

Employee Resilience as Psychological Capital: Transforming Organizational Resources into Proactive Work Behavior

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Abstract

The role of employee resilience as psychological capital in mediating the relationship of organizational resources to proactive work behavior of lecturers is very critical. Especially in the context of Sustainable Development Goal 4 on quality education. This research was quantitative with an explanatory approach based on the Conservation of Resources Theory. The research subjects were 240 permanent lecturers from 25 private universities in West Kalimantan, Indonesia, a geographically peripheral area with significant institutional and resource limitations. The data were analyzed by employing Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) to test the direct and indirect relationships among the suggested variables and the mediating role of employee resilience. The findings indicate that perceived organizational support ($\beta = 0.284$), empowering leadership ($\beta = 0.385$) and job autonomy ($\beta = 0.237$) have positive and significant influence on employee resilience with a Variance Accounted For (VAF) of 54.2%. Furthermore, employee resilience significantly mediates the transformation of these organizational resources into proactive work behavior, with significant indirect effects of 0.061, 0.083 and 0.051, respectively. These findings indicate that the development of psychological capital is a stronger determinant than structural resource provision in fostering sustainable faculty proactivity. Therefore, improving quality education in resource-constrained regions requires strengthening empowering leadership, organizational support and lecturers' professional autonomy alongside infrastructure development and institutional capacity building to encourage sustainable academic performance and innovation.

Keywords: Conservation of Resources Theory, Employee Resilience, Limited Resources, Proactive Work Behavior, Psychological Capital.

Introduction

Proactive work behavior is critical to organizations' success in dynamic environments by fostering a culture of responsiveness and innovation. In the case of higher education, the need for proactive work behavior is not limited to organizational interests. The mandate of SDG 4 is based on an unspoken assumption, access does not create quality faculty behavior does (1), a principle reflected in equitable education access policies in Indonesia (2). Institutional resources are transformed into learning, competency and knowledge production through initiative, voice, innovation and problem prevention (3). This premise is most keenly felt where resources are at their most limited. In outlying private universities, behavior, not the resource base, distinguishes quality from stagnation. This study examines the organizational conditions that enable the psychological capital that underpins this behavior – not whether resources matter, but how their

conversion is organizationally enabled under constraint. The faculty's proactivity is structurally different from the organizational one: autonomy rather than the fight against hierarchy, institutionalized autonomy rather than autonomy fought for within hierarchy, extends the scope of the Tri Dharma mandate from teaching to scholarship and collegial governance makes voice and innovation peer rather than dyadic evaluation. Therefore extrapolating from non-academic settings is not warranted. Leadership support, personal resource development and Tri Dharma support predict faculty performance, but the process turning them into proactive behaviour is theoretically underspecified. The proposed converter (4), robust but unproven in the resource-constrained private universities where digital transformation and competition require it most. Proactive work behavior is important and so researchers have attempted to identify factors that

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may promote or hinder it. Previous studies have examined various prerequisites for proactive work behavior, such as individual characteristics like proactive personality (5, 6) and self-confidence (7), as well as contextual factors such as job design (8). Factors influencing proactive behavior through mediating factors include perceived insider status, self-efficacy and career development prospects (9, 10). However, research integrating various factors such as perceived organizational support, empowering leadership, job autonomy and employee resilience into a single comprehensive framework remains very limited. Employee resilience functions as psychological capital a meta-resource that determines whether limited organizational resources can be transformed into high-quality educational outcomes. This perspective shifts the analytical focus from what resources the institution possesses to how faculty members utilize available resources through proactive work behavior strategies. Based on the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory perspective, perceived organizational support, empowering leadership and job autonomy function as critical external resources for employees at private universities. Access to organizational resources enhances individual adaptive capacity (11), including employee resilience, which is particularly crucial in addressing infrastructure and accessibility limitations at private universities. Empowering leadership strengthens the positive impact of organizational resources on proactive work behavior by enhancing employees' embeddedness and their responsiveness to institutional support (12), while job autonomy fulfills basic psychological needs that drive intrinsic motivation, in line with the philosophy of self-determination (13). The interactive synergy of these three factors builds a "resource enhancement spiral" to enhance employee resilience and further promote proactive work behavior, so as to consolidate the institutional capability to cope with the complexity of private universities.

Employee resilience plays a crucial role as a mediator in transforming external organizational resources to foster proactive work behavior in the context of private universities in West Kalimantan, Indonesia. Through the lens of COR Theory, employee resilience functions as a psychological

buffer (14), transforming perceived organizational support, empowering leadership and job autonomy into proactive capacity. Employee resilience goes beyond mere survival, involving the ability to bounce back and adapt to difficult situations, which is a critical component in regions with structural constraints (15). The mediating role of employee resilience between proactive work behavior and positive outcomes has been documented (16), yet this study expands understanding within a specific geographic context.

Based on this research gap and the aforementioned phenomena, this study fills a gap in human resource management research by examining the dynamics of proactive work behavior among faculty members at private universities in West Kalimantan, Indonesia, while considering the mediating role of employee resilience. This study not only contributes to the development of Human Resource Management literature on workforce management in higher education institutions but also has significant practical implications for the development of human resource management strategies, recruitment systems, career development and job design that can enhance faculty performance at private universities with limited resources.

