Generational Gaps in Work-Life Balance: Comparing the Expectations of Gen X, Y, and Z

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Abstract

This study analyzes the relationship between work-life balance and employee happiness and performance, considering the differences between Generations X, Y, and Z in East Nusa Tenggara Province. This is an explanatory quantitative study with a sample size of 1.155 respondents and data analysis using SEM-PLS. Work-life balance is measured through three dimensions: Personal Life Interferes with Work (PLIW), Work Interferes with Personal Life (WIPL), and Work-Personal Life Enhancement (WPLE). The results indicate that among Generation Z, work-life balance significantly influences performance, with happiness as a mediator and moderator variable. Conversely, among Generation X and Y, the significant influence only occurs through the WPLE dimension, and happiness acts as a mediator without a moderating effect. These findings emphasize the importance of considering generational differences in human resource management strategies, particularly in designing flexible work systems that support employees' responsibilities.

Kesenjangan Work-Life Balance Antar Generasi: Perbandingan Ekspektasi Generasi X, Y dan Z

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh work-life balance terhadap kebahagiaan dan kinerja karyawan dengan mempertimbangkan perbedaan generasi X, Y, dan Z di Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Timur. Jenis penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kuantitatif eksplanatori dengan jumlah sampel 1.155 responden dan analisis data menggunakan SEM-PLS. Work-Life Balance diukur melalui tiga dimensi: Personal Life Interferes with Work (PLIW), Work Interferes with Personal Life (WIPL), dan Work-Personal Life Enhancement (WPLE). Hasil menunjukkan bahwa pada Generasi Z, work-life balance berpengaruh signifikan terhadap kinerja, dengan kebahagiaan berperan sebagai variabel mediator dan moderator. Sebaliknya, pada Generasi X dan Y, pengaruh signifikan hanya terjadi melalui dimensi WPLE, dan kebahagiaan berperan sebagai mediator tanpa efek moderasi. Temuan ini menekankan pentingnya mempertimbangkan perbedaan generasi dalam strategi manajemen sumber daya manusia, khususnya dalam merancang sistem kerja yang fleksibel dan mendukung tanggung jawab pribadi karyawan.

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INTRODUCTION

The importance of human resources has increased in a dynamic, competitive, information- and knowledge-driven corporate environment. This is because business organizations are now more concentrated in scarce quality human resources rather than scarce financial capital (Williams et al., 2016). Organizations realize the essential duties of employees in achieving organizational goals through the actions of each individual (Burin & Manafe, 2022). The importance of employees is growing due to these challenges, as they are required to maintain exceptional performance and play a vital role in the company's success (Wolor et al., 2020). Companies must continuously attend to the wants and needs of their workforce to guarantee employee performance, boost production, and turn a profit (Larasati et al., 2019). To accomplish their long-term objectives, businesses must also devise plans for acquiring and retaining human resources (Capnary et al., 2018).

Happiness can be a tool that organizations can use to maximize the quality and performance of employees (Abualloush et al., 2016; Joo & Lee, 2017). Each employee's happiness (physical and mental happiness) holds significant value for organizations to take notice of to achieve success and retain talented employees. Happy workers can help others advance in their careers and enhance corporate performance in customer satisfaction, staff retention, and productivity or profitability (Shaffer et al., 2016; Sheikhaboumasoudi et al., 2018). A person's level of happiness at work is determined by their positive affective experiences or favourable assessments (Fisher, 2010). Therefore, employee happiness in the workplace has developed into one of the leaders' core matters and is perceived as an essential means to support the performance of an organization (Sondakh et al., 2023).

Happiness is essential to overall well-being through its affective and cognitive dimensions. This dimension involves emotional experiences and individual happiness levels in every area of their life (Rini, 2024). Work-life balance is a significant contributor influencing the level of work (Elnanto & Suharti, 2021). Work-life balance can also be interpreted as an individual's ability to effectively balance their roles in work and family. Work-life balance contains two essential elements: the total time management of work hours and responsibilities for the household (Iswahyudi et al., 2023). When a person enters work life, the inability to apply work-life balance will make them unable to enjoy their life. The balance will make a person unable to enjoy their life and feel burdened because it is challenging to meet with friends, family, or partners (Bataineh, 2019). In addition, applying work-life balance principles will make it easier for employees to do their tasks more effectively and efficiently (Bataineh, 2019).

When individuals can preserve a healthy work-life balance that promotes happiness, it should enhance their job performance. However, in practice, many work environments become unbalanced and less effective when working hours exceed the recommended limits (Manafe et al., 2025). Pursuant to Law Number 6 of 2023 about work creation (UU Cipta Kerja), the working hour scheme applicable in Indonesia is 40 hours a week. Data from the Central Bureau of Statistics in 2022 regarding the workforce, according to the number of hours worked, shows that as many as 55,189,400 people still work more than 44 hours a week. This data indicates that many Indonesians still have total working hours exceeding those set by the work copyright law. Total working hours that exceed the standard will interfere with a person's work-life balance because non-work hours for family and self are reduced, which can affect the individual's

feelings (Gröpel & Kuhl, 2009).

Organizations that offer their employees the opportunity to supervise their work assignments and life duties will benefit their employees by improving their performance (Bataineh, 2019). The application of work-life directly affects performance, which pertains to the results attained by an individual or team in their job responsibilities. These responsibilities are crucial for reaching objectives, commonly known as work standards (Damanik et al., 2023). Organizations must prioritize maintaining their employees' work-life balance to affirm that their performance and contributions positively support organizational outcomes (Priya et al., 2023).

