

Work Stress as a Predictor of Counterproductive Work Behavior Among Generation Z in Yogyakarta

Amaranty Putri Sejati¹, Alimatus Sahrah²

12Fakultas Psikologi Universitas Mercu Buana Yogyakarta

*alimatus.sahrah@mercubuana-yogya.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This research investigates the relationship between work stress and counterproductive work behavior (CWB) among Generation Z employees in Yogyakarta. Utilizing a sample of 104 Generation Z employees, this study employs the product moment correlation method to explore the dynamics between these variables. Findings reveal a positive correlation between work stress and CWB, with a correlation coefficient r_{xy} of 0.213 and a significance level of $p = 0.030$ ($p \leq 0.050$). The results indicate that work stress accounts for 4.5% of the variance in CWB, suggesting that other unexamined factors contribute to the remaining 95.5%. This study highlights the impact of work stress on CWB and underscores the need for interventions targeting stress management to mitigate counterproductive behaviors in the workplace.

Keywords: *Counterproductive Work Behavior, Work Stress, Generation Z Employees*

Introduction

In 2045, Indonesia will celebrate 100 years of independence, marking a golden opportunity to realize the "Golden Indonesia 2045" vision. An essential step in this vision is preparing a quality successor generation. Currently, particularly Generation Z, holds a significant responsibility in preparing Indonesia for a brilliant future. Over the next 23 years, Indonesia has the opportunity to leverage its demographic bonus by relying on the quality of its human resources (HR). Human resources are a crucial factor that cannot be separated from any company or organization (Subri, 2003; Orchidiella et al., 2023). Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2005, is now entering the workforce and bringing new energy to the professional world (Baldonado, 2018).

Dangmei et al. (2016) explain that Generation Z is a unique generation skilled in using technology. This generation has a different communication style; Generation Z tends to use semi-formal, individualistic, and straightforward language in their lives. Besides being competent workers, Generation Z may still exhibit behaviors deviant from organizational or company culture, such as arriving late to work, skipping work without permission, committing physical or verbal violence against coworkers, engaging in inappropriate activities during work hours, theft, and misuse of company resources. According to BKN through the staffing advisory body (Bapek), which has reviewed 35 cases of disciplinary violations by civil

servants at central and regional levels, 19 were work absences and 16 other cases related to gratification, fraud, misuse of authority, and narcotics abuse (Toga & Yoelianita, 2022).

The phenomenon above, found in employee behavior, will have a negative impact on organizations or companies if it continues (Khafiana, 2022). Consistent with research by De Clercq et al. (2019), which states that counterproductive work behavior can affect the decline in work productivity, making it difficult for employees to follow workplace procedures or even disobey them (Rishipal, 2019). Counterproductive work behavior can be described as behavior that contradicts organizational norms, such as refusal, expressing dissatisfaction with work (job position, work environment, etc.), and attempting to rectify it in the wrong way (Keskin et al., 2016). Kessler et al. (2013) report that employee behaviors such as spreading rumors, arriving late to work, wasting time, poor interpersonal relationships among employees, theft, and all forms of negative employee behavior in negative response fall under the category of counterproductive work behavior.

According to Fox et al. (2001), Counterproductive Work Behavior has various behaviors that harm individuals or organizations, such as being rude and immoral to coworkers, showing violent behavior (physically or verbally), making mistakes intentionally, damaging, stealing, corruption, and withdrawal (for example, absenteeism, being late, and resigning). Counterproductive work behavior not only affects the organization as a whole due to administrative participation but also closely intersects with employees.

Weinstein and Trickett (2016) explain that one of the causes of the emergence of counterproductive work behavior is work stress. Work stress or job stress experienced by employees in the workplace is usually underpinned by the pressure and workload felt by employees. According to Robbins (2006), work stress is a situation that arises from the interaction between humans and work that causes changes in humans and pushes employees to deviate from their normal functions. Work stress is also defined as a specific interaction between humans and the work environment perceived as pressure or burden that exceeds the individual's capacity (Weinstein & Trickett, 2016). In research conducted by Spector, it is explained that Individual Frustration can increase aggressive behavior, as well as hostility and anger that can trigger individuals to engage in counterproductive work behavior (Spector & Fox, 2002).

