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Precarious Employment in Academia: Unpacking the Dominance of Job Satisfaction Over Organizational Commitment in Predicting Turnover Intention

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ABSTRACT

Precarious employment is an increasingly prevalent feature of the academic landscape, particularly within Indonesian higher education institutions, posing significant challenges for human resource management. This study investigated the complex interplay between job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention among non-permanent (contractual) employees at Universitas Lambung Mangkurat (ULM), a context characterized by employment uncertainty. A quantitative, descriptive-analytical survey design was employed. Data were collected via questionnaires from a proportionally stratified sample of 128 non-permanent employees at ULM. Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM) was utilized to test the hypothesized relationships between job satisfaction, organizational commitment (affective, continuance, and normative), and turnover intention. The findings revealed that job satisfaction had a significant positive influence on organizational commitment ($\beta=0.422$, $p<0.001$) and a significant negative influence on turnover intention ($\beta=-0.371$, $p=0.013$) among non-permanent academic staff. However, contrary to some established models, organizational commitment did not demonstrate a statistically significant direct effect on turnover intention ($\beta=-0.216$, $p=0.108$). Furthermore, organizational commitment did not significantly mediate the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention in this cohort ($\beta=-0.091$, $p=0.260$). In conclusion, job satisfaction emerged as a more dominant predictor of turnover intention than organizational commitment. The inherent uncertainties and limited long-term prospects associated with non-permanent contractual roles appear to diminish the capacity of organizational commitment to retain employees or mediate the effects of job satisfaction. These findings underscore the critical need for higher education institutions to prioritize enhancing job satisfaction for their precariously employed staff as a primary retention strategy.

1. Introduction

The global landscape of higher education has undergone significant transformations in recent decades, marked by increased competition, demands for accountability, and evolving employment structures. Within this dynamic environment, a prominent trend has been the rise of precarious employment among academic and administrative staff. Precarious employment in academia typically refers to non-standard employment relationships characterized

by job insecurity, limited contractual terms, reduced benefits, uncertain career progression, and often, lower pay compared to permanent counterparts. This phenomenon is not confined to specific regions but is a global concern, impacting universities in both developed and developing nations, including Indonesia (Abdelaliem, 2025; Arumsari, 2025).

Universitas Lambung Mangkurat (ULM), a notable state higher education institution in South Kalimantan, Indonesia, mirrors this trend, employing



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a significant number of non-permanent, or "honorary," staff who operate on a contractual basis. These individuals play crucial roles in teaching, research, and administrative functions; yet, their employment conditions often reflect the hallmarks of precarity: uncertainty regarding contract renewal, limited access to professional development opportunities, and disparities in welfare improvements compared to permanent staff. Such conditions can cultivate a sense of marginalization and foster an environment where turnover intention becomes a significant organizational challenge.

Turnover intention, defined as an employee's conscious and deliberate willingness to leave an organization, is a critical concern for human resource management in any sector, including higher education. High turnover intention and subsequent actual turnover can precipitate substantial direct and indirect costs for institutions. These include expenses related to recruitment, selection, and training of new staff, loss of institutional knowledge and experience, disruption to team dynamics, and potential declines in service quality and operational efficiency. For universities relying on a sizeable non-permanent workforce, understanding and mitigating turnover intention is paramount for maintaining stability and achieving strategic objectives. Preliminary observations at ULM indicated a discernible pattern of turnover among non-permanent employees, warranting a systematic investigation into its antecedents (Doruker, 2025; Irvine, 2024).

Two of the most extensively researched antecedents of turnover intention in organizational psychology and human resource management are job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Job satisfaction refers to an individual's positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences. It encompasses feelings about various facets of work, including the work itself, pay, promotion opportunities, supervision, and coworker relationships. Organizational commitment,

conversely, reflects an employee's psychological attachment to their organization, characterized by identification with its goals and values, a willingness to exert effort on its behalf, and a desire to maintain membership. Organizational commitment has been conceptualized into three components: affective commitment (emotional attachment and identification), continuance commitment (awareness of the costs associated with leaving), and normative commitment (feelings of obligation to remain) (Jaehrling, 2018; Javed, 2025; Jeong, 2025).

