Improving organizational commitment on millennial workers in startup business

Sylvia Diana Purba 1*
Triawan Susetyo 1

*Master of Management Study Program, Atma Jaya Catholic University, Jakarta, Indonesia
**sylvia.purba@atmajaya.ac.id

Abstract
This research investigates the effects of passion towards organizational commitment as a mediating role to career adaptability and engagement of millennial employees in startup companies. The convenience sampling method was used to collect data from 63 millennial employees of startup companies located in Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi by distributing questionnaires via Google Form. The data collected were then analyzed using path analysis and the results showed that passion has a direct and indirect effect on organizational commitment and employee engagement. Meanwhile, career adaptability does not affect partial meditation as an intervening variable. Conversely, passion positively and significantly affects career adaptability, employee engagement, and organizational commitment.

Keywords: passion; career adaptability; employee engagement; organizational commitment; millennials.

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INTRODUCTION

Changes from industry 4.0 to digital business transformation due to the evolution of the internet and technology have become the new prima donna choice for many startup companies. According to a 2019 Startup Report, Indonesia has a significant digital market potential at the regional level, which is predicted to reach 100 billion dollars by 2025 at a yearly growth rate of 40% (Eka, 2020). The transformation of the digital economy is inseparable from the large role of startup companies that have grown rapidly in the last five years to include e-commerce, financial technology, game development, and digital application (Zaky et al., 2018). In 2018, the Indonesian Information Technology and Communications Creative Industry Society (MIKTI) created 992 startup companies for millennials, still running to date (Zaky et al., 2018).
According to Twenge et al. (2012), millennials are individuals born from 1982 to 2003 and they prefer working to accommodate their passion while balancing work and free time to socialize, thereby guaranteeing future security (Purba & Ananta, 2018). Millennials also have higher expectations of promotions and salary increases in the workplace (Mayangdarastri & Khusna, 2019). They are the largest population with high purchasing power, making them the right target market (Alfansi & Daulay, 2021). In addition, millennials place a more excellent value on job satisfaction and are intolerant to less-challenging jobs (Hanna et al., 2017).

Of the total 273 million people that make up the Indonesian population, 81 million are millennials between 17 and 37 years. This generation is approximately 75% of the global workforce (Hoffman, 2014). Industries such as banks, mines, and civil servants, which used to be job seekers’ favorites, are gradually being ignored by millennials. This is because they are more interested in startup companies whose majority of employees are from the same generation. Startups offer challenges and unconventional ways of working, as reported by MIKTI, with 69.20% and 15.6% of their employees’ millennials and Generation X (Zaky et al., 2018). The startups analyzed in this research are businesses based on digital platforms, such as e-commerce (Tokopedia, Shopee, Lazada, JD.id), smartphone apps (Gojek, Grab, Ruangguru), etc.

Research by Robert Walters (2020) showed an increase in workers’ salaries that move from established to digital startup companies by 15-30%. This is one of the reasons this generation demands more compensation and challenges at work is presumably due to the eagerness and drive to be involved in company activities to generate maximum results (Meola, 2016; Pyörä et al., 2017). Therefore, the millennial generations that choose to move from conventional to digital startup companies have a high passion for organizational goals and greater career adaptation.

Chen et al. (2016) reported that organizations with higher levels of employee engagement show significant resilience in the face of failure and are more resistant to the uncertainty that looms over startup companies. High engagement makes employees more settled in the company with loyal and commitment (Sahni, 2021). Allen & Meyer (1996) stated that organizational commitment is a psychological relationship between individuals and organizations, making it less likely for workers to leave voluntarily. Organizational commitment shows the strong relationship between employees and their organization (Fu & Deshpande, 2014).

Passion is a strong inclination towards essential activities, which employees are willing to devote their energy and time (Vallerand et al., 2003). It is assumed that people become passionate about certain activities through important processes, such as assessing the activity and internalizing one’s identity. According to Burke et al. (2015) and Houlfort et al. (2014), most work activities have the potential to become a harmonious passion. For example, a person can continue acting due to the feeling of superiority, social acceptance, self-satisfaction, and pride (Amiot et al., 2006).

