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Professional Competence and Psychological Capital: The Impact of Affective Commitment on Teacher Performance

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ABSTRACT

Teacher performance is a strategic factor in determining the success of primary education, particularly in delivering quality learning and fostering students' character development. However, the learning quality achievement at SDIT Al Mumtaz remains in the moderate category, indicating the need to improve teacher performance through strengthening professional competence and psychological capital, with affective commitment serving as an intervening variable. This study aims to analyze the effects of professional competence and psychological capital on affective commitment and their implications for teacher performance. This research employed a quantitative approach using a survey method. The study population consisted of 50 permanent teachers at SDIT Al Mumtaz, all of whom were included as research respondents through a saturated sampling technique. Data were analyzed using path analysis and regression analysis with the assistance of SPSS version 27. The findings indicate that professional competence has a total effect of 28.6% on affective commitment, while psychological capital has a total effect of 31.3%. Simultaneously, professional competence and psychological capital contribute 59.9% to affective commitment. Furthermore, affective commitment has an effect of 66.4% on teacher performance, while the remaining 33.6% is influenced by other factors not examined in this study. This study concludes that improving teacher performance requires an integrated teacher development policy that combines the enhancement of professional competence with psychological capital development. Furthermore, school leaders should strengthen affective commitment as a driver of emotional attachment to the organization and a catalyst for achieving excellent teacher performance.

Keywords: Professional Competence, Psychological Capital, Affective Commitment, Teacher Performance.

INTRODUCTION

Basic education constitutes a fundamental foundation for developing human resource quality in terms of knowledge, skills, and character. The success of education at this level is largely determined by the quality of the learning process and teacher performance as the primary

implementers of education. Teachers are not only required to master subject matter but are also expected to develop students' potential, create effective learning environments, and instill moral and social values. However, the 2025 National Education Report indicates that numeracy achievement remains generally at a moderate level. This condition highlights the need to improve learning quality through strengthening human resources in the education sector.

In West Java Province, private schools, particularly Integrated Islamic Elementary Schools. have become an alternative educational option that integrates academic achievement with character development and Islamic values. One of the educational institutions providing this type of education is SDIT Al Mumtaz, located in Bandung Regency. Although the school has established an organizational culture and educational programs that integrate the national curriculum with Islamic values, its learning quality, as reflected in the Education Report, remains at a moderate level. Organizational observations also indicate that some teachers demonstrate inconsistent involvement in collective tasks, resistance to change, and a lack of initiative in exceeding established performance standards. These phenomena suggest that improving teacher performance requires more than technical competence; it also necessitates strengthening teachers' psychological resources and emotional attachment to the school.

One of the factors determining teacher performance is professional competence. This study specifically focuses on professional competence rather than overall teacher competence because its primary concern is teachers' mastery of disciplinary knowledge, execution of professional responsibilities, and continuous professional development. Overall teacher competence encompasses four domains: pedagogical, personal, social, and professional competencies, thereby covering a broader scope. According to Minister of National Education Regulation No. 16 of 2007, professional competence encompasses mastery of subject matter, mastery of competency standards and basic competencies, creative development of instructional materials, continuous professional development, and the utilization of information and communication technology. This conceptual delimitation is intended to ensure more specific measurement and alignment with the research objectives. Teachers with strong professional competence tend to demonstrate greater confidence, adaptability, and responsibility in performing their duties, which may foster professional pride and a sense of belonging to the organization.

The relationship between professional competence and affective commitment is supported by Samtono (2020), who found that teacher competence contributes to strengthening affective commitment through self-confidence, professional pride, and contributions to organizational goals. Similarly, Hafid et al. (2022) found that professional competence has a positive effect on affective commitment because mastery of knowledge and skills encourages individuals to perceive themselves as making meaningful contributions to their organizations. Thus, professional competence not only supports learning quality but also has the potential to strengthen teachers' emotional attachment to their schools.

In addition to professional competence, psychological capital represents an important internal resource for navigating workplace dynamics. Referring to Luthans, Avolio, Avey, and Norman (2007), psychological capital is a multidimensional construct comprising four positive psychological capacities: self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience. Self-efficacy reflects an individual's belief in their ability to accomplish tasks; hope relates to the ability to establish goals and identify pathways to achieve them; optimism represents positive expectations about the future; while resilience refers to the ability to recover and adapt when facing difficulties. The adoption of psychological capital as a construct enables this study to examine teachers' positive psychological resources more comprehensively rather than focusing on a single psychological capacity. Teachers with positive psychological capital tend to maintain more favorable perceptions of themselves, their work, and their organization's future.

