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The Relationship Between Self-Efficacy and Anxiety Level of Gen Z as the Sandwich Generation in the Special Capital Region of Jakarta

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Abstract: This study investigates the relationship between self-efficacy and anxiety levels among Generation Z individuals acting as the sandwich generation in Jakarta. These individuals often face dual responsibilities, potentially increasing psychological strain if not supported by strong self-efficacy. Using a quantitative, non-experimental design, the study involved 123 Generation Z respondents in Jakarta. Data were collected through the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES) and Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale (ZSAS), and analyzed using Spearman correlation. Results showed that most participants had low self-efficacy (55.28%) but were within normal anxiety levels (67.48%), with 30.08% experiencing mild anxiety and 2.44% moderate anxiety. The Spearman analysis revealed a very weak, non-significant negative correlation between self-efficacy and anxiety ($r = -0.022$, $p = 0.808$). These findings indicate no significant relationship between self-efficacy and anxiety in this group. Therefore, psychological interventions and programs to strengthen personal capacity are recommended to support Gen Z in managing their dual roles more effectively. Future research is encouraged to consider potential mediating variables, such as social status, occupation, and education, which may influence both self-efficacy and anxiety.

Keyword: Self-Efficacy, Anxiety, Sandwich Generation, Gen Z, Jakarta

INTRODUCTION

The introduction The Statistics Indonesia (BPS) categorizes the Indonesian population into six generations, with Generation Z being the largest group (BPS, n.d.). Generation Z consists of individuals born between 1997 and 2012 (RRI, n.d.). Raised during the digital era, this generation has faced significant changes and challenges. A study by the American Psychological Association (APA, 2018) revealed that Generation Z experiences higher levels of anxiety compared to other generations. Only 45% of Generation Z reported having good or excellent mental health, making them more vulnerable to anxiety disorders and other mental health issues (Thahir, Hajarini, Nasution, Harahap, & Wulandari, 2023). According to research conducted by Deloitte (2023), Generation Z frequently experiences persistent stress and

anxiety, primarily triggered by concerns over financial stability, both in the present and for the future. They are not only responsible for planning their own futures but also for the well-being of their parents and other family members (Sintha, 2022). Data from Data Indonesia indicates that approximately 46.3% of Generation Z bear the responsibilities of the “Sandwich Generation” (Annisa, Nursanti, & Ramdhani, 2024).

The sandwich generation is a social phenomenon in which middle-aged adults experience dual pressures in fulfilling the needs of both their immediate families and the older generation (Nuryasman & Elizabeth, 2023). Members of the sandwich generation often feel burdened by these dual responsibilities (Yenny, 2023). The inability to meet all family needs can lead to feelings of isolation and self-blame. Such emotions may trigger conflicts in social relationships and exacerbate anxiety (Nuryasman et al., 2023).

The World Health Organization (WHO) states that anxiety disorders are among the most prevalent mental health conditions and are considered a significant threat to overall health (Oktavia, Nurhalimah, Alam, Adi, Arunita, Hidayati, & Kharisma, 2022). WHO reported that the global prevalence of anxiety disorders rose to 76.2 million people in 2021 (WHO, 2021). The Indonesia National Adolescent Mental Health Survey (I-NAMHS) in 2022 indicated that 15.5 million Indonesian adolescents experienced anxiety (Fahdilah, Saputra, & Wibowo, 2024). Anxiety significantly affects the lives of Generation Z, who also bear the role of the sandwich generation in Indonesia, accounting for 46.3% of the population. This is further exacerbated by feelings of guilt-reported by 73.38%-stemming from a perceived failure to meet family needs, along with the burden of dual responsibilities, which often leads to mental health disorders and, in severe cases, depression (Annisa, 2024; Rari, 2022). According to Bandura’s theory, anxiety levels are influenced by an individual’s self-efficacy (Fatmawati, 2022).

