



# Increasing Productivity of Gen Z Employees: The Role of Flexible Work Arrangements and Participative Style



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**Orientation:** Employee productivity is affected by various social and psychological variables. Flexible work arrangements (FWAs) and participative styles are expected to influence employee productivity.

**Research purpose:** This study examined the effect of FWA and participative styles on employee productivity, specifically of Generation Z (Gen Z) employees. It also examines the mediating role of emotional engagement on the effect of FWA and participative styles on employee productivity.

**Motivation for the study:** Gen Z workers have specific work-behavioural characteristics, including freedom and flexibility. This study provides empirical evidence of factors that increased the productivity of Gen Z employees by examining the influence of FWA and participative style.

**Research approach/design and method:** This study was designed as explanatory. Data were collected using a survey involving 259 employees by purposive sampling technique. The data were analysed by the Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method with the IBM AMOS 26 program.

**Main findings:** Flexible work arrangement, participative style and emotional engagement affect employee productivity in direct and indirect relationships. However, there is no significant effect of FWAs on emotional engagement.

**Practical/managerial implications:** Organisations need to develop FWA systems and more employee participation at work. It is expected to strengthen emotional engagement in their organisation and increase their productivity indirectly.

**Contribution/value-add:** The study took Gen Z as the object of this research to support the assumption that this generation prefers a flexible way of working but still supports their productivity achievements.

**Keywords:** flexible work arrangement (FWA) systems; participative style; emotional engagement; employee productivity; Gen Z.

## Introduction

The world of work is currently faced with volatile conditions and experiencing many changes caused by various factors, some of which are because of the pandemic and also the large number of Generation Z (Gen Z) who are entering a work environment. As many as 3.2 billion or 41% of the world's population, are Gen Z (Singh et al., 2016). Gen Z plays an essential role in shaping the economy. The presence of Gen Z certainly brings fresh wind and different work trends. Gen Z, who was born in the Internet era, certainly has a different perspective regarding the world of work when compared to the Baby Boomer Generation and Generation X (Subandowo, 2021). As a generation born when information technology developed rapidly, it is no wonder that Gen Z has prominent characteristics that distinguish it from previous generations. Gen Z is reliable in mastering information technology, so they were more familiar and creative in using technology. It covers the shortcomings of the previous generation, who were still unfamiliar or needed help to understand how to use the technology. With its character as a tech-savvy generation, it is no wonder that Gen Z also chooses companies supported by technology to help get the job done (Saputra et al., 2021). The fact that Gen Z has also indirectly created a positive impact, added value and quality for the progress of a company (Chillakuri., 2020).

These conditions have a significant influence on the mindset and behaviour of Gen Z in the world of work today. Gen Z, an ambitious and forward-thinking generation, has a different

view of looking for work (Mahmoud et al., 2021). Unlike previous generations, several things make Gen Z motivated at work, including the need for flexibility. Gen Z needs flexibility at work, such as the opportunity to work from home or more hours (Bragas et al., 2022). If they do not gain this flexibility, they may feel unmotivated. Gen Z also chooses jobs that can make them grow. Gen Z likes freedom, setting their own goals and aspirations at work, finding ways to be themselves in finding happiness, and it makes Gen Z adaptive and efficient at work. Gen Z is very concerned about development and progress in their career; if they do not get this, they are courageous enough to change jobs (Lorgulescu, 2016; Yacine & Karjaluoto, 2022). They can change jobs and immediately move to companies with higher growth opportunities (Zen, 2023).

According to the survey conducted by Deloitte Global (2022), most Gen Z employees (63%) prefer a combination work pattern. Furthermore, as much as 19% of Gen Z say they prefer to work in the office, while 12% said that they prefer to work remotely. The survey revealed that Gen Z wants flexibility in how and when they work. They want companies to offer flexible working hours, which is considered as essential to achieve work-life balance. They say that remote working can be more productive and provide more time to spend with family (Hyman, 2022; Tarigan et al., 2022).

Many organisations invest heavily in building systems that make their Gen Z employees feel comfortable and passionate. Organizational leaders usually subjectively assess employee productivity and performance from their presence at work during working hours. Leaders may need to put aside the notion that spending time at the office will demonstrate a high work ethic or productivity. Will the many work hours spent at the office automatically result in a better product or service? What if employees spend less time at the office but produce the same results? Can organisational leaders support these kinds of situations and conditions? (Schroth, 2019).

