



Leadership, climate, and satisfaction: A behavioural approach to teacher retention

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Abstract

From an organizational behavior perspective, teacher retention reflects the interplay of leadership practices, organizational climate, and work-related evaluative mechanisms. This study examines how school climate and principals' decision-making style influence teacher performance, job satisfaction, and teachers' intention to stay in faith-based schools. Using a quantitative explanatory design, data were collected from 200 junior and senior high school teachers across 16 faith-based schools in Java, Indonesia, and analyzed using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results indicate that both school climate ($\beta = 0.333$, $p < 0.01$) and principals' decision-making style ($\beta = 0.402$, $p < 0.001$) are positively associated with teacher performance. Teacher performance significantly predicts job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.655$, $p < 0.001$), which in turn has a positive effect on intention to stay ($\beta = 0.511$, $p < 0.001$). Further analysis confirms that job satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between teacher performance and intention to stay. These findings contribute to organizational behavior and educational leadership literature by illustrating how leadership and climate function as organizational resources supporting teacher retention. Practically, the study highlights the importance of participative decision-making and supportive school climates in sustaining a committed teaching workforce.

1. INTRODUCTION

Employee retention has long been recognized in organizational behavior research as a strategic factor influencing workforce sustainability and long-term organizational performance (Griffeth et al., 2000). Retention is not merely a function of contractual arrangements, but rather reflects a behavioral outcome shaped by leadership practices, organizational climate, and employees' work-related evaluations over time (Rumangkit & Hadi, 2022; Qian & Balwi, 2024). While this body of research has been predominantly developed within corporate and industrial settings, similar behavioral dynamics are increasingly evident in educational organizations, where teacher retention directly affects instructional continuity, learning quality, and institutional resilience (Belinda et al., 2022).

From an organizational behavior perspective, teachers' intention to stay represents a cumulative assessment of their work experiences, encompassing perceptions of leadership decision-making, collegial relationships, and professional effectiveness (Judge & Klinger,



2008; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018). Teaching is inherently relational and emotionally demanding, requiring sustained engagement with students, colleagues, and school leadership. Consequently, retention in educational settings is influenced not only by structural conditions, but also by how teachers experience their daily work environment, leadership practices, and recognition of their professional contributions (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2017).

Faith-based private schools provide a theoretically meaningful context for examining these dynamics. Such institutions are typically characterized by strong value orientations and mission-driven goals, which may foster teachers' affective attachment and sense of purpose (Arthur, 2023). At the same time, these schools often face structural constraints related to financial resources, career advancement, and employment security, making teacher retention a persistent organizational challenge (Belinda et al., 2022). This combination creates a distinctive organizational setting in which retention depends less on formal rewards and more on relational, motivational, and climate-related factors. Examining teacher retention in this context therefore allows organizational behavior perspectives on leadership and climate to be extended beyond conventional corporate environments.

Prior studies consistently highlight the importance of organizational climate in shaping employee attitudes and behaviors. In educational settings, a positive school climate that characterized by trust, fairness, and supportive interpersonal relationships has been associated with higher teacher satisfaction, stronger commitment, and lower turnover intentions (Cohen et al., 2009; Thapa et al., 2013; Wang & Degol, 2016). Leadership practices further shape these outcomes. Principals' decision-making styles influence teachers' sense of voice, autonomy, and professional respect, with participative approaches fostering collaboration and commitment, while authoritarian styles tend to increase stress and withdrawal tendencies (Mailool et al., 2020; Adeyemi, 2022).

Despite the growing literature on leadership, school climate, and teacher retention, many studies continue to examine these factors in isolation. Such fragmented approaches offer limited insight into the behavioral processes through which leadership and organizational conditions translate into teachers' decisions to remain in their schools (Elsahoryi et al., 2022). In particular, the mechanisms linking organizational conditions to retention such as teacher performance and job satisfaction remain underexplored within an integrated explanatory framework.