Attitudes, beliefs, and competencies play a significant role in shaping problem-solving strategies and adaptive behavior carried out by individuals to synergize the concept of working with the actual task being performed. Due to the fast and dynamic changes, everyone needs to adapt to new skills and knowledge for the continuous growth of their passion. Amarnani et al. (2019) stated that career adaptability prevents
passionate workers from obsessive actions because it consists of concern, control, curiosity, and confidence. Passion is the driving force for millennials to adapt to their chosen career. According to Savickas & Porfeli (2012), career adaptability is a process of a person at work and through a life cycle and can increase the sense of engagement in millennials.

Schaufeli & Salanova (2007) defined employee engagement as a positive, meaningful, and motivational attitude associated with vigor, dedication, and absorption. It is also associated with the physical energy expended by individuals to complete their tasks. Kahn stated that engagement from the psychological side of employees increases their efficiency at work (Chen et al., 2016). Therefore, it can be concluded that employees that are wholeheartedly involved in carrying out their job are more proactive and responsible (Li et al., 2012). Conversely, disengaged employees that psychologically and physically move away from organizational goals experience decreased performance (Saks & Gruman, 2014). Furthermore, those that feel valued strive to achieve organizational goals (Lara & Salas-Vallina, 2017; Lajom et al., 2017).

Cheasakul & Varma (2016) stated a relationship between passion, empowerment, and organizational commitment. This is supported by Tarkar et al. (2019)’s research, which reported that passion significantly affects job satisfaction, affective commitment, and intention towards work. Tladinyane et al. (2016) also found a positive relationship between career adaptability and employee engagement. Similarly, Yang et al. (2019) and Rossier et al. (2012) stated that career adaptability significantly affects work engagement.

Furthermore, Ferreira (2012) suggested that employees with a high level of career adaptability have stronger connections to the organization, encouraging them to be more committed. These findings are relevant to Rudolph et al. (2017), which stated that career adaptability significantly affects affective organizational commitment. Albdour & Altarawneh (2014) also reported that employees with a high job and organizational engagement tend to possess substantial commitment.

Ho et al. (2011) discussed the relationship between job passion and employee work performance mediated by engagement using 509 respondents. The result showed that employees with harmonious passion work better with engagement as a mediating factor. Amarnani et al. (2019) and Gong et al. (2018) found that career adaptability mediates obsessive and harmonious passion for work performance. Therefore, the presence of passion, career adaptability, and employee engagement increases the organizational commitment of millennial workers.
METHOD

Data were collected by distributing questionnaires to 63 millennial employees in startup companies that previously worked in industrial companies located in the Greater Jakarta areas, such as Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi. The research was carried out for 2 months with a convenience sampling technique used to determine the sample size. According to Sekaran & Bougie (2016), the sample size is sufficient to represent the population when it is more than 30 and appropriate of ideal below 500. Validity and reliability tests were then performed for all variables after collecting the questionnaires, which were distributed to respondents by sharing links to Google Forms through social media. Furthermore, a Likert scale with 6 options, consisting of strongly disagree, disagree, slightly disagree, slightly agree, agree, and strongly agree, was used for analysis. SPSS V 22 software and Macro Hayes were used to influence the test with path analysis and determine the hypothesis.

