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The Effect of Work-Life Balance and Perceived Organizational Support on Turnover Intention Through Work Engagement in Generation Z Employees : Evidence from the QHSE Department of the Aviation Food Service Industry

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Abstract

Generation Z employees are more willing than previous generations to leave jobs that fail to meet their expectations, making their retention a pressing concern in high-pressure operational units. Prior findings on the direct effects of work-life balance (WLB) and perceived organizational support (POS) on turnover intention are inconsistent, and the motivational mechanism linking these resources to turnover intention remains under-examined. Drawing on Social Exchange Theory and the Job Demands-Resources model, this study examines whether work engagement (WE) mediates these effects. Data were collected from all 143 Generation Z employees in the Quality, Health, Safety, and Environment (QHSE) Department of an aviation food service company in Jakarta and analyzed using PLS-SEM (SmartPLS 4.0) with bootstrapping.
The results show that WLB ($\beta = -0.180$) and POS ($\beta = -0.234$) negatively affect turnover intention, both positively affect WE ($\beta = 0.411$ and $\beta = 0.453$), and WE negatively affects turnover intention ($\beta = -0.263$). WE partially mediates the effects of WLB (indirect $\beta = -0.108$) and POS (indirect $\beta = -0.119$) on turnover intention. Theoretically, the study shows that a personal domain resource (WLB) and an organizational-domain resource (POS) reduce turnover intention through a common motivational pathway, which helps explain the inconsistent direct effects reported in earlier studies. Practically, organizations seeking to retain Generation Z employees in compliance-intensive units should combine predictable scheduling and adequate recovery time with visible organizational support in order to sustain engagement.

1. INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly competitive business environment, human resources (HR) have become a strategic asset that plays a critical role in an organization's sustainability. One of the main challenges facing companies is high turnover intention, that is, employees' desire to leave the organization, which can lead to increased recruitment costs, decreased productivity, and disruption to organizational stability (Latumahina et al., 2026). This phenomenon is increasingly important to study because the current workforce is dominated by Generation Z individuals born between 1997 and 2012 who possess distinct characteristics from previous generations. Generation Z tends to prioritize work-life balance,

work flexibility, career development, mental health, and adequate organizational support; therefore, organizations need to understand the factors influencing turnover intention to improve employee retention and maintain the company's competitive advantage (Roushon & Laskar, 2025).

One sector facing significant challenges regarding employee retention is the aviation food service industry. This industry has unique operational characteristics because it must operate 24 hours a day to meet the needs of airlines, which demand punctuality, product quality, food safety, and compliance with various international standards. This high operational pressure often results in employees facing heavy workloads, unpredictable work schedules, strict audit requirements, and significant responsibility for service quality and safety, factors that have been found to increase turnover intention among employees (A. Putri & Wicaksana, 2026; E. Y. Putri & Febrian, 2025)

In the airline catering industry, the Quality, Health, Safety, and Environment (QHSE) Department plays a strategic role in ensuring that all operational processes comply with national and international standards for food safety, occupational health and safety, and environmental management. QHSE employees oversee critical aspects that directly affect consumer safety and the company's reputation. However, this substantial responsibility is often not matched by supportive working conditions. Structurally, the QHSE Department is frequently categorized as a cost center and receives less strategic attention than direct operational departments. Because operations run 24 hours a day without interruption, QHSE employees regularly face irregular working hours, sudden overtime, unannounced inspections, external audits, complex documentation requirements, and limited recovery time, all of which directly threaten their work-life balance. These conditions are particularly relevant for Generation Z employees, who account for 143 of the 325 employees (44.0%) in the QHSE Department. Internal HR data show that the number of Generation Z QHSE employees who resigned was 2 in 2023 (1.40%), increased to 4 in 2024 (2.80%), and then stood at 2 in 2025 (1.40%) and 2 as 2026 (1.40%), for a total of 10 resignations over the past four years. Although the number of actual resignations remains relatively small, the increase in 2024 and the persistently demanding working conditions suggest a latent intention to leave that has not yet translated into actual resignation. This indicates that the organization has not yet provided a work system that adequately supports the work-life balance of its Generation Z employees, making turnover intention an important issue to examine before it develops into higher actual turnover.

