

How Proactive Teachers Become Committed: Work Engagement as a Key Mechanism in the Indonesian Education Context

Ifna Ratrika Enggarsari¹, Olievia Prabandini Mulyana^{2*)}

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Abstract

In education, teachers play a role in carrying out their duties as an educator for the continuity of education. Based on data the percentage of teachers experiencing fatigue and turnover tends also be high. This study was conducted with the aim of empirically determining the relationship between Proactive Personality and Job Commitment with Works Engagement as a mediator. This study used a quantitative method with purposive sampling technique and involved 112 elementary school teachers as the research sample. Three primary scales were used in this study, Proactive Personality with the Proactive Personality Scale (PPS), Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ), and Work Engagement UWES-9 (Utrecht Work Engagement Scale-9). Mediation analysis was performed using Hayes 5.0 PROCESS Macro with bootstrapping was performed 10,000 times with a 95% confidence interval. The Result showed that proactive personality had a significant effect on job commitment with work engagement as a partial mediator ($b = 0.31$ and 95% significant with $CI = 0.16, 0.51$). Proactive personality had a significant effect on work engagement ($b = 0.35$ and $p < 0.001$). Work engagement had a significant on job commitment ($b = 0.89$ and $p < 0.001$). This study found that work engagement has a partial effect on the relationship between proactive personality and job commitment.

Keywords: Indonesia, Job Commitment, Proactive Personality, Sustainable Development Goals, Teacher, Work Engagement

INTRODUCTION

SDGs point 4 emphasize the importance of inclusive and equitable quality education for all individuals, and targets the sustainable improvement of human resource (Situmeang et al., 2021). One of its specific targets are SDGs 4c, focuses on increasing the supply of qualified, trained, and professionally supported teachers (Boeren, 2019). In this context, teacher commitment is an important prerequisite because teachers with high commitment tend to stay longer, work more effectively, and contribute to the quality of learning. Education is a deliberate, systematic, and continuous effort to share, provoke, or acquire knowledge, values, attitudes, skills, or sensitivities that can be used in everyday life (Devadze et al., 2022). Through education, individuals not only develop academic capacity, but also social and professional skills enable them to contribute constructively to society.

Education is important for a country because it is a major pillar in human resource development. In the Indonesian context, the quality of education especially at the elementary school level remains a strategic issue. The national education system faces complex challenges, ranging from the quality of learning to the welfare and career sustainability of teachers. Teachers play an important role in its implementation. In Indonesia, according to data from Kementrian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi, there are more than 3.1 million teachers. However, several studies indicate serious challenges related to the sustainability of the teaching profession. For instance, Destiani & Nurhayaty (2024) reported that more than 10% of teachers in Indonesia each year show turnover intention, which is the desire to leave the teaching profession within a year. This problem emphasizes that psychological factors such a proactive personality and work engagement play an important role in teachers' commitment to achieving SDG target (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2023).

Teachers play an important role in the part of education for teaching and learning. Teachers have an important role as agents of change and spearheads in educating the nation's future generations who will then strengthen human resources (Efendi et al., 2023). With their important role, teachers often have low job commitment. Job commitment is defined as emotional attachment, continuity, and norms toward an organization (Puryana & Shidiqy, 2021). Job commitment is an individual's tendency to behave actively and responsibly (Fajriyanti et al., 2023). Basically, every individual has commitment, but the

^{1, 2*)} Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Negeri Surabaya; Surabaya, Indonesia

*) *corresponding author*

Dr. Olievia Prabandini Mulyana, S. Psi., M. Psi., Psikolog

Department of Psychology, Faculty of Psychology,
Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Indonesia
Jl. Lidah Wetan, Lidah Wetan, Kec. Lakarsantri, Kota
Surabaya, Jawa Timur 60213
Email: olieviaprabandini@unesa.ac.id

proportion and form of commitment in each individual is not always the same. The job commitment of teachers will create a professional work situation and the expected working conditions.

