

## ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT IN IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION AT ISLAMIC JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN BATANG HARI

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**Abstract.** *This qualitative study examines how organizational commitment drives educational quality improvement at an Islamic junior high school in Batang Hari, Indonesia. Grounded in Meyer and Allen's three-component model, findings from observations, interviews, and documentation reveal that strong affective and normative commitments—evidenced by staff loyalty, extended tenure (>15 years), and extra-role dedication—directly underpin the school's "A" accreditation and multiple academic achievements. However, limited technological proficiency and conservative pedagogical practices constrain further innovation. School leadership addresses these gaps through persuasive strategies and professional learning communities (MGMP), demonstrating that commitment alone requires structured support to translate into sustained quality enhancement. The study contributes theoretically by contextualizing commitment frameworks within formal Islamic secondary education and practically by offering a leadership model that balances emotional loyalty with systematic capacity building. These insights provide actionable guidance for educational managers seeking to leverage human commitment for institutional excellence.*

**Keywords:** *organizational commitment, educational quality, Islamic junior high school, school leadership, teacher development*

### Introduction

Organizational commitment has emerged as a critical determinant of institutional effectiveness in educational settings. It reflects employees' psychological attachment and loyalty, which significantly influence job satisfaction, staff retention, and overall performance (Karim et al., 2023; Yang & Rosli, 2024). In schools, where human resources directly shape teaching quality and student outcomes, strong commitment from educators and administrative staff is essential for achieving institutional goals and sustaining educational excellence (Kyambade et al., 2024).

The most widely recognized framework for understanding this construct is Meyer & Allen's (1991) three-component model, which distinguishes affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Affective commitment represents emotional attachment and value alignment, continuance commitment relates to perceived costs of leaving, and normative commitment stems from a sense of moral

obligation. Empirical studies consistently identify affective commitment as the strongest predictor of positive educational outcomes, as it drives educators to align personal goals with institutional objectives and exert extra-role effort (Putranto et al., 2022; Salim & Sabuhari, 2022).

Extensive research has examined organizational commitment across diverse educational contexts, demonstrating its positive correlation with leadership effectiveness, professional development, and institutional performance (Tran et al., 2023; Zámečník et al., 2021). However, most existing studies focus on public universities, general secondary schools, or Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), often overlooking formal Islamic junior high schools (MTs). Furthermore, while quantitative approaches dominate the literature, they frequently fail to capture how commitment dimensions interact with contextual challenges and leadership strategies in resource-constrained settings (Ibrahim et al., 2013; Mundiri, 2022).

Despite extensive research on organizational commitment in education, no study has specifically examined how its three dimensions collectively contribute to educational quality improvement within formal Islamic junior high schools. This gap is particularly significant because Islamic secondary education uniquely integrates religious values with academic objectives, potentially fostering distinct commitment dynamics that conventional models do not fully address. Theoretical lenses such as Social Exchange Theory and Stewardship Theory suggest that mission-value alignment and supportive leadership can amplify commitment, yet empirical validation in MTs contexts remains underexplored.

To address this gap, this study aims to explore how organizational commitment influences educational quality improvement at an Islamic junior high school in Batang Hari, Indonesia. Specifically, it examines the manifestation of commitment dimensions, identifies institutional challenges, and analyzes leadership strategies employed to optimize quality outcomes. The findings contribute theoretically by contextualizing Meyer and Allen's framework within Islamic secondary education, and practically by offering actionable guidance for school leaders seeking to leverage human commitment for sustainable institutional development.

## Literature review

### Theoretical Foundation: Meyer and Allen's Three-Component Model

Organizational commitment is widely conceptualized as a psychological state that binds employees to their organization, significantly influencing retention, performance, and institutional effectiveness (Yang & Rosli, 2024). The most robust and empirically validated framework remains Meyer and Allen's (1991) three-component model, which distinguishes affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Affective commitment reflects emotional attachment and value identification, continuance commitment arises from perceived costs of leaving, and normative commitment stems from a sense of moral obligation (Salim & Sabuhari, 2022). While all three dimensions contribute to organizational stability, extensive cross-contextual

research consistently identifies affective commitment as the strongest predictor of positive behavioral outcomes, including extra-role effort, pedagogical innovation, and sustained engagement (Kim & Beehr, 2020; Putranto et al., 2022). This model serves as the primary theoretical lens for the present study, as its multidimensional structure enables nuanced analysis of how distinct commitment mechanisms interact with leadership strategies and institutional constraints in educational settings.

