

Improving Generation Z Employee Performance Through Positive Reinforcement: An Operant Behavior Intervention Through Instagram Social Media

Aulia Rizky Ramadhani¹, Wulantika²

Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: wulantika24@students.unnes.ac.id

Abstract. In the scope of a career, performance becomes the main focus in achieving targets and goals. Low employee performance has an impact on organizational success. Human resource practitioners need to pay attention to this in managing and developing employees in the organization. Operant behavior intervention in the form of positive reinforcement can be a solution to overcome employee performance problems. This intervention can be applied through social media, making it an effective and innovative alternative to improve employee performance in the digital era. The Instagram platform has innovative potential as a means of communication and interaction that can reach more widely in mental health promotion, especially in the context of positive reinforcement. The purpose of this study is to examine how positive reinforcement delivered through Instagram social media can improve employee performance among generation Z. This research uses a literature study research method by reviewing scientific journals relevant to the author's research. Based on the results of data analysis using the literature study method related to operant behavior intervention in the form of positive reinforcement, it was found that there was a positive impact in improving employee performance. In research related to the effectiveness of Instagram social media as a means of mental health promotion, it was found that Instagram social media provides effectiveness and accessibility of information through digital literacy activities. Furthermore, there are also some important implications for human resource practitioners and organizations that want to improve the performance of generation Z employees.

Key words: [Employee Performance, Generation Z, Positive Reinforcement, Operant Behaviour Intervention, Instagram Social Media.]

How to Cite: Ramadhani, A. R., Wulantika. (2024). Improving Employee Performance Through Positive Reinforcement: an Operant Behavior Intervention Through Instagram Social Media. *AGCAF: Annual Guidance and Counseling Academic Forum* (2024), 186-192.

INTRODUCTION

Low employee performance in today's competitive era is still a major problem in Human Resource Management (HRM) (Syamsul, Masharyono, Triananda, and Sumiyati, 2016). This certainly has an impact on the vision and mission of the institution or organization concerned. Every organization always tries to increase employee productivity. Human Resource Management (HRM) plays a role in optimizing the ability capacity of its members. For this reason, leaders need to find ways and solutions to generate employee performance. Appreciation for work achievements will improve performance in employees (Prabu and Wijayanti, 2016). So that there will be encouragement or motivation in him to carry out his duties as well as possible, along with the rewards applied by the company itself. In the Behavioristic approach, there is the principle of positive reinforcement in operant behavior intervention. Positive reinforcement in the principle of operant behavior is given in the form of basic things such as food, drink, money, love, praise, appreciation, attention and career success (Maghfur, 2022). The existence of positive reinforcement allows it to strengthen changes in employee behavior in the form of improved performance through a stimulus that encourages behavior change. Because the recognition of hard work and achievement can increase employee motivation and loyalty (Halim, Syawaludin and Putra, 2020).

Employees are people who work under the management company system, without them a company system cannot run and affect the vision and goals of the company. Generation Z is one of the generations that dominates the population in Indonesia, which is around 74.93 million people or 27.94% of the total population (Sawitri, 2022). Generation Z has various advantages compared to other generations. Some of these advantages include having expertise in using various types of technology, having multitasking abilities compared to previous generations, quickly accessing information and responding to social phenomena around them (Syafitri, 2024). Based on surveys in work, generation Z is very proficient and capable in using technology because since birth they have been familiar with computer and internet

technology (Rachmawati, 2020). In research (Kim, et al, 2020), 33% of Gen Z spend more than 6 hours a day using cellphones and use social media much more frequently than their predecessors. Based on a survey conducted by the Jakpat survey institute (2024), it states that the social media platform that is popular and often accessed by generation Z is Instagram with a score of 94% of respondents.

