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THE ROLE OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP, EMPOWERMENT, SELF-EFFICACY, MOTIVATION, AND QUALITY CULTURE IN TEACHER COMMITMENT

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the direct and indirect effects of servant leadership, empowerment, self-efficacy, work motivation, and quality culture on the organizational commitment of teachers in Center of Excellence Vocational High Schools (SMK Pusat Keunggulan), and to identify improvement strategies using SITOREM analysis. A quantitative survey was conducted on 119 teachers from 18 private Center of Excellence Vocational High Schools in Bogor Regency, selected through proportional random sampling. Instruments were adapted from standardized scales. Data were analyzed using PLS-SEM (SmartPLS 3.0) and SITOREM. The measurement model met convergent validity (AVE>0.5), discriminant validity (HTMT<0.9), and reliability (CR>0.8). The R^2 for organizational commitment was 0.685, indicating that 68.5% of its variance was explained by the five predictors. Work motivation had the strongest direct effect (β=0.312, p<0.001), followed by quality culture (β=0.287, p<0.001). All direct and mediating effects were significant (p<0.05). SITOREM identified five priority indicators for improvement (sharing leadership, participation in decision making, member engagement, classroom management, achievement motivation) and five outstanding indicators to be maintained. Enhancing teachers' organizational commitment is most effectively achieved by strengthening work motivation and quality culture. Operational recommendations based on the priority indicators are provided for school principals and education authorities. Future research should employ longitudinal designs.

Keywords*: organizational commitment, servant leadership, empowerment, self-efficacy, work motivation, quality culture, PLS-SEM, SITOREM*

INTRODUCTION

Teachers' organizational commitment is a determining factor in the successful implementation of the Center of Excellence Vocational High School (SMK Pusat Keunggulan) program in Indonesia. This program demands instructional transformation, stronger partnerships with the industrial sector, and continuous quality improvement. However, a preliminary survey of 30 teachers from private Center of Excellence Vocational High Schools in Bogor Regency (May 2025) revealed that, on average, 34% of teachers still exhibited suboptimal organizational commitment, particularly in terms of loyalty, retention intention, and active participation. This phenomenon is exacerbated by the high mobility of private school teachers becoming Government Employees with Work Agreements (PPPK) as well as their transition to other sectors offering better welfare. Consequently, the stability of school organizations and the sustainability of quality improvement programs are threatened. Theoretically, organizational commitment is defined as a psychological bond encompassing affective, continuance, and normative commitment (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002).

Previous research has identified various factors affecting teachers' organizational commitment, such as transformational leadership (Nguyen, Tran, & Le, 2023),

organizational support (Demir & Özdemir, 2023), and personality (Laihad, Hardhienata, & Retnowati, 2025). However, most of these studies have been partial in nature. In the leadership domain, the concept of servant leadership developed by Liden, Wayne, Zhao, and Henderson (2008) and systematically reviewed by Eva, Robin, Sendjaya, van Dierendonck, and Liden (2019) emphasizes that leaders who serve will encourage empowerment and follower development. van Dierendonck (2011) also synthesized that servant leadership positively affects subordinates' well-being and commitment. On the other hand, psychological empowerment introduced by Spreitzer (1995) and further examined by Seibert, Wang, and Courtright (2011) has been shown to enhance intrinsic motivation and performance. Similarly, self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998) plays an important role in work behavior. Multidimensional work motivation (Gagné et al., 2015) has also been shown to mediate the relationship between leadership and commitment (Vansteenkiste, Ryan, & Soenens, 2020). Unfortunately, no study has integrated all five variables (servant leadership, empowerment, self-efficacy, work motivation, quality culture) simultaneously into a single empirical model in the context of Center of Excellence Vocational High Schools. Furthermore, none has used the SITOREM approach (*Scientific Identification Theory to Conduct Operation Research in Education Management*) to determine indicator-level improvement priorities. Therefore, the novelty of this article lies in: (1) developing a constellation model of the effects of these five variables on teachers' organizational commitment, and (2) formulating evidence-based priority indicator recommendations using SITOREM.

