

Work flexibility and work-life balance: Exploring the moderating role of resilience in Generation Z and Millennial

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ABSTRACT

Remote workers from Generation Z and Millennial increasingly seek new job opportunities when required to return to entirely on-site work. This trend highlights the critical importance of work-life balance and work flexibility policies for these demographics. As such, flexibility and balance are essential priorities that companies must incorporate into their workplace strategies. This study examines the moderating role of resilience in the relationship between work flexibility and work-life balance. The inclusion of resilience as a moderator seeks to address the inconsistent findings observed in prior studies concerning the impact of work flexibility on work-life balance. The research involved a purposive sample of 132 Generation Z and Millennial employees working in startup companies across Indonesia. Data analyzed using Smart Partial Least Square version 4.0. The results revealed that both work flexibility and resilience significantly influence work-life balance. However, resilience did not significantly moderate the relationship between work flexibility and work-life balance. These findings imply that while resilient individuals experience better work-life balance, resilience alone does not enhance the benefits of flexible work arrangements. For startup companies, offering flexibility remains a key strategy for supporting work-life balance. At the same time, organizations can further support their employees by fostering personal development and well-being through programs that build resilience. Combining both approaches may lead to a healthier, more motivated, and more productive workforce.

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1. Introduction

The rapid advancement of technology, which is a result of the Industrial Revolution 4.0, alongside the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, has led to significant changes across all aspects of society. Remote work, initially adopted as a crisis response, has since evolved into a preferred work model for many, enabling more flexible arrangements that benefit employers

and employees. In particular, startup companies, which are often characterized by dynamic structures, digital ecosystems, and younger workforces, were among the quickest to adopt flexible work policies (Akbari et al., 2025). As a result, specific organizations now offer employees the freedom to determine respective work schedules, durations, and locations.

Several studies by Hada et al. (2020) and Amin (2022) have demonstrated that flexible work arrangements contribute positively to work-life balance, primarily because they offer employees more autonomy in coordinating their work and personal responsibilities. On the other hand, Shagvaliyeva and Yazdanifard (2014) and Dilmaghani (2021) critiqued earlier research for lacking robust empirical validation of this association. Notably, Dilmaghani (2021) argued that although flexible job structures may help in reducing work-family tensions, they do not necessarily address the wider spectrum of work-life conflicts shaped by the intensifying demands of modern work settings. This underscores a need for further research to explore the contextual factors that determine when and how flexibility in work arrangements genuinely improves work-life balance.

This current study introduced resilience as a moderating variable in assessing the relationship between work flexibility and work-life balance. Various empirical findings have shown that resilience significantly enhances work-life balance, with higher resilience enabling individuals to manage their respective professional and personal commitments more effectively (Kim & Windsor, 2015; Köse et al., 2021; Padios et al., 2022). Resilience is a buffer against the stress and pressures associated with work flexibility (Ditchburn & Koh, 2024). According to the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory by Hobfoll (1989) individuals strive to obtain and preserve valuable resources such as time, energy, and emotional well-being. For instance, resilience helped employees cope with increased work pressure and stress during the pandemic, thereby maintaining their mental well-being and work-life balance. Resilience also transforms the influence of work-family balance on emotional exhaustion and job performance, indicating its moderating effect (Ghimire, 2020). Thus, this study utilizes resilience as a moderating variable to examine its role in strengthening the relationship between work flexibility and work-life balance.

To strengthen the relevance of the research context, it is important to note that the startup ecosystem in Indonesia is growing rapidly. Generation Z and Millennial are dominating the workforce nowadays. Hence, to maximize organizational effectiveness, the management must understand what affects Generation Z and Millennial employee performance (Wolor et al., 2020). These startups predominantly employ young professionals, especially those from Generation Z (born 1997–2012) and Millennial (born 1981–1996), who are typically more adaptable to digital environments but also more sensitive to issues related to work-life balance and job flexibility (Waworuntu et al., 2022).