According to Robbins & Judge (2016), job commitment is a condition possessed by workers in the form of a strong desire to maintain their relationship with the institution where they work (Maryani et al., 2022). Job commitment also considers how teachers have the ability to carry out and achieve the organization's overall goals (Hasibuan, 2016; Mustaghfiroh et al., 2020). Teachers with high job commitment tend to develop their abilities to help achieve the goals of the institution where they work, which will also affect the quality and education system in place. This job commitment will be influenced by several psychological factors such as work engagement and proactive personality, which will determine the level of commitment possessed by teachers.

In order to increase teacher commitment, supporting factors must be considered to achieve the organization's goals. One of these supporting factors is employee attachment to their work. This work attachment can be seen in positive, satisfying working conditions and affection-motivation. Kahn (1990) describes the concept of work engagement as a description of a person's full involvement in work in terms of physical, cognitive, emotional, and mental aspects, which can be seen in their role at work (Hisbullah & Izzati, 2021). Work engagement focuses on the role of workers in an institution in relation to the level of worker motivation and commitment in carrying out their roles (Mazzetti et al., 2021; Faustine & Zamralita, 2024). High work engagement will increase the effectiveness of an institution. Work engagement is characterized by a positive mindset, enthusiasm, dedication, and complete focus on the workplace (Lailla et al., 2024).

Work engagement has three dimensions that discuss positive states and motivation in individuals, characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption, which can be seen as the opposite of fatigue (Elfitasari et al., 2020). Vigor is feeling of enthusiasm in work hard, be responsive, and be able to preserve in difficult circumstance. Dedication is a strong commitment to one's work, making individuals enjoy their work despite obstacles, be enthusiastic, and feel responsible. Absorption is a form of complete concentration at work, making individuals feel that working hours pass quickly, feel comfortable, and find it difficult to detach themselves from their work. Teachers with good work engagement will carry out their work roles, work and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally while demonstrating their performance (Febriansyah & Ginting, 2020). There are other supporting factors that will make teachers have good job commitment, namely proactive personality.

Proactive personality is defined as an individual personality that is relatively unconstrained by situational forces and an individual's tendency to interact with the environment in ways that lead to constructive change (Bateman & Crant, 1993). A proactive personality is one that actively seeks to influence the surrounding environment (Pan et al., 2021). According to Mahardika & Kistyanto (2020), proactive personality consists of four indicators, namely detecting opportunities, initiative, taking action, and persistence (Rahmawati, 2024). Teachers with proactive personalities will tend to be able to see opportunities to take initiative and persevere until what they do brings about significant change. This is because these teachers are sensitive to the signals given by their surroundings and have a high willingness to make changes to the problems that are occurring. This is in line with the

understanding of proactive personality that individuals will have a tendency to take initiative, be able to overcome problems, and be able to make positive changes in their work (Ma et al., 2024).

Several studies have discussed the same thing, in the context of education especially teachers, there is still not much empirical evidence regarding how job commitment is based on work engagement and proactive personality. Previous studies have only discussed proactive personality descriptively without complete quantitative mediation testing, leaving a gap in how this variable as a mediator affects teacher commitment amid local challenges such as habituation and adaptation to administrative burdens (Rahmawati, 2024). Although the relationship between proactive personality, work engagement, and job commitment has been extensively studied in the context of business organizations and the corporate sector, empirical evidence in the context of education particularly among elementary school teachers in Indonesia remains limited. Previous studies have generally focused on organizational commitment or situational factors such as leadership and school culture, while the role of personality as a key psychological predictor and the mediating mechanism of work engagement have rarely been tested quantitatively.

The novelty of this research lies in testing the work engagement mediation model in the relationship between proactive personality and job commitment with elementary school teachers as a participant, which is rarely done in Indonesian educational literature. Job commitment supported by factors such as work engagement and proactive personality in teachers will help the effectiveness of the institutions of education office to understand the job commitment of their employees. This research provides a new contribution by placing proactive personality as the main predictor of teacher job commitment, while also testing the role of work engagement as a psychological mechanism that bridges this influence.