The relevance of psychological capital to professional development is demonstrated by Safavi and Bouzari (2019), who found that psychological capital plays a role in enhancing competence and career adaptability. In the educational context, this is particularly relevant to teachers' demands for continuously improving their educational qualifications, obtaining professional certification, and advancing their professional careers. Huynh and Hua (2020) also demonstrated that psychological capital has a positive effect on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. These findings are further supported by Taheri, et al (2024), Psychological capital (PsyCap) positively influences teacher commitment and serves as a mediating mechanism in the relationship between emotional labor and commitment among primary school educators. Within the broader framework of organizational commitment, PsyCap generally fosters the enhancement of affective, continuance, and normative

commitment. Meanwhile, Machmud and Sidharta (2021) demonstrated that unfavorable working conditions can reduce employees' quality of life through the emergence of anxiety and depression. In school environments, healthy, safe, and supportive working conditions are essential for promoting psychological well-being and teachers' attachment to their organizations. Accordingly, professional competence and psychological capital represent two complementary capacities: the technical capacity to perform job responsibilities and the psychological capacity to cope with workplace challenges.

These two capacities are closely associated with affective commitment. This study specifically selects affective commitment as the intervening variable rather than organizational commitment as a whole because affective commitment represents an individual's emotional attachment, identification, and involvement with an organization. According to Allen and Meyer's (1991) three-component model, organizational commitment consists of affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Affective commitment reflects an individual's desire to remain part of an organization because of emotional attachment; continuance commitment is based on the perceived costs or consequences of leaving the organization; whereas normative commitment is based on an individual's sense of obligation to remain. In this study, affective commitment is considered more relevant because teachers who experience a sense of belonging, embrace school values, and perceive themselves as integral members of the organization are expected to demonstrate stronger involvement in carrying out their professional responsibilities. Therefore, affective commitment is positioned as a psychological mechanism linking professional competence and psychological capital to teacher performance.

The importance of commitment in improving performance is demonstrated by Zulfikar (2019), who found that commitment has a significant effect on improving the performance of non-permanent teachers. Commitment encourages teachers to perform their duties consistently, responsibly, and with a strong orientation toward achieving educational objectives. In this study, teacher performance is selected as the dependent variable because it is consistent with the unit of analysis of all research variables, namely individual teachers. Professional competence, psychological capital, and affective commitment are all individual-level constructs; therefore, teacher performance represents a conceptually and methodologically consistent outcome variable. Unlike school performance, which operates

at the organizational level and is also influenced by leadership, organizational culture, infrastructure, and other institutional factors, teacher performance is more appropriate for explaining the implications of individuals' professional and psychological capacities. Teacher performance in this study is operationalized through four dimensions: lesson planning, instructional implementation, learning assessment, and follow-up actions as part of continuous efforts to improve the learning process.

Although previous studies have demonstrated relationships among professional competence, psychological capital, organizational commitment, and performance, several research gaps remain to be addressed. Safavi and Bouzari (2019), Huynh and Hua (2020) examined psychological capital primarily within business organizations and employee contexts. Meanwhile, Samtono (2020) and Hafid et al. (2022) investigated the relationship between competence and affective commitment but did not integrate these relationships with psychological capital into a single research model within the context of private elementary school teachers. Furthermore, although Zulfikar (2019) established the effect of commitment on teacher performance, there remains an opportunity to investigate more specifically the role of affective commitment as an intervening variable linking professional competence and psychological capital to teacher performance. In addition, Machmud and Sidharta (2021) provide a perspective on the importance of working conditions for psychological well-being, which is relevant to broadening the understanding of how teachers' organizational attachment is developed. Accordingly, this study seeks to address these research gaps by examining an integrated model that incorporates professional competence and psychological capital to explain affective commitment and its implications for teacher performance.

The novelty of this study lies in the development of an integrative model that positions professional competence as a technical capacity and psychological capital as a positive psychological capacity in shaping affective commitment and its implications for teacher performance. This model provides the perspective that teacher performance is determined not only by professional abilities in carrying out job responsibilities but also by psychological resources and emotional attachment to the organization. The distinctiveness of this study also lies in its empirical context, namely an Islamic Integrated private elementary school, SDIT Al Mumtaz, in Bandung Regency. Based on the organizational phenomena, theoretical considerations, and identified research gaps, this study aims to analyze the partial and

simultaneous effects of professional competence and psychological capital on affective commitment, as well as the effect of affective commitment on teacher performance. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of human resource management, particularly by providing a basis for formulating integrated teacher development policies through strengthening professional competence, fostering psychological capital, and enhancing affective commitment as a driver of superior teacher performance.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative research approach using a survey method with an explanatory design to analyze the effects of professional competence and psychological capital on affective commitment and their implications for teacher performance. The study population consisted of 50 permanent teachers at SDIT Al Mumtaz, Bandung Regency, all of whom were included as respondents through a saturated sampling technique (census sampling).

