

Original Article

Transformational Leadership of School Administrators and Teachers' Performance: The Mediating Role of Perceived Motivation

Raymart O. Gorosin , Laila Teresa F. Bersoto , Marjurie V. Catuguran, Ronielyn F. Pinsoy 

Author Information:

University of Southern Mindanao
Kidapawan City Campus, Kidapawan City,
Philippines

Correspondence:
rogorosin@usm.edu.ph

Article History:

Date received: March 25, 2026
Date revised: April 27, 2026
Date accepted: May 8, 2026

Recommended citation:

Gorosin, R., Bersoto, L.T., Catuguran, M., & Pinsoy, R. (2026). Transformational leadership of school administrators and teachers' performance: The mediating role of perceived motivation. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, 4(6), 88-100. <https://doi.org/10.69569/jip.2026.160>

Abstract. Transformational leadership has been widely recognized as a key driver of teacher outcomes; however, its underlying mechanisms, particularly the role of motivation, remain inconsistently supported in empirical research. Grounded in Self-Determination Theory and Transformational Leadership Theory, this study examined whether teachers' perceived motivation mediates the relationship between school administrators' transformational leadership and teachers' performance. Using a quantitative descriptive-correlational design, data were collected from 166 public secondary school teachers in Kabacan, North Cotabato through stratified random sampling. Standardized instruments, including the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), motivation scales, and Classroom Observation Tool (COT) ratings, were utilized. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Spearman correlation, and mediation analysis in Jamovi. Findings revealed that transformational leadership was not significantly associated with teachers' motivation or performance, and motivation did not significantly mediate the relationship between leadership and performance. These results suggest that the assumed motivational pathway linking transformational leadership to teacher performance may not hold in all educational contexts, highlighting the need to consider contextual and organizational factors. The study contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence that challenges the universality of motivation as a mediating mechanism and underscores the importance of context in leadership-performance relationships.

Keywords: Mediation analysis; Motivation; Performance; Transformational leadership; Teachers.

Educational systems worldwide continue to experience rapid changes driven by curriculum reforms, technological integration, and increasing accountability demands. These changes have intensified the responsibilities of school administrators, whose leadership practices significantly shape teachers' professional experiences and instructional effectiveness. Recent research in the Philippine educational context emphasizes that leadership quality remains a critical factor in fostering positive school environments, sustaining teachers' motivation, and improving performance outcomes (Caharian & Cabanlit, 2024; Encallado, Bajarias, De Guzman, & Peligro, 2025). These perspectives are conceptually grounded in Transformational Leadership Theory, which posits that leaders influence followers by articulating a shared vision, providing intellectual stimulation, and addressing individual needs. In educational settings, this theory explains how school administrators shape

teachers' attitudes, motivation, and professional performance through specific leadership behaviors.

Transformational leadership has emerged as one of the most effective leadership styles in educational settings due to its focus on vision-building, professional growth, and individualized support. Philippine studies show that school administrators who demonstrate transformational leadership—such as inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration—positively influence teachers' attitudes toward their work and commitment to organizational goals (Basco & Espiritu, 2025; Caharian & Cabanlit, 2024). These leadership practices encourage teachers to exceed minimum expectations and actively engage in continuous improvement, promoting a culture of professional excellence within schools. Consistent with Transformational Leadership Theory, these leadership dimensions are expected to foster not only behavioral compliance but also internalized commitment, suggesting that leadership effects may extend beyond direct influence and operate through psychological mechanisms such as motivation.

Teachers' motivation remains a central concern in contemporary Philippine education, particularly amid increasing workloads, professional stress, and post-pandemic recovery. Studies grounded in Self-Determination Theory indicate that teachers are more motivated when their needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are supported by school leadership (Encallado et al., 2025). Transformational school leaders contribute to these motivational conditions by empowering teachers, recognizing their efforts, and fostering collaborative professional relationships. Teachers' performance, defined by instructional quality, classroom management, and professional engagement, is also closely linked to leadership and motivational factors. Philippine research has shown that strong transformational leadership practices are associated with higher levels of teacher effectiveness in instructional planning, classroom delivery, and professional responsibilities (Basco & Espiritu, 2025). Collectively, these findings suggest that transformational leadership enhances teachers' motivation, which in turn improves their performance in schools.

