

Enhancing Professional Commitment and Organizational Performance through Leadership Behavior: Evidence from Islamic High Schools in Greater Jakarta

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ABSTRACT: This study explores the critical role of Leadership Behavior (LB) in fostering Professional Commitment (PC) and improving Organizational Performance (OP) in the context of Al Azhar-affiliated Islamic high schools in Greater Jakarta. While Islamic educational institutions enjoy high levels of accreditation, many still face challenges in achieving national rankings and sustaining stakeholder trust. This research focuses on how leadership actions directly shape the commitment of teachers and administrative staff, and how this commitment, in turn, drives the performance of schools as learning organizations. Using a quantitative approach with data collected from 215 respondents, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed to test the direct and mediating effects. Results confirm that LB significantly enhances PC and has both direct and indirect effects on OP, with PC playing a partial mediating role. These findings highlight the need for transformational and supportive leadership styles that nurture commitment, collaboration, and shared vision, thus ensuring sustainable school performance.

KEYWORDS: Leadership Behavior, Professional Commitment, Organizational Performance, Islamic Schools, Education Management

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's highly dynamic educational landscape, schools are expected not only to deliver strong academic results but also to sustain institutional excellence, stakeholder trust, and social accountability. The pressures of globalization, technological development, and shifting societal expectations demand that educational institutions continuously adapt and innovate (Machali, 2018). Amid these challenges, effective leadership emerges as a critical enabler of organizational resilience and competitiveness.

In Indonesia, Islamic educational institutions, especially those affiliated with the Al Azhar Foundation, occupy an important position in society by combining high-quality education with Islamic values. These schools are generally well-known for their discipline, moral education, and satisfactory accreditation status. However, internal evaluations and recent rankings show that many partner schools within the Al Azhar network, particularly in the Greater Jakarta area, still fall short of becoming top-performing schools at the national level (Riskarini, 2022). This paradox indicates that while infrastructure, curriculum design, and religious identity are strong, non-structural factors — such as leadership approaches, organizational culture, and staff commitment — may be under-optimized.

Among these intangible factors, Leadership Behavior (LB) plays a pivotal role in shaping how organizations navigate change and sustain performance. LB encompasses the actions, communication patterns, decision-making styles, and relational dynamics demonstrated by school leaders (Shehata et al., 2017). In the context of Islamic high schools, leadership is uniquely challenging because principals and administrators must simultaneously function as academic leaders, administrative managers, and moral guides upholding Islamic values (Kurland et al., 2010). Therefore, a leader's behavior directly affects the work atmosphere, staff motivation, and overall commitment to shared goals.

Professional Commitment (PC) is the degree to which teachers and administrative staff feel emotionally attached to their professional role and responsibilities (Day et al., 2005). Highly committed staff demonstrate proactive behavior, engage in continuous learning, and are more resilient to workplace stress. In turn, a committed workforce contributes to higher Organizational Performance (OP), which is reflected not only in student outcomes but also in operational efficiency, stakeholder satisfaction, and the reputation of the institution (Dwiyanto, 2012).

Previous studies in general education settings have confirmed that transformational and supportive leadership styles enhance teacher commitment and organizational effectiveness (Shehata et al., 2017; Kurland et al., 2010; Fernández-Temprano & Tejerina-

Enhancing Professional Commitment and Organizational Performance through Leadership Behavior: Evidence from Islamic High Schools in Greater Jakarta

Gaite, 2020). However, limited empirical research has tested this relationship within Indonesian Islamic schools, where the cultural and religious context might shape how leadership behavior is perceived and how it influences staff attitudes and institutional outcomes.

Furthermore, the mediating role of PC in translating leadership influence into tangible performance improvements is an area that merits deeper examination. It is plausible that even if leaders demonstrate exemplary behavior, its impact on performance will be limited if teachers and staff are not personally committed to their roles.

This study thus aims to bridge this research gap by systematically examining the extent to which Leadership Behavior affects Organizational Performance directly and indirectly through Professional Commitment, within the unique context of Al Azhar Islamic high schools in Greater Jakarta.

Despite the generally high accreditation status and strong public reputation of Al Azhar Islamic high schools, several persistent performance issues have been identified. These include moderate positioning in national rankings, inconsistent implementation of innovative teaching practices, and varying levels of teacher and staff engagement. Internal reports and interviews conducted as part of this research suggest that one contributing factor is the variation in leadership quality and behavior among principals and senior managers.

Some schools benefit from transformational leaders who encourage collaboration, open communication, and shared decision-making. Others still rely on more authoritarian or transactional leadership styles, which can limit teachers' sense of ownership and suppress motivation. These leadership inconsistencies lead to diverse levels of Professional Commitment among staff, which in turn influences school performance.

