

## **Generation Z: Profile of Psychological Capital in Students**

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**Abstract.** Generation Z is the population that dominates the Indonesian population who are currently entering the world of work or are preparing to enter the world of work. Gen Z has different characteristics, especially lower psychological vulnerability than previous generations. One of the factors that influences individual work behavior is psychological capital. This research aims to obtain an overview of the psychological capital of Gen Z in students who are currently studying at university. The method used was a quantitative approach involving 124 students at Faculty X. The sampling technique used was accidental sampling. The instrument used in this research uses a psychological capital scale with four dimensions, namely hope, optimism, self-efficacy and resilience which Platania and Paolillo have, which consists of 12 question items. The analysis technique used in this research is descriptive analysis with the help of Jamovi. Based on the results of the descriptive test, it is known that the psychological capital of Gen Z students at Faculty X is in the low category. This means that students tend to lack self-confidence, do not have definite goals and how to achieve these goals and in completing assignments and when they experience failure they tend to have difficulty getting back up.

**Keywords** – gen Z, psychological capital, students

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Currently the population in Indonesia is dominated by Gen Z with a population of more than 75 million people [1]. Gen Z are individuals born from 1996 to 2012, and now most of them are entering the world of work or are currently studying at junior high school to university level. At the tertiary level, you are literally preparing to enter the world of work so that when you graduate, you can be easily absorbed into the world of work. Based on research results, students are ready to enter the world of work, but many students still feel psychologically not ready, for example in terms of their ability to manage the challenges expected in the field, including stress, long working hours, and formal environmental requirements [3]. This shows that psychological capital is important in facing the world of work, including for Gen Z.

Generation Z appears as a more realistic and pragmatic generation when dealing with their careers and future [4]. In addition, Generation Z likes transparency, independence, flexibility and personal freedom and tends to be independent [5]. Several types of jobs that are of interest to Gen Z include jobs that are able to provide a pleasant working atmosphere in the office but still prioritize flexible schedules, the use of technology in work and communication, and choosing to wear comfortable clothes for work are characteristics of Generation Z workers. [6]. In contrast to the previous generation, Gen Z has a different view from the previous generation, whether as workers, customers or as individuals [7].

Based on data released by the American Psychological Association, it shows that generation Z is more susceptible to experiencing psychological problems compared to generations X and Y when under pressure [8]. In the world of work, the pressure experienced by workers can come from the individual's own internal factors, such as not meeting worker expectations, which will have an impact on feelings of unhappiness at work and even trigger changes in behavior and intentions to change jobs [9]. This data is supported by the statement that Gen Z tends to change their minds easily and change jobs if their expectations are not met or are unable to manage pressure at work [10].

Pressure in the world of work is something that cannot be avoided as we enter the *virtual era* where changes occur quickly and unpredictably. Individuals need the ability to survive and face various challenges that can hinder them from working. Individual employability not only depends on the knowledge and skills required in the labor market, but also involves psychological resources, which play an important role in employability [11]. One effort that can be used to manage pressure in the world of work is by optimizing an individual's resources or psychological capital [12].

Psychological capital (PsyCap) is a concept from positive psychology known as *psycap* which is used to describe an individual's psychological capacity that can be measured, developed and utilized

to improve individual work results. Psycap is a positive condition in individuals related to their psychology which is characterized by feeling confident in facing various challenges, having positive attributions, being able to persist to achieve goals, and being able to bounce back when facing failure [13]. This statement is supported by the opinion that psycap in individuals is characterized by the individual's ability to understand themselves, be able to motivate themselves, have positive expectations and be able to adapt to various difficulties faced [14].

Psychological capital has four dimensions, namely first, hope is the condition of individuals who have hope, namely individuals who have a strong desire to achieve and have a way to achieve it. Second, self-efficacy, namely belief in one's ability to complete a task or job successfully. Third, resilience, namely an individual's ability to survive and bounce back from times of failure or obstacles to achieve success. Fourth, optimism in an individual's ability to assess events that have happened, are happening or will happen in the future as positive [13].

There are two factors that influence an individual's psychological capital, first, the individual's ability to manage cognitive and second, the individual's ability to manage affection [13]. Apart from that, psychological capital is influenced by four factors, namely, personal experience, the experience of other people, verbal influence and the physical and psychological condition of the individual. Factors that influence psychological capital can be grouped into two, namely factors originating from internal individuals and external factors from the environment.

