

# THE INFLUENCES OF COMPETENCY, ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT, AND JOB SATISFACTION ON THE EFFICIENCY OF AIRPORT GROUND STAFF IN THAILAND'S LOW-COST AIRLINES\*

อิทธิพลของสมรรถนะ ความผูกพันต่อองค์กร และความพึงพอใจในงาน  
ที่มีผลต่อประสิทธิภาพการปฏิบัติงานของพนักงานบริการภาคพื้น  
ประจำสนามบินของสายการบินต้นทุนต่ำในประเทศไทย



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## Abstract

This research article has the objective 1. assess the levels of competency, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and employee efficiency. 2. investigate the direct and indirect influences of these factors on employee efficiency. 3. develop a comprehensive model to illustrate these relationships. To achieve these objectives, a mixed-methods research design was adopted, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. Quantitative research involved distributing surveys to 300 airport ground staff of low-cost airlines in Thailand. Qualitative research involved semi-structured interviews with 10 key informants. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and content analysis.

Findings revealed 1. high overall levels: the overall average of competency, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and employee efficiency among airport ground staff in Thai low-cost airlines were found to be high (average = 3.99). Competency has the highest average rating (4.44), followed by employee efficiency (4.06), job satisfaction (3.84), and organizational commitment (3.64). 2. significant relationships: this study found significant relationships among

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competency, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and employee efficiency. Competency and organizational commitment were found to have a positive influence on job satisfaction, which in turn had a direct effect on employee efficiency. Additionally, both competency and organizational commitment indirectly influenced employee efficiency through job satisfaction. 3. ACAW Model was developed based on the identified direct and indirect effect, as well as the combined influence of latent variables that interact with each other. This model provides a visual representation of the complex relationships between the four key factors. The study highlights the importance of human capital in the aviation industry and provides valuable insights for policymakers and industry practitioners, emphasizing the need to invest in employee development and foster a positive work environment to enhance employee efficiency and organizational performance.

**Keywords:** Competency; Organizational Commitment; Job Satisfaction

## บทคัดย่อ

บทความวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์ 1. ประเมินระดับสมรรถนะ ความผูกพันต่อองค์กร ความพึงพอใจในงาน และประสิทธิภาพการทำงานของพนักงาน 2. ศึกษาอิทธิพลทางตรงและทางอ้อมของปัจจัยเหล่านี้ต่อประสิทธิภาพการทำงานของพนักงาน 3. สร้างแบบจำลองเพื่ออธิบายความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างปัจจัยต่าง ๆ การวิจัยแบบผสานวิธี โดยการวิจัยเชิงปริมาณเป็นการนำ และการวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพเป็นการสนับสนุน การวิจัยแบบเชิงปริมาณใช้วิธีแจกแบบสอบถามให้กับพนักงานบริการภาคพื้นประจำนามบิน สายการบินต้นทุนต่ำในประเทศไทย จำนวน 300 คน และการวิจัยแบบเชิงคุณภาพใช้การสัมภาษณ์เชิงลึกแบบกึ่งโครงสร้างสัมภาษณ์ผู้ให้ข้อมูลสำคัญ 10 คน การวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลใช้สถิติเชิงพรรณนาและการวิเคราะห์เนื้อหา

ผลการศึกษาพบว่า 1. ค่าเฉลี่ยโดยรวมของสมรรถนะ ความผูกพันต่อองค์กร ความพึงพอใจในงาน และประสิทธิภาพการทำงานของพนักงานภาคพื้นดิน: สายการบินต้นทุนต่ำของไทย มีระดับสูง (ค่าเฉลี่ย=3.99) โดยสมรรถนะมีค่าเฉลี่ยสูงสุด (4.44) รองลงมาคือประสิทธิภาพการทำงานของพนักงาน (4.06) ความพึงพอใจในงาน (3.84) และความผูกพันต่อองค์กร (3.64) 2. มีความสัมพันธ์ที่มีนัยสำคัญระหว่างสมรรถนะ ความผูกพันต่อองค์กร ความพึงพอใจในงาน และประสิทธิภาพของพนักงาน โดยสมรรถนะและความผูกพันต่อองค์กรมีอิทธิพลเชิงบวกต่อความพึงพอใจในงาน ซึ่งมีอิทธิพลทางตรงต่อประสิทธิภาพการทำงานของพนักงาน นอกจากนี้ สมรรถนะและความผูกพันต่อองค์กรยังมีอิทธิพลทางอ้อมต่อประสิทธิภาพการทำงานของพนักงานผ่านความพึงพอใจในงาน 3. แบบจำลอง ACAW ได้รับการพัฒนาจากอิทธิพล