Instagram is a social media platform that focuses on audio-visual content, allowing Generation Z to follow influencers and brands, and express themselves through their stories and posts. The features provided can be accessed freely and for free by its users, so users have the freedom to determine the content they want to offer or post on their Instagram account page for followers to enjoy. Instagram offers various features that facilitate two-way communication between users and their followers (Purwati, Isyrofi and Asiyah, 2024). One of the features of Instagram is Instagram live, which allows users to interact in real-time during an Instagram live broadcast by involving many people at once, including with discussions related to mental health. Instagram also has a story feature that has a use for posting various photos, videos, conducting polls, responding to uploaded content, and asking questions with followers. This feature is usually used to share more personalized content and can be accessed for 24 hours. This feature can be used to measure audience understanding of mental health. Instagram feed is an effective feature to improve user branding because the uploaded content is permanent unless the user deletes or archives the feed. This feature is suitable for presenting explanatory content, because it is in the form of slides or carousels. In addition, there is a pin feed feature that is useful for listing important uploads at the top of the list, this feature is commonly used for feeds that contain important information. The latest feature owned by Instagram is the reels feature, which can be used to upload short creative videos with various interesting tools and effects. This feature is suitable for delivering short and easy messages related to mental health. In relation to providing positive reinforcement, these various features can be utilized to share expressions of appreciation, motivation and those related to mental health promotion.

The use of Social Media at work, serves to help work by using information technology. Agencies provide internet facilities, such as the use of social media accounts with the aim of sharing information both administrative and academic, utilizing social media accounts in disseminating information and as a communication tool. In this regard, Human Resource Management in a company can also take advantage of the availability of social media as a means of developing employee performance. Based on the results of Marsal and Hidayati's research (2018), it shows that the use of social media technology supports employees' work in providing information and its convenience can be used to facilitate efforts to provide positive reinforcement through social media, especially the Instagram platform. Other research, namely that conducted by Purwati, Isyrofi and Asiyah (2024) shows that Instagram has proven effective as a health promotion media for UINSA Pratama clinics with impression values in the last 90 days reaching 21,484 accounts. However, in research conducted by Beni (2022) related to social media platforms as mental health promotion, it is felt that it is less effective to use because there are obstacles in utilizing social media and the absence of supporting facilities in order to access social media. From these three studies, a gap was found that encouraged researchers to conduct further research related to the use of Instagram social media as a mental health promotion platform, especially operant behavioral interventions, providing positive reinforcement as an effort to improve the performance of generation Z employees.

Based on the explanation above, the author conducted a literature review study on national and international journal articles as a study to obtain the data needed by researchers. With the formulation of the problem 1) How are the results of research on efforts to provide positive reinforcement as an effort to improve the performance of generation Z employees through Instagram social media? 2) How are the results of research on the effectiveness of positive reinforcement as an effort to improve the performance of generation Z employees through Instagram social media? Based on the formulation of the problem, the purpose of this study is to determine the results and effectiveness of providing positive reinforcement as an effort to improve the performance of generation Z employees through Instagram social media. This research is expected to provide benefits in the scientific repertoire, especially in the field of behavioral interventions in counseling and mental health promotion media innovation. In addition, this research is also expected to provide benefits for human resource management practitioners in finding references to efforts to improve employee performance, especially generation Z innovatively and efficiently through social media technology.

METHODS

This research uses a descriptive qualitative method of literature study type, with the aim of describing the findings of researchers based on several journal articles found. The purpose of the literature review is for the benefit of the research project itself. In this case, making a literature review is to enrich the author's insight into the research topic being carried out, help the author formulate research problems, and help the author determine the theories and methods and research results that are appropriate for use in the research being done. As explained by Saputra (2017) that literature study research by looking for theoretical references that are relevant to the case or problem found. Theoretical references obtained by way of literature study research are used as the basic foundation and main tool for research practice in the middle of the field. The type of data source or object of study used in this research is scientific articles from national and international journals published within the last five years. With the process of collecting data on journal articles from steps through access to google trends, google scholar, publish or perish and reading intensive & extensive. The research steps can be systematically described in the following diagram:

