

## The Relationship Between Work Stress and Workload with Job Embeddedness Among Generation Z Employees in the Creative Media Industry of Cirebon

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### ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between work stress, workload, and job embeddedness among Generation Z employees in creative media companies in Cirebon. Grounded in the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) framework, the study addresses the limited evidence regarding employee attachment within regional creative media organizations. A quantitative associative approach was employed using data collected from 100 Generation Z employees through proportionate stratified random sampling. Data were analyzed using multiple linear regression. The findings reveal that work stress has a positive but insignificant relationship with job embeddedness, while workload has a positive and significant relationship with job embeddedness. Simultaneously, work stress and workload significantly influence job embeddedness. These results suggest that Generation Z employees in creative media organizations tend to perceive workload as a challenge that supports learning and professional growth rather than merely as a job demand.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The creative media industry is evolving at remarkable speed, redefining how organizations design and manage work in a digital environment characterized by constant innovation and rapid change. Media companies operate within dynamic ecosystems marked by continuous content production, emerging technologies, and demanding deadlines. Such conditions increase job demands and influence employees' perceptions of their work and organizational attachment (Setthakorn & Rostiani, 2024). These developments are particularly relevant for Generation Z employees, who seek meaningful careers, flexibility, and opportunities for professional growth.

In the creative media industry of Cirebon, Generation Z employees are frequently required to work under tight deadlines, continuous content production demands, and rapidly changing creative expectations. Preliminary observations conducted in several media organizations indicate that young employees often experience time pressure, emotional exhaustion, and difficulties in maintaining work-life balance. These conditions may weaken employees' attachment to their organizations and increase the risk of turnover, particularly among Generation Z workers who are known for their high career mobility. Therefore, understanding how work stress and workload relate to job embeddedness becomes increasingly important for organizations seeking to maintain workforce stability and employee retention.

According to the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, job demands represent aspects of work that require sustained physical or psychological effort and are associated with certain physiological and psychological costs (Bakker et al., 2017). Previous studies have demonstrated that job demands significantly influence employee well-being, workplace attitudes, and organizational outcomes (Lesener et al., 2020). Within the creative media industry, work stress and workload constitute important job demands that may affect employees' attachment to their organizations.

Although previous studies have extensively examined work stress, workload, and employee retention across corporate and service sectors, limited research has specifically investigated the relationship between work stress, workload, and job embeddedness among Generation Z employees in regional creative media organizations (Karatepe & Olugbade, 2020). The creative media industry possesses unique characteristics, including high creative expectations, tight deadlines, and dynamic work environments, which may produce different outcomes compared to other sectors.

While scholars increasingly explore job pressures and retention patterns, the specific nexus linking work stress, workload, and job embeddedness among Generation Z in regional creative media remains largely uncharted. Research has tended to spotlight corporate and service environments, leaving creative media workplaces in the periphery (Kim & Beehr, 2022). At the same time, stress and workload, as interconnected dimensions of job demands, may jointly influence the extent to which employees become embedded within their organizations (Jiang et al., 2021).

Beyond the limited empirical evidence, an important conceptual gap remains regarding how Generation Z employees in regional creative media organizations respond to work stress and workload compared to employees in conventional corporate settings. Creative media organizations operate in environments characterized by project-based work, continuous innovation demands, high levels of creative autonomy, and rapidly changing content requirements. These conditions may shape employees' perceptions of stress and workload differently from those working in more structured corporate environments. For Generation Z employees, who are generally accustomed to digital technologies, flexibility, and dynamic work arrangements, certain job demands may be perceived as opportunities for learning and self-development rather than as organizational burdens. Therefore, the relationship between work stress, workload, and job embeddedness may demonstrate unique patterns within the regional creative media industry context.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the relationship between work stress and workload and their influence on job embeddedness among Generation Z employees in creative media companies in Cirebon.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### ***Work Stress (X1)***

Work stress emerges as an individual's psychological response to workplace demands that exceed personal coping capacities. When deadlines become increasingly demanding and creative expectations intensify, employees may experience psychological pressure that affects workplace attitudes and organizational attachment. Previous studies have identified a close relationship between work stress, workplace attitudes, and organizational attachment (Chen et al., 2022). However, generational differences may influence how employees perceive and respond to workplace stressors. Generation Z employees are often characterized as adaptable and capable of functioning in dynamic work environments (Schroth, 2019), suggesting that their responses to workplace stress may differ from those of previous generations.