The specific objectives of this article are: (a) to examine the direct and indirect effects of servant leadership, empowerment, self-efficacy, work motivation, and quality culture on teachers' organizational commitment; (b) to discover evidence-based strategies for enhancing organizational commitment; and (c) to determine priority indicators for improvement and outstanding indicators to be maintained. The main hypotheses tested in this study are: (1) there is a positive direct effect of each of the five exogenous variables on organizational commitment; (2) there is a positive direct effect of servant leadership and empowerment on work motivation; (3) there is a positive direct effect of empowerment and self-efficacy on quality culture; (4) work motivation mediates the effects of servant leadership and empowerment on organizational commitment; and (5) quality culture mediates the effects of empowerment and self-efficacy on organizational commitment. This study is expected to make an important contribution to the development of organizational behavior theory in the context of vocational education while providing practical guidance for school principals, education authorities, and private education providers.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach with a survey method and was verificative (causal) in nature. The research was conducted over six months, from January to June 2026, at 18 private Center of Excellence Vocational High Schools in Bogor Regency, West Java Province. The target population was all permanent teachers (GTY), totaling 169 people. The sample size was calculated using the Yamane formula with a 5% margin of error: $n = 169 / (169 \times 0.05^2 + 1) = 118.8 \approx 119$. Proportional random sampling was used. A total of 119 teachers successfully participated (100% response rate).

The statistical hypothesis proposed in this study is depicted in the Path Diagram as follows:

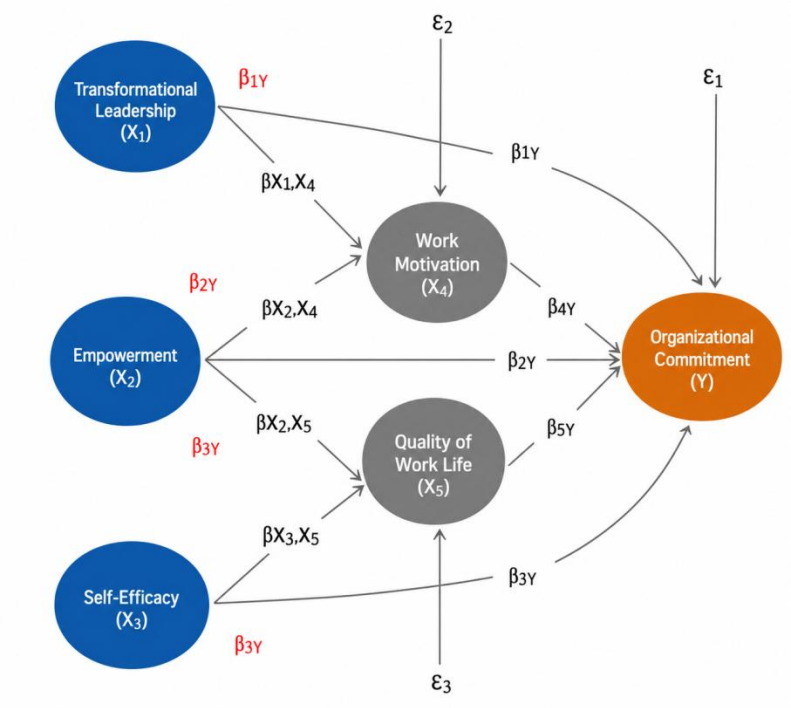

Figure 1. research constellation

The research instrument was a questionnaire developed based on the operational definition of each variable. Organizational commitment (Y) was measured using a scale adapted from Meyer et al. (2002). Servant leadership (X1) was measured using the scale of Liden et al. (2008). Empowerment (X2) was measured using Spreitzer's (1995) scale. Self-efficacy (X3) was measured based on the concepts of Bandura (1977) and Stajkovic & Luthans (1998). Work motivation (X4) was measured using the Multidimensional Work Motivation Scale (Gagné et al., 2015). Quality culture (X5) was measured using indicators derived from TQM literature. A pilot test of the instrument was conducted on 30 teachers outside the sample. Item validity was tested using Product Moment correlation; all items had r-calculated > r-table (0.361). Reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha; coefficients for each variable ranged from 0.855 to 0.883 (>0.70), indicating reliability.

