

The Influence of Transformational Leadership Style and Work Motivation on Gen Z Worker Satisfaction in the Karawang Manufacturing Industry

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the effect of transformational leadership style and work motivation on the satisfaction of Generation Z workers in the Karawang manufacturing industry. The problem raised is the level of job satisfaction that is influenced by leadership factors and worker work motivation. This study uses a quantitative approach with a causal associative method. The population in this study were Gen Z workers in a Karawang manufacturing company with 204 participants using a convenience sampling technique. Data collection was carried out using a Likert scale consisting of the Short Index Job Satisfaction (SIJS), Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), and The Motivation at Work Scale (MAWS). Data analysis was carried out using multiple linear regression with the help of SPSS. The results of the study indicate that transformational leadership style and work motivation have a significant effect on job satisfaction, both partially and simultaneously. This indicates that the better the implementation of the transformational leadership style and the higher the work motivation, the job satisfaction of Gen Z workers will increase.

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Introduction

In the era of globalization, every organization must have the ability to adapt to various changes that arise, both from within the organization itself and from the ever-evolving external environment. This adaptability is a key factor for organizations in maintaining their existence and increasing their competitiveness amidst ongoing change. (Sinaga et al., 2025). In facing increasingly tight competitive dynamics, companies need to have competent and highly competitive human resources (Lawren & Ekawati, 2023) The dynamics of the national workforce are now influenced by the presence of Generation Z (Gen Z), which is starting to dominate the workforce. The entry of Gen Z into the labor market has had a significant impact on work patterns in companies. Princess (2024) He added that this generation, growing up amidst the rapid development of digital technology, has distinct characteristics from

previous generations, both in terms of personality and work orientation. Workers tend to prioritize work-life balance, place meaning and job satisfaction above financial rewards, and also enjoy team collaboration.

Interestingly, Gozali et al. (2024) revealed that Gen Z's interest in the manufacturing industry is also quite high, surpassing that of millennials and the general public. This is important considering that the manufacturing sector is the backbone of the national economy, contributing around 30% of tax revenue and controlling 80% of Indonesia's export activity. Therefore, job satisfaction among workers in the manufacturing sector needs to be considered, because according to Sunarta (2019) Job satisfaction is important for both workers and organizations because it is related to psychological well-being, health, productivity, and positive work behavior.

Besides that, Enok and Wijono (2023) states that job satisfaction is achieved when workers' expectations and needs in the workplace are met. However, employment conditions in the manufacturing sector show instability. Based on data from the Karawang Manpower and Transmigration Office, as written by Bahtiar (2024), that between January and August 2024, a total of 2,242 workers were laid off in industrial companies. Of these, 163 workers chose to resign voluntarily, thus categorizing them as self-initiated terminations. The high intensity of layoffs often triggers collective reactions from workers in the form of demonstrations. TV News Editorial (2025) On Wednesday, August 20, 2025, hundreds of workers demonstrated in front of PT X, located in Klari District, Karawang Regency. The demonstration was a manifestation of the workers' disappointment with the company's management, which they deemed had failed to honor the previously agreed Collective Labor Agreement (PKB).

Theoretically, job satisfaction according to Brayfield and Rothe (1951) Job satisfaction is a worker's overall positive affective (emotional) attitude toward their job, reflecting their level of comfort and enjoyment. This concept is measured through indicators such as interest in the job, comfort at work, high enthusiasm, and opportunities for development. Robbins and Stephen (2006) also stated that job satisfaction is a worker's attitude toward their work, which is influenced by perceptions of compensation, promotion opportunities, supervision, work relationships, and overall working conditions. In line with this, Schermerhorn et al. (in Farhanna & Tatiyani, 2022) suggests that job satisfaction reflects the extent to which workers experience positive or negative emotions about the work they do. This means that job satisfaction occurs when workers feel happy, enjoy the tasks they perform, and receive support from their work environment.

One of the factors that determines the level of employee satisfaction according to Munandar and Prayekti (2021) is a transformational leadership style, because the success or failure of an organization depends on the leadership style applied by the leader in directing the potential of subordinates so that the company's goals can be achieved effectively and efficiently. Transformational leadership style is a leadership style that has a high concern for subordinates while being oriented towards achieving maximum results. Transformational

leadership is also described as a figure who has a leadership spirit (leadership) and a clear and precise vision in carrying out various activities, both within the organization and other fields (Rahayu & Agustina, 2022).

