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Research Article

Transformational Leadership and Organizational Transformation in Indonesian Private Secondary Schools: Change Commitment Over Change Efficacy

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ABSTRACT

Background: Post-pandemic private schools face intensifying strategic pressures such as financial sustainability, business-model adaptation, and talent retention, which make organizational transformation a survival imperative. However, whether the two dimensions of organizational readiness, commitment, and efficacy operate concurrently or hierarchically in transmitting leadership influence into systemic transformation remains unclear.
Purpose: This study examines the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational transformation in private schools through organizational readiness for change, clarifying the distinct roles of change commitment and change efficacy.
Design/methodology/approach: A quantitative design was used; data from 114 respondents across six private secondary schools in Bogor Regency were analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM).
Findings/results: Change commitment emerged as the dominant mechanism driving organizational transformation, whereas change efficacy did not. The results indicate complementary partial mediation, in which transformational leadership influences systemic change mainly by cultivating collective commitment and retaining a smaller direct effect. Neither the direct effect of change efficacy on transformation nor its mediating path was significant.
Conclusion: Organizational readiness appears to be weighted toward commitment, and leadership works partly through a direct path but mainly through the collective commitment it cultivates. Therefore, transformation strategies may integrate commitment building with capability development.
Originality/value: This study shows that the two readiness dimensions carry unequal weight and proposes collective commitment as a candidate microfoundational condition for organizational reconfiguration within the Dynamic Capabilities perspective.

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INTRODUCTION

In the post-pandemic environment, private schools increasingly operate less like sheltered educational institutions and more like resource-constrained business organizations competing for survival. Financial sustainability has become a decisive limiter on their capacity to deliver on mission (Swaner et al., 2023), as prolonged remote learning triggered closures and forced costly investment in digital infrastructure amid economic uncertainty (Wolf et al., 2022). In the Indonesian context, these organizations must simultaneously absorb curriculum reform, safe-reopening demands, and new pedagogical models (Sandy, 2024) while managing their most strategic asset, namely human capital. Reports of a “mass exodus” of teachers from private schools, attributed to neglected well-being and weak institutional policy (Adewale & Potokri, 2023), represent not merely an operational disruption but the erosion of intellectual resources central to competitive advantage (Putra et al., 2021; Ray et al., 2023). These pressures place private schools in a competitive position closer to that of small service firms operating under tight resource constraints. School leaders must decide how to mobilize internal change under those constraints, which is the problem this study addresses. Private-sector attrition is difficult to measure precisely, but regional figures indicate its scale. In Vietnam, Ministry of Education and Training figures record 7,215 teachers leaving or changing jobs between August 2023 and April 2024 (Hao & Dien, 2025), while in Taiwan turnover in remote schools remains elevated, with about 20% of their teachers employed as substitutes compared with 15% in urban schools (Chen, 2025).

These converging pressures have reframed organizational transformation in private schools as a strategic imperative rather than an educational adjustment. It unfolds along three business-oriented fronts: reconfiguring the business model through structural options such as mergers, acquisitions,

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and hybrid or micro-school arrangements to safeguard continuity (Swaner et al., 2023), adopting a strategic talent-management posture to retain high-quality educators within a supportive culture (Liechti & Sesé, 2025); and integrating digital technology as a core operational capability (Kafa, 2024; Momdjian et al., 2024). Each of these fronts requires decisions that reach beyond routine administration and touch on the allocation of scarce organizational resources. They also demand coordination across governance, teaching, and administrative functions, which traditionally operate in relative isolation. Collectively viewed, they mark a shift from incremental improvement toward systemic reconfiguration of how a school creates and sustains value. For this study, these operational pressures raise a prior question about organizational change: how leadership mobilizes the internal readiness that turns strategic intent into systemic transformation, and which component of that readiness carries the effect of that mobilization.

Transformational leadership is widely positioned as the instrument through which such institutional change is steered, providing strategic direction and organizational coherence (Assefa & Mujtaba, 2025; Sengendo & Musinguzi, 2024) and safeguarding adherence to strategy (Schmitz et al., 2025). However, the change-management literature consistently indicates that leadership seldom acts on outcomes directly; its effectiveness is channeled through mediating mechanisms rooted in organizational readiness for change (ORC), in which a coherent vision strengthens adaptability and affective commitment to transform (Naseer et al., 2023; Shanti et al., 2025). This mediating view implies that the influence of leadership depends on internal conditions. It also directs attention to the internal states through which strategic intent is absorbed by members of the organization. Explaining why some leadership efforts translate into change while others do not requires establishing which of those states carries the greater weight.

