



TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL COMMITMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF EMPOWERMENT AND TRUST

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Abstract

Professional commitment is an essential aspect that teachers need to continuously develop in order to perform their roles effectively and maintain educational quality. However, several factors may influence the level of teachers' professional commitment, particularly empowerment and trust. This study aimed to determine whether empowerment and trust have significant effects on teachers' professional commitment. The research was conducted among public junior high school teachers in Bogor City. A total of 184 teachers were selected as respondents through a multistage random sampling technique, while the sample size was determined using the Slovin formula. Data regarding professional commitment, empowerment, and trust were collected using measurement scales that had previously passed validity and reliability testing. The research hypotheses were analyzed using multiple linear regression with the assistance of SPSS software. The findings revealed that both empowerment and trust significantly influence teachers' professional commitment. Therefore, strengthening these factors may enhance commitment. Further studies are recommended to explore specific indicators of empowerment and trust related to teachers' professional commitment.

Keywords: Teachers' professional commitment, empowerment, trust.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching is a noble profession. Teachers are professionals in the field of education whose primary responsibility is to instruct, guide, direct, train, assess, and evaluate students in formal education (Laihad & Retnowati, 2018). Many individuals aspire to this profession, but those who have entered or are working in it are unable to perform to their full potential. The main issue highlighted is competence in work performance. Somers & Birnbaum state that work performance is defined as the ability to complete tasks and is assessed by immediate superiors in the workplace (Song et al., 2018). Teacher competency is considered important in improving the quality of education in line with the objectives of revitalisation (Aindra et al., 2022). However, what is rarely highlighted is the issue of professional commitment.

Commitment refers to the manifestation of dedication to something. Commitment is a stabilising or binding force that provides direction to behaviour, such as binding someone to a course of action (Peng et al., 2024). Characteristics of commitment include dedication, loyalty, and voluntary contributions, which drive productivity, profitability, and organisational citizenship behaviour (Ali Alshuhumi et al., 2025). In an educational context, job commitment, which relates to teachers' dedication and connection to their profession, is an example of organisational commitment, which is teachers' loyalty to the organisation (Ligaya et al., 2024). Loyalty, dependable performance, and active involvement in accomplishing the school's aims and objectives are characteristics of high-commitment teachers (Masrifah et al., 2025).

In an educational context, such as the teaching profession, teacher professional commitment refers to teachers' readiness to participate actively with the organisation, a prerequisite for achieving

school goals (Al-Zu'bi et al., 2024). Teacher professional commitment transforms the educational environment. It represents a multifaceted framework essential to student retention, happiness, and learning outcomes—enthusiasm for the profession, the school, and the students (Belay & Melesse, 2025). Teacher professional commitment also refers to teachers' desire to build and maintain relationships within the teaching organisation in response to teaching effectiveness and career development (Yuan et al., 2025).

Developing a commitment to the teaching profession is crucial. To build commitment as professional teachers, teachers are required to do several things, including developing their knowledge in line with current developments so that students can understand what they are conveying, and being disciplined and organised in carrying out their duties (Ahmad et al., 2024). In this effort, various studies have contributed to strengthening and developing teachers' professional commitment. Several studies have revealed that developing teachers' professional commitment requires transformational leadership and trust (Ahmad et al., 2024), organisational climate (Ahmad et al., 2024; Djuanda & Sayekti, 2025), job satisfaction (Van Tran et al., 2023), empowerment (San Mg & Mar Ni, 2020), attitudes towards the profession (Kimutai Bett et al., 2020), school culture (Veeriah & Yan Li, 2017), and self-efficacy (Murniarti & Sihotang, 2024; Octoria et al., 2025).

An initial survey conducted on 30 junior high school teachers in Bogor City found indications of suboptimal commitment to the teaching profession. It was found: a) 37.3% of teachers need improvement in the indicator of having an emotional bond to the profession. Several teachers who are still not proud to be a teacher, have not seriously pursued the teaching profession, do not view teaching as the best profession, and do not view the teaching profession as the best profession; b) 33.73% of teachers in the indicator of self-involvement for the benefit of the profession that needs improvement. Several teachers who are less enthusiastic about developing a career as a teacher have not written modules based on the material taught, and have not had the desire to attend first; c) 34.69% of teachers in the indicator of awareness of losses if leaving the profession that needs improvement. Several teachers who still think about economic matters in becoming a teacher, and there is a tendency to be anxious if there is an offer from another profession; d) 33.11% of teachers in the indicator of willingness to do something for the advancement of the profession that needs improvement. Some teachers are unwilling to update their learning tools, are less willing to accept additional assignments, and are less willing to seek information on developments in the world of education; and e) 34.52% of teachers in the indicator of their attitude of obligation towards professional duties need to be improved. Some teachers feel their knowledge is insufficient, do not evaluate learning activities sufficiently, and do not engage in discussions with colleagues.

