



## Job Autonomy and Teacher Career Commitment in Educational

Olivia Prabandini Mulyana<sup>1\*</sup>, Umi Anugerah Izzati<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup> Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Surabaya, Indonesia



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### ABSTRACT

Study aims to determine the relationship between job autonomy and teacher career commitment in educational. This study used quantitative method and the study design is correlation study. The sampling technique used is accidental sampling to the population of teachers in an educational foundation with minimum a year work period. The participants of this study are 191 teachers from educational background. The data collection used job autonomy scale and teacher career commitment scale in a likert scale model and data analyzed using a statistical test of product moment correlation with SPSS program. The results of the study shown that there is a significant positive relationship between job autonomy and teacher career commitment. In other words, the higher the autonomy of the job for teacher, the higher their career commitment. Otherwise, the lower the teacher job autonomy, the lower the teacher's career commitment too. This study shows that job autonomy and career commitment have a significant relationship that can interconnect by each other in term of professional career as teacher.

## INTRODUCTION

Education is an important component in terms of the development and progress of the nation in facing the challenges of an increasingly modern world. This is also inseparable from the role of teachers in educating and directing students in developing their abilities and potential. As an important component in the world of education, it is appropriate for teachers to get decent and guaranteed welfare for life, whether teachers have the status of civil servants or non-civil servants. Based on data from the Ministry of Education and Culture, of all active teachers currently, only 1,520,354 (52.3%) teachers have the status of Civil Servants (PNS). Meanwhile, the remaining 47.7% are honorary teachers consisting of 401,182 Foundation Permanent Teachers (GTU/PTY), 13,328 provincial Non-Permanent Teachers (GTT), 141,724 district/city GTTs, 3,770 central auxiliary teachers, 704,503 school honor teachers, and 121,378 teachers from other categories (Andina & Arifa, 2021). This data shows that the status of teachers who have not yet become civil servants is still very high in Indonesia.

Currently, the welfare of teachers is far from feasible, especially for most teachers who do not yet hold the title of the civil servant. This will impact reducing the number of professional teachers due to the fading of career commitments that have been built for a long time, and many teachers will leave their careers in search of a job that is not clear. This problem can make teachers and prospective teachers think twice about continuing their profession or staying with their career commitment to become a teacher. Career commitment is an attitude to achieve goals carried out by the individual in terms of self-development that reflects the individual's commitment regarding his goals (Vandenbergh & Ok, 2013). High career commitment will make the individual go all out to achieve the career he wants. In this case, the career commitment in teaching field

can be referred to the commitment towards career in teaching profession or a career as a teacher or in an educational sector.

Career commitment refers to the attitude of individuals toward their careers, including their willingness and enthusiasm to work in a specific capacity. Previous studies have found that career commitment leads to better performance regarding focal and discretionary behavior and reduces job turnover rates (Gan & Cheng, 2021). A high level of career commitment helps teachers provide better student care and education (Lee et al., 2017; Gan & Cheng, 2021). The central premise underlying self-determination theory is that people naturally tend to be diligent and build extended and consolidated self-feelings (Gan & Cheng, 2021). That is, they are looking for ways to relate to themselves, others, and groups in society. Individuals with high career commitments have different attitudes compared to those with low commitments. Individuals who are highly committed to their careers have better work performance, enjoy their work and are responsible for their work. They will show a high interest in being willing to learn, increase their knowledge and transfer their knowledge to others.

Career commitment is the degree to which a person identifies the value of the profession, occupation, amount of time and effort given to acquire relevant knowledge (Goulet & Singh, 2002). Niu (2010) reveals that career commitment is an essential factor that helps individuals to stick to a particular job for a long enough time to develop specific skills. Furthermore, career commitment is defined as a person's attitude toward achieving goals for self-advancement and is more individualist (Ching & Kee, 2012). Vandenberghe & Ok (2013) define career commitment as a person's attitude in achieving goals to develop oneself that reflects one's commitment to one's personal goals. Based on the definition of experts, it can be concluded that career commitment is an individual's attitude to his job or profession, including the development of personal career goals, identification and involvement in personal career goals.