To increase Gen Z productivity, organisations need to establish some programmes. The organisational factor is one of the motivators for increasing Gen Z productivity because employees spend most of their time in the office (Effendi & Anindita, 2022). Employee productivity can be increased by regulating and managing the variables within the organisational factors, which include participation and a flexible work management system (Thejovathi & Krishnan, 2020). Participation is defined as how far an employee can be involved in types of work that are strategic, problem-solving and evaluative (Spreitzer, 1995). Employee engagement is perceived as a psychological condition or feeling, emotional attachment to the organisation, a sense of pride and willingness to support the organisation, an employee's suitability for the organisation, and motivation and willingness to put in extra effort (Effendi & Anindita, 2022). Meanwhile, a flexible work arrangement (FWA) system is defined as allowing employees to make choices about when, where and how they are involved in work-related projects or tasks. An FWA system raises the

perception that employees have the freedom to complete their work in the way they think is most suitable, giving employees flexibility and confidence not to feel limited in how they do or when to complete tasks and solve problems (Kroucher & Kelliher, 2005).

The study conducted by Supriatna et al. (2020) found the influence of an FWA system on employee productivity. In the case of challenging conditions such as a pandemic outbreak, flexible working arrangements can increase a worker's perceived productivity (Supriatna et al., 2020). The facility that allows employees to manage their personal and professional lives with ease using their preferred work method promotes employee satisfaction and, in turn, increases employee productivity (Hashmi et al., 2023). Flexible work-home arrangements indirectly affect employee productivity by increasing their job satisfaction (Ramos & Prasetyo, 2020). However, Irwan and Sari (2021) found no influence of the FWA system on employee productivity.

In addition, there have been no studies that specifically examine the influence of employee participation on their productivity individually. The study conducted by Phipps et al. (2013), Charles et al. (2021) and Majumder (2022) examined the impact of employee involvement on productivity at the organisational level. In addition, other research focuses on examining the impact of active employee participation on improving performance at the organisational level (Qi & Wang, 2018; Tortorella et al., 2021). Furthermore, of all the studies that review the relationship between FWAs and employee participation in employee productivity, none has specifically tested it in the Gen Z context.

Based on these research gaps, we aimed this study to examine the effect of participation and FWA systems on employee productivity. Additionally, we examined the effect of the mediating role of emotional engagement on increased employee productivity resulting from participation and an FWA system. We tested these issues by taking research objects, namely employees who fall into the Gen Z category. The novelty of this research lies in its contribution to the practical world, especially in HR management for industries that employ employees belonging to the Z generation, so that they can increase their productivity by understanding systems and work patterns that are appropriate to their character.

## Literature review

### Flexible work arrangement systems

Flexible work arrangement systems are schedules that allow employees to adjust flexible work hours according to their responsibilities (Hyland & Rowsome, 2005). It is often defined as the level of freedom an employee has in planning a job, including determining the time and place for completion of the work as required by the organisation. Flexible work arrangement systems allow employees to have the freedom to complete their work without strict time and place restrictions. Flexible work arrangement systems allow employees the flexibility to manage workloads,

thereby minimising stress, fatigue and conflict (Hicks & Klimoski, 1981). This system will increase their work motivation and allow them to do other things without hampering their primary tasks. (Shockley & Allen, 2012). Flexible working hours provide a wider time allocation for work and personal needs. Examples of flexible work management systems include flexi-time, job sharing, part-time, home working and compressed hours (Eaton, 2003; Kossek et al., 2006).

Flexible work arrangement systems are a work structure that changes regular work times and workplaces in a way that the company and employees can manage and predict. Meanwhile, flexibility in the workplace includes working from home or a location far from the workplace (Halpern, 2005). Aspects of flexibility that can be applied through this flexible working hour arrangement include workplace aspects. This aspect does not require workers to do work from an office or a place that is regularly used as a work location, and aspects of working time give freedom for workers, with the company's approval, to regulate working hours outside the fixed working hours that apply in the company (Fernandez et al., 2005). Flexible work arrangement systems are a form of FWA system practice where employees are directed to work a certain number of hours with greater flexibility or to work less than the working hours set in the office (Skinner & Pocock, 2011).

