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The impact of the organisational commitment of teachers on work engagement: The mediating role of teaching efficacy

Abstract

Research on teaching efficacy has explored the impact of self-efficacy on students' academic performance and learning engagement, but little attention has been paid to the correlation with organisational commitment and work engagement. This study looks into the relationship between organisational commitment and work engagement, focusing on the mediation of self-perceived teaching efficacy. A cross-sectional study was designed, in which 1,532 teachers from 722 junior high schools in Taiwan completed distributed questionnaires containing an organisational commitment scale, teacher self-efficacy scale, and work engagement scale. Structural equation modelling was used to analyse the collected data, and confirmatory factor analysis and bootstrapping were used to confirm the hypothesised model. The outcomes revealed strong positive correlations among the self-efficacy, organisational commitment and work engagement of teachers, with organisational commitment being a significant predictor of work engagement, indirectly impacting work engagement through teaching efficacy. The results confirmed the mediating role of teaching efficacy.

Keywords: teaching efficacy, organisational commitment, work engagement, secondary school teachers, teacher behaviour

Introduction

Shifting from 9-year compulsory education to 12-year basic education, Taiwan launched a new educational curriculum in 2019 to meet the changing needs of society. The educational reform has considerably increased the workload of secondary school teachers, mainly due to curriculum changes (Hung, 2017) that affect lesson design, learning assessments, and teaching effectiveness (Ting et al., 2023). The implementation of education reform may reduce teachers' engagement, and even their commitment to their schools, as teacher effectiveness is key to both teachers' working conditions and students' learning performance, so teachers with high self-efficacy tend to devote themselves more to school and student matters. However, research has shown that secondary school teachers in Asia have low professional commitment and less access to supportive workplace resources, which in turn affects their work engagement (Cai et al., 2022; Granziera & Perera, 2019).

Existing studies on teacher effectiveness have explored the impact of self-efficacy on students' academic performance and learning engagement (Shahzad & Naureen, 2017), as well as the correlation of teacher self-efficacy with teacher work engagement (Wang & Pan, 2023; Zhi et al., 2023). The more confidence teachers have in their teaching, the better their students' academic performance in class and the more engaged teachers are in the life of the school. Whether professional efficacy is regarded as a consequence of engagement or a constituting element, it is clear that engaged workers feel more productive in their work (Maslach & Leiter, 1997). Low work engagement can be an indicator of a lack of professional efficacy (Schaufeli et al., 2006), and work engagement

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can positively predict self-efficacy (Li et al., 2022). Furthermore, Orgambídez et al. (2019) indicated that self-efficacy and work engagement could predict affective organisational commitment, with self-efficacy playing a further mediating role between affective organisational commitment and work engagement.

Waweru et al. (2021) pointed out that in Kenya, secondary school teachers with higher self-efficacy are committed more to their schools, while Demir (2020) revealed that in Turkey, more effective teachers have better organisational commitment and job involvement, and that organisational commitment and motivation mediate the relationship between teacher self-efficacy and job involvement. In Ouargla-Algeria, Mouloud and Krine (2021) found evidence that the organisational commitment of physical education teachers can predict their self-efficacy. Liu and Huang (2019), on the other hand, found that the occupational self-efficacy of part-time MBA students in China could predict work engagement, and that organisational commitment was a mediator between self-efficacy and work engagement, although it remained unclear whether teacher self-efficacy played a mediating role in the relationship between organisational commitment and work engagement.

A limited number of studies have discussed the impact of organisational commitment on teachers' work engagement in the Asian context, especially in secondary schools. This study aims to fill the gap by verifying the predictive role of self-efficacy and organisational commitment on work engagement, and by examining the mediating role of self-efficacy in the relationship between organisational commitment and work engagement.

