

## The Influence of Compensation and Motivation on Gen Z's Work Interests

### ABSTRACT

**Sanjung Nevi Destiny\*, Agus Purnomo Sidi**

Business and Economic Faculty, Institut Teknologi dan Bisnis Asia Malang, Malang, 65113, Indonesia

\*Corresponding author e-mail: [sanjungnevi11@gmail.com](mailto:sanjungnevi11@gmail.com)

The large number of unemployment and turnover rates in Gen Z is a problem for a company. For this reason, it is necessary to conduct a study to determine the factors that influence Gen Z's job interest in Malang. This study used accidental sampling which amounted to 115 people. This research uses a quantitative approach by utilizing multiple regression SPSS analysis tools. The results of this study indicate that simultaneously compensation and motivation have a significant effect on Gen Z's job interest. Partially, compensation has not a significant effect on Gen Z work interest. Motivation has a significant effect on Gen Z job interest. The company is advised to prioritize strategies that can enhance the motivation of Gen Z. Although compensation does not show a significant partial effect, the average compensation value remains fairly high. Therefore, the company must continue to maintain a fair and competitive compensation system so that Gen Z feels valued and recognized.

**Keywords:** Gen Z; Compensation; Motivation; Work Interest

| Submitted March 2025 | Reviewed June 2025 | Revised August 2025 | Accepted August 2025  
| DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.18860/mec-j.v9i2.32285>

### INTRODUCTION

Basic human needs are crucial for daily survival. These needs include things that must be fulfilled by each individual in order to survive, such as food, clothing, shelter, education, health, and security. Without the fulfillment of basic needs, humans will not be able to survive and develop. One way to meet basic needs is to work and earn enough income. The main benefit of working is to earn money according to your interests and to meet all these needs.

According to data from the Central Statistics Agency per February 2024 (BPS, 2024.), the Indonesian workforce starts from the age of 15 years to more than 60 years old. Along with technological advancements, various different generation groups have emerged such as Generation Z or Gen Z. The term Gen Z is now often heard and used in everyday conversations. Gen Z refers to individuals between the ages of 12 and 27 by 2025. Gen Z is known as a unique generation with characteristics that are influenced by technological developments. They place a greater focus on career development, have high ambition,

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and are able to present high technical skills and language understanding (Fajriyanti et al., 2023).

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In the ever-changing world of work, Gen Z is expected to have a significant influence on the dynamics of the future world of work. Gen Z workers will exceed the number of Baby Boomers in the full-time job sector. Unlike previous generations, Gen Z has unique values and expectations, which are shaped by their experience facing various global challenges such as economic crises and pandemics. According to Roberta et al. (2023), they are not only looking for income but also want to contribute to positive social change. Gen Z wants a flexible and balanced work environment between work and personal life and values collaborative and transparent leadership (Ramadhani, 2024).

Generation Z, otherwise known as the post-millennial generation, is a group familiar with the presence and advantages of technology. Growing up in the digital age, they can easily adapt to a variety of situations. This adaptability gives them a broad perspective, career ambition, and a tendency to think quickly. In addition, this generation wants recognition, loves freedom, appreciates differences, and pays great attention to detail (Ningtyas & Putra, 2024). Gen Z has a tendency to seek meaning and purpose in work. They tend to prefer to work on projects that have a positive impact and provide added value to the community (Putri, 2024). Gen Z prioritizes the balance between work life and personal life, and prioritizes job satisfaction over salary (Putri, 2024).

Other studies have shown that Gen Z is more attracted to organizations that offer high compensation even if career growth is low. This indicates that while career growth is important, compensation remains a major factor in attracting their interest in joining an organization (Fathyra, 2024). Gen Z places the fulfillment of basic needs as a top priority in work motivation. They believe that by fulfilling these needs, they can survive and

continue their lives (Sani et al., 2024). Technological advances play a major role in shaping Gen Z's work interests. They prefer flexible and digital-based jobs, such as positions in information technology or jobs that allow collaboration through online platforms (Ramadhani & Khoirunisa, 2025).

