

Misaligned Motivation and Work Team Effectiveness in Public Sector Organizations: The Mediating Role of Organizational Commitment

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Abstract

This study examines the factors that affect work team effectiveness in public sector organizations. It focuses on misaligned motivation, adversity quotient, and organizational culture. Organizational commitment is considered a mediating variable. Misaligned motivation occurs when an individual's motivation does not align with team goals, organizational systems, or role clarity. The study uses a quantitative approach and PLS-SEM analysis. Data comes from employees of the High Prosecutor's Office of the Bangka Belitung Islands. Results show that the adversity quotient and organizational culture positively influence team effectiveness. Organizational commitment mediates the link between motivation and team effectiveness. Work motivation has a negative direct effect, which suggests misaligned motivation. This study broadens motivation theory in public-sector contexts and highlights the importance of aligning individual motivation with corporate systems to enhance team effectiveness.

Keywords: *misaligned motivation, adversity quotient, organizational culture, organizational commitment, team effectiveness*

1. INTRODUCTION

Public sector organizations must now be effective, accountable, and adaptable. This is necessary to meet complex environments and public demands. In this context, work team effectiveness is vital for organizational performance. This is especially true in law enforcement. Tasks are complex, time-sensitive, and often occur under high pressure (Salas et al., 2020). Effective teamwork enhances coordination, decision-making, and service delivery.

A growing body of literature shows that both psychological and organizational factors play essential functions in shaping team effectiveness. Among these, the adversity quotient has been identified as a key individual capability, reflecting the capacity to handle challenges and work-related pressures (Stoltz, 2024). Individuals with a higher adversity quotient tend to demonstrate better adaptability plus persistence, which positively contribute to team performance (Haryono et al., 2022). In addition, organizational culture has been widely recognized as a fundamental driver of teamwork, as shared values, norms, and behavioral expectations promote collaboration and cohesion within teams (Schein, 2024; Choi & Kang, 2021).

Work motivation is often seen as a key factor in employee performance. Self-determination theory suggests motivation boosts engagement and performance from both intrinsic and extrinsic sources (Deci & Ryan, 2020). But new research finds mixed results for motivation's impact on team effectiveness. Some studies show a positive effect. Others find that overly strong or poorly aligned motivation increases role conflict, increases pressure, and reduces collaboration (Kuvaas et al., 2020; Palomino & Frezatti, 2020; Wijaya, 2022). This shows motivation may not always be a purely positive force in organizations.

This study introduces the concept of misaligned motivation in public organizations, where high individual motivation may reduce team effectiveness when not supported by organizational systems and role clarity. This concept is supported by prior studies indicating that motivation may produce negative outcomes when it leads to role conflict, misalignment, and reduced collaboration (Kuvaas et al., 2020; Palomino & Frezatti, 2020; Gagné et al., 2022).

Organizational commitment connects individual attitudes to results. Highly committed employees show greater loyalty and responsibility. This increases team effectiveness (Meyer, 2021; Prabowo, 2022; Zhou, 2023). Thus, organizational commitment may mediate the effects of individual and organizational factors on team performance.

Despite extensive literature, few studies have integrated the adversity quotient, work motivation, and organizational culture into an integrated model to explain team effectiveness, particularly in public-sector organizations. More importantly, the paradoxical role of motivation—its capacity to undermine team performance—is still underexplored. This gap illustrates the need for a new conceptual perspective.

Therefore, this study puts forward the concept of misaligned motivation, defined as a condition in which high individual motivation is not aligned with team goals, organizational systems, or role clarity, thereby reducing team effectiveness. This study examines the direct and indirect effects of difficulty quotient, work motivation, and organizational culture on team effectiveness, with organizational commitment as a mediating variable. By doing so, this research contributes to the development of motivation theory in public-sector contexts and provides useful insights for improving team-based performance.

Based on this, the research questions include:

1. Does adversity quotient influence work team effectiveness?
2. Does work motivation influence work team effectiveness?
3. Does organizational culture influence work team effectiveness?
4. Does organizational commitment influence work team effectiveness?
5. Does adversity quotient influence organizational commitment?
6. Does work motivation influence organizational commitment?
7. Does organizational culture influence organizational commitment?