Two criteria are derived from the hypotheses of the study based on the existing theoretical framework and empirical studies. The first hypothesis (H1) assumes direct effects and posits that perceived organizational support has positive effects on proactive work behavior. The second hypothesis (H2) assumes a positive relation between empowering leadership and proactive work behavior. H3: Job autonomy is a positive facilitator of proactive work behavior. Hypothesis 4 (H4). Perceived organizational support positively affects employee resilience. Hypothesis 5 (H5) Empowering leadership has a positive impact on employee resilience. Hypothesis 6 (H6): Employee resilience has a positive and significant impact on Job autonomy. The seventh hypothesis (H7) suggests that employee resilience has a positive effect on proactive work behavior. H8: Positive effect of perceived organizational support on proactive work behavior. H9: Employee resilience mediates the relationship between perceived organizational support and proactive work behavior. H9: employee resilience mediates

the relationship between empowering leadership and proactive work behavior. H10: Job autonomy has a positive effect on proactive work behavior via

employee resilience. The proposed research model is illustrated in Figure 1.

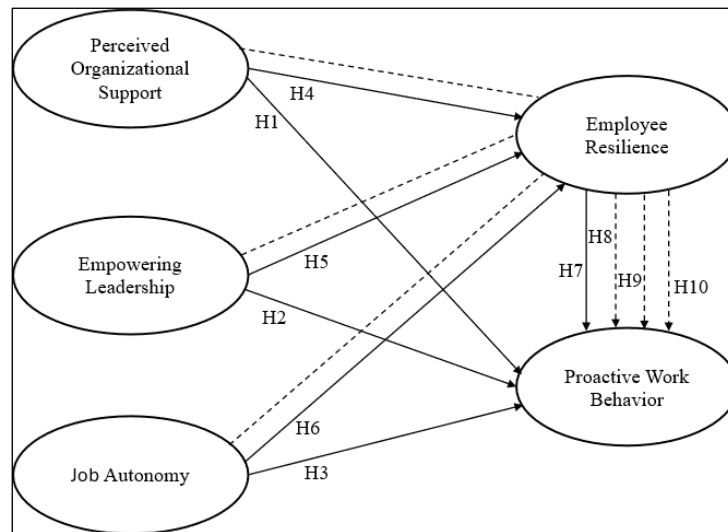


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Methodology

Non-probability purposive sampling was used for participant selection; faculty members were recruited based on inclusion criteria grounded in theory, not randomly, fitting the explanatory design and critical-case logic of the research context. The selection of private universities in West Kalimantan as the empirical setting was purposive in itself: this context constitutes a theoretically significant case for testing the gain spiral mechanism of COR Theory in the context of chronic resource scarcity, rather than a randomly sampled organizational context. This border and peripheral regional setting is characterized by documented institutional and resource constraints in education management (17). To ensure construct relevance, three individual-level inclusion criteria were applied: (a) the respondents must be permanent employees, to

ensure sufficient organizational embeddedness to assess perceived organizational support authentically; (b) they must have at least one year of continuous service, to allow adequate exposure to leadership practices and institutional climate; and (c) they must be actively involved in the Tri Dharma of higher education (teaching, research and community service), to ensure behavioral relevance for the proactive work behavior constructs measured. This purposive approach is suitable and preferred for structural equation modeling studies where theoretical representativeness is more important than statistical generalizability (18). To meet the minimum requirements of PLS-SEM of 10 observations per estimated parameter (19), 240 permanent faculty members from 25 institutions were recruited.

Table 1 presents the operational definitions of all variables, derived from their principal sources.

Table 1: Operational Definitions of Variables (20–28)

Variable	Theoretical Definition	Indicators
Perceived Organizational Support	Employees believe that the organization will provide welfare and attention commensurate with performance (20).	a) Satisfaction as an organizational member b) Lecturer performance satisfaction c) Consideration of faculty goals and opinions d) Faculty well-being (20)
Empowering Leadership	A leadership process that motivates individuals in the workplace by enhancing their sense of self-efficacy or belief in their own abilities (21).	a) Delegation of authority b) Accountability c) Independent decision-making d) Information sharing e) Skill development

Variable	Theoretical Definition	Indicators
Job Autonomy	A multifaceted concept encompassing the freedom, independence and discretion granted to employees in the workplace, enabling them to make decisions, innovate and shape their work environment to achieve positive outcomes for both individuals and the organization (23).	f) Coaching for innovative performance (22) a) Work scheduling autonomy b) Decision-making autonomy c) Autonomy in work methods (24)
Proactive Work Behavior	Self-directed and change-oriented behavior in which individuals strive to influence, change, or improve their work situations (25).	a) Take initiative b) Voice c) Individual innovation d) Problem prevention (26)
Employee Resilience	Patterns of attitudes and strategies that help individuals transform stressful situations from potential disasters into opportunities for growth (27).	a) Authentic living b) Life's calling c) Maintain perspective d) Stress management e) Cooperative interaction f) Stay Healthy g) Build Networks (28)

After explicit three-level justification, all five second-order constructs, perceived organizational support, empowering leadership, job autonomy, employee resilience and proactive work behavior, were specified as reflective-reflective (Type I higher-order) constructs.

