

BURNOUT AMONG GENERATION Z: RISK FACTORS AND COPING STRATEGIES

Umy Yonaevy^{*1}

Poltekkes Kemenkes Surakarta, Indonesia

Email: ummyyona12@gmail.com

Endang Sri Wahyuni

Poltekkes Kemenkes Surakarta, Indonesia

Email: endangsriwahyuni84@gmail.com

Abstract

Burnout is a condition of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion that is increasingly experienced by Generation Z due to pressure in the workplace, academics, and social life. This study aims to identify the main risk factors that contribute to burnout among Generation Z and the coping strategies that can be used to overcome it. The risk factors found include excessive workload, social pressure due to digital media, economic instability, and lack of balance between personal and professional life. Meanwhile, effective coping strategies include good time management, social support, mindfulness, and implementing limits on technology use. This study emphasizes the importance of the role of individuals, educational institutions, and organizations in creating an environment that supports the mental well-being of Generation Z.

Keywords: Burnout, Generation Z, risk factors, coping strategies, mental health

INTRODUCTION

According to Paulišić, M. (2024), burnout is a condition of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion that often occurs due to excessive stress over a long period of time. This condition is increasingly found in various age groups, including among Generation Z, which consists of individuals born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s. This generation grew up amidst the rapid development of digital technology and unique social and economic dynamics. With high academic demands, increasingly competitive work pressures, and complex social expectations, Generation Z is a group that is vulnerable to burnout. Technological developments have created unlimited access to information and communication (Ningthoujam et al., 2021). However, the impact of this constant connectivity is the pressure to always be

¹ Correspondence author

productive, exposure to high social standards through social media, and increased comparison of oneself with others. Generation Z often feels the need to always be connected and respond to every demand from their academic, professional, and social environments. This leads to prolonged emotional exhaustion and decreased mental well-being. In many cases, these social expectations are exacerbated by the pressure to always appear successful and happy on social media, even though this is not always the case.

In addition to technological factors, academic pressure is also one of the main triggers for burnout among Generation Z. Many of them feel they have to achieve high academic achievement in order to get a decent job in the future. The increasingly dense curriculum, the demand to continuously improve skills, and the tight competition in the world of education add to the significant mental burden. Failure to meet academic expectations often causes excessive anxiety, which in the long term can develop into burnout (Putri, R. A., & Dudija). In addition, constantly changing education policies and uncertainty in career paths also contribute to the stress experienced by Generation Z.

In the world of work, according to Takács et al., (2021) Generation Z faces different challenges than previous generations. They enter the world of work in an unstable economy and changes in work patterns accelerated by digitalization. Many of them work in flexible but stressful work environments, with the expectation of always being ready and delivering maximum results in a short time. The changes in work patterns due to the COVID-19 pandemic have also had a significant impact, with the increase in remote working models that often blur the lines between personal and professional life. This lack of work-life balance exacerbates the burnout experienced by Generation Z. In addition, many Generation Z individuals face uncertainty in their jobs, with phenomena such as the gig economy offering flexibility but not long-term stability. Not only academic and professional factors, social pressure also contributes to burnout among Generation Z. Expectations from the social environment regarding success, self-image, and the ideal life that are often promoted through social media can create great psychological pressure. Many individuals from Generation Z feel that they must follow the standards set by society or the surrounding environment in order to be accepted and appreciated (Antonissen et al., 2023). This leads to increased social anxiety, feelings of not being good enough, and dissatisfaction with oneself, which ultimately contribute to the emergence of burnout symptoms. Cultural factors also influence Generation Z's perception of success and the stress they face,

with some cultures emphasizing the importance of hard work without regard for an individual's mental well-being (Eertmans, I. V. D. B., & Van, 2023).

