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**Economics and Digital Business Review**ISSN : [2774-2563](https://doi.org/10.37531/ecotal.v7i1.3676) (Online)**Burnout Among Generation Z in Creative Agencies: The Role of Work-Life Balance and Workload through Job Stress**Adilah Rahmah<sup>✉1</sup>, Ilzar Daud<sup>2</sup>, Pramana Saputra<sup>3</sup>, Rizky Fauzan<sup>4</sup>, Syahbandi<sup>5</sup><sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup> Program Studi Manajemen, Universitas Tanjungpura**Abstract**

The fast-paced work environment and project-related pressures in the creative agency sector may increase the risk of burnout among Generation Z employees. This study aimed to examine the effects of work-life balance (WLB) and workload on burnout, with job stress as a mediating variable. A quantitative approach was employed using a survey of 200 Generation Z employees working in creative agencies in Indonesia, selected through purposive sampling. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with SmartPLS 4. The results indicated that WLB had a negative and significant effect on job stress ( $\beta = -0.575$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), whereas workload had a positive and significant effect on job stress ( $\beta = 0.502$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). Workload and job stress also had positive and significant effects on burnout ( $\beta = 0.312$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ;  $\beta = 0.489$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), while WLB did not have a significant direct effect on burnout ( $\beta = -0.124$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ). Additionally, job stress mediated the relationships between WLB, workload, and burnout. These findings suggest that burnout among Generation Z employees in creative agencies is primarily shaped by job stress arising from excessive job demands, highlighting the importance of managing workload and promoting WLB to reduce burnout risk.

**Keywords:** *work-life balance; workloads; job stress; burnout; generation z; creative agencies.*

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Changes in workplace dynamics have led to an increasing focus on employee well-being, particularly among younger individuals entering the labor market. Generation Z is known to place a high priority on work-life balance, as it is closely associated with mental well-being and long-term career sustainability. This issue is particularly relevant in Indonesia, where Generation Z constitutes 27.94% of the population, or approximately 74.93 million individuals, thereby playing a strategic role in shaping the future workforce. Consistent with this, Deloitte (2024) notes that Generation Z tends to prioritize flexibility, transparency, and the integration of personal and professional life. A survey conducted by Jakpat (2024) further reveals that 74% of Generation Z respondents identify work-life balance (WLB) as the primary factor influencing their mental well-being, underscoring the critical importance of balancing occupational demands with personal life for this generation.

However, these needs often do not align with the realities of work in the creative agency sector. Creative agencies are service-based companies that provide strategic services and creative content production to support marketing and brand communication activities, such as graphic design, advertising, video production, content marketing, social media management, branding, digital advertising, and digital consulting (Putra et al., 2024; Herco Digital, 2024).

Additionally, a creative agency can be defined as a team of professionals offering marketing and advertising services to support the fulfillment of client needs and the achievement of their goals, particularly for business and brand owners (Hung & Kembaren, 2024). The work environment in creative agencies is characterized by high project dynamics, tight deadlines, repeated revisions, and elevated client expectations for innovative outcomes (Candy et al., 2025). These conditions require employees to work quickly, adaptively, and creatively under intense work pressure.

Survey by Samsung Electronics America (2023) indicates that Generation Z shows a strong interest in working in the media, creative, and entertainment industries, as the nature of such work aligns with their preferences. Generation Z highly values flexibility; therefore, one of the main reasons they are attracted to creative agencies is the perceived flexibility in work arrangements (Hung & Kembaren, 2024). However, this flexibility is not always accompanied by healthy working conditions. Research by Hung & Kembaren (2024) indicates that employees in creative agencies in Jakarta experience high job demands, including heavy workloads, time pressure, and a constant need for innovation. These pressures have been shown to significantly reduce psychological well-being and increase the risk of burnout. Supporting this, Candy et al. (2025) find that the majority of young workers in the digital content industry experience emotional exhaustion due to irregular working hours, intense project demands, and insufficient organizational support for work-life balance. These conditions suggest that the creative agency sector presents a high risk of work-related stress and burnout, particularly among Generation Z employees.

