

The Effects of Person–Organization Fit and Work Discretion on Generation Z Employees' Intention to Stay: The Mediating Role of Employee Well-Being

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Abstract

Efforts to retain Generation Z employees are one of the important challenges for organizations, particularly as this generation increasingly values alignment with organizational values, autonomy in carrying out job responsibilities, and positive psychological experiences at work. This study examines whether Person–Organization Fit and Work Discretion contribute to Generation Z employees' Intention to Stay and whether these relationships are mediated by Employee Well-Being in Demak Regency, Indonesia. Researcher applied quantitative within approach called cross-sectional, data gathered through self-administered questionnaire. Data collected from 140 qualified respondents were examined by PLS-SEM using application named SmartPLS version 4. Findings proved Person–Organization Fit also Work Discretion have roles in correlation of Employee Well-Being with Intention to Stay in positive and significant way. Employee Well-Being also have roles for Intention to Stay and mediates influence from Person–Organization Fit with Work Discretion for employees' intention to remain in positive way. This study proves Employee Well-Being considered as crucial psychological mechanism related organizational fit and work discretion enhance employees' intentions to remain with their organization. The study extends the employee retention literature by considering organizational, work-related, and psychological factors simultaneously in explaining Gen Z workers' Intention to Remain. From a practical perspective, organizations can support Gen Z workers' retention by strengthening value alignment, allowing sufficient discretion in work execution, and fostering a positive workplace that supports employee well-being.

Keywords:

Employee Well-Being; Generation Z; Intention to Stay; Person–Organization Fit; Work Discretion.

1. INTRODUCTION

The modern workplace is undergoing profound transformations in employee expectations, work structures, and the nature of employer–employee relationships, elevating employee retention to a strategic priority for organizations. Employee turnover can create considerable financial and operational challenges for organizations, including recruitment costs, investments in employee training and development, reduced productivity, and the loss of valuable organizational knowledge (Hom et al., 2017; Rubenstein et al., 2018). In this context, Intention to Stay has gained prominence as a key measure of workforce stability, reflecting an individual's commitment to maintaining their relationship with their current employer (Hom et al., 2017).

The topic of retention has taken on particular urgency in light of Gen Z workers entering workforce percentage level has been increased. Unlike preceding generational cohorts, Generation Z exhibits distinct workplace preferences that encompass meaningful organizational values, purposeful work, opportunities for career advancement, autonomy, scheduling flexibility, and psychological wellness (Barhate & Dirani, 2022;

Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021; and Schroth, 2019). These preferences fundamentally shape how members of this generation assess their workplace experiences and evaluate their long-term commitment to an organization. Consequently, understanding the organizational and psychological conditions that encourage Generation Z employees to remain with their employers is increasingly important for developing context-sensitive retention strategies.

Among the factors that may shape employees' retention decisions, Person Organization Fit stands out as particularly influential. P-O Fit describes as level of worker's goals, values, also personal attributes are compatible with those of the organization, including its prevailing workplace culture (K. Brown & Guay, 2011; and K. Brown et al., 2005). Research consistently demonstrates that higher levels of this factor are linked to more favorable work behaviors or even stronger sense of organizational attachment (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Additionally, this factor already describes as reduce turnover-related intentions and enhance workers' desire to stay with their company (Kakar et al., 2023; Kerse et al., 2022). Evidence from Indonesia further supports this relationship, as Sebastian & Saraswati (2023) found that this factor statistically influenced Generation Z workers' plan to stay. Related findings also highlight the relevance of compatibility and work-related factors to employees' retention decisions across different contexts. Margaretha et al. (2023), for instance, investigated correlation of this factor with workers' turnover intention especially Indonesian workplace, while Talamayan et al. (2025) explored work-related motivational factors and their implications for Generation Z employees in the Philippines. Despite examining distinct dimensions of person-organization compatibility and workplace experiences, these studies offer complementary insights into the factors that may shape younger employees' willingness to maintain their employment relationships.

In addition to organizational compatibility, the characteristics of the work itself can shape how employees experience their roles and make retention-related decisions. This study directs attention to Work Discretion, conceptualized as the perceived latitude employees hold to exercise personal judgment and exert influence over how their assignments are executed (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006; Parker et al., 2017). When employees are granted greater discretion, they tend to experience heightened control and independence in managing their responsibilities, and such autonomy-related attributes have been shown to created workers' psychological experiences also broader work outcomes (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006; Parker et al., 2017). Work Discretion is therefore relevant as a feature of job design also potential resource which created workers' experiences within decisions about remaining with companies.

The theoretical significance of Work Discretion could be well-recognized with Job Demands-Resources Theory called JD-R, that posits about work resources assist employees in coping with work demands, attaining work-related goals, and sustaining motivational drive (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Demerouti et al., 2001). Including its framework, Work Discretion role which is job resource to enhances degree of control employees exercise over how their work is executed (Parker et al., 2017). Prior investigations have documented positive associations between autonomy-related work attributes and psychological outcomes, including employee well-being (Chen et al., 2023; Wan et al., 2024; and Wheatley, 2017). By that opinion, availability of discretion may contribute to retention both directly, by improving employees' experiences of their work, and indirectly, by supporting their psychological well-being.

Employee Well-Being represents a central psychological mechanism through which both organizational and work conditions may shape employees' Intention to Stay. It encompasses the positive psychological states, effective functioning, and workplace experiences encountered in day-to-day roles (Nielsen et al., 2017). From the JD-R perspective, access to work resources nurtures well-being by sustaining positive psychological states, which in turn can generate favorable attitudes and behavioral inclinations toward the organization (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Lesener et al., 2019). Including current research, P-O Fit is one of factor for bolster well-being by reducing value tensions and strengthening a sense of belonging, while Work Discretion may support well-being by affording employees greater agency by its functions (Wan et al., 2024; Watanabe et al., 2024).

Empirical scholarship supports a meaningful connection between P-O Fit and Employee Well-Being. Watanabe et al. (2024) described fit-related alignment correlated to improved well-being among workers in Japan, while Jaškevičiūtė et al. (2024) identified significant associations between P-O Fit and multiple dimensions of well-being across Central European samples. Collectively, these findings indicate that greater congruence between individuals and their organizations tends to yield more positive psychological experiences at work (Jaškevičiūtė et al., 2024; and Watanabe et al., 2024).

