Increasing Proactive Work Behavior Among Teachers in Islamic Senior High School: The Role of Ethical Work Climate and Perceived Organizational Support

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ABSTRACT

Educational institutions, such as Islamic high schools, face challenges in managing teacher performance, particularly in promoting proactive behavior. This study explores the impact of an ethical work climate characterized by principles of caring, instrumental independence, service, rules, and codes, as well as perceived organizational support (POS), on teachers' proactive behavior in Islamic senior high schools. The study includes a one-month convenience sampling period, with 104 teachers from Medan, North Sumatra, participating as respondents. Primary data was collected through the respondents' perceptions and analyzed using Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Findings highlight that an ethical work climate has a greater influence on teachers' proactive behavior than POS. While perceived organizational support remains important, Islamic schools' unique cultural and religious context may elevate the significance of an ethical work climate. Teachers may perceive ethical guidelines and values as integral to their role and mission within the Islamic educational setting, leading to a more profound impact on their proactive engagement than the general perception of organizational support. The study concludes that the ethical work climate in Islamic senior high schools influences teachers' proactive behavior. It emphasizes the importance of fostering and maintaining an ethical work environment to support teachers professionally.

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INTRODUCTION

In the realm of school-based learning, the role of the teacher is pivotal. They are responsible for creating a conducive learning atmosphere within the classroom and motivating students to engage earnestly in their studies. However, being a well-liked teacher does not mean catering to every student, as excessive compliance can distract from educational goals. Moreover, the challenges in education become even greater when students are in the adolescent conformity phase (Rahayuningrum & Sari, 2021). Therefore, schools serve as vital educational hubs within society, with teachers occupying the front lines of educational services. Teachers hold a central and indispensable role as pivotal contributors to the learning process within educational institutions (Aryani et al., 2021; Safrudin et al., 2022). The primary function of educational institutions is to enhance the knowledge and skills of students, making learning their core operational process. These institutions are equipped with educational tools and support facilities that empower them to elevate the quality of their student's education. Elevating students' academic performance stands out as one of the foremost goals for educational institutions (Suhermanto & Anshari, 2018). Meanwhile, in Islamic education, the challenge teachers face is building strong student character, including at Islamic High School (Khaidir & Suud, 2020). Of course, this will encourage teachers to continue to improve in educating the students.

Teachers stand at the forefront of efforts to enhance the quality of educational institutions (Aryani et al., 2021; Suhermanto & Anshari, 2018). Consequently, teachers play a central role in any initiative aimed at dynamic and sustainable educational reform (Lambriex-Schmitz et al., 2020; Thurlings et al., 2015). Teacher performance is traditionally assessed through a normative institutional lens, which evaluates their contributions to the learning process at school. Numerous studies have highlighted that teacher performance in Islamic schools is influenced by various factors, including leadership and motivation (Aryani et al., 2021; Dian et al., 2022; Nasution & Afandi, 2022; Pradesa & Tanjung, 2021; Suprihatin et al., 2022). While technological advancements continue to reshape the educational landscape, the irreplaceable role of teachers persists. Teachers must continuously innovate, remain proactive, and adapt dynamically to these developments. They are expected to exhibit flexibility and creativity in shaping the learning process for students. Additionally, teachers must display resilience in various school-related situations, taking on multifaceted roles to contribute to the organization.

Proactive work behavior is crucial for organizational change, including in educational institutions (Ghitulescu, 2013). Teachers often involve themselves in change processes related to their roles and teaching practices within schools. While exploring how the organizational context influences proactive behavior is important, it is equally crucial to understand the specific situational and relational contexts that encourage proactive behavior within an organization.

Proactive behavior should be encouraged in both contexts because it goes beyond the formal job description and is not directly tied to organizational reward and punishment systems (Wu et al., 2011). This study aims to shed light on the role of the work environment, specifically the ethical framework and organizational support, in fostering proactive behavior in the workplace.

