

The Influence of Position Hierarchy and Promotion on Professionalism with Affective Commitment as a Mediation Variable

Cahyo Sunarko¹, and Wiyarni Wiyarni²

^{1,2}Economics, Department of Management, Malangkuçęwara College of Economics, Malang, Indonesia

Correspondence should be addressed to Cahyo Sunarko; cahyo.lpmgl@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT- Employee professionalism is a key factor in determining the effectiveness of the organization, especially in hierarchical structures where promotion plays an important role. This study aims to examine the influence of position hierarchy and promotion on employee professionalism, with affective commitment as a mediating variable. The background of this research departs from the need to understand how organizational structure and promotion policies can shape professional behavior through employees' emotional attachment to the organization. This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method of 103 employees in a government agency. Data analysis was carried out using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the help of SmartPLS software. The results showed that the hierarchy of positions had a positive and significant effect on professionalism, indicating that higher job positions encourage stronger professional behavior. Promotion has also been shown to have a significant effect on professionalism, reflecting the motivational effect of career mobility in a higher direction. Additionally, affective commitment has been shown to mediate such relationships significantly, which means employees who have a high emotional attachment to the organization tend to exhibit a stronger professional attitude. By implication, organizations need to create a fair promotion system as well as build emotional attachment to encourage professionalism and long-term performance.

KEYWORDS- Professionalism; Hierarchy of Positions; Promotion of Positions; Affective Commitment

I. INTRODUCTION

Human Resource Management (HRM) is a crucial foundation for any organization that strives to achieve competitive advantage and effective and efficient performance [1]. The concept of HR fundamentally involves a series of integrated activities focused on workforce management, ensuring their maximum contribution to the achievement of the organization's strategic objectives. In an ever-evolving business and governance landscape, HR is faced with a complex set of challenges, such as navigating complex legal compliance, addressing skills gaps, managing diverse employee backgrounds, and struggling to acquire and retain the best talent in a competitive market. The effectiveness of performance management and adaptation to rapid

technological changes is also a big homework for MSDM practitioners. The dynamics that occur in the public sector, especially in human resource management (HRD), determine the relevance and productivity of the organization. Employee recruitment, development, and retention strategies must be adaptive and innovative to meet these challenges. According to research by Sudaryanto & Hanny[2], proper human resources are essential in improving the quality of public services, where such improvement can be achieved through training and development of relevant skills. Other research states that the implementation of bureaucratic reform policies that encourage innovation in public services can overcome the issues faced by government organizations, thereby increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of services[3][4]. This study will examine four main interrelated variables. First, the hierarchy of positions refers to the level of authority that is structured from top to bottom in an organization, which regulates the division of duties, command channels, delegation of authority, as well as guidance and supervision mechanisms [5]. This structure is often described as pyramid-like, with top management at the top, followed by middle management, and executive management at the bottom. Second, a promotion is the movement of an employee to a higher position, which is usually accompanied by increased duties, authority, and greater responsibility, as well as better earning potential [6]. This is often a form of recognition for performance and a driver of work morale. Third, the professionalism of employees reflects their skills, expertise, and discipline in carrying out their duties, with high standards of quality, precision, and punctuality [7]. This is an important pillar that enables the government apparatus to function effectively, characterized by competence, effectiveness, efficiency, and responsibility. Fourth, employee affective commitment describes the extent to which an individual feels attached to and accepts the goals of his organization, and has a strong desire to remain part of the organization [8]. This affective commitment can manifest in the form of emotional attachment, consideration of the cost of leaving the organization, or a sense of obligation.

In the context of the public sector, especially in the Class I Correctional Institution of Malang, the dynamics of the relationship between these variables are very relevant and urgent to be researched. Class I Malang Prison has a hierarchical organizational structure, but it is faced with

unique and extreme operational challenges, such as significant overcapacity of inmates, which can trigger internal conflicts. In addition, there are obstacles such as a lack of maximum supervision, limited health insurance for inmates, and limited budgets for employee training and development. This dense, high-risk, and resource-constrained work environment has the potential to put unique pressure on employees' professionalism and affective commitment. These extreme conditions can affect employees' motivation, adaptability, and loyalty, even testing the limits of their professionalism and affective commitment. Therefore, an in-depth investigation of how the hierarchy of positions and promotions affect employee professionalism, with the affective commitment of employees as a mediating variable, in the Malang Class I Prison environment is very important and has novelty value. This research will provide a more nuanced understanding of how organizational factors influence professional behavior and attitudes in the midst of challenging working conditions.

