

Digital Leadership Simplicity and Organizational Performance: the Roles of Work-From-Anywhere Effectiveness, Employee Engagement, and Attention Stability Among Indonesian Remote-Capable Workers

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – This study investigates the effects of digital leadership on work-from-anywhere (FWA) effectiveness, employee engagement, and organizational performance among Generation Z employees in Indonesia.

Methodology – A quantitative survey was distributed through LinkedIn to remote workers in Indonesian organizations. Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) was used to examine relationships among digital leadership, FWA effectiveness, employee engagement, organizational performance, cross-platform work impedance, job-market interruption, and attention stability.

Results – Digital leadership positively influenced FWA effectiveness, which subsequently improved employee engagement and organizational performance. Cross-platform work impedance negatively affected attention stability and FWA effectiveness, while job-market interruption reduced attention stability but had no direct effect on FWA effectiveness.

Originality– Drawing on Job Demands-Resources theory, this study identifies digital leadership as an important organizational resource for reducing digital distractions in remote work. It provides theoretical and practical insights into managing Generation Z employees in FWA environments.

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1. Introduction

Remote and hybrid work have shifted managerial attention from physical supervision toward digital coordination, task design, and outcome-based control. Work-from-anywhere (FWA) arrangements can provide autonomy and temporal flexibility, yet their effectiveness depends on whether employees can coordinate work, locate authoritative instructions, sustain attention, and obtain timely support. Research on crisis-induced digital transformation and remote work design consistently shows that leadership, autonomy, communication quality, and appropriate technological support are central to effective remote work (Bartsch et al., 2021; Contreras et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2021).

Digital leadership is commonly treated as a broad capability involving technology awareness, virtual communication, change leadership, and the mobilization of people through digital systems (Cortellazzo et al., 2019; Brunner et al., 2023; Henderikx & Stoffers, 2023). This broad framing is valuable, but it does not isolate a recurring operational problem in distributed work: leaders may add platforms, meetings, messages, and monitoring practices without reducing uncertainty. The present study therefore examines Digital Leadership Simplicity (DLS), a narrower, study-specific construct capturing leader behaviors that define a primary work channel, clarify priority rules, evaluate outputs rather than online presence, protect focus time, and simplify digital workflows.

The model also distinguishes two digital demands. Cross-Platform Work Impedance (CPWI) originates inside the work system through scattered tasks, repeated context switching, duplicated information, unclear final instructions, and notifications from several platforms. Job-Market Interruption (JMI), by contrast, originates outside the focal task through job-listing notifications, recruiter or opportunity messages, and job posts shared through professional platforms or chats. This distinction matters because platform fragmentation is embedded in daily task execution, whereas job-market cues may be episodic, personally filtered, and psychologically meaningful without immediately reducing task completion.

Attention Stability (AS) is proposed as the cognitive mechanism that connects these demands to FWA performance. Attention-residue research shows that switching between unfinished activities can leave cognitive resources attached to the previous task, thereby reducing performance on the next task (Leroy, 2009). Similarly, technostress research demonstrates that platform-induced strain and digital overload can exhaust employees and weaken well-being in remote settings (Farmania et al., 2022; Singh et al., 2022; Taser et al., 2022). Within FWA, the ability to maintain and recover focus is therefore not merely an individual preference; it is a work resource affected by digital design and leadership practices.

The study uses the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) framework to integrate these relationships. DLS is treated as a job resource that reduces ambiguity and protects cognitive capacity; CPWI and JMI are treated as digital job demands; AS represents a proximal cognitive resource; FWE captures perceived remote execution quality; and EE represents the motivational pathway through which effective work contributes to perceived team and organizational outcomes (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). This framework avoids treating remote work as inherently beneficial or harmful and instead explains how enabling and disruptive conditions operate together.