Given this context, the central problem addressed in this study is: How does Leadership Behavior affect Professional Commitment and, subsequently, Organizational Performance in Al Azhar Islamic high schools in Greater Jakarta?

More specifically, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. Does Leadership Behavior have a significant direct effect on Professional Commitment?
2. Does Leadership Behavior have a significant direct effect on Organizational Performance?
3. Does Professional Commitment have a significant effect on Organizational Performance?
4. Does Professional Commitment mediate the relationship between Leadership Behavior and Organizational Performance?

By addressing these questions, this study aims to provide empirical evidence that can guide school leaders in adopting leadership practices that foster a more committed workforce and deliver higher levels of performance. The results are expected to contribute to the broader discourse on educational leadership within faith-based educational contexts in Indonesia and comparable settings worldwide.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Leadership Behavior and Professional Commitment

Leadership Behavior (LB) is a critical factor shaping employees' attitudes, motivation, and attachment to their work roles (Shehata et al., 2017; Kurland et al., 2010). In educational settings, leadership extends beyond administrative supervision; it entails inspiring teachers to embrace organizational goals, promoting open communication, and modeling professional ethics — all of which are vital in schools that blend general education with religious values, such as Al Azhar Islamic high schools.

Transformational leadership, in particular, has been widely documented as effective in fostering high levels of Professional Commitment (PC) (Day et al., 2005). According to Bass (1985), transformational leaders articulate a compelling vision, challenge staff intellectually, provide individualized consideration, and serve as role models. These behaviors build trust and emotional bonds, motivating teachers and staff to commit fully to their professional duties.

Prior studies have established that supportive and transformational leadership leads to increased job satisfaction and commitment among teachers (Shehata et al., 2017). In the context of Indonesian Islamic schools, Riskarini's (2025) findings highlight that schools with open and participative leadership styles report stronger staff morale and lower turnover. Therefore, the first hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Leadership Behavior has a positive and significant effect on Professional Commitment.

Leadership Behavior and Organizational Performance

Effective leadership also directly influences Organizational Performance (OP). Leadership determines how resources are allocated, how conflicts are resolved, and how a culture of continuous improvement is nurtured (Dwiyanto, 2012; Kurland et al., 2010). In schools, principals and senior managers play pivotal roles in setting performance standards, ensuring curriculum quality, and maintaining stakeholder relationships.

Enhancing Professional Commitment and Organizational Performance through Leadership Behavior: Evidence from Islamic High Schools in Greater Jakarta

Previous research by Kurland et al. (2010) demonstrated that schools with transformational leaders exhibit higher organizational learning capacity and better overall performance. Similarly, Shehata et al. (2017) found that supportive leadership is associated with higher student achievement and institutional reputation. In the Al Azhar network, schools led by visionary leaders who align staff efforts with institutional missions tend to maintain higher operational efficiency and academic competitiveness (Riskarini, 2025). Thus, the second hypothesis is formulated as:

H2: Leadership Behavior has a positive and significant effect on Organizational Performance.

Professional Commitment and Organizational Performance

Professional Commitment is widely recognized as a driver of performance in both corporate and educational organizations (Day et al., 2005; Fernández-Temprano & Tejerina-Gaite, 2020). Committed teachers are more likely to innovate in lesson delivery, engage students effectively, and collaborate with peers to improve teaching quality.

Moreover, committed administrative staff contribute to operational excellence, proactive problem-solving, and enhanced service quality for students and parents. High PC thus reinforces positive school climates and strengthens the institution's reputation (Dwiyanto, 2012). Empirical evidence from various educational settings suggests that when teachers exhibit strong PC, students achieve better learning outcomes and schools are better positioned to meet stakeholder expectations (Shehata et al., 2017). Therefore, the third hypothesis is formulated as:

H3: Professional Commitment has a positive and significant effect on Organizational Performance.

The Mediating Role of Professional Commitment

While leadership can directly influence performance, researchers argue that its effect is partially channeled through employees' attitudes and behaviors (Kurland et al., 2010). Specifically, transformational leadership strengthens PC, which in turn enhances performance (Shehata et al., 2017).

This mediation perspective aligns with the Social Exchange Theory, which posits that when leaders provide support and recognition, employees reciprocate through higher commitment and extra-role behaviors that benefit the organization (Blau, 1964).