Previous studies have explored the relationship between job hierarchy, job promotion, professionalism, and employee affective commitment. Some studies show that the hierarchy of positions has a positive influence on professionalism, where the higher a person's position, the more experience and professionalism they have [9], [10], [11]. Similarly, promotion is generally believed to have a positive and significant influence on improving employee performance, often seen as a motivating reward [12]. Employee affective commitment was also found to have a positive and significant influence on employee performance, correlated with better productivity and increased loyalty [13], [14], [15]. However, there are significant inconsistencies in the findings of previous

research. Some studies have found that promotion does not always have a significant effect on employee performance or affective commitment [16], [17]. In fact, the affective commitment of employees themselves sometimes does not show a significant influence on performance, and the mediating role of organizational affective commitment also shows varied results [17]. This gap highlights that the relationship between these variables is not universal and is highly dependent on the organizational context and how the MSDM policy is implemented. If the promotion is not objective or not aligned with the expertise, it can undermine affective commitment and ultimately undermine professionalism, despite the existence of a clear hierarchical structure. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by specifically analyzing this dynamic in the unique environment of Class I Malang Prison.

II. METHOD

This research is quantitative with the type of explanatory research. The population in this study is employees in correctional institutions, with the sampling technique used is saturated sampling (census). Based on these criteria, 103 respondents were obtained from the Class 1 Correctional Institution of Malang. This study uses Descriptive analysis methods and Parametric analysis using the Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) approach. The SEM-PLS method was chosen because it is very flexible in predicting data behavior and causality relationships between variables for small to medium samples. In addition, SEM PLS is more suitable for non-parametric research data because it does not require strict normal distribution [18]. The operationalization of variables and indicators is presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Operational Definitions, Variables, and Indicators

Variable	Indicators	Explanation
Departmental Hierarchy [9]	Organizational structure	Demonstrate the structure of positions in the organization to understand positions and roles in the line of communication and responsibility.
	Authority and Responsibilities	Describe the difference in authority between levels of position and its influence on professionalism.
	Information Access Opportunities	Assess access to information owned by each level of position to support decision-making.
	Support from Superiors	Measure the level of support that superiors provide to subordinates to increase confidence and commitment.
Promotion of Positions [6]	Opportunities for Promotion	Describe the availability of opportunities to be promoted as motivation to increase professionalism.
	Evaluation Criteria for Promotion	Assess the transparency of criteria in promotions to encourage employee trust in the organization.
	Recognition of Work Achievements	Measuring how often an employee's work achievement is recognized as a form of appreciation that increases professionalism.
	Education and Training for Promotion	Assess additional training provided to employees to improve competence and professionalism.
Employee Professionalism [19]	Commitment to Duties and Roles	Shows the extent to which employees are committed to carrying out their duties consistently.
	Ability in Decision Making	Assess employees' ability to make the right decisions, especially in critical situations.
	Work Ethics and Integrity	Demonstrate strong standards of work ethics and integrity as the basis of professionalism.
	Adaptability to Change	Describe the employee's ability to adapt to new situations or under pressure.

Affective Commitment [20]	Emotional Attachment to the Organization	Assess the extent to which employees feel ownership and emotionally attached to the organization they work for.
	Pride in Being Part of an Organization	Describe employees' pride in their organization's identity and reputation.
	The Desire to Survive in the Organization	Measuring employees' intention to stay in the organization out of love, not out of compulsion.
	Alignment of Personal Values with Organizational Values	Assess how much alignment between employees' personal values and values embraced by the organization.

III. RESULTS

A. Convergent Validity Test

According to Hair et al., (2014) The indicator is said to be valid convergently if it has a loading factor value of more

than 0.70. However, a loading factor between 0.60–0.70 is still acceptable if the AVE value of the construct is more than 0.50. Based on the results of data processing using SmartPLS, the loading factor values for each indicator in each variable are as follows in the below table 2.