In addition to examining the effect of work-life balance on happiness and performance, generational diversity in the workplace, as reviewed by Stanišauskienė & Urbonienė (2018), holds considerable importance. Three generations dominate the workforce in Indonesia based on the latest data from 2020, namely, 27.94% of the population is Generation Z (1997-2012), 25.87% of the population is Generation Y (1981-1996), and 21.88% of the population is Generation X (1965-1980). The differences in each generation affect the characteristics, values, and attitudes to life and work (Smith & Nichols, 2015). The differences between Generations X, Y, and Z may have contributed to the findings regarding work-life balance, happiness at work, and performance.

East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) is one of the provinces in Indonesia with a 2023 population of 5,656,039 people and a labour force of 2,990,716. The labour force that falls into the Generation X, Y, and Z categories is 2,639,767 or 88.27%. In East Nusa Tenggara, where traditional values may coexist with modern influences, these generational differences can be even more pronounced, affecting how employees perceive balance and success. Younger generations may be more tech-savvy and open to flexible work arrangements (Rachmadini & Riyanto, 2020; Skyler, 2022), while older generations might value structure and face-to-face interaction (Sismawati & Lataruva, 2020). This gap is particularly relevant in developing regions like NTT, where access to technology and digital literacy may vary significantly across generations. In NTT conditions, younger employees seek meaning, flexibility, and growth (Waworuntu et al., 2022), while older employees value job security and benefits. Recognizing these generational motivations is key to maintaining morale and reducing turnover in NTT's workforce, where opportunities may already be limited.

This research centres on exploring the interrelationships connecting work-life balance, happiness, and performance areas that have often been studied independently in previous research (Aruldoss et al., 2021; Haralayya, 2021; Kurnia & Widigdo, 2021; Ramdhani & Rasto, 2021; Saritha & Mukherjee, 2024). Additionally, most existing studies focus on the interrelation between work-life balance and job satisfaction (Waworuntu et al., 2022; Rathi & Islam, 2024). Research investigating work-life balance in NTT from a generational perspective has yet to be conducted. Additionally, these studies have not specifically examined work-life balance across its three dimensions.

Based on this phenomenon, researchers want to know the application of work-life balance and its consequences on employee happiness and performance in NTT from the perspective of Generation X, Y, and Z. These results are predicted to support existing organizations in NTT to realize the value of implementing work-life balance on employee happiness and performance based on generational categories. In addition, researchers also tested the effectiveness of the number of working hours set by law on employees in NTT. The issue formulation to be studied

is the influence of Work-Life Balance on Employee Happiness and Performance in East Nusa Tenggara Province, based on the Perspective of Generation X, Y, and Z.

Hypothesis Development
Work-Life Balance and Employee Performance

The capacity of a person, regardless of age or gender, to carry out work and personal responsibilities simultaneously is described as work-life balance. Work-life balance signifies competence in handling job obligations and family roles harmoniously. Successfully maintaining this balance contributes positively to the workplace atmosphere. This concept aligns with the work-life balance description highlighted by Zhenjing et al. (2022). Work-life balance appears from the state or condition of an employee's life in balancing assigned tasks and his role in non-work life, which is also backed by the organization where he works and the culture that exists in the organization (Waworuntu et al., 2022).

Performance is the outcome of the work fulfilled by employees on the tasks assigned to them (Ramdhani & Rasto, 2021; Weny et al., 2023). Employee performance leads to the refinement of the organization's processes as a whole, notably concerning efficiency and productivity, and determines the amount of employee contribution to the organization, such as the quantity of work results, employee attendance during work, and other attitudes that accommodate this (Bataineh, 2019). Performance can be divided into individual and organizational levels, which are closely linked. Individual performance plays a key role in shaping organizational performance, as reaching the organization's objectives, vision, and mission depends on the activities carried out by individuals or teams (Manafe et al., 2025).

The three dimensions of work-life balance according to Hayman (2005) are: "work intrusion into personal life (WIPL),

personal life intrusion into work (PLIW), and work/personal life enhancement (WPLE)". The basis for selecting these dimensions is based on the conditions in NTT, where there is no clear distinction between work and non-work life. This consideration led to the use of Hayman's dimensions to assess the implementation of work-life balance. Additionally, work patterns in the NTT region still tend toward an administrative work system, so evaluating the ability to implement work-life balance is necessary before examining the conflicts that arise further. Each dimension of work-life balance will have a different impact or influence on an employee's performance at work (Afara & Adiputra, 2024). In a more dominant work-life condition (Dimension 1), employees will be more productive at work than in their personal lives. This can lead to performance that may be better than that of employees with a dominant personal life (Dimension 2). Conditions in this dimension allow employee performance to be much lower in quality compared to employees in the previous dimensional state (Susanto et al., 2022). In dimension 3, when employees can balance time for personal life and work, employee performance tends to be more stable because they can harmonize the two roles. In the end, these three dimensions both influence employee performance.

Previous studies demonstrated that a strong work-life balance correlated with improved employee performance (Lukmiati et al., 2020; Kurnia & Widigdo, 2021; Ramdhani & Rasto, 2021). Employees with a high work-life balance also have a higher job performance (French et al., 2020), or the balance between work-life balance and engaging in life beyond work increases work productivity (Hofmann & Sauer, 2019). Thus, the hypotheses developed in this study are:

H1: Work-life balance has a positive relation to employee performance.

Work-Life Balance and Happiness

Happiness is the feeling that employees experience when they can accomplish their work with trust and satisfaction, which also involves other coworkers. Employees are the core strength of the organization. The happiness felt by employees benefits not only the employees themselves but also the organization (Shaffer et al., 2016). Companies must create a work environment that makes employees happy and impacts the organization (Awada, 2019). Happiness at work is more than just feeling pleasure, positive emotions, or enjoyment; it also includes discovering a sense of purpose in one's career. Moreover, people are seen as genuinely happy when they regularly experience positive emotions (Elnanto & Suharti, 2021).