Carson & Bedeian (1994) stated that career commitment includes three main dimensions, namely career identity, which describes the emotional connection of the individual with the career he chooses; career planning which consists of the process by which individuals determine the needs of career development and set their career goals; and career resilience which measures the extent to which a person remains diligent in achieving career goals. As in this study, career commitment for teacher might be related toward their commitment and obligations as a teacher who responsible to increasing knowledge and development in education (Zuraida et al., 2020). Teacher who commit with their career will show the dynamic and eager to take care of their work (Izzati et al., 2022).

Career commitment is influenced by various factors that can be categorized as internal and external factors. Internal factors are factors that arise from within the individual, while external factors arise from outside the individual self. Internal factors that influence career commitment, namely: organizational commitment (Nazish et al., 2013), work engagement, job satisfaction (Nazish et al., 2013), work value (Ching & Kee, 2012), work experience (Nazish et al., 2013), personality (Arora & Rangnekar, 2016; Xiao et al., 2014), and self-efficacy. Meanwhile, external factors affecting career commitment, namely the work situation (Nazish et al., 2013; Cai et al., 2017; Pasha et al., 2017) which includes working conditions, perceptions of retirement, perceptions of threats at work, offered inducements, corporate expected contributions, promotional opportunities, and awards.

Based on research conducted by Ingarianti (2017) with a literature review of 10 articles, it is known that external and internal factors influence career commitment. External factors include the work situation (Cai et al., 2017; Pasha et al., 2017), rewards, promotion opportunities, contributions expected by the organization, encouragement offered by the organization, perceptions of threats at work, hazards at work, working conditions, and perceptions of pensions, while internal factors include work value (Ching & Kee, 2012), job satisfaction (Nazish et al., 2013), self-efficacy, work engagement, personality (Arora & Rangnekar, 2016; Xiao et al., 2014), organizational commitment (Nazish et al., 2013), and also work experience (Nazish et al., 2013; Ingarianti, 2017).

The results of studies state that employees have autonomy in determining how they work, competencies with tasks in work, and attachment to their work will improve psychological and social well-being in employees (Gan & Cheng, 2021). Furthermore, a workplace that provides opportunities for employees to communicate, develop, evaluate and implement ideas at work shows that part of the work process within the organization prioritizes contextual factors that employees can perceive as job autonomy. Job autonomy provides an overview for employees of the extent of the power that employees have in managing ways of working. The autonomy of work owned by employees allows employees to use various methods to complete work. It further encourages employees to discover new ideas and develop them more effectively and efficiently.

Job autonomy is the degree to which employees have full rights in organizing their work and what they use and deciding what procedures to follow (Garg & Dhar, 2017). Job autonomy is also about independence, substantial flexibility, and freedom in determining work procedures and scheduling (Giebels et al., 2016) and concerns the discretion exercised in determining the schedule and differences in work at work (Jin & Kim, 2015). Job autonomy refers to the degree of control a person has over how to carry out his job duties (De Spiegelaere et al., 2014). Based on some of these definitions, it can be concluded that job autonomy is the extent to which teachers have complete control including their freedom, independence, and flexibility in regulating work methods, work schedule, and the place to be used in carrying it out.

Aspects of job autonomy, according to, refers to the work method, scheduling work, and the time and location that will be used in carrying it out. There is a more specific discussion about the aspects of autonomy in teachers, including the selection of teaching materials, content selection, teaching styles, student evaluation processes, student discipline, decision-making, and teacher independence and independence (Diyan & Adediwura, 2016).

