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THE INFLUENCE OF THE ON-TIME PERFORMANCE, FLIGHT SCHEDULES, TICKET PRICES, AND PASSENGER SATISFACTION IN DETERMINING CUSTOMER LOYALTY IN INDONESIAN GARUDA AIRLINES

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ABSTRACT

Some economic and agro-industrial managerial problems are that the company's human resources are not maximized in optimizing productivity, cost efficiency, and product quality control. This also includes improving understanding of markets, marketing strategies, and the development of appropriate technologies to improve agro-industrial performance. The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of on-time performance, flight schedules, and ticket prices on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty of Garuda Indonesia Airlines at Soekarno-Hatta International Airport Jakarta, Indonesia. The data collection method uses a questionnaire distributed to 100 respondents. The data analysis method uses SEM PLS. The results show that a positive and significant direct impact on customer satisfaction is obtained from on-time performance and ticket prices, while flight schedules have a positive and insignificant direct impact. A positive and significant direct impact on passenger loyalty, it is obtained from customer satisfaction and ticket prices, while on-time performance and flight schedules have a positive and insignificant direct impact, which implies that customer satisfaction is a vital factor for Garuda Indonesia Airlines to survive in such a highly competitive aviation market

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1. INTRODUCTION

In a competitive industry such as the airline industry, it is important for airline management not only to properly understand what their customers want and expect, but also to manage their own resources in meeting customer expectations appropriately. Apart from the actual service quality provided by airline companies, customer expectations regarding the quality of airline services are also an important factor that can influence customer satisfaction (Sorescu, Warren, and Ertekin, 2017; Majid, 2017). Therefore, airlines will be more likely to survive the competition.

The airline industry is highly competitive and operates on small profit margins. Airline companies strive to develop profitable flight schedules that maximize their revenues and exploit available resources (e.g. aircraft and crew). Considering this complexity, large airlines typically adopt a gradual schedule update approach, in which previous flight schedules are modified to accommodate recent changes in demand, competition with other airlines, and changes in available resources (Burolini *et al*., 2021).

In the aviation industry, determining the price for a product (i.e. tickets) is one of the main problems that must be solved every day (Den Boer, 2015). On the other hand, the price decided for a product directly influences future demand, in one flight there are several different products with different demand behavior, and a price decision must

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be made for each of these products (Otero and Akhavan Tabatabaei, 2015) . Additionally, the products offered by airlines are non-refillable and perishable, indicating that there is a limited number of products and limited time periods that limit such decisions.

If at the start of the period a low price is offered for a particular product then it is likely that many potential customers purchased tickets at a lower price than they were willing to pay. On the other hand, if a higher price is set, few potential customers will buy tickets and even lowering the price at the end of the sales period may still leave some tickets unsold (Otero and Akhavan-Tabatabaei, 2015). Therefore, the challenge in the airline industry is to set prices in each time period that minimize loss of revenue and take advantage of customers' willingness to pay. Because decisions taken at a certain time affect what will happen in the next period and must also be updated dynamically to maximize revenue, this problem is known as *dynamic pricing* (Talluri and Van Ryzin, 2004).

Building a loyal customer base is an obvious marketing goal for an airline. Nyadzayo and Khajehzadeh (2016) stated that customer loyalty reduces service costs, reduces customer price sensitivity, increases the time customers spend with the company, and encourages customers to provide positive recommendations about the brand.

Research by Jiang and Zhang, (2016) found that satisfactory service was not found to result in higher customer loyalty in
among business travelers. While ticket prices have a positive and significant impact on overall passenger satisfaction and in turn strengthen customer loyalty among leisure tourists, they have no impact on business passenger satisfaction and loyalty.