### Participation style

Participation is a process by which decision-making, problem-solving and action planning are shared and carried out jointly by employees and management. Participation is the mental and emotional involvement of employees in organisational situations that encourages them to contribute to organisational goals and share responsibility for the organisation (Heller et al., 1998). Important ideas for participation are involvement, contribution and responsibility (Cox & Marchington, 2006).

Participation affects employee behaviour by involving employees directly in the ongoing process; therefore, they are committed to participatory results through a sense of belonging that stimulates personal involvement. Another effect is to allow employees to exchange and get information about ongoing activities and the results of participation (Van Yperen et al., 1999).

There are four processes that affect participation. Firstly, sharing information by managing and disseminating information can be a key strategy for organisations (Strauss, 1998). Secondly, continuous training is needed for employees to stay relevant and motivated. Thirdly, it involves employees in the decision-making process. It provides opportunities for employees to handle routine tasks, which allows leaders to observe and evaluate employee performance and handle more complex tasks. Fourthly, giving rewards (Delbridge & Whitfield, 2001) that provide opportunities for advice, ideas, achievements, rewards, responsibility and personal growth (Dachler & Wilpert, 1978).

### Emotional engagement

Emotional engagement is a willingness to do more (Leiter & Baker, 2010). Emotional engagement includes everything organisations do concerning employee contributions and behaviour regarding employee performance, employee voluntary efforts, organisational citizenship behaviour and organisational commitment (Strom et al., 2014). Emotional engagement is when an employee is fully connected physically, cognitively and emotionally with their work role (Argawal, 2014).

Employees who are engaged with their organisation will internalise the goals and aspirations of the organisation as their own goals and objectives. There are many important things in an employee's emotional engagement, including a sense of belonging to a job and organisation, energy that is focused on completing work, having personal initiative in completing work, ability to adapt to work and organisation, always striving for the best, consistency and focus on organisational goals (Anthony et al., 2017; Kim & Park, 2017; Storm et al., 2014).

Studies show that one of the drivers of emotional engagement is intrinsic motivation, which includes feelings of meaning, feelings of choosing, feelings of competence and feelings of progress. The feeling of meaning is the basic force, passion or passion that drives our strongest emotions (Knight et al., 2016). Competent employees do work that can be performed well while continuing to try and find the best way. Meanwhile, other research shows several factors driving emotional engagement, including culture, indicators of success, priority setting, communication, innovation, talent acquisition, talent enhancement and the business cycle (Bakker et al., 2012; Soane et al., 2012).

### Employee productivity

Bakker (2012) states that productivity results from a process that can be achieved by a person or group of people in an organisation to achieve organisational goals within a certain period based on predetermined terms or agreements. Productivity means a comparison between the results achieved (output) and the overall resources used (input) (Barbier et al., 2013). Productivity has two dimensions; firstly the effectiveness, which leads to achieving targets in terms of quality, quantity and time (Baard et al., 2014; Demeoruti & Cropanzano, 2010). Secondly the efficiency associated with comparing inputs with their actual use or how the work is carried out (Berkery et al., 2017).

### The influence of flexible work arrangement system on emotional engagement on productivity of Gen Z employees

Flexible work arrangements are important for organisations and provide positive results (Hyatt & Coslor, 2018). This study shows a positive effect of FWAs on emotional engagement. Flexible work arrangements can lure employees into being more responsible for their jobs. Flexible work

arrangements will increase the sense of job ownership. Research shows that organisations that employ flexible work-management systems record low absenteeism and resignation rates (Berkery et al., 2017).

The advantages of an FWA system include increased employee morale and engagement with the organisation. This policy shows that organisations that give trust to employees will make them feel more valuable and proud to be part of the company. An FWA system also decreases absenteeism and turnover. When employees are given flexibility in managing time, this will automatically reduce the number of employee absences and the absence of the desire to move to another organisation (Kotey, 2017).

The FWA system encourages employees to have work initiatives or come up with creative ideas in carrying out activities, being responsible for work and not depending on orders from superiors (Kropf, 1999). Employees allowed to choose their work hours tend to be more engaged and productive (Stavrou, 2005).

The system of FWAs is seen as having an important role in job comfort, tranquillity and security. Creating comfortable working conditions will help employees to work actively so that productivity will increase. The benefits of an FWA system include increased productivity, decreased employee stress levels resulting from traffic jams, reduced conflict between employees (Smith & Wedderburn, 1998), improvement in employee work quality, motivating employees because of the freedom to determine how or to work according to the individual (Coenen & Kok, 2014; Dec & Scheibl, 2001; Moen et al., 2016). Thus, we propose the hypotheses as follows:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Flexible work arrangement systems have a positive effect on emotional engagement.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Flexible work management systems have a positive effect on employee productivity.