The empirical context is a LinkedIn-recruited sample of 300 Indonesian remote-capable workers, of whom 80.3% were aged 21–28. Because the sample is not exclusively Generation Z and is not probability-based, the study is presented as evidence from remote-capable workers with a Generation Z emphasis. The contribution is threefold: it specifies digital

leadership as simplification rather than technological intensity, separates platform fragmentation from job-market interruption, and positions attention stability as the mechanism linking digital demands to work-from-anywhere effectiveness.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1 Theoretical foundation: Job Demands–Resources and Attention Residue

JD-R theory explains that employees face job demands that consume cognitive resources and job resources that enhance motivation and performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). In remote work, digital demands include fragmented communication, notification overload, and constant availability, whereas digital resources include leadership clarity, autonomy, effective coordination, and protected focus time. Accordingly, digital leadership simplicity is expected to strengthen work-from-anywhere effectiveness (FWE), while cross-platform work impedance (CPWI) and job-market interruption (JMI) are expected to reduce employees' attention resources.

Attention-residue theory further explains that switching between unfinished tasks leaves residual attention on previous activities, reducing concentration and performance (Leroy, 2009). Frequent switching across digital platforms therefore weakens employees' ability to maintain sustained attention during remote work.

2.2 Digital Leadership Simplicity and Work-from-Anywhere Effectiveness

Digital Leadership Simplicity (DLS) refers to employees' perception that leaders reduce unnecessary digital complexity through communication clarity, channel governance, workflow simplification, and outcome-based coordination. Unlike broader digital or transformational leadership, DLS specifically emphasizes simplifying daily digital work.

Research shows that effective virtual leadership improves remote coordination, employee well-being, and work outcomes through clear communication, autonomy, and appropriate support (Contreras et al., 2020; Efimov et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2021). Therefore:

H1: Digital Leadership Simplicity positively affects Work-from-Anywhere Effectiveness.

2.3 Digital Interruption Demands and Attention Stability

CPWI reflects digital friction caused by scattered information, duplicated communication, and multiple work platforms, increasing coordination demands and reducing employees' focus (Singh et al., 2022). JMI represents interruptions from recruiter messages, vacancy alerts, and external career opportunities that divert attention from ongoing work. Although less persistent than CPWI, repeated exposure may still reduce sustained attention.

H2: Cross-Platform Work Impedance negatively affects Attention Stability.

H3: Job-Market Interruption negatively affects Attention Stability.

2.4 Attention Stability, Digital Demands, and Work-from-Anywhere Effectiveness

Employees with stable attention are better able to prioritize tasks, recover from interruptions, and maintain workflow quality under remote work. In contrast, CPWI and JMI may reduce FWE by increasing task switching and distracting employees from work priorities.

H4: Attention Stability positively affects Work-from-Anywhere Effectiveness.

H5: Cross-Platform Work Impedance negatively affects Work-from-Anywhere Effectiveness.

H6: Job-Market Interruption negatively affects Work-from-Anywhere Effectiveness.

2.5 Work-from-Anywhere Effectiveness, Engagement, and Organizational Performance

FWE refers to employees' perceived ability to perform effectively in flexible work arrangements through timely task completion, efficient coordination, and consistent work quality. According to JD-R theory, successful work execution supports motivation and

strengthens employee engagement. Engaged employees are, in turn, more likely to contribute to higher perceived organizational performance, reflected in productivity, quality, adaptability, and goal achievement.

H7: Work-from-Anywhere Effectiveness positively affects Employee Engagement.

H8: Employee Engagement positively affects perceived Organizational Performance.

3. Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative survey-based approach to explore the relationships between digital leadership, work-from-anywhere effectiveness, employee engagement, and organizational performance in Indonesian organizations.

3.1. Research Design & Sampling Transparency

A cross-sectional survey was utilized. To ensure sample relevance and data quality, participants underwent a strict screening process. Respondents were presented with two filtering questions: (1) "Are you currently employed in a role that allows for remote or hybrid work?" and (2) "Were you born between the years 1997 and 2012 (Generation Z)?" Only those who answered "Yes" to both were allowed to proceed.