The research instrument was developed based on established theoretical frameworks and relevant regulatory standards. Professional competence was measured using five dimensions based on Minister of National Education Regulation No. 16 of 2007: mastery of subject matter, mastery of competency standards and learning outcomes, development of instructional materials, continuous professional development, and utilization of information and communication technology. Psychological capital was measured using four dimensions proposed by Luthans, Youssef, and Avolio (2007): self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience. Affective commitment was measured using three dimensions based on Allen and Meyer (1991): emotional attachment, identification, and involvement. Meanwhile, teacher performance was assessed through four dimensions based on Minister of Primary and Secondary Education Regulation No. 11 of 2025.

Data were collected through questionnaires distributed to all research respondents. The collected data were analyzed using path analysis and regression analysis with the assistance of IBM SPSS Statistics version 27 to examine the direct and indirect relationships among the research variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The quality of the research instruments was assessed through validity and reliability tests across all statement items for each variable. Based on the validity test results, all items for Professional Competence (X_1) values ranging from 0.438 to 0.709, Psychological Capital (X_2) ranged from 0.574 to 0.834, Affective Commitment (Y) ranged from 0.558 to 0.819, and Teacher Performance (Z) ranged from 0.604 to 0.874. Since all values exceeded the critical threshold of 0.300, every instrument item was confirmed to be valid. Furthermore, the reliability test demonstrated that all variables achieved Cronbach's Alpha values well above the minimum threshold of 0.700, specifically 0.903 (X_1), 0.961 (X_2), 0.946 (Y), and 0.966 (Z), confirming that all instruments are reliable and suitable for further statistical analysis. The calculation results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Validity and Reliability Results

Variable	**Number of Items**	r-calculated **Range (r-critical = 0.300)**	**Cronbach's Alpha (Min = 0.700)**	**Status**
Professional Competence (X_1)	15	0.438 – 0.709	0.903	Valid & Reliable
Psychological Capital (X_2)	24	0.574 – 0.834	0.961	Valid & Reliable
Affective Commitment (Y)	15	0.558 – 0.819	0.946	Valid & Reliable
Teacher Performance (Z)	21	0.604 – 0.874	0.966	Valid & Reliable

The path analysis model demonstrates that Professional Competence (X_1) and Psychological Capital (X_2) have a moderate positive correlation of 0.457, and both exert positive direct effects on Affective Commitment (Y) with path coefficients of 0.439 and 0.467, respectively. Together, Professional Competence and Psychological Capital account for 59.9% (R^2= 0.599) of the variance in Affective Commitment, while the remaining 40.1% is explained by external factors outside the model. Furthermore, Affective Commitment exhibits a very strong positive direct effect on Teacher Performance (Z) with a coefficient of 0.815, explaining 66.4% (R^2= 0.664) of its variance (leaving 33.6% to external factors), while also serving as an effective mediator that channels positive indirect effects from Professional Competence (0.358) and Psychological Capital (0.381) toward Teacher Performance.

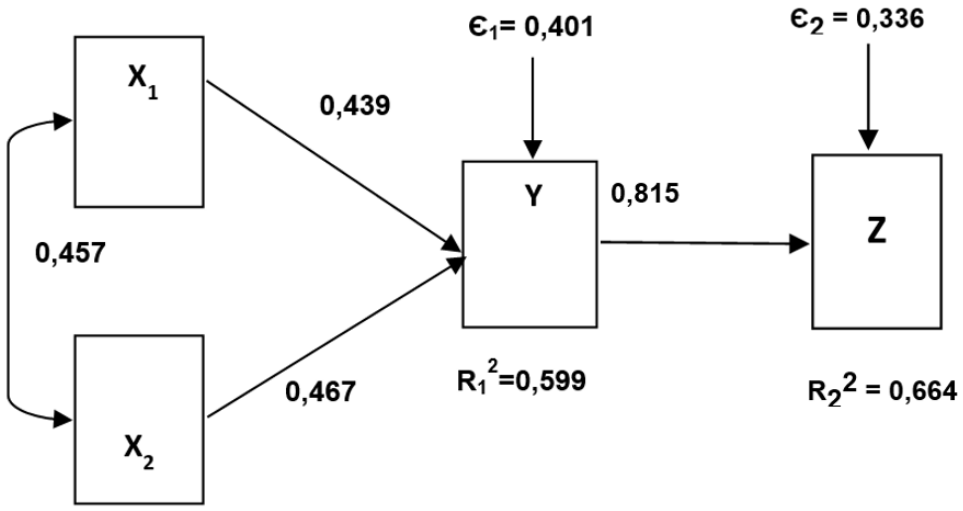


Figure 1. Path Analysis Diagram

These findings indicate that both professional competence and psychological capital contribute significantly to improving affective commitment, with psychological capital exhibiting a relatively stronger standardized effect.