Organisational commitment and work engagement

Past studies on teachers tend to explore the relationship between organisational commitment and work engagement, and while perspectives vary, higher engagement or commitment is effective for organisations. Organisational commitment and work engagement enhance the organisational identification and job performance of faculty members in universities (Nabhan & Munajat, 2023) and strengthen the job satisfaction of clinical nurses (Lee & Yu, 2023). Some studies have regarded organisational commitment as the cause of work engagement (Rivkin et al., 2016; Sezen-Gultekin et al., 2021), while others have indicated that work engagement results in organisational commitment (Orgambídez et al., 2019). Sezen-Gultekin et al. (2021) suggested that the organisational commitment of Turkish teachers could predict their work engagement, although Orgambídez et al. (2019) found that the work engagement of Spanish nurses could predict affective organisational commitment. Abdulaziz et al. (2022) found evidence that teachers' work engagement partially mediated the relationship between work-life balance and organisational commitment in Saudi Arabia. Raj et al. (2024) indicated

that faculty engagement mediates the relationship between quality of work life and organisational commitment among Indian teachers.

Whether teachers who are more engaged in their work have a higher level of commitment to their schools, or whether teachers with higher organisational commitment engage more in their work, remains unclear. Teachers with better organisational commitment are willing to devote themselves to working consistently, fully concentrating on their tasks, and experiencing significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride and challenges in their work. Work engagement relates to having a positive frame of mind at work, as well as a sense of fulfilment, and, as such, it is a more persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive status, while commitment is more psychological. The latter is a powerful belief in the school, and the components of affective, continuance, and normative commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990) could be psychological factors affecting teachers in their connection with school activities. Thus, this study examines whether teachers' organisational commitment predicts work engagement, with the following hypotheses proposed in this paper:

H1: Teachers' organisational commitment and self-efficacy positively predict work engagement.

The mediating role of teaching efficacy

Teacher self-efficacy is teachers' confidence in and expectations of their ability to successfully complete teaching tasks (Bandura, 1977), and can also be regarded as their ability to achieve the desired outcomes in student engagement and academic achievement (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). There is a significant correlation between teachers' sense of efficacy and organisational commitment (Agu, 2015; Coladarci, 1992; Waweru et al., 2021), with work engagement shown to predict self-efficacy (Li et al., 2022). In China, teaching efficacy (Wang & Pan, 2023) and well-being (Kong, 2021) predicted work engagement, although the paths among teachers' organisational commitment, work engagement, and self-efficacy need to be further elucidated. It remains to be confirmed whether work engagement and organisational commitment lead to self-efficacy, or whether self-efficacy results in work engagement and organisational commitment.

Liu and Huang (2019) found that the organisational commitment of Chinese students enrolled part-time in a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree mediated the relationship between self-efficacy; further, the work engagement and occupational self-efficacy of these students predicted work engagement. Orgambídez et al. (2019) indicated that the self-efficacy and work engagement of nursing staff positively predicted affective organisational commitment, and that work engagement played a mediating role between self-efficacy (personal resource) and affective organisational commitment (organisational result), suggesting that

there is a significant correlation between teachers' sense of efficacy and organisational commitment (Coladarci, 1992; Waweru et al., 2021). Over the past two decades, psychological well-being has been shown to influence teachers' organisational commitment (Aiello & Tesi, 2017). Orgambídez et al. (2019) indicated that work engagement mediated self-efficacy and affective organisational commitment, and that affective organisational commitment positively predicted self-efficacy and work engagement. A greater perception of one's own abilities, as well as a higher level of work engagement, can strengthen the affective bond with the organisation. Self-efficacy plays a mediating role between professional job satisfaction and happiness at work, while organisational commitment has some impact on work engagement and teaching efficacy. Teachers with high self-efficacy are more committed to their institutions (Waweru et al., 2021). Research has found that teacher self-efficacy is associated with work engagement (Wang & Pan, 2023; Zhi et al., 2023) and organisational commitment (Mouloud & Krine, 2021), although the correlations among teachers' organisational commitment, self-efficacy, and work engagement remain questionable, especially for secondary school teachers who experienced the educational reform in Taiwan. This study thus seeks to verify the predictive power of self-efficacy and organisational commitment for work engagement within schools and the mediating role of self-efficacy on the relationship between organisational commitment and work engagement. Accordingly, we propose the following hypotheses:

H2: Teacher self-efficacy, organisational commitment, and work engagement are correlated.
H3: Teacher self-efficacy mediates the relationship between organisational commitment and work engagement.

