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Love on the Clock: Workplace Romance, Happiness, Fun at Work, and Job Performance among Millennial and Gen Z Employees

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ABSTRACT

Workplace romance is a paradoxical phenomenon that can generate both positive and negative organizational outcomes. This study addresses a key research gap by examining the positive mechanisms through which workplace romance influences job performance, particularly among Millennial and Generation Z employees in Indonesia. Drawing on Affective Events Theory and the Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions, the research tests a mediation model in which workplace happiness and fun at work transmit the effects of workplace romance on job performance. Using a quantitative design, data from 370 early-career to mid-level employees were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings indicate that consensual workplace romance enhances job performance both directly and indirectly, with workplace happiness and fun at work serving as significant mediators. These results suggest that healthy, well-managed romantic relationships can function as emotional resources that foster engagement, motivation, and performance. The study provides a more nuanced understanding of workplace romance. It highlights the importance of supportive organizational policies that promote well-being, mitigate risks, and capitalize on positive emotions to enhance performance. These insights align with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8 by demonstrating how positive relational dynamics contribute to decent work and sustainable economic growth.

Keywords: Workplace Romance, Workplace Happiness, Fun at Work, Job Performance, Quality of Work, Decent Work and Economic Growth.

JEL Code: M12, D23, J24, I31.

I. Introduction

Workplace romance has long been a topic of scholarly and managerial interest, often approached with caution due to concerns about favoritism, conflicts of interest, reputational damage, and disruptions to workplace dynamics (Qiu et al., 2023; Anand et al., 2024; Batra et al., 2023; Horan et al., 2023). Research indicates that coworkers often perceive romantic partners as benefiting from unfair leniency or positive bias, which can create reputational risks and organizational tension (Chory et al., 2022; Horan & Chory, 2011).



Likewise, workplace romance may generate perceptions of injustice, damaged coworker relationships, and reduced morale, particularly when power asymmetries increase concerns about favoritism (Cole, 2019; Mainiero & Jones, 2013). Despite these risks, emerging research suggests that workplace romance can also yield meaningful, positive outcomes when relationships are consensual and well-managed. Romantic involvement at work may enhance psychological comfort, emotional support, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment, ultimately improving concentration, enthusiasm, and performance (Cole, 2019; Horan & Chory, 2011). Additional studies also show that romantic partners often report greater happiness and interpersonal closeness, which supports motivation, engagement, and job effectiveness (Chory et al., 2019, 2023). Nevertheless, the literature has historically emphasized risks over benefits, leaving limited empirical attention to the positive mechanisms—such as emotional well-being or relational energy—that may influence work-related behavior through workplace romance. This gap is particularly relevant for Millennials and Generation Z, who now represent the largest share of Indonesia's workforce. These generations tend to embrace emotional openness, relational transparency, and work-life integration. Nevertheless, few studies have examined how workplace romance functions within these groups or influences key outcomes such as happiness, fun at work, and job performance. The scarcity of research is even more pronounced in non-Western contexts, where cultural norms surrounding modesty, hierarchy, and collectivism shape how employees perceive and navigate romantic relationships. Addressing this gap, the present study investigates how workplace romance influences job performance among Millennial and Generation Z employees in Indonesia, and to what extent workplace happiness and fun mediate these effects.

Recent trends point to a growing normalization of workplace romance, especially in industries with more flexible or creative cultures such as finance, hospitality, sales, and media (Chory et al., 2022; Khalilzadeh & Pizam, 2021). Employees in organizations with explicit workplace romance policies also report greater engagement in or observation of such relationships (Horan et al., 2023). The digitalization of work and increased virtual connectivity further expand opportunities for interpersonal interaction (De Bruyne & Gerritse, 2018). This rising prevalence warrants closer examination, as workplace romance can significantly impact job performance, team dynamics, and overall well-being. Healthy relationships may improve performance directly (Jung & Yoon, 2020) or indirectly through affective pathways (Khan et al., 2018), making this phenomenon particularly salient among Millennials and Gen Z, whose relational norms increasingly influence work culture. Despite greater acceptance, workplace romance remains paradoxical, capable of producing both positive and negative effects. Positive experiences may enhance trust, well-being, job involvement, and performance (Horan & Chory, 2011; Khan et al., 2017; Jung & Yoon, 2020), whereas negative experiences may trigger distraction, perceptions of favoritism, and interpersonal conflict (Alder & Quist, 2014; Mano & Gabriel, 2006). This duality underscores the importance of organizational policies that balance risk mitigation with potential benefits.

The Indonesian context adds significant complexity to workplace romance, particularly among Millennials and Gen Z, who are increasingly open to workplace relationships. A recent survey reported that 45% of Gen Z and 42% of Millennials in Indonesia have engaged in romantic interactions with colleagues, rates substantially higher than those of older cohorts (The Hill, 2025). Despite this trend, organizational responses remain fragmented: 56% of companies have formal workplace romance policies, 44% have none, and 23% explicitly prohibit such relationships (Amanda & Mustika, 2023). Recent empirical evidence further indicates that workplace romance in Indonesia positively influences job performance, both directly and indirectly through job engagement, underscoring its role as a socio-emotional resource within organizations (Abdalla & Agustina, 2024). These findings suggest that workplace romance is not limited to Western settings but is also a salient relational dynamic in collectivist cultures such as Indonesia, where interpersonal harmony and emotional bonds are highly valued. However, the absence of clear organizational guidelines may lead to inconsistent managerial responses and potential disruptions to team dynamics and productivity, particularly in cultural contexts that emphasize harmony and professionalism. Against this backdrop, the generational shift toward relational openness underscores the need for context-sensitive HR practices in Indonesia that balance relational flexibility, fairness, professionalism, and performance.

In light of these considerations, this study examines the impact of workplace romance on job performance among Millennial and Generation Z employees in Indonesia. Grounded in Affective Events Theory, which explains how work experiences shape emotions and behavior, and the Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions, which posits that positive emotions broaden cognition and build enduring resources, we propose that workplace happiness and fun at work function as affective pathways linking romantic relational experiences to enhanced performance. This theoretical integration provides a nuanced understanding of workplace romance, acknowledging its complexities while recognizing its potential to generate meaningful emotional resources in modern organizational contexts. The study also responds to calls for research that incorporates generational diversity, cultural specificity, and the emotional dimensions of work, particularly within non-Western settings such as Indonesia. Accordingly, this study aims to clarify the mechanisms through which workplace romance shapes job performance in Indonesia's Millennial and Generation Z workforce, with particular attention to the mediating roles of workplace happiness and fun at work.

II. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1. Grand Theory: Affective Events Theory and the Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions

The conceptual foundation of this study is rooted in Affective Events Theory (AET), which posits that emotionally meaningful workplace events influence employees' attitudes and behaviors. Workplace romance is viewed as an affective event that can elicit positive emotions such as emotional support, relational closeness, and interpersonal stability. These emotional reactions influence work-related outcomes by enhancing motivation, focus, and collaborative behavior, thereby providing theoretical justification for understanding how workplace romance may contribute to improved job performance. Complementing AET, the Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions (BBT) explains how positive emotional states broaden individuals' cognitive and behavioral repertoires, thereby building enduring psychological and social resources. In this study, workplace happiness and fun at work are conceptualized as key positive emotions that mediate the relationship between workplace romance and job performance. Together, AET and BBT provide an integrated framework that clarifies how romance-induced affective experiences translate into resource-building processes that enhance employee performance.

2.2. Workplace Romance and Job Performance

Workplace romance, defined as a consensual and mutually acknowledged relationship between two employees within an organization, has become an increasingly significant topic in organizational behavior research. While traditionally approached with caution, recent scholarship has highlighted its potential to generate meaningful positive outcomes for employees and organizations. Employees involved in workplace romances often experience heightened emotional support, motivation, and relational stability, which can facilitate more effective collaboration and sustained concentration on work tasks. Jung & Yoon (2020) suggest that such relationships provide a sense of interpersonal security, thereby improving employees' ability to manage job demands and ultimately enhancing job performance. In addition, workplace romance may reinforce affective commitment not only toward the romantic partner but also toward the work unit and organization. Khan et al. (2018) demonstrate that employees in supportive romantic relationships often show stronger emotional attachment, which translates into discretionary effort, persistence in achieving goals, and greater alignment with organizational expectations. These relational and motivational mechanisms position workplace romance as a potentially constructive force that can contribute to improved performance when conducted within clear ethical and organizational boundaries.

H1: Workplace romance positively affects job performance.

2.3. Workplace Romance and Workplace Happiness

When consensual and mutually acknowledged, workplace romance can positively contribute to employees' emotional and psychological experiences at work. Far from being solely a source of distraction or organizational risk, romantic relationships in the workplace can provide emotional fulfillment and social support, factors closely tied to employees' sense of happiness at work. Positive interpersonal relationships formed through workplace romance can provide employees with companionship, emotional intimacy, and a sense of psychological safety. These emotional resources are essential for promoting workplace happiness, encompassing job satisfaction, emotional well-being, and a sense of belonging within the organization. Jung & Yoon (2020) suggest that employees who experience companionship and emotional closeness through workplace romance often report higher job satisfaction, a core element of workplace happiness. The emotional support from a romantic partner at work can serve as a buffer against work-related stress, leading to greater contentment and a more positive work environment. Furthermore, workplace romance can increase employees' intrinsic motivation and daily engagement, fulfilling their psychological needs for relatedness and connection. According to Khan et al. (2017), employees in romantic relationships at work often exhibit higher levels of job engagement and emotional well-being. This sense of emotional security and heightened motivation may enhance their positive work experiences, contributing to a happier and more fulfilling work life. In this context, workplace romance, when occurring within appropriate professional boundaries, can be viewed as a personal resource that enriches employees' work experiences and fosters greater workplace happiness.

H2: Workplace romance positively affects workplace happiness.

2.4. Workplace Romance and Fun at Work

While often approached cautiously by management, recent research suggests that workplace romance may contribute to a more enjoyable and engaging work environment when properly understood and managed. One key mechanism through which workplace romance can enhance workplace fun is through its impact on employees' emotional experiences and interpersonal dynamics. Fun at work, characterized by enjoyable activities, positive social interactions, and a generally light-hearted atmosphere, is often facilitated by strong interpersonal bonds among employees. Romantic relationships, when perceived as authentic and respectful, can promote feelings of emotional support, companionship, and social connectedness. These emotional benefits can spill over into the broader workplace climate, making the work environment feel more relaxed and enjoyable (Khan et al., 2017). Moreover, organizational policies surrounding workplace romance also play an important role. Research by Pierce et al. (2012) demonstrates that fair and transparent romance policies contribute to employees' perceptions of fairness, thereby enhancing psychological safety and openness in the workplace. When romance is not stigmatized but guided by fair policies, it can positively influence workplace culture by normalizing emotional expression and fostering a more human-centered work environment. This, in turn, can make the workplace feel more inclusive, fun, and engaging. This suggests that when employees perceive romance policies as fair, they are more likely to view their workplace as enjoyable. These findings suggest that workplace romance, particularly when supported by fair organizational practices and mutual consent, can positively contribute to a fun workplace by enhancing emotional well-being, strengthening social bonds, and creating a more vibrant and enjoyable work environment.

H3: Workplace romance positively affects fun at work.

2.5. Workplace Happiness and Job Performance

Workplace happiness, commonly defined as a combination of emotional well-being, job satisfaction, and positive affective experiences at work, has long been recognized as a predictor of enhanced performance. The happy-productive worker hypothesis (Hosie et al., 2012) posits that happier employees are more

motivated, cognitively flexible, and socially engaged, leading to improved performance outcomes. Recent studies provide renewed support for this premise. Costa et al. (2024) demonstrate that the thesis gains stronger empirical support when happiness is understood as a multidimensional construct encompassing affective well-being, satisfaction, and engagement. Their findings reveal that positive affect enhances cognitive flexibility, motivation, and social functioning, which directly strengthen performance. Complementing this, Bayona et al. (2025) demonstrate that the happiness-performance link remains robust, though context-dependent, varying across job characteristics and employee profiles. Together, these contemporary insights reaffirm workplace happiness as a central psychological mechanism influencing job performance and underscore its relevance in modern organizational behavior research. Happiness contributes to improved cognitive functioning, greater engagement, and more effective interpersonal interactions. Employees who feel emotionally enriched in their workplace roles tend to demonstrate resilience, creativity, and proactive behavior, enabling them to perform tasks more efficiently and overcome challenges more readily. Khan et al. (2017) emphasize that when organizations invest in employee well-being, they foster positive emotional climates that directly enhance productivity and job effectiveness. Thus, positive affective states energize employees, helping them sustain focus, maintain constructive attitudes, and collaborate more effectively (Bayona et al., 2025; Costa et al., 2024). Workplace happiness, therefore, functions as a strategic psychological resource that fuels performance. Organizations that foster positive emotional environments are more likely to cultivate high-performing employees who can make meaningful contributions to organizational goals.

H4: Workplace happiness positively affects job performance.

