

Transformational Leadership, School Climate, and Organizational Commitment as Determinants of Teachers' Job Satisfaction: A Literature Review

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ABSTRAK

Kepuasan kerja guru merupakan isu sentral dalam manajemen pendidikan karena keterkaitannya yang kuat dengan retensi guru, komitmen organisasi, dan kualitas pembelajaran. Berbagai penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepuasan kerja tidak hanya dipengaruhi oleh karakteristik individu, tetapi juga oleh gaya kepemimpinan, iklim sekolah, dan komitmen organisasi. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menelaah dan mensintesis literatur empiris terkait hubungan antara kepemimpinan transformasional, iklim sekolah, komitmen organisasi, dan kepuasan kerja guru. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan Systematic Literature Review (SLR) terhadap artikel-artikel ilmiah yang dipublikasikan pada periode 2018–2025. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan transformasional berpengaruh positif terhadap kepuasan kerja guru, baik secara langsung maupun tidak langsung melalui komitmen organisasi. Iklim sekolah muncul sebagai prediktor yang paling konsisten dan kuat dalam meningkatkan kepuasan kerja, terutama melalui penciptaan rasa aman psikologis dan kesejahteraan profesional guru. Komitmen organisasi, khususnya komitmen afektif, berperan sebagai mekanisme mediasi penting yang memperkuat pengaruh kepemimpinan dan iklim sekolah terhadap kepuasan kerja. Namun demikian, terdapat variasi temuan empiris yang menunjukkan adanya pengaruh faktor kontekstual, terutama pada sekolah dasar swasta. Artikel ini memberikan sintesis konseptual yang memperkuat landasan teoretis dan menjadi pijakan bagi penelitian empiris selanjutnya dalam bidang kepemimpinan dan manajemen pendidikan.

Kata Kunci: *Kepemimpinan Transformasional; Iklim Sekolah; Komitmen Organisasi; Kepuasan Kerja Guru; Systematic Literature Review*

ABSTRACT

Teachers' job satisfaction is a central issue in educational management due to its strong association with teacher retention, organizational commitment, and instructional quality. Previous studies indicate that job satisfaction is influenced not only by individual characteristics but also by leadership style, school climate, and organizational commitment. This article aims to review and synthesize empirical literature on the relationships among transformational leadership, school climate, organizational commitment, and teachers' job satisfaction. Using a literature review approach, this study analyzes peer-reviewed articles published between 2018 and 2025. The findings reveal that transformational leadership positively affects teachers' job satisfaction both directly and indirectly through organizational commitment. School climate emerges as a consistent and strong predictor of job satisfaction, particularly in fostering psychological safety and professional well-being. Organizational commitment especially affective commitment plays a mediating role in strengthening the influence of leadership and school climate on job satisfaction. However, inconsistencies across studies indicate the importance of contextual factors, particularly in private primary schools. This review provides a conceptual synthesis to support future empirical research in educational leadership.

Keywords:

Transformational Leadership, School Climate, Organizational Commitment, Teachers' Job Satisfaction

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1. INTRODUCTION

Teacher job satisfaction has become a strategic issue in educational management due to its close relationship with teacher performance, organizational commitment, and institutional sustainability. In the education sector, teachers are not only instructional agents but also emotional workers who continuously interact with students, parents, and school management. Consequently, teachers' perceptions of their work environment significantly affect their motivation, well-being, and long-term commitment to the school (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017; Robbins & Judge, 2019). Recent empirical data indicate that teacher dissatisfaction remains a persistent challenge, particularly in private schools. In Indonesia, national reports show that nearly half of teachers experience high work pressure due to increasing administrative demands, limited professional recognition, and insufficient organizational support (BSKAP, 2022). In urban areas such as Jakarta, this issue is more pronounced due to institutional competition, heterogeneous school quality, and disparities in teachers' welfare.

Data from the Jakarta Provincial Education Office reveal a steady increase in teacher turnover rates in private primary schools, reaching almost 10% annually, signaling instability in human resource retention. From a theoretical perspective, job satisfaction is commonly defined as a pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job experiences (Colquitt et al., 2021). Herzberg's two-factor theory explains that job satisfaction is influenced by motivator factors such as achievement, recognition, and responsibility, while dissatisfaction arises from inadequate hygiene factors including salary, supervision, and working conditions (Herzberg, as cited in Wedadjati & Helmi, 2022). In the context of private schools, where salary levels often fall below regional minimum standards, hygiene factors may trigger dissatisfaction; however, motivator factors derived from leadership and organizational climate can mitigate these negative effects.

Leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping teachers' job satisfaction. Transformational leadership theory, developed by Bass and Avolio, emphasizes four core dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. In educational settings, principals who demonstrate transformational leadership behaviors tend to inspire teachers, foster professional growth, and create a shared sense of purpose (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Amelia, 2024). Empirical studies consistently report that transformational leadership positively influences teachers' job satisfaction either directly or indirectly through psychological empowerment and organizational commitment (Paskawaty, 2025; Raziq et al., 2025). In addition to leadership, school climate has emerged as a critical organizational factor affecting teachers' well-being. School climate refers to shared perceptions of interpersonal relationships, organizational norms, leadership practices, and physical working conditions within a school (Hoy & Miskel, 2012). A positive school climate is characterized by open communication, collegial support, fairness, and psychological safety. Research shows that teachers working in supportive school climates experience lower stress levels and higher job satisfaction, even under demanding work conditions (Dodent et al., 2022; Erdem & Koçyiğit, 2025). Observational data from private primary schools in Jakarta further indicate that variations in facilities, transparency, and collegial relationships contribute to uneven levels of teacher satisfaction.

Organizational commitment represents another key construct in understanding teachers' job satisfaction. Meyer and Allen (1997) conceptualize organizational commitment as comprising affective, continuance, and normative dimensions. Among these, affective commitment—teachers' emotional attachment to their school—has been identified as the strongest predictor of job satisfaction and retention. Teachers with high affective commitment tend to perceive organizational challenges more positively and demonstrate stronger loyalty (Yong & Zhang, 2025). However, in private schools, contractual employment status and job insecurity often weaken affective commitment, thereby reducing job satisfaction. Despite extensive research, empirical findings regarding the relationships among transformational leadership, school climate, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction remain inconsistent. Some studies report strong direct effects of transformational leadership on job satisfaction, while others find that its influence operates primarily through mediating variables such as organizational commitment (Bantilan et al., 2024; Thika et al., 2024). Similarly, while school climate is generally found to be a robust predictor of job satisfaction, its interaction with leadership and commitment varies across institutional contexts.

Notably, most previous studies have focused on public schools or secondary education levels, where employment systems and organizational structures are relatively stable. Limited attention has been given to private primary schools in metropolitan areas, where teachers face unique challenges

related to compensation disparities, institutional competition, and administrative pressure. This contextual gap underscores the need for a more integrated and context-sensitive examination of organizational determinants of teachers' job satisfaction. Therefore, this literature review aims to synthesize existing theoretical and empirical studies to clarify how transformational leadership, school climate, and organizational commitment interact in shaping teachers' job satisfaction. By integrating these three constructs within a single analytical framework, this article seeks to strengthen conceptual understanding and provide a theoretical foundation for future empirical research, particularly in the context of private primary schools in urban settings.

2. METHOD

This study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to comprehensively examine and synthesize existing empirical and theoretical studies related to transformational leadership, school climate, organizational commitment, and teachers' job satisfaction. The SLR method was chosen to ensure a structured, transparent, and replicable review process, particularly given the inconsistencies reported in previous empirical findings and the need for an integrative understanding of organizational determinants of teachers' job satisfaction in educational settings. The literature review process was conducted through several sequential and interrelated stages. Initially, the identification stage involved a systematic search of peer-reviewed journal articles indexed in Scopus and nationally accredited journals, as referenced in the proposal. The search focused on publications released between 2018 and 2025 to capture recent developments in educational leadership and organizational behavior. Keywords used in the search process included "transformational leadership," "school climate," "organizational commitment," and "teachers' job satisfaction," combined using Boolean operators to ensure relevance and breadth of coverage.

Following identification, the screening stage was carried out by reviewing article titles and abstracts to eliminate irrelevant, duplicate, or non-educational studies. At this stage, articles that did not focus on teachers or organizational contexts in education were excluded. The remaining articles were then subjected to a full-text eligibility assessment, where each study was evaluated based on its methodological rigor, relevance to the research variables, and contribution to understanding the relationships among leadership, school climate, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction. Studies that met all inclusion criteria were included in the final review corpus and proceeded to the data extraction stage. Relevant information from each article was systematically extracted using a structured matrix, capturing author details, year of publication, research context, variables examined, methodological approach, and key findings. This process ensured consistency and comparability across studies, facilitating a coherent synthesis of results.