In dealing with burnout, Generation Z develops a variety of coping strategies to manage the stress they experience. Some choose to take a break from tiring activities and focus on activities that provide relaxation, such as meditation, exercise, or certain hobbies. Others seek social support from friends, family, or the community to help them cope with the stress they feel. However, many also have difficulty finding effective coping strategies, so they tend to experience prolonged stress that can have a negative impact on their mental health. Unfortunately, there is still a lot of stigma in society regarding the importance of mental health, which makes some individuals reluctant to seek professional help even though they are experiencing severe burnout.

In addition to individual strategies, support from the surrounding environment is also very important in helping Generation Z overcome burnout. Educational institutions can play a role by providing adequate guidance and counseling programs for students and students who experience academic stress (Rutledge et al., 2024). In the workplace, companies can implement more flexible policies and pay more attention to employee well-being, such as providing access to mental health services and creating a psychologically healthier work environment. In addition, awareness of the importance of mental health in society also needs to be continuously improved so that Generation Z feels more comfortable seeking help and talking about the stress they are experiencing. The government and health organizations can also take steps to provide more facilities that support mental health, such as free counseling centers or digital-based mental health services that are easily accessible to Generation Z (Jiang et al., 2024). By understanding the risk factors and coping strategies that can be used, it is hoped that Generation Z can be better prepared to face existing challenges without having to experience excessive fatigue.

Burnout is not just ordinary fatigue, but a condition that can have a serious impact on a person's quality of life if not handled properly. Therefore, more attention to the mental well-being of Generation Z is important for individuals, families, educational institutions, and the workplace to pay attention to. With the right approach, burnout can be minimized so that Generation Z can reach their full potential without sacrificing their mental health. Awareness of the importance of life balance, stress management, and a supportive environment are steps that need to be taken so that Generation Z can grow healthier and more productively.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research method used in this study is a literature review, which aims to analyze various previous studies related to burnout among Generation Z, the risk factors that influence it, and coping strategies that can be used to overcome it. Data were collected from various academic sources, such as scientific journals, books, research reports, and trusted articles that are relevant to the topic. The selection of literature was carried out systematically by considering the relevance, validity, and novelty of the research in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of burnout among Generation Z.

The analysis was carried out by grouping the findings from various studies into several main themes, such as the causes of burnout (eg academic pressure, job demands, and the influence of social media) and coping strategies that can be used (such as stress management, social support, and adaptive skill development). After that, a synthesis was carried out on the various findings to identify general patterns, research gaps, and recommendations that can be given to Generation Z in overcoming burnout. With this approach, the research is expected to provide useful theoretical contributions and become a basis for further research in the fields of psychology and mental health.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Understanding Burnout Among Generation Z

Burnout is a condition of physical, mental, and emotional exhaustion that occurs due to excessive stress or workload over a long period of time. This term is increasingly being discussed along with the increasing awareness of mental health, especially among Generation Z who grew up in a fast-paced and competitive environment. This generation faces various unique challenges that make them more susceptible to burnout than previous generations (Leslie et al., 2021). One of the main factors causing burnout among Generation Z is high academic and professional pressure. From an early age, they are faced with high expectations to excel in school, get into the best universities, and get promising jobs. The increasingly fierce competition makes many individuals in this generation feel trapped in a tiring cycle between study and work. The demand to always excel often makes them sacrifice their own rest time and mental health (Goh, E., & Lee, 2018).

In addition to academic pressure, another factor that contributes to burnout is the social expectations that arise from social media. Generation Z

grew up in a digital era where online and offline life often blend together. Social media creates its own pressures due to the inevitable culture of comparison. Seeing other people's achievements often displayed in an idealized form on social media can trigger feelings of not being good enough or being less successful. This causes many individuals to feel they have to work harder to meet standards that are often unrealistic (Holzer et al., 2022).

Economic factors also play a major role in increasing the risk of burnout among Generation Z. Global economic instability, rising costs of living, and career uncertainty make many of them feel anxious and stressed. Heavy financial burdens force many individuals to work harder or even take on multiple jobs at once to make ends meet. As a result, time for rest and mental health care becomes very limited (Fleeton, 2024).