Following the selection of the moderating variable, the present study focuses on employees from Generation Z and Millennial demographics. These groups were considered appropriate for this investigation because they represent the dominant age segments in the startup workforce. According to a recent survey by Deloitte (2024), 49% of Millennial and 44% of Gen Z respondents said they would consider leaving their jobs if flexible work options were removed, especially those working remotely or in hybrid settings. This suggests that work-life balance and flexible work policies are top priorities for Generation Z and Millennial, making the group an ideal company consideration. Based on observations, organizations that fail to offer flexible work arrangements risk losing employees. It is also important to establish that work flexibility contributes to a better work-life balance and enhances employees' performance, satisfaction, and productivity (Shagvaliyeva & Yazdanifard, 2014). Resilience has further been observed to play a significant role in influencing work-life balance. Therefore, this study examines whether resilience strengthens or weakens the impact of work flexibility on work-life balance among Generation Z and Millennial employees in startups.

This research focuses on employees from the Generation Z and Millennial cohorts who are active in Indonesia's start-up sector, given their dominant presence and heightened responsiveness to matters concerning flexibility and work-life balance (Waworuntu et al., 2022). The primary objective is to explore the moderating role of resilience in the relationship between flexible work arrangements and work-life balance. By doing so, this study aims to fill existing empirical voids and offer practical recommendations for start-up companies seeking to improve employee well-being and organizational effectiveness through strategic implementation of flexible work practices.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1. Literature Review

2.1.1. Conservation of Resources Theory

According to the COR theory, individuals naturally strive to acquire, maintain, and protect their resources, such as time, energy, and social support (Hobfoll, 1989). In the work context, work-life balance is essential to preserve these resources, thereby reducing emotional exhaustion and enhancing work performance. The theory explains that stress arises when individuals experience a threat to, loss of, or failure to gain valued resources despite significant effort. The core principle of this theory, known as the primacy of loss, emphasizes that the impact of resource loss is significantly greater than that of resource gain (Hobfoll et al., 2018). During the pandemic, COR theory has been used to explain how the sudden shift to remote work led to various resource losses, such as reduced social interaction, loss of work structure, and blurred boundaries between personal and professional life. However, this situation also presented opportunities for resource gains, such as time flexibility, savings on commuting costs, and increased work autonomy. Therefore, organizational strategies that balance resource losses and gains are crucial to maintaining employee resilience and well-being (Akbari et al., 2025).

2.1.2. Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance is an increasingly important concept in modern society, particularly in response to rising demands from both work and personal life. Work-life balance is the balance between work obligations and personal life, reflecting social awareness of individual well-being amid work pressure and family responsibilities (Verma et al., 2024). Furthermore, work-life balance is understood as an individual's perception of how well their life roles are balanced emphasizing that this balance is subjective and influenced by contextual factors and organizational support (Rashmi & Kataria, 2022). These two perspectives show that achieving work-life balance is not merely the absence of role conflict but rather the integration of roles that support psychological well-being and overall individual performance. In essence, work-life balance contributes to a healthier and more sustainable lifestyle, which leads to improved job performance (Kumar et al., 2017).

2.1.3. Resilience

Resilience is a key psychological resource that significantly contributes to maintaining individuals' mental and emotional stability, particularly during stress or adversity (Zhou et al., 2025). It is a psychological trait that constitutes key attributes such as commitment, control, and the ability to confront challenges (Shani, 2020). The current workplace challenges present ongoing risks, so organizations must take measures to strengthen resilience among employees. Furthermore, the concept of resilience also explores the reasons why some individuals are better equipped to deal with difficulties than others. It is further used to identify, define, and assess the capacity of an individual

to overcome adversity while recognizing and developing essential skills, even in unfavourable environmental conditions (Padios et al., 2022). Resilience in an organizational context refers to applying positive psychology to navigate uncertainty. It can be strengthened through organizational support (Taneja et al., 2015) and social support from family and friends, which helps individuals adapt to challenges and uncertainties in the workplace. According to a previous study, organizational attentiveness played a crucial role in fostering resilience, providing a foundation for individual and collective adaptability (Williams et al., 2017). Resilience is typically shaped by past experiences and learning, which equip organizations and employees with substantial capacity to address similar challenges more effectively in the future. This continuous learning process enhances organizational resilience and preparedness (Williams et al., 2017). Additionally, the concept supports employees in maintaining work-life balance, which, in turn, influences both job performance and entire organizational growth. Resilience indicators used in this study are adapted from the investigation by Smith et al. (2008). Moreover, from the COR perspective, resilience can be interpreted as an internal psychological resource that enables individuals to protect themselves against resource depletion during stressful periods (Hobfoll, 1989). This capacity is significant in maintaining a work-life balance when work demands increase.

