

THE ANTECEDENT OF CAREER SATISFACTION OF FLIGHT ATTENDANTS

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to analyse the effect of work-life balance, stress, and career satisfaction variables on the flight attendant profession in Jakarta. This study examines the effect of work-life balance variables on career satisfaction with work stress mediating variables in the flight attendant profession. The object of this research is 70 flight attendants who work for several airlines. Data collection is done through filling out a research questionnaire in Google forms, where the questionnaire link is distributed through the WhatsApp application. Data management is done by using SPSS 25 software and Macro Hayes PROCESS v3 to test the simple mediation hypothesis and the path analysis method. The results of the study indicate there is a significant negative effect of work-life balance on stress and stress variable has a significant negative effect on career satisfaction. The work-life balance variable does not significantly influence career satisfaction. The results in this study also prove that stress variable can mediate the effect of work-life balance on career satisfaction.

Keywords: *career satisfaction, stress, work-life balance*

1. INTRODUCTION

A flight attendant, according to the 2015 Indonesian Great Dictionary (KBBI), is an employee working for a public transportation company, especially air transportation, who serves passengers. The main duty of flight attendants is to maintain the safety of their passengers. They serve the needs and comfort of their passengers while on the plane (on board). Damos, Boyett, and Gibbs (2015) state that the duties of in-flight cabin crew can be grouped into three main categories: safety, security, and passenger services.

Safety is the state of being secured and in a safe condition physically, socially, spiritually, financially, emotionally, at work, psychologically, or educationally in order to avoid threats. Meanwhile, security is a state of being free from dangers. This term can be used with all forms of accidents, etc. Passenger service is a facility provided to meet the needs of passengers to be safe and comfortable during the trip.

Though many risks arise, the profession is mostly coveted by females. We can still find some males doing this

profession as their job, in fact females always dominate this sort of profession. The duty of flight attendants is always flying and far from their families so that airlines prefer unmarried women. Ermawati, in her work *'Double Career Women (A Conflict of Double Career Women Viewed from the Perspective of Islam'* (2016), explains that when a woman decides to choose to have a job or a career, especially a married woman, she will have a dual role that can trigger new, more complex and complicated problems that make the duties of the career woman more complicated. The profession of a flight attendant is not easy. Problems can arise, especially from the flight attendants' closest surrounding environment, for example from their own families. The flight attendants' families still want them to work but their duties can become an obstacle because they have very limited time to gather with their families or relatives. Their working hours are not the same with the usual working hours. This is a critical period in which flight attendants must be consistent with their work, which is always away from their families or partners (Ayu, Renanita, and Setiawan, 2017).

The working conditions of flight attendants usually create the phenomena of stress and the imbalance between their personal lives and the working condition. Rabenu, Tziner and Sharoni (2017) explain that stress occurs when employees perceive their work situation as a demand that threatens to exceed their abilities and resources in achieving their goals and objectives. In another situation, the employees think that the demands coming from their work situation is very

valuable so that it is impossible to achieve. Then, they judge the situation as something that makes them stressful. In doing the job, flight attendants often miss opportunities to gather with their families. However, they must still be able to manage their lives and jobs or work so that they are balanced. Such balance must be managed well in order to minimize the stress arising at work in order to achieve the desired career. Clarke et. al., (2004), states that work-life balance is generally associated with a balance between the amount of time and efforts a person dedicates to work and personal activities in order to maintain an overall sense of a harmony in life.

In doing the job, flight attendants often experience moments when they have personal problems as well as they have to serve many people at the same time. At that time, they must be able to put aside their personal problems and be professional in doing the job of serving passengers sincerely and create good impressions. They must be able to work with many people, especially their colleagues and, at the same time, they are required to be professional in their work. They have to be able to handle passengers wholeheartedly without giving a bad impression in the eyes of passengers. Every time they handle problems related to their jobs, they must be able to serve their passengers with a big smile and to respond problems that occur to passengers based on company standards, and in these circumstances they seek for the psychological supports and moral care from their managers and leaders (Ling et al., 2017). The heavy burden of flight attendants who must always be ready to face whatever situation at work can create stressful

conditions. The career as flight attendants is still interesting although they are high-risky and exhausting. In such situation, can female flight attendants or stewardess feel the career satisfaction which is influenced by work stress as well as low work-life balance? Based on the discussion above, the authors are eager to examine the correlation of career satisfaction of stewardess or female flight attendants which is influenced by work-life balance and work stress.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Work-Life Balance