Table 2. Summary of Path Analysis and Correlation Results

Relationship	Coefficient r /β	t-value	p -value	R^2	Conclusion
Professional Competence (X_1) ↔ Psychological Capital (X_2)	0.457 (r)	-	<0.001	-	Significant
Professional Competence (X_1) → Affective Commitment (Y)	0.439 β	4.224	<0.001	**0.599**	Significant
Psychological Capital (X_2) → Affective Commitment (Y)	0.467 β	4.497	<0.001	**0.599**	Significant
Affective Commitment (Y) → Teacher Performance (Z)	0.815 β	9.734	<0.001	**0.664**	Significant

Professional competence and psychological capital are positively related, and both significantly strengthen teachers' affective commitment. In turn, strong affective commitment substantially drives higher teacher performance. Furthermore, affective commitment serves as an effective mediator that channels the positive effects of both professional competence and psychological capital toward improving overall teacher performance. Professional competence and psychological capital reinforce one another to form a vital foundation for teaching excellence.

Teachers who master pedagogical strategies and subject matter naturally cultivate stronger confidence, optimism, and adaptability in the classroom, while resilient and hopeful educators continuously pursue instructional mastery and professional growth. Together, these two internal resources significantly strengthen teachers' affective commitment—their deep emotional attachment to and identification with their schools. Recent empirical studies corroborate this positive dynamic. For instance, Bastian and Widodo (2024) demonstrate that psychological capital actively evokes stronger commitment among educators, especially when teachers integrate these inner psychological strengths with effective professional and interpersonal skills. Similarly, Zhang et al. (2025) reveal that psychological capital directly elevates teachers' professional commitment through interconnected psychological mechanisms. Expanding on this perspective, Yanran et al. (2026) map the network of educators' mental resources and confirm that psychological capital closely intertwines with teacher wellbeing to anchor lasting commitment. Furthermore, Miftahuddin et al. (2025) highlight that core dimensions of psychological capital—specifically hope, self-efficacy, and resilience—shield educators from emotional exhaustion and burnout, enabling them to sustain genuine dedication to their institutions and students.

Once teachers develop this strong affective commitment, they channel their emotional investment into substantially higher job performance. Emotionally committed educators go beyond fulfilling routine administrative duties; they design engaging lessons, adapt proactively to diverse student needs, and invest discretionary effort into achieving institutional goals. Because these teachers genuinely care about their schools' success, they uphold high instructional standards even under demanding academic conditions. Miftahuddin et al. (2025) reinforce this behavioral advantage by showing that resilient and efficacious teachers preserve their energy and mental focus rather than succumbing to workplace fatigue, which allows them to execute classroom responsibilities at peak effectiveness.

Beyond acting as an independent driver, affective commitment operates as an essential mediating mechanism that translates both professional competence and psychological capital into tangible performance gains. Possessing advanced pedagogical expertise or positive psychological traits alone does not automatically maximize instructional output unless teachers feel a meaningful emotional bond with their workplace. Affective commitment bridges this gap by converting technical knowledge and mental fortitude into consistent, goal-

directed classroom action. Kappagoda (2021) directly substantiates this mediating pathway, finding that organizational commitment transmits the positive influence of teachers' psychological capital onto their overall job performance. In parallel, Zhang et al. (2025) and Yanran et al. (2026) affirm that psychological resources generate their strongest professional outcomes when they first solidify teachers' internal commitment and wellbeing. Consequently, school leaders who simultaneously advance educators' technical mastery and nurture their psychological capital cultivate a deeply committed teaching workforce that consistently delivers superior educational performance.

CONCLUSION

The synergistic integration of professional competence (hard skills) and psychological capital (soft skills) serves as the primary foundation for building teachers' emotional attachment to the school. Both aspects complement each other in preventing job burnout while avoiding frustration in task execution. Furthermore, affective commitment proves to be the most dominant predictor driving improvements in teacher performance. Teacher dedication born out of genuine desire ("want to") fosters extra-role behaviors that directly enhance instructional quality. Practically, these findings affirm that human resource management in schools must balance the enhancement of technical expertise with the strengthening of mental resilience, supported by a participative leadership style capable of cultivating teachers' pride and emotional bond with the institution. School leaders should strengthen affective commitment as a driver of emotional attachment to the organization and a catalyst for achieving excellent teacher performance.

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest. The funders had no role in the design of the study; in the collection, analyses, or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript, or in the decision to publish the results.

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

The authors transparently disclose the use of AI Tool exclusively for the purpose of linguistic editing and grammatical refinement of the original draft. The authors maintain full responsibility for the manuscript's substantive content, data integrity, and final scientific conclusions.

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