Teachers must adopt an anticipatory and proactive mindset to navigate these professional challenges. Teachers' proactive behavior manifests as tangible actions driven by their flexibility in responding to events and their capacity to take the initiative and responsibility for all occurrences within the learning process and their roles as educators. At the organizational level, understanding an individual's behavior at work is crucial for achieving organizational goals and objectives. Proactive behavior is an intriguing aspect to study, considering its theoretical foundations (Crant, 2000; Ghitulescu, 2016; Grant & Ashford, 2008). While work behavior is often associated with job performance, including aspects such as quantity, quality, and suitability, proactive behavior stands out as a form of individual performance that can add significant value to an organization (Crant, 2000; Grant & Ashford, 2008; Parker et al., 2006).

The ethical work climate and perceived organizational support are well-established constructs in behavioral studies (Altuntas et al., 2021; Abou Hashish, 2017; Maulina & Wicaksono, 2021; Paillé & Valéau, 2020). They are associated with various attitudes and behaviors. For example, ethical work climate can influence job satisfaction and organizational commitment (DeConinck et al., 2013; Okpara & Wynn, 2008; Pradesa, 2018). On the other hand, perceived organizational support is instrumental in fostering organizational citizenship behavior and other positive forms of behavior (Ahmed & Nawaz, 2015; Alshaabani et al., 2021; Pemecutan, Dharmanegara, & Udayana, 2016). In specific situational and relational contexts, perceived organizational support has been recognized as a catalyst for proactive behavior (Caesens et al., 2016). The relationships between constructs in research can be explored using social exchange theory as a useful framework to understand these dynamics.

Ethical work climate is particularly important for teachers, reflecting how well an organization is managed ethically. In education, it is essential to uphold the ethical principles of the teaching profession and ensure that the workplace climate aligns with these standards. The work culture in educational institutions plays a crucial role in enhancing educators' performance (Safrudin et al., 2022). An ethical work climate refers to the prevailing atmosphere within an organization that emphasizes and promotes ethical behavior and values. It involves creating a workplace culture where individuals are encouraged to make decisions and take actions while also encompassing factors such as care for others, instrumental focus on achieving goals, autonomy and independence, dedication to service, and adherence to established rules and codes of conduct (Martin & Cullen, 2006). In an ethical work climate, a shared understanding and

adherence to ethical standards fosters trust, transparency, and a sense of responsibility among employees.

Ethical climate has been found to predict absenteeism (Shapira-Lischinsky & Rosenblatt, 2010; Shapira-Lishchinsky & Raftar-Ozery, 2016) and organizational citizenship behavior among teachers (Shapira-Lishchinsky & Raftar-Ozery, 2016). Previous research has shown that perceived organizational support does not significantly affect individual proactive behavior (Agustina & Harijanto, 2022), highlighting the need to investigate other potential antecedents of proactive behavior. According to social exchange and reciprocal norms theory, higher perceived organizational support should enhance proactive behavior among individuals in the workplace (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Kurtessis et al., 2017). However, the inconsistency in empirical findings raises questions about the determinants of proactive behavior, which this study aims to explore comprehensively by examining the ethical work climate and perceived organizational support.
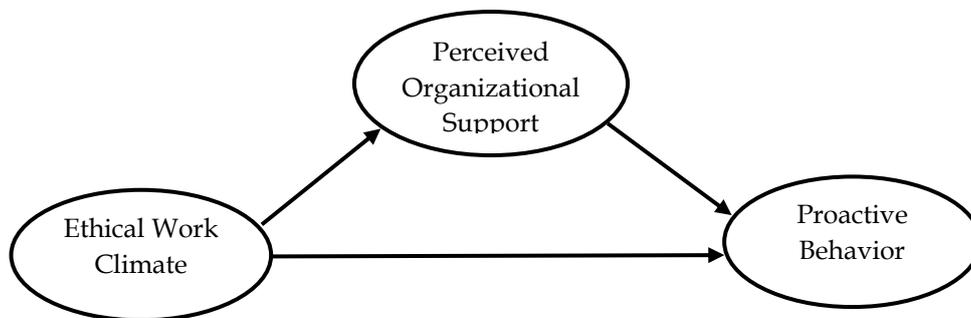

