



Perceived Organizational Support and Work Engagement: Testing the Mediating Role of Perceived Insider Status in Indonesia

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Abstract

Employee engagement in work is key to organizational success, yet only 21% of employees globally are truly engaged in their work, reflecting a major challenge in human resource management. This research aims to examine the mediating role of Perceived Insider Status (PIS) in the relationship between Perceived Organizational Support (POS) and Work Engagement among employees in Indonesia. This research uses a quantitative method with a cross-sectional design, involving 283 employee participants who met the research criteria. Data were collected through online surveys using validated instruments: Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS), and Perceived Insider Status Scale. Analysis results using PROCESS bootstrapping regression indicate that POS has a significant and positive effect on work engagement ($\beta = 0.1194$, $p < 0.001$) and POS also has a significant effect on PIS ($\beta = 0.0388$, $p < 0.001$). However, PIS does not have a significant effect on work engagement ($\beta = -0.3351$, $p = 0.0942 > 0.05$), thus PIS was not proven to function as a mediating variable (indirect effect: $\beta = -0.0130$, 95% CI [-0.0361, 0.0049]). These findings are useful as a reference for human resource practitioners, managers, and organizations to develop more effective strategies in enhancing employee work engagement through comprehensive organizational support strengthening. The implications of this research demonstrate that the influence of organizational support on work engagement is direct without requiring an increase in insider status feelings first, therefore organizations should prioritize enhancing perceived organizational support directly to improve employee work engagement.

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INTRODUCTION

Human resources (HR) constitute the most vital asset for any organization or company in achieving strategic objectives. Fundamentally, HR represents the individuals employed within an organization, serving as the driving forces to accomplish organizational goals (Sella & Riofita, 2024). Effective Human Resource Management (HRM) encompasses crucial processes such as recruitment, training, development, compensation, and labor relations, all aimed at enhancing employee performance and ensuring the successful attainment of organizational objectives. Anjani & Hidayat, (2024) emphasize that human resources, comprising individuals who act as organizational drivers in both institutions and companies, must be viewed as an asset whose capabilities should be continuously trained and developed. Thus, strategically managed human resources become a sustainable competitive advantage, as humans represent the most adaptive factor, capable of driving innovation amid dynamic business environment changes.

The critical role of human resources makes employee engagement in work an essential psychological state requiring continuous maintenance. However, the phenomenon of low employee engagement has become a serious global challenge. According to the Gallup Global Workplace Report in 2025, a concerning low rate of only 21% of employees globally feel genuinely engaged in their work (Orr, 2025). In Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, this condition is even more alarming, with engagement rates falling below the global average. A survey conducted by Indonesia, (2017) among 1,200 millennial employees in six major cities found that only 25% of respondents felt fully attached to their work. This low level of work engagement underscores the critical importance of human resource management in organizations, particularly in creating work environments that can optimally promote employee motivation, commitment, and engagement. Furthermore, an initial survey of 30 Indonesian employees found that a significant portion reported low work engagement, particularly in the aspects of enthusiasm (vigor) and deep involvement (absorption).

Work engagement is formally defined by Schaufeli et al., (2008) as a positive psychological state characterized by vigor (high energy and mental resilience), dedication (high involvement, enthusiasm, and pride) (Bakker et al., 2008; Schaufeli et al., 2008), and absorption (deep concentration on the task) (Schaufeli et al., 2008). This state is crucial due to its profound impact on both organizational and individual productivity (Boccoli et al., 2023). Research consistently demonstrates that engaged employees are not only more creative and productive but also more willing to exert maximum discretionary effort for the organization (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). In addition, engaged employees exhibit better performance, higher job satisfaction, and more positive organizational behaviors (Schaufeli et al., 2008). The fostering of work engagement is often linked to key factors such as job resources, personal resources (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008), and managing job demands (Bakker & Leiter, 2010).

Despite its recognized importance, the underlying mechanisms that foster work engagement remain insufficiently understood, particularly in the context of Indonesian organizations. Existing literature widely recognizes Perceived Organizational Support (POS) an employees' perception of the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being Eisenberger et al., (1986) as a significant antecedent (Saks, 2006). According to Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 2017), when employees perceive organizational support, which is influenced by factors such as fairness,

supervisor support, and rewards (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002), they feel obligated to reciprocate through increased commitment and engagement. High POS is associated with positive organizational outcomes, including increased job satisfaction, affective commitment, and enhanced performance, both in-role and extra-role (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). However, empirical findings in Indonesia show significant inconsistencies regarding the direct POS-WE relationship. While some studies report a strong positive relationship (Gumilang & Indrayanti, 2022; Mufarrikhah et al., 2020), others find non-significant associations (Silviana & Hayati, 2025), suggesting unexplored mediating mechanisms that account for these contextual differences.