(a) **Theoretical Justification:** The indicators are seen as manifestations of the underlying latent construct, that is, changes in the construct cause changes in all indicators at the same time. The behavioral indicators are therefore not part of what constitutes employee resilience but are rather a reflection of it, which is an important distinction in the behavioral operationalization adopted in this study and is in line with the process-oriented resilience perspective advanced in the theoretical framework. A formative specification would suggest that these behavioral expressions give rise to resilience rather than express it.

(b) **Empirical Justification:** All the first-order factor loadings were more than 0.70 (range: 0.774-0.938) and all the second-order AVE values were more than 0.50, confirming the convergent validity suitable to reflective constructs. The high internal consistency ($0.912 < \text{Cronbach's } \alpha < 0.952$) also supports the reflective assumption that indicators share a common underlying cause.

(c) **Methodological Justification:** A formative specification would require variance inflation factor (VIF) diagnostics and significance testing of indicator weights rather than loadings, procedures that are incompatible with the theoretical model that treats behavioral dimensions as interchangeable reflections of unified latent constructs. This specification is consistent with prior PLS-SEM studies on resilience and proactive work behavior in organizational settings (18).

The outer model evaluation was used to test the validity and reliability of research instruments. Convergent validity was assessed using the criteria of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of at least 0.5 and factor loadings of at least 0.7. Composite reliability was examined and Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability were above 0.7. The discriminant validity was assessed by means of the cross-loadings and the Fornell-Larcker criteria. Model fit was evaluated with Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) and Normed Fit Index (NFI). SRMR should be < 0.08 , NFI should be close to 1. The overall model quality was assessed by combining the evaluation results of the measurement model, structural model and predictive relevance.

Inner model assessment including tests for multicollinearity, coefficient of determination, predictive relevance (Q^2), F-statistic and the path

coefficients of each relationship between constructs. The R-Square assessment is applied to assess the proportion of variance in the endogenous variable explained by the ex. The Q-square test is used to evaluate the predictive relevance of the model using the blindfolding procedure. If the Q^2 value > 0 , the model has predictive validity. The effect size (f^2) is also used to assess the substantive contribution of the ex to the coefficient of determination (R^2) of the endogenous construct. The path coefficient test was then used to test the significance of the relationships between the constructs, with the criterion being a positive path coefficient in the direction of the hypothesis and significance at the 0.05 level. Hypothesis was accepted if P-value < 0.05 and rejected if P-value > 0.05 . The analysis includes the direct and mediating effect of Employee Resilience. Answer 2. The indirect effect is estimated by computing the Variance Accounted For (VAF) using the following formula: $VAF = (\text{Indirect Effect} / \text{Total Effect}) \times 100\%$. The VAF is

interpreted as: VAF $< 20\%$: no or weak mediation. VAF values of 20%-80% indicate partial mediation and values $> 80\%$ indicate full mediation.

Results and Discussion

Second-order measurement is to explore the relationship between the second-order construct and its indicators or dimensions, to confirm the construct's sufficient validity and reliability. The evaluation is done by testing convergent validity, discriminant validity and construct reliability by Outer Loading, AVE and Composite Reliability under reflective approach. In the assessment of the outer loading loading value > 0.70 indicates that the indicators or dimensions have a good convergent validity. As can be seen from Table 2, all the indicators or dimensions have the loading values above (> 0.70). This implies that the indicators of the study at the second order level were able to reflect the latent construct measured and met the criteria of convergent validity in the measurement model.

Table 2: Factor Loading Analysis Results

Construct	Indicator	Factor Loading
Perceived of Organizational Support (POS)	POS 1	0.894
	POS 2	0.918
	POS 3	0.918
	POS 4	0.863
Empowering Leadership (EL)	EL 1	0.912
	EL 2	0.831
	EL 3	0.918
	EL 4	0.895
	EL 5	0.936
	EL 6	0.883
Job Autonomy (JA)	JA 1	0.916
	JA 2	0.912
	JA 3	0.938
Employee Resilience (ER)	ER 1	0.855
	ER 2	0.878
	ER 3	0.891
	ER 4	0.889
	ER 5	0.879
	ER 6	0.774
	ER 7	0.826
Proactive Work Behavior (PWB)	PWB 1	0.912
	PWB 2	0.904
	PWB 3	0.937
	PWB 4	0.896

Construct Reliability Table 3 shows that the composite reliability, Cronbach's alpha and AVE

values for all five constructs are above the recommended thresholds, confirming construct

reliability. Then, the correlations among the constructs are presented in Table 4. The diagonal presents the square root of AVE that is higher than all inter-construct correlations, confirming the discriminant validity.

In this study, we have assessed the construct reliability through Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability and construct validity through Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and square root of AVE. The construct is considered reliable if the Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha values are more than 0.70. The construct is

considered valid if the AVE value is more than 0.50. Composite Reliability of each construct ranged from 0.912 to 0.951 and Cronbach's Alpha ranged from 0.912 to 0.952 which are greater than 0.70 and confirmed good internal consistency. Also, discriminant validity was tested by Fornell-Larcker criterion where the square root of AVE was higher than the correlation between constructs. The Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio HTMT values ranged from 0.351 to 0.657 and were below the threshold of 0.85, suggesting that the discriminant validity was sufficient.