Several studies have identified work-life balance (WLB), perceived organizational support (POS), and work engagement as important antecedents of turnover intention. Work-life balance refers to an individual's ability to effectively manage and balance the demands of work and personal life. Employees who achieve a satisfactory level of work-life balance generally experience lower stress and burnout, which subsequently reduces their intention to leave the organization. Empirical evidence largely supports the negative relationship between WLB and turnover intention (Barasa & Tunjungsari, 2024; Nur et al., 2025; Setiyo & Saputra, 2025), although several studies have reported non-significant effects, suggesting that the influence of WLB may vary across organizational and demographic contexts (Fatmawati & Mansyur, 2024; Nurasyikin et al., 2025; Pratiwi et al., 2022). Perceived organizational support, defined as employees' perceptions regarding the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being, has also been recognized as a critical factor in reducing turnover intention. Drawing on Social Exchange Theory, employees who perceive strong organizational support are more likely to reciprocate through greater commitment and loyalty to the organization. Nevertheless, prior studies have produced inconsistent findings regarding the direct effect of POS on turnover intention, indicating the need for further investigation (Herianto & Yanuar, 2021; A. Putri & Wicaksana, 2026). In addition, previous research has demonstrated that both WLB and POS contribute positively to work engagement. Employees who perceive a healthy balance between work and personal life, as well as adequate organizational support, tend to exhibit higher levels of engagement in their work roles (Shofiyatunnisa, 2025). Higher work engagement, in turn, has consistently been associated with lower turnover intention, indicating that engaged employees are less likely to consider leaving their organizations (Barasa & Tunjungsari, 2024; Setiabudi & Wendra, 2025).

Beyond these contextual issues, a theoretical gap remains. Prior studies have mostly treated WLB and POS as separate, direct predictors of turnover intention, without explaining the mechanism through which these resources translate into lower withdrawal intentions. From the perspective of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, resources such as WLB and POS reduce withdrawal intentions mainly through a motivational process in which they foster work engagement (Bakker et al., 2023), while Social Exchange Theory explains why employees reciprocate organizational care with loyalty (Ahmad et al., 2023). Empirical evidence suggests that a supportive balance between work and personal life fosters work engagement, which in turn reduces turnover intention (Barasa & Tunjungsari, 2024; Djuita & Dwarawati, 2024). Employees who achieve a healthy balance between work and personal life and who feel valued by their organization are therefore likely to be more energized and dedicated, and consequently less inclined to leave.

A mediation model is therefore more appropriate than a direct-effect model. The effects of WLB and POS on turnover intention are likely to operate through a proximal psychological state, and the inconsistent direct effects reported in earlier studies (Fatmawati & Mansyur, 2024; Herianto & Yanuar, 2021) suggest the presence of such an intervening mechanism. Identifying this mechanism also shows organizations which condition must be sustained for balance and support initiatives to improve retention. Recent studies have examined mediators mainly along the strain or commitment

pathways, such as job stress (Latumahina et al., 2026; Setiyo & Saputra, 2025), burnout (Setiabudi & Wendra, 2025), and organizational commitment (A. Putri & Wicaksana, 2026). Studies using work engagement as a mediator have generally examined a single resource (Barasa & Tunjungsari, 2024). The novelty of this study lies in simultaneously testing WLB and POS as personal- and organizational-domain resources that reduce turnover intention through work engagement, and in examining Generation Z employees in a compliance-intensive QHSE function of the aviation food service industry.

Accordingly, this study addresses three research questions: (RQ1) Do WLB and POS directly affect turnover intention? (RQ2) Do WLB and POS affect work engagement? (RQ3) Does work engagement mediate the effects of WLB and POS on turnover intention? Theoretically, this study clarifies the motivational mechanism linking WLB and POS to turnover intention and helps explain earlier inconsistent findings; practically, it guides HR managers in combining work-life balance policies and organizational support to retain Generation Z employees. Therefore, this study was conducted to analyze the effect of work-life balance and perceived organizational support on turnover intention through work engagement among Generation Z employees in the QHSE Department of the aviation food service industry in Jakarta.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Turnover Intention

Turnover intention constitutes a critical issue in human resource management, as it has the potential to undermine organizational performance and result in the loss of highly competent employees (Barasa & Tunjungsari 2024). Herianto & Yanuar (2021) argue that turnover intention reflects an individual's inclination to leave an organization, stemming from low job satisfaction and insufficient perceived organizational support. Fatmawati & Mansyur (2024) define turnover intention as an employee's conscious desire to leave the organization, which simultaneously functions as an early indicator for predicting the occurrence of actual turnover. Putri & Wicaksana (2026) explain that turnover intention represents a psychological state that drives individuals to leave their jobs, resulting in diminished productivity, increased recruitment costs, and disrupted organizational stability. Drawing upon these perspectives, turnover intention can be conceptualized as an employee's desire or propensity to voluntarily leave the organization, arising from their evaluation of working conditions, the work environment, and the organization's treatment of its employees.

Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance refers to an individual's capacity to reconcile the demands of professional responsibilities with personal life, enabling both domains to operate in harmony. Barasa & Tunjungsari (2024) indicate that work-life balance reflects employees' ability to manage their time and align work, family life, and personal interests in a manner that fosters individual well-being. Shofiyatunnisa (2025) explains that work-life balance encompasses flexible working hours, support for personal life, and organizational policies that enable employees to fulfill both professional and personal roles in an equitable manner. For Generation Z in particular, work-life balance serves as a significant factor in enhancing their engagement and commitment to work. Setiyo & Saputra (2025) contend that work-life balance is achieved when individuals are able to meet the demands of their professional roles while simultaneously maintaining personal well-being, mental health, social relationships, and family life in a balanced way. Accordingly, work-life balance can be understood as an individual's ability to manage and harmonize professional demands with personal life, thereby fostering optimal well-being, satisfaction, and productivity.

