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The Influence of Salary Compensation, Leadership Communication, Work Culture, Competence, and Motivation on The Work Productivity of Generation Z In Culinary MSMES In Balikpapan

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Abstract. This study analyzes the effect of salary compensation, leadership communication, work culture, competence, and motivation on the work productivity of Generation Z in culinary MSMEs in Balikpapan, using multiple linear regression with 135 respondents. The study reveals that Generation Z is a workforce group with unique characteristics that require an adaptive and innovative management approach. The results show that competence has a positive and significant effect ($\beta = 0.348$; $p < 0.05$), while salary compensation ($\beta = -0.117$; $p < 0.05$) and leadership communication ($\beta = -0.242$; $p < 0.05$) have significant negative effects. Work culture and motivation are not significant partially, but simultaneously, all variables have a significant effect. These findings provide practical recommendations for MSMEs to optimize competency development, revise compensation schemes, and improve leadership communication to suit the characteristics of Gen Z.

Keywords: Compensation; Leadership communication; Motivation; MSMEs; Work culture.

INTRODUCTION

Since the enactment of Law Number 11 of 2020 concerning Job Creation, several changes have occurred in UMKM (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises regarding the criteria for UMKM and non-UMKM. Business actors, both UMKM and non-UMKM, play a vital role in the national economy, as they significantly contribute to absorbing the workforce, including Generation Z (born between 1997 and 2012), who are increasingly involved as both young owners and employees (Fauzi & Sheng, 2022; Nursini, 2020; Sondakh et al., 2023; Tumiwa & Nagy, 2021; Utami et al., 2021).

This research stems from the observation that Generation Z's work productivity in Balikpapan's culinary UMKM sector is not yet fully optimal. UMKM often face challenges in providing competitive compensation, establishing effective communication, and creating a work culture that aligns with Generation Z expectations. Unattractive salary compensation can drive Gen Z to move to larger companies, while rigid and one-way leadership communication often fails to resonate with them (Kimonyo, 2025; Septiani et al., 2024; Septyani et al., 2025).

Furthermore, a less inclusive and inflexible work culture can stifle their creativity and motivation. On the other hand, competence and motivation are key individual drivers but are also shaped by the work environment (Habba et al., 2017; Mulyana et al., 2021; Seppala & Cameron, 2015; SIMMS JR., 2014). Without adequate competency development and a motivating environment, Generation Z's potential will be stifled.

Therefore, it is important to identify how these factors—salary compensation, leadership communication, work culture, competence, and motivation—specifically influence the work productivity of Generation Z in Balikpapan's culinary UMKM environment. This research is expected to provide in-depth understanding and practical recommendations for

culinary UMKM owners to manage this generation's workforce more effectively (Aviles-Peralta, 2024; Demirdag, 2022; Dong & Loang, 2023; Haavisto & Linge, 2022; Vellya et al., 2020).

This research was conducted because most previous studies examined these factors in the millennial generation or in large companies. Research on culinary UMKM and Generation Z in Balikpapan remains very limited. With the entry of Generation Z, who have distinct expectations such as flexibility, social values, and technology integration, UMKM need to understand relevant motivational and productivity drivers to attract, retain, and optimize young employees. Culinary UMKM contribute more than 60% of the total UMKM in Balikpapan; increased productivity can boost UMKM income, strengthen local taxes, and reduce unemployment rates, especially among young people.

The work culture in culinary UMKM is often informal. Understanding how work culture influences Generation Z's motivation and productivity can help align traditional values with the aspirations of the new generation. Competence is rarely studied alongside variables such as work culture, leadership, and compensation in the UMKM context. Motivation is often examined with other variables, but studies less frequently explore the specific motivational dimensions of Generation Z in UMKM.