Self-efficacy, as introduced by Bandura, refers to an individual’s belief in their ability to perform specific tasks and actions, which in turn influences their motivation and behavior (Jendra & Sugiyo, 2020). However, research by Sakitri (2021) found that Generation Z tends to experience anxiety and often lacks confidence when faced with situations that do not meet their expectations. A study by Haskoro (2023), conducted on civil engineering and management students at Diponegoro University (UNDIP) class of 2018, revealed a significant negative relationship between self-efficacy and anxiety. This indicates that the higher a person’s self-efficacy, the lower their level of anxiety. Similarly, research by Rismadayanti (2021) found that individuals with high self-efficacy tend to exert greater effort and persistence due to their strong internal motivation. Conversely, a study by Jannah (2019) involving nursing students found a positive relationship between self-efficacy and anxiety. This suggests that higher self-efficacy is associated with higher anxiety levels. The study further explains that this heightened anxiety may stem from the students’ preoccupation with academic outcomes. Rather than focusing on performing clinical tasks effectively, these students were more concerned with achieving high grades or whether their performance would require improvement.

Previous studies have shown a significant relationship between anxiety and self-efficacy, indicating that higher self-efficacy can reduce an individual’s level of anxiety. However, these studies have not specifically examined Generation Z individuals who assume the role of the sandwich generation in relation to their self-efficacy. Therefore, the researcher is interested in further investigating “The Relationship Between Self-Efficacy and Anxiety Levels of Gen Z as the Sandwich Generation in the Special Capital Region of Jakarta”.

METHOD

This type of research uses a quantitative research design with a non-experimental approach. It was conducted in the Special Capital Region of Jakarta in April 2025, with the population comprising Generation Z individuals categorized as the “Sandwich Generation” in

Jakarta. The sample consisted of 123 respondents. The sampling technique used in this study was purposive sampling, in which the selection of participants was based on specific criteria determined by the researcher. Data were collected through a questionnaire distributed to the respondents via Google Forms.

The instruments used in this study consisted of two measurement tools. Self-efficacy was measured using the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES) developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem, which comprises 10 items rated on a 4-point Likert scale. Higher scores indicate higher levels of self-efficacy. The assessment of anxiety levels was conducted using the Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale (ZSAS). This scale consists of 20 items evaluating both affective and somatic symptoms of anxiety. The ZSAS uses a frequency rating scale ranging from 1 to 4, from “a little of the time” to “most or all of the time,” representing how frequently individuals experience specific anxiety symptoms.

The data obtained from the questionnaire were processed using univariate analysis to identify the frequency distribution of respondent characteristics, self-efficacy, and anxiety levels among Generation Z as the sandwich generation in the Special Capital Region of Jakarta. This was followed by bivariate analysis aimed at examining the relationship between self-efficacy and anxiety levels among Generation Z as the sandwich generation in the Special Capital Region of Jakarta, using Pearson’s simple correlation test through the computer-based Statistical Program for Social Science (SPSS) version 29.0.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Demographics

Table 1. Respondent Demographic

Characteristics	Frequency (n)	Presentation (%)
Gender		
Male	38	30.89%
Female	85	69.11%
Location		
Jakarta Barat	12	9.76%
Jakarta Pusat	13	10.57%
Jakarta Selatan	56	45.53%
Jakarta Timur	14	11.38%
Jakarta Utara	11	8.94%
Kepulauan Seribu	17	13.82%

Based on the distribution of respondents conducted among Generation Z individuals residing in Jakarta, a total of 123 respondents met the inclusion criteria established for this study. Of these, the majority were female ($n = 85$; 69.11%), while male respondents accounted for 38 individuals (30.89%). This finding suggests that women are more likely to experience the dual-role burden characteristic of the sandwich generation in Jakarta. In terms of residential location, the highest number of respondents came from South Jakarta ($n = 56$; 45.53%), followed by the Thousand Islands ($n = 17$; 13.82%), East Jakarta ($n = 14$; 11.38%), Central Jakarta ($n = 13$; 10.57%), West Jakarta ($n = 12$; 9.76%), and North Jakarta ($n = 11$; 8.94%). This distribution indicates that respondents from South Jakarta demonstrated the highest level of participation, which may reflect the concentration of economic and social burdens typical of the sandwich generation in this area. Regarding age, the largest proportion of respondents were 23 years old (27.64%), followed by those aged 22 (13.01%) and 26 (11.38%).