Method

Design and participants

To accomplish our research purpose, a total of 1,700 teachers were randomly selected from 722 junior high schools in Taiwan, and were invited to complete a questionnaire. These teachers had undergone educational reform for five years. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and the study was approved by the authors' Institutional Review Board. 1,532 questionnaires were returned, giving a response rate was 90.1%, with 562 males (36.7%) and 970 females (63.3%) in the sample.

Measures

We used the following instruments for the research: the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) proposed by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001), the Organisational Commitment Scale (OCS) developed by Allen and Meyer (1990), and the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) by Schaufeli et al. (2006).

Teacher self-efficacy

Teacher self-efficacy was measured using the 12-item TSES under three domains: efficacy regarding instructional strategies (IS), efficacy regarding classroom management (CM), and efficacy regarding student engagement (SE). The TSES is measured on a five-point *Likert* scale, ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. Both reliability ($\alpha = 0.903$) and construct validity ($\chi^2 = 259.265$; $df = 51$; $\chi^2/df = 5.084$; GFI = 0.965; CFI = 0.980; RMSEA = 0.052; SRMR = 0.038) were confirmed.

Teachers' organisational commitment

Organisational commitment was measured using the OCS model on a five-point *Likert* scale, ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. The 24-item scale was divided into affective commitment (AC), normative commitment (NC), and continuance commitment (CC), with internal consistency represented by a Cronbach's α coefficient of 0.742. Construct validity was also confirmed: $\chi^2 = 2419.865$; $df = 245$; $\chi^2/df = 9.877$; GFI = 0.867; CFI = 0.786; RMSEA = 0.076; SRMR = 0.088.

Teachers' work engagement

Teachers' work engagement was assessed using the nine-item UWES-9, which was originally developed to measure burnout. The three factors of vigour (VI), dedication (DE) and absorption (AB) are scored on a five-point *Likert* scale, ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. Construct validity was confirmed: $\chi^2 = 237.671$; $df = 24$; $\chi^2/df = 9.903$; GFI = 0.965; CFI = 0.970; RMSEA = 0.076; SRMR = 0.040. With a Cronbach's α of 0.882, internal consistency was also confirmed.

Data analysis

The statistical software packages *SPSS 28* and *Amos 25* were used to obtain descriptive statistics, correlations and reliability coefficients, and the relationship between self-efficacy, organisational commitment and work engagement was examined using structural equation modelling (SEM). Following verification of the scales, mediation analysis was used for testing path directions (Hayes, 2013), bootstrapping was used to make inferences, and confidence intervals (CIs) were used to measure the direct and indirect effects (Kline, 2016). We calculated bias-corrected (BC) bootstrap confidence intervals of 95% based on 10,000 samples (Hayes, 2013).

Results

Descriptive analysis and correlations

The final sample consisted of 1,532 participants, representing a response rate of 90.1%. The descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients are presented in Table 1. The results of correlational analyses revealed that teacher self-efficacy was positively associated with

Table 1

Descriptive statistics and factor correlations (N = 1,532)

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1. Organisational commitment	3.15	0.34	1.00		
2. Self-efficacy	3.82	0.44	0.155***	1.00	
3. Work engagement	3.51	0.58	0.399***	0.578***	1.00

Note. *** $p < 0.001$.

Source: authors' own work.

work engagement ($r = 0.578, p < 0.001$) and with organisational commitment ($r = 0.155, p < 0.001$). Organisational commitment and work engagement were also positively correlated ($r = 0.399, p < 0.001$). SEM was used to examine the correlations among teacher efficacy, work engagement and organisational commitment. The model fit was confirmed by the following measures: $\chi^2 = 351.523$; $df = 32$; $\chi^2 / df = 10.985$; CFI = 0.944; RMSEA = 0.081; SRMR = 0.046; TLI = 0.921.

Direct and indirect associations

Teacher self-efficacy was significantly correlated with organisational commitment ($\beta = 0.480$, $SE = 0.042$, $p < 0.001$) and was positively correlated with work engagement ($\beta = 0.416$, $SE = 0.038$, $p < 0.001$). In turn, teachers' work engagement was significantly correlated with organisational commitment after controlling for teacher efficacy and other covariates ($\beta = 0.699$, $SE = 0.058$, $p < 0.001$).