2. METHOD

2.1 Research types and data collection techniques

This study follows a quantitative design and uses a survey. The goal is to examine the links between adversity quotient, work motivation, organizational culture, organizational commitment, and work team effectiveness in the public sector.

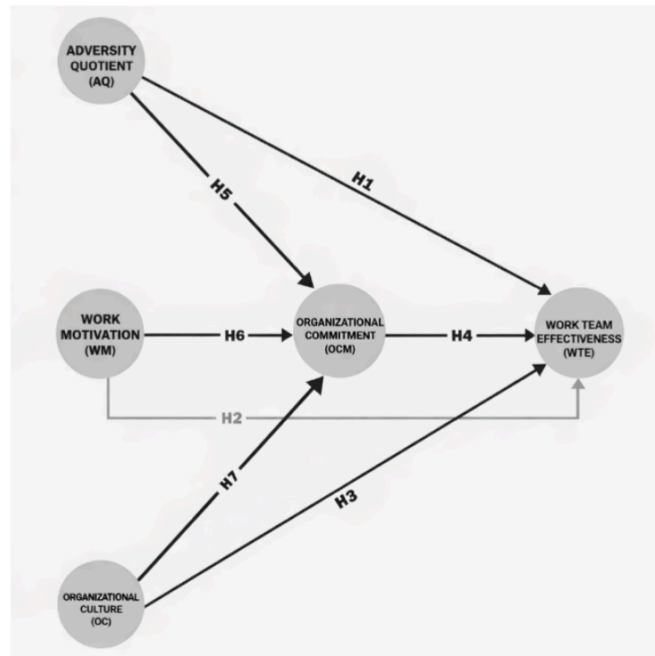


Figure 1. Research Model Framework

The study was conducted at the High Prosecutor's Office of the Bangka Belitung Islands, Indonesia. The population consisted of structural and functional employees involved in organizational operations. This study employed a total sampling (census) technique, in which all 170 employees in the population were included as respondents.

Data were collected using structured questionnaires distributed to employees. A total of 170 responses were obtained, and all responses were deemed valid for further analysis.

All variables were measured using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), adapted from previous validated studies.

a. Adversity Quotient (AQ)

Measured based on the dimensions proposed by Stoltz (2024), including control, endurance, reach, and ownership, which reflect an individual's ability to deal with challenges and adversity.

b. Work Motivation (WM)

Measured using indicators derived from self-determination theory, including intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2020).

c. Organizational Culture (OC)

Organizational culture is defined by values, norms, and practices that support teamwork and performance (Schein, 2024).

d. Organizational Commitment (OCM)

Organizational commitment is measured using Meyer's (2021) three-component model (affective, continuance, and normative).

e. Work Team Effectiveness (WTE)

Team effectiveness is measured by indicators like goal clarity, communication, coordination, and task completion (Salas et al., 2020).

2.2 Data Analysis Technique

Data were analyzed using PLS-SEM in SmartPLS 4. PLS-SEM is suited for evaluating complex relationships among latent variables. It also works well for both predictive and exploratory models (Hair et al., 2019).

The analysis was conducted in two stages:

a. Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model)

- Convergent validity assessed using outer loading values (≥ 0.70)
- Discriminant validity assessed using HTMT (< 0.90)
- Reliability assessed using Cronbach's alpha (≥ 0.70) and composite reliability (≥ 0.70)

b. Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

- Path coefficients to examine relationships between variables
- Coefficient of explanation (R^2) to measure the model's explanatory power

Hypothesis testing using bootstrapping (t-statistic > 1.96 ; p-value < 0.05)

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis shows all variables—adversity quotient, work motivation, organizational culture, organizational commitment, and work team effectiveness—are rated high. Each variable's mean score is above 4.0.

This means employees show resilience, motivation, a strong organizational culture, and firm commitment. These are all factors linked to effective teamwork. However, analysis reveals more subtle links among these variables.