Table 3: Construct Reliability and Validity

Variable	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	Average Variance Extracted	Square Root of AVE	Description
Perceived Organizational Support	0.921	0.920	0.807	0.898	Reliable
Empowering Leadership	0.951	0.952	0.804	0.896	Reliable
Job Autonomy	0.912	0.912	0.851	0.922	Reliable
Employee Resilience	0.941	0.939	0.734	0.856	Reliable
Proactive Work Behavior	0.933	0.933	0.832	0.912	Reliable

Table 4: Correlations Among Constructs

Construct	POS	EL	JA	ER	PWB
Perceived Organizational Support	0.898	0.562	0.351	0.584	0.562
Empowering Leadership	0.562	0.896	0.475	0.657	0.608
Job Autonomy	0.351	0.475	0.922	0.519	0.547
Employee Resilience	0.584	0.657	0.519	0.859	0.622
Proactive Work Behavior	0.562	0.608	0.547	0.622	0.912

Note: Perceived of Organizational Support (POS), Empowering Leadership (EL), Job Autonomy (JA), Employee Resilience (ER), Proactive Work Behavior (PWB).

After testing the outer model for construct validity and reliability, testing of the model fit was conducted. Model fit was assessed with different indices such as Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), Normed Fit Index (NFI), d_ULS and d_G (19). The SRMR value was 0.063 which is less than the cut-off point of 0.08 which means the model falls in the "good fit" category. Similarly, Normed Fit Index (NFI) value was 0.733 indicating an adequate model. An NFI of > 0.70 is acceptable,

particularly when the research is exploratory. In conclusion, the NFI of the model in this study is appropriate and satisfactory (19). Also the d_ULS and d_G values are 7.649 and 3.786 respectively which shows that the difference between the saturated model and the estimated model is very small. The close values indicate that the structural model is stable and there is no deviation from the theoretical model. The evaluation of the results of the model fit is given in Table 5.

Table 5: Model Fit Evaluation Results

Indicator	Saturated Model	Estimated Model	Criteria	Interpretation
SRMR	0.063	0.063	< 0.10 (Adequate) < 0.08 (Very Good)	Very Good
NFI	0.733	0.733	> 0.70 (Acceptable fit)	Adequate
d_ULS	7,649	7,649	Difference between Saturated Model and Estimated Model = 0	Stable/Adequate
d_G	3,786	3,786	Difference between Saturated Model and Estimated Model = 0	Stable/Adequate

The PLS-SEM approach for structural model evaluation was performed in phases including assessment of the coefficient of determination, predictive relevance (Q^2), F^2 values and path coefficients for every relationship between constructs (19). The structural model showed good explanatory power. The coefficient of determination (R^2) for employee resilience is 0.542, which indicates that perceived organizational support, empowering leadership and job autonomy together explain 54.2% of the variance in employee resilience, which is a moderate to substantial effect.

The coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.533 for proactive work behavior, showing that the model accounts for 53.3% of the variance in proactivity, moderate to substantial as well. The results of the blindfolding confirm the predictive relevance of the Q^2 values of Employee resilience $Q^2 = 0.527$, Proactive work behavior $Q^2 = 0.486$. Both are well above zero, indicating that the model predicts the omitted observations significantly better than the baseline average. The results of R^2 and Q^2 predict coefficients of the proposed model are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: R-squared and Q-predict Coefficients

Endogenous Variables	R-Squared	Interpretation of R-Squared	Q Predict	Interpretation of Q Predict
Employee Resilience	0.542	Moderate	0.527	High
Proactive Work Behavior	0.533	Moderate	0.486	High

As shown in the research structural model in Figure 2, all the paths of relationships between constructs are positive and significant at the 5% level. For Employee Resilience, Perceived Organizational Support ($\beta = 0.284$; $p = 0.000$), Empowering Leadership ($\beta = 0.385$; $p = 0.000$) and Job Autonomy ($\beta = 0.237$; $p = 0.000$) were found to have Positive and significant effects. Similarly, Proactive Work Behavior was positively and significantly influenced by Perceived

Organizational Support ($\beta = 0.223$; $p = 0.041$), Empowering Leadership ($\beta = 0.223$; $p = 0.035$) and Job Autonomy ($\beta = 0.252$; $p = 0.000$) as well as Employee Resilience as an intervening variable ($\beta = 0.215$; $p = 0.030$). The findings, taken together, confirm that all the independent constructs in the model were found to contribute to the improvement of employee resilience and proactive work behavior, as hypothesized.