Data analysis was performed in three stages. First, descriptive statistics were computed using MS Excel. Second, model testing and hypothesis testing were conducted using Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 3.0 (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2019). The measurement model was evaluated through convergent validity (loading factor >0.7; AVE >0.5), discriminant validity (HTMT <0.9), and reliability (CR >0.7). The structural model was evaluated through multicollinearity (VIF <5), R^2, f^2, and Q^2. Hypothesis testing was performed using bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples ($t > 1.96$; $p < 0.05$). Third, SITOREM analysis was conducted to determine indicator priorities based on expert weights (cost, benefit, urgency, importance criteria) and empirical mean scores.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Descriptive Statistics.

Table 1 presents a summary of descriptive statistics. The highest mean score was for organizational commitment (Y = 166.79) and the lowest for self-efficacy (X3 = 156.06).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics (n=119)

Variabel	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
X1 (Servant Leadership)	135	197	162,24	17,20
X2 (Empowerment)	135	194	156,34	16,53
X3 (Self Eficacy)	131	189	156,06	13,28
X4 (Work Motivation)	135	194	156,74	16,78
X5 (Quality Culture)	136	194	157,44	16,69
Y (Organizational Commitment)	137	196	166,79	15,19

Measurement Model Evaluation.

All indicators had loading factors >0.7. AVE values: X1=0.624; X2=0.618; X3=0.641; X4=0.632; X5=0.619; Y=0.655 (all >0.5). HTMT values were <0.85. Composite Reliability exceeded 0.86. Thus, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability were satisfied.

Structural Model Evaluation.

VIF for all predictors was <3. R^2 for Y = 0.685; R^2 for X4 = 0.472; R^2 for X5 = 0.451. f^2 X4→Y = 0.285 (medium), X5→Y = 0.241 (medium). Q^2 for Y = 0.423 (>0).

Hypothesis Testing (Direct Effects).

Table 2 shows that all direct effect hypotheses H1–H9 were accepted ($p<0.05$). The strongest effects were X2→X4 (β=0.361) and X4→Y (β=0.312).

Table 2 Direct Effect

Hypothesis	Path	β	t-statistic	p-value
H1	X1 → Y	0,168	2,471	0,014
H2	X2 → Y	0,185	2,681	0,007

Hypothesis	Path	β	t-statistic	p-value
H3	X3 → Y	0,154	2,200	0,028
H4	X4 → Y	0,312	4,875	0,000
H5	X5 → Y	0,287	4,100	0,000
H6	X1 → X4	0,254	3,432	0,001
H7	X2 → X4	0,361	4,945	0,000
H8	X2 → X5	0,328	4,205	0,000
H9	X3 → X5	0,342	4,442	0,000

Hypothesis Testing (Indirect/Mediation Effects).
Table 3 shows that all four mediation paths were significant ($p<0.05$).

Table 3. Indirect Effects

Hipotesis	Mediation Path	Indirect Effect	t-statistic	p-value
H10	X1→X4→Y	0,079	2,815	0,005
H11	X2→X4→Y	0,113	3,415	0,001
H12	X2→X5→Y	0,094	2,892	0,004
H13	X3→X5→Y	0,098	3,150	0,002

SITOREM Analysis.
Priority indicators for improvement: (1) Sharing Leadership, (2) Participation in Decision Making, (3) Member Engagement and Classroom Management (tie), (4) Achievement Motivation. Outstanding indicators to be maintained: Authenticity, Access to Information & Resources, Achievement of Learning Outcomes, Goal Commitment, Shared Quality Values.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study consistently support the theoretical framework based on meta-analyses and recent empirical studies. The direct effect of work motivation on organizational commitment (β=0.312) was the strongest. This aligns with Gagné et al.