Perceived Organizational Support

Perceived Organizational Support (POS) refers to employees' perceptions of the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being. According to Herianto & Yanuar (2021) perceived organizational support is defined as employees' perceptions regarding the organization's concern for employee well-being and the recognition provided in return for their contributions to the company. (Djuita & Dwarawati, 2024; A. Putri & Wicaksana, 2026) further explain that perceived organizational support serves to fulfill employees' social and emotional needs. Organizational support enhances employees' sense of being valued, strengthens organizational commitment, and reduces their intention to leave the organization. Drawing upon these perspectives, perceived organizational support can be conceptualized as employees' perceptions of the degree to which the organization attends to, recognizes, and supports their contributions and well-being, thereby fostering greater loyalty and diminishing turnover intention.

Work Engagement

Work engagement is a positive psychological state characterized by vigor, dedication, and full absorption in one's work. Employees with high levels of work engagement tend to be more focused, energized, and deeply immersed in their tasks. Djuita & Dwarawati (2024) describe work engagement as the psychological attachment of employees to their work, reflected in high levels of enthusiasm, involvement, and concentration in task completion. Their findings

demonstrate a negative relationship between work engagement and turnover intention, indicating that higher levels of work engagement are associated with a reduced desire to leave the organization. Barasa & Tunjungsari (2024) found that work engagement functions as a mediating variable linking work-life balance with turnover intention, whereby employees who successfully achieve work-life balance exhibit higher levels of work engagement, which in turn lowers their propensity to leave the organization. Setiabudi & Wendra (2025) further affirm that work engagement constitutes a critical factor in mitigating turnover intention among Generation Z employees. Based on these perspectives, work engagement can be understood as a positive psychological state marked by vigor, dedication, and full absorption in work, which promotes productivity, fosters loyalty, and reduces turnover intention (Bas, 2022).

Theoretical Framework and Hypothesis Development

This study is grounded in two complementary theories. The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model posits that job and personal resources initiate a motivational process in which employees become more engaged, which in turn produces favorable outcomes such as lower turnover intention, whereas excessive job demands initiate a health-impairment process that leads to strain (Bakker et al., 2023). Social Exchange Theory explains the relational logic behind this process: when employees receive valued resources and care from their organization, they feel obliged to reciprocate through positive attitudes and behaviors, including greater dedication and a desire to remain (Ahmad et al., 2023). In this study, WLB is treated as a personal-domain resource that enables recovery from the intensive demands of QHSE work, POS as an organizational-domain resource that signals the organization's appreciation of employees' contributions, and work engagement as the motivational mechanism that links both resources to turnover intention.

Work-Life Balance and Turnover Intention

From the JD-R perspective, employees who are able to balance work and personal demands preserve the energy needed to cope with job demands and therefore have fewer reasons to withdraw from the organization. Several studies among Generation Z employees have reported that WLB reduces turnover intention (Barasa & Tunjungsari, 2024; Nur et al., 2025; Setiyo & Saputra, 2025), although others found non-significant effects (Fatmawati & Mansyur, 2024; Nurasyikin et al., 2025; Pratiwi et al., 2022). Because irregular schedules, sudden overtime, and audit pressures make balance a scarce and highly valued resource in QHSE work, a negative effect is expected.

H1: Work-life balance has a negative effect on turnover intention.

Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover Intention

Social Exchange Theory suggests that employees who perceive that the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being feel obliged to reciprocate through loyalty and a willingness to remain (Ahmad et al., 2023). Prior studies have linked POS to lower turnover intention, although this effect has often been examined through job satisfaction, organizational commitment, or engagement (Herianto & Yanuar, 2021; A. Putri & Wicaksana, 2026; Winarno et al., 2022). For QHSE employees, whose department is frequently treated as a cost center, visible support is expected to carry particular weight.

H2: Perceived organizational support has a negative effect on turnover intention.

Work-Life Balance, Perceived Organizational Support, and Work Engagement

The JD-R model identifies resources as the main drivers of work engagement (Bakker et al., 2023). Employees who achieve a healthy balance between work and personal life retain the energy required for vigor and dedication (Shofiyatunnisa, 2025), while employees who feel supported by their organization are motivated to invest themselves more fully in their work as a form of reciprocity (Winarno et al., 2022). Accordingly, both resources are expected to increase work engagement.

H3: Work-life balance has a positive effect on work engagement.

H4: Perceived organizational support has a positive effect on work engagement.

Work Engagement and Turnover Intention

Engaged employees experience their work as energizing and meaningful and are therefore less inclined to look for alternative employment (Djuita & Dwarawati, 2024; Setiabudi & Wendra, 2025). Engagement has also been shown to lower turnover intention partly by reducing work stress (Bas, 2022).