Addressing this gap, the present study adopts an organizational behavior lens to examine teacher retention as a behavioral outcome shaped by leadership and climate through performance and satisfaction-based mechanisms. Specifically, this study investigates how school climate and principals' decision-making style influence teachers' intention to stay, with teacher performance and job satisfaction positioned as key mediating variables. By integrating leadership, climate, performance, and satisfaction within a single explanatory model, this study seeks to extend organizational behavior and educational leadership literature while offering practical insights for school leaders seeking to sustain a stable and committed teaching workforce.

Conceptually, this study is informed by Social Exchange Theory and the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model as complementary lenses for understanding teacher retention. Social Exchange Theory explains retention as a reciprocal process in which supportive leadership and a positive organizational climate encourage teachers to respond with

stronger commitment and a greater intention to remain in their schools (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Complementing this perspective, the JD-R model positions leadership practices and school climate as key organizational resources that enable effective performance and foster positive work-related attitudes, particularly job satisfaction (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Together, these perspectives provide an integrative framework for explaining how leadership and climate influence teachers' intention to stay through performance- and satisfaction-based mechanisms.

2. THEORETICAL REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS

Social Exchange Theory (SET) conceptualizes teacher commitment as a reciprocal process. Teachers who perceive appreciation and organizational support tend to respond by enhancing their performance, job satisfaction, and loyalty as a form of positive reciprocity (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Cropanzano et al., 2017). Within school settings, supportive climates and participative leadership practices operate as organizational resources that reinforce positive exchange relationships and reduce turnover intentions.

Complementing this perspective, the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model explains how the balance between job demands and available resources shapes motivation, performance, and well-being (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Lesener et al., 2019). When teachers have access to adequate resources such as fair policies, supportive leadership, and collegial relationships they are better equipped to manage workload pressures, sustain effort, and perform effectively. These performance experiences subsequently contribute to more favorable evaluations of work, fostering a stronger intention to remain in the profession.

Together, SET and the JD-R model provide an integrative framework for understanding teacher retention. Both perspectives suggest that school climate and leadership decision-making function as structural resources that shape teachers' psychological and behavioral responses. More specifically, these organizational conditions influence teacher performance and job satisfaction, which in turn mediate the relationship between contextual factors and teachers' intention to stay.

School Climate

School climate refers to shared perceptions of organizational policies, practices, and interpersonal relationships that shape daily work experiences (Cohen et al., 2009; Wang & Degol, 2016). In educational contexts, school climate represents an education-specific manifestation of organizational climate, encompassing fairness, trust, collegial support, and the quality of interactions among teachers, students, and school leaders (Cohen et al., 2009; Wang & Degol, 2016). Rather than serving merely as background conditions, these perceptions constitute an important organizational context that shapes teachers' motivation, performance, and attachment to their schools.

Empirical research consistently shows that a positive school climate supports teachers' psychological well-being and professional engagement. Supportive environments characterized by respectful relationships and transparent policies reduce stress and foster a sense of belonging, thereby encouraging sustained effort and professional commitment (Thapa et al., 2013). From an organizational behavior perspective, school climate thus

operates as a socio-emotional resource that enables effective performance while supporting motivation over time.

Importantly, school climate is not expected to influence retention in isolation. Its effects are more likely to operate through proximal outcomes, particularly teacher performance and job satisfaction. When teachers perceive their school environment as fair and supportive, they tend to demonstrate higher instructional effectiveness and professional initiative, which subsequently inform positive evaluations of their work and strengthen intentions to remain in the organization.

Leadership and Decision-Making Style

Leadership decision-making represents a central mechanism through which principals influence organizational processes and teacher behavior. Decision-making style reflects how leaders define problems, allocate resources, and involve teachers in organizational decisions, thereby shaping perceptions of autonomy and professional respect (Danisi et al., 2021; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). In school settings, these practices signal whether teachers are trusted as professionals and valued as contributors to institutional goals.

Participative and inclusive decision-making styles have been consistently associated with positive teacher outcomes. When principals involve teachers in instructional and administrative decisions, teachers are more likely to experience ownership, clarity, and professional recognition, which in turn support motivation and performance (Mailool et al., 2020; Adeyemi, 2022). In contrast, authoritarian approaches may restrict discretion, elevate stress, and weaken engagement, thereby increasing withdrawal tendencies.