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

This study aims to address the gap in knowledge regarding the relationships between ethical work climate, perceived organizational support, and proactive behavior among teachers in Islamic senior high school organizations. There is a growing interest in understanding how distinct values, cultural and religious contexts, and the unique educational setting influence teachers' professional attitudes. Islamic senior high school teachers place great importance on exploring positive aspects within the framework of Islamic education. The organizational climate of Islamic schools is typically characterized by ethical foundations rooted in Islamic teachings, a strong religious identity, a focus on community and collaboration, an emphasis on character building, and a commitment to educational excellence. This study will explore how these features contribute to a positive work climate and perceptions of organizational support, impacting teachers' proactive behavior. Additionally, this study may provide insights into educational practices within this specific cultural and religious context.

METHODS

Quantitative methods were used to address the research questions. The unit of analysis was determined to be the teachers at the Islamic high school in Medan,

North Sumatra, to investigate the model. Data collection involved creating a carefully crafted questionnaire for this research, distributed online to all previously identified potential participants. Convenience sampling was the sampling technique used in this research. Given the specific context of Islamic High Schools in Medan, North Sumatra, and the practical limitations associated with accessing the target population of teachers, convenience sampling was chosen for its efficiency and accessibility. The researchers identified and invited teachers who were readily available and willing to participate in the study, aiming to balance feasibility and obtaining representative insights. The researchers acknowledged the potential limitations of convenience sampling and highlighted the relevance and significance of insights within the defined context. The data collection phase spanned from July to August 2022, when 104 teachers actively participated. Although convenience sampling may limit the generalizability of the findings to a broader population, it was considered suitable for this study due to the specific focus on Islamic high schools and the manageable sample size of 104 teachers.

The ethical work climate indicators, including caring, instrumental, independence, service, and rules and codes, serve as key dimensions in assessing the ethical culture within an organization. In the context of Islamic High Schools, the ethical work climate among teachers encompasses several key indicators. Caring involves demonstrating empathy and concern for colleagues and students, emphasizing a supportive and compassionate atmosphere. Instrument signifies the importance of achieving organizational goals ethically, aligning actions with the broader mission of Islamic education. Independence emphasizes individual autonomy and ethical decision-making within the framework of Islamic principles. Service underscores the commitment to serving the educational needs of students and the broader community, aligning with the philanthropic values inherent in Islamic teachings. Finally, adherence to rules and codes reflects the importance of following ethical guidelines and principles rooted in Islamic law, ensuring a harmonious and morally upright work environment. Collectively, these indicators contribute to shaping an ethical work climate conducive to fostering proactive behavior and professional engagement among teachers in Islamic high schools.

Perceived organizational support (POS) in the research context refers to the subjective perception of Islamic high school teachers regarding how much their educational institution values their contributions, cares about their well-being, and supports their professional development. This perception includes tangible support, such as resources and opportunities, and emotional support, such as recognition and appreciation. Proactive behavior among teachers is defined as self-initiated, anticipatory actions that go beyond formal job requirements and reflect a proactive approach to teaching. This behavior can include taking charge, voicing opinions, innovating, or participating in problem prevention within the Islamic high school institution. The concepts of ethical work climate, perceived organizational support, and proactive behavior were adapted from previous

research (Eisenberger et al., 2001; Grant & Ashford, 2008; Martin & Cullen, 2006; Parker et al., 2006). In this study, they were developed into a questionnaire using a Likert scale (ranging from 1 - strongly disagree to 5 - strongly agree).