This phenomenon can be explained by the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory. According to Bakker et al. (2023), employee well-being and performance are determined by the balance between job demands and job resources. Job demands refer to aspects of work that require sustained physical or mental effort, such as time pressure, excessive workload, and role conflict. Conversely, job resources are factors that help individuals cope with these demands, including organizational support, job autonomy, and WLB strategies. An imbalance between these elements triggers a health disruption process, in which high job demands not balanced by adequate resources lead to stress, fatigue, and ultimately burnout (Bakker et al., 2023). Conversely, adequate job resources can trigger a motivation process, enhancing motivation and work engagement, thereby reducing the negative impact of job demands.

In the context of creative agencies, high job demands are reflected in operational practices characterized by strict targets, tight deadlines, frequent revisions, and increasing client expectations. Agencies often accept client requests that exceed their actual capacity in pursuit of higher revenue. Daily activities are typically dominated by efforts to meet deadlines, respond to diverse client demands, and implement revisions to deliverables. The pressure to consistently provide optimal service and meet client expectations has resulted in increasingly long working hours for agency employees (Hung & Kembaren, 2024). In Indonesia, a survey conducted by SINDIKASI (2022) among creative workers found that 51.1% of 190 respondents work more than 40 hours per week. Of these, 30.5% reported working overtime several days per week, 18.9% reported working overtime several times per month, and another 18.9% indicated that they work overtime almost every day. These findings demonstrate that excessive workload is a significant issue in the creative agency sector.

According to Maslach (2003), burnout is a psychological syndrome arising from chronic job stress, characterized by three core dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and diminished personal accomplishment. When left unaddressed, burnout can result in declining job performance, increased absenteeism, and ultimately employee turnover. In the context of creative agencies, this risk is amplified by the project-based nature of work, which demands sustained high intensity over defined periods without the assurance of long-term workload stability.

One of the key factors in reducing stress and burnout is WLB. A GoodStats (2023) survey revealed that 37.2% of Generation Z workers quit their jobs due to a lack of WLB. A study by

Dudija & Putri (2025) found that WLB negatively affects burnout by reducing work-related stress. When employees have sufficient time and support to manage their personal lives, they tend to experience lower levels of stress and are better able to maintain optimal performance. Within the JD-R framework, this suggests that WLB functions as a job resource that can counterbalance the negative effects of job demands, such as workload.

Workload is defined as the number of tasks or responsibilities that an employee must complete within a specific period (Vanchapo, 2020). A GoodStats (2024) survey indicates that 26% of Generation Z members quit their jobs due to excessive workloads. When workload demands exceed an individual's capacity, this situation not only causes stress but also affects performance and mental health. Research findings by Purwanti et al. (2022) and Alyaa et al. (2024) indicate that workload influences burnout both directly and indirectly through job stress. Workload may therefore be understood as a primary job demand that substantially elevates the risk of burnout among Generation Z workers.

Job stress serves as a key mediating variable in explaining the relationship between WLB, workload, and burnout. The findings of Dudija & Putri (2025) indicate that workload influences burnout both directly and through job stress as a mediating variable. Similar results were found in the study by Alyaa et al. (2024), which showed that workload and work-family conflict can trigger stress that ultimately increases negative impacts on both individuals and organizations. These findings demonstrate that job stress is a psychological mechanism that explains how high work demands and low WLB can lead to burnout.

This phenomenon highlights the urgency of research on the relationship between WLB, workload, job stress, and burnout among Generation Z workers in the creative agency sector. Although several previous studies have addressed similar topics, most have focused on the manufacturing sector, state-owned enterprises, or conventional organizations (Purwanti et al., 2022; Alyaa et al., 2024; Lestari & Setyaningrum, 2024). Studies specifically highlighting the creative agency context remain relatively limited, even though this sector has unique job characteristics, such as high innovation pressure, irregular working hours, and continuous demands for creativity (Hung & Kembaren, 2024; Situmorang et al., 2024). Furthermore, Generation Z holds different work values and expectations compared to previous generations (Aulia et al. (2025) suggesting that findings from other sectors may not be fully applicable. Therefore, this study is essential to better understand how WLB and workload influence burnout through work-related stress as a mediating variable, particularly among Generation Z employees in creative agencies.