Mustari (2021) defines work interest as a situation where an individual chooses the extent to which he or she will be involved in a job or activity. In this context, work can be interpreted as an effort carried out by an individual with the aim of obtaining compensation for his or her survival. Shkoler & Kimura (2020) stated that work interest is the motivation to make extra efforts in working to realize ideals and goals.

Based on this understanding, this study will conduct an in-depth analysis of the interaction between compensation and motivation as well as the impacts on Gen Z work interest in Malang which includes Malang City and Malang Regency and it is hoped that the results of this study can provide valuable information for companies in designing effective strategies to attract and retain young talents in the current digital era.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### ***Compensation***

Irvani (2021) stated that compensation is all income in the form of money, direct or indirect goods that employees receive in exchange for services provided to the company. Compensation in the form of money, compensation is paid in a certain amount of currency to the employee concerned. Meanwhile, compensation is in the form of goods, which means that it is paid with goods.

Alwahdi, Muhamar, & Yusnita (2020), stated the compensation dimension are: a) Salary; wages are related to hourly wage rates. Wages are a payment base that is often used for production and maintenance workers. Salary generally applies to weekly, monthly, or annual pay rates. b). Incentive; compensation on top of the salary or wages provided by the organization. c). Allowances; benefits are health and life insurance, company-covered vacations, pension plans, and benefits related to employment relationships. d). Facilities; examples of perks are enjoyments/perks such as company cars, club memberships, dedicated parking lots or access to company aircraft that employees obtain, perks that can represent a substantial amount of compensation, especially for paid executives.

### ***Motivation***

Motivation is a driving force or force that encourages a person to do an activity with a specific goal. According to Mangkunegara (2020), basically motivational factors are grouped into two groups, namely internal factors and factors in this study state that there are 2 factors of motivation, namely: intrinsic factors and extrinsic factors.

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Intrinsic Factors are factors that come from within an employee that encourage them to excel. Intrinsic factors include; Achievement; achieved in carrying out their duties and functions, each for the skills, efforts, and opportunities owned by employees. Employee achievement is the result of work that can be achieved by a person or a group of people in an organization, in accordance with their respective authorities and responsibilities, in order to achieve organizational goals. From the description above, it is clear that the role of motivation in supporting the fulfillment of the needs of achievement is very large, or in other words, motivation has a positive relationship with work productivity.

Confession; Recognition is the state of a person who wants to be recognized for his existence and recognition given by the leader where they work, both recognition of status and work results that have been achieved in various ways, namely; Directly declaring success at their place of work, it is better to do it when there are other people, award certificates, giving gifts in the form of cash, giving medals, award letters and cash prizes, giving promotional salary increases.

Responsibility; can be interpreted as where employees can complete all their work in accordance with the rules and instructions that have been given properly. The higher the position of an employee, the greater the responsibility, but with the existing responsibilities, the employee will try to carry out all the responsibilities given by the leadership

Development of individual potential (advancement); the development of individual potential is an opportunity that employees have to advance and develop in their work, such as promotions, promotions, and others. The development of individual potential, especially related to the use of information technology, is because they realize that the development of their own potential is very important for improving performance.

Extrinsic Factors; is a factor that arises from outside the employee that is able to affect the work motivation of an employee, extrinsic factors include: Salary; Salary is a form of reward given in the form of money for the work of employees. The provision of a good salary must be adjusted to the workload of the employee himself. The provision of wages/salaries to meet minimum physical needs and minimum living needs. One of the motivations in organizations comes from leaders. Because an organization will succeed or even fail is partly determined by the leader. An expression that says that the leader is responsible for the failure to carry out a job, is an expression that occupies the position of a leader in an organization in an important position.

Job satisfaction is an assessment, feeling or attitude of employees towards their work and is related to the work environment, type of work, compensation, relationships between colleagues, social relations in the workplace and so on. It can also be said that job satisfaction is the fulfillment of the desires and needs of employees through work activities. Needs are one of the important factors to motivate employees because as human beings must have various primary and secondary needs. Employees will be

motivated if their needs are met, with the fulfillment of needs, job satisfaction will arise which has a positive impact on employee work productivity in the organization.

