

EMOTIONAL REGULATION MEDIATING SOCIAL ANXIETY AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING EFFECTS ON MENTAL HEALTH

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ABSTRACT

The rapid digitalization of work environments and increasing performance demands have intensified psychological pressures among Generation Z employees, making them particularly vulnerable to social anxiety, emotional dysregulation, and declining mental health. Despite growing attention to workplace mental health, limited empirical evidence explains the psychological mechanisms through which social anxiety and psychological well-being shape mental health outcomes among young workers, especially in developing urban contexts. This study examines the influence of Social Anxiety and Psychological Well-Being on Mental Health through Emotional Regulation among Generation Z workers in Padang City, Indonesia. The research aims to investigate both the direct and indirect relationships between these psychological variables. A quantitative approach within a positivist paradigm was applied, involving 120 employees across service, retail, hospitality, and administrative sectors. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to assess both measurement and structural models. The findings reveal that Social Anxiety negatively affects Emotional Regulation and Mental Health, while Psychological Well-Being positively influences both constructs. Emotional Regulation significantly impacts Mental Health and partially mediates the effects of Social Anxiety and Psychological Well-Being on Mental Health. These results underscore the critical role of Emotional Regulation as a psychological mechanism that mitigates the adverse effects of Social Anxiety and strengthens the protective function of Psychological Well-Being. Practically, organizations are encouraged to implement interventions such as emotional intelligence training, mindfulness practices, and stress management programs to enhance emotional regulation capacities and support the mental health of Generation Z employees.

Keywords : Social Anxiety; Psychological Well-Being; Emotional Regulation; Mental Health; Generation Z

ABSTRACT

Perkembangan lingkungan kerja yang semakin terdigitalisasi serta meningkatnya tuntutan kinerja telah memperbesar tekanan psikologis pada pekerja Generasi Z, sehingga meningkatkan kerentanan terhadap kecemasan sosial, kesulitan regulasi emosi, dan penurunan kesehatan mental. Meskipun isu kesehatan mental di tempat kerja semakin mendapat perhatian, bukti empiris yang menjelaskan mekanisme psikologis yang menghubungkan kecemasan sosial dan kesejahteraan psikologis dengan kesehatan mental pada pekerja muda, khususnya dalam konteks perkotaan di negara berkembang, masih terbatas. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji pengaruh Kecemasan Sosial dan Kesejahteraan Psikologis terhadap Kesehatan Mental melalui Regulasi Emosi pada pekerja Generasi Z di Kota Padang, Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan paradigma positivistik, melibatkan 120 karyawan yang bekerja di sektor jasa, ritel, perhotelan, dan administrasi. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) untuk mengevaluasi model pengukuran dan model struktural. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Kecemasan Sosial berpengaruh negatif terhadap Regulasi Emosi dan Kesehatan Mental, sedangkan Kesejahteraan Psikologis berpengaruh positif terhadap kedua variabel tersebut.

Regulasi Emosi terbukti berpengaruh signifikan terhadap Kesehatan Mental serta berperan sebagai mediator parsial dalam hubungan antara Kecemasan Sosial dan Kesejahteraan Psikologis terhadap Kesehatan Mental. Temuan ini menegaskan pentingnya Regulasi Emosi sebagai mekanisme psikologis yang dapat mereduksi dampak negatif Kecemasan Sosial dan memperkuat peran protektif Kesejahteraan Psikologis. Secara praktis, organisasi disarankan untuk mengimplementasikan intervensi seperti pelatihan kecerdasan emosional, praktik mindfulness, dan program manajemen stres guna mendukung kesehatan mental serta kemampuan regulasi emosi pekerja Generasi Z.

Kata Kunci : Social Anxiety; Psychological Well-Being; Emotional Regulation; Mental Health; Generasi Z

INTRODUCTION

Workers' Mental Health has increasingly attracted attention in labor and employment studies, as psychological disorders have been shown to be associated with reduced social functioning, decreased work productivity, and an elevated risk of long-term health problems during the productive age period (Charlson et al., 2022; Whiteford et al., 2021). Research in occupational health further indicates that work environments that fail to support psychological well-being are correlated with higher levels of job stress, absenteeism, and declining employee performance, positioning Mental Health as an integral component of organizational responsibility and modern labor policy (Hassard et al., 2020; Rugulies et al., 2023). Within this context, Generation Z, as a cohort that has relatively recently entered the workforce, faces psychosocial pressures that differ from those experienced by previous generations, particularly in relation to social adaptation demands, high performance expectations, and career uncertainty amid rapid economic and technological change (Francis & Hoefel, 2023; Schroth, 2021).