Based on the description in the background, the formulation of the problem in this study is whether there is a relationship between job autonomy and career commitment to teachers. Based on the literature review that has been carried out, it is known that research related to career commitments to teachers has not been carried out much. This research is essential to do, considering that career commitment has a vital role to play in improving teacher performance. This current study aims to determine the relationship between job autonomy and teacher career commitment with teachers as the subject. In addition, research has practical benefits that can be used as a reference source to discuss and increase career commitments, especially for teachers.

## RESEARCH METHOD

### General Background

This type and design of researchers use quantitative methods with correlation designs. They were analyzed using statistical analysis techniques (Azwar, 2015). This research was conducted in September 2022. This research takes place in a private school located in Surabaya.

### Population and Sample

The population of this study is all teachers in Indonesia with a minimum work period of one year. The sampling technique in this study used accidental sampling. Accidental sampling is a technique based on the chance anyone who meets a researcher can be used as a sample in research (Sugiyono, 2015). The model in this study is teachers willing to participate in the research and can be taken data. The total sample of this study is 191 teachers in an educational foundation in Surabaya with a minimum work period of one year.

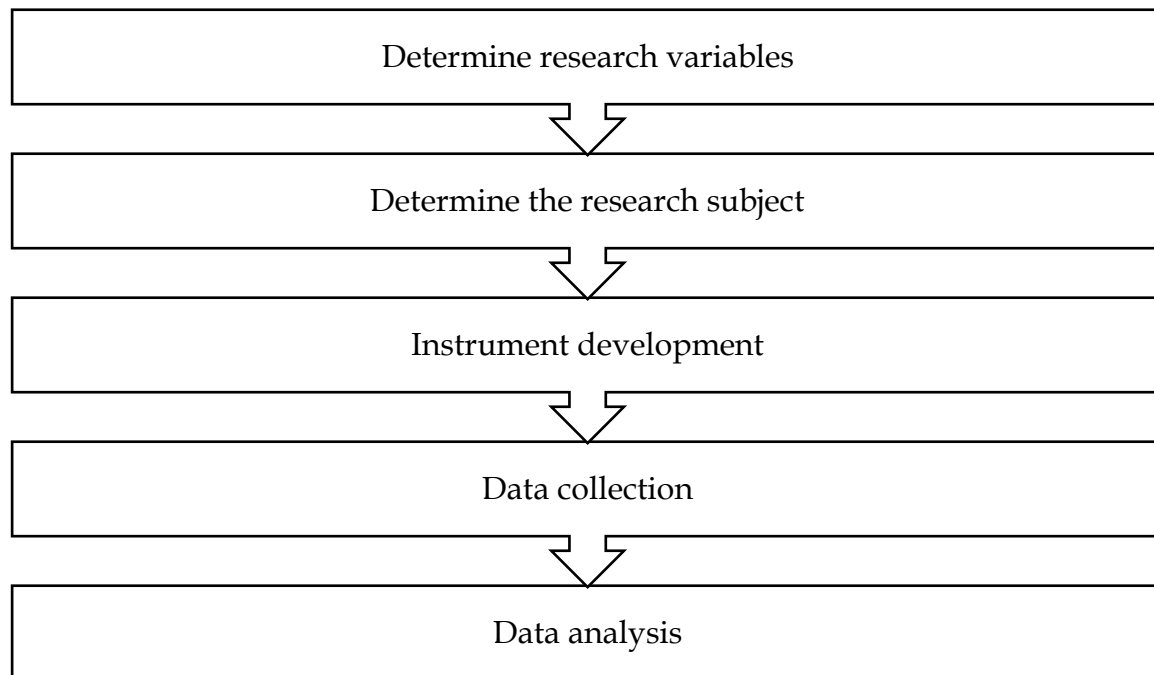
### Instrument and Procedures

A free variable or independent variable is a variable that affects or is the cause of the change or onset of bound variables (Sugiyono, 2015). The free variable in this study is job autonomy. Job autonomy is defined as the degree to which employees have full rights in organizing their work and what they use and deciding what procedures to follow. Aspects of job autonomy in teachers include selecting teaching materials, content selection, teaching styles, student evaluation processes, student discipline, decision-making, and teacher independence and independence. A bound variable or dependent variable is a variable affected or is the result of a free variable (Sugiyono, 2015). The set variable in this study is career commitment. Career commitment is an individual's effort to survive a job for an extended period of time related to the emotional connection of the individual with the career he chooses (career identity); determining the needs of career development, and setting his career goals (career planning), and remain diligent in achieving career goals (career resilience).

