

THE EFFECT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP ON AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT AND TEACHER PERFORMANCE

Fuji Hidayat^{1*}, Agustedi²

^{1,2} Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Indonesia Surabaya, Surabaya
Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: fuji.hidayat@itbriau.ac.id

Abstract: This study aims to examine the impact of transformational leadership on teachers' affective commitment and performance. In the field of education, effective leadership plays a crucial role in enhancing teachers' motivation and performance. Transformational leadership, which emphasizes inspiration, empowerment, and individual development, is expected to encourage teachers to develop a higher commitment to their profession and improve their performance. This research employs a quantitative approach with a survey method, where data was collected through questionnaires distributed to teachers in several schools. The results indicate that transformational leadership has a significant positive effect on teachers' affective commitment (path coefficient 0.775) and teacher performance (path coefficient 0.689). Additionally, affective commitment positively influences teacher performance with a path coefficient of 0.475. These findings emphasize that leaders who can inspire and empower teachers can enhance their commitment to the school and drive improved performance. This study contributes to the understanding of the importance of transformational leadership in the educational context and provides recommendations for educational administrators to focus more on developing transformational leadership styles.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Affective Commitment, Teacher Performance, Education

1. Introduction

This study aims to examine the influence of transformational leadership on affective commitment and teacher performance. In the field of education, effective leadership plays a crucial role in enhancing teacher motivation and performance. Transformational leadership, which emphasizes inspiration, empowerment, and individual development, is expected to encourage teachers to have a higher level of commitment to their profession and improve their performance. This research employed a quantitative approach with a survey method, where data were collected through questionnaires distributed to teachers in several schools. The findings reveal that transformational leadership has a significant positive effect on teachers' affective commitment (path coefficient = 0.775) and teacher performance (path coefficient = 0.689). Moreover, affective commitment also has a positive effect on teacher performance with a path coefficient of 0.475. These results confirm that leaders who are able to inspire and empower teachers can strengthen their sense of commitment to the school and foster performance improvement. This study contributes to the understanding of the importance of transformational leadership in the educational context and provides recommendations for education managers to place greater emphasis on developing a transformative leadership style.

2. Literature Review

a. Transformational Leadership Theory & Organizational Learning

Transformational leadership has a direct influence on affective commitment, with individual-level organizational learning and motivation serving as partial mediators. A transformational leadership style that encompasses intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, inspiration, and idealized influence can encourage teachers to continuously learn and improve their practices, thereby strengthening their emotional attachment to the school organization. This theory highlights that transformational leadership not only affects commitment directly but also indirectly through learning and motivation variables. Recent models integrate teachers' internal aspects (motivation, learning) with leadership style to explain how transformational leadership enhances affective commitment, which in turn impacts performance. This is particularly relevant in the educational context, as school leaders must foster a supportive organizational learning environment for transformational leadership to be effective (Kristanto, 2022).

b. Transformational Leadership Theory for Deeper Learning

Transformational leadership should be extended toward deeper learning, which emphasizes not only academic achievement but also the development of creativity, critical thinking, equity, and innovation. Leaders practicing deeper learning leadership require authenticity, a clear vision, courage to challenge educational norms, and support for teachers in creating meaningful learning experiences. Within the evolving framework of transformational leadership, the concept of deeper learning leadership adds dimensions beyond motivation and inspiration, incorporating structures, resources, and instructional changes to foster innovation and contextual learning. This theory is relevant for the present study as it shows that transformational leadership is most effective when leaders build supportive learning environments that empower teacher innovation and promote meaningful student learning (Richardson et al., 2021).

c. Emotional Intelligence Theory & Transformational Leadership as a Moderator

Teachers' emotional intelligence and principals' transformational leadership interact to influence organizational commitment. Specifically, transformational leadership functions as a moderating variable between emotional intelligence and organizational commitment. The underlying theory suggests that teachers with high emotional intelligence are more capable of responding to transformational leadership, translating inspiration and support from leaders into emotional commitment. This enriches affective commitment theory by incorporating personality and individual capacity while highlighting how leadership can amplify the effects of personal emotional qualities (Mingwei et al., 2024).

d. Teacher Professional Performance Theory Based on Digital Competence, Grit, and Teaching Creativity

Teacher professional performance is not only determined by traditional pedagogical skills but also by digital literacy, grit (perseverance and resilience), and instructional quality, with teaching creativity as a mediator. This theory implies that in today's digital era of rapid educational change, teachers must be adaptive, persistent in overcoming challenges, and creative in delivering learning to optimize performance. The model emphasizes that transformational leadership should support the development of teachers' digital literacy and creativity, allowing room for innovation rather than focusing solely on supervision (Damanik & Widodo, 2024).