Smith et al., (2016) state that work-life balance refers to the way in which people distribute or allocate time they have between their work and the other activities, such as family activities, personal activities, and community activities. Meanwhile, Saikia (2011) states that work-life balance is how far someone gets involved and satisfied with his or her work and his or her personal roles. Another definition, mentioned by Greenhaus, Collins, and Shaw (2003), states that work-life balance is the extent to which the individual has a balance of involvement and satisfaction in his or her roles in work and life. A proper and good balance between work and life makes a person be able to avoid stress. Moreover, the person will feel happy because his or her work and his or her life are in a harmonious condition. Work-life balance is a situation where employees feel that they are able to balance their work and their commitments outside of work (Moore, 2007). Work-life balance is about creating and maintaining a supportive and healthy work environment, which

will allow employees to have a balance between their work and their personal responsibility and thereby can strengthen their loyalty and productivity (Anila and Krishnaveni, 2016).

2.2 Stress

Stress is a pressure that affects either physical or psychological conditions of a person. Such pressure is a condition that can come from within or from outside the person (Cahyono, 2014). Stress can also be a person's reaction to his or her environmental forces that affect the person's performance. Stress related to work can be very disabling because of the possible threats to the function of the person's family as well as the person's performance. Stress, indeed is also an unpleasant psychological process that occurs as a response to environmental pressures and heavy workload pressures and deadlines as positive challenges that can increase the quality of their work and the satisfaction they get from their work (Robbins and Judge, 2018). A pressure can have or create a positive or negative impact depending on a person perceiving the pressure as motivating or stressful.

Workplace stress has a negative impact not only on the physical condition but also on the mental well-being of individual workers (Foy et. al., 2019). Carsten (2007) in Nur (2013) also states that stress has two dimensions, namely stress reaction, which is measuring the stress level of an individual in the workplace due to the worry, tension, and joy that a person feels in the workplace when carrying out office tasks. Perceived environmental stressors are

environmental demands. An employee will feel emotional exhaustion due to the excessive organizational demands as the organizational stressor. The employee's performance or work result is usually not optimal or satisfying.

2.3 Career Satisfaction

Career is an extension of someone's work experience from time to time. Hall (2002) in Gu et. al., (2010) states that career has traditionally been considered limited to professionals or people whose careers develop through organizational hierarchies. Career satisfaction reflects the amount a person feels about his or her job over a fairly long period of time (Lounsbury et. al., 2008). Personality tends to play an important role in career satisfaction (Seibert et al., 1999). According to Jawahar and Liu (2016), employees who are satisfied with their careers see themselves as successful people in making good progress towards achieving their career goals.

So far, career satisfaction refers to the evaluation of the accumulated experience in a career (Abele et. al., 2011). Erdogan et. al., (2012) suggest that the state of being happy at work depends on the satisfaction with the environment, and that leadership, career development, job characteristics, and person-environment compatibility contribute to an understanding on happiness or well-being in the workplace. Nurendra and Saraswati (2016) conducted a study which reveals that the correlation of work-life balance with work stress is negative. The findings of another research conducted by Satriansyah (2019) reveal that work-life balance has a significant and

negative effect on work stress. Another research, conducted by Nisar and Rasheed (2019) states that occupational stress is negatively related to employee career satisfaction. Meanwhile, a research conducted by Purba and Nilawati (2015) reveals that work-life balance has no significant effect on career satisfaction and work-life balance cannot increase career satisfaction. Finally, Andini and Surjanti (2017), based on the results of their research, prove that work-life balance has a significant and positive effect on career satisfaction.

3. METHOD

The population of the study is stewardess living in Jakarta Metropolitan Province. This study does not limit the working experience and of the flight attendants. The researchers of the study decide to have 70 flight attendants as the respondents because according to Roscoe (1975), the ideal number of samples is more than 30 respondents and less than 500 respondents.

The authors conducted the research by distributing the research questionnaires. The questionnaire contains questions related to the variables and research items studied by the authors. The questionnaire is compiled in google forms to then be submitted to respondents (research objects) through google forms link via e-mail and WhatsApp application. The sampling technique is carried out by convenience sampling, that is, sampling with possible conditions. The perception questions (items) in the questionnaire are in the form of statements, where the respondents have

five alternative answers that follow the Likert scale. They are strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree.

The variables in the study are work-life balance, stress and career satisfaction. They are measured using the Likert scale which is distributed in the questionnaire using the google form. In the work-life balance indicator, the items used are adapted from Hayman, (2005). Meanwhile, the item indicator for the perceived stress scale is adapted from Cohen et. al., (1983). The reverse questionnaire is not used but only for control. The following indicators are used to measure stress. Greenhaus et. al., (1990) defines career

satisfaction as the satisfaction that the individuals get from the intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of their career. The measurement for the Career Satisfaction variable in this study refers to the questionnaire from taken from Greenhaus et. al., (1990).