Teachers' professional commitment needs improvement. Several factors are suspected to contribute to this phenomenon. First, it is suspected that increasing professional commitment requires a strong understanding of empowerment. Empowerment refers to a management style that values

autonomy, initiative, decentralisation of power, and employee responsibility (Berraies et al., 2014). Empowering teachers and ensuring they continue to progress and improve is crucial to their school performance (Hidiroğlu & Tanriöğen, 2022). Teacher empowerment mediates the relationship between teacher commitment and student academic improvement (Aliakbari & Amoli, 2016). Second, trust is also believed to contribute to teachers' professional commitment. Trust is essentially a psychological condition characterised by a willingness to embrace vulnerability, grounded in favourable anticipations of another individual's intentions or behaviour (Vanhala & Tzafrir, 2021). Trust is an important factor in a company's performance. It affects important results, including employee engagement, teamwork, and production (Iddrisu, 2025). Trust builds relationships and engagement, upholds values of honesty and shared decision-making, encourages autonomy, and overcomes barriers to trust-building (Lansing et al., 2023).

Based on the above description, this study examines whether empowerment and trust influence teachers' professional commitment. Therefore, this study describes the contribution of empowerment and trust to teachers' professional commitment. The above description suggests that empowerment and trust significantly influence teachers' professional commitment. The results of this study are expected to serve as a reference in educational management science and, more specifically, to support the development of teachers' professional commitment.

METHOD

Teachers at public junior high schools in Bogor City participated in this study, which used a quantitative design and a survey. The study population comprised 774 teachers from 21 schools in the Bogor City area. Area sampling and individual sampling are the two phases of multistage random sampling used to compute the accessible population (Hardani et al., 2020). Three sub-districts—Tanah Sareal, South Bogor, and Central Bogor—met the sample eligibility requirements after we chose 50% of the six sub-districts for area sampling. Additionally, 50% of the schools are in each sub-district. Eight schools were selected as research sites through a sampling process. The researcher used individual sampling in the second phase. The 100% of the teachers in the eight schools were chosen for individual sampling. To obtain a thorough description of the variables, a multistage random sampling method was used to select the sample. A multistage random sampling approach was used to determine the optimal sample size, which was 337 teachers. Eight schools provided the sample. A sample of 184 teachers was obtained using the Slovin formula (Yusuf, 2014) to determine the sample size at a significance level of 0.05.

The teacher professional commitment, empowerment, and trust scales were the instruments used in this study. The teacher professional commitment scale consisted of 30 items with indicators: a) belief, b) desire, c) contribution, d) loyalty, and e) responsibility, with a reliability coefficient of 0.920. There are 34 items with indications on the empowerment scale: has a dependability rate of 0.924, including a) authority delegation, b) competency development, c) organisational support, d)

meaning, and e) effect. Additionally, the trust scale has a reliability coefficient of 0.925 and has 36 items with the following indicators: a) kindness, b) reliability, c) integrity, d) openness, and e) recognition. To address the study issues, SPSS was used to perform multiple linear regression analyses (Priadana & Sunarsi, 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected from respondents were analysed descriptively, with the results presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Descriptive Analysis

		Empowerment	Trust	Teachers' Professional Commitment
N	Valid	184	184	184
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		134.14	135.21	116.45
Std. Error of Mean		1.364	1.354	1.384
Std. Deviation		18.507	18.371	18.777
Minimum		80	78	56
Maximum		165	167	146

Table 1 shows that the entire sample completed the instrument, with no missing scores on any variable (valid = 184 and missing = 0). Empowerment with the smallest value of 80, the largest value of 165 with an average score of 134.14 (SD = 18.507 and SEM = 1.364), trust with the smallest value of 78, the largest value of 167, with an average score of 135.21 (SD = 18.371 and SEM = 1.354), and teachers' professional commitment with the smallest value of 56, the largest value of 146 with an average score of 116.45 (SD = 18.777 and SEM = 1.384). All variables have small SD and SEM and are far below the average. This condition indicates that the data are homogeneous and increasingly accurate in describing the population's characteristics. In general, teachers' empowerment, trust, and professional commitment in Bogor public junior high schools are in good condition. These facts contradict the data obtained in the preliminary study. This contradiction arises because the number of participants in the preliminary study was small, rendering it less representative of the sample.