Nevertheless, leadership does not invariably produce linear transformation. Progressive strategic frameworks are often constrained by leaders' limited execution (Sarmurzin, 2024), and leadership-focused development interventions have shown marginal and indeterminate effects on organizational outcomes (Lauterbach et al., 2025). Such inconsistencies raise a central question: through what internal mechanism does leadership translate into substantive organizational transformation? They also suggest that the assumed link between leadership quality and organizational outcomes is weaker than practitioner accounts often imply. Answering this question requires a framework that specifies the internal conditions through which leadership influence is transmitted.

Transformational leadership, the two ORC dimensions of change commitment (the affective-motivational component) and change efficacy (the cognitive-capability component), and organizational transformation have largely been examined in isolation. The prevailing literature tends to privilege efficacy and capability while treating commitment as a secondary condition (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002), and it commonly assumes that the two readiness dimensions operate in parallel rather than performing distinct roles. This assumption sits uneasily with Weiner's (Weiner, 2009) observation that readiness-building is far less firmly grounded at the organizational than at the individual level, and with evidence that readiness is rarely evaluated through a systemic organizational lens in educational settings (Wang et al., 2023). Local evidence reinforces this concern: in a PLS-SEM study of Indonesian private higher education, Ramaditya and Sundari (Ramaditya & Sundari, 2023) reported that leadership was associated with performance largely through motivational and climate pathways, whereas capability-oriented constructs such as knowledge management and organizational development showed no significant association with performance. This pattern suggests that readiness-related mechanisms may not contribute uniformly, and that their relative weight, rather than their mere presence, warrants closer examination. Prior work has established that leadership operates through organizational readiness, but not which readiness dimension carries the effect (affective commitment to change or cognitive belief in capability), nor whether the two operate in parallel or in sequence. This unresolved question is the gap that the present study addresses. Its main novelty lies in disaggregating the two readiness dimensions to compare their associations with transformation; Dynamic Capabilities supplies the theoretical lens, and the private-school setting supplies the empirical context.

Addressing this gap, the present study examines how transformational leadership relates to organizational transformation in private schools through the ORC framework and clarifies whether change commitment and change efficacy function as interchangeable or distinct mediating pathways. Commitment is an affective-motivational state, efficacy is a cognitive judgment of capability, and the two are shaped by different antecedents. We therefore model them as separate parallel mediators so that the association of each with transformation can be estimated and compared. Using PLS-SEM on data from private schools in Bogor Regency, the study assesses six direct relationships spanning the association between leadership and transformation and the interrelations among leadership, commitment, and efficacy, and it also reports the indirect pathways to transformation through commitment and efficacy. The design shows whether transformation runs mainly through the commitment pathway, the efficacy pathway, or both. The six relationships are examined simultaneously within a single structural model so that the relative weight of each pathway can be compared under identical estimation conditions.

The specific objective of this study is to determine which dimension of organizational readiness (change commitment or change efficacy) conveys the association between transformational leadership and organizational transformation, and whether the two dimensions operate in parallel or in a hierarchical sequence. This study contributes to the strategic management literature by integrating ORC with the dynamic capabilities perspective as a mechanism underlying organizational transformation. It advances a differentiated view of readiness in which change commitment operates as a strategic lever that secures legitimacy and collective decisional support, while change efficacy reflects a psychological state that does not, by itself, produce systemic change. Thus, this study portrays transformational leadership mainly as an architect of strategic alignment, whose influence

runs largely through the commitment it builds, and it offers private-school leaders a managerial proposition that treats collective commitment as a foundation for sustained organizational change. For scholars, this differentiation refines how readiness is theorized at the organizational level, where the evidence base is thinner than at the individual level. For practice, it indicates where limited managerial attention and resources are most productively directed during periods of institutional change.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative cross-sectional design using primary data obtained through a structured questionnaire. The research was conducted in Bogor Regency, West Java, Indonesia, and data were collected between August and October 2024. The target population comprised members of private secondary schools in the regency that had maintained strong performance records over the preceding five years. The five-year performance record was used as the selection criterion because schools with sustained performance are more likely to have undergone deliberate organizational change, making the constructs of interest observable. A cross-sectional design suits the question because we examine how the readiness dimensions relate to one another at one point in time, not how they develop over time. Restricting the sample to consistently high-performing schools makes the constructs easier to observe but confines the sample to one performance stratum. We return to this trade-off and its implications for generalizability in the limitations section.

We selected Bogor Regency as the study site for two reasons: It has the largest secondary-school student population of any regency or city in West Java, with 451,489 students at the junior, senior, and vocational secondary levels (Kemendikbudristek, 2024), and its private-school sector grew faster than the public sector and above the West Java average between 2020 and 2022 (BPS Jabar, 2024). The regency also shows the strains that motivated this study. Across its three most populous sub-districts, private school enrollment declined by an average of 1.6% between the 2019/2020 and 2023/2024 academic years, accompanied by reductions in study groups (2.7%) and teachers (2.0%), while eight private schools across seven sub-districts closed permanently (Kemendikbudristek, 2024). This combination of a large, expanding private-school sector and tangible pressure on sustainability makes the regency well suited to studying leadership-driven transformation.

