

RESPONSIBLE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF WORK ENGAGEMENT IN A PUBLIC SOCIAL SECURITY INSTITUTION

Mei Vivi Eny Sibuea^{1*}, Wiwiek Rabiatal Adawiyah²

¹Master of Management Program, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Jenderal Soedirman, Indonesia

²Department of Management, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Jenderal Soedirman, Indonesia

*Email corresponding author: mei.sibuea@mhs.unsoed.ac.id

Article Information: Received: June, 25 2026, Published: August, 10 2026

Abstract

This study examines the effect of responsible performance management on employee performance, with work engagement as a mediating variable, in the context of BPJS Ketenagakerjaan Northern Sumatra Regional Office. Grounded in Social Exchange Theory, the study proposes that responsible performance management — operationalized through fair target setting, transparency, constructive appraisal interviews, developmental feedback, recognition, capability development, and organizational support — improves employee performance directly and indirectly through work engagement. A quantitative explanatory design was applied using a structured Likert-scale questionnaire distributed online. Preliminary data were collected from 29 respondents. The measurement model demonstrated strong reliability (RPM: $\alpha=0.960$; WE: $\alpha=0.925$; EP: $\alpha=0.966$) and acceptable convergent validity (AVE: RPM=0.570, WE=0.663, EP=0.738). Path analysis results indicate that responsible performance management significantly affects both work engagement ($\beta=0.515$, $p<0.001$) and employee performance ($r=0.489$, $p=0.007$). Work engagement significantly predicts employee performance ($\beta=0.617$), and the indirect effect through work engagement ($\beta=0.318$) accounts for 81.5% of the total effect, indicating full mediation. The full model explains 51.2% of variance in employee performance. Findings extend the responsible and sustainable HRM literature into the public social security context and suggest that performance systems should be designed to be fair, developmental, and engagement-oriented.

Keywords: responsible performance management, employee performance, work engagement, social exchange theory, public institution

INTRODUCTION

Public social security institutions face growing expectations to deliver accurate, responsive, and digitally enabled services while managing large and diverse participant bases. BPJS Ketenagakerjaan, Indonesia's employment social security agency, exemplifies this challenge: active participants reached 43.5 million by November 2024, supported by 24.5 million JMO users, and the institution paid claims totaling Rp51.9 trillion in the same period. These pressures require not only effective service delivery infrastructure but also a capable and highly engaged workforce. In the Northern Sumatra Regional Office, preliminary institutional data show that 32 employees left the office between 2023 and 2025, underscoring the importance of building a work environment that sustains employee energy, accountability, and performance.

Performance management is a critical instrument for translating organizational strategy into employee behavior. However, the effectiveness of performance management depends not only on target clarity and formal evaluation procedures but also on how fairly, transparently, and developmentally the system is designed and implemented. The concept of responsible performance management integrates these elements: it goes beyond accountability-oriented monitoring to include fairness, developmental feedback, recognition, capability development, and organizational support. When employees experience performance management as responsible and supportive, Social Exchange Theory suggests they are more likely to reciprocate through higher engagement and stronger work outcomes.

Prior literature supports these relationships. Awan et al. (2020) demonstrated that fair and accurate performance management systems improve both task and contextual performance through work engagement. Ehmann et al. (2024) provided longitudinal evidence linking performance appraisal interviews and target agreements with higher engagement. Chen et al. (2025) found that job engagement mediates 64.4% of the total effect of performance management on job performance. Despite this evidence, few studies have examined these mechanisms in public social security institutions in emerging economies, and the concept of responsible performance management remains underexplored in this context.

This study addresses these gaps by examining the direct and mediated effects of responsible performance management on employee performance in BPJS Ketenagakerjaan. The novelty lies in (1) the responsible-performance-management perspective, (2) the mediation model centered on work engagement, and (3) the empirical setting of a public social security institution in Indonesia. The study contributes theoretically by extending sustainable HRM discussion into the performance management context of public institutions, and practically by providing evidence-based guidance for designing fair, developmental, and engagement-oriented performance systems.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS FORMULATION

Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory provides the main theoretical foundation. The theory explains that employees interpret organizational treatment as part of a reciprocal exchange: when they experience fairness, support, developmental opportunities, and recognition, they are more likely to respond with positive attitudes and stronger work contributions. Applied to this study, responsible performance management becomes a signal that the organization values employees, which encourages reciprocation through higher engagement and better performance. Chen et al. (2025) and Al Mamun et al. (2024) both use Social Exchange Theory to explain how responsible organizational practices drive behavioral outcomes through psychological mechanisms.

