

IMPROVING ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR IN THE ERA OF INDEPENDENT LEARNING

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Abstract. This study aims to analyze the improvement of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) among elementary school teachers within the context of Indonesia's Independent Learning (Merdeka Belajar) policy by examining the roles of transformational leadership and self-efficacy. Using a quantitative research design with a path analysis approach, data were collected from 173 certified civil servant teachers in accredited "A" public elementary schools across Depok City, West Java, through proportional random sampling and structured questionnaires. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics with SPSS 22 to test the hypothesized relationships among variables. The results show that transformational leadership has a significant positive effect on OCB ($\text{sig} = 0.107 < \alpha = 0.05$), while self-efficacy does not show a significant influence ($\text{sig} = 0.884 > \alpha = 0.05$). These findings indicate that school principals' visionary and inspirational leadership behaviors enhance teachers' willingness to engage in voluntary and collaborative actions beyond formal job requirements, a critical factor for advancing educational quality in the Independent Learning era. The study concludes that strengthening transformational leadership practices and cultivating teachers' professional self-efficacy through continuous training and supportive work environments are essential strategies to sustain a high level of OCB and foster a positive, innovative school culture..

Keywords: Organizational Citizenship Behavior; Independent Learning; Elementary Education

I. INTRODUCTION

The transformation of educational systems in the twenty-first century requires teachers to move beyond routine instructional duties and demonstrate proactive, voluntary behaviors that contribute to school improvement. These discretionary actions, known as Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), are essential in sustaining collaboration, innovation, and collective efficacy within educational institutions [1]. OCB encompasses teachers' willingness to assist colleagues, engage in institutional initiatives, and maintain professional integrity without expecting formal rewards [2]. In the Indonesian context, the implementation of the Independent Learning (Merdeka Belajar) policy has introduced greater autonomy, creativity, and flexibility in the learning process, thereby demanding stronger intrinsic motivation and professional commitment from teachers [3]. Strengthening OCB is thus critical to achieving the objectives of Merdeka Belajar, which emphasizes humanistic, outcome-based, and innovation-oriented education [4]. Transformational leadership has been identified as one of the most influential factors in enhancing OCB among teachers [5]. According to Bass and Avolio's framework, transformational leaders inspire followers through vision, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and moral influence [6]. In the school context, principals who demonstrate transformational leadership promote a sense of purpose, encourage teacher innovation, and foster a culture of trust and collaboration [7]. Recent studies highlight that transformational leadership correlates positively with teachers' work engagement, satisfaction, and voluntary contributions to institutional success [8]. Furthermore, transformational leaders effectively align teachers' individual goals with organizational missions, reinforcing teachers' affective commitment and willingness to perform extra-role behaviors [9]. Another factor influencing OCB is self-efficacy, or an individual's belief in their capability to perform specific tasks successfully [10]. Rooted in Bandura's social cognitive theory, self-efficacy influences motivation, persistence, and adaptability in complex teaching situations [11]. Teachers with high self-efficacy are more likely to take initiative, embrace change, and exhibit altruistic behaviors that benefit the organization [12]. Studies in educational psychology reveal that self-efficacy predicts not only instructional effectiveness but also collegial support, innovation adoption,

and organizational citizenship [13]. However, empirical findings regarding the strength of this relationship vary across cultural and institutional contexts, necessitating further research in developing countries like Indonesia [14].