2.6. Fun at Work and Job Performance

Incorporating fun into the workplace positively influences job performance across various dimensions, including creativity, engagement, innovation, and organizational commitment. For instance, Yue et al. (2023) found that workplace fun significantly enhances employees' creative behavior, particularly when supported by managerial encouragement and trust within the organization. Similarly, Chen & Sun (2024) reported that fun at work promotes task crafting, which in turn boosts innovative service behavior. Furthermore, previous research found that workplace fun, including coworker socializing and supportive management, increases proactive behavior and job engagement among white-collar workers (Tews et al., 2016). Moreover, workplace fun contributes more strongly to performance outcomes than to job satisfaction or discretionary behaviors, underscoring its critical role in productivity (Iqbal et al., 2023). Fun at work increases affective commitment, promoting innovative behavior, a crucial factor in high-stakes environments (Zhang et al., 2024). Finally, Bakker et al. (2025) suggest that a playful workplace climate fosters playful work design, which, in turn, boosts employees' perceived competence and engagement. These studies affirm that fun is not merely a superficial perk but a strategic element that enhances performance, engagement, and innovation when integrated thoughtfully into an organization's culture.

H5: Fun at Work positively affects job performance.

2.7. Workplace Happiness as a Mediator

The concept of workplace happiness, which encompasses creating a positive, enjoyable work environment, is crucial to enhancing employee performance. Workplace romance that promotes happiness can lead to a happier work environment (Khan et al., 2018), which in turn affects performance outcomes. Workplace romance, a mutual and consensual relationship between employees involving emotional and/or physical attraction (Pierce, Byrne, & Aguinis, 1996), has increasingly drawn scholarly attention due to its complex effects on organizational outcomes. While traditionally perceived as a potential source of conflict or distraction, emerging research suggests that workplace romance can foster positive psychological states,

including increased emotional support, companionship, and job satisfaction (Wilson, Filosa, & Foust, 2015). One such positive psychological state is workplace happiness, broadly defined as the experience of positive emotions and meaningful engagement in one's job (Fisher, 2010). Romantic involvement with a coworker may enhance workplace happiness by fostering a sense of belonging, emotional security, and increased social interaction, all of which are essential to overall well-being (Berscheid & Reis, 1998). This aligns with the Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions (Fredrickson, 2001), which posits that positive emotions broaden individuals' thought-action repertoires and build enduring personal resources, including emotional, cognitive, and social, that enhance performance. Furthermore, research has established a significant link between workplace happiness and job performance. Happy employees are more engaged, motivated, and cooperative, which positively influences both individual and organizational performance (Zelenski, Murphy, & Jenkins, 2008). A study by Salas-Vallina, Alegre, & Fernández (2017) supports this mechanism, finding that positive affect in the workplace significantly mediates the relationship between contextual variables and performance. Therefore, it is reasonable to propose that workplace happiness serves as a psychological mechanism through which the emotional and relational benefits of workplace romance translate into improved job performance.

H6: Workplace happiness mediates the relationship between workplace romance and job performance

2.8. Fun at Work as Mediators

Workplace romance, a prevalent and complex workplace phenomenon, refers to mutually desired relationships between colleagues that involve emotional and/or physical intimacy (Pierce, Byrne, & Aguinis, 1996). While traditionally viewed with skepticism due to risks such as favoritism or conflict, more recent perspectives highlight its potential to generate positive psychological and social outcomes (Wilson, Filosa, & Foust, 2015). These include increased motivation, emotional support, and positive affect, all of which may contribute to a more enjoyable and engaging work environment. One such outcome is the experience of fun at work, which refers to the extent to which employees perceive their workplace as enjoyable, playful, and engaging (Karl & Peluchette, 2006). Fun at work encompasses social events, humorous interactions, and a generally positive atmosphere. Research indicates that interpersonal relationships, particularly those that foster closeness and emotional bonding, such as romantic relationships, can create a more relaxed and enjoyable workplace climate (Tews, Michel, & Allen, 2014). The Affective Events Theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) offers a valuable lens for understanding this dynamic. It posits that specific work events (e.g., developing a romantic relationship) evoke emotional reactions (e.g., enjoyment, fun), which, in turn, influence work attitudes and behaviors (e.g., performance). Therefore, workplace romance may contribute to a more enjoyable climate by fostering emotional connections, promoting laughter, and generating positive social energy, ultimately enhancing job performance through increased engagement and motivation. Tews et al. (2015) found that workplace fun significantly enhances job performance, particularly by increasing employee energy and promoting organizational citizenship behavior. Moreover, studies suggest that fun mediates the impact of social interactions on performance outcomes (McDowell, 2004). Thus, workplace fun can be conceptualized as a mediating mechanism that translates the emotional benefits of workplace romance into improved job performance.

H7: Fun at work mediates the relationship between workplace romance and job performance.

III. Research Method

3.1. Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research design to address the research question, using a structured online questionnaire as the primary data collection instrument. A quantitative approach was chosen because it enables the empirical testing of the proposed mediation model, which involves workplace romance, workplace happiness, fun at work, and job performance. Each construct was measured using established, validated scales widely applied in organizational behavior and human resource management research. Workplace romance was measured using items adapted from Jung & Yoon (2020); workplace happiness, using items from Salas-Vallina et al. (2017); fun at work, using the scale developed by Pierce et al. (2012); and job performance, using the instrument by Carlos & Rodrigues (2016). These instruments were selected for their strong theoretical grounding in Affective Events Theory and the Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions, thereby ensuring alignment with the conceptual framework of this study. To ensure cultural and contextual relevance for Indonesian Millennial and Generation Z employees, the questionnaire underwent a rigorous translation and adaptation process. The English items were translated into Bahasa Indonesia following Brislin's (1980) translation-back-translation procedure. Subsequently, three organizational behavior academics and two HR practitioners assessed the translated items for linguistic accuracy, cultural appropriateness, and conceptual equivalence. Their feedback helped refine the wording of items, especially for sensitive content related to emotional expression and romantic dynamics, which may carry different connotations within Indonesian workplace norms. A pilot test involving 40 eligible respondents from the target demographic was conducted to evaluate item clarity, readability, cognitive load, and initial reliability. Minor revisions were made to enhance clarity and eliminate ambiguous phrasing.

After administering the final questionnaire, psychometric properties were evaluated using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Reliability was assessed using both Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, while convergent validity was evaluated using item loadings and average variance extracted (AVE). Discriminant validity was confirmed using the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio. Variance inflation factor (VIF) values were also examined to detect potential common method bias. All values met established methodological thresholds, indicating that the measurement model was both robust and theoretically coherent. These systematic procedures ensured that the final instrument was scientifically rigorous, culturally appropriate, and psychometrically sound for investigating affective and behavioral dynamics among younger Indonesian workers.