H5: Work engagement has a negative effect on turnover intention.

The Mediating Role of Work Engagement

Within the motivational process of the JD-R model, resources influence organizational outcomes primarily by fostering engagement (Bakker et al., 2023). Empirical evidence shows that work engagement mediates the relationship between job resources and turnover intention (Otoo, 2024; Van Heerden et al., 2022), as well as the relationship between WLB and turnover intention (Barasa & Tunjungsari, 2024). Combining this mechanism with the reciprocity logic of Social Exchange Theory, WLB and POS are expected to reduce turnover intention by strengthening work engagement. The research model is presented in Figure 1.

H6: Work engagement mediates the effect of work-life balance on turnover intention.

H7: Work engagement mediates the effect of perceived organizational support on turnover intention.

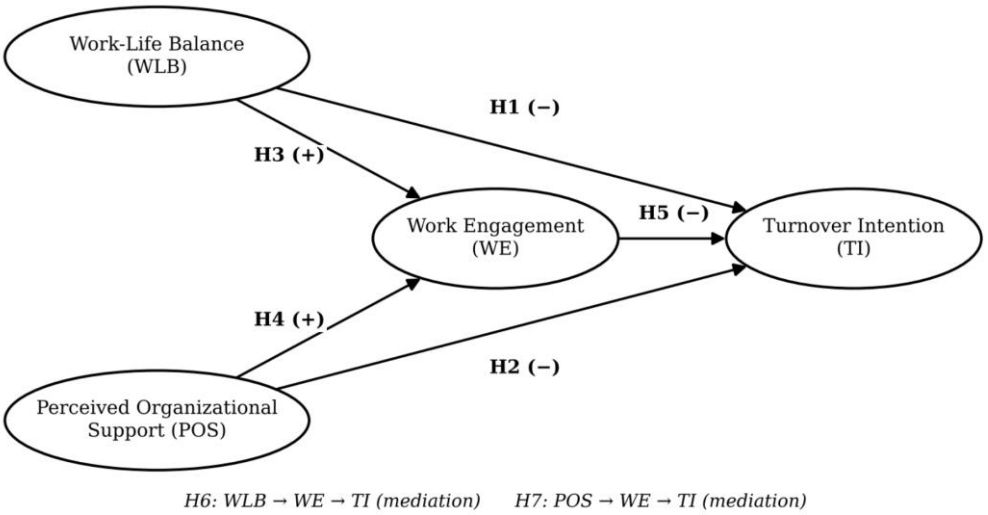


Figure 1. Research Model

3. METHOD

This study employed a quantitative, explanatory, cross-sectional survey design to examine the hypothesized relationships among Work-Life Balance, Perceived Organizational Support, Work Engagement, and Turnover Intention. The study was conducted in the Quality, Health, Safety, and Environment (QHSE) Department of an aviation food-service company in Jakarta.

The QHSE Department comprised 325 employees across four generational cohorts: 2 Baby Boomers (0.62%), 50 Generation X employees (15.38%), 130 Generation Y employees (40.00%), and 143 Generation Z employees (44.00%). Generation Z represented the largest generational cohort in the department. Accordingly, the target population of this study consisted of all 143 Generation Z employees in the QHSE Department.

A census sampling approach was employed because the target population was relatively small and accessible. All 143 Generation Z employees were invited to participate in the survey. No minimum employment-tenure requirement was imposed as an additional inclusion criterion. All 143 questionnaires were returned and deemed complete and usable for analysis, resulting in a 100% response rate. Therefore, the final sample consisted of 143 Generation Z employees.

All variables were measured using questionnaire items adapted from recent studies that examined the same constructs. Turnover intention was measured with four items adapted from Barasa and Tunjungsari (2024) and Latumahina et al. (2026). Work-life balance was measured with five items adapted from Setiyo and Saputra (2025) and Shofiyatunnisa (2025). Perceived organizational support was measured with five items adapted from Nur et al. (2025) and A. Putri and Wicaksana (2026). Work engagement was measured with five items adapted from Djuita and Dwarawati (2024) and Setiabudi and Wendra (2025). All items were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The items were translated into Indonesian and adjusted to the context of QHSE work. Data were collected through an online questionnaire using Google Forms distributed via WhatsApp. The collected data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS version 4.0.

The analysis stage begins with the evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) to assess the quality of the research instrument. This evaluation encompasses the examination of convergent validity through factor loading values and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), discriminant validity testing to ensure differentiation among constructs, and construct reliability assessment using Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha values. Subsequently, the structural model (inner model) is evaluated to examine the relationships among variables within the research model. This evaluation includes the assessment of the coefficient of determination (R^2) to measure the extent to which independent variables explain the dependent variable, predictive relevance (Q^2) to assess the predictive capability of the model, path coefficient analysis, and hypothesis testing. Hypotheses were tested using bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples, percentile bootstrap confidence intervals, a two-tailed test, and a significance level of 0.05. Direct and indirect (mediating) effects were considered significant when the p-value was below 0.05 and the 95% confidence interval did not include zero.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Measurement Model (Outer Model)

The evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) aims to assess the relationship between the indicators and the latent variables used in the study. This assessment is conducted to ensure that each indicator accurately reflects

its latent construct through a reflective measurement approach.