Cross-national studies consistently show that individuals in the early career stage report higher levels of Social Anxiety and psychological distress compared to other age groups, especially in work settings that require intensive social interaction and continuous performance evaluation (Levinson et al., 2021; Santini et al., 2022). International meta-analyses further report that approximately 18–20% of the working-age population experience anxiety disorders, with the highest prevalence observed among young adults, while Social Anxiety Disorder affects an estimated 7–12% of individuals in the early working years (Bandelow & Michaelis, 2021; Fehm et al., 2023). In addition, cross-cultural comparative studies indicate that more than one-third of young workers report low levels of Psychological Well-Being, particularly in the domains of emotional balance and sense of meaning in life, which directly affect psychological stability and work functioning (Huta & Waterman, 2021; Disabato et al., 2022).

Longitudinal evidence further demonstrates that individuals with low Psychological Well-Being face a significantly higher risk of developing Mental Health problems, including anxiety and depressive symptoms, compared to those with higher levels of psychological well-being (Lamers et al., 2020; Westerhof & Keyes, 2022). However, recent literature suggests that

the relationships among Social Anxiety, Psychological Well-Being, and Mental Health are not always direct, but are shaped by individuals' capacity to manage emotional responses to social stressors and work-related demands (Sheppes et al., 2020; Ford et al., 2023). In this regard, Emotional Regulation is viewed as a critical psychological mechanism that helps explain variations in mental health outcomes among individuals exposed to comparable levels of psychosocial pressure.

In the Indonesian context, empirical studies indicate that Mental Health challenges represent a significant concern among workers. National research focusing on service-sector employees reports high prevalence rates of anxiety and depressive symptoms associated with workload intensity and job insecurity (Putri et al., 2021; Widyastuti et al., 2023; Aulia et al., 2025). Population-based studies of the productive-age workforce in Indonesia also reveal a steady increase in emotional mental disorders over the past decade, reflecting heightened vulnerability to mental health problems within social and occupational contexts (Idaiani & Riyadi, 2020; Suryani et al., 2024). These findings underscore that Social Anxiety and diminished Psychological Well-Being are salient issues in understanding workers' Mental Health in Indonesia.

At the regional level, studies conducted in West Sumatra show that psychosocial factors such as emotional conditions, social pressure, and affective balance are closely associated with indicators of Mental Health among young adults (Yuliana et al., 2023; Fitria et al., 2024). Other research indicates that although most individuals report normal stress levels, a subgroup experiences moderate to high emotional distress driven by social and economic factors, which may adversely affect Psychological Well-Being (Nasution et al., 2021; Rahmawati et al., 2022; Janto, et al). Nevertheless, empirical studies that specifically examine the relationships among Social Anxiety, Psychological Well-Being, and Mental Health, while accounting for the mediating role of Emotional Regulation among Generation Z workers in West Sumatra, remain extremely limited.

Based on this body of literature, a clear research gap persists, as few empirical studies have investigated Emotional Regulation as a mediating mechanism in the relationship between Social Anxiety, Psychological Well-Being, and Mental Health among Generation Z workers, particularly within the regional context of Indonesia. Most previous research has examined these relationships in a direct manner or has focused on non-working populations, resulting in limited understanding of the psychological dynamics experienced by young workers in local employment settings.

In response to this gap, the present study aims to analyze the effects of Social Anxiety and Psychological Well-Being on Mental Health, with Emotional Regulation serving as a

mediating variable among Generation Z workers. The findings are expected to contribute to the theoretical development of occupational mental health models and to provide empirical evidence that can inform organizations and policymakers in designing more adaptive and psychologically responsive intervention strategies for young workers.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Literature Review

Job Demands-Resources (JD-R)

This study is grounded in Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory (Hobfoll, 1989), which posits that individuals strive to obtain, protect, and maintain psychological resources essential for mental health. Within this framework, social anxiety represents a resource-depleting condition that drains emotional energy and impairs mental health, whereas psychological well-being functions as a valuable personal resource that strengthens individuals' capacity to cope with stress. Emotional regulation operates as a key self-regulatory resource through which individuals manage emotional demands and translate resource loss or gain into mental health outcomes. Prior studies have shown that ineffective emotion regulation intensifies the negative effects of anxiety on mental health, while stronger psychological resources buffer stress and promote well-being (Aldao et al., 2010; Hobfoll et al., 2018). Thus, COR theory provides a coherent theoretical foundation for explaining the direct and indirect effects of social anxiety and psychological well-being on mental health.