Since happiness is most fundamentally born out of an employee's feelings as an individual, Hills & Argyle (2002) identified 29 indicators of happiness inherent in an individual that can impact one's personal and work quality (Oxford Happiness Questionnaire/OHQ). Indicators related to employee happiness include positive relationships with coworkers or other people, feeling at home in doing work, incentives received, and enthusiasm in doing work (Sondakh et al., 2023). Employees who can sustain a proper blend of their work and personal lives are inclined to experience greater happiness, and integrating both aspects of life will enhance their capacity to carry out job responsibilities effectively (Manafe et al., 2025).

Previous studies confirm that work-life balance positively and significantly impacts happiness (Jannah et al., 2020; Rini, 2024; Manafe et al., 2025). Individuals who sustain a balanced work-life tend to show a higher level of psychosocial well-being in fostering happiness at work, as employees feel more supported, in control, and secure in their roles (Yang et al., 2018; Shams & Kadow, 2019; Hariri et al., 2024). Therefore, the second hypothesis developed in this study is:

H2: Work-life balance has a positive relation to happiness.

Happiness and Employee Performance

As part of the conditions inherent in an employee's person, happiness will stimulate employees to continue to be high-performing and work according to the target or responsibility given (Bataineh, 2019). The result is that employee performance will be of good value and support the company's overall performance. This feeling of happiness will also help employees improve time management quality between work-related and personal domains (Bellet & Ward, 2023).

Based on prior studies, happiness significantly supports improved employee performance (Awada, 2019; Weny et al., 2023; Manafe et al., 2025). Employees content with their professional and personal lives often exhibit greater attention, productivity, and commitment to fulfilling their job responsibilities. This condition would elevate individual performance and business output (Tunsi & Bhalla, 2023). A positive interrelation is associated with happiness at work and employee performance; specifically, happiness will boost performance even when performance levels are moderate. Happier employees tend to perform better (Met et al., 2023). Therefore, it can be inferred that happiness positively relates to employee performance.

H3: Happiness has a positive relation to performance.

Work-Life Balance, Happiness, and Employee Performance

In employees with Dimension 1 conditions, happiness will strengthen them to continue working in their work environment (Salas-Vallina et al., 2018), because they feel comfortable with the envi-

ronment and their passion. On the other hand, employees who are more depleted of energy and time for personal problems can improve their mood at work when the company provides positive affirmations and feelings of comfort to these employees (Bakker & Van Woerkom, 2018). This means that the happiness that will be felt will support improving the employee's performance (Saritha & Mukherjee, 2024). For employees with dimension three categories, the ability to harmonize work and personal life will be stronger and better when supported by a sense of security and positive support from the workplace (Sirgy & Lee, 2018).

Employees facing heavy workloads often struggle to uphold a well-managed work and life outside of work, leading to poor job performance. In this condition, happiness can act as a bridge that helps employees manage their work-life balance more effectively and, in turn, enhances their performance (Senbursa & Dunder, 2024). Existing literature shows that happiness could mediate the link between work-life balance and performance (Mendis & Weerakkody, 2018; Sari & Ali, 2022; Senbursa & Dunder, 2024).

Employee condition is shaped by the organization's support for work-life balance. Studies have revealed that work-life balance leads to better job performance by enhancing psychological well-being, one of the happiness indicators. In this context, happiness can function as a moderating variable, strengthening the positive outcome of work-life balance on employee performance (Haider et al., 2018). Prior studies have proven that happiness (factoring in supervisory support and supportive behaviour) strengthens the connection between work-life balance and performance (Rofcanin et al., 2018; Achour et al., 2020; Susanto et al., 2022). When employees are happy, the constructive influence of work-life balance on performance strengthens

as happiness enhances motivation, energy, and overall engagement at work (Kim et al., 2017).

As per the above explanation and prior studies, happiness has the potential to act both as a mediating and moderating variable in enhancing employee performance. As a linking variable, happiness bridges the relationship between work-life balance and employee performance. As a moderator, happiness strengthens the positive effect of work-life balance on performance. This is as stated in the following hypothesis:

H4: Happiness mediates work-life balance on employee performance.

H5: The effect of work-life balance on employee performance is significantly moderated by happiness.

The Generation Perspectives

The relevance of generational differences in work-life balance is acknowledged in these theories, emphasizing its complexity (Arceo et al., 2024). Every employee from a different generation has a different understanding and work culture. Employees who fall into the Generation X category will be more easily loyal and follow the work procedures determined by the company. They prefer to work independently and complete tasks more efficiently and comfortably when given greater autonomy (Pathirage & Weerasinghe, 2020). Additionally, most employees from this generation demonstrate a strong commitment to their job responsibilities, and their willingness to take risks and seek enjoyment in their work makes them valuable contributors to organizational growth and development (Usmani et al., 2019).

From a generational viewpoint, work-life balance is crucial for Generation Y, as it promotes positive emotions and attitudes that contribute to better job performance (Sismawati & Lataruva, 2020). Moreover, it supports a healthy and

cooperative relationship between employees and the organization while minimizing conflicts in both work and personal settings (Capnary et al., 2018; Nizam & Kam, 2018; Waworuntu et al., 2022).

For Generation Z, work-life balance is a key factor influencing their loyalty to the workplace (Suslova & Holopainen, 2019). They place high importance on maintaining this balance, often prioritizing it over work itself, as they do not see work as their central focus (Skyler, 2022). This generation also expects greater organizational attention, especially in building strong employee engagement (Rachmadini & Riyanto, 2020). Interestingly, 90% of Generation Z respondents believe work-life balance significantly affects their job satisfaction and performance (Suslova & Holopainen, 2019). Their emphasis on balance also reflects a more idealistic perspective on integrating work with personal life (Nabahani & Riyanto, 2020; Mandagi & Aseng, 2021).