The extracted data were then analyzed using an integrative narrative synthesis approach. This analytical strategy allowed the comparison of findings across diverse educational contexts and research designs while identifying recurring patterns, theoretical convergences, and empirical contradictions. Particular attention was given to examining the mediating role of organizational commitment and the contextual influence of school type, especially private primary schools, on teachers' job satisfaction. To enhance methodological rigor and trustworthiness, the SLR process followed explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria, transparent screening procedures, and systematic documentation of each review stage. This approach minimized selection bias and strengthened the validity of the conclusions drawn from the reviewed literature. By applying this systematic and structured method, the study provides a robust conceptual foundation for understanding how transformational leadership, school climate, and organizational commitment interact to shape teachers' job satisfaction.

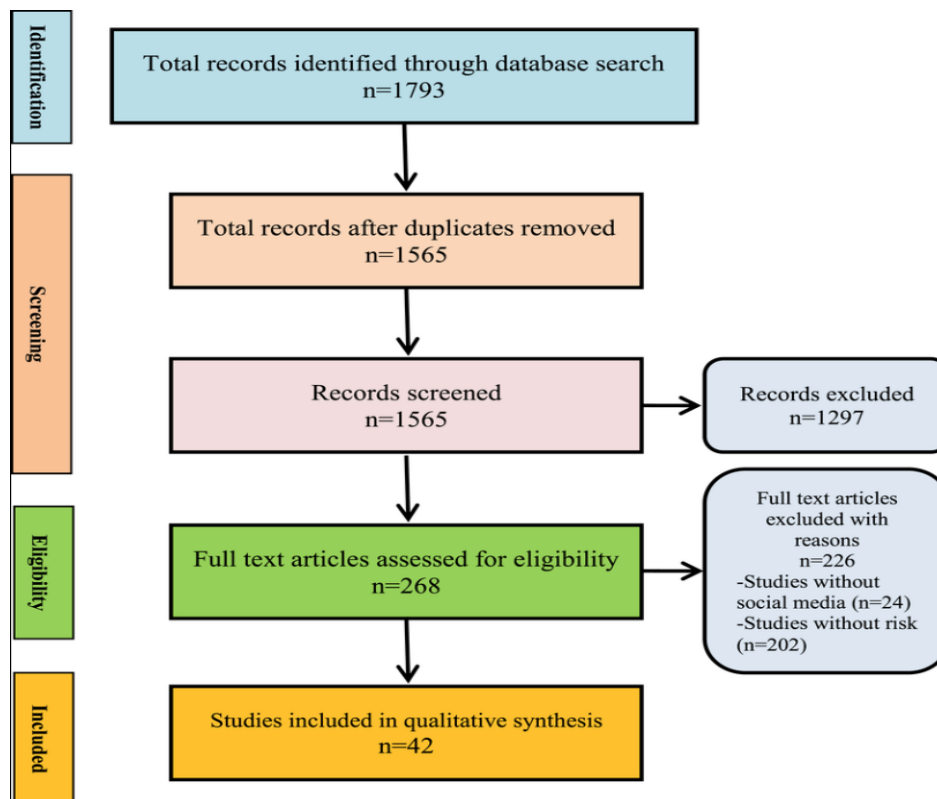


Figure 1. Systematic Literature Review Stages

Figure 1 illustrates the sequential stages of the Systematic Literature Review applied in this study, beginning with literature identification, followed by screening and eligibility assessment, and concluding with data extraction and integrative synthesis. This visual representation reflects the structured and transparent methodological framework used to ensure rigor and reproducibility.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The results of this Systematic Literature Review demonstrate clear and recurring patterns regarding the relationships among transformational leadership, school climate, organizational commitment, and teachers' job satisfaction. Across the reviewed studies, teachers' job satisfaction consistently appears as a central outcome variable influenced by organizational leadership and environmental factors. Overall, the reviewed literature shows that transformational leadership tends to have a positive association with teachers' job satisfaction, although the strength and directness of this relationship vary across contexts. Several studies report a direct positive effect, while others indicate that transformational leadership primarily influences job satisfaction indirectly through organizational commitment or related psychological mechanisms. In contrast, school climate emerges as a more stable and consistently significant predictor of job satisfaction across different educational settings. Organizational commitment, particularly affective commitment, frequently functions as an intervening variable, although its mediating role is not uniformly supported in all studies. To clarify these patterns, the main findings of the reviewed studies are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Synthesis of Findings from Reviewed Studies on Teachers' Job Satisfaction