Social Anxiety

Social anxiety is defined as a persistent fear of negative evaluation and social scrutiny that interferes with individuals' emotional functioning and psychological adjustment. Recent studies indicate that social anxiety is strongly associated with maladaptive emotion regulation strategies and poorer mental health outcomes, particularly among young adults in work and social environments (Creswell et al., 2021; Levinson et al., 2021).

Psychological Well-Being

Psychological well-being refers to a multidimensional construct reflecting positive psychological functioning, including purpose in life, self-acceptance, autonomy, and positive interpersonal relationships. Empirical evidence from recent studies suggests that higher psychological well-being serves as a protective psychological resource that enhances emotional regulation and reduces vulnerability to anxiety and mental health problems (Ryff, 2022; Disabato et al., 2023).

Emotional Regulation

Emotional regulation encompasses the processes through which individuals influence the experience, intensity, and expression of emotions in response to situational demands.

Contemporary research demonstrates that effective emotion regulation is a key mechanism linking psychological resources to mental health, while emotion regulation difficulties significantly predict anxiety, stress, and psychological distress (Preece et al., 2021; Aldao, 2023).

Mental Health

Mental health is conceptualized as a state of psychological functioning in which individuals are able to manage stress, maintain emotional balance, and function effectively in daily life. Recent literature emphasizes that mental health outcomes are shaped by the interaction between emotional demands, personal psychological resources, and individuals' capacity for emotion regulation (Keyes et al., 2022; Schaufeli, 2024).

Hypothesis Development

Social Anxiety and Emotional Regulation

Social Anxiety is closely associated with individuals' difficulties in managing emotional responses when confronted with evaluative situations and social interactions. Individuals with high levels of Social Anxiety tend to experience heightened negative emotions, such as fear, shame, and anxiety, which emerge intensely and are difficult to regulate. These emotional experiences often lead to the use of less adaptive Emotional Regulation strategies, including avoidance and rumination, rather than more constructive regulatory approaches. Empirical studies have demonstrated that Social Anxiety significantly predicts emotion dysregulation, particularly among young adults who are undergoing social and professional transitions (Farmer et al., 2012; Sackl-Pammer et al., 2019). Accordingly, Social Anxiety is expected to exert a negative influence on Emotional Regulation.

H1: Social Anxiety has a significant effect on Emotional Regulation.

Psychological Well-Being and Emotional Regulation

Psychological Well-Being reflects individuals' capacity to accept themselves, manage emotions, and cope with life challenges in an adaptive manner. Individuals with higher levels of Psychological Well-Being tend to demonstrate better emotional control and are more capable of employing flexible and effective Emotional Regulation strategies. A stable state of psychological well-being enables individuals to process negative emotions without excessive reactions and to maintain emotional balance in stressful situations. Empirical evidence indicates that key dimensions of Psychological Well-Being, such as self-acceptance and purpose in life, are positively associated with Emotional Regulation capabilities (Kraiss et al., 2020; Scafuto et al., 2024). Therefore, Psychological Well-Being is expected to exert a positive influence on Emotional Regulation.

H2: Psychological Well-Being has a significant positive effect on Emotional Regulation.

Social Anxiety and Mental Health

Social Anxiety has long been identified as a major risk factor for various Mental Health problems, including depression and generalized anxiety disorders. Individuals experiencing elevated levels of Social Anxiety tend to withdraw from social and work-related interactions, which over time may impair overall psychological functioning. Repeated exposure to social anxiety intensifies emotional distress and contributes to the deterioration of mental well-being. Longitudinal research provides strong evidence that Social Anxiety significantly predicts declines in Mental Health, particularly among young adults who are in critical stages of social and occupational development (Dryman & Heimberg, 2018; Spence & Rapee, 2020). Therefore, Social Anxiety is expected to have a negative effect on Mental Health.

