

# “Continuance of organizational commitment among flight attendants as an intervening variable to job performance”

<b>AUTHORS</b>	Muhamad Firdaus  Anis Eliyana  Andika Setia Pratama  Aila Cahyani Nurul Liyana Mohd Kamil 
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© Muhamad Firdaus, Anis Eliyana,  
Andika Setia Pratama, Aila Cahyani,  
Nurul Liyana Mohd Kamil, 2022

Muhamad Firdaus, M.Sc., Faculty  
of Engineering, Department of  
Informatics Engineering, University of  
17 Agustus 1945 Surabaya, Indonesia.

Anis Eliyana, Ph.D., Professor,  
Faculty of Economics and Business,  
Department of Management, Airlangga  
University, Indonesia. (Corresponding  
author)

Andika Setia Pratama, M.Sc. Student,  
Faculty of Economics and Business,  
Department of Management, Airlangga  
University, Indonesia.

Aila Cahyani, Bachelor Student,  
Faculty of Economics and Business,  
Department of Management, Airlangga  
University, Indonesia.

Nurul Liyana Mohd Kamil, Dr., Senior  
Lecturer, Faculty of Business and  
Economics, Department of Public  
Administration, University of Malaya,  
Malaysia.



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Muhamad Firdaus (Indonesia), Anis Eliyana (Indonesia), Andika Setia Pratama (Indonesia),  
Aila Cahyani (Indonesia), Nurul Liyana Mohd Kamil (Malaysia)

# CONTINUANCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AMONG FLIGHT ATTENDANTS AS AN INTERVENING VARIABLE TO JOB PERFORMANCE

## Abstract

The low-cost business model has thrived in the last decade, creating a more competitive atmosphere in some industries. The airline industry is the sector that has grown significantly with this business model. To maintain sustainability amidst the challenge, human resources can be an investment in the organization's material resources. Hence, this study aims to determine the effect of job satisfaction and continuance of organizational commitment moderated by the tenure of employment on job performance. This study surveyed 41 flight attendants of a low-cost airline in Indonesia. The respondents were selected through convenience sampling. The data were then analyzed using Partial Least Squares (PLS), which is part of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The analysis results show that job satisfaction and continuance of organizational commitment have a significant effect on flight attendants' performance. In contrast, the tenure of employment has a positive yet insignificant effect in moderating the relationship between job satisfaction and continuance of organizational commitment. The findings of this study can be a reference for airlines to manage the individual performance of flight attendants in the competitive aviation business world.

## Keywords

job satisfaction, continuance of organizational  
commitment, job performance, quality of job, effective  
institutions

## JEL Classification

J24, J28, L93

## INTRODUCTION

As a result of the 2008 economic downturn, which severely harmed the financial sector and reduced the population's purchasing power, low-cost business models flourished in the aviation industry, providing a service to a larger audience. Eventually, passengers and competitors embraced this model (Dobruszkes, 2006).

A flight attendant is an operational component that interacts directly with passengers; hence, a qualified and competent flight attendant is required. In addition, they must try to actualize themselves to discover and cultivate their personalities. To achieve this, flight attendants must have high job satisfaction and organizational commitment to achieve improved performance. This ensures that a flight attendant performs well and that the airline achieves its mission. According to Gibbs et al. (2017), flight attendants' performance includes service proficiency, balancing cabin service, and all safety-related activities.

Organizations are beginning to recognize that their employees are their most precious resource (Govaerts et al., 2011), and research in-

dicates that employee job satisfaction is crucial. In the contemporary era, companies must focus on employee engagement and pleasure (Valaei & Rezaei, 2016). When members of an organization see that they have been treated well, they will be satisfied and feel obligated to repay the organization's support. Furthermore, their job satisfaction and devotion to the organization will motivate them to work beyond their formal responsibilities (Claudia, 2018). Conversely, the influence of negative impressions on low levels of satisfaction will result in low levels of organizational commitment. In the end, positive job performance-enhancing behavior will decline under these conditions.