Generation Y or Millennials are known for their strong commitment to contributing to organizational success (Smith & Nichols, 2015). They show high enthusiasm and motivation to deliver outstanding performance at work. In contrast, Generation Z emphasizes emotional well-being more and prioritizes personal growth within the workplace (Waworuntu et al., 2022). These generational differences offer interesting insights, especially across diverse job sectors. Moreover, most previous studies have analyzed each generation's viewpoint independently (Capnary et al., 2018; Larasati et al., 2019; Ingsih et al., 2022).

The perspectives of each generation will not be hypothesized in this section but will be elaborated on during the testing of each dimension and the hypotheses that have been developed.
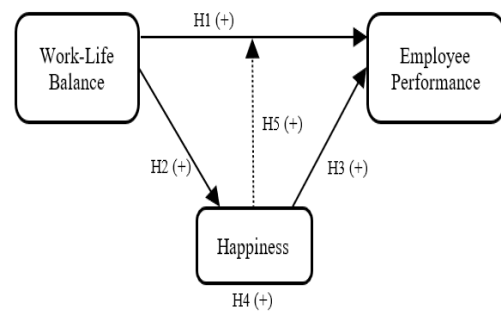

Figure 1. Research Framework

METHOD

This study focuses on a population of the entire workforce in NTT of 2,639,767 and meets the criteria, namely, working in government and private organizations with a total working time exceeding 40 hours per week and belonging to generation Z (1997-2012), generation Y (1981-1996), and generation X (1965-1980).

As a developing region, East Nusa Tenggara has traditional values that coexist with modern influences, so generational differences can affect how employees view balance and success. In the context of NTT, younger generations who are more tech-savvy and open to flexibility tend to seek meaning, growth, and adaptable work arrangements, while older generations, who value structure and direct interaction, prioritize job security and benefits. Understanding these generational motivations can be key to maintaining morale and reducing turnover in NTT's workforce.

The ideal sample size with a 95% Confidence Level and 5% Margin of Error was 385 respondents. Using stratified sampling gave rise to a sample size of 1,155, representing 385 Generation Z, 385 Generation Y, and 385 Generation X respondents.

This analysis applies quantitative methods and explanatory research. This method provides input for organizations based on employees' views in NTT on Work-Life Balance and its effect on Happiness and Performance from the perspective of Generations X, Y, and Z.

To confirm this phenomenon, the researchers interviewed 25 employees from one city and 21 districts in the East Nusa Tenggara region about work-life balance, happiness, and performance at work. The identification of the interview results shows that employees are still unable to implement work-life balance, which impacts their happiness and performance at work. Solution planning is based on identifying and overcoming problems using quantitative methods and explanatory research to assess the relationship between these variables.

The questionnaire was used as an instrument in research to gather respondents' answers on each variable's indicators, using a Likert scale of 1 to 7. All variable dimensions were adapted from previous studies or research sources. (Hayman, 2005) is used as a reference in determining work-life balance variables with three dimensions, namely Work Interference with Personal Life (7 items), Personal Life Interference with Work (4 items), and Work/Personal Life Enhancement (4 items). A 29-item questionnaire from The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (Hills & Argyle, 2002) was used for the variable Happiness. Five items from Robbins & Judge (2016) were used for employee performance. The survey was conducted via online platforms (Google Form) and manually in areas with inadequate internet access with the help of an enumerator.

The questionnaire results were then analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Researchers used SmartPLS 4 to analyze this research data. Convergent validity confirms that indicators measuring the same constructs are highly correlated. To meet this criterion, factor loadings should be at least 0.70 and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) should be at least 0.50—discriminant validity using the HTMT, which should fall below 0.85 to 0.90. Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha (CA) should be at least 0.70. The R-square evaluates the predictive strength of the independent variables on dependent variables, and the significance of the relationship within the model is tested using bootstrapping, which generates t-statistics and p-values, where the p-value must be < 0.05 (Legate et al., 2023).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of Respondents

This study involved 1.155 respondents who filled out the questionnaire, with the demographic profile of the respondents in Table 1.

Table 1. Respondent Demographics

	Unit	%
Gender		
Male	554	48%
Female	601	52%
Age/Generation		
15-27/Generation Z	439	38%
28-43/Generation Y	416	36%
44-59/Generation X	300	26%

Employee Status		
Single	774	67%
Married	381	33%
Education		
High School	347	30%
Diploma	92	8%
Undergraduate	635	55%
Postgraduate	81	75%

Source: Processed Data (2025)

As shown in Table 1, from the gender category, there were 554 male respondents (48%) and 601 female respondents (52%). By age category, in the range of 15-27 years (Z Generation), there are 439 people (38%), the age range of 28-43 years (Y Generation) is 416 people (36%), and the age range of 44-59 years (X Generation) is 300 people (26%). Based on marital status, 774 people are in the single category (67%) and 381 are in the married category (33%). Judging from the level of education, 347 people (30%) have the last high school education, 92 people (8%) have taken a Diploma, 635 people (55%) possess a bachelor's qualification, and 81 people (7%) have a Bachelor's degree.