The questionnaire underwent a thorough validation process, which included pilot testing. Pilot testing was conducted with a small group of Islamic high school teachers representing the target population. This phase assessed the questionnaire items' clarity, coherence, and relevance. Feedback from the pilot participants was used to make necessary adjustments, enhancing the questionnaire's reliability and validity. Once the pilot testing results meet the validity and reliability standards, the research instrument is considered suitable for distribution to the respondents.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was chosen as the preferred methodology, with the SmartPLS program used for analysis. PLS, a variant-based SEM statistical method, was selected due to its effectiveness in addressing data-specific challenges, especially when dealing with a relatively small sample size. The decision to use SEM-PLS was based on its suitability for examining complex relationships in the research model, its robustness with smaller sample sizes, and its flexibility in accommodating the specific characteristics of the study variables, aligning well with the goals and constraints of the research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The data collected through the distribution of questionnaires was thoroughly compiled and processed, involving a comprehensive examination of descriptive statistics, focusing on the mean values of each indicator and variable. The inner and outer models are components of structural equation modeling (SEM), specifically the partial least squares (PLS) variant, used to analyze relationships between latent constructs and observed variables in a research model.

The inner model refers to the relationships between latent constructs in the theoretical framework. It represents the relationships between variables such as ethical work climate, perceived organizational support, and proactive behavior among teachers. The inner model is assessed through path coefficients, which indicate the strength and direction of the relationships between these constructs. The outer model assesses the relationships between latent constructs and their observed indicators or manifest variables. It involves examining the reliability and validity of each indicator. Loadings represent the strength of the relationship between the latent construct and its observed variables. A high loading indicates that the observed variable effectively measures the latent construct. Additionally, indicators are assessed for discriminant validity, ensuring that each latent construct is distinct from others in the model.

For the outer model, Table 1 presents the discriminant validity results, displaying outer loadings ranging from 0.799 to 0.911 for each indicator of the ethical work

climate. All these indicators are well-accepted, demonstrating strong discriminant validity. Furthermore, the calculated Cronbach's alpha value of 0.925 and a composite reliability value of 0.943 signify high reliability for the ethical work climate construct. The ethical work climate is a variable that shows both internal consistency and discriminant validity. The mean values for each ethical work climate indicator fall within the range of 3.68 to 4.15, with an overall mean score of 3.816. Teachers in Islamic high schools perceive a relatively favorable ethical work climate within the organization.

Table 1. Mean Value, Discriminant Validity and Composite Reliability

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loading	t-statistic	Mean
Ethical Work Climate (X_1)	Caring	0.907	56.854738	4.15
	Instrumental	0.911	36.041721	3.70
a = 0.924	Independence	0.892	32.575045	3.72
mean = 3.816	Service	0.799	14.856260	3.68
CR = 0.943	Rules and Codes	0.869	36.464749	3.83
	The school cares about teachers' opinion	0.853	26.943038	3.84
	The school takes pride in teacher accomplishments	0.808	17.395619	3.71
Perceived Organizational Support (Z_1)	The school values teacher contribution	0.907	48.477699	4.04
a = 0.934 mean = 3.942	The school appreciates any extra teacher effort	0.899	30.984235	4.01
CR = 0.949	The school cares about teacher problem	0.845	17.981824	4.05
	The school cares about teacher well-being	0.898	48.698641	3.99
Proactive Behavior (Y_1)	Taking charge	0.876	33.763671	4.11
	Voice	0.875	27.674350	4.04
a = 0.909	Individual innovation	0.901	28.150998	3.82
mean = 3.937 CR = 0.936	Problem prevention	0.893	29.935273	3.79

Regarding perceived organizational support, all indicators exhibit outer loadings ranging from 0.808 to 0.907, confirming the discriminant validity of each perceived organizational support indicator. The calculated Cronbach's alpha value of 0.934 and composite reliability of 0.949 highlight the perceived organizational support construct's high internal consistency and reliability. The mean values for each perceived organizational support indicator range from 3.84 to 4.05, with an overall mean score of 3.942. Teachers perceive a fairly good level of support from their organizations.