Numerous studies have traditionally found that higher job satisfaction and stronger organizational commitment are associated with lower turnover intentions. Organizational commitment is often posited as a mediator in the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention, suggesting that satisfied employees develop commitment, which in turn reduces their desire to leave. However, the context of precarious employment introduces complexities that may alter these established relationships. For employees in non-permanent roles, the foundational elements that typically foster deep organizational commitment—such as perceived long-term job security, expectations of career advancement within the organization, and consistent investment from the employer—are often diminished or absent. In such environments, the psychological contract between the employee and the organization may be more transactional and less relational. Consequently, while job satisfaction derived from daily work experiences, collegial relationships, or even the nature of the tasks might still be significant, its translation into enduring organizational commitment, particularly affective and normative commitment, could be weakened. The perceived lack of reciprocal long-term commitment from the organization might lead precariously employed individuals to place greater emphasis on immediate job satisfaction as a determinant of their intention to stay or leave, with organizational commitment playing a less pivotal, or



even non-significant, role. While research on job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention is abundant, studies specifically focusing on non-permanent employees within the unique cultural and structural context of Indonesian public universities remain relatively scarce (Jobin, 2017; Jobst, 2018; Lim, 2025). This study aimed to critically re-examine the established pathways to employee retention by investigating whether job satisfaction or organizational commitment holds greater sway over the turnover intentions of precariously employed academic staff at Universitas Lambung Mangkurat, thereby providing crucial insights for managing a vulnerable yet vital segment of the higher education workforce in Indonesia.

2. Literature Review

Job satisfaction is a cornerstone concept in organizational behavior, representing an employee's overall affective orientation towards their job. It is a multifaceted construct, influenced by various job facets, including the work itself (intrinsic satisfaction derived from tasks, autonomy, and skill utilization), pay and benefits (extrinsic satisfaction), promotion opportunities, quality of supervision, and relationships with coworkers. Employees experiencing high job satisfaction generally exhibit positive feelings about their work, whereas those with low job satisfaction hold negative attitudes. In the context of precarious academic employment, certain facets of job satisfaction may take on heightened importance. While pay and promotion might be sources of dissatisfaction due to inherent limitations in contractual roles, aspects like supportive supervision, positive collegial relationships, and engaging work content could still contribute significantly to overall job satisfaction. The daily experiences and the intrinsic rewards from academic work might therefore be crucial buffers against the inherent insecurities of their employment status (Jobin, 2017; Jobst, 2018).

Organizational commitment signifies the psychological bond an employee feels towards their organization. It represents more than passive loyalty; it involves an active relationship with the organization, where individuals are willing to contribute to its success and desire to remain part of it. As previously noted, a widely accepted model includes three components: Affective Commitment: An employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. Employees with strong affective commitment stay because they want to. Continuance Commitment: An awareness of the perceived costs associated with leaving the organization. Employees with strong continuance commitment stay because they *need* to. This can be influenced by factors like accrued benefits, specific skills not easily transferable, or a lack of alternative employment opportunities. Normative Commitment: A feeling of obligation to remain with the organization. Employees with strong normative commitment stay because they feel they ought to, perhaps due to a sense of indebtedness or moral obligation (Jaehrling, 2018; Manky, 2018).

For precariously employed academic staff, the development of these commitment components can be complex. Affective commitment might be challenging to foster if employees perceive a lack of long-term investment or support from the institution. Continuance commitment might be present due to limited alternative job prospects in a competitive academic market, but this form of commitment is often associated with less positive outcomes than affective commitment. Normative commitment could be low if the perceived psychological contract is primarily transactional, with limited expectations of loyalty from either party. The "unclear future of their careers and limited work rights" identified in the original study's discussion would likely impact all three forms of commitment.

Turnover intention is the immediate precursor to actual employee turnover and is defined as an



employee's cognitive manifestation of the desire to voluntarily leave their current organization. It is a critical variable for organizations because it signals potential human capital flight and associated costs. Factors influencing turnover intention are numerous and include individual, job-related, and organizational characteristics (Demoulin, 2025; Jeong, 2025; Lim, 2025).