Classical assumption tests for normality, linearity, multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity, and autocorrelation were then applied to the data. We checks were carried out to ensure the data were impartial and consistent, thereby guaranteeing the validity of the regression model. The test results indicated that the data passed the prerequisite tests, confirming the feasibility of multiple linear regression testing, as presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Multiple Linear Regression Test Results

Model		Coefficients ^a				
		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	37.322	10.552		3.537	.001
	Empowerment	.301	.073	.297	4.112	.000
	Trust	.287	.074	.280	3.888	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Teachers' Professional Commitment

Based on Table 2, the regression equation is $\hat{Y} = 37.322 + 0.301X_1 + 0.287X_2$. The fixed (constant) score of teachers' professional commitment in public junior high schools in the Bogor area is 37.322. This score is a factual condition possessed by teachers, unaffected by any variables. However, the teacher's professional commitment score will increase by 0.301 due to empowerment and by 0.287 due to trust. The magnitude of B for each independent variable (empowerment and trust) is positive, indicating that the two variables have a positive influence on the dependent variable (teachers' professional commitment) in this study. Partially, the three independent variables significantly influence the dependent variable (sig. < $\alpha = 0.05$).

To determine the simultaneous contribution of independent variables to the dependent variable, an ANOVA was conducted, as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3. ANOVA Test Results

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	15458.700	2	7729.350	28.514	.000 ^b
	Residual	49064.757	181	271.076		
	Total	64523.457	183			
a. Dependent Variable: Teachers' Professional Commitment						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Trust, Empowerment						

Through the ANOVA test as presented in Table 3, the significance value is obtained = 0.000 < $\alpha = 0.05$. These results indicate that empowerment and trust have a significant effect on the professional commitment of junior high school teachers in Bogor City. The contribution of these three variables to teachers' professional commitment is 24.0% ($R = 0.489$). This result means that empowerment and trust have an impact of 24.0% on teachers' professional commitment, while 76.0% is caused by other factors not examined in this study.

Empowerment is another important aspect in strengthening teachers' professional commitment. Empowerment reflects energy rooted in the belief that tasks contribute to a larger purpose (Colquitt et al., 2021). Empowerment is fostered when work goals align with passion (meaningfulness), a sense of choice regarding work tasks (self-determination), a sense of ability to perform successfully (competence), and a sense of making progress toward achieving their goals (impact). Empowered teachers carefully consider the content they teach children and creatively utilise instructional materials, personal talents, and innovative resources in planning and implementing learning activities (Nagabhooshanam, 2022). Specifically, these individuals are committed to providing immersive and challenging educational experiences for children, thereby empowering their students.

Effective empowerment improves teachers' self-efficacy by providing them with resources, training, and team support. Teachers' loyalty shifts from a simple administrative role to a more profound, personal drive when they feel capable, competent and motivated to innovate in their

instruction. Teachers who feel empowered are more resilient when faced with classroom obstacles and tend to put more effort into helping students succeed because they believe their efforts are making a difference. Low empowerment is a strong predictor of decreased commitment and burnout. Without empowerment, teachers tend to feel trapped in an uncontrollable routine, which erodes their dedication over time. Therefore, the link between empowerment and commitment is reciprocal; empowerment creates a climate that fosters commitment, while strong professional commitment ensures that all forms of empowerment are optimally utilised to improve the quality of education. The two are essential to creating a dynamic school environment focused on student progress.