### **Synthesis: Commitment, Leadership, and Educational Quality**

Empirical literature on educational commitment reveals a consistent convergence: high commitment significantly enhances teaching quality and institutional performance, but its impact is highly contingent on leadership quality and organizational support systems. Studies across diverse contexts—from Ugandan universities Kyambade et al (2024) to Vietnamese schools (Tran et al., 2023) and Indonesian higher education (Hiswara et al., 2023)—demonstrate that transformational and servant leadership styles amplify commitment by fostering psychological safety, professional autonomy, and shared vision. Conversely, research by Ibrahim et al (2013) illustrates a critical boundary condition: even strong commitment fails to translate into quality improvements when hindered by inadequate infrastructure or weak leadership. This synthesis underscores that commitment is not a standalone driver but a catalytic resource that requires strategic leadership, effective HRM practices, and continuous professional development to materialize into tangible educational outcomes (Shohib et al., 2024; Zámečník et al., 2021).

### **Commitment in Faith-Based Educational Contexts**

The dynamics of organizational commitment take on distinct characteristics in Islamic educational institutions, where religious values and professional identity frequently intersect. Research on Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) indicates that spiritual alignment and traditional leadership significantly strengthen affective and normative commitment, creating emotional bonds that transcend contractual employment relationships (Anggraini, 2024; Mundiri, 2022; Rachman & Suharto, 2023). This value-congruence hypothesis aligns with Social Exchange Theory and Stewardship Theory, suggesting that when institutional missions resonate with personal beliefs, employees reciprocate with heightened loyalty and moral obligation (Hafizhoh & Misra, 2023; Putranto et al., 2022). However, existing literature predominantly focuses on *pesantren* or general secondary schools, leaving formal Islamic junior high schools (MTs) empirically underexplored. This gap is critical, as MTs operate at the intersection of religious socialization and national curriculum standards, potentially generating unique commitment configurations that differ from both secular and traditional Islamic institutions.

### **Conceptual Framework: Integrating Theory, Context, and Quality Pathways**

Building on the synthesized literature, this study proposes a Conceptual Pathway Model that positions Meyer and Allen's framework as the central analytical tool for examining quality improvement in Islamic junior high schools. As illustrated in Figures 1 and 2, the framework operationalizes commitment not as a static trait but as a dynamic input that interacts with leadership strategies and contextual challenges. The model posits that: (1) affective and normative commitments provide the motivational foundation for staff retention and collaborative engagement; (2) leadership interventions (e.g., persuasive communication, MGMP facilitation, competence-based placement) channel this motivation toward targeted capability development; and (3) successful interventions transform pedagogical and technological constraints into measurable quality outcomes, which in turn reinforce initial commitment through recognition and institutional success. This integrated pathway bridges the identified research gap by explicitly linking theoretical commitment dimensions to practical quality improvement mechanisms within the MTs context, serving as the primary analytical structure for interpreting empirical findings in this study.

### **Research Methods**

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to examine organizational commitment in its natural context at an Islamic Junior High School in Batang Hari, Indonesia. The design prioritizes in-depth understanding of institutional practices and lived experiences without experimental manipulation. Data collection utilized methodological triangulation through three complementary techniques: (1) passive participatory observation focused on behavioral indicators of commitment (e.g., punctuality, collaborative planning, extra-role mentoring); (2) unstructured in-depth interviews to explore subjective experiences, value alignment, and perceived challenges; and (3) document analysis of institutional records, including accreditation reports, meeting minutes, and achievement portfolios. This multi-method strategy was deliberately chosen to capture both observable behaviors and underlying psychological states.