Rapidly developing technology has also contributed to the increasing rate of burnout among Generation Z. On the one hand, technology provides easier access to information and job opportunities. However, on the other hand, this also creates a work culture that has no clear boundaries between work time and personal time. With the presence of digital devices, many young workers feel they must always be available and responsive to work at any time. This prevents them from truly taking a break and getting away from work pressure (Cosseta, 2023). The impact of burnout on Generation Z cannot be ignored. Burnout not only reduces their productivity and performance, but also negatively impacts their mental and physical health. Many individuals who experience burnout report experiencing anxiety disorders, depression, and physical health problems such as chronic fatigue and sleep disorders. If not treated properly, burnout can hinder their career development and social life in the long run.

To overcome burnout, it is important for Generation Z to realize the importance of maintaining a balance between work, study, and personal life (Prater, 2020). Developing healthy habits such as setting a break, exercising, and seeking social support can help reduce stress levels. In addition, organizations and educational institutions also have a role in creating a more supportive environment by reducing excessive pressure and providing access to mental health services. Awareness of the importance of mental health must continue to be increased so that Generation Z can face the challenges of the modern era without having to sacrifice their own well-being.

Risk Factors for Burnout in Generation Z

One of the main factors contributing to burnout in Generation Z is high academic and professional pressure. This generation was raised in a highly competitive environment, where academic and professional achievement are often the benchmarks of success. High expectations from family and society make many individuals in this group feel the need to always perform perfectly, both in education and work. The increasingly demanding education system, coupled with increasingly fierce competition in the workplace, creates pressure that can lead to chronic stress and ultimately burnout (Chen et al., 2023). Technology and social media also play a significant role in increasing the risk of burnout in Generation Z. They grew up in a digital era where information can be accessed easily and quickly. Although technology brings many benefits, excessive exposure to social media can lead to feelings of anxiety and low self-esteem. Constant social comparison with others, whether in academic, career, or personal life, can increase psychological stress. In addition, the habit of always being digitally connected, including the demand to always be responsive to work messages and emails, can lead to a lack of separation between personal and professional life, which is a major factor in mental exhaustion (Kobyakova et al., 2021).

Economic uncertainty is also a major cause of burnout in Generation Z. Many of them face significant financial challenges, including high education costs, difficulty in finding stable employment, and rising living costs. This economic uncertainty creates additional pressure for Generation Z to work harder and longer, often at the expense of their physical and mental well-being. Many are forced to work more than one job or take on side jobs to make ends meet, which ultimately increases the risk of burnout (Lestari, P. A., & Setyaningrum, 2024).

In addition, Generation Z also faces pressure from increasingly complex social expectations. They grow up in an environment that encourages high social awareness, including issues such as climate change, social justice, and gender equality. Involvement in these social issues can be emotionally stressful, especially when they feel they do not have enough power or resources to create real change. The expectation to always actively participate in various social movements can also lead to mental and emotional exhaustion. Lack of mental health support is also a contributing factor to the risk of burnout in Generation Z. While awareness of the importance of mental health is increasing, there are still many stigmas and barriers to accessing quality mental health services. Many are reluctant to seek professional help

for fear of being seen as weak or unable to cope on their own. Lack of access to therapy or counseling can also lead to stress buildup that leads to burnout. Addressing burnout in Generation Z requires a holistic approach, including changes in the education and work systems to be more flexible and focused on individual well-being. In addition, it is important for them to build healthy habits, such as setting limits on technology use, seeking social support, and implementing stress management techniques such as meditation or exercise. Awareness of the importance of mental health and access to adequate resources also need to be increased so that Generation Z can better face their challenges and prevent burnout early on.

