



Drivers of Employee Engagement among Generation Z: The Role of Servant Leadership, Creative Self-Efficacy, Learning Climate, and Organizational Trust

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study examines the effect of servant leadership, creative self-efficacy, learning climate, and organizational trust on employee engagement among Generation Z employees in East Java. **Methodology:** A quantitative approach was employed using questionnaire data collected from Generation Z employees in various organizations in East Java and analyzed using statistical techniques. **Results:** The results show that servant leadership, creative self-efficacy, learning climate, and organizational trust have a significant positive effect on employee engagement. **Findings:** The findings indicate that for Generation Z employees, engagement is driven less by traditional control mechanisms and more by developmental leadership, psychological safety to express creativity, and a trustworthy organizational environment. **Novelty:** The novelty of this study lies in its integrated multi-level model that simultaneously examines leadership, individual psychological resources, and organizational context in explaining employee engagement among Indonesian Generation Z workers. **Originality:** The originality of this research is reflected in its specific focus on Generation Z employees in East Java, a context that has received limited attention in previous studies. **Conclusion:** Strengthening servant leadership, developing creative self-efficacy, fostering a positive learning climate, and enhancing organizational trust are essential to improve employee engagement. **Type of Paper:** Empirical Research Paper.

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INTRODUCTION

Employee engagement has become a central concern in contemporary human resource management due to its critical role in enhancing individual performance, organizational commitment, and long-term organizational sustainability. Engaged employees demonstrate high levels of energy, dedication, and absorption in their work, which contribute positively to productivity, service quality, and organizational effectiveness (Albrecht et al., 2023; W. Schaufeli, 2021). Conversely, low employee engagement has been associated with reduced motivation, higher turnover intentions, and weakened organizational attachment, making engagement a strategic concern for modern organizations.

The issue of employee engagement becomes more complex with the increasing participation of Generation Z in the workforce. Prior research suggests that Generation Z employees tend to exhibit distinct work values, including a strong emphasis on personal development, meaningful work, supportive leadership, and psychologically safe work environments (Seemiller & Grace, 2018). In Indonesia, the increasing proportion of Generation Z employees highlights the importance of understanding factors that can strengthen their engagement at work (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2023). Empirical studies indicate that when organizational practices fail to align with these expectations, younger employees are more likely to display lower engagement and higher turnover intentions (Rudolph et al., 2021). These characteristics suggest that traditional engagement strategies may be insufficient for this generation, requiring organizations to adopt more developmental and relational approaches.

From a theoretical perspective, employee engagement can be explained through the lens of Social Exchange Theory (SET) and the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model. SET posits that employment relationships are based on reciprocal exchanges between employees and organizations; when employees perceive supportive treatment, fairness, and trust, they feel obligated to reciprocate through positive work attitudes and behaviors, including higher engagement (Cropanzano et al., 2017; Saks, 2022). Within this framework, leadership behavior and organizational trust function as critical social resources that signal organizational support and integrity.

Complementing SET, the JD-R model explains employee engagement as a motivational process activated by the availability of job and personal resources (Bakker et al., 2023). Job resources such as a supportive learning climate and personal resources such as creative self-efficacy enhance employees' intrinsic motivation, resilience, and willingness to invest effort in their work. For Generation Z employees, who strongly value growth opportunities and psychological empowerment, the presence of such resources is particularly important in sustaining engagement.

Leadership has been identified as a crucial organizational factor influencing employee engagement. Servant leadership emphasizes serving, empowering, and supporting employees and has been shown to positively influence work-related attitudes and outcomes. Aboramadan et al. (2020) found that servant leadership contributes to higher levels of employee engagement by fostering supportive leader–employee relationships. Similarly, Cai et al. (2024) reported that servant leadership creates a positive work environment that enhances employee engagement, particularly among younger employees.

Beyond leadership, individual factors also play an important role in shaping employee engagement. Creative self-efficacy reflects an individual's belief in their ability to generate creative ideas and solutions when facing work-related challenges. Employees with higher creative self-efficacy tend to demonstrate greater confidence, proactive behavior, and deeper involvement in their work activities (Abulela., 2023). Within the JD-R framework, creative self-efficacy can be conceptualized as a personal resource that strengthens the motivational process, enabling employees especially those from Generation Z to perceive work demands as opportunities for growth rather than obstacles.