3.2. Population and Sample

The population of this study consisted of Millennial and Generation Z employees working across diverse organizational contexts in Indonesia. These generational cohorts were intentionally selected because they represent the largest share of the current Indonesian workforce and are known to exhibit more open attitudes toward workplace relationships, emotional well-being, and experiential aspects of work. Purposive sampling was employed to ensure that all respondents met the study's key inclusion criterion: having experienced or currently engaging in a workplace romance. A mandatory screening question was included at the beginning of the questionnaire to verify eligibility before participants could proceed. The screening question ensured this criterion: "Have you ever or are you currently in a romantic relationship with a coworker/superior/subordinate at your workplace?"

Data collection was conducted over two months, from January to February 2025, allowing sufficient time for recruitment and ensuring the sample's representativeness. The online survey was distributed through multiple digital platforms commonly used by Millennials and Gen Z, including WhatsApp groups, Telegram channels, LinkedIn communities, industry-specific discussion forums, and HR professional networks. This multi-channel distribution strategy enhanced accessibility and helped secure a diverse respondent pool

across various industries, job levels, and organizational types. To maintain data integrity, each participant was restricted to one submission per device. Participation was voluntary and anonymous, with confidentiality assurances clearly stated at the beginning of the survey. Respondents provided verbal or nonwritten consent, a culturally appropriate and widely accepted practice in Indonesian survey research. In line with procedures outlined by Lestari et al. (2021), the questionnaire included a concise consent statement emphasizing anonymity and the exclusive use of data for research purposes, fostering participant comfort and honesty throughout the process.

A total of 370 valid responses were obtained. The sample was restricted to ages 20-35, reflecting the developmental stages of early Gen Z to core Millennials. Consistent with employment patterns of younger generations, most respondents held early-career roles, including interns, entry-level employees, junior staff, and supervisors, with a smaller representation of middle managers. Educational attainment was also aligned with typical generational trends, with the majority holding a Bachelor's degree, followed by respondents with Master's degrees and Diploma qualifications. The sample included employees from various sectors, i.e., private companies, government institutions, state-owned enterprises, and NGOs, enriching the generalizability of the findings across different organizational environments. The tenure distribution further reflected realistic career trajectories for Millennials and Gen Z, with most respondents reporting 1-5 years of tenure and smaller proportions reporting 6-10 years. This tenure profile is consistent with documented patterns of job mobility and shorter employment cycles among younger employees. Collectively, these demographic characteristics demonstrate that the sample accurately represents the Indonesian Millennial and Gen Z workforce, providing a valid basis for analyzing how workplace romance interacts with affective workplace experiences and job performance in this generational context; all of this description describe in Table 1.

3.3. Measurement

All variables in this study were assessed using a Likert Scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

3.4. Workplace Romance

In the present study, workplace romance is conceptualized as a relationship between two individuals in the same organizational environment, whether from the same or different divisions. These individuals have committed to being more than mere work colleagues and have a sexual attraction and affection for each other. We adopted a seven-item measurement of workplace romance from Jung & Yoon (2020). The sample items are "Some romantic intimacy among coworkers can create a more harmonious work environment"; "It is all right for someone to look for a dating or marriage partner at work"; and "I would go along with romantically oriented behavior that was common in my workplace" ($\alpha = 0.874$).

3.5. Workplace Happiness

Workplace happiness is conceptualized as a multifaceted construct encompassing three core dimensions: passion and enthusiasm at work (engagement), evaluations of job characteristics (job satisfaction), and feelings of belonging to the organization (affective commitment) (Salas-Vallina et al., 2017). This study adopted a nine-item measure of workplace happiness from Salas-Vallina et al. (2017). 3 items from each dimension. The sample item from the Engagement dimension is "I am enthusiastic about my job"; Job Satisfaction dimensions "I am satisfied with the nature of the work performed"; Affective commitment dimensions "I would be pleased to spend the rest of my career with this organization" ($\alpha = 0.908$).

3.6. Fun at Work

Fun at Work in this research refers to enjoyable activities, both formal and informal, that occur inside or outside the workplace, including social, interpersonal, and task-based interactions (Tews et al., 2014). Both employees and supervisors value these activities for fostering a positive and engaging work climate (Jing et al., 2021). In Indonesian multi-organizational settings, workplace fun is especially relevant for Millennials and Gen Z workers, who prioritize positive culture, connection, and emotional well-being. For these generations, fun at work enhances engagement, collaboration, and innovation, making it a strategic tool to boost motivation and retention. The fun at work measurement was a seven-item scale adapted from Pierce et al. (2012). The sample items are "This organization sounds like a fun place to work", "Employees at this organization try to have fun whenever they can," and "Managers encourage employees to have fun at work" ($\alpha = 0.880$).

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age Group	20-22 years (Early Gen Z)	84	22.7%
	23-26 years (Core Gen Z)	128	34.6%
	27-30 years (Late Gen Z/Young Millennials)	96	25.9%
	31-35 years (Core Millennials)	62	16.8%
Gender	Female	214	57.8%
	Male	156	42.2%
Education Level	Diploma	41	11.1%
	Bachelor's degree	262	70.8%
	Master's degree	67	18.1%
Job Role / Position	Entry-level Staff	52	14.1%
	Staff / Junior Employee	228	61.6%
	Supervisor / Coordinator	72	19.5%
	Middle Manager	18	4.9%
Organizational Sector	Private companies	203	54.9%
	Government institutions	74	20.0%
	State-owned enterprises (BUMN)	51	13.8%
	Non-profit / NGO	42	11.4%
Work Tenure	<1 year	92	24.9%
	1-2 years	118	31.9%
	3-5 years	94	25.4%
	6-8 years	47	12.7%
	9-10 years	19	5.1%
Type of Workplace Romance Experienced	Peer-peer (same level)	252	68.1%
	Supervisor-subordinate	82	22.2%
	Cross-department / inter-team	36	9.7%
Current Relationship Status	Still in a relationship	145	39.2%
	No longer in a relationship	225	60.8%

3.7. Job Performance

Job performance is a quantifiable outcome resulting from an employee's actions in carrying out assigned tasks and responsibilities within the work environment. Job performance was measured using a seven-item scale adapted from Carlos and Rodrigues (2016). Job performance consisted of two dimensions: Task performance (3 items) and Contextual performance (4 items). The sample item for task performance dimensions is "I perform the basic tasks required in the job according to the performance required by the

organization,” and the sample for contextual performance dimensions is “I can perform my duties effectively when working under pressure” ($\alpha = 0.883$).