The Impact of Burnout on Generation Z

One of the main impacts of burnout is a decline in mental health. Generation Z is known as a group that is more open in discussing mental health issues than previous generations. However, they also face greater pressure in academics and work, which often triggers anxiety and depression. Burnout makes individuals feel demotivated and lose purpose, which can ultimately lead to feelings of hopelessness. Not infrequently, this condition also contributes to increasing rates of mental disorders, such as major depression and anxiety disorders. This is further exacerbated by high social expectations, where many individuals feel they must always be productive and successful at a young age (Meechan, N., & Wonglorsaichon, 2024). In addition to mental health, burnout also has a significant impact on the productivity and work performance of Generation Z. Many of them work in environments that require high performance for long hours, either as freelancers, corporate employees, or entrepreneurs. The pressure to continue to produce optimal results often leads to prolonged fatigue. As a result, they become less focused, lose creativity, and experience decreased motivation in completing their tasks. Not infrequently, this condition leads to the desire to quit work or change careers continuously, which can affect their financial stability in the long term (Hartono, N., & Prapunoto, 2024).

The impact of burnout is not only limited to individuals, but also affects their social relationships. Generation Z lives in an era of social media that allows them to connect with many people, but ironically, many of them feel lonely and isolated. Burnout can cause them to withdraw from social interactions because they feel too tired or do not have the energy to communicate. This can worsen the feelings of alienation and loneliness that are already widely experienced by this generation. Lack of social support can

also worsen burnout, creating a vicious cycle where individuals feel increasingly trapped in prolonged fatigue (Lucas, 2024).

In addition, the impact of burnout on Generation Z can also be seen in unhealthy lifestyle patterns. Many of them experience sleep disorders due to excessive stress, resulting in irregular sleep patterns and lack of quality rest. Lack of sleep can trigger various health problems, such as a decreased immune system, increased risk of heart disease, and metabolic disorders. On the other hand, some individuals may adopt unhealthy habits, such as consuming excessive amounts of fast food or relying on high amounts of caffeine to stay awake. This unbalanced lifestyle further exacerbates the effects of burnout and creates long-term health problems.

To overcome the effects of burnout, it is important for Generation Z to recognize their limitations and implement effective stress management strategies. Maintaining a balance between personal and professional life, allocating time for rest, and seeking social support are some steps that can help reduce the level of fatigue they experience. In addition, it is important for the workplace and educational institutions to pay more attention to the mental health and well-being of this generation, by creating policies that support a better life balance (Lu, A. C. C., & Gursoy, 2016).

Overall, burnout has a fairly serious impact on Generation Z, both in terms of mental health, productivity, social relationships, and lifestyle. This phenomenon needs to get more attention so that individuals can live healthier and more balanced lives. With increasing awareness of the importance of mental health and strategies for dealing with burnout, it is hoped that Generation Z can face life's challenges better and still have an optimal quality of life.

Coping Strategies for Dealing with Burnout

One of the main approaches in coping strategies is to recognize the early signs of burnout and understand the triggers. Symptoms such as prolonged fatigue, decreased motivation, and increased feelings of cynicism towards work or the social environment can be an indication that someone is experiencing burnout. By recognizing this early on, individuals can take more effective preventive measures before the condition worsens (Demerouti, 2015). Maintaining a balance between personal and professional life is also an important aspect in overcoming burnout. Often, individuals who experience burnout tend to be trapped in unhealthy work patterns, such as working excessively without giving enough time for rest or recreation. Therefore,

arranging a more flexible work schedule and making room for enjoyable activities can help reduce excessive stress. Activities such as exercise, meditation, or simply spending time with family and friends can have a positive effect on maintaining emotional balance. In addition, having a good support system can be a powerful coping strategy. Support from family, friends, or coworkers can help someone feel more understood and appreciated. Sharing feelings and experiences with others can also reduce the emotional burden felt. In some cases, seeking professional help, such as a counselor or psychologist, can be a wise move to get further guidance in dealing with burnout (Maresca et al., 2022).