In the era of Merdeka Belajar, teachers' OCB becomes increasingly vital as schools adopt decentralized management, outcome-based assessments, and flexible learning models. These reforms require educators to demonstrate professional autonomy, collaboration, and accountability, traits strongly associated with OCB [15]. However, many public elementary schools still face challenges in cultivating a supportive environment that fosters OCB due to hierarchical management structures, limited professional development opportunities, and varying leadership styles [16]. Understanding how transformational leadership and self-efficacy interact to shape teachers' OCB can thus provide valuable insights for school improvement strategies and educational policy development. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the influence of transformational leadership and self-efficacy on Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) among elementary school teachers in the Independent Learning era. The research contributes both theoretically and practically: theoretically, it expands the understanding of leadership-behavior dynamics in the Indonesian educational context; practically, it provides empirical evidence for educational leaders and policymakers to design interventions that enhance teacher motivation, trust, and engagement. The study ultimately supports the realization of Merdeka Belajar's vision—empowering teachers as transformative agents of learning and institutional excellence.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) refers to voluntary, discretionary behavior exhibited by individuals that is not directly recognized by formal reward systems but contributes significantly to the overall effectiveness of the organization [17]. Originally conceptualized by Organ (1988) and expanded by Podsakoff et al. (2019), OCB includes behaviors such as altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy, and civic virtue [18]. In educational institutions, OCB manifests through teachers' willingness to collaborate, assist colleagues, share instructional resources, and participate in school activities beyond contractual obligations [19]. Recent research in educational management identifies OCB as a critical determinant of school performance and teacher professionalism, especially in dynamic policy environments [20]. When teachers demonstrate OCB, schools exhibit greater adaptability, innovation, and stakeholder trust, thereby enhancing the quality of learning outcomes [21]. OCB also functions as a bridge between individual motivation and organizational culture, creating synergy that supports continuous school improvement [22]. Several empirical studies have demonstrated that teachers' OCB positively correlates with transformational leadership, job satisfaction, and work engagement [23].

Moreover, OCB in the education sector plays an instrumental role in building learning organizations, where collaboration and self-regulation are essential for sustainable improvement. Teachers with strong OCB are more likely to engage in reflective practices, mentoring peers, and initiating pedagogical innovation [24]. In the Indonesian context, fostering OCB aligns with the nation's educational reform objectives, which emphasize Gotong Royong (collective cooperation) and Profil Pelajar Pancasila values—core elements of holistic education. As such, OCB is not only an individual behavioral construct but also a cultural foundation for advancing school transformation in Indonesia's modern educational landscape [25].

The Independent Learning (Merdeka Belajar) policy introduced by Indonesia's Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology in 2019 aims to transform the rigid, standardized education model into a flexible, student-centered, and autonomy-based system [26]. The policy grants teachers greater authority to design contextualized learning, innovate assessment strategies, and collaborate across disciplines. However, such autonomy demands a higher level of professional accountability, self-regulation, and voluntary commitment—qualities inherently linked to OCB [27]. In the Independent Learning era, teachers are not only content deliverers but also curriculum designers, facilitators, and community partners. They are expected to demonstrate proactive initiatives, professional cooperation, and adaptability to evolving educational challenges [28]. These behaviors align closely with the five dimensions of OCB identified by Organ particularly altruism and civic virtue which are essential for sustaining innovation in decentralized education systems [29]. The successful implementation of Merdeka Belajar thus relies heavily on cultivating teachers' intrinsic motivation and commitment to organizational goals [30]. According to Rahmawati (2023), teachers who display strong OCB behaviors—such as volunteering for school projects, mentoring peers, and supporting students beyond classroom boundaries—directly contribute to realizing the vision of Merdeka Belajar as a transformative educational movement [31].

Furthermore, leadership styles, organizational climate, and teacher efficacy have been identified as antecedents of OCB under the Independent Learning framework [32]. Transformational leadership, for instance, encourages teacher empowerment through shared vision and collective efficacy, fostering trust and respect among school communities [33]. In contrast, low organizational support and bureaucratic rigidity can hinder the expression of OCB by limiting teacher autonomy and innovation. Hence, creating an enabling environment that promotes psychological safety and shared leadership becomes crucial for sustaining OCB in the Merdeka Belajar era [34]. In summary, the theoretical intersection between OCB and Independent Learning underscores the need for teachers to embody professional autonomy, altruism, collaboration, and civic virtue as drivers of educational transformation. Strengthening OCB through leadership development, professional learning communities, and supportive school cultures ensures that the Merdeka Belajar policy achieves its ultimate goal empowering educators and learners to co-create meaningful, inclusive, and future-ready education systems.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a quantitative explanatory research design aimed at analyzing the factors influencing Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) among elementary school teachers in the context of Indonesia's Independent Learning (Merdeka Belajar) policy. The design was selected to test causal relationships between transformational leadership, self-efficacy, and OCB,