### ***Workload (X2)***

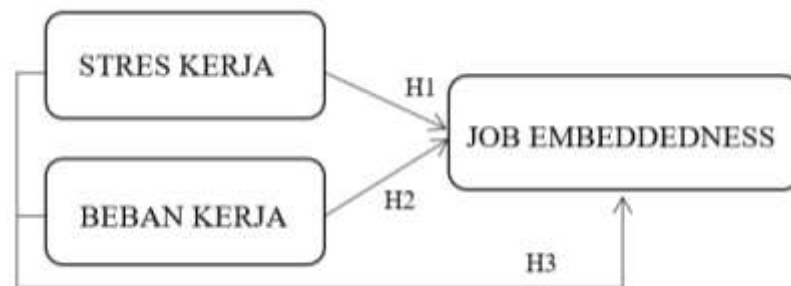
Workload reflects the amount, intensity, and time pressure associated with work tasks. Excessive workloads may generate stress and fatigue (Zang et al., 2022). However, workloads that are perceived as manageable and meaningful may encourage motivation, professional development, and organizational commitment (Li et al., 2022). Within creative media organizations, structured responsibilities and challenging projects may strengthen employees' sense of purpose and increase their organizational attachment. Consequently, workload may function not only as a source of pressure but also as a factor that reinforces employee commitment and responsibility.

### ***Job Embeddedness (Y)***

Job embeddedness refers to the extent to which employees are connected to their organizations through social relationships, organizational fit, and perceived sacrifices associated with leaving the organization (Mitchell et al., 2001). Employees who experience strong job embeddedness are generally more likely to remain within their organizations and demonstrate stronger organizational commitment (Ampofo et al., 2021). Previous studies have found that job embeddedness is influenced by both individual and organizational factors and plays an important role in reducing turnover intentions (Wang et al., 2024).

This study offers both theoretical and practical contributions to the existing literature. Theoretically, it extends the application of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) framework by examining how two key job demands work stress and workload relate to job embeddedness among Generation Z employees in creative media organizations. While previous studies have primarily focused on employee well-being, turnover intention, and organizational commitment, limited attention has been given to job embeddedness as an organizational retention mechanism within creative industries. Practically, the findings provide insights for managers of creative media organizations in designing workload management strategies and employee retention programs that are aligned with the characteristics of Generation Z employees. By understanding how workplace demands influence organizational attachment, organizations can develop more effective human resource practices to strengthen employee retention and organizational sustainability.

### ***Conceptual Framework***



**Figure 1. Conceptual Framework**

### ***Research Hypothesis***

Grounded in the established theoretical framework and supported by empirical evidence, this research seeks to examine the association between work-related stress and workload and their impact on job embeddedness among Generation Z employees within the creative media sector. The hypotheses developed for this study are presented as follows:

- H1 : *Work stress has a significant relationship with job embeddedness.*
- H2 : *Workload has a positive and significant relationship with job embeddedness.*
- H3 : *Work stress and workload simultaneously have a significant relationship with job embeddedness.*

## METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative approach with an associative research design to examine the relationship between work stress, workload, and job embeddedness among Generation Z employees in the creative media industry. The research was conducted at Radar Cirebon, Fajar Cirebon, and Rakyat Cirebon. The population consisted of 110 Generation Z employees, while the sample comprised 100 respondents determined using the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error (Schroth, 2019). Respondents were selected using proportionate stratified random sampling to ensure proportional representation from each company.

Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The work stress variable was measured using 13 items adapted from the Job Stress Scale validated in the study "Validating the Job Stress Scale for Indonesian Police: A CFA Study." Workload was measured using six items adapted from the study "Research on the Influence Mechanism of Creative Time Pressure on Employee Knowledge Hiding: Evidence from Creative Service Enterprises in China," which focuses on time pressure and constraints in generating and implementing creative ideas. Job embeddedness was measured using seven items adapted from the global job embeddedness scale developed by Crossley et al. (2007) in "Development of a Global Measure of Job Embeddedness and Integration into a Traditional Model of Voluntary Turnover." Prior to hypothesis testing, validity and reliability tests were conducted to ensure the quality and consistency of the measurement instruments.

**Table 1. Research Measurement Instruments**

| Variable         | Number of Items | Source                                             |
|------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Work Stress      | 13              | Job Stress Scale<br>(Validated Indonesian Version) |
| Workload         | 6               | Creative Time Pressure Scale                       |
| Job Embeddedness | 7               | Global Job Embeddedness Scale<br>Crosssley         |

Prior to hypothesis testing, validity and reliability tests were conducted to ensure the quality of the research instrument (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014). Data were analyzed using multiple linear regression to examine the partial and simultaneous effects of work stress and workload on job embeddedness. The regression model used in this study is as follows:

$$JE = \alpha + \beta_1 WS + \beta_2 WL + \varepsilon$$

Where JE represents job embeddedness, WS represents work stress, WL represents workload,  $\alpha$  denotes the constant,  $\beta_1$  and  $\beta_2$  represent regression coefficients, and  $\varepsilon$  represents the error term. Hypothesis testing was performed using t-tests, F-tests, and the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) at a significance level of 0.05

## RESEARCH RESULT

This study introduces a structured depiction of its participants to contextualize their roles within the research. By examining their defining traits and qualifications, the profile verifies their relevance to the study's scope and purpose. An organized presentation of this information appears in Table 1 below.

**Table 2. Responden Profile**

| <b>Gender</b>            | <b>Percentage (%)</b> |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Male                     | 35                    |
| Famale                   | 65                    |
| <b>Age Range</b>         | <b>Percentage (%)</b> |
| <17                      | 1                     |
| 17 - 19                  | 13                    |
| 20 - 22                  | 62                    |
| >22                      | 24                    |
| <b>Education Level</b>   | <b>Percentage (%)</b> |
| High School              | 34                    |
| Bachelor's Degree        | 65                    |
| Master's Degree          | 1                     |
| <b>Length of Service</b> | <b>Percentage (%)</b> |
| <1 Year                  | 43                    |
| 1 - 3 Years              | 36                    |
| 3 - 5 Years              | 4                     |
| <5 Years                 | 17                    |

*Source: Data Processing Results (2026)*

Among 100 respondents, 65% were female, indicating female dominance in Cirebon's Creative Media Industry. Most were aged 20–22, university graduates, and had less than one year of experience typical traits of Generation Z, whose exploratory and mobile nature influences organizational commitment.

### *Validity Test*

The credibility of each question can be statistically authenticated through SPSS validity testing. A question qualifies as valid once its Rcount value outperforms the Rtable threshold. When this criterion is satisfied, the researcher's formulated questions and assertions are justified and approved.