This research comprehensively examines the effect of compensation on work productivity alongside other variables in the UMKM or Generation Z context. It deepens the analysis of leadership influence by considering mediation from variables such as job satisfaction for a clearer picture. It analyzes work culture using indicators more focused on and relevant to UMKM or Generation Z characteristics in the study location. It integrates competence as a key variable in a comprehensive model to measure productivity in UMKM and Generation Z. Finally, it examines motivation through a multidimensional approach tailored to the characteristics of Generation Z or UMKM workforces.

This research provides practical benefits for culinary UMKM in Balikpapan City by offering guidance on managing compensation, leadership communication, work culture, competence, and motivation to enhance Generation Z's work productivity. Academically, it contributes by increasing literacy on the influence of these factors in the context of Generation Z in UMKM, serving as a basis for developing more relevant HR management theories and strategies. Socially, it helps improve the quality and welfare of young workers while supporting the competitiveness and sustainability of UMKM.

This study aims to analyze the partial effect of salary compensation on the work productivity of Generation Z. It further examines the partial effects of leadership communication, work culture, competence, and motivation on their work productivity. Additionally, it identifies the simultaneous influence of these five variables on overall work productivity. Ultimately, it provides practical recommendations for culinary UMKM owners in Balikpapan to optimize the management and development of Generation Z human resources.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

This study employed a quantitative descriptive approach using a questionnaire for statistical analysis to examine causal relationships between independent and dependent variables.

The population consisted of Generation Z workers in Balikpapan City. As the

population size was unknown, the sample size was set at a minimum of five times the number of indicators, yielding 135 respondents for 27 indicators. Non-probability purposive sampling was used based on these criteria: (1) employment in Balikpapan's culinary MSMEs and (2) at least one year of service.

Questionnaires were distributed online via Google Forms, capturing respondent demographics (gender, age, education, tenure, MSME category) and research variables using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).

Data analysis involved multiple linear regression using SPSS 25.0. Tests included descriptive analysis; validity (Product Moment) and reliability (Cronbach's Alpha); classical assumptions (normality, multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity); and hypothesis testing (F-test for simultaneous effects, t-test for partial effects).

$$Y = a + bX_1 + cX_2 + dX_3 + eX_4 + fX_5$$

Information:

$\hat{Y}$ = Predicted value

a = Constant/intercept

b = regression coefficient/slope

X = Independent variable

e = Standard error

Data were collected using a questionnaire that measured the variables:

- Compensation/salary (X_1)
- Leadership communication (X_2)
- Work culture (X_3)
- Competence (X_4)
- Motivation (X_5)

The value of a (constant) and the value of b (regression coefficient) in the equation above can be determined using the following formula (Suliyanto, 2011:39):

$$b = n(\Sigma XY) - (\Sigma X)(\Sigma Y) \, n(\Sigma$$

Information:

Y = Dependent variable

a = Constant

b = Regression coefficient

X = Independent variable

n = Number of observations

To calculate simple linear regression, an application tool is used to process data, namely: SPSS (Statistical Product and Service Solutions) software.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Characteristics of Respondents

Based on the questionnaire distribution results in Table 1, a descriptive analysis of the characteristics of the respondents in the study revealed that 17 respondents (12.6%) were male, while 118 respondents (87.4%) were female. These results also indicate that the majority of respondents were female. All respondents were aged 18-25 years.

Based on Table 1, it is known that 54 respondents (40.0%) had a high school education, and 81 respondents (60.0%) had a bachelor's degree. These results also indicate that the

majority of respondents in this study were bachelor's degree graduates. Based on table 1, it is known that the respondents' jobs in crafts and culinary are 6 respondents (4.4%), food/beverage producers are 9 respondents (6.7%), restaurants/stalls/shops are 15 respondents (11.1%), in cake shops/bakeries are 23 respondents (17.0%), and in food/beverage shops are 82 respondents (60.7%). These results also show that the majority of respondents in this study work in food/beverage shops.