In the specific context of Islamic high schools, Riskarini's (2025) study indicates that leadership alone may not guarantee performance improvements if staff do not internalize institutional goals through strong PC. Therefore, examining PC as a mediator clarifies whether leadership effectiveness truly translates into tangible performance gains through its impact on teachers' and staff's psychological bonds with their work. Accordingly, the fourth hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Professional Commitment mediates the relationship between Leadership Behavior and Organizational Performance.

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employs a quantitative, explanatory research design aimed at testing causal relationships among Leadership Behavior (LB), Professional Commitment (PC), and Organizational Performance (OP) in the context of Al Azhar Islamic high schools in Greater Jakarta. The rationale for using a quantitative approach is to provide empirical evidence that can generalize findings across similar educational settings and to statistically examine both direct and indirect (mediated) relationships as proposed in the research hypotheses.

Population and Sample

The target population consists of teachers, administrative staff, and managerial personnel employed in five Al Azhar-affiliated Islamic high schools located in the Greater Jakarta region. These schools were selected because they operate under the same foundation, apply comparable curricula, and share a similar religious ethos, ensuring the sample is homogeneous in terms of institutional characteristics while allowing for variations in leadership style and staff attitudes.

A proportional stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure representation from each school and various staff categories. Based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sampling table, a minimum of 200 respondents was deemed sufficient for the estimated population size of approximately 500 employees across the five schools. Ultimately, 215 valid responses were obtained, exceeding the minimum requirement for robust Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis.

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected through a self-administered structured questionnaire distributed in both hard copy and digital format to accommodate respondents' preferences. Respondents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality to reduce social desirability

Enhancing Professional Commitment and Organizational Performance through Leadership Behavior: Evidence from Islamic High Schools in Greater Jakarta

bias and to encourage honest answers. Data collection was conducted over a six-week period, and incomplete responses were excluded from the final dataset.

Research Instrument

The questionnaire consisted of four sections:

1. Demographics: Basic information including gender, age, tenure, position (teacher/staff/manager).
2. Leadership Behavior (LB): Adapted from Shehata et al. (2017) and Kurland et al. (2010); measured using 10 items covering aspects of transformational and supportive leadership such as inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration.
3. Professional Commitment (PC): Measured using 8 items adapted from Day et al. (2005); focused on loyalty, identification with the profession, and willingness to perform beyond formal duties.
4. Organizational Performance (OP): Measured with 7 items adapted from Dwiyanto (2012); covered goal achievement, operational efficiency, stakeholder satisfaction, and institutional reputation.

All items employed a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

Data Analysis Technique

The analysis was conducted using SmartPLS 4.0, which is suitable for complex models with mediating effects and small to medium sample sizes. The procedure included:

1. Measurement Model Evaluation: Reliability assessed via Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability (CR); convergent validity via Average Variance Extracted (AVE); discriminant validity via the Fornell-Larcker criterion.
2. Structural Model Evaluation: Path coefficients (β), t-values, and p-values obtained through bootstrapping (5000 resamples).
3. Mediation Analysis: Significance of indirect effects tested to confirm the mediating role of PC.

Ethical approval was obtained from the respective institutional review board of the Al Azhar Foundation before data collection commenced.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Profile

Of the 215 respondents, 58% were teachers, 30% administrative staff, and 12% school managers. The majority (65%) had served in their respective schools for more than five years, indicating familiarity with organizational processes and leadership dynamics.

Measurement Model

Reliability: All constructs showed excellent internal consistency:

- Leadership Behavior: Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.911$, CR = 0.937
- Professional Commitment: Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.894$, CR = 0.921
- Organizational Performance: Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.881$, CR = 0.909

Convergent Validity: All items had factor loadings >0.7 ; AVE for each construct exceeded the 0.50 threshold.

Discriminant Validity: The Fornell-Larcker criterion confirmed that the square root of AVE for each construct was higher than its correlation with other constructs.

Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

Table 1 summarizes the hypothesis testing results:

Hypothesis	Path	β	t-value	p-value	Result
H1	LB $\rightarrow$ PC	0.53	10.45	<0.001	Supported
H2	LB $\rightarrow$ OP	0.35	6.72	<0.001	Supported
H3	PC $\rightarrow$ OP	0.36	7.20	<0.001	Supported
H4	LB $\rightarrow$ PC $\rightarrow$ OP	0.19	4.98	<0.001	Supported

The coefficient of determination (R^2) was 0.28 for PC and 0.54 for OP, indicating that LB explains 28% of the variance in PC, and together with PC, explains 54% of the variance in OP.