Based on the above discussion, this study aims to analyze the effects of WLB and workload on burnout, with job stress as a mediating variable, among Generation Z workers in creative agencies. This study is expected to provide a theoretical contribution to the literature on burnout from the perspective of the JD-R Theory, particularly in the context of young workers in the creative industry. Practically, the findings are expected to serve as a reference for creative agency management in formulating workload management strategies, strengthening organizational support, and designing more effective WLB policies to foster a healthy, productive, and sustainable work environment.

## METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design to analyze the effects of WLB and workload on burnout, with job stress as a mediating variable. The quantitative approach was selected for its capacity to explain causal relationships among variables in a measurable manner. Data analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) via SmartPLS 4. This method was chosen because it can test both direct and indirect (mediation) relationships among latent variables, does not require normally distributed data, and is suitable for studies with small to medium sample sizes (Hair et al., 2021).

The population of this study consists of Generation Z workers employed at creative

agencies in Indonesia. As the exact population size is unknown, a non-probability sampling technique with a purposive sampling method was employed. This technique was selected to ensure that the respondents aligned with the study's characteristics (Sugiyono, 2023). The respondent criteria were Generation Z workers employed at creative agencies in Indonesia, aged 21 to 28 years, with a minimum employment duration of three months. Based on the recommendations of Hair et al. (2021), the minimum sample size for SEM-PLS is ten times the number of indicators in the model. As this study includes 12 indicators, the minimum required sample size was 120 respondents. However, to enhance analytical robustness and account for potential invalid responses, the sample size was set at 200 respondents.

Data were collected through an online survey administered via Google Forms and distributed through social media platforms. The research instrument employed a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questionnaire was designed to measure the variables of work-life balance (WLB), workload, work-related stress, and burnout. The collected data were analyzed in two stages: evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) and evaluation of the structural model (inner model). The outer model evaluation assessed construct validity and reliability using factor loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Composite Reliability (CR), and Cronbach's Alpha. Meanwhile, the inner model evaluation examined the relationships among latent variables using path coefficients,  $R^2$  values, and significance testing through the bootstrapping method at a 5% significance level ( $p < 0.05$ ). Additionally, mediation analysis was conducted to assess the indirect effects of WLB and workload on burnout through work-related stress.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Of the total 200 respondents, the largest proportion were 22 years old (20.2%). In terms of gender, the majority of respondents were female (65.5%). Regarding marital status, most respondents were unmarried (76.5%). Based on the highest level of education attained, the majority held a bachelor's degree (75.5%). In terms of residence, the largest group of respondents resided in Java, accounting for 84 individuals (42.0%). With respect to length of employment, most respondents had been working for 6–12 months (40.5%), and with regard to job position, the majority were employed as Creative Staff (57.5%).

### Outer Model Measurement

The results of the suitability, validity, and reliability tests are as follows:

**Table 1.** Convergent Reliability and Validity Test

Variables	Indicator	Outer Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
Work-Life Balance	WLB1	0.941	0.930	0.956	0.877
	WLB2	0.928			
	WLB3	0.942			
Workload	WL1	0.954	0.944	0.964	0.899
	WL2	0.936			
	WL3	0.955			
Job Stress	JS1	0.915	0.909	0.943	0.845
	JS2	0.925			
	JS3	0.919			
Burnout	BO1	0.919	0.914	0.946	0.854
	BO2	0.918			
	BO3	0.935			

Source: Processed by the author, 2025

The results of the measurement model testing indicate that all constructs in this study demonstrated excellent validity and reliability, rendering them suitable for further analysis. The WLB variable exhibited outer loadings ranging from 0.928 to 0.942, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.930, Composite Reliability (CR) of 0.956, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of 0.877. These values indicate that the indicators robustly and consistently represent the construct. The Workload variable showed outer loadings between 0.936 and 0.955, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.944, CR of 0.964, and AVE of 0.899. Furthermore, the Job Stress variable demonstrated outer loadings ranging from 0.915 to 0.925, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.909, CR of 0.943, and AVE of 0.845. The Burnout variable exhibited outer loadings between 0.918 and 0.935, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.914, CR of 0.946, and AVE of 0.854. All outer loading values exceeded 0.70, and the Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, and AVE values surpassed the recommended minimum thresholds. Consequently, it can be concluded that all constructs in the research model possess adequate measurement quality and conform to the standards of SEM-PLS research.