2.1.4. Work Flexibility

According to Dessler (2015), work flexibility is the variation in work to ensure employees do not feel bored. Work flexibility can be defined as a multifaceted concept that goes beyond merely allowing employees to choose when and where to work; it includes the structural, psychological, and social dimensions that shape the overall work experience. Bostan and Bîrcă (2024) define work flexibility as a core component of flexicurity, expressed through flexible work arrangements such as remote work, flexi-time, and temporary employment, enabling organizations to adapt to labour market dynamics while promoting employment growth. Bonacci et al. (2025) extend this definition by situating work flexibility within the post-pandemic (new normal), it encompasses hybrid models that integrate spatial flexibility, for example, working remotely or in co-working spaces near home and sustainability goals. Rothausen (1994) outlined five key aspects of evaluating work flexibility. These aspects include the extent to which management accommodates the family responsibilities of employees without causing negative repercussions, the ability of employees to fulfil work obligations while managing household responsibilities effectively, the availability of leave or vacation time for family needs, the opportunity to work part-time without facing penalties, and the degree of flexibility in arranging work schedules. Carlson et al. (2010) further identified three primary dimensions of work flexibility, namely time flexibility, which refers to the ability to adjust work hours, timing flexibility, a factor that allows employees to select respective work schedules, and place flexibility, which enables employees to select preferred work locations.

2.2. Hypothesis Development

2.2.1. The Positive Effect of Work Flexibility on Work-Life Balance

Flexibility in work arrangements can be understood as a mechanism to help individuals preserve key resources such as time, energy, and social support, thereby mitigating stress and emotional exhaustion. Work flexibility, particularly time and place flexibility, has increasingly been recognized as a strategic organizational resource that promotes work-life balance (Brauner et al., 2019). Drawing from the COR theory by Hobfoll et al. (2018), while remote work initially brought challenges like blurred

boundaries and reduced structure, it also offered significant resource gains through increased autonomy and reduced commuting time (Akbari et al., 2025). Several empirical studies support this positive association. Ray and Pana-Cryan (2021) found that flexible work scheduling was associated with significantly lower work-family conflict and better work-life outcomes across industries. Yen et al. (2024) emphasized that temporal flexibility led to improved employee satisfaction and reduced emotional exhaustion, particularly in high-demand environments, aligning with COR theory's emphasis on stress prevention through resource preservation. Chandola et al. (2019) show that employees with access to remote work and flexible start or end times experienced enhanced psychological well-being and lower levels of burnout, indicating an indirect enhancement of work-life balance through resource gain and reduced demands. Moreover, Bryan and Sevilla (2017) found that place flexibility (such as working from home) increased reported life satisfaction and time balance, especially among parents and caregivers. These findings underscore that flexibility is not just a structural benefit, but a psychological resource that improves the integration of work and personal life domains. However, research also points out that these benefits are not automatic. They are highly dependent on organizational culture, leadership support, and the extent to which flexibility is perceived as a legitimate and sustainable policy (Subramaniam et al., 2015). When poorly implemented, flexibility can lead to role ambiguity, extended work hours, and increased psychological strain thereby undermining its positive effect on WLB (Verma et al., 2024). Work-life balance is not merely the absence of role conflict but a subjective integration of work and life domains that enhances well-being and job performance (Rashmi & Kataria, 2022). **H₁: Work Flexibility Has a Positive Effect on Work-Life Balance.**