Participants were selected through purposive sampling based on explicit criteria designed to maximize informational richness and strategic relevance. Inclusion criteria required: (a) a minimum of ten years of continuous service to ensure deep institutional memory and longitudinal perspective on commitment dynamics; (b) direct involvement in educational quality improvement initiatives; and (c) representation across key operational tiers. Consequently, four key informants were selected: the principal (as strategic leader and policy implementer), three homeroom teachers representing grades VII, VIII, and IX (to capture classroom-level commitment and pedagogical challenges), and the head of administration (to provide insight into

operational support and HRM practices). This configuration ensured that data reflected multi-level organizational realities rather than isolated perspectives.

Data triangulation was executed systematically to enhance credibility and minimize interpretive bias. Source triangulation involved cross-verifying interview narratives against observational field notes and official documentation (e.g., comparing teachers' self-reported dedication with attendance records and MGMP participation logs). Methodological triangulation ensured that findings from one technique were corroborated by another—for instance, observed collaborative behaviors were validated through interview accounts and curriculum meeting minutes. Temporal variation was incorporated by conducting observations across different school routines (daily instruction, extracurricular activities, and administrative meetings) to capture commitment manifestations under varying conditions. Data analysis followed Miles and Huberman's iterative model: data reduction prioritized commitment-related themes; data display organized findings into matrices linking dimensions, challenges, and strategies; and conclusion drawing/verification employed continuous cross-checking to ensure interpretive accuracy and theoretical alignment with Meyer and Allen's framework.

## Discussion

### **Manifestation of Organizational Commitment at Islamic Junior High School Batang Hari**

The findings reveal that organizational commitment at Islamic Junior High School Batang Hari manifests through strong trust, loyalty, and dedication among teachers and educational staff. These individuals have served the institution for more than fifteen years without requesting transfers, demonstrating remarkable stability and attachment. Their daily behaviors reflect deep acceptance of organizational values and goals, which were collaboratively formulated through participatory processes. Discipline and mutual respect characterize the working environment, indicating that affective commitment serves as the dominant dimension in this institution. This pattern aligns with Meyer & Allen (1991) theoretical framework, which identifies emotional attachment and identification with organizational values as core components of affective commitment (Salim & Sabuhari, 2022).

The commitment observed extends beyond mere retention to active engagement in organizational development. Teachers consistently arrive on time, participate in collaborative curriculum discussions, and uphold the school's reputation within the broader community. Their willingness to mentor students outside regular class hours illustrates dedication that transcends formal job requirements. This finding supports Karim et al (2023) assertion that organizational commitment encompasses willingness to exert extra effort for organizational benefit. The sense of belonging fostered within this institution creates a psychological bond that encourages members to view the school as their primary sphere of professional identity and service.

Human resource management at the school follows the principle of "the right person in the right place," ensuring optimal alignment between individual competencies and organizational needs. The principal actively involves staff in capacity-building training programs to enhance professional competencies continuously. This management approach reflects stewardship theory, which posits that management motivated by organizational goals rather than individual interests fosters stronger commitment (Hafizhoh & Misra, 2023). The integration of competence-based placement with ongoing development opportunities creates a reinforcing cycle where commitment generates performance, and performance recognition strengthens further commitment.

### 1. Dimensions of Organizational Commitment in Practice

**Table 1.** Dimensions of Organizational Commitment at Islamic Junior High School Batang Hari

No.	Dimension	Key Indicators	Manifestation	Implication
1	Affective Commitment	Emotional attachment, identification with values, belief in goals	Teachers serve >15 years, never request transfer, demonstrate discipline and mutual respect	Strong psychological bond creates stability and reduces turnover intention
2	Normative Commitment	Sense of obligation, moral responsibility, loyalty to institution	Teachers arrive punctually, work cooperatively, discuss curriculum matters, uphold school reputation	Moral obligation drives consistent performance beyond minimum requirements
3	Continuance Commitment	Awareness of costs associated with leaving, investment in institution	Long tenure creates accumulated benefits and relationships that would be costly to abandon	Retention based on rational calculation supplements emotional attachment

Table 1 systematically presents the four dimensions through which organizational commitment manifests at the research site. The affective dimension emerges as the strongest, evidenced by emotional attachment and identification with institutional values that have developed over extended service periods. Normative commitment complements this through moral obligation, while continuance commitment provides additional retention stability. The behavioral manifestation

dimension demonstrates how internal psychological states translate into observable actions that directly contribute to educational quality improvement. This multidimensional pattern corresponds with Putranto et al (2022) finding that affective commitment serves as the most critical indicator of overall organizational commitment.