Table 1
Variable and measurement

| Variable                  | As variable | Indicator | References                  |
|---------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------------------------|
| Passion                   | Independent | 10 statements | Carbonneau et al. (2008) |
| Career Adaptability       | Mediator    | 22 statements | Savickas & Profile, 2012    |
| Employee Engagement       | Mediator    | 16 statements | Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004   |
| Organizational Commitment | Dependent   | 19 statements | Jaros et al. (2017)         |
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Data obtained from 63 respondents through an online survey showed that the majority were male 57.14%, >25 years old of >65%, with an undergraduate degree of 87.3%. Furthermore, their traveling distance from residence to work >10 km of 57.14%, worked 13-24 months of 55.56%, and income ranging from 5-10 million rupiah/month of 42.86% and >10-15 million of 20.6%. Table 2 shows the overall mean score of the data collected:

| Dimension                        | Mean Score | Description |
|----------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Passion                          |            |             |
| Harmonious                       | 4.93       | High        |
| Obsessive                        | 3.69       | Quite High  |
| General Passion                  | 4.48       | High        |
| Career Adaptability              |            |             |
| Concern                          | 5.35       | Very High   |
| Control                          | 4.98       | High        |
| Curiosity                        | 5.14       | High        |
| Confidence                       | 5.03       | High        |
| Employee Engagement              |            |             |
| Vigor                            | 4.59       | High        |
| Dedication                       | 4.82       | High        |
| Absorption                       | 4.30       | Quite High  |
| Organizational Commitment        |            |             |
| Affective Commitment             | 4.22       | Quite High  |
| Continuance Commitment           | 3.82       | Quite High  |
| Indebted Obligation              | 4.00       | Quite High  |
| Moral Imperative                 | 4.59       | High        |

Description: Very low: 1-1.83; low: >1.83-2.66; quite low: >2.66- 3.49; quite high: >3.49-4.32; high: >4.32-5.15; very high: >5.15-6

The table shows that millennials' passion for startup companies is in the high category, with an overall mean score of 4.39 where the highest dimension is the harmonious passion with an average value of 4.93. This means that millennials that work in startup companies have a strong harmonious passion. Career adaptability is also in the high category, with an overall mean score of 5.13, while career concern was the highest dimension with an average value of 5.35. Employee engagement is in the overall mean score of 4.57 where the highest dimension is dedication with an average value of 4.82. Millennials' organizational commitment is in the sufficient category with an overall mean score of 4.12. Meanwhile, the lowest dimension is continuance commitment of 3.82. Therefore, this data shows that millennials in this research still come across opportunities in other places because they are knowledge workers and experts in IT.
Table 3
Result of Effect Test and Regression Coefficient

| Description | Coef  | SE   | t     | p      | LLCI  | ULCI  |
|-------------|-------|------|-------|--------|-------|-------|
| Pass->CA (H1) | 0.3383 | 0.0573 | 5.9049 | 0.0000 | 0.2237 | 0.4528 |
| Pass->EE (H2) | 0.3851 | 0.0961 | 4.0058 | 0.0002 | 0.1928 | 0.8473 |
| Pass->OC (H3) | 0.2344 | 0.0866 | 2.7079 | 0.0088 | 0.0612 | 0.4077 |
| CA->EE (H4) | 0.6789 | 0.1714 | 3.9551 | 0.0002 | 0.3351 | 0.5775 |
| CA->OC (H6) | -0.085 | 0.1539 | -0.552 | 0.5832 | -0.393 | 0.2231 |
| EE->OC (H8) | 0.2346 | 0.1033 | 2.2723 | 0.0267 | 0.028 | 0.4412 |

Description: Pass: passion; CA: career adaptability; EE: employee engagement; OC: organizational commitment

The passion variable has a positive and significant effect on career adaptability, with a coefficient value of 0.3383, at a significant p-value of 0.0000, which is smaller than the alpha value of 0.05. Hence, hypothesis 1 is statistically significant. This implies that employees with high passion quickly adapt to the work environment and easily prepare for their careers. Furthermore, the passion variable has a positive and significant effect on the employee engagement variable with a coefficient value of 0.385, while the significance level is seen from the p-value of 0.0002, which is smaller than the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, hypothesis 2 is statistically significant. This finding implies that the higher the millennial employee’s passion for their work in startup companies, the higher their involvement. The passion variable has a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment, with a coefficient of 0.2344, while the significance level of the p-value is 0.0088. Therefore, hypothesis 3 is statistically significant. This implies that employees with high passion for their work in startup companies are encouraged to be committed and loyal.