Previous Studies

Recent studies consistently confirm that transformational leadership plays a vital role in enhancing teachers' affective commitment and performance. Transformational leadership significantly influences affective commitment, reinforced by motivation and organizational learning (Kristanto, 2022). Similarly, transformational leadership and learning organizations strengthen teacher commitment through motivation (Sitompul & Tung, 2023). Meta-analytic findings also indicate that transformational leadership consistently has a positive impact on teacher satisfaction, commitment, and self-efficacy, which are closely linked to performance (Firmansyah et al., 2022). However, some studies reveal that while transformational leadership affects organizational commitment, its influence on teacher performance is not always significant through the commitment pathway (Soelistya, 2024). Other research demonstrates a direct influence of transformational leadership on teacher performance, with organizational commitment serving as a mediator that strengthens the relationship (Soelistya & Selamat, 2024). In the international context, teacher commitment mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and sustainable teaching performance (Almaamari & Beshr, 2023). Further studies also highlight that transformational leadership can enhance work motivation, which ultimately improves teacher performance (Sarinah et al., 2024). Based on these findings, the present study aims to address the research gap by focusing on affective commitment as the primary mediator between transformational leadership and teacher performance, which has rarely been examined comprehensively in the Indonesian educational context.

Hypotheses

Based on the theoretical framework and previous studies, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Transformational leadership has a positive effect on teachers' affective commitment.

H2: Transformational leadership has a positive effect on teacher performance.

H3: Affective commitment has a positive effect on teacher performance.

3. Method

This study employed a quantitative method with a survey approach to collect data. Data were obtained through questionnaires distributed to respondents and analyzed using descriptive statistics and Partial Least Squares Path Modeling (PLS-PM). PLS-PM, a variance-based technique within Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), is used to analyze the relationships between latent and independent variables. Also known as Variance-Based Structural Equation Modeling (VB-SEM), this technique is highly suitable for examining the influence of transformational leadership on teacher performance with affective commitment as a mediating variable.

Research Design

The study applied a quantitative survey method using a structured questionnaire designed to measure teachers' perceptions of principals' transformational leadership, their affective commitment to the organization, and teacher performance. This approach was selected because it enables the explanation of causal relationships among variables through hypothesis testing with inferential statistical analysis.

Population

The population consisted of all teachers in secondary schools within the designated research area. Teachers were chosen as the research subjects because they are the primary actors in educational practice and directly experience the impact of principals' leadership styles on their motivation, commitment, and performance.

Sample

The sample was determined using specific criteria, such as teachers who had been teaching for at least two years and were actively involved in both academic and administrative activities at school. The sample size was adjusted according to the requirements of PLS-SEM analysis, namely at least 5–10 times the number of indicators in the questionnaire. Accordingly, the total number of respondents in this study was ... teachers (to be adjusted with actual data).

Sampling Technique

A purposive sampling technique was employed, selecting respondents based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. This method was chosen to ensure that the selected respondents accurately represent the variables being measured, thereby producing data that more precisely reflect the studied phenomenon.

Instrument

The research instrument was a questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” The transformational leadership variable was measured based on indicators developed by Bass & Avolio, including idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Affective commitment was measured using the construct by Allen & Meyer, which emphasizes emotional attachment to the organization. Meanwhile, teacher performance was assessed using indicators of professionalism, discipline, effectiveness, and innovation in the teaching process.

Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis was conducted in several stages. First, validity and reliability tests were performed to ensure that each indicator adequately measured the intended latent variable. Second, classical assumption tests—including normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity—were conducted to confirm the appropriateness of the data for statistical modeling. Finally, multiple regression analysis using SEM-PLS was applied to test the structural relationships among variables and verify the hypotheses regarding the influence of transformational leadership on affective commitment and teacher performance.

4. Result and Discussion

This study applied the Partial Least Squares (PLS) technique in two stages: first, testing the validity and reliability of the measurement model, and second, evaluating the structural relationships among variables to ensure that the model is valid, reliable, and aligned with the hypothesized relationships.