Furthermore, the organizational environment plays an essential role in shaping employee engagement. A supportive learning climate encourages continuous learning, skill development, and knowledge sharing among employees, thereby enhancing their motivation and willingness to invest effort in their work roles. Such an environment is particularly relevant for Generation Z employees, who place strong emphasis on learning opportunities and career development. Empirical studies have shown that a positive learning climate significantly enhances employee engagement by facilitating personal growth and adaptability (Restrepo et al., 2022). In addition, organizational trust defined as employees' confidence in the organization's integrity, fairness, and reliability serves as a critical social resource within the Social Exchange framework. When trust is high, employees feel secure and valued, which strengthens their emotional and cognitive attachment to the organization (Alshaabani et al. 2022).

Although previous studies have examined the effects of servant leadership, creative self-efficacy, learning climate, and organizational trust on employee engagement, most have investigated these variables in isolation. Empirical research that integrates leadership, individual psychological resources, and organizational context into a single explanatory model remains limited, particularly in the context of Generation Z employees in emerging economies. This gap is significant, as Generation Z's work values and engagement drivers are still being empirically defined.

This study seeks to address this gap by examining the simultaneous effects of servant leadership, creative self-efficacy, learning climate, and organizational trust on employee engagement among Generation Z employees in East Java, Indonesia. East Java represents one of Indonesia's largest industrial and service regions, characterized by a heterogeneous workforce and rapid economic development. As such, it provides a relevant context for understanding employee engagement dynamics among Generation Z in Indonesia's evolving labor market. By integrating Social Exchange Theory and the Job Demands-Resources model, this study aims to provide a more comprehensive and theoretically grounded understanding of the key drivers of employee engagement among Generation Z employees.

METHOD

Metode Analisis

This study employed a quantitative research design with a cross-sectional survey approach. The research process was carried out systematically, beginning with problem identification and formulation, followed by a review of relevant literature, hypothesis development, identification of research variables, and the operationalization of these variables into measurable indicators. A quantitative approach was considered appropriate because the data collected were numerical in nature and were analyzed statistically to test hypotheses and generate objective conclusions regarding the relationships among the variables examined.

The main objective of this study was to analyze the effects of servant leadership, creative self-efficacy, learning climate, and organizational trust on employee engagement among Generation Z employees in East Java, Indonesia. Primary data were obtained through a structured questionnaire, which is commonly used in quantitative survey research because it allows for standardized measurement of respondents' perceptions and facilitates statistical analysis. The use of a questionnaire enabled the researcher to capture empirical data directly from respondents who met the predefined research criteria.

The population of this study consisted of Generation Z employees working in East Java, defined as individuals born between 1997 and 2007. This population criterion is consistent with the classification applied in the author's undergraduate thesis. Respondents included in the study were required to be actively employed at the time of data collection, work in organizations located in East Java, and have a minimum tenure of six months, either as permanent or contract employees. The minimum tenure requirement was applied to ensure that respondents had sufficient exposure to leadership practices, organizational climate, and trust-related experiences within their respective organizations.

A purposive sampling technique was employed, as the study specifically targeted respondents who possessed characteristics relevant to the research objectives. This sampling technique was chosen to ensure that the data collected were obtained from individuals who were most capable of providing accurate and meaningful information related to the variables under investigation. Data were collected from employees across various sectors, including services, manufacturing, and trade. A total of 126 valid questionnaires were obtained and analyzed. This sample size meets the minimum requirements for Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), particularly for research models with moderate complexity (Hair et al., 2021).

Data collection was conducted using a self-administered questionnaire distributed directly to Generation Z employees in East Java. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary. Prior to completing the questionnaire, respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and assured that their responses would be treated confidentially and used solely for academic purposes. Informed consent was obtained from all respondents, and no personal identifying information was collected. Throughout the research process, data confidentiality and respondent anonymity were strictly maintained to ensure ethical research practices.

All variables in this study were measured using previously validated measurement scales adapted from established literature and adjusted to fit the research context. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Both favorable and unfavorable items were included in the questionnaire to reduce the likelihood of response bias, while consistent scale anchors were maintained across all items to ensure measurement consistency.