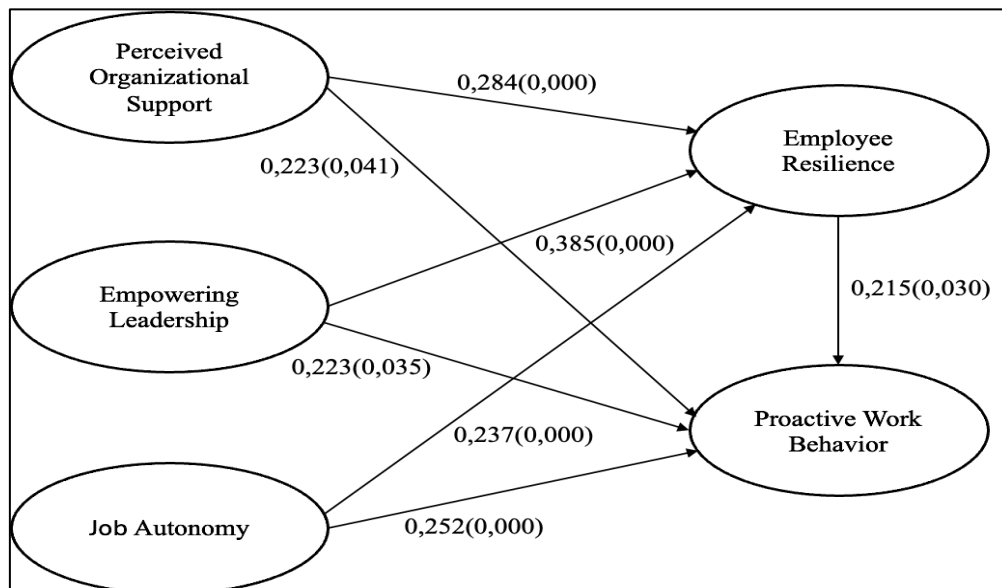


Figure 2: Hypothesis Model and Results

The effect on ER indicates that EL has a moderate effect size ($f^2=0.193$), while POS and JA have small effect sizes ($f^2=0.119$) and ($f^2=0.093$). The effect on PWB indicates that all predictors have small

effect sizes: POS ($f^2=0.064$), EL ($f^2=0.053$), JA ($f^2=0.095$) and ER ($f^2=0.045$), suggesting that although the effects are statistically significant, the practical contribution to PWB is relatively small

and requires cumulative effects from various sources. The results of the effect size evaluation are shown in Table 7.

The interpretation of effect size uncovers critical practical nuances that go beyond statistical significance. The only practically significant result in this model is the moderate effect of empowering leadership on employee resilience ($f^2 = 0.193$). It means that leadership style explains meaningful variance in faculty psychological capital, irrespective of the availability of material resources. In institutional investment terms, this finding suggests that the ROI of empowering

leadership development programs, in terms of faculty resilience and then of proactive behavior, far exceeds that of similar investments in physical infrastructure or financial compensation in resource-poor settings. A one standard deviation increase in empowering leadership practices results in a 0.385 standard deviation increase in resilience which in turn results in a 0.083-unit indirect gain in proactive behavior. This multiplier effect is consistent with the gain spiral mechanism of COR Theory operating through the resource type with the highest Psychological Proximity Gradient.

Table 7: Effect Size Evaluation

Variable	f-value	Interpretation
Perceived Organizational Support → Proactive Work Behavior	0.064	Small Effect
Empowering Leadership → Proactive Work Behavior	0.053	Small Effect
Job Autonomy → Proactive Work Behavior	0.095	Small Effect
Perceived Organizational Support → Employee Resilience	0.119	Small Effect
Empowering Leadership → Employee Resilience	0.193	Moderate Effect
Job Autonomy → Employee Resilience	0.093	Small Effect
Employee Resilience → Proactive Work Behavior	0.045	Small Effect

Although statistically significant, the small-to-moderate effects of perceived organizational support ($f^2 = 0.119$) and job autonomy ($f^2 = 0.093$) on resilience suggest that these resource types produce smaller but practically meaningful contributions, which need to be maintained through institutional commitment rather than one-off interventions. Importantly, the small effect sizes of all predictors on proactive work behavior ($f^2 = 0.045$ – 0.095) do not imply that the relationships are weak but that faculty proactivity is inherently multi-determined, being influenced by a range of factors outside the scope of this model such as disciplinary cultures, peer norms, external funding environments and individual career orientations. This finding has direct implications for educational policy: no single organizational intervention can change faculty proactivity; rather, sustainable proactive culture requires simultaneously cultivating empowering leadership, organizational support, professional autonomy and resilience capabilities, a human resource development approach at the systems level. The cumulative $R^2 = 0.533$ of the proactive work behavior supports that the model explains more than half of the explainable variance in faculty proactivity, providing a practically complete framework for the design of institutional

interventions in private universities with limited resources.

The direct and indirect effects of the variables were examined through hypothesis testing. Criteria were selected on the basis of a significance level of $p\text{-value} < 0.005$ and the strength of the association between variables < 0.005 (as measured by effect size). Mediation or indirect effect of variables was also analyzed using Variance Accounted For (VAF) with the criterion of $VAF > 80\%$ to indicate full mediation. According to the results of the tests of the seven research hypotheses all hypotheses were statistically accepted. Perceived Organizational Support was found to have a positive effect on Proactive Work Behavior ($\beta = 0.223$; $p = 0.041$; $f^2 = 0.064$) and on Employee Resilience ($\beta = 0.284$; $p = 0.000$; $f^2 = 0.119$). Similarly, Empowering Leadership also has a positive effect on Proactive Work Behavior ($\beta = 0.223$; $p = 0.035$; $f^2 = 0.053$) and on Employee Resilience ($\beta = 0.385$; $p = 0.000$; $f^2 = 0.193$) as the strongest effect in the model. Job Autonomy also has a positive effect on Proactive Work Behavior ($\beta = 0.252$; $p = 0.000$; $f^2 = 0.095$) and on Employee Resilience ($\beta = 0.237$; $p = 0.000$; $f^2 = 0.093$). Moreover, Employee Resilience was positively associated with Proactive Work Behavior ($\beta = 0.215$; $p = 0.030$; $f^2 = 0.045$), suggesting that

resilience as an internal psychological resource enhances the impact of the three exogenous variables on employees' proactive behavior.