From a causal standpoint, leadership decision-making is expected to exert its influence primarily through teachers' performance experiences. Effective decision-making provides structure, direction, and support that enable teachers to perform their roles more competently. These performance experiences subsequently shape teachers' job evaluations and contribute to stronger intentions to remain in the organization.

Teacher Performance

In organizational behavior research, performance refers to patterns of behavior and outcomes that contribute to organizational goals (Campbell & Wiernik, 2015). In educational settings, teacher performance encompasses instructional effectiveness, classroom management, student guidance, and engagement in broader school activities (Stronge, 2018). Rather than functioning solely as an outcome, teacher performance represents a proximal behavioral response to organizational conditions such as leadership practices and school climate.

From a JD-R perspective, supportive leadership and a positive organizational climate operate as key resources that enable teachers to meet job demands effectively. When teachers receive clear guidance, participative decision-making opportunities, and collegial support, they are more likely to demonstrate sustained engagement and instructional quality. In this sense, teacher performance reflects how organizational resources are translated into effective work behavior.

Performance is theorized to precede job satisfaction rather than merely result from it. Performance experiences provide feedback regarding competence and effectiveness, which form the basis for positive evaluations of work. When teachers perceive themselves as

performing well, they are more likely to experience feelings of accomplishment that contribute to job satisfaction.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is commonly defined as a positive evaluative judgment individuals make about their job based on accumulated work experiences (Locke, 1976; Judge & Klinger, 2008). In educational contexts, teacher job satisfaction reflects how teachers assess whether their work meets professional expectations, personal values, and performance-related aspirations.

From a social exchange perspective, job satisfaction emerges as an evaluative response to the quality of exchanges between teachers and their schools. Supportive leadership, fair decision-making, and a positive school climate signal organizational care and respect, fostering satisfaction. However, satisfaction develops through teachers' ongoing work experiences, particularly their perceptions of competence and accomplishment derived from effective performance.

Accordingly, job satisfaction functions as a central evaluative mechanism linking organizational conditions to retention intentions. It integrates perceptions of leadership, climate, and performance into an overall judgment that informs teachers' willingness to continue their employment relationship.

Intention to Stay

Intention to stay refers to an individual's deliberate willingness to remain with their current organization for a foreseeable period (Tett & Meyer, 1993; Qian & Balwi, 2024). Within organizational behavior research, intention to stay is widely regarded as a proximal predictor of actual retention behavior, reflecting the outcome of cognitive and evaluative processes related to work experiences.

In educational settings, teachers' intention to stay is shaped by both structural conditions and subjective evaluations of work experiences. While effective performance strengthens teachers' sense of professional competence, it is the positive evaluation of these experiences captured through job satisfaction that translates performance into a sustained intention to remain. Prior research consistently shows that satisfied teachers are more committed and less likely to consider leaving their schools.

Thus, intention to stay represents the final outcome of a sequential process in which organizational conditions shape performance experiences, performance informs job satisfaction, and satisfaction ultimately drives retention intentions.

Hypotheses Development

Drawing on the Job Demands–Resources model, organizational climate functions as a key contextual resource that enables employees to perform their roles effectively. In school settings, a supportive climate characterized by trust, fairness, and collegial relationships provides teachers with socio-emotional and instrumental resources that facilitate instructional effectiveness and professional engagement. When teachers perceive their school environment as supportive, they are more likely to invest effort, manage classroom demands successfully, and demonstrate higher levels of performance (Mailool et al., 2020; Simaremare et al., 2023). Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₁: School climate has a positive effect on teacher performance.

Principals' decision-making style represents a central leadership mechanism through which organizational expectations, priorities, and resources are communicated. Participative decision-making allows teachers to experience autonomy, professional respect, and clarity regarding their roles, which in turn enhances motivation and work effectiveness (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005; Adeyemi, 2022). From a JD-R perspective, inclusive leadership practices strengthen teachers' capacity to meet job demands by providing guidance, structure, and support. Therefore, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H₂: Leadership decision-making style has a positive effect on teacher performance.