This inconsistency necessitates further research into potential mediating variables explaining how perceived organizational support translates into work engagement. Recent theoretical developments suggest that Perceived Insider Status (PIS) the extent to which individuals psychologically feel themselves as part of the organizational "inner circle" Priem et al., (2002) may serve as a crucial psychological mechanism. PIS focuses on employees' subjective perceptions of being recognized, accepted, and valued as integral organizational members, distinguishing it from formal membership. This perception forms a psychological attachment, akin to a psychological contract, signifying their inner membership within the organization (Çelik et al., 2023). Dai & Chen, (2015) conducted a systematic review highlighting that PIS represents a unique construct that bridges social exchange and social identity perspectives, capturing employees' felt inclusion in the organizational core. Aselage & Eisenberger, (2003) further articulated that PIS integrates both social exchange (based on reciprocity) and social identity (based on categorization and identification) perspectives, making it a particularly powerful predictor of employee outcomes. PIS encourages greater responsibility, loyalty, and a desire to contribute more, promoting organizational citizenship behavior and reducing deviant workplace behavior. POS is theorized as a prerequisite for PIS, as positive treatment from the organization signals that the individual is valued and part of the insider group (Priem et al., 2002). International evidence supports PIS significance in predicting organizational outcomes: Liu et al., (2022) found that PIS significantly predicted employee engagement among healthcare staff in China, and Zheng et al., (2022) identified PIS as a significant predictor of work engagement among faculty members in China. However, research specifically examining PIS as a mediator between POS and work engagement remains scarce, particularly in Indonesian contexts

This research addresses this critical gap by investigating whether Perceived Insider Status mediates the relationship between Perceived Organizational Support and Work Engagement among Indonesian employees. The study aims to identify the specific psychological pathway through which organizational support influences employee work engagement and explore PIS as the intermediary variable. Theoretically, establishing PIS as a mediating mechanism would advance Organizational Support Theory by elucidating the precise psychological pathways through which organizational support translates into employee engagement, thereby contributing to more nuanced models of work engagement antecedents. Furthermore, the findings are expected to provide practical insights for organizational management, offering a framework for developing strategies to enhance work engagement through the deliberate strengthening of both perceived organizational support and perceived insider status.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative research approach with a cross-sectional survey design to examine the mediating role of Perceived Insider Status in the relationship between Perceived Organizational Support and Work Engagement among Indonesian employees (Adelakun, 2025; Amanda et al., 2026; Ashaari et al., 2025; Engkizar et al., 2026; Eriyanti et al., 2020; Sudirman et al., 2026). A total of 283 Indonesian employees were recruited using non-probability convenience sampling, meeting criteria of: i) minimum age of 18 years, ii) active employment status, and iii) minimum one-year tenure in their current organization. The demographic composition included 184 females (65%) and 99 males (35%), with the majority aged 20-30 years (86.2%), holding Bachelor's degrees (67.1%), and having 2-3 years of work experience (51.6%). Data were collected entirely online through structured Google Forms questionnaires distributed on various social media platforms, ensuring complete anonymity and voluntary participation through digital informed consent.

Three validated instruments were utilized: Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) Schaufeli & Bakker, (2004) consisting of 17 items across three dimensions with excellent reliability ($\alpha = 0.878$, $\omega = 0.876$; CFI = .912, TLI = .887, RMSEA = .063); Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS) (Eisenberger et al., 1986) with 31 valid items demonstrating excellent reliability ($\alpha = 0.946$, $\omega = 0.949$; CFI = 0.901, TLI = 0.882, RMSEA = 0.065); and Perceived Insider Status Scale (Stamper & Masterson, 2002) with 6 items showing good reliability ($\alpha = 0.837$, $\omega = 0.842$; CFI = 0.987, TLI = 0.961, RMSEA = 0.083). All instruments used Likert scales with proven validity through Confirmatory Factor Analysis. Data analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics version 25.0 and Jamovi, beginning with descriptive statistics and classical assumption tests such as normality via Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and Q-Q plots, linearity, multicollinearity via VIF, heteroscedasticity via Glejser test, and autocorrelation via Durbin-Watson, followed by hypothesis testing using Hayes & Andrew, (2013) PROCESS macro version 4.2 Model 4 with bootstrapping regression analysis (5,000 bootstrap samples) to examine direct and indirect effects, with statistical significance determined at $\alpha = 0.05$ and mediation confirmed if 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals for indirect effects excluded zero.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Testing of linear regression assumptions aims to avoid bias in data analysis and prevent specification errors in the regression model used. The classical assumption tests conducted include normality, linearity, multicollinearity, homoscedasticity, autocorrelation, and hypothesis testing. The normality assumption test was performed using the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test, where data are considered normally distributed when sig. (p) > 0.05 and non-normally distributed when sig. (p) < 0.05. Based on the results obtained, all main research variables showed non-normally distributed data. Specifically, the variables perceived organizational support (p = <0.001), work engagement (p = <0.001), and perceived insider status (p = <0.001). However, visual inspection of the Quantile-Quantile (Q-Q) Plot indicated adequate approximate normality, which is consistent with the recommendation of Hair et al., (2019) for analyses less sensitive to minor violations of assumptions.