Companies must also significantly contribute to staff retention to achieve their professional goals. Employers must make an effort to meet employee demands because they are frequently met with loyalty, trust, morale, and work tenure-related contentment. A company's human capital can be measured by how long employees have been employed since it shows how employees acquire knowledge, abilities, and experiences on the job that increase their value to the business over time (Huff, 2019). Since particular vocations and individual backgrounds in organizations differ regarding diverse activities and psychological adjustments, this study will use the length of work as a moderating variable (Shirom et al., 2008). Therefore, employee identification with the organization's circumstances, job, length of service, and perceived advancement can be predicted. For airlines, it is critical to ascertain whether tenure influences the relationship between organizational commitment and job satisfaction among flight attendants.

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## 1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Job satisfaction is defined as individuals' real feelings and attitudes toward their work, as well as feelings and perceptions that may eventually affect how conforming a society is (Valaei & Rezaei, 2016). According to Yousef (2017), job satisfaction relates to individuals' attitudes toward circumstances, components, or employment features related to their place of employment and how they feel about their job. According to Jernigan et al. (2002), employees' sense of satisfaction with their job and a larger organizational context constitutes work satisfaction in a broad sense. In addition to being a positive emotional state that reflects how much people like their jobs, job satisfaction may also be seen as an indicator of how people feel about particular jobs (Yuspahrudin et al., 2020). Therefore, it may be claimed that job satisfaction is tied to both contentment with the job in and of itself as well as satisfaction with a larger organizational context of employment.

Organizational commitment is the level employees feel a sense of unity with the organization and support it because they intend to keep their membership (Syabarrudin et al., 2020). The three primary qualities of organizational commitment are affective commitment, continuation commitment, and normative commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1996). Organizational commitment is de-

defined as the propensity to engage in processes that are based on the costs or advantages an individual perceives as a result of a continued engagement or the losses associated with leaving a company (Valaei & Rezaei, 2016). According to M. Kaplan and A. Kaplan (2018), valuable employees may be determined by their commitment to the organization, as leaving a company may incur costs. Individuals with high perseverance and dedication can contribute to the organization because they see it to be in their best interests.

Performance is the completion of organizational objectives, functions, or duties, which indicates that each person, group, or work unit can attain the aim via effort (M. Kaplan & A. Kaplan, 2018). It is a measure of the quality and quantity of results over some time, determined by numerous circumstances and the responsibility provided to reach the objective (Muzakki et al., 2019). Performance is the execution of work according to established circumstances in fulfilling or finishing work, regarded as the success of employee efforts to carry out their work (M. Kaplan & A. Kaplan, 2018). Job performance refers to employee-controlled activities important to company goals (Sony & Mekoth, 2016). Qureshi et al. (2019) describe job performance as an individual-level variable or what one person in an organization does to maintain and attract the best performance. Flight attendant performance includes service proficiency, balancing

cabin service, and safety-related activities. Flight attendant performance relates to compliance with company goals.

Tenure of employment is defined as the length of time an employee has worked for an organization, providing insight into workers' choices to remain with their employer and the amount of time an employee is allowed to remain (Copeland, 2019). Tenure of employment is expressed as the last biographical characteristic in the frequently studied concept of individual character, which is also related to seniority in an organization. According to Steffens et al. (2014), tenure of employment is a measure of the value of human capital in an organization that shows employees will develop job knowledge, skills, abilities, and experiences over time that increase their value to the organization. In addition, tenure of employment is related to employees who feel they are in line with the values and culture of the organization and will choose and be selected to remain with a company (Huff, 2019). Finally, a long tenure of employment will likely make employees feel more at home in an organization; this is because they have adapted to the environment for a long time, so employees with a long tenure will feel comfortable with their job.

Job satisfaction is the attitude of workers toward their work, the rewards they get, and the social, organizational, and physical characteristics of the environment in which they perform their work activities (Yousef, 2017). Fu and Deshpande (2014) examined four aspects of job satisfaction: salary, nature of work, supervision, and co-workers. They found that these factors were positively related to organizational commitment. A person with a high level of job satisfaction will maintain a positive attitude and have a good feeling about his work environment. In contrast, a dissatisfied person seems to have negative feelings and attitudes toward his job, which may tend to have a lower organizational commitment to the job and the company (Valaei & Rezaei, 2016).

