




Humble Leadership and Teacher Behavior Outcomes: Team Climate as a Bridge to Strengthen Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Reduce Withdrawal Behavior – A Conceptual Analysis

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Abstract. This conceptual study examines the mediating role of team climate in the relationship between humble leadership, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), and withdrawal behavior among elementary school teachers. Guided by SIP and SET, this paper consolidates empirical results from pertinent studies to develop an integrated conceptual model. While prior work has uniformly found that humble leadership is related to OCB and withdrawal behavior, a lack of empirical consistency underscores the potential for alternative mechanisms by which leader behavior can influence different types of behavioral outcomes. We posit that team climate is a key mediator of this theoretical divide. This conceptual analysis suggests that humble leadership fosters a supportive and trusting team climate, which in turn increases teachers' voluntary contributions and reduces their tendency to disengage from work. The originality of this study lies in positioning team climate as an important explanatory mechanism that has not been comprehensively explored in the field of educational leadership. From a practical perspective this evidence highlights the need to promote servant leadership behaviour and for the development of a team climate in schools, in order that teacher engagement is enhanced and dysfunctional behaviour minimised. It is assumed that this framework will provide a foundation for replication through empirical testing using quantitative method such as PLS-SEM to test the mediating effects suggested.

Keywords: Humble Leadership, Team Climate, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Withdrawal Behavior, Conceptual Analysis, Teacher Behavior

1 Introduction

The quality of leadership in education, especially at the elementary school

level, has increasingly become the focus of attention due to its crucial role in shaping teachers' behavior, motivation, and psychological well-being[1] . In the educational ecosystem, teachers are not only curriculum implementers but also agents of character building, school culture builders, and important figures in the success of the learning process[2] . Therefore, teachers' work behavior, both positive behavior such as organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and negative behavior such as withdrawal behavior, are important factors in the effectiveness of school organizations. These behavioral phenomena cannot be separated from the influence of leadership style and the quality of social interactions formed in the work environment[3] .

In practice, many elementary schools face challenges in the form of declining work enthusiasm, emotional exhaustion, and low teacher participation in collaborative activities[4] . Various reports and field observations show that there are teachers who exhibit symptoms of withdrawal, such as tardiness, absenteeism, decreased motivation, and lack of involvement in school activities[5] . This withdrawal behavior not only undermines teaching effectiveness but also weakens the social and cultural cohesion of the school organization[6] . On the other hand, positive behaviors such as OCB, namely the willingness of teachers to help colleagues, maintain harmony, and actively participate in school activities without coercion, are still not optimally emerging in many schools. This condition indicates structural and psychological problems in school organizations that need serious attention[3] .

A factor believed to have a strong influence on the dynamics of teacher behavior is the leadership style of the principal[7]. In the last few years, the concept of humble leadership has become a pertinent and effective style of leadership for creating good work relationship. The hallmark of humble leadership is the leader's ability to admit they don't know everything, value help from others, be open to feedback, and commit themselves to ongoing learning. Leadership that does not emphasize power or takeover for control, but works towards cooperation, facilitating and effective communication. In the context of elementary schools, humble principals set moral and social examples that significantly influence teachers' perceptions and behavior[8] .

Various studies have shown that humble leadership has a positive relationship with increased OCB and decreased withdrawal behavior. Teachers who feel valued and supported tend to show higher commitment to the school and are willing to make extra contributions. However, empirical results are not always consistent[9] . Some studies have found that the influence of humble leadership on teacher behavior is insignificant or even very weak. This inconsistency shows that the relationship between leadership and teacher work behavior is not as simple as a direct relationship, but involves more complex psychosocial mechanisms.

A very important but often overlooked mechanism is team climate. Team climate is the collective perception of team members regarding the work atmosphere, level of social support, trust, cohesion, communication, and openness to innovation. In an elementary school environment, team climate influences how teachers work together, support each other, and build interpersonal relationships[10] . A positive team climate creates psychological safety, encourages teachers to freely express ideas without fear of judgment, and fosters a sense of belonging in the school community. Conversely, a negative team climate can be a source of stress, interpersonal conflict, and trigger withdrawal behavior.