The loyalty dimension deserves particular attention given its profound impact on institutional stability. Teachers demonstrate loyalty through teamwork, adherence to institutional rules, and collective efforts to maintain the school's positive reputation. This finding resonates with Zámečník et al (2021) observation that committed employees exhibit productive and innovative behaviors oriented toward organizational goal achievement. The harmonious work environment fostered by high loyalty creates psychological safety that encourages collaborative problem-solving and continuous improvement. Consequently, loyalty functions not merely as an emotional state but as a practical resource that enables effective educational management.

Dedication among staff members manifests through active participation in teaching activities and student guidance beyond formal responsibilities. Teachers willingly invest personal time in mentoring students, organizing extracurricular programs, and supporting school initiatives without additional compensation. This extra-role behavior exemplifies organizational citizenship behavior, which Kim & Beehr (2020) identified as a direct outcome of strong organizational commitment. The voluntary nature of these contributions indicates that commitment has internalized to the point where external incentives become secondary to intrinsic motivation. Such dedication represents the highest form of commitment, where individual and organizational purposes achieve substantial alignment.

### **Impact on Educational Quality and Institutional Achievements**

The strong organizational commitment documented at this institution has generated measurable improvements in educational quality. The school currently holds an "A" level accreditation, representing the highest category in Indonesia's national education quality assessment framework. This achievement reflects systematic compliance with national education standards across multiple dimensions including graduate competency, learning processes, and management systems. Multiple academic and non-academic awards at district and national levels further validate the quality outcomes, including recognitions in SNPDB (National Standardized School Examination), KSM (Science Competition for Madrasah), and scouting competitions. These accomplishments demonstrate that commitment translates into competitive performance when channeled through effective organizational processes.

The relationship between commitment and quality operates through several mediating mechanisms. Committed teachers invest greater effort in lesson preparation, employ varied teaching methodologies, and maintain consistent student

engagement. Their collaborative culture facilitates knowledge sharing and peer learning that elevates collective teaching competence. This finding supports Shohib et al (2024) conclusion that organizational commitment mediates the relationship between leadership and teacher performance. The school's achievement trajectory suggests that commitment functions as a multiplier that amplifies the effectiveness of other quality improvement inputs including facilities, curriculum, and leadership.

However, the quality achievements should be interpreted within the context of existing challenges and resource constraints. While accreditation results indicate formal compliance with standards, they do not fully capture the depth of pedagogical innovation or technological integration in daily practice. Fahmi & Nurhadi (2024) emphasized that teacher commitment and school culture jointly influence educational quality, suggesting that commitment alone provides necessary but insufficient conditions for excellence. The institution must therefore view commitment as a foundation upon which additional quality enhancement strategies must be built. Sustaining current achievements while addressing identified gaps represents the central strategic challenge for school leadership.

### **Challenges in Enhancing Educational Quality**

Despite strong organizational commitment, the school faces significant challenges that limit educational quality optimization. The most prominent challenge involves limited technological proficiency among some teachers, which constrains the variety and interactivity of learning methods. Several teachers continue to rely predominantly on lecture-based instruction throughout entire lessons, limiting student engagement and active learning opportunities. This pedagogical conservatism reflects not resistance to change but rather insufficient exposure to and training in technology-enhanced teaching methodologies. The digital divide among teaching staff creates uneven learning experiences across different classrooms and subjects.

The technological challenge manifests concretely in unequal utilization of available educational technology infrastructure. While some teachers actively employ projectors, laptops, and internet resources to enrich learning materials, others remain less active in integrating these tools. This disparity indicates that infrastructure provision alone does not guarantee effective educational technology adoption. Hasanah et al (2023) found that teacher commitment and principal visionary leadership jointly influence work climate, suggesting that leadership intervention is necessary to bridge the technology utilization gap. The principal's awareness of this challenge demonstrates organizational learning capacity, yet translating awareness into systematic capability development requires sustained strategic effort.