When discussing organizational commitment, all facts must be considered as target constructions in a holistic model that analyzes aspects of organizational commitment. Possible interactions of aspects of organizational commitment, namely the impact of affective commitment, continu-

ance commitment, and normative commitment, should be considered (Srivastava & Tang, 2015). This study will focus on the continuance of organizational commitment expressed by individuals with a high level of continuance of organizational commitment to give their energy on behalf of the organization because they consider it in their interest to do so (Valaei & Rezaei, 2016). When individuals feel satisfied with the work, they will show positive attitudes and behavior toward the organization. They will also show more significant commitment than dissatisfied workers, including continuance of organizational commitment (Claudia, 2018). Satisfied workers have a more remarkable continuance of organizational commitment, which can be seen from their sense of ownership of the organization. Satisfied workers show their commitment to the organization based on their needs (continuance commitment) and their desires (Claudia, 2018). This will refer to how an individual attached to an organization can also positively influence his continued involvement. This is in line with Amos et al. (2015), Valaei and Rezaei (2016), Yousef (2017), and Claudia (2018), who stated that job satisfaction has a significant effect on the continuance of organizational commitment.

Organizational commitment of employees is certainly one of the attitudes that can produce high performance. Employees who are committed to their organization will likely become better players than employees who are less committed. Motivated employees put more effort on behalf of the organization toward its success and strive to achieve its goals and mission, which leads to an increase in performance (Jafri & Lhamo, 2013). Organizational commitment can increase when an organization has evident roots for promotion, a sound reward system, and a clear career development plan (Al Zefeiti & Mohamad, 2017). Employees with exemplary continuance commitment will make their work more productive and lead to proper performance. With high productivity or quality, the organization's overall performance efficiency will also increase. In addition, employees with the right continuance commitment can determine the need to stay in the organization because employees can face costs associated with the organization if they leave it (M. Kaplan & A. Kaplan, 2018). Therefore, they will prefer to stay in the organization in the fulfillment or com-

pletion of an excellent job to influence the level of success of the efforts made by employees to carry out their work properly. Similarly, flight attendants need to improve their work performance to significantly impact service quality, organizational reputation, and success (Fu & Deshpande, 2014). This is in line with Al Zefeiti and Mohamad (2017) and M. Kaplan and A. Kaplan (2018), who stated that continuance of organizational commitment significantly affects flight attendants' performance.

According to Yang and Hwang (2014), knowing cause-and-effect relationships can help managers to direct limited resources to improve their causes, whether related to performance. Organizations with a more satisfied workforce will be more efficient and able to create organizational effectiveness. Human assets in organizations are the most valuable resources, so when employees are satisfied with their work, they can improve their organization's financial/non-financial performance (Wardle & Mayorga, 2016). Golembiewski (2018) stated that job satisfaction is one of the most common factors in human resource development practices that lead to greater organizational efficiency, such as increased performance. Job satisfaction is expressed as an affective (i.e., emotional) reaction to a job resulting from the comparison of the incumbent's actual results with the desired, expected, or appropriate, which also leads to behaviors that are relevant to appropriate organizational goals (Wardle & Mayorga, 2016). Likewise, what is done by flight attendants who are satisfied with their work will improve short- or long-term results and their relevance to input, output, productivity, efficiency, or service quality at work (Qureshi et al., 2019). Job satisfaction has been proven to increase performance, which has a beneficial impact on job satisfaction because increased job satisfaction can increase employee productivity based on quality (Karem et al., 2019). These ideas align with previous studies that state that job satisfaction significantly affects job performance (Torlak & Kuzey, 2019; Wardle & Mayorga, 2016; Qureshi et al., 2019; Dinc et al., 2018; Karem et al., 2019).