Humble leadership has great potential to shape this team climate. Humble leaders tend to treat teachers fairly, provide opportunities for participation, and create a collaborative work environment. This type of leadership behavior sends a strong social signal to teachers that their team is safe and supportive. Teachers then translate these signals into prosocial behaviors, such as helping colleagues, maintaining harmony, and contributing to school activities. Thus, team climate becomes a psychological mechanism that links the influence of humble leadership to teacher behavior [11].

Two important theories support this process. First, Social Information Processing Theory (SIP) explains that individuals process social information from their leaders and form perceptions of the work environment based on that information. When the principal shows humility, teachers process that information as a signal that the work environment is supportive, safe, and open. This perception then reinforces a positive team climate. Second, Social Exchange Theory (SET) emphasizes that the relationship between leaders and subordinates is built on the principle of reciprocity. If teachers are treated with respect, trust, and support, they will respond with positive attitudes and behaviors, including OCB. Conversely, they tend to avoid dysfunctional behaviors such as withdrawal behavior.

Based on these two theories, team climate acts as a mediator that explains how humble leadership can produce different behavioral outcomes in teachers. Empirical inconsistencies regarding the influence of humble leadership on OCB and withdrawal behavior indicate that without considering team climate conditions, the influence of leadership may not be strong or even significant. Thus, positioning team climate as a mediating variable provides an important theoretical contribution to understanding the dynamics of teacher behavior in educational organizations.

Beyond theoretical contributions, understanding this relationship has practical implications for schools. Principals can develop humble leadership behaviors as a basis for creating a harmonious and collaborative team climate. With a conducive team climate, teachers will be more motivated to work beyond their formal duties and suppress the tendency to withdraw from responsibility. Against this background, the present conceptual paper seeks to provide an overview of how humble leadership could affect OCB and withdrawal behaviour it is examined by, as well as team climate serving as a mediator linking between them. --The emergent frame of reference is foreseen to inform more in-depth empirical studies, particularly within the field of primary education as these educational levels present multifaceted conditions in terms of teacher motivation and professionalism.

2 Literatur Review

2.1 Social Information Processing Theory (SIP)

This study is grounded in SIP which describes how people develop attitudes and behaviors following exposures to information from their social environment [12]. Salancik and Pfeffer posited that in the workplace, actors pay attention to the behaviors of superiors or the leaders, interactions with their peers--coworkers, and

develop an understanding of cultural norms as they interpret what is “appropriate” behavior. In the school, teachers make extensive use of what is being said directly and indirectly by principals and peers to construct perceptions around expectations, trust support and cooperation. Humble leadership provides strong social cues: when principals demonstrate self-awareness, acknowledge teachers' contributions, and openly solicit feedback, teachers interpret these signals as norms of mutual respect, openness, and shared responsibility[13] . Through the SIP process, these leadership cues shape teachers' perceptions of team climate, including trust, cohesion, and support. A positive team climate then becomes the basis for behavioral responses such as increased Organizational Citizenship Behavior and reduced tendencies to withdraw. Thus, SIP theory positions humble leadership as a social signal that activates collective interpretation and indirectly influences teacher behavior through the shared team environment.

2.2 Social Exchange Theory (SET)

The second theoretical foundation in this study is Social Exchange Theory (SET), which explains how social relationships are built through reciprocal exchange. When leaders treat subordinates with respect, fairness, and appreciation, followers develop a sense of obligation to reciprocate these positive treatments. In the school context, a humble principal who recognizes teachers' strengths and provides psychological support initiates a cycle of social exchange in which teachers "repay" this positive treatment[14] . This reciprocal process encourages teachers to contribute beyond formal demands embodied in OCB, and reduces the tendency to withdraw from responsibilities, such as absenteeism, tardiness, or decreased work effort. SET also explains the mediating role of team climate: a supportive team environment strengthens mutual obligation, trust, and shared identity, thereby strengthening the relationship between humble leadership and behavioral outcomes. Through SET, humble leadership influences OCB and withdrawal behavior because teachers feel valued and supported within their professional community.