2.2.2. The Positive Effect of Resilience on Work-Life Balance

Resilience is a psychological capacity that enables individuals to adapt to adversity, manage stress, and maintain emotional stability. It encompasses persistence, control, and commitment (Shani, 2020; Zhou et al., 2025). Resilience significantly enhances work-life balance by helping individuals manage stress, adapt to challenges, and maintain well-being. Based on the COR Theory by Hobfoll (1989) and Hobfoll et al. (2018), resilience functions as a vital internal asset that shields individuals from emotional strain. The theory posits that people are motivated to acquire and safeguard essential resources, and stress emerges when these resources are endangered or diminished. Resilient individuals are better equipped to reframe stressful situations as controllable, allowing them to sustain psychological stability even when facing significant demands. In the context of work-life balance, resilience enables employees to maintain a stable integration of work and personal responsibilities, even under challenging conditions. In the context of work-life balance, resilience contributes by transforming work-related stress into manageable experiences, thereby preserving psychological resources and improving intra-role performance. Resilience is positively associated with work-life balance and enrichment (Bernuzzi et al., 2022). Resilience can transform the influence of work-family balance on emotional exhaustion and performance. Higher resilience levels significantly reduce emotional exhaustion and improve intra-role performance. It acts as a buffer against work pressure and stress, promoting mental well-being and maintaining work-life balance (Ditchburn & Koh, 2024). Accordingly, resilient individuals are likelier to perceive equilibrium between roles, even under demanding conditions, leading to greater work-life balance. **H₂: Resilience Has a Positive Effect on Work-Life Balance.**

2.2.3. The Moderating Effect of Resilience on The Effect of Work Flexibility on Work-Life Balance

Resilience plays a significant role in moderating the relationship between work flexibility on work-life balance. While flexible arrangements offer structural benefits, their effectiveness can vary depending on employees' ability to adapt and self-regulate. In this regard, resilience is a critical moderating factor that enables individuals to effectively navigate the ambiguities and potential stressors that come with flexibility, such as boundary blurring and self-discipline challenges (Bernuzzi et al., 2022). Resilience serves as a crucial moderating variable in the relationship between work flexibility and work-life balance. Although flexible work arrangements offer structural advantages, such as autonomy over time and location. Their impact on work-life balance is not uniform across individuals. The degree to which employees benefit from flexibility depends largely on their psychological ability to cope with uncertainty and manage self-discipline. In this context, resilience functions as a psychological moderator that enables individuals to better navigate the demands and potential stressors of flexible work, such as role ambiguity, blurred work-life boundaries, and diminished routine (Bernuzzi et al., 2022). The COR Theory by Hobfoll (1989) and Hobfoll et al. (2018) provides a foundational explanation for this moderating role. According to COR, individuals seek to acquire and maintain valuable resources, and stress arises when these are threatened or lost. While work flexibility may offer resource gains (e.g., more control, reduced commute), it can also introduce resource threats (e.g., work encroaching on personal time). Resilient individuals are better able to buffer these resource losses and optimize the gains, thereby enhancing the positive impact of flexibility on work-life balance. Köse et al. (2021) found that resilience significantly alters the impact of work-family balance on emotional exhaustion, highlighting its role in protecting individuals from burnout. This moderation effect suggests that the positive outcomes of flexibility on work-life balance are amplified when employees possess high levels of resilience, as they are better equipped to capitalize on resource gains and buffer resource losses in dynamic work environments. **H₃: Resilience Moderates the Effect of Work Flexibility on Work-Life Balance.**

2.3. Research Framework

This research framework explores how work flexibility, resilience, and work-life balance are connected. When employees have flexibility in when and where they work, they can better manage the demands of their professional and personal lives, leading to a stronger sense of work-life balance. The model also highlights the role of resilience, which directly supports work-life balance and enhances the positive effects of work flexibility. In other words, more resilient employees are likely to benefit more from flexible work arrangements, as they are better equipped to handle stress and adapt to challenges that come with balancing multiple responsibilities. Based on theoretical and empirical results, as well as the formulation of relevant hypotheses, the conceptual framework for this study is structured in Figure 1.