Employee Well-Being may serve to be a key determinant of employees' decisions to remain with their organizations. Those who enjoy greater psychological well-being plan to grow some great perceptions of workplace and employer, potentially lowering their intention to leave. Conversely, diminished well-being has been associated with withdrawal tendencies and turnover-related outcomes (Nielsen et al., 2017; Pelly, 2023). Chen et al. (2023) mainly focused on function from well-being in linking work design to retention intentions among young employees, while Luthfiana et al. (2024) explained significant correlation of workplace well-being with Gen Z workers' intention to continue working for their current organizations in Indonesia. These findings suggest that Employee Well-Being may help explain how organizational fit and work-related characteristics influence employees' intention to stay.

Despite the expanding literature on employee retention, several research gaps remain unresolved. Previous studies have generally examined P-O Fit with autonomy-related job characteristics as separate

predictors of retention, with limited attention to their combined relationships with purpose for stay (Chen et al., 2023; Kakar et al., 2023; and Kerse et al., 2022). In addition, Employee Well-Being as mediator of correlation amongst these factors also employees' Intention to Stay remains insufficiently explored, especially within Gen Z workforce (Chen et al., 2023; Watanabe et al., 2024). In Indonesia or even Southeast Asia, studies of Gen Z retention and turnover has examined elements including person–work fit, job flexibility, work–life balance, career development, also work motivation, often emphasizing job satisfaction or affective commitment rather than Employee Well-Being as an explanatory mechanism (Jamalulel, 2025; Margaretha et al., 2023; and Talamayan et al., 2025). Accordingly, further study must be able to analyze P–O Fit with Work Discretion jointly and to investigate whether Employee Well-Being mediates their relationships with Intention to Remain.

This researcher's study seeks to fill these gaps by examining Gen Z workers working in Demak Regency, Central Java, Indonesia. Demak offers an appropriate context for investigating employee retention because its economy is substantially shaped by industrial and manufacturing activities, making it an important context for understanding employment dynamics among younger workers (BPS-Statistics, 2025a). The diversity of employment sectors in the regency also provides an opportunity to examine how P–O Fit, Work Discretion, and Employee Well-Being relate to employees' decisions to remain with their organizations. Furthermore, Demak's open unemployment rate was reported at 5.38% in 2023 and 4.75% in September 2024, while local officials identified information gaps between employers and job seekers as a relevant labor-market issue (ANTARA Jateng, 2024). Although these figures do not directly indicate employee retention problems, the reported information gaps highlight the importance of matching individuals with suitable organizational environments, which is conceptually relevant to P–O Fit.

Building on JD R theory, this study explains correlation of P–O Fit with Work Discretion in context Gen Z workers' Intention to remain, while considering worker Well-Being as a mediating factor. The underlying theoretical assumption is that alignment between employees and their organizations, together with the discretion they have in carrying out their work, may provide favorable work-related resources that support psychological well-being. In turn, higher well-being may strengthen employees' willingness to remain with their organizations (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Lesener et al., 2019).

This researcher's study focused to response study's questions or issues: How do Person–Organization Fit and Work Discretion influence Generation Z employees' Intention to Stay in Demak Regency, and to what extent does Employee Well-Being mediate these relationships?

Researcher's study focused on 3 objectives: (1) investigate direct correlation of P–O Fit also Work Discretion with Employee Well-Being & Intention to Stay, (2) evaluate correlation of Employee Well-Being & Intention to Stay, also (3) analyze Employee Well-Being as mediator for correlation between these two independent elements with Intention to Stay. Theoretically, this study gives contributes with incorporating P between these two independent elements including a unified JD-R framework; empirically, by testing these relationships simultaneously using a single structural model; and contextually, by offering evidence from Generation Z workers in Demak Regency. Researcher hopes this study results provide practical guidance to organizations needs for strengthen worker retention through better organizational fit, greater job autonomy, and improved psychological well-being.

1.1. Person–Organization Fit with Intention to Stay

This element represents of how workers view compatibility between their personal attributes and the characteristics of their organization (K. Brown et al., 2005; K. Brown & Guay, 2011). A strong sense of compatibility can encourage favorable perceptions of the organization and strengthen employees' psychological attachment to their workplace (K. Brown et al., 2005; K. Brown & Guay, 2011).

By Person–Environment Fit theory's perspective, compatibility between employees and their organizational surroundings givings great work manners also potentially reduce tendencies toward withdrawal Workers that perceive a nice fit to its company are generally close to experience job satisfaction and organizational commitment. These attitudes can diminish their inclination to leave and reinforce their commitment to protect current relationship amongst workers (K. Brown & Guay, 2011; Verquer et al., 2003).

Previous researches noted correlation of this element to explaining worker retention. Research has associated stronger organizational fit with lower turnover intentions and greater attachment for company (Kerse et al., 2022; Verquer et al., 2003). Subsequent studies have also reported correlation of P–O Fit with workers intentions to resign said negative (Arum, 2022; Kakar et al., 2023). In the Indonesian context, Sebastian & Saraswati (2023) found P–O Fit significantly and positively influenced Gen Z workers' intention to stay inside company. These finding highlights importance of compatibility of workers also workplace in understanding the retention of younger workers. Collectively, all results indicate the workers with their viewof strong fit to company considered inclined to continue their employment and less likely to consider leaving. This study's hypothesis described below:

H1: Person–Organization Fit affects Gen Z workers' Intention to Stay positively.

1.2. Work Discretion with Intention to Stay

Work Discretion described as independence with flexibility level from workers related to arranging tasks, choosing appropriate methods, and making decisions about how their tasks are performed (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006; Parker et al., 2017). Workers that enjoy upper categories of discretion usually experience greater independence and self-direction in managing their work tasks, which may function as a meaningful resource that supports retention.

Through framework of JD-R, job resources are focused to facilitate achievement of work goals and energize positive motivational states (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Work Discretion, as such a resource, may strengthen employees' positive orientations toward their roles and increase their willingness to continue working for their current organization (Lesener et al., 2019). Expanded autonomy may thus help sustain employees' sense of engagement and deepen their intention to stay.

Empirical work lends support to this reasoning. Chen et al. (2023) found that job autonomy contributed to retention intentions among young workers by enhancing their psychological well-being. More recently, Pujiwati et al. (2026) concluded job autonomy had correlation to better worker retention amongst Gen Z workers in Indonesia significantly. Overall, employees who have greater autonomy in carrying out their tasks may demonstrate a stronger intention to continue working for their current organization. This study's hypothesis described below:

H2: Work Discretion affects Gen Z workers' Intention to Stay positively.

