

A Structural Model of Teacher Performance: Examining Empowerment, Self-Efficacy, Creativity, and Trust

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Abstract

This study examines a structural model of teacher performance by positioning empowerment, self-efficacy, transformational leadership, and creativity as exogenous variables, with trust as a mediating variable. The purpose of this study is to analyze the direct and indirect effects of these variables on vocational high school teacher performance in Bogor Regency, Indonesia. A quantitative survey design was employed involving 175 teachers from 45 vocational high schools selected through multistage proportional random sampling. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and path analysis. The results indicate that all exogenous variables significantly influence teacher performance, both directly and indirectly through trust. The indirect effect analysis shows that empowerment ($\beta = 0.016$; $t = 2.793$; $p < 0.01$), self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.021$; $t = 3.467$; $p < 0.001$), transformational leadership ($\beta = 0.018$; $t = 3.830$; $p < 0.001$), and creativity ($\beta = 0.060$; $t = 9.070$; $p < 0.001$) have significant effects on teacher performance through trust, with creativity demonstrating the strongest mediating effect. These findings confirm trust as a critical mechanism for enhancing teacher performance. This study contributes to the development of an empirically validated trust-based teacher performance model and provides evidence-based implications for school leadership development and vocational education quality improvement policies.

Keywords: creativity; empowerment; teacher performance; transformational leadership; trust

INTRODUCTION

Education quality remains at the forefront of global development agendas, as effective learning outcomes are critical for individual advancement and national competitiveness (OECD, 2020; World Bank, 2022). A growing body of research identifies teacher performance as one of the most significant predictors of student achievement and educational effectiveness,

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surpassing many structural or resource-based factors (Hanushek, 1992; Darling-Hammond et al., 2020; Kim & Lee, 2021). In the context of Indonesia, persistent concerns about educational quality continue to emerge, particularly regarding teacher capability and instructional quality within secondary and vocational education systems (Suryadi et al., 2019; Ministry of Education and Culture, 2021). These challenges are reflected in international and national assessments indicating sub-optimal learning outcomes and the need for strengthened pedagogical practices across diverse school settings, including vocational schools (SMK) (OECD, 2019; World Bank, 2023).

Vocational education in Indonesia plays a pivotal role in equipping learners with industry-relevant skills and competencies aligned with labor market demands (Pavlova, 2020; Cedefop, 2021). However, the transition from school to productive employment remains uneven, partly due to difficulties in ensuring consistent instructional effectiveness among vocational teachers. Structural issues such as teacher preparedness, limited professional development, and misalignment between instructional practices and industry needs persist (Utomo, 2021; Nugroho & Sutarto, 2022; Billett, 2020). In this dynamic and increasingly complex educational environment, teacher performance should be understood not merely as the execution of instructional tasks, but as a multidimensional construct influenced by psychological, organizational, and social factors (Klassen & Tze, 2019; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2021).

Recent research in educational psychology and organizational studies highlights teacher empowerment, self-efficacy, creativity, and trust as key determinants of effective teaching practices and professional agency (Zhang & Ng, 2022; Liu et al., 2023). Teacher empowerment characterized by autonomy, participation in decision-making, and access to professional support has been shown to enhance teachers' sense of role significance, motivation, and instructional effectiveness (Putra et al., 2025; Short & Rinehart, 2019; Bogler & Nir, 2021). Likewise, self-efficacy, defined as teachers' beliefs in their instructional capabilities, consistently demonstrates a positive relationship with teaching engagement, persistence, and performance outcomes (Maulana & Sukrawan, 2025; Klassen et al., 2020; Zee & Koomen, 2021). Furthermore, self-efficacy supports adaptive and creative teaching behaviors, enabling teachers to respond effectively to instructional challenges and diverse student needs (Saputro et al., 2023; Topalik et al., 2025; Anderson et al., 2020).

Creativity in teaching, understood as the ability to generate and implement novel and context-responsive instructional strategies, has gained increasing attention due to rapid technological change and the evolving demands of vocational education (Beghetto & Kaufman, 2020; Henriksen et al., 2021). Teachers with higher levels of creative engagement are more likely



to design innovative learning experiences, integrate problem-based learning, and foster higher-order thinking skills, which are associated with improved learning effectiveness (Topalik et al., 2025; Subekti et al., 2025; Davies et al., 2019; Gu et al., 2022).