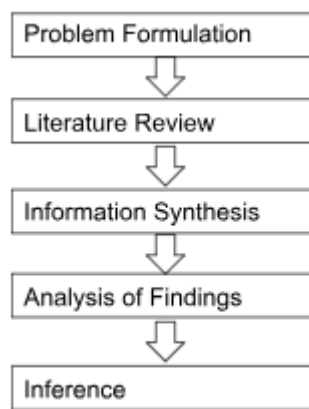


Fig.1: steps in the study literature review

This research begins by formulating a specific and clear problem related to Improving the performance of generation Z employees through positive reinforcement: operant behavior intervention through Instagram social media Next, a comprehensive literature review is conducted using relevant keywords such as Employee Performance, Positive relationships, Positive Reinforcement, Operant Behavior Intervention, Instagram Social Media. Then the selected relevant literature findings were read in depth and analyzed manually. Based on the analysis conducted, conclusions were drawn and linked to the research questions that had been raised at the beginning.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the literature review conducted, several previous studies were found related to the effectiveness of positive reinforcement delivered through Instagram social media in improving the performance of Generation Z employees. Before this research was conducted, many studies had examined efforts to improve employee performance. However, the subjects used and the alternative efforts made have their own characteristics. Both the intervention method given, the focus of the problem, and the social media used. Such as research conducted by Sihombing and Batoebara (2019) entitled *Employee Performance Improvement Strategies in Achieving Company Goals at CV Multi Baja Medan*. The findings of this study are that performance improvement strategies for each employee are carried out by providing positive encouragement (self reinforcement), fulfilling employee rights and obligations, transparent assessment systems, career paths, conducting training, conducting positive discipline programs and providing homework. These findings can be related to research by the author because providing positive reinforcement is one of the efforts to improve employee performance in a

company. However, another strategy found in the study was to conduct training to eliminate employee skill gaps. However, this strategy is again under consideration because the shortcomings and obstacles that arise are greater than the increase in performance, one of which is employees who fall ill (Sihombing and Batoebara, 2019).

The contribution of the research journals mentioned and used as the author's information material is intended to make the research conducted more robust. However, from several research articles mentioned, it can be seen that no one specifically discusses efforts to provide positive reinforcement to improve employee performance through Instagram social media. This research discusses simultaneously with the aim of knowing the efforts and effectiveness of providing positive reinforcement to improve the performance of generation Z employees through Instagram social media. Thus it can be concluded that the research conducted is relatively new and has not been carried out by many previous researchers. With this research, it can be used as a reference for human resource management managers in developing strategies to improve employee performance, especially generation Z innovatively and effectively.

The results of the research based on the literature study conducted by the author can be presented as follows:

1. Positive Reinforcement

Reinforcement theory originated from the thoughts of B.F. Skinner who explained that reinforcement can influence behavior. In the context of this research, the author focuses on how the application of positive reinforcement can improve employee performance, especially generation Z. By using positive reinforcement techniques, the author aims to improve employee performance. By using positive or negative reinforcement techniques, it can change operant behavior to be repeated or disappear (Nelson & Jones, 2011). According to (Locke, 1980) consequences that can strengthen the behavior of the organism are called reinforcement. Positive reinforcement is the provision of reinforcement based on the idea that a supportive stimulus is followed by an increase in response frequency. In short, this reinforcement effect can be measured as a higher frequency of behavior. Positive reinforcement can be in the form of gifts, rewards, or behaviors (Martin & Pear, 2015). In the context of the workplace, positive reinforcement can range from small things like giving praise to bigger things like giving bonuses and promotions. After all, if someone is given reinforcement or feedback easily for whatever they do, then they will be encouraged to continue doing the same thing they previously did. This creates a link between behavior and positive consequences, so individuals tend to do things that bring satisfactory results. In the interpretation of reinforcement, there are two choices: to maintain or to increase.

