

The Effect of Grit on Work Engagement Among Generation Z Employees in Samarinda City

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Keywords:

*Generation Z, Grit, Work
Engagement*

ABSTRACT

This study addresses the increasing challenges faced by Generation Z employees in adapting to dynamic work environments, where psychological resilience and sustained engagement are essential for optimal performance. In Samarinda City, the dominance of Generation Z in the workforce highlights the importance of understanding internal factors that influence work engagement. This study aims to examine the effect of grit on work engagement among Generation Z employees. A quantitative inferential research design was employed, involving 111 respondents selected through purposive sampling based on the Lemeshow formula. Data were collected using validated psychological scales measuring grit and work engagement, and analyzed using simple linear regression with SPSS. The results indicate that grit has a positive and statistically significant effect on work engagement ($t = 3.080$; $p < 0.05$), although its contribution is relatively small ($R^2 = 0.08$). This finding suggests that while perseverance and consistency in achieving long-term goals enhance employee engagement, other factors also play a substantial role. In conclusion, grit serves as an important psychological resource that supports work engagement among Generation Z employees, but it is not the sole determinant. Future research is recommended to explore additional variables influencing work engagement.

INTRODUCTION

Generation Z is an age group born after the Millennial generation and before the Alpha generation, with a birth range between 1997 and 2012 (Dimock, 2019). According to Kullah (2024), the characteristics of this generation are that they were born and raised in the digital era, with easy access to technology, information, and social media; therefore, their ways of thinking, learning, and interacting with the world around them differ from those of previous generations. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency of Samarinda City (2025), the number of residents aged 15–24 years—most of whom are Generation Z—reaches around 78.8%, indicating that this group constitutes a large portion of the productive population in the city. In recent years, Generation Z has begun to actively enter the workforce, as the number of new graduates entering the labor market increases, especially in Samarinda. Data from Radio Republik Indonesia Programa Samarinda indicate that around 68.69% of registrants for Civil Servant Candidates (CPNS) in 2024 come from Generation Z, which shows the high interest of the younger generation in jobs that offer career stability amid economic uncertainty due to social changes and global dynamics (Kullah, 2024). This phenomenon indicates that most Generation Z in Samarinda has high life expectations and optimism about their work, demonstrating a strong desire to develop their careers, navigate job transitions, and engage in

both short-term and long-term career planning. These findings are in line with the results of (Fitri, 2023), which state that Generation Z tends to have a clear career orientation, optimism about the future of work, and readiness to face workplace dynamics. However, they also face challenges in the modern workplace, such as high skill demands, intense competition, rapid technological change, and social and psychological pressures in adapting to an ever-evolving work culture (Kullah, 2024). This condition requires Generation Z to possess adaptability, perseverance, and mental resilience in order to survive and thrive in a competitive work environment.

Although Generation Z in Samarinda City shows high enthusiasm for entering the workforce, they also face various challenges that can affect their level of work engagement. These challenges are not only procedural but also include psychological and social aspects arising within the work environment. Based on data from the East Kalimantan Labor Force Participation Rate (TPAK) in August 2024, the rate was recorded at 67.07%. Although this shows an increase compared to the previous year, this percentage remains relatively lower than that of other provinces in Indonesia (East Kalimantan Central Statistics Agency, 2024). Research conducted by (Emillia et al., 2024) on 165 male Generation Z workers in Samarinda City showed that toxic leadership and intimidating behavior in the workplace (workplace bullying) had a significant impact on their intention to leave their current jobs (turnover intention). These findings indicate that many young workers are vulnerable to negative workplace pressures, which can lead to decreased motivation, engagement, and commitment to their work.

According to Schaufeli & Bakker, (2022), work engagement—a positive psychological state related to work—is characterized by three main aspects: vigor, which reflects energy and mental resilience; dedication, which represents enthusiasm, pride, and a sense of significance toward one's work; and absorption, which refers to full involvement and high concentration in performing tasks. Individuals with high levels of work engagement tend to demonstrate strong commitment, intrinsic motivation, and more optimal performance (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2022).

