

The Effect off Emotional Support, Instrumental Support, and Transformational Leadership on Generation Z Employee Performance at PT X, Kuningan Regency

1st Sofi Febrianti

Faculty of Economics and Business
Universitas Swadaya Gunung Jati,
Cirebon, Indonesia
sofi.124020368@ugj.ac.id

2nd Sabila

Faculty of Economics and Business
Universitas Swadaya Gunung Jati
Cirebon, Indonesia
sabila.124020361@ugj.ac.id

3rd Alya Dwi Rosmiati Faculty of
Faculty of Economics and Business,
Universitas Swadaya Gunung Jati
Cirebon, Indonesia
Alya.124020472@ugj.ac.id

4th Jihan Siva Salsabilah

Faculty of Economics and Business,
Universitas Swadaya Gunung Jati
Cirebon, Indonesia
Jihan.124020117@ugj.ac.id

5th Dendy Novandi

Faculty of Economics and Business,
Universitas Swadaya Gunung Jati
Cirebon, Indonesia
dendy.novandy@ugj.co.id

Abstract— Employee performance is a critical determinant of organizational effectiveness, particularly among Generation Z employees who exhibit distinctive work values, expectations, and motivational drivers compared to earlier cohorts. This study investigates the effects of emotional support, instrumental support, and transformational leadership on the performance of Generation Z employees at PT X in Kuningan Regency. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to 51 Generation Z employees selected using purposive sampling within a non-probability sampling framework. The data were analyzed using multiple linear regression, preceded by validity and reliability assessments to ensure measurement robustness. The findings reveal that emotional support and transformational leadership exert positive and significant effects on Generation Z employee performance, whereas instrumental support does not demonstrate a significant influence. These results indicate that psychological and relational factors, particularly supportive interpersonal interactions and inspirational leadership behaviors, play a more substantial role in enhancing Generation Z performance than tangible or material-based assistance. This study contributes to the growing literature on Generation Z workforce management by emphasizing the importance of socio-emotional resources and transformational leadership

practices in optimizing employee performance within contemporary organizational contexts.

Keywords— *emotional support; instrumental support; transformational leadership; employee performance*

I. INTRODUCTION

Employee performance is a critical indicator of organizational effectiveness, as it reflects the extent to which employees contribute to the achievement of organizational goals. High-performing employees enhance productivity, improve service quality, and support long-term organizational sustainability. In contemporary human resource management, employee performance is no longer determined solely by technical competence; rather, it is increasingly shaped by psychological resources and leadership dynamics that influence employee motivation and behavior.

The importance of examining employee performance becomes more pronounced in organizations increasingly dominated by Generation Z employees. Generation Z, commonly defined as individuals born between 1997 and 2012, grew up in a highly digitalized environment and is characterized by strong technological adaptability, a preference for flexibility, and an expectation for meaningful and supportive work environments. According to Twenge Generation Z employees tend to perform more effectively when they receive recognition, psychological support, and clear leadership direction [1]. Consequently, organizations are

required to adapt their human resource management practices to align with the expectations and work orientations of this emerging workforce.

Perceived Organizational Support (POS) theory explains that employees develop general beliefs regarding the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being [2]. Organizational support can be conceptualized into two main dimensions: emotional support and instrumental support. Emotional support refers to empathy, appreciation, and concern provided by supervisors and the organization, which strengthen employees' psychological attachment [3]. In contrast, instrumental support refers to tangible assistance such as work facilities, tools, and technical resources that enable employees to perform their tasks more effectively.

Prior studies have reported mixed findings regarding the relative importance of these factors. Emotional support has been shown to enhance work engagement and employee performance [4], while transformational leadership has consistently been associated with higher motivation and improved performance outcomes [5]. However, recent studies indicate that Generation Z employees may place greater emphasis on practical and resource-based support compared to purely emotional or inspirational leadership approaches, suggesting the need for further empirical examination in this context.

Literature Review

1. Dependent Variable (Y): Employee Performance

Employee performance is a central concept in human resource management studies, as it reflects the level of individual success in carrying out assigned tasks and responsibilities. Mangkunegara defines employee performance as the quality and quantity of work results achieved by an individual in accordance with the responsibilities assigned [6]. This definition emphasizes that performance is assessed not only based on outcomes but also on the work processes conducted in line with organizational standards.