Measurement Model Evaluation

Indicator Reliability

Table 2. Outer Loadings

	WIPL	PLIW	WPLE	Happiness	Employee Performance
WIPL.1	0.630				
WIPL.2	0.597				
WIPL.3	0.746				
WIPL.4	0.772				
WIPL.5	0.825				
WIPL.6	0.726				
WIPL.7	0.701				
PLIW.1		0.849			
PLIW.2		0.864			
PLIW.3		0.824			
PLIW.4		0.729			
WPLE.1			0.880		
WPLE.2			0.883		
WPLE.3			0.904		
WPLE.4			0.896		
H.1				-0.018	
H.2				-0.873	
H.3				0.815	

H.4	0.857	
H.5	-0.327	
H.6	-0.449	
H.7	0.889	
H.8	0.912	
H.9	0.885	
H.10	0.904	
H.11	-0.322	
H.12	0.516	
H.13	0.783	
H.14	0.719	
H.15	0.893	
H.16	-0.374	
H.17	-0.132	
H.18	0.859	
H.19	0.887	
H.20	-0.225	
H.21	-0.182	
H.22	-0.216	
H.23	0.863	
H.24	0.817	
H.25	-0.175	
H.26	-0.097	
H.27	0.844	
H.28	0.887	
H.29	0.891	
EP.1		0.948
EP.2		0.940
EP.3		0.950
EP.4		0.950
EP.5		0.910

Source: Processed Data (2025)

Table 2 shows the result of outer loading relevance analysis with the outer loadings parameter. Based on these results, it is known that there are indicators that have a value greater than 0.7 (Legate et al., 2023). This requires retesting by removing indicators that do not meet these criteria one by one until all the indicators meet the requirements (WIPL.1; WIPL.2; H.1, H.2; H.5; H.6; H.10; H.13, H.14; H.19; H.23; H.24; H.27; H.28; H.29).

Table 3. Retest Outer Loadings

	WIPL	PLIW	WPLE	Happiness	Employee Performance
WIPL.3	0.708				
WIPL.4	0.747				
WIPL.5	0.810				
WIPL.6	0.702				
WIPL.7	0.766				
PLIW.1		0.849			
PLIW.2		0.864			
PLIW.3		0.824			
PLIW.4		0.729			
WPLE.1			0.880		
WPLE.2			0.883		
WPLE.3			0.904		
WPLE.4			0.896		
H.3				0.868	
H.4				0.819	
H.7				0.852	
H.8				0.891	
H.9				0.896	
H.11				0.817	
H.12				0.864	
H.15				0.902	
H.16				0.921	
H.17				0.891	
H.18				0.911	
H.20				0.785	
H.21				0.704	
H.22				0.901	
H.25				0.871	
H.26				0.896	
EP.1					0.948
EP.2					0.940
EP.3					0.950
EP.4					0.950
EP.5					0.910

Source: Processed Data (2025)

Furthermore, after retesting, all indicators have values greater than 0.70. This indicates that these measures reliably capture the intended constructs and the test is accurate (Legate et al., 2023).

Internal Consistency

Table 4. Reliability Test

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
WIPL	0.835	0.886
PLIW	0.841	0.913
WPLE	0.913	0.914
Happiness	0.927	0.929
Employee Performance	0.917	0.917

Source: Processed Data (2025)

The reliability test results with Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability characteristics are referred to in Table 4. The test findings demonstrate that every parameter value is more than 0.70, indicating the dependability of the measuring device utilized in this research (Legate et al., 2023).

Convergent Validity

Table 5. Convergent Validity

	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
WIPL	0,553
PLIW	0,666
WPLE	0,793
Happiness	0,746
Employee Performance	0,883

Source: Processed Data (2025)

Table 5 indicates that using the average variance extracted (AVE) parameter, all latent variables have values greater than 0.5. This demonstrates that each construct's indicators may measure the corresponding construct (Legate et al., 2023).

Discriminant Validity

Table 6. Discriminant Validity

	Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT)
WIPL <-> Employee Performance	0.336
WIPL <-> Happiness	0.286
WIPL <-> PLIW	0.757
PLIW <-> Employee Performance	0.144
PLIW <-> Happiness	0.101
WPLE <-> Employee Performance	0.673
WPLE <-> Happiness	0.702
WPLE <-> PLIW	0.174
WPLE <-> WIPL	0.354
Happiness <-> Employee Performance	0.866

Source: Processed Data (2025)

Table 6 shows the Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) discriminant validity test. The discriminant validity test results show a value below 0.9, indicating discriminant validity has been established between the two constructs and is measured reflectively (Legate et al., 2023).

R Square

Table 7. R-Square

	R-Square	R Square Adjusted
Happiness	0.454	0.452
Employee Performance	0.725	0.724

Source: Processed Data (2025)

There are two adjusted R-square values in Table 7: the happiness variable of 0.452 and the employee performance variable of 0.724. This result shows that the structural model in this study is in the moderate to strong category (Legate et al., 2023).

Table 8. Hypothesis Test Result

Overall	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Values
WIPL -> Employee Performance	0.086	0.101	0.034	2.513	0.012
PLIW -> Employee Performance	-0.022	0.619	0.026	0.719	0.472
WPLE -> Employee Performance	0.103	0.085	0.034	3.004	0.003
WIPL -> Happiness	0.150	0.149	0.029	5.216	0.000
PLIW -> Happiness	-0.085	-0.020	0.031	3.190	0.001
WPLE -> Happiness	0.619	-0.082	0.027	23.686	0.000
Happiness->Employee Performance	0.664	0.668	0.033	20.020	0.000
Generation X					
WIPL -> Employee Performance	0.087	0.077	0.080	1.098	0.272
PLIW -> Employee Performance	-0.021	-0.005	0.071	0.294	0.769
WPLE -> Employee Performance	0.015	0.021	0.063	0.233	0.816
WIPL -> Happiness	0.147	0.140	0.118	1.245	0.211
PLIW -> Happiness	-0.031	-0.031	-0.016	0.056	0.547
WPLE -> Happiness	0.652	0.655	0.043	15.192	0.000
Happiness->Employee Performance	0.766	0.761	0.053	14.572	0.000
Generation Y					
WIPL -> Employee Performance	0.056	0.054	0.053	1.049	0.294
PLIW -> Employee Performance	0,028	0.027	0.049	0.574	0.566
WPLE -> Employee Performance	0.072	0.074	0.046	1.544	0.123
WIPL -> Happiness	0.090	0.089	0.049	1.835	0.067
PLIW -> Happiness	-0.068	-0.061	0.046	1.499	0.134
WPLE -> Happiness	0.639	0.639	0.043	15.016	0.000
Happiness->Employee Performance	0.729	0.730	0.045	16.139	0.000