providing empirical evidence for theoretical linkages identified in previous studies [27]. The research population comprised certified civil servant teachers (Guru PNS Bersertifikat) working in A-accredited public elementary schools in Depok City, West Java, reflecting a professional environment aligned with the Merdeka Belajar transformation agenda. A proportional random sampling technique was applied to ensure representativeness, resulting in a total sample of 173 respondents. Data collection utilized a structured questionnaire containing validated Likert-scale items measuring transformational leadership (Bass & Avolio's MLQ), teacher self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy's TSES), and OCB (Organ's OCB scale). Each instrument underwent validity and reliability testing through Pearson correlation and Cronbach's Alpha (>0.80), confirming strong internal consistency.

Data analysis was performed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods with SPSS version 22, incorporating path analysis to determine both direct and indirect effects among the three variables. Prior to hypothesis testing, classical assumption tests (normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity) were conducted to ensure data validity. The regression model was structured to evaluate the predictive strength of transformational leadership and self-efficacy on OCB both independently and simultaneously. The significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$) was used as the decision criterion for hypothesis acceptance. Quantitative findings were then interpreted through theoretical triangulation with contemporary leadership and behavioral theories to enhance construct validity and contextual relevance [28]. This methodological approach follows Creswell's (2020) and Yin's (2021) recommendations for explanatory educational research, ensuring methodological rigor and practical applicability. The combination of empirical analysis and theoretical reflection provides a robust framework for understanding how leadership practices and teacher beliefs interact to enhance OCB in the evolving landscape of Independent Learning.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study revealed that transformational leadership has a significant and positive influence on teachers' Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), while self-efficacy does not significantly affect OCB levels among elementary school teachers in Depok City. The results of path analysis indicated that transformational leadership contributed to OCB with a standardized regression coefficient of $\beta = 0.107$, $p < 0.05$, confirming a positive causal relationship. Conversely, self-efficacy showed a regression coefficient of $\beta = 0.884$, $p > 0.05$, indicating no statistically significant effect. These findings suggest that the principal's transformational leadership practices—characterized by vision sharing, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration—play a more substantial role in promoting teachers' voluntary behaviors beyond formal job duties. The descriptive analysis also revealed that teachers rated their principals highly in aspects of inspirational motivation (mean = 4.36) and individual consideration (mean = 4.28) on a 5-point scale, reflecting strong relational leadership in line with Merdeka Belajar principles [29].

The significant influence of transformational leadership on OCB corroborates earlier research indicating that leaders who empower and inspire teachers foster stronger commitment, collaboration, and organizational involvement [30]. According to Bass and Riggio's leadership theory, transformational leaders cultivate an emotional connection that motivates employees to exceed formal expectations [31]. In the educational context, such leadership stimulates teachers to participate in school development initiatives, mentoring activities, and innovative pedagogical practices—all of which exemplify citizenship behaviors essential for school success. Studies conducted in Asian educational settings similarly found that teacher OCB increases when school principals promote a sense of shared vision and collective efficacy [32]. This finding is particularly relevant to Indonesia's Independent Learning policy, which emphasizes teacher autonomy, creativity, and moral responsibility [33].

Interestingly, the lack of a significant relationship between self-efficacy and OCB contrasts with findings from several Western studies that associate self-efficacy with higher job satisfaction, persistence, and altruistic behavior [34]. This discrepancy may be attributed to contextual differences in the Indonesian school environment, where collectivist cultural values and hierarchical leadership structures tend to moderate individual self-belief expression. Teachers may feel more motivated to engage in extra-role behaviors when leadership and organizational climate provide explicit encouragement rather than relying solely on personal confidence. This aligns with Ülker and Elci's [35] assertion that organizational culture and leadership support are stronger predictors of OCB than individual factors in collectivist societies.