Teachers, as the spearhead of human resource development who work with commitment, attachment, and a good proactive personality, will help the agency achieve its goals, thereby producing quality resources. This study is relevant to the current state of education, particularly the implementation of Merdeka Belajar curriculum and the increasing administrative burden on teachers, so that the findings reflect the dynamics of teachers in the modern education era. The main contribution of this study is to fill the literature gap with quantitative empirical evidence regarding this mediation model in teachers, which will enrich the theory of organizational personality (Sari & Widodo, 2020).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Participant characteristics and research design

According to John W. Creswell, population refers to a group of individuals or objects, items, and other relevant elements who share common characteristics or relatively similar (Creswell, 2023). Participant characteristic are described in Table 1. This study uses a quantitative method to test and measure objective theories by identifying the relationship between each variable or comparisons between groups (Creswell, 2023). The quantitative approach is research method that focused on testing phenomena through measurement and numerical analysis (Creswell, 2020). In this study, there are independent variables

(Proactive Personality), dependent variables (job commitment), and mediator variables (Work Engagement).

Table 1. Demography of participants

Characteristic	Total	Percentage
Gender		
Female	83	74.1%
Male	29	25.9%
Age		
Early adulthood	51	45.5%
Middle-aged	61	54.5%
Education		
Bachelor's degree	111	99.1%
Master's degree	1	0.9%
Teaching Experience		
5-10 years	81	72.3%
11-20 years	28	25%
21-25 years	3	2.7%

Sampling procedures

A sample is a small portion of a population that has certain characteristics that will be used in research (Sujarweni, 2019). This study used non-probability sampling techniques specifically purposive sampling, whereby the researcher selected subjects based on the criteria of being elementary school and 5 years minimum of level experience. According to Creswell (2023), purposive sampling is a sampling technique in which research deliberately select participants based on specific considerations and criteria deemed most relevant to the research, rather than randomly. Sample size calculation using the G Power 3.1.9.7 application resulted in a minimum sample size of 70 respondents. The sample size in this study was 112 of elementary school teachers in Nganjuk.

Sample size, power, and precision

This study used a sample of 112 of elementary school teachers. The job commitment scale uses the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) in Indonesia from (Rahmania & Islaha, 2023.), referring to the measurement tool developed by Mowday et al. (1982). It measures three aspects, namely identification, involvement, and loyalty, consisting of 14 statement items. On the Work Engagement scale, the researchers used the Indonesian version of the UWES-9 (Utrecht Work Engagement Scale-9) measurement tool from (Kristiana et al., 2019), measuring three aspects, namely vigor, dedication, and absorption from Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzales-Roma & Bakker (2002), consisting of 9 statement items. The Proactive Personality Scale was measured using the PPS (Proactive Personality Scale) in the Indonesian version from (Viratasya & Kadiyono (2024), consisting of 17 statement items referring to the measurement tool developed by Bateman & Crant (1993).

Measures

Job commitment in this study refers to Mowday (1982). Job commitment is a recognition and significant participation of employees in a particular agency or organization (Mowday et al., 1982). Commitment to an organization is a psychological construct in the form of the characteristics of a member's relationship with their organization and has implications for a person's decision to

continue their membership in the organization (Merwina & Widawati, 2019). This condition is characterized by individuals who work actively, positively, and responsibly.

Work engagement in this study refers to Schaufeli et al. (2002), where it is defined as a positive state of mind related to work characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. Committed individuals will invest a lot of personal energy in carrying out their roles at work.

Bateman & Crant (1993) define individuals with proactive personalities as people who are relatively unconstrained by situational circumstances and influence environmental change. Proactive personality refers to an individual's tendency to take the initiative in creating a positive environment (Yulidha & Fajrianthi, 2024).

Data were collected through an online survey using a digital questionnaire during the period October-November 2025. Participants were required through education offices in Nganjuk. Of the 120 questionnaires, 112 valid response were analyzed (93,3%). Outliers were identified using purposive sampling and exclude form the analysis.

Job Commitment was measured using the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) (Rahmania & Islaha, 2023). This questionnaire uses 14 items that measure employee identification, involvement, and loyalty. Participants' answers will be in the form of a Likert Scale from 1 to 7, with intervals ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The Alpha's Cronbach reliability of the Job Commitment is 0.853 and the CFA (RMSEA = 0.064; CFI = 0.952).