3.8. Data Cleaning and Analysis Procedures

All responses were collected via an online questionnaire administered through Google Forms, providing an efficient digital record of participants' inputs. After data collection was completed, all reactions were exported into Microsoft Excel for preliminary screening. This screening process involved verifying eligibility based on the mandatory screening question, identifying missing data, checking for inconsistencies, and removing incomplete submissions. Because the proportion of missing values was minimal, listwise deletion was applied to maintain data integrity. Outliers and patterned responses were also examined to ensure the final dataset reflected reliable and meaningful participant input. After cleaning, the dataset was imported into SmartPLS 4.0 for statistical analysis. Data analysis followed the standard two-step approach recommended for PLS-SEM research: measurement model evaluation and structural model evaluation. Measurement model assessment included examining indicator loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE) to establish internal consistency and convergent validity. Discriminant validity was evaluated using the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT), while multicollinearity and potential standard method bias were assessed using variance inflation factor (VIF) values. Once the measurement model met the required thresholds, the structural model was tested to evaluate the significance of the hypothesized relationships. Path coefficients and mediation effects were examined using a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 subsamples at a 95% confidence level. Additional structural model assessments included evaluating the coefficient of determination (R^2), effect sizes (f^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2). These systematic analytical steps ensured that the data processing and interpretation were rigorous, transparent, and aligned with established PLS-SEM methodological standards.

IV. Results and Discussion

4.1. Result

4.1.1. Measurement model

The hypothesis was analyzed using the structural equation modeling (SEM) approach. This study used PLS-SEM, implemented in SmartPLS (v. 4.0) in two stages. In the first stage, the “measurement model” was examined to ensure “common method bias (CMB),” “internal consistency, i.e., reliability,” and “convergent and discriminant validity” of the measurement scales. To address the issues of CMB, the authors measured “multicollinearity” using “variance inflation factor (VIF)” (Hair et al., 2019). The results reported in Table 1 indicate that all values are below the cutoff of 5, suggesting the least impact of the predictors on the interpretation of the results (Hair et al., 2019). To assess “internal consistency,” the authors used the “composite reliability (CR)” and “Cronbach's alpha” metrics (Hair et al., 2018). According to Greco et al. (2018) and Nunnally & Bernstein (1994), Cronbach's alpha and CR values should exceed 0.70 to ensure scale reliability. The results presented in Table 2 show that all values exceed 0.70, indicating the reliability of the instruments.

Furthermore, the “convergent validity” was assessed using “outer loadings” and “average variance extracted (AVE).” Hair et al. (2019) suggested that the minimum threshold values for these metrics should be greater than 0.50. Table 2 shows that all outer loadings and AVEs exceed the acceptable threshold, thereby confirming convergent validity in the study (Hair et al., 2019). In addition, the authors assessed the “discriminant validity” to ensure that “intraconstruct” correlations were higher than “inter-construct” correlations (Hair et al., 2019). In line with the recommendations of Hair et al. (2019), the study examined the “heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT)” ratio. To measure the HTMT ratio, the authors employed the “bias-corrected and accelerated (BCa)” bootstrapping technique, resampling 5,000 times at a 90% significance level (one-

tailed) to yield an error probability of 5% (Henseler et al., 2009). The maximum threshold value of the HTMT ratio is reported to be HTMT 0.85 (Henseler et al., 2015). Table 3 shows that all values are below the maximum threshold, with confidence intervals (CIs) that do not straddle 0. This ensures the study's discriminant validity.

Table 2. Collinearity assessment

Constructs	FAW	JP	WH	WR
FAW		6.159		
JP				
WH		6.401		
WR	1.000	6.696	1.000	

Notes: FAW=fun at work; JP=job performance; WH=workplace happiness; WR=workplace romance.

Table 3. Validity and reliability for constructs

Items	Loadings	AVE	CR	Cronbach's alpha
Workplace romance		0.581	0.903	0.874
Romantic relations foster better communication between the two workers involved	0.767			
Some romantic intimacy among coworkers can create a more harmonious work environment.	0.731			
Any worker who directs romantic attention toward another should be reprimanded (R)	0.750			
An organization ought to ignore romantically oriented behavior among coworkers as long as it does not affect productivity	0.752			
I would never get romantically involved with a coworker	0.755			
It is all right for someone to look for a dating or marriage partner at work	0.793			
I would go along with romantically oriented behavior that was common in my workplace	0.735			
Workplace happiness		0.589	0.924	0.908
<i>Engagement</i>				
At my job, I feel strong and vigorous	0.727			
I am enthusiastic about my job	0.757			
I get carried away when I am working	0.760			
<i>Job Satisfaction</i>				
I am satisfied with the nature of the work performed	0.738			
I am satisfied with the pay received for my job	0.757			
I am satisfied with the opportunities that exist in this organization for advancement [promotion]	0.782			
<i>Affective Commitment</i>				
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization	0.768			
I feel emotionally attached to this organization	0.791			
I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization	0.748			
Fun at the workplace		0.576	0.907	0.880
This organization sounds like a fun place to work	0.733			

Items	Loadings	AVE	CR	Cronbach's alpha
Employees at this organization try to have fun whenever they can	0.739			
Managers encourage employees to have fun at work	0.762			
This organization seems to value fun	0.774			
Employees have a good time at work	0.786			
Working for this organization would be enjoyable	0.761			
Employees at this organization get pleasure from their work	0.778			
Job performance		0.570	0.909	0.883
<i>Task Performance</i>				
I perform the basic tasks required by my job at the level of performance expected by my organization.	0.759			
When I have a deadline for a specific task, I always complete it on time.	0.772			
I feel disappointed with my performance at work because I know I could do better. (R)	0.750			
I can perform my job effectively under pressure.	0.776			
I am always willing to help colleagues within the organization, even when I have limited time.	0.772			
I take my work seriously; therefore, I always comply with established rules and procedures.	0.785			
When I write messages to others, I have difficulty expressing what I intend to communicate. (R)	0.756			

Notes: FAW=fun at work; JP=job performance; WH=workplace happiness; WR=workplace romance; R=Reverse.

Table 4. HTMT criterion

Constructs	FAW	JP	WH	WR
FAW				
JP	1.015 CI _{.0.900} [0.671;0.715]			
WH	0.995 CI _{.0.900} [0.637;0.637]	1.002 CI _{.0.900} [0.638;0.718]		
WR	1.018 CI _{.0.900} [0.636;0.724]	1.010 CI _{.0.900} [0.648;0.702]	1.008 CI _{.0.900} [0.647;0.726]	

Notes: FAW=fun at work; JP=job performance; WH=workplace happiness; WR=workplace romance.