Bass and Avolio (1992) introduced the concept of transformational leadership as a leadership style that is capable of changing the values and norms of workers and encouraging workers to go beyond their own abilities and expectations. According to Heaven (2017) Transformational leadership is a leader who has the power to influence his subordinates. By implementing transformational leadership, subordinates will feel trusted, valued, loyal, and respectful towards their leader. In line with this, Robbins (2018) states that transformational leadership is a form of leadership where a leader can inspire followers for the good of the organization and is able to have a profound and extraordinary effect on his followers.

In concept Bass and Avolio (1992) There are four main dimensions known as "The Four I's": inspirational motivation (the ability to motivate and inspire subordinates), intellectual stimulation (the encouragement to think creatively and innovatively), individual consideration (personal attention to employee needs), and idealized influence (moral example and inspiring behavior). These four dimensions form the basis of a mutually reinforcing relationship between leaders and employees.

Based on the results of previous research conducted by Anggraeni and Santosa (2013) shows that there is a positive relationship and significant influence between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. Other research was conducted Herawati and Ranteallo (2020) A study conducted on PT JMS Jakarta employees showed that leadership style had a positive and significant effect on employee satisfaction. This study used quantitative methods and involved 32 respondents. As for the research conducted by Munandar and Prayekti (2021) shows that transformational leadership style, intrinsic motivation, and work environment have a positive and significant influence on employee job satisfaction, both partially and simultaneously. The results of previous research show a very strong relationship between leadership style and job satisfaction, so that the better the leadership style applied, the higher the job satisfaction of workers.

Besides transformational leadership style, another factor that determines employee job satisfaction is work motivation. In companies, work motivation is a crucial factor in increasing employee satisfaction. When employees feel satisfied with their work, they are more likely to produce optimal results. (Saputra & Andani, 2021) This is reinforced by previous research conducted by Aesah et al. (2024) which found a positive and significant relationship between work motivation and job satisfaction. The research conducted by Suryandari et al. (2024) found a significant influence between work motivation and job satisfaction among private vocational school teachers in Maros Regency. In line with this, research conducted by Hidayat et al. (2025), found a significant influence between work motivation and job satisfaction of production department workers at XYZ company.

Gagné and Deci (2005) Work motivation is a drive that originates from within or outside an individual that influences a person's behavior in carrying out their work, which is

influenced by the extent to which a person's basic psychological needs, such as the need for competence, autonomy, and social relationships are met in the work environment. When these needs are met, workers will be more internally motivated and this has a positive impact on worker behavior, including job satisfaction. The dimensions of work motivation consist of external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and intrinsic motivation.

Not only that, Sidharta et al. (2024) also added that motivation is the key to generating energy and enthusiasm within workers and encouraging them to overcome various obstacles in order to achieve the desired goals as explained in the theory of work motivation. Work motivation acts as a driving force, both internal and external, that drives workers to work with enthusiasm, discipline, and a sense of responsibility. Workers who have high motivation tend to show initiative, creativity, and have a stronger commitment to their work and organization (Olivia et al., 2025).

Based on the description, the low level of job satisfaction among Gen Z workers in the Karawang manufacturing industry is an important issue that organizations need to pay attention to. The novelty of this study lies in the combination of transformational leadership style and work motivation in explaining job satisfaction among Gen Z workers in the Karawang manufacturing industry, which is still rarely studied. This research is increasingly relevant with the results of pre-research which show that the satisfaction of Gen Z workers in the Karawang manufacturing industry tends to be low. This condition emphasizes the need to strengthen factors that can increase job satisfaction, namely transformational leadership style as an external factor originating from the leader's role in influencing subordinates and work motivation as an internal factor that encourages individuals to work optimally and achieve their work goals, which is believed to play a role in shaping workers' positive perceptions of their jobs, thereby increasing job satisfaction. Therefore, this study aims to determine "Do transformational leadership style and work motivation influence the satisfaction of Gen Z workers in the Karawang manufacturing industry?"