Based on the study conducted by Destriana and Dewi (2021), the work stress variable has a percentage indicator of 67%, indicating high criteria and indicating that employees experience high work stress. Conflicts and pressure at work are factors that cause work stress in employees. The CWB (Counterproductive Work Behavior) variable has an index percentage of 59%, indicating that these criteria are quite high. CWB is influenced by stress, which has a positive and significant effect (Weinstein & Trickett, 2016). Counterproductive work behavior emerges in employees, which is then influenced by work stress (interpersonal conflicts, organizational constraints) and organizational justice mediated by negative emotions (Fox et al., 2001).

Stress is a dynamic condition that develops when an individual faces potential, demands, or unwanted resources as a result of external pressure. This term is often used to describe a dynamic state that directly affects workers with opportunities, constraints, or demands associated with a goal, with outcomes considered uncertain and significant (Robbins & Judge, 2008). Furthermore, work stress or job stress is defined as a condition that arises from the interaction between an employee and their job (Beehr & Newman, 1978).

Robbins & Judge (2008) state three aspects of work stress are as follows: (1) Physiological Aspect, which involves early symptoms usually marked by physiological symptoms. Such as palpitations and other conditions marked by changes in body metabolism. (2) Psychological Aspect, involves tension, anxiety, irritability, boredom, a tendency to procrastinate, and others that can cause dissatisfaction with various things, especially in work, which can cause stress. (3) Behavioral Aspect. Typically marked by changes in productivity, increased absenteeism, and turnover are examples of behavioral stressors. Changes in daily habits, such as eating problems, sleep disturbances, and increased alcohol and cigarette intake, are some of the causes of stress due to behavior.

Spector et al. (2006) state five dimensions of CWB are as follows: (1) Abuse against others. This action is harmful because it targets coworkers and other individuals who physically or psychologically hurt others by making threats, hurling demeaning comments, ignoring the person, or undermining their skills making it difficult to work efficiently, (2) Production deviance, which involves activities that intentionally fail tasks that should be completed, (3) Sabotage, which involves activities that intentionally damage company tools or production equipment causing losses to a company, (4) Thief, which involves deviant behavior at the workplace involving taking or stealing company-owned goods and not returning them. For example, taking office supplies without permission, and; (5) Withdrawal, where individuals intentionally limit work time by being late to work.

The relationship between work stress and counterproductive work behavior can be reviewed from employees who feel pressured by the workload in the company, which often causes employees to act negatively such as taking breaks not during break time, leaving work for personal reasons with unclear reasons, arriving late, poor interpersonal relationships among employees, and all negative dissatisfaction responses are forms of counterproductive work behavior. The study conducted by Eschleman et al. (2015) found that increased job stress causes an increase in counterproductive work behavior (CWB). High pressure, unpredictable environments, and high stress levels can threaten human resources and create uncertainty, resulting in a higher likelihood of counterproductive work behavior occurring.

Based on the discussion regarding the problem of counterproductive work behavior in Generation Z employees in Yogyakarta and explanations related to the factors influencing the formation of counterproductive work behavior in Generation Z, the researcher wants to find out if there is a relationship between work stress and counterproductive work behavior in Generation Z employees in Yogyakarta. According to the background of the problem above, the formulation of the problem can be formulated as follows; "Is there a Relationship

between work stress and counterproductive work behavior in Generation Z employees in Yogyakarta?"

Research Methodology

This study utilizes the Counterproductive Work Behavior Checklist (CWB-C) scale introduced by Spector et al. (2006). This instrument has been adapted from English into Indonesian by Rahmah (2020), aligned with the aspects defined by Spector et al. (2006). The Work Stress Scale is used to measure work stress among Generation Z employees in the D.I Yogyakarta province, based on aspects defined by Robbins & Judge (2008). This instrument was adapted by Semita (2022) who referred to the work stress scale developed by Robbins & Judge (2008).

The study employed purposive sampling technique, which involves selecting subjects based on specific considerations or characteristics that meet the criteria and objectives of the research. Therefore, subjects were intentionally chosen according to the sample requirements needed by the researcher (Sugiyono, 2013). The characteristics of the subjects in this study are employees aged 19-26 years in 2024, who have a minimum work tenure of three months.