1.3. Person–Organization Fit with Employee Well-Being

Employee Well-Being encompasses employees' positive psychological functioning, subjective experiences, and overall quality of engagement with their work environment, including psychological health, positive affect, and effective role functioning (Nielsen et al., 2017). Under theory of JD-R itself, conducive work situations and adequate its resources support employees' well-being by enabling both healthy functioning and motivational engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Lesener et al., 2019).

P–O Fit may foster employee well-being by diminishing value conflicts and cultivating employees' sense of belonging and acceptance within their organization (K. Brown et al., 2005; K. Brown and Guay, 2011). Workers that experience great fit to its company are mostly enjoy favorable psychological conditions and positive workplace experiences.

Empirical researchers corroborate this relationship. Nurliawati & Nurtjahjanti (2020) identified correlation of these two elements in positive way also more recent investigations have further confirmed connections between fit and favorable psychological outcomes at work (Jaškevičiūtė et al., 2024; Watanabe et al., 2024). Theoretical arguments with evidence indicate stronger alignment between employees and their organization may promote more favorable psychological states. This study's hypothesis described below:

H3: Person–Organization Fit affects Employee Well-Being among Gen Z workers positively.

1.4. Work Discretion and Employee Well-Being

Work Discretion affords employees the latitude to exercise independent judgment, exert influence over their work processes, and manage their tasks according to personal discretion (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006; Parker et al., 2017). Higher levels of Work Discretion potentially support workers to get better control related with tasks also adjust their job approaches to address workplace challenges more effectively.

By framework of JD-R itself, work resources enable employees to cope with job demands while maintaining motivation and positive psychological functioning (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Lesener et al., 2019). Work Discretion offers employees greater autonomy also controls tasks, that may promote psychological well-being and support more positive experiences in the workplace.

Research supports this relationship. Wheatley (2017) observed that employees with greater job autonomy tended to report higher subjective well-being, whereas Wan et al. (2024) demonstrated influence from job autonomy for well-being at workplace in positive way. Chen et al. (2023) similarly demonstrated that job autonomy contributed to psychological well-being among young workers. These findings point to Work Discretion as a meaningful predictor of employee well-being. This study's hypothesis described below:

H4: Work Discretion affects Employee Well-Being among Gen Z workers positively.

1.5. Employee Well-Being with Intention to Stay

Employee Well-Being describes level some individuals experience psychological wellness and positive work-related conditions in their professional lives (Nielsen et al., 2017). By theory of JD-R, well-being called outcome of adequate job resources and supportive work conditions, which in turn shape workers' attitudes and behavioral inclinations (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Lesener et al., 2019).

Workers that show greater well-being have potential to develop more favorable perceptions of their company also prove show decrease tendency for contemplate leaving works. Pelly (2023) demonstrated that well-being across multiple dimensions was closely associated with intentions to quit among full-time workers. Chen et al. (2023) likewise demonstrated that employee well-being is an important factor associated with young workers' intentions to remain with their organizations. Evidence from Indonesian contexts also points to well-

being as a relevant predictor of Generation Z employees' desire to remain in their organizations (Luthfiana et al., 2024).

All proofs collectively show about fostering positive psychological experiences in the workplace may strengthen employees' commitment to their employer. This study's hypothesis described below:

H5: Employee Well-Being affects Gen Z workers' Intention to Stay positively.

1.6. Employee Well-Being as Mediator for Correlation of P-O Fit with Intention to Stay

P-O Fit may make workers' willingness gets increased for staying inside company by fostering positive psychological states and shaping favorable perceptions of the workplace. Workers within their perspective of great match of their own values to its company values are potentially experience variative positive outcomes in their professional lives (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011).

In accordance with Theory of JD-R, supportive organizational environments and the availability of job resources can foster positive psychological states, thereby influencing employees' workplace perceptions, attitudes, and behavioral responses (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Lesener et al., 2019). P-O Fit may contribute to employee well-being by reducing dissonance between individual and organizational values, and the resulting psychological comfort may, in turn, reinforce employees' desire to stay.

Supporting this chain of reasoning, Watanabe et al. (2024) proved longitudinal research of fit-related alignment predicted worker well-being in Japanese workers, while Jaškevičiūtė et al. (2024) found robust associations between P-O Fit and multiple facets of well-being in a Central European sample. Concerning retention outcomes, Chen et al. (2023) demonstrated that well-being serves to mediate work design with workers' intention for stay inside organization, and Pelly (2023) showed that greater well-being was inversely associated with quit intentions. These findings indicate that Employee Well-Being may serve to mediate steps linking P-O Fit to workers' retention intentions. This study's hypothesis described below:

H6: Employee Well-Being positively becomes mediator for Correlation of P-O Fit with Gen Z workers' Intention to Stay.

1.7. Employee Well-Being as Mediator for Correlation of Work Discretion with Intention to Stay

Theory of JD-R indicates work resources foster motivational processes that enhance positive workers results (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Lesener et al., 2019). As a valuable job resource, Work Discretion supports workers including better autonomy and flexibility to organize tasks, potentially contributing to improved psychological well-being (Parker et al., 2017).

When employees are afforded greater discretion, they may be better positioned to manage their workload, make meaningful choices, and maintain a sense of mastery over their tasks all of which may contribute to more positive psychological states. Previous research supports this perspective, indicating that greater job autonomy is correlated to upper category from worker well-being (Wan et al., 2024; Wheatley, 2017). These improved psychological states may subsequently foster more favorable employment attitudes and increase employees' willingness to stay inside company.

From Chen et al. (2023) specifically proved job autonomy exerted an indirect effect on retention intention among young employees, with well-being serving as the mediating pathway. Similarly, Pelly (2023) found that higher well-being was associated with reduced intentions to leave. These findings indicate that Employee Well-Being may function as a psychological bridge through which Work Discretion exerts its influence on employees' retention decisions. This study's hypothesis described below:

H7: Employee Well-Being positively becomes mediator for Correlation of Work Discretion with Gen Z workers' Intention to Stay.