Characteristic	Frequency (n)	Presentation (%)
Age		
17	3	2.44%
18	1	0.81%
19	9	7.32%
20	8	6.50%
21	4	3.25%
22	16	13.01%
23	34	27.64%
24	13	10.57%
25	13	10.57%
26	14	11.38%
27	7	5.69%
28	1	0.81%

The overall age range of respondents was between 17 and 28 years, aligning with the early adulthood stage—an age group that is beginning to achieve financial independence while still facing reciprocal dependency with family members, placing them at risk of experiencing the pressures associated with dual-role responsibilities.

Table 3. Self-efficacy of Gen Z Sandwich Generation in Jakarta

Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	MeanTotal Score
High	55	44,72%	30,01
Low	68	55,28%	
Total	123	100,00%	

Based on Table 3, it was found that out of a total of 123 Generation Z respondents classified as part of the sandwich generation in Jakarta, 55 respondents (44.72%) had a high level of self-efficacy, while 68 respondents (55.28%) exhibited a low level of self-efficacy. The mean score for the self-efficacy scale was determined to be 30.01. Scores that fall below this value are classified as low, while scores that exceed it fall in the high category. This suggests that, in general, the majority of respondents demonstrated a tendency toward low self-efficacy. These findings indicate that more than half of the participants lacked confidence in their ability to manage the demands and responsibilities associated with being part of the sandwich generation. Low self-efficacy may negatively affect how individuals cope with stress, make decisions, and formulate strategies to manage dual burdens, both for themselves and their families.

Tabel. 4 Anxiety of Gen Z Sandwich Generation in Jakarta

Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Score Range
Normal	83	67.48%	20-44
Mild	37	30.08%	45-59
Moderate	3	2.44%	60-74
High	0	0.00%	75-80
Total	123	100.00%	

According to Widayanti and Saparwati (2022), the Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale (ZSAS) categorizes responses into four levels as follows:

- a. Normal/No anxiety: Score 20–44
- b. Mild anxiety: Score 45–59
- c. Moderate anxiety: Score 60–74
- d. Severe anxiety: Score 75–80

The frequency distribution of anxiety levels among Generation Z individuals as part of the sandwich generation in Jakarta is presented in Table 4. Based on the results presented in Table 4, the majority of Generation Z respondents classified as part of the sandwich generation in Jakarta fell into the normal or non-anxious category, totaling 83 individuals (67.48%). This indicates that most individuals in this group are still capable of managing the psychological pressures they face. However, 37 respondents (30.08%) reported experiencing mild anxiety, and 3 respondents (2.44%) exhibited symptoms of moderate anxiety. No respondents were found to be experiencing severe anxiety (0%). The proportion of respondents with mild to moderate anxiety reflects the presence of psychological stress among a segment of this population, which may escalate if not addressed appropriately. Therefore, preventive measures and targeted psychological interventions are needed to support Generation Z individuals in the sandwich generation in coping with life challenges in a healthy and adaptive manner.

Validity Test

Validity indicates the degree of relevance between the data obtained and the actual focus of the research. The essence of validity is to ensure that the measurement truly targets or measures what it is intended to measure. For questionnaires, the validity of each item can be tested through the correlation between the item score and the total score. If the correlation coefficient (r calculated) $>$ the table value (r table), then the item is considered valid (DelGreco et al., 1987).