4.1.2. Hypothesis Testing and Goodness of Fit Index

The hypothesis testing results presented in Tables 4 and 5, and Figure 1, collectively confirm the strength and significance of the proposed model. All direct effect hypotheses (H1 to H5) are statistically significant ($p < 0.01$), showing that workplace romance (WR) positively influences job performance (JP), workplace happiness (WH), and fun at work (FAW). Specifically, WR has a direct positive effect on JP ($\beta = 0.245$), WH ($\beta = 0.898$), and FAW ($\beta = 0.984$), while both WH ($\beta = 0.362$) and FAW ($\beta = 0.355$) significantly enhance JP. The indirect effects (H6 and H7) are also significant, indicating that WR positively affects JP through the

mediating roles of WH ($\beta = 0.467$) and FAW ($\beta = 0.456$), suggesting partial mediation. Furthermore, the goodness-of-fit indices presented in Table 6 demonstrate strong model validity, with all AVE values exceeding 0.5 and high R^2 values for WH (0.800), FAW (0.860), and JP (0.822), indicating a well-fitting and robust structural model. Figure 1 visually reinforces these results by illustrating the statistically significant direct and indirect relationships among the variables. Overall, the findings validate the model, emphasizing that workplace romance significantly improves job performance both directly and through increased happiness and fun at work.

Table 4. Effect of endogenous variables (Direct effect)

Hypotheses	β	CI (2.75%, 97,5%)	SE	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1 WR→JP	0.245***	(0.147, 0.347)	0.050	4.879	0.000	Supported
H2 WR→WH	0.898***	(0.885, 0.912)	0.007	128.604	0.000	Supported
H3 WR→FAW	0.984***	(0.879, 0.911)	0.008	109.462	0.000	Supported
H4 WH→JP	0.362***	(0.267, 0.460)	0.048	7.512	0.000	Supported
H5 FAW→JP	0.355***	(0.257, 0.458)	0.050	7.092	0.000	Supported

Notes: FAW=fun at work; JP=job performance; WH=workplace happiness; WR=workplace romance; ***significant $p < 0.01$ ($t > 1.96$)

Table 5. Effect of endogenous variables (Indirect effect)

Hypotheses	β	CI (2.75%, 97,5%)	SE	t-value	p-value	Decision
H6 WR→WH→JP	0.467***	(0.384, 0.551)	0.042	11.047	0.000	Supported
H7 WR→FAW→JP	0.456***	(0.369, 0.536)	0.043	10.643	0.000	Supported

Notes: FAW=fun at work; JP=job performance; WH=workplace happiness; WR=workplace romance; ***significant $p < 0.01$ ($t > 1.96$)

Table 1. Goodness-of-fit index

Constructs	AVE	R^2
WR	0.581	
WH	0.589	0.800
FAW	0.576	0.860
JP	0.570	0.822
Average scores	0.579	
$(GFI = \sqrt{AVE \times R^2} \rightarrow)$	0.689	

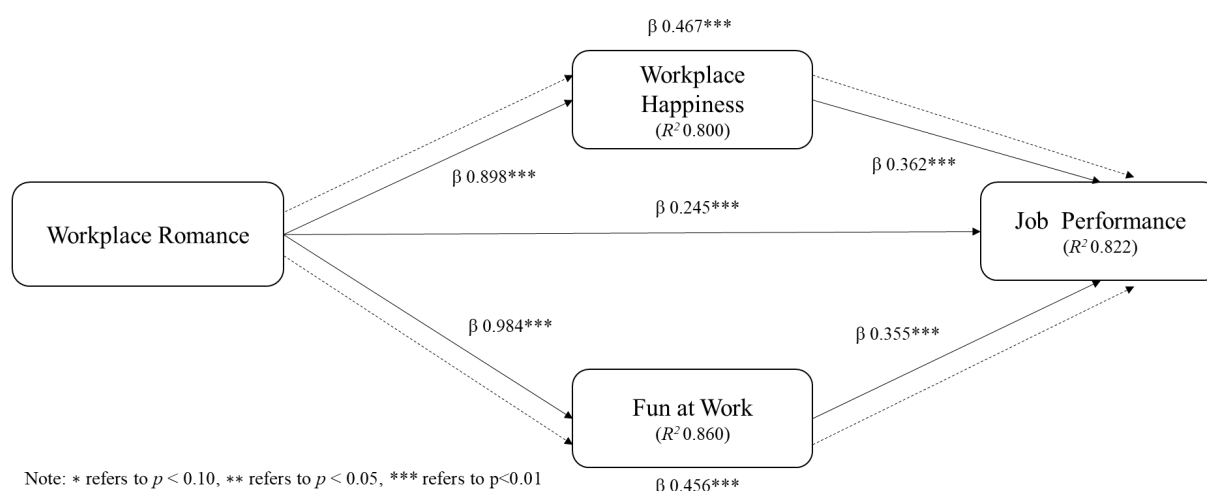


Figure 1. Research Model and Analysis Results

4.2. Discussion

The first hypothesis is supported, demonstrating that workplace romance positively affects job performance and challenging the long-standing assumption that romantic relationships at work are inherently detrimental. Contemporary research increasingly suggests that consensual, well-managed workplace romances can serve as a practical relational resource that enhances performance. From the perspective of Affective Events Theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), workplace romance can be understood as a salient affective event that elicits positive emotional responses, which, in turn, influence work attitudes and behaviors. Romantic relationships provide emotional support that helps employees regulate stress, sustain motivation, and maintain psychological well-being, which are critical antecedents of performance (Quinn, 1977; Jung & Yoon, 2020). Recent empirical evidence further suggests that positive emotional states and happiness at work are robust predictors of higher performance, providing strong support for the happy-productive worker thesis (Costa et al., 2024; Bayona et al., 2025). Employees involved in positive workplace romances tend to develop more substantial affective commitment and emotional attachment to their organization, which increases discretionary effort and performance beyond formal role requirements (Wilson et al., 2015). In addition, enhanced communication, trust, and interpersonal coordination between romantic partners, particularly in interdependent or team-based work contexts, can improve efficiency and work quality (Mainiero, 1989; Khalilzadeh & Pizam, 2021). Importantly, recent HRM literature emphasizes that these positive outcomes are most likely to emerge when workplace romance is grounded in mutual respect and transparency, and is supported by clear organizational policies that foster psychological safety and minimize relational risks. Under such conditions, workplace romance can be viewed not as a liability but as a strategic socio-emotional resource that enhances job performance.