**Table 3. Average Validity Test Result**

| <b>R Count<br/>Work<br/>Stress</b> | <b>r Count<br/>Workload</b> | <b>r Count<br/>Job<br/>Embeddedness</b> | <b>R Table</b> | <b>Description</b> |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| 0.728                              | 0.734                       | 0.803                                   | 0.195          | Valid              |
| 0.735                              | 0.831                       | 0.823                                   | 0.195          | Valid              |
| 0.689                              | 0.815                       | 0.827                                   | 0.195          | Valid              |
| 0.639                              | 0.862                       | 0.840                                   | 0.195          | Valid              |
| 0.689                              | 0.838                       | 0.784                                   | 0.195          | Valid              |
| 0.629                              | 0.764                       | 0.424                                   | 0.195          | Valid              |
| 0.747                              |                             | 0.741                                   | 0.195          | Valid              |
| 0.730                              |                             |                                         | 0.195          | Valid              |
| 0.540                              |                             |                                         | 0.195          | Valid              |
| 0.615                              |                             |                                         | 0.195          | Valid              |
| 0.724                              |                             |                                         | 0.195          | Valid              |
| 0.698                              |                             |                                         | 0.195          | Valid              |
| 0.719                              |                             |                                         | 0.195          | Valid              |

*Source: Data Processing Results (2026)*

Table 2, generated from SPSS processing, indicates that all variable instruments have passed the validity examination, qualifying them for continued analytical procedure.

#### ***Reliability Test***

To verify the consistency of the measurement tool, Cronbach's Alpha served as the benchmark. When the coefficient surpassed 0.60, the instrument was deemed dependable. Presented below are the reliability findings produced using SPSS.

**Table 4. Reliability Test Result**

| <b>Reliability Test</b> | <b>Cornbach's Alpha</b> | <b>Description</b> |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Work Stress             | 0.865                   | Reliabel           |
| Workload                | 0.892                   | Reliabel           |
| Job Embeddedness        | 0.868                   | Reliabel           |

*Source: Data Processing Results (2026)*

Table 3, generated via SPSS processing, confirms that each component of the variable successfully passes the reliability assessment.

#### ***Simultaneous Test (F-test)***

To examine whether work stress and workload jointly influence job embeddedness, an F-test was applied using a 5% significance threshold. The combined effect analysis is summarized in Table 4.

**Table 5. Simultaneous Test (F)**

| Description  | Value        |
|--------------|--------------|
| F Calculate  | 43,789       |
| Significance | 0.000        |
| Conclusion   | Significance |

*Source: Data Processing Results (2026)*

With an F-statistic reaching 43.789 – clearly exceeding the required critical value and a probability level of 0.000 under the 0.05 standard, the analysis verifies that work stress and workload simultaneously influence job embeddedness in a statistically significant manner.

### **Partial Test (T-test)**

A t-test serves as an inferential tool to verify the partial effect of individual independent variables on the dependent variable under a 0.05 significance criterion. The analysis requires matching the obtained t-value against the tabulated critical value. Detailed results regarding the influence of X on Y are provided in Table 5.

**Table 6. Partial Test Result (T)**

| Variable    | Regression Coefficients | T Count | Sig   | Description     |
|-------------|-------------------------|---------|-------|-----------------|
| Constant    | -                       | 4.857   | 0.000 |                 |
| Work Stress | 0,101                   | 1.759   | 0.082 | Not Significant |
| Workload    | -                       | 4.802   | 0.000 | Significant     |

*Source: Data Processing Results (2026)*

According to the results presented in Table 5, work stress does not significantly influence job embeddedness ( $\beta = 0.101$ ;  $p = 0.082$ ), indicating that workplace stress is not a determining factor of organizational attachment among Generation Z employees in the creative media sector. In contrast, workload has a positive and significant influence on job embeddedness ( $\beta = 0.575$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ), suggesting that employees who perceive their workload as meaningful and manageable tend to demonstrate stronger attachment to their organizations. In other words, H2 stands confirmed, whereas H1 does not receive empirical support.

### **Multiple Linear Regression Analysis**

Multiple linear regression evaluates how independent variables affect a dependent variable.