Measuring customer satisfaction in the aviation industry is becoming increasingly common and relevant; there are at least five reasons for this (Grigoroudis and Siskos, 2010). First, customer satisfaction measurement programs can improve communication with customers. Second, companies can check whether their services meet customer expectations. Additionally, companies can analyze the impact of certain efforts and actions on customers. Third, the main satisfaction dimensions that must be improved can be identified. Fourth, companies can identify their strengths and weaknesses vis-à-vis the competition, based on customer perceptions and assessments. Lastly, company personnel can be motivated to increase their productivity because all improvement efforts promoted on the service are evaluated by the customers themselves.

Ramdas and Williams (2006) tested *tradeoff* between aircraft utilization and OTP using queuing theory and found that flight delays increase as aircraft utilization increases. Chow (2015) found that improving on-time performance actually reduces customer complaints. Park, Robertson, and Wu (2004) using data from the Korean airline industry, found a similar relationship between the punctuality of airline flights and customer satisfaction.

Although airlines generally compete based on price, on-time flight time is a critical component of airline service quality, driving customer satisfaction and loyalty (Gayle and Yimga, 2018; Chen and Hu, 2013). Service quality, namely punctuality of flights, is a consumer's impression of the relative superiority of an organization and its impact on customer loyalty (Lee, Graefe, and Burns, 2004). Therefore, the aviation industry must always strive to provide high standard service quality, namely punctuality of flights to influence customer loyalty.

The Airline Schedule Planning Problem (ASPP) is part of a larger airline planning problem (APP) that includes the development of flight schedules, fleet, crew, and other operational resources. APP is a complex process that typically consists of several interdependent tasks, including demand forecasting, capacity planning, flight frequency, departure time optimization, and resource assignment and scheduling (Abdelghany *et al*., 2017).

In the aviation industry sector, the importance of price research is very important. Transportation is a key component of the tourism product. The international aviation market is experiencing many changes and is becoming increasingly competitive. In particular, the air transportation network has developed continuously leading to major changes in the competitive patterns, positions and advantages of various airline companies.

Clems *et al*. (2008) found a significant positive relationship between perceived price in international air travel. Younger passengers or passengers with lower incomes are more price sensitive, and typically purchase tickets based on the lowest price available, and may also have different levels of expectations. Tanomsin and Chen (2018) stated that there is a direct relationship between price and customer satisfaction and loyalty, but the effect is limited to Thai low cost carrier (LCA) companies.

This is inconsistent with other empirical research (Akamavi *et al*., 2015). According to Akamavi *et al*. (2015), the price paid by customers of course influences the level of satisfaction they experience. This means that when prices increase, customers feel dissatisfied. Conversely, when prices decrease, customers feel more satisfied. Thus, fluctuations in prices paid by customers significantly influence customer satisfaction. However, this was not the case in our investigation, we suspect that the competitive LCA market in Thailand had an impact on price variables, which then led to very low air ticket prices and devalued the price factor. Therefore, price is not as influential a factor (around 30%) as other studies suggest

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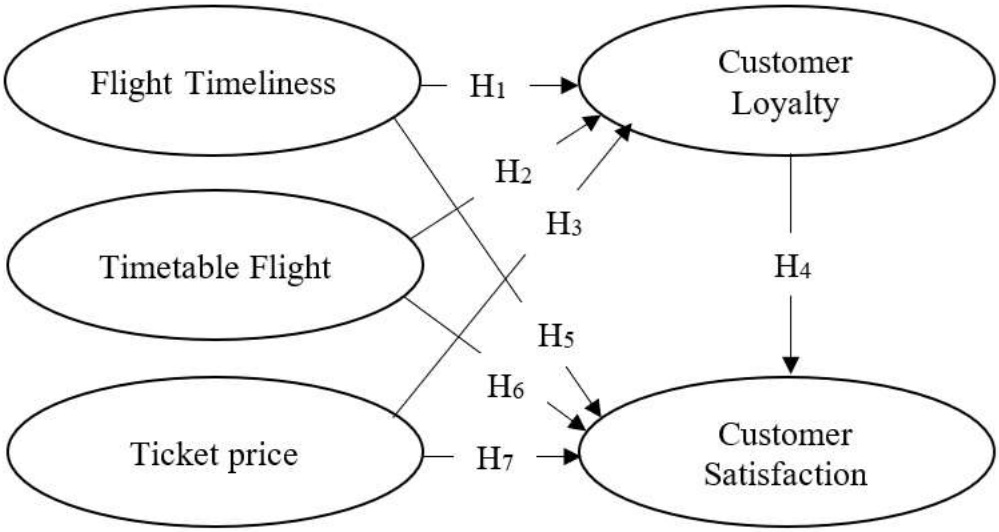