Table. 5 Validity of Self Efficacy

Item	R Count	R Table	Results
ED1	0.358	0.1771	Valid
ED2	0.543	0.1771	Valid
ED3	0.411	0.1771	Valid
ED4	0.411	0.1771	Valid
ED5	0.563	0.1771	Valid
ED6	0.361	0.1771	Valid
ED7	0.455	0.1771	Valid
ED8	0.577	0.1771	Valid
ED9	0.404	0.1771	Valid
ED10	0.620	0.1771	Valid

Based on the data from the validity test results in Table 5, which were obtained by distributing questionnaires to 123 respondents, the validity test results showed that 10 statement items used to measure self-efficacy were tested by comparing the calculated r value for each item with the table r value of 0.1771, which was obtained from the Product Moment table at the 121st position ($n-2$). All items showed calculated r values greater than the table r value, with the lowest value being 0.358 and the highest value being 0.620. This indicates that all items in the measurement instrument are valid, as they are able to accurately and appropriately measure the self-efficacy aspect, making them suitable for use in measuring self-efficacy in Gen Z respondents as the sandwich generation in this study.

Table 6 Validity of Anxiety

Item	R Count	R Table	Results
K1	0.349	0.1771	Valid
K2	0.458	0.1771	Valid
K3	0.308	0.1771	Valid
K4	0.463	0.1771	Valid
K5	0.412	0.1771	Valid
K6	0.430	0.1771	Valid
K7	0.345	0.1771	Valid
K8	0.551	0.1771	Valid
K9	0.332	0.1771	Valid
K10	0.598	0.1771	Valid
K11	0.381	0.1771	Valid
K12	0.348	0.1771	Valid
K13	0.418	0.1771	Valid
K14	0.559	0.1771	Valid
K15	0.307	0.1771	Valid
K16	0.425	0.1771	Valid
K17	0.231	0.1771	Valid
K18	0.407	0.1771	Valid
K19	0.323	0.1771	Valid
K20	0.495	0.1771	Valid

Based on the data from the validity test results in Table 6, obtained by distributing questionnaires to 123 respondents, the validity test results for 20 statement items used to measure the level of anxiety showed that all items had calculated r values greater than the table r value, with the lowest calculated r value being 0.231 and the highest being 0.598. Validity was tested by comparing the calculated r value of each item with the table r value of 0.1771, as found in the Product Moment r table at the 123rd position ($n-2$). Therefore, based on the analysis, it can be concluded that all the questionnaire items are valid, meaning that the items on the questionnaire accurately measure the anxiety construct in this study. The good validity of all these items strengthens the reliability of the measurement instrument in representing the respondents' psychological condition related to anxiety. As a result, this measurement tool is suitable for analyzing and drawing scientific conclusions about the anxiety levels of the respondents, specifically Gen Z as the sandwich generation.

Reliability Test

Reliability refers to the degree of stability in measuring a phenomenon or data. In other words, reliability indicates how consistently a measurement tool produces similar results when used repeatedly on the same data. A variable is considered reliable if its Cronbach's Alpha value is greater than 0.60 (Taherdoost, 2018).

Table 7. Reliability Test of Self-Efficacy

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.604	10

The results of the reliability test for the self-efficacy variable yielded a value of 0.604, which exceeds the reliability coefficient threshold and is therefore acceptable, although not considered high. Thus, this measurement tool can be considered sufficiently consistent in measuring the self-efficacy construct in the respondents of this study, specifically Gen Z as the sandwich generation, as shown in Table 7.

Table 8. Reliability Test of Anxiety

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.735	20

Based on the results of the reliability test presented in Table 8, it is known that the Cronbach's Alpha value for the measurement tool assessing the level of anxiety is 0.735 with a total of 20 items. This value indicates that the measurement tool has a high level of reliability and can be categorized as reliable, according to the criteria proposed by Sugiyono (2017), where a Cronbach's Alpha value of ≥ 0.70 is considered to demonstrate good internal consistency. Therefore, this measurement tool is deemed appropriate and consistent in measuring the anxiety construct in the respondents of this study, specifically Gen Z as the sandwich generation.

Correlaion Test

Based on the results of the normality test conducted in this study, the data distributions for the self-efficacy and anxiety variables were evaluated using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. The test results indicated significance values of 0.008 for self-efficacy and 0.001 for anxiety, both of which are below the standard threshold ($p > 0.05$). These findings indicate that the data were not normally distributed, necessitating the use of a non-parametric correlation analysis, specifically the Spearman correlation test.