In line with this, research by Fajriyanti et al., (2023) supports these findings, showing that workplace conditions and organizational commitment play important roles in increasing work motivation among Generation Z in Samarinda City. These factors interact in determining employees' levels of enthusiasm and productivity. This implies that Generation Z's motivation and work performance are still strongly influenced by external conditions, such as environmental support, organizational policies, and leadership style. This is further supported by the findings of (Somantri et al., 2025), which indicate that aspects such as work atmosphere, leadership style, rewards, flexibility, and job meaning have significant impacts on the work motivation of Generation Z employees in organizations.

According to Schaufeli & Bakker, (2022), a high level of work engagement has positive impacts on both individuals and organizations. For individuals, work engagement can enhance motivation, psychological well-being, job satisfaction, and resilience to work-related stress. For organizations, it contributes to increased productivity, loyalty, creativity, and overall employee performance efficiency. Conversely, low levels of work engagement can lead to negative consequences, such as increased turnover, higher absenteeism, decreased quality of work outcomes, and weakened organizational commitment (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2022). Therefore, research on work engagement—especially among Generation Z employees in

Samarinda City—is necessary to better understand their level of involvement at work and their contribution to optimizing human resource potential in the region.

Given the importance of internal factors in shaping employee resilience and engagement, a broader examination of the psychological aspects influencing the work performance of Generation Z in Samarinda is needed. One relevant psychological factor is work engagement, defined as an individual's positive attitude toward work, reflected in enthusiasm, dedication, and full involvement in carrying out responsibilities (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2022). Low levels of work engagement may contribute to suboptimal performance among Generation Z employees in the workplace.

Previous research has shown that Generation Z in Samarinda tends to seek rapid achievement; therefore, many may not fully understand that career development requires a gradual process along with balanced mental, physical, and cognitive readiness (Sa'diyah et al., 2024). This condition presents a challenge in developing perseverance and psychological resilience, which in turn affects work engagement and loyalty. (Safariningsih et al., 2022) found that high levels of grit are associated with increased work engagement. This finding is further supported by (Farina & Mulyana, 2023), who found that grit is positively related to employee work attachment. Another study by (Permatasari & Fajrianthi, 2021) also confirms that grit contributes to increased work engagement and reduces turnover intention. Meanwhile, (Safitri et al., 2025) emphasize that in a competitive and stressful work environment, personal characteristics such as perseverance and consistency in achieving long-term goals are essential for maintaining commitment and active involvement despite various obstacles.

Psychological readiness enables Generation Z workers to face challenges with a positive and rational attitude. The alignment between physical and mental readiness fosters individuals who uphold discipline, responsibility, and high dedication to their work. These findings are consistent with research by (Azky & Mulyana, 2024), which showed that individuals with high psychological capital tend to demonstrate better job readiness, whereas those with lower psychological capital exhibit reduced preparedness.

According to Sa'diyah et al., (2024), Generation Z employees in Samarinda City face challenges stemming not only from external factors, such as leadership style and organizational conditions, but also from internal factors, including resilience and perseverance in navigating workplace dynamics. Although work engagement plays a crucial role in enhancing performance and well-being, not all employees are able to maintain consistently high levels of engagement. This is particularly relevant for Generation Z in Samarinda, who often face challenges related to adaptation, rapid change, and pressure for career stability (Sa'diyah et al., 2024). Therefore, internal factors are needed to help Generation Z remain focused and persistent in achieving their professional goals.

One important internal factor that supports sustained work engagement is grit, defined as a character trait reflecting perseverance and consistency in pursuing long-term goals, enabling individuals to remain committed and enthusiastic despite facing challenges (Duckworth, 2018). In the context of Generation Z—who are known to be adaptive but also prone to boredom and a desire for rapid change (Fitri et al., 2023)—grit has strong potential as a key factor in fostering sustainable work engagement.