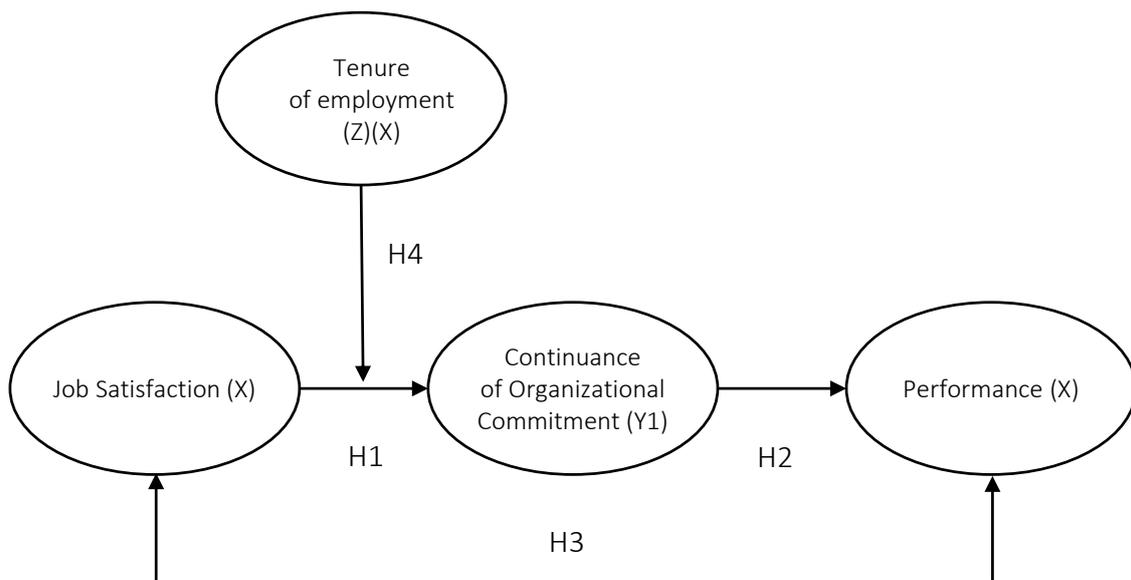
Each individual has a different perception of their work environment and situation based on tenure (Lee et al., 2019). For example, to become professional employees in work settings, junior employees must interact with others in their work environ-

ment and prioritize the development of knowledge and skills in their careers, which can be measured through the tenure of employment (Baek et al., 2019). On the other hand, senior employees may be less affected by working environment conditions because they can intuitively make clinical decisions based on their accumulated experience and because they have been in the organization longer. According to Allen and Meyer (1996), a tenure is a form of demographic characteristic that is thought to correlate with organizational commitment. In addition, the ability of employees with a positive effect on job satisfaction will precisely provide what employees want in the work environment, which is a critical determinant of the realization of organizational commitment (Moon et al., 2014).

Thus, this study hypothesizes that the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment may differ based on tenure (i.e., moderating effect of tenure on flight attendants). Therefore, an organization will need a strategy to increase job satisfaction and commitment, which is very important for the organization to achieve its goals effectively. The tenure role of flight attendants will moderate the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, including continuance of organizational commitment. This would suggest that different strategies based on tenure are needed to make flight attendants satisfied with their jobs and committed to their organizations. According to Jehanzeb and Mohanty (2018), employees with a higher level of organizational commitment are expected to have a longer tenure, continue their affiliation, and assist the organization in achieving its goals. Therefore, committed employees can help organizations realize their strategic goals and produce satisfactory results, and have felt job satisfaction due to openness to experience because of longer tenure (Park & Seo, 2020). This is in line with Baek et al. (2019), who showed that tenure moderated the relationship between authentic leadership in organizational units and nurse job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

## 1.1. Aims and hypotheses

This study aims to investigate the effects of job satisfaction and continuance of organizational commitment on flight attendants' performance.



**Figure 1.** Conceptual framework

In order to further the study, it also tested if job satisfaction affects performance when it is mediated by continuance of organizational commitment. Additionally, as it may be used to forecast employee retention, the moderator role of tenure employment is also tested.

The following hypotheses are conceptualized (Figure 1):

- H1: Job satisfaction significantly affects continuance of organizational commitment.*
- H2: Continuance of organizational commitment significantly affects flight attendants' performance.*
- H3: Job satisfaction significantly affects flight attendants' performance.*
- H4: Job satisfaction significantly affects continuance of organizational commitment moderated by tenure of employment.*

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1. Data collection

This study is based on a predetermined research model that uses data based on the sample source

to be obtained for analysis. The source of this analysis is primary and secondary data, which is an essential factor for consideration in determining the data collection method. This study discusses the novelty of the importance of online questionnaires with Google Forms that have been distributed using the time-lagged method. Thus, the questionnaire was distributed twice using two wave models. The population of this study was low-cost airline flight attendants encountered during the flight. The study uses purposive sampling with the criteria of working for more than two years. Based on these criteria, the total numbers of respondents who filled out the questionnaire were 41 flight attendants and seven supervisors. Furthermore, the procedures set as guidelines for the implementation of data collection are through interviews and questionnaires conducted.