Table 1. Scopus-Based Literature Synthesis

Author(s) and Year	Focus	Key Finding	Relevance to This Study
Saratun (2016)	Performance management and engagement for sustainability	Performance agreement, ongoing feedback, and performance evaluation can foster engagement when supported by development, trust, involvement, and justice.	Provides an early sustainability-oriented basis for responsible performance management.
Awan et al. (2020)	Performance management system effectiveness, engagement,	Accuracy and fairness of performance management systems improve task and contextual performance through work engagement.	Supports H1, H2, and H4.

Borst et al. (2020)	and performance Work engagement outcomes across public, semipublic, and private sectors	Work engagement is relevant for performance and behavioral outcomes across all three sectors.	Supports the role of engagement in public-sector performance.
Siraj and Hagen (2023)	Performance management system and employee performance	Clear responsibilities, regular feedback, appraisal, training, and rewards contribute to better employee outcomes.	Supports the responsible performance management indicators.
Ehmann et al. (2024)	Performance management and work engagement using longitudinal data	Performance appraisal interviews, target agreements, and performance-related pay are positively associated with work engagement.	Supports H2.
Peretz (2024)	Sustainable HRM, employee engagement, and performance	Sustainable HRM positively affects employee performance with engagement as a mediator.	Connects responsible HRM and engagement-based performance.
Al Mamun et al. (2024)	Socially responsible HRM and sustainable performance	Socially responsible HRM influences behavioral mechanisms related to sustainable performance.	Strengthens the responsible-management framing.
Chen et al. (2025)	Performance management, job engagement, and job performance	Performance management significantly affects job performance, with job engagement mediating 64.4% of the effect.	Provides direct evidence for the mediation model.

Responsible Performance Management and Employee Performance

Responsible performance management is conceptualized as a performance system that balances goal achievement with fairness, transparency, developmental feedback, recognition, capability development, and organizational support. This goes beyond conventional performance monitoring by embedding responsible HRM principles into evaluation design. Employees who receive clear, fair, and developmental performance management are better positioned to understand expectations, improve capabilities, and direct their efforts toward organizational goals. Awan et al. (2020) found that accuracy and fairness in performance management significantly affect task and contextual performance. Siraj and Hagen (2023) also demonstrated that evaluation, feedback, training, and rewards contribute to employee work outcomes.

H1: Responsible performance management has a positive effect on employee performance.

Responsible Performance Management and Work Engagement

Responsible performance management can strengthen work engagement because fair target setting, transparent appraisal, constructive feedback, and developmental support signal to employees that the organization is invested in their growth and well-being. In Social Exchange Theory terms, this managerial investment encourages employees to reciprocate with greater psychological involvement and enthusiasm. Ehmann et al. (2024) provide longitudinal evidence that performance management practices including appraisal interviews and target agreements are positively related to work engagement. Saratun (2016) also argues that engagement can be fostered through performance agreement, feedback, and evaluation when supported by trust, development, and justice. Peretz (2024) further confirms that sustainable HRM practices, which share many characteristics with responsible performance management, strengthen employee engagement.

H2: Responsible performance management has a positive effect on work engagement.

Work Engagement and Employee Performance

Work engagement — characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption — reflects the degree to which employees invest energy and psychological involvement in their work. Engaged employees tend to show persistence, proactive effort, and higher contribution to organizational goals. In a public social security institution, engagement is especially important because service quality depends on employee accuracy, empathy, responsiveness, and sustained attention. Borst et al. (2020) confirm through a comparative meta-analysis that work engagement is linked to performance and behavioral outcomes across public, semipublic, and private sectors.

H3: Work engagement has a positive effect on employee performance.