### The influence of participation style on emotional engagement and productivity of Gen Z employees

Participation increases emotional engagement by helping employees to understand and clarify the flow to goals. According to the Path-Goal Leadership Model (Northouse, 2016), a better understanding of the relationship between paths and goals will result in a greater sense of responsibility for achieving goals. Then, the result is better emotional engagement. Participation increases the emotional engagement of employees because they get autonomy and a feeling that they are contributing to organisational success (Park, 2012). Participation can lead to better decisions because employees closer to the issue or problem have input or information about the decision (Bakan & Money, 2004; Summer & Haymand, 2005).

Participation provides a variety of benefits, direct and intangible. By employee participation, in particular, the organisation gets higher and better-quality output. Employees

often make suggestions for improvements in both quality and quantity. Participation tends to increase emotional engagement because employees feel more accepted and involved. Their self-esteem, job satisfaction and cooperation also increased (Van Yperen et al., 1999).

Research shows that the most effective way to engage employees is to focus on higher needs by giving employees greater control, responsibility and policies that make their work more meaningful (Osborne & Hammoud, 2017). When employees feel their work contributes to an important value to the organisation, it affects responsibility on how effectively he or she is doing his or her job (Cox & Suter, 2009). Employees who participate in organisational decisions feel part of a team with the same goal, so their self-esteem and creativity potential increase. Participation will increase the quantity and quality of the product or service and reach a more effective decision (Pareira & Osburn, 2007; Torika & Looise, 2010). Participation will result in engaging all employees to achieve organisational success. Participation helps organisations improve their performance and productivity and adopt new work methods to adapt to new technologies by utilising the knowledge and practical skills of all their employees (Levin & Tyson, 1990). Accordingly, the following hypotheses are proposed:

**H<sub>3</sub>:** Participation style has a positive effect on emotional engagement.

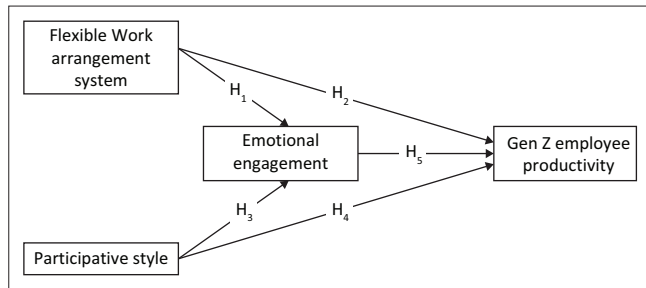
**H<sub>4</sub>:** Participation style has a positive effect on employee productivity.

### The influence of emotional engagement on productivity of Gen Z employees

Emotional engagement is often defined as the willingness of employees to do more (Albrecht, 2013). The findings of several studies show that employees who perceive themselves as being very compatible with the organisation they work for tend to have more positive attitudes, one of which is engagement and have a strong intention to stay with the organisation they work for (Demerouti & Cropanzano, 2010). These include behaviours beneficial for work or tasks, such as personal initiative, extra work or dedication (Alfes et al., 2013; Rich et al., 2010).

Emotional engagement brings many benefits, both personal, team and organisational (Demerouti & Cropanzano, 2010). The benefits include the spirit to develop creativity, the spirit to increase performance, the spirit to build loyalty and the spirit to take the organisation to a higher level. Employees with emotional engagement are happier with the organisation, less interested in leaving the organisation and more likely to tell others positive stories about the organisation (Albrecht, 2013; Shin & Back, 2019).

Another impact of employee emotional engagement on the organisation is increased employee attitudes. These attitudes include feelings of personal achievements, like their work, and being satisfied with their work, feelings of loyalty and commitment to the organisation, pride in the organisation



H, Hypothesis.