The research instrument used a questionnaire distributed to the subjects to obtain information according to what was needed in this study. This research instrument uses a Likert scaling model. The Likert scaling model consists of five alternative answers, including Very Appropriate (VA), Appropriate (A), Quite Appropriate (QA), Not Appropriate (NA), and Very Inappropriate (VI) (Sugiyono, 2015). The data collection instrument in this study used a career commitment scale based on the three dimensions of Carson & Bedeian (1994) and a job autonomy scale based on the Spiegelare et al. (2016) that is work method, work schedule, and time and location of working.

The validity test in this study used the corrected item-total correlation method. The criterion used in the corrected item-total correlation method is that an item can be used if the item scores  $\geq 0.3$  means that this item is positively valued and has a high differentiation power. In contrast, the item that  $< 0.3$  has a low differentiation so that the item must be aborted (Azwar, 2015). A reliability test is a test to determine the confidence of a measuring instrument that reflects a measurement, where the magnitude of a reliability coefficient is influenced by the heterogeneity of scores in that group (Azwar, 2015). The reliability test in this study uses Cronbach Alpha. A questionnaire is reliable if the Cronbach alpha value  $\geq 0.6$ .

The validity of job autonomy scale that has 24 items and tested using the corrected item-total correlation shows that the score are in the range of 0.346 to 0.768, means that the items are positively valued and the reliability of the scale tested using Cronbach Alpha obtained reliability score that is 0.920, means that the job autonomy scale is reliable. The validation test of teacher career commitment scale has 12 items, shows the score between 0.57 to 0.78, so the all the items tested is positively valued and the reliability score is around 0.7, meaning that the scale was reliable to use on this study.



**Figure 1.** Flowchart of research procedures.

**Data Analysis**

The data analysis technique is a process of systematically finding and compiling data which is carried out by organizing data, describing the data into units and synthesizing, then continuing with compiling into patterns to choose which ones are important and to be studied, and making conclusions that can be understood by oneself and others (Sugiyono, 2015). The data analysis technique used in this study was a statistical test of the correlation product moment, Pearson, with the SPSS program version 27.0 for Mac.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This study aims to determine the relationship between job autonomy and career commitment in teachers. Based on the results of data processing using SPSS 27.0 for Mac, the statistical description results can be seen in the Table 1.

**Table 1.** The result of statistic descriptive test.

Variables	N	Mean	Std.	Min	Max
Job Autonomy	191	46.00	6.409	26	58
Career Commitment	191	91.88	12.872	61	120

Table 1 is the results of descriptive statistic on this study between career commitment and job autonomy. This study carried out by 191 participants that is teachers from various background and school. The mean of career commitment is 46.00 with standard deviation is 6.409 and the mean of job autonomy is 91.88 with standard deviation is 12.672. The process of analyzing data used a Pearson Product Moment Correlation Test that can shows how each variables correlate in different situations or study. The correlations study can be carried out if the data meets the assumptions tests that are normality test and linearity test. The normality test proposed to know if the data obtained from normal distributed populations or not (Sugiyono, 2015). This study used Kolmogorov Smirnov test to assess the normality of the data study. A data distributed normal if the significant value is more than 0.05 and the data not distributed normal if the significant value is less than 0.05. The second assumption test is linearity test, which is a procedure to shows that the data distributed linear. The Table below are the results obtained by Table 2.