Then, from table , it is known that the length of service of respondents is less than 1 year, namely 23 respondents (17.0%), the length of service of 1-2 years is as many as 73 respondents (54.1%), the length of service of 3-5 years is as many as 10 respondents (7.4%), and more than 5 years is as many as 29 respondents (21.5%). These results also show that the majority of the length of service is 1-2 years.

Table 1. Descriptive Frequency

Characteristics (18 - 25 years old)	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Man	17	12.6%
	Woman	118	87.4%
Education	SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL	54	40.0%
	Bachelor	81	60.0%
MSMEs	Crafts and culinary	6	4.4%
	Food/beverage manufacturers	9	6.7%
	Restaurant/stall/shop	15	11.1%
	Cake shop/bakery	23	17.0%
	Food/drink shop	82	60.7%
Length of work	Less than 1 year	23	17.0%
	12 years old	73	54.1%
	3 - 5 years	10	7.4%
	More than 5 years	29	21.5%
Total		**135**	**100%**

Instrument Test

The questionnaire was used as an analytical tool in this study. The questionnaire, which was to be used as a data collection tool, was first tested as a research instrument. The tests conducted included validity and reliability tests. These tests were intended to measure the accuracy and reliability of the questionnaire as a data collection tool.

Validity Test

Validity testing is essential in research, particularly those that use questionnaires to obtain data. Validity testing is intended to determine the validity of the understanding of the relationship between concepts and empirical reality. Validity testing is a measure that indicates

the level of validity and authenticity of an instrument. An instrument is considered valid if it can measure what it is intended to measure or accurately reveal data from the variables being studied. The level of instrument validity indicates the extent to which the collected data does not deviate from the description of the intended variables.

Instrument validity testing is conducted by correlating each item score with the total score using the *Pearson Correlation* (*Product Moment*) technique. The testing criteria state that if the correlation coefficient (r) ≥ r Table means that the questionnaire item is declared valid or capable of measuring the variable it is measuring. For more details, it is presented in the following table (Attachment 2):

Table 2. Instrument Validity Test Results

Variables	Item	Validity Coefficient (r Count)	r Table	p-value	Note
Compensation/salary (X1)	X1.1	0.897	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid
	X1.2	0.877	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid
	X1.3	0.915	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid
Communication leadership (X2)	X2.1	0.890	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid
	X2.2	0.903	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid
	X2.3	0.917	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid
	X2.4	0.853	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid
Work culture (X3)	X3.1	0.805	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid
	X3.2	0.833	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid
	X3.3	0.916	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid
	X3.4	0.856	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid
Competence (X4)	X4.1	0.856	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid
	X4.2	0.909	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid
	X4.3	0.741	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid
Motivation (X5)	X5.1	0.821	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid
	X5.2	0.776	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid
	X5.3	0.717	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid
	X5.4	0.745	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid
	X5.5	0.791	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid
Productivity Work (Y)	Y1	0.885	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid
	Y2	0.697	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid
	Y3	0.810	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid
	Y4	0.864	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid
	Y5	0.756	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid
	Y6	0.677	0.1582	< 0.001	Valid

Source: Processed data, 2025.

From Table 2 above, it can be seen that all correlation coefficient values for each item with the total score (r) > r table (0.1582) with degrees of freedom (db) = 133. Thus, the items are declared valid or capable of measuring the variable, so they can be used as a data collection tool in this study.

Reliability Test

Reliability testing indicates the level of stability, consistency, or accuracy of a measuring instrument used to determine the extent to which measurements are relatively consistent when repeated measurements are taken. The reliability testing technique is using Cronbach's Alpha. The decision-making criterion is if the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient value is ≥ 0.6, meaning the questionnaire items were declared reliable or consistent in measuring the variables they measured (Appendix 3).

Table 3. Instrument Reliability Test Results

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Information
Compensation/salary (X1)	0.868	Reliable
Leadership communication (X2)	0.911	Reliable
Work culture (X3)	0.874	Reliable
Competence (X4)	0.779	Reliable
Motivation (X5)	0.824	Reliable
Work Productivity (Y)	0.872	Reliable

Source: Processed data, 2022

Table 3 shows that the Cronbach's Alpha value for all variables is greater than 0.6. Based on the previously mentioned provisions, the items measuring the variables are declared reliable or consistent in measuring the variables.