2.3. Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

Organizational Citizenship Behavior refers to voluntary actions beyond formal roles that contribute to the overall functioning of the school. OCB reflects behaviors such as helping coworkers, participating in school activities, supporting administrative needs beyond core duties, and maintaining discipline or the school's positive image. In the education sector, OCB is very important because collaboration and proactive involvement have a direct impact on student learning and school effectiveness. OCB is multidimensional and is generally understood through the aspects of altruism, conscientiousness, civic virtue, sportsmanship, and courtesy. Teachers with high OCB tend to help colleagues, maintain consistency in instructional tasks, support collective decisions, and engage in problem-solving beyond their formal job descriptions. Previous research shows that positive leadership styles, high-quality relationships, and supportive team dynamics consistently increase

OCB. In this study, OCB is positioned as one of the main behavioral outcomes influenced by humble leadership directly and indirectly through team climate.

2.4 Withdrawal Behavior

Withdrawal behavior encompasses various psychological and behavioral actions that indicate disengagement from work responsibilities. This behavior can take the form of absenteeism, tardiness, reduced effort, procrastination, excessive daydreaming, and even the desire to leave the organization. Withdrawal behavior is the opposite of OCB: while OCB reflects active contribution, withdrawal indicates avoidance of work obligations. In a school environment, teacher withdrawal behavior is very detrimental because it disrupts the continuity of learning, reduces student engagement, and increases the burden on other staff. The literature shows that a stressful environment, lack of appreciation, poor leadership, and weak team support contribute to an increased tendency toward withdrawal. Conversely, when teachers feel respected by leaders and supported by their team, they are less likely to psychologically detach themselves from their responsibilities. Therefore, in this research model, withdrawal behavior acts as a negative behavioral outcome influenced by leader humility and team climate.

2.5 Humble Leadership

Humble leadership refers to a style of leadership incorporating three key qualities self-awareness, appreciation for others and introspective learning. Leaders with a strong sense of humility recognize what they can't do without the help from subordinates, give credit where credit is due, and are comfortable receiving constructive criticism. Within the school, modest principals promote participation, inclusiveness and relational trust among teachers. It has been evidenced by research that humble leadership leads to positive relationships at work, fosters psychological safety, supports working together and lessens stress in the working environment. Humble leadership provides emotional and social resources that enable teachers to perform their roles more effectively. Humble leadership has been shown to increase extra-role behavior (OCB) and reduce withdrawal behavior by promoting respect, motivation, and relationship stability. In this study, humble leadership acts as a key antecedent that shapes team climate and ultimately influences teacher behavior outcomes.

2.6 Team Climate

Team climate refers to the collective perceptions within a work group regarding aspects of trust, cohesion, support, collaboration, and openness to innovation. Team climate is a shared perception of how people experience and are treated by other members, including the work environment. At the school level, a positive team climate allows for effective teamwork among teachers who can

collaborate, experience psychological safety and uphold agreed-upon norms of behavior. The climate of a team is multi-dimensional and generally includes factors such as trust, support, cohesiveness and innovation. Previous studies have shown that a supportive team climate strengthens professional commitment, encourages collaborative teaching practices, and reduces conflict. Team climate also plays an important mediating role: leadership style influences team climate, which in turn shapes individual behaviors such as OCB and withdrawal behavior. In this study, team climate is positioned as a core mechanism that explains how humble leadership translates into teacher behavior consequences.

3 Methodology

This study uses a conceptual approach based on a literature review that synthesizes relevant research findings to build a theoretical understanding of the influence of humble leadership on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and withdrawal behavior with team climate as a mediator in the context of elementary school teachers in Southwest Sumba Regency. The main conceptual foundations are Social Information Processing Theory (SIP) and Social Exchange Theory (SET), which explain how social cues from leaders shape team members' perceptions of the work climate, and how reciprocal social exchange triggers extra-role contributions and suppresses withdrawal behavior. The writing process includes: establishing constructs and operational definitions (humble leadership, team climate, OCB, withdrawal), searching for seminal and current literature, extracting key findings, and then formulating propositions that are in line with the hypotheses in the proposal to be tested empirically in subsequent studies. Thus, the methods section serves to link theoretical and empirical evidence to construct a conceptual model consistent with the research objectives and context.