ทั้งทางตรงและทางอ้อมที่ระบุไว้ รวมถึงอิทธิพลร่วมของตัวแปรแฟ่ที่มีปฏิสัมพันธ์ซึ่งกันและกัน แบบจำลองนี้แสดงความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างปัจจัยทั้ง 4 การศึกษานี้เน้นถึงความสำคัญของทุน มนุษย์ในอุตสาหกรรมการบิน และให้ข้อมูลที่มีคุณค่าสำหรับผู้กำหนดนโยบายและผู้ปฏิบัติงาน โดยย้ำถึงความจำเป็นในการลงทุนพัฒนาพนักงานและส่งเสริมสภาพแวดล้อมการทำงานที่ดีเพื่อ เพิ่มประสิทธิภาพของพนักงานและประสิทธิภาพขององค์กร

**คำสำคัญ:** สมรรถนะ; ความผูกพันต่องค์กร; ความพึงพอใจในงาน

## Introduction

The aviation industry is a key driver of economic growth, particularly in tourism-dependent countries like Thailand. It contributes directly and indirectly through consumption, employment, trade, and investment (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2021). As the global aviation industry recovers, Thailand's tourism sector is projected to experience significant growth, with foreign tourist arrivals increasing from 28.2 million in 2023 to 35.6 million in 2024 (Macroeconomic Team, 2024). To ensure long-term sustainability, the Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand (CAAT) has implemented a five-year plan (2023-2027) aimed at enhancing the industry's capacity and efficiency.

However, the aviation industry faces challenges in post-pandemic recovery, including a shortage of skilled labor, intense competition, and evolving customer expectations, as evidenced by recent staffing issues at Suvarnabhumi Airport.

Airport ground staff play a vital role in the efficient operation of airlines, especially within the low-cost carrier model, which relies on cost-effective and timely service delivery. Their performance directly impacts customer satisfaction and overall operational efficiency. However, as noted by Noothong & Monpanthong (2020), there have been frequent complaints regarding ground staff service, and challenges such as cost reduction measures and training limitations can hinder their ability to deliver optimal service.

To effectively address the challenges faced by airport ground staff, a multifaceted skillset is required, encompassing knowledge, skills, and service competencies. This skillset is crucial for delivering exceptional service and fostering passenger loyalty. Competency, a combination of knowledge, skills, and attitude, is a pivotal factor in employee performance within the aviation industry.



Furthermore, organizational commitment is essential for engaged and motivated employees, thereby leading to enhanced productivity and job satisfaction (Munda et al., 2024). Additionally, job satisfaction is influenced by various factors, including job characteristics, interpersonal relationships, promotions, salary, and work-life balance, with promotions having the strongest positive impact (Silitonga et al., 2017).

To mitigate these challenges and optimize ground staff efficiency, it is essential to understand the factors that influence their performance. The researcher wishes to find out the specific factors of competency, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction that drive the efficiency of ground staff in Thailand's low-cost airline industry. This research will provide valuable insights for policymakers, airline management, and human resource professionals to implement strategies that enhance employee performance, boost operational efficiency, and ultimately contribute to the sustainable growth of the aviation sector.

## Research Objectives

1. to examine the levels of competency, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and employee efficiency of airport ground staff of low-cost airlines in Thailand
2. to investigate the direct and indirect influences between competence, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and employee efficiency of airport ground staff of low-cost airlines in Thailand
3. to develop a model illustrating the relationships between competence, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and employee efficiency of airport ground staff of low-cost airlines in Thailand

## Methodology

### 1. Research Design

This mixed-methods research investigated the relationships between competency, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and employee efficiency among airport ground staff of 4 low-cost airlines in Thailand: Thai AirAsia,

Nok Air, Thai Lion Air, and Thai Vietjet Air. The total population size was 4,761 individuals.

A mixed-methods approach was employed to gain a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing employee efficiency. This approach combines the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative research.