Subsequently, linearity testing was conducted to ensure that relationships between variables could be accurately modeled using linear equations, with the criterion that relationships are declared linear if the significance value (Deviation

of Linearity) is greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$). Results indicated that the relationship between perceived insider status and work engagement had a significance value of 0.10 ($p > 0.05$), and the relationship between perceived insider status and perceived organizational support had a significance value of 0.051 ($p > 0.05$), meaning both variable pairs were statistically declared linear, indicating their data distribution patterns tend to follow straight lines, making linear regression models relevant for these variables. However, for the relationship between perceived organizational support and work engagement, the significance value obtained was 0.017 ($p < 0.05$), indicating that the relationship between these two variables was declared non-linear.

Table 1. Linearity Test

Variables	Sig.	Interpretation
Perceived Organizational Support → Work Engagement	0.017	Non-Linear
Perceived Insider Status → Work Engagement	0.100	Linear
Perceived Organizational Support → Perceived Insider Status	0.051	Linear

Residual independence tests were conducted including autocorrelation and multicollinearity tests. Based on the autocorrelation test results using Durbin-Watson, the three regression models involving perceived organizational support, work engagement, and perceived insider status consistently demonstrated no autocorrelation problems. Through the testing that has been conducted, all three models were within the range of 1.5-2.5, which represents the ideal threshold for indicating the absence of autocorrelation. Furthermore, multicollinearity testing was performed to ensure that there was no excessively strong relationship among independent variables in the regression model, revealing that the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for all variables were 1.000. Since the VIF values for each variable were far below the recommended threshold ($VIF < 5$), it can be concluded that multicollinearity did not occur in the regression model. The results of the residual independence tests can be seen in table 2.

Table 2. Residual Independence

Variables	Durbin-Watson	VIF
Perceived Organizational Support & Work Engagement	1.801	1.000
Perceived Insider Status & Work Engagement	1.509	1.000
Perceived Organizational Support & Perceived Insider Status	1.882	1.000

Following the completion of classical assumption tests to satisfy prerequisites and a correlation test using a correlation matrix, hypothesis testing was conducted using PROCESS bootstrapping regression to examine variables with a mediator. For the subsequent hypothesis testing, the researcher employed the theory of Hayes (2013) in testing the research hypotheses through the regression analysis method of PROCESS bootstrapping V4.2, Model 4. The hypothesis analysis revealed a set of findings, partially supporting and partially contrasting the existing literature. Hypothesis one (H1) was supported, confirming that Perceived Organizational Support (POS) has a positive and significant effect on Work Engagement ($\beta = 0.1194$, $t = 4.3005$, $p < 0.001$). This finding is highly consistent with the principle of reciprocity within Social Exchange Theory (SET) (Blau, 2017; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002), where organizational support creates a psychological obligation for employees to reciprocate with high dedication. Hypothesis two

(H2) was also supported, indicating that POS positively and significantly affects Perceived Insider Status (PIS) ($\beta = 0.0388$, $t = 4.6949$, $p < 0.001$), aligning with the initial PIS concept, also rooted in SET, where positive treatment enhances employees' perception of being full members or insiders (Priem et al., 2002). However, Hypothesis three (H3) was rejected, as PIS did not demonstrate a significant role in predicting Work Engagement ($\beta = -0.3351$, $p = 0.0942$). This finding contradicts previous studies that reported a direct predictive role for PIS (Liu et al., 2022; Song et al., 2025). Crucially, Hypothesis four (H4) was also rejected, confirming that PIS failed to mediate the relationship between POS and Work Engagement (negligible coefficient $\beta = -0.0130$; 95% CI included zero). Underscoring that, in the context of this study, the POS influence on Work Engagement is more direct, and PIS proved to be a redundant or ineffective pathway.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the mediating role of Perceived Insider Status (PIS) on the relationship between Perceived Organizational Support (POS) and Work Engagement (WE) among Indonesian employees. The findings confirmed a strong, significant, and direct positive relationship between POS and WE ($\beta = 0.1194$, $p = 0.000$), while concluding that PIS did not significantly mediate this relationship, as the direct effect of PIS on WE was non-significant ($\beta = -0.3351$, $p = 0.0942$). This suggests that the primary mechanism for work engagement in this context is direct reciprocity resulting from perceived support, thereby challenging the universal application of the POS $\rightarrow$ PIS $\rightarrow$ WE mediation model. For future research, it is highly recommended to explore alternative mediating variables to fully explain the psychological pathway between POS and WE. Additionally, comparative studies should be conducted across different industries or cultural contexts within Indonesia to determine the boundary conditions for the PIS mechanism.

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