The hypothesis testing is carried out by path analysis using Macro Hayes software. The testing aims at proving that the mediating variable is significant or insignificant by looking at the BootLLCI and BootULCI values. If the values of BootLLCI and BootULCI do not exceed 0, then the mediation variable significantly mediates the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable.

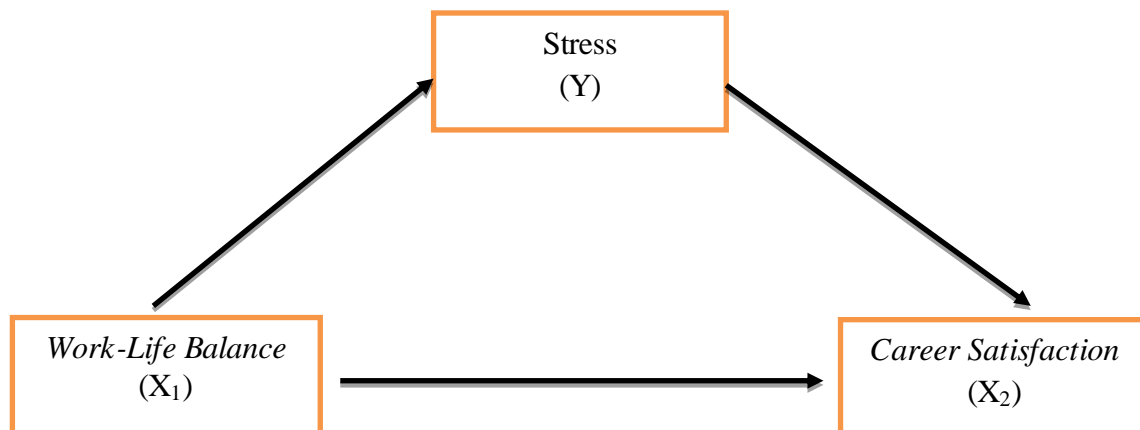


Figure 1: Research Model

Table 1: Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Statements
H1	Work-life Balance has a significant influence on Stress.
H2	Stress has a significant influence on Career Satisfaction.
H3	Work-life Balance has s significant influence on Career Satisfaction
H4	Work-life Balance has a significant influence on Career Satisfaction mediated by Stress

4. RESULTS

4.1 Reliability Test and Validity Test

The authors employ the Cronbach's alpha as the technique to test the reliability. The scale in a reliable measurement must have a Cronbach Alpha value as at least 0.70 (Sugiyono, 2009). The questionnaire items are said to be valid if the questions on the questionnaire are able to reveal something to be measured. The indicators can be said to be valid if the $p\text{-value} < \alpha 0.05$ (Uyanto, 2006). In order to test the validity of each item on variable data, the authors employs the Pearson Correlation Test to examine whether each item is valid or not by comparing the r-count (Corrected Item-Total Correlation) with the r-table. The value on the r-

table is obtained from the distribution table with $\alpha = 0.05$ with the degree of freedom as 70, so that the r-table is 0.235. The statements are said to be valid if the value of their Corrected Item-Total Correlation > 0.235 .

Based on the results of the validity and reliability tests, each variable is stated valid and reliable, where all the coefficient of the cronbach alpha is 0.853 for the work-life balance variable; 0.949 for the stress variable and 0.957 for the career satisfaction variable. Meanwhile, the validity value of all items has a corrected item total correlation value above 0.5. This means that all items in the variable are stated valid and reliable.

Table 2: The Results of the Average Score of Each Variable

Variables	OMS Values	Remarks
Work-life Balance	4,11	High
Stress	2,06	Low
Career Satisfaction	3,85	High

Source: SPSS Output Results

Table 3: Work-life Balance t-test against Stress

Outcome : Stress						
WL	coefficient	SE	T	P	LLCI	ULCI
B	-0,4642	0,1760	-2,6369	0,0104	-0,8154	-0,1129

Source: SPSS Output Results

In the p-value column, it is seen that the resulting output of stress has a significance value of 0.0104. The value is

below 0.05, meaning that work-life balance has a significant and negative effect on stress.