Table 2: Loading Factor

	DEPARTMENT HIERARCHY	EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT	PROFESSIONALIS M	PROMOTION POSITION
HJ1	0,856			
HJ2	0,848			
HJ3	0,876			
HJ4	0,822			
KOM1		0,767		
KOM2		0,911		
KOM3		0,871		
KOM4		0,827		
PJ1				0,837
PJ2				0,822
PJ3				0,895
PJ4				0,814
PROF 1			0,762	
PROF 2			0,946	
PROF 3			0,905	
PROF 4			0,909	

(Source: Smartpls)

The results of the PLS SEM analysis showed that all indicators in this study had excellent convergent validity. The loading factor values of all indicators met the threshold of 0.7 and showed a strong relationship between each of these indicators successfully measured the construct to be

measured so that it could be relied upon to provide relevant information for this study.

The AVE values for each construct are as follows in the below table 3.

Table 3: Average Variance Extracted

	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
DEPARTMENT HIERARCHY	0,724
EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT	0,716
PROFESSIONALISM	0,780
PROMOTION POSITION	0,710

With the total AVE value above 0.50, it can be concluded that all constructs in this study meet the criteria of

B. Composite Reliability

Composite Reliability (CR) measures the reliability of a construct by considering the contribution of each indicator. A good CR value is above 0.70 [21], [22], which shows that the construct has a high level of internal consistency in

convergent validity. This means that the indicators used are able to explain their respective variables well and validly measuring the variable in question. Based on the results of data processing, the Composite Reliability values for each construct are as follows in the below table 4.

Table 4: Composite Reliability

	Composite Reliability
DEPARTMENT HIERARCHY	0,913
EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT	0,909
PROFESSIONALISM	0,934
PROMOTION POSITION	0,907

The entire construct has a Composite Reliability value above 0.90, which indicates that the three variables in the model have excellent reliability and are trustworthy in representing each of their indicators.

C. Cronbach's Alpha

Cronbach's Alpha measures internal reliability assuming that all indicators have an equal contribution. Although not as accurate as CR, Cronbach's Alpha value is still used as a starting measure to assess consistency. The construct is

declared reliable if Cronbach's Alpha value > 0.60 [21]. The results of Cronbach's Alpha test in this study are as follows in the below table 5.

Table 5: Cronbach's Alpha

	Cronbach's Alpha
DEPARTMENT HIERARCHY	0,874
EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT	0,866
PROFESSIONALISM	0,904
PROMOTION POSITION	0,863

The entire Cronbach's Alpha value of the construct shows a number above 0.80, even close to 0.90, which means the construct has a very strong internal consistency.

• Structural Model Test

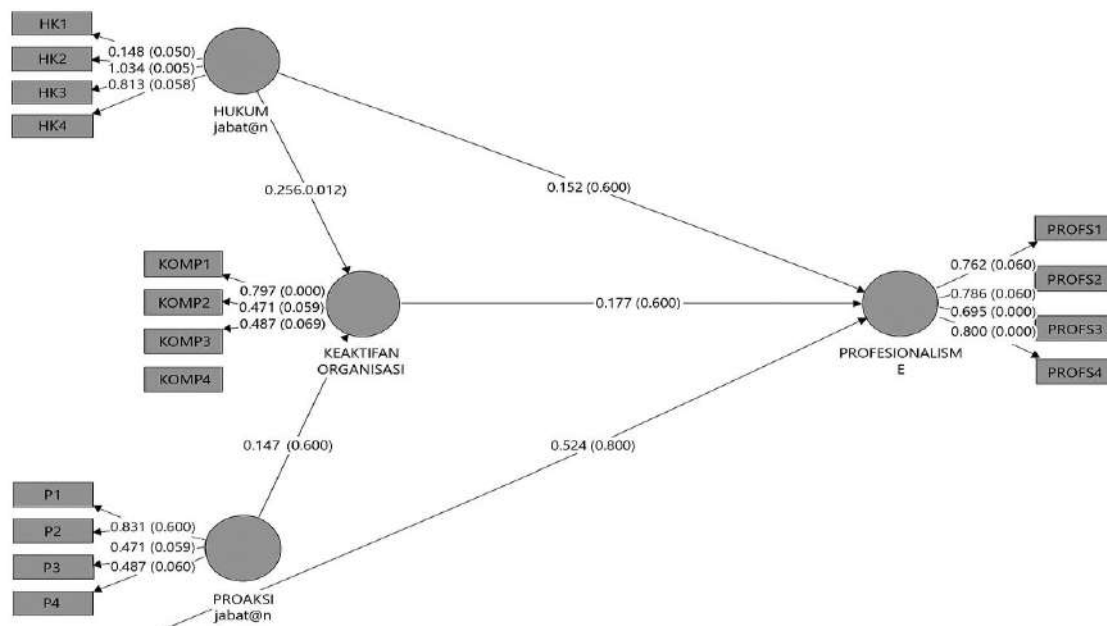


Figure 2: Structural Models

D. Hypothesis Testing

Table the path coefficients to see the results of the following T-statistics(see table 6):