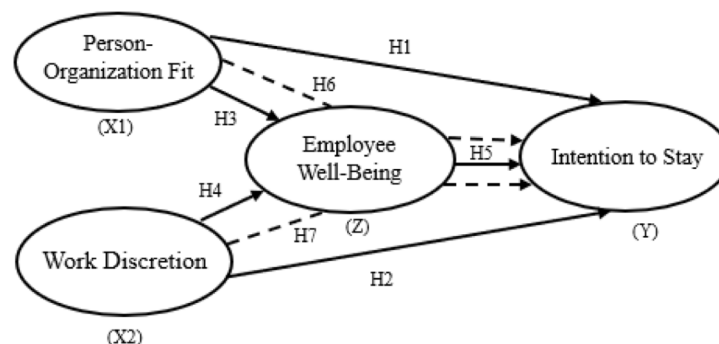


Figure 1. Research Framework

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1. Research Design

Researcher applied quantitative with design called explanatory to describes correlation of P–O Fit, Work Discretion, Employee Well-Being, also Intention to Stay among Gen Z Workers in Demak Regency, Central Java, Indonesia. The choice of a quantitative approach was guided by the study's objective of empirically evaluating the proposed hypotheses and exploring correlations of latent elements through quantitative procedures (Saunders et al., 2023; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This design applied to assess both direct correlation of P–O Fit with Work Discretion with Intention to Stay and their indirect pathways through Employee Well-Being.

The primary theoretical lens guiding this research is Theory of JD-R, which offers framework to know process of job also organizational resources promote positive psychological states and desirable job-related results (Lesener et al., 2019; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). By context, Work Discretion was called work resource which makes workers exercise better autonomy also decision-making control in carrying out their work, while P–O Fit was treated as an organizational condition capable of nurturing positive work experiences. Both antecedents were expected to contribute to Employee Well-Being and, by extension, to Intention to Stay. Given the mediation framework and the inclusion of multiple latent constructs, the data were processed by SmartPLS 4 application to conduct PLS-SEM (Sarstedt et al., 2022; Hair et al., 2022).

2.2. Population and Sample

Researcher's study applied Gen Z workers as population which engaged across diverse employment sectors within Demak Regency, Central Java, Indonesia, including manufacturing and industrial companies, trade, services, healthcare, food and beverage businesses, and other private-sector organizations. Demak Regency was chosen as the research setting due to its expanding industrial and economic activities, particularly the significant contribution of the manufacturing sector to local employment and regional economic growth (BPS-Statistics, 2025b).

Although Gen Z considered individuals born from 1997 to 2012, researcher's study specifically takes employees aged 18–29 years (Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021). Respondents are collected by purposive sampling including specific eligibility requirements established for the study (Saunders et al., 2023; Sekaran & Bougie, 2020). Participants considered eligible if matched to requirements: (1) be between 18 and 29 years of age and belong to Generation Z; (2) currently work in Demak Regency; and (3) have been employed by current organization with min. of 6 months, providing sufficient exposure to organizational environment and established work practices.

The research framework incorporates four latent constructs, namely Person–Organization Fit, Work Discretion, Employee Well-Being, and Intention to Stay, measured using a total of 18 indicators. Based on the guideline suggesting five to ten respondents per measurement indicator, the recommended sample size ranged from a minimum of 90 respondents (18×5) to a maximum of 180 respondents (18×10) (Hair et al., 2022). This study obtained 140 valid responses, which falls within the recommended range and was considered adequate for examining the proposed correlation by PLS-SEM whether direct or not (Sarstedt et al., 2022; Hair et al., 2022).

2.3. Data Collection Procedure

Data of this study considered primary within questionnaire completed by Gen Z workers working in Demak Regency. Distribution took place through both digital and in-person channels. For online data collection, a Google Forms survey was deployed, with the link circulated via professional networks, WhatsApp messaging groups, social media channels, and other peer networks. Before answering questions, participants were explained of research objectives and notified that their answers would be kept confidential. They were also instructed to provide answers that genuinely reflected their workplace perceptions and actual experiences.

The questionnaire categorized in 2 distinct components. Main gathered demographic and employment information, within participants' age, gender, income every month, work experience, also employment sector. The second consisted of measurement items covering the four study variables: POF, Work Discretion, Employee Well-Being, and Intention to Stay. To promote data reliability and limit potential common method bias, participant anonymity was preserved, and the questionnaire items were phrased clearly to ensure ease of understanding (Podsakoff et al., 2024; Saunders et al., 2023). Only questionnaires that were fully completed, met the eligibility requirements, and passed internal consistency checks were retained for subsequent analysis.

2.4. Measurement of Variables

Four latent constructs formed the core of the research model: POF, Work Discretion (WD), Employee Well-Being (EWB), and Intention to Stay (ITS). Each construct has finished assessed by reflective indicators of scales from organizational behavior also HR management literature. In total, the questionnaire included 18 items, with responses recorded on scale called Likert with its 5 points, from Strongly Disagree (1 point) and Strongly Agree (5 points). That format applied considering implementing adequate variability in responses while remaining straightforward for participants to complete (Hair et al., 2022; Joshi et al., 2015).

P–O Fit already assessed by 4 indicators adapted from Cable & Derue (2002) and K. Brown et al. (2005), designed to capture employees' subjective sense of fit with their organization. Work Discretion was evaluated through five indicators based on Morgeson & Humphrey (2006) and Parker et al. (2017), focusing on employees' perceived freedom and autonomy in carrying out their work. Employee Well-Being already assessed by 5 items of Nielsen et al. (2017) also Zheng et al. (2015), related to psychological functioning and positive experiences at company. Intention to Stay already assessed by 4 indicators of Hom et al. (2017) also Kyndt et al. (2009), reflecting employees' willingness and commitment to remain with their current employer. Table 1 summarizes details of this study variables.

Table 1. Operational Definition of Variables

Variable	Operational Definition	Measurement Indicators	References
POF	Workers' view of compatibility also congruence about workers' goals, values even characteristics and their company.	Value congruence; goal congruence; demands–abilities fit also needs–supplies fit;	Cable & Derue (2002); K. Brown et al. (2005)
Work Discretion (WD)	Employees' perceived freedom and authority to exercise personal judgment and determine how work tasks and activities are performed.	Freedom in work methods; decision-making authority; independence in task execution; flexibility in organizing work; opportunity to exercise personal judgment.	Morgeson & Humphrey (2006); Parker et al. (2017)
Employee Well-Being (EWB)	Employees' positive psychological functioning and overall quality of experiences associated with their work and organizational environment.	Positive work experience; psychological health; job satisfaction and fulfillment; positive interpersonal relationships; personal growth and functioning.	Nielsen et al. (2017); Zheng et al. (2015)
Intention to Stay (ITS)	Employees' willingness and conscious intention to continue working and maintain their employment relationship with their current organization.	Intention to remain; willingness to continue employment; commitment to stay; low intention to leave.	Hom et al. (2017); Kyndt et al. (2009)

Source: Secondary Data Processed by the Author, 2026

Thus, the research instrument comprised 18 reflective indicators adapted for Gen Z workers in Demak Regency. Before examining its correlation, model designed to check convergent also discriminant validity, with internal consistency to ensure compliance to fit PLS-SEM methodological standards (Hair et al., 2022; Sarstedt et al., 2022).