Developing a more adaptive mindset is also important in coping strategies for burnout. Often, individuals who experience burnout have too high expectations of themselves, making it easy to feel frustrated when the results achieved are not as expected. By learning to accept one's limitations and adapting to changes that occur, individuals can be more flexible in facing challenges and reducing unnecessary stress. Another strategy that can be applied is to improve stress management skills. Techniques such as mindfulness, deep breathing, or other relaxation techniques can help calm the mind and body in dealing with stressful situations. In addition, setting priorities and managing time more effectively can reduce feelings of being overwhelmed by too many responsibilities that must be completed in a short time.

Burnout is not a condition that can be overcome overnight, but by implementing the right coping strategies, individuals can slowly restore balance and return to living a healthier and more productive life. The most important thing is to realize that self-well-being must always be a priority, so that you can face life's challenges more wisely and calmly.

CONCLUSION

Burnout is an increasingly common phenomenon among Generation Z, especially in the digital era full of academic, professional, and social demands. This generation faces various risk factors that can increase the likelihood of experiencing burnout, ranging from academic pressure, high job expectations, excessive exposure to social media, to a lack of balance between personal and professional life.

The main risk factors for burnout in Generation Z include high academic pressure, economic uncertainty, and unrealistic social expectations. Many of them feel the need to achieve success in a short time, which is exacerbated by

social comparisons that occur through digital media. In addition, increased work flexibility can actually lead to a greater workload because the boundaries between work and personal life become blurred.

The impact of burnout on Generation Z not only affects mental health, but can also have an impact on productivity, interpersonal relationships, and overall life satisfaction. Symptoms of burnout often appear in the form of emotional exhaustion, loss of motivation, and feelings of incompetence in carrying out daily tasks. If not handled properly, burnout can lead to more serious health problems such as anxiety disorders and depression. To overcome burnout, Generation Z needs to implement various effective coping strategies. One strategy that can be applied is good time management to balance academic or work demands with sufficient rest time. In addition, establishing healthy boundaries on social media use can help reduce social pressure and improve mental well-being. Social support also plays an important role in overcoming burnout. Generation Z needs to be encouraged to seek help from friends, family, or mental health professionals when facing excessive pressure. In addition, organizations and educational institutions need to create a more supportive environment by providing flexibility in work or study schedules and providing access to counseling services. Awareness of the importance of mental health must be a priority for Generation Z so that they can face life challenges better. By recognizing the risk factors for burnout and implementing appropriate coping strategies, Generation Z can maintain a healthier and more productive life balance. Therefore, a joint effort is needed from individuals, communities, and institutions to create an environment that supports the mental health and well-being of future generations.

REFERENCES

- Antonissen, D., Eertmans, A., Van den Brande, I., & Van den Broeck, L. (2023). Age differences in levels and risk factors of burnout in three European countries: A contribution from consultancy practice. In *Job Insecurity, Precarious Employment and Burnout* (pp. 177-193). Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Chen, X., Masukujjaman, M., Al Mamun, A., Gao, J., & Makhbul, Z. K. M. (2023). Modeling the significance of work culture on burnout, satisfaction, and psychological distress among the Gen-Z workforce in an emerging country. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 10(1), 1-12.
- Cosseta, L. (2023). Job burnout and 996 working hour system: how Chinese Generation Z reacts.
- Demerouti, E. (2015). Strategies used by individuals to prevent burnout. *European journal of clinical investigation*, 45(10), 1106-1112.