From an organizational behavior perspective, job satisfaction reflects an evaluative judgment that develops from accumulated work experiences. Performance experiences play a critical role in shaping this evaluation, as perceptions of effectiveness and accomplishment contribute to positive self-appraisal and professional fulfillment (Judge & Klinger, 2008; Salameh & Benkohila, 2024). Teachers who perceive themselves as performing well are more likely to evaluate their jobs positively and experience higher satisfaction. Based on this reasoning, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₃: Teacher performance has a positive effect on job satisfaction.

Social Exchange Theory suggests that employees' decisions to remain in an organization are influenced by their overall evaluation of the employment relationship. In educational contexts, teachers who experience high job satisfaction are more likely to develop stronger attachment and a willingness to continue their employment, whereas dissatisfaction increases withdrawal tendencies (Griffeth et al., 2000; Qian & Balwi, 2024). Thus, the following hypothesis is offered:

H₄: Job satisfaction has a positive effect on intention to stay.

Although job satisfaction represents a key evaluative mechanism, performance experiences may also exert a direct influence on teachers' intention to stay. Teachers who perceive themselves as effective and competent are more likely to develop a sense of professional identity and belonging, which can strengthen retention intentions independently of satisfaction (Stronge, 2018). In light of this, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H₅: Teacher performance has a positive effect on intention to stay.

Integrating Social Exchange Theory and the Job Demands–Resources model, organizational conditions influence retention decisions through both behavioral and evaluative mechanisms. Leadership practices and school climate shape teachers' performance experiences, which subsequently inform job satisfaction. In turn, job satisfaction translates these experiences into a sustained intention to remain. This theoretical ordering supports the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between teacher performance and intention to stay (Malik, 2020). Based on this reasoning, the final hypothesis is proposed:

H₆: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between teacher performance and intention to stay.

Figure 1 presents the research model derived from the proposed hypotheses, depicting the direct and mediated relationships among leadership decision-making, school climate, teacher performance, job satisfaction, and intention to stay

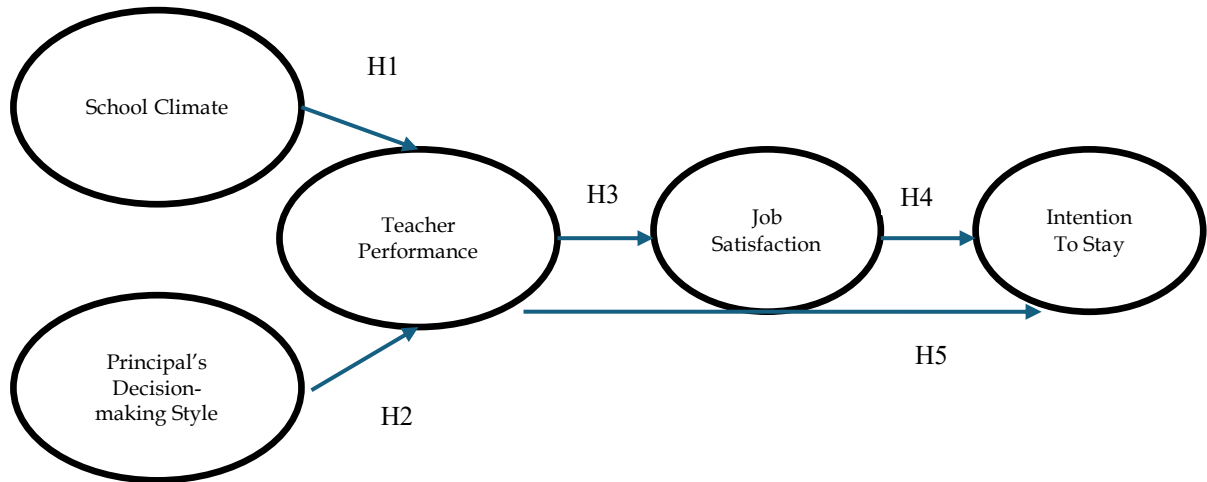


Figure 1. Research Model

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative explanatory design using a cross-sectional survey approach to examine the relationships among school climate, principals' decision-making style, teacher performance, job satisfaction, and intention to stay. Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed to teachers from 16 faith-based private junior and senior high schools located in seven cities across Java Island, Indonesia. Purposive sampling was applied to ensure that respondents had a minimum of two years of teaching experience, allowing them to meaningfully evaluate leadership practices and organizational climate within their schools. A total of 200 valid responses were obtained and included in the analysis.