2.5. Questionnaire Development

Researcher developed its questionnaire by modifying established scales to reflect workplace conditions of workers in Demak Regency. There are 2 processes: addressed participants' demographic also occupational background, capturing gender, age, monthly income, work tenure, and employment sector, while the second comprised the construct-specific measurement items covering P–O Fit, Work Discretion, Employee Well-Being, and Intention to Stay.

By Likert Scale 1-5 points, researcher carefully examined also revised items to maintain clarity of meaning and ensure their relevance to samples.

Table 2. Research Questionnaire Instrument

Variable	Code	Questionnaire Statement	References
Person–Organization Fit (P–O Fit)	POF1	My values are consistent to organization's values.	Cable & Derue (2002); K. brown et al. (2005)
	POF2	Purpose of I value are compatible with the goals of my organization.	
	POF3	My organization provides an environment that meets my personal and work-related needs.	
	POF4	My skills and capabilities align well with demands related to work field also expectations of my organization.	
Work Discretion (WD)	WD1	I have freedom in deciding how to perform my work tasks.	Morgeson & Humphrey (2006); Parker et al. (2017)
	WD2		
	WD3		

	WD4	I can use my own judgment when carrying out my work.	
	WD5	I have sufficient independence in organizing my work activities. I have flexibility in determining the methods used to complete my work. I have opportunities to make decisions related to my work responsibilities.	
Employee Well-Being (EWB)	EWB1	I generally feel positive about my experiences at work.	Nielsen et al. (2017); Zheng et al. (2015)
	EWB2		
	EWB3	I feel psychologically comfortable while performing my work.	
	EWB4		
	EWB5	My work gives me a sense of satisfaction and fulfillment. I have positive relationships with people at company. I feel I am developing even growing through my work experiences.	
Intention to Stay (ITS)	ITS1	I am committed to remaining employed by the organization I currently work for.	Hom et al. (2017); Kyndt et al. (2009)
	ITS2	I prefer to continue working for my current organization instead of pursuing job opportunities at other organizations.	
	ITS3	I plan to remain employed by my current organization in the long term.	
	ITS4	I am strongly committed to maintaining my employment with this organization..	

Source: Secondary Data Processed by the Author, 2026

Scales showed items also tailored for workplace related to Gen Z workers in Demak Regency. Before primary data collection commenced, each item was reviewed to confirm its clarity, comprehensibility, and relevance to the target respondents' professional experiences. The finalized instrument was subsequently assessed through PLS-SEM to evaluate all statistical tests (Hair et al., 2022; Sarstedt et al., 2022).

2.6. Instrument Validity and Reliability

Researcher assessed instrument by PLS-SEM to check both scores. Before conducting its analysis, items got reviewed for checking suitability for measuring the constructs among its population.

Convergent already examined by outer loadings with AVE, which its min. score are 0.70 also 0.50, Next, reliability checked by Cronbach's Alpha, rho_A, also CR which its. Min score is 0.70 (Dijkstra & Henseler, 2015; Hair et al., 2022).

Discriminant already examined by Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio. If score is below its standard, 0.90 it shows factors are sufficiently distinct from one another (Henseler et al., 2015; Hair et al., 2022).

Overall, model is considered satisfactory when all reliability also validity criteria were met. These thresholds were applied to the 18 indicators across the four constructs, and the results were used to determine whether the model can be process on next analysis.

2.7. Data Analysis Technique

Researcher applied PLS – SEM to analyze data with help of application called SmartPLS version 4. Study focused to check variation of interconnected latent factors also both correlations mediated by Employee Well-Being. Furthermore, PLS-SEM fits studies emphasizing predictive objectives and involving complex mediation models (Hair et al., 2022; Sarstedt et al., 2022).

Its data analysis followed a systematic procedure consisting of several steps. Data screening is performed to detect incomplete responses, duplicate submissions, and unusual response patterns. Responses which far from criterias already filtered, leaving only complete and valid observations for subsequent analysis. Descriptive analysis is subsequently undertaken for summarize participants' demographic also employment characteristics, covering gender, age, income level, work experience, and employment sector.

Next, model is examined to check both reliabilities also validity from 18 indicators with goal to represent research constructs. Reliability items got evaluated with outer loading which its score above 0.70, then convergent checked by AVE which its score above 0.50. reliability got evaluated by a, rho_A, and CR, which its score above 0.70 indicating acceptable reliability. Discriminant got evaluated with HTMT which its score < 0.90 categorize acceptable.

Study model got assessed by VIF to assess collinearity, R² to measure explanatory power, f² to determine effect sizes, and Q² to examine predictive relevance. Researcher assess hypotheses with path coefficients, T

score, P score by bootstrapping with resample amounts of 5,000. Statistical significance is established at T score above 1.96 then P score under 0.05, with confidence level reached 95% (Hair et al., 2022).

Mediation is performed to check Employee Well-Being really plays as mediator for correlation POF also WD for ITS. Influence in indirect way checked by bootstrapping also considered significant if p score is lower than its limit 0,05 also confidence interval excluded 0 (Hair et al., 2022; Nitzl et al., 2016).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Result

3.1.1. Respondent Profile

It describes demographic also work backgrounds of Gen Z workers that included in researcher's study. By specified sampling requirements, 140 responses counted valid. Respondent characteristics were examined in category of age, gender, work experience also employment sector.

The demographic profile offers an overview of Gen Z workers criteria. The respondents represented individuals aged 18–29 years who were employed across various sectors in Demak Regency. Their employment characteristics also reflected differences in work experience and occupational sectors.