Convergent Validity

Convergent validity is one of the testing criteria used to measure the extent of the correlation between item scores and construct scores. The higher the correlation value obtained, the greater the validity of the data, indicating that each indicator is able to measure the intended construct consistently and accurately.

Table 1. Convergent Validity Test Result

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loading	Description
Turnover Intention (Y)	TI1	0.752	Valid
	TI2	0.810	Valid
	TI3	0.707	Valid
	TI4	0.782	Valid
Work-life Balance (X1)	WLB1	0.800	Valid
	WLB2	0.819	Valid
	WLB3	0.818	Valid
	WLB4	0.796	Valid
	WLB5	0.815	Valid
Perceived Organizational Support (X2)	POS1	0.771	Valid
	POS2	0.803	Valid
	POS3	0.722	Valid
	POS4	0.798	Valid
	POS5	0.764	Valid
Work Engagement (Z)	WE1	0.795	Valid
	WE2	0.754	Valid
	WE3	0.734	Valid
	WE4	0.739	Valid
	WE5	0.749	Valid

Based on the analysis results presented in Table 1, all indicators used in measuring the research variables show factor loadings above 0.70, as recommended by Hair et al. (2021). No indicator was found to have a factor loading below the established threshold, so all indicators are deemed valid. These results provide empirical evidence that the criteria for convergent validity have been met in their entirety.

Discriminant Validity Results

Discriminant validity is presented in Table 2. A construct is considered to have adequate discriminant validity if its factor loading is greater than the factor loadings of other constructs in the measurement model.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity Results

Indicator	Turnover Intention	Work-Life Balance	Perceived Organizational Support	Work Engagement
TI1	0.752	-0.286	-0.407	-0.384
TI2	0.810	-0.354	-0.342	-0.428
TI3	0.707	-0.334	-0.347	-0.324
TI4	0.782	-0.320	-0.319	-0.419
WLB1	-0.319	0.800	0.232	0.473
WLB2	-0.326	0.819	0.320	0.438
WLB3	-0.328	0.818	0.337	0.484
WLB4	-0.323	0.796	0.276	0.496
WLB5	-0.412	0.815	0.379	0.470
POS1	-0.338	0.180	0.771	0.477
POS2	-0.416	0.338	0.803	0.503
POS3	-0.315	0.256	0.722	0.438
POS4	-0.352	0.420	0.798	0.500
POS5	-0.360	0.272	0.764	0.435
WE1	-0.434	0.444	0.467	0.795

Indicator	Turnover Intention	Work-Life Balance	Perceived Organizational Support	Work Engagement
WE2	-0.430	0.416	0.447	0.754
WE3	-0.338	0.407	0.462	0.734
WE4	-0.376	0.457	0.480	0.739
WE5	-0.342	0.480	0.448	0.749

The test results show that the factor loadings for each target construct are higher than those for other constructs, leading to the conclusion that this research instrument meets the criteria for discriminant validity.

Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value is used as a measure to evaluate the extent to which the variance present in the indicators of a construct can be explained by the latent variable in question, taking into account the level of measurement error. According to Hair et al. (2020), an acceptable AVE value in both confirmatory and exploratory research is one that exceeds the threshold of 0.50, indicating that more than 50% of the variance in the reflective indicators can be explained by the latent variable.

Table 3. Average Variant Extracted (AVE) Test

Variable	AVE	Validity
Turnover Intention	0.583	Valid
Work-Life Balance	0.656	Valid
Perceived Organizational Support	0.596	Valid
Work Engagement	0.569	Valid

Based on Table 3, the results of the convergent validity test indicate that all research variables obtained an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value above the required threshold of 0.50. Specifically, the Turnover Intention variable obtained an AVE value of 0.583, Work-Life Balance of 0.656, Perceived Organizational Support of 0.596, and Work Engagement of 0.569. Referring to the criteria established by Hair et al. (2019), an AVE value exceeding 0.50 indicates that more than half of the variance in the respective reflective indicators can be explained by their latent variables. Thus, the measurement model in this study is deemed to meet the criteria for convergent validity, meaning that each latent construct adequately explains the variance of its respective indicators.

Composite Reliability

Composite reliability is a measure used to test the reliability of indicators for a latent variable. The composite reliability values generated from data analysis using SmartPLS software are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Composite Reliability Value

Variable	Composite Reliability	Reliability
Turnover Intention	0.848	Reliable
Work-Life Balance	0.905	Reliable
Perceived Organizational Support	0.880	Reliable
Work Engagement	0.868	Reliable

Based on Table 4, the results of the composite reliability test show that all research variables, namely turnover intention, work-life balance, perceived organizational support, and work engagement, achieved composite reliability values exceeding the minimum threshold of 0.70, ranging from 0.848 to 0.905. This indicates that all constructs in this study possess a good level of reliability. These findings align with the view of Hair et al. (2020), who state that a construct is considered to have high reliability if its composite reliability value is greater than 0.70. Thus, it can be concluded that all variables used in this study have met the reliability criteria and are suitable for further analysis.