Method

This study uses a quantitative approach. The design used in this study is associative and clausal, namely to test the cause-and-effect relationship between two or more variables. (Sugiyono, 2020) The variables in this study are job satisfaction as the dependent variable, transformational leadership style and work motivation as the independent variables.

The population in this study was an unknown number of Gen Z workers in the Karawang manufacturing sector. The sampling technique used a non-probability sampling technique through a convenience sampling approach. The study involved 204 participants with characteristics of Gen Z workers aged 18-29 years, domiciled in the city of Karawang. The sample size in this study used Cohen's formula, which The results obtained show that the minimum number of samples required in this study is 203.6, which is rounded up to 204 respondents. (Abdullah, 2015).

Data collection in this study was conducted using a psychological scale as a measuring tool. In this study, there are three scales for data collection, each using the Likert scale. The prepared statement item scale will be tried out on respondents who share the same characteristics as the research subjects. After the tryout, validity and reliability test scores are assessed to determine the suitability of the measuring instrument used. In addition, item analysis is also conducted to determine the discriminatory power of each item using SPSS version 26.0 for Windows. According to Azwar (2017) an item will be said to be valid if the R_{1x} value ≥ 0.30 . Job satisfaction is measured using the Short Index Job Satisfaction (SIJS) which was adopted from Purwanto SK et al. (2025) which is a development of the theory Brayfield and Rothe (1951). The SIJS scale consists of 5 items with five response statements ranging from Strongly Disagree (STS) to Strongly Agree (SS). The SIJS reliability test produced a Cronbach's alpha of 0.704 (high reliability) and the validity test showed a value of 0.610 for item 3 (lowest) to 0.776 for item 5 (highest).

Transformational leadership style was measured using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) adopted from Princess (2024) which is a development of the theory Bass and Avolio (2004). The MLQ scale consists of 8 items with four response statements ranging from Strongly Agree (SS) to Strongly Disagree (STS). The MLQ reliability test produced a Cronbach's alpha of 0.842 (high reliability) and the validity test showed a value of 0.452 on item 5 (lowest) to 0.881 on item 8 (highest).

Work motivation is measured using The Motivation at Work Scale (MAWS) which is adapted from the theory Gagné and Deci (2005). The MAWS scale consists of 12 items with seven response statements ranging from Not at All (TSS) to Certainly (P). The MAWS reliability test for the Cronbach's alpha response category was 0.908 (high reliability) and the validity test showed a value of 0.584 for item 12 (lowest) to 0.841 for item 11 (highest).

Data analysis in this study was conducted in stages using a quantitative approach. The first stage was a normality test, which aimed to determine whether the research data were normally distributed. A normality test is essential as a prerequisite for using parametric analysis. (Sugiyono, 2020). Next, a linearity test is conducted to determine whether there is a linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables. This test is conducted to ensure that the regression model used is appropriate to the characteristics of the research data. (Sugiyono, 2020).

After meeting the necessary assumptions, hypothesis testing was conducted using multiple linear regression analysis. This analysis was used to determine the effect of transformational leadership style and work motivation as independent variables on job satisfaction as the dependent variable. Furthermore, multiple linear regression analysis was also used to determine the direction and magnitude of the influence of each independent variable on the dependent variable (Sugiyono, 2018).

Next, a coefficient of determination test is conducted to determine the extent of the influence of the independent variable (X) on the dependent variable (Y). Furthermore, a

categorization test aims to group workers into several hierarchical groups based on the attributes being measured.(Azwar, 2018).

Results and Discussion

Results

Table1 Respondent Demographic Data

Demographic Data	Categorization	N	%
Gender	Man	79	39%
	Woman	125	61%
Age	18 - 21 Years	24	12%
	22 - 25 Years	109	53%
	26 - 29 Years	71	35%
Years of service	< 1 Year	33	16%
	15 years	121	59%
Employment Status	6 - 10 Years	50	25%
	Contract Workers	78	38%
	Permanent Worker	105	51%
	Apprenticeship	21	10%

Based on the results of data collection of Gen Z workers in the Karawang manufacturing sector, 204 respondents were obtained, consisting of 79 men and 125 women. The majority were aged 18-21 years, as many as 24 people (12%), followed by 22-25 years as many as 109 people (53%) and 26-29 years as many as 71 people (35%). With a work period of <1 year as many as 33 people (16%), followed by a work period of 1-5 years as many as 121 people (59%), and 6-10 years as many as 50 people (25%). The status of workers as contract workers as many as 78 people (38%), as permanent workers as many as 105 people (51%) and interns as many as 21 people (10%). The collected data were then analyzed using SPSS version 26.0 for windows through normality tests, linearity tests, and multiple linear regression analysis.