Table 3. Demographic and Employment Characteristics of Respondents

No.	Features	Category	N	Percentage
1.	Gender	Male	65	46,43%
		Female	75	53,57%
2.	Age	18 to 20 Y.O	10	7,14%
		21 to 23 Y.O	72	51,43%
		24 to 26 Y.O	40	28,57%
		27 to 29 Y.O	18	12,86%
3.	Length of Work Experience	6 months - 1 Y	11	7,86%
		1 to 2 Y	58	41,43%
		3 to 4 Y	49	35,00%
		Above 5 Y	22	15,71%
4.	Employment Sector	Industry	45	32,14%
		Health	32	22,86%
		Food and Beverage	37	26,43%
		Trade	26	18,57%
Total			140	100%

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Overall, the respondent profile reflects a diverse group of Generation Z employees across multiple employment sectors and demographic categories. The inclusion of participants from different industries broadens the generalizability of findings and supports a comprehensive examination of P–O Fit, Work Discretion, Employee Well-Being, and Intention to Stay across varied organizational contexts in Demak Regency.

3.1.2. Measurement Model Evaluation

Far from checking correlation of hypothesized structural, researcher assessed model for ensure its suitability of instruments. This stage designed to verify all indicators reliably and accurately captured for latent elements it was intended to measure. The evaluation covered 4 dimensions of measurement quality with validity of convergent and discriminant, both reliability of indicator also internal consistency (Hair et al., 2022; Sarstedt et al., 2022).

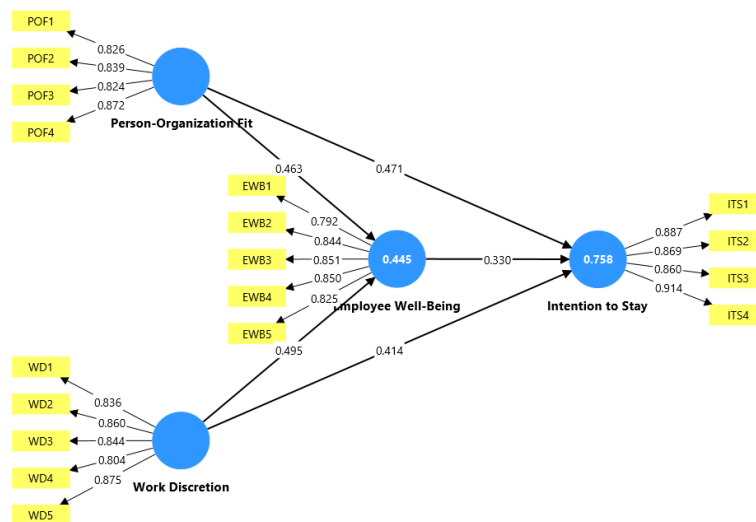


Figure 1. Graphical Output (Source: SmartPLS Output Results)

3.1.2.1. Indicator Reliability

This element checked by outer loading on factors. If score showed above 0,70, this proves indicator has adequate role for assess factor it represents. Table 4 shows outcomes from indicator reliability.

Table 4. Indicator Reliability Assessment

	Employee Well-Being	Intention to Stay	Person-Organization Fit	Work Discretion
EWB1	0.792			
EWB2	0.844			
EWB3	0.851			
EWB4	0.850			
EWB5	0.825			
ITS1		0.887		
ITS2		0.869		
ITS3		0.860		
ITS4		0.914		
POF1			0.826	
POF2			0.839	
POF3			0.824	
POF4			0.872	
WD1				0.836
WD2				0.860
WD3				0.844
WD4				0.804
WD5				0.875

Source: Data Processed, (2026)

From those details, all of 18 indicators recorded an outer loading score higher than 0,70. Specifically, scores of EWB between 0.792 and 0.851, whereas those for Intention to Stay fell between 0.860 - 0.914. POF indicators exhibited loading scores range 0.824–0.872, while WD indicators achieved scores range 0.804 - 0.875.

Results show indicators demonstrated sufficient reliability in measuring its corresponding latent construct. EWB1 recorded its lowest loading at 0.792, while ITS4 attained its highest loading at 0.914. Given that all indicators surpassed the required threshold, the complete set of 18 indicators was maintained to evaluate models.

3.1.2.2. Convergent Validity & Internal Consistency Reliability

Both included inside model which checked by Cronbach's Alpha, rho_A, rho_C, also AVE. Internal consistency had deemed acceptable when all scores reached above 0.70. Meanwhile, AVE scores exceeding 0.50 for establish adequate its validity.

Table 5. Convergent Validity & Internal Consistency Reliability

	Cronbach's Alpha	Rho A	Rho C	AVE
Employee Well-Being	0.890	0.891	0.919	0.694
Intention to Stay	0.905	0.907	0.934	0.779
Person-Organization Fit	0.862	0.865	0.906	0.706
Work Discretion	0.899	0.903	0.925	0.713

Source: Data Processed, (2026)

Results show all factors met criteria. Cronbach's Alpha scores are 0.862 - 0.905, and all rho_A and rho_C scores are above its limit 0.70. Similarly, AVE scores are 0.694 - 0.779, above its limit 0.50. It all proves satisfactory in both elements of model.

3.1.2.3. Discriminant Validity

This element checked by HTMT which establish constructs in model exhibited sufficient empirical distinctiveness. Following the recommended criterion, HTMT scores under its limit 0.90 categorize established, proving constructs represent conceptually different dimensions of the theoretical framework.

Table 6. Discriminant Validity

	HTMT
Person-Organization Fit ↔ Employee Well-Being	0.507
Person-Organization Fit ↔ Intention to Stay	0.685
Work Discretion ↔ Employee Well-Being	0.530
Work Discretion ↔ Intention to Stay	0.612
Work Discretion ↔ Person-Organization Fit	0.052
Intention to Stay ↔ Employee Well-Being	0.819

Source: Data Processed, (2026)

By that details, HTMT scores range 0.052 - 0.819, with none above its limit 0.90. It proves all factors are empirically distinguishable from one another. Consequently, study model fits established criterion for its test.

3.1.3. Structural Model Analysis

Next step is evaluating model after checking validity for investigate hypothesized correlation of POF, EWB, WD, and ITS factors. This focused to determine model's explanatory power and predictive performance, as well as to check proposed correlation of factors. By PLS-SEM, assesment included collinearity with VIF, R^2 , f^2 , Q^2 , also path coefficients.