For non-permanent employees in academia, turnover intention may be chronically elevated due to the inherent insecurity of their positions. The "intention to leave current job," "intention to look for work elsewhere," and "possibility to leave the organization in the near future" are the core indicators measured in this study. The lack of a clear career path and limited opportunities for advancement within the institution often compel such employees to continually scan the external job market. The dominant theoretical perspective posits a negative relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention, and between organizational commitment and turnover intention. Satisfied and committed employees are generally less likely to consider leaving their organizations. Some research has found that higher job satisfaction significantly reduces turnover intention.

Furthermore, job satisfaction is often viewed as an antecedent to organizational commitment. The logic is that positive work experiences (job satisfaction) lead to a stronger psychological attachment to the organization (organizational commitment), which in turn reduces the likelihood of turnover. Thus, organizational commitment frequently serves as a mediator in the job satisfaction-turnover intention relationship. However, the strength and even the presence of these relationships can be context-dependent. The unique circumstances of precarious employment might alter these dynamics. Employees who perceive their employment relationship as temporary or insecure may prioritize immediate, tangible aspects of their job (captured by job

satisfaction) over developing a deep, lasting commitment to an organization that may not reciprocate with long-term security or investment. Recent research highlights that job insecurity, a key feature of precarious work, can directly increase turnover intentions and weaken the positive effects of other workplace attitudes. This suggests that for precariously employed academics, the traditional pathway from job satisfaction through organizational commitment to reduced turnover intention might be less operative. Job satisfaction might instead exert a more direct and potent influence on their decision to stay or leave (Arumsari, 2025; Bettina, 2025).

Based on the literature reviewed and the specific context of non-permanent employees at Universitas Lambung Mangkurat, this study formulated four key hypotheses. Firstly (H1), it was hypothesized that job satisfaction exerts a negative and significant effect on turnover intention among these employees. Secondly (H2), job satisfaction was posited to have a positive and significant effect on their organizational commitment. The third hypothesis (H3) proposed that organizational commitment, in turn, has a negative and significant effect on turnover intention. Finally (H4), the study explored whether organizational commitment mediates the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention among the non-permanent employees at Universitas Lambung Mangkurat.

3. Methods

This study employed a quantitative approach with a survey research design to investigate the relationships between job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention among non-permanent employees at Universitas Lambung Mangkurat (ULM). The method was descriptive-analytical, aiming to describe the characteristics of the variables and analyze the hypothesized relationships between them using data collected via questionnaires. All data collection and analysis were conducted with a focus on understanding the phenomena as they



existed at the time of the study.

The research was conducted at Universitas Lambung Mangkurat (ULM), a public university in South Kalimantan, Indonesia. ULM was founded on September 21st, 1958, and has campuses in Banjarmasin and Banjarbaru. The unit of analysis for this study was the non-permanent (honorary/contractual) employees at the university. The total population of non-permanent employees at ULM at the time of the study was 362 individuals, distributed across various faculties and the rectorate. A proportionate stratified sampling technique was employed to ensure representation from different work units (departments/faculties and the rectorate). This technique was chosen due to the heterogeneous nature of the population, which was spread across various work units. The number of respondents from each stratum (department/faculty) was calculated proportionally to its size within the total non-permanent employee population.

Data were primarily collected using structured questionnaires administered to the selected sample of 128 non-permanent employees. The questionnaire was designed to measure the key variables of the study: job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. Prior to distribution, it is assumed the questionnaire was pilot-tested for clarity and reliability, though this step is not explicitly detailed in the provided text. The administration process involved distributing the questionnaires to the employees within their respective work units and collecting them after completion. Ethical considerations, such as ensuring anonymity and confidentiality of responses, were presumably maintained throughout the data collection process.

In this study, the variables were operationalized and measured using a Likert-type scale for all constructs. Job Satisfaction (X) was defined as an individual's positive or negative emotional attitude towards their work and was assessed through indicators reflecting satisfaction with salary/pay,

promotion opportunities, coworkers, supervisors, and the intrinsic aspects of the job itself, such as interesting tasks, learning opportunities, and responsibility. Organizational Commitment (Z) was conceptualized as the extent to which employees know, identify with, and support their organization; its measurement encompassed indicators for its three core components: Affective Commitment (emotional attachment and belief in organizational values), Continuance Commitment (perceived economic value of remaining), and Normative Commitment (an obligation to stay for moral or ethical reasons). Finally, Turnover Intention (Y) was defined as an employee's intention or desire to leave the organization, either in the near future or subsequently, and was measured through indicators consistent with common assessments, including the intention to leave the current job, the intention to seek alternative employment, and the perceived possibility of leaving the organization in the near future.