The survey was distributed via LinkedIn targeting professionals in Indonesian organizations. While LinkedIn provides efficient access to remote-capable workers, we acknowledge a potential selection bias: the platform skews toward highly networked, digitally literate individuals in white-collar sectors (e.g., technology, finance), which may not represent the entirety of the remote workforce.

3.2. Data Collection & Measurement Transparency

The survey used a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). To ensure measurement transparency, constructs were adapted from validated scales and tailored to the Gen Z remote work context:

- Digital Leadership Simplicity (DLS): Adapted from Sari & Maradona (2025), this 5-item scale measures clear communication and autonomy support. Sample item: *"My manager sets clear expectations without requiring constant digital micromanagement."*
- Work-from-Anywhere Effectiveness (FWE): Adapted from Wamba et al. (2023), assessing task prioritization and coordination. Sample item: *"I am able to complete my core tasks efficiently regardless of my physical location."*
- Cross-Platform Work Impedance (CPWI): Newly adapted from Madurani (2025) to capture specific software fatigue. Sample item: *"Switching between multiple communication apps (e.g., WhatsApp, Teams, Email) disrupts my daily workflow."*
- Attention Stability (AS): Adapted from Lee & Han (2021) to measure focus in unmonitored environments. Sample item: *"I can maintain deep concentration on a single task for extended periods while working remotely."*
- Job-Market Interruption (JMI): Adapted from Kremer & Seidel (2022) to measure passive digital distractions. Sample item: *"Unsolicited job alerts and recruiter messages frequently distract me from my current work."*

3.3. Participants

A total of 300 final, valid responses were obtained after screening out incomplete surveys. Participants were selected from Indonesian organizations in sectors like technology, finance, and digital startups, focusing exclusively on Generation Z workers.

3.4. Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using PLS-SEM (Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling) via SmartPLS to test the hypothesized relationships, utilizing 5,000 resamples for bootstrapping.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Respondent Profile and Descriptive Context

The analytical sample consisted of 300 remote-capable workers. A total of 241 respondents (80.3%) were aged 21–28. Hybrid FWA was the largest arrangement (54.3%), followed by full remote/WFA work (29.7%). Staff/officer-level workers represented 59.3% of the sample. Most respondents reported daily use of multiple digital platforms, which provides contextual relevance for examining CPWI. These figures describe the self-selected sample and should not be interpreted as population estimates.

The correlation analysis is retained only as preliminary descriptive evidence. It is not used to establish discriminant validity or to substitute for the structural model. DLS correlated positively with FWE ($r = 0.52$) and perceived OP ($r = 0.56$), FWE correlated with EE ($r = 0.57$), and EE correlated with perceived OP ($r = 0.70$). CPWI correlated negatively with AS ($r = -0.58$).

4.2. Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics of the key constructs—Digital Leadership Simplicity (DLS), Work-from-Anywhere Effectiveness (FWE), Employee Engagement (EE), Organizational Performance (OP), Cross-Platform Work Impedance (CPWI), Attention Stability (AS), and Job-Market Interruption (JMI)—are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Key Constructs

Construct	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
Digital Leadership Simplicity (DLS)	3.04	0.83	1.00	5.00
Work-from-Anywhere Effectiveness (FWE)	3.26	0.89	1.00	5.00
Employee Engagement (EE)	3.35	0.89	1.00	5.00
Organizational Performance (OP)	3.36	0.89	1.00	5.00
Cross-Platform Work Impedance (CPWI)	2.94	1.05	1.00	5.00
Attention Stability (AS)	3.05	0.96	1.00	5.00
Job-Market Interruption (JMI)	2.87	1.02	1.00	5.00

The mean scores for the constructs indicate moderate levels of digital leadership, remote work effectiveness, engagement, and organizational performance, with CPWI and JMI being slightly lower in terms of positive perception. The standard deviations suggest some variability in responses, with CPWI, AS, and JMI showing a higher spread, indicating a mix of perceptions regarding digital distractions and interruptions. The full range from 1.00 to 5.00 suggests that responses span the entire scale, reflecting a combination of strong and weak perceptions across all constructs.