Based on this phenomenon, it is evident that the challenges faced by Generation Z employees in Samarinda City stem not only from external workplace factors but also from

internal individual characteristics, particularly their level of perseverance and resilience in dealing with obstacles (Sa'diyah et al., 2024). While previous studies in Samarinda have examined factors such as work culture, organizational commitment, job stress, and motivation in relation to turnover intention and performance, relatively few have explored the role of personal traits such as grit in influencing work engagement, particularly among Generation Z employees. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap in the literature.

Grit is a non-cognitive trait characterized by perseverance and consistency in pursuing long-term goals, enabling individuals to remain committed despite obstacles (Duckworth, 2018). Individuals with high levels of grit tend to maintain focus and persistence when facing challenges or boredom (Framita et al., 2025). Research by (Fikriani et al., 2025) indicates that grit helps sustain motivation, improve performance, and strengthen psychological endurance under work pressure. For Generation Z, who are adaptive yet prone to boredom (Fitri et al., 2023), strengthening grit is essential for building sustainable work engagement.

Strengthening grit among Generation Z employees in Samarinda City is therefore important, as it can help them remain diligent, committed, and engaged despite ongoing adaptation challenges and evolving work dynamics. This study aims to examine the influence of grit on work engagement among Generation Z employees aged 18–28 who are actively working in Samarinda City. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to the field of industrial and organizational psychology and to serve as a basis for organizations in designing strategies to develop resilient and highly committed young employees.

Based on this background, the research question is: “How does grit affect the work engagement of Generation Z employees in Samarinda City?” This study focuses on understanding the influence of grit on work engagement among Generation Z employees in Samarinda City. It aims to provide both theoretical and practical contributions to understanding this relationship. The theoretical contribution is expected to enrich scientific literature, particularly in industrial and organizational psychology, while the practical contribution is to provide insights for policymakers, educators, and organizations in designing programs that foster grit among Generation Z employees in Samarinda City to enhance their work engagement.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach with an inferential research design to examine the influence between two variables, namely work engagement (dependent variable) and grit (independent variable) among Generation Z employees in Samarinda City. The inferential quantitative method was selected because it enabled hypothesis testing through statistical analysis and provided empirical evidence regarding the relationship between grit and work engagement (Azwar, 2022).

The population of this study consisted of Generation Z employees in Samarinda City, defined as individuals born between 1997 and 2012 who were actively working. The sample was determined based on the criteria of individuals aged 17–28 years who were actively employed in Samarinda City. The sample size was calculated using the Lemeshow formula, resulting in 96 respondents (Armin & Vitalocca, 2023).

This study used purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique in which participants were selected based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives (Azwar, 2022).

Data were collected using psychological scales based on a Likert model, which allowed for the measurement of respondents' attitudes and perceptions in a structured manner. The instruments consisted of favorable and unfavorable items with scaled response options, enabling quantitative analysis of the measured constructs (Ghozali, 2021; Azwar, 2024). Data collection was conducted through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms to reach respondents efficiently.

Two instruments were used in this study: the Grit Scale and the Work Engagement Scale, both of which were adapted to suit the characteristics of the research participants. The adaptation process maintained the original theoretical constructs while adjusting item wording to the study context (Azwar, 2022). Content validity was evaluated through expert judgment, and the results were analyzed using Aiken's V to ensure that each item adequately represented the intended construct (Azwar, 2025).

A pilot test was conducted to examine the validity and reliability of the instruments before their use in the main study (Merisa et al., 2019). The Grit Scale, adapted from (Reynaldi et al., 2022) and based on Duckworth's theory (2021), initially consisted of 32 items. After the validation process, 17 items were retained, each measured using a four-point Likert scale ranging from "never" to "always."

The validity test using product-moment correlation indicated that all 17 items were valid, with correlation coefficients ranging from 0.295 to 0.632, exceeding the critical value of 0.2058. The reliability test showed a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.858, indicating that the instrument had good internal consistency and was suitable for use in this study.