The data collected from the questionnaires were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach, specifically employing SmartPLS software. This PLS-SEM analysis encompassed a two-step process. The first step involved the evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) to assess the reliability and validity of the constructs. Reliability was determined using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR), both expected to exceed 0.70. Convergent validity was assessed through outer loadings of indicators (anticipated to be greater than 0.70) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) (expected to be above 0.50). Discriminant validity was evaluated by ensuring that the square root of each construct's AVE was greater than its correlations with other constructs, following the Fornell-Larcker criterion, and potentially through an examination of cross-loadings. The second step focused on the evaluation of the structural model (inner model) to assess the hypothesized relationships between constructs. This included examining the



Coefficient of Determination (R-Square) to understand the variance explained in the dependent variables (organizational commitment and turnover intention); analyzing path coefficients (β) for their strength, direction, and statistical significance (determined via p-values from bootstrapping procedures, typically $p < 0.05$); and assessing the effect size (f-Square) to gauge the substantive impact of exogenous constructs, with values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 representing small, medium, and large effects, respectively. Finally, mediation analysis was conducted to test the significance of the indirect effect (H4), likely using bootstrapping to determine the p-value for the mediated path from job satisfaction to turnover intention via organizational commitment.

4. Results and Discussion

Table 1 presents a detailed demographic profile of the 128 non-permanent employee respondents at Universitas Lambung Mangkurat. The age distribution of the respondents indicates a mature workforce, with the largest segment (57.81%) falling within the 30-39 years age bracket. A significant portion (25.00%) is aged 40-49 years, while smaller cohorts represent younger employees (20-29 years, 6.25%) and more senior staff (50-58 years, 10.94%). This age profile suggests that the non-permanent staff are largely in their primary working years or mid-career, rather than being predominantly recent entrants to the workforce. In terms of gender, the sample is predominantly male, constituting 61.72% of the respondents, while females represent a substantial minority at 38.28%. The educational background of the non-permanent staff is varied, yet aligns with the expectations of a higher education environment. The dominant qualification is a Bachelor's Degree (S1), held by 56.25% of the participants. A notable portion (26.56%) possess senior high school qualifications (SMA/SLTA), and a smaller but significant group (7.03%) holds Master's Degrees (S2), indicating that individuals with postgraduate degrees also occupy these non-

permanent roles. Minor groups reported having junior high school (7.03%) or diploma (3.13%) qualifications. The most striking characteristic revealed is the length of service. A vast majority of these contractual employees have a considerable history with the institution. The largest group (42.97%) has served for 5-10 years, closely followed by those with 10-15 years of service (38.28%). This means over 80% of the surveyed non-permanent staff have been employed for five years or more. Furthermore, a smaller segment has accumulated 15-20 years of service (11.72%), and a few individuals (4.69%) have served for more than two decades under non-permanent status. This highlights a significant reliance on long-serving contractual staff and points towards the entrenched nature of precarious employment for a substantial portion of this workforce, providing a critical context for understanding their work attitudes and intentions.

Table 2 shows the comprehensive evaluation of the measurement model, detailing the rigorous assessment of reliability and validity for the key constructs: Job Satisfaction (JS), Organizational Commitment (OC), and Turnover Intention (TI). The analysis confirms the robustness of the measurement scales employed in this study. For reliability, all three constructs demonstrated excellent internal consistency. Job Satisfaction yielded a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.899 and a Composite Reliability (CR) of 0.918. Organizational Commitment similarly showed strong reliability with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.858 and a CR of 0.904. Turnover Intention also exhibited high reliability, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.909 and a CR of 0.937. All these values substantially exceed the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70, indicating that the items used to measure each construct consistently reflect the same underlying dimension. Regarding convergent validity, the data affirm that the indicators are effective measures of their intended latent constructs. The outer loadings for all indicators associated with each construct surpassed the standard benchmark of 0.70. Specifically, the seven