**FIGURE 1:** Empirical research model.

they work for, and being emotionally attached to the organisation, which tend to stay in the organisation, and see their future in the organisation (Alfes et al., 2013; Van Wingerden et al., 2017). Employee emotional involvement also has an impact on changes in work behaviours, for example, working optimally, working extra, working harder than required, completing work according to the standard operating procedure (SOP), taking initiatives to do better tasks, proposing ideas to improve how things work and making changes to how work is more effective (Barbier et al., 2013; Christian et al., 2011; Saks, 2006). The last hypothesis is as follows:

**H<sub>5</sub>:** Emotional engagement has a positive effect on employee productivity.

## Methodology and research design

### Research design and sample

The research was designed as explanatory research to test the influence of the independent variables (FWAs and participative style) on the dependent variable (employee productivity) and to test the role of the mediating variable (emotional engagement). This research used a quantitative approach by focusing on objects in the form of Generation Z employees in Indonesia. Data were obtained by distributed survey questionnaires using closed and open questions on a scale of 1 to 10 to a number of respondents according to the research criteria. The purposive sample selection technique is based on the criteria: (1) work in the information technology field, (2) born between 1995 and 2010 and (3) have performed flexible work for at least 6 months. Employees who work in the information technology sector were chosen because this job has a work pattern and technology that allows employees to work virtually and flexibly from anywhere. There are 259 respondents of the total 266 distributed survey with a response rate of 97%. They came from various companies in the IT industry in Indonesia, ranging from many job positions, that is, software developer unit, database administrator, system analyst, network architect, web developer, IT Support and system manager.

### Measurement

The research used four variables, that is, FWA systems, participative style, emotional engagement and employee productivity. These variables are measured using indicators adopted from various previous research literature. Flexible

work arrangement systems are measured by five indicators, including time flexibility, place flexibility, change off and change shift (Coenen & Kok, 2012). One of these items is 'I have freedom in determining working hours'. The participative style is measured by an instrument developed by Park (2012) with five indicators, including self-management team, team briefing, job enrichment, power sharing and mutual understanding. An example of these items is 'My leader gives me the opportunity to manage work'. Emotional engagement is measured by adopting the instrument of Argawal (2014), consisting of five indicators: vigour, dedication, sense of belonging, pride and trust. 'I feel connected to my work', is one sample of emotional engagement instruments. Employee productivity is measured using five indicators: timeliness, conformity to standards, quality, independence and adaptability (Demerouti & Cropanzano, 2010). The instrument contains several items, for example, 'I am able to complete work according to specified standards'. All instrument items are measured with a response scale of 1 to 10 (1 = strongly disagree and 10 = strongly agree).

### Data analysis

Before data analysis was carried out, an analysis was first performed on the characteristics of respondents based on gender, age and work tenure. Quantitative analysis was carried out by testing the validity, reliability test and normality test. The hypothesis was tested by partial least squares structural equation modelling using the IBM AMOS 26 program.

### Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance to conduct this study was obtained from the Universitas Dian Nuswantoro, Faculty of Economics and Business on 9 November 2023. The ethical clearance number is 408/B.21/UDN-03/XI/2023.

## Result

The qualitative analysis of respondents based on gender shows that male employees dominated respondents (181 respondents). Thus, it can be understood that male employees are the party that deals more with matters relating to information technology. Based on age characteristics, 144 respondents were aged between 23 and 25 years (55.6%). From the work tenure category, the majority of respondents have worked for 3–4 years (a total of 96 respondents). A summary of respondent characteristics is presented in Table 1.

The results of testing the reliability and validity of the data show a fairly good level of consistency and accuracy. Results testing of the validity and homogeneity data with the correlation test between the scores of each item and the total score (Pearson correlation) shows a positive correlation and a significant level at the 0.01 level. The factor analysis test was carried out on the value of each variable with varimax rotation and the Kaiser MSA showed a value > 0.50. It means that each variable was quite valid.

**TABLE 1:** Characteristics of respondent.

Characteristics	Number	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	181	69.90
Female	78	30.10
<b>Age</b>		
< 17	1	0.40
17–19	5	1.90
20–22	109	42.09
23–25	144	55.60
<b>Work tenure</b>		
< 1	32	12.30
1– < 2	45	17.30
2– < 3	86	33.30
3–4	96	37.10

The results showed that all questionnaire instruments were valid and reliable because the correlation value  $r$  count was  $> 0.196$ . The results of the reliability calculations above indicate that the construct reliability of all latent variables meets the criteria for the cut-off value  $> 0.70$ . Likewise, the extract variance value meets the cut-off value  $> 0.50$ , so it can be concluded that each latent variable meets the reliability criteria. The results of the validity and reliability test are shown in Table 2.