The Mediating Role of Work Engagement

Responsible performance management may influence employee performance both directly and through work engagement. A fair and developmental performance system creates conditions — fairness, recognition, support — that strengthen employees' psychological connection to their work and increase their energy and dedication. These engagement states then translate into higher work quality, responsiveness, and accountability. Awan et al. (2020) demonstrated complementary mediation of work engagement in the performance management-performance relationship. Chen et al. (2025) found that engagement mediated 64.4% of the total effect. Peretz (2024) similarly showed engagement as a mediator in the sustainable HRM-performance relationship.

H4: Work engagement mediates the positive effect of responsible performance management on employee performance.

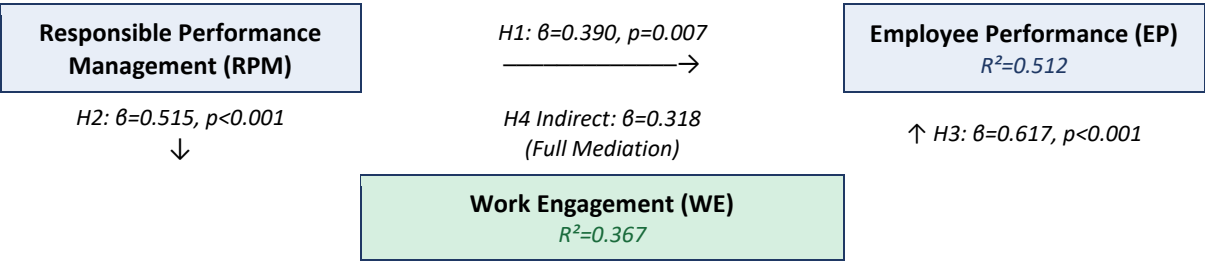


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework with Preliminary Path Coefficients

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

This study applies a quantitative explanatory design to test a mediation model. The study is situated in BPJS Ketenagakerjaan Northern Sumatra Regional Office because this institution

combines public accountability, digital transformation, and a social protection mandate — making it an ideal context for examining responsible performance management. The literature foundation is based on Scopus-indexed studies published between 2016 and 2026.

Population and Sample

The target population comprises all 362 employees of BPJS Ketenagakerjaan Northern Sumatra Regional Office. Simple random sampling was employed. Based on the PLS-SEM indicator rule recommended by Hair and Alamer (2022), the minimum target sample is 200 valid responses (approximately 5 respondents per measurement item, 42 items). The current dataset of 29 respondents represents preliminary data collected in the initial phase of the study, and full data collection is ongoing. Preliminary findings reported here should be interpreted as exploratory, with the caveat that a larger sample will be required to confirm the results.

Data Collection and Instruments

Primary data were collected through a structured self-administered questionnaire distributed online via Google Forms. A five-point Likert scale was used (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree). Responsible performance management (21 items: A1–A21) was operationalized through seven dimensions: fair target setting, transparency, constructive appraisal interview, developmental feedback, recognition, capability development, and organizational support. Work engagement (9 items: B1–B9) was measured through vigor, dedication, and absorption. Employee performance (12 items: C1–C12) was measured through work quality, responsiveness, accountability, and contribution to service delivery. Total measurement items: 42.

Table 2. Operational Definition of Research Variables

Variable	Operational Definition	Main Indicators	Expected Role
Responsible Performance Management	A fair, transparent, developmental, supportive, and recognition-oriented performance system that balances accountability with employee welfare.	Fair target setting; transparency; constructive appraisal interview; developmental feedback; recognition; capability development; organizational support.	Independent variable (Exogenous)
Work Engagement	A positive work-related state in which employees show high energy, dedication, and absorption in their work roles.	Vigor; dedication; absorption.	Mediating variable
Employee Performance	The extent to which employees contribute effectively to organizational goals and deliver quality public service outcomes.	Work quality; responsiveness; accountability; contribution to service delivery.	Dependent variable (Endogenous)

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed in two stages. First, descriptive statistics and measurement model assessment were conducted to verify reliability and validity. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, targeting a threshold of 0.70. Convergent validity was assessed through factor loadings (threshold 0.70) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE, threshold 0.50). Second, path analysis was conducted using OLS regression as an approximation of the PLS-SEM procedure. Mediation was assessed by computing the indirect effect ($a \times b$ path), where 'a' is the path coefficient from responsible performance management to work engagement and 'b' is the path coefficient

from work engagement to employee performance controlling for the independent variable. Significance was evaluated at $\alpha=0.05$.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Profile