Servant leadership was measured using a 7-item scale adapted from Liden et al. (2015). The scale captures leaders' ethical behavior, empowerment, emotional healing, conceptual skills, and commitment to follower growth. Creative self-efficacy was measured using a 3-item scale adapted from Tierney & Farmer (2002). This scale reflects employees' confidence in their ability to generate creative ideas and solve problems creatively. Learning climate was measured using a 12-item scale adapted from Nikolova et al. (2014) and operationalized by Cangialosi et al. (2020). This construct consists of three dimensions, namely facilitation learning climate, appreciation learning climate, and error avoidance learning climate. Organizational trust was measured using a 6-item scale adapted from Hon & Grunig (1999) as cited in Lee & Li (2021). encompassing the dimensions of integrity, dependability, and competence. Employee engagement was measured using a 9-item scale adapted from W. B. Schaufeli et al. (2006), which captures the dimensions of vigor, dedication, and absorption.

Data analysis in this study was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with the assistance of SmartPLS version 4.0. The analysis was carried out in two main stages. First, the measurement model was evaluated to assess indicator reliability through outer loadings, internal consistency reliability using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, and convergent validity using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), with a minimum threshold of 0.50. Discriminant validity was examined using the Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) ratio to ensure that each construct was empirically distinct from the others.

Second, the structural model was evaluated to examine the relationships among the latent variables by analyzing path coefficients, coefficients of determination (R^2), and the significance of the proposed hypotheses. Hypothesis testing was conducted using a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 resamples, in accordance with established SEM-PLS guidelines (Hair et al., 2021).

To minimize the potential risk of common method bias, several procedural remedies were implemented during the research process. These included ensuring respondent anonymity, using both favorable and unfavorable questionnaire items, and employing validated measurement scales. Additionally, Harman's single-factor test was conducted to assess the presence of common method variance. The results indicated that no single factor accounted for the majority of the variance, suggesting that common method bias was not a significant concern in this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

The respondents in this study consisted of 126 Generation Z employees in East Java. Based on gender, the respondents were composed of male and female employees. Of the total respondents, 62 respondents (49.2%) were male, while 64 respondents (50.8%) were female.

Table 1. Outer Loadings

	<i>Creative Self-Efficacy</i>	<i>Employee Engagement</i>	<i>Learning Climate</i>	<i>Organizational Trust</i>	<i>Servant Leadership</i>
(CSE 1)	0.891				
(CSE 2)	0.880				
(CSE 3)	0.891				
(EE 1)		0.834			
(EE2)		0.884			
(EE3)		0.829			
(EE4)		0.812			
(EE5)		0.816			
(EE6)		0.848			
(EE7)		0.793			
(EE8)		0.752			
(EE9)		0.838			
(LC1)			0.694		

	<i>Creative Self-Efficacy</i>	<i>Employee Engagement</i>	<i>Learning Climate</i>	<i>Organizational Trust</i>	<i>Servant Leadership</i>
(LC2)			0.804		
(LC3)			0.719		
(LC4)			0.851		
(LC5)			0.776		
(LC6)			0.742		
(LC7)			0.752		
(LC8)			0.809		
(LC 9)			0.793		
(LC 10)			0.821		
(LC 11)			0.777		
(LC 12)			0.806		
(OT 1)				0.863	
(OT 2)				0.837	
(OT 3)				0.864	
(OT 4)				0.875	
(OT 5)				0.854	
(OT 6)				0.869	
(SL 1)					0.841
(SL 2)					0.854
(SL 3)					0.801
(SL 4)					0.850
(SL 5)					0.751
(SL 6)					0.844
(SL 7)					0.870

Source : Data processed SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

Convergent validity of the measurement model was assessed by examining the outer loading values of each indicator using SmartPLS 4.0. Outer loadings reflect the extent to which each indicator contributes to its respective latent construct, with values exceeding 0.60 indicating acceptable indicator reliability (Hair et al., 2021).

The results show that all indicators across the five constructs exhibit satisfactory outer loading values. Indicators measuring Creative Self-Efficacy demonstrate strong loadings, ranging from 0.880 to 0.891, indicating that all three items reliably capture employees' confidence in their creative abilities. Similarly, the indicators for Employee Engagement display high outer loading values, ranging from 0.752 to 0.884, reflecting strong representation of the vigor, dedication, and absorption dimensions.