Utrecht Work Engagement Scale-9 (UWES-9) adapted by previous researchers (Kristiana et al., 2019). This questionnaire uses 9 items to measure three dimensions, namely vigor, dedication, and absorption. Participants answers will be in the form of a 1-7 Likert scale, with intervals ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The Alpha's Cronbach reliability of the Work Engagement is 0.85. Value of validity CFA goodness of fit (RMSEA = 0.049; CFI>0.95)

In measuring Proactive Personality, the scale used is the Proactive Personality Scale (PPS) by previous researchers (Viratasya & Kadiyono, 2024). This questionnaire consists of 17 items that have a single or unidimensional dimension. Participants' answers will be in the form of a 1-7 Likert Scale, with intervals ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The Alpha's Cronbach reliability of the Proactive Personality is 0.826 and CFA (RMSEA = 0.036; CFI = 0.986). Data of this study will undergo descriptive testing and reliably testing. After that, mediation analysis using Hayes 5.0 PROCESS Macro.

Data analysis

Data processing was performed using statistic descriptive, and reliability alpha's Cronbach. The mediation analysis in this study used the Hayes 5.0 PROCESS Macro. The Proactive Personality variable was positioned as variable X, Job Commitment as variable Y, and Work Engagement as the mediator. In this test, bootstrapping was performed 10,000 times with a 95% confidence interval using mediation model 4.

RESULTS OF STUDY

This study tested 112 of elementary school teachers in Nganjuk district who were actively teaching minimum 5 years' experience. Three primary variables were investigated in this study: Job Commitment, Work

Engagement, and Proactive Personality. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the Job Commitment variable based on the mean value. Job commitment had a value of $M = 77.68$ and $SD = 9.746$. The Work Engagement variable was reviewed based on its average value using descriptive statistical analysis, with a value of $M = 54.85$ and $SD = 4.604$. The Proactive Personality variable is characterized as unidimensional. Based on descriptive analysis, indicated a mean value of 93.73 and a standard deviation of 7.384. The description of the variable can be seen in table 2.

Mediator analysis test using the Hayes 5.0 PROCESS Macro (table 3). Proactive Personality as the independent variable (X), Job commitment as the dependent variable (Y), and Work Engagement as the mediator. In this test, bootstrapping was performed 10,000 times with a 95% confidence interval using mediation model 4. The results on

path a (proactive personality with work engagement) obtained a significant effect with $b = 0.35$ and $p < 0.001$, which means that proactive personality can significantly influence work engagement. Path b (work engagement with job commitment) yielded a value of $b = 0.89$ with $p < 0.001$. This means that work engagement has a significant effect on job commitment. Path c' shows the direct effect, or when work engagement is used as a mediator, the relationship between proactive personality and job commitment becomes insignificant ($b = 0.26$ and $p = 0.04$, $p < 0.05$). Then, the results of the indirect effect show $b = 0.31$ and significant at a 95% confidence interval (0.16, 0.51). The results of the total effect (path c) in this study are $b = 0.57$ with $p < 0.001$, which means that before work engagement was included as a mediator, proactive personality had a significant effect on job commitment.

Table 2. Variable Overview

	M	SD	Min	Max
Job Commitment	77.68	9.746	55	95
Work Engagement	54.85	4.604	39	63
Personality Proactive	93.73	7.384	73	113

Table 3. Mediator analysis with PROCESS Macro Hayes

	b	p	CI	Explanation
Path a	0.35	<0.001	0.25, 0.44	Significant
Path b	0.87	<0.001	0.49, 1.29	Significant
Path c'	0.26	0.04	0.01, 0.51	Significant
Indirect Effect	0.29	95%	0.16, 0.51	Partial mediator
Path c	0.51	<0.001	0.34, 0.79	Significant