Figure 1 Flow of Thought

Based on the thoughts above, a hypothesis can be formulated, which is a temporary answer to the research question. As a temporary answer to the formulation of the problem and hypothesis that will be tested in the research, the researcher formulates the hypothesis as follows:

H1. There is a direct influence on flight timeliness on airline customer satisfaction.
H2. There is a direct influence of flight schedules on airline customer satisfaction.
H3. There is a direct influence of ticket prices on airline customer satisfaction.
H4. There is a direct influence of customer satisfaction on airline customer loyalty.
H5. There is a direct influence on flight punctuality on airline customer loyalty.
H6. There is a direct influence of flight schedules on airline customer loyalty.
H7. There is a direct influence of ticket prices on airline customer loyalty.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

The stages in this research include five latent variables, each of which is measured with several items. The items for this construct were adapted from previous literature with the aim of increasing content validity (Taherdoost, 2016). The items were then reworded to reflect the airline context and research environment. This research instrument was developed from the research of Gayle and Yimga (2018) and Prince and Simon (2015) for the flight punctuality variable, Camilleri and Camilleri (2018) for the flight schedule variable, Truong *et al*. (2020), Jiang (2013), and Medina-Munoz *et al*. (2018) for the ticket price variable, and Farooq *et al*. (2018) for the customer satisfaction variable, as well as Omoregie *et al.* (2019) and Chai *et al.* (2015) for the customer loyalty variable.

The research location was carried out at Soekarno-Hatta International Airport, Jakarta, Indonesia, with passengers from the Garuda Indonesia airline as the research targets. The population in this study was all passengers of the Garuda airline at Soekarno-Hatta airport on domestic routes during January 2024, totaling 211,770. Data was collected through field surveys. Garuda Indonesia airline passengers were selected based on incidental sampling, namely determining the sample based on a chance meeting with the researcher and deemed suitable as a data source. Passengers who were waiting were asked. Those who answer yes and are willing
participating in this research were given a questionnaire to fill out via WhatsApp with a Google Form attachment. A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Results

The majority of respondents consisted of men (52%) while 48% were women. Percentage of age groups: between 21-30 years (15%), between 31-40 years (38%), less than 21 years (0%), and between 41-50 years (47%). The majority of respondents had a bachelor's degree (56%), followed by a master's degree (33%), and a diploma (11%). In terms of purpose of visit, the majority of respondents (66%) traveled for business purposes, followed by leisure (40%) and education (10%).

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Data collected from the survey was analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). SEM allows researchers to test causal relationships between latent variables in a proposed research model. There are two approaches to SEM (Hair *et al*., 2022): covariance-based SEM (*covariance-based* SEM) which requires the data to demonstrate multivariate normality and the variance-based approach PLS-SEM (*variance-based approach* PLS-SEM) which does not require multivariate normality. A preliminary study of the collected data showed that the data were not normal, thus confirming the choice of this study to use PLS-SEM.

Using a two-step approach to evaluate the structural equation model recommended by Becker *et al*. (2023), we first tested the reliability and validity of the measurement model and then tested the significance of the structural paths between latent constructs in the hypothesized model. SmartPLS 3 software was used to evaluate the reliability and validity of the measurement model and to test the structural model.