Working conditions; the conditions in which employees work, both in terms of physical, psychological, and applicable regulations that are felt by employees that have an impact on job satisfaction and employee productivity. The level of attendance will affect the employee's morale, with the work morale, the work will be completed faster and better.

Supervision; good supervision functions to provide direction, guide the work of employees appropriately, so that they can do their work well. Therefore, the supervisory position is very close to the employees, and always pays attention to the employees in carrying out their daily duties.

Work Interest; is a person's tendency to have a certain job or position prospect that suits their characteristics and personality (Sholihah and Natalia, 2023).

### **Hypothesis of the research**

This study examines the influence of compensation and motivation on work interest among Generation Z. The development of the hypotheses is based on theories and previous research that demonstrate the relationships among these variables.

#### ***The Relationship Between Compensation and Work Interest***

According to Robbins and Judge (2017), compensation is one of the main factors influencing employee behavior, including work interest. Fair and competitive compensation can increase job satisfaction and motivation, thereby positively affecting work interest (Mathis & Jackson, 2011). Research conducted by Sari and Hadi (2022) found that compensation significantly affects the work interest of employees in the manufacturing industry sector. Similarly, Rahman et al. (2023) reported compensation as a positive predictor of work interest among young employees.

#### ***The Relationship Between Motivation and Work Interest***

Both internal and external motivation serve as primary driving forces for performance achievement and work interest (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Motivation functions as a psychological factor that drives individuals to achieve work goals (Luthans, 2015). The study by Wijayanti et al. (2021) demonstrated that motivation has a positive and significant effect on the work interest of intern students. Furthermore, Pudjiastuti and Nugroho (2023) reported that work motivation directly impacts both work interest and employee retention.

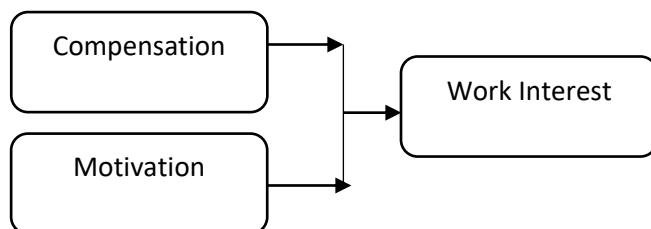
#### ***Research Hypotheses***

H1: Compensation positively and significantly affects the work interest of Gen Z.

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H2: Motivation positively and significantly affects the work interest of Gen Z.

H3: Compensation and motivation simultaneously affect the work interest of Gen Z.



**Figure 1.** Proposed Conceptual Framework

**Source:** Authors

## METHODOLOGY

This research is a quantitative research that aims to determine the influence of Compensation and Motivation variables on Gen Z's Work Interest in Malang. The population in this study is Gen Z in Malang City and Malang Regency. The population based on the 2020 Population Census data, Gen Z covers around 26% of the total population of Malang City which at that time was 843,810 people (Widianto, 2021). And for the population of Gen Z in Malang Regency, it is unknown because researchers did not find valid data.

Samples were taken using accidental sampling techniques. By determining the sample using Roscoe Theory, which is  $5 \times$  the number of indicator items, the number of respondents is 115 people. By using a Quantitative approach and collecting data from respondents who belong to Gen Z with a workforce age range of 15 years to 27 years.

Data collection was collected through the distribution of questionnaires online through Google Forms using a Likert scale, the content of the questionnaire consisted of several parts, namely Compensation which measures the respondent's perception of the compensation package received including salary, allowances and bonuses; Motivation measures the factors that motivate respondents to work, such as recognition, career development opportunities and work environment; Job Interest that measures the level of interest of respondents in their work and organization as well as the analysis tool used by the author is SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software.