### 2.2. Measurement

Referring to the formulation of the problem and the proposed hypotheses, this study uses a quantitative approach that also uses structured tools such as alternative answers to questions submitted to respondents. The independent variable used in this study is the job satisfaction of flight attendants at Indonesian low-cost airlines, the endogenous variable is the job performance of flight attendants, the intervening variable is

continuance of organizational commitment for flight attendants, and the moderator variable is tenure of flight attendants.

This study uses a 5-point Likert scale to measure the level of indicators used to show responses to the statements in the questionnaire (1 – strongly disagree, 5 – strongly agree). This study measures job satisfaction using items from Johnson et al. (2000). Continuance of organizational commitment uses items from Allen and Meyer (1996), and job performance adopted items from Gomes (2000).

### 3. RESULTS

After collecting data from the questionnaire, data processing uses analytical tools, i.e., Partial Least Square (PLS), considering that the number of samples is < 100. Respondents in this study were Indonesian low-cost airline flight attendants, as many as 41 people; Table 1 shows their characteristics, including gender, age, length of work, and marital status.

**Table 1.** Characteristics of respondents

Characteristics	Classification	Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	6	14.6
	Female	35	85.4
	Total	41	100%
Age	19-23 years old	20	48.8
	24-28 years old	21	51.2
	Total	41	100%
Marital status	Married	3	7.3
	Single	38	92.7
	Total	41	100%
Tenure	2 -3 years	23	56.1
	≥3 years	18	43.9
	Total	41	100%

Table 1 shows that most employees are female, 35 or 85%, with an age level of 24-28 years, totaling 21 or 51.2%, and unmarried marital status, 38 or 92.7%. In addition, most respondents are employed for 2-3 years, 23 or 56.1%.

**Table 2.** Validity and reliability test

Variables	Code	Factor loading		CR	
Job Satisfaction	KK1	0.785	–	0.859	
	KK2	0.762	–	–	
	KK3	0.744	–	–	
	KK4	0.579	–	–	
	KK5	0.767	–	–	
	KK6	0.531	–	–	
	KK7	0.585	–	–	
Continuance of Organizational Commitment	Y1.1	–	0.771	0.824	
	Y1.2	–	0.726	–	
	Y1.3	–	0.657	–	
	Y1.4	–	0.781	–	
Performance of Flight Attendants	Y2.1	–	–	0.557	0.807
	Y2.2	–	–	0.520	–
	Y2.3	–	–	0.528	–
	Y2.4	–	–	0.665	–
	Y2.5	–	–	0.665	–
	Y2.6	–	–	0.505	–
	Y2.7	–	–	0.674	–
	Y2.8	–	–	0.558	–

Table 2 shows that all indicators have met the research requirements. It is stated that all indicators in this study affect the latent variables because these results have met terms of validity and reliability.

**Table 3.** Answer frequency distribution

Item	Mean	Category
<b>Job Satisfaction</b>		
I am satisfied with my work as a flight attendant (KK1)	4.05	High
I am satisfied with the salary compared to the salary of a similar job in another company (KK2)	3.98	High
I am satisfied with the job promotion (KK3)	4.15	High
I am satisfied with my supervisors (KK4)	4.07	High
I am satisfied with the relationships with fellow flight attendants, pilots, and co-pilots (KK5)	4.07	High
I am satisfied with the policies applied in my company (KK6)	4.05	High
I am satisfied with the customer response to my work (KK7)	4.12	High
Average	4.07	<b>High</b>
<b>Continuance of Organizational Commitment</b>		
The company's ability to meet my needs is the reason for staying (Y1.1)	4.00	High
It will be a loss if I leave this company and move to another company (Y1.2)	4.17	High
I feel that my life will be disrupted if I leave this job (Y1.3)	4.10	High
I do not have many options to work in other companies if I decide to leave (Y1.4)	3.88	High
Average	4.04	<b>High</b>