For Learning Climate, all twelve indicators load adequately on their respective construct, with outer loading values ranging from 0.694 to 0.851. These results suggest that the dimensions of facilitation, appreciation, and error avoidance learning climate are well captured by the measurement items. Organizational Trust indicators also show robust loadings, ranging from 0.837 to 0.875, indicating that integrity, dependability, and competence are consistently perceived by respondents. Likewise, Servant Leadership indicators demonstrate strong outer loading values between 0.751 and 0.870, confirming that leadership behaviors related to ethical conduct, empowerment, and concern for followers are adequately reflected in the measurement model.

Overall, all indicators in the study exceed the recommended minimum threshold of 0.60, and no item required removal from the model. These findings confirm that the measurement model demonstrates adequate convergent validity, indicating that the indicators are sufficiently correlated with their respective constructs and suitable for subsequent structural model analysis.

Table 2. Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, and AVE

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (rho_a)	Composite Reliability (rho_b)	AVE
Servant Leadership	0.925	0.936	0.940	0.690
Creative Self-Efficacy	0.865	0.867	0.917	0.787
Learning Climate	0.941	0.944	0.949	0.608
Organizational Trust	0.930	0.931	0.945	0.740
Employee Engagement	0.941	0.943	0.950	0.679

Source : Data processed SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

Reliability and convergent validity of the measurement model were evaluated by examining Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) using SmartPLS 4.0. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values were assessed to determine internal consistency reliability, with recommended thresholds of 0.60 and 0.70, respectively (Hair et al., 2021).

The results indicate that all constructs demonstrate strong internal consistency. Cronbach's alpha values range from 0.865 to 0.941, while composite reliability values (ρ_A and ρ_C) range from 0.867 to 0.950. These values exceed the recommended minimum thresholds, indicating that the indicators within each construct consistently measure the same underlying concept.

Convergent validity was further assessed using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The AVE values for servant leadership (0.690), creative self-efficacy (0.787), learning climate (0.608), organizational trust (0.740), and employee engagement (0.679) all exceed the recommended threshold of 0.50. This indicates that each construct explains more than half of the variance of its indicators, thereby confirming adequate convergent validity.

Overall, the results demonstrate that the measurement model satisfies the criteria for both reliability and convergent validity. Therefore, the constructs are deemed suitable for subsequent evaluation of the structural model and hypothesis testing.

Table 3. Fornell Larcker Criterion

Variabel	CSE	EE	LC	OT	SL
CSE	0.887				
EE	0.774	0.824			
LC	0.566	0.725	0.780		
OT	0.637	0.751	0.569	0.860	
SL	0.466	0.672	0.519	0.481	0.831

Source : Data processed SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

Discriminant validity of the measurement model was assessed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion. As presented in Table 3, the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct Creative Self-Efficacy (0.887), Employee Engagement (0.824), Learning Climate (0.780), Organizational Trust (0.860), and Servant Leadership (0.831) is greater than the corresponding inter-construct correlations.

These results indicate that each construct shares more variance with its own indicators than with other constructs in the model. Accordingly, the measurement model demonstrates adequate discriminant validity, confirming that the constructs are empirically distinct and suitable for subsequent structural model analysis.

Table 4. Path Coefficient and P Values

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
CSE -> EE	0.345	0.345	0.044	7.782	0.000
LC -> EE	0.243	0.246	0.041	5.871	0.000
OT -> EE	0.270	0.272	0.034	7.841	0.000
SL -> EE	0.255	0.256	0.047	5.427	0.000

Source : Data processed SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

The structural model was evaluated to examine the hypothesized relationships between creative self-efficacy, learning climate, organizational trust, servant leadership, and employee engagement among Generation Z employees in East Java. The assessment was conducted using SmartPLS 4.0 through a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 resamples to determine the significance of path coefficients.

The results indicate that all proposed direct relationships have a positive and statistically significant effect on employee engagement. Creative self-efficacy shows the strongest influence on employee engagement ($\beta = 0.345$, $t = 7.782$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that Generation Z employees who possess higher confidence in their creative abilities tend to exhibit higher levels of engagement at work. This finding highlights the central role of individual psychological resources in fostering engagement among younger employees.