Mediation analysis

Hypothesis 3 predicted that teacher self-efficacy mediates the relationship between organisational commitment and work engagement, with the SEM model created to examine this hypothesis showing an acceptable fit ($\chi^2 = 351.523$; $df = 32$; $\chi^2/df = 10.985$; CFI = 0.94 4; RMSEA = 0.081; SRMR = 0.046; TLI = 0.921). Additionally, the following relationships remained significant: organisational commitment–teaching efficacy ($\beta = 0.480, p < 0.01$), teaching

efficacy–work engagement ($\beta = 0.416$, $p < 0.001$), and organisational commitment–work engagement ($\beta = 0.699$, $p < 0.001$), which suggests that teacher self-efficacy mediates the relationship between organisational commitment and work engagement, and that this mediating effect is further moderated by teacher self-efficacy. Significant correlations among teacher efficacy, work engagement and organisational commitment were detected, and the discriminant validity of the three-factor model was also confirmed.

As Figure 1 shows, teaching efficacy significantly predicts work engagement ($\beta = 0.416$, $p < 0.001$), and it also significantly mediates the relationship between organisational commitment and work engagement (mediating effect$_{TE}$ = 0.051, $p < 0.05$). Organisational commitment had a significant direct effect on work engagement ($\beta = 0.699$, $p < 0.001$).

Discussion

The current research aims to test a model of work engagement in which the predictive power of organisational commitment and teacher self-efficacy was explored among secondary teachers in Taiwan. Our findings suggest that both teacher self-efficacy and organisational commitment are correlated with and significantly predict work engagement, although they act through different mechanisms: self-efficacy has a direct effect, while organisational commitment has an indirect effect, and is entirely mediated by self-efficacy. Organisational commitment, on the other hand, has a positive effect on work engagement. This

Table 2

Standardised estimates of direct and indirect effects

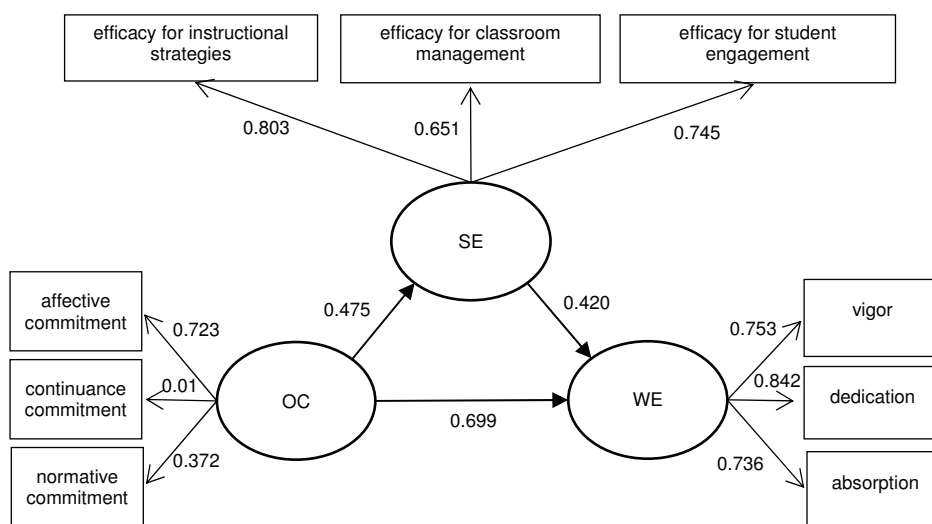| Path		$X^2(df)$	X^2/df	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	TLI
Endogenous variable	Exogenous variable	351.523(32)	10.985	0.081	0.046	0.944	0.921
Direct effects		B	SE	t	β		
TE ←	OC	0.574	0.042	13.704***	0.480		
WE ←	TE	0.569	0.038	14.788***	0.416		
WE ←	OC	1.142	0.058	19.743***	0.699		
Indirect							
WE ←	OC	0.327	0.034	0.269~0.397	0.237		

Source: authors' own work.

Figure 1

Final model of organisational commitment, self-efficacy and work engagement

Note. *** $p < 0.001$.