All study variables were measured using previously validated instruments adapted to the educational context. Principals' decision-making style, school climate, and teacher performance were measured using items adapted from Mailool et al. (2020). Job satisfaction was measured using a short questionnaire adapted from established job satisfaction measures commonly used in educational research (Judge & Klinger, 2008.), while intention to stay was measured using five items adapted from Elshoryi et al. (2022). All items were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The instruments were reviewed and contextualized to ensure clarity and relevance to the school setting.

Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 3. The analysis followed a two-stage procedure. First, the measurement model was evaluated to assess indicator reliability, internal consistency, and convergent validity. Indicator reliability was confirmed through outer loadings, while internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. Convergent validity was evaluated based on average variance extracted (AVE), with values

exceeding recommended thresholds. Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion to ensure that each construct was empirically distinct from the others.

In the second stage, the structural model was evaluated to examine the hypothesized relationships among the constructs. The analysis focused on path coefficients, their statistical significance, and the explanatory power of the model, as indicated by R-square values. Model adequacy was evaluated using the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) and the normed fit index (NFI), following current reporting practices in PLS-SEM. The significance of direct and indirect effects was assessed using a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 resamples at a 5% significance level.

PLS-SEM was selected because the study aimed to examine predictive relationships and mediation effects among multiple latent constructs within an explanatory research framework. This approach is particularly suitable for models involving indirect effects and theory development, especially when sample sizes are moderate and strict distributional assumptions cannot be guaranteed (Hair et al., 2022). Although the study employed a cross-sectional design, the hypothesized directional relationships were grounded in established organizational behavior theories, including Social Exchange Theory and the Job Demands-Resources model. Accordingly, the analysis focuses on theoretically informed associations rather than causal claims.

Participation in the study was voluntary and anonymous. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the research, and informed consent was obtained prior to data collection.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data analysis was conducted using a two-stage approach consistent with the Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) procedure. The first stage involved the evaluation of the measurement model to establish the reliability and validity of the constructs, followed by the assessment of the structural model to test the hypothesised relationships among the study variables.

Measurement Model

The measurement model was assessed to examine indicator reliability, internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Two indicators (JS1 and ITS5) were removed because their outer loadings were below the recommended threshold of 0.70. After refinement, all remaining indicators demonstrated satisfactory loadings on their respective constructs, with values ranging from 0.747 to 0.933.

As presented in Table 1, all constructs achieved Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) values exceeding the minimum acceptable level of 0.70, indicating adequate internal consistency. In addition, the average variance extracted (AVE) values for all constructs were above 0.50, confirming convergent validity. These results indicate that the constructs were measured reliably and validly.

Table 1. Convergent Validity and Reliability

| Construct | Outer Loading (Range) | Cronbach's α | CR | AVE |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-------|-------|
| Principals' Decision-Making (PDM) | 0.747-0.892 | 0.933 | 0.946 | 0.715 |
| School Climate (SC) | 0.815-0.879 | 0.865 | 0.908 | 0.711 |
| Job Satisfaction (JS) | 0.813-0.880 | 0.805 | 0.885 | 0.720 |

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Teacher Performance (TP) | 0.706–0.861 | 0.897 | 0.919 | 0.618 |
| Intention to Stay (ITS) | 0.834–0.933 | 0.892 | 0.925 | 0.757 |

Source: SmartPLS 3.0 output

Discriminant validity was evaluated using the Fornell–Larcker criterion. As shown in Table 2, the square root of the AVE for each construct (diagonal values) exceeded the correlations with other constructs, demonstrating satisfactory discriminant validity.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity (Fornell – Larcker Criterion)

| Construct | PDM | SC | JS | TP | ITS |
|-----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| PDM | 0.846 | | | | |
| SC | 0.757 | 0.843 | | | |
| JS | 0.663 | 0.642 | 0.849 | | |
| TP | 0.654 | 0.637 | 0.655 | 0.786 | |
| ITS | 0.513 | 0.479 | 0.658 | 0.559 | 0.870 |

Note: Diagonal values represent the square root of AVE.