4. Results & Discussion

4.1 The Influence of Humble Leadership on Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

Humble leadership plays an important role in creating a work environment that encourages collaboration and trust among team members. Principals who practice humble leadership are able to appreciate the contributions of each teacher, treat them with respect, and remain open to feedback. This has a positive impact on teachers' organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), such as helping colleagues, participating in school activities, and maintaining good relationships among employees. Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Social Information Processing Theory (SIP) explain this relationship, whereby a humble principal creates positive social exchanges that motivate teachers to behave prosocially and engage in the organization without coercion or direct rewards. Previous research also shows that principals who implement humble leadership can increase teachers' OCB. Thus, humble leadership has a positive effect on Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) among elementary school teachers in SBD Regency.

4.2 The Influence of Humble Leadership on Withdrawal Behavior

Withdrawal behavior refers to behaviors such as absenteeism, tardiness, and disengagement from work, which usually arise due to dissatisfaction, stress, or negative perceptions of the work environment. Humble leadership, by forming an open and supportive work environment, might significantly decrease withdrawal behaviour. When teachers feel respected, valued and supported by their leaders, they will become more engaged in their roles and responsibilities, leading to a diminished withdrawal tendency. This is also consistent with SET and SIP theories. Humble leadership also directly enhances social exchange, which will benefit the emotional well-being and trust for teachers, thus significantly reducing their withdrawal intention. In addition, positive signals from leaders, such as recognition of teachers' efforts and provision of emotional support, influence teachers' perceptions and behavior, thereby reducing the tendency to withdraw. Thus, humble leadership has a negative effect on withdrawal behavior among teachers in SBD Regency.

4.3 The Influence of Humble Leadership on Team Climate

Humble leadership contributes greatly to the creation of a positive team climate in schools. By fostering humility, respect, and openness, humble leaders encourage teachers to collaborate, share ideas, and support each other. A team climate characterized by trust, cohesion, and openness will grow under humble leadership. Valuing and supporting teachers increases their incentive to engage effectively in collaborative work, leading to a healthier team climate. 4 Social Exchange Theory According to SET, if the leader behaves humbly with teachers, a relationship of reciprocity will develop between them and their head. Teachers reply by making a contribution to creating quality team environment. Social Information Processing Theory (SIP) further asserts that teachers' actions are influenced by the social cues they receive from leaders. In a positive team climate, teachers are more motivated to share ideas and work collaboratively, thereby strengthening team cohesion. Thus, humble leadership has a positive effect on team climate among teachers in SBD Regency.

4.4 The Influence of Team Climate on Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

Positive team climate (e.g., trust, support, cohesion) has a strong impact in the OCB of teachers. In an organizational culture where teachers feel valued, supported and involved in open communication, they are more inclined to participate in tasks beyond their formal duties. from: working in a team. Helper behaviour, participation at other school activities and creating and maintaining a pleasant work atmosphere is associated with taking part. According to Social Exchange Theory (SET), a supportive team climate strengthens reciprocal relationships, making teachers feel motivated to perform actions that benefit the school[15] . Meanwhile, Social Information Processing Theory (SIP) emphasizes that teachers' behavior is shaped by social cues from their environment. When the team climate is positive, teachers internalize the values of cooperation and collaboration, thereby becoming more involved in Organizational

Citizenship Behavior. Thus, a positive team climate has a positive effect on Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) among teachers in SBD Regency.

4.5 The Influence of Team Climate on Withdrawal Behavior

A healthy team climate mitigates withdrawal behaviours (e.g. absence from work, late for work or setting aside 'from work'). Teachers have less opportunity to experience stress or dissatisfaction with withdrawing behaviors if they work in a supportive environment. The positive affects of the peer climate, especially mutual respect and support, lead to teachers' emotional attachment and dedication in this regard preventing withdrawal behavior. According to Social Exchange Theory (SET), when teachers experience positive interactions in a supportive team climate, they are less likely to exhibit withdrawal behavior. Social Information Processing Theory (SIP) further explains that teachers interpret social cues from their environment, and when they perceive the work climate as supportive, they are encouraged to remain engaged and avoid withdrawal behavior. Thus, a positive team climate has a negative effect on withdrawal behavior among teachers in SBD Regency.