Cronbach's Alpha

Reliability testing using the composite reliability value can be further reinforced through the calculation of Cronbach's Alpha. A variable is considered reliable if it meets the threshold of a Cronbach's Alpha value greater than 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019). If all variables have met these criteria, it can be concluded that all constructs in this study have a good level of reliability. The results of the Cronbach's Alpha calculations for each variable are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Cronbach Alpha Value

Variable	Cronbach Alpha	Reliability
Turnover Intention	0.761	Reliable
Work-Life Balance	0.869	Reliable
Perceived Organizational Support	0.830	Reliable
Work Engagement	0.811	Reliable

Based on Table 5, it can be seen that the Cronbach's Alpha values for all research variables namely, turnover intention, work-life balance, perceived organizational support, and work engagement are greater than 0.70. Thus, the results of this study indicate that all research variables have met the established Cronbach's Alpha criteria. Therefore, it can be concluded that all variables in this study are reliable and suitable for further analysis.

Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

Testing the structural model (inner model) is a process of developing a concept and theory based model to analyze the relationship between exogenous and endogenous variables as outlined in the study's conceptual framework. The evaluation of the inner model in this study was conducted based on several indicators, including the coefficient of determination (R^2) and the predictive relevance (Q^2) of each endogenous variable.

Coefficient of Determination (R-Square)

The coefficient of determination (R-Square) is used to measure the proportion of variation in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables in a regression model. The R^2 value ranges from 0 to 1, where a higher R-Square value indicates a greater ability of the independent variables to explain the variability of the dependent variable. The results of the coefficient of determination calculations in this study are presented in Table 6 below

Table 6. Variant R-Square Value

Variable	R-Square
Turnover Intention	0.319
Work Engagement	0.517

The results of the coefficient of determination (R^2) test show that the Work Engagement construct has an R^2 value of 0.517, indicating that Work-Life Balance and Perceived Organizational Support together account for 51.7% of the variance in the Work Engagement variable. Meanwhile, the Turnover Intention construct yielded an R^2 value of 0.319, meaning that Work-Life Balance, Perceived Organizational Support, and Work Engagement simultaneously explain 31.9% of the variance in the Turnover Intention variable. Referring to the criteria established by Hair et al. (2022), an R^2 value of 0.517 is categorized as moderate, while an R^2 value of 0.319 falls into the weak to moderate category. Based on these results, it can be concluded that the proposed research model possesses adequate explanatory power in explaining the phenomena under study.

Predictive Relevance (Q^2)

The validity of the structural model (inner model) can also be evaluated through the predictive relevance (Q^2) value. If $Q^2 > 0$, it indicates that the model has predictive relevance, whereas $Q^2 < 0$ indicates that the model lacks predictive relevance. Furthermore, Hair et al. (2019) state that Q^2 values > 0.25 and $Q^2 > 0.50$ reflect moderate and high predictive relevance, respectively.

Based on the calculations performed, the Q^2 value is obtained as follows:

$Q^2 = 1 – [1 – R_1^2)(1 – R_2^2)$

$= 1 – [(1 – 0.517)(1 – 0.319)]$

$= 1 – [0.328923]$

$= 0.6711$

Based on these calculations, a Q^2 value of 0.6711 was obtained, meaning that the model built explains 67.11% of the data variability, while the remaining 32.89% is explained by other variables outside the model. Thus, a Q^2 value exceeding the threshold of 0.50 indicates that the structural model developed in this study possesses significant predictive relevance (large predictive relevance), thereby deeming the model valid and meeting the criteria for predictive validity as established by Hair et al. (2019).

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing was conducted to determine whether exogenous variables influence endogenous variables, either directly or indirectly through mediating variables. Hypothesis testing in this study used p-values to determine the significance level of the relationships between variables, with the criterion that a hypothesis is accepted if the p-value is < 0.05.

Based on the results of data analysis using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method, the following hypothesis test results were obtained.