Psychological capital has a positive impact on organizations, this is because psycap is able to have a positive impact among workers so that it can improve employee performance [15]. Individuals with high psychological capital will be able to understand the meaning of work, be more optimistic and resilient in facing obstacles at work [16]. Psycap will improve the quality of work and quality of life of individuals and reduce the negative impact of various pressures at work [17]. Apart from that, individuals with high psychological capital will be able to face various challenges so that they are able to perform more optimally [18]. An optimistic individual will see a high chance of success, a high level of self-confidence to motivate achieving goals, positive attributions in doing work, as well as self-resilience to recover from bad conditions that occur when pursuing goals or targets [19]. This behavior is a sign shown by individuals who have psychological capital.

Research on psychological capital that focuses on describing psychological capital in Generation Z who are currently studying at the tertiary level has not yet been carried out much. Research aims to examine the relationship between Psychological Capital and Social Support and Grit in Students Who Study While Working [20]. Other research shows that there is a relationship between psychological capital and stress levels in first year students [21]. As well as the results, there are differences in the level of psychological capital in men and women.

Based on the literature above, it can be understood that it is important to research further in relation to generation z. In Indonesia itself, Generation Z is currently in education, especially higher education, and is preparing to enter the world of work. Psychological capital has a significant influence on student work readiness [22]. Research explaining psychological capital in students who will enter the world of work. Therefore, this research aims to find a picture of the psychological capital of Faculty X students in Jember.

## **II. METHOD**

The research is a non-experimental quantitative type which is systematic research without control from the researcher. This research method uses a descriptive approach which aims to describe the phenomenon of a variable without testing the influence or relationship with other variables. This research aims to find an overview of Psychological Capital in Gen Z who are currently studying at university.

This research used Gen Z respondents from Faculty The consideration for choosing a semester is because in the next few years they will enter the world of work so that the results of this research can be followed up later.

The instrument used in this research uses a psychological capital scale with four dimensions, namely hope, optimism, self-efficacy and resilience belonging to Platania and Paolillo, which consists of 12 question items.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of data analysis in this study are summarized as follows:

**Table 1.** Descriptive Test Results of Psychological Capital

| Variable              | Intervals   | Frequency  | Category |
|-----------------------|-------------|------------|----------|
| Psychological Capital | $X < 31$    | 65 (52.4%) | Low      |
|                       | $X \leq 31$ | 59 (47.6%) | Tall     |

Source: primary data

Table 1 shows the results that the psychological capital of Gen Z who are currently studying at Faculty X is in the low category at 52.4% while in the low category it is 47.6%.

**Table 2.** Gender Demographic Test Results

| Gender | Intervals   | Frequency | Category |
|--------|-------------|-----------|----------|
| Man    | $X \leq 38$ | 7 (39%)   | Low      |
|        | $X > 38$    | 11 (61%)  | Tall     |
|        |             | 18        | 100%     |
| Woman  | $X \leq 38$ | 59 (56%)  | Low      |
|        | $X > 38$    | 47 (44%)  | Tall     |
|        |             | 106       | 100%     |

Source: primary data

Table 2 shows the results that the psychological capital of male Gen Z is in the low category at 39% and the high category at 61%. Gen Z with female gender has a low category of 56% and a high category of 44%.

**Table 3.** Activity Demographic Test Results

| Additional Activities | Intervals   | Frequency | Category |
|-----------------------|-------------|-----------|----------|
| There is Activity     | $X \leq 38$ | 35 (51%)  | Low      |
|                       | $X > 38$    | 34 (49%)  | Tall     |
|                       |             | 69        | 100%     |
| There isn't any       | $X \leq 38$ | 31 (56%)  | Low      |
|                       | $X > 38$    | 24 (44%)  | Tall     |
|                       |             | 55        | 100%     |

Source: primary data

Table 3 shows the results that the psychological capital of Gen Z who take part in additional activities outside lecture hours is in the low category at 51% and the high category at 49%, while the psychological capital of Gen Z who take part in activities outside lecture hours is in the low category at 56%. and the high category was 44%.