The data collection approach used in this study is the Likert Scale Method. A Likert scale is used to measure the attitudes, opinions, or perceptions of an individual or group about social phenomena (Sugiyono, 2013). The counterproductive work behavior scale offers four response alternatives favorably: "Almost Never" scoring 1, "Occasionally" scoring 2, "Sometimes" scoring 3, and "Almost Often" scoring 4. The work stress scale has four alternative responses for favorable statements, scoring from 4 to 1: "Strongly Agree" = 4, "Agree" = 3, "Disagree" = 2, "Strongly Disagree" = 1. For unfavorable statements, the scoring is reversed from 1 to 4: "Strongly Agree" = 1, "Agree" = 2, "Disagree" = 3, "Strongly Disagree" = 4.

The data analysis technique used is the product moment correlation analysis, adjusted to test the hypothesis concerning the closeness of the relationship between two variables. If a significant correlation is found, it implies a relationship between one variable and another, and vice versa; if an insignificant correlation is found, it means there is no relationship between the variables. Data analysis will be performed using SPSS software.

The acceptable item-total correlation coefficient (rix) threshold is 0.30; however, if the number of valid items is still not sufficient, researchers may consider lowering the threshold to 0.25 or 0.20 (Azwar, 2016). Nonetheless, Sufren & Nathanael (2013) argue that an item can be considered valid if the number in the Corrected Item-Total Correlation column is above 0.2. In this study, the researcher uses a threshold of 0.20. Reliability testing in this study uses Cronbach's Alpha. Reliability is indicated by the reliability coefficient, ranging from 0 to 1.00. A reliability coefficient close to 1.00 means the measurement is more reliable, while a coefficient close to 0 indicates lower reliability.

Results and Discussion

Based on the research data obtained from the Counterproductive Work Behavior Scale and the Work Stress Scale, which were used as the basis for hypothesis testing, the researcher also conducted a categorization. According to the data description below, categorization can be done on both variables, whether it's the body dissatisfaction variable or the self-esteem variable, by grouping the data into three categories: low, medium, and high.

Table 1: Statistical Description of Research Data

Variable	Hypothetical Data	Empirical Data
	N	Min
Counterproductive Work Behavior	104	29
Work Stress	104	28

Note: N: Number of subjects; **Mean:** Average; **Min:** Minimum or low score

Max: Maximum or high score; **SD:** Standard Deviation

Results of the Categorization of the Counterproductive Work Behavior Scale

The categorization results for the counterproductive work behavior scale indicate that 7.7% (8 subjects) are in the high category, 47.1% (49 subjects) are in the medium category, and 45.2% (47 subjects) are in the low category. Thus, it can be concluded that most subjects exhibit low to medium levels of counterproductive work behavior.

Table 2: Categorization of Counterproductive Work Behavior Scores

Category	Guideline	Score	N	Percentage
High	$X > (\mu + 1\sigma)$	$X > 87$	8	7.7%
Medium	$\mu - 1\sigma \leq X \leq \mu + 1\sigma$	$87 \leq X \leq 58$	49	47.1%
Low	$X < \mu - 1\sigma$	$X < 58$	47	45.2%
Total			104	100%

Note: N: Number of subjects; μ : Hypothetical mean; σ : Hypothetical standard deviation

Results of the Categorization of the Work Stress Scale

The categorization of the work stress scale shows that 0% (0 subjects) are in the high category, 100% (104 subjects) are in the medium category, and 0% (0 subjects) are in the low

category. Therefore, it can be concluded that all subjects in this study have a medium level of work stress.

