



ENHANCING PRODUCTIVITY THROUGH PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES IN THE ERA OF GLOBAL TRANSFORMATION

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Literature Analysis on the Effect of Job Description Mismatch on Burnout in Generation Z

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Abstract: This study aims to examine the relationship between mismatch job description and burnout among Generation Z workers through a literature review using a descriptive-analytical approach. The phenomenon of young employees experiencing discrepancies between their job descriptions and actual work realities has led to increasing psychological pressure and burnout risks. The reviewed articles were obtained from Google Scholar, Scopus, PubMed, and ProQuest databases, limited to the 2020–2025 publication period. The review of five key studies indicates that the imbalance between job demands and job resources is the main trigger of burnout, especially when the assigned job tasks differ from what is described in the job documentation. Findings based on the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) Model and Person–Job Fit Theory emphasize that role ambiguity, role conflict, and a lack of organizational support significantly contribute to emotional exhaustion and reduced motivation among Generation Z employees. Overall, this literature review highlights the importance of developing accurate, data-based job descriptions derived from a comprehensive job analysis process to minimize mismatches and prevent burnout in the modern workplace.

Keywords: Mismatch Job Description, Burnout, Generasi Z, Job Analysis.

Introduction

Generation Z is now entering the workforce in large numbers, bringing with them characteristics and expectations that differ from previous generations. A number of studies show that workers from this generation tend to have higher levels of anxiety, stress, and burnout compared to other generations. One thing to note is the discrepancy between the job description promised or explained at the beginning of the recruitment process and the reality of the job. This discrepancy can have negative psychological effects, such as the onset of burnout symptoms.

The phenomenon of mismatch between job descriptions and work realities is becoming increasingly apparent among Generation Z. Several studies in the service sector

show a discrepancy between the jobs expected by Generation Z and the actual working conditions, which then leads to frustration and discomfort (Shan, 2025). This mismatch can take the form of tasks that do not match expectations, additional responsibilities that were not previously explained, or unclear roles. In the field of industrial and organizational psychology, conditions such as role ambiguity and role conflict are often associated with increased work pressure and the emergence of burnout. Research in Indonesia also supports this, showing that role conflict has a positive effect on burnout levels among young workers (Syamsu et al., 2020).

In the context of Industrial and Organizational Psychology (IOP), job analysis is an important basic step before developing a clear job description that is in line with work requirements. This process involves collecting, reviewing, and compiling data on the tasks, responsibilities, competencies, working conditions, and qualifications required for a position (Ordua, 2025). Studies show that a well-conducted job analysis can clarify job responsibilities and requirements and assist in the recruitment, training, and performance evaluation processes. Conversely, according to Mildawani (2023), when job descriptions are compiled without adequate data support, for example, when there are additional tasks that are not recorded, ambiguous responsibilities, or competencies that have changed, there is a risk of mismatch between the job description and the reality of the work. This condition is very much in line with what Generation Z experiences, where their work expectations are not met and ultimately contribute to an increased risk of burnout.

Burnout, characterized by emotional exhaustion, feelings of detachment from work (depersonalization), and a decreased sense of personal accomplishment, is one of the most serious problems in today's workplace. Based on the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) model, burnout occurs when job demands exceed the resources available to employees (job resources). When job descriptions do not align with reality in the field such as additional workload, unclear responsibilities, or lack of support from the organization this creates an imbalance that can trigger burnout. According to Thangal et al. (2022), the imbalance between job demands and resources is a major factor causing burnout. Therefore, they emphasize the importance for organizations to provide clarity on roles and realistic job descriptions so that employees can avoid chronic fatigue in the workplace.

In line with this, a systematic review conducted by Galanakis and Tsitouri (2022) shows that burnout often occurs when there is an imbalance between job demands and the resources available to employees. Factors such as role ambiguity, role conflict, and job insecurity have a significant influence on increasing the risk of burnout. The study also emphasizes the importance of task clarity and social support as preventive measures. These findings are in line with the characteristics of Generation Z, who generally prioritize role transparency, work–life balance, and a work environment that provides autonomy and meaning.

Other international studies also show that the mismatch between expectations and actual working conditions can increase the risk of emotional exhaustion among young workers (Van Der Heijden et al., 2024). Similar findings were also seen in a study in Thailand, which revealed that areas of work-life mismatch such as workload, sense of fairness, and work value alignment have a significant relationship with the emergence of burnout (Chaiyakunapruk & Rattanapong, 2023).

Therefore, it is important for organizations and HR practitioners to understand how job analysis and the development of appropriate job descriptions can help reduce mismatches and their psychological impact. A systematic literature review of the

relationship between job description mismatch and burnout among Generation Z workers is expected to reveal patterns, identify research gaps, and provide recommendations for creating more psychologically healthy job designs. Based on this, this study aims to conceptually and quantitatively examine the existing literature to clarify the effect of job description mismatch on burnout among Generation Z workers.