Table 6: Path Coefficient

	Original Sample (O)	P Values
Hierarchy of Departments -> Professionalism	0,332	0,000
Promotion of Professionalism -> Professionalism	0,254	0,009
Affective Commitment -> Professionalism	0,377	0,000
Hierarchy of Positions -> Commitment of Professionalism Employees →	0,293	0,013
Promotion of Position -> Commitment of Professionalism Employees →	0,547	0,000

The hierarchy of positions has a direct effect on the professionalism of employees, with a coefficient value of

0.332 and a p-value of 0.000. This indicates that employees in higher positions tend to show a stronger professional attitude, in line with increased responsibilities and expectations for employee roles. Thus the first hypothesis is accepted.

Promotion of the position positively and significantly affected professionalism, with a value of 0.254 and a p-value (0.009). This shows that the existence of upward mobility (career) provides a stimulus to improve employee work ethics, skills, and discipline. The second hypothesis is accepted.

Affective commitment has a value of 0.377 and a p-value of 0.000 for professionalism so that affective commitment plays an important role in shaping employee professionalism. Employees who are emotionally attached to the organization tend to exhibit high professional ethics. The third hypothesis is accepted.

Affective commitment significantly mediates the influence of the position hierarchy on professionalism. This means that a higher job structure not only directly increases professionalism, but also indirectly through increased emotional commitment. The fourth hypothesis is accepted.

Affective commitment also significantly mediates the relationship between job promotion and employee professionalism. Promotions encourage emotional loyalty, which ultimately improves professional behavior. The fifth hypothesis is proven.

IV. DISCUSSION

A. The Influence of Position Hierarchy on Employee Professionalism

The results of the study showed that the position hierarchy had a direct effect on employee professionalism with a coefficient value of 0.332 and a p-value of 0.000. This means that the higher a person's position in the organizational structure, the higher the level of professionalism he or she shows. This happens because higher positions demand greater responsibility, more complex skills, and a more disciplined and directed work attitude. Employees in the upper hierarchy are required to be role models and maintain the image of the organization, so they tend to show stronger professional behavior. High positions also typically provide access to leadership training, strategic decision-making, and involvement in organizational policies, all of which reinforce competencies and work ethic. Professionalism in this context includes aspects such as integrity, competence, accountability, and commitment to quality work. Therefore, individuals in managerial or upper structural positions are more likely to demonstrate consistency in work behaviors that align with the organization's professional values. These findings are in line with the results of research by Sutanto and Kurniawan [30] who stated that positions are closely related to a person's intensity in showing professional work behavior, especially in public organizations. Professionalism is an important part of the implementation of managerial tasks at the senior level because it concerns strategic decision-making and resource management. In addition, individuals in high positions have greater control over the implementation of organizational values, which demands consistency of attitude and integrity. Other studies by Shirley [23] suggests that structural officials in higher positions tend to be more aware of the importance of the organization's reputation and their moral responsibility to subordinates and the public. They also tend to be role models for other colleagues in maintaining high standards of professionalism. In the context of government or public institutions, the professional attitude of upper-echelon employees also plays an important role in shaping the overall organizational culture. This reinforces the evidence that positions are not only a matter of authority, but also carry the burden of inherent professional values and norms. Thus, the first hypothesis is accepted. The job hierarchy is not only a representation of formal positions within the organization, but also relates to the expectations of professional work behavior. Employees who occupy high positions tend to understand their roles and responsibilities more maturely, and are aware of the demands of ethics and discipline at work. They are more involved in surveillance and policy-making activities that require high meticulousness, accuracy, and social sensitivity. Professionalism at this level is a reflection of the leadership qualities and work culture developed within the organization. The professional behavior shown by high-ranking employees also contributes to creating a positive

and productive work environment for all team members. Therefore, the higher a person's position, the greater the demands and encouragement to act professionally in carrying out their duties.