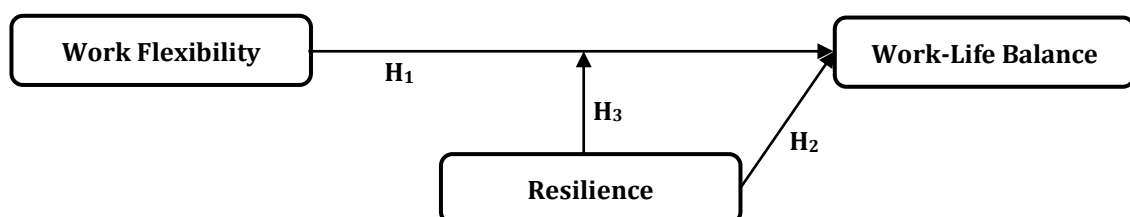


Figure 1. Research Framework

3. Research Method

3.1. Population and Sampling Method

The current study adopted a quantitative method with an explanatory design. The primary focus is on Generation Z (aged 20 to 26 years) and Millennial (aged 27 to 39 years) employees working in startups, given their dominance in the digital workforce and higher likelihood of working under flexible arrangements. According to Hair et al. (2019), the maximum recommended sample size is 300 when the number of constructs is ≤ 7 , the minimum commonality level is 0.45, and there are fewer than three invalid indicators or items per construct. Based on these parameters, the present investigation assumed a maximum sample size of 300 to ensure accurate data and results that closely reflect reality. Because the population size was not explicitly defined, a non-probability sampling method was utilized, specifically purposive sampling. The inclusion criteria required participants to be employees currently working in startup companies for at least six months, belong to Generation Z or Millennial age groups, and be employed in roles that offer some degree of work flexibility, such as remote or hybrid work options. Accordingly, this exploration incorporates three variables, namely work flexibility as the independent variable, work-life balance as the dependent variable, and resilience as the moderating variable.

3.2. Data Collecting Method

Data was collected through online administration of a questionnaire. All variables were measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The work flexibility variable was measured using five items adapted from Carlson et al. (2010), which captured three key dimensions: time flexibility, timing flexibility, and place flexibility. For instance, items included statements such as "I have the freedom to choose how long I work in the office," "My company allows flexibility in arrival and departure times," and "I have the freedom to determine my work schedule and choose where to work." These items reflect the extent to which employees are granted autonomy over when, where, and how they carry out their tasks.

The work-life balance variable was assessed using twelve items adapted from the framework of Köse et al. (2021) which comprised four dimensions: First, work interference with personal life, e.g., "My job often leads to neglecting my personal life". Second, personal life interference with work, e.g., "My personal life makes it difficult for me to concentrate at work". Third, personal life enhancement of work, e.g., "My personal life provides positive energy to complete my job tasks". Last, work enhancement of personal life, e.g., "My job enables me to balance personal life and job responsibilities well." Negatively worded items were reverse-coded during the analysis process to ensure consistency in interpretation.

Lastly, resilience was measured using six items adapted from the brief resilience scale by Smith et al. (2008) focusing on an individual's psychological capacity to recover from stress and adversity. Sample items included "I bounce back after going through difficult times" and "It doesn't take me long to recover from stressful things," while reverse-coded items included "I tend to take a long time to recover from setbacks in my life." These items collectively reflect the individual's level of persistence, control, and adaptability under challenging circumstances.

3.3. Data Analysis Method

Data analysis was conducted using moderated regression analysis in Smart Partial Least Square version 4. The analysis followed three essential stages: evaluation of the outer model, assessment of the inner model with moderation analysis, and hypothesis testing. Lastly, hypothesis validation was determined by comparing the p-value was less than 0.05. The validity test in this analysis was carried out using convergent validity, which was

assessed through the outer loading of each variable. By predefined standards, an instrument is considered to meet the criteria for convergent validity if the outer loading exceeds 0.7. However, during the scale development stage, outer loading values between 0.5 and 0.6 were still considered acceptable (Hair et al., 2019). It is also important to comprehend that convergent validity is typically evaluated based on the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value. A variable is considered valid if the AVE value equals or exceeds 0.5 (Hair et al., 2019). According to Shani (2020), a measurement instrument and its data are considered reliable if the instrument consistently produces the same results each time a measurement is conducted. The evaluation of the measurement model includes reliability tests such as Cronbach's alpha, Rho_A, and composite reliability. Based on predefined standards, a construct is considered reliable when the values of Cronbach's alpha, Rho_A, and composite reliability exceed 0.7