**Table 1.** Variable Operational Definition Table

Variables	Indicator	Statements
Compensation	Salary and Financial Allowance	<p>I only choose companies with attractive salaries</p> <p>I only choose companies that provide annual bonuses</p> <p>I only choose companies that provide health benefits</p> <p>I only choose companies with good financial compensation</p> <p>I only choose companies that provide leave allowances</p> <p>I only choose companies that provide salaries above the Regional Minimum Wage (UMR)</p>
	Recognition and Promotion Opportunity	<p>I only choose companies that provide opportunities to get promotions</p> <p>I only choose companies that provide salary raises</p>
	Other Facilities and Benefits	<p>I only choose companies with flexibility in working hours</p> <p>I only choose companies that offer retirement plans or old-age savings</p> <p>I have an interest in working remotely</p>
Motivation	Recognition and Appreciation	I expect recognition from my boss for the work I do
	Skill Development	I look forward to the opportunity to develop skills in the workplace
	Positive Work Environment	I expect a positive work environment to influence my career decisions
	Work-life Balance	I expect a balance between work and personal life at the company
	Training and Development	I expect training in the company
Work Interests	Readiness to Work and Complete Tasks	I hope that there will be an employee skill development
		I'm ready to work
	Commitment to Company Innovation	I'm ready to complete the assigned tasks
		I am ready to achieve the company's vision and mission
		I am ready to contribute to the company's innovation
Work Interest and Enthusiasm	I have an interest in the work I do	
	I am passionate about my work	

Source(s): Data by authors

## **RESULTS**

Before conducting further analysis, the research instrument must be tested for validity and reliability to ensure that the measurement tool is appropriate and trustworthy. Validity testing is carried out by assessing how well each statement represents the construct of the measured variable. The minimum acceptable validity value is a correlation coefficient (calculated  $r$ ) that is higher than the table  $r$  value at a 0.05 significance level. If the calculated  $r$  exceeds this value, the item is considered valid and usable.

Reliability testing aims to measure the internal consistency of the instrument, which is the ability of the measurement tool to produce stable and dependable results. One common method used to assess reliability is Cronbach's Alpha, with a minimum acceptable value between 0.60 and 0.70 indicating that the instrument is reliable. Alpha values below 0.60 are generally considered inadequate.

This research instrument is a questionnaire containing 23 items and has passed the Validity Test and Reliability Test so that it is suitable to be used as a valid measuring tool. Validity Test using Pearson correlation with the help of SPSS software for windows. The results of the Validity Test of the R-calculated instrument were the highest in the Work Interest item namely "I am enthusiastic about working" and the lowest R-calculated in the Motivation item namely "I expect a positive work environment to influence my career decisions.

**Table 2.** Reliability Test Results

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Results</b>
Compensation	0.694	Reliable
Motivation	0.692	Reliable
Work Interest	0.799	Reliable

Source: Primary Data Processing, 2025

The reliability test results show that the Cronbach's Alpha values for the variables of compensation, motivation, and work interest are all greater than 0.6. Therefore, the instruments are declared reliable as valid measurement tools.

The respondents of this study amounted to 115 people with the number of items in the compensation variable as many as 11 items. The results of the description of the respondents answers for the compensation variables are as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Descriptive Statistics of Respondents' Answers

Question	Items	Answer	Percentage
Domicile	Malang City	59	51.3 %
	Malang Regency	56	48.7%
Age	15-18	22	18.8%
	19-22	36	30.8%
	23-27	57	50.4%
Gender	Man	51	44.4%
	Woman	64	55.6%
Last education	High School/Vocational School	57	49.6%
	D1/D2/D3	17	14.5%
	S1	37	32.5%
	S2	4	3.4%

Source(s): Data by authors

**Table 4.** Means Value Responds

Variables	Highest Mean	Lowest Mean	Mean
Compensation	4.56	4.10	4.37
Motivations	4.67	4.32	4.61
Work Interest	4.62	4.56	4.59

Source: Primary Data Processing, 2025

The results of descriptive statistics on the Compensation Variable show that the item with the highest score is 4.56 from the item "I only choose a company that provides a salary increase", while the lowest score is on the item "I have an interest in working remotely". Meanwhile, the average compensation variable was 4.37.

The results of descriptive statistics on the Motivation Variable show that the Motivation variable item with the highest score is 4.67 from the items "I expect a balance between work life and personal life in the company" and "I expect employee skill development", while the lowest score is in the item "I expect recognition from the boss for the work I do". Meanwhile, the average motivation variable was 4.61.