The normality test shows that the data are normally distributed by paying attention to the value of critical ration (CR) Skewness and Kurtosis, not exceeding the absolute price of 2.58, which is 1.786. Before testing the hypothesis, it is necessary to test the goodness of fit model. From the results of data analysis, it is known that all indicators of the goodness of fit model in this study are met. The results of the goodness of fit analysis are summarised in Table 3.

Based on the regression weight output in the full model, there are five causality relationships. The hypothesis is accepted if the value of CR  $> 2.00$  and a significance of  $< 0.05$ , so the relationship stated has a significant effect. The results of statistical testing on  $H_1$  show that the estimated parameter is 0.160 with a CR value of 1.899 and the significance value is 0.058. It means that FWAs have no significant effect on emotional engagement; thus,  $H_1$  was rejected. The result shows that the estimated parameter for  $H_2$  is 0.179, with a CR value of 3.806 ( $p = 0.001$ ). There is a significant positive effect of FWAs on the productivity of Gen Z employees, so  $H_2$  was supported. The estimated parameter of  $H_3$  is 0.588, with a CR value of 6.121 ( $p = 0.001$ ). It indicates that the participative style has a significant effect on emotional engagement, so  $H_3$  was supported. The fourth hypothesis has an estimated parameter of 0.615, the CR value is 8.748 and the significance value is 0.001. It means that the participative style has a significant effect on the productivity of Gen Z, so  $H_4$  was supported. The last hypothesis ( $H_5$ ) supported by the evidence of the estimated parameter is 0.201, the CR value is 4934 and a significance value of 0.001. Complete hypothesis test results are presented in Table 4.

**TABLE 2:** Validity and reliability of measurement items.

Variables and Indicators	Factor loading	Reliability
<b>Flexible work arrangement</b>	-	0.861
1. Time flexibility	0.82	-
2. Timing flexibility	0.77	-
3. Place flexibility	0.61	-
4. Change off	0.77	-
5. Change schedule	0.81	-
<b>Participative style</b>	-	0.895
1. Self-management team	0.83	-
2. Team briefing	0.82	-
3. Job enrichment	0.79	-
4. Power sharing	0.79	-
5. Mutual understanding	0.74	-
<b>Emotional engagement</b>	-	0.917
1. Vigour	0.89	-
2. Dedication	0.86	-
3. Sense of belonging	0.77	-
4. Pride	0.85	-
5. Trust	0.78	-
<b>Productivity of Gen Z employee</b>	-	0.909
1. Timeliness	0.78	-
2. Conformity of standards	0.86	-
3. Conformity of quality	0.78	-
4. Independence	0.84	-
5. Adaptability	0.82	-

**TABLE 3:** Goodness-of-fit test results.

Goodness of fit index	Cut-off value	Value of data processing results	Note
Chi-square	Expected to be small	189 213	Fit
CMIN	$< 2.00$	1.154	Fit
RMSEA	$< 0.08$	0.024	Fit
GFI	$> 0.90$	0.935	Fit
AGFI	$> 0.90$	0.917	Fit
TLI	$> 0.95$	0.992	Fit
CFI	$> 0.95$	0.993	Fit

CMIN, Chi-square minimum; RMSEA, Root mean square error of approximation; GFI, Goodness of fit index; AGFI, Adjusted goodness of fit index; TLI, Tucker-Lewis index; CFI, Comparative fit index.

## Discussion

Hypothesis 1 which states that FWA systems have a positive effect on employee emotional engagement is not supported by the results of data testing. From the results of data analysis, no significant effect was found between FWAs on emotional engagement. This assumption is not supported in this research because the samples come from various companies, so the implementation of FWA systems in each company has different practices. The practice of FWAs in each company is carried out within different policies, frameworks and organisational cultures. A study conducted by Weideman and Hofmeyr (2020) using in-depth interviews with six companies from different industries found that applying an FWA system that is not comprehensive in one organisation will not be an effective strategy for promoting employee engagement. The study suggests that organisations should include other supporting practices and foster an agile work culture to foster member engagement with the organisation (Weideman & Hofmeyr, 2020). Apart from that, other research found that FWA systems have a 'dark side', one of which is that remote communication tends to cause emotional

**TABLE 4:** Regression weight full model.

Hypotheses	Estimate	SE	CR	p	Note
H1 Flexible_Work_Arangement → Emotional_Engagement	0.160	0.084	1.899	0.058	Not supported
H2 Flexible_Work_Arangement → Productivity of Gen Z	0.179	0.047	3.806	0.001	Supported
H3 Participative_Style → Emotional_Engagement	0.588	0.960	6.121	0.001	Supported
H4 Participative_Style → Productivity of Gen Z	0.615	0.071	8.687	0.001	Supported
H5 Emotional_Engagement → Productivity of Gen Z	0.202	0.041	4.934	0.001	Supported

SE, standard error; CR, critical ratio.

exhaustion, leading to decreased work engagement (Sardeshmukh et al., 2012; Wang & Xie, 2023).