This relationship is further explained by Self-Determination Theory, which posits that the satisfaction of autonomy, competence, and relatedness enhances intrinsic motivation, leading to improved performance outcomes. In parallel, Social Cognitive Theory suggests that teachers' performance is influenced by the interaction between environmental factors, such as leadership practices, and personal factors, including motivation and self-beliefs. Together, these theories provide a basis for examining both direct and indirect relationships among leadership, motivation, and performance.

Despite the growing body of research on transformational leadership in education, many studies in the Philippines have examined teachers' motivation and performance as separate outcomes. Limited empirical research has simultaneously investigated how transformational leadership influences both teachers' motivation and performance within a single explanatory framework. Addressing this gap is essential for developing evidence-based leadership practices that support teachers holistically. In addition, while previous studies have established the positive influence of transformational leadership on teachers' motivation and performance, much of the existing literature assumes a direct or consistently mediated relationship among these variables. However, limited attention has been given to examining whether motivation reliably functions as a mediating mechanism, particularly in public secondary schools, where organizational constraints, policy demands, and evaluation systems may influence teacher behavior.

This study is novel in that it not only confirms established relationships but also critically examines the validity of the assumed mediation pathway between transformational leadership and teachers' performance. By simultaneously analyzing leadership, motivation, and performance within a single analytical framework, the study provides a more comprehensive understanding of their interactions. Furthermore, the study contributes to the field by offering empirical evidence from a localized Philippine context, where structural and institutional conditions may differ from those in prior international studies. In doing so, it addresses an important gap in the literature by testing whether widely accepted theoretical assumptions—particularly those derived from Transformational Leadership Theory and Self-Determination Theory—hold true in a specific educational setting. The findings are expected to inform both theory and practice by identifying whether motivation serves as a meaningful explanatory mechanism or whether alternative factors should be considered in understanding teachers' performance.

Therefore, this study seeks to examine the influence of school administrators' transformational leadership on

teachers' motivation and performance. Specifically, it aims to: (1) determine the level of transformational leadership demonstrated by school administrators across the dimensions of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration; (2) assess the level of teachers' motivation in terms of intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and autonomy, competence, and relatedness; (3) determine teachers' performance in schools; (4) examine the relationships between transformational leadership and teachers' motivation and performance; and (5) investigate whether teachers' motivation mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and teachers' performance.

This study is significant for multiple stakeholders. For school administrators, it provides insights into how specific transformational leadership behaviors influence teachers' motivation and performance, enabling targeted professional growth, enhanced engagement, and the creation of supportive and innovative school environments. For teachers, the study highlights leadership practices that enhance intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and foster autonomy, competence, and relatedness, encouraging greater professional engagement and instructional effectiveness. Policymakers and educational planners will benefit from empirical evidence on the leadership behaviors that enhance teacher motivation and performance, informing policies, programs, and resource allocation for administrative training and development initiatives. From a research perspective, the study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on transformational leadership in education in the Philippines, providing a framework for understanding the mechanisms—such as motivation—through which leadership affects teacher outcomes. In particular, the study contributes by empirically examining whether motivation serves as a mediating mechanism, thereby testing theoretical assumptions derived from Transformational Leadership Theory and Self-Determination Theory within a specific educational setting.

Finally, students and other school stakeholders stand to gain from improvements in teacher motivation and performance, which are likely to enhance student learning outcomes and overall school climate, thereby strengthening confidence in school leadership and fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

Literature Review

Transformational Leadership in Educational Settings

Transformational leadership has been widely recognized as an effective leadership style in educational organizations due to its emphasis on vision, motivation, and professional growth. Rooted in the work of Bass and Avolio, transformational leadership is characterized by four core dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. In school contexts, administrators who demonstrate these behaviors are more likely to foster trust, commitment, and shared purpose among teachers. These dimensions are grounded in Transformational Leadership Theory, which explains how leaders influence followers by aligning individual values with organizational goals and fostering internalized commitment rather than mere compliance.

Recent studies highlight the relevance of transformational leadership in improving school effectiveness. Berkovich and Eyal (2021) emphasized that transformational leadership in schools promotes ethical decision-making and positive organizational climates, both of which are critical to supporting teachers' engagement. Similarly, Kriswanto and Santosa (2025) found that transformational leadership practices significantly influence both teachers' motivation and school performance, underscoring the role of school leaders in shaping instructional quality and organizational outcomes.