**Table 7. Multiple Linear Regression Test Result**

| Variable            | Regression Coefficients | T Count | Sig   |
|---------------------|-------------------------|---------|-------|
| Constant            | 7.559                   | 4.857   | 0.000 |
| Work-Related Stress | 0.101                   | 1.759   | 0.082 |
| Workload            | 0.575                   | 4.802   | 0.000 |

*Source: Data Processing Results (2026)*

$$Y = 7,559 + 0,101X_1 + 0,575X_2$$

1. The constant value is 7.559. If the work stress and workload variables are 0, then the job commitment value is 7.559.
2. The work stress regression coefficient is 0.101. Each one-unit increase in work stress, assuming the workload remains constant, will increase job commitment by 0.101 units.
3. The regression coefficient for workload is 0.575. Each one-unit increase in workload, assuming work stress remains constant, will increase job commitment by 0.575 units.

### ***R<sup>2</sup> Determination Coefficient Test***

R<sup>2</sup> serves as a gauge of how convincingly a model captures shifts in the dependent variable. When this value nears 1, it signals that the independent variables almost entirely illuminate the pattern of change. In essence, a high R<sup>2</sup> reflects the strong explanatory power of the predictors in shaping the outcome (Saleh et al., 2023).

**Table 8. Results of the Determination (R<sup>2</sup>)**

| Description | Value |
|-------------|-------|
| R Square    | 0.464 |
| Percentage  | 46,4% |

*Source: Data Processing Results (2026)*

The SPSS output presented in Table 7 reports an R<sup>2</sup> of 0.464, meaning that work stress and workload jointly explain 46.4% of the variability in job embeddedness. The remaining 53.6% arises from external determinants not captured in the model. This result confirms the concurrent linkage between the predictor variables and job embeddedness.

## **DISCUSSION**

### ***The Relationship Between Work Stress and Job Embeddedness***

The statistical analysis indicates that work stress does not have a significant relationship with job embeddedness among Generation Z employees in creative media companies in Cirebon. This finding is evidenced by a significance value of 0.082, which exceeds the 0.05 significance threshold. Although the regression coefficient shows a positive direction, the result suggests that work stress does not substantially influence employees' attachment to their organizations. This finding is consistent with (Pamungkas et al., 2023), who reported that work stress did not significantly reduce job embeddedness among younger employees. However, the result differs from Chen et al. (2022) and Kim and Beehr (2022), who found that excessive work stress weakens employees' organizational attachment and increases withdrawal behaviour. One possible explanation is the distinctive characteristics of Generation Z employees. As digital natives, they are generally more accustomed to dynamic work environments, multitasking, rapid technological changes, and flexible work arrangements. Consequently, moderate levels of work stress may be perceived as a normal aspect of professional life rather than a threat to organizational attachment. Within creative media organizations, employees commonly expect tight deadlines, continuous content production, and creative demands as inherent aspects of their work, thereby

reducing the likelihood that work stress alone influences their decision to remain attached to the organization. Therefore, work stress cannot be regarded as the primary determinant of job embeddedness among Generation Z employees in the creative media industry.

### ***The Relationship Between Workload and Job Embeddedness***

The results demonstrate that workload has a positive and significant relationship with job embeddedness. The significance value of 0.000 indicates that workload is an important factor influencing employees' attachment to their organizations. This finding suggests that employees who perceive their workloads as meaningful, challenging, and manageable tend to develop stronger organizational attachment. The finding supports Li et al. (2022), who argued that workloads perceived as meaningful can increase employee engagement and organizational commitment. It also aligns with the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory proposed by Bakker and Demerouti (2014), which explains that job demands do not always produce negative outcomes. Under certain conditions, demanding work assignments function as challenge demands that stimulate motivation, learning, and professional growth. Within the creative media industry, workloads commonly involve creative problem-solving, content development, innovation, and deadline-oriented responsibilities that provide employees with opportunities to develop competencies and build professional portfolios. Such experiences strengthen employees' sense of contribution, responsibility, and belonging within the organization. Consequently, workload is interpreted not merely as a burden but also as an opportunity for self-development and career advancement, thereby reinforcing job embeddedness among Generation Z employees.