Organizational trust also demonstrates a strong positive effect on employee engagement ($\beta = 0.270$, $t = 7.841$, $p < 0.001$). This result indicates that employees who perceive their organization as reliable, competent, and acting with integrity are more likely to invest cognitive, emotional, and behavioral energy in their work. Trust functions as a critical social resource that strengthens employees' willingness to reciprocate through higher engagement.

Servant leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee engagement ($\beta = 0.255$, $t = 5.427$, $p < 0.001$). This suggests that leadership behaviors emphasizing empowerment, ethical conduct, and concern for employee growth contribute meaningfully to enhancing engagement among Generation Z employees. Leaders who prioritize serving their subordinates foster a supportive environment that encourages employees to become more engaged in their roles.

Learning climate also positively influences employee engagement ($\beta = 0.243$, $t = 5.871$, $p < 0.001$). This finding indicates that organizational environments that facilitate learning, value development, and tolerate mistakes as part of the learning process are associated with higher levels of employee engagement. Although its effect size is slightly lower than other predictors, learning climate remains an important organizational factor in shaping engagement.

Overall, the results reveal that employee engagement among Generation Z employees is influenced by a combination of individual-level factors (creative self-efficacy), leadership-related factors (servant leadership), and organizational-level factors (learning climate and organizational trust). The relative strength of the path coefficients suggests that personal confidence in creativity plays the most dominant role, followed by organizational trust, servant leadership, and learning climate.

Table 5. R-Square

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Y	0.817	0.811

Source : Data processed SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

The explanatory power of the structural model was evaluated using the coefficient of determination (R^2) for the endogenous variable, employee engagement. The R^2 value represents the

proportion of variance in the dependent variable that is explained by the exogenous constructs included in the model.

The results indicate that the R^2 value for employee engagement is 0.817, with an adjusted R^2 of 0.811. This finding suggests that creative self-efficacy, learning climate, organizational trust, and servant leadership collectively explain approximately 81.7% of the variance in employee engagement among Generation Z employees in East Java.

According to the criteria proposed by Hair et al. (2021), R^2 values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 can be described as substantial, moderate, and weak, respectively. Therefore, the R^2 value obtained in this study indicates a substantial level of explanatory power. This result demonstrates that the proposed model has strong predictive capability and is highly effective in explaining employee engagement in the context of Generation Z employees.

Overall, the high R^2 value confirms that the combination of individual, leadership, and organizational factors included in the model provides a comprehensive explanation of employee engagement, supporting the robustness of the structural model and its suitability for further interpretation and discussion.

DISCUSSION

Summary of Key Findings

The results demonstrate that all four predictors servant leadership, creative self-efficacy, learning climate, and organizational trust have positive and significant effects on employee engagement. The structural model shows strong explanatory power, with an R^2 value of 0.817, indicating that the proposed model explains a substantial proportion of variance in employee engagement among Generation Z employees. Among the predictors, creative self-efficacy emerged as the strongest contributor, followed by organizational trust, servant leadership, and learning climate.

Integrated Interpretation and Hierarchy of Effects

The relative strength of the predictors highlights the central role of individual psychological resources, particularly creative self-efficacy, in driving engagement among Generation Z employees. This finding suggests that Gen Z employees are more engaged when they believe in their ability to generate ideas, solve problems creatively, and contribute meaningfully to their work. Compared to structural or leadership-related factors, confidence in one's creative competence appears to be the most salient driver of engagement for this generation.

Organizational trust also demonstrates a strong effect, indicating that engagement is closely tied to employees' perceptions of fairness, reliability, and integrity within the organization. For Generation Z, trust functions as a foundational condition that enables emotional and cognitive attachment to work. Without trust, even supportive leadership or learning opportunities may fail to fully translate into engagement.

Servant leadership shows a meaningful but comparatively lower effect size. This suggests that while leadership behaviors emphasizing empowerment, ethical conduct, and concern for employee growth are important, their influence on engagement operates partly through the psychological and relational climate they help create. Similarly, learning climate contributes positively to engagement by fostering opportunities for growth and competence development, although its effect is less dominant than personal efficacy beliefs.

Taken together, the findings indicate a hierarchy of engagement drivers, where internal psychological resources are complemented by relational and contextual organizational factors.