## 2. Populations and Samples

2 . 1 Quantitative research Data Collection: A structured questionnaire with three sections was administered to 300 airport ground staff from four low-cost airlines in Thailand. The questionnaire collected demographic data (age, gender, years of experience, job title, salary, workplace, and education), responses to research questions, and additional opinions. Qualitative Phase Data Collection: In-depth interviews were conducted with 10 key informants from four low-cost airlines in Thailand. These informants included 8 management personnel, 1 expert, and 1 operational-level employee with at least 3 years of experience

2.2 Qualitative research the sample size of 300 was determined based on Westland (2010) rule of thumb, which recommends a sample size of 5 to 20 times the number of observed variables. The population was divided into strata based on the specific airlines, and individuals were randomly selected from each stratum within a timeframe of June to July 2024. This stratified random sampling ensured that the sample was representative of the entire population of ground staff across the different airlines. Qualitative Phase Sampling: Purposive sampling was used to select participants based on their expertise and perspectives on the research topic.

## 3. Research Instruments

- 3.1 Quantitative research Use a questionnaire
- 3.2 Qualitative research Use in-depth interviews

## 4. Data Collection

4.1 Quantitative research Data were collected from 300 sets of questionnaires.

4.2 Qualitative research Data were collected from interviews with key informants.



## 5. Data analysis Statistics used to analyzed the data

5.1 Quantitative research Descriptive statistics (e.g., frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations) were used to summarize the quantitative data. Inferential statistics were employed to examine relationships between variables. The questionnaire's reliability, measured by Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient, was found to be high (0.890), indicating its effectiveness in measuring the intended constructs. Individual sections also demonstrated high reliability: competency (0.891), job satisfaction (0.847), organizational commitment (0.861), and employee efficiency (0.816).

5.2 Qualitative research Thematic analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data. The interviews were transcribed and coded to identify key themes and patterns.

## Results

### Summary of the demographic information

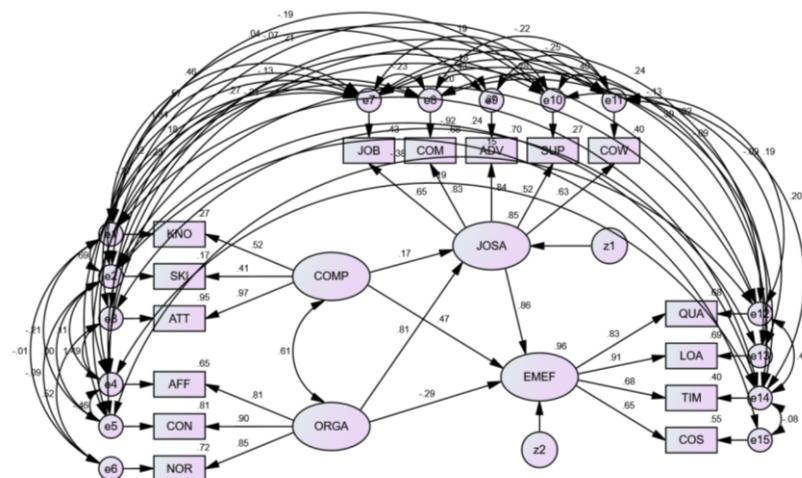
The majority of respondents were female (62.3%), aged between 25 and 35 (48.3%), and held bachelor's degrees (91.0%). Additionally, the average monthly income was between 20,001 and 30,000 Thai Baht (39.3%). Furthermore, the most common airline worked for was Thai AirAsia (52.7%), followed by Thai Vietjet Air (17.0%), Thai Lion Air (13.0%), and Nok Air (17.3%). Finally, the majority of respondents (74.3%) were operational-level employees with less than 3 years of work experience (44.7%).

### Summary of the research objective

First, conducted a first order confirmatory factor analysis to assess the validity of the proposed constructs. Then, a structural equation modeling analysis will be performed to evaluate the model's fit with the data. Specialized software will be used, employing the maximum likelihood estimation method to estimate parameters. The goodness-of-fit will be assessed using various criteria, including Relative Chi-Square p-value, GFI, AGFI, CFI, NFI, TLI, RMR, SRMR, and RMSEA.