indicators for Job Satisfaction had loadings ranging from 0.706 to 0.827; the three indicators for Organizational Commitment ranged from 0.832 to 0.891; and the four indicators for Turnover Intention ranged from 0.823 to 0.948. Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct was well above the 0.50 criterion. For Job Satisfaction, the square root of AVE was 0.762 (AVE \approx 0.581); for Organizational Commitment, it was 0.839 (AVE \approx 0.704); and for Turnover Intention, it was 0.888 (AVE \approx 0.789). These results collectively provide strong evidence for convergent validity. Discriminant validity was robustly established using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, which requires that the square root of a construct's AVE be greater than its correlations with all other constructs in the model. The matrix presented shows that for Job Satisfaction, the $\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$ (0.762) is greater than its correlation with

Organizational Commitment (0.436) and Turnover Intention (-0.461). Similarly, Organizational Commitment's $\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$ (0.839) exceeds its correlations with Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention (-0.373). Finally, Turnover Intention's $\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$ (0.888) is greater than its correlations with the other two constructs. This confirms that each construct is empirically distinct and measures a unique concept within the model. In summary, Table 2 demonstrates that the measurement model employed in this study exhibits strong psychometric properties. The constructs of Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment, and Turnover Intention meet stringent criteria for reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity, thereby ensuring a sound foundation for the subsequent structural model analysis and hypothesis testing.

Table 1. Profile of non-permanent employee respondents at Universitas Lambung Mangkurat (N=128).

Characteristic	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Key observations
Age group	20 - 29 years	8	6.25%	A small segment of younger employees.
	30 - 39 years	74	57.81%	Majority of respondents; indicates a workforce largely in their primary working years.
	40 - 49 years	32	25.00%	A significant group in mid-career.
	50 - 58 years	14	10.94%	A smaller cohort of more senior non-permanent staff.
Gender	Male	79	61.72%	Predominantly male workforce among the non-permanent staff surveyed.
	Female	49	38.28%	A substantial female representation.
Educational background	SMP/SLTP (Junior High School)	9	7.03%	A minor group with junior secondary education.
	SMA/SLTA (Senior High School)	34	26.56%	Over a quarter of respondents hold senior secondary qualifications.
	D3 (Diploma)	4	3.13%	A small number of diploma holders.
	S1 (Bachelor's Degree)	72	56.25%	Dominant educational level; expected in a university setting, even for non-permanent roles.
	S2 (Master's Degree)	9	7.03%	A small but notable group with postgraduate qualifications.
Length of service	Less than 5 years	3	2.34%	Very few relatively new non-permanent employees in the sample.
	5 - 10 years	55	42.97%	Largest group by tenure; many have a considerable service history despite non-permanent status.
	10 - 15 years	49	38.28%	Another large group with significant long-term service, highlighting reliance on these contractual staff.
	15 - 20 years	15	11.72%	A smaller segment with very long service.
	More than 20 years	6	4.69%	A few individuals with over two decades of service as non-permanent staff, indicating deep-rooted precarity for some.
Total respondents		128	100.00%	



Table 2. Measurement model evaluation – reliability and validity of constructs.

Construct	Reliability measures	Value	Threshold met?	Convergent validity measures	Summary of findings
Job Satisfaction (JS)	Cronbach's Alpha	0.899	Yes (>0.70)	Outer Loadings (Range)	All 7 indicators exhibited outer loadings ranging from 0.706 to 0.827, all exceeding the 0.70 threshold.
	Composite Reliability (CR)	0.918	Yes (>0.70)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	The $\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$ was 0.762, indicating an AVE of approx. 0.581, which is >0.50.
Organizational Commitment (OC)	Cronbach's Alpha	0.858	Yes (>0.70)	Outer Loadings (Range)	All 3 indicators exhibited outer loadings ranging from 0.832 to 0.891, all exceeding the 0.70 threshold.
	Composite Reliability (CR)	0.904	Yes (>0.70)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	The $\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$ was 0.839, indicating an AVE of approx. 0.704, which is >0.50.
Turnover Intention (TI)	Cronbach's Alpha	0.909	Yes (>0.70)	Outer Loadings (Range)	All 4 indicators exhibited outer loadings ranging from 0.823 to 0.948, all exceeding the 0.70 threshold.
	Composite Reliability (CR)	0.937	Yes (>0.70)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	The $\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$ was 0.888, indicating an AVE of approx. 0.789, which is >0.50.

