



THE INFLUENCE OF SELF EFFICACY ON WORK ENGAGEMENT OF GENERATION Z INTERNSHIP STUDENTS

Yesa Fadilah Rahayu¹, Lintang Citra Kusumadewi^{2*}

^{1,2}Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Siliwangi, Tasikmalaya, Indonesia

^{*}233402408@student.unsil.ac.id

Abstract. This study aims to analyze the influence of self-efficacy on work engagement among Generation Z interns in Tasikmalaya City. Using quantitative explanatory methods with simple linear regression analysis, the findings indicate that self-efficacy has a positive and significant effect on work engagement. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on examining the work engagement experienced by Generation Z in the context of internship experiences in local work environments, which has rarely been studied empirically in Indonesia. This study contributes scientifically by strengthening empirical evidence regarding the role of self-efficacy in increasing engagement among young workers. Practically, the results suggest that internship programs should focus on enhancing self-efficacy through training, mentoring, and providing meaningful assignments to optimize intern engagement.

Keywords: Self efficacy; Work engagement; Generation Z intern students.

1. Introduction

The era of globalization has led to increasingly fierce competition among companies in Indonesia, as evidenced by the rise in the national Business Competition Index score (Center for Economic and Development Studies, Faculty of Economics and Business, Padjadjaran University, 2024). This situation requires companies to adapt and increase productivity through high-quality human resources. The need for professional, skilled, and experienced workers is often associated with fresh graduates who already have work experience, especially through internship programs (Saputra et al., 2024a). Positive internship experiences have been proven to increase students' readiness for work, provide opportunities to face real challenges, and develop an understanding of the expectations of the working world (Jaenab & Koerniawan, 2025).

Currently, Generation Z individuals born between 1996 and 2010, who are highly active in digital technology, dominate Indonesia's population with 27.94% (BPS, 2020). Generation Z is a major newcomer to the workforce, tending to show a high dependence on technology and preferring flexible jobs (Lubis & Komalasari, 2024). In this context, the success of interns, especially Generation Z, is influenced by two key factors: Work Engagement (level of dedication, enthusiasm, and focus at work) (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004) and Self-Efficacy (a person's belief and confidence in their ability to complete tasks) (Bandura, 1997).

The Job Demands-Resources (JDR) theory proposed by Demerouti et al. explains that a person's work engagement is influenced by the balance between job demands and available resources. In this model, resources come not only from the work environment but also include personal resources such as self-efficacy, which is an individual's belief in their ability to successfully complete a task.

In the context of this research, self-efficacy plays a role as a personal resource that can increase the work engagement of Generation Z interns in Tasikmalaya City. Students with high self-efficacy are better able to cope with the pressures and challenges of their internship, thus remaining enthusiastic, persistent, and focused on their work.

Although high potential for Self-Efficacy can encourage better Work Engagement, the reality in the field shows a disparity. Phenomena on social media and preliminary survey results indicate low Work Engagement among some interns. For example, a survey of 10 students from the Faculty of Psychology at University X (Sandi & Khoirunnisa, 2025) revealed that 50% felt unenthusiastic and experienced fatigue during their internship, as well as feeling less involved in organizational activities. This condition reflects a lack of dedication, enthusiasm, and focus, which has implications for suboptimal internship programs.

However, most of these empirical studies tend to focus on Millennial employees or interns, and very few specifically target Generation Z interns who have different psychological characteristics and work environment demands. Moreover, existing studies on work engagement and self-efficacy among Generation Z interns remain limited and have not yet provided comprehensive findings that can be generalized across different organizational and regional contexts. This gap highlights the importance of conducting research that examines the influence of self-efficacy on work engagement among Generation Z interns in order to generate broader insights and provide practical contributions for educational institutions and internship companies.

This study aims to fill the empirical research gap by analyzing the influence of self-efficacy on work engagement among Generation Z interns in Tasikmalaya City. This study also provides theoretical contributions in expanding the understanding of the psychological dynamics of Generation Z in a practical work environment, as well as practical contributions for agencies in designing coaching and mentoring programs that can strengthen students' self-confidence during internships.

2. Research Method

This study uses a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design that aims to analyze the causal relationship between Self-Efficacy (independent variable) and Work Engagement (dependent variable). This approach was chosen to test the hypotheses that had been formulated empirically. The study population consisted of Generation Z interns who were currently or had completed internship programs at various companies or agencies in Tasikmalaya City. Because the exact number of this population is not officially recorded, it is categorized as an unidentified population. Therefore, purposive sampling was conducted using specific criteria to determine eligible respondents. The sample size was determined based on statistical calculations to achieve a 95% confidence level.