Structural Model

Following the establishment of measurement validity, the structural model was evaluated to test the hypothesised relationships. Model adequacy was assessed using the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) and the normed fit index (NFI). The results indicated acceptable model adequacy (SRMR = 0.068; NFI = 0.826).

The explanatory power of the model was assessed using the coefficient of determination (R^2). Principals' decision-making style and school climate jointly explained 47.5% of the variance in teacher performance ($R^2 = 0.475$). Teacher performance accounted for 42.9% of the variance in job satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.429$). Furthermore, teacher performance and job satisfaction together explained 46.2% of the variance in intention to stay ($R^2 = 0.462$), indicating a moderate level of explanatory power. Bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples was employed to assess the significance of the path coefficients. The results of the structural paths are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Path Coefficients

| Path | β | t-value | p-value |
|----------|---------|---------|---------|
| PDM → TP | 0.402 | 4.469 | 0.000 |
| SC → TP | 0.333 | 3.039 | 0.002 |
| TP → JS | 0.655 | 15.549 | 0.000 |
| JS → ITS | 0.511 | 8.209 | 0.000 |
| TP → ITS | 0.224 | 2.959 | 0.003 |

Source: SmartPLS 3.0 output

Hypotheses Testing

The results of hypothesis testing indicate that all proposed direct hypotheses (H1–H5) were supported. Principals' decision-making style had a positive and significant effect on teacher performance ($\beta = 0.402$, $p < 0.001$), while school climate also showed a positive and significant influence on teacher performance ($\beta = 0.333$, $p = 0.002$). Teacher performance was found to have a strong and positive effect on job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.655$, $p < 0.001$). In addition, job satisfaction had a significant positive effect on intention to stay ($\beta = 0.511$, $p < 0.001$). Teacher performance also exerted a direct positive influence on intention to stay ($\beta = 0.224$, $p = 0.003$).

Mediation Analysis

The mediation analysis showed that the effect of teacher performance on intention to stay operated through job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.335$, $p < 0.001$). This finding was also observed when examining the direct effect of teacher performance on intention to stay ($\beta = 0.224$, $p = 0.003$), indicating partial mediation. Approximately 60% of the total effect of teacher performance on intention to stay was transmitted through job satisfaction, thereby reinforcing the argument regarding the importance of performance in retention processes. These results provide substantial support for H6.

Overall, the statistical results indicate that all direct and indirect relationships were positive and aligned closely with the theoretical expectations of the study. In particular, the integration of leadership decision-making, school climate, teacher performance, and teacher job satisfaction produced a valid explanatory model of teacher retention within the context of faith-based schools. The “hypothesis testing results” folder contains a synthesis of the hypothesis testing outcomes presented in Table 4, including the corresponding path coefficients, t-values, p-values, and overall conclusions for each proposed relationship.

Table 4. Summary of Hypotheses Testing Results

| Hypothesis | Relationship | Path Coefficient (β) | t-value | p-value | Result |
|------------|--|------------------------------|---------|---------|-------------------------------|
| H1 | Principals’ Decision-Making → Teacher Performance | 0.402 | 4.469 | 0.000 | Supported |
| H2 | School Climate → Teacher Performance | 0.333 | 3.039 | 0.002 | Supported |
| H3 | Teacher Performance → Job Satisfaction | 0.655 | 15.549 | 0.000 | Supported |
| H4 | Job Satisfaction → Intention to Stay | 0.511 | 8.209 | 0.000 | Supported |
| H5 | Teacher Performance → Intention to Stay (direct effect) | 0.224 | 2.959 | 0.003 | Supported |
| H6 | Teacher Performance → Job Satisfaction → Intention to Stay (indirect effect) | 0.335 | 7.261* | <0.001 | Supported (Partial Mediation) |

This study examined the relationships among principals’ decision-making style, school climate, teacher performance, job satisfaction, and intention to stay within faith-based private schools. Overall, the findings provide consistent support for the proposed model and offer a coherent explanation of how leadership and organizational climate are associated with teachers’ retention intentions through performance and satisfaction-related mechanisms.