Discriminant validity evaluation (Fornell-Larcker Criterion).

Construct	Job satisfaction	Organizational commitment	Turnover intention
Job satisfaction	0.762		
Organizational commitment	0.436	0.839	
Turnover intention	-0.461	-0.373	0.888

Table 3 shows a consolidated summary of the structural model evaluation, providing critical insights into both the model's predictive capacity and the outcomes of the specific hypotheses tested regarding the relationships between Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment, and Turnover Intention among non-permanent academic staff. Initially, the model's explanatory power for the endogenous constructs was assessed. For Organizational Commitment, the R-Square value was 0.178 (R-Square Adjusted = 0.172), indicating that Job Satisfaction explained 17.8% of its variance. For Turnover Intention, the R-Square was 0.253 (R-Square Adjusted = 0.241), signifying that Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment collectively accounted for 25.3% of its variance. Both these R-Square values are characterized as weak, suggesting that while the predictors in the model contribute to explaining these outcomes, a substantial portion of the variance in both Organizational Commitment and Turnover Intention is influenced by other factors not included in this particular model.

The examination of direct effects revealed significant findings. Hypothesis H2, which posited a positive relationship between Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment, was supported ($\beta = 0.422$, T-Statistics = 4.141, P-Value = 0.000). This relationship demonstrated a moderate effect size (f-Square = 0.217), underscoring that higher job satisfaction among non-permanent employees significantly contributes to fostering a stronger sense of organizational commitment. Similarly, Hypothesis H1, predicting a negative relationship between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention, was also supported ($\beta = -0.371$, T-Statistics = 2.481, P-Value = 0.013). This path also exhibited a moderate effect size (f-Square = 0.152), indicating that increased job satisfaction plays a meaningful role in directly reducing non-permanent employees' intentions to leave the organization.

However, Hypothesis H3, which proposed a negative relationship between Organizational Commitment and Turnover Intention, was not supported ($\beta = -0.216$, T-Statistics = 1.608, P-Value = 0.108). The effect size for this path was weak (f-Square



= 0.052). This is a pivotal finding, suggesting that for this specific cohort of precariously employed staff, their level of commitment to the organization does not translate into a significant reduction in their intention to seek employment elsewhere. Consistent with the non-significant direct effect of Organizational Commitment on Turnover Intention, the mediating effect proposed in Hypothesis H4 was also not supported. The indirect effect of Job Satisfaction on Turnover Intention via Organizational Commitment was found to be non-significant (Indirect Effect β = -0.091, T-Statistics = 1.127, P-Value = 0.260). This implies that Organizational Commitment does not

serve as a significant intermediary mechanism through which Job Satisfaction influences Turnover Intention in this context. In essence, the structural model evaluation highlights Job Satisfaction as a direct and moderately strong predictor of both increased Organizational Commitment and decreased Turnover Intention. However, the anticipated role of Organizational Commitment as a direct deterrent to turnover, or as a mediator, was not substantiated for these non-permanent employees, pointing to the unique dynamics of employment relationships under conditions of precarity.

Table 3. Combined structural model evaluation and hypothesis testing results.