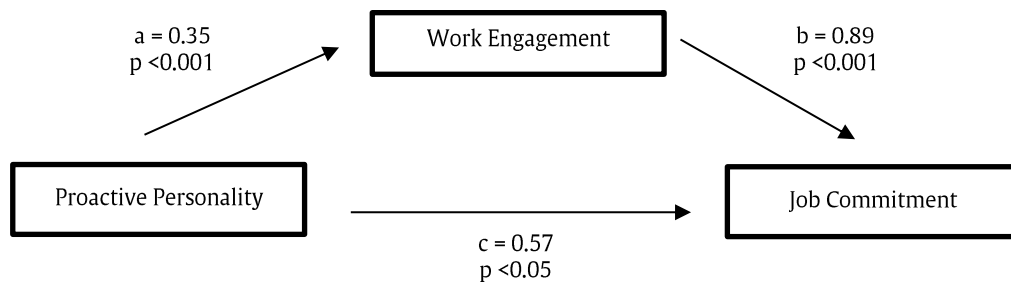


Figure 1. Mediator Analysis Result

Based on the test results described in tabel 3, it can be said that there is a partial mediating effect of the work engagement variable in the relationship between the proactive personality variable and job commitment. This can be seen from the significant indirect effect value obtained in the confidence interval range that does not exceed zero (Rockwood & Hayes, 2020). This mediating role is a partial mediation, as seen from the insignificant direct effect value. There are several criteria for partial mediation, namely (a) there is a relationship between the independent and dependent variables, (b) there is a significant relationship between the independent variable and the mediator, (c) there is a significant relationship between the mediator variable and the dependent variable, (d) the relationship between the independent and dependent

variables is significant if there is a mediator variable, and (e) the direct effect between the independent and dependent is significant but weakened after the mediator was included.

This can be seen from the results obtained, which show that there is a significant relationship between proactive personality and job commitment (total effect), proactive personality and work engagement (path a), work engagement and job commitment (path b), the results of the direct effect (path c') also significant, and direct effect (c') weakened while work engagement was include as an mediator. On the other hand, the mediating effect can also be seen from the increase in the R-sq value when work engagement is used as a mediator. The R-sq value before work engagement was used as a mediator was 0.18, and after being used as a mediator, it increased to 0.31.

DISCUSSION

The test results show that work engagement partial mediates the relationship between proactive personality and job commitment in teachers. In path a, the analysis shows that proactive personality has a significant effect on work engagement. This means that the higher the level of proactive personality in teachers, the higher their level of engagement in performing their roles at work. In path b, the results show that work engagement has a significant direct effect on job commitment.

In path c', or direct effect, proactive personality has a direct effect that is significant on job commitment. However, when looking at the total effect and indirect effect results, an interesting dynamic is found. The total effect of proactive personality on job commitment is significant, but after the mediator work engagement is included, the direct effect becomes decrease. Some of the influence of proactive personality on job commitment has been explained by the mediator of work engagement, thereby weakening its influence. Meanwhile, the indirect effect through work engagement is significant with a 95% confidence interval not crossing zero. This indicates that there is partial mediation, where the influence of proactive personality on job commitment occurs partly through work engagement.

Specifically, the result of the mediation analysis show that work engagement functions as a partial moderator. Work engagement explains the casual relationship between proactive personality and job commitment, but does not eliminate the entire direct relationship between proactive personality and job commitment. The result of the partial mediator shows that although work engagement plays an important role in explaining why proactive personality on job commitment remains significant, albeit weakened. In other words, proactive teachers are not only committed because of their basic nature but also because teachers tend to be more visible cognitively, emotionally, and physically in doing their work. It is this engagement that then strengthens job commitment.

Statistically, this indicates that teachers with proactive personalities tend to have stronger emotional and cognitive attachment to their work, and through this attachment these two variables foster higher commitment to the school or institution where they work and teach. Theoretically, these results indicate that proactive personality does not directly increase job commitment, but rather through individual involvement in their work. Individuals with proactive personalities tend to be more initiative, seek opportunities, and show positive energy towards the work they do, which ultimately results in increased work engagement (Bakker et al., 2012). This work engagement then becomes an emotional and motivational factor that strengthens a person's commitment to the organization (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Thus, work engagement acts as a psychological mechanism that links proactivity with job commitment.

The results of this study are in line with the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory by Bakker & Demerouti (2017) which explains that internal resources such as proactive personality can increase work engagement, and in turn strengthen positive attitudes and behaviors towards work, including organizational commitment. Teachers with proactive personalities tend to seek solutions, take the initiative to improve learning processes, and adapt to complex educational challenges. When teachers feel fully engaged in their work, this emotional attachment leads to higher job commitment to their workplace and profession.