These findings support the assumption of Transformational Leadership Theory that leadership behaviors can influence both psychological and performance-related outcomes, suggesting a pathway through which leadership affects teachers beyond direct supervision.

Transformational Leadership and Teachers' Motivation

Teachers' motivation is a key determinant of instructional quality and student learning outcomes. Motivation in the workplace is commonly understood in terms of intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions, as well as psychological needs such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness. In educational settings, motivated teachers are more likely to demonstrate commitment, persistence, and enthusiasm in their professional roles. This conceptualization is anchored in Self-Determination Theory, which posits that individuals are more intrinsically motivated when their basic psychological needs are satisfied.

Empirical evidence consistently shows that transformational leadership positively affects teachers' motivation. Fernet et al. (2015) found that transformational leadership enhances employees' intrinsic motivation by improving perceived job characteristics and fostering meaningful work. In school environments, administrators who inspire, intellectually stimulate, and support teachers individually contribute to higher levels of professional motivation. Teachers who perceive their leaders as transformational tend to feel more valued, empowered, and motivated to perform beyond basic job requirements. From the perspective of Self-Determination Theory, such leadership behaviors may enhance motivation by supporting autonomy, competence, and relatedness, thereby strengthening intrinsic motivation among teachers.

Recent educational studies further support this relationship. Kriswanto and Santosa (2025) reported that transformational leadership practices significantly predict teachers' motivation, suggesting that leadership behaviors play a crucial role in sustaining teachers' psychological engagement and work satisfaction. These findings reinforce the importance of leadership approaches that prioritize encouragement, professional growth, and shared vision. However, theoretical perspectives also suggest that the strength of this relationship may vary depending on contextual conditions, as the effectiveness of leadership in enhancing motivation depends on the extent to which teachers' psychological needs are genuinely supported.

Teachers Motivation and Performance

Teachers' performance refers to the effectiveness with which teachers carry out instructional responsibilities, manage classrooms, and engage in professional activities. Motivation is widely regarded as a foundational factor influencing teachers' performance, as motivated teachers are more likely to invest effort, adopt innovative teaching strategies, and participate in professional development. This relationship is supported by Self-Determination Theory, which explains that intrinsically motivated individuals tend to exhibit higher levels of engagement and performance.

Research indicates that teachers with high intrinsic motivation demonstrate stronger instructional effectiveness and classroom management skills. When teachers feel competent, autonomous, and supported, they are more inclined to engage actively in school initiatives and continuous improvement efforts. Fernet et al. (2015) emphasized that motivation serves as a mediating mechanism through which leadership influences work performance, highlighting its central role in organizational outcomes. In addition, Social Cognitive Theory explains that performance is shaped by the interaction between environmental influences and individual cognitive factors, suggesting that motivation plays a crucial role in translating leadership support into actual teaching performance. In the school context, motivated teachers contribute directly to improved school performance through effective teaching practices and professional engagement. This relationship underscores the need for leadership strategies that not only set expectations but also nurture teachers' motivational needs.

Transformational Leadership, Teachers' Motivation, and Performance

An emerging body of literature suggests that teachers' motivation serves as a critical link between transformational leadership and teachers' performance. Transformational school leaders influence performance indirectly by shaping teachers' motivational states, attitudes, and professional commitment. Leaders who articulate a clear vision, encourage innovation, and provide individualized support create conditions that enable teachers to perform at higher levels. This indirect relationship is consistent with both Transformational Leadership Theory and Self-Determination Theory, which together suggest that leadership effects on performance may operate through motivational processes rather than solely through direct influence.

Kriswanto and Santosa (2025) demonstrated that transformational leadership has both direct and indirect effects on school performance, with teachers' motivation acting as a key contributing factor. This finding aligns with earlier organizational studies suggesting that leadership behaviors influence performance outcomes through motivational processes (Fernet et al., 2015). These studies collectively indicate that transformational leadership is a powerful driver of sustainable performance improvement in schools. However, not all studies report consistent findings, indicating that the mediating role of motivation may not be universally significant across contexts, thereby highlighting the need for further empirical investigation.