Table2. Normality Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test	Unstandardized Residual
N	204
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,092c

Based on the results of the normality test, a significance value of 0.092 ($p > 0.05$) was obtained, which means that all data in this study were normally distributed and could be analyzed using numerical statistics.

Table3 Linearity Test

ANOVA Table	Sig. Deviation from Linearity
Job Satisfaction*Transformational Leadership Style	,515
Job Satisfaction*Work Motivation	,845

Based on the results of the linearity test, transformational leadership style and work motivation have a linear relationship with job satisfaction among Gen Z workers in the Karawang manufacturing sector. This is indicated by the deviation from linearity value of 0.515 for transformational leadership style and 0.845 for work motivation, so both are greater than 0.05 (sig. > 0.05) and meet the linearity assumption.

Table4. Partial Test

Coefficientsa					
Variables	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	1,072	1,309		-,819	,414
GKT (X1)	,435	,048	,499	9,066	,000
MK (X2)	,113	,018	,347	6,302	,000

Based on the table above, the transformational leadership style variable has a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05 for the multiple linear regression test. As a result, the research hypothesis, Ha1 is accepted and H01 is rejected, this indicates that the transformational leadership style influences job satisfaction in Gen Z workers in the Karawang manufacturing industry sector. Then, the work motivation variable has a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05 for the multiple linear regression test. As a result, the research hypothesis, Ha2 is accepted and H02 is rejected, this indicates that work motivation influences job satisfaction in Gen Z workers in the Karawang manufacturing industry sector.

Table5. MK Partial Test on Job Satisfaction

Coefficientsa	
Variables	Job satisfaction
Intrinsic Motivation	,000
Identified Regulation	,053
Introjected Regulation	,028
External Regulation	,045

Based on table 5, the results of the partial regression test show that most dimensions of work motivation have a significant influence on job satisfaction. Job satisfaction shows a significant influence on *intrinsic motivation* has a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05, introjected regulation 0.028 < 0.05, external regulation 0.045 < 0.05. This shows that both internal and external factors can play an important role in increasing job satisfaction. However, it is not significant for identified regulation 0.053 < 0.05, indicating that workers'

understanding of the importance of work has not had a significant influence on job satisfaction levels.

Table6. Simultaneous Test

ANOVA					
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1441,137	2	720,568	118,593	,000b
Residual	1221,270	201	6,076		
Total	2662,407	203			

Based on the multiple linear regression test in the table above, it has a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$, which means that the hypothesis H_{a3} is accepted and H_{03} is rejected. This shows that transformational leadership style and work motivation simultaneously influence the satisfaction of Gen Z workers in the Karawang manufacturing industry.

Table7. Coefficient of Determination

Model Summary			
R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate
,736a	,541	,537	2.46495

Based on the table above, the determination test shows an R-square value of 0.541, or 54.1%. This indicates that 54.1% of job satisfaction is due to transformational leadership style and work motivation. The remaining 46% is influenced by other factors not included in this study.

Table8. Categorization Test

Variables	Category	(n)	Percentage
Job satisfaction	Low	7	3.4%
	Currently	86	42.2%
	Tall	111	54.4%
Transformational Leadership Style	Low	2	1.0%
	Currently	29	14.2%
	Tall	173	84.8%
Work motivation	Low	93	45.6%
	Currently	110	53.9%
	Tall	1	0.5%

Based on the categorization test on the job satisfaction variable, the majority of respondents were in the high category, as many as 111 people (54.4%), followed by the medium category as many as 86 people (42.2%), and the low category as many as 7 people (3.4%). This indicates that job satisfaction among Gen Z workers in the Karawang

manufacturing sector is generally at a high level. On the transformational leadership style variable, the majority of respondents were in the high category, as many as 173 people (84.8%), followed by the medium category as many as 29 people (14.2%), and the low category as many as 2 people (1.0%). This indicates that the transformational leadership style among Gen Z workers in the Karawang manufacturing sector is generally at a high level. On the work motivation variable, the majority of respondents were in the medium category, as many as 110 people (53.9%), followed by the low category as many as 93 people (45.6%), and the high category as many as 1 person (0.5%). This indicates that work motivation among Gen Z workers in the Karawang manufacturing sector is generally at a high level.