Classical Assumption Test

These classical assumptions must be tested to meet the requirements for multiple linear regression. After performing multiple regression calculations using SPSS, the following classical regression assumption test results were obtained:

Normality Test

The normality assumption test aims to determine whether the residuals in the path analysis model are normally distributed. Path analysis requires a normal distribution of residuals. To test whether the residuals are normally distributed, a probability plot can be used. The test criteria state that if the residual points are spread around the diagonal line, the residuals are normally distributed. The following are the results of detecting the normality assumption using a probability plot:
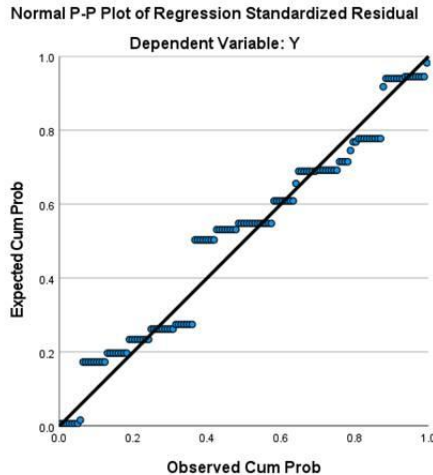
Figure 1. Normality Test through *Probability Plot*

Based on the probability plot above, it can be seen that the residual points are spread around the diagonal line. This indicates that the residuals are normally distributed. Thus, the assumption of normality is met.

Multicollinearity Test

The multicollinearity test is intended to determine whether there is a correlation between independent variables in the model. In a regression model, it is expected that the independent variables are not correlated with each other. To detect the presence or absence of multicollinearity, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value, or the tolerance value of each independent variable, can be used to determine the relationship between the dependent variable and the VIF. If the VIF value is less than 10 or the tolerance value is greater than 0.1, the model is considered free of multicollinearity. The results of the multicollinearity assumption test can be seen in the following table:

Table 4. Multicollinearity Test Results

Independent Variables	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
X1	0.800	1,249
X2	0.495	2,020
X3	0.444	2,252
X4	0.496	2,014
X5	0.536	1,866
a. Dependent Variable: Y		

Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance

From Table 4, it is known that all independent variables produce VIF values smaller than 10 and tolerance values greater than 0.1, therefore it can be concluded that the non-multicollinearity assumption is met, so that no multicollinearity problem occurs.

Heteroscedasticity Test

The heteroscedasticity assumption is used to determine whether the residuals have a

homogeneous variance. In testing the heteroscedasticity assumption, the residuals are expected to have a homogeneous variance. The heteroscedasticity assumption test can be seen from the scatter plot. The residuals are said to have a homogeneous variance if the residual points on the scatter plot are randomly distributed. The following are the results of identifying the heteroscedasticity assumption:
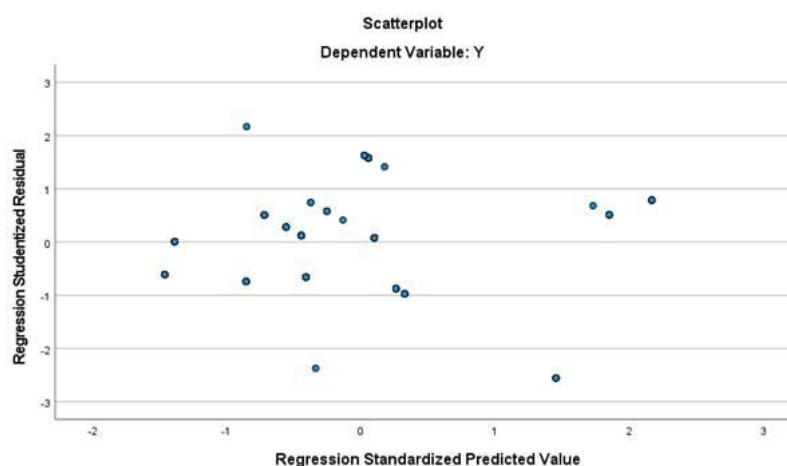