### ***The Relationship Between Work Stress and Workload with Job Embeddedness***

The simultaneous analysis reveals that work stress and workload jointly have a significant relationship with job embeddedness among Generation Z employees. The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) of 46.4% indicates that these two variables explain nearly half of the variation in job embeddedness, while the remaining 53.6% is influenced by other variables outside the present research model. This finding confirms that work-related factors remain important determinants of employees' attachment to organizations. Nevertheless, the relatively moderate explanatory power suggests that additional variables, such as organizational culture, leadership style, work-life balance, psychological capital, or career development opportunities, may also influence job embeddedness. Therefore, future studies are encouraged to incorporate broader organizational and psychological factors to provide a more comprehensive explanation of employee attachment in creative media organizations.

The findings should also be interpreted within the context of Indonesia's regional creative media industry. Unlike conventional organizations that rely on standardized procedures, creative media companies operate in highly dynamic environments characterized by continuous content production, rapid technological changes, and intense competition for audience attention. Employees are frequently required to manage multiple tasks simultaneously while maintaining creativity and productivity under strict deadlines. For Generation Z employees, who dominate the workforce in many creative industries, such conditions are often perceived as inherent characteristics of contemporary creative work rather than exceptional sources of occupational pressure. This contextual perspective helps explain why work stress did not emerge as a significant predictor of job embeddedness in the present study, whereas workload demonstrated a significant positive effect. When workloads are perceived as meaningful challenges that provide opportunities for learning, portfolio development, and career advancement, they are more likely to strengthen employees' attachment to their organizations. Therefore, the present findings reflect not only individual psychological responses but also the distinctive characteristics of Indonesia's regional creative media industry, where organizational attachment is shaped by the interaction between job demands and the expectations of a digitally oriented Generation Z workforce.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study aimed to examine the relationship between work stress, workload, and job embeddedness among Generation Z employees in creative media companies in Cirebon. The findings reveal that work stress does not have a significant relationship with job embeddedness. Although work stress demonstrates a positive coefficient, its effect is statistically insignificant, indicating that workplace pressure does not substantially influence employees' attachment to their organizations. This finding suggests that Generation Z employees are generally capable of adapting to dynamic work environments and managing workplace challenges without weakening their organizational attachment.

In contrast, workload has a positive and significant relationship with job embeddedness. Employees who perceive their workloads as meaningful, challenging, and manageable tend to develop stronger organizational attachment. This finding indicates that workload can function not only as a job demand but also as a motivating factor that encourages employees to become more engaged and committed to their organization.

Furthermore, the simultaneous analysis confirms that work stress and workload collectively have a significant relationship with job embeddedness. The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) of 46.4% indicates that these variables explain a substantial proportion of the variation in job embeddedness, while the remaining 53.6% is influenced by other factors beyond the scope of this study.

Based on the findings, creative media organizations should prioritize structured workload management strategies that ensure assignments remain challenging yet achievable. Managers are encouraged to implement regular workload evaluations, balanced task distribution, and realistic project scheduling to prevent excessive work pressure while maintaining employee engagement. In addition, organizations may adopt milestone-based reward systems, provide opportunities for skill development and creative autonomy, and establish regular feedback sessions between supervisors and employees. Considering the characteristics of Generation Z employees, organizations should also support flexible work arrangements, career development opportunities, and well-being monitoring programs to strengthen job embeddedness and improve long-term employee retention. Future research is recommended to incorporate additional organizational and psychological variables, such as leadership style, organizational culture, work-life balance, and psychological capital, in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing job embeddedness in regional creative media organizations.

## ADVANCED RESEARCH

This study has several limitations. The research was conducted only in three creative media companies in Cirebon and focused exclusively on Generation Z employees. In addition, the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) indicates that 53.6% of the variation in job embeddedness is explained by factors outside the research model. Future research is recommended to examine additional variables that may influence job embeddedness, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, employee engagement, leadership style, and work-life balance. Further studies may also involve larger samples and different industries to enhance the generalizability of the findings.

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