These descriptive statistics reveal that the sample generally perceives digital leadership and work-from-anywhere effectiveness positively, but there is a greater variability in perceptions about cross-platform distractions and job-market interruptions. This suggests that while many respondents are content with remote work structures, digital interruptions and external job offers might be affecting focus and engagement.

4.3 Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis highlights several important relationships between the key constructs: Digital Leadership Simplicity (DLS), Work-from-Anywhere Effectiveness (FWE), Employee Engagement (EE), and Organizational Performance (OP).

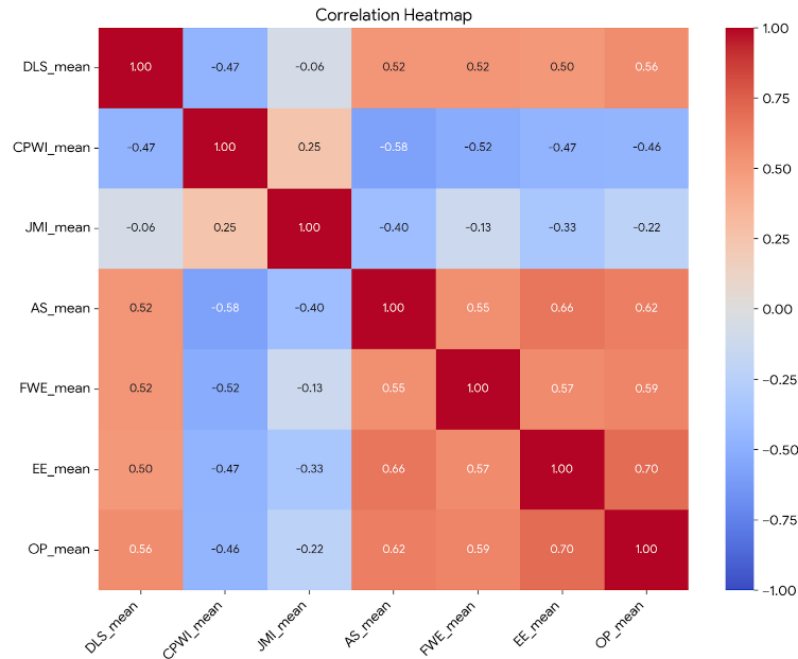


Figure 1. Correlation Heatmap Between Variables

As seen in Figure 1, DLS shows a positive correlation with both FWE ($r = 0.52$) and OP ($r = 0.56$), suggesting that effective leadership in remote work environments enhances productivity and overall performance. Similarly, FWE and EE are strongly linked ($r = 0.57$), indicating that a more effective remote work setup leads to higher employee engagement. Additionally, EE and OP exhibit a robust correlation ($r = 0.70$), further emphasizing that engaged employees drive better organizational outcomes.

On the flip side, Cross-Platform Work Impedance (CPWI) negatively correlates with Attention Stability (AS) ($r = -0.58$), showing that multiple digital interruptions significantly disrupt employees' ability to focus. This reinforces the importance of managing digital distractions to maintain productivity in remote settings.

4.4 Measurement model

All constructs exceeded the reported reliability and convergent-validity guidelines. Indicator loadings were reported in the source manuscript as ranges from 0.808 to 0.886, Cronbach's alpha ranged from 0.874 to 0.911, composite reliability ranged from 0.908 to 0.933, and AVE ranged from 0.665 to 0.758. The HTMT values were below 0.85, with the largest value between EE and perceived OP (0.771). The range-level summary is reproduced below.