While existing studies provide strong evidence of the positive effects of transformational leadership on teachers' motivation and performance, most research has been conducted in international or urban educational settings. There remains a limited number of empirical studies focusing on public secondary schools in local Philippine

contexts, particularly in municipalities such as Kabacan, North Cotabato. Moreover, few studies employ stratified random sampling across multiple schools to ensure representative findings. Furthermore, there is limited evidence examining whether motivation consistently functions as a mediating mechanism within these contexts, raising questions about the applicability of existing theoretical assumptions in local educational settings.

This study addresses these gaps by examining the influence of transformational leadership on teachers' motivation and performance in public secondary schools in Kabacan, using a quantitative approach and validated instruments. By doing so, the study contributes localized empirical evidence that can inform leadership practices and policy decisions in similar educational contexts.

Conceptual and Analytical Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is anchored on the integration of Transformational Leadership Theory, Self-Determination Theory, and Social Cognitive Theory, which collectively explain the relationships among transformational leadership, teachers' motivation, and teachers' performance. Transformational Leadership Theory provides the foundation for understanding how school administrators' leadership behaviors influence teachers through inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Self-Determination Theory explains the internal psychological mechanism through which leadership behaviors satisfy teachers' basic needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, thereby enhancing motivation. Social Cognitive Theory complements these perspectives by explaining how environmental factors and cognitive processes interact to shape behavioral outcomes such as teaching performance. In this study, transformational leadership serves as the independent variable, teachers' motivation as the mediating variable, and teachers' performance as the dependent variable. The analytical framework assumes that the effect of transformational leadership on performance may occur both directly and indirectly through motivation. This alignment between theory and variables provides the basis for mediation analysis, allowing the study to examine not only relationships among variables but also the underlying mechanism by which leadership influences performance.

Research Hypotheses

This study aims to determine the impact of transformational leadership practices of school administrators on teachers' motivation and teachers' performance in public secondary schools in Kabacan, North Cotabato. In line with the specific objectives of the study, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between transformational leadership and teachers' motivation.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between transformational leadership and teachers' performance.

H₀₃: Teachers' motivation does not significantly mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and teachers' performance.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative, descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationships between transformational leadership, teachers' motivation, and teachers' performance, following Creswell (2014) and Sekaran and Bougie (2016). The study utilized a cross-sectional approach, collecting data from teachers' respondents at a single point in time to capture a "snapshot" of current perceptions of leadership practices, motivation, and performance. The descriptive component determined the levels of transformational leadership demonstrated by school administrators and the levels of teachers' motivation and performance. In contrast, the correlational component examined the relationships between transformational leadership and teachers' motivation, transformational leadership and teachers' performance, and the mediating role of teachers' motivation. Data were collected using standardized survey instruments, including the MLQ for transformational leadership, along with secondary school records where applicable, ensuring alignment with the study's objectives and hypotheses.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The participants of this study were teachers from eight public secondary schools in Kabacan, North Cotabato, namely: Kabacan National High School, Osias National High School, Upper Paatan National High School, Malamote National High School, Gil B. Manalo National High School, Aringay National High School, Bannawag National High School, and Lumayong National High School, with a total population of 285 teachers. To ensure representativeness across schools, the study employed stratified random sampling, treating each school as

a stratum. The sample size of 166 teachers was determined using the Raosoft sample size calculator, with a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error. Participants were selected proportionally based on the population of each school: Kabacan NHS (84), Osias NHS (8), Upper Paatan NHS (4), Malamote NHS (8), Gil B. Manalo NHS (9), Aringay NHS (21), Bannawag NHS (16), and Lumayong NHS (16). Within each school, teachers were randomly selected from the official faculty list provided by the administration. Only full-time teachers actively teaching during the data collection period were included. This sampling method ensured that the study captured the perceptions and experiences of teachers across all public secondary schools in Kabacan, providing a solid basis for examining the relationship between transformational leadership, teachers' motivation, and teachers' performance.