3.2 Measurement model

Table 1. Measurement Model (Validity & Reliability)

Variable	Outer Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Adversity Quotient	> 0.70	> 0.70	> 0.70	> 0.50
Work Motivation	> 0.70	> 0.70	> 0.70	> 0.50
Organizational Culture	> 0.70	> 0.70	> 0.70	> 0.50
Organizational Commitment	> 0.70	> 0.70	> 0.70	> 0.50

Team Effectiveness	> 0.70	> 0.70	> 0.70	> 0.50
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Source: Author's calculation based on SmartPLS output (2025)

3.3 Structural Model Evaluation

Tabel 2. Structural Model (R²)

Variable	R ²	Category
Organizational Commitment	0,527083333	Strong
Team Effectiveness	0,483333333	Strong

Source: Author's calculation based on SmartPLS output (2025)

PLS-SEM analysis shows the model has strong explanatory power. It reveals:

R² Organizational Commitment = 0.759 (very strong)

R² Team Effectiveness = 0.696 (strong)

This means the independent variables in this study explain a large part of the variance in organizational commitment and team effectiveness.

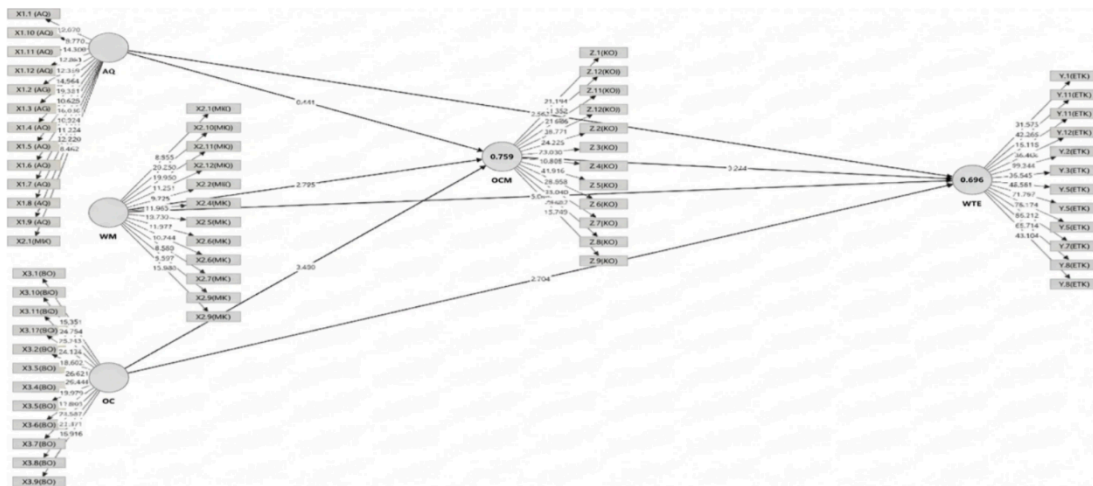


Figure 2. Structural Models

3.4 Hypothesis Testing

Tabel 3. Hypothesis Testing (Direct Effect)

Hypothesis	Path	Coefficient (β)	T-Statistic	P-Value	Result
H1	AQ → WTE	0,159722222	2.563	0.010	Supported
H2	WM → WTE	-0.269	3.046	0.002	Supported (Negative)

H3	OC → WTE	0,325	2.704	0.007	Supported
H4	OCM → WTE	0,320833333	3.244	0.001	Supported
H5	AQ → OCM	0.045	0,30625	0,458333333	Not Supported
H6	WM → OCM	0,210416667	2.795	0.005	Supported
H7	OC → OCM	0,395833333	3.480	0.001	Supported

Source: Author's calculation based on SmartPLS output (2025)

1. H1: Adversity Quotient → Team Effectiveness

Adversity quotient has a positive and significant effect on team effectiveness ($\beta = 0.230$; $p = 0.010$).

This evidence suggests that employees who are better able to withstand stress and handle pressure contribute more effectively to team performance. This result supports resilience theory, which stresses the importance of psychological endurance in high-stress work environments (Stoltz, 2024; Haryono et al., 2022).

0. H2: Work Motivation → Team Effectiveness

Work motivation negatively and significantly affects team effectiveness ($\beta = -0.269$; $p = 0.002$).

This finding is particularly important as it contradicts traditional motivation theories that assume a positive relationship between motivation and performance (Deci & Ryan, 2020). Instead, it indicates misaligned motivation.

In this context, high individual motivation does not necessarily translate into efficient teamwork. Rather, it may lead to role conflict, excessive competition, or inconsistency between individual goals and team objectives. This finding is consistent with studies showing that unbalanced or poorly structured motivation can reduce collaborative performance (Kuvaas et al., 2020; Palomino & Frezatti, 2020).