2. Positive reinforcement on employee performance

Every organization always tries to increase employee productivity. Human Resource Management (HRM) plays a role in optimizing the ability capacity of its members. For this reason, leaders need to find ways and solutions to generate employee performance. Performance comes from the word work performance (Lengkong et al, 2019). Performance is the result of quality, quantity, and timeliness achieved by an employee or employee (Wardani, Mahaysa, & Gede, 2022.). There are many factors that can improve work performance, one of which is positive reinforcement, which can be in the form of work appreciation. Appreciation for work achievements will improve performance in employees (Prabu and Wijayanti, 2016). This mechanism works by providing a pleasant stimulus after a behavior occurs, so as to increase the likelihood that a behavior will be repeated. This reinforcement can be in the form of praise, bonuses, promotions, or other opportunities. According to previous research, it shows that there is a significant positive influence between awards on employee performance (Prabu and Wijayanti, 2016), this shows that the greater the continuous provision of awards to employees, the impact on increasing employee performance. In addition, similar results were also found in Avriyanti's research (2024), where it was found that the effect of rewards on employee performance was 27.5%, the rest being influenced by other variables. As well as the same results in the form of a positive and significant effect of rewards on employee performance in research conducted by Wardani, Mahaysa, & Gede (2022).

3. Generation Z characteristics and response to positive reinforcement

Generation Z are individuals born between 1995 and 2010 (Sari, Ifdil & Yendi, 2020). Previous research shows that generation Z is accustomed to a positive reinforcement system in the form of rewards as a form of recognition for the achievements or achievements they have obtained. According

to research conducted by Alfaruqy (2022) on generation Z and the perceived values of their parents, generation Z is used to receiving feedback in the form of rewards from their parents. In addition, from when generation Z was a student, they received rules in the form of a reward system to compete in positive things and increase discipline and motivation (Utami, 2021). The positive reinforcement mechanism in the form of rewards works by providing a pleasant stimulus after a behavior occurs, thus increasing the likelihood that a behavior will be repeated. The reward can be in the form of verbal or non-verbal praise such as giving physical gifts. It is also mentioned that in the world of work generation Z wants feedback from superiors regarding the results of the work they have done (Dolot, 2018) to show the need for appreciation and recognition in their work environment (Rahman & Claudia, 2024). Overall, the results of the literature review show that generation Z has a strong response to positive reinforcement, both in the context of education, parenting, social interaction, This is in line with the purpose of this study which wants to test the effectiveness of positive reinforcement in improving the performance of generation Z employees.

4. Characteristics of generation Z and social media

Generation Z has various advantages compared to other generations, one of which is having expertise in using various types of technology and quickly accessing information (Ikasari, 2020). Based on surveys in work, generation Z is very proficient and capable in using technology because since birth they have been familiar with computer and internet technology (Rachmawati, 2019). Of course, this makes generation Z attached to social media such as Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, WhatsApp and others. In fact, according to Maharrani's research (2019) generation Z is the generation in Indonesia that is most active in using social media. In Indonesia, in a 2019 survey, the duration of social media use reached 195 minutes per day where most users came from the generation Z group (Duarte, 2019). Generation Z uses social media for various purposes, be it to find information, just for entertainment, communicate, or even according to Zufar et al (2020) social media is also used as a source of education. Thus, in the context of work, Generation Z's tendency to use social media and the speed in responding to information can be utilized by companies or organizations to provide public recognition of employee achievements and prove that social media can also be an effective platform to improve employee work performance, especially Generation Z.

5. The role of social media instagram as a facilitator of mental health promotion

In Indonesia, Instagram is one of the most popular social media. Instagram can be a suitable alternative for disseminating audio-visual information such as interesting images and videos (Anisah et al., 2021). In addition, amidst the high public interest in Instagram, many groups are using it for mental health campaigns. This campaign has the aim of providing education, public understanding, and encouraging positive behavior (Wardaningsih et al., 2021). Based on the results of Marsal and Hidayati's research (2018), it shows that the use of social media technology supports employees' work in providing information and its convenience can be used to facilitate efforts to provide positive reinforcement through social media, especially the Instagram platform. However, in research conducted by Beni (2022) related to social media platforms as mental health promotion, it is considered less effective to use because there are obstacles in utilizing social media and the absence of supporting facilities in order to access social media. In this regard, after further investigation based on previous research related to Instagram social media as a promotional media, there are differences in strategies in its use. If the purpose of the promotion is used as a marketing medium, this platform is considered less effective due to limited facilities, but if used as an educational platform, Instagram is considered as effective because its features that use audio visuals attract more attention.