Similarly, all indicators related to the proactive behavior variable display outer loadings ranging from 0.875 to 0.901, establishing the good discriminant validity

of each indicator. The Cronbach's alpha value of 0.906 and composite reliability of 0.936 indicate the proactive behavior construct's high internal consistency and reliability. The mean values for each proactive behavior indicator fall within the range of 3.79 to 4.11, with an overall mean score of 3.937. Teachers perceive a high level of proactive behavior in their work within Islamic high schools in Medan.

The results provide compelling insights into the perceptions of teachers in Islamic high schools regarding ethical work climate, perceived organizational support, and proactive behavior. Notably, the outer model analyses confirm the robust discriminant validity of each indicator within the constructs. The high-reliability metrics, including Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, confirm the internal consistency of the constructs. Teachers consistently reported favorable perceptions, with mean scores indicating a positive ethical work climate, substantial organizational support, and heightened proactive behavior.

The assessment of the ethical work climate in schools, as reported by teachers, falls within the moderate to good category. Interestingly, the organization's instrumental aspect predominantly characterizes the ethical work climate from the teachers' perspective. In schools, "instrumental" refers to teachers' decisions prioritizing their or the school's best interests over ethical considerations. However, empirical observations indicate that the most significant aspect reflecting an ethical work climate is the caring atmosphere among teachers and other school staff. These findings suggest that while Islamic high school organizations in Medan exhibit an ethical work climate, teachers value mutual care among colleagues most. In Islamic senior high schools, the culture of caring for one another is highly regarded by teachers as a crucial aspect of their workplace.

Perceived organizational support is also perceived quite positively by teachers. Teachers believe that the organization values their contributions, with the highest mean score observed in the indicator related to the school's concern for teachers' problems. These results are consistent with the caring aspect of the ethical work climate in Islamic high schools. Based on the mean scores for the variable, proactive behavior is rated as being in the "good" category. Notably, the most significant indicator reflecting proactive behavior is individual innovation. Among teachers in Islamic senior high schools, taking initiative and showing leadership are the most prominent forms of proactive behavior in their work.

Table 2. Latent Variable Correlations, Average of Variance Extracted (AVE), and Rsquare

	Ethical Work Climate	POS	Proactive Behavior	AVE	R Square
Ethical Work Climate	1.0000			0.7690	
POS	0.897	1.0000		0.7554	0.8061
Proactive Behavior	0.929	0.893	1.0000	0.7856	0.8817

Table 2 shows the correlation values between latent variables, the AVE (average variance extracted) value for each construct, and the R-square (R^2) value for each endogenous variable in the research model. The correlations between latent variables range from 0.893 to 0.929, indicating a very strong correlation. Two key parameters are considered to assess discriminant validity: the mean AVE root value and the correlations between latent variables. According to Table 2, the mean AVE root value is calculated to be 0.877, and the average correlation between latent variables is 0.851. The AVE root value exceeds the average correlation between latent variables, which meets this study's discriminant validity criteria. To further validate the measurement and structural model results, the goodness of fit (GoF) is calculated. The GoF is determined by multiplying the square root of the average communality index by the average value of R-square for each endogenous variable. In this model, the GoF calculation yields a value of 0.649, indicating a relatively high GoF value for the research model.

Table 3. Result of Path Coefficient

	β	t-statistic	p
Ethical Work Climate --> Perceived Organizational Support	0.898	41.056	.000
Ethical Work Climate --> Proactive Behavior	0.659	7.795	.000
Perceived Organizational Support --> Proactive Behavior	0.301	3.473	.011

Table 3 presents the results of the beta coefficient analysis for each relationship between variables in the research model. The key findings are as follows:

1. Ethical Work Climate on Perceived Organizational Support: The beta coefficient for the relationship between ethical work climate and perceived organizational support is 0.898 (sign.000), indicating a highly significant and positive effect of ethical work climate on perceived organizational support. In other words, a positive ethical work climate within the organization significantly contributes to teachers perceiving greater organizational support.