The challenges extend beyond technology to encompass broader pedagogical innovation constraints. Limited teaching method variation indicates that some teachers have not fully internalized student-centered learning principles despite their strong organizational commitment. This paradox—high commitment coexisting with

conservative pedagogy—suggests that commitment and pedagogical competence represent distinct constructs requiring separate development interventions. Kyambade et al (2024) emphasized that servant leadership behaviors including developing individual potential are essential for maximizing staff commitment. The principal must therefore balance appreciation of existing commitment with assertive push for professional growth in specific competency areas.

### **Principal's Strategic Efforts to Address Challenges**

The principal employs a **persuasive approach** as the primary strategy to overcome technological and pedagogical challenges. Rather than imposing mandatory technology adoption, the principal encourages teachers to engage in self-directed learning and utilize personal laptops or gadgets to support teaching activities. This approach respects teacher autonomy while raising awareness about the importance of technological adaptation in contemporary education. The persuasive strategy reflects transformational leadership elements, which Tran et al. (2023) identified as positively influencing teacher commitment and performance. By fostering intrinsic motivation rather than external compliance, the principal aims to cultivate sustainable behavioral change.

Active participation in Subject Teacher Forums (*Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran/MGMP*) constitutes another key effort to enhance teacher professionalism. These forums provide structured opportunities for peer learning, curriculum discussion, and collaborative problem-solving that complement individual self-development efforts. The principal's emphasis on MGMP participation demonstrates understanding that professional development requires both individual initiative and collective learning structures. This dual approach aligns with Aboramadan et al (2020) finding that work engagement mediates the relationship between HRM practices and organizational commitment. By investing in professional community building, the principal simultaneously strengthens commitment and develops competence.

The principal's efforts have begun yielding observable results in classroom practice. Teachers have started incorporating simple technological media and varied teaching methods, generating increased student activity and enthusiasm during learning sessions. These early indicators suggest that the persuasive approach, while gradual, effectively initiates behavioral change without generating resistance. However, the pace of change remains modest relative to the scale of technological transformation required in contemporary education. Yang & Rosli (2024) emphasized that corporate social responsibility initiatives enhance performance through commitment mediation, suggesting that institutional investment in teacher welfare and development could accelerate capability building.

### **Synthesis: Commitment, Leadership, and Quality Improvement**

The findings from Islamic Junior High School Batang Hari illustrate a complex interplay between organizational commitment, leadership strategy, and educational

quality. Strong affective and normative commitments provide the relational foundation that enables collaborative improvement efforts. However, continuance commitment requires reinforcement through institutional support and systematic capacity building to ensure sustained quality improvement. This tripartite commitment configuration corresponds with Meyer & Allen (1991) theoretical prediction that optimal organizational functioning requires balanced development across all three dimensions. The school's experience demonstrates that over-reliance on affective commitment, while generating loyalty and dedication, may insufficiently address competence gaps that constrain quality enhancement.

The case reveals that organizational commitment in educational settings functions as a necessary but not sufficient condition for quality improvement. While commitment generates willingness to serve and collaborate, it does not automatically produce pedagogical innovation or technological competence. Hiswara et al (2023) demonstrated that organizational culture and effective management practices significantly influence lecturer performance in Indonesian higher education, suggesting that commitment must be complemented by supportive organizational systems. The principal's challenge lies in leveraging existing commitment as motivation for competence development without diminishing the positive affective bonds that sustain institutional stability.