In addition, trust within educational organizations, both among colleagues and between teachers and school leaders, plays a critical role in shaping collaborative cultures and professional learning environments (Bryk & Schneider, 2020; Tschannen-Moran, 2021). High levels of organizational trust are associated with stronger collegial cooperation, psychological safety, and openness to instructional innovation (Hoy & Tarter, 2020; Yin et al., 2022). Although trust has been less frequently examined in vocational school research, it is increasingly recognized as a key condition for sustaining teacher commitment and performance in complex educational settings (Li & Liu, 2023; Vangrieken et al., 2021).

Despite these insights, existing studies tend to examine predictors of teacher performance in isolation, resulting in fragmented explanations and limited understanding of systemic relationships (Kim et al., 2020; Nguyen et al., 2022). Empirical research integrating empowerment, self-efficacy, creativity, and trust into a comprehensive structural model remains scarce, particularly in the context of private vocational high schools (SMK swasta) in Indonesia (Sutjipto et al., 2023; Rahman & Widodo, 2024). This limitation restricts deeper understanding of how psychological and organizational factors interact simultaneously within specific educational ecosystems such as Bogor Regency.

Addressing this gap is essential, as improving teacher performance requires more than technical pedagogical training alone. It necessitates an integrated understanding of teachers' beliefs, creative capacities, and relational dynamics within schools (Day et al., 2020; Fullan, 2021). Accordingly, this study aims to examine the direct and indirect effects of empowerment, self-efficacy, creativity, and trust on teacher performance among private SMK teachers in Bogor Regency. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to contemporary models of teacher performance and practically to leadership strategies, policy formulation, and professional development in vocational education (OECD, 2023; Bush, 2024).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teacher Performance

Teacher performance refers to teachers' ability to effectively plan, implement, and evaluate learning while fulfilling professional and organizational responsibilities. High teacher performance is reflected in instructional quality, classroom management, innovation, and commitment to school goals (Campbell et al., 2004). Recent educational research emphasizes



that teacher performance is shaped by the interaction between individual psychological factors and organizational conditions (Day & Gu, 2014). Structural modelling approaches are increasingly used to explain teacher performance because they allow the simultaneous examination of multiple interrelated variables, including empowerment, self-efficacy, leadership, creativity, and trust (Hidayat & Patras, 2024).

Empowerment and Teacher Performance through Trust

Teacher empowerment refers to the extent to which teachers are granted autonomy, authority, access to resources, and involvement in decision-making processes (Short & Rinehart, 1992). Empowerment enhances teachers' sense of ownership and professional responsibility, which positively affects their performance (Bogler & Somech, 2004). Empirical studies show that empowerment strengthens organizational trust, as teachers perceive fairness, support, and confidence from school leadership (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). Hidayat (2020) found that empowerment contributes indirectly to teacher performance through trust, indicating that trust is a key mechanism linking organizational practices to performance outcomes.

Self-Efficacy, Trust, and Teacher Performance

Self-efficacy is defined as an individual's belief in their capability to organize and execute actions required to manage prospective situations (Bandura, 1997). In educational contexts, teacher self-efficacy has been consistently identified as a strong predictor of instructional effectiveness and job performance (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Teachers with high self-efficacy are more confident, persistent, and adaptive in their teaching practices, which enhances professional performance. Research by Hidayat et al. (2020) demonstrates that self-efficacy has a significant direct effect on teacher performance and also contributes to the development of trust through increased collaboration and professional interaction within schools.

Transformational Leadership and Trust

Transformational leadership is characterized by inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and idealized influence (Bass & Avolio, 1994). In school settings, transformational leadership has been shown to foster positive organizational climates and improve teacher commitment and performance (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). Trust is a critical outcome of transformational leadership. School leaders who demonstrate integrity, support, and vision are more likely to gain teachers' trust, which facilitates cooperation and goal alignment. Hidayat and Patras (2024) confirmed that transformational leadership significantly



influences trust and indirectly improves teacher performance through strengthened organizational relationships.

Creativity, Trust, and Teacher Performance

Teacher creativity refers to the ability to generate innovative instructional strategies, adapt learning approaches, and respond flexibly to classroom challenges (Runco, 2014). Creative teaching enhances student engagement and instructional effectiveness, contributing positively to teacher performance. Creativity is closely related to trust, as innovative behaviour requires psychological safety and organizational support. Teachers are more willing to experiment with new ideas when they trust school leadership and colleagues (Edmondson, 1999). Empirical findings reported by Hidayat (2023) indicate that creativity positively affects teacher performance and that trust functions as a facilitating condition for creative instructional practices.