B. The Effect of Job Promotion on Employee Professionalism

The results of the study showed that promotion had a positive and significant effect on employee professionalism with a coefficient value of 0.254 and a p-value of 0.009. This means that the higher the promotion opportunities that employees receive, the higher their tendency to show a professional attitude. Promotions give a positive signal that employees' performance and competencies are valued by the organization, thus motivating them to continue to improve their work standards. In the promotion process, employees are faced with the expectation of fulfilling new, more challenging responsibilities, which demand improvements in aspects of work ethics, technical expertise, and discipline. In addition, promotions also create a sense of personal achievement and pride, which reinforces employees' commitment to work professionally. The professionalism that grows from the promotion process is not only formal, but also shows a more mature transformation of attitudes and behaviors in carrying out organizational tasks. Therefore, promotion is one of the important factors in the development of a professional work culture with integrity.

This finding is supported by a study from Siswanto [24] which states that promotion can encourage improvement in employee performance and professionalism because it creates new expectations that must be met. They found that employees who received promotions tended to show higher loyalty and had stronger work motivation to maintain their reputation and responsibility for their new positions. Research by Juliansyah & Adayani [25]. It also revealed that promotion increases confidence and strengthens employees' professional identities. In the context of public sector organizations, a transparent and meritocracy-based promotion process can increase trust in the system, which in turn reinforces the spirit of professionalism. In addition, success in achieving a promotion is often attributed to the ability to adapt to dynamic organizational demands and the ability to lead effectively. Therefore, promotion not only rewards past performance, but also signifies readiness to take on a strategic role in the future.

Thus, the third hypothesis is accepted. Promotion of positions has been proven to contribute to forming professional work behavior among employees. Promotions encourage individuals to strengthen their commitment to greater duties and responsibilities. Professionalism becomes a necessity when employees realize that their position has an influence on team performance and the reputation of the institution. Improving competence and self-development is also part of the process of internalizing professional values in response to organizational trust. In the long run, promotion of positions based on an objective evaluation system will trigger healthy competition and a quality-oriented work culture. This will ultimately create a more productive, innovative, and accountable work environment. Therefore, structured and fair promotion of positions is an important strategy in forming professional human resources.

C. The Effect of Affective Commitment on Employee Professionalism

The results of the analysis showed that affective commitment had a positive and significant effect on employee professionalism, with a coefficient value of 0.377 and a p-value of 0.000. These findings suggest that employees who have a strong emotional attachment to the organization tend to exhibit higher professional behaviors. This emotional bond strengthens a sense of responsibility, dedication, and work ethic in the execution of daily tasks. Employees who feel belonging and proud of their organization are more likely to maintain integrity, work with commitment, and demonstrate compliance with applicable work standards. Affective commitment acts as an intrinsic driver that underlies ethical and professional work behavior. This is in line with organizational behavior theory which states that emotional attitudes towards institutions affect the intensity of individuals in carrying out tasks optimally and according to professional norms.

These findings are supported by studies from Rachmawati[26], which states that employees with a high level of affective commitment show better quality of work and responsibility. They are also more likely to work beyond expectations because they feel they have a vested interest in the success of the organization. Other studies have shown that affective commitment is able to foster ethical awareness and a sense of responsibility in every work activity [27]. In the context of government institutions, this is very important because employee professionalism is the main foundation in quality and accountable public services.

Thus, the fourth hypothesis is accepted. Affective commitment has proven to be one of the key factors in shaping employee professionalism. Emotional attachment to the organization encourages employees to carry out their duties with more discipline, integrity, and high ethical awareness. Employees who have affective commitment tend to be agents of change in the organization because their professional attitude has a positive impact on colleagues and the overall work environment. Therefore, efforts to improve employee professionalism can be done not only through technical training, but also by strengthening emotional commitment through inspirational leadership, a supportive work environment, and appreciation for individual contributions.

D. The Role of Affective Commitment Mediation: Position Hierarchy to Professionalism

The results of the analysis showed that affective commitment significantly mediated the influence of the position hierarchy on employee professionalism. This means that a higher job structure not only has a direct impact on increased professionalism, but also indirectly through increased affective commitment. Employees who occupy high positions tend to feel valued, trusted, and given great responsibility, thus fostering a sense of emotional attachment to the organization. A sense of belonging and pride in the institution strengthens the internal motivation to act professionally [28].