A multistage sampling approach was applied. High-performing private schools were first identified across five geographic clusters of the regency (North, East, South, West, and Central) to reduce geographic bias and improve external validity; school leaders, teachers, and educational staff were then drawn from within the selected schools, yielding 114 valid responses from six high-performing schools (ranging from seven to 28 respondents per school). This size satisfies the ten-times rule for PLS-SEM, which requires a sample of at least ten times the largest number of structural paths directed at any single construct (Hair et al., 2022); with organizational transformation receiving three such paths, the sample of 114 exceeds the minimum threshold of 30. Clustering the regency in this way ensured that schools from both urban and peripheral sub-districts entered the sampling frame. Respondents were drawn from leadership, teaching, and administrative roles so that perceptions of organizational readiness would reflect more than a single vantage point within each school. The questionnaire link was shared voluntarily through WhatsApp. We could not determine how many people it reached; therefore, we do not report a conventional response rate. Statistical power was confirmed with an a priori analysis in G*Power (Faul et al., 2009): for a linear multiple regression with four predictors, a medium effect size ($f^2 = 0.15$), $\alpha = 0.05$, and power of 0.80, the minimum sample size required is 85 (Hair et al., 2021), which the sample of 114 exceeds.

All constructs were measured reflectively on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Transformational leadership was captured with ten items adapted from Seaver (Seaver, 2010) and Bass and Avolio (Bass & Avolio, 2000), spanning inspirational, exemplary, respect-building, and individualized-attention behaviors. Change commitment (five items) and change efficacy (three items) were adapted from Weiner's (Weiner, 2009) organizational-readiness formulation, and organizational transformation (five items) from Kotnour (Kotnour, 2010), covering understanding, strategic exploration, implementation, and adjustment. All items were contextualized to the private-school setting. We reworded items so that organizational referents pointed to the school instead of a generic firm, and left the underlying construct definitions unchanged. The resulting instrument was reviewed for clarity before distribution to ensure that the wording was accessible to respondents holding different school roles. All four constructs were specified reflectively. Their indicators are interchangeable manifestations of a common underlying construct and are expected to covary; they do not jointly define the construct, as formative indicators would.

Data were analyzed using PLS-SEM with SmartPLS 4, selected for its suitability for complex models and its distribution-free estimation (Hair et al., 2022), following the standard two-stage procedure. The measurement model was assessed through indicator loadings (≥0.708), average variance extracted (≥0.50), and internal consistency (composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha ≥0.70), with discriminant validity examined via the Fornell–Larcker criterion, cross-loadings, and the HTMT ratio (Henseler et al., 2015). The structural model was then evaluated for collinearity (VIF < 5), path coefficients and their significance through bootstrapping (5,000 subsamples, percentile method, two-tailed), explanatory power (R^2), and effect size (f^2). Mediation was examined through bootstrapped specific indirect effects and classified following the mediation typology (Zhao et al., 2010). These criteria were applied in sequence so that the structural model was interpreted only after the measurement model had met accepted standards. Reporting both the estimation settings and the evaluation thresholds allows the analysis to be reproduced under the same conditions.

Six hypotheses were derived from the theoretical framework outlined above, and each is stated below together with the reasoning that supports it. The first four concern the relationships between transformational leadership and the two readiness dimensions, while the remaining two address the association of each readiness dimension with organizational transformation. Every hypothesis is grounded in prior theoretical or empirical work, which is cited alongside the statement. The hypotheses are directional because the underlying literature consistently anticipates positive associations among these constructs. They are tested simultaneously within a single structural model, so that the estimates reported later are mutually adjusted.

H1: Transformational leadership is positively associated with change commitment (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Transformational leaders raise followers' motivation and collective identification beyond immediate self-interest, which strengthens their shared commitment to change.

H2: Transformational leadership is positively associated with organizational transformation (Sengendo & Musinguzi, 2024). By providing strategic direction and organizational coherence, transformational leadership is expected to directly shape organizational transformation.

H3: Change commitment is positively associated with change efficacy (Weiner, 2009). Once members are collectively committed to change, their shared resolve should reinforce the belief that the organization can implement it; therefore, commitment is expected to raise efficacy.

H4: Transformational leadership is positively associated with change efficacy (Long & Xia, 2025). Leaders who model confidence and provide support should also strengthen the members' collective belief in their ability to change.

H5: Change commitment is positively associated with organizational transformation (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002). Affective commitment mobilizes the discretionary effort and persistence that implementation requires and should therefore drive organizational transformation.

H6: Change efficacy is positively associated with organizational transformation (Weiner, 2009). A shared belief in the organization's capability should support the enactment of change; efficacy is therefore expected to contribute to organizational transformation.