The results of descriptive statistics on the Job Interest item showed that the variable items of job interest with the highest score were 4.62 from the items "I am ready to complete the assigned task" and "I am excited about work", while the lowest score was on the items namely "I am ready to achieve the company's vision and mission" and "I am ready to contribute to the company's innovation". Meanwhile, the average variable of job interest was 4.59.

Based on the Table 5, it is known that the variable with the "high" score category is compensation while the lowest score is work interest based on the Likert scale range.

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Based on the average of respondents' answers, it shows that compensation is one of the respondents' answer scores with an average of 48.0342.

**Table 5.** Category Score Distribution Value

Variables	Average's Means	Category
Compensations	48.0342	High
Motivations	27.6325	Low
Work Interest	27.5299	Low

Source: Primary Data Processing, 2025

Classical assumption testing is an important step in multiple linear regression analysis to ensure that the model used meets the requirements. The classical assumption test consists of a normality test, a multicollinearity test, and a heteroscedasticity test. The normality test was carried out using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov One-Sample test. The results show the Asymp value. Sig. (2-tailed) is 0.200, which is greater than 0.05, so it can be concluded that the data is normally distributed. Therefore, the assumption of normality in this regression model is met.

The Multicollinearity Test uses Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). The results showed that the VIF values for the two variables, namely compensation and motivation, were 1.223, which was less than 10, and the tolerance value was greater than 0.1. This suggests that there are no symptoms of multicollinearity in the regression model.

The Heteroscedasticity test was used to determine the unevenness of residual variance between observations. The test results show that the distribution of data points does not form a certain pattern that is regular, be it wavy or widening. This indicates that there are no symptoms of heteroscedasticity in this regression model.

**Table 6.** Regression Result

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1	(Constant)	2.054	.450	4.567	.000
	Compensation	.040	.059	.669	.505
	Motivation	.555	.089	.545	6.243
					.000

a. Dependent Variable: Work\_Interest

Source: Primary Data Processing, 2025

Multiple linear regression analysis aims to determine the influence of the predictor variable on the dependent variable. The results of multiple linear regression analysis in this study aim to determine the influence of compensation and motivation variables in

influencing Gen Z work interest variables in Malang. The results of multiple linear regression predictions are described in the Table 6.

The equation of the regression can be found in Equation 1.

$$Y = 2,054 + 0,04x_1 + 0,555x_2 + e \dots \dots 1$$

1. The beta coefficient is 2.054, which indicates that if compensation and motivation do not change in each unit, the amount of Gen Z's work interest is 2.054.
2. The compensation coefficient shows a positive value of 0.040 which indicates a direct relationship between compensation and work interest, this means that if compensation is increased, the increase in Gen Z work interest is 0.040.
3. The motivation coefficient shows a positive value of 0.555 which indicates a one-way relationship between motivation and work interest, this means that if motivation is increased, the increase in Gen Z's work interest is 0.555.

**Table 7. R-Square**

**Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Error of the Durbin-Estimate	R Std. Error of the Durbin-Watson
1	.572a	.327	.315	2.557	2.146

a. Predictors: (Constant), Motivation, Compensation

b. Dependent Variable: Work\_Interest

Source: Primary Data Processing, 2025

Table 7 showed that R-square value is 0.327. This means that 32.7% of the variation in the dependent variable of Work Interest can be explained by the independent variables, namely Compensation and Motivation. The remaining 67.3% is explained by other variables.

Table 8 showed that The results of the F test show an F value of 28.233 with a significant value of 0.000 < 0.05, which indicates that compensation and motivation have a significant effect on Gen Z's work interest.