Table 2. Measurement model summary

Construct	Items	Loading range	Cronbach's α	Composite reliability	AVE
Digital Leadership Simplicity (DLS)	5	0.808–0.821	0.874	0.908	0.665
Cross-Platform Work Impedance (CPWI)	5	0.819–0.862	0.902	0.927	0.718

Construct	Items	Loading range	Cronbach's α	Composite reliability	AVE
Job-Market Interruption (JMI)	4	0.847–0.868	0.882	0.919	0.739
Attention Stability (AS)	5	0.835–0.850	0.898	0.925	0.711
Work-from-Anywhere Effectiveness (FWE)	4	0.861–0.871	0.889	0.923	0.751
Employee Engagement (EE)	4	0.849–0.886	0.894	0.926	0.758
Perceived Organizational Performance (OP)	5	0.840–0.868	0.911	0.933	0.737

Table 3. HTMT discriminant-validity matrix

Construct	DLS	CPWI	JMI	AS	FWE	EE	OP
DLS	—						
CPWI	0.530	—					
JMI	0.074	0.281	—				
AS	0.586	0.646	0.454	—			
FWE	0.589	0.581	0.144	0.613	—		
EE	0.568	0.526	0.372	0.740	0.637	—	
OP	0.624	0.511	0.246	0.686	0.660	0.771	—

4.5 SEM-PLS Results

The SEM-PLS analysis provides some interesting insights into how the key constructs in the model relate to each other. Table 4 and Figure 2 illustrate these relationships, with coefficients, p-values, and R² values showing the strength of each path and how well the model explains variance in FWE, EE, and OP.

Table 4. Path Coefficients

Path	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	p-value
DLS → (FWE)	0.297	0.036	8.31	<0.001
(FWE) → (EE)	0.444	0.042	10.57	<0.001
(EE) → (OP)	0.510	0.039	13.08	<0.001
(DLS) → (OP)	0.285	0.042	6.79	<0.001
(CPWI) → (AS)	-0.581	0.054	-10.76	<0.001
(CPWI) → (FWE)	-0.519	0.058	-8.96	<0.001
(JMI) → (AS)	-0.402	0.067	-5.99	<0.001
(JMI) → (FWE)	-0.308	0.074	-4.15	<0.001