**Table 1** Assessing the Model Fit of the Structural Equation Model: Influences of Competency, Organizational Commitment, and Job Satisfaction on Employee Efficiency of Airport Ground Staff in Thailand's Low-Cost Airlines (After Model Modification)

Fit Index	Criteria	Value	Result
p-value	$1 < \text{p-value} < 0.05$	0.103	Passed
Chi-Square/df (CMIN/DF)	$0 < \text{Chi-Square/df} < 2$	1.302	Passed
GFI	$0.90 < \text{GFI} < 1.00$	0.978	Passed
AGFI	$0.90 < \text{AGFI} < 1.00$	0.929	Passed
CFI	$0.90 < \text{CFI} < 1.00$	0.997	Passed
NFI	$0.90 < \text{NFI} < 1.00$	0.987	Passed
TLI	$0.90 < \text{TLI} < 1.00$	0.991	Passed
RMR	$0 < \text{RMR} < 0.05$	0.023	Passed
SRMR	$0 < \text{SRMR} < 0.05$	0.036	Passed
RMSEA	$0 < \text{RMSEA} < 0.05$	0.032	Passed



Chi-square = 48.189, df = 37, P-value = .103, Chi-square/df = 1.302,  
 GFI = .978, AGFI = .929, CFI = .997, NFI = .987, TLI = .991,  
 RMR = .023, SRMR = .036, RMSEA = .032

**Figure 2** Structural Equation Model of Competency, Organizational Commitment, Job Satisfaction, and Their Influence on Employee Efficiency in Airport Ground Staff: Low-Cost Airlines in Thailand (After Model Modification 1)



The results can answer all 3 objectives.

**Table 2** Level of importance

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Competency (COMP)	4.64	0.39	High
Organizational Commitment (ORAG)	3.64	0.79	High
Job Satisfaction (JOSA)	3.84	0.73	High
Employee Efficiency (EMEF)	4.06	0.63	High
Overall	3.99	0.55	High

Objective 1 . to examine the levels of Competency, Organizational Commitment, Job Satisfaction, and Efficiency of Airport Ground Staff of Low-Cost Airlines in Thailand.

From Table 2 found that the overall average rating for the various dimensions assessed among airport ground staff of low-cost airlines in Thailand was high (Mean=3.99). Competency emerged as the strongest dimension, with a very high average rating (Mean=4.64). Employee efficiency also demonstrated a high average rating (Mean=4.06). Both job satisfaction and organizational commitment received high average ratings (Mean=3.84 and Mean=3.64 , respectively). These findings indicate that the airport ground staff of low-cost airlines in Thailand are generally well-equipped, perform efficiently, and exhibit positive attitudes towards their work and the organization.

**Table 3** Structural Equation Model Results

Dependent Variables	Effect	Independent Variables			
		COMP	ORGA	JOSA	EMEF
JOSA	DE	0.173**	0.806***	...	...
	IE	...	...	...	...
	TE	0.173**	0.806***	...	...
EMEF	DE	0.468***	-0.293*	0.863***	...
	IE	0.149*	0.696***	..	...
	TE	0.617***	0.403***	0.863***	...

JOSA = Job Satisfaction, EMEF = Employee Efficiency, COMP = Competency, ORGA= Organizational Commitment, DE = Direct Effect, IE = Indirect Effect, TE = Total Effect

Objective 2 . to investigate the direct and indirect effect between competency, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and efficiency of airport

ground staff of low-cost airlines in Thailand. From Table 3, the analysis reveals that Job satisfaction (JOSA) is positively influenced by both competence (COMP) and organizational commitment (ORGA). Specifically, individuals with higher levels of competence tend to report greater job satisfaction, as indicated by a direct effect coefficient of 0.173. Additionally, a strong positive direct effect of 0.806 exists between organizational commitment and job satisfaction, suggesting that employees who are more committed to their organizations are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs. Employee Efficiency (EMEF) is significantly influenced by both competence (COMP) and job satisfaction (JOSA). Specifically, individuals with higher levels of competence tend to have higher efficiency, as indicated by a strong positive direct effect of 0.468. Additionally, job satisfaction has a strong positive direct effect on employee efficiency, with a coefficient of 0.863. While organizational commitment (ORGA) has a slightly negative direct effect on employee efficiency with a coefficient of -0.293, this effect is not statistically significant. Furthermore, the indirect effect of COMP on EMEF through JOSA suggests that part of the impact of competence on employee efficiency is mediated through job satisfaction.