Enhancing Professional Commitment and Organizational Performance through Leadership Behavior: Evidence from Islamic High Schools in Greater Jakarta

DISCUSSION

Leadership Behavior and Professional Commitment

The significant positive effect of LB on PC ($\beta = 0.53$) validates prior findings that transformational and supportive leadership behaviors cultivate trust, psychological safety, and a sense of belonging among employees (Bass, 1985; Shehata et al., 2017). In the context of Al Azhar schools, leaders who communicate a clear vision and show genuine concern for staff well-being motivate teachers and staff to commit more deeply to their professional duties. Interview excerpts from a small qualitative follow-up (not statistically analyzed but illustrative) revealed that teachers felt more motivated to innovate and collaborate when school principals actively solicited feedback and recognized their contributions.

Leadership Behavior and Organizational Performance

The direct effect of LB on OP ($\beta = 0.35$) reinforces the argument that effective leaders shape not only internal work climates but also institutional outcomes visible to stakeholders. This finding aligns with Kurland et al. (2010), who emphasized that leadership fosters a culture of learning and adaptation, which is vital for schools operating in complex socio-cultural contexts like Islamic education. Schools with participative leaders were found to resolve operational issues faster, maintain high discipline standards, and attract greater parental trust — all hallmarks of robust performance.

Professional Commitment and Organizational Performance

The positive link between PC and OP ($\beta = 0.36$) confirms that committed staff act as catalysts for continuous improvement and service quality. High PC reduces absenteeism and staff turnover, ensuring teaching continuity and preserving institutional memory (Day et al., 2005). In a faith-based setting, PC also means upholding the moral and ethical standards expected by the community.

Mediating Role of Professional Commitment

The significant indirect effect ($\beta = 0.19$) demonstrates partial mediation: leadership influences performance both directly and indirectly through PC. This echoes Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), which posits that supportive leaders gain reciprocation in the form of loyalty and extra-role performance.

Practically, this means that leadership training for principals in the Al Azhar network should emphasize both strategic management and relational competencies — listening skills, empathy, and motivational communication — to amplify commitment-driven performance.

CONCLUSIONS

This study provides empirical evidence that effective Leadership Behavior (LB) is a crucial determinant of both Professional Commitment (PC) and Organizational Performance (OP) in the context of Al Azhar Islamic high schools in Greater Jakarta. The findings contribute to the growing body of literature on educational management by validating the theoretical proposition that transformational and supportive leadership styles cultivate a work environment where teachers and staff feel valued, trusted, and motivated to exceed routine job requirements.

Firstly, the significant positive relationship between LB and PC confirms that when school leaders demonstrate inspirational motivation, individualized support, and a clear strategic vision, they nurture stronger emotional bonds and loyalty among teachers and staff. This aligns with transformational leadership theory, which has been widely applied in Western contexts but here is shown to hold true in Indonesian Islamic schools as well.

Secondly, LB was found to have a direct positive impact on OP, underscoring the role of leadership in shaping an institution's strategic direction, problem-solving capacity, and public trust. Schools led by principals who actively engage with staff and stakeholders tend to maintain high operational standards, resolve conflicts effectively, and adapt to external challenges more smoothly.

Thirdly, the study establishes that PC significantly boosts OP. Committed staff members exhibit greater dedication to student success, maintain discipline, and contribute to the school's reputation for quality and moral integrity. This finding is consistent with organizational behavior theories, which emphasize the centrality of employee commitment in achieving sustainable performance.

Importantly, the mediating role of PC illustrates that leadership effects on performance are both direct and indirect. Leaders who foster commitment not only influence short-term results through their own decisions but also build a self-sustaining culture of dedication that endures beyond individual leaders' tenures.

Practical implications: For school administrators and policymakers within the Al Azhar network and similar faith-based institutions, this study suggests prioritizing leadership development programs that emphasize transformational competencies —

Enhancing Professional Commitment and Organizational Performance through Leadership Behavior: Evidence from Islamic High Schools in Greater Jakarta

such as emotional intelligence, participatory decision-making, and capacity building. Routine training workshops, mentoring, and leadership coaching can ensure that principals are equipped not just as managers but as role models and motivators.

Limitations and directions for future research: This study is limited to Islamic high schools in the Greater Jakarta area under a single foundation; results should be interpreted with caution when generalizing to other regions or education systems. Future research could adopt a comparative design involving public schools, other faith-based schools, or different educational levels to test the model's wider applicability. Longitudinal studies are also recommended to observe how sustained leadership practices influence PC and OP over time.

By deepening the understanding of how Leadership Behavior shapes Professional Commitment and Organizational Performance, this research provides actionable insights for achieving excellence in education that is not only academically competitive but also grounded in ethical and moral values.

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