The Work Engagement scale was structured based on three dimensions: vigor, dedication, and absorption.

Table 1. Blueprint of Work Engagement Scale

No	Aspects	Scale	Quantity
1.	<i>Vigor</i>	1, 4, 8, 12, 15,17	6
2.	<i>Dedication</i>	2, 5, 7, 10, 13	5
3.	<i>Absorption</i>	3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 16	6
Total			17

The second instrument used is the Work Engagement scale used in this study is an adaptation by Zuhdi, (2023) of The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) developed by (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2022), which was then modified by the researcher. The scale serves to measure three aspects of work engagement, namely vigor, dedication, and absorption. This scale consists of 17 statement items with a Likert scale of four answer choices, namely very appropriate (SS), appropriate (S), inappropriate (TS), and very inappropriate (STS), with a score range of 1–4 on each item. This scale measures two aspects of grit, namely consistency of interest and perseverance.

The results of the validity test showed that all items were declared valid with r calculated greater than 0.300 in the number of respondents (N = 30). All items have an adequate

correlation to the total score. The results of the reliability test show that the instrument has good reliability. The alpha coefficient value was 0.761 for the consistency aspect of interest, 0.709 for the aspect of business diligence, and 0.787 for the total instrument. All these values are above the minimum recommended reliability limit ($\alpha > 0.600$), so that the instrument is declared reliable and consistent. The Grit scale blueprint is presented in the following table:

Table 2. Grit Scale Blueprint

No.	Indicator	Item		Quantity
		<i>Favorable</i>	<i>Unfavorable</i>	
1.	<i>Consistency of interest</i>	1,5,9,13,17,21,25,29	3,7,11,15,19,23,28,32	16
2.	<i>Perseverance of effort</i>	2,6,10,14,18,22,26,30	4,8,12,16,20,24,27,31	16
Total				32

Both instruments were selected because they demonstrated adequate reliability and validity and had been empirically applied in previous research within the East Kalimantan region. A four-point Likert scale was retained in accordance with the original design of the instruments, allowing respondents to provide clear and consistent responses without a neutral option. This format also supported more structured and efficient quantitative data analysis.

This study used instruments adapted from existing scales; therefore, validity and reliability testing were conducted to ensure their suitability for Generation Z employees in Samarinda City. Prior to the main data collection, a pilot test (tryout) was conducted to identify appropriate items for use (Merisa et al., 2019). Content validity was assessed through expert judgment to evaluate the alignment between the instrument items and the constructs being measured (Azwar, 2025). Several experts rated each item, and the results were analyzed using Aiken's V. Items were considered valid if the Aiken's V coefficient met the minimum threshold of ≥ 0.80 (Azwar, 2024). Reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha to measure the internal consistency of the scales. The coefficient ranged from 0 to 1.00, with higher values indicating better reliability. The analysis was conducted using SPSS, and the instrument was considered reliable if the Cronbach's Alpha value was ≥ 0.70 (Azwar, 2024).

Quantitative analysis was conducted to examine the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable using SPSS 16. The data were first tested for suitability before hypothesis testing. Classical assumption tests were performed to ensure that the data met the requirements for parametric statistical analysis, particularly simple linear regression (Sholihah et al., 2023). The normality test was conducted using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov method to examine the distribution of residuals. The data were considered normally distributed if the significance value (Sig.) was greater than 0.05 and not normally distributed if it was less than 0.05 (Azwar, 2022). A linearity test was also conducted to determine whether the relationship between the independent and dependent variables followed a linear pattern. The analysis was performed using SPSS with a significance level of 0.05, and a linear relationship was indicated when the significance value exceeded 0.05 (Ghozali, 2021).

After the data met the classical assumption requirements, hypothesis testing was conducted using simple linear regression analysis. This analysis was performed to examine the effect of grit on work engagement among the respondents, with results including the regression coefficient, significance value (p-value), and the strength of the relationship between variables.