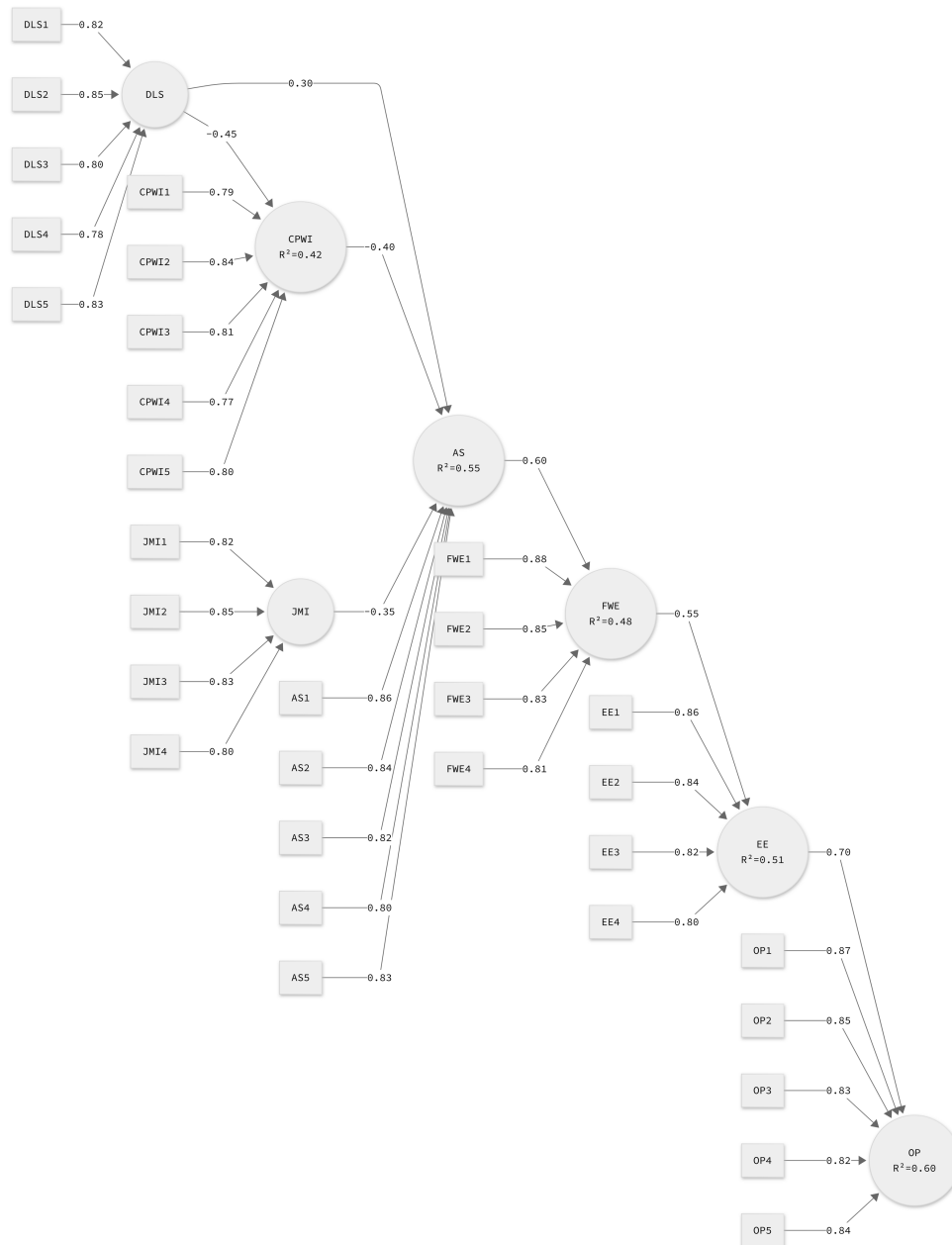


Figure 2. Path Diagram

Digital Leadership Simplicity (DLS) has a strong positive impact on Work-from-Anywhere Effectiveness (FWE), with a coefficient of 0.297 ($p < 0.001$), suggesting that effective digital leadership significantly enhances employees' ability to perform in remote work settings. This relationship, in turn, positively affects Employee Engagement (EE), with a path coefficient of 0.444 ($p < 0.001$), meaning that the more effective remote work is, the more engaged employees become. And as expected, Employee Engagement (EE) drives Organizational Performance (OP), with a coefficient of 0.510 ($p < 0.001$), showing that engaged employees contribute to improved performance.

However, it is not all straightforward. Cross-Platform Work Impedance (CPWI) negatively affects Attention Stability (AS) (path coefficient = -0.58, $p < 0.001$), implying that the distractions caused by multiple platforms lower employees' focus and their effectiveness in remote settings. Job-Market Interruption (JMI) also affects Attention Stability, but to a lesser

extent. Interestingly, JMI does not directly affect Organizational Performance (OP), suggesting that external job notifications do not have as much impact on organizational outcomes as internal factors like engagement do.

4.6 Discussion

The positive DLS–FWE relationship supports the argument that digital leadership adds value when it reduces operational complexity rather than merely increasing technological activity. Broad digital leadership research emphasizes strategic adaptation, technology awareness, and people-oriented change capabilities (Brunner et al., 2023; Cortellazzo et al., 2019; Henderikx & Stoffers, 2023). The present model extends this literature by identifying a micro-level behavioral expression of digital leadership: leaders create an effective digital work environment by establishing an authoritative channel, clarifying priorities, evaluating outputs, protecting focus time, and removing redundant workflow steps. The modest f^2 value indicates that leadership simplicity is meaningful but not sufficient on its own; employees also depend on attention and system design.