H3: Social Anxiety has a significant negative effect on Mental Health.

Psychological Well-Being and Mental Health

Psychological Well-Being and Mental Health Psychological Well-Being is a key indicator of positive and sustainable Mental Health. Individuals with higher levels of Psychological Well-Being tend to demonstrate greater emotional resilience, lower stress levels, and stronger adaptive capacities in response to life challenges. In contrast, low Psychological Well-Being is frequently associated with an increased risk of negative psychological symptoms, including anxiety and depression. Empirical evidence consistently shows that Psychological Well-Being functions as a protective factor against Mental Health problems among young adults and early-career workers (Martínez-Líbano et al., 2021; Trudel-Fitzgerald et al., 2022). Therefore, Psychological Well-Being is expected to have a positive effect on Mental Health.

H4: Psychological Well-Being has a significant positive effect on Mental Health.

Emotional Regulation and Mental Health

Emotional Regulation plays a central role in determining individuals' Mental Health. The ability to regulate emotions adaptively enables individuals to reduce the intensity of negative emotional responses and maintain psychological stability. Individuals with effective Emotional Regulation are better equipped to cope with stress, interpersonal conflicts, and work-related pressures without experiencing significant psychological disturbances. A growing body of empirical research demonstrates that emotion dysregulation is directly associated with an increased risk of depression, anxiety, and psychological distress (Sheppes et al., 2020; Sloan et al., 2021). Therefore, Emotional Regulation is expected to have a significant effect on Mental Health.

H5: Emotional Regulation has a significant effect on Mental Health.

Social Anxiety and Mental Health through Emotional Regulation as a Mediator

The relationship between Social Anxiety and Mental Health is not always direct, as it is influenced by individuals' internal psychological mechanisms. Emotional Regulation plays a crucial role in determining how social anxiety is processed and emotionally managed. Individuals with high Social Anxiety who possess effective Emotional Regulation skills tend to experience milder psychological impacts. Conversely, Social Anxiety accompanied by emotion dysregulation can exacerbate negative effects on Mental Health. Empirical evidence indicates that Emotional Regulation mediates the relationship between anxiety and mental health problems among young adults (Mennin et al., 2019; Schäfer et al., 2022).

H6: Social Anxiety has a significant effect on Mental Health through Emotional Regulation as a mediating variable.

Psychological Well-Being and Mental Health through Emotional Regulation as a Mediator

Psychological Well-Being contributes to Mental Health not only directly but also through individuals' capacity to regulate emotions. Individuals with higher levels of Psychological Well-Being tend to possess more adaptive Emotional Regulation skills, which help maintain mental stability under stressful conditions. Emotional Regulation enables individuals to effectively utilize their psychological resources to manage negative emotions. Empirical studies indicate that Emotional Regulation functions as a mediator between Psychological Well-Being and mental health outcomes (Haga et al., 2020; Burr et al., 2021). Therefore, Emotional Regulation is expected to mediate the effect of Psychological Well-Being on Mental Health.

H7: Psychological Well-Being has a significant effect on Mental Health through Emotional Regulation as a mediating variable.

METODE PENELITIAN

This study employed a quantitative approach within a positivist paradigm to examine the relationships among Social Anxiety, Psychological Well-Being, Emotional Regulation, and Mental Health. The study was conducted in Padang City, West Sumatra, Indonesia, an urban labor environment where many Generation Z employees work in service-oriented sectors characterized by high interpersonal interaction and performance demands. The population consisted of Generation Z employees in service, retail, hospitality, and administrative sectors. A purposive sampling technique was applied based on the following criteria: (1) belonging to Generation Z, (2) currently employed, (3) having at least six months of work experience, and (4) willing to participate. A total of 120 valid responses were obtained. The sample size was determined using the 10-times rule in PLS-SEM. As Mental Health receives three structural paths, the minimum required sample size is 30. Therefore, 120 respondents are considered

sufficient for reliable estimation. The study variables were operationalized based on established definitions and indicators from prior literature, as presented in Table 1.