**Table 3 (cont.).** Answer frequency distribution

Item	Mean	Category
<b>Performance of Flight Attendants</b>		
I serve passengers according to service standards (Y2.1)	4.16	High
I serve passengers in a friendly manner (Y2.2)	4.30	Very high
I have good knowledge about my work (Y2.3)	4.46	Very high
I have creative work methods to get the job done (Y2.4)	4.17	High
I can work with fellow flight attendants, pilots, and co-pilots (Y2.5)	4.13	High
I have full responsibility for completing the work (Y2.6)	4.07	High
As a flight attendant, I have the initiative to do my job without having to wait for orders from my superiors (Y2.7)	4.06	High
I am disciplined with the rules that apply to airlines (Y2.8)	4.27	Very high
Average	4.20	<b>High</b>

Table 3 describes respondents' answers to job satisfaction, continuance of organizational commitment, and flight attendants' performance in the high category because they have an average of  $> 4.20$ -5.00.

**Table 4.** Coefficients of determination

Coefficients of determination	R square
Job Satisfaction and Tenure on Continuance of Organizational Commitment	0.849
Job Satisfaction and Continuance of Organizational Commitment on Performance	0.656

Table 4 shows that the effect magnitude of job satisfaction and tenure on continuance organizational commitment is 0.849 or 84.9%. This means that the level of continuance of organizational commitment can be explained by job satisfaction and tenure, while the remaining 15.1% by other variables were not examined. While the magnitude of the influence of continuance of job satisfaction and organizational commitment on performance is 0.656 or 65.6%. This means that high and low performance can be explained by continuance of organizational commitment, while the remaining 34.4% by other variables were not examined.

**Table 5.** Estimated coefficient values between the variables

Relationship between variables	Original sample estimate	T Count	T Table	Information
Job Satisfaction $\rightarrow$ Continuance of Organizational Commitment	0.488	2.127	$> 1.96$	Significant
Continuance of Organizational Commitment $\rightarrow$ Performance	0.400	4.388	$> 1.96$	Significant
Job Satisfaction $\rightarrow$ Performance	0.429	4.966	$> 1.96$	Significant
Moderation effect of Tenure on Job Satisfaction $\rightarrow$ Continuance of Organizational Commitment	0.840	1.615	$< 1.96$	Not significant

Based on Table 5, the original sample shows the direction of the relationship between variables, such as positive or negative. In comparison, the T-count value shows that the relationship between the tested variables is declared to have a significant effect (T-Table =  $> 1.96$ ) and vice versa.

## 4. DISCUSSION

The results show a significant positive effect of job satisfaction on the continuance of organizational commitment with a t value of 2.127  $>$  t table 1.96. Therefore, the higher the job satisfaction of flight attendants at Indonesian low-cost airlines, the higher they will show an increase in continuance of organizational commitment. Therefore, the first hypothesis (*H1*) is accepted, supporting Amos et al. (2015), Valaei and Rezaei (2016), Yousef (2017), and Claudia (2018). Thus, job satisfaction has a significant effect on the continuance of organizational commitment. The results further indicate that flight attendants with high job satisfaction will maintain a positive attitude and have a good feeling about their work environment to have a higher organizational commitment to their job and company. If flight attendants are satisfied with their job, working relationships with other flight attendants, pilots, and co-pilots, the salary received, promotional opportunities, airline passengers, supervision, and policies applied by Indonesian low-cost airlines, then they will form continuance of organizational commitment. Flight attendants will not feel like leaving a company because their satisfaction is high. In other words, flight attendants do not want to move to another airline because all the job expectations are fulfilled.

In addition, it was found that continuance of organizational commitment significantly influences the performance of flight attendants at Indonesian

low-cost airlines. There is a significant positive effect of the continuance of organizational commitment on flight attendants' performance with a  $t$  value of  $4.388 > t$  table 1.96. Thus, the higher the continuance of organizational commitment of flight attendants, the higher they will show an increase in performance toward their job. Thus, the second hypothesis ( $H2$ ) is accepted, supporting Al Zefeiti and Mohamad (2017) and M. Kaplan and A. Kaplan (2018). Continuance of organizational commitment has a significant effect on flight attendants' performance. The results indicate that flight attendants at Indonesian low-cost airlines with a high level of continuance commitment will make their work more productive and achieve good performance. The organization's overall performance efficiency will also increase with high productivity or quality. In addition, flight attendants increasingly have no desire to leave Indonesian low-cost airlines and are strongly committed to staying at their jobs. This result may be because they have no alternative job other than flight attendants. Therefore, they feel obligated to stay in the job and keep it.