The measurement model was evaluated based on the reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of the measurement instrument. Reliability is assessed with using Cronbach's α and composite reliability. In order for a construct to be considered reliable, Ringle *et al*. (2018) recommend that the Cronbach's α value and composite reliability for the construct should be above 0.7. Table 4.1 shows that there is one item, namely KWP4 (Flight Time Accuracy 4) below 0.7. So that item is removed.

Table 1. Reliability and Convergent Validity Test Results

	Ticket price	Timetable Flight	Satisfaction Customers	Flight Timeliness	Loyalty Customers	THAT	CR	AVE
HRT1	*0,836*	0,384	0,469	0,315	0,462	0,868	0,902	0,648
HRT2	*0,840*	0,399	0,461	0,361	0,475			
HRT3	*0,830*	0,434	0,536	0,368	0,540			
HRT4	*0,739*	0,412	0,517	0,421	0,445			
HRT5	*0,776*	0,466	0,857	0,563	0,783			
JPR1	0,322	*0,815*	0,427	0,578	0,426	0,790	0,875	0,699
JPR2	0,418	*0,845*	0,417	0,514	0,430			
JPR3	0,551	*0,849*	0,647	0,655	0,538			
KPP1	0,702	0,518	*0,946*	0,660	0,757	0,939	0,957	0,847
KPP2	0,747	0,606	*0,926*	0,618	0,763			
KPP3	0,719	0,558	*0,945*	0,678	0,848			
KPP4	0,602	0,579	*0,862*	0,626	0,783			
KWP1	0,356	0,539	0,561	*0,848*	0,568	0,814	0,878	0,645
KWP2	0,450	0,564	0,634	*0,876*	0,548			
KWP3	0,435	0,500	0,522	*0,721*	0,433			
KWP5	0,472	0,669	0,532	*0,757*	0,512			

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BEG1	0,675	0,544	0,841	0,624	*0,938*	0,923	0,951	0,867
LYP2	0,701	0,465	0,760	0,528	*0,917*			
LYP3	0,618	0,567	0,789	0,644	*0,938*			
Catatan: CA, Cronbach's α; CR, composite reliability; AVE, Average variance extracted								

Table 2. Discriminant Validity using the Fornell-Larcker Criteria

	Price Tickets	Timetable Flight	Customer Satisfaction	Flight Timeliness	Loyalty Customers
Ticket price	0,805				
flight schedule	0,531	0,836			
Customer Satisfaction	0,754	0,614	0,920		
Flight Timeliness	0,530	0,706	0,702	0,803	
Customer Loyalty	0,713	0,565	0,857	0,644	0,931
Note: The square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) is shown on the diagonal, while outside the diagonal are the inter-construct correlations					

Source: Data processed by researchers.

Table 3. Path Coefficients and Significance

Track	Path Coefficien		*p*	Results
H1: flight punctuality → customer satisfaction	0,376	3,619	0,000	Significant
H2: flight schedule → customer satisfaction	0,076	0,803	0,423	Not Significant
H3: ticket price → customer satisfaction	0,514	7,343	0,000	Significant
H4: customer satisfaction → customer loyalty	0,679	7,730	0,000	Significant
H5: flight punctuality → customer loyalty	0,077	1,005	0,315	Not Significant
H6: flight schedule → customer loyalty	0,012	0,133	0,894	Not Significant
H7: ticket price → customer loyalty	0,155	2,128	0,034	Significant

Source: Data processed by researchers.

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Research Discussion

After verifying the measurement model, the authors proceed to assess the structural model and determine whether the structural relationships in the model being tested are meaningful. A bootstrap resampling procedure (with iterations of 500 sub-samples drawn with replacement from the initial sample of 100) was used to determine the significance of path coefficients in the structural model. The explanatory power of the structural model is assessed from its ability to predict endogenous constructs using the coefficient of determination R^2. The results of the structural model assessment are presented in table 3 and Figure 2.