Research Instrument

The study utilized a structured questionnaire to gather data on transformational leadership practices and teachers' motivation, while teachers' performance data were obtained from official school records using the Classroom Observation Tool (COT). Transformational leadership was measured using a questionnaire adapted from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) developed by Bass and Avolio (1995), encompassing four dimensions: Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualized Consideration, with ten items per dimension rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Teachers' motivation was assessed using items adapted from Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory, covering three dimensions: Intrinsic Motivation, Extrinsic Motivation, and Autonomy, Competence, and Relatedness, each measured through ten items on a 5-point Likert scale. Teachers' performance was evaluated using the Classroom Observation Tool (COT), in which classroom teachers were assessed by Master Teachers and Master Teachers were assessed by the school principal, based on established indicators such as teaching effectiveness, classroom management, participation in school programs, and professional conduct. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5X), developed within the framework of Transformational Leadership Theory, is a widely validated instrument for measuring transformational leadership across diverse contexts. Empirical validation studies have reported strong psychometric properties for the MLQ, particularly for internal consistency. For instance, validation results for the MLQ-5X indicate that Cronbach's alpha values for its subscales are generally high, ranging from acceptable to very good, demonstrating strong reliability of the instrument (Cortina, 1993; Mind Garden MLQ technical documentation).

Further psychometric evaluation of the MLQ-5X has shown robust reliability, with internal consistency measures described as "good to very good," supporting the stability of the leadership constructs across samples. These findings confirm that the MLQ is a dependable instrument for assessing transformational leadership behaviors in organizational and educational research settings. Due to the standardized and extensively validated nature of the MLQ, direct permission from the original developers was not separately obtained; however, the instrument was used in accordance with its established academic and research use guidelines. In the present study, the MLQ was adopted based on its established validity and reliability in prior research and on its widespread use in educational leadership studies.

Data Collection Procedure

Prior to data collection, permission was secured from the DepEd Cotabato Division Office at Amas, Kidapawan City, as well as from the administrators of the eight public secondary schools in Kabacan, North Cotabato, to ensure the study complied with official regulations and ethical standards. Ethical clearance was also obtained to guarantee voluntary participation, confidentiality, and anonymity of the respondents. The stratified random sample of 166 teachers was selected proportionally from each school based on population size. The questionnaires on transformational leadership and teachers' motivation were administered directly to the selected teachers during designated school hours, with clear instructions provided for independent and honest completion. Completed questionnaires were collected immediately to ensure accuracy and completeness. Data on teachers' performance were obtained from official school records using the Classroom Observation Tool (COT). Classroom teachers were evaluated by Master Teachers, and Master Teachers were evaluated by the school principal, using the COT based on established indicators such as teaching effectiveness, classroom management, participation in school programs, and professional conduct. All collected data were carefully coded and prepared for statistical analysis while maintaining strict confidentiality. The entire process adhered to ethical guidelines for educational research, ensuring the protection of participants' rights and the integrity of the collected data.

Data Analysis

The collected data were prepared, coded, and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The levels of transformational leadership and teachers' motivation were determined using mean and standard deviation based on teachers' responses to the MLQ (Bass & Avolio, 1995) and the Deci & Ryan (1985) motivation questionnaire. Teachers' performance data were obtained from official school evaluation records, in which classroom teachers were evaluated by Master Teachers and Master Teachers were evaluated by the school principal, and were summarized using mean and standard deviation. To examine the relationship between transformational leadership and teachers' motivation, as well as transformational leadership and teachers' performance, Pearson's r correlation coefficient was used when normality assumptions were met; otherwise, Spearman's rank correlation was applied. To determine whether teachers' motivation mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and teachers' performance, mediation analysis was conducted using regression procedures following Baron and Kenny's (1986) approach. Statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$, and all analyses were performed using Jamovi software to ensure accurate and reliable computation of descriptive statistics, correlations, and mediation effects, providing a comprehensive understanding of the impact of transformational leadership on teachers' motivation and performance.

Ethical Considerations

This study strictly adhered to ethical guidelines to ensure the protection of all participants' rights and the integrity of the research process. Prior to data collection, formal permission was obtained from the DepEd Cotabato Division Office in Amas, Kidapawan City, as well as from the administrators of the eight public secondary schools in Kabacan, North Cotabato. Participation in the study was voluntary, and teachers were fully informed about the purpose of the research, the nature of their participation, and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. To maintain confidentiality and anonymity, respondents' names and identifying information were not recorded in the questionnaires, and all data were coded and stored securely. The study also ensured that teachers' performance evaluation data obtained from official school records were used solely for research purposes and treated with strict confidentiality. Furthermore, the study complied with ethical standards in educational research, including honesty, transparency, and respect for participants' privacy, thereby safeguarding the well-being of all participants and upholding the credibility and reliability of the research findings.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered from the respondents. The discussion is structured according to the study's objectives, focusing on the level of transformational leadership demonstrated by school administrators, the level of teachers' motivation, the level of teachers' performance, and the relationships among these variables. Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, and mode, were used to describe teachers' perceptions of leadership practices and motivation, while mean scores were computed for correlation and further inferential analysis. The findings are also interpreted in light of relevant theories, including Transformational Leadership Theory (Bass & Avolio, 1995) and Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Level of Transformational Leadership Demonstrated by School Administrators