CONCLUSION

Some of the research results that have been presented from several studies both in the research on efforts to provide and the effectiveness of positive reinforcement as an effort to improve the performance of generation Z employees through Instagram social media can be categorized, namely in the application category. This category shows that Generation Z has a strong response to positive reinforcement. The existence of a significant positive influence between rewards on employee performance, shows that the greater the continuous provision of rewards to employees, the impact on increasing employee performance. Through their technological prowess, generation Z is more attached to social media. By dominating as a social media user Instagram, making this platform an effective

facilitator in promoting mental health services, especially used as a forum for providing positive reinforcement by human resource management to generation Z company employees.

REFERENCES

- Alfaruqy, M. Z. (2022). Generation Z and their Parents' Perceived Values. *PSYCHE: Journal of Psychology*, 4(1), 84-95.
- Avriyanti, S. (2024). The Influence Of Reward On Employee Performance At Pt. Bank Rakyat Indonesia (Persero) Tbk. Branch Office Of Tabalong Regency. *Japb*, 7(1), 381-394.
- Christiani, L. C., & Ikasari, P. N. (2020). Generation z and the maintenance of intergenerational relationships in the perspective of Javanese culture. *Journal of Communication and Media Studies*, 4(2), 84-105.
- Claudia, M., & Rahman, S. F. (2024). An Interpersonal Process Approach Strategy in Organizational Change Management to Support Generation-Z Wellbeing in the Workplace. *Balance: Journal of Economics, Management and Accounting*, 2(4), 388-398.
- Dewi, D. A., Senen, S. H., & Masharyono, M. (2018). Overview of Ability, Social Work Environment and Employee Performance. *Journal of Business Management Education (Jbme)*, 3(3), 145-154.
- Duarte, F. (2019). How much time do Indonesians spend on social media? - BBC News Indonesia.
- Dolot, A. 2018. The Characteristic Of Generation Z, "E-Mentor", S. 44-50, [Http://Dx.Doi.Org/10.15219/Em74.1351](http://Dx.Doi.Org/10.15219/Em74.1351)
- Halim, J., Syawaluddin, & Putra, A. (2020). The Effect of Reward and Employee Loyalty on Work Motivation of Employees of PT Tuahta Maju Persada. *Journal of Business Colleagues*, 6(2), 17-24
- Jakpat Survey Institute (2024) Instagram is the most popular social media among Gen Z. Quoted on July 27, 2024. At 20.15 WIB. From <https://www.rri.co.id/ipitek/614661/instagram-jadi-media-sosial-terpopuler-di-kalangan-genz>
- Kim, A., McInerney, P., Smith, T. R., & Yamakawa, N. (2020). What makes Asia–Pacific’s generation Z different. *McKinsey & Company*, 1-10.
- Lisias, C., Beni, S., Asmara, A. P., & Yeni, E. Y. (2022). Analysis of Strengthening Marketing Strategies by Utilizing Social Media in Maintaining Umkm in the New Normal Era. *Development Innovation: Journal of Research and Development*, 10(02), 207-207.
- Locke, E. A. (1980). Latham Versus Komaki: A Tale of Two Paradigms. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 65, No. 1, 16 – 23
- Maharrani, A. (2019). Generation Z, Indonesia's Biggest Internet Users.
- Maghfur, M. (2022). Operant Conditioning Theory in English and Arabic Language Learning. *Journal of Islamic Education Science*, 20(1), 139-158.
- Maritska, Z., Prananjaya, B. A., Nabila, S. P., & Parisa, N. (2023). Social Media-Based Mental Health Promotion (Instagram Live) for the Community during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Wal'afiat Hospital Journal*, 4(1), 13-22.
- Martin, G. & Pear, J. Behavior Modification Meaning and Application. 10th Edition. Yogyakarta: Student Library. 2015.
- Marsal, A., & Hidayati, F. (2018). The Effect of Social Media Use on Employee Performance at Uin Suska Riau. *Scientific Journal of Information Systems Engineering and Management*, 4(1), 91-98.
- Neli, A. (2023). The Effect of Advertising, Word Of Mouth (Wom) and Brand Awareness on Repurchase Interest in Emina Cosmetic Products in an Islamic Business Perspective (Doctoral Dissertation, Uin Raden Intan Lampung).
- Nelson, R., & Jones. Theory and Practice of Counseling and Therapy. (Transl. Helly Prajitno Soetjipto & Sri Mulyantini Soetjipto).(4ed).Yogyakarta: Student Library. 2011
- Prabu, A., & Wijayanti, D. (2016). The Effect of Rewards and Motivation on Employees (Study at the Sales Division of PT. United Motors Center Suzuki Ahmad Yani, Surabaya). *Journal of Business Economics and Entrepreneurship*, 104-114
- Purwati, N. F., A'yunin Al Isyofi, A. Q., & Asiyah, S. N. (2024). Analysis of the Effectiveness of Health Promotion on Instagram accounts@ Klinikpratamaainsa as a medium of communication,