No	Author(s) & Year	Key Variables Examined	Research Context	Main Findings
1	Paskawaty (2025)	Transformational Leadership → Job Satisfaction	Public schools	Transformational leadership has a significant positive direct effect on teachers' job satisfaction.

No	Author(s) & Year	Key Variables Examined	Research Context	Main Findings
2	Bantilan et al. (2024)	Transformational Leadership, School Climate → Organizational Commitment	Secondary schools	School climate significantly predicts commitment; leadership effect is weak.
3	Thika et al. (2024)	Transformational Leadership → Job Satisfaction (via Commitment)	Educational institutions	Indirect effect through commitment is weaker than direct leadership effect.
4	Yong & Zhang (2025)	Transformational Leadership → Affective Commitment → Job Satisfaction	Teachers	Affective commitment mediates the relationship between leadership and job satisfaction.
5	Noori et al. (2024)	School Climate → Job Satisfaction	Conflict-affected schools	School climate has a strong positive effect on teachers' job satisfaction.
6	Otrębski (2022)	School Climate → Job Satisfaction	General & special schools	Positive school climate predicts job satisfaction regardless of school type.
7	Hidayat et al. (2023)	Leadership, Organizational Justice → Job Satisfaction	Private schools	Organizational justice and climate outweigh leadership in predicting satisfaction.
8	Haerofiatna et al. (2021)	Commitment, Work Environment → Job Satisfaction	Teachers	Commitment does not significantly predict job satisfaction in unstable settings.

The synthesis presented in Table 1 highlights three dominant empirical tendencies. First, transformational leadership is generally beneficial for teachers' job satisfaction, but its influence is often conditional and context-dependent. Second, school climate consistently demonstrates a strong and direct relationship with job satisfaction across diverse institutional settings. Third, organizational commitment shows mixed results, functioning as a powerful mediator in some studies while appearing insignificant in others, particularly in contexts marked by employment insecurity. In summary, the results of this SLR indicate that teachers' job satisfaction is influenced by a combination of leadership practices, organizational environment, and psychological attachment to the school. School climate emerges as the most consistent predictor, while transformational leadership and organizational commitment demonstrate context-sensitive effects. These findings provide a structured empirical foundation for further interpretation and theoretical integration, which are elaborated in the Discussion section.

Discussion

Discussion is the most important part of the entire contents of a scientific article, as it serves to answer the research problems, interpret findings, integrate empirical evidence with existing theories, and contribute to theoretical development. In line with these objectives, this discussion synthesizes the results of the Systematic Literature Review to explain how transformational leadership, school climate, and organizational commitment interact in shaping teachers' job satisfaction.

The first research problem concerns whether transformational leadership influences teachers' job satisfaction. The findings of this review indicate that transformational leadership generally has a positive relationship with teachers' job satisfaction, although the strength and directness of this influence vary across contexts. This suggests that leadership alone is not a universal determinant of satisfaction but operates within broader organizational and psychological conditions. Principals who demonstrate inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation tend to foster higher satisfaction, particularly when teachers perceive leadership as supportive rather than merely administrative (Paskawaty, 2025; Raziq et al., 2025).

The second research problem addresses the role of school climate. The results clearly show that school climate is one of the most consistent and robust predictors of teachers' job satisfaction. Across diverse educational contexts, including high-pressure and resource-limited environments, positive school climate characterized by collegiality, fairness, and open communication—significantly enhances teachers' satisfaction. This finding answers the research problem by confirming that school climate is not a peripheral factor but a core organizational condition shaping teachers' work experiences (Dodent et al., 2022; Noori et al., 2024).

