

## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the Study

The demographic bonus, a time when the percentage of people in the productive age range is higher than that of non-productive dependents, is currently occurring in Indonesia (Meilia & Parahyangan, 2025). There is a chance for economic expansion, higher national productivity, and increased global competitiveness due to this demographic structure. However, the quality of human capital more especially, the degree to which recent graduates are prepared to enter a high-stakes workforce determines whether or not this potential is realized.

Even though the demographic phase indicates that the number of university graduates produced each year is rising, questions remain about how prepared these graduates are to meet the demands of society. Prior research has revealed a persistent competency gap, where Indonesian graduates exhibit adequate technical knowledge but lack critical non-cognitive traits like flexibility, perseverance, and self-control (Fahrezi *et al.*, 2025). This emphasizes how important it is for final-year students to have those qualities in order to facilitate seamless transitions between school and work.

These days, employers prioritize psychological infrastructure the internal qualities that enable a person to convert knowledge into non-cognitive skills rather than a candidate's formal education (Rachmad, 2025). Finding the right candidate has become more challenging for HR managers as a result of the HR industry's current evolution, which shifts from administrative screening to more complex psychological evaluations to determine an applicant's internal qualities (Wiroko &

Pancasila, 2015). In this scenario, the competency gap identified by Fahrezi (2025) indicates that the challenge with Indonesian students is not only overcoming the competitive environment but also acquiring non-cognitive abilities to leverage the expanding economy.

Self-Efficacy is one of the most important psychological concepts when it comes to being prepared for the workforce (Nabilah & Listiana, 2025). Self-efficacy, which has its roots in Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory is the conviction that one can plan and carry out the necessary actions to accomplish particular objectives. Students' confidence in their ability to successfully complete academic tasks and achieve desired outcomes is reflected in academic self-efficacy, which is commonly expressed as academic self-efficacy (Akhmedjanova, 2024).

Motivation, effort, perseverance, and resilience are all significantly impacted by this belief system. High ASE students are more likely to actively participate in their education and persevere in the face of challenges (Akhmedjanova, 2024). Additionally, higher ASE is also linked to improved academic achievement, better emotional control, and more resilience during the transition from school to the workplace. On the other hand, procrastination and academic disengagement are more common among students with low self-efficacy, which may suggest that they are not prepared for the workforce (Nabilah & Listiana, 2025).

Conscientiousness, one of the Big Five personality model's five main dimensions, has long been emphasized as a factor in the development of ASE (Li *et al.*, 2025). Discipline, organization, accountability, and goal-oriented behavior

are characteristics of conscientiousness. People who are highly conscientious typically make good plans and work steadily to accomplish their goals (Jackson *et al.*, 2010).

Conscientious students are more likely to follow organized study habits and effectively manage their time in the classroom (Li *et al.*, 2024). These actions inevitably promote the growth of academic proficiency and self-assurance, which raises ASE. Conscientiousness and self-efficacy have been found to be positively correlated in empirical research, indicating that students who are well-organized and disciplined are more likely to have confidence in their capacity to achieve academic success (Jackson *et al.*, 2010).

Recent developments by Li *et al.* (2024) in educational psychology suggest that the relationship between conscientiousness and ASE may operate through psychological boosters, specifically Growth Mindset and Grit. Growth Mindset was introduced by Dweck (2017), this refers to the belief that intelligence and abilities can be developed through effort, learning, and persistence. Students with a growth mindset embrace challenges and view failures as opportunities for improvement. Alternatively, Grit was developed by Angela Duckworth (2007), grit meant sustained effort and passion toward long-term goals. Gritty individuals are characterized by their ability to persevere over extended periods and remain committed to their objectives (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009).

Although the structural foundation for a disciplined lifestyle is ensured by conscientiousness, growth mindset and grit serve as the psychological mechanisms for motivation and perseverance; however, such a stance is also supported by recent

empirical research findings of Li *et al.* (2024) which indicated that conscientiousness has a positive effect on ASE both directly and indirectly via a dual mediation effect of growth mindset and grit. Thus, it is proposed that people who are more inclined towards conscientiousness are more likely to have a growth mindset and grit along with a stronger belief in their academic capabilities (ASE).

However, in spite of the findings of educational psychology, a significant geographical and contextual void still exists. Most of the existing models, such as the mediation framework examined by (Li *et al.*, 2024, 2025), have been empirically tested in the Chinese education system. However, the socio-demographic characteristics of the Chinese and Indonesian cases differ significantly. Currently, China is undergoing a phenomenon of demographic aging with a shrinking labor pool. Indonesia, conversely, is in a demographic bonus period with an expanding labor pool. Additionally, statistics by Ogihara (2023) shows that the Chinese culture is becoming more individualistic, in the other hand the Indonesian culture is embedded within a system of Gotong Royong or mutual cooperation. It is not clear whether traits like Conscientiousness are expressed differently in a culture that values group progress over individual progress. Hence, studies from other cultures cannot be generalized to the Indonesian culture.

In spite of the importance of this stage in the development process, there is not enough empirical evidence with regard to the Indonesian final-year university student, the closest group to the school-to-work transition. Additionally this study chooses the Faculty of Business and Economics at Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta as an area of significance. The FBE program is heavily involved in the

development of entrepreneurial skills. Entrepreneurship is itself a high-pressure environment in the development of non-cognitive skills. The necessity for a highly advanced level of soft skills rather than purely technical skills in the practice of entrepreneurship provides a unique perspective with which to observe the impact of 'psychological infrastructure' namely the interaction of Conscientiousness, Growth Mindset, and Grit in the school-to-work transition.