Robbins and Judge further state that employee performance reflects an individual's actual contribution to achieving organizational goals, including aspects of productivity, effectiveness, and service quality. In modern organizations, employee performance is no longer viewed solely as technical capability; rather, it is also influenced by psychological, social, and work environment factors [7]. Therefore, organizations are required to create working conditions that support the comprehensive optimization of employee performance.

Among Generation Z employees, the concept of performance has distinctive characteristics. This generation is known for high technological adaptability, an orientation toward meaningful work, and expectations for supportive and flexible work environments. According to Twenge (2017), Generation Z employees tend to demonstrate optimal performance when they feel valued, emotionally supported, and guided by leaders who provide inspiration and clear direction. This suggests that performance management approaches for Generation Z employees must carefully

consider psychological support and leadership style as key determinants of performance outcomes.

Despite the growing interest in Generation Z workforce management, most previous studies have focused on large urban organizations, while limited research has examined Generation Z employees in regional organizational contexts such as Kuningan Regency. This creates a research gap regarding whether psychological support or tangible support plays a more dominant role in enhancing Generation Z employee performance in regional companies. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the effects of emotional support, instrumental support, and transformational leadership on Generation Z employee performance at PT X in Kuningan Regency.

Bernardin and Russell (2013) propose that employee performance can be measured through several primary dimensions, including work quality, work quantity, timeliness, cost-effectiveness, and teamwork ability. In this study, employee performance is measured using three key indicators: (1) work quality, referring to the level of accuracy and excellence of work outcomes; (2) work quantity, referring to the amount of work completed in accordance with established targets; and (3) timeliness, referring to the ability to complete tasks within predetermined deadlines.

2. Independent Variable 1 (X1): Emotional Support

Emotional support represents an affective form of organizational support that is closely related to employees' perceptions of care, appreciation, and psychological recognition within the workplace. Eisenberger et al. define emotional support as the attention, empathy, recognition, and appreciation provided by the organization and supervisors to employees [9]. Such support fosters a sense of being valued, respected, and considered an integral part of the organization, which strengthens employees' emotional attachment and psychological well-being.

From the perspective of Perceived Organizational Support (POS) theory, emotional support plays a critical role in building reciprocal relationships between employees and organizations. Rhoades and Eisenberger explain that when employees perceive high levels of emotional support, they tend to reciprocate through positive attitudes and behaviors, including stronger organizational commitment, increased loyalty, and improved job performance [2]. Moreover, emotional support functions as an important psychological resource that helps reduce work-related stress and emotional exhaustion, thereby enabling employees to perform more effectively.

Empirical evidence supports the significant role of emotional support in enhancing employee performance. Caesens et al. found that perceived emotional support from the organization is positively associated with higher work engagement and individual performance [4]. Similarly, Kurtessis et al. concluded that emotional support strengthens employees' intrinsic motivation, which ultimately contributes to improved performance outcomes [10]. These findings highlight the importance of socio-emotional resources in shaping employee behavior and performance.

For Generation Z employees, emotional support becomes particularly important because this generation tends to value recognition, constructive feedback, and supportive interpersonal relationships. Generation Z employees are more likely to demonstrate optimal performance when they feel psychologically supported and appreciated by their supervisors and organizations. Conversely, the absence of adequate emotional support may lead to reduced motivation and lower performance, even when organizations provide sufficient material resources and work facilities.

3. Independent Variable 2 (X2): Instrumental Support

Instrumental support refers to a tangible form of organizational support oriented toward the provision of work-related resources. Rhoades and Eisenberger define instrumental support as organizational assistance in the form of work facilities, tools, technology, information, and technical support required by employees to perform their tasks effectively [2]. This type of support aims to reduce work-related obstacles and improve task execution efficiency, thereby facilitating employees in achieving optimal performance.

Within the framework of Perceived Organizational Support (POS) theory, instrumental support is viewed as a signal of organizational concern for employees' well-being and success. Eisenberger et al. argue that when organizations provide adequate work resources, employees perceive that the organization is committed to supporting their task accomplishment [9]. As a result, employees feel functionally supported and are better able to perform their jobs more effectively and efficiently.