4. Result and Discussion

4.1. Characteristics of Respondents

Respondents in this study consist of 132 employees from various startups in Indonesia. The sample includes 113 Generation Z (aged 20 to 26 years) and 19 Millennial employees (aged 27 to 39 years). The generational imbalance (85.6% Gen Z vs. 14.4% Millennial) reflects the current demographic structure of the Indonesian startup workforce. However, future studies may consider a more balanced composition or comparative analysis between generational cohorts. Most of the respondents held a bachelor's degree (65.2%). Regarding employment status, 46.4% were permanent employees, while 53.4% were contract employees. Gender distribution is nearly equal, with 49.2% male and 50.8% female respondents. Regarding industry distribution, 29 respondents (22%) worked in manufacturing companies, and the remaining 103 (78%) worked in service-based companies. The sample was predominantly married (90.2%), with single respondents accounting for only 9.8%. This demographic trend is in line with the age group of respondents, as Generation Z and Millennial are generally in the early stages of their respective professional and personal lives. Respondents' characteristics are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondent

Characteristics of Respondents	Description	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	65	49.2%
	Female	67	50.8%
Level of Education	Senior/Vocational High School	35	26.5%
	Associate Degree	11	8.3%
Occupation Type	Bachelor Degree	86	65.2%
	Manufacturing Company	29	22%
Age	Service Company	103	78%
	20-26 (Generation Z)	113	85.6%
Marital Status	27-39 (Millennial)	19	14.4%
	Married	119	90.2%
Employment Status	Single	13	9.8%
	Permanent	61	46.4%
	Contract	71	53.6%

4.2. Validity Test

The data analysis results on the effect of flexibility on work-life balance and the moderating role of resilience are shown in Figure 2. The outer loading model in Figure 2 illustrates the relationships between each latent variable and their respective measurement indicators. As shown in the figure, most of the indicator loadings exceed 0.7, such as WF 3 (0.878), R 2 (0.865), and WLB 12 (0.827), which indicates a good indicator. These results confirm that the indicators strongly associate with their latent constructs, providing evidence of convergent validity

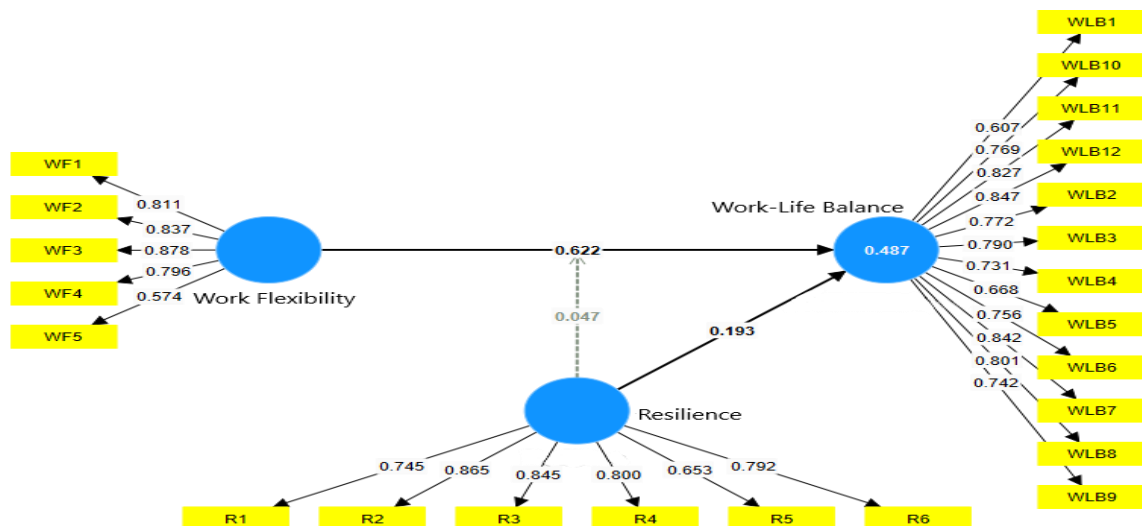


Figure 2. Outer Loading Analysis Results

The results of the validity test carried out in this study are presented in Table 2. Based on the processed validity test results obtained, the outer loading value of each item was greater than 0.5, and the AVE value was greater than 0.5. This signified that the instruments used were valid.