2. Ethical Work Climate on Proactive Behavior: The beta coefficient for the relationship between ethical work climate and proactive behavior is 0.659 (sign.000), demonstrating a substantial influence of ethical work climate on proactive behavior. A positive ethical work climate is crucial in encouraging teachers to exhibit proactive behavior in their roles.

3. Perceived Organizational Support on Proactive Behavior: The beta coefficient for the relationship between perceived organizational support and proactive behavior is 0.301 (sign.000), indicating a significant effect of perceived organizational support on proactive behavior. Teachers who perceive greater organizational support are more likely to engage in proactive behavior in their work.

4. The mediating role of perceived organizational support on the effect of ethical work climate on proactive behavior: The beta coefficient for the relationship between ethical work climate and POS is 0.898 (sign.000), while the beta coefficient for the relationship between perceived organizational support and proactive behavior is 0.301 (sign.000). These results indicate an important mediating role of POS in the effect of ethical work climate on proactive behavior among teachers. Teachers who feel that the ethical climate in their organization is improving can encourage proactive behavior in their work as long as they feel supported by the Islamic high school.
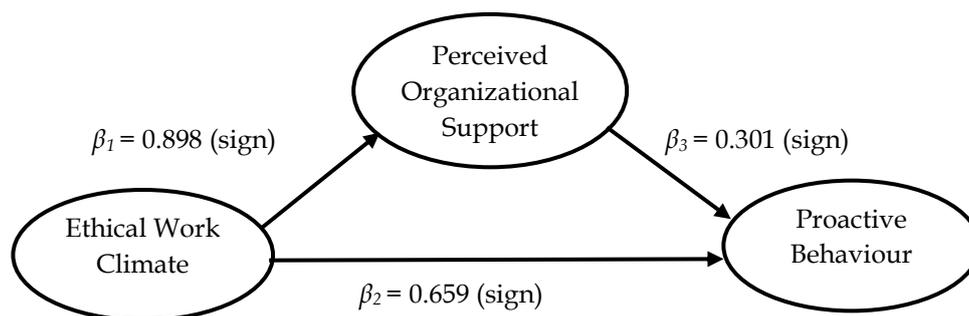

Figure 2: Path Analysis

Discussion

These findings highlight the importance of an ethical work climate and perceived organizational support in shaping proactive behavior among teachers in Islamic high schools in Medan, North Sumatra. The positive relationships between these variables underscore their pivotal roles in creating a conducive and proactive work environment for teachers. The results of the structural model analysis show that the ethical work climate has a significant impact on perceived organizational support, surpassing the influence of other relationships among variables. For teachers in Islamic high schools in Medan, a work climate characterized by ethical values and principles plays a crucial role in fostering their perception of organizational support. Additionally, the influence of the ethical work climate on proactive behavior is stronger than the impact of perceived organizational support on proactive behavior. This finding emphasizes the importance of cultivating an ethical work environment for teachers in Islamic high schools, as it supports their optimal performance and fosters positive energy and a strong sense of purpose within the school community. The significance of ethical values and a supportive work environment enhances teacher performance and proactive engagement within educational institutions (Shapira-Lischinsky & Rosenblatt, 2010).

The research highlights the significant impact of an ethical work environment on how teachers perceive support from their school organization. Specifically, the "caring" aspect within the work climate at Islamic high schools in Medan was paramount to teachers. The high level of concern exhibited by the organization

towards teachers' problems was the most prominent form of support perceived by respondents. This finding underscores the importance of studying how an ethical work climate, which values caring, contributes to increased organizational support and proactive behavior among teachers in Islamic high schools in Medan. Several organizations, including Islamic educational institutions, have emphasized the importance of a positive organizational climate or culture (Asmarani et al., 2022; Ghosh, 2015) in supporting the attitudes and behavior of individuals within them. These findings align with the socioeconomic perspective, which emphasizes the importance of fostering an ethical climate in the workplace, with school organizations no exception (Cohen, 1995; Shapira-Lischinsky & Raftar-Ozery, 2016).