The hypothesis was tested using a significance level of 0.05, and if the p-value was less than 0.05, the hypothesis was accepted, indicating a significant effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Characteristics

The characteristics of the respondents in this study aim to describe the variation in demographic background. The description of respondent characteristics aims to provide an overview of the profile of respondents involved in the study. The characteristics of the respondents analyzed included gender, age, profession, and length of service.

The characteristics of the first respondents analyzed in this study were gender. The distribution of respondents by gender is presented in the following table:

Table 3. Gender Characteristics

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	33	29,7%
Women	78	70,3%
Total	111	100%

Based on Table 7, the characteristics of respondents by gender show that respondents are dominated by women as many as 78 people (70.3%), while male respondents amount to 33 people (29.7%). These findings indicate that women's participation in this study is greater than that of men.

In addition to being reviewed from gender, the characteristics of respondents in this study were also analyzed based on age. The distribution of respondents by age range is as follows:

Table 4. Age Characteristics

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage
17-19	8	7,2%
20-23	68	61,3%
24-28	38	31,5%
Total	111	100%

Furthermore, based on Table 8, the characteristics of respondents based on age show that the majority of respondents are in the age range of 20–23 years, which is 68 people (61.3%). Respondents in the age range of 24–28 years amounted to 38 people (31.5%), while respondents aged 17–19 years were the least group, which was 8 people (7.2%). This shows that the respondents in this study were dominated by individuals in their early 20s.

The characteristics of the respondents were then analyzed based on the profession or type of work carried out by the respondents. The distribution of respondents by profession is in the following table:

Table 5. Characteristics of the Profession

Profession	Frequency	Percentage
Private	56	50,5%
Entrepreneurship	28	25,2%
Negeri	27	24,3%
Total	111	100%

Based on Table 9, the majority of respondents worked in the private sector as many as 56 people (50.5%), followed by entrepreneurs as many as 28 people (25.2%) and the public sector as many as 27 people (24.3%). This distribution shows that respondents come from

diverse professional backgrounds with the dominance of the private sector. Although the difference in proportion between entrepreneurs and the public sector is relatively small, the tendency for *work engagement* is seen to be stronger in the entrepreneurial group. This is allegedly related to the characteristics of entrepreneurial work that requires fighting power, perseverance, and the ability to survive in the face of job uncertainty, so that it has the potential to encourage a *more intense* level of work engagement.

In addition to professions, respondents' characteristics were also reviewed based on length of service to describe the level of work experience of respondents. The distribution of respondents by length of service is in the following table:

Table 6. Characteristics of Long Service Life

Length of Service	Frequency	Percentage
1-3 years	73	65,8%
3-6 years	32	28,8%
6-10 years	6	5,4%
Total	111	100%

Furthermore, based on Table 10, the characteristics of respondents based on the length of service period show that the majority of respondents have a working period of 1-3 years, namely 73 people (65.8%). Respondents with a working period of 3-6 years amounted to 32 people (28.8%), while respondents with a working period of 6-10 years were the least group, namely 6 people (5.4%). These findings show that most respondents are in the early to intermediate stages of work experience.

Classic Assumption Test

Classical assumption tests are performed as a prerequisite before inferential statistical analysis is carried out to ensure that the residues in the regression model meet the normality assumptions in parametric statistical analysis and produce unbiased estimates (Ghozali, 2021). In this study, the prerequisite testing of simple linear regression analysis includes a reliability test and a data normality test.

The normality test was carried out to find out whether the research data was distributed normally. The normality test in this study uses *the Kolmogorov Smirnov test*. The results of the data normality test are presented in Table 7 below:

Table 7 Normality Test Results

<i>Kolmogorov Smirnov</i>	<i>Asymp. Sig</i>	<i>Monte Carlo</i>	Criteria	Remarks
1.287	0,74	0,64	>0,05	Normally Distributed

Based on the results of the normality test using *Kolmogorov Smirnov* presented in Table 11, an *Asymp value* was obtained. *Sig.* is 0.74 and *Monte Carlo* value is 0.64. The significance value is greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$), so it can be concluded that the data in this study are normally distributed (Azwar, 2022). Thus, the data meets the assumption of normality and is feasible to analyze using parametric statistical tests.