Table 2. Validity Test

Indicator	Item Indicator	Outer Loading	AVE
Work Flexibility (WF)	WF1	0.811	0.619
	WF2	0.837	
	WF3	0.878	
	WF4	0.796	
	WF5	0.574	
Resilience (R)	R1	0.745	0.619
	R2	0.865	
	R3	0.845	
	R4	0.800	
	R5	0.653	
	R6	0.792	
Work-Life Balance	WLB1	0.607	0.586
	WLB2	0.772	
	WLB3	0.790	
	WLB4	0.731	
	WLB5	0.668	

Indicator	Item Indicator	Outer Loading	AVE
(WLB)	WLB6	0.756	
	WLB7	0.842	
	WLB8	0.801	
	WLB9	0.742	
	WLB10	0.769	
	WLB11	0.827	
	WLB12	0.847	

4.3. Reliability Test

The results of the reliability test carried out in this study are presented in Table 3. As shown in Table 3, all three variables show strong reliability scores. The Cronbach's alpha values for each were well above the acceptable threshold of 0.7, indicating that the items used to measure each construct are consistent. Similarly, the Rho_A and composite reliability values all exceeded 0.8, providing additional support for the reliability of the scales. These results suggest that the instruments used in this study are dependable and suitable for further analysis.

Table 3. Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Rho_A	Composite Reliability
Work Flexibility	0.839	0.849	0.888
Resilience	0.875	0.877	0.906
Work-Life Balance	0.935	0.939	0.944

4.4. Hypothesis Test

Based on the data analysis results, Table 4 presents the direct effect of flexibility on work-life balance with resilience as a moderating variable. The analysis showed that work flexibility policies positively impacted work-life balance. This suggested that the more flexible the work policies implemented by companies, the higher the employees' work-life balance. Similarly, resilience was observed to have a positive effect on work-life balance. This result suggested that higher resilience among Generation Z and Millennial employees correlated with improved work-life balance. Dissimilar to the results, moderation analysis showed that resilience did not moderate the effect of work flexibility on work-life balance. In other words, the level of resilience among Generation Z and Millennial employees did not influence how work flexibility impacted work-life balance.

Table 4. Hypothesis Test

Hypothesis	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard deviation	T-Statistic	P Value
Work Flexibility → Work-Life Balance	0.622	0.635	0.068	9.100	0.000
Resilience → Work-Life Balance	0.193	0.205	0.059	3.283	0.001
Resilience*Flexibility → Work-Life Balance	0.047	0.050	0.080	0.590	0.556

4.5. Discussion

4.5.1. The Positive Effect of Work Flexibility on Work-Life Balance

The findings of this study demonstrate that work flexibility has a positive effect on work-life balance, indicating that organizational practices which allow employees to control their schedules, locations, and working hours can enhance their ability to manage professional and personal responsibilities. This relationship is grounded in the COR

Theory by Hobfoll et al. (2018), which asserts that individuals strive to protect and accumulate valuable resources such as time, autonomy, and energy to reduce stress and maintain well-being. Thus, flexible work arrangements serve as resource-preserving strategies. The empirical studies, such as Ray and Pana-Cryan (2021) found that flexible scheduling reduced work-family conflict and increased job satisfaction, while Chandola et al. (2019) and Yen et al. (2024) highlighted the benefits of spatial and temporal flexibility in improving life integration and preventing burnout. The relevance of this finding is particularly strong for Generation Z and Millennial employees, who form the majority of the sample and are widely recognized for prioritizing autonomy and flexibility in the workplace (Deloitte, 2024). Their preference for output-oriented performance, rather than strict adherence to working hours, allows them to benefit more from flexible arrangements. This is consistent with research by Shani (2020), who noted that flexibility enhances work-life quality, and Kossek and Lee (2017), who emphasized that individual differences in self-regulation and boundary control influence the effectiveness of flexible policies. Therefore, work flexibility not only operates as a structural organizational practice but also acts as a personal resource that empowers young professionals, particularly in startups, to balance multiple life roles effectively.