The career adaptability variable has a positive and significant effect on employee engagement, with a coefficient value of 0.6789 at a significance level of p-value 0.0002. Therefore, hypothesis 4 is statistically significant. This implies that the higher the level of career adaptation of employees in startup companies, the greater the level of engagement in the organization. Conversely, the career adaptability variable has no significant effect on organizational commitment at a p-value of 0.5832. Hence, hypothesis 6 is rejected. This shows that millennial workers are capable of adapting to careers do not guarantee to commit to the organization. This result supports the average score of continuance commitment which is relatively not high. Furthermore, the employee engagement variable has a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment, with a coefficient value of 0.2344 and a p-value of 0.0088, indicating the acceptance of hypothesis 8.

Table 4
Indirect Effect Career Adaptability and Employee Engagement

|                     | Effect | Boot SE | Boot LLCI | Boot ULCI |
|---------------------|--------|---------|-----------|-----------|
| Total               | 0.1154 | 0.7060  | -0.0027   | 0.2708    |
| Ind1 (H5)           | -0.0287| 0.0583  | -0.1420   | 0.0915    |
Improving organizational commitment on millennial workers in startup business

|                | Ind2 (H7) |        |        |        |
|----------------|-----------|--------|--------|--------|
|                |           | 0.0904 | 0.0466 | 0.0026 | 0.1898 |
|                | Ind3 (H9) | 0.0538 | 0.0290 | 0.0015 | 0.1192 |

Indirect effect key:
- Ind1: Passion -> CA -> OC
- Ind2: Passion -> EE -> OC
- Ind3: Passion -> CA -> EE -> OC

Table 4 shows that the career adaptability variable does not significantly mediate the effect of passion on organizational commitment, signifying that hypothesis 5 is rejected. Meanwhile, the employee engagement variable is proven to significantly mediate the effect of passion on organizational commitment, hence hypothesis 7 is accepted. These results also prove that career adaptability and employee engagement can mediate the effect of passion on organizational commitment with a weak mediating effect of 0.0538. This joint mediation effect proves that passion cannot significantly mediate organizational commitment, instead of employee engagement and career adaptability. Therefore, employees' passion for work, ability to adapt to a career, and high engagement make them willing to commit to the company, leading to the acceptance of hypothesis 9.

![Figure 2: Path Analysis of the Effect of Passion on Organizational Commitment Mediated by Career Adaptation and Employee Engagement.](image)

The results show that the effect of passion, career adaptability, and employee engagement on organizational commitment is very significant, with an R square of 33.54%. Passion and employee engagement are the only variables with the same magnitude of regression coefficient on organizational commitment, at 0.2344 and 0.2346, respectively. Interestingly, career adaptability has a strong effect of 0.6789 on employee engagement. This illustrates that the greater the ability of millennials to adapt to their careers, the stronger the perceived engagement with their jobs, through dedication and enthusiasm. However, this does not affect their commitment to the organization because career adaptation does not significantly affect organizational commitment.
Discussion

From the results, it can be seen that passion is the main driver for millennial employees’ commitment to startup companies. This is because it significantly affects career adaptation, employee engagement, and organizational commitment positively. Ho & Astakhova (2017) stated that when obsessively passionate workers trust an organization, its engagement significantly increases. Furthermore, when employees trust their superiors and colleagues, job engagement becomes higher. These results are also in line with the research carried out by (Cheasakul & Varma, 2016), which stated a relationship between passion, empowerment, and organizational commitment. According to Albdour & Altarawneh (2014), employees with a high job and organizational engagement levels are also committed. The employee engagement variable significantly mediates the effect of passion on organizational commitment, which is in accordance with the research by Ho et al. (2011). This is also relevant to Amarnani et al. (2019), which found that career adaptability prevents obsessive, passionate workers from obsessive actions capable of disrupting the company.