Evaluation of the Measurement (Outer) Model

Three criteria were employed to evaluate the measurement model using SmartPLS: convergent validity, discriminant validity, and composite reliability.

Convergent Validity

Convergent validity assesses the extent to which the indicators used in the model accurately measure their intended constructs. The results in the Outer Loadings (Measurement Model) table indicate that all indicators for Transformational Leadership (X1), Teacher Performance (Y2), and Affective Commitment (Y1) produced factor loadings of -1.000 . This value suggests that no significant relationship exists between the indicators and the constructs they were intended to measure, indicating potential problems in the measurement model or errors in the data used. Typically, a factor loading greater than 0.70 is considered significant in reflecting the underlying construct. The -1.000 values therefore highlight that the measurement model requires revision, or that there may have been data entry or processing errors.

Table 1. Outer Loadings (Measurement Model)

Construct	Indicator	Outer Loading
Transformational Leadership (X1)	X1.1	0,713
	X1.2	0,823
	X1.3	0,824
	X1.4	0,712
	X1.5	0,877
	X1.6	0,809
	X1.7	0,838
	X1.8	0,797
Affective Commitment (Y1)	Y1.1	0,745
	Y1.2	0,805
	Y1.3	0,922
	Y1.4	0,855
	Y1.5	0,852
	Y1.6	0,909
Teacher Performance (Y2)	Y2.1	0,842
	Y2.2	0,885
	Y2.3	0,841
	Y2.4	0,785
	Y2.5	0,811
	Y2.6	0,838
	Y2.7	0,859
	Y2.8	0,818

Source: Output SmartPLS (2025)

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity assesses whether the indicators of a construct are distinct from those of other constructs. In the cross-loading table, each indicator should load higher on its associated construct compared to other constructs. For instance, indicator X1.1 has a loading of 0.713 on Transformational Leadership, while its loadings on Teacher Performance and Affective Commitment are 0.528 and 0.440, respectively. This indicates that X1.1 is more strongly related to Transformational Leadership than to the other

constructs. However, some indicators, such as Y1.1, show higher loadings on different constructs (e.g., Teacher Performance or Transformational Leadership), which may signal potential issues in distinguishing between constructs. Ideally, indicator loadings should be highest on their intended construct and lower on others. Overall, while most indicators align with their respective constructs, a few require further refinement to improve discriminant validity.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity (Cross Loadings)

	Transformational Leadership (X1)	Affective Commitment (Y1)	Teacher Performance (Y2)
X1.1	0,713	0,440	0,528
X1.2	0,823	0,654	0,464
X1.3	0,824	0,625	0,550
X1.4	0,712	0,624	0,531
X1.5	0,877	0,824	0,622
X1.6	0,809	0,631	0,452
X1.7	0,838	0,577	0,652
X1.8	0,797	0,526	0,598
Y1.1	0,551	0,745	0,666
Y1.2	0,667	0,805	0,674
Y1.3	0,735	0,922	0,668
Y1.4	0,524	0,855	0,492
Y1.5	0,626	0,852	0,613
Y1.6	0,787	0,909	0,674
Y2.1	0,685	0,778	0,842
Y2.2	0,545	0,578	0,885
Y2.3	0,523	0,657	0,841
Y2.4	0,681	0,610	0,785
Y2.5	0,483	0,544	0,811
Y2.6	0,589	0,559	0,838
Y2.7	0,501	0,539	0,859
Y2.8	0,512	0,671	0,818

Source: Output SmartPLS (2025)

Construct Reliability and Validity

Construct reliability and validity were tested to ensure that each construct in the model is consistent and reliable. Cronbach's Alpha, rho_A, and Composite Reliability values for Transformational Leadership, Teacher Performance, and Affective Commitment were all greater than 0.9, indicating excellent internal consistency. In addition, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct exceeded 0.5, suggesting that more than 50% of the variance in the indicators is explained by the latent construct. These results confirm strong convergent validity, meaning that the indicators effectively measure the intended constructs.