4.5.2. The Positive Effect of Resilience on Work-Life Balance

Another key finding showed that resilience had a significant impact on work-life balance. The stronger the resilience of Generation Z and Millennial employees, which is typically measured by the demographic's ability to adapt, persist through challenges, and navigate change, the more effectively the employees would balance their respective professional and personal lives. Highly resilient Employees, characterized by a strong determination to overcome difficulties and adapt to changes, are particularly valuable in an era of rapid transformation and intense competition. As stated in a previous investigation, resilience is not merely a personal trait but a psychological competence that constitutes commitment, control, and the ability to address challenges effectively (Shani, 2020). This ability is increasingly important, as employees who can endure and adapt to adversity are better equipped to manage work and personal life demands. According to the COR theory, resilience is an internal psychological resource that protects individuals from emotional depletion when external demands increase (Hobfoll et al., 2018). This reinforces the idea that highly resilient employees can better manage work-life boundaries and recover from daily stressors. These results are in correspondence with previous investigations (Liu et al., 2019; Bernuzzi et al., 2022; Novianti et al., 2024), which also emphasized the positive effects of resilience on work-life balance. Moreover, resilience has been reported to significantly reduce employee fatigue, alleviate work-related stress, and lower turnover intentions while simultaneously enhancing job satisfaction. Considering its importance, resilience should be a key focus for individuals and organizations (Smith et al., 2020).

4.5.3. The Moderating Effect of Resilience on The Effect of Work Flexibility on Work-Life Balance

This study showed that resilience did not moderate the relationship between work flexibility policies and work-life balance. In other words, the ability of an individual to persevere through challenges does not amplify the effect of work flexibility on the individual's ability to balance professional and personal life. One possible explanation relates to the independence of structural and psychological resources: flexibility is a structural factor that provides external support, while resilience is internal and may operate independently. From the perspective of the COR Theory by Hobfoll et al. (2018),

this finding can be interpreted through the lens of resource independence. COR theory asserts that individuals strive to acquire, maintain, and protect their personal resources, such as time, autonomy, and emotional stability. In this case, work flexibility acts as a structural (external) resource, while resilience represents a personal (internal) resource. When structural resources are already sufficient to reduce strain, the additional buffering role of internal resources like resilience may become redundant. This supports the notion that when one type of resource is dominant, the marginal contribution of another may be limited, especially in low-stress conditions or when baseline resilience is uniformly high.

This finding aligns with Akbari et al. (2025), who argue that not all psychological resources interact with structural policies, particularly when baseline resilience is already high or homogeneous within a population. Instead, the success of achieving work-life balance appeared to be more directly influenced by policies that grant employees the flexibility to determine where, when, and for how long each employee works. This suggests that work-life balance improvements are perceived primarily from structural workplace conditions rather than individual resilience. One possible explanation is that flexibility, as a structural factor, independently enhances work-life balance regardless of personal traits. The interaction may also be context-specific: organizational support and culture influence whether resilience strengthens flexibility's effects. Moreover, demographic factors such as marital status and employment type may shape perceptions. Single employees (90.2%) may have fewer family obligations, making them more responsive to flexible schedules. Likewise, contract employees (53.6%) may value flexibility as compensation for job insecurity. These results highlight the importance of tailored human resource policies in startups. Flexibility should be structurally embedded, while resilience-building programs (e.g., coaching and mentoring) may help improve employee coping mechanisms. As a psychological trait, resilience is shaped by internal factors such as commitment, control, and the ability to deal with challenges (Shani, 2020). In essence, since resilience is primarily driven by personal attributes rather than external conditions such as companies' policies, the variable did not significantly enhance the relationship between work flexibility and work-life balance.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the results obtained in this study showed that both work flexibility policies and resilience significantly influenced work-life balance. However, resilience did not effectively moderate the impact of flexibility on work-life balance. Based on the findings, an empirical suggestion was made that companies provide a more flexible work schedule, specifically for Generation Z and Millennial employees, as this would invariably improve the quality of life through work. In order to accurately provide a more flexible work schedule, job designs must be crafted flexibly, enabling employees to manage work time, place, and duration freely. Because work results are usually perceived as the main priority in companies, trust automatically becomes an important factor in implementing flexible work-related policies. Additionally, the correct process of carrying out assigned tasks must be monitored and assessed effectively. According to these insights, it was inferred that companies were oriented toward results and significantly considered the attitudes and behaviours of respective employees assigned with different tasks.

The current study has certain limitations, including that its population only comprised Generation Z and Millennial employees in startups. To address this limitation, further studies can incorporate other sectors, such as manufacturing companies. The data points obtained from Generation Z and Millennial were combined in terms of data analysis. Hence, the results

could not be explicitly detected for either group. Future explorations should include the two groups acting separately as control variables to obtain specific results. Various other variables should also be incorporated in future investigations, such as employee engagement, perception of organizational support, and well-being, to measure work-life balance further.

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