Table 4: Stress t-test Mediating the Effect of Stress on Career Satisfaction

Outcome: Career Satisfaction
Model

	Coeff	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
WLB	0,0960	0,1573	0,6104	0,5437	-0,2180	0,4100
S	-0,3230	0,1032	-3,1297	0,0026	-0,5291	-0,1170

Source: SPSS Output Results

In the p-value column, it can be seen that the output produced by the work-life balance variable has a significance value of 0.5437, meaning that it is bigger than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that work-life balance variable has no significant effect on career satisfaction variable. Meanwhile, based on the results

of the calculation written in Table 4, it is found that the output produced by stress variable has a significance value of 0.0026. The value is smaller than 0.05 and the coefficient value is -0.3230. Thus, it can be concluded that stress variable has a significant and negative effect on career satisfaction variable.

Table 5: The Indirect Effect of Work-life Balance on Career Satisfaction

Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI
0,1499	0,0816	0,0167	0,3350

Source: SPSS Output Results

In Table 5 above, it can be seen that there is an indirect effect of work-life balance variable on career satisfaction variable through the stress mediating variable. Based on the results of the above calculations, it can also be seen that the indirect effect of work-life balance variable on stress-mediated career satisfaction variable with a 95% CI level. The LLCI value is 0.0167 and the value of ULCI is 0.3350, where the CI number value does not go through 0 between them. These results indicate that stress variable can significantly mediate the effect of work-life balance on career satisfaction. This proves that there is a perfect mediation effect of stress variable because the direct effect of work-life balance on career satisfaction is known not significant.

Then, in Figure 2 below, it can be seen that the coefficient of direct effect of work-life balance variable on career satisfaction variable is not significant with a direct effect coefficient of 0.0960. The results, based on these findings, can explain that the influence of work-life balance variable on career satisfaction is not significant. In other words, work-life balance variable can influence career satisfaction variable if stress variable decreases, where stress variable is a perfect mediating variable. It can be concluded that the profession of flight attendants does not have a direct influence from work-life balance variable on career satisfaction variable, but there is a mediating effect from stress in a negative direction.

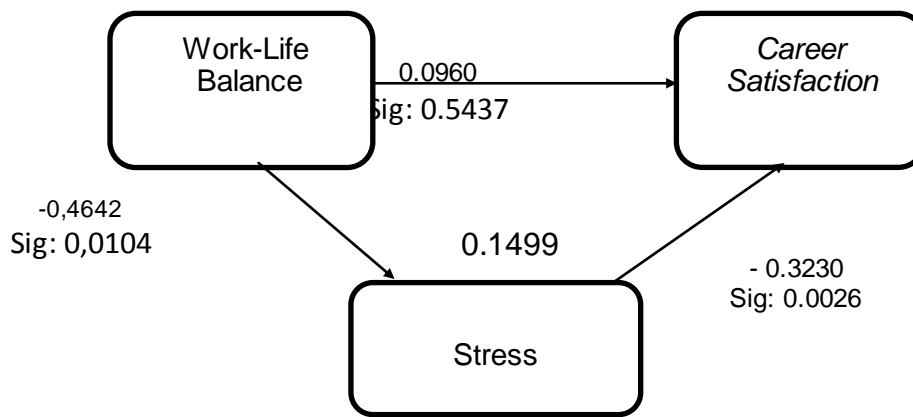


Figure 2: Path Analysis (Source: SPSS Output Results)

Below, in Table 6, we can see the results of the test of the four hypothesis of the study.

Table 6: Research Hypothesis Testing Results

H	Hypothesis Statement	Sig.	Conclusion	Hypothesis Test
H1	Work-life balance variable has a significant influences on Stress variable	0.0104	Having a significant and negative influence	H1 is accepted
H2	Stress variable has a significant influence on career satisfaction variable	0.0026	Having a significant and negative influence	H2 is accepted
H3	Work-life balance variable has a significant influence on Career Satisfaction variable	0.5437	Having a positive and not significant influence	H3 is rejected
H4	Work-life balance variable has a significant influence on career satisfaction variable, mediated by stress variable		LL (0,0167) and UL (0,3350)	H4 is accepted

Source: SPSS Output Results

5. DISCUSSION

In the first hypothesis, it can be seen that the work-life balance variable has a significant and negative effect on the stress variable. The findings of the first hypothesis test are supported by a previous research conducted by Nurendra and Saraswati (2016) where work-life balance has a negative effect on stress, meaning that if the work-life balance increases, then work stress decreases and if the work-life balance decreases, then it will increase stress.

Based on the findings in hypothesis 1 which is significant and negative, it can be explained that in the profession of flight attendants when the allocation of their time for working and other life activities is effective and supported by their environment, then stress will decrease.