The results of the mediation analysis show that the Employee Resilience has a significant mediating effect on the relationship of the three exogenous variables and Proactive Work Behavior. Perceived Organizational Support has an indirect effect on Proactive Work Behavior through Employee Resilience with an indirect effect of 0.061 ($p = 0.047$) and VAF value of 21% meaning the type of mediation is partial. Empowering Leadership also influences Proactive Work Behavior through Employee Resilience with an indirect effect coefficient of 0.083, ($p = 0.037$) and a VAF value of 27%, which is also in the category of partial mediation and the largest mediating effect among the three hypotheses. Meanwhile, Job Autonomy positively affects Proactive Work Behavior through Employee Resilience with an indirect coefficient of 0.051 ($p = 0.049$) and VAF value of 17% and is categorized as weak mediation.

The partial mediation patterns in all three indirect pathways are of substantive theoretical importance over and above statistical description. The large direct effects of perceived organizational support ($\beta=0.223$), empowering leadership ($\beta=0.223$) and job autonomy ($\beta=0.252$), as well as indirect effects via resilience, suggest that faculty proactive work behavior is linked to organizational resources via multiple simultaneous mechanisms, not a single psychological process.

Partial mediation for the perceived organizational support pathway reflects the co-existence of two mechanisms grounded in different theoretical traditions: a psychological capital development pathway, in which organizational support develops resilience as a resource reservoir that subsequently energizes proactive behavior (consistent with COR Theory gain spiral logic) and a social exchange pathway whereby perceived organizational valuation directly energizes a felt obligation to reciprocate through proactive role

expansion (consistent with Organizational Support Theory), a mechanism that circumvents resilience-building altogether. The co-operation of these two mechanisms from different theoretical traditions results in partial rather than full mediation.

The empowering leadership pathway is partially mediated (VAF=27%, strongest indirect effect), which means empowering leadership directly activates resilience-building processes and strategic resilience, a proactively-oriented, change-focused capability that is directly converted into initiative and innovation, bypassing the slower process of psychological capital accumulation. This double activation is proper to relational-interpersonal resources, thus explaining why the pathway of empowering leadership presents the strongest indirect effect (through resilience) as well as a significant direct effect (through activation of strategic resilience).

For the job autonomy pathway (VAF=17%, classified as weak mediation), the dominance of the direct pathway signifies a core theoretical principle derived from Self-Determination Theory: autonomy satisfies basic psychological needs for self-determination directly and immediately, leading to autonomous motivation and proactive orientation without the mediating role of resilience-building. In terms of structural-formal resources, job autonomy has the lowest Psychological Proximity Gradient to the core components of resilience (recognition, trust, meaningfulness) and is therefore the less efficient resource type for resilience conversion; but it is the strongest direct predictor of proactive behavior. The differential mediation strengths across three pathways provide empirical support for the Differential Conversion Efficiency proposition and suggest that the mediating capacity of resilience is contingent on the type of antecedent resource and not universal.

The results of the direct effect are shown in Table 8. Subsequently, the results of the indirect effect analysis are shown in Table 9.

Table 8: Results of Direct Effects

Hypothesis	Statement	Path Coefficient	p-value	Effect Size	Conclusion
H1	Perceived Organizational Support has a positive effect on Proactive Work Behavior	0.223	0.041	0.064	Accepted
H2	Empowering Leadership has a positive effect on Proactive Work Behavior	0.223	0.035	0.053	Accepted
H3	Job autonomy has a positive effect on proactive work behavior	0.252	0.000	0.095	Accepted
H4	Perceived Organizational Support has a positive effect on Employee Resilience	0.284	0.000	0.119	Accepted
H5	Empowering Leadership has a positive effect on Employee Resilience	0.385	0.000	0.193	Accepted
H6	Job Autonomy Has a Positive Effect on Employee Resilience	0.237	0.000	0.093	Accepted
H7	Employee resilience has a positive effect on proactive work behavior	0.215	0.030	0.045	Accepted

Table 9: Indirect Effect Results

Hypothesis	Statement	Indirect Coefficient	p-value	VAF	Type of Mediation
H8	Perceived Organizational Support has a positive effect on Proactive Work Behavior through Employee Resilience	0.061	0.047 (Significant)	21%	Partial Mediation
H9	Empowering Leadership has a positive effect on Proactive Work Behavior through Employee Resilience	0.083	0.037 (Significant)	27	Partial Mediation
H10	Job Autonomy has a positive effect on Proactive Work Behavior through Employee Resilience	0.051	0.049 (Significant)	17%	Weak Mediation

This study makes three interrelated contributions to the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory that collectively extend its applicability beyond the resource-abundant organizational contexts that have dominated the empirical literature. First, the results offer empirical support for a Differential Conversion Efficiency (DCE) mechanism which indicates that different organizational resources do not translate into employee resilience at similar rates in terms of psychological capital. A systematic hierarchy of conversion efficiency was observed, with relational-interpersonal resources significantly higher in conversion rates than conditional-institutional resources, which in turn exceeded structural-formal resources. This gradient, which we call the Psychological Proximity Gradient (PPG), suggests that the degree to which the resource's intrinsic nature aligns with the fundamental psychological needs that constitute resilience: recognition, trust and meaningfulness determines its efficiency of conversion into adaptive capacity. This pattern

extends the resource taxonomy of COR Theory by introducing a predictive dimension of conversion efficiency that can be used to ascertain which resource types are most effective in building adaptive capacity in times of scarcity.