In addition to these direct relationships, the indirect effects of transformational leadership on organizational transformation through each readiness dimension were assessed via bootstrapped specific indirect effects, enabling the relative mediating contributions of change commitment and change efficacy to be evaluated. We report these pathways separately instead of as one aggregate indirect effect, which distinguishes the contribution of each readiness dimension. Bootstrapping was used because indirect effects are products of coefficients and therefore rarely follow a normal distribution. Percentile confidence intervals were retained so that inferences did not depend on distributional assumptions. The resulting estimates indicate not only whether mediation occurs but also which dimension carries the greater share of the transmitted effect.

The conceptual framework (Figure 1) positions transformational leadership as the exogenous construct shaping organizational transformation both directly and indirectly through two organizational readiness for change dimensions, change commitment and change efficacy, allowing the relative contribution of the affective-motivational and cognitive-capability pathways to be compared. Transformational leadership is therefore modeled as an antecedent of both readiness dimensions, as well as transformation itself. Change commitment is additionally specified as an antecedent of change efficacy, reflecting the theoretical expectation that collective resolve precedes and supports beliefs about capability. Organizational transformation serves as the sole endogenous outcome of the model. This arrangement makes it possible to observe whether the two readiness dimensions operate in parallel or in a hierarchical sequence.

RESULTS

Respondents were 43.9% male and 56.1% female. Most held a bachelor's degree (66.7%), followed by senior secondary (17.5%), master's (13.2%), and diploma (2.6%). By role, the sample comprised teachers (77.2%), students (12.3%), principals or vice-principals (5.3%), and educational staff (4.4%). In terms of tenure, 43.9% had served two to five years, 30.7% more than ten years, and 25.4% six to seven years. Students were included as a small share of the sample because, as internal stakeholders, they directly experience the organizational and service changes that schools implement, so their perceptions form part of the collective readiness observed at the school level. Because their share is small, the results mainly reflect the perspectives of staff who participate in or enact organizational change.

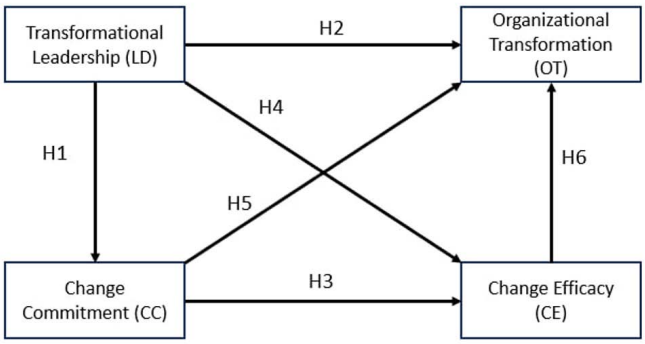

Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the hypothesized relationships between transformational leadership, change commitment, change efficacy, and organizational transformation

On the five-point scale, all four constructs recorded high mean scores (transformational leadership M = 4.32, SD = 0.68; change commitment M = 4.34, SD = 0.63; change efficacy M = 4.24, SD = 0.73; organizational transformation M = 4.41, SD = 0.67), and the item distributions departed from normality, which supports the use of the distribution-free PLS-SEM estimator.

All reflective indicators loaded above 0.708 (range 0.734–0.939), and every construct met the reliability and convergent-validity thresholds: Cronbach's alpha 0.884–0.946, composite reliability (ρc) 0.928–0.954, and AVE 0.675–0.812 (Table 1). Estimation was performed using SmartPLS 4 with 5,000 bootstrap subsamples (percentile method, two-tailed, fixed seed). With every loading above the threshold, all indicators were retained for the structural analysis. The AVE values indicate that each construct explains more than half of the variance in its own indicators. Together, these results confirm that the reflective measurement model is adequate for the tests that follow.

Discriminant validity was assessed using three criteria. The Fornell–Larcker criterion was satisfied for all constructs (Table 2), and every indicator loaded most strongly on its assigned construct (Appendix A). Under the HTMT criterion (Table 2), leadership ratios with the other constructs were well below 0.85; however, the ratios between change commitment and change efficacy (0.919) and between change commitment and organizational transformation (0.916) exceeded the 0.90 benchmark, indicating substantial empirical proximity that is interpreted in the discussion and acknowledged among the limitations. The three criteria were reported together because they differ in strictness and can lead to different conclusions for the same data. Presenting all of them provides a transparent basis for interpreting the proximity between the readiness dimensions.