**Table 2.** Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
WLB	4,057	0.825	200
Workload	2,043	0.964	200
Job Stress	2,070	0.898	200
Burnout	1,950	0.813	200

*Source: Processed by the author, 2025*

The descriptive statistics indicate that the WLB variable obtained the highest mean score ( $M = 4.057$ ;  $SD = 0.825$ ), suggesting that respondents generally perceived their balance between work and personal life to be satisfactory. In contrast, the workload ( $M = 2.043$ ;  $SD = 0.964$ ), job stress ( $M = 2.070$ ;  $SD = 0.898$ ), and burnout ( $M = 1.950$ ;  $SD = 0.813$ ) variables exhibited lower mean scores. However, it is important to note that the indicators for workload, job stress, and burnout were formulated as positive statements and underwent reverse coding prior to analysis; therefore, lower mean scores cannot be directly interpreted as indicating low actual conditions. These findings suggest that although respondents tend to maintain favorable WLB, the dynamic, project-based nature of work in creative agencies—characterized by deadline pressure—still carries the potential to generate workload, job stress, and burnout. Thus, relatively maintained WLB can be understood as a protective factor that helps respondents manage job demands, yet it does not entirely eliminate the potential emergence of work pressure or psychological exhaustion.

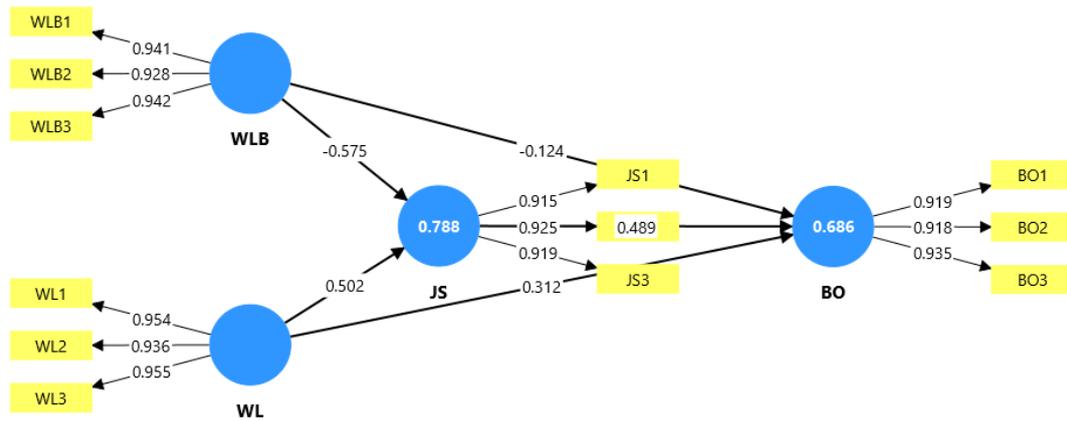


Figure 1. Path outer model

**Discriminant Validity**

The analysis was conducted using cross-loading and the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) to assess the specificity of each construct in the model.

**Table 3.** Cross Loadings

	WL	BO	JS	WLB
WL1	0.954	0.675	0.697	-0.373
WL2	0.936	0.636	0.662	-0.334
WL3	0.955	0.684	0.652	-0.306
BO1	0.615	0.919	0.739	-0.564
BO2	0.644	0.918	0.749	-0.565
BO3	0.685	0.935	0.738	-0.544
JS1	0.602	0.673	0.915	-0.691
JS2	0.649	0.740	0.925	-0.678
JS3	0.694	0.794	0.919	-0.709
WLB1	-0.335	-0.589	-0.735	0.941
WLB2	-0.350	-0.558	-0.688	0.928
WLB3	-0.316	-0.547	-0.693	0.942