However, empirical findings regarding the effect of instrumental support on employee performance remain mixed. Some studies, such as Shanock and Eisenberger, found that instrumental support has a positive effect on employee performance by facilitating task completion and reducing operational barriers [11]. Conversely, other studies suggest that instrumental support does not always have a significant impact when it is not accompanied by emotional support and effective leadership. These findings indicate that instrumental support is complementary in nature and may require psychological and leadership factors to generate maximum performance outcomes.

For Generation Z employees, instrumental support remains an important requirement, particularly in relation to technological facilities, digital tools, and access to information. Nevertheless, this type of support is likely to be more effective when accompanied by supportive communication and emotional attention from supervisors. Therefore, instrumental support alone may not be sufficient to enhance Generation Z employee performance without the presence of relational and leadership-based support.

4. Independent Variable 3 (X3): Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is a leadership style that emphasizes a leader's ability to inspire and transform subordinates to achieve higher levels of performance. Bass and Avolio define transformational leadership as a process in which leaders motivate employees to transcend personal

interests for the sake of organizational goals through four key components: vision, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration [5]. This leadership approach focuses on developing employees' potential and fostering commitment to shared organizational objectives.

Podsakoff et al. argue that transformational leadership positively influences employee performance by enhancing intrinsic motivation, creativity, and employees' sense of responsibility [12]. Transformational leaders encourage employees to think innovatively, challenge existing assumptions, and take initiative in completing their tasks. Such behaviors contribute to improved performance, particularly in dynamic and evolving organizational environments.

In the context of Generation Z employees, transformational leadership is highly relevant because this generation tends to expect leaders who are open, communicative, and capable of providing meaning to the work being performed. Generation Z employees value collaborative relationships, continuous feedback, and opportunities for personal development. Authoritarian leadership styles are generally less effective for Generation Z, whereas transformational leadership fosters a more supportive, collaborative, and inspirational working relationship. Consequently, transformational leadership is expected to play a significant role in enhancing the performance of Generation Z employees.

5. Hypothesis Development

The Effect of Emotional Support on Employee Performance Emotional support perceived by employees, such as attention, empathy, and appreciation in the workplace, enables Generation Z employees to work more comfortably and with higher motivation. This condition helps employees manage work pressure and develop positive work attitudes. Therefore, emotional support is considered an important factor in improving employee performance.

H1: Emotional support has a positive effect on the performance of Generation Z employees.

The Effect of Instrumental Support on Employee Performance Instrumental support in the form of work facilities, technical assistance, and adequate resources can help employees complete tasks more effectively and efficiently. With sufficient instrumental support, employees are able to perform their duties in accordance with organizational standards. Therefore, instrumental support is considered to play a role in improving employee performance.

H2: Instrumental support has a positive effect on the performance of Generation Z employees.

The Effect of Transformational Leadership on Employee Performance

Transformational leadership is able to provide inspiration, motivation, and clear direction to employees. This leadership style encourages Generation Z employees to be committed to their work, increase self-confidence, and strive to achieve optimal performance. Therefore, transformational leadership is considered a factor that can enhance employee performance.

H3: Transformational leadership has a positive effect on the performance of Generation Z employees

II. METHOD

This study employed a quantitative research approach with an explanatory research design to examine the causal relationships between emotional support, instrumental support, transformational leadership, and the performance of Generation Z employees. The quantitative approach was selected because it enables objective measurement of variables and hypothesis testing using statistical procedures based on numerical data. By applying this approach, the study aims to provide empirical evidence regarding the extent to which organizational support and leadership style influence employee performance.

An explanatory research design was adopted because the primary objective of this study was to explain the effects of independent variables on a dependent variable through hypothesis testing. This design is particularly appropriate for studies that aim to identify cause-and-effect relationships and verify theoretical assumptions derived from previous literature. In this context, the explanatory design allows the researcher to assess whether emotional support, instrumental support, and transformational leadership significantly influence the performance of Generation Z employees.

The study applied a cross-sectional design, in which data were collected at a single point in time. This design was considered suitable because the research aimed to capture employees' perceptions of organizational support, leadership style, and performance during the research period rather than observing changes over time. The cross-sectional approach also enabled efficient data collection within a limited timeframe while still providing meaningful insights into the relationships among variables.