Table 3. Construct Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Transformational Leadership (X1)	0,919	0,926	0,934	0,642
Affective Commitment (Y1)	0,922	0,935	0,940	0,722
Teacher Performance (Y2)	0,939	0,944	0,949	0,698

Source: Output SmartPLS (2025)

Structural Model Testing (Inner Model)

The structural model testing was conducted to determine the extent to which the independent variables explain the dependent variables in the model. The analysis results show that the R-Square (R^2) value for Teacher Performance (Y2) is 0.475, indicating that the model explains approximately 47.5% of the variance in teacher performance. Meanwhile, the R-Square value for Affective Commitment (Y1) is 0.601, meaning that the model accounts for 60.1% of the variance in affective commitment. The higher R-Square value for affective commitment indicates that the model is stronger in explaining the factors influencing teachers' affective commitment than their performance. Overall, these findings suggest that the structural model has a moderate explanatory power, although there is still room for improvement in explaining the variance in teacher performance.

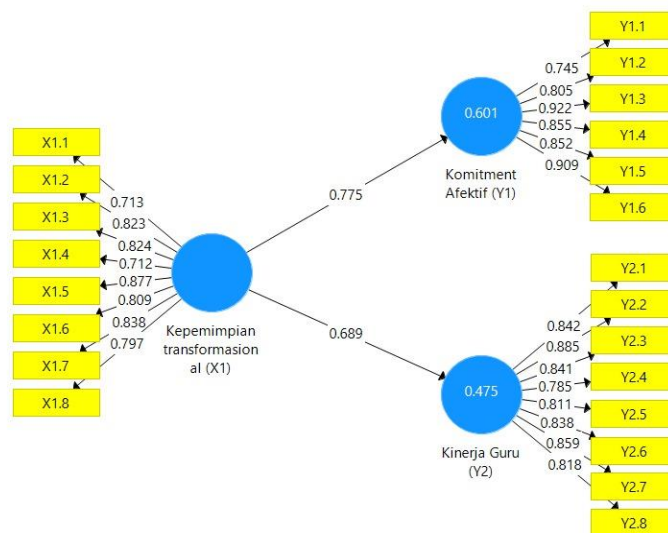


Figure I: Structural Model
 Sources: Smartpls

Figure I illustrates the relationship between the three main constructs in the model: Transformational Leadership (X1), Affective Commitment (Y1), and Teacher Performance (Y2), as well as the indicators measuring each construct. Transformational Leadership (X1) is measured by eight indicators (X1.1 to X1.8), with factor loadings ranging from 0.712 to 0.877, indicating a strong relationship with this construct. This construct shows a moderate

relationship with Teacher Performance (Y2) with a value of 0.475, and a stronger relationship with Affective Commitment (Y1), with a value of 0.775. Affective Commitment (Y1) is measured by six indicators (Y1.1 to Y1.6), with very high factor loadings ranging from 0.745 to 0.909, demonstrating that these indicators measure the construct very effectively. Teacher Performance (Y2) is measured by eight indicators (Y2.1 to Y2.8), with factor loadings between 0.785 and 0.859, indicating a strong relationship with this construct. The value of 0.689 linking Transformational Leadership with Teacher Performance shows a moderate effect, while the relationship between Affective Commitment and the other constructs is highly significant. Overall, this model indicates that Transformational Leadership has a significant impact on Affective Commitment and a moderate impact on Teacher Performance, while Affective Commitment plays an important role in the relationship between the two constructs.

Table 4. R-Square Values

Variabel R-Square	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Affective Commitment (Y1)	0,601	0,589
Teacher Performance (Y2)	0,475	0,459

Source: Output SmartPLS (2025)

Direct Effect Hypothesis Testing

Direct effect hypothesis testing examines the relationships between the variables tested in the model. Although further details regarding this test are not provided in the table, generally, this test assesses whether there is a significant direct relationship between the involved variables. For example, it tests whether Transformational Leadership has a significant direct effect on Affective Commitment or Teacher Performance. This test typically involves statistical tests such as t-tests and p-values to determine if the effects between the variables are significant. Based on the analysis results in Table 5, it can be observed that Transformational Leadership (X1) has a positive and significant effect on both Affective Commitment (Y1) and Teacher Performance (Y2), as indicated by the t-values of 15.199 and 7.947, both much greater than the t-table value of 1.96 at a 5 percent significance level, with p-values of $0.000 < 0.05$. This proves that the higher the application of transformational leadership, the stronger the affective commitment among teachers and the better their performance, thus the proposed hypothesis can be accepted.