Theoretical Contribution: SET and JD-R Perspectives

From the perspective of Social Exchange Theory (SET), the positive effects of servant leadership, learning climate, and organizational trust reflect reciprocal relationships between employees and organizations. When employees perceive that leaders care about their well-being, organizations provide learning opportunities, and systems operate fairly, they feel obliged to reciprocate through higher engagement.

Meanwhile, the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model offers a complementary explanation. Creative self-efficacy represents a personal resource, while servant leadership, learning climate, and organizational trust function as job resources. The findings support the JD-R assumption that both

personal and job resources independently and jointly enhance work engagement. Notably, the stronger effect of creative self-efficacy underscores the importance of personal resources in activating motivational processes, particularly among younger employees who value autonomy, self-expression, and meaningful contribution.

By integrating SET and JD-R, this study extends existing engagement literature by demonstrating how exchange-based mechanisms and resource-based motivation coexist in explaining Generation Z employees' engagement.

Comparison with Previous Studies

The findings are largely consistent with prior studies that identify servant leadership, organizational trust, and learning climate as antecedents of employee engagement. However, the relatively stronger role of creative self-efficacy aligns with emerging research emphasizing the unique characteristics of Generation Z, such as their preference for creativity, innovation, and self-development.

In contrast to studies on older generations where leadership or organizational systems often dominate as engagement drivers, this study suggests that for Generation Z, self-belief and psychological empowerment play a more central role. This generational nuance contributes to the growing body of literature on workforce heterogeneity and engagement dynamics.

Practical Implications

The results offer several practical implications for organizations employing Generation Z workers. First, organizations should prioritize initiatives that strengthen employees' creative self-efficacy, such as providing autonomy, encouraging idea generation, and recognizing innovative contributions. Second, building and maintaining organizational trust through transparent communication, consistent policies, and ethical practices is essential to sustaining engagement.

Additionally, leaders should adopt servant leadership behaviors that emphasize empowerment and personal growth, while organizations should cultivate a supportive learning climate that encourages continuous development without fear of failure. Rather than relying on a single approach, organizations are encouraged to adopt an integrated strategy that simultaneously enhances individual confidence and organizational support systems.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to examine the effects of servant leadership, creative self-efficacy, learning climate, and organizational trust on employee engagement among Generation Z employees in East Java. Using a cross-sectional survey design and SEM-PLS analysis, the findings reveal that all four variables have a positive and significant influence on employee engagement, with creative self-efficacy emerging as the strongest predictor. These results indicate that engagement among Generation Z employees is shaped by an interaction between individual psychological resources and supportive organizational conditions.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the literature by integrating Social Exchange Theory (SET) and the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model in explaining employee engagement within a Generation Z context. The findings extend SET by demonstrating that relational resources, such as servant leadership and organizational trust, foster reciprocal attitudes in the form of higher engagement. Simultaneously, the results support the JD-R model by highlighting the critical role of personal resources particularly creative self-efficacy in driving motivational processes among younger employees. This integrated perspective underscores that, for Generation Z, personal confidence in creative capability may be as important as organizational support mechanisms.

In practical terms, the findings offer several actionable implications for managers and organizations. First, organizations should invest in practices that enhance employees' creative self-efficacy, such as autonomy-supportive job design, opportunities for idea generation, and recognition of creative contributions. Second, leaders are encouraged to adopt servant leadership behaviors that emphasize empowerment, ethical conduct, and genuine concern for employee development. Third, organizations should strengthen organizational trust through transparent communication, consistent policies, and fair decision-making processes. Finally, fostering a positive learning climate

by providing continuous learning opportunities and psychological safety can further enhance engagement among Generation Z employees.

Despite these contributions, this study has several limitations. The use of a cross-sectional design limits the ability to draw causal conclusions. Data were collected using self-reported questionnaires, which may introduce common method bias, although procedural remedies were applied. In addition, the study focused on a single regional context (East Java), which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other cultural or organizational settings.

Future research is encouraged to address these limitations by employing longitudinal designs to capture changes in engagement over time, utilizing multi-source data to reduce method bias, and expanding the sample to include multiple regions or countries. Further studies may also explore moderating variables such as cultural values, organizational size, or leadership tenure, as well as conduct comparative analyses between Generation Z and other generational cohorts to deepen understanding of generational differences in employee engagement.

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