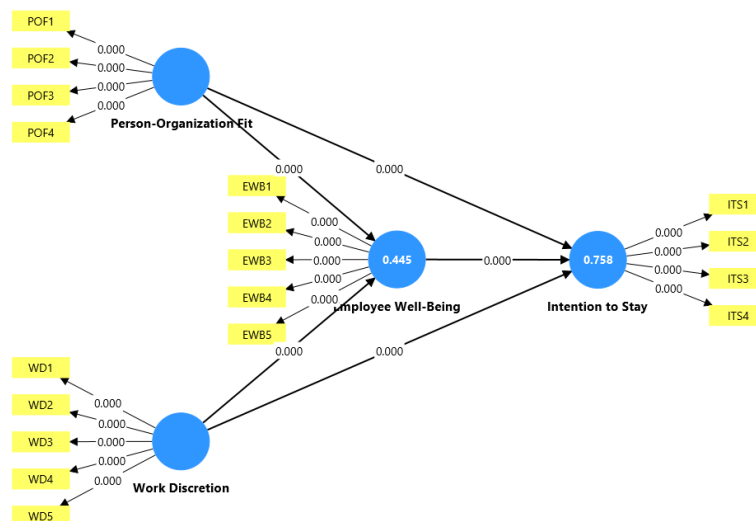


Figure 2. Bootstrapping (Source: SmartPLS Output Results)

3.1.3.1. Collinearity Assessment (VIF)

The presence of multicollinearity among predictor elements evaluated by VIF. From PLS-SEM, these scores are lower than 5 means multicollinearity considered uncritical issue within study model (Hair et al., 2022).

Table 7. Collinearity Assessment

	VIF
Employee Well-Being → Intention to Stay	1.801
Person-Organization Fit → Employee Well-Being	1.001
Person-Organization Fit → Intention to Stay	1.388
Work Discretion → Employee Well-Being	1.001
Work Discretion → Intention to Stay	1.443

Source: Data Processed, (2026)

The obtained VIF scores categorized 1.001 - 1.801, remaining under its limit, 5. It proves multicollinearity is not related to study model, supporting its appropriateness for subsequent hypothesis testing.

3.1.3.2. Coefficient of Determination

Study explanatory power checked by R^2 score, which proves percentage of dependent variance which described by independent elements.

Table 8. R^2 Analysis

	R^2	Adj. R^2
Employee Well-Being	0.445	0.437
Intention to Stay	0.758	0.753

Source: Data Processed, (2026)

By that table, POF and WD explained 44.5% of EWB's variance ($R^2 = 0.445$). Meanwhile, POF, WD, also EWB collectively accounted for 75.8% of ITS's variance ($R^2 = 0.758$). Overall, these prove proposed structural model exhibits satisfactory explanatory power, with better variance's percentage explained in ITS factor.

3.1.3.3. Effect Size

f^2 checked extent to which independent elements explain dependent's variance. By PLS-SEM guidelines, f^2 scores showed 0.02, 0.15, also 0.35 which categorized small, medium, also large.

Table 9. F^2

	F^2	Category
Employee Well-Being → Intention to Stay	0.249	Medium
Person-Organization Fit → Employee Well-Being	0.386	Large
Person-Organization Fit → Intention to Stay	0.660	Large
Work Discretion → Employee Well-Being	0.441	Large
Work Discretion → Intention to Stay	0.491	Large

Source: Data Processed, (2026)

These proves all structural correlation contributed meaningfully to the model's explanatory capability. EWB exerted a medium f^2 on ITS ($f^2 = 0.249$), while POF and WD both exhibited large f^2 in correlation of EWB with ITS. The largest f^2 observed to POF → ITS path ($f^2 = 0.660$), underscoring the substantial contribution of organizational compatibility to explaining workers' intention to stay.

3.1.3.4. Predictive Relevance

Q^2 score by PLSpredict procedure. Q^2_{predict} score higher than 0 means model possesses predictive relevance to respective dependent element. Furthermore, RMSE with MAE tests focused to determine extent of prediction errors.

Table 10. Predictive Relevance

	Q^2 score	RMSE score	MAE score
Employee Well-Being	0.414	0.788	0.621
Intention to Stay	0.682	0.576	0.436

Source: Data Processed, (2026)

As presented in Table, both factors yielded Q^2 scores above 0 means show predictive relevance in model. EWB with Q^2 score reached 0.414, whereas ITS with Q^2 score reached 0.682. All showed predictive relevance to both outcomes, with Intention to Stay demonstrating stronger predictive level.

3.1.3.5. Path Coefficients

Researcher analyzed model by path coefficients to establish both directions also strength of correlation from all elements. In PLS-SEM, scores prove magnitude of correlation amongst elements while their statistical significance is determined by bootstrapping.

Table 11. Path Coefficients

	Score
Employee Well-Being → Intention to Stay	0.330
Person-Organization Fit → Employee Well-Being	0.463
Person-Organization Fit → Intention to Stay	0.471
Work Discretion → Employee Well-Being	0.495
Work Discretion → Intention to Stay	0.414

Source: Data Processed, (2026)

By details, whole coefficient scores categorized positive. The most pronounced relationship was identified among WD with EWB ($\beta = 0.495$), followed by POF → ITS ($\beta = 0.471$) and POF → EWB ($\beta = 0.463$). Additionally, WD is correlated to ITS in positive way ($\beta = 0.414$), while EWB also is correlated to ITS in positive way ($\beta = 0.330$). All correlations are examined by hypothesis tests.

3.1.4. Hypothesis Test

This test supported with SmartPLS which applied bootstrapping including resample amounts of 5,000. All proposed correlations checked with examining path coefficient, T or P scores. A hypothesis already got accepted when the estimated effect followed the predicted direction, T score above its limit 1.96, also P score below its limit 0.05, which confidence level of 95%.

Table 12. Hypothesis Test

Hypothesis		O	M	STDEV	T Score	P Score	Decision
H1	Person-Organization Fit → Intention to Stay	0.471	0.465	0.067	7.036	0.000	Supported
H2	Work Discretion → Intention to Stay	0.414	0.412	0.047	8.808	0.000	Supported
H3	Person-Organization Fit → Employee Well-Being	0.463	0.463	0.071	6.563	0.000	Supported
H4	Work Discretion → Employee Well-Being	0.495	0.492	0.086	5.772	0.000	Supported
H5	Employee Well-Being → Intention to Stay	0.330	0.336	0.055	5.942	0.000	Supported

Source: Data Processed, (2026)

By table, empirical results support 5 proposed hypotheses. POF showed correlation with ITS in positive also significant way ($\beta = 0.471$, $t = 7.036$, $p < 0.001$) and EWB ($\beta = 0.463$, $t = 6.563$, $p < 0.001$). Similarly, WD showed correlation with ITS in positive also significant way ($\beta = 0.414$, $t = 8.808$, $p < 0.001$) and EWB ($\beta = 0.495$, $t = 5.772$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, EWB showed correlation with ITS in positive also significant way ($\beta = 0.330$, $t = 5.942$, $p < 0.001$). This means accepting these 5 study hypotheses.