Second, this study addresses a longstanding tension between dispositional and process-oriented perspectives of resilience within the COR framework by operationalizing employee resilience as a measurable behavioral process construct. This means that we focus on what faculty members do rather than what they have as a static trait. The behavioral operationalization shows good psychometric properties, confirming that indicators of a process-oriented nature are well suited to capture resilience as a developable meta-resource, which can be subject to organizational intervention. This allows an empirical foundation for the COR Theory's treatment of resilience as a dynamic personal resource rather than a fixed personality characteristic.

Third, the study demonstrates that gain spiral dynamics, which are central to the cumulative resource accumulation mechanism of COR Theory, also occur in situations of chronic resource scarcity, contradicting the implicit assumption in previous COR research that gain spirals are mainly operative in resource-rich environments. The existence of still significant positive relationships between organizational resources, resilience and proactive behavior in private universities with structural and geographic resource constraints implies that relational-psychological resources can be used as seed resources that trigger gain spirals even under strong constraints in material and infrastructural resources. This finding greatly expands the boundary conditions for the applicability of the core propositions of COR Theory, with implications for research on organizational behavior in resource-constrained institutional contexts across the globe.

This behavioral conceptualization offers crucial theoretical precision. By measuring what faculty members do such as effectively managing stress, seeking collaborative input, adapting to challenges and maintaining perspective rather than what they possess, such as a resilient personality, it captures a capability that is developable and amenable to organizational intervention. This resolves a long-standing tension in the employee resilience literature between dispositional and process-oriented perspectives, demonstrating that process-oriented behavioral indicators effectively operationalize the construct of employee resilience (29).

These findings provide the first rigorous empirical evidence regarding the prioritization of psychological resources over material resources in the context of chronic scarcity. Partial mediation patterns indicate that, in a context of resource scarcity, the development of psychological capital precedes the provision of structural resources in determining behavioral outcomes. This challenges the conventional educational development paradigm that prioritizes material infrastructure over human capital.

Of the three predictors of organizational resource, empowering leadership had a much stronger effect on employee resilience than perceived organizational support and job autonomy. Three complementary theoretical mechanisms are proposed to explain this hierarchy. First, the

Psychological Proximity Gradient (PPG) mechanism. Leadership, as a relational-interpersonal resource of empowerment, directly provides the three core components of employee resilience: recognition of professional worth, trust in individual capability and meaningfulness of academic work. These three elements are not merely related to resilience, but are the same building blocks of resilience as conceptualized in the psychological capital (PsyCap) framework. Unlike perceived organizational support (a conditional-institutional resource that works mainly via cognitive-affective channels of perceived organizational valuation) and job autonomy (a structural-formal resource that works through sense of control and competence accumulation), empowering leadership does not require an intermediate resource transformation step before building resilience; it directly injects the psychological raw materials of adaptive capacity into the faculty member's psychological system.

Second, the relational multi-domain transfer mechanism. Empowering leadership transfers three types of resources through a single source, including condition resources, energy resources and personal resources at the same time. This multi-domain simultaneity creates a synergistic resource bundle not available from any single structural or institutional resource, consistent with the resource caravan passageway proposition of COR Theory. Such a wide transfer is especially significant in the context of resource-scarce private universities, where empowering leaders can make up for material and infrastructural deficits through relational and psychological provision of resources.

Third, the uncertainty-absorption mechanism: in private universities where institutional continuity and promotion prospects and research support are chronically uncertain, empowering leadership directly addresses the fundamental psychological threat of resource loss that COR Theory identifies as the primary motivational force. Empowering leaders who delegate meaningful authority and who express explicit confidence in faculty capability send signals that faculty competence is recognized and valued even when material recognition is constrained, neutralizing the threat perception that would otherwise deplete

psychological resources and prevent resilience-building.

This extends the principle of resource loss awareness COR Theory to predict resource conversion priorities under scarcity conditions (30): when external resources are chronically limited, the psychological capacity to convert available resources into outcomes becomes more important than the quantity of resources. This extension has profound implications for development economics and organizational behavior in a global context.

This study contributes to the existing literature by filling a theoretical gap and clarifying the specific psychological mechanisms through which organizational resources influence proactive work behavior. Previous research has demonstrated that perceived organizational support (31), empowering leadership (32) and job autonomy enhance proactive work behavior (33), but rarely examines the mediating psychological mechanisms. By establishing employee resilience as a full mediator, it can be demonstrated that organizational resources first build psychological capital (resilience) and psychological capital subsequently facilitates sustained proactive work behavior, while the direct structural facilitating effect is minimal when resources are scarce.

This sequential mechanism challenges the implicit assumptions in much of the literature on proactive work behavior, which state that environmental factors directly facilitate or limit proactivity, suggesting instead that environmental factors primarily influence proactivity indirectly through the impact of psychological resource reserves.

This study establishes the first empirically verified theoretical pathway from human resource management practices to the achievement of quality education (SDG 4) through the development of psychological capital. This pathway operates through stages such as strategic resource allocation, psychological capital formation, sustained proactive behavior and finally, quality education outcomes. This framework challenges the infrastructure-centered paradigm that dominates international development discourse, pointing to an alternative pathway through the cultivation of strategic human capital that is accessible to institutions with limited resources worldwide.