Trust as a Mediating Variable

Trust refers to teachers' confidence in school leaders, colleagues, and institutional systems (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). Trust plays a strategic role in integrating organizational and psychological factors within schools by fostering collaboration, reducing uncertainty, and enhancing professional commitment. Several structural equation modelling studies, including those conducted by Rais Hidayat, demonstrate that trust frequently acts as a mediating variable linking empowerment, self-efficacy, transformational leadership, and creativity to teacher performance (Hidayat & Patras, 2024). These findings support the inclusion of trust as a central construct in comprehensive models of teacher performance.

Figure 1 Literature Review



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in vocational high schools (SMKs) located in Bogor Regency, Indonesia, in accordance with the research title and objectives. Bogor Regency was selected as the research site due to its large geographical area, administrative complexity, and diversity of school characteristics, which provide a representative context for examining teacher performance in a broad educational setting. The object of this research consists of the research variables, defined as constructs that generate observable characteristics and attributes that become the primary focus of scientific investigation (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). Accordingly, this study examines teacher performance (Y) as the endogenous variable, which is influenced by empowerment (X1), self-efficacy (X2), transformational leadership (X3), creativity (X4), and trust (X5) as exogenous variables. These variables have been widely acknowledged in educational management literature as critical determinants of teacher effectiveness and organizational performance (Bandura, 1997; Bass & Avolio, 1994; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003; Hidayat & Patras, 2024).

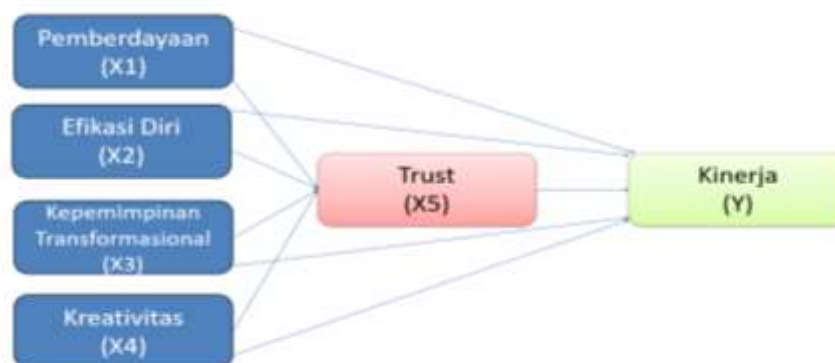


Figure 1 Research constellation diagram

Given the extensive size of Bogor Regency administratively divided into 40 sub-districts across three major regions (western, central, and eastern) this study employed a Multistage Proportional Random Sampling technique. This sampling method is considered appropriate for large and geographically dispersed populations, as it enhances representativeness while maintaining feasibility and research efficiency (Creswell, 2014; Fraenkel et al., 2019). In the first stage, the population was stratified into three regional zones: western, central, and eastern Bogor. In the second stage, 50% of sub-districts from each region were selected proportionally using a random lottery technique. In the final stage, vocational schools and teachers within the selected sub-districts were randomly selected to ensure equal probability of participation

(Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). As a result of this process, 20 sub-districts and 45 SMKs were selected from a total of 348 vocational schools in Bogor Regency, yielding an accessible population of 175 teachers. This sample size satisfies the minimum requirements for path analysis and ensures adequate statistical power for multivariate modeling (Hair et al., 2019).

Data analysis was conducted using Path Analysis, a multivariate statistical technique designed to examine direct and indirect causal relationships among variables within a predefined structural model (Kline, 2016). Path analysis was selected because it allows for a comprehensive evaluation of the structural relationships between empowerment, self-efficacy, transformational leadership, creativity, trust, and teacher performance. Furthermore, the analysis was carried out not only at the construct level but also at the indicator level, enabling a more detailed examination of each variable. This approach facilitates the identification of indicators that require immediate improvement, as well as those that should be maintained or further developed to enhance teacher performance (Hidayat, 2020; Schumacker & Lomax, 2016).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of statistical description analysis for the research variables, data centralization symptoms can be revealed as listed in the following table:

Table 1. Summary of Statistical Descriptions of Research Variables

No	Description	Empowerment (X1)	Self-Efficacy (X2)	Transformational Leadership (X3)	Creativity (X4)	Trust (X5)	Performance (Y)
1	Mean	134.68	139.1143	147.2743	123.01	144.074	125.788
2	Standard Error	0.987576	0.769699	0.71894	1.08813	0.93580	0.9323
3	Median	135	139	148	121	144	126
4	Mode	140	140	152	121	140	127
5	Standard Deviation	13.0644	10.18217	9.510682	14.394	12.379	12.3337
6	Sample Variance	170.6786	103.6765	90.45307	207.206	153.253	152.121
7	Range	57	50	46	66	63	57
8	Minimum	106	113	124	99	112	99
9	Maximum	163	163	170	165	175	156
10	Sum	23569	2				