In the second hypothesis, based on the calculations, it is found that stress variable has a significant and negative effect on career satisfaction variable. The results of this hypothesis test are

equivalent to a previous research conducted by Nisar and Rasheed (2019), stating that occupational stress is negatively related to employees' career satisfaction. Another research conducted by Kang et. al., (2015) reveals that job stress is high and career satisfaction is low. Based on the findings of hypothesis 2 which stating that stress variable has a significant and negative effect on career satisfaction variable, it can be explained that flight attendants who experience high stress will result in low career satisfaction because the pressure does not make their careers satisfied and, in the other words, low stress will make their career satisfaction high.

The third hypothesis states that work-life balance variable has no significant effect on career satisfaction variable. The results of this hypothesis test are in accordance with a previous research conducted by Purba and Nilawati (2015), stating that work-life balance has no significant effect on career satisfaction. Work-life balance in the flight attendant profession cannot increase their career satisfaction because flight attendants are the career that cannot possibly work in a flexible or routine working hours. Flights attendants have anticipated the problems and prepared themselves with the problems. They have already known that they will have troubles in balancing time for working and families. Thus, work-life balance is not a variable that can influence the career satisfaction.

Finally, the findings in the fourth hypothesis reveal that work-life balance variable has an effect on career satisfaction variable which is mediated by stress variable. It is found out that the results of the test of simple mediation

and the output macro Hayes show a significant and indirect effect of work-life balance variable on career satisfaction variable. It can be said that in doing the profession of flight attendants, stress is a variable that really determine whether they are satisfied or not in doing the job. If the flight attendants are stressful while they are doing the job, then they cannot enjoy the career as they dream about. Airlines should strive to help them reduce the stress so that the work-life balance can improve the career satisfaction. Stress can be reduced by providing leaves and leave incentives for flight attendants so they can enjoy their free time when they are not flying. Another thing that can be done is that because of the tight working hours and job demands, flight attendants who have done their duty well are given appreciation for their achievements, not just the salary that the company regularly gives. Airlines should also provide them opportunities for free time after taking off so that they are not bored with their routine work, such as shopping time in the regions or countries they visit, organizing fitness programs for flight attendants such as yoga, sports because exercising can minimize the stress, and conducting communication and consultations for flight attendants.

Based on the findings of the research, it is found out that the work-life balance is high because most of the respondents are not married or still single. The flight attendants are already accustomed to high-risky job and they have also understood that their work will make them often leave their families. Such conditions have forced them to be better prepared in order to anticipate it. This is also supported by the low stress

score. Flight attendance is a profession that is usually driven by passion and not everyone is suitable to be a flight attendant, even though they might be. Stress at work may not be so meaningful because they like the job as their ideals. The next research can be very interesting if it includes the element of passion in the flight attendant profession.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the problem formulation and the analysis of the research results discussed earlier, the author can conclude the following things:

- a. work-life balance variable has a significant and negative effect on stress variable. This means that a high work-life balance will reduce the level of work stress of the flight attendants;
- b. stress variable has a significant and negative effect on career satisfaction variable. This means that low job stress faced by flight attendants will increase their career satisfaction at work.
- c. work-life balance variable does not have a significant effect on career satisfaction variable. This means that work-life balance cannot increase the career satisfaction felt by flight attendants, and
- d. stress variable can significantly mediate the effect of work-life balance on career satisfaction. Stress at work faced by flight attendants must not be excessive, so that work-life balance can increase their career satisfaction and make their career choices more enjoyable.

7. LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Limitations

The research begins before the pandemic, but the data is entered when the pandemic era has occurred. Therefore, the results of the study do not discuss the flight conditions during the pandemic era and the data obtained is data that is relevant to the normal situations.

7.2 Implications:

Based on the conclusions above, the author suggests several things as follows:

- a. Flight attendants are risky professions and have uncertain working hours, therefore airlines must pay attention on their safety by providing good insurance and rights in carrying out their duties. By paying attention on the safety, work-life balance will be felt because the flight attendants will be more tranquil when they leave their family for doing the job. This is consistent with the results of the study: if the work-life balance is felt to be good, stress will decrease and career satisfaction will increase.
- b. Whenever stress variable is in the low category, it is expected that the company can maintain the stress level at a low level because flight attendants serve passengers. If they are stressed then the possibility of having an impact on services they deliver to passengers is even greater. It is better if the company provides training to manage their emotions by understanding stress

management at work, conducting communication and consulting for flight attendants, providing free time after taking off and holding a fitness program. This

can minimize the level of stress at work.

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