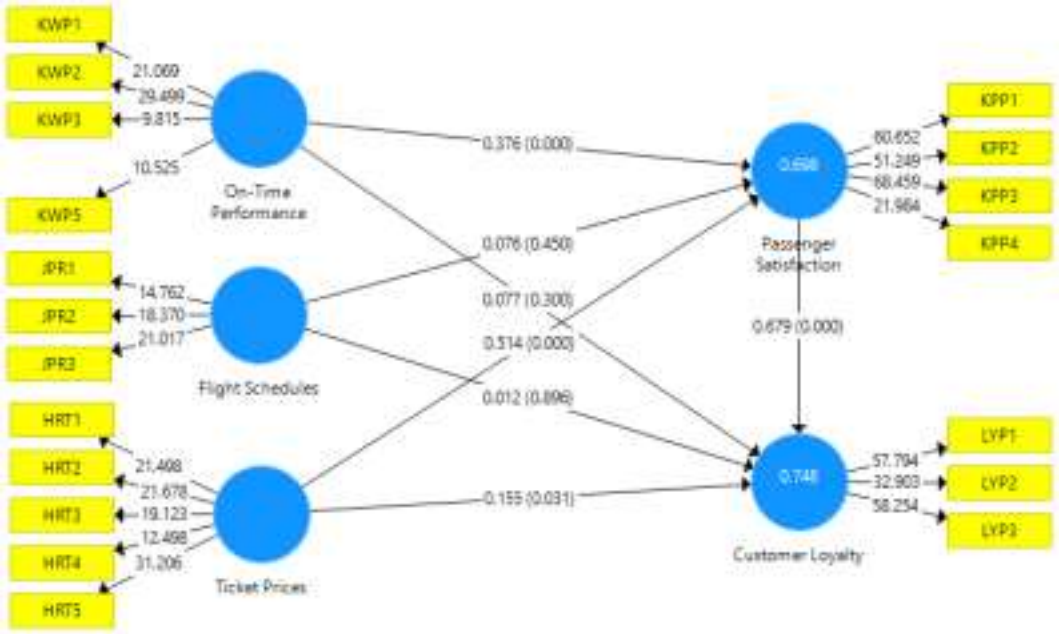

Figure 2. Structural Model

For the direct influence of H1-H3, flight timeliness was found to have a significant influence on customer satisfaction (b = 0.376, p = 0.000), while flight schedules were found to have an insignificant effect on customer satisfaction (b = 0.076, p = 0.423), and ticket prices were found to have a significant influence on customer satisfaction (b = 0.514, p = 0.000), not sequentially.

Further to the direct effects of H4-H7, customer satisfaction, in turn, was also found to be a significant predictor of customer loyalty (b = 0.679, p = 0.000), the exact flight time was found
has an insignificant effect on customer loyalty (b = 0.077, p = 0.315), and likewise repeat flight schedules were found to have an insignificant effect on customer loyalty (b = 0.012, p = 0.894), while ticket prices are always found to have a significant influence on customer loyalty (b = 0.155, p = 0.034).

Correctly understanding what customers want and expect is the main step to help Garuda Indonesia airline management in reducing customer complaints, achieving customer satisfaction and loyalty. As a consequence, Garuda Indonesia airlines have devoted a lot of their resources to improving the quality of their services and meeting what customers want.

Apart from the actual service quality provided by the Garuda Indonesia airline, customer expectations regarding flight schedules and ticket prices also play an important role in the customer's decision to file a complaint against the Garuda Indonesia airline. This research studies how customer complaints, which are an indicator of customer satisfaction, are related to actual performance and expectations of punctuality, flight schedules, and ticket prices to determine when customers will actually submit their complaints to the Garuda Indonesia airline. Researchers believe that this research has meaningful implications for academics and practitioners.