This study identifies an empirically verified pathway from organizational human resource management to SDG 4 achievement operating through five sequential stages:

- (a) strategic allocation of organizational resources (perceived organizational support, empowering leadership and job autonomy);
- (b) conversion of these resources into employee resilience as psychological capital; (
- (c) resilience-enabled sustained proactive work behavior;
- (d) translation of proactive behavior into measurable educational quality indicators; and
- (e) cumulative contribution to SDG 4 Target 4.3 and 4.c goals.

In particular, the four dimensions of proactive work behavior assessed in the present study are directly related to nationally recognized indicators of educational performance:

- (a) taking the initiative for behavior supports curriculum innovation and pedagogical renewal, contributing to IKU-7 (collaborative and participatory learning);
- (b) voice behavior facilitates constructive participation in institutional governance, thus improving the capacity for organizational learning;
- (c) individual innovation leads to research productivity and knowledge dissemination, contributing to IKU-5 (faculty research outcomes utilized by society); and
- (d) problem prevention ensures continuity of instruction and quality of student learning during institutional disruptions.

The regional level of private universities' empowering leadership practices generate faculty proactive behavior resulting in IKU-3 (faculty engagement in external activities) including cross-border academic collaboration such as SDG 4.3. The pathway shows that sustainable quality education in resource-constrained settings is attainable through psychological capital cultivation. The pathway is replicable, does not require resource parity with better-endowed institutions as a prerequisite and is cost-effective.

Conclusion

This study provides empirical validation that, in the context of education with limited resources, employee resilience as psychological capital is the primary mechanism that transforms organiza-

tional resources into sustainable proactive work behavior and this is essential for the realization of quality education.

Practical Implications

This research provides evidence on the application of the Conservation of Resources Theory to private higher education institutions in Indonesia by showing that the spiral gain mechanism of resources is relevant even in the resource-scarce environment, confirming resilience as a meta-resource that connects external resources to faculty members' adaptive behaviors and highlighting empowering leadership as an important determinant of educator quality in a resource-based human resource management framework. Furthermore, this study recommends that private universities in West Kalimantan transform their academic leadership paradigm toward an empowerment model through capacity building for program directors and deans, design a system for recognizing faculty contributions that strengthens perceived organizational support, redesign faculty job structures to provide broader professional autonomy by reducing bureaucratic burdens and building a resilience development ecosystem through training, professional learning communities and mentoring programs. At the regional level, the Higher Education Service Institution Region XI (LLDIKTI) Region XI needs to facilitate collaborative networks among private universities and quality-oriented leadership training programs, while at the national level, the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology (Kemendiktisaintek) needs to integrate indicators of psychological well-being and faculty empowerment into accreditation standards and provide affirmative policies for private universities in underdeveloped regions, given that the optimization of psychological and relational resources has proven to be the most effective and sustainable strategy for improving the quality of higher education without relying entirely on physical infrastructure investment.

Limitations and Future Research

First, the sample is restricted to private universities in West Kalimantan. In contrast with public institutions whose existence is guaranteed by state budget allocations regardless of the enrollment, private universities rely exclusively on tuition revenue. Such a structural difference may hinder generalization of the observed resource

configurations and leadership dynamics to public or resource-rich contexts. This is a question best answered by explicit private universities and public universities comparative designs. Second, the cross-sectional design is consistent with the associations of the gain spiral mechanism of COR Theory but cannot establish the temporal order assumed by the mechanism. A three-wave longitudinal design would be necessary to establish the temporal order, rule out reverse causality and monitor whether the conversion advantage of empowering leadership will be sustained over time. Third, the exclusive reliance on self-report measures raises the possibility of common method variance as a confounding factor. Although Harman's single-factor test suggests that this bias is unlikely to be large, the use of multiple methods, for example, supervisor-rated proactivity and institutional performance indicators (SINTA scores, publication counts) would improve convergent validity. Finally, the model omits several theoretically important constructs, organizational culture, peer support, chronic work stress and access to external funding – that, when incorporated in multilevel designs, would advance understanding of how institutional-and individual-level resources interact to shape faculty proactivity in the face of chronic scarcity.

Abbreviations

COR Theory: Conservation of Resources Theory, EL: Empowering Leadership, ER: Employee Resilience, f^2 : Effect Size, HTMT: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio, JA: Job Autonomy, POS: Perceived Organizational Support, PWB: Proactive Work Behavior, SDG 4: Sustainable Development Goal 4, SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals.

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Author Contributions

Bella Ghia Dimmera: Conceptualization, Methodology, Data Collection, Formal Analysis, Drafting, Visualization, Nurul Komari: Supervision, Conceptualization, Validation, Review, Editing,

Project Administration, Fundraising, Titik Rosnani: Data Curation, Validation, Review, Editing, Resources, Investigation.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest.

Data Availability

Data supporting the results of this study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

Declaration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Assistance

This manuscript utilized artificial intelligence tools (Claude and ChatGPT) for language refinement and improved readability. Following this use, the authors conducted a comprehensive revision and verification of all content and assume full responsibility for the scientific accuracy, integrity and originality of the final manuscript.

Ethics Approval

This study has been approved by the relevant authorities and written consent was obtained from all participants prior to their involvement.

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