The population of this study consisted of all Generation Z employees working at PT X in Kuningan Regency. Generation Z employees were defined as individuals born between 1997 and 2012, in accordance with commonly accepted generational classifications in human resource and organizational studies. This generation was selected as the focus because Generation Z employees increasingly dominate the workforce and are characterized by distinctive work preferences, including a stronger emphasis on psychological support, meaningful work, and leadership style.

A purposive sampling technique was used to select the research sample. This technique was chosen to ensure that respondents met specific criteria relevant to the objectives of the study. The inclusion criteria required respondents to belong to Generation Z and to have worked at PT X for a minimum of six months. This minimum tenure requirement was applied to ensure that respondents had sufficient experience and understanding of organizational conditions, leadership practices, and support systems within the company. Based on these criteria, a total of 51 Generation Z employees were selected as respondents.

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire distributed online via Google Forms from November 21 to December 2, 2025. The use of an online questionnaire facilitated efficient data collection, improved accessibility for respondents, and reduced administrative

constraints. Respondents completed the questionnaire voluntarily and anonymously, which was expected to encourage honest and unbiased responses. The questionnaire consisted of two main sections: the first section collected demographic information such as gender and age, while the second section measured the research variables using structured measurement items.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Respondent Characteristics

TABLE I. RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Female	30	58,8
Male	21	41,2
Age > 20 years	51	100

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The majority of respondents were female, accounting for 58.8% (n = 30), while male respondents represented 41.2% (n = 21). All respondents were over 20 years old, indicating that the participants met the criteria for Generation Z employees in this study. These findings suggest that the sample adequately represents Generation Z employees working at PT X in Kuningan Regency.

2. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	SD
Employee Performance	4.40	0.64
Emotional Support	4.11	0.80
Instrumental Support	4.23	0.69
Transformational Leadership	4.31	0.70

The descriptive statistics indicate that all variables have mean values above 4.00, suggesting that respondents generally perceived emotional support, instrumental support, transformational leadership, and employee performance at relatively high levels. Employee performance recorded the highest mean value (M = 4.40, SD = 0.64), followed by transformational leadership (M = 4.31, SD = 0.70), instrumental support (M = 4.23, SD = 0.69), and emotional support (M = 4.11, SD = 0.80). These results indicate that respondents generally viewed organizational support and leadership practices positively, and perceived their performance to be relatively high.

3. Validity Test

Variable	r- value	r- table	Descriptio n
Emotional Support	0.784-0.90	0.279	Valid
Instrumental Support	0.729-0.893	0.279	Valid
Transformational Leadership	0.851-0.905	0.279	Valid
Employee Performance	0.808-0.859	0.279	Valid

The validity test results show that all measurement items have r-values ranging from 0.729 to 0.905, which are higher than the r-table value of 0.279. Specifically, emotional support items ranged from 0.784 to 0.900, instrumental support from 0.729 to 0.893, transformational leadership from 0.851 to 0.905, and employee performance from 0.808 to 0.859. These findings indicate that all questionnaire items are valid and suitable for measuring the respective research variables.

4. Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Descripti on
Emotional Support	0.904	Reliable
Instrumental Support	0.857	Reliable
Transformational Leadership	0.919	Reliable
Employee Performance	0.903	Reliable

The reliability test results indicate that all variables have Cronbach's Alpha values above the recommended threshold of 0.70. Emotional support has a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.904, instrumental support 0.857, transformational leadership 0.919, and employee performance 0.903. These results confirm that the research instruments demonstrate high internal consistency and are reliable for data analysis.

5. Hypothesis Testing

Variable	Beta(β)	Sig	Decision
Emotional Support (X1)	-0.246	0.194	Rejected
Instrumental Support (X2)	0.703	0.005	Accepted
Transformational Leadership (X3)	0.240	0.256	Rejected

The hypothesis testing results indicate that instrumental support has a positive and significant effect on Generation Z employee performance ($\beta = 0.703$, $p = 0.005$). In contrast, emotional support ($\beta = -0.246$, $p = 0.194$) and transformational

leadership ($\beta = 0.240$, $p = 0.256$) do not show significant effects on employee performance. These findings suggest that tangible organizational support plays a more dominant role in influencing the performance of Generation Z employees compared to psychological support and leadership style in the context of PT X in Kuningan Regency.