To be noted, the study conducted by Li *et al* (2024) explored these variables using a dual-mediation model, hence their results showed that Growth Mindset were statistically suppressed or deprived of significance. To see the true impact of these variables in Indonesia, where empirical research on these subjects is still low, the dual mediating model is simplified to the simple mediation model. Following the research of (Li *et al.*, 2024), the current study aims to extends the Dual Mediation Model and applies it to the simple mediation model to make it more appropriate for the context of Indonesia. The research findings hopes to provide a clear 'psychological infrastructure' for the final-year students at FBE Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta and offer them a strategy to address the national 'competency gap' and maximize the demographic bonus of Indonesia.

## **1.2. Problem Statement**

1. Does Conscientiousness have a positive and significant effect on Academic Self-Efficacy among final-year students at FBE Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta?
2. Does Conscientiousness have a positive and significant effect on Growth Mindset among final-year students at FBE Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta?

3. Does Conscientiousness have a positive and significant effect on Grit among final-year students at FBE Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta?
4. Does Growth Mindset have a positive and significant effect on Academic Self-Efficacy among final-year students at FBE Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta?
5. Does Grit have a positive and significant effect on Academic Self-Efficacy among final-year students at FBE Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta?
6. Does Growth Mindset mediate the relationship between Conscientiousness and Academic Self-Efficacy among final-year students at FBE Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta?
7. Does Grit mediate the relationship between Conscientiousness and Academic Self-Efficacy among final-year students at FBE Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta?

### **1.3. Scope of Research**

To clarify the variables used in this study, the research scope is defined as follows:

1. Referring to Jackson *et al.* (2010) Conscientiousness was defined as the tendency to follow socially prescribed norms, plan effectively, and adhere to the rules.
2. Referring to Bandura (1977) Self-Efficacy was defined as the belief of an individual in their ability to organize and execute the actions needed to achieve certain goals. Self-Efficacy in the academic setting is referred to as Academic Self-Efficacy (Akhmedjanova, 2024). Self-Efficacy was also identified as one of the significant predictors of Work Readiness (Nabilah & Listiana, 2025).
3. Referring to Duckworth & Quinn (2009) Grit was defined as the constant interest and effort towards the individual's objective.

4. Referring to Dweck (2017) Growth Mindset was defined as the belief that intelligence and abilities can be developed through efforts, learning, and persistence.

#### **1.4. Research Objectives**

Based on the problem statement, the study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To analyze the effect of Conscientiousness on Academic Self-Efficacy among final-year students at FBE Universitas Atma Jaya. Yogyakarta
2. To analyze the effect of Conscientiousness on Growth Mindset among final-year students at FBE Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta.
3. To analyze the effect of Conscientiousness on Grit among final-year students at FBE Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta.
4. To analyze the effect of Growth Mindset on Academic Self-Efficacy among final-year students at FBE Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta.
5. To analyze the effect of Grit on Academic Self-Efficacy among final-year students at FBE Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta.
6. To analyze the mediating effect of Growth Mindset on the relationship between Conscientiousness and Academic Self Efficacy among final-year students at FBE Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta.
7. To analyze the mediating effect of Grit on the relationship between Conscientiousness and Academic Self Efficacy among final-year students at FBE Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta.

#### **1.5. Research Benefits**

The findings of this research is expected to contribute the following benefits:

1. Theoritical Benefits

This study examines the relationship of Conscientiousness, Growth Mindset, Grit, Academic Self-Efficacy in Indonesia, which is in the demographic bonus but is experiencing a 'competency gap.' Prior studies in China employed a dual mediation model, which statistically suppressed the effect of Growth Mindset (Li *et al.*, 2024). However, in this study, a simple mediation approach is employed, enabling us to examine the unique contribution of each 'psychological infrastructure' of the Indonesian final year college student. This study aims to give empirical basis to use more complex mediation model for future research as well as partially validate the study by (Li *et al.*, 2024) in the current Indonesian context enhancing knowledges about 'psychological infrastructures'.

## 2. Practical Benefits

- a) This study promotes self-reflection among final year students or students in general, as it makes them aware of the fact that it is not just the knowledge they possess that makes them work-ready, but the development of discipline and a state of mind.
- b) This research can also help universities develop their courses and curriculum interventions. Understanding the significance of non-cognitive skills can help them go beyond traditional academic tutoring to develop courses that can potentially enhance conscientiousness, growth mindset, grit, and self-efficacy to facilitate the school-to-work transition process.

- c) The present study offers HR managers a clearer framework for identifying the right candidates. By emphasizing the internal factors that shape work readiness, the present study suggests the need for the evolution of the recruitment process, which goes beyond the simple GPA of the candidate.
- d) The present study contributes to the Indonesian objective of reaping the demographic bonus. By determining the factors that address the competency gap, the results provide some insights into the creation of first-rate human capital that can successfully face the challenges of globalization.

## **1.6. Research Structure**

The writing system consists of five chapters, as follows:

### **CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides a general overview of the research, including the background, research problems, research scope, research objectives, and research benefits.

### **CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter contains the theoretical foundations related to the research problem, which serve as a guide for the analysis. It also presents previous studies that act as references, the research framework, and the hypotheses.

### **CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY**

This chapter explains the research location, data sources, research model, population and sample, data measurement

methods, instrument testing methods, and data analysis techniques.

#### **CHAPTER IV RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter presents the research results processed using appropriate methods to test the hypotheses. The discussion includes respondent characteristics, instrument test results, descriptive statistical analysis, F-tests, and T-tests, concluding with an in-depth discussion of the findings

#### **CHAPTER V CONCLUSION**

This chapter contains the conclusions drawn from the research results, the limitations of the study, and suggestions for future research.