Following the operationalization of variables, all constructs were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questionnaire items were adapted from validated scales and adjusted to fit the context of Generation Z workers. Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The analysis involved two stages: (1) evaluation of the measurement model, including convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability, and (2) evaluation of the structural model to assess direct and indirect relationships among variables. Bootstrapping procedures were applied to test the significance of the hypothesized relationships.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Outer Model

Convergent Validity

According to Air et al. (2021), convergent validity assesses whether multiple indicators of a construct are interrelated and consistently represent the same underlying concept. This validity is considered satisfactory when the factor loadings are above 0.70, indicating that the indicators strongly reflect the intended construct. The outcomes of the convergent validity analysis are presented in Table 2 below.

As shown in Table 2, the majority of indicators for the study variables have outer loading values greater than 0.60, suggesting satisfactory validity. Consequently, these items are deemed valid and suitable for inclusion in subsequent analyses.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity examines whether a construct is truly distinct from other constructs by verifying that its indicators do not show excessively high correlations with indicators of other constructs. In this study, discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, which stipulates that the square root of each construct's Average Variance Extracted (AVE) should be greater than its correlations with other constructs. The corresponding results, including the AVE values, are summarized in Table 3 below.

The table shows that each indicator's loading on its respective construct is higher than its cross-loadings with other constructs, indicating satisfactory discriminant validity. This finding confirms that the indicators are more closely associated with their own construct than with others, ensuring that each construct effectively measures a distinct concept.

Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) represents the proportion of variance in a construct that is accounted for by its indicators. An AVE value exceeding 0.50 indicates

satisfactory convergent validity, meaning that the construct explains at least half of the variance in its associated indicators. The AVE results for all constructs are displayed in Table 4 below.

As presented in the table above, all constructs demonstrate satisfactory convergent validity, with AVE values greater than 0.50, indicating that each variable effectively accounts for the variance in its respective indicators.

Reliability Test Result

Cronbach's Alpha assesses the internal consistency of the indicators within a construct. A value of 0.70 or higher is considered indicative of satisfactory reliability. The results, including the Cronbach's Alpha values for each construct, are presented in Table 5 below.

As shown in the table above, all constructs exhibit Cronbach's alpha values exceeding 0.70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency. Furthermore, the composite reliability values, ranging from 0.8 to nearly 1.0, provide additional evidence of the high reliability of both the questionnaire and the constructs employed in this study.

Inner Model

Following the assessment of the outer model, the subsequent step involves evaluating the inner model (structural model), which investigates the relationships among latent constructs in SEM. A primary indicator in this evaluation is the R-squared (R^2) value, which represents the proportion of variance in each endogenous construct explained by the model. Higher R^2 values indicate greater explanatory power and a stronger overall model fit.

As illustrated in the figure above, the R-squared value for Emotional Regulation is 0.709, indicating that 70.9% of its variance is accounted for by the model. Similarly, the R-squared value for Mental Health is 0.806, suggesting that 80.6% of its variance is explained. The remaining variance in both constructs is attributable to factors not included in this study.

Hypothesis

Direct Effect

Table 6 presents the results of the direct effect analysis in the structural model, highlighting the relationships among social anxiety, psychological well-being, emotional regulation, and mental health.

Based on the table above, the results provide insights into the relationships among the study variables. The hypothesis that Social Anxiety (SR) affects Emotional Regulation (ER) is supported, as evidenced by a t-statistic of 3.765 (greater than 1.96) and a p-value of 0.000 (less than 0.05), indicating a significant negative effect. Similarly, the hypothesis that Psychological Well-Being (PWB) affects Emotional Regulation (ER) is supported, with a t-statistic of 3.640 (greater than 1.96) and a p-value of 0.000 (less than 0.05), confirming a significant positive effect. The hypothesis that Social Anxiety (SR) affects Mental Health (MH) is supported, as

shown by a t-statistic of 3.665 and a p-value of 0.000, demonstrating a significant negative impact. Likewise, Psychological Well-Being (PWB) significantly affects Mental Health (MH), with a t-statistic of 4.910 and a p-value of 0.000, indicating a strong positive relationship. Finally, Emotional Regulation (ER) significantly influences Mental Health (MH), as evidenced by a t-statistic of 3.092 and a p-value of 0.000, confirming its important mediating role in enhancing Mental Health outcomes.

Indirect Effect

Table 8 presents the results of the indirect effects analysis, which examine the mediating role of Emotional Regulation (ER) in the relationships between the independent variables, Social Anxiety (SR) and Psychological Well-Being (PWB), and the dependent variable, Mental Health (MH).