Objective 3. to develop a model illustrating the relationships between competency, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and efficiency of airport ground staff of low-cost airlines in Thailand found that the model demonstrates a good fit to the data, as indicated by the various fit indices, including Chi-Square (48,189), df (37), Relative Chi-Square (1.302), p-value (0.103), GFI (0.978), AGFI (0.929), CFI (0.997), NFI (0.987), TLI (0.991), RMR (0.023), SRMR (0.036), and RMSEA (0.032). These values suggest that the proposed relationships between the variables are supported by the empirical evidence.

The researcher proposes ACAW Model (Attitudes, Continuance Commitment, Advancement & Workload). This model provides a valuable framework for understanding the factors that influence employee efficiency. By assessing these four components from the model fit after the second modification, organizations can identify areas for improvement and implement strategies to enhance employee engagement and productivity.



## Discussion

The study examined the interrelationships among competency, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and employee efficiency among ground staff in Thai low-cost airlines. The findings of this study revealed that 1. the overall levels of Competency, Organizational Commitment, Job Satisfaction, and Efficiency of Airport Ground Staff of Low-Cost Airlines in Thailand are high. This positive finding suggests that these employees are generally satisfied with their jobs, motivated to perform well, and possess the necessary skills and knowledge to carry out their duties effectively. Competency, particularly technical, communication, teamwork, and problem-solving skills, significantly influences employee performance. Investing in these areas through training and development can enhance employee performance and mitigate operational issues. The findings of this study align with previous studies by Kankaew & Vadhanasindhu (2020), which identified essential competencies for aviation personnel, including volunteerism, cultural diversity management, communication and interpersonal skills, and technological skills. Moreover, in line with Chodchoy et al. (2022)'s investigation of factors influencing the quality of service provided by hotel staff, this study underscores the importance of investing in employee training and development to enhance their competency. 2. the study demonstrates that job satisfaction is positively influenced by both competency and organizational commitment, leading to higher employee efficiency. While organizational commitment has a slightly negative direct effect on employee efficiency, this effect is not statistically significant, suggesting a complex relationship influenced by other factors. Continuance commitment can lead to dissatisfaction if employees feel disengaged or avoid new challenges and related to the study of Panin et al. (2024), which examined the impact of compensation, informal organizational arrangements, and organizational commitment on employee turnover and performance in Ghanaian banks. Their research indicated that organizational commitment does not have a significant positive impact on employee performance, as evidenced by a p-value of 0.099. This suggests that employees' commitment to the organization is not significantly related to their work performance. 3. The ACAW model identifies four key factors that influence employee efficiency in low-cost airlines: attitudes, continuance commitment,

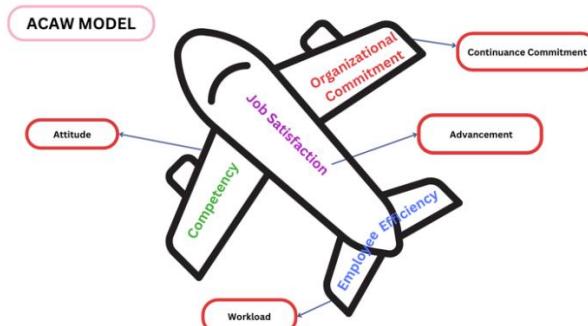
advancement opportunities, and workload balance was developed demonstrates a good fit to the data, as indicated by the various fit indices, including Chi-Square (48,189), df (37), Relative Chi-Square (1.302), p-value (0.103), GFI (0.978), AGFI (0.929), CFI (0.997), NFI (0.987), TLI (0.991), RMR (0.023), SRMR (0.036), and RMSEA (0.032). By understanding and addressing these factors, organizations can improve employee engagement, productivity, and overall job satisfaction, this related to Jantasang (2022) conducted research to develop a causal model of job satisfaction and organizational commitment that impact the performance of academic support staff. The research found that job satisfaction and organizational commitment positively influence the performance of academic support staff. Job satisfaction indirectly impacts performance through its effect on organizational commitment.