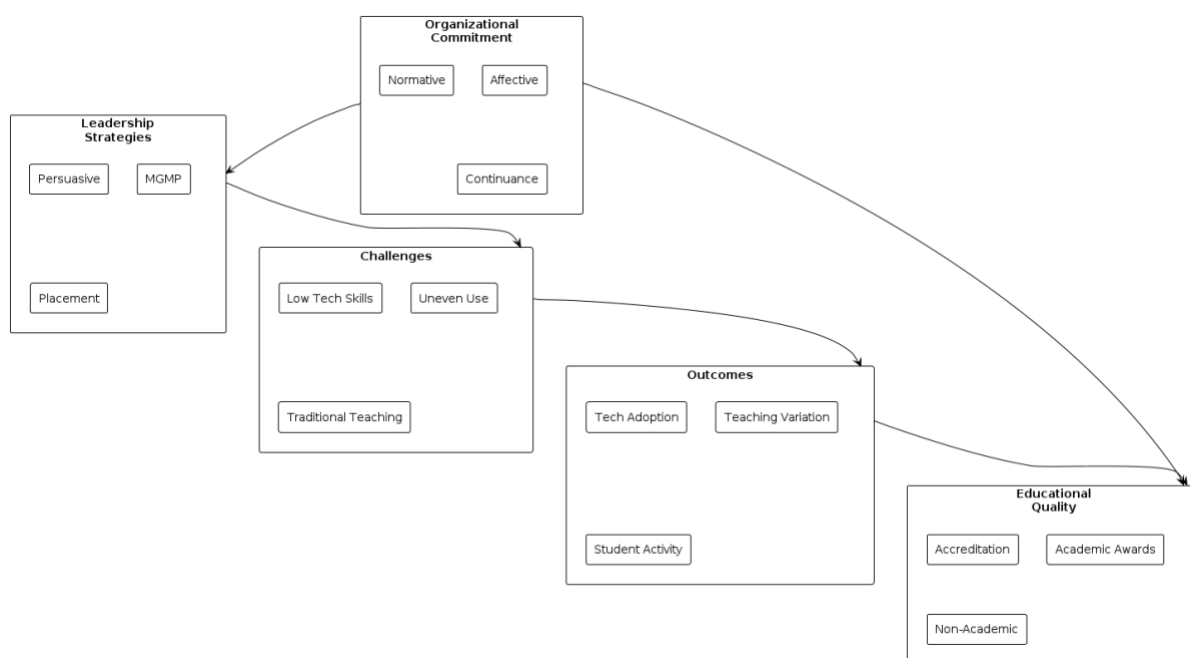
The broader implication concerns the integration of emotional, behavioral, and institutional commitment as a comprehensive framework for educational improvement. Sustainable school quality emerges from the balance between professional competence and organizational commitment, not from either factor in isolation. This study's novelty lies in demonstrating how this integration operates within a specific Islamic junior high school context, filling the research gap identified in previous studies. Mundiri (2022) examined commitment in Islamic boarding schools, while Ahmed (2020) focused on elementary schools, leaving the Islamic junior high school context underexplored. The current findings contribute to filling this gap by providing empirical evidence from a formal Islamic secondary education institution.

### **Comparative Analysis with Previous Research**

The findings from this study converge with and diverge from previous research in instructive ways. Mumpuni et al (2025), examining Indonesian Islamic schools, found that teachers' strong emotional attachment and loyalty significantly improved student learning outcomes and school performance. This convergence validates the positive relationship between affective commitment and educational quality across different Islamic educational contexts. Similarly, Meyer & Allen (1991), in their Canadian study, confirmed that affective commitment enhances teacher motivation and job satisfaction, which subsequently contribute to educational quality. These consistent findings across geographical and cultural contexts strengthen confidence in the generalizability of the commitment-quality relationship.

However, Ibrahim et al (2013) presented contrasting findings from Malaysia, where high organizational commitment among teachers did not automatically translate into improved educational outcomes due to inadequate facilities and poor leadership. This divergence highlights the contextual contingency of commitment effects, suggesting that commitment operates within enabling or constraining environmental conditions. The Batang Hari case occupies an intermediate position: strong commitment and effective leadership exist, but resource limitations and capability gaps partially constrain quality optimization. This pattern supports contingency theory, which posits that no universal management system applies equally across all organizational situations (Hafizhoh & Misra, 2023).