Collinearity among predictors was acceptable (inner VIF 1.000–3.643, all < 5). The model explained substantial variance in the endogenous constructs and demonstrated predictive relevance, with all blindfolding-based Q^2 values above zero (Q^2 = 0.372 for change commitment, 0.574 for change efficacy, and 0.571 for organizational transformation); it accounted for 75.8% of the variance in organizational transformation (R^2 = 0.758), 71.7% in change efficacy (R^2 = 0.717), and 48.0% in change commitment (R^2 = 0.480), and adequate fit was observed, with SRMR = 0.060 (Hair et al., 2022). Five of the six direct hypotheses were supported (Table 3). Transformational leadership was positively related to change commitment (β = 0.693) and, more modestly, to change efficacy (β = 0.197) and directly to organizational transformation (β = 0.192). Change commitment was the strongest determinant of transformation (β = 0.604, f^2 = 0.413). By contrast, change efficacy showed no significant direct effect on organizational transformation (β = 0.140, p = 0.166; 95% CI [−0.052, 0.350]), so H6 was not supported. Out-of-sample predictive relevance was further assessed with PLSpredict: all thirteen endogenous indicators produced positive Q^2predict values (0.276 to 0.435), and the PLS-SEM analysis yielded lower prediction error (RMSE) than the naive linear-model benchmark for eleven of the thirteen indicators, including all five indicators of organizational transformation, indicating that the model has high predictive power for its focal outcome (Shmueli et al., 2019).

The indirect route through commitment was significant and, at β = 0.418, accounted for 59.3% of leadership's total effect on transformation (total effect = 0.705) and 81% of its total indirect effect; because the direct leadership-to-transformation path was also significant, this constitutes complementary partial mediation. The route through efficacy was not significant (β = 0.027, p = 0.255), and neither the serial route (β = 0.068, p = 0.200) nor the commitment-through-efficacy route (β = 0.098, p = 0.186) reached significance. Thus, commitment sits at the center of the transmission mechanism. Leadership transmits most of its total effect on transformation indirectly, although not all of it. The remaining direct association suggests that part of the leadership influence operates through channels not captured by the two readiness dimensions.

Table 1. Indicator loadings, internal consistency reliability, and convergent validity of transformational leadership, change commitment, change efficacy, and organizational transformation

Construct	Items (loadings)	α	ρa	CR (ρc)	AVE
Change Commitment (CC)	CC1 .885; CC2 .929; CC3 .883; CC4 .844; CC5 .893	0.932	0.933	0.949	0.787
Change Efficacy (CE)	CE1 .939; CE2 .884; CE3 .879	0.884	0.888	0.928	0.812
Transformational Leadership (LD)	LD1 .853; LD2 .859; LD3 .867; LD4 .734; LD5 .858; LD6 .810; LD7 .871; LD8 .824; LD9 .747; LD10 .781	0.946	0.951	0.954	0.675
Organizational Transformation (OT)	OT1 .868; OT2 .856; OT3 .907; OT4 .899; OT5 .883	0.929	0.93	0.946	0.779

Table 2. Discriminant validity of the four constructs assessed with the Fornell–Larcker criterion and the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio

	CC	CE	LD	OT
Change Commitment (CC)	0.887	0.919	0.728	0.916
Change Efficacy (CE)	0.835	0.901	0.737	0.853
Transformational Leadership (LD)	0.693	0.68	0.822	0.743
Organizational Transformation (OT)	0.853	0.774	0.705	0.883

Note: The square root of AVE is on the diagonal (bold). Source: SmartPLS 4 output (2025). Values below the diagonal are inter-construct correlations (Fornell–Larcker); values above the diagonal are the HTMT ratios

Table 3. Direct path coefficients, significance levels, and effect sizes for the six hypothesized relationships

Hypothesis	β	T	p	f²	95% CI	Decision
H1. Transformational Leadership (LD) → Change Commitment (CC)	0.693	10.807	0	0.922	[0.561, 0.811]	Supported
H2. Transformational Leadership (LD) → Organizational Transformation (OT)	0.192	2.563	0.01	0.074	[0.055, 0.342]	Supported
H3. Change Commitment (CC) → Change Efficacy (CE)	0.698	7.937	0	0.895	[0.507, 0.850]	Supported
H4. Transformational Leadership (LD) → Change Efficacy (CE)	0.197	2.444	0.015	0.071	[0.053, 0.364]	Supported
H5. Change Commitment (CC) → Organizational Transformation (OT)	0.604	6.079	0	0.413	[0.392, 0.781]	Supported
H6. Change Efficacy (CE) → Organizational Transformation (OT)	0.14	1.385	0.166	0.023	[−0.052, 0.350]	Not supported