The results indicate that principals’ decision-making style and school climate are positively associated with teacher performance. This finding aligns with prior studies suggesting that participative leadership practices and supportive organizational environments facilitate effective work behavior by providing teachers with clarity, support, and opportunities for professional involvement. From a resource-based perspective, leadership practices and school climate can be understood as organizational conditions that enable teachers to manage job demands more effectively, thereby enhancing their

performance. In educational settings, where teaching tasks are relationally and cognitively demanding, such enabling conditions appear particularly salient.

The findings further show that teacher performance is strongly associated with job satisfaction. This result supports the view that job satisfaction represents an evaluative judgment that develops from accumulated work experiences rather than a purely affective response. Teachers who perceive themselves as effective and competent in fulfilling their professional roles are more likely to evaluate their jobs positively. This ordering helps clarify why performance precedes satisfaction in the proposed model and is consistent with prior research emphasizing the role of perceived effectiveness and accomplishment in shaping work attitudes.

In addition, job satisfaction was found to be positively associated with intention to stay, confirming its central role in teachers' retention decisions. Satisfied teachers are more likely to perceive the employment relationship as rewarding and worthwhile, which strengthens their willingness to remain in their schools. While teacher performance also showed a direct relationship with intention to stay, the mediation analysis indicates that job satisfaction partially transmits the effect of performance on retention intentions. This suggests that performance alone may not be sufficient to sustain teachers' intention to stay unless it is accompanied by positive evaluative judgments about their work situation.

Taken together, these findings suggest a sequential process in which leadership decision-making style and school climate shape teachers' performance experiences, performance informs job satisfaction, and satisfaction contributes to teachers' intention to stay. The presence of partial mediation indicates that both behavioral experiences and evaluative attitudes play important roles in the retention process. Rather than acting as isolated predictors, leadership, climate, performance, and satisfaction appear to function as interconnected elements within teachers' broader work experience.

From a theoretical standpoint, the results are consistent with organizational behavior perspectives that emphasize the role of social and organizational conditions in shaping employee behavior and attitudes. The findings support the relevance of social exchange processes, whereby supportive leadership and positive organizational climates foster favorable work evaluations, as well as resource-based perspectives that highlight how organizational resources facilitate effective performance. By integrating these perspectives, the study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of teacher retention as a process shaped by both performance-related and attitudinal mechanisms.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examined the relationships among principals' decision-making style, school climate, teacher performance, job satisfaction, and intention to stay within the context of faith-based private schools. The findings provide empirical support for the proposed model, indicating that leadership practices and organizational climate are associated with teachers' retention intentions through performance- and satisfaction-related mechanisms.

The results show that principals' decision-making style and school climate are positively related to teacher performance. Teacher performance, in turn, is positively associated with job satisfaction, which subsequently contributes to teachers' intention to stay. The mediation analysis further indicates that job satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between teacher performance and intention to stay, suggesting that both

behavioral experiences and evaluative judgments play important roles in shaping retention intentions.

From a practical perspective, the findings suggest several recommendations for school leaders and educational administrators, particularly in faith-based private schools. Inclusive and participative decision-making practices may enhance teacher performance by fostering professional recognition, clarity, and shared responsibility. In addition, cultivating a supportive school climate characterized by trust, cooperation, and respectful relationships can create organizational conditions that enable teachers to perform effectively and sustain motivation over time. Efforts to strengthen teacher retention may therefore benefit from coordinated strategies that align leadership practices, relational climates, and opportunities for professional effectiveness, rather than relying on isolated interventions.

Several limitations should be acknowledged when interpreting these findings. The use of a cross-sectional design limits causal inference, and future studies may employ longitudinal or time-lagged designs to capture the dynamic nature of retention processes. The reliance on self-reported data also raises the possibility of common method bias, suggesting the value of incorporating multiple data sources in future research. Moreover, the context-specific focus on faith-based private schools may limit generalizability, and future studies could extend the model to other educational settings or examine additional moderating and mediating variables, such as organizational commitment or work engagement.

Overall, this study underscores that teacher retention is best understood as a process shaped by leadership, organizational climate, performance experiences, and evaluative work attitudes. By adopting an integrated organizational behavior perspective, the findings offer insights that may inform both theory development and practical efforts to foster stable and committed teaching workforces.

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