Prior to the correlation analysis, a linearity test was performed to assess the presence of a linear relationship between self-efficacy and anxiety. The analysis of variance (ANOVA) yielded a significance value for the deviation from linearity of 0.685. Since this value exceeds 0.05, it can be interpreted that a linear relationship exists between the two variables.

The Spearman correlation analysis produced a correlation coefficient of -0.022 with a significance value of 0.808, indicating a very weak negative relationship that is not statistically significant. In conclusion, there is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and anxiety among Generation Z individuals who occupy the role of the sandwich generation in Jakarta. These findings suggest that individual confidence in managing tasks or challenges does not have a substantial impact on anxiety levels within this demographic.

Table 9. Spearman's Correlation

Spearman's rho		Self Efficacy	Anxiety Level
Self-Efficacy	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.022
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.808
	N	123	123
Anxiety Level	Correlation Coefficient	-.022	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.808	.
	N	123	123

Discussion

This study examined the relationship between self-efficacy and anxiety levels among Generation Z individuals in Jakarta who experience dual-role pressures commonly associated with the sandwich generation. Statistical analysis using Spearman's correlation showed no significant relationship between self-efficacy and anxiety ($r = -0.022$, $p = 0.808$), leading to the rejection of the hypothesis. These findings are in line with prior research by Laudita and Ariana (2021), as well as Cubukcu (2008), both of which found no significant association between self-efficacy and anxiety across various populations and settings.

Although 55.28% of respondents reported low self-efficacy—reflecting limited confidence in managing tasks or challenges—most (67.48%) exhibited anxiety levels within the normal range, based on Zung's classification. The ZSAS considers both affective symptoms (e.g., feelings of tension, worry, and fear) and somatic symptoms (e.g., sleep disturbances, physical discomfort, and fatigue). The predominance of normal anxiety levels in this sample suggests that while respondents may experience certain emotional or physical symptoms, these remain within a manageable threshold. It is possible that some individuals, despite having low self-efficacy, possess effective coping mechanisms or external support that help regulate both emotional distress and physical tension.

Still, a notable portion of respondents (30.08%) experienced mild anxiety and 2.44% experienced moderate anxiety, indicating the presence of psychological vulnerability within this group. These individuals may be at greater risk for developing anxiety-related disorders if their stressors are not properly addressed through preventive interventions.

The instruments used in this study were validated and reliable, supporting the accuracy of the findings in measuring psychological conditions. Demographic data showed that most respondents were women (69.11%) residing in South Jakarta, suggesting a possible gendered dimension to caregiving or dual-role expectations in urban settings. The average age of 23 reflects a life stage characterized by increasing responsibility for financial and familial obligations, which may exacerbate emotional and physical strain.

Taken together, these findings highlight the complexity of psychological well-being among Generation Z in sandwich-like roles. Although self-efficacy appears unrelated to anxiety in this study, it remains a critical construct worth strengthening through targeted interventions. Future research is encouraged to examine mediating factors—such as social status, education, or employment—that may explain or influence the relationship between self-efficacy and anxiety more comprehensively.

CONCLUSION

Most Generation Z respondents in this study were found to have low self-efficacy, while their anxiety levels remained within the normal range. No significant relationship was identified between self-efficacy and anxiety among Gen Z individuals who take on sandwich generation roles in Jakarta. Therefore, psychological interventions and programs aimed at strengthening personal capacity are needed to help this group manage their dual-role burdens more effectively.

Future research is encouraged to consider the inclusion of potential mediating variables that may bridge the relationship between self-efficacy and anxiety. Referring to Bandura's theory (1997, in Hanapi, 2017), social status is one factor that can influence self-efficacy. Meanwhile, according to Untari (2014, in Muhsinatun, 2018), occupation and educational level can impact anxiety levels. Thus, social status—which includes occupation and education—could be explored as a mediating variable in future studies. Additionally, interventions aimed at enhancing self-efficacy are also important to be designed for Gen Z individuals navigating sandwich generation responsibilities in Jakarta.

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