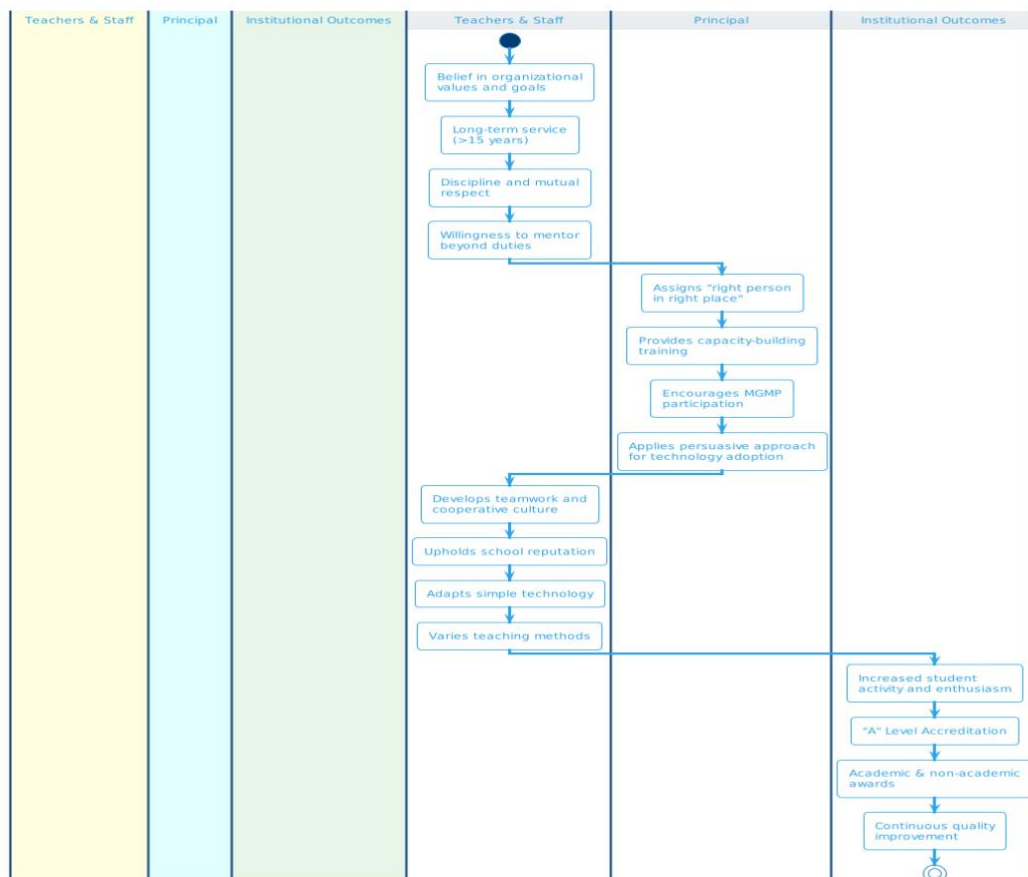
The comparative analysis reveals that organizational commitment's impact on educational quality depends on leadership quality, resource availability, and systematic capability development. Schools with committed staff but weak leadership or insufficient resources may fail to translate commitment into quality outcomes. Conversely, schools with moderate commitment but strong leadership and resources may achieve comparable or superior results through systematic intervention. The optimal configuration involves high commitment, effective leadership, adequate resources, and continuous professional development—a combination that the Batang Hari school is progressively building through the principal's strategic efforts.



**Figure 1.** Conceptual Framework: Organizational Commitment and Educational Quality Improvement

The conceptual framework presented in Figure 1 illustrates the dynamic relationship between organizational commitment, leadership strategies, challenges, intervention outcomes, and educational quality at Islamic Junior High School Batang Hari. The framework demonstrates that organizational commitment—particularly

affective and normative dimensions—provides the foundational motivation that enables effective leadership implementation. Leadership strategies, including the persuasive approach, MGMP participation encouragement, and competence-based placement, directly address identified challenges such as limited technology proficiency, uneven technology utilization, and conservative pedagogy. Successful interventions transform these challenges into positive outcomes including simple technology adoption, varied teaching methods, and increased student activity, which collectively enhance educational quality evidenced by "A" accreditation and multiple academic and non-academic awards. The framework's color coding distinguishes input factors (warm colors), process mechanisms (cool colors), challenges (pink tones), outcomes (green tones), and final quality indicators (golden tones), creating visual clarity about the transformation pathway from commitment to quality.