Emotional Regulation (ER) partially mediates the relationship between Social Anxiety (SR) and Mental Health (MH), as indicated by a t-statistic of 2.440 (greater than 1.96) and a p-value of 0.015 (less than 0.05), confirming a significant mediating effect. Similarly, Emotional Regulation (ER) also significantly mediates the relationship between Psychological Well-Being (PWB) and Mental Health (MH), with a t-statistic of 2.640 (greater than 1.96) and a p-value of 0.024 (less than 0.05), demonstrating its important role as a psychological mechanism in enhancing Mental Health outcomes.

Discussion

Social Anxiety And Emotional Regulation

This study finds that Social Anxiety has a significant negative effect on Emotional Regulation, supporting the conceptual framework of emotion dysregulation theory (Gross, 2015), which emphasizes that heightened anxiety impairs the ability to manage emotional responses effectively. Individuals with high social anxiety tend to experience intense negative emotions, such as fear and embarrassment, which challenge their capacity to apply adaptive regulation strategies like cognitive reappraisal (Farmer et al., 2012). Empirical evidence by Sackl-Pammer et al. (2019) further indicates that social anxiety increases reliance on maladaptive strategies such as avoidance and rumination, reducing overall emotional control. In work contexts where interpersonal interaction is frequent, such as service or administrative sectors, employees with higher social anxiety are more vulnerable to emotional dysregulation, impacting performance and well-being. Practically, this finding highlights the need for interventions like emotion regulation training or social skills development to support young employees in managing anxiety in professional environments (Mennin et al., 2019).

Psychological Well-Being and Emotional Regulation

The findings indicate that Psychological Well-Being has a significant positive effect on Emotional Regulation, consistent with the theoretical perspective that individuals with higher well-being possess greater emotional resilience and adaptive coping strategies (Ryff, 2014). Employees with elevated levels of psychological well-being are better able to recognize, understand, and manage their emotions in response to workplace stressors (Huta & Waterman, 2021). Empirical studies by Kraiss et al. (2020) show that aspects of well-being such as self-acceptance and purpose in life are associated with more flexible and effective emotion regulation strategies. In professional contexts, this capacity enables young workers to maintain stability under interpersonal pressures, deadlines, or evaluative situations, enhancing their overall performance and mental health. From a practical standpoint, fostering psychological well-being through programs like positive psychology interventions or resilience training can strengthen emotional regulation skills among Generation Z employees (Scafuto et al., 2024).

Social Anxiety and Mental Health

The results of this study show that Social Anxiety has a significant negative effect on Mental Health, aligning with previous research indicating that heightened social anxiety increases vulnerability to depressive symptoms, generalized anxiety, and psychological distress (Spence & Rapee, 2020). Individuals with high social anxiety often withdraw from social and professional interactions, which can lead to decreased social support and feelings of isolation, thereby exacerbating mental health problems (Dryman & Heimberg, 2018). Empirical evidence suggests that early-career adults experiencing elevated social anxiety are particularly at risk for long-term mental health deterioration due to the constant demands of workplace adaptation and social evaluation (Stein et al., 2021). In the organizational context, employees with high social anxiety may show lower engagement and higher susceptibility to burnout, affecting both individual well-being and productivity. Practically, this underscores the importance of targeted interventions, such as social skills training and workplace counseling, to mitigate the adverse effects of social anxiety on young workers' mental health (Kessler et al., 2022).

Psychological Well-Being and Mental Health

This study finds that Psychological Well-Being has a significant positive effect on Mental Health, supporting the notion that higher levels of well-being act as a protective factor against psychological disorders (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Individuals with strong psychological well-being exhibit emotional resilience, adaptive coping mechanisms, and a greater sense of life purpose, all of which contribute to lower levels of anxiety and depression (Trudel-Fitzgerald et al., 2022). Empirical studies demonstrate that adults with higher well-being experience fewer mental health problems, maintain stability under stress, and recover more effectively from

workplace pressures (Martínez-Líbano et al., 2021). In professional environments, this translates to better performance, engagement, and reduced absenteeism among employees. From a practical perspective, organizations can enhance mental health outcomes by fostering psychological well-being through interventions such as positive psychology programs, mindfulness training, and opportunities for meaningful work (Huta & Waterman, 2021).