Evaluation aspect	Construct / Path	Metric	Value	Interpretation / Decision
Model explanatory power	Organizational Commitment	R-Square	0.178	17.8% of variance explained by Job Satisfaction.
		R-Square Adjusted	0.172	Adjusted for model complexity. Model strength considered weak.
	Turnover Intention	R-Square	0.253	25.3% of variance explained by Job Satisfaction & Organizational Commitment.
		R-Square Adjusted	0.241	Adjusted for model complexity. Model strength considered weak.
Hypothesis testing: Direct effects & effect sizes				
H2	Job Satisfaction → Organizational Commitment	Path Coefficient (β)	0.422	
		T-Statistics	4.141	
		P-Value	0.000	Significant (p < 0.05)
		f-Square (Effect Size)	0.217	Moderate Effect
		Decision		H2 Supported
H1	Job Satisfaction → Turnover Intention	Path Coefficient (β)	-0.371	
		T-Statistics	2.481	
		P-Value	0.013	Significant (p < 0.05)
		f-Square (Effect Size)	0.152	Moderate Effect
		Decision		H1 Supported
H3	Organizational Commitment → Turnover Intention	Path Coefficient (β)	-0.216	
		T-Statistics	1.608	
		P-Value	0.108	Not Significant (p > 0.05)
		f-Square (Effect Size)	0.052	Weak Effect
		Decision		H3 Not Supported
Hypothesis testing: Mediating effect				
H4	Job Satisfaction → Org. Commitment → Turnover Intention	Indirect Effect (β)*	-0.091	
		T-Statistics	1.127	
		P-Value	0.260	Not Significant (p > 0.05)
		Decision		H4 Not Supported (Organizational Commitment does not significantly mediate the relationship between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention)

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the attitudes and intentions of non-permanent (contractual) employees within Universitas Lambung Mangkurat, particularly concerning the interplay of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention in a context marked by precarious employment. Consistent with a vast body of research, this study confirmed that job satisfaction had a significant positive effect on organizational commitment (H2 supported) and a significant negative effect on turnover intention (H1 supported) among non-permanent employees at ULM. This suggests that even within the constraints of contractual employment, positive experiences related to aspects such as the work itself, supervision, coworker relationships, and potentially certain aspects of compensation or recognition, contributed to employees feeling more committed to the institution and less inclined to leave. The moderate effect sizes for these relationships further underscore the substantive importance of job satisfaction in shaping these outcomes.

The fact that non-permanent employees who reported higher job satisfaction also exhibited stronger organizational commitment indicates that daily positive work experiences can still foster a sense of attachment. Dimensions like supportive relationships with supervisors and colleagues, satisfaction with the work itself (including teaching and research engagement), and perhaps aspects of pay satisfaction were highlighted in the original document as important facets. These elements likely provided a degree of psychological comfort and emotional connection to the work and the immediate work environment (Poblete, 2018).

The most striking findings of this study were the non-significant direct effect of organizational commitment on turnover intention (H3 not supported) and the non-significant mediating role of organizational commitment in the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention (H4

not supported). These results deviate from many traditional models where organizational commitment is a robust predictor of turnover and a key mediator.

This divergence strongly suggests that the context of precarious employment fundamentally alters the dynamics of how organizational commitment influences turnover decisions for non-permanent academic staff. Several factors inherent to precarious work could explain this diminished role: **Uncertainty and Lack of Long-Term Prospects:** For employees on fixed-term contracts with no clear pathway to permanency, the psychological basis for strong, enduring affective or normative commitment may be weak. Even if they feel some level of commitment (as indicated by the significant H2), this commitment may not be potent enough to override the practical considerations and anxieties associated with job insecurity when contemplating leaving. **Transactional Psychological Contract:** Precarious employment relationships often tend towards a more transactional psychological contract, where the exchange is primarily based on defined work for defined pay, with fewer expectations of long-term mutual investment. In such cases, employees might perceive the organization's commitment to them as limited and temporary, thereby reciprocating with a form of commitment that is similarly conditional and less influential on long-term stay intentions. **Nature of Commitment:** While the study measured overall organizational commitment, it's possible that the dominant form of commitment among non-permanent staff, if any, might be continuance commitment (staying due to a lack of alternatives or perceived switching costs) rather than affective commitment (emotional attachment). Continuance commitment is generally a weaker predictor of positive work outcomes and less effective in reducing turnover intention compared to affective commitment. The study's finding implies that whatever commitment was present, it wasn't the type or strength needed to significantly deter turnover intentions. Primacy of Tangible and



Immediate Factors: In environments characterized by insecurity, individuals may place greater weight on immediate and tangible aspects of their employment, such as daily job satisfaction (enjoying the work, good relationships, adequate immediate rewards), rather than on a more abstract, long-term sense of organizational loyalty that may feel unreciprocated or unrealistic. Job satisfaction, in this sense, becomes a more direct and salient factor in their calculus of whether to stay or seek more stable opportunities elsewhere (Samaluk, 2021; Seo, 2017).