After the data is declared to meet the assumption of normality, the next test is a linearity test. The linearity test was carried out to find out whether the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables in this study is linear, which is a prerequisite for simple linear

regression (Ghozali, 2021). The results of the linearity test are presented in the following Table 8:

Table 8. Linearity Test Results

	<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
<i>Deviation from Linearity</i>	1.060.546	39	27.193	1,520	0,063

Based on the results of the linearity test presented in Table 12, a significance value in the *Deviation from Linearity* section was obtained of 0.063. The significance value is greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$), so it can be concluded that the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables in this study is linear. Thus, the data meets the assumption of linearity and is feasible to analyze using parametric statistical tests.

Uji Hypothesis

1. Simple Linear Regression Analysis

The hypothesis test in this study was carried out using simple linear regression analysis to determine the influence of *the grit* variable (X) on the *work engagement* variable (Y), because the data was declared to have met the prerequisite test (Ghozali, 2021). The following table presents the results of the research hypothesis test:

Table 9. Hypothesis Test Results

<i>Variable Independent</i>	<i>Koef. Right.</i>	<i>T Count</i>	<i>Sig. T</i>
<i>(Constant)</i>	46.018	13.621	0,000
Grit	0,11	3.080	0,003
r	0,283		
R square	0,080		

Based on the results of simple linear regression analysis presented in Table 13, the regression equation is obtained as follows:

$$Y=46.018+0.11X+e$$

The regression equation shows that the constant value of 46.018 indicates that when the *grit* variable (X) is zero, then the *work engagement* value (Y) is at 46.018. Meanwhile, a grit regression coefficient of 0.11 showed that every increase of one unit of grit would increase *work engagement* by 0.11 units, with e representing a component of error or the influence of other factors that were not measured in this study.

2. Partial Test (T Test)

Furthermore, partial hypothesis testing was carried out using a t-test to find out the extent to which the dependent variable, namely *grit*, individually had a significant effect on explaining the independent variable, namely *work engagement* (Ghozali, 2021). Based on the results of the significance t presented in Table 13, a calculated t-value of 3.080 with a significance value of 0.003 was obtained. The significance value is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$), so it can be concluded that *the grit* variable has a significant effect on *work engagement*. Thus, the hypothesis that grit affects *work engagement* is accepted.

3. Coefficient of Determination Test (R^2)

The determination coefficient (R^2) test was carried out to determine the contribution of *the grit variable* in explaining the variation of *the work engagement variable* expressed in the form of percentages. The R^2 value shows the ability of the regression model to explain variations in dependent variables (Ghozali, 2021). So that the greater the R^2 value, the greater the proportion of *work engagement* that can be explained by *the grit variable*.

The results of the analysis showed that *the R Square* value of 0.080 that the *grit variable* was able to explain 8% of *the work engagement variable*. Thus, 92% of the variation in *work engagement* was influenced by other factors outside the variables studied. In addition, the correlation coefficient value (r) of 0.283 indicates a positive relationship between *grit* and *work engagement* with a relatively low level of relationship strength.

Although this contribution is relatively small, it indicates that *grit* is one of the factors that play a role in increasing *work engagement*, but not the only factor. Thus, the results of this study still support the research hypothesis regarding the influence of *grit* on *work engagement*.