This study also found that proactive personality does not directly affect job commitment, but its influence occurs

through increased work engagement. In other words, proactive personality encourages high work engagement, and it is this engagement that fosters a sense of commitment to the organization. In line with the research by Macey & Schneider (2008), in a deeper context, research by Lin et al (2025) found that proactive personality affects performance through work engagement among nurses in China, showing a similar pattern of indirect relationships.

In addition, the results of this study are supported by the findings of Callea et al. (2022), which show that proactive personality is positively related to flow at work and work engagement through the mechanism of job crafting. This reinforces the view that proactivity plays an important role in generating internal motivation and attachment to work. Research by (Lie et al., 2023) also found that work engagement contributes significantly to increasing employees' affective commitment, which means that the higher the work engagement, the higher the sense of belonging and willingness of individuals to remain in the organization. Thus, the results of this study are consistent with various recent findings that place work engagement as the main link between personality characteristics and work outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that Proactive Personality plays a role in Job commitment through Work Engagement as a partial mediator. If teachers have a high proactive personality, they will feel more attached to their work, which ultimately results in high job commitment. From a practical perspective, the findings in this study have important implications for organizations in managing human resources. In order to foster employee job commitment, organizations should not only focus on assigning tasks or rules, but also on creating a work environment that supports employee engagement. Providing autonomy, opportunities for initiative, social support, and constructive feedback can strengthen the role of work engagement as a bridge between proactivity and commitment.

Theoretically, the result of this study reinforces the understanding that work engagement plays an important psychological role in bridging the relationship between teachers' proactive personality and their job commitment. These findings support the Job Demands Resource Model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017), in which proactive personality as a personal resource can increase teachers' engagement in their work, which in turn strengthens their commitment to their profession.

In context of teachers, proactive personality encourages them to take the initiative to find new ways of teaching and overcome obstacles at school, thereby fostering a sense of involvement and meaning in their work. This shows that job commitment is not only influenced by external factors, such as school policy or job commitment, but also by internal factors, namely the involvement and positive energy that arise from proactive personality.

This study expands the application of positive work behavior theory to the field of education and confirms that teachers who are proactive and highly engaged tend to show stronger professional commitment to their tasks and organizations.

Limitations

Limitations in this study that need to be considered in interpreting the result. First, the sampling technique using

purposive sampling limits the generalization of the findings. So, the result of this study does not necessarily represent all teachers with different characteristics or cohorts. Second, the research design means that this study only captures the relationship between variables at a specific point in time, so it cannot confirm a strong causal relationship between proactive personality, work engagement, and job commitment.

In addition, data collected through self-report questionnaires has the potential to cause social desirability bias, as respondents may give answers that are considered most positive or in line with social expectations. This study only focused on internal psychological variables without considering contextual factors such as organizational support, school culture, or the relationship style of the principal, which is also have the potential to influence teachers' job commitment. Nevertheless, these findings still provide valuable preliminary insights into the influence of proactive personality on job commitment with work engagement as a mediator among teachers in Nganjuk.

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DECLARATION

Ethics approval and consent to participate

This research has received approval letters from three institutions, namely the Faculty of Psychology, Surabaya State University, Indonesia, through letter number (B/146732/UN38.11/PP.11.01/2025), the Nganjuk Regency National Unity and Politics Agency through letter number (000.9/632/411.405/2025), and the Education Office of Nganjuk Regency through letter number (000.9/2403/411.301.2/2025).

Consent for publication

In this study, the author has obtained consent from respondents to participate in the research.

Availability of Data and Material (ADM)

The data supporting the findings of this study are available upon request from the author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

Competing interests

The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Ifna Ratrika Enggarsari is a final year student at the Faculty of Psychology, Surabaya State University, Indonesia, specializing in Industrial and Organizational Psychology.

Dr. Olievia Prabandini Mulyana, S. Psi., M. Psi., Psikolog is the Vice Dean I and a lecturer in Industrial and Organizational Psychology at the Faculty of Psychology, Surabaya State University.

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Correspondence All inquiries and requests for additional materials should be directed to the Corresponding Author.

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