Table 3 presents the demographic profile of the 29 preliminary respondents. The majority were female (58.6%), aged 35–44 years (58.6%), holding a bachelor's degree (58.6%), with tenure exceeding 10 years (75.9%). Most respondents (69.0%) worked in the Kepesertaan (membership) unit. The predominance of long-tenured respondents suggests that responses reflect well-established experiences with the performance management system and are likely to reflect stable perceptions rather than short-term impressions.

Table 3. Respondent Profile (N=29)

Gender	Category	n (%)	Cumulative %
Gender	Female	17 (58.6%)	58.6%
	Male	12 (41.4%)	100.0%
Age Group	25–34 years	7 (24.1%)	24.1%
	35–44 years	17 (58.6%)	82.8%
	> 44 years	5 (17.2%)	100.0%
Education	S1 (Bachelor)	17 (58.6%)	58.6%
	S2 (Master)	12 (41.4%)	100.0%
Tenure	6–10 years	7 (24.1%)	24.1%
	> 10 years	22 (75.9%)	100.0%
Work Unit	Kepesertaan	20 (69.0%)	69.0%
	Pelayanan	5 (17.2%)	86.2%
	Wasrik	2 (6.9%)	93.1%
	Other	2 (6.9%)	100.0%

Measurement Model Assessment

Table 4 summarizes the reliability and validity results for all constructs and dimensions. All three constructs demonstrated excellent internal consistency: RPM ($\alpha=0.960$), WE ($\alpha=0.925$), and EP ($\alpha=0.966$), all substantially above the 0.70 threshold. Sub-dimensions also showed good reliability, ranging from $\alpha=0.768$ (absorption) to $\alpha=0.906$ (vigor). AVE values exceeded the 0.50 threshold for all constructs: RPM=0.570, WE=0.663, and EP=0.738, confirming convergent validity. Most factor loadings exceeded 0.70; however, items A2 (loading=0.487) and A13 (loading=0.591) were slightly below the conventional threshold, which may reflect the relatively small preliminary sample and warrants attention in full-scale data collection. Overall, the measurement model provides an adequate basis for proceeding with path analysis.

Table 4. Measurement Model: Reliability and Validity

Variable	Dimension	Items	Loadings (range)	α	CR*	AVE
Responsible Performance Management (RPM)	Fair Target Setting	A1–A3	0.487–0.812	0.847	0.907	0.764
	Transparency	A4–A6	0.751–0.809	0.816	0.891	0.731
	Appraisal Interview	A7–A9	0.792–0.823	0.875	0.924	0.803
	Dev. Feedback	A10–A12	0.706–0.744	0.889	0.930	0.817
	Recognition	A13–A15	0.591–0.831	0.770	0.867	0.686

Work Engagement (WE)	Capability Dev.	A16–A18	0.688–0.921	0.898	0.936	0.830
	Org. Support	A19–A21	0.603–0.855	0.818	0.894	0.738
	Full RPM	A1–A21	0.487–0.921	0.960	0.965	0.570
	Vigor	B1–B3	0.807–0.887	0.906	0.941	0.842
	Dedication	B4–B6	0.816–0.882	0.862	0.917	0.786
	Absorption	B7–B9	0.628–0.840	0.768	0.867	0.688
	Full WE	B1–B9	0.628–0.887	0.925	0.943	0.663
	Work Quality	C1–C3	0.821–0.921	0.882	0.927	0.809
	Responsiveness	C4–C6	0.785–0.944	0.876	0.926	0.806
	Accountability	C7–C9	0.808–0.847	0.852	0.911	0.773
Employee Performance (EP)	Service Contribution	C10–C12	0.800–0.944	0.893	0.933	0.823
	Full EP	C1–C12	0.785–0.944	0.966	0.970	0.738