Source: Processed by the author, 2025

The results of the discriminant validity assessment using the cross-loading method indicate that all indicators met the established criteria for discriminant validity. The indicators for the Workload variable (WL1-WL3) demonstrated the highest loadings on their respective construct, ranging from 0.936 to 0.955, compared to their cross-loadings on other constructs. Similarly, the indicators for the Burnout variable (BO1-BO3) exhibited the highest loadings on the Burnout construct, with values between 0.918 and 0.935. The indicators for the Job Stress variable (JS1-JS3) also showed the highest loadings on their intended construct, ranging from 0.915 to 0.925. Furthermore, the indicators for the WLB variable (WLB1-WLB3) loaded most strongly on the WLB construct, with values between 0.928 and 0.942, relative to their loadings on other constructs. These findings confirm that each indicator correlates more strongly with its corresponding construct than with any other construct in the model. Therefore, it can be concluded that the measurement model satisfies the requirements for discriminant validity, and each construct is conceptually distinct, with no significant measurement overlap among the variables.

**Table 4.** Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT)

	WL	BO	JS	WLB
WL				
BO	0.754			
JS	0.761	0.878		
WLB	0.380	0.654	0.819	

Source: Processed by the author, 2025

The discriminant validity assessment using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) method indicates that all constructs in this study satisfied the required discriminant validity criteria, as evidenced by all inter-construct HTMT values falling below the recommended threshold of 0.90. Specifically, the HTMT value between Workload and Burnout was 0.754, between Workload and Job Stress was 0.761, and between Burnout and Job Stress was 0.878. The HTMT value between WLB and Workload was 0.380, between WLB and Burnout was 0.654, and between WLB and Job Stress was 0.819. The highest observed value was recorded for the Burnout–Job Stress relationship at 0.878. However, this remained below the prescribed threshold, confirming that each construct in the model maintains clear conceptual boundaries with no substantial measurement overlap across variables. It can therefore be concluded that the measurement model satisfies the criteria for discriminant validity and is suitable for progression to the structural model evaluation stage.

### Inner Model Measurement

**Table 5.** R Square Value

Variables	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Burnout	0.686	0.681
Job Stress	0.788	0.786

Source: Processed by the author, 2025

The results of the structural model evaluation indicate that the R-squared value for the burnout variable is 0.686, with an adjusted R-squared of 0.681. This implies that burnout is explained by WLB, workload, and job stress by 68.6%, while the remaining 31.4% is influenced by other factors outside the research model. Furthermore, the R-squared value for the job stress variable is 0.788, with an adjusted R-squared of 0.786. This indicates that job stress is explained by WLB and workload by 78.8%, while the remaining 21.2% is attributable to other variables not included in the model. These R-squared values demonstrate that the research model possesses strong explanatory power in accounting for the endogenous variables under investigation.

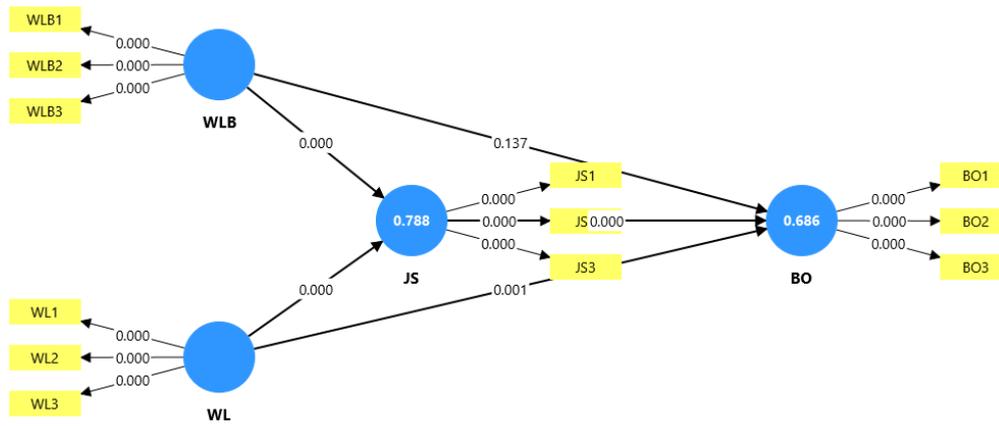


Figure 2. Path Inner Model (Bootstrapping)