The author's research findings bridge the knowledge gap in the field of research on customer satisfaction and loyalty at the Garuda Indonesia airline company because there is no similar research that studies this relationship at the Garuda Indonesia airline company with the punctuality of flights and flight schedules, as well as ticket prices. By using passenger data for January 2024 which is balanced with a large airline company, namely the Garuda Indonesia airline, the empirical results of this research show that improving the performance of flight punctuality, flight schedules and ticket prices actually increases customer satisfaction.

However, the expected increase in flight punctuality performance does not significantly reduce customer loyalty. These two results are different because they were obtained from the twelve models used in this research. As found in Chow's (2015) research, it was found that the customer expectation factor in increasing the level of on-time

performance is expected to significantly increase passenger complaints. In other words, the punctuality of flights and flight schedules does not have a significant effect on customer loyalty. In addition, the empirical results of this study are generally consistent with the results of previous studies.

Although customer satisfaction as a mediation/indirect influence of flight schedules on customer loyalty is not significant, the empirical test of this research accepts customer satisfaction as a mediation/indirect influence on the influence of flight timeliness on customer loyalty. This is confirmed by research by Yimga and Gorjidooz (2019) that delays have an impact on consumer loyalty and also proposed a new method to model the relationship between market share and on-time arrival and flight schedules by exploring the relationship between the rate of passengers switching airlines due to previous flight experience. The results imply that passengers who experience delays are more likely to switch airlines indicating that flight punctuality influences airline market share primarily through passenger experience, not through flight schedules with high flight punctuality ratings.

In addition, based on Table 4.4 above, ticket prices have a positive and significant influence on passenger satisfaction and in turn strengthen customer loyalty among Garuda Indonesia airline passengers. This is in line with research by Jiang and Zhang (2016) which found that airline ticket prices have a significant and positive impact on customer loyalty.

Passengers are loyal to the airlines they use if the ticket prices match customer needs. Compared with them who travel with airlines other than Garuda Indonesia, passengers who fly with airlines other than Garuda tend not to use this airline again (Jiang and Zhang, 2016). In other words, the Garuda Indonesia airline has a much lower level of customer complaints compared to unregistered/state-owned operators. This is thought to be because registered operators have greater advantages in terms of better reputation and better access to the aviation industry market in Indonesia.

4. CONCLUSION

Well-designed quality measures should be precise, cheap to create, easy to understand, and minimize opportunities for operators to game the system. Advances in communications infrastructure, upgraded terminals, and solutions to improve the productive use of travel time will greatly reduce costs associated with scheduling and long wait times at airports. Ticket prices have a positive and significant influence on overall passenger satisfaction and in turn strengthen customer loyalty among tourists, while the price factor has no impact on the satisfaction and loyalty of business passengers.

On average, passengers prefer products offered by low-cost airlines such as AirAsia Indonesia and Lion Air, rather than products offered by the airline Garuda Indonesia. Low-cost airlines are more likely to operate on highly traveled routes. Apart from that, this airline company is also famous for its flight ticket pricing model *a la carte*. The Garuda Indonesia airline company is also included in this category with Citilink which is under the Garuda Indonesia Group banner.

This research recommends and suggests that airline companies consider shifting resources from improving customer satisfaction to areas such as Frequent Flyer Programs (FFP) to increase customer loyalty and test punctuality flights, flight schedules and ticket prices from the Garuda Indonesia airline company and explore the relationship between flight timeliness, flight schedules, ticket prices and customer satisfaction, as well as the conditions under which airline companies can retain existing passengers.

This research has limitations. First, in the aviation industry, competitors can easily observe service quality due to government reporting of flight punctuality performance data. This ease of observation facilitates the ability of airlines to covertly collude in their provision of service quality. Second, airline management is very aware of the relationships among the routes they serve. They routinely make decisions about prices, schedules, connections, and the like that require them to consider a network of routes, and not just one route at a time.

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