Change commitment as the primary transformation pathway

The findings position change commitment as the central conduit linking transformational leadership to organizational transformation. Leadership was most strongly associated with commitment (β = 0.693, f² = 0.922), and commitment in turn was the dominant correlate of transformation (β = 0.604, f² = 0.413). The indirect path through commitment was significant (β = 0.418; 95% CI [0.267, 0.564]), and, since the direct leadership-to-transformation path also held (β = 0.192), it represents complementary partial mediation (Zhao et al., 2010). In magnitude, the commitment route carried 59.3% of leadership's total effect on transformation and 81% of its total indirect effect, indicating that leadership is associated with systemic change largely by way of the collective resolve it cultivates rather than through direct action alone. The two pathways differ in the size of their effects as well as in statistical significance. This difference in magnitude is the empirical basis for describing readiness as weighted toward commitment; the label is descriptive and does not imply that the two dimensions are fully separable. From a human-resource-management standpoint, this dominance is consistent with evidence that high-performance work practices foster change mainly through employees' affective commitment to change; commitment supplies the discretionary effort through which staff turn leadership intent into collective action (Naseer et al., 2023). We compared the two coefficients directly to test whether this asymmetry is statistically meaningful or only reflects one significant and one non-significant path. The effect of commitment on transformation is larger than that of efficacy (difference = 0.464; approximate t = 3.28, p < 0.01; 95% CI of the difference [0.186, 0.741], excluding zero). This indicative test treats the two coefficients as independent, although commitment and efficacy are strongly correlated (HTMT = 0.919), so it may understate the standard error of the difference. We therefore report the result as suggestive; a difference test on the individual bootstrap resamples would provide firmer confirmation.

This pattern is consistent with the view that transformational leaders elevate followers' motivation and emotional investment beyond immediate self-interest (Bass & Riggio, 2006), and with organizational readiness for change theory, in which committed members initiate change, expend discretionary effort, and persist through implementation (Weiner, 2009). Read through a Dynamic Capabilities lens, commitment operates as the behavioral substrate of the seizing and reconfiguring phases: the mobilization of collective resolve that allows an organization to act on sensed opportunities and recombine its resources (Teece, 2007; Teece et al., 2016). In this reading, commitment works as the mechanism through which intent becomes collective, not merely as a precursor to action. It supplies the willingness that allows reallocation decisions to hold once they meet resistance. Without that willingness, strategic direction remains an intention held by leaders and never becomes a shared organizational position. Structural model showing path coefficients, indicator loadings, and R^2 values for change commitment, change efficacy, and organizational transformation in Figure 2.

Why change efficacy does not translate into transformation

In contrast, change efficacy showed no significant direct association with transformation (β = 0.140, p = 0.166; 95% CI [−0.052, 0.350]), and neither the efficacy-mediated route (β = 0.027, p = 0.255) nor the serial route (β = 0.068, p = 0.200) reached significance. Thus, collective confidence in the organization's capacity to change was not, by itself, associated with systemic transformation. From a strategic management standpoint, transformation entails binding collective decisions and resource reconfiguration (Teece, 2007); a shared belief in capability does not necessarily convert into the strategic risk-taking that reconfiguration requires. Confidence in capability may support implementation once change is already underway, but it does not appear to initiate the reconfiguration itself. This distinction between enabling and driving conditions helps explain why efficacy-focused interventions can leave organizational outcomes unchanged. Efficacy beliefs make change seem feasible, yet they do not supply the affective drive needed to enact it; capability perceptions therefore enable change without motivating it.

This convergence with prior evidence is instructive. In a PLS-SEM study of Indonesian private higher education, Ramaditya and Sundari (Ramaditya & Sundari, 2023) reported that leadership was associated with performance chiefly through motivational and climate pathways, whereas the more capability-oriented constructs, namely knowledge management (β = 0.087, p = 0.207) and organizational development (β = 0.135, p = 0.061), showed no significant association with the terminal performance outcome. This parallel is notable: in both the higher education and school

settings, and across two people-centered leadership styles (servant and transformational), the affective-motivational route reaches the outcome, whereas the capability-oriented route stalls at the final link. This lends external plausibility to the present finding that efficacy, as a capability perception, is a supporting rather than a driving condition of organizational change. The similarity across two educational levels and two leadership styles suggests that the pattern is not an artifact of a single setting. It remains an observed regularity, and no study has yet tested it as a boundary condition. The comparison spans two organizational settings, higher education and secondary schooling, so we treat it as convergent evidence and do not claim that it confirms the present finding.

Structural divergence within a closely related readiness structure

The two readiness dimensions were empirically proximate. Although the Fornell–Larcker criterion was satisfied and each indicator loaded most strongly on its assigned construct, the HTMT ratios between change commitment and change efficacy (0.919) and between change commitment and organizational transformation (0.916) exceeded the 0.90 benchmark, indicating substantial overlap (Franke & Sarstedt, 2019). This is theoretically unsurprising: organizational readiness for change conceives commitment and efficacy as facets of a single collective state (Weiner, 2009), and transformation is precisely the outcome that commitment most directly informs. This overlap limits how far the two dimensions can be treated as independent. It does not remove the difference in how each dimension relates to the outcome. We therefore acknowledge the size of this overlap (HTMT = 0.919), which exceeds even the liberal 0.90 threshold, as a measurement limitation that constrains any claim that the two dimensions are empirically distinct. Psychometric assessments of the Organizational Readiness for Implementing Change instrument have reported similarly high internal consistency and item redundancy between the commitment and efficacy facets, which suggests that limited discriminant separation is a recurring property of the measure (Batterham et al., 2024; Shea et al., 2014).