This study found that job satisfaction significantly influences the performance of flight attendants at Indonesian low-cost airlines. There is a significant positive effect of job satisfaction on performance with a  $t$  value of  $4.966 > t$  table 1.96. Thus, the higher the job satisfaction of flight attendants, the higher their performance. Thus, the third hypothesis ( $H3$ ) is accepted, supporting Torlak and Kuzey (2019), Wardle and Mayorga (2016), Qureshi et al. (2019), Dinc et al. (2018), and Karem et al. (2019). The results indicate that flight attendants at Indonesian low-cost airlines have positive affective (i.e., emotional) reactions to their work with desired, expected, and appropriate effects, which also lead to behaviors relevant to appropriate organizational goals. Thus, it will also trigger an increase in their performance. When flight attendants' expectations are met, they will also feel compelled to influence the quality of their work, which

will directly affect their performance. Indonesian low-cost airlines will always be required to provide work safety guarantees considering the high risk of work borne by flight attendants, so they feel satisfied with this.

The findings concluded that there is an insignificant positive effect of job satisfaction moderated by tenure on the continuance of organizational commitment with a  $t$  value of  $1.615 < t$  table 1.96. Thus, tenure has an insignificant effect on strengthening the relationship between job satisfaction and the continuance of organizational commitment. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis ( $H4$ ) is rejected. This is different from Baek et al. (2019), who showed that tenure moderated the relationship between authentic leadership in managerial units, nurse job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. However, this study showed that tenure did not significantly reduce the impact of job satisfaction on the continuance of organizational commitment. Tenure does not always increase the effect of job satisfaction on performance, because, in this study, Indonesian low-cost airlines currently face many customer demands, especially flight schedule issues. In addition, more than the working period of flight attendants and even longer experience is needed to make them survive in their organization due to the issue of salary and staff reductions.

Nevertheless, the results indicate that when job satisfaction is high, continuance of organizational commitment is also high, and the effect on the service life of flight attendants is not significant. Furthermore, the flight attendant's perception of job satisfaction and continuance of organizational commitment was found to have a positive relationship. This is because every year, Indonesian low-cost airlines provide different company conditions. Therefore, what feels good this year (such as job satisfaction and continuance of organizational commitment), does not necessarily happen next year.

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## CONCLUSION

This study aims to analyze the effect of job satisfaction and continuance of organizational commitment on flight attendants' performance with the moderating effect of tenure of employment. The results found that job satisfaction significantly affects continuance of organizational commitment and job per-

formance. Continuance of organizational commitment significantly affects job performance, and job satisfaction has an insignificant effect on continuance of organizational commitment moderated by the tenure of employment.

These findings add to empirical evidence in the literature regarding the relationship between variables in the context of the aviation sector. The study underlines that employees who are psychologically attached to a company will tend to be productive. Considering that employee performance affects the competitive aspect of a company as a whole, these findings can be used as a basis for consideration by managerial airlines to build job satisfaction and organizational commitment among flight attendants. What is interesting from the analysis results is that tenure of employment does not have a moderating effect on job performance, which means that the length of time employees work in a company does not guarantee that they will remain committed to their company.

## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization: Muhamad Firdaus, Aila Cahyani.

Data curation: Andika Setia Pratama.

Formal analysis: Muhamad Firdaus, Aila Cahyani.

Funding acquisition: Nurul Liyana Mohd Kamil.

Investigation: Andika Setia Pratama.

Methodology: Anis Eliyana, Aila Cahyani.

Project administration: Muhamad Firdaus.

Resources: Anis Eliyana, Nurul Liyana Mohd Kamil.

Software: Andika Setia Pratama.

Supervision: Anis Eliyana, Nurul Liyana Mohd Kamil.

Visualization: Andika Setia Pratama.

Writing – original draft: Muhamad Firdaus, Aila Cahyani.

Writing – review & editing: Muhamad Firdaus, Anis Eliyana.

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