**Table 4.** Age Demographic Test Results

| Age Range     | Intervals   | Frequency | Category |
|---------------|-------------|-----------|----------|
| Age $\leq 19$ | $X \leq 38$ | 5         | Low      |

|          |       |    |      |
|----------|-------|----|------|
|          | X>38  | 2  | Tall |
|          |       | 7  | 100% |
| Age 20   | X<=38 | 26 | Low  |
|          | X>38  | 23 | Tall |
|          |       | 49 | 100% |
| Age 21   | X<=38 | 23 | Low  |
|          | X>38  | 17 | Tall |
|          |       | 40 | 100% |
| Age 22   | X<=38 | 9  | Low  |
|          | X>38  | 11 | Tall |
|          |       | 20 | 100% |
| Age >=23 | X<=38 | 3  | Low  |
|          | X>38  | 5  | Tall |
|          |       | 8  | 100% |

Source: primary data

Table 4 shows the results that psychological capital tends to increase as Gen Z ages.

Based on the results of the analysis test, it can be seen that the psychological capital of Generation Z in this study was in the high category at 47.6% and the low category at 52.4%. This means that most of Gen Z, when faced with a challenging situation, Gen Z will tend to be unsure about being able to resolve it optimally. Apart from that, the ability to focus on goals and direct efforts to achieve goals is not optimal, pessimistic in viewing events and easily give up when experiencing failure. Gen Z grows and develops along with technological advances so that Gen Z has better mastery of technology than previous generations, but this has a negative impact on their psychological condition. One of the negative psychological impacts that Gen-Z feels stressed is because the speed of technology makes information easily accessible due to intense news, family, risk exams and intimidation [23]. The results of this study are different from previous research which showed that psychological capital in Gen Z was in the high category [24]. Individuals who have high psychological capital tend to be prepared to complete their work optimally, have goals at work and have strategies to achieve them, have optimism at work and can survive in various difficult situations while working.

Psychological capital consists of four dimensions, namely hope, optimism, resilience and self-efficacy. In this study, Gen Z's psychological capital was highest in the self-efficacy category compared to the aspects of hope, optimism and resilience. This means that Gen Z has confidence in their ability to successfully complete challenging or difficult tasks. Self-efficacy is an individual's belief in their competence to direct the motivation, cognitive capacity and behavior needed to complete tasks efficiently. Individuals who have high self-efficacy will actualize behavior to achieve goals and be able to weigh the various risks they will face (Maria, et al., 2021). Furthermore, the resilience aspect of Generation Z's psychological capital is the lowest aspect, this means they have a tendency to have difficulty getting back up when they experience pressure or failure. Individuals with a low level of resilience when encountering obstacles will find it difficult to find solutions to the problems they are facing, even these obstacles can affect them physically and psychologically. Furthermore, the results of this research also prove that the level of resilience of generation z is lower than the previous generation [25].

Psychological capital in individuals is influenced by demographics, individual environment, leadership style and individual characteristics [26]; [27]. Individual characteristics include personality, age and education. Age has an important role in influencing an individual's psychological

capital, this is because as an individual increases in age and education it is in line with the psychological capital they have. This is because increasing age is related to physiological maturity, emotional maturity, and increasing individual experience. In line with this, the results of the age demographic test show that there are categorical differences between Gen Z aged 19 years - 21 years, which are in the low category, above 50%. Meanwhile, those aged 22 years and over are in the high category, meaning that Gen Z's psychological capital tends to increase with age. The results of the categorization test of additional activities other than studying for Gen Z show that Gen Z who participate in student activities or work have higher psychological capital than students who do not participate in student activities or work. In line with research results showing that the psychological capital of entrepreneurial students is in the high category [28]. The experience gained by individuals in carrying out tasks related to the results they achieve influences how individuals assess themselves as capable of carrying out work in the future.

The results of demographic tests on gender show that male Gen Z has higher psychological capital compared to female Gen Z. This means that Gen Z men have better psychological capital than women. These results are in line with previous research which shows that men have higher psychological capital than women [29]. The results of this study are different from research which states that the overall average level of psychological capital in men is higher than in women [30]. This can happen because differences in levels of psychological capital between men and women can occur due to the development of different abilities and competencies, thought patterns or culture.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

This research answers the research objectives of Gen Z's psychological capital which is in the low category. In the psychological capital dimension, self-efficacy is in the highest category and resilience is in the lowest category compared to other dimensions. This research has limitations in that the research population is still limited to one faculty and limited references regarding psychological capital in students. Recommendations for further research are expected to involve a larger population and from various faculties so that it is more comprehensive.

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