Figure 2. Heteroscedasticity Detection through Scatter Plot

Based on the scatter plot above, the residual points are spread out in a random pattern. Because the residuals do not form a specific pattern, it can be concluded that the residuals generated by the model have a homogeneous variance, thus meeting the heteroscedasticity assumption.

Multiple Regression Model Estimation Results

The results of the regression model estimation testing the influence of Compensation/salary (X1), Leadership Communication (X2), Work Culture (X3), Competence (X4), and Motivation (X5) on Work Productivity (Y) of Generation Z in Culinary MSMEs in Balikpapan can be seen in the following table 5 (Attachment 3):

Table 5. Regression Model Estimation

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Information
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	**3,909**	**0.308**	**-**	**12,688**	**0.000**	
Compensation X1	-0.117	0.042	-0.159	-2,796	0.006	Significant (-)
Leadership communication X2	-0.242	0.043	-0.407	-5,614	0.000	Significant (-)
X3 work culture	-0.058	0.054	-0.082	-1,070	0.287	No Significant Effect
Competence X4	0.348	0.052	0.482	6,654	0.000	Significant
Motivation X5	0.084	0.060	0.098	1,412	0.160	No Significant Effect
Dependent Variable: Work Productivity (Y)						Significant

The regression equation from the estimation results of multiple linear regression analysis is:

$$Y = 3.909 - 0.117\ X1 - 0.242\ X2 - 0.058\ X3 + 0.348\ X4 + 0.084\ X5$$

Coefficient of Determination

Table 6. Coefficient of Determination

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate
0.815	0.664	0.651	0.23530

The magnitude of the contribution of the influence of Compensation/salary (X1), Leadership communication (X2), Work culture (X3), Competence (X4), and Motivation (X5) on Work Productivity (Y) of Generation Z in Culinary MSMEs in Balikpapan can be seen through the coefficient of determination (R2) in table 6 which is 0.664. This means that the variables Compensation/salary (X1), Leadership communication (X2), Work culture (X3), Competence (X4), and Motivation (X5) are 66.4%, while the rest is a contribution from other factors/variables not included in this study.

Hypothesis Testing
Simultaneous Test (F Test)

Table 7. F Test

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	14,144	5	2,829	51,093	0.000 [b]
Residual	7,142	129	0.055		
Total	21,286	134			
a. Dependent Variable: Y					
b. Predictors: (Constant), X1, X2, X3, X4, X5					

H_0: There is no significant simultaneous (together) influence of Compensation/salary (X1), Leadership communication (X2), Work culture (X3), Competence (X4), and Motivation (X5) on Work Productivity (Y),

H_1: There is a significant simultaneous (together) influence of Compensation/salary (X1), Leadership communication (X2), Work culture (X3), Competence (X4), and Motivation (X5) on Work Productivity (Y),

The testing criteria state that if the p value $\leq$ level of significance (a=5%) then reject H0, meaning there is a significant influence simultaneously (together). Conversely, if the p value > level of significance ((a=0.05) then accept H0, meaning there is no significant influence simultaneously (together) on the Compensation/salary Variable (X1), Leadership Communication (X2), Work Culture (X3), Competence (X4), and Motivation (X5) on Work Productivity (Y).

Based on table 7 above, simultaneous hypothesis testing produces a calculated F value of 51,093 with a p value of 0.000. The test results show a p value (0.000) < level of significance (a=0.05) then reject H0, this means that there is a significant influence simultaneously (together) Compensation/salary (X1), Leadership communication (X2), Work culture (X3), Competence (X4), and Motivation (X5) on Work Productivity (Y) of Generation Z in Culinary MSMEs in Balikpapan.