Table 1 presents the summary of transformational leadership demonstrated by school administrators across four dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. The findings reveal that all dimensions were rated Very High, indicating that school administrators consistently demonstrate strong transformational leadership practices. Among the dimensions, individualized consideration obtained the highest mean ($M = 4.85$, $SD = 0.13$), followed by intellectual stimulation ($M = 4.67$, $SD = 0.19$), idealized influence ($M = 4.40$, $SD = 0.27$), and inspirational motivation ($M = 4.30$, $SD = 0.29$). The overall mean of 4.56 ($SD = 0.22$) further confirms a very high level of transformational leadership. The relatively low standard deviation values suggest that respondents share a consistent perception of administrators' leadership behaviors.

Table 1. Summary of Transformational Leadership Demonstrated by School Administrators per Dimension

Transformational Leadership	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
Idealized Influence	4.40	0.27	Very High
Inspirational Motivation	4.30	0.29	Very High
Intellectual Stimulation	4.67	0.19	Very High
Individualized Consideration	4.85	0.13	Very High
Overall Mean	4.56	0.22	Very High

The results imply that school administrators play a significant role in fostering a positive, supportive educational environment through effective leadership. The high rating in individualized consideration suggests that administrators prioritize teacher welfare, mentoring, and professional development, which may lead to increased teacher motivation and job satisfaction. Similarly, strong intellectual stimulation indicates that administrators encourage innovation and critical thinking, enabling teachers to improve their instructional strategies. In the Philippine educational setting, such leadership practices are essential in addressing the demands of curriculum reforms and improving overall school performance. Consequently, the consistent demonstration of transformational leadership may contribute to enhanced teacher effectiveness, collaboration, and ultimately, better student outcomes.

Recent studies in the Philippines corroborate the positive role of transformational leadership in enhancing teachers' motivation and performance. For example, Ermita and Baysa (2023) found that transformational leadership practices of school heads—characterized by clarity of goals, collaborative professional environments, and confidence-building—significantly enhance teacher motivation and job satisfaction in public elementary schools, fostering stronger instructional engagement and professional commitment. Another Philippine study by Cabayag and Guhao (2024) found that transformational leadership is positively associated with teachers' self-efficacy and job performance, suggesting that teachers who perceive strong transformational leadership also report higher levels of performance and professional confidence. Moreover, Galila, Valdez, and Escarlos (2025), in a systematic review of transformational leadership in Philippine education, concluded that transformational leadership behaviors strengthen institutional governance, promote collaborative professional environments, and support teachers' professional development and performance outcomes. Collectively, these Philippine-based studies affirm that transformational leadership in schools is a significant predictor of both teachers' motivation and performance, aligning with the high levels observed in the present study.

Level of Teachers' Motivation

Table 2 summarizes teachers' motivation across three core dimensions: intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Teachers reported very high intrinsic motivation ($M = 4.56$, $SD = 0.24$), indicating that internal drivers such as interest in teaching, enjoyment of the profession, and personal satisfaction strongly motivate them. Extrinsic motivation was rated as high ($M = 4.01$, $SD = 0.32$), suggesting that external rewards (e.g., recognition, incentives) also contribute to teachers' engagement, though not as strongly as internal factors. The dimension of autonomy, competence, and relatedness also scored very high ($M = 4.44$, $SD = 0.36$), indicating that teachers feel autonomous in decision-making, capable in their roles, and connected to colleagues and the school environment. The overall mean of 4.34 ($SD = 0.31$) reflects a robust level of motivation across all measured dimensions.