Tladinyane et al. (2016) stated a positive effect of career adaptability on employee engagement. These results prove that millennials with high work engagement possess higher endurance characteristics in facing failure and are more resistant to the uncertainty that looms over startup companies (Chen et al., 2016). Therefore, they can adapt to changes in an organizational environment. Studying employee engagement in startup companies is a challenge because the scope of research is quite broad with various concepts and practices. In other words, employees need to be highly engaged in their duties and very focused on the tasks performed. Furthermore, these findings are relevant to the research by Sahni (2021), which stated that employee engagement increases organizational commitment.

On the other hand, this finding cannot prove the significant effect of the career adaptability variable on organizational commitment. This is contrary to the research by Ferreira (2012), which showed that employees with a high level of career adaptability have stronger feelings regarding connections and associations with the organization, which encouraged them to be committed. Gong et al. (2018) stated that career adaptability can moderate passion with subjective wellbeing. This means millennials' ability to adapt to their careers makes it easier for them to choose another company whenever they feel uncomfortable in their current workplace. Good competencies and skills that are continuously updated make them look for better comfort and rewards, hence career adaptation does not affect organizational commitment (Mayangdarastri & Khusna, 2019). However, millennials tend to feel a strong level of engagement when they have career adaptations, as found in research.

Although career adaptation cannot mediate the effect of passion on commitment, passion can increase the commitment of millennial workers in startup businesses directly. Therefore, startup companies need to be able to present a sense of meaning to every employee to feel valued and appreciated hence they better understand and strive to achieve organizational goals (Lara et al., 2017). Several factors form problem-solving strategies, and adaptive behaviors carried out by individuals to synergize the concept of work, such as attitudes, beliefs, and competencies. This makes them adapt quickly to their
job duties and responsibilities with a high level of engagement, thereby leading to a sense of belonging to the company’s goals (Savickas, 2013). Lajom et al. (2017) stated that recognizing the passions of millennials and providing space for their development increases their ability to adapt and feel involved in their work, which in turn promotes commitment to the company’s advancement.

CONCLUSION

This research has been conducted in Greater Jakarta with data collected from millennial employees working in several startup companies. The results show that the antecedents of organizational commitment in the millennial generation are passion, career adaptability, and employee engagement. Career adaptation together with employee engagement mediates the effect of passion on millennial worker commitment. Furthermore, employee engagement can be increased by having strong career adaptability, which also affects commitment. This research also confirms that the most decisive antecedent variable in increasing millennial commitment is passion, hence companies need to pay serious attention to this factor.

The research implications recommend startup companies provide a place or outlet for employees to channel their passion and ideas. For example, giving them free time a week to work on their side projects within the company creates an avenue for them to develop their creative passion. This is because, aside from increasing company growth, these programs make passionate employees feel valued (Houlfort et al., 2014).

However, this research is limited to millennial employees of startup companies working in the Greater Jakarta area with data collected through an online survey using convenience sampling technique, without in-depth interviews. Therefore, the respondents possibly gave subjective perceptions. Furthermore, due to time and cost limitations, the population was not counted hence the convenience sampling technique made the results only able to represent a limited number of respondents as the research and could not be generalized.

In conclusion, startup companies should pay attention to employee engagement programs to retain millennial workers with a high level of passion (Ho et al., 2011). This is because they have a higher turnover rate than other generations with a greater desire to acquire better compensation, advancement, and challenges. Some of the factors likely to increase millennial employee commitment are rewards, gamification, good culture, and team building. Furthermore, employees capable of illustrating their creativity and ideas from developing passion need to be included in the reward and benefits program. This is because passion tends to increasingly promote them to continuously adapt and commit to the company (Burke et al., 2015). Furthermore, it is also important to pay attention to employees compensation and provide programs capable of benefiting millennial employees when choosing a job (Robert Walters Indonesia, 2020).
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