4.6 The Mediating Role of Team Climate in the Influence of Humble Leadership on Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Team climate plays an important role as a mediator in the relationship between humble leadership and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). Principals who demonstrate humility are able to create a positive team climate, which ultimately encourages prosocial behaviors such as helping coworkers and participating in school activities. This mediating effect shows that the work environment created through humble leadership is the foundation for the emergence of teacher involvement and commitment to the organization. Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Social Information Processing Theory (SIP) support this mediation hypothesis, as teachers interpret the positive behavior of humble leaders and then reciprocate through collaborative behavior. Thus, a positive team climate serves as a mechanism bridging humble leadership with the increase in OCB. Consequently, team climate mediates the positive influence of humble leadership on Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) among teachers at Kabupaten SBD.

4.7 The Mediating Role of Team Climate in the Influence of Humble Leadership on Withdrawal Behavior

In the relationship between humble leadership and withdrawal behavior, team climate also plays a very important mediating role. Humble leaders are able to create a supportive and collaborative team climate, which reduces teachers' tendency to withdraw from their responsibilities. When teachers experience a positive team climate, they are less likely to exhibit withdrawal behaviors, such as absenteeism or disengagement from work. Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Social Information Pro-

cessing Theory (SIP) support this mediation model, because humble leadership contributes to the creation of a positive team climate, which then reduces withdrawal behavior through a supportive, trusting work environment that involves teachers in various activities. Thus, team climate mediates the negative influence of humble leadership on withdrawal behavior among teachers in SBD Regency.

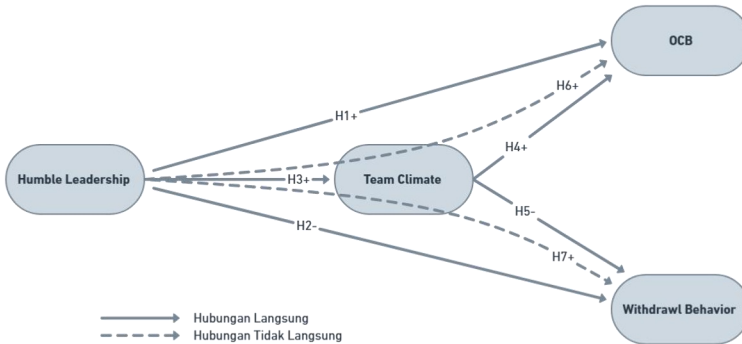


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework obtained from discussions and integration of previous studies. This framework proposes that Humble Leadership has a positive effect on Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) and a negative effect on Withdrawal Behavior, both directly and indirectly through the mediation of Team Climate. This is in line with Social Information Processing Theory (SIP) and Social Exchange Theory (SET), which explain how leadership cues shape perceptions of team climate and constructive social exchange. Team Climate plays a crucial role as a mediator; an open, collaborative, and trusting climate encourages effective communication, reduces friction, and strengthens cooperation, thereby increasing OCB and suppressing Withdrawal Behavior among elementary school teachers.

5 Conclusion

This conceptual study provides a comprehensive exploration of the relationship between Humble Leadership, Team Climate, and teacher behavior outcomes: Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) and Withdrawal Behavior. Based on Social Information Processing Theory (SIP) and Social Exchange Theory (SET), this study proposes a model that emphasizes the important role of Team Climate as a mediator. Conceptual results indicate that humble leadership has a direct positive effect on OCB and negative effect on Withdrawal Behavior, as well as an indirect impact through team climate forms of safety, collaboration and trust. Team climate serves as a key mechanism through which leadership cues (SIP) are processed into shared norms and constructive reciprocal exchange (SET), fostering teachers' extra-role contributions while dampening their withdrawal behavior. The proposed framework en-

riches the educational leadership literature by positioning Team Climate as the primary link between leadership style and teacher work behavior. Theoretically, this study clarifies the psychosocial mechanisms that have made empirical findings appear inconsistent; practically, it provides guidance for principals and policymakers to develop humility-based leadership and team climate strengthening interventions (two-way feedback, collaborative practices, psychological safety). Moving forward, this framework needs to be empirically validated, for example through PLS-SEM in the context of elementary school teachers to test the strength of the mediating effect and the potential of relevant moderators.

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