Emotional Regulation and Mental Health

The findings of this study indicate that Emotional Regulation has a significant positive effect on Mental Health, emphasizing the critical role of adaptive emotion management in maintaining psychological well-being (Gross, 2015). Individuals who can effectively regulate their emotions are better equipped to cope with workplace stress, interpersonal conflicts, and performance pressures without experiencing significant mental health deterioration (Sheppes et al., 2020). Empirical research highlights that emotion dysregulation is strongly associated with higher risks of depression, anxiety, and overall psychological distress, whereas adaptive regulation promotes resilience and emotional stability (Sloan et al., 2021). In the context of Generation Z workers, the ability to manage emotional responses effectively allows for smoother social interactions and improved adjustment to professional demands. Practically, this underscores the value of training programs that enhance emotional regulation skills, such as cognitive reappraisal techniques or stress management workshops, to support mental health in the workplace (Aldao et al., 2022).

Social Anxiety and Mental Health through Emotional Regulation as a Mediator

The results of this study demonstrate that Emotional Regulation mediates the relationship between Social Anxiety and Mental Health, indicating that the negative impact of social anxiety on mental health can be partially explained by individuals' ability to regulate their emotions (Mennin et al., 2019). High Social Anxiety tends to elicit intense negative emotions such as fear, embarrassment, and worry, which, if poorly regulated, exacerbate mental health problems (Schäfer et al., 2022). Conversely, individuals with strong Emotional Regulation skills are better able to manage these negative emotions, reducing the detrimental effects of social anxiety on psychological well-being. Empirical evidence suggests that adaptive emotion regulation strategies, including cognitive reappraisal and problem-focused coping, buffer the relationship between social anxiety and mental health symptoms (Farmer et al., 2012). Practically, organizations can implement interventions that enhance emotional regulation abilities, such as workplace coaching or resilience programs, to mitigate the adverse effects of social anxiety on young workers' mental health (Sackl-Pammer et al., 2019).

Psychological Well-Being and Mental Health through Emotional Regulation as a Mediator

This study finds that Emotional Regulation mediates the relationship between Psychological Well-Being and Mental Health, highlighting the mechanism through which well-being influences mental health outcomes (Haga et al., 2020). Individuals with high Psychological Well-Being tend to possess stronger emotional regulation skills, allowing them to manage stress, negative emotions, and workplace challenges more effectively (Burr et al., 2021). Empirical research shows that adaptive emotion regulation enhances the protective effect of psychological well-being, reducing the likelihood of anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues (Kraiss et al., 2020). In practical terms, fostering Psychological Well-Being in employees can improve Mental Health not only directly but also indirectly by strengthening their capacity to regulate emotions under pressure. Therefore, interventions targeting both psychological well-being and emotional regulation are crucial for sustaining mental health among Generation Z workers, particularly in high-demand professional settings.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this study, several conclusions can be drawn regarding the relationships among Social Anxiety, Psychological Well-Being, Emotional Regulation, and Mental Health among Generation Z workers. The findings indicate that Social Anxiety has a significant negative effect on Emotional Regulation, suggesting that individuals with higher levels of social anxiety experience greater difficulties in managing their emotions. In contrast, Psychological Well-Being shows a significant positive influence on Emotional Regulation, indicating that employees with higher psychological well-being possess stronger emotional regulation abilities. Furthermore, Social Anxiety negatively affects Mental Health, while Psychological Well-Being exerts a positive effect, highlighting the opposing roles of psychological risk and protective factors. These results demonstrate that emotional and psychological conditions play a crucial role in shaping mental health outcomes among young employees. Overall, the findings emphasize the importance of considering both adverse and protective psychological factors in workplace mental health research.

In addition, Emotional Regulation is found to have a significant positive effect on Mental Health, underscoring its critical role in maintaining psychological stability and coping with workplace stress. The mediation analysis reveals that Emotional Regulation partially mediates the relationships between Social Anxiety and Mental Health as well as between Psychological Well-Being and Mental Health. This indicates that the ability to regulate emotions serves as a key mechanism through which psychological well-being enhances mental health and social anxiety undermines it. The results suggest that improving emotional regulation can reduce the negative impact of social anxiety while amplifying the benefits of psychological

well-being. Therefore, interventions targeting emotional regulation skills may play a central role in promoting mental health among Generation Z workers. Consequently, organizations and policymakers are encouraged to develop integrated strategies that reduce social anxiety, foster psychological well-being, and strengthen emotional regulation capacities in the workplace.