Generation Z					
WIPL -> Employee Performance	0.094	0.095	0.047	1.999	0.046
PLIW -> Employee Performance	-0.052	-0.043	0.041	1.265	0.206
WPLE -> Employee Performance	0.183	0.171	0.054	3.358	0.001
WIPL-> Happiness	0.208	0.206	0.046	4.482	0.000
PLIW -> Happiness	-0.125	-0.118	0.048	2.584	0.010
WPLE -> Happiness	0.583	0.584	0.048	12.249	0.000
Happiness->Employee Performance	0.574	0.587	0.053	10.777	0.000

Source: Processed Data (2025)

Hypothesis Test

Refer to Tables 8, 9, and 10 for the hypothesis testing results. Five hypotheses were put out in this study, and each of the primary indicators of each variable was separated for analysis. First, the WLB variable is divided based on three dimensions, namely WIPL, PLIW, and WPLE, towards happiness and performance. This effect is separated into two parts: the test results overall and based on insights from three generations (X, Y, and Z).

Table 8 presents the results of the direct hypothesis testing. The table outlines the outcomes of H1, H2, and H3. Each hypothesis was analyzed separately using the dimensions of work-life balance, as previously explained, and the results are further categorized based on different generations as follows:

Overall results show that H1 is supported for the WIPL and WPLE dimensions, given their significant constructive impact on employee performance (p-value < 0.05). However, the PLIW dimension does not show a significant or supportive effect on employee performance. H2

is supported across all three work-life balance dimensions, revealing that work-life balance significantly influences happiness. H3 is also supported, confirming that happiness positively affects employee performance.

The result by Generation X and Y for H1 is supported for the WPLE dimension but not for the other dimensions. Similarly, H2 is only supported for the WPLE dimension. However, happiness (H3) significantly and positively affects employee performance for both generations.

For Generation Z, all three work-life balance dimensions significantly influence happiness, meaning H2 is fully supported. H3 is also confirmed, showing that happiness positively impacts employee performance. H1 is only supported for the WPLE dimension, but not for the other two dimensions (WIPL and PLIW).

This analysis highlights the generational differences in how work-life balance affects happiness and employee performance, with Generation Z showing a stronger relationship between these factors than Generations X and Y.

Table 9. Hypothesis Test: Mediation Effect

Overall					
	Original Sample	Simple Mean	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Values
WIPL -> Happiness -> Employee Performance	0.100	0.100	0.019	5.207	0.000
PLIW -> Happiness -> Employee Performance	-0.057	-0.055	0.018	3.115	0.002

WPLE -> Happiness -> Employee Performance	0.411	0.414	0.030	13.887	0.000
Generation X					
WIPL -> Happiness -> Employee Performance	0.112	0.106	0.044	2.562	0.010
PLIW -> Happiness -> Employee Performance	-0.023	-0.012	0.043	0.550	0.582
WPLE -> Happiness -> Employee Performance	0.500	0.499	0.050	9.904	0.000
Generation Y					
WIPL -> Happiness -> Employee Performance	0,066	0,065	0,036	1,829	0,067
PLIW -> Happiness -> Employee Performance	-0.050	-0.044	0.034	1.476	0.140
WPLE -> Happiness -> Employee Performance	0.466	0.466	0.043	10.814	0.000
Generation Z					
WIPL-> Happiness -> Employee Performance	0.119	0.120	0.028	4.194	0.000
PLIW-> Happiness -> Employee Performance	-0.072	-0.069	0.029	2.434	0.015
WPLE -> Happiness -> Employee Performance	0.334	0.343	0.046	7.293	0.000

Source: Processed Data (2025)

As detailed in Table 9, the hypothesis testing results show happiness as a mediating variable.

Overall findings confirm that H4 is supported, indicating that happiness successfully mediates the connection between work-life balance and employee performance.

For Generations X and Y, happiness only mediates the relationship in the WIPL and WPLE dimensions. However, mediation is not significant in the PLIW dimension. For Generation Z, happiness is an important mediating factor across all dimensions of work-life balance.

These findings suggest that the mediating role of happiness varies across generations, with Generation Z showing the most substantial mediation effect across all dimensions.

Table 10. Hypothesis Test: Moderation Effect

Overall					
	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Values
Happiness x WIPL-> Employee Performance	-0.063	-0.063	0.046	1.373	0.170
Happiness x PLIW-> Employee Performance	-0.003	-0.005	0.037	0.090	0.928

Happiness x WPLE -> Employee Performance	-0.076	-0.074	0.037	2,078	0.038
Generation X					
Happiness x WIPL-> Employee Performance	-0.160	-0.142	0.102	1.563	0.118
Happiness x PLIW-> Employee Performance	0.038	0.016	0.087	0.437	0.662
Happiness x WPLE-> Employee Performance	-0.004	-0.009	0.061	0.069	0.945
Generation Y					
Happiness x WIPL-> Employee Performance	-0.018	-0.018	0.068	0.308	0.758
Happiness x PLIW-> Employee Performance	-0.052	-0.052	0.050	1.128	0.260
Happiness x WPLE -> Employee Performance	-0.041	-0.041	0.053	0.724	0.469
Generation Z					
Happiness x WIPL-> Employee Performance	-0.025	-0.033	0.058	0.427	0.670
Happiness x PLIW-> Employee Performance	0.005	0.002	0.045	0.120	0.905
Happiness x WPLE -> Employee Performance	-0.139	-0.126	0.051	2.726	0.006

Source: Processed Data (2025)

Table 10 presents the results of hypothesis testing with happiness as a moderating variable.