Source: authors' own work.

paper contributes to the literature by confirming that organisational commitment is an antecedent of work engagement, and that higher levels of organisational commitment result in higher levels of work engagement. These findings support those of Sezen-Gultekin et al. (2021), who researched teachers in Turkey, and are also consistent with the results found by Liu and Huang (2019) and Cao et al. (2019). Thus, if schools strengthen their teachers' commitment, the work engagement of those teachers will be at a higher level, showing that fostering teachers' organisational commitment is key to engagement in school activities, and thus students' learning.

Consistent with prior research conducted with early childhood teachers (Lipscomb et al., 2022), secondary school teachers who reported more self-efficacy also exhibited greater engagement in their work, which extends previous research on elementary school and middle school teachers (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014). The direct influence of teacher self-efficacy on work engagement was also previously reported (Al-Hamdan & Issa, 2022; Granziera & Perera, 2019; Orgambídez et al., 2019) as was the predictive power of teacher self-efficacy on work engagement (Wang & Pan, 2023; Zhi et al., 2024). Thus, teachers who complete teaching tasks with confidence will engage in teaching with dedication, vigour and absorption. Self-efficacy can be considered a personal resource that assists teachers in carrying out their work with enthusiasm.

Our results also indicate that teacher self-efficacy mediates the relationship between organisational commitment and work engagement, supporting Hypothesis 3, which differs from the results of previous studies. The organisational commitment of Chinese MBA students played a mediating role in the relationship between occupational self-efficacy and

work engagement (Liu & Huang, 2019), while the work engagement of Spanish nursing professionals mediated the relationship between self-efficacy and affective organisational commitment (Orgambídez et al., 2019). However, teacher self-efficacy is associated with organisational commitment (Seyhan, 2015) and work engagement (Al-Hamdan & Issa, 2022; Granziera & Perera, 2019), and even predicted work engagement (Cai et al., 2023; Wang & Pan, 2023; Zhi et al., 2024). Although no prior studies had investigated the mediating role of teacher self-efficacy between organisational commitment and work engagement, the findings in this study confirmed that organisational commitment interacts with self-efficacy with regard to work engagement. Thus, teacher self-efficacy could be an important factor in teachers' engagement in schools attempting to increase teacher commitment.

Conclusions

This study investigated a structural model of organisational commitment, work engagement and teacher self-efficacy, examining both direct and indirect associations. The results provide strong support for an indirect relationship between organisational commitment and work engagement, which is mediated by teacher self-efficacy. Schools should seek to strengthen teachers' organisational commitment in order to promote work engagement and improve both teaching quality and the happiness of teachers. Our results highlight the significance of personal beliefs of effectiveness, and enhancing teacher self-efficacy will thus likely increase their engagement in school activities, resulting in better student learning. In addition, teacher self-efficacy and organisational commitment predicted work engagement. Under the pressure of

educational reform, teachers' commitment to their schools is particularly important for their involvement, with self-efficacy playing the role of a mediator.

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WE RECOMMEND

EDEN 2025 Annual Conference, 15–17 June 2025, Bologna, Italy

The EDEN Digital Learning Europe Annual Conference 2025 will focus on the future of education in the age of AI. The conference will explore the opportunities and challenges posed by generative AI, recognizing its potential for growth and innovation in education, while critically addressing the associated risks. It is important to recognize that different perspectives (educational, engineering, social, economic, psychological, etc.) are necessary to be taken into account to fully cover the impact of this technology for teaching, learning ad assessment, now and in the future. The conference will further present different scenarios of AI integration in education, ranging from personalized learning to global learning networks. The conference will reflect on how we can democratize access to knowledge, foster equity and inclusion, bridge gaps in education quality, cross boundaries, raise ethical awareness, combat biases and disinformation, promote global citizenship and sustainable development. The conference will also discuss the Bologna Process and its impact on shaping digital and AI-driven educational policies across Europe. A special focus of the conference will be on the role of AI in upskilling and reskilling for the future of work. Through these discussions, the EDEN Annual Conference 2025 aims to identify new directions for formal, informal, and non-formal education with, for and about AI, making critical mass around themes that matter to the future of learning, teaching, and societal well-being.

More information at: **https://eden-europe.eu/event/eden-2025-annual-conference/**