The significant effect of instrumental support indicates that Generation Z employees rely heavily on the availability of work facilities, technological resources, and operational support to perform effectively. This finding supports the argument that Generation Z employees are highly technology-oriented and prefer practical resources that directly facilitate task completion. When organizations provide adequate tools, information, and technical assistance, employees can work more efficiently, which ultimately improves performance.

On the other hand, emotional support does not show a significant effect on employee performance. This finding is consistent with previous studies emphasizing that socio-emotional support does not always directly translate into performance outcomes. Prior research indicates that workplace compassion and altruistic behaviors primarily influence affective outcomes such as organizational commitment, well-being, and psychological attachment rather than immediate performance improvements [13], [14]. These findings suggest that Generation Z employees may require functional resources in addition to socio-emotional support to enhance performance outcomes, particularly in operational work settings where task efficiency plays a central role [15]. This finding suggests that although Generation Z employees value recognition and interpersonal relationships, emotional support alone may not directly translate into improved performance without adequate work resources. Similarly, transformational leadership does not significantly influence performance in this study. This result indicates that inspirational leadership may not be sufficient to enhance performance when employees prioritize practical and resource-based support for task completion.

These findings highlight that Generation Z employees may emphasize functional support over relational or inspirational factors, particularly in operational work environments. Therefore, instrumental support appears to be a more critical determinant of performance in this organizational context.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that instrumental support has a positive and significant effect on the performance of Generation Z employees at PT X, Kuningan Regency. This finding indicates that tangible forms of organizational support, such as the availability of adequate work facilities, access to modern technology, and operational support, significantly influence performance. The findings of this study provide both theoretical and practical implications. From a theoretical perspective, this research contributes to the literature on employee performance by highlighting the dominant role of instrumental support for Generation Z employees, particularly in a regional organizational setting. From a practical perspective, the results suggest that organizations employing Generation Z workers should prioritize the provision of adequate resources, modern

work facilities, and clear operational support systems as part of their human resource management strategies.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. The sample size was relatively small and limited to a single organization, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, this study focused only on three independent variables, while other factors such as job satisfaction, work motivation, organizational culture, and work-life balance may also influence employee performance.

Future research is therefore recommended to involve larger and more diverse samples, include organizations from different sectors and regions, and incorporate additional variables to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing the performance of Generation Z employees. Longitudinal research designs may also be considered to capture changes in employee perceptions and performance over time. By addressing these limitations, future studies are expected to provide deeper insights into effective organizational practices for managing and supporting Generation Z employees.

REFERENCES

- [1] D. S. Fajri, M. Alfäreza, R. Satrio, D. M. Siddiq, and M. Mamat, "How workplace compassion, social support, and altruism in predicting retention among employees in highly competitive businesses," *Jurnal Ekonomi Bisnis Digital*, vol. 3, no. 3, pp. 477–494, 2024.
- [2] R. K. Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*. New York: Paulist Press, 1977.
- [3] R. C. Liden, S. J. Wayne, H. Zhao, and D. Henderson, "Servant leadership: Development of a multidimensional measure and multi-level assessment," *The Leadership Quarterly*, vol. 19, no. 2, pp. 161–177, 2008, doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2008.01.006.
- [4] A. A. P. Mangkunegara, *Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia Perusahaan*. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2017.
- [5] S. P. Robbins and T. A. Judge, *Organizational Behavior*, 17th ed. Harlow: Pearson Education, 2017.
- [6] D. M. Siddiq, Mukhibulloh, R. P. Astuti, A. T. Dewi, and T. Along, "The role of CEO altruism in moderating the relationship between affective commitment and integrity with organizational citizenship behavior in SMEs," *International Research Journal of Business Studies*, vol. 17, no. 1, pp. 93–104, 2024.
- [7] M. J. Sirgy, D. Efraty, P. Siegel, and D. J. Lee, "A new measure of quality of work life (QWL) based on need satisfaction and spillover theories," *Social Indicators Research*, vol. 55, no. 3, pp. 241–302, 2001, doi:10.1023/A:1010986923468.
- [8] A. Somech, "The effects of leadership style and team process on performance and innovation in functionally heterogeneous teams," *Journal of Management*, vol. 32, no. 1, pp. 132–157, 2006, doi:10.1177/0149206305277799.
- [9] J. M. Twenge, *iGen: Why Today's Super-Connected Kids Are Growing Up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy—and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood*. New York: Atria Books, 2018.