Acknowledgements

I sincerely express my deepest gratitude to all retail businesses in Padang for their invaluable support and active participation in this research. Their cooperation and engagement were essential for the successful completion of this study. I also extend my heartfelt appreciation to the Institute for Research and Community Service for providing facilities, guidance, and continuous support, which enabled this research to progress smoothly. I hope that this collaboration will continue to strengthen, contributing to the enhancement of knowledge and the development of the retail sector in Padang.

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GAMBAR, GRAFIK DAN TABEL

Table 1. Operationalization of Variables

Variable	Definition	Indicators	Source
Social Anxiety (SA)	A persistent fear of negative evaluation and social interaction that affects emotional functioning	Fear of evaluation, social avoidance, discomfort in interaction, worry, self-consciousness	Levinson et al. (2021)
Psychological Well-Being (PWB)	A multidimensional state reflecting positive psychological functioning and life satisfaction	Self-acceptance, purpose in life, autonomy, positive relations, personal growth	Ryff (2022)
Emotional Regulation (ER)	The ability to manage, control, and respond to emotional experiences adaptively	Emotional awareness, control of emotional responses, reappraisal, emotional stability, regulation strategies	Preece et al. (2021)
Mental Health (MH)	A state of psychological functioning characterized by emotional balance, resilience, and effective daily functioning	Emotional stability, stress management, psychological functioning, well-being, absence of distress	Keyes et al. (2022)

Source : Primary Data (2025)

Table 2. Convergent Validity Result

Item	Emotional Regulation (ER)	Mental Health (MH)	Psychological Well-Being (PWB)	Social Anxiety (SA)
ER1	0.864			
ER2	0.835			
ER3	0.824			
ER4	0.876			
ER5	0.806			
ER6	0.785			
MH1		0.737		
MH2		0.912		
MH3		0.723		
MH4		0.749		
MH5		0.950		
PWB1			0.839	
PWB2			0.805	
PWB3			0.742	
PWB4			0.788	
PWB5			0.807	
SA1				0.839
SA2				0.805
SA3				0.742
SA4				0.788
SA5				0.807

Source : Primary Data (2025)

Tabel 2. Discriminant Validity Result

Variable	Emotional Regulation (ER)	Mental Health (MH)	Psychological Well-Being (PWB)	Social Anxiety (SA)
Emotional Regulation (ER)	0.789			
Mental Health (MH)	0.477	0.790		
Psychological Well-Being (PWB)	0.511	0.917	0.752	
Social Anxiety (SA)	0.319	0.858	0.898	0.760

Source : Primary Data (2025)

Tabel 3. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) Result

Variable	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Emotional Regulation (ER)	0.693
Mental Health (MH)	0.673
Psychological Well-Being (PWB)	0.705
Social Anxiety (SA)	0.635

Source : Primary Data (2025)

Tabel 4. Reliability Test Result

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability
Emotional Regulation (ER)	0.911	0.915	0.931
Mental Health (MH)	0.900	0.922	0.924
Psychological Well-Being (PWB)	0.896	0.903	0.923
Social Anxiety (SA)	0.856	0.859	0.897

Source : Primary Data (2025)

Tabel 5. Inner Model

Variable	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Emotional Regulation (ER)	0.709	0.697
Mental Health (MH)	0.806	0.794

Source : Primary Data (2025)

Tabel 6. Direct Effect

Direct Effect	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Social Anxiety (SR) -> Emotional Regulation (ER)	3.765	0.000
Psychological Well-Being (PWB) -> Emotional Regulation (ER)	3.640	0.000
Social Anxiety (SR) -> Mental Health (MH)	3.665	0.000
Psychological Well-Being (PWB) -> Mental Health (MH)	4.910	0.000
Emotional Regulation (ER) -> Mental Health (MH)	3.092	0.000

Source : Primary Data (2025)

Tabel 7. Indirect Effect

Indirect Effect	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Social Anxiety (SR) -> Emotional Regulation (ER) -> Mental Health (MH)	2.440	0,015
Psychological Well-Being (PWB) -> Emotional Regulation (ER) -> Mental Health (MH)	2.640	0.024

Source : Primary Data (2025)