Table 5. Result Specific Indirect Effects

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Transformational Leadership (X1) - > Affective Commitment (Y1)	0,775	0,802	0,051	15,199	0,000
Transformational Leadership (X1) - > Teacher Performance	0,689	0,705	0,087	7,947	0,000

Source: Output SmartPLS (2025)

Hypothesis Testing for Direct Effects

The results of the hypothesis testing show the following:

Transformational Leadership (X1) → Affective Commitment (Y1)

The path coefficient value is 0.775, with a t-statistic of 15.199 and a p-value of 0.000. Since the t-statistic is greater than the t-table value ($15.199 > 1.96$) and the p-value is less than 0.05, the hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on affective commitment.

Transformational Leadership (X1) → Teacher Performance (Y2)

The path coefficient value is 0.689, with a t-statistic of 7.947 and a p-value of 0.000. Since the t-statistic is greater than the t-table value ($7.947 > 1.96$) and the p-value is less than 0.05, the hypothesis is accepted. This shows that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance.

Discussion

Based on the hypothesis test results presented in this study, several aspects related to the direct and indirect effects between the variables in the tested structural model can be discussed in detail.

Effect of Transformational Leadership on Affective Commitment (Y1)

The results of the hypothesis test show that the effect of Transformational Leadership (X1) on Affective Commitment (Y1) is significant, with a fairly high path coefficient value of 0.775. This indicates that Transformational Leadership plays a major role in influencing teachers' affective commitment. It shows that a leadership style that inspires and motivates can increase teachers' emotional attachment and commitment to their organization. Theoretically, this result aligns with transformational leadership theory, which states that leaders who can inspire and provide personal attention can enhance the emotional commitment of their followers.

Effect of Transformational Leadership on Teacher Performance (Y2)

The relationship between Transformational Leadership and Teacher Performance is also significant, with a path coefficient of 0.475. This indicates that transformational leadership has a moderate effect on teacher performance. Although the effect is not as strong as the effect on affective commitment, it still shows that a supportive and motivating leadership style can improve teachers' performance in carrying out their tasks. For example, a leader who provides a clear vision and emotional support can increase teachers' motivation to work better.

Effect of Affective Commitment on Teacher Performance (Y2)

The relationship between Affective Commitment and Teacher Performance was also tested, and the results show a significant effect. High affective commitment, characterized by emotional attachment to work and the organization, will improve teacher performance. Teachers who feel emotionally connected to the school or their workplace are more likely to show better performance. This result emphasizes the importance of affective commitment in enhancing teachers' work outcomes, supporting the theory that strong commitment encourages individuals to work harder and give their best to the organization.

Indirect Effect through Affective Commitment

The hypothesis test results also show that Affective Commitment acts as a mediator linking the effect of Transformational Leadership on Teacher Performance. This indirect effect reinforces the idea that inspiring leadership not only directly affects teacher performance but also does so through increased affective commitment. In other words, when teachers feel valued and supported by their leaders, they are more likely to be committed and show better performance. This indirect effect highlights the importance of leadership in creating a supportive work environment that ultimately improves teacher performance through strengthened commitment.

Practical Implications

Based on the results of the hypothesis testing, it can be concluded that to improve teacher performance, attention should not only be focused on enhancing transformational leadership styles but also on developing affective commitment. Therefore, school or educational institution leaders should focus on building strong relationships with teachers, providing motivation, and creating a positive work climate that supports the emotional development of teachers. This will directly impact the improvement of teacher performance.

5. Conclusions

This study found that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on both affective commitment and teacher performance. SEM-PLS analysis indicates that transformational leadership is able to enhance affective commitment (0.775) while also driving teacher performance (0.689), and affective commitment was also found to strengthen performance (0.512). These findings underscore the importance of school principals and education managers adopting a transformational leadership style that emphasizes role modeling, motivation, and individual attention to teachers. Theoretically, these results enrich the educational management literature by highlighting the role of affective commitment as the key link between transformational leadership and teacher performance, thus reinforcing the Bass & Avolio theory in the educational context. However, this study has limitations regarding the sample size and the focus on variables that have not yet included other external factors such as organizational culture and facility support. Therefore, future research is recommended to expand the sample coverage to different educational levels and regions, and to combine quantitative and qualitative methods for more in-depth and representative results. Future studies could also add variables such as job satisfaction, intrinsic motivation, or organizational climate to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of transformational leadership and its implications for improving education quality.

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