**Table 8.** F Test Result

<b>ANOVA</b>						
		<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
1	Regression	3.643	2	1.822	28.233	.000b
	Residual	7.355	114	.065		
	Total	10,998	116			

a. Dependent Variable: Work\_Interest  
b. Predictors: (Constant), Motivation, Compensation  
Source: Primary Data Processing, 2025

**Table 9.** Partial Hypothesis Test Result

<b>Model</b>	<b>Coefficientsa</b>					
	<b>Unstandardized Coefficients</b>		<b>Standardized Coefficients</b>		<b>t</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
	<b>B</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>Beta</b>			
1	(Constant) 2.054	.450			4.567	.000
	sqrt_comp .040	.059	.058		.669	.505
	sqrt_mot .555	.089	.545		6.243	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Work\_Interest  
Source: Primary Data Processing, 2025

The results of the hypothesis test show that the compensation variable has a t-value of 0.669 (t table = 1.6588) with a significant value of 0.505 > 0.05, indicating that compensation does not have a significant effect on Gen Z's work interest, thus the hypothesis is rejected. While the motivation variable has a t-value of 6.243 with a significant value of 0.000 < 0.05, indicating that motivation has a significant effect on Gen Z's work interest, thus the hypothesis is accepted.

## DISCUSSION

### ***The influence of compensation and motivation on Gen Z's work interests***

The results of this study indicate that motivation has a greater and more significant influence on Gen Z's work interest in Malang compared to compensation. Compensation and motivation as the basis for decision making in work decision making. Compensation is used as feedback in the world of work, especially for Generation Z (Gen Z). Motivation is the main foundation on which work decisions are based as life goals. This study indicates that although compensation remains important, motivational factors play a key role in shaping their work interest. This implies that organizations that want to attract and retain Gen Z talent should focus on strategies that increase motivation, such as providing development opportunities, recognition, and a positive work environment.

Quality motivation has a positive effect on career interest and work interest. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are significant driving factors to increase individual interest in choosing a particular career. This research supports Ambarwanti & Ardini ( 2019) and Kirchmayer & Fratričová (2018).

#### ***The influence of compensation on Gen Z's work interest***

The results of this study show that compensation does not have a significant effect on interest. Gen Z work in Malang. Compensation does not have a significant influence on the work interests of Generation Z (Gen Z) for several reasons related to their characteristics and expectations of the world of work.

The result In line with Anjani (2024) showed that compensation does not have a significant impact on a person's motivation to apply for a job. The study also found that Gen Z is very sensitive to compensation that is felt to be fair and in accordance with their contributions in the workplace. They want a sense of fairness in salary and benefits, and to feel appreciated for the efforts they make. Compensation that does not match expectations or is considered unfair can reduce their interest in the job and even lead to high turnover rates (Kirchmayer & Fratričová, 2018).

#### ***The influence of motivation on Gen Z's job interest***

The results of this study indicate that motivation has an effect on Gen Z's work interest in Malang. Motivation shows a significant effect on the t-test on work interest, this indicates that Gen Z's work interest in Malang is high. motivation has a significant influence on work interest because of its role as an internal drive that drives individuals to pursue work that is in line with their personal goals. The combination of high motivation and strong interest creates greater readiness and commitment in the world of work. This study supports research Ambarwanti & Ardini (2019); (Kirchmayer & Fratričová, 2018).

### **CONCLUSION**

Research on the Influence of Compensation and Motivation on Gen Z Work Interest in Malang shows that simultaneously compensation and motivation have a significant effect on Gen Z work interest. Partially, compensation does not have a significant effect on Gen Z work interest, and motivation has an effect on Gen Z work interest. The company is advised to prioritize strategies that can enhance the motivation of Gen Z, such as providing opportunities for active participation in decision-making, offering personal development opportunities through training and career development, as well as giving non-material rewards and appreciation. Although compensation does not show a significant partial effect, the average compensation value remains fairly high. Therefore, the company must continue to maintain a fair and competitive compensation system so that Gen Z feels valued and recognized.

**Limitations and recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends that future studies not only focus on the variables of compensation, motivation, and work interest but also explore other variables that may influence the work interest of Gen Z. Furthermore, it is suggested that companies shift their focus beyond merely providing financial compensation to factors that have a greater impact on Gen Z's work interest, such as creating a supportive work environment, strengthening employer branding, providing clear job descriptions, and offering career development opportunities. Companies should also keep up with the evolving world of work by enhancing access to digital skills training for Gen Z and efforts to boost their motivation. Additionally, the researcher advises future studies to collect data from a more accurate population to strengthen the validity and generalizability of the research findings.

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