The third research problem relates to organizational commitment, particularly its role as a mediating mechanism. The reviewed studies demonstrate that affective organizational commitment often mediates the relationship between leadership, school climate, and job satisfaction. Teachers who feel emotionally attached to their schools are more likely to interpret leadership practices and organizational conditions positively, resulting in higher job satisfaction (Yong & Zhang, 2025). However, this mediating role is not universally observed, indicating the influence of contextual moderators such as employment status and job security.

The variation in findings regarding transformational leadership can be interpreted through the lens of organizational behavior theory. While transformational leadership is designed to enhance intrinsic motivation, its effectiveness depends on teachers' perceptions of fairness, stability, and organizational support. In contexts where teachers face contractual insecurity or inequitable compensation, leadership inspiration alone may be insufficient to generate high job satisfaction (Bantilan et al., 2024). This explains why some studies report indirect rather than direct effects of leadership on satisfaction.

In contrast, the strong and consistent influence of school climate can be interpreted as evidence that daily social and organizational experiences have a more immediate impact on teachers' emotional well-being than abstract leadership vision. Teachers interact with school climate continuously through collegial relationships, workload distribution, and communication practices, making climate a powerful determinant of satisfaction regardless of leadership style.

The mixed results regarding organizational commitment suggest that commitment is a conditional psychological resource. When organizational conditions support emotional attachment—through recognition, inclusion, and fairness—commitment becomes a strong pathway to job satisfaction. Conversely, when employment conditions undermine teachers' sense of belonging, commitment weakens and loses its mediating power (Haerofiatna et al., 2021).

The findings of this review strongly support Transformational Leadership Theory, which posits that leaders influence followers by shaping values, motivation, and meaning at work (Bass & Avolio, 1994). However, this review suggests a theoretical refinement: transformational leadership is most effective when embedded within a supportive school climate. Leadership influence appears to be amplified by organizational context rather than operating in isolation.

The results also align with School Climate Theory, which emphasizes shared perceptions of organizational environment as determinants of individual attitudes and behaviors (Hoy & Miskel, 2012). The consistent effect of school climate on job satisfaction reinforces the argument that organizational atmosphere functions as a social mechanism that regulates emotional well-being and professional engagement. Furthermore, the mediating role of organizational commitment supports Meyer and Allen's Three-Component Model of Commitment, particularly the primacy of affective commitment. This review reinforces affective commitment as the most influential form of commitment in educational organizations, directly linked to job satisfaction and retention (Meyer & Allen, 1997). From the perspective of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model, transformational leadership and positive school climate can be conceptualized as job resources that buffer the negative effects of high job demands. When these resources are insufficient, teachers' job satisfaction declines despite leadership efforts, explaining the inconsistencies observed across studies.

Beyond confirming existing theories, this review contributes to theoretical development by proposing an integrative interpretation: teachers' job satisfaction is not driven by leadership, climate, or commitment independently, but by their dynamic interaction. School climate emerges as the most stable foundational resource, leadership acts as a catalytic mechanism, and organizational commitment functions as a psychological conduit translating organizational conditions into job satisfaction. This synthesis suggests a modification of existing leadership-centric models by repositioning school climate as a central structural condition rather than a secondary outcome of leadership. In private primary

school contexts, where organizational stability is fragile, strengthening school climate may yield greater impact on job satisfaction than leadership interventions alone. The discussion highlights the need for future empirical studies to adopt integrated models that simultaneously examine leadership, school climate, and organizational commitment. Research focusing on private primary schools in urban settings is particularly important, as contextual pressures such as competition, parental expectations, and employment insecurity may alter established theoretical relationships.

4. CONCLUSION

Teachers' job satisfaction emerges from the dynamic interaction of leadership practices, organizational climate, and psychological commitment. This review confirms that transformational leadership contributes positively to job satisfaction, although its influence is often indirect and context-dependent. In contrast, school climate consistently demonstrates a strong and direct relationship with job satisfaction across diverse educational settings. The findings suggest that daily organizational experiences—such as collegial relationships, fairness, and communication—exert a more immediate influence on teachers' emotional well-being than leadership vision alone. Organizational commitment, particularly affective commitment, serves as a psychological conduit that strengthens or weakens the impact of leadership and climate on job satisfaction. These results support existing leadership and organizational theories while simultaneously refining them by emphasizing contextual dependency and organizational climate as a foundational resource. For private primary schools, strengthening school climate and emotional attachment may be more effective in improving job satisfaction than leadership interventions in isolation.

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