**Table 2.** The result of assumptions test.

Variables	N	Mean	Sig.
Job Autonomy	191	46.00	0.892
Career Commitment	191	91.88	0.892

Based on the Table 2, the significance value of the normality test is 0.892 that is greater than 0.05, so the data test of job autonomy and career commitment is normally distributed. This is shows that the first assumption test is fulfilled. The second test is linearity test and the results show that the significant value of the deviation from linearity test obtained is 0.765. According to the basis decision making of the linearity test, it is shows that if the significance value more than 0.05, the data is linear. So, the second assumption test is fulfilled. After the two assumptions test was fulfilled, then the hypothesis test can be analyzed. The hypothesis test of this study used correlation Pearson Product Moment test using SPSS 27.0 for Mac software. The basis decision making of this hypothesis test is if the significance value shows  $< 0.05$ , the  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_1$  is accepted or there is a significant difference on this study. However, of the significant value shows  $> 0.05$ , the  $H_0$  is accepted and the  $H_1$  is rejected means that there is no significant difference between variables tested. The results of the hypothesis tested on this study shown in Table 3.

**Table 3.** The result of statistical analysis of product moment.

Variables	N	Pearson Correlation	Sig.
Career Commitment - Job Autonomy	191	0.493	0.000

The hypothesis was analyzed using SPSS 27.0 for Mac software, showing a significance value of 0.000 (Sig  $< 0.05$ ) on the variables, namely job autonomy and career commitment, which means that the results of data analysis show a significant relationship between the two variables. Thus, the hypothesis in this study, which states there is a relationship between job autonomy and career commitment is acceptable. The results of the correlation coefficient analysis also show a positive relationship direction;

in other words, the higher the autonomy of a job in a school, the higher the number of teacher career commitments, otherwise the lower the job autonomy on teacher at school, the lower the value of teacher career commitment.

## DISCUSSION

Education is an essential component in the nation's progress, and teachers have a significant role in directing students to develop their abilities and potential. Teachers can carry out their duties optimally if they have guarantees in work. Suppose the work as a teacher cannot create job security. In that case, the variability of emotional attachment to a career as a teacher will have a significant work meaning for a person to continue to choose a career as a teacher in school. Career commitment is an attitude to achieve goals carried out by individuals in terms of self-development that reflects the individual's commitment regarding his goals (Vandenberghe & Ok, 2013). Various factors, including motivation, influence teachers with a high career commitment. Various motivations that encourage teacher commitment there are intrinsic motivations such as interest in teaching in the classroom, self-efficacy, and a strong desire to work with students have contributed to a high level of commitment for the teacher (Zhang, 2019). Career commitment also considered as one of the factor related to many kinds of employee development (Atmaca, 2022), because employee who commit with their career shows more dedication in work and have a lot of positive outcomes for the organization. As for teachers, career commitment shows the teachers dedication in teaching student and helps them to improve the students' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral development (Butucha, 2013; Atmaca, 2022). Teachers should value or be proud of their professional job as a teacher and have desire to remain in teaching as a job, so that they can reach the high level of teacher career commitment and give all the dedication in teaching and developing education, as well as increased their personal development (Picard & Kutsyuruba, 2017; Atmaca, 2022).

The practices of school learning development, the teachers' commitment are very important. A study discovered that improving career commitment will make teacher to encourage dedication and increase the stability of their job (Sun, 2018). Not only the commitment to stay as an employee of school organization, but also commitment as a teacher itself. The commitment of being teacher or work in teaching profession is very necessary to be implied in learning activity at school, because teachers will be able to handle various roles as a person who gives education to students properly (Sahrazad et al., 2022). A teacher must have a commitment in their profession, because if the teacher doesn't have commitment in their career as an educator at school, the school goals will not be achieved. It is also because, a career commitment makes people become more responsible of their job and giving their best at working so, the company or organization will get the best result and achieve their goal optimally (Sahrazad et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the results of the meta-analysis of Zhu et al. (2021) regarding the antecedents of career commitment include organizational factors, social environment, work, individual attributes, and psychological attributes, including job autonomy. First, occupational autonomy becomes an integral part of organizational practice because it becomes one of the human needs relating to the level of control or flexibility in doing work deals with three aspects of job autonomy, namely autonomy related to work methods, the extent to which a person can choose his way or manner of working.