The findings align with qualitative research conducted with 10 key informants from four low-cost airlines, including management and experienced staff. The data indicate that competency, particularly a positive attitude, knowledge, and skills, is crucial for efficient service delivery. As one interviewee noted, "A positive attitude is essential for good customer service and problem-solving." Airport ground staff also demonstrate strong work commitment, job and colleague loyalty, responsibility, job satisfaction, problem-solving skills, teamwork abilities, and adaptability. Teamwork skills are essential for achieving operational goals effectively. As another interviewee emphasized, "Teamwork is crucial for smooth operations, especially during peak times." Employees who feel emotionally connected to their airline and are dedicated to their work are more likely to exhibit high performance and remain with the organization. Factors such as a sense of belonging, involvement in decision-making, positive relationships, and a supportive work environment contribute to employee commitment. Additionally, a positive work environment with supportive colleagues, fair compensation, clear communication, and growth opportunities leads to higher job satisfaction and enhances their performance. As one interviewee stated, "A supportive work environment can boost morale and motivation, leading to increased productivity and job satisfaction."



## Body of knowledge

The study proposes the ACAW Model (Attitudes, Continuance Commitment, Advancement & Workload) identifies four key factors that influence employee efficiency in low-cost airlines: attitudes, continuance commitment, advancement, and workload. By assessing these four components, organizations can identify areas for improvement and implement strategies to enhance employee engagement and productivity. Findings from the study indicate that competency, encompassing knowledge, skills, and attitudes, empowers employees to perform tasks effectively. Attitudes, a key component of competency, significantly influence employee behavior and job satisfaction (Martini et al., 2023). When employees possess positive attitudes, they are more likely to feel confident, take initiative, handle challenges effectively, and build positive relationships with colleagues. These factors ultimately contribute to increased job satisfaction and overall organizational success. Organizational commitment, particularly continuance commitment, this can lead to increased organizational stability, as experienced employees stay with the company, contributing to improved performance and efficiency (Ismail et al., 2024). Opportunities for career advancement can significantly enhance job satisfaction. When employees feel that they have opportunities to grow and develop, they are more likely to be motivated and engaged in their work. Lastly, effective workload management ensures optimal performance, directly impacting employee efficiency. By strategically addressing these factors, airlines can significantly improve employee efficiency and gain a competitive advantage in the industry.



**Figure 3:** ACAW Model (Attitudes, Continuance Commitment, Advancement, Workload)

This study examines the relationships between competency, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction, and their influences on the work efficiency of ground staff in Thailand's low-cost airline. Findings indicate that competency, including an attitude and essential skills, is a fundamental driver of task efficiency. Attitudes, such as emotional control and pride contribute to job satisfaction, and effective efficiency. Organizational commitment, specifically continuance commitment, supports work efficiency by promoting long-term retention and workforce stability. Additionally, Job satisfaction linked to career advancement opportunities fosters engagement and motivation, allowing employees to contribute more actively to the organization's productivity goals (Azmy et al., 2023). Workload management is crucial for maintaining efficiency and ensuring successful flight operations. Airport ground staff must prioritize efficiency in their operations to ensure successful flight operations, maintain customer satisfaction, and contribute to the overall success of the airline industry. By optimizing their workflows and utilizing resources effectively, ground staff can play a vital role in enhancing the efficiency and reputation of the airline industry.

## Recommendations

### Policy Recommendations

The study underscores the significance of competency, particularly in specific areas like technical skills, communication skills, teamwork abilities, and problem-solving skills, for enhancing employee performance. Management should prioritize training and development in these areas, foster a positive work environment, and actively listen to employee feedback to create a conducive environment for employee growth and performance. To foster commitment, organizations should create a sense of belonging, provide job security, ensure fair treatment, and maintain a positive work environment. Effective communication and transparent leadership are also vital for building trust and encouraging employee commitment.

### Operational Recommendations

Enhance Employee Training and Development Programs To improve employee efficiency among airport ground staff in Thailand's low-cost airlines, airlines should implement continuous training and development programs



focused on enhancing technical skills, communication abilities, teamwork, and problem-solving capabilities.

### Recommendations for Next Research

Future research should investigate factors influencing safety and service quality to identify strategies for enhancing airport ground staff effectiveness. Safety is paramount in the aviation industry, directly impacting passenger and employee well-being.

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