaction, with a coefficient value of -0.225, a T-statistic of $1.985 > 1.656$, and a P-value of $0.047 < 0.05$. Thus, Hypothesis 5 is accepted.

Relationship between Occupational Strain and Job Satisfaction among Generation Z

The results indicate that Occupational Strain has a negative and significant effect on Job Satisfaction, with a coefficient value of -0.225, a T-statistic of $1.985 > 1.656$, and a P-value of $0.047 < 0.05$. This finding suggests that the higher the level of work-related pressure experienced by employees, the lower their job satisfaction. Excessive work strain can diminish motivation, enthusiasm, and workplace comfort, ultimately hindering the achievement of optimal job satisfaction. In the coffee shop industry, which demands fast service, frequent customer interactions, and adaptation to fluctuating workloads, high work strain can lead to emotional exhaustion, reduced service quality, and weakened job commitment.

This aligns with Pariona-Cabrera et al. (2024), who found that workplace violence or pressure significantly increases job stress, negatively affecting job satisfaction and performance quality. Work strain that is not balanced with adequate organizational support or job resources can deplete energy and reduce employee effectiveness. Similarly, Zhao et al. (2022) revealed that job stress has a significant positive effect on burnout, which in turn decreases job satisfaction. Conflicts between job demands and personal life exacerbate this condition, especially among workers with high job involvement but limited psychological resources. Therefore, managing Occupational Strain is crucial to maintaining employee job satisfaction, particularly in service sectors such as coffee shops, which heavily rely on front-line service performance.

Relationship between Service Load and Job Satisfaction among Generation Z

Service Load has a negative and significant effect on Job Satisfaction, with a coefficient value of -0.127, a T-statistic of $2.827 > 1.656$, and a P-value of $0.005 < 0.05$. This result indicates that excessive service load, whether in terms of the number of tasks or time pressure, can reduce employees' job satisfaction. In the coffee shop context, the high intensity of service demands that must be handled quickly and simultaneously often creates work pressure that triggers stress. Employees facing excessive service loads tend to experience physical and mental fatigue, ultimately leading to decreased motivation and service quality.

This finding is consistent with Jermstittiparsert et al. (2021), who found that excessive workload especially when combined with time pressure and interruptions negatively affects job satisfaction due to increased job stress. Similarly, Guarnaccia et al. (2018) confirmed a negative correlation between workload and job satisfaction, driven by heightened tension and reduced job commitment. In the context of Generation Z, who tend to prioritize work-life balance, effective management of service load becomes a crucial factor in maintaining job satisfaction. Implementing fair scheduling strategies, proportional task allocation, and

adequate resource support can help mitigate the negative impact of excessive service load on job satisfaction.

Relationship between Reward Fairness and Job Satisfaction among Generation Z

Reward Fairness has a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction, with a coefficient value of 0.215, a T-statistic of $2.380 > 1.656$, and a P-value of $0.017 < 0.05$. This indicates that the fairer the reward system employees receive whether financial or non-financial the higher their level of job satisfaction. In the context of coffee shop businesses that demand high-quality service, the perception of fairness in reward distribution becomes a crucial factor in motivating employees to consistently deliver optimal performance. Employees who feel that the rewards they receive are proportional to their efforts and contributions tend to show higher loyalty, stable work enthusiasm, and strong commitment to the company.

This finding aligns with Maryani et al. (2022), who demonstrated that compensation managed fairly and proportionally can increase job satisfaction by fostering a sense of appreciation and recognition within the organization. Similarly, Nugraha & Wulansari (2020) found that positive perceptions of reward system fairness contribute to increased motivation, a sense of belonging, and the quality of workplace relationships. Therefore, implementing a fair, transparent, and consistent reward system becomes an essential strategy to maintain job satisfaction, especially for Generation Z, who are highly sensitive to aspects of fairness and recognition in the workplace.

Relationship between Supervisory Support and Job Satisfaction among Generation Z

The results show that Supervisory Support has a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction, with a coefficient value of 0.206, a T-statistic of $2.223 > 1.656$, and a P-value of $0.026 < 0.05$. This indicates that support from supervisors whether in the form of guidance, recognition, or technical assistance can enhance employees' job satisfaction. In the coffee shop industry, where work demands are fast-paced, interaction-intensive, and require strong team coordination, having a supportive supervisor fosters a sense of security, boosts motivation, and builds harmonious working relationships.

This finding aligns with Hussain and Khayat (2021), who demonstrated that transformational and supportive leadership styles increase job satisfaction and organizational commitment by creating a positive work environment. Similarly, Turgut et al. (2020) found that consistent supervisory support contributes to improving employee wellbeing, reducing job stress, and strengthening loyalty to the organization. For Generation Z, who tend to value open communication and constructive feedback, supervisory support is a critical factor in maintaining job satisfaction and driving optimal performance in service sectors such as coffee shops.

Relationship between Work-Life Balance and Job Satisfaction among Generation Z

The results indicate that Work-Life Balance has a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction, with a coefficient value of 0.225, a T-statistic of $2.341 > 1.656$, and a P-value of $0.019 < 0.05$. This finding suggests that employees who are able to balance work demands with personal life tend to have higher job satisfaction. In the coffee shop context where work shifts often change and workloads can increase during peak hours effective time management and flexible work policies play a crucial role in maintaining employee wellbeing. Generation Z, who highly value flexibility and quality of life, are more likely to feel satisfied when the company supports this balance.

This finding is consistent with Pradhan et al. (2016), who found that work-life balance positively influences job satisfaction by enhancing intrinsic motivation and reducing job stress. Similarly, Haar et al. (2014) demonstrated that work-life balance significantly contributes to job satisfaction and organizational commitment, while also positively impacting employees' mental health. Therefore, strategies to support this balance such as fair scheduling, adequate rest periods, and management support can be key to sustaining employee job satisfaction, particularly in service sectors like coffee shops that rely heavily on direct customer interaction.

5. Conclusion

This study found that service load and occupational strain have a negative effect on job satisfaction, while reward fairness, work-life balance, and supervisory support have a positive effect. These findings confirm that the job satisfaction of Generation Z coffee shop employees in East Semarang is strongly influenced by factors related to workload, compensation fairness, supervisor support, work-life balance, and the level of work-related pressure.

In the coffee shop industry, which demands fast and high-quality service, there is a need for human resource management strategies that can maintain employee job satisfaction to ensure optimal performance. Based on these results, companies are advised to regulate

workloads proportionally, ensure a fair compensation system, provide consistent supervisory support, and implement policies that support the balance between work and personal life. In addition, steps are needed to manage work-related pressure through a supportive work environment and stress management training.

For future research, it is recommended to expand the research area and consider additional variables such as employee engagement or organizational commitment as mediating or moderating variables. The use of mixed methods can also provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence job satisfaction, especially in the service sector, which relies heavily on direct customer interaction.

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