Tabel 6. Hypothesis Test

	Path	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ( O/STDEV )	P values	Results
H1	WLB -> JS	-0.575	-0.572	0.048	12.044	0.000	Accepted
H2	WL -> JS	0.502	0.504	0.047	10.659	0.000	Accepted
H3	WLB -> BO	-0.124	-0.126	0.083	1.486	0.137	Rejected
H4	WL -> BO	0.312	0.314	0.098	3.187	0.001	Accepted
H5	JS -> BO	0.489	0.486	0.109	4.498	0.000	Accepted
H6	WLB -> JS -> BO	-0.281	-0.277	0.065	4.344	0.000	Accepted
H7	WL -> JS -> BO	0.246	0.245	0.062	3.951	0.000	Accepted

Source: Processed by the author, 2025

The findings indicate that WLB exerts a significant negative effect on job stress ( $t = 12.044$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ), thereby supporting H1. These results suggest that workers' capacity to manage the balance between professional demands and personal life contributes to a reduction in experienced psychological stress. WLB is conceptualized as a condition in which individuals are able to allocate time, energy, and role engagement proportionally between work and personal life (Greenhaus et al., 2003). When this balance is achieved, individuals tend to exercise greater control over work demands, thereby reducing their susceptibility to job stress. These findings are consistent with prior research demonstrating that WLB exerts a negative effect on job stress, wherein a well-maintained balance functions as a psychological resource for coping with work-related pressure (Jessica et al., 2023; Dube & Ndfirepi, 2024). In the context of creative agencies, WLB represents a critical factor in supporting workers' ability to cope with fast-paced work rhythms and dynamic project demands.

The second hypothesis proposed that workload has a positive and significant effect on job stress. The results support this relationship ( $t = 10.659$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ), leading to the acceptance of H2. This finding suggests that an increase in job demands that must be completed within a specific timeframe can elevate employees' levels of job stress. Workload is defined as the quantity and complexity of tasks that demand an individual's physical and mental effort in performing their job (Vanchapo, 2020). When workload is not balanced with an individual's capacity, this situation has the potential to cause psychological pressure. These results are consistent with the findings of Dudija & Putri (2025) and Kelly et al. (2020), who state that workload is one of the primary factors triggering job stress. In a creative agency environment, pressure from targets, work revisions, and tight deadlines further strengthens the relationship between workload and job

stress.

The results of the third hypothesis test indicate that WLB does not have a significant direct effect on burnout ( $t = 1.486$ ;  $p = 0.137$ ); therefore, H3 is rejected. This finding indicates that although employees may have relatively good levels of WLB, this condition does not necessarily directly reduce burnout levels. Burnout is understood as a state of emotional and psychological exhaustion that develops as a result of prolonged job stress (Maslach, 2003). Thus, burnout does not occur instantly but is an accumulation of continuous work-related pressure. These results align with the views of Kelly et al. (2020) and Leone et al. (2024), who state that the factors triggering burnout are generally chronic and are not influenced by just one aspect of WLB. Therefore, WLB does not play a direct role in reducing burnout but rather operates through other psychological mechanisms that are more closely related to the process of burnout formation.

The fourth hypothesis proposed that workload has a positive and significant effect on burnout. The results support this relationship ( $t = 3.187$ ;  $p = 0.001$ ), leading to the acceptance of H4. This finding suggests that a high workload can deplete employees' physical and psychological energy and increase the risk of burnout. A workload that persists continuously without being balanced by adequate recovery has the potential to cause emotional exhaustion and a decline in work motivation (Vanchapo, 2020). These results are consistent with the findings of Kelly et al. (2020) and Selvia et al. (2025), who state that workload is a primary determinant of burnout. In the context of creative agencies, the intensity of work and high demands on work outcomes further reinforce the potential for burnout among employees.