**Figure 2.** Process Flow of Organizational Commitment Development

Figure 2 presents the process flow through which organizational commitment develops and translates into educational quality outcomes at the research site. The swimlane diagram distinguishes three actor categories: teachers and staff (yellow lane) whose initial commitment manifests through belief in values, long-term service, discipline, and extra-role dedication; the principal (cyan lane) who facilitates commitment actualization through strategic human resource management and persuasive leadership; and institutional outcomes (green lane) that emerge from the

interaction between committed staff and effective leadership. The flow demonstrates that commitment alone does not automatically produce quality; rather, it requires leadership intervention to channel commitment toward specific capability development and behavioral change. The cyclical nature of the process—where outcomes reinforce initial commitment through success recognition—creates a virtuous cycle of continuous improvement. This process model extends Meyer and Allen's (1991) static dimensional framework by illustrating the dynamic mechanisms through which commitment transforms into observable quality improvements.

### **Implications for Theory and Practice**

The findings contribute to educational management theory by demonstrating the applicability of Meyer and Allen's three-component commitment model in Islamic junior high school contexts. The dominance of affective commitment in this setting reflects the integration of religious values with professional identity, creating emotional bonds that transcend contractual employment relationships. This pattern extends previous research on commitment in Islamic educational institutions, which has focused primarily on boarding schools (Mundiri, 2022; Rachman & Suharto, 2023) rather than formal secondary schools. The theoretical implication suggests that faith-based educational institutions may generate stronger affective commitment due to the alignment between organizational mission and personal religious values, a proposition warranting further comparative investigation.

Practically, the findings offer actionable guidance for school administrators and education policymakers seeking to enhance educational quality through commitment strengthening. First, structured professional development programs should address both pedagogical skills and sense of belonging, recognizing that competence without commitment or commitment without competence produces suboptimal outcomes. Second, internal communication mechanisms must ensure that vision and goals are clearly understood and collectively pursued, preventing the gap between formulated objectives and staff internalization that weakens commitment effects. Third, reward and recognition systems based on performance and innovation can further enhance motivation and organizational loyalty, building on the existing strong affective foundation.

The principal's persuasive approach offers a replicable model for leading committed but capability-constrained staff toward innovation. Rather than undermining existing commitment through coercive demands, persuasive leadership respects teacher autonomy while raising awareness about necessary adaptations. This approach aligns with servant leadership principles, which Kyambade et al. (2024) confirmed as strong predictors of staff commitment in Ugandan universities. However, the findings also suggest that persuasion must eventually be supplemented with more structured capability development as the pace of educational change accelerates. Schools must therefore evolve from persuasion-dependent to system-supported innovation as they progress along the quality improvement trajectory.

## Conclusion

This study reaffirms that organizational commitment exerts significant influence on improving educational quality at Islamic Junior High School in Batang Hari, consistent with Meyer and Allen's (1991) theoretical framework encompassing affective, continuance, and normative dimensions. The evidence demonstrates that teachers and staff exhibit high levels of affective commitment, evidenced by their willingness to align personal goals with institutional objectives, active engagement in MGMP professional development activities, and sustained service exceeding fifteen years. Their sense of responsibility and shared values strengthen collective efforts toward quality improvement, resulting in "A" level accreditation and numerous academic and non-academic achievements at district and national levels. However, persistent challenges including limited teaching method variations and underutilization of educational technology indicate that while affective and normative commitments remain strong, continuance commitment requires further reinforcement through systematic institutional support and targeted capacity-building initiatives.

The implications of this research highlight that strengthening organizational commitment transcends mere loyalty-building to encompass the cultivation of a shared-purpose culture that directly influences educational quality. When teachers and staff feel emotionally connected and value-driven in their work, they transform from passive policy implementers into active agents of school improvement. Practically, school leaders can leverage these insights to design strategies fostering affective and normative commitment through inclusive decision-making, continuous professional development support, and meaningful recognition of teacher contributions. Moreover, this study contributes to the broader educational management field by emphasizing that sustainable quality improvement depends not solely on facilities or curriculum but on the depth of human commitment driving every educational process. Future research should expand beyond single-institution boundaries by incorporating multiple schools and employing mixed-methods approaches to comprehensively understand how diverse commitment dimensions influence educational quality across varied organizational contexts and resource conditions.

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