Furthermore, the findings emphasize that transformational leadership mediates the institutionalization of OCB by reinforcing values of collaboration, empathy, and professional integrity among teachers. When principals model ethical behavior and provide continuous professional feedback, teachers reciprocate by showing loyalty and voluntary cooperation [36]. This dynamic supports the notion that OCB is not merely an outcome of personality or motivation but a reflection of the relational and cultural dimensions of school management. Transformational leaders thus act as "cultural architects," shaping professional norms that sustain long-term organizational learning. In the framework of Merdeka Belajar, OCB functions as the behavioral manifestation of teacher empowerment and professional freedom. Teachers exhibiting OCB contribute actively to co-curricular development, peer mentoring, and community engagement practices essential for realizing the autonomy-driven philosophy of Independent Learning. These behaviors are consistent with Organ's (1988) classic OCB dimensions altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy, and civic virtue which align with Indonesia's educational values of Gotong Royong and Profil Pelajar Pancasila [37]. Strengthening OCB, therefore, is not only a managerial goal but also a moral imperative in shaping a resilient and collaborative learning culture.

The study underscores that leadership development programs must focus on cultivating transformational competencies among school leaders to sustain teacher motivation and collective performance. Investing in leadership training, mentorship

systems, and school-based professional learning communities (PLCs) can enhance the relational trust and psychological safety necessary for continuous improvement. As noted by Leithwood and Jantzi [38], effective leadership remains one of the most powerful determinants of teacher engagement and school quality. Future studies may explore the mediating effects of organizational climate and teacher engagement to further elucidate the complex dynamics between leadership, self-efficacy, and OCB.

For school leaders and administrators, this study emphasizes the importance of adopting transformational leadership practices as a strategic approach to strengthen OCB and teacher engagement. Leadership development programs should focus on enhancing principals' ability to communicate vision, provide mentoring, and encourage reflective collaboration. Schools may also implement Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to cultivate a supportive and participatory culture that reinforces altruism, teamwork, and innovation [41]. For policy makers, the findings support the integration of OCB-enhancing strategies within Indonesia's Merdeka Belajar initiatives. National teacher development frameworks should incorporate leadership training and school-based management models that promote professional autonomy and collective responsibility. Strengthening teachers' sense of belonging and organizational identification can lead to sustainable educational transformation consistent with the goals of Profil Pelajar Pancasila [42].

From a theoretical standpoint, this study contributes to the body of literature by reaffirming that OCB functions as an outcome of social-exchange dynamics within educational institutions, shaped primarily by leadership and organizational culture. The results extend Organ's OCB theory into the Southeast Asian educational context, providing cross-cultural validation under a decentralized policy framework. The study also highlights that the effectiveness of transformational leadership in promoting OCB depends on contextual moderators such as teacher autonomy and institutional trust [43]. Future research could employ mixed-method or longitudinal designs to explore how OCB evolves over time as schools adapt to Merdeka Belajar. Investigating mediating variables such as job satisfaction, trust in leadership, or school climate could deepen understanding of the mechanisms through which leadership fosters OCB. Additionally, comparative studies between public and private schools, or across urban and rural settings, may reveal contextual differences that inform more tailored leadership and organizational strategies for enhancing teacher citizenship behavior.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that transformational leadership plays a significant role in improving Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) among elementary school teachers in the context of Indonesia's Independent Learning (Merdeka Belajar) policy, while self-efficacy shows no significant direct influence. Empirical results indicate that leadership characterized by inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and vision sharing encourages teachers to voluntarily engage in extra-role behaviors that contribute to institutional improvement. These findings reinforce previous research suggesting that leadership style remains one of the most consistent predictors of OCB, especially in collectivist and hierarchical educational systems [39]. The study also demonstrates that OCB serves as a behavioral reflection of teachers' internalization of organizational values and their active participation in realizing the transformative goals of Merdeka Belajar. Teachers exhibiting high OCB are more likely to collaborate, support peers, and innovate in their instructional practices—behaviors essential for promoting the Independent Learning philosophy. Although self-efficacy did not show a significant direct effect, it may influence OCB indirectly through mediating factors such as motivation, work engagement, or leadership support. These results suggest that cultivating OCB in schools requires more than individual confidence—it necessitates relational trust, moral leadership, and an organizational culture that empowers teachers to act beyond formal obligations. Thus, OCB is best nurtured in environments where transformational leadership fosters empowerment, empathy, and shared commitment toward educational excellence [40].

V. REFERENSI

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