The descriptive statistics show that Transformational Leadership (X3) has the highest mean score ($M = 147.27$), indicating that this variable is perceived most strongly by respondents. Trust (X5) also demonstrates a high mean value ($M = 144.07$), followed by Self-Efficacy (X2) with a mean of 139.11 and Empowerment (X1) with a mean of 134.68. Creativity (X4) has the lowest mean score ($M = 123.01$), although it remains at a relatively high level. The standard deviation values range from 9.51 to 14.39, with Transformational Leadership ($SD = 9.51$) showing the lowest variability, indicating more consistent responses among participants. All variables have the same number of observations ($N = 175$), suggesting data completeness. Overall, the results indicate that the studied variables are generally perceived positively and show relatively homogeneous distributions, which supports their suitability for further statistical analysis.

Before conducting path analysis, the data must meet several statistical test requirements, namely: Error Normality Test, Variance Homogeneity Test, and Linearity Test, as follows:

Normality Test

The normality test of the standard error of the estimate uses the Liliefors test. The L_{table} value for $N = 175$ with $\alpha = 0.05$ is 0.0680, at a significance level of 0.05. The requirement that the standard error of the estimate comes from a normally distributed population is $L_{count} < L_{table}$. The hypothesis of the normality test in this study is as follows:

Table 2 Summary of Normality Test Standard Error Estimates

No.	Estimation Error	n	L calculated	L table ($\alpha = 0.05$)	Ltable ($\alpha = 0.01$)	Decision
1	Y – X1	175	0.0441	0.0639	0.0703	Normal
2	Y – X2	175	0.0370	0.0639	0.0703	Normal
3	Y – X3	175	0.0442	0.0639	0.0703	Normal
4	Y – X4	175	0.0367	0.0639	0.0703	Normal
5	Y – X5	175	0.0395	0.0639	0.0703	Normal
6	X5 – X1	175	0.0545	0.0639	0.0703	Normal
7	X5 – X2	175	0.0608	0.0639	0.0703	Normal
8	X5 – X3	175	0.0495	0.0639	0.0703	Normal
9	X5 – X4	175	0.0599	0.0639	0.0703	Normal

Homogeneity Test

Homogeneity testing is conducted to determine whether the population variance is

homogeneous or heterogeneous. The homogeneity test of variable data in this study was conducted using Bartlett's test with a chi-square table. The data is considered homogeneous if $\chi^2_{\text{count}} < \chi^2_{\text{table}}$, tested with a significance level of 0.05.

Table 3 Summary of Variance Homogeneity Test data

No.	Grouping	$\chi^2_{\text{calculated}}$	$\chi^2_{\text{table}} (\alpha = 0.05)$	Conclusion
1	Y based on X1	2261.98	4188.98	Homogeneous
2	Y based on X2	2234.76	3973.05	Homogeneous
3	Y based on X3	1625.64	2875.16	Homogeneous
4	Y based on X4	2015.39	3893.58	Homogeneous
5	Y based on X5	1866.56	3271.48	Homogeneous
6	X5 based on X1	2222.80	4188.98	Homogeneous
7	X5 based on X2	2278.57	3973.05	Homogeneous
8	X5 based on X3	1633.55	2875.16	Homogeneous
9	X5 based on X4	2035.47	3893.58	Homogeneous

Test the linearity of the regression model.

The simple regression equation of the variables Performance (Y), Empowerment (X1), Self-Efficacy (X2), Transformational Leadership (X3), Creativity (X4) and Trust (X5) needs to be tested for significance and linearity. This test is conducted to group variable scores, namely Y over X1, Y over X2, Y over X3, Y over X4, Y over X5, X1 over X5, X2 over X5, X3 over X5, and X4 over X5. The calculation results are then entered into the ANOVA table to obtain the F-value. The linearity test uses SPSS, where if $F_{\text{count}} < F_{\text{table}}$ and the significance value (Sig.) > 0.05 , it can be said to be linear. The linearity test is described as follows:

Table 4. Summary of Linearity Test Results

No.	Model of Variable Relationship	Deviation from Linearity (Sig.)	Significance Level	Test Result
1	Empowerment (X1) → Teacher Performance (Y)	0.058	$\alpha = 0.05$	Linear
2	Self-Efficacy (X2) → Teacher Performance (Y)	0.069	$\alpha = 0.05$	Linear
3	Transformational Leadership (X3) → Teacher Performance (Y)	0.052	$\alpha = 0.05$	Linear
4	Creativity (X4) → Teacher Performance (Y)	0.077	$\alpha = 0.05$	Linear

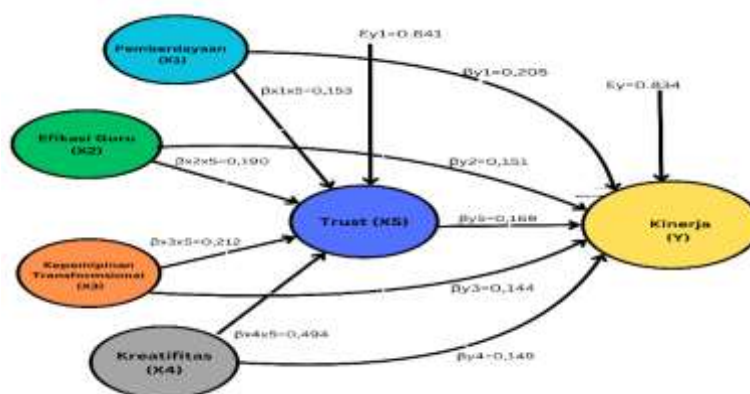
5	Trust (X5) → Teacher Performance (Y)	0.062	$\alpha = 0.05$	Linear
6	Empowerment (X1) → Trust (X5)	0.114	$\alpha = 0.05$	Linear
7	Self-Efficacy (X2) → Trust (X5)	0.085	$\alpha = 0.05$	Linear
8	Transformational Leadership (X3) → Trust (X5)	0.054	$\alpha = 0.05$	Linear
9	Creativity (X4) → Trust (X5)	0.093	$\alpha = 0.05$	Linear

The indirect effect test in this study used the Preacher and Hayes test. The test results are as follows:

Table 5. Results of Indirect Effects

Indirect Effect	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-value	Sig.
Empowerment (X1) → Teacher Performance (Y) through Trust (X5)	0.016	0.031	2.793	0.0006
Self-Efficacy (X2) → Teacher Performance (Y) through Trust (X5)	0.021	0.032	3.467	0.0001
Transformational Leadership (X3) → Teacher Performance (Y) through Trust (X5)	0.018	0.026	3.830	0.0000
Creativity (X4) → Teacher Performance (Y) through Trust (X5)	0.060	0.035	9.070	0.0000

Figure 3 Path Coefficients



The results of the indirect effect analysis demonstrate that trust (X5) plays a significant mediating role in the relationship between the independent variables and teacher performance

(Y). As shown in Table 4.61, empowerment (X1) has a statistically significant indirect effect on teacher performance through trust ($\beta = 0.016$; $t = 2.793$; $p = 0.0006$), indicating that empowerment contributes to performance improvement when it strengthens organizational trust. Self-efficacy (X2) also exhibits a significant indirect effect via trust ($\beta = 0.021$; $t = 3.467$; $p = 0.0001$), suggesting that teachers' confidence translates into higher performance within a trusting school environment. Furthermore, transformational leadership (X3) indirectly affects teacher performance through trust ($\beta = 0.018$; $t = 3.830$; $p < 0.001$), emphasizing the importance of leadership in fostering trust. Creativity (X4) shows the strongest indirect effect ($\beta = 0.060$; $t = 9.070$; $p < 0.001$), highlighting trust as a crucial mechanism that enables creative behaviour to enhance teacher performance.

Based on the research conclusions, improving teacher performance requires strengthening **empowerment, self-efficacy, transformational leadership, and creativity** as exogenous variables, with **trust as an intervening variable**. Empowerment should be enhanced by improving delegation of authority and modelling, while maintaining competency building, organizational support, and self-determination. Self-efficacy needs reinforcement through increased self-confidence, persistence, motivation, perceived ability equivalence, and real experience. Transformational leadership should focus on innovation and intellectual stimulation, while sustaining inspirational motivation, role modelling, and achievement opportunities. Creativity requires improvement in flexibility, openness, and rationality, alongside developing practical behavior and generating new ideas. Trust should be strengthened by enhancing risk acceptance, partnership strength, superior support, professional confidence, and openness in expressing ideas.

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