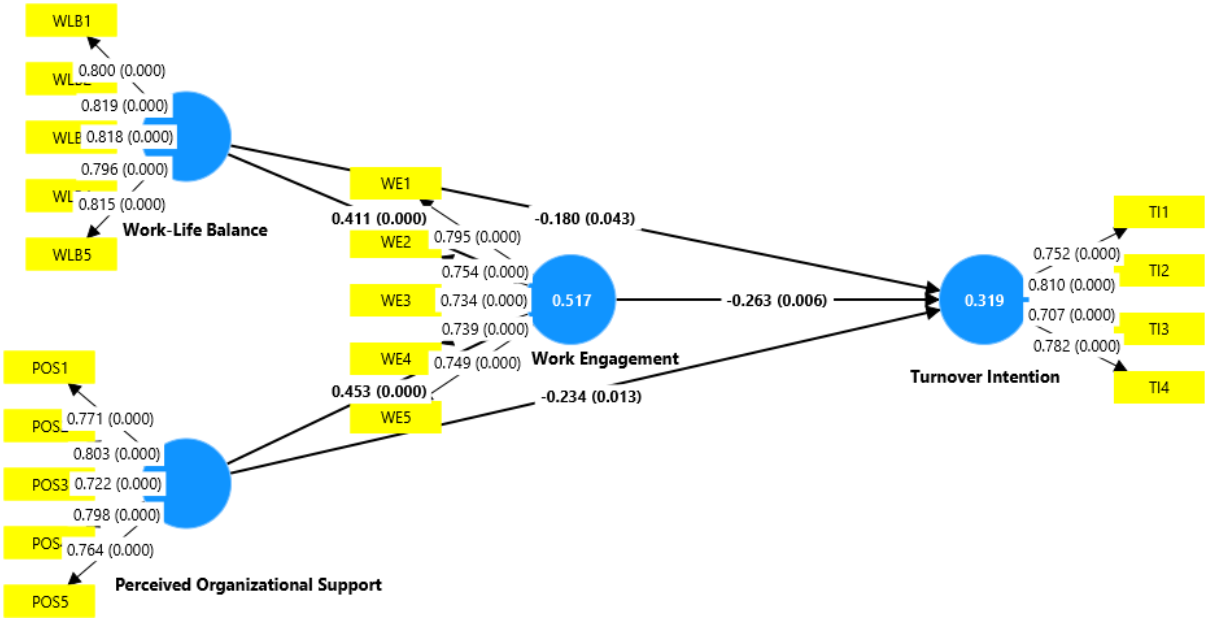


Figure 2. Hypothesis Test Results
Source : SmartPLS version 4.0

Table 7. Hypothesis Testing Results (Direct and Indirect Effects)

Hyp.	Path	β	SD	T-statistic	p-value	95% CI [2.5%; 97.5%]	Decision
H1	WLB → TI	−0.180	0.089	2.028	0.043	[−0.351; −0.006]	Supported
H2	POS → TI	−0.234	0.094	2.497	0.013	[−0.410; −0.046]	Supported
H3	WLB → WE	0.411	0.060	6.868	< 0.001	[0.292; 0.528]	Supported
H4	POS → WE	0.453	0.055	8.173	< 0.001	[0.344; 0.562]	Supported
H5	WE → TI	−0.263	0.096	2.749	0.006	[−0.452; −0.076]	Supported
H6	WLB → WE → TI	−0.108	0.041	2.649	0.008	[−0.193; −0.032]	Supported (partial mediation)
H7	POS → WE → TI	−0.119	0.048	2.503	0.012	[−0.222; −0.032]	Supported (partial mediation)

Note: WLB = work-life balance; POS = perceived organizational support; WE = work engagement; TI = turnover intention; β = path coefficient (original sample); SD = standard deviation; 95% CI = percentile bootstrap confidence interval based on 5,000 subsamples (two-tailed). Total effects: WLB → TI = −0.288 (t = 3.704, p < 0.001); POS → TI = −0.353 (t = 4.394, p < 0.001). Source: SmartPLS 4.0 output.

As shown in Table 7, all direct paths are significant (p < 0.05), and none of their 95% confidence intervals includes zero. The indirect effects of WLB (β = −0.108, t = 2.649, p = 0.008, 95% CI [−0.193; −0.032]) and POS (β = −0.119, t = 2.503, p = 0.012, 95% CI [−0.222; −0.032]) on turnover intention through work engagement are also significant. Because the direct effects of WLB and POS on turnover intention remain significant, work engagement partially mediates both relationships, with the indirect effects accounting for approximately 38% (−0.108 of −0.288) and 34% (−0.119 of −0.353) of the respective total effects.

Discussion

The first finding shows that work-life balance reduces turnover intention among Generation Z QHSE employees.

Consistent with the motivational process of the JD-R model, this indicates that WLB functions as a personal-domain resource that enables employees to recover from the irregular working hours, unannounced inspections, and audit pressures inherent in QHSE work; when this resource is available, employees have less reason to seek alternative employment. This result is consistent with (Barasa & Tunjungsari, 2024; Nur et al., 2025; Setiyo & Saputra, 2025) but differs from studies that reported non-significant effects (Fatmawati & Mansyur, 2024; Nurasyikin et al., 2025; Pratiwi et al., 2022). These differences may be explained by sample and model characteristics: those studies involved samples such as part-time working students and supermarket employees, whose work demands and attachment to the organization differ from those of permanent employees in a compliance-intensive unit, and in some cases examined WLB alongside stronger predictors such as workload and job stress. In addition, the relatively modest direct coefficient in this study suggests that part of the effect of WLB operates indirectly, as discussed below.