After testing the hypothesis, the next analysis is the distribution of the frequency of respondent data on each variable. The frequency distribution of respondent data was carried out to describe the distribution and tendency of respondents' score levels in each of the research variables, namely *grit* (X) and *work engagement* (Y). The grouping of categories is based on a predetermined range of scores, so that it can provide an overview of the variable level distribution in the study respondents. The frequency distribution of the *respondents' grit* levels is presented in Table 10 below:

Table 10. Frequency Distribution *Grit* (X)

Category	Range			Frequency	Percentage
Very High	104,1	n.d	128	36	32%
Height	88,1	n.d	104	42	38%
Average Above	96,559	n.d	88	0	0%
Average	90,406	n.d	96,46	0	0%
Below Average	78,1	n.d	90,306	27	24%
Low	65,793	n.d	78	6	5%
Very Low	32	n.d	65,693	0	0%
Total				111	100%

Based on Table 10, the distribution of the frequency of the *grit variable* shows that the majority of respondents, namely 111 people (100%), are in the high category, which is 38%, followed by the very high category of 32%. Furthermore, respondents in the lower average category amounted to 24%, and the low category as many as 5%. There were no respondents in the above-average, average, or very low categories. These results show that the *grit level* of Generation Z employees in Samarinda City is generally in the high to very high category. Furthermore, the frequency distribution of respondents' *work engagement* levels is presented in Table 11 below:

Table 11. Frequency Distribution *Work Engagement (Y)*

Category	Range		Frequency	Percentage
Very High	63,89	n.d 68	4	4%
Height	59,11	n.d 63,79	23	21%
Average Above	56,72	n.d 59,01	45	41%
Average	54,33	n.d 56,62	13	12%
Below Average	49,55	n.d 54,23	16	14%
Low	44,77	n.d 49,45	7	6%
Very Low	17	n.d 44,67	3	3%
Total			111	100%

Based on Table 11, the distribution of the variable frequency of work engagement shows that all respondents, namely 111 people (100%), the majority of respondents are in the upper average category, which is 41%. Furthermore, respondents were in the high category as much as 21%, followed by the lower average category as much as 14% and the average category as much as 12%. The proportion of respondents in the low category was recorded at 6%, while the very high and very low categories were only 4% and 3%, respectively. These results show that the work engagement level of Generation Z employees in Samarinda City is generally in the fairly good category, namely in the upper to high average category.

Discussion

Based on the results of a simple linear regression analysis with a positive value ($\beta = 0.11$), which indicates that the higher the grit level of Generation Z employees, the higher the level of work engagement they have. Grit was declared to have a significant effect based on the results of the partial test (t) of 0.003 ($p < 0.05$), so the hypothesis that grit influences work engagement was accepted.

These findings indicate that grit is one of the influencing factors, but not the main factor, considering that work engagement is a multidimensional construct influenced by various individual and organizational factors (Rahmadani, et al., 2022). The results of the frequency distribution also showed that most respondents had a grit level in the high to very high category, and all respondents in the work engagement category were in the upper to high average category. This condition reflects the characteristics of respondents who have high perseverance and strong work engagement, which also supports the results, namely the low significance of the influence of grit on work engagement in this study.

The findings of the positive influence of grit on work engagement may also explain the slight difference in proportion between entrepreneurial respondents and the public sector, where entrepreneurs show a slightly higher percentage. Logically, individuals who work as entrepreneurs are required to have high fighting power, perseverance, and consistency in dealing with income uncertainty, business risks, and independent decision-making demands. This condition encourages the formation of stronger grit, which ultimately contributes to more intense work engagement. This is in line with the results of Sitompul's (2022) research which states that psychological capital, including perseverance and resilience, is positively related to work engagement in entrepreneurial actors. Thus, although the contribution of grit to work

engagement in this study is statistically small, the role of grit is still relevant in explaining the higher tendency of work engagement in the entrepreneurial group.