It's worth noting that the research findings differ from previous studies (Agustina & Harijanto, 2022) that did not consider perceived organizational support as the most significant determinant of proactive behavior. This study demonstrates that perceived organizational support can be a crucial predictor of proactive behavior among teachers, enriching the potential outcomes of perceived organizational support (Ahmed & Nawaz, 2015; Kurtessis et al., 2017). Furthermore, this study supports the notion that all changes, especially psychosocial ones, can contribute to positive changes in work behavior (Ghitulescu, 2016), drawing upon the social exchange perspective (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005) within this context.

The R-square (R^2) value for perceived organizational support is 0.806, indicating that the ethical work climate can explain 80.60 percent of the variance in perceived organizational support among teachers at Islamic High Schools in Medan. The remaining 19.40 percent is attributed to factors other than the ethical work climate. Similarly, the R-square (R^2) value for proactive behavior is 0.882, suggesting that the determinants (ethical work climate and perceived organizational support) can explain 88.20 percent of the variance in proactive behavior. Factors outside the predictor variables influence the remaining 11.80 percent. The ethical work climate and perceived organizational support are crucial to proactive behavior.

Additionally, the Q-square value of 97.70 indicates that the model is highly effective in predicting the relevance value, further highlighting the strength of the research model. In conclusion, these findings underscore the crucial roles of the ethical work climate and perceived organizational support in explaining the variance in teachers' perceptions of organizational support and their proactive behavior. The model exhibits a high degree of effectiveness in predicting the relevance value, enhancing the overall validity and reliability of the research framework.

However, an ethical work climate that involves good service can lead to higher perceptions of organizational support. Social exchange theory states that when individuals feel organizational support, they tend to contribute more and be more proactive in the work environment. Teachers who feel supported are more

likely to be actively engaged, share knowledge, and participate in school initiatives, which can ultimately improve the quality of education and the overall work climate. Practically, Islamic high schools can develop coaching and mentoring programs for teachers. This support may include guidance in work ethics, professional development, and day-to-day problem-solving. Providing adequate facilities and resources will be important in supporting the tasks carried out by teachers. It can include educational technology, a good library, and a comfortable work environment. Islamic high schools can build an effective communication system between school leaders and teachers, which includes holding regular meetings, providing information about school news, and providing an online platform for sharing information. With these things, they can encourage positive feelings from teachers about their organization. Thus, Islamic high schools must implement a clear and transparent performance recognition program. Recognition may include written awards, appreciation at school meetings, or annual recognition programs. Another important thing is providing regular constructive feedback to teachers, recognizing their achievements, and providing direction for improvement if necessary.

CONCLUSIONS

Generally, a work environment promoting ethical behavior and good service can lead to higher perceptions of organizational support. According to social exchange theory, when individuals feel supported by their organization, they are more likely to contribute and exhibit proactive behavior in the workplace. It is particularly important when studying proactive behavior among teachers in Islamic senior high schools. Based on the theoretical perspectives of ethical work climate and organizational support, the research findings highlight the crucial role that an ethical work climate plays in determining proactive behavior. A positive and ethically sound school environment is essential for teachers to feel supported and motivated to be proactive.

Given the increasing expectations placed on teachers to excel, their level of proactivity becomes instrumental in effectively managing the demands of their profession. This observation has significant implications for improving the working environment in Islamic senior high schools in Medan and enhancing its overall quality. One practical recommendation from this research is for educational institutions to prioritize cultivating a conducive and ethical work climate. It has been shown to have a profound impact on stimulating proactive behavior among Islamic high school teachers in Medan. As future researchers explore the relatively underexplored theme of ethical work climate and proactive behavior in the workplace, they may consider using alternative methodologies, such as experimental or longitudinal designs, further to enrich our understanding of this critical area of study.

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