Overall findings that happiness moderates the relationship between work-life balance and employee performance only in the WPLE dimension, meaning that H5 is supported for this dimension.

The same pattern is observed for Generation Z, where H5 is supported only in the WPLE dimension, but not in the WIPL and PLIW dimensions. In contrast, generations X and Y find H5 is not supported for any of the three work-life balance dimensions, indicating that happiness does not act as a moderator for these generations.

These results suggest that happiness enhances the impact of work-life balance on employee performance only in specific cases, particularly for Generation Z in the WPLE dimension. At the same time, it does not serve as a significant moderator in other dimensions or for different generations.

Work-Life Balance and Employee Performance

The first hypothesis measures the effect of work-life balance on employee performance. Overall test results show that WIPL and WPLE exert a positive and notable impact on employee performance among the three dimensions of work-life balance. However, the second dimension, PLIW, shows a negative but insignificant relationship with employee performance.

From the perspective of Generations X and Y, the test results indicate no significant influence on employee performance

from any of the three dimensions. As stated by Capnary et al. (2018), increasing workload and disruptions to personal life among Generations X and Y do not significantly affect their performance. This is because these generations tend to work more effectively and can manage their tasks efficiently within time constraints.

Even though Generation X and Y employees often receive numerous tasks from the company that demand their focus, their impact on organizational performance remains unchanged. In some cases, it may even affect their work programs. This suggests that for these generations, having a job regardless of personal life conditions, such as marital status, is necessary for career and life fulfilment (Manafe et al., 2025). As a result, employees with many responsibilities outside of work continue to fulfill their assigned tasks (Smith & Nichols, 2015). Additionally, the lack of influence may be attributed to the respondents' environment, where career achievement is a priority, often at the expense of personal life considerations (Susanto et al., 2022).

From the perspective of Generation Z, WIPL significantly affects their performance in the workplace. This generation values professional development and considers work flexibility an essential part of self-growth, directly influencing their careers and overall work performance (Waworuntu et al., 2022). A similar result is observed for WPLE. WPLE, which reflects the simultaneous improvement of work and personal life, significantly enhances overall performance, especially for Generation Z. Employees in this generation require a well-integrated work strategy and personal life to preserve high performance levels. When their needs are well managed, they can perform better in their professional responsibilities (Holopainen & Suslova, 2019). For Generation Z, the workload must be complemented by a well-structured personal life so that both aspects can prog-ress harmoniously (Skyler, 2022).

This distinction in generational perspectives makes it evident that Generations X and Y do not perceive work-life balance as a key factor in improving performance. In contrast, for Generation Z, work-life balance is pivotal in determining job performance. Therefore, companies must acknowledge this shift and prioritize work-life balance as a fundamental strategy for improving employee performance. As Generation Z increasingly dominates with changing workforce dynamics, companies must align their approach to evolve to the needs of employees and ensure sustainable performance in the long run.

These findings align with previous studies (Capnary et al., 2018; Larasati et al., 2019; Ingsih et al., 2022), emphasizing the importance of organizations in supporting employees' work-life balance across different generations. Furthermore, the significant effect observed in Generation Z corroborates earlier research, confirming that a strong work-life balance is positively linked to improved employee performance (Lukmiati et al., 2020; Kurnia & Widigdo, 2021; Ramdhani & Rasto, 2021; Susanto et al., 2022). Individuals experiencing an optimal balance between work and personal life tend to demonstrate better job performance (French et al., 2020). Maintaining an optimal balance between work and personal life also increases work effectiveness (Hofmann & Sauer, 2019).

Work-Life Balance and Happiness

The study's second hypothesis is that work-life balance positively and statistically impacts employee happiness. Overall testing shows that the three dimensions, PLIW, WIPL, and WPLE, substantially affect employee happiness, similar to earlier studies (Jannah et al., 2020; Rini, 2024; Manafe et al., 2025). It can be interpreted that each dimension will contribute to the

happiness felt by employees. In the WIPL and WPLE, the relationship formed is positive and significant, which means that work-life balance impacts employees' happiness. In the PLIW dimension, the relationship formed is negative, which means that when employees have many personal problems and affairs, employee happiness will be at a lower level than when they face fewer personal problems.

From a generational perspective, the PLIW and WIPL dimensions do not affect their happiness in generations X and Y. Again, this is due to the character of generations X and Y, who separate these two things (work and personal life) as their own running things. They avoid work and personal or family conflicts (Wolor et al., 2020). This is evidenced by the WPLE dimension having a significant impact on happiness. When both aspects of life run smoothly, employees will feel happy. This test also illustrates that these conditions do not affect generations X and Y in East Nusa Tenggara. When the workload is higher, they will still carry it out, as well as when the burden of personal life is more dominant.

By comparison, the test results on Generation Z show that all three dimensions of work-life balance will affect their happiness differently. When they are in a WIPL condition, there is a positive relationship between this condition and happiness. This does not apply to the PLIW condition, which states that the greater portion of personal life, rather than work life, hurts happiness. The ability to adopt a blended work model, annual leave, and flexible work schedules is highly valued by Generation Z since it enables them to maintain a balanced lifestyle (Nabahani & Riyanto, 2020). Work-life balance reduces the possibility that Generation Z workers will leave the organization (Suganda, 2022), which means that the happiness indicator is achieved in this condition. This

is then supported by WPLE conditions, which also affect employee happiness in Generation Z.