On the other hand, in the public sector profession, work engagement tends to be formed through structural and organizational mechanisms, such as a clear work system, job stability, and the application of work discipline. Research by Grace, et al., (2023) shows that work engagement and work discipline have a positive and significant effect on employee performance, so that work engagement in the public sector is more influenced by compliance with institutional rules and demands than individual fighting power. This condition can explain why the level of work engagement in the public sector is relatively high but does not exceed work engagement in entrepreneurship, which is built through direct experience of facing challenges and work pressures. These findings reinforce the results of the study that in Generation Z employees in Samarinda City, work engagement is influenced by a combination of internal psychological factors and work characteristics, with grit playing a role as one of the supporting factors, not the main factor.

The results of this study are in line with the findings of previous research which stated that grit has a positive relationship and influence on work engagement. Safariningsih, et al., (2022) found that high grit levels were associated with increased engagement in work. This finding is again strengthened by Farina and Mulyana (2023), that grit is positively related to employee work attachment. Another study by Permatasari and Fajrianti (2021), also corroborates that grit contributes to increasing work engagement and reducing the tendency to change jobs. Meanwhile, Safitri et al., (2025) mentioned that in a competitive and stressful world of work, personal character such as perseverance and consistency in achieving long-term goals are needed so that individuals remain committed and actively involved in their work, despite facing various obstacles. Thus, the results of this study strengthen the empirical evidence that grit is only one of several psychological factors that affect the level of work engagement, especially in this study in the context of the subject of Generation Z employees in Samarinda City.

The results of the frequency distribution show that most of Generation Z employees in Samarinda City are in the upper to high average category in the work engagement variable. These findings show that respondents have a relatively stable level of work morale, dedication, and engagement in carrying out their work roles. This condition is in line with the characteristics of Generation Z who tend to be adaptive to change, have an orientation to achievement, and can adapt to the demands of a dynamic and technology-based work environment (Kullah, 2024). According to Schaufeli and Bakker (2022), individuals with good work engagement can maintain work energy and psychological involvement consistently, thus supporting the sustainability of work performance.

Based on the results of the variable frequency distribution of grit, most respondents were in the high to very high category. This shows that Generation Z employees in Samarinda City have a good level of perseverance and consistency of interest in facing job challenges. Duckworth (2021) states that grit plays a role in helping individuals survive difficult situations and stay focused on long-term goals. The high level of grit in respondents is one of the factors that support work engagement, even though its contribution to work engagement is statistically small.

Although grit has been proven to have a positive and significant effect on work engagement, the results of the study show that grit contributes 8% to the work engagement variable based on the R Square value. This is because work engagement is a complex construct (Rahmadani, et al., 2022). So, 92% of the work engagement rate is influenced by various other factors outside of grit. The limitation of this study lies in the use of one independent variable and a self-report-based data collection method, so that the results of the study have not fully represented all factors that affect work engagement. Therefore, further research is recommended to add other variables, expand the variation of respondents or use additional measurement methods.

In addition to the main findings of the study, these results also reflect on the importance of precision related to the evaluation process of measuring instruments. This study shows that the accuracy of the analysis procedure has a great influence on the decision of item feasibility. The difference in the application of score processing techniques in the early stages had resulted in the finding that several items were declared unfeasible. However, after adjusting the analysis procedure in accordance with the principle of evaluating the relevance of the item, all items are in the category of suitable for use. These findings affirm the importance of methodological precision in the instrument development process so that validity decisions are not technically biased.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that grit significantly influences work engagement among Generation Z employees in Samarinda City, with higher levels of grit associated with stronger work ethic, greater dedication, and deeper involvement in tasks. This suggests that perseverance and consistency play an important role in fostering positive work attitudes, although they are not the sole determinants of work engagement. The results highlight the importance of considering grit as a key psychological factor in enhancing employee engagement, particularly for Generation Z. For organizations, these findings provide a basis for developing targeted programs—such as training, coaching, and long-term career development initiatives—that strengthen perseverance and goal commitment. For individuals, the study underscores the value of cultivating grit as part of psychological capital to better navigate workplace challenges. Future research is recommended to incorporate additional variables, such as organizational support, leadership, well-being, and work environment factors, and to employ more diverse research designs to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the determinants of work engagement.

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