(2015) and the meta-analysis by Meyer et al. (2002) showing that intrinsic motivation is strongly correlated with affective commitment. In the teacher context, high work motivation fosters loyalty and attachment (Vansteenkiste et al., 2020). This finding also supports Thoonen et al. (2023) that work motivation of teachers in the Netherlands significantly affects organizational commitment.

Quality culture also exerted a strong direct effect (β=0.287). Alotaibi, Islam, & Alnasser (2023) and Psomas, Antony, & Bouranta (2023) confirmed that quality culture enhances commitment through discipline and continuous improvement. Asif, de Vries, & Ahmad (2021) also found that quality culture promotes organizational learning and innovation. However, in our study, the indicator of member engagement still had a low score (64), requiring intervention. This suggests that although shared quality values are already good, active teacher participation in quality improvement activities remains insufficient.

Servant leadership (β=0.168) and empowerment (β=0.185) had significant but smaller direct effects, as most of their influence was transmitted through mediation. These results are consistent with Liden et al. (2008), van Dierendonck (2011), Eva et al. (2019), and Seibert et al. (2011). Zhang & Bartol (2010) also showed that empowering leadership enhances creativity through self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation. In the school context, principals who serve and empower teachers increase work motivation (β=0.254 for X1→X4; β=0.361 for X2→X4) and quality culture (β=0.328 for X2→X5), which in turn strengthens commitment.

Self-efficacy (β=0.154) had the smallest direct effect, but its indirect effect through quality culture was substantial (0.098). Bandura (1977) and Stajkovic & Luthans (1998) explained that self-efficacy influences proactive behavior and persistence. In our study, teachers with high self-efficacy were better able to foster quality culture, which then increased commitment. Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2021) also found that teacher self-efficacy is positively related to job satisfaction and engagement, which in turn enhance commitment.

The mediating roles of work motivation and quality culture are important theoretical contributions. This study reinforces the integrative model of Colquitt & Zipay (2015) and the findings of Wang, Li, & Zhang (2023) that job satisfaction mediates professional identity and commitment. Recent research by Xu, Li, & Zhang (2024) also showed that teacher well-being mediates the effect of authentic leadership on commitment. Afsar & Umrani (2022) reported that servant leadership influences employee outcomes through empowerment and motivation. In our study, work motivation mediated the effects of X1 and X2 on Y, while quality culture mediated the effects of X2 and X3 on Y. Therefore, interventions to increase organizational commitment should target both work motivation and quality culture simultaneously.

Practical implications based on SITOREM: the priority indicator improvements provide concrete guidance for school principals and education authorities. For example, forming teacher committees for decision making (participation in decision making), classroom management training, a performance-based reward system (achievement motivation), and regular discussion forums to increase member engagement in quality culture. Outstanding indicators such as principal authenticity and access to information should be maintained because they are already solid foundations.

Research limitations

The cross-sectional design cannot definitively establish causality; longitudinal research is needed (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Podsakoff, 2012). The sample was limited to one regency (Bogor Regency), so generalization to other regions should be made with caution. The use of self-report questionnaires is susceptible to common method bias, although the HTMT test indicated good discriminant validity. Future studies are advised to add observational or interview data to enrich the findings.

CONCLUSION

The organizational commitment of teachers in Center of Excellence Vocational High Schools can be enhanced by strengthening work motivation (especially achievement motivation) and quality culture (especially member engagement). Servant leadership, empowerment, and self-efficacy have positive effects, both directly and indirectly through mediation. SITOREM analysis produced five priority indicators for improvement (sharing leadership, participation in decision making, member engagement, classroom management, achievement motivation) and five outstanding indicators to be maintained. The main limitations are the cross-sectional design and limited geographic scope. Future research should employ longitudinal designs, expand the sample to other regions, and test the effectiveness of interventions based on SITOREM priorities through action research.

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