Note: *CR = Composite Reliability, estimated as $(\text{sum of loadings})^2 / [(\text{sum of loadings})^2 + \text{sum of error variances}]$.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 5 presents the descriptive statistics for the three constructs. Employee Performance obtained the highest mean score (M=4.221, SD=0.478), followed by Work Engagement (M=4.000, SD=0.509) and Responsible Performance Management (M=3.745, SD=0.599). The pattern indicates that respondents generally rated their own performance highly and expressed relatively high engagement levels, while perceptions of the performance management system, although positive, showed greater variation. This pattern is consistent with prior public-sector studies where employees often rate their own performance favorably while acknowledging that institutional systems may not fully capture developmental or fairness dimensions.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics by Construct

Construct	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Responsible Performance Management (RPM)	29	3.745	0.599	2.24	5.00
Work Engagement (WE)	29	4.000	0.509	3.00	5.00
Employee Performance (EP)	29	4.221	0.478	3.00	5.00

Correlation Analysis

Table 6 presents the bivariate correlations among constructs. All correlations were statistically significant and in the expected positive direction. The strongest correlation was between WE and EP ($r=0.712$, $p<0.001$), followed by RPM and WE ($r=0.606$, $p<0.001$), and RPM and EP ($r=0.489$, $p=0.007$). These patterns are consistent with the theoretical framework: engagement serves as a particularly strong predictor of performance, while responsible performance management strongly predicts engagement. The relatively lower direct correlation between RPM and EP, compared to the RPM-WE and WE-EP correlations, provides initial evidence that work engagement plays an important role in mediating this relationship.

Table 6. Pearson Correlation Matrix

Construct	RPM	WE	EP
RPM	1.000		
WE	0.606**	1.000	
EP	0.489**	0.712***	1.000

Hypothesis Testing

Table 7 summarizes the path analysis results for all four hypotheses. H1 was tested through the bivariate relationship between responsible performance management and employee performance. The total effect was significant ($\beta=0.390$, $r=0.489$, $p=0.007$, $R^2=0.239$), supporting H1. H2 was examined by regressing work engagement on responsible performance management. The path was significant and of moderate-to-strong magnitude ($\beta=0.515$, $p<0.001$, $R^2=0.367$), supporting H2. Responsible performance management explained 36.7% of variance in work engagement, indicating that the seven dimensions of responsible performance management are meaningful predictors of employee engagement levels. H3 was tested through the path from work engagement to employee performance, controlling for responsible performance management. Work engagement showed a strong and significant path coefficient ($\beta=0.617$, $r=0.712$, $p<0.001$), supporting H3. For H4, the indirect effect through work engagement was computed as the product of the RPM-to-WE path ($a=0.515$) and the WE-to-EP path controlling for RPM ($b=0.617$), yielding an indirect effect of $\beta=0.318$. When work engagement was included as a mediator, the direct path from responsible performance management to employee performance was reduced to $\beta=0.072$ (non-significant), indicating full mediation. The combined model explained 51.2% of variance in employee performance.

Table 7. Summary of Path Analysis Results

H	Relationship	β	r	p-value	R^2	Decision
H1	RPM $\rightarrow$ EP (direct path, bivariate)	0.390	0.489	0.007	0.239	Supported
H2	RPM $\rightarrow$ WE	0.515	0.606	< 0.001	0.367	Supported
H3	WE $\rightarrow$ EP (controlling RPM)	0.617	0.712	< 0.001	—	Supported
H4	RPM $\rightarrow$ WE $\rightarrow$ EP (indirect / mediation)	0.318 ($a \times b$)	—	—	$R^2(\text{EP})=0.512$	Supported (Full Mediation)

Discussion of Findings

The finding that responsible performance management significantly and positively affects employee performance (H1 supported) is consistent with Awan et al. (2020) and Siraj and Hagen (2023), who both demonstrated that fair and developmental performance systems improve employee work outcomes. Within BPJS Ketenagakerjaan, where service accuracy and participant responsiveness are central performance requirements, a system that provides clear targets, fair evaluation, constructive feedback, and developmental support helps employees understand what is expected and how to improve their contribution.