Partial Test (T-Test)

Because it is proven that there is a simultaneous influence, it is continued with a partial significance test (t test). Partial hypothesis testing (t test) is used to determine whether there is a partial (individual) influence of Compensation/salary (X1), Leadership communication (X2), Work culture (X3), Competence (X4), and Motivation (X5) factors on Work Productivity (Y). The test criteria state that if t-count> t-table or p value < level of significance (a = 0.05) then there is a partial significant influence (individual). Conversely, if t-count < t-table or p value > level of significance (a = 0.05) then there is no partial significant influence (individual) of Compensation/salary (X1), Leadership communication (X2), Work culture (X3), Competence (X4), and Motivation (X5) on Work Productivity (Y). The results of the partial test are explained below based on the results in the table above:

a.   **Testing the Effect of Compensation/Salary on Work Productivity**

Hypothesis testing of the influence of Compensation/salary (X1) produces a t-value of -2.796 with a p-value of 0.006. The test results show a p-value (0.006) < level of significance (a=0.05) so that there is a significant influence of Compensation/salary (X1) on Work Productivity (Y). This means that the better the Compensation/salary, the more it can increase the Work Productivity of Generation Z in Culinary MSMEs in Balikpapan.

b.   **Testing the Influence of Leadership Communication on Work Productivity**

The hypothesis testing of the influence of leadership communication (X2) produced a t-value of -5.614 with a p-value of 0.000. The test results showed a p- value (0.000) < level of significance (a=0.05) so that there is a significant influence of leadership communication (X2) on work productivity (Y). This means that the better the leadership communication, the more it can increase the work productivity of Generation Z in culinary MSMEs in Balikpapan.

c.   **Testing the Influence of Work Culture on Work Productivity**

The hypothesis test of the influence of Work Culture (X3) produced a t-value of -1.070 with a p-value of 0.287. The test results showed that the p-value (0.287) > level of significance (a = 0.05) so that there was no significant influence of Work Culture (X3) on Work Productivity (Y).

d.   **Test of the Influence of Competence on Work Productivity**

Hypothesis testing of the influence of Competence (X4) produces a t-value of 6.654 with a p-value of 0.000. The test results show a p-value (0.000) < level of significance (a=0.05) so that there is a significant influence of Competence (X4) on Work Productivity (Y). When viewed from the regression coefficient on the Competence variable, it has a positive value of 0.348 indicating that Competence has a positive effect on Work Productivity. This means that the higher the Competence, the more it can increase the Work Productivity of Generation Z in Culinary MSMEs in Balikpapan.

e.   **Testing the Influence of Motivation on Work Productivity**

The hypothesis test of the influence of Motivation (X5) produced a t-value of 1.412 with

a p-value of 0.160. The test results showed that the p-value (0.160) > level of significance (a = 0.05) so that there was no significant influence of Motivation (X5) on Work Productivity (Y).

Dominant Variable

The dominant influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable can be seen through the absolute value of the largest Standardized Coefficients beta (See Table 4.5). The estimation results shown in the table above show that the variable that has the largest standardized coefficients beta. The largest coefficient is X4 at 0.482. Thus, Competence (X4) has the most dominant influence on Work Productivity (Y) among the other independent variables.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research, it can be concluded that competence, compensation, and leadership communication significantly affect work productivity among Generation Z in culinary MSMEs in Balikpapan, with competence having the greatest influence. Conversely, work culture and motivation do not significantly impact work productivity. Simultaneously, these variables collectively increase work productivity, highlighting the importance of competence, compensation, and leadership communication. The study faced limitations due to a short timeframe and difficulties in obtaining respondents. Future research should expand the sample size and explore additional variables. As a managerial implication, training programs should be developed to enhance competencies, and compensation should be improved with commissions and bonuses. Effective communication between leadership and employees should also be prioritized to boost work productivity.

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