Discussion

Testing the first hypothesis using a partial test showed that transformational leadership style has a significant influence on job satisfaction among Gen Z in Karawang City with a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). This means that employees with leaders who implement high levels of transformational leadership tend to have higher levels of job satisfaction.

This finding is in line with Bass and Avolio (2004) which explains that transformational leaders are able to influence subordinates through four characteristics: idealized influence, where leaders serve as role models respected and trusted by employees. Inspirational motivation motivates employees to achieve organizational goals, while intellectual stimulation encourages employees to think creatively and develop. Furthermore, individualized consideration demonstrates the leader's attention to the needs and development of individual employees. This finding is supported by previous research which is conducted Herawati and Ranteallo (2020) A study conducted on PT JMS Jakarta employees showed that leadership style had a positive and significant effect on employee job satisfaction. This study used quantitative methods and involved 32 respondents.

Work motivation has a significant positive effect on job satisfaction with a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). These results indicate that the higher the work motivation, the higher the job satisfaction of Gen Z workers in a Karawang manufacturing company. Furthermore, the dimensions *external regulation*, *introjected regulation*, and *intrinsic motivation* showed a significant influence on job satisfaction. These results indicate that both internal motivation and external factors can increase the job satisfaction of Gen Z workers in the Karawang manufacturing sector. The lack of a significant effect of identified regulation on job satisfaction indicates that workers' understanding of the importance of their work is not sufficient to directly increase job satisfaction.

The results of this study are supported by Azizah and Amin (2023) which explains that, from a Self-Determination Theory (SDT) perspective, employee satisfaction is not only influenced by identified regulation, but also by other factors such as external regulation, intrinsic motivation, and positive experiences gained by individuals in their activities. This shows that giving meaning to an activity does not necessarily directly increase job

satisfaction if it is not accompanied by conditions that support the employee's psychological needs. These results support the theory Gagné and Deci (2005) which states that work motivation is a drive that comes from within or outside the individual that influences a person's behavior in carrying out their work, which is influenced by the extent to which a person's basic psychological needs, such as the need for competence, autonomy, and social relationships are met in the work environment. When these needs are met, workers will be more internally motivated and this has a positive impact on worker behavior, including job satisfaction. The dimensions of work motivation consist of external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and intrinsic motivation. This is supported by previous research conducted by research conducted by Hidayat et al. (2025), found a significant influence between work motivation and job satisfaction of production department workers at XYZ company.

Simultaneous results show that transformational leadership style and work motivation together have a significant effect on job satisfaction with a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). In addition, the R Square value of 0.541 indicates that both variables explain the influence on job satisfaction by 54.1%, while the rest is influenced by other factors outside this study, including the work environment, compensation, organizational culture, work stress and career development. (Sinambow et al., 2022). Based on the results of the categorization of job satisfaction, it is in the high category. This finding differs from the initial phenomenon that indicated low job satisfaction could be caused by differences in the number and conditions of respondents in the pre-study, thus depicting different conditions. Furthermore, the transformational leadership style is in the high category, while work motivation is in the medium category. This indicates that Gen Z workers tend to be satisfied with their jobs, but companies still need to improve employee work motivation to optimize job satisfaction.

Conclusion

This study shows that transformational leadership style influences job satisfaction, meaning that the higher the implementation of transformational leadership style, the higher the job satisfaction of Gen Z workers in the Karawang manufacturing industry. This is because transformational leaders create a supportive work environment and increase job satisfaction. Second, work motivation has a positive effect, where the higher the work motivation, the higher the job satisfaction felt by workers, because it fulfills psychological needs and makes Gen Z workers work more meaningfully and feel satisfied with their jobs. Then, both variables simultaneously have a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction.

Thus, these two factors collectively contribute to increasing job satisfaction among Gen Z workers in the Karawang manufacturing sector. The results of this study are influenced not only by internal factors such as work motivation but also by external factors such as the transformational leadership style implemented in a company.

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