Hypothesis 2 is supported, indicating that workplace romance positively affects workplace happiness. Consensual, positive romantic relationships at work can enhance employees' emotional satisfaction, a core dimension of workplace happiness. This finding aligns with the Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions (Fredrickson, 2001), which posits that positive emotional experiences expand individuals' psychological resources and promote well-being. Employees involved in such relationships often experience a sense of companionship, emotional stability, and mutual support. These relational resources can buffer against stress and enhance overall psychological well-being, which are essential foundations of happiness at work (Quinn, 1977; Pierce et al., 1996; Jung & Yoon, 2020; Costa et al., 2024; Bayona et al., 2025). Recent research further suggests that positive workplace relational experiences play a critical role in fostering happiness by strengthening employees' sense of belonging and interpersonal connectedness (Khan et al., 2018). When individuals feel emotionally supported and valued, their affective commitment, motivation, and morale tend to increase, leading to a more optimistic outlook toward daily tasks and interactions with colleagues (Wilson, 2015). Moreover, empirical evidence consistently shows that these positive emotional states are closely associated with higher job satisfaction, as employees derive both personal and professional fulfillment from their work environment (Horan & Chory, 2011). Collectively, these positive affective experiences contribute to a culture of trust, psychological safety, and positivity, which are closely tied to workplace happiness. Accordingly, when workplace romance is mutual, transparent, and supported by appropriate organizational policies, it can serve as a meaningful socio-emotional resource that enhances workplace happiness.

The third hypothesis, that workplace romance positively influences fun at work, was supported, indicating that consensual, well-managed romantic relationships can enrich the workplace's emotional and social climate. Consistent with Affective Events Theory, romantic involvement represents an emotionally meaningful workplace event that can trigger positive affective reactions, such as enjoyment and enthusiasm, which contribute to perceptions of fun at work. Although traditionally viewed as inappropriate, workplace romance is increasingly recognized as a source of emotional support, companionship, and social connection, contributing to a more relaxed and enjoyable work atmosphere. As Khan et al. (2017) note, such relationships may enhance well-being, motivation, and psychological security, factors closely linked to workplace fun,

which thrives on positive interactions and camaraderie (Karl & Peluchette, 2006). Organizational policies further shape how romance influences workplace experiences; fair and transparent policies can foster psychological safety and reduce stigma, allowing employees to interact more authentically (Pierce et al., 2012). In Indonesia, however, policy practices differ considerably (Amanda & Mustika, 2023). These patterns underscore the importance of context-sensitive, clearly articulated policies to support healthy relational dynamics. As emphasized by Tews et al. (2013), workplace fun is shaped not only by individual relationships but also by organizational culture and leadership.

The fourth hypothesis was confirmed, highlighting that workplace happiness is crucial in enhancing job performance and aligning with the happy-productive worker premise. From a theoretical standpoint, the Broaden-and-Build Theory explains this relationship by suggesting that positive emotions broaden cognitive and behavioral repertoires, enabling individuals to build enduring performance-related resources. Defined by emotional well-being, job satisfaction, and a positive mood, workplace happiness supports greater motivation, sharper cognitive abilities, and stronger interpersonal relationships, all of which are essential for optimal performance (Bayona et al., 2025; Costa et al., 2024; Hosie et al., 2012).

Hypothesis 5 was supported, indicating that integrating fun into the workplace can significantly enhance job performance. Fun at work can be conceptualized as a positive affective state that enhances intrinsic motivation and engagement, consistent with affect-based motivational theories. Empirical evidence demonstrates that fun at work promotes creativity, proactive role shaping, and innovative performance (Yue et al., 2023; Chen & Sun, 2024; Iqbal et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2024; Bakker et al., 2025).

Furthermore, the mediation hypothesis in H6 was supported, indicating that workplace happiness functions as a key psychological mechanism through which workplace romance enhances job performance. This mediating process is theoretically grounded in the Broaden-and-Build Theory, which explains how positive emotions arising from supportive social relationships expand individuals' psychological resources and, in turn, facilitate improved performance. Empirical evidence suggests that mutual and respectful workplace romances enhance emotional well-being and psychological safety, thereby creating a favorable affective climate that supports performance (Jung & Yoon, 2020; Feng et al., 2023). Support for this mechanism is also evident in the Indonesian context. Abdalla and Agustina (2024) found that workplace romance positively influences job performance through affective processes, suggesting that positive relational experiences enhance performance by fostering deeper psychological involvement at work. Collectively, these findings highlight the pivotal role of affective and motivational pathways in shaping how workplace romance translates into tangible performance outcomes.

Building on this affective perspective, the seventh hypothesis further highlights the mediating role of fun at work in linking the emotional and relational dynamics of workplace romance to job performance. Drawing on Affective Events Theory, workplace romance can be understood as an affective event that elicits positive emotions, which are experienced as fun at work and subsequently shape performance-related behaviors. Consistent with this view, empirical studies demonstrate that fun at work mediates the relationship between positive social interactions and job performance by enhancing motivation, engagement, and energy at work (Tews et al., 2015; Chen & Sun, 2024; Zhang et al., 2024).

V. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that consensual, well-managed workplace romance can positively contribute to job performance through the emotional pathways of workplace happiness and fun at work. Rather than functioning solely as a source of organizational risk, workplace romance can generate relational stability, emotional support, and constructive collaboration when guided by appropriate professional boundaries and organizational clarity. The results further show that workplace happiness plays a central role in translating relational experiences into meaningful work outcomes. Employees who feel emotionally secure and satisfied are more engaged, focused, and motivated, highlighting the importance of psychological well-being in contemporary performance models. Likewise, fun at work enhances social connection and fosters a

supportive environment that encourages creativity and productive teamwork. These insights are particularly relevant for organizations navigating Indonesia's evolving workforce demographics. As Millennials and Generation Z increasingly shape workplace culture, expectations around emotional well-being, authenticity, and positive interpersonal dynamics continue to grow. The findings suggest that organizations benefit from creating environments that support healthy relational interactions while maintaining fairness and professionalism. In conclusion, the study highlights the importance of integrating emotional well-being and supportive work environments into organizational strategies. When workplace romance is approached responsibly and complemented by a culture that promotes happiness and enjoyable work experiences, it can become a meaningful contributor to employee performance and organizational effectiveness.