Primary data were collected using an online questionnaire distributed to sample respondents. The research instrument consisted of two main scales. The Self-Efficacy variable (X) was measured using an adapted scale from Schwarzer & Jerusalem's (1995) General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE), focusing on indicators of confidence in overcoming difficulties, ability to complete tasks, and perseverance. Meanwhile, the Work Engagement (Y) variable was measured using an adaptation of the short version (UWES-9) of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) by Schaufeli & Bakker (2004), which includes the dimensions of Vigor, Dedication, and Absorption. Before the main data was collected, instrument quality testing was conducted. The validity test was carried out using the Product Moment correlation technique with the criterion that the calculated r must be greater than the table r , while the reliability test was carried out by calculating

Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, where the α value must reach 0.70 to indicate good internal consistency.

The data analysis techniques in this study involved descriptive statistics and inferential statistics, with the help of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Before testing the hypothesis, a series of Classical Assumption Tests were conducted to ensure that the regression model used met the BLUE (Best Linear Unbiased Estimator) prerequisites. The classical assumption tests included the Normality Test, using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test to examine data distribution, the Linearity Test, through scatterplot examination or ANOVA analysis to ensure that the causal relationship between variables was linear, and the Heteroscedasticity Test, which used the Glejser Test or residual plot to detect residual variance inequality. The main hypothesis testing was conducted using Simple Linear Regression Analysis with the equation model $Y=a+bX+eY$. The significance of the effect of the SelfEfficacy variable (X) on Work Engagement (Y) was tested partially through a t-test at a significance level of 5% (0.05). In addition, the Coefficient of Determination is used to assess the extent of the contribution or ability of independent variables in explaining the variation in dependent variables.

3. Result and Discussion

This study involved 53 Generation Z interns in Tasikmalaya City who met the established criteria. Although the respondents represent a specific context, this focus allows this study to provide a clear and relevant analysis of Generation Z interns' self-efficacy and work engagement. The majority of respondents were female (81.10%) with a dominant age of 21 years (62.26%) and the longest internship duration of 1 month (67.92%).

3.1 Validity Test

The validity test was conducted to assess the extent to which the statements in the questionnaire were able to measure the intended variables. With a total of 53 respondents, the table $r = 0.273$ was obtained at a significance level of 5% ($df = 51$). The following table shows the validity test results:

Table 1. Variable X Validity Test Table

Item	Calculated R	Sig. (2-tailed)	R table (0.273)	Description
X - 1	0.721	0.000	0.273	Valid
X - 2	0.826	0.000	0.273	Valid
X - 3	0.743	0.000	0.273	Valid
X - 4	0.807	0.000	0.273	Valid
X - 5	0.590	0.000	0.273	Valid

Table 2. Variable Y Validity Test

Item	Calculated R	Sig. (2-tailed)	R table (0.273)	Description
Y - 1	0.837	0.000	0.273	Valid
Y - 2	0.778	0.000	0.273	Valid
Y - 3	0.618	0.000	0.273	Valid
Y - 4	0.681	0.000	0.273	Valid
Y - 5	0.730	0.000	0.273	Valid
Y - 6	0.696	0.000	0.273	Valid

The test results show that all statement items for the Self-Efficacy (X) variable have a calculated r value between 0.590 and 0.826, with Sig. (2-tailed) < 0.05 , so all items are declared valid. Similarly, for the Work Engagement (Y) variable, all items have a calculated r between 0.618 and 0.837, with Sig. (2-tailed) < 0.05 , so they are declared valid.

3.2 Reliability Test

A reliability test was conducted to ensure the consistency of measurement results between items in the instrument. The following table shows the reliability test results:

Table 3. Reliability Test Table

Statistic	Value	Number of Items
Cronbach's Alpha (X)	0.784	5
Cronbach's Alpha (Y)	0.807	6

The reliability test results showed Cronbach's Alpha values > 0.70 , namely 0.784 for self-efficacy and 0.807 for work engagement, which means that the research instruments were reliable.

3.3 Classical Assumption Test

Normality Test

The test was conducted using the One-Sample Kolmogorov–Smirnov Test (K–S Test). The test results show that the Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value = 0.200 > 0.05 , so the residual data is declared to be normally distributed. Thus, the assumption of normality is satisfied and the data is suitable for regression analysis.

Multicollinearity Test

Multicollinearity testing was conducted to ensure that there was no correlation between independent variables in the model. Since this study only involved one independent variable, multicollinearity was theoretically impossible. The calculation results show that the Tolerance value = 1.000 and VIF = 1.000, both of which meet the criteria of Tolerance ≥ 0.10 and VIF ≤ 10 . Therefore, it can be concluded that the regression model is free from multicollinearity.