Literature Review

Recent studies consistently highlight the role of job demands, job resources, and task role alignment in predicting burnout among employees. Galanakis & Tsitouri (2022), through a systematic review of empirical research, found that an imbalance between job demands such as excessive workload and role ambiguity, and job resources including autonomy, social support, and role clarity, is a strong and consistent predictor of burnout. Their review reinforces the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) theory as a relevant framework for explaining emotional exhaustion, particularly when there is a mismatch between job expectations as stated in job descriptions and the reality of work experienced by employees.

Building on this, Van Veen et al. (2023) examined young workers aged 18–30 using latent class analysis and identified significant variations in work characteristics within this age group. Certain worker profiles especially those whose jobs require continuous interpersonal engagement demonstrated notably higher levels of emotional exhaustion. These findings suggest that task configuration and availability of job resources shape burnout vulnerability, reflecting how job descriptions and real work conditions influence psychological well-being among younger employees.

Similar conclusions were drawn by Thangal et al. (2022), who reviewed empirical evidence under the JD–R framework and reported that burnout increases when job demands exceed available resources. They emphasize the importance of improving role clarity and restructuring job descriptions to reduce burnout risk, implying that organizations need to regulate task distribution and provide sufficient support systems.

Further evidence is provided by El-Gazar et al. (2022), who investigated burnout through the Areas of Worklife model, which focuses on person job fit. Their work shows that mismatches in workload, control, and values are strongly associated with burnout. This perspective supports the idea that discrepancies between job descriptions and actual responsibilities can lead to psychological strain when employees feel disconnected from work expectations.

A more localized empirical insight comes from Hasyim & Bakri (2022), who found that task mismatch where work performed does not correspond to promised or expected job roles decreases motivation and work engagement. Over time, this condition may contribute to burnout and turnover intention if not addressed.

Their study strengthens the argument that job–task misalignment can negatively affect mental well-being and productivity, especially among younger workers who are more sensitive to clarity, fairness, and role expectation alignment.

Research Methods

This study uses a literature review method with a descriptive analytical approach. This approach was chosen because it helps researchers describe, explain, and analyze various research results discussing the relationship between job description mismatch and burnout among Generation Z workers. With this method, researchers do not collect data directly but

review previous research results to understand the patterns and trends that emerge from previous findings.

The literature was collected through several academic databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, Pubmed, and ProQuest. The search process was conducted using keywords such as “job description mismatch,” “role ambiguity,” “burnout,” “Generation Z,” and “young workers.” The articles used were limited to the period from 2020 to 2025 to ensure that the discussion remained relevant to current conditions in the world of work. The selection process involved reviewing the titles, abstracts, and contents of the articles to ensure their relevance to the research topic.

Result and Discussion

The results of a literature search of five key articles discussing job description mismatch and burnout indicate that the mismatch between job descriptions and job reality consistently contributes to increased psychological distress, especially among Generation Z workers. The most prominent pattern of all findings is that mismatch in the form of additional tasks, unclear changes in responsibilities, and non-transparent work expectations create an imbalance between job demands and job resources, as explained in the Job Demands Resources (JD–R) model.

Findings from (Saputra, 2022) indicate that role ambiguity and role conflict are the main triggers for increased emotional exhaustion. This condition arises when workers do not understand their task boundaries, performance standards, or the authority they hold. For Generation Z who tend to require clear work structures, rapid feedback, and measurable expectations this ambiguity is a stronger stressor than for previous generations. When they accept work that does not align with their job description, this creates perceptions of unfairness and uncertainty, which then trigger feelings of inability to control the work. This aligns with the findings of regarding the importance of workload, control, and value alignment as predictors of burnout.

Thus, the literature findings underscore that job description mismatch is significantly associated with burnout in Generation Z and needs to be addressed through job analysis-based job description development, more open role communication, and adequate organizational support. This is believed to reduce the risk of burnout and improve the psychological well-being of young workers.

Conclusion

This literature review shows that job description mismatch has a significant relationship with the emergence of burnout among Generation Z workers. The discrepancy between promised tasks and actual work can cause an imbalance between demands and work resources, which ultimately leads to emotional exhaustion, decreased motivation, and a tendency to leave the job. Based on the Job Demands–Resources and Person–Job Fit Theory models, conditions such as role ambiguity, role conflict, and task mismatch are the factors that contribute most to increased burnout. In addition, Generation Z, who have high expectations for role clarity, meaning of work, and work-life balance, are more vulnerable to negative impacts when faced with job mismatch. Therefore, organizations need to strengthen the job analysis process so that job descriptions are more accurate, relevant, and data-driven. This effort not only helps reduce the risk of burnout but can also improve the psychological well-being and retention of young employees in the modern workplace.

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