- Eertmans, I. V. D. B., & Van, L. (2023). 9. Age differences in levels and risk factors of burnout in three European countries: A contribution from consultancy practice Pulso Group: Dirk Antonissen, Audrey. *Job Insecurity, Precarious Employment and Burnout: Facts and Fables in Work Psychology Research*, 177.
- Fleeton, T. (2024). Job Satisfaction among Generation Z and Millennials in the Mental Health Field.
- Goh, E., & Lee, C. (2018). A workforce to be reckoned with: The emerging pivotal Generation Z hospitality workforce. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 73, 20-28.
- Hartono, N., & Prapunoto, S. (2024). Computer Self-Efficacy, Work Stress, and Burnout in Gen Z in Mentoring Communities. *Asian Journal of Social and Humanities*, 2(9), 1956-1970.
- Holzer, B. M., Ramuz, O., Minder, C. E., & Zimmerli, L. (2022). Motivation and personality factors of Generation Z high school students aspiring to study human medicine. *BMC medical education*, 22(1), 31.
- Jiang, J., Liu, S., Chi, C., Liu, Y., Xu, J., Zeng, L., & Peng, H. (2024). Experiences of compassion fatigue among Generation Z nurses in the emergency department: a qualitative study in Shanghai, China. *BMC nursing*, 23(1), 556.
- Kobyakova, O. S., Levko, A. N., Bakhteeva, A. V., Chernov, D. Y., Malkova, A. A., Chigrina, V. P., ... & Kulikov, E. S. (2021). Occupational burnout of doctors: characteristics of generations. *Russian Medicine*, 27(3), 205-216.
- Leslie, B., Anderson, C., Bickham, C., Horman, J., Overly, A., Gentry, C., ... & King, J. (2021). Generation Z perceptions of a positive workplace environment. *Employee responsibilities and rights journal*, 33, 171-187.
- Lestari, P. A., & Setyaningrum, R. P. (2024). The Influence Of Work-Life Balance And Job Stress On Job Satisfaction Mediated By Burnout In Generation Z Employees In The Manufacturing Sector MM2100. *Jurnal Ekonomi*, 13(02), 555-563.
- Lu, A. C. C., & Gursoy, D. (2016). Impact of job burnout on satisfaction and turnover intention: do generational differences matter?. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 40(2), 210-235.
- Lucas, A. C. (2024). *The Effect Leadership Styles Have on Generational Workforce as It Relates to Burnout* (Doctoral dissertation, The Chicago School of Professional Psychology).
- Maresca, G., Corallo, F., Catanese, G., Formica, C., & Lo Buono, V. (2022). Coping strategies of healthcare professionals with burnout syndrome: a systematic review. *Medicina*, 58(2), 327.
- Meechan, N., & Wonglorsaichon, P. (2024). The Influence of Working Environment on Burnout among Gen-X, Gen-Y, and Gen-Z Employees. *Journal of Family Business & Management Studies*, 16(1).

- Ningthoujam, S., Singh, T., Gautam, V., & Zafar, M. (2021). Perceived Stress and Coping Mechanism of Generation Z Management Students: Empirical Evidence. *IUP Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 20(4).
- Paulišić, M. (2024, October). Workplaces: Is There a Difference in Burnout Between Generation Y and Generation Z?. In *IBSCO 2024 2. International Business and Society Conference* (pp. 1-19).
- Prater, M. R. (2020). Teaching millennials and generation Z: New opportunities in undergraduate medical education. In *Handbook of research on the efficacy of training programs and systems in medical education* (pp. 72-91). IGI Global.
- Putri, R. A., & Dudija, N. Burnout among Generation Z Employees: A Literature Review. *International Research Journal of Economics and Management Studies IRJEMS*, 3(6).
- Rutledge, D. N., Douville, S., & Winokur, E. J. (2024). Nurses' Generational Differences of Burnout and Turnover Risk. *Online Journal of Issues in Nursing*, 29(3), 1-13.
- Takács, R., Takács, S., T Kárász, J., Horváth, Z., & Oláh, A. (2021). Exploring coping strategies of different generations of students starting university. *Frontiers in psychology*, 12, 740569.
- Wulandari, A., Listiarini, A., Palit, G. M., & Rohman, A. (2023). Burnout, leadership, and turnover intention among generation Z in mining industry. *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change*, 17(2), 1-26.