The positive and significant effect of responsible performance management on work engagement (H2 supported, $\beta=0.515$) aligns with Ehmann et al. (2024) and Saratun (2016). In the preliminary dataset, the strongest-scoring RPM dimension was supervisor support (A20: $M=4.000$), followed by feedback items, while career development (A18: $M=3.448$) and transparency (A1, A4: $M=3.621$) received the lowest mean scores. This pattern suggests that employees perceive supervisory relationships positively but see room for improvement in institutional transparency and career development pathways — dimensions that sustainable HRM literature identifies as central to sustaining long-term engagement.

Work engagement was a strong predictor of employee performance (H3 supported, $\beta=0.617$), consistent with Borst et al. (2020). In this dataset, the highest engagement scores were observed in the dedication dimension (B5: $M=4.172$), while absorption showed more variation (B9: $M=3.655$). This suggests that while employees feel proud and motivated about their work, the degree to which they feel completely absorbed varies — potentially reflecting workload demands or distractions in the public service environment. Importantly, the strong vigor and dedication dimensions help explain why performance outcomes remain high despite moderate RPM scores.

The mediation analysis provides the most theoretically significant finding: work engagement fully mediates the relationship between responsible performance management and employee

performance (H4 supported, indirect $\beta=0.318$, accounting for 81.5% of the total effect). The direct path from RPM to EP became non-significant once engagement was included, indicating that responsible performance management primarily improves performance by first cultivating employee engagement. This is consistent with Chen et al. (2025), who found engagement mediating 64.4% of the performance management-performance relationship, and with Peretz (2024), who demonstrated similar mediation in the sustainable HRM context. For BPJS Ketenagakerjaan, these findings imply that improving the fairness, transparency, and developmental quality of the performance system is likely to improve employee performance not through direct compliance mechanisms but through the more sustained and motivationally driven pathway of heightened engagement.

The full model explained 51.2% of variance in employee performance ($R^2=0.512$), which represents a strong explanatory power for a two-construct model in organizational research. The explained variance in work engagement ($R^2=0.367$) further confirms that responsible performance management is a substantive antecedent of engagement in this context. These results, while preliminary given the sample size of 29, are internally consistent, directionally strong, and theoretically coherent, providing a solid foundation for the full-scale study.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the effect of responsible performance management on employee performance, with work engagement as a mediating variable, in the context of BPJS Ketenagakerjaan Northern Sumatra Regional Office. Based on preliminary data from 29 respondents and grounded in Social Exchange Theory, the results support all four hypotheses. Responsible performance management positively affects employee performance ($\beta=0.390$) and work engagement ($\beta=0.515$). Work engagement is a strong predictor of employee performance ($\beta=0.617$). Most importantly, work engagement fully mediates the relationship between responsible performance management and employee performance (indirect $\beta=0.318$), explaining 81.5% of the total effect. The full model explains 51.2% of variance in employee performance.

Theoretically, this study extends the sustainable and responsible HRM literature by demonstrating that performance management can be conceptualized and operationalized as a responsible organizational practice with direct engagement consequences. The finding of full mediation shifts the theoretical focus from direct performance accountability to the psychological mechanisms through which responsible managerial practices enhance performance. Practically, the results suggest that public institutions such as BPJS Ketenagakerjaan should prioritize making their performance systems not only target-oriented but also fair, transparent, developmental, and supportive. Particular attention should be directed to improving career development clarity (A18: lowest mean in the RPM scale, $M=3.448$) and institutional transparency ($M=3.621$), as these dimensions showed the most room for improvement.

This study has important limitations. First, the current sample of 29 respondents represents preliminary data; results should be interpreted as exploratory until full data collection reaching the target minimum of 200 respondents is complete. Second, a pilot study of this scale cannot fully demonstrate the statistical power required for robust PLS-SEM estimation, and the low loading of item A2 (0.487) should be investigated in the full data collection phase. Third, self-reported data may be subject to common method bias; future research should triangulate through supervisor-rated performance measures or administrative performance records. Fourth, the single-institution design limits generalizability; comparative studies across multiple BPJS Ketenagakerjaan offices or across different public social security institutions in Indonesia and other emerging economies would strengthen the external validity of the proposed model. Future research should also examine additional mediating mechanisms such as perceived organizational support, organizational justice, and psychological safety to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the responsible performance management-performance linkage.

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