The finding that developing organizational commitment alone, without enhancing job satisfaction, is insufficient to reduce turnover intention among this group is a critical takeaway. It reinforces the idea that for precariously employed staff, the drivers of retention may differ significantly from those applicable to permanent employees. The results collectively point to the "dominance" of job satisfaction over organizational commitment in predicting the turnover intentions of non-permanent employees at ULM. While job satisfaction contributed to building some level of organizational commitment, this commitment did not, in turn, significantly prevent employees from intending to leave. Instead, job satisfaction exerted its influence on turnover intention more directly and significantly. This aligns with arguments that in uncertain employment conditions, individuals are more likely to be influenced by factors that affect their immediate well-being and work experience (Shweta, 2025; Trappmann, 2024).

The moderate effect size of job satisfaction on turnover intention, while not overwhelmingly large, was notably stronger than the weak and non-significant effect of organizational commitment. This suggests that managerial interventions aimed at improving aspects of the job that directly enhance satisfaction are likely to be more fruitful in retaining non-permanent staff than initiatives focused solely on fostering organizational commitment without addressing underlying satisfaction and security

concerns.

It is important to acknowledge that the R-Square values for both organizational commitment and turnover intention were relatively weak. This indicates that while job satisfaction (and to a lesser extent, organizational commitment for the former) explained a statistically significant portion of the variance, a substantial amount of variation in these outcomes remains unexplained by the current model. Theoretically, this study contributes by testing established models of turnover in the increasingly important but often under-studied context of precarious academic employment in a non-Western setting. The findings challenge the universal applicability of organizational commitment as a primary mediator and predictor of turnover, highlighting the moderating influence of employment conditions. It suggests that for precariously employed individuals, existing theories may need adaptation to account for the primacy of more immediate psychological rewards like job satisfaction (Trlifajová, 2023; Vatansever, 2023).

Practically, the study offers clear guidance for the management of Universitas Lambung Mangkurat and other higher education institutions relying on non-permanent staff. The primary recommendation is to prioritize strategies aimed at enhancing job satisfaction. This could involve improving working conditions, ensuring fair and transparent treatment, providing opportunities for skill development even within contractual limitations, fostering supportive supervisory and collegial relationships, and offering competitive compensation and recognition where possible. While fostering commitment is not unimportant, efforts to do so are unlikely to yield significant retention benefits unless coupled with robust measures to improve job satisfaction and, ideally, address the underlying issues of precarity itself by exploring pathways to more stable employment where feasible. Formulating inclusive HR policies that acknowledge the specific needs and



contributions of contractual employees is also critical.

5. Conclusion

This study investigated the influence of job satisfaction on turnover intention among non-permanent employees at Universitas Lambung Mangkurat, examining the mediating role of organizational commitment. The research provides important empirical insights into human resource management within Indonesian public higher education institutions, specifically concerning the growing cohort of contractual employees operating under conditions of precarious employment. The primary conclusions derived from this research indicate that job satisfaction among non-permanent employees significantly and positively influenced their organizational commitment, meaning those more satisfied with their roles exhibited greater psychological attachment to the institution. Concurrently, job satisfaction exerted a significant negative influence on turnover intention, as increased satisfaction directly reduced the likelihood of these employees intending to leave. However, a critical finding was that organizational commitment, within this specific context of contractual employment at ULM, did not demonstrate a significant direct effect on turnover intention; the level or nature of commitment formed appeared insufficient on its own to deter departure considerations. Furthermore, organizational commitment did not significantly mediate the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention. Instead, the influence of job satisfaction on turnover intention was found to be predominantly direct, underscoring the dominance of job satisfaction as a predictor of turnover intentions in this precarious employment setting. In essence, for non-permanent academic staff at ULM, feeling satisfied with their job was a more critical factor in their decision to stay or leave than their overall level of commitment to the university. The inherent instability and limited long-term prospects associated with their

contractual status likely tempered the power of organizational commitment as a retention lever.

6. References

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