The results support H2, which states that FWA systems have a positive effect on employee productivity. Perceived FWA systems could improve employee productivity, especially for Gen Z employees. Organisations that conduct FWA systems record high productivity. By implementing an FWA system, employees can complete work on time and meet targets and quality standards (Berkery et al., 2017; Coenen & Kok, 2014).

Hypothesis 3 states that the participative style has a positive effect on employees' emotional engagement. It means that the more the employee participates in decision-making and problem-solving, the stronger their emotional engagement with the organisation. A participative style will motivate employees to contribute or bond to their organisation (Bakan et al., 2004). The employee will be more motivated towards the goals he or she has set, and the employee will have a greater interest in the decisions and problem-solving in which he or she is involved (Cox et al., 2006; Park, 2012).

The result of analysed data, support for H4, states that participative style has a positive effect on employee productivity. The stronger the participative style, the stronger the Gen Z employee productivity can be received. The participative style encourages employees to accept responsibility for organisational activities (Pereira & Osburn, 2007). A participative style is a social process in which employees become more involved in the organisation and want to see their work succeed (Leviner & Tyson, 1990; Summer & Hyman, 2005). Employees are empowered to use their initiative and creative resources to achieve organisational goals (Torka et al., 2010).

The results of data analysis supported H5, which states that participative style has a positive effect on employee productivity. The stronger the emotional engagement of employees, the more productive they are. When employees are engaged, they invest more of themselves in their job roles, and they are more likely to do their jobs with energy and enthusiasm (Demerouti & Crpanzano, 2010). Emotional employee engagement will improve employee attitudes and behaviour, including a feeling of personal achievement, liking his job and being satisfied with his job. Employees who have an emotional engagement with the organisation will be working optimally, working harder than required, completing work according to SOP, taking the initiative to do better tasks, coming up with ideas to improve the way things

work and making changes to how things work to make them more effective (Albreicht, 2013; Christian et al., 2013).

## Practical implication

Organisations need to implement FWA systems and participative styles, where each employee is given the freedom to organise and plan a job according to their responsibilities. Implementing a flexible work system will directly affect employee work productivity because they will have more freedom to carry out their duties without time and place restrictions. Moreover, employees who participate in any decision-making and problem-solving cases, will become more engaged and do their work with energy and enthusiasm. They will be more motivated towards the goals he or she has set, therefore it strengthens the bond to their organisation. Thus, employees who have emotional engagement will increase the sense of ownership of the job, increase energy focused on completing work, increase employee personal initiative and increase employee adaptability.

## Conclusion

The results of this study showed that four out of five relationships between variables in Hypotheses 2, 3, 4 and 5 were supported by the results of data analysis so that these hypotheses can be accepted. The first hypothesis was not supported because of no empirical evidence from data analysis, which means that FWA systems do not influence emotional engagement. It could be because of differences in FWA practices in each company from different samples, so not all are supported by policy conditions and work culture that lead to engagement with their organisation.

The second hypothesis was proven empirically, so the more significant the freedom for Gen Z employees to determine their time, place and method of work the more will be the productivity. The data analysis supported the third hypothesis, proving that higher participation or involvement will increase employees' emotional engagement in the organisation. Results show that the participation of employees will increase the productivity of Gen Z employees. The last hypothesis, which states that emotional engagement affects the productivity of Gen Z employees, was accepted.

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### Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no financial or personal relationship(s) that may have inappropriately influenced them in writing this article.

## Authors' contributions

A.F. was involved in the conceptualisation, research methodology, data collection and writing of the original manuscript of this study. M.M. was responsible for project management, reviewing, and editing the final manuscript.

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## Data availability

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analysed in this study.

## Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and are the product of professional research. It does not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated institution, funder, agency, or that of the publisher. The authors are responsible for this article's results, findings, and content.

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