The fifth hypothesis is supported, as job stress was found to exert a positive and significant effect on burnout ( $t = 4.498$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ), leading to the acceptance of H5. These findings confirm that burnout is a consequence of job stress that is inadequately managed and persists over an extended period. Job stress is conceptualized as a psychological response that arises when occupational demands exceed an individual's coping capacity (Beehr & Newman, 1978). When this condition is sustained, individuals are at risk of developing burnout, characterized by emotional exhaustion and diminished work engagement (Maslach, 2003). These results are consistent with the findings of Erlinda & Sawitri (2025), who demonstrate that job stress plays a significant role in elevating burnout, particularly in high-pressure occupations.

The results of the sixth hypothesis test indicate that job stress mediates the effect of WLB on burnout ( $t = 4.344$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ), thus supporting H6. This finding suggests that WLB does not directly reduce burnout but operates indirectly by first reducing job stress. In this context, WLB functions as a psychological resource that enables individuals to manage work pressure, thereby preventing the development of job stress that ultimately leads to burnout (Greenhaus et al., 2003). These results are consistent with the findings of Dudija & Putri (2025) and Shafariah & Gofur (2025), which demonstrate that job stress acts as a mediating variable in the relationship between WLB and burnout. This also explains the non-significant direct effect of WLB on burnout observed in H3.

The seventh hypothesis is supported, as job stress was found to mediate the effect of workload on burnout ( $t = 3.951$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ), leading to the acceptance of H7. These findings suggest that elevated workload contributes to increased burnout through the mechanism of heightened job stress. Workload, as a form of job demand, has the potential to induce job stress which, if sustained over time, may develop into burnout (Vanchapo, 2020; (Maslach, 2003). These results are consistent with the studies of Purwanti et al. (2022) and Dudija & Putri (2025), who identify job stress as the primary mechanism mediating the effect of workload on burnout. In the context of creative agencies, the sustained intensity of work-related pressure further reinforces the role of job stress as a critical pathway to burnout.

## CONCLUSION

This study aims to examine the effects of WLB and workload on burnout, with job stress as a mediating variable, among Generation Z workers in creative agencies in Indonesia. The research is grounded in the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory. The findings indicate that all

proposed hypotheses were supported, with the exception of H3. WLB was found to reduce job stress, while workload contributed to increased job stress. In addition, both workload and job stress were shown to increase burnout. However, WLB did not demonstrate a significant direct effect on burnout, leading to the rejection of H3. These results suggest that WLB balance does not function as a direct protective factor against burnout among Generation Z employees in creative agencies. Instead, its influence appears to operate indirectly through specific psychological mechanisms more closely associated with the dynamics of work-related pressure.

The rejection of H3 simultaneously reinforces the acceptance of H6, which posits the mediating role of job stress in the relationship between WLB and burnout. Within the framework of the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Theory, these findings suggest that burnout is primarily shaped through a health impairment process, whereby job demands elevate job stress, which in turn drives burnout. As a job resource, WLB is insufficient to directly prevent burnout; however, it proves effective when it first operates to reduce job stress. This implies that in the context of creative agencies characterized by high project intensity and a fast-paced work environment, the presence of WLB alone is insufficient to eliminate burnout when work pressure remains elevated. Accordingly, the protective effect of WLB is indirect and contingent upon its capacity to mitigate job stress. Job stress, therefore, serves as the primary intervening mechanism through which both WLB and workload contribute to burnout within this research model.

The practical implications of this study underscore the importance of organizational strategies aimed at preventing burnout through the management of job stress and job demands. Management in creative agencies should ensure realistic workload allocation by implementing balanced project planning, limiting overtime, and managing client revisions to prevent work pressure from escalating into chronic stress. Furthermore, WLB policies must be consistently enforced through clear working hour limits, measured work flexibility, and managerial support that facilitates employees' psychological recovery. This study has limitations due to its cross-sectional design, reliance on self-report questionnaires, and its focus on the creative agency sector in Indonesia. Therefore, future research is encouraged to test this model in other industrial sectors, include respondents with a minimum of one year of work experience, and incorporate additional variables such as perceived organizational support or leadership style.

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