3.1.5. Mediation Analysis

Mediation was analyzed to examine whether it mediates influence from POF with WD for ITS. Bootstrapping includes resample amounts of 5,000 applied to check influence in indirect way. The mediation effect categorized significant if T score reached above its limit 1.96 also P score reached lower than its limit 0.05.

Table 13. Mediation

Hypothesis		O	M	STDEV	T Score	P Score	Decision
H6	Person-Organization Fit → Employee Well-Being → Intention to Stay	0.153	0.155	0.031	4.894	0.000	Supported

H7	Work Discretion → Employee Well-Being → Intention to Stay	0.163	0.166	0.042	3.841	0.000	Supported
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Source: Data Processed, (2026)

Some findings reported in that table confirm EWB significantly mediates both hypothesized correlations. Influence from POF for ITS indirectly through EWB categorized positive also significant ($\beta = 0.153$, $t = 4.894$, $p < 0.001$), thereby supporting H6. Likewise, Influence from WD for ITS indirectly through EWB categorized positive also significant ($\beta = 0.163$, $t = 3.841$, $p < 0.001$), thereby supporting H7.

Importantly, influence from both POF and WD for ITS in direct way remained statistically significant in H1 and H2, indicating the presence of complementary partial mediation. The results proved EWB factor acts as partial mediator for correlation of POF also WD roles to Generation Z workers' Intention to Stay, while both predictor variables continue to exert direct effects on the outcome variable. This interpretation is consistent with widely accepted methods for evaluating mediation influence by PLS-SEM.

3.2. Discussion

This research explored correlations of all elements in the context of Gen Z workers working in Demak Regency. Results generally support its proposed model, which show organizational compatibility and work discretion are important factors associated with employees' well-being and willingness to stay inside companies.

Person–Organization Fit can strengthen Intention to Stay by creating greater alignment between employees' values, characteristics, and organizational values. Such alignment may foster a more comfortable work environment and stronger organizational attachment (Kerse et al., 2022; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Silva et al., 2024). It further supports Employee Well-Being because employees who perceive greater compatibility may experience greater psychological comfort and positive work experiences. From the JD-R perspective, favorable organizational conditions can support positive psychological functioning and employee well-being (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). This result aligns with Sebastian & Saraswati (2023) who highlighted the relevance of P–O Fit to Gen Z workers' intention to remain with their organizations in Indonesia, underscoring the importance of organizational compatibility in the Demak Regency context. Work Discretion is similarly important because greater freedom in determining how work is performed give employees a greater perception of autonomy. As a job resource within JD-R Theory, work discretion can enable employees to cope with job demands and promote positive psychological experiences (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Lesener et al., 2019). This may subsequently strengthen both Employee Well-Being and Intention to Stay, consistent with previous research on autonomy-related work characteristics among younger employees (Chen et al., 2023). Accordingly, granting Generation Z employees greater discretion in carrying out their responsibilities may help organizations in Demak Regency foster well-being and encourage workforce retention.

Employee Well-Being further explains why favorable work conditions may encourage employees to remain with their organizations. Positive psychological experiences can lead to more favorable evaluations of the workplace and stronger willingness to maintain the employment relationship (Nielsen et al., 2017; Pelly, 2023). Consistent with JD-R Theory, adequate job and organizational resources can foster positive psychological states that contribute to desirable employee outcomes (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Lesener et al., 2019). Thus, employee well-being should be considered an important component of strategies aimed at retaining Generation Z employees. The mediation findings indicate that Employee Well-Being acts as a key psychological mechanism linking both Person–Organization Fit and Work Discretion with Intention to Stay. Thus, organizational compatibility and work discretion may influence retention not only directly but also by fostering positive psychological experiences. Since the direct effects remained significant, Employee Well-Being represents a complementary mediator in both relationships (Zhao et al., 2010). This finding aligns with previous studies conducted in Indonesia and Southeast Asia examining psychological and attitudinal mechanisms in Generation Z employee outcomes (Jamalulel, 2025; Talamayan et al., 2025). Although these studies investigated different mediating variables, they provide a relevant regional comparison for the present findings. The current study extends this discussion by demonstrating the mediating role of Employee Well-Being in the relationships of P–O Fit and Work Discretion with Intention to Stay among employees in Demak Regency. Overall, the findings emphasize that retaining Generation Z employees requires attention to organizational fit, work discretion, and psychological well-being. In line with JD-R Theory, organizations can strengthen retention by creating conditions that align with employees' values, provide sufficient discretion in performing work, and support positive employee experiences. These insights provide context-specific evidence for developing more sustainable retention strategies for Generation Z employees in Demak Regency, emphasizing the significance of alignment between employees and their organizations, work discretion, and employee well-being.

4. CONCLUSION

This research examined the relationships of Person–Organization Fit and Work Discretion with Employee Well-Being and Intention to Stay among Generation Z employees working in Demak Regency. The findings indicate that stronger alignment between employees and their organizations, as well as greater autonomy in carrying out work, is associated with more favorable levels of Employee Well-Being and a more pronounced willingness to remain with the organization. Employee Well-Being was additionally found to have a substantial influence on employees' willingness to remain in their jobs.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that Employee Well-Being acts as a mediating mechanism through which Person–Organization Fit and Work Discretion influence Intention to Stay. This suggests that organizational compatibility and the freedom employees have in performing their tasks may influence retention not only independently but also by fostering more positive psychological experiences. In this regard, Employee Well-Being helps explain how favorable organizational and work conditions can encourage employees to maintain their employment relationships.

These findings suggest that organizations aiming to retain Generation Z employees should create working environments that align with employees' values and expectations, allow adequate freedom in performing job responsibilities, and promote positive psychological well-being. In the regional context of Demak Regency, this study provides empirical support for the integrated contribution of Person–Organization Fit, Work Discretion, and Employee Well-Being to Generation Z employees' Intention to Stay. The results can offer valuable insights for organizations to formulate more effective and sustainable strategies for retaining employees.

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