Accordingly, the contribution advanced here does not rest on treating commitment and efficacy as fully separable constructs. It rests on their divergent structural association with transformation: even within a tightly coupled readiness structure, commitment retains a significant path to transformation while efficacy does not. The finding is therefore one of differential causal weight rather than discriminant distinctness, a distinction treated transparently here, and one whose measurement-level implication is acknowledged among the study's limitations. We frame the contribution this way to keep the claim proportionate to what the measurement model supports. The framing also points to where sharper instruments would improve future tests of the same relationships. We interpret the divergent paths conservatively, as a difference in the degree of association; they do not prove two independent mechanisms.

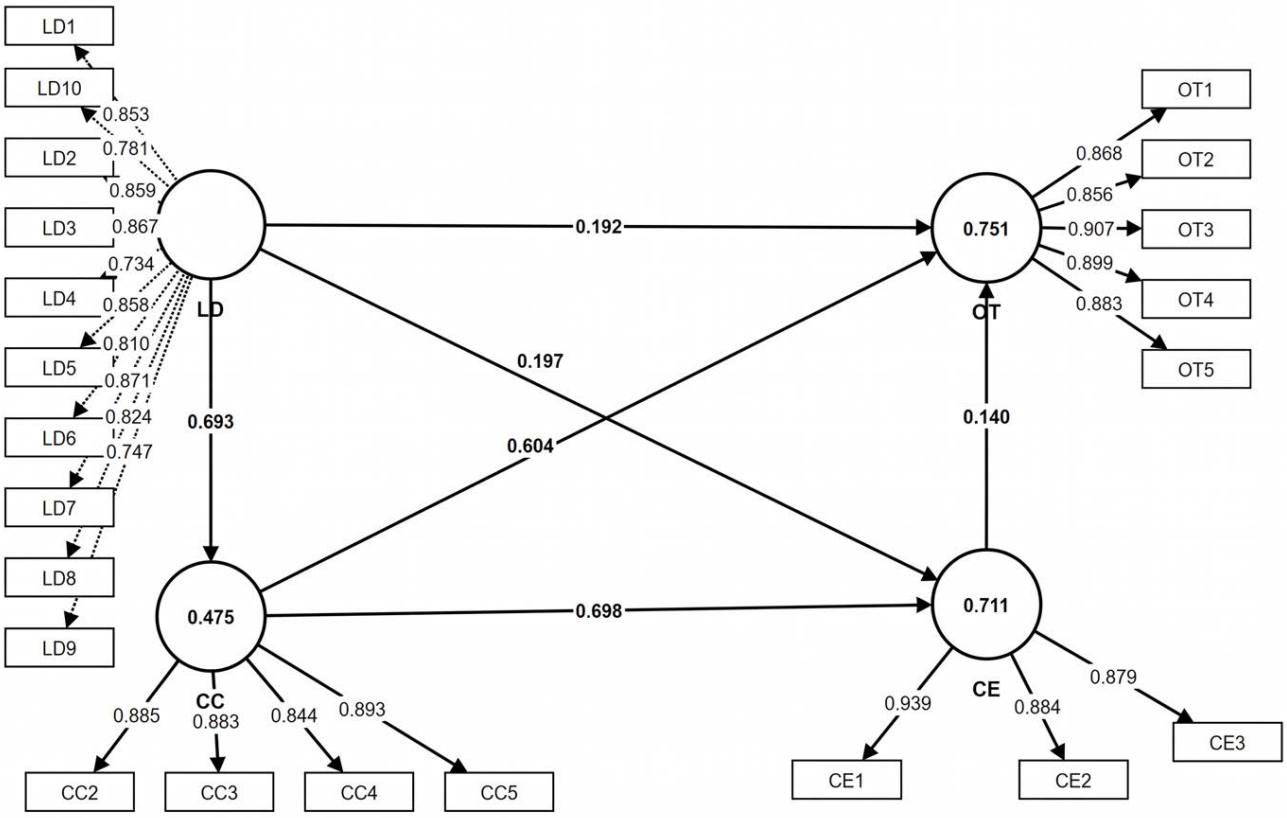

Figure 2. Structural model showing path coefficients, indicator loadings, and R^2 values for change commitment, change efficacy, and organizational transformation