Table 3: Categorization of Work Stress Scores

Category	Guideline	Score	N	Percentage
High	$X > (\mu + 1\sigma)$	$X > 83.1$	0	0%
Medium	$\mu - 1\sigma \leq X \leq \mu + 1\sigma$	$83.1 \leq X \leq 53.9$	104	100%
Low	$X < \mu - 1\sigma$	$X < 53.9$	0	0%
Total			104	100%

Note: N: Number of subjects; μ : Hypothetical mean; σ : Hypothetical standard deviation

Normality Test

The normality test always uses the one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS-Z) technique. This test must be performed to determine whether the distribution of the measured data is normal or not. The guideline used is that if the significance value (p) $KS-Z > 0.050$, then the data distribution follows a normal distribution; if the significance value (p) $KS-Z \leq 0.050$, then the data distribution is not normal (Hadi, 2015). From the normality test results, the Counterproductive Work Behavior variable obtained $KS-Z = 0.130$ and $p < 0.001$ ($p < 0.050$), and for the Work Stress variable, $KS-Z = 0.117$ and $p = 0.001$ ($p < 0.050$). These results indicate that both the Counterproductive Work Behavior and Work Stress variables do not follow a normal distribution.

Table 4: Normality Test Results for CWB and Work Stress Variables

Variable	Kolmogorov-Smirnov	Statistic	df	Significance	Remarks
Work Stress		.117	104	.001	Not normally distributed
CWB		.130	104	.000	Not normally distributed

Correlation Test

The correlation test is conducted using the product moment correlation method (Pearson correlation) developed by Karl Pearson (Sugiyono, 2013). According to the product moment analysis (Pearson correlation), a correlation value (r_{xy}) = 0.213 was obtained with $p = 0.030$

($p \leq 0.050$), indicating a positive relationship between Work Stress and Counterproductive Work Behavior; thus, the hypothesis proposed in this study is accepted. Additionally, the determination coefficient (R^2) is 0.045, indicating that the Work Stress variable contributes effectively 4.5% to the Counterproductive Work Behavior variable. This result suggests that 95.5% is caused by other factors not studied.

Table 5: Correlation Coefficients Results

	Work Stress	CWB
Work Stress	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.030
	N	104
CWB	Pearson Correlation	.213*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.030
	N	104

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 6: Determination Coefficient Results

Model Summary

Model	R
1	.213a

a. Predictors: (Constant), Work stress

The results of this study are consistent with those of Wahyuni (2019), which showed a relationship between work stress and counterproductive work behavior, indicating a positive correlation between the two variables. These findings align with the theory proposed by Spector & Fox (2002), which suggests that counterproductive work behavior is a response to job stress. Job stress is considered an environmental influence that causes negative emotional reactions leading to CWB. Work stress or job stress is a state where an individual is unable to cope with the tasks imposed, leading to physiological, psychological, and behavioral responses, including counterproductive work behavior (Robbins & Judge, 2008).

Conclusion

Based on the research findings, a correlation coefficient (r_{xy}) of 0.213 was obtained with $p=0.030$ ($p \leq 0.050$). From these results, there is a positive relationship between work stress and Counterproductive Work Behavior. This is consistent with the hypothesis proposed, which states that higher work stress is likely to lead to higher occurrences of counterproductive work behavior, and conversely, lower work stress will result in lower occurrences of such behavior in Generation Z employees. Therefore, the hypothesis proposed in this study is accepted. The determination coefficient value (R^2) of 0.045 in this study indicates that the variable of counterproductive work behavior contributes 4.5% to the work stress variable. This result suggests that 95.5% is caused by other factors not explored in this study.

References

- Azwar, S. (2016). *Metode Penelitian*. Pustaka belajar.
- Baldonado, Arthur. M. (2018). Leadership and Gen Z: Motivating Gen Z Workers and Their Impact to the Future. *International Journal of Managerial Studies and Research*, 6(1). <https://doi.org/10.20431/2349-0349.0601008>
- Beehr, T. A., & Newman, J. E. (1978). Job Stress, Employee Health, And Organizational Effectiveness: A Facet Analysis, Model, And Literature Review 1. *Personnel Psychology*, 31(4), 665–699. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.1978.tb02118.x>
- Dangmei, J., Singh, A., & Professor, A. (2016). Understanding The Generation Z: The Future Workforce. In *South-Asian Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies (SAJMS)* (Vol. 3). <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/305280948>
- De Clercq, D., Haq, I. U., & Azeem, M. U. (2019). Time-related work stress and counterproductive work behavior. *Personnel Review*, 48(7), 1756–1781. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-07-2018-0241>
- Destriana, N. P. E., & Dewi, S. K. (2021). Pengaruh Keadilan Organisasi Dan Work Stress Terhadap Counterproductive Work Behavior. *E-Jurnal Manajemen Universitas Udayana*, 10(11), 1051. <https://doi.org/10.24843/EJMUNUD.2021.v10.i11.p01>
- Eschleman, K. J., Bowling, N. A., & LaHuis, D. (2015). The moderating effects of personality on the relationship between change in work stressors and change in counterproductive work behaviours. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 88(4), 656–678. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12090>
- Fox, S., Spector, P. E., & Miles, D. (2001). Counterproductive Work Behavior (CWB) in Response to Job Stressors and Organizational Justice: Some Mediator and Moderator