0. H3: Organizational Culture → Team Effectiveness

Organizational culture has a positive and significant effect on team effectiveness ($\beta = 0.468$; $p = 0.007$).

This indicates that a robust organizational culture characterized by shared values, discipline, and joint effort elevates team performance. This finding is consistent with previous research emphasizing culture as a key driver of teamwork (Schein, 2024; Choi & Kang, 2021).

0. H4: Organizational Commitment → Team Effectiveness

Organizational commitment shows a positive and significant effect on team effectiveness ($\beta = 0.462$; $p = 0.001$).

This suggests that employees with strong emotional attachment and loyalty to the organization are more likely to contribute to team unity and performance. This result is consistent with previous studies (Meyer, 2021; Zhou, 2023).

0. H5: AQ → Commitment → Team Effectiveness

The indirect effect of the adversity quotient on organizational commitment is not significant ($p = 0.663$).

This suggests that resilience operates directly on team effectiveness rather than through commitment.

0. H6: Motivation → Commitment → Team Effectiveness

Work motivation has a significant indirect effect through organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.140$; $p = 0.023$).

This indicates that although motivation directly negatively affects team effectiveness directly, it can improve effectiveness when mediated by organizational commitment.

0. H7: Culture → Commitment → Team Effectiveness

Organizational culture has a significant indirect effect through commitment ($\beta = 0.263$; $p = 0.020$).

This finding shows that culture strengthens commitment, which in turn augments team effectiveness.

3.5 Mediation Analysis

Tabel 4. Indirect Effect (Mediation)

Path	Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value	Result
AQ → OCM → WTE	0.021	0,302083333	0,460416667	Not Significant
WM → OCM → WTE	0,097222222	2.279	0.023	Significant
OC → OCM → WTE	0,182638889	2.336	0.020	Significant

Source: Author’s calculation based on SmartPLS output (2025)

3.6 Discussion

The findings of this study make an important theoretical contribution, particularly regarding the role of motivation in team effectiveness. While traditional theories stress the positive role of motivation, this study shows that it can have a negative impact when misaligned within organizational systems and team functioning.

The concept of misaligned motivation explains this phenomenon, where high individual motivation is not aligned with team goals, role clarity, or corporate structures. In such conditions, motivation may result in increased pressure, competition, and reduced collaboration within teams.

This finding expands self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2020) by highlighting that motivation alone is insufficient to ensure performance. Instead, alignment between individual goals and organizational systems is essential.

Furthermore, the significant mediating role of organizational commitment indicates that commitment operates as a critical psychological mechanism that transforms individual motivation into collective performance. This supports the argument that organizational commitment enhances cohesion, trust, and mutual responsibility within teams (Meyer, 2021; Taufiq et al., 2023).

Overall, this study adds to the literature by introducing a new perspective on motivation in public sector organizations and stressing the importance of alignment between individual and organizational factors.

4. CONCLUSION

This study provides important knowledge of the determinants of work-team effectiveness in public-sector organizations. Based on the empirical findings, multiple important conclusions can be drawn.

1. Adversity quotient has a positive and significant effect on work team effectiveness. This indicates that employees with higher resilience are better able to contribute to team performance under pressure.
2. Work motivation has a negative and significant effect on work team effectiveness. This finding suggests the presence of misaligned motivation, where high individual motivation does not align with team goals or organizational systems, thereby reducing team effectiveness.
3. Organizational culture has a positive and significant effect on work team effectiveness. A strong organizational culture fosters collaboration, shared values, and coordination within teams.
4. Organizational commitment has a positive and significant effect on work team effectiveness. Employees with strong commitment demonstrate higher levels of engagement and cooperation in achieving team goals.
5. Adversity quotient does not have a significant effect on organizational commitment. This indicates that resilience operates more directly on team effectiveness rather than through commitment.
6. Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment. This suggests that motivated employees tend to develop stronger psychological attachment to the organization.
7. Organizational culture has a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment. A supportive culture strengthens employees' sense of belonging and loyalty to the organization.

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NOVELTY

This study describes the concept of misaligned motivation in public organizations, where high individual motivation can reduce team effectiveness when not supported by organizational systems and role clarity.

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