Theoretical implications

Three contributions follow. First, the results qualify the common assumption that readiness dimensions operate in parallel: within a strategic-transformation context, readiness appears to be weighted more toward commitment than toward efficacy, with collective resolve bearing the stronger association with systemic change. Second, the study extends the Dynamic Capabilities perspective by positioning collective commitment as a candidate microfoundational condition that may support the coordination of sensing, seizing, and reconfiguring (Teece, 2007). Finally, it recasts transformational leadership as an architect of strategic alignment: its association with transformation is largely indirect, exercised through the commitment it builds, rather than through unmediated influence. Across these three contributions, the question shifts from whether readiness is present to how its components are weighted. The model does not measure sensing, seizing, and reconfiguring directly; therefore, this mapping remains a theoretical proposition that future studies must test.

Managerial implications

For private schools operating as resource-constrained service organizations, we propose that leaders build collective commitment alongside capability, giving early attention to shared commitment to the strategic direction. Leaders should articulate a clear strategic direction, establish a felt urgency for change, and secure internal legitimacy for resource reallocation and structural adjustment. Investments that raise perceived capability, such as training, systems, and technical upskilling, remain valuable, but the evidence suggests that they are unlikely to produce organization-level transformation unless anchored in a prior, shared commitment to the strategic direction. Change programs that begin with vision consolidation and collective buy-in are therefore better positioned to convert leadership intent into durable reconfiguration than those that lead with technical readiness alone. Given the cross-sectional design, this is a managerial proposition; the data do not establish a temporal sequence.

Limitations and future research

Three limitations bound these conclusions. The first is the cross-sectional design, which precludes causal inference; the relationships are associational, and longitudinal work is needed to trace how commitment accumulates and shapes transformation over time. A second and more consequential limitation concerns discriminant validity: the high HTMT ratio between change commitment and change efficacy (0.919) indicates limited separation between the two readiness dimensions and may inflate the shared variance attributed to commitment while understating the independent contribution of efficacy; although their structural associations with transformation diverge, their measurement overlap means the results should be read as evidence of differential causal weight rather than of two cleanly separable mechanisms. Refined or context-adapted instruments that sharpen the distinction between commitment and efficacy would strengthen future tests. The final limitation is the single-region sample of high-performing private schools, which may introduce range restriction and selection bias and therefore limits generalizability; replication across regions, sectors, and performance strata, together with a comparison of public and private organizations, would help establish the boundary conditions of the readiness structure observed here, in which commitment carries more weight than efficacy. Although the ten-times rule, G*Power analysis, and PLSpredict results all indicate that the sample is adequate, more conservative procedures such as the inverse-square-root method imply a larger requirement, so replication with a larger sample would strengthen confidence in the estimates (Kock & Hadaya, 2018).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

This study set out to clarify how transformational leadership relates to organizational transformation in private schools and whether the two dimensions of organizational readiness for change contribute equally to that process. The evidence indicates that they do not. Leadership is linked to transformation primarily through the collective commitment it cultivates, whereas change efficacy, although empirically close to commitment, does not carry an independent association with systemic change. Organizational readiness in strategic transformation therefore appears to be weighted toward commitment rather than symmetric, although the two dimensions are empirically close; transformational leadership operates partly through a significant direct path and, to a greater extent, indirectly through the collective resolve it cultivates, a pattern consistent with complementary partial mediation. This asymmetry between the two readiness dimensions is the central finding of the study. These findings align with evidence that leadership shapes organizational outcomes mainly through affective and motivational mechanisms (Naseer et al., 2023; Ramaditya & Sundari, 2023). They diverge, however, from accounts that treat organizational readiness as a symmetric, additive combination of commitment and efficacy.

Recommendations

Private schools facing financial and strategic pressure can pursue shared commitment to a clear strategic direction and capability-building together, without treating either as a strict precondition for the other. Change programs that begin with vision alignment and collective buy-in are better positioned to convert leadership intent into durable organizational change than those that lead with technical readiness. In practice this means beginning change programs with structured consultation that gives staff a genuine role in shaping the direction to be pursued. School leaders should also explain the reasons behind reallocation decisions, because commitment rests on legitimacy, not instruction. Capability investment is likely to be more effective when it is aligned with the commitment that the agreed direction requires.

Future research should test this readiness structure longitudinally and across regions and sectors, and should employ refined instruments that more sharply distinguish commitment from efficacy, in order to establish the boundary conditions under which the pattern observed here holds. Longitudinal designs would let researchers observe commitment accumulating instead of inferring it from one measurement occasion. Comparative work across public and private organizations would indicate whether the pattern reflects the resource constraints of private provision or a more general property of organizational readiness. Instrument development should focus on separating affective resolve from capability belief, since the two were closely related in the present data. Replication in other regions would establish whether the same weighting toward commitment holds beyond the setting studied here.

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