- information and health education. *Journal of Indonesian Public Health (JKMI)*, 1(2), 50-56.
- Rachmawati, D.. (2019). Welcoming Gen Z in Job World (Welcome Generation Z to the world of work). *Proceeding Indonesia Career Center Network Summit IV*
- Rahmawati, D., Lumakto, G., & Kesa, D. D. (2020). Generation of Digital Natives in News Consumption Practices in the Digital Environment. *Communications*, 2(2), 74-98.
- Saputra, S. Y. (2017). Traditional Games vs Modern Games in Cultivating Character Values Character in Elementary School. *Elementary School Education Journal*, 1(1), 1-7
- Sari, I. P., Irdil, I., & Yendi, F. M. (2020). The Concept of Nomophobia in Generation Z Adolescents. *JRTI (Journal of Indonesian Action Research)*, 5(1), 21-26.
- Sawitri, D. R. (2022). Career Development of Generation Z: Challenges and Strategies in Realizing Excellent Indonesian Human Resources.
- Senen, S. H., Masharyono, M., Triananda, N., & Sumiyati, S. (2016, August). The Employee Performance Influenced by Communication: a Study of BUMD in Indonesia. In *2016 Global Conference on Business, Management and Entrepreneurship* (pp. 596-598). Atlantis Press.
- Sihombing, P. L. T., & Batoebara, M. U. (2019). Employee Performance Improvement Strategy in Achieving Company Goals at Cv Multi Baja Medan. *Public Reform: A Journal Of Public Administration*, 6, 1-16.
- Syafitri, A. A. (2024). Financial Literacy as an Effort to Achieve Financial Well Being: A Perspective from Generation Z. *Dialectics: Journal of Economics and Social Sciences*, 9(1), 136-148.
- Utami, P. S. (2021). Point System in Improving Discipline Character and Independence of Generation Z Era Students. *Joyful Learning Journal*, 10(2), 66-73.
- Wardani, N. K. A. D., Mahayasa, I. G. A., & Gede, I. K. (2022). Pengaruh Keterampilan Kerja, Reward Dan Punishment Terhadap Kinerja Karyawan. *Journal of Applied Management Studies*, 3(2), 115-127.
- Wardaningsih, A. D., Widjaya, R. O., & Erna, M. (2020). IG@ Healthy_Mind Mental Health Education Campaign for Jabodetabek Students During the Covid-19 Pandemic. *Proceedings of the National Conference on Community Service and Corporate Social Responsibility (PKM-CSR)*, 3, 849-857.
- Zufar, Z., Thaariq, A., Media, S., Resource, L., Normal, N., Sosial, M., Normal, N. (2020). The Use of Social Media as Learning Resources to Support the New Normal Zahid Zufar At Thaariq, 1. 18(02), 80–93.