This result shows the same indication as the condition of work-life balance with employee performance. For Generation Z, work-life balance is the main thing that can determine their happiness and work performance (Holopainen & Suslova, 2019; Skyler, 2022). As for generations X and Y, it will not be a problem when one of the affairs (between work or personal life) dominates the other, because it will not affect their happiness and performance, and keep their commitment to enhance the organization's goals (Smith & Nichols, 2015). For companies, this needs to be the direction of policy and work system development by paying attention to the environment of employees from different generations.

Happiness and Employee Performance

Findings from the hypothesis evaluation, both overall and based on each generation's perspective, show that hypothesis 3 is accepted. This can be interpreted as happiness being one of the aspects that can stimulate employees to execute their work well, reflecting earlier studies (Awada, 2019; Weny et al., 2023). When employees feel security and comfort at work, they will be better able to complete their work and support the achievement of individual performance, team performance, and the company as a whole (Manafe et al., 2025).

Through the lens of Generation X, Y, and Z, the positive and significant effect shows that happiness is an essential factor in any working age range. Company conditions need to be designed in such a way as to support the feeling of happiness of employees at all ages (Met et al., 2023; Tunsi & Bhalla, 2023). In addition, the happiness factor will support communication patterns that can be established bet-

ween employees of different generations.

Work-Life Balance, Happiness, and Employee Performance
The Mediating Effect

This study's fourth hypothesis is that employee performance is indirectly impacted by happiness with work-life balance. The test results reveal that overall happiness can mediate the effect of work-life balance in the WIPL, PLIW, and WPLE dimensions (Mendis & Weerakkody, 2018; Sari & Ali, 2022). The same results also appear in the test results of Generation Z. It is evident that a good work-life balance makes employees live a balanced personal and work life, thereby reducing stress and increasing their comfort at work (Senbursa & Dunder, 2024). This directly affects employee happiness. Enhanced happiness at work subsequently contributes significantly to better employee performance. Happy employees are more motivated, productive, and focused in completing tasks, resulting in better performance outcomes.

Different results are seen in Generations X and Y. In Generation X, happiness can mediate the WIPL and WPLE performance dimensions, but cannot mediate the PLIW dimensions. In Generation Y, happiness does not mediate the WIPL and PLIW dimensions to performance, but can only mediate in the WPLE dimension. Under these conditions, stresses from personal life, such as family problems, household duties, or other personal issues, impact employees' ability to perform optimally at work (Arceo et al., 2024).

Even when work-life balance is achieved, personal life factors that interfere with work can prevent happiness from serving as a mediating factor. In Personal Life Interference with Work (PLIW) situations, employees from Generations X and Y may experience improved work-life balance, but this does not necessarily lead to

greater happiness or enhanced job performance. Happiness is crucial in effectively managing one's circumstances, particularly when individuals find fulfilment in their family and work. In today's world, organizations support and allow individuals to focus on maintaining their well-being. However, achieving a proper balance remains key. This highlights that personal life challenges significantly affect employees' happiness and ability to manage a stable work-life balance (Arceo et al., 2024).

Generation X, who tend to be more responsible for family or have high personal commitments, may have greater distractions from personal life. Meanwhile, Generation Y, although more flexible and prioritizing work-life balance, can still experience difficulties if personal life interferes with their work. Thus, in the PLIW condition, work-life balance may still be necessary. Still, happiness does not mediate its effect on performance because distractions from personal life reduce the mediating effectiveness of joy.

The Moderating Effect

The fifth hypothesis tested the moderating effect of happiness on work-life balance and performance. In this condition, the test results show that Generation X and Y happiness does not moderate the impact on all three dimensions (WILP, PLIW, and WPLE). Generations X and Y are known as groups that do not want to cause problems in work and personal life. They tend to be flexible between work and personal life. For them, this balance can be a significant factor that directly affects performance, regardless of happiness levels. This could be due to their higher expectations of a balanced work life. Alternatively, work-life balance itself is already a significant enough factor to influence performance, without the need to be influenced by happiness.

On the other hand, in the overall test

results and Generation Z, happiness was shown to moderate WPLE on performance. Happy employees control pressures from work and personal life better simultaneously (Haider et al., 2018). Happiness can improve their tolerance for challenges and stress, so they can maintain or even improve performance. Generation Z is concerned about well-being and work-life balance (Waworuntu et al., 2022). They tend to value work that gives them a meaningful personal life. In this regard, happiness is an essential factor that strengthens together with their competence to manage their careers and individual lives simultaneously. Happy people are more likely to manage those demands well, improving performance (Kim et al., 2017).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study describes work-life balance, happiness, and employee performance in East Nusa Tenggara from the perspective of generations X, Y, and Z. Work-life balance is divided into three dimensions: the PLIW, WIPL, and WPLE. The analysis results show that both direct and indirect effects (mediation and moderation) of work-life balance for generations X and Y are two things that must be carried out together without seeing the dominance between personal life and work. Generation X and Y can still focus on their performance without considering their happiness. On the other hand, for Generation Z, work-life balance is the main thing, and they must run with as much flexibility as possible. Achieving work-life balance will support their happiness and encourage Generation Z to perform better.

This study informs the company's human resource management (HRM) policies and strategies, emphasizing the importance of considering generational differences when designing employee work systems without neglecting individual responsibility. In operational terms, HRM can integrate flexible work arrangements, career development pathways tailored to different generational needs, and comprehensive well-being initiatives to foster engagement, satisfaction, and sustainable productivity. The limitation of this research is that it needs to be tested in the context of a different region and culture because a sample was drawn from employees in the East Nusa Tenggara region. Future studies should conduct comparative analyses across provinces or countries, explore sector-specific differences (public vs private), or incorporate longitudinal approaches to examine how generational attitudes toward work-life balance evolve. Additionally, qualitative insights could enrich understanding of the underlying motivations and cultural influences on work-life dynamics.

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