In a study conducted in Iran, the correlation coefficient for empowerment on teacher professional commitment was 0.477 with a determination coefficient of 22.75% at a significance level of 0.05 (Aliakbari & Amoli, 2016). This result means that empowerment is positively and significantly correlated with teacher professional commitment. Furthermore, San Mg & Nar Ni reported that teacher empowerment has a correlation coefficient of 0.455 and a determination coefficient of 20.70% at the 0.01 significance level (San Mg & Nar Ni, 2020). This result means that teacher empowerment is positively correlated with teacher professional commitment. Hidiroğlu & Tanriöğen found a positive correlation between teacher empowerment and professional commitment ($r = 0.4913$, $t(12) = 12.7408$, $p < 0.000$) (Hidiroğlu & Tanriöğen, 2022). This research revealed that teacher empowerment accounted for 24.14% of teachers' professional commitment, indicating a significant relationship. This condition means that empowerment provided to teachers will strengthen their professional commitment.

Trust is a positive desire and expectation, as well as the authority granted to a trusted individual or group based on mutual respect, grounded in the positive actions and intentions of the person granting the authority. Trust is a driving factor in high performance, innovation, and organisational stability (Iddrisu, 2025). Trust can reduce tension and conflict between individuals and encourage collaboration, cohesion, and identification within a community (Wu et al., 2012). Trust is a fundamental form of social capital that strongly predicts teacher professional commitment. When a teacher places a high level of trust in the principal (vertical trust) and colleagues (horizontal trust), a sense of psychological safety is created in the workplace. This trust minimises anxiety about office politics or managerial unfairness, preventing teachers' energy from being drained by suspicion. Consequently, teachers have more mental space to innovate and dedicate themselves fully to their instructional tasks, thereby strengthening their identity and attachment to the teaching profession.

The mechanism of social exchange, or the principle of reciprocity, is how this relationship works. When teachers feel trusted, heard, and supported by an open school organisation, they are more loyal (affective commitment). Trust helps them feel that their work is valued and that the school's goals are shared. Therefore, rather than contractual requirements (normative commitment) or financial need (continuance commitment), the desire to sustain their professions and raise teaching

quality comes from inner motivation. On the other hand, mistrust in the educational setting might seriously reduce professional dedication. Alienation, emotional tiredness (sometimes called burnout), and a desire to give up are frequently caused by mistrust. As a result, the link between commitment and trust is clear-cut and causal: teachers are more resilient in the face of academic difficulties when they have greater trust in the school culture. Building trust is not simply a managerial strategy but an absolute prerequisite for maintaining teachers' long-term commitment and integrity.

Several studies have shown that trust contributes to teachers' professional commitment. Research conducted by Ependi & Sudirman concluded that trust has a direct positive effect on professional commitment, with a correlation coefficient of 0.293 and a path coefficient of 0.184 (Ependi & Sudirman, 2021). Trust has a direct positive effect on professional commitment. Furthermore, research conducted by Djuanda on teachers at a State Islamic Junior High School in South Jakarta concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between trust and teachers' professional commitment, as indicated by a correlation coefficient of $r_{y2} = 0.627$ and a determination coefficient of $r_{y2}^2 = 0.393$, indicating that 39.30% of teachers' professional commitment is related to trust (Djuanda, 2022). Other research revealed that trust correlates with professional commitment by 0.435, yielding a determination coefficient of 18.90%, indicating that trust contributes 18.90% to professional commitment (Verianto, 2019). In a study, a path coefficient of 0.437 and a calculated t coefficient of 4.683 were obtained, while the t table value for $\alpha = 0.01$ was 2.64. Because the calculated t coefficient exceeded the t table value, H_0 was rejected, and H_1 was accepted, indicating that trust had a direct effect on professional commitment (Ayuningtyas, 2017).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion, empowerment and trust were identified as important variables that have a positive and significant relationship with teacher professional commitment. Both factors also showed a meaningful influence on the level of commitment demonstrated by teachers in carrying out their professional duties. These findings indicate that when empowerment is implemented effectively, teachers are more likely to feel valued, capable, and involved in decision-making processes within the school environment. Likewise, when trust is strengthened among teachers, principals, and other stakeholders, a supportive atmosphere is created that encourages responsibility and dedication. Therefore, the better the implementation of empowerment strategies and the stronger the level of trust within the organization, the higher the professional commitment of teachers in public junior high schools in Bogor. These results emphasize the importance of school management efforts to promote empowerment and trust as strategic approaches to improving teacher commitment, performance, and overall educational quality in schools.

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