Heteroscedasticity Test

The scatterplot analysis results show that the residual points are scattered randomly above and below the zero line without any clear pattern. Thus, it can be concluded that there is no heteroscedasticity and the regression model meets the assumption of homoscedasticity.

Linearity Test

The linearity test is used to determine whether the relationship between the independent variable (self-efficacy) and the dependent variable (work engagement) is linear. Based on the results of the ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) test, the calculated F value = 5.848 with Sig. = 0.020 ($p < 0.05$) for the linearity component, which means that the relationship between the two variables is significantly linear. Meanwhile, the F value = 0.438 with Sig. = 0.907 ($p > 0.05$) for deviation from linearity indicates no deviation from linearity.

3.4 Simple Linear Regression Analysis

The regression analysis results produced the following equation:

$$Y = 13,394 + 0,471 X$$

A regression coefficient of 0.471 with a significance value of 0.014 ($p < 0.05$) indicates that self-efficacy has a positive and significant effect on work engagement. This means that every one-unit increase in self-efficacy will increase work engagement by 0.471 units. In addition, the Standardized Beta value of 0.336 indicates that self-efficacy has a moderate effect on work engagement.

3.5 Hypothesis Testing

Prior to hypothesis testing, several classical assumption tests were conducted to ensure that the regression model met the required criteria. The results showed that the data were normally distributed (Sig. > 0.05), the model exhibited linearity, no multicollinearity was detected (VIF < 10 ; Tolerance > 0.1), and the heteroscedasticity test indicated no heteroscedasticity (Sig. > 0.05), indicating that the model was suitable for testing the proposed hypothesis. The t-test results show that $t\text{-count} = 2.548 > t\text{-table} = 1.675$ with $p = 0.014 < 0.05$, so the alternative hypothesis is accepted. Thus, there is a positive and significant influence between self-efficacy and work engagement among Generation Z interns in Tasikmalaya City. These results confirm that the higher the students' self-confidence in carrying out their internship tasks, the higher their level of work engagement.

The results of the study indicate that self-efficacy has a positive and significant effect on work engagement among Generation Z interns in Tasikmalaya City, with a significance value of $0.014 < 0.05$ and a regression coefficient of 0.471, which means that the higher the students' self-confidence, the greater their involvement in internship activities. This finding confirms that an individual's belief in their own abilities plays an important role in increasing enthusiasm, dedication, and perseverance in completing tasks during an internship.

These findings are in line with the results of a study by (Hardiyani et al., 2025), which also shows that work engagement is influenced by internal individual factors. The study states that "employee work engagement can be improved if internal psychological factors such as motivation and self-perception are managed properly." This statement supports the conclusion that psychological aspects, including self-efficacy, have an important contribution in shaping work engagement.

Furthermore, the study emphasizes that "individuals with positive perceptions of their abilities tend to show higher energy, dedication, and work absorption in carrying out tasks." This finding is in line with the dimensions of work engagement according to Schaufeli & Bakker, namely vigor, dedication, and absorption, which in this study were also in the high category.

In addition, the results of this study are also consistent with international research (Lu et al., 2025) found that self-efficacy significantly predicts job engagement and enhances individuals' psychological involvement in their work by strengthening their cognitive readiness and emotional resilience. Similarly, Yagil et al. (2023) reported that employees with higher self-efficacy demonstrate stronger engagement and greater persistence in facing job challenges. Moreover, Keleynikov et al. (2022) highlighted that self-efficacy acts as a key personal resource that promotes vitality and dedication, which ultimately leads to higher levels of work engagement. These international findings

reinforce the conclusion that self-efficacy functions as a universal psychological factor influencing engagement across different populations and work contexts, including Generation Z internship students.

4. Conclusion

The results of this study indicate that self-efficacy has a positive and significant effect on work engagement among Generation Z interns in Tasikmalaya City. Both variables are in the high category, which indicates that the greater the students' confidence in their abilities, the higher their level of dedication, enthusiasm, and involvement in internship activities.

5. Recommendations

Based on these results, interns are expected to continue developing and maintaining self-efficacy as a key factor in driving increased work engagement and performance during their internship. In addition, internship institutions or companies are advised to provide coaching or mentoring programs to strengthen interns' self-confidence, thereby optimizing their potential and work engagement. For further research, it is recommended to add a mediating variable such as Job Satisfaction to better understand the relationship between Self-Efficacy and Work Engagement in a more in-depth and comprehensive manner.

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