The second finding shows that perceived organizational support reduces turnover intention. Consistent with Social Exchange Theory, this finding reflects the norm of reciprocity: when QHSE employees, whose department is frequently treated as a cost center, perceive that the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being, they feel obliged to reciprocate through loyalty and a willingness to remain. The result supports the position of Herianto and Yanuar (2021) and A. Putri and Wicaksana (2026), who treated POS as an antecedent of turnover intention, although those studies examined its effect through mediators such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The significant direct effect observed in this study suggests that, in a department that receives limited strategic attention, visible organizational support carries a particularly strong signal for Generation Z employees.

The third and fourth findings show that both WLB and POS increase work engagement, with POS exerting a slightly stronger effect. This indicates that the two resources energize employees through different routes: WLB preserves the physical and psychological energy needed for vigor, whereas POS strengthens the sense of being valued that underlies dedication. The finding for WLB is consistent with Shofiyatunnisa (2025), who found that work-life balance enhances engagement among Generation Z employees, and with Barasa and Tunjungsari (2024). The stronger effect of POS suggests that in compliance-intensive units, where working schedules are largely dictated by operational and audit requirements, organizational support may be a more controllable lever for sustaining engagement than work-life balance alone.

The fifth finding shows that work engagement reduces turnover intention, confirming that employees who feel energized, dedicated, and absorbed in their work are less inclined to leave. This result is in line with (Barasa and Tunjungsari, 2024; Djuita & Dwarawati, 2024; Setiabudi & Wendra, 2025) and with Bas (2022), who showed that engagement is associated with lower turnover intention partly through reduced work stress. For Generation Z employees, who value meaningful and developmental work, engagement appears to function as a psychological anchor that offsets the attraction of alternative employment.

The most distinctive finding is that work engagement partially mediates the effects of both WLB and POS on turnover intention. Based on the path coefficients, the indirect effect accounts for approximately 38% of the total effect of WLB (−0.108 of −0.288) and 34% of the total effect of POS (−0.119 of −0.353). This finding is consistent with Barasa and Tunjungsari (2024), who found that engagement mediates the effect of WLB, and extends it by showing that the same motivational pathway also transmits the effect of an organizational-domain resource, namely POS. Whereas recent studies have explained turnover intention mainly through strain-based mediators such as job stress (Latumahina et al., 2026; Setiyo & Saputra, 2025) or attitudinal mediators such as organizational commitment (A. Putri & Wicaksana, 2026), this study shows that the motivational pathway proposed by the JD-R model also plays a substantial role. Partial mediation further offers an explanation for the inconsistent direct effects reported in earlier studies: because a considerable share of the influence of WLB and POS operates through engagement, their direct effects may appear weak or non-significant in settings where engagement is low or is not included in the model. This constitutes the main contribution of the study: retaining Generation Z employees in compliance-intensive units depends not only on providing balance and support, but also on ensuring that these resources are translated into sustained work engagement.

5. CONCLUSION

This study set out to explain how work-life balance and perceived organizational support reduce turnover intention among Generation Z employees in the QHSE Department of the aviation food service industry in Jakarta. With regard to RQ1, both WLB and POS directly reduce turnover intention. With regard to RQ2, both resources increase work engagement, with POS exerting a slightly stronger effect. With regard to RQ3, work engagement partially mediates the effects of both resources on turnover intention.

The main contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that a personal-domain resource and an organizational-domain resource reduce turnover intention through a common motivational pathway. This finding extends the motivational process of the JD-R model to the retention of Generation Z employees, complements recent studies that have focused on strain-based or commitment-based mediators, and offers an explanation for the inconsistent direct effects reported in earlier research: because a considerable share of the effects of WLB and POS operates through work engagement, their direct effects may appear weak or non-significant when engagement is not taken into account.

Based on the tested model, organizations seeking to retain Generation Z employees in compliance-intensive units are advised to (1) protect work-life balance through predictable scheduling, fair distribution of overtime, and adequate recovery time after audits and inspections; (2) make organizational support visible through recognition of QHSE contributions and supervisors' attention to employee well-being; and (3) monitor work engagement as an early indicator of turnover intention, since both resources reduce turnover intention largely by sustaining engagement. Beyond the variables tested in this study, organizations may also consider broader initiatives such as wellness programs, cross-generational mentoring, and structured career development; however, the effectiveness of these initiatives in reducing turnover intention was not examined in this study and should be evaluated in future research.

This study has several limitations. The cross-sectional design limits causal inference, the data were self-reported, and the sample was limited to Generation Z employees in a single QHSE department, which restricts the generalizability of the findings. Future studies are encouraged to use longitudinal or multi-source designs, extend the model to other departments, industries, and generations, examine contextual moderators such as organizational culture, job autonomy, and psychological safety, and test strain-based mediators such as burnout alongside work engagement.

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