Second, the process of developing a work schedule is independence in controlling the division of work time. Finally, the autonomy of the place or location of work is freedom in determining the position used to do its job (Fida & Najam, 2019).

Autonomy allows employees to experiment with different approaches and methods of work. This will enable them to discover ideas and develop them further through the small-scale application of these ideas. Teachers have the flexibility to manage their way of working and explore more creative new ideas. Autonomy also increases freedom of choice, and flexibility and gives more power to individuals, so job autonomy can be considered an important work design element that can be used to increase innovation in organizations (Swaroop & Dixit, 2018). Employees' autonomy in managing their work will positively impact them to think creatively, using new ways and innovative ideas to produce optimal performance in the workplace, the results of Swaroop & Dixit (2018) entitled "Employee engagement, job autonomy and innovative work behavior: An empirical study" also show a positive influence. Teacher autonomy can positively influence a teacher's critical thinking-focused instruction.

Job autonomy can make individual think of their job freedomly and different from each other, so that the individual level of creativity can increase. In line with that, the responsibility to take initiative in work, find innovative solutions, and potential exploration on working also can be increased because of the opportunity in employee job autonomy (Garg & Dhar, 2017). When someone is given autonomy, they are more likely to increase their motivation and be more creative than under direction and control. Increased creativity and willingness to perform tasks ensure that workers have the opportunity to experience performance achievements, inspiration, creativity, and achievement experiences, which will appear as new behaviors (Jin & Kim, 2015). Related to these conditions, some studies show that a worker with good job autonomy and work-life balance will positively influence job performance in the workplace (Johari et al., 2016). The job autonomy criterion refers to the level at which employees can choose or modify work objectives and evaluation criteria. Individuals with little control over their work will tend to be more dependent on organizational systems (Swaroop & Dixit, 2018). When job autonomy in individuals increases, it will reduce the worry in employees by restructuring and increase employee innovation ideas; it will also make employees more freely explore new ideas in their work at a time of stressful circumstances. In line with that, Li & Zhu (2022) found that job autonomy of teachers has a positive relationship with is associated with teaching innovations carried out by teachers in schools.

An aspect of autonomy of work methods that refers to the discretion of the individual relating to procedures and practices of work on how to work is performed. In this case, the teacher has autonomy of work methods by choosing teaching styles and teaching materials for students. The selection of teaching materials is tailored to the curriculum and the needs of students, while the freedom of teaching style can be adjusted to the characteristics of students. Teachers are expected to be able to develop teaching materials not only following the provisions of school standards but also to develop them to improve students' abilities. This research is in line with the findings of relevant study, conducted by Diyan & Adediwura (2016). The autonomy for teacher to work, or teacher autonomy, is very impactful on how the teachers run their professional work. Related to that, Fradkin-Hayslip (2021) explained that the level of job autonomy and the competence of teachers correlate with the values that apply in organizations,



including schools. The professional development as a teacher also can be seen better when the teacher have autonomy on their job (Akçay & Sevinç, 2021), it means that the teacher autonomy plays an important role to improve teachers' ability and quality in education activities. The results showed a positive relationship between teacher autonomy and teacher job satisfaction. Thus, the better the autonomy of the teacher's work, the higher the level of job satisfaction of teacher. In addition, this study found a positive relationship between student behavior that showed good attitudes and teacher job satisfaction. In line with these results, the investigation concluded that teacher autonomy possessed by a teacher could strengthen positive student behavior and a higher level of teacher satisfaction (Kengatharan, 2020). Teachers autonomy also enable teacher to reflects their potential in work as well as improving their commitment in organization (Dilekçi, 2022), and teacher autonomy also contributes in making teacher more powerful, creative, and effective in working activities (Ertürk, 2021).