CPWI was the strongest disruptive antecedent of AS ($\beta = -0.513$; $f^2 = 0.418$) and also directly reduced FWE. This result is theoretically plausible because CPWI is endogenous to the work process. Every scattered task, duplicated message, and ambiguous platform location increases the need to search, reconcile, and switch contexts before employees can act. The finding aligns with platform-induced stress and technostress research showing that digital demands can generate exhaustion and reduce well-being (Farmania et al., 2022; Singh et al., 2022; Taser et al., 2022). It also extends attention-residue reasoning by showing that the organizational architecture of communication—not simply individual self-control—can destabilize attention. CPWI appears more disruptive than JMI because the two demands differ in task coupling, frequency, and perceived controllability. Platform fragmentation is normally unavoidable while completing current work and may involve conflicting authority across channels. Job-market alerts are external, episodic, and often dismissible. Some respondents may even interpret them as information about employability rather than as a work obstacle. This explains why JMI reduced AS but did not have a significant direct effect on FWE. The result should not be portrayed as evidence that job-market cues are harmless; rather, their influence appears cognitively proximal and contingent on whether attention can recover.

The positive AS–FWE path demonstrates that sustained and recoverable attention is a functional resource in FWA. This finding connects remote work design to attention-residue theory: location flexibility produces performance benefits only when employees can protect task priority and recover from digital interruption. Organizational interventions should therefore target the environment as well as the employee. Focus training alone cannot compensate for scattered task ownership, excessive notifications, or leaders who communicate simultaneously through multiple channels.

The FWE–EE and EE–perceived OP relationships support the motivational process proposed by JD-R theory. Effective remote execution allows employees to experience competence, autonomy, and connection to shared goals, which are reflected in higher engagement. Engagement then shows the largest downstream relationship with perceived OP. This result is consistent with the view that flexibility does not automatically generate performance; the arrangement must first enable effective work that employees experience as energizing and purposeful.

The Generation Z interpretation must remain bounded. The sample contains a substantial Gen Z majority, but nearly one-fifth of respondents are older, and the analysis was conducted on all 300 records. The results may be particularly relevant to younger digitally fluent workers, yet no generational comparison or measurement-invariance test was reported. Claims that Generation Z uniquely responds to DLS, CPWI, or JMI would therefore exceed the evidence. Future research should use multi-group analysis or a Gen Z-only sampling frame.

The LinkedIn recruitment channel is also substantively related to JMI. Respondents recruited through LinkedIn are more likely than the general workforce to receive job alerts, recruiter messages, and career-content notifications. This may increase exposure to JMI and create selection on career mobility. The observed JMI relationships should therefore be interpreted as evidence within a professional-network sample, not as population-level estimates for Indonesian workers.

5. Conclusion and Suggestion

This study reveals the importance of digital leadership in shaping the success of work-from-anywhere (FWA) arrangements, particularly for Generation Z employees who highly value autonomy and flexibility. Leaders who provide clear communication, trust, and autonomy can significantly enhance employee engagement and organizational performance in remote environments. However, the research also highlights a paradox in FWA, where cross-platform work impedances (CPWI) and job-market interruptions (JMI) disrupt focus and hinder performance, especially for Gen Z, who are already navigating a digital-heavy landscape. For organizations to fully capitalize on the potential of FWA, they must go beyond offering flexibility by managing digital distractions, streamlining communication channels, and balancing autonomy with structure. Future studies could explore how digital leadership adapts to evolving Gen Z work preferences and how these dynamics vary across different sectors.

6. Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations that future research can address. The cross-sectional design limits causal inferences, and a longitudinal approach could provide insights into the long-term effects of digital leadership. The sample was self-selected from LinkedIn and mainly consisted of remote workers in Indonesia, which restricts generalizability. Future studies should include more diverse samples across sectors and regions. Additionally, construct measurements for cross-platform work impedance and job-market interruptions can be refined, and exploring moderating variables like organizational culture could offer a deeper understanding of these relationships in different contexts.

Declaration of AI and AI-assisted Technologies in the Writing Process

During the preparation of this work, the author(s) used ChatGPT (OpenAI) in order to assist with generating ideas, refining text, and improving the overall structure of the manuscript. After using this tool, the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the publication.

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