Higher positions create space for greater involvement in strategic decision-making, cross-divisional interactions, and involvement in organizational policies. All of this strengthens employees' awareness of the importance of their contribution to the overall success of the organization. With

strong emotional attachment, employees will show loyalty, integrity, and work attitudes that reflect high professionalism [29]. Thus, the fifth hypothesis is accepted. Affective commitment acts as a bridge that connects structural roles with improving the quality of work behavior. Organizations need to encourage the formation of emotional bonds through a participatory leadership approach and recognition of individual contributions.

E. The Role of Affective Commitment Mediation: Promotion of Professionalism

In addition, the results of the study also show that affective commitment significantly mediates the influence of job promotion on employee professionalism. Promotions not only provide an increase in formal status and job responsibilities, but also give a positive signal to employees that they are valued and recognized by the organization. This sense of appreciation fosters a sense of pride, satisfaction, and belonging to the institution of the workplace, which in turn strengthens emotional bonds (affective commitment) [30], [31].

Affective commitment formed through the promotion process will encourage employees to show high work ethics, responsible attitudes, and consistency in professional behavior. Promotions that are carried out fairly and based on meritocracy create trust in the organizational system, which further increases intrinsic motivation and employee loyalty. Therefore, the sixth hypothesis is accepted. A well-designed promotion process can be a strategic tool to foster professionalism through increased affective commitment. Organizations should not only focus on the administrative aspects of promotions, but also consider the impact on employees' psychological and emotional well-being which has implications for overall performance and work ethic [25], [32].

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data analysis and discussions that have been carried out in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that several important things related to the relationship between the hierarchy of positions, position promotions, affective commitment, and professionalism of employees in the Correctional Institution in Malang can be concluded. First, the hierarchy of positions has been proven to have a positive and significant effect on employee professionalism. Employees with higher positions show a higher level of professionalism due to the demands of responsibility, leadership expectations, and access to organizational resources. Second, the hierarchy of positions also has a significant influence on affective commitment, where employees in higher positions show stronger emotional attachments to the organization. Third, promotion of positions has a positive influence on employee professionalism, showing that upward mobility can be a stimulus that strengthens work ethics and discipline. Fourth, affective commitment has proven to have an important role in shaping employee professionalism. Employees who have an emotional connection to the organization show more professional, consistent, and responsible work behavior. Fifth, affective commitment significantly mediates the influence of the position hierarchy on professionalism. This shows that higher positions not only encourage professionalism directly, but

also indirectly through increased employee emotional attachment to the institution. Sixth, affective commitment also mediates the effect of job promotion on professionalism, meaning that a positive promotional experience encourages emotional loyalty and ultimately improves professional work behavior. Thus, all hypotheses in this study are accepted and show a strong relationship between organizational structure, emotional aspects, and the quality of work behavior.

The theoretical implication of this study is to strengthen the theory of human resource management which states that structural and psychological factors play an important role in shaping employee professionalism. The findings that affective commitment mediates the influence of position and promotion on professionalism make a new contribution in the literature, particularly in the context of public sector organizations. This research shows that the formation of professional behavior does not only depend on formal positions, but also on employees' emotional ties to their organization. In practical terms, these results suggest the importance of building a transparent and performance-based career system and creating a work environment that encourages emotional attachment. Organizational leaders need to realize that increased professionalism can be achieved by creating a fair promotion system, appreciating contributions, and creating a participatory work culture. In addition, a humane and supportive leadership approach will strengthen affective commitment and support sustainable professional behavior. This research can also be the basis for the development of human resource policies in the prison environment to improve the integrity and quality of public services.

This research provides some important suggestions for organizational managers, especially in the Correctional Institution environment. First, it is important for management to strengthen the promotion and placement system based on competence, integrity, and real contributions in order to improve the professionalism of employees as a whole. Second, organizations need to develop programs that can increase affective commitment, such as leadership training, coaching, and strengthening inclusive and participatory organizational values. Third, it is important to pay attention to intensive and open internal communication to build trust and encourage employee loyalty to the institution. Fourth, in the decision-making process related to job structure and promotion, the psychological aspects of employees need to be considered because they have a long-term impact on work ethic and professional behavior. Fifth, for the next researcher, it is recommended to develop a research model that involves other variables such as job satisfaction, intrinsic motivation, or transformational leadership to look more broadly at the dynamics that affect professionalism. Sixth, the study can be replicated in other government agencies to test the consistency of results and enrich scientific databases in the field of public sector human resource management.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest

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