The autonomy aspect of the work schedule is that when an individual has flexibility related to regulating when to do which work this case, the teacher has wisdom and flexibility in the division of time during the learning process both for material presentation, assignments, homework, quizzes, and tests. Teachers are expected to be able to wisely schedule and sequence activities in teaching and learning activities and divide the duration of time for each activity. The aspect of workplace autonomy refers to autonomy to decide where to do work (Spiegelaere et al., 2016), which in this study can be shown from the wisdom of teachers in choosing a place to carry out teaching and learning activities and the design of the program. The attitude shown is when the teacher has the authority to determine the position or location used for the place of study by the subject matter, both in the classroom, school environment, and outside the school. In line with this, Brummelhuis & Bakker (2012) found that the wisdom in which people work allows them to organize their work more effectively and become more entanglement. In addition, teachers are also able to make program designs to bridge between the theory in the book and the reality in the field to be practiced, so that their career commitment as a teacher also continues to increase.

As Kılınç et al. (2018) told that teacher job autonomy has a important role in teaching activities and also shows the quality of teacher as the main actors of this field, so giving teacher their autonomy in working will give a lot of benefits not only for the teacher itself but also for the organization (school) in general. This is because the good quality teacher will perform good decision making and problem solving when there is problem in educational activities (Parker, 2015; Dilekçi, 2022). Futhermore, Akçay & Sevinç (2021) from their research results that increasing the level of teachers' job autonomy can improve the teachers' motivation, efficiency in work, and also the commitment towards their job and organization. In line with this research result that shows positive relation between job autonomy and teacher career commitment, so the autonomy given to teacher in their work will improving their level of career commitment as a professional teacher and makes them perform the best potential they have as the consequences of their value as a teacher.

## CONCLUSION

This study aims to determine the relationship between job autonomy and career commitment on teachers. Based on the results study, there is a significant relationship among the variables. The job autonomy in teacher has a positive significant relationship

with the teacher career commitment. It means that the higher the autonomy of work on teacher, the higher their career commitment. Otherwise, the lower the job autonomy on teacher, the lower the teacher career commitment. For organizations, the findings of this study show that career commitment needs to begin with providing job autonomy to teachers to offer flexibility and independence in regulating teaching methods, scheduling the teaching and learning process, and the place used in the learning process. This is because when teachers freely manage their way of working, they will fully have a hand in the work and know what should be done and the problems that occur in their work so that, from the knowledge of the problem, they can look for opportunities to solve it with the emergence of behaviors to create innovative new ideas and solutions that are used to solve problems in their work. Future researchers can further examine the factors that affect career commitment because this study only examines the relationship with the variables of job autonomy. Both by reviewing internal and external aspects of individuals related to career commitments; in addition, the number of samples used needs to be enlarged again so that research results can be generalized to the education sector or teachers in general. This research has limitations, including focusing only on the relationship between job autonomy and career commitment. This study did not study several factors that influence career commitment, internally and externally. For example, internal factors such as individual personality, motivation, cognitive abilities, knowledge, and skills, while external factors include organizational climate and support.

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**\*Olievia Prabandini Mulyana (Corresponding Author)**

Department of Psychology Faculty of Education,  
Universitas Negeri Surabaya  
Lidah Wetan Street, Lakarsantri, Surabaya City, East Java, 60213, Indonesia  
Email: [olieviaprabandini@unesa.ac.id](mailto:olieviaprabandini@unesa.ac.id)

**Umi Anugerah Izzati**

Department of Psychology Faculty of Education,  
Universitas Negeri Surabaya  
Lidah Wetan Street, Lakarsantri, Surabaya City, East Java, 60213, Indonesia  
Email: [umianugerah@unesa.ac.id](mailto:umianugerah@unesa.ac.id)

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