This research offers several practical insights for organizations navigating workplace romance, particularly in dynamic, technology-driven, and generationally diverse environments. As Millennial and Generation Z employees increasingly value emotional well-being, authenticity, and inclusive relationship norms, workplace romances are likely to remain common. Organizations should acknowledge this reality and manage it proactively, recognizing that consensual romantic relationships can enhance job performance, workplace happiness, and engagement when appropriately supported. A key step is developing transparent, fair, and context-sensitive policies regarding workplace romance. These policies should clearly articulate behavioral expectations, confidentiality safeguards, and relevant boundaries, while also reflecting the organization's values and industry norms. For example, creative or tech-oriented workplaces may adopt more flexible guidelines, whereas highly regulated sectors may require stricter protocols. As noted by Chory et al. (2022), one-size-fits-all policies are not effective and may create unintended tension if they overlook employee privacy or generational differences. Tailored guidelines help reduce ambiguity, prevent favoritism, and maintain professionalism.

Transparent communication is essential. Organizations should clearly explain the purpose and scope of workplace romance policies to minimize stigma and misinformation. Research indicates that employees respond more responsibly when they perceive these policies as fair and well-articulated (Pierce et al., 2012; Wilson, 2015). HR departments can integrate discussions of workplace relationships into onboarding, ethics training, and leadership development to promote informed decision-making and foster a culture of psychological safety. Managers and HR practitioners also need training to address risks associated with workplace romance, including power imbalances, favoritism, conflicts of interest, and potential harassment. Establishing confidential reporting channels, mediation procedures, and role-adjustment options can help manage these concerns while preserving workplace harmony (Cavico & Mujtaba, 2021). Such systems reinforce a respectful culture and support organizational values related to equity, well-being, and professionalism. Ultimately, organizations should adopt a more comprehensive approach, shifting from a purely risk-focused perspective to a relationship-aware HR strategy. For Indonesian Millennials and Gen Z, whose collectivist cultural background intersects with growing individual expression, workplace relationships play a crucial role in fostering a sense of belonging, emotional fulfillment, and motivation. Organizations that support relational well-being while maintaining clear boundaries will enhance person-organization fit, attract talent, and foster long-term engagement and performance. Continued research and evidence-based policy development remain essential for effectively managing the implications of workplace romance on organizational (Sidhu et al., 2020) and individual outcomes (Anand et al., 2023).

This study makes an important theoretical contribution by challenging traditional assumptions about workplace romance and by integrating affective constructs, such as workplace happiness and fun, into performance-oriented models. It broadens organizational behavior theory by demonstrating that workplace romance, often viewed primarily through a risk-management lens, can serve as a positive relational resource when it enhances psychological well-being, emotional support, and affective engagement. These insights align with and extend Affective Events Theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), suggesting that romantic relationships at work, as emotionally meaningful experiences, can stimulate positive affective reactions that shape attitudes and behaviors. This perspective encourages scholars to examine workplace romance not only

as an ethical or boundary-related concern but also as a potential source of motivation, well-being, and performance when mediated by emotional states.

Second, this research advances the Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions (Fredrickson, 2001) by empirically demonstrating how positive emotional states, specifically happiness and fun, mediate the relationship between relational dynamics and job performance. The findings demonstrate that happiness and fun at work are not incidental feelings but central affective constructs that expand employees' psychological, cognitive, and social resources, thereby supporting creativity, resilience, and productivity. This underscores the importance of incorporating positive affect as a key mechanism in performance models, moving beyond more traditional indicators such as job satisfaction or stress. Third, the study contributes to the literature on employee engagement and affective commitment by positioning fun and happiness as complementary affective experiences that can emerge from interpersonal relationships and organizational culture. While previous engagement models have focused on leadership, task characteristics, or reward systems, this study highlights the role of interpersonal emotions, particularly those linked to romantic relationships, in strengthening employees' connection to their work and colleagues. This suggests that emotional bonds in the workplace, when aligned with cultural and ethical boundaries, can enhance the sense of belonging that is central to modern engagement theories.

Fourth, confirmation of mediation effects provides theoretical support for affective integration frameworks, in which emotional well-being and workplace fun serve as intermediate mechanisms that translate social relationships into behavioral outcomes. This mediational perspective enriches multi-level theorizing by illustrating how micro-level relational experiences (e.g., workplace romance) can influence macro-level outcomes (e.g., job performance) through meso-level affective constructs (e.g., happiness, fun). These findings create opportunities for future models that integrate affective, relational, and organizational variables more holistically. Finally, the study encourages further exploration of generational differences in affective work dynamics, particularly among Millennial and Gen Z employees who place a high value on emotional authenticity, psychological safety, and meaningful social interaction. The findings indicate that traditional conceptions of professionalism may need to adapt to accommodate generational shifts in relational openness and affective expectations. This opens a promising avenue for research on how younger generations perceive and experience workplace romance and how these experiences shape broader organizational behavior processes.

VI. Limitations and Future Research Agenda

Despite the valuable contributions of this study, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the research primarily used self-reported measures, which may introduce common-method bias and social desirability effects, especially when addressing culturally sensitive topics such as workplace romance. Respondents may have underreported or overreported their experiences due to organizational norms or fear of judgment, particularly in the Indonesian context, where romantic relationships in professional settings may still be stigmatized. Future studies should incorporate multiple sources of data, such as supervisor evaluations or peer assessments, to triangulate findings and enhance the objectivity of the results.

Second, the study's cross-sectional design limits the ability to establish causal relationships among workplace romance, happiness, fun, and job performance. While the proposed mediation models are theoretically grounded, longitudinal or experimental studies are needed to validate the directionality of these relationships. Longitudinal designs would also help examine how workplace romance evolves and how changes in emotional experiences (e.g., happiness, fun) impact performance across different stages of the relationship. Third, the research was conducted among Millennial and Gen Z workers in multi-organizational settings in Indonesia, which may limit generalizability to other cultural or generational groups. Given Indonesia's collectivist cultural orientation and the unique work values of younger generations, such as prioritizing emotional well-being and social connection, future research should explore how these dynamics manifest in more individualistic cultures or among older generational cohorts. Comparative studies across

countries or industries could provide insights into how cultural norms and organizational policies moderate the effects of workplace romance on affective and performance outcomes.

Fourth, the study did not differentiate between types of workplace romance (e.g., hierarchical vs. lateral, disclosed vs. secretive). Prior research suggests that different types of romantic relationships may have distinct implications for organizational outcomes. Future studies should examine these nuances to better understand how power dynamics, disclosure practices, and relationship duration affect the emotional climate and performance. Additionally, gender, managerial position, and relationship status could be tested as potential moderators. Finally, the current study focused on positive emotional mediators, happiness and fun, but did not examine possible negative consequences, such as jealousy, conflict, or perceptions of favoritism. Future research should adopt a more balanced approach by exploring the benefits and risks of workplace romance. Incorporating dual-pathway models (positive and negative affect) would enable a more comprehensive understanding of how workplace romance can both enhance and potentially hinder organizational functioning.

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