Tests for Autonomy and Emotions. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 59(3), 291–309.
<https://doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.2001.1803>

Hadi, S. (2015). *Metodologi Riset*. Pustaka Belajr.

Keskin, H., Akgün, A. E., Ayar, H., & Kayman, Ş. S. (2016). Cyberbullying Victimization, Counterproductive Work Behaviours and Emotional Intelligence at Workplace. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 235, 281–287.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2016.11.031>

Kessler, S. R., Bruursema, K., Rodopman, B., & Spector, P. E. (2013). Leadership, Interpersonal Conflict, and Counterproductive Work Behavior: An Examination of the Stressor–Strain Process. *Negotiation and Conflict Management Research*, 6(3), 180–190. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ncmr.12009>

Khafiana, N. (2022). Analisa faktor yang mempengaruhi Counterproductive Work Behaviors.

Orchidiella, Z., Mulyani, I., & Elida, T. (2023). Perilaku Konterproduktif di Tempat Kerja Pada Generasi Z (Studi Deskriptif). *INOVATIVE: Journal Of Social Science Research*, 3(6).

Rahmah, H. (2020). Hubungan Antara Al-Haya' Dengan Perilaku Kerja Kontraproduktif Pada Pegawai Negeri Sipil Di Kota Pekanbaru. *Skripsi*

Rishipal. (2019). Employee loyalty and counter-productive work behaviour among employees in the Indian hospitality sector. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, 11(4), 438–448. <https://doi.org/10.1108/WHATT-04-2019-0020>

Robbins, S. P. (2006). *Perilaku Organisasi*. Edisi Kesepuluh. PT Indeks Kelompok.

Robbins, S. P., & Judge, T. A. (2008). *Perilaku Organisasi* (R. Cahyani & A. Rosyid, Eds.; 12th ed.). Penerbit Salemba Empat.

Semita, R. (2022). Hubungan Antara Tuntutan Tugas dengan Stres Kerja pada Wanita yang Bekerja di Skin Care X.

Spector, P. E., & Fox, S. (2002). An emotion-centered model of voluntary work behavior. *Human Resource Management Review*, 12(2), 269–292.
[https://doi.org/10.1016/S1053-4822\(02\)00049-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1053-4822(02)00049-9)

Spector, P. E., Fox, S., Penney, L. M., Bruursema, K., Goh, A., & Kessler, S. (2006). The dimensionality of counterproductivity: Are all counterproductive behaviors created equal? *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 68(3), 446–460.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2005.10.005>

Subri, M. (2003). *Ekonomi Sumber Daya Manusia*. PT. Raja Grafindo Persada.

Sufren, & Nathanael, Y. (2013). *Mahir Menggunakan SPSS secara Otodidak*.

- Sugiyono. (2013). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Alfabeta.
- Toga, E., & Yoelianita, B. E. (2022). Peran Locus Of Control Sebagai Mediasi Terhadap Hubungan Kepuasan Kerja Dengan Counterproductive Work Behavior. *Jurnal Ilmiah Hospitality*, 11(2), 1349. <http://stp-mataram.e-journal.id/JIH>
- Wahyuni, R. A. (2019). Peran Stres Kerja Terhadap Perilaku Kerja Kontraproduktif Pada Anggota Polisi Satuan Sabhara Dan Satuan Reserse Kriminal Di Polres Kota Lubuklinggau.
- Weinstein, T. L., & Trickett, E. J. (2016). The development of an instrument to measure English Language Learner (ELL) teacher work stress. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 55, 24–32. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2015.12.001>