Table 2. *Summary of Teachers' Motivation per Dimension*

Teachers' Motivation	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
Intrinsic Motivation	4.56	0.24	Very High
Extrinsic Motivation	4.01	0.32	High
Autonomy, Competence, and Relatedness	4.44	0.36	Very High
Overall Mean	4.34	0.31	Very High

The high levels of motivation suggest that teachers are both internally and externally encouraged to perform effectively, which can positively influence instructional quality and student outcomes. Very high intrinsic motivation implies that teachers find personal meaning and satisfaction in their work, which is associated with sustained engagement and enthusiasm in teaching. The strong sense of autonomy, competence, and relatedness aligns with Self-Determination Theory, which posits that fulfilling basic psychological needs enhances motivation and well-being. By contrast, although extrinsic factors also play a role, they appear less influential than intrinsic drivers. These results imply that school environments which support teacher autonomy and competence—alongside appropriate external recognition—are likely to foster higher motivational levels and better educational performance.

The high levels of teacher motivation observed in this study are supported by recent empirical research conducted in the Philippine educational context. Anong (2024) found that transformational leadership practices of school heads significantly enhance teachers' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in public elementary schools in Davao Oriental, demonstrating that leadership behaviors such as providing clear vision, empowerment, and professional

support can boost teacher engagement and morale. Similarly, Ermita and Baysa (2023) reported that transformational leadership practices involving confidence-building, collaboration, and coaching are positively associated with teacher motivation and overall school performance, highlighting the role of supportive administrative behaviors in fostering motivation among educators. Moreover, Salipong, Ubayubay, and Corpuz (2024) established that motivation levels among teachers in Misamis Oriental were high and that teachers' motivational orientations were significantly related to their teaching styles and professional effectiveness, underscoring the importance of motivational factors in educational performance. Collectively, these Philippine-based studies confirm that both intrinsic and organizational support factors contribute to high teacher motivation, reinforcing the findings presented in Table 2.

Level of Teachers' Performance in Schools

Table 3 presents the level of teachers' performance in schools based on the Classroom Observation Tool (COT). Teachers' performance was rated on a scale where 1 = Poor, 2 = Unsatisfactory, 3 = Satisfactory, 4 = Very Satisfactory, 5 = Outstanding, 6 = Highly Outstanding, and 7 = Exemplary. The results show a high level of performance, with a mean of 6.71, a standard deviation of 0.455, a minimum of 6, and a maximum of 7. This indicates that most teachers consistently demonstrate strong teaching effectiveness, classroom management, professional conduct, and participation in school programs, as evaluated by Master Teachers and the school principal. The high mean reflects alignment between teachers' professional practices and school standards and expectations.

Table 3. *Level of Teachers' Performance in Schools*

	Rating
N	166
Missing	0
Mean	6.71
Standard Deviation	0.455
Minimum	6
Maximum	7

These findings support the notion that transformational leadership and teachers' motivation contribute to high-quality teaching performance. For instance, a study by Dela Cruz Apostol (2026) found that transformational school leadership is positively associated with teachers' work motivation in public elementary schools, showing that leaders who engage in supportive and inspiring behaviors strengthen teachers' motivation and professional engagement. Additionally, Penonia and Quines (2021) reported that transformational leadership is positively associated with teachers' self-efficacy, a factor that bolsters confidence and effective classroom practices among public school teachers. A descriptive-correlational study in Compostela West District, Davao de Oro, also showed that principals' transformational leadership practices were linked to high levels of teacher performance across multiple professional duties, indicating that leadership behaviours aligned with transformational principles contribute to observable performance excellence (Bulac & Villocino, 2024). These local empirical studies affirm the role of transformational leadership and motivation in enhancing teacher performance, implying that collaborative evaluation systems and continuous administrative support help sustain exemplary teaching performance in the schools under study.

Normality Test for Transformational Leadership, Teachers' Motivation, and Teachers' Performance

The descriptive statistics and Shapiro-Wilk test for normality, as presented in Table 4, indicate that the data for Transformational Leadership are normally distributed ($p = 0.062$). In contrast, the data for Teachers' Performance ($p < 0.001$) and Teachers' Motivation ($p = 0.030$) are not normally distributed. This suggests that while transformational leadership scores can be analyzed with parametric techniques, the non-normality of teachers' performance and motivation data requires the use of non-parametric methods. Consequently, for correlational analyses involving teachers' performance and motivation, Spearman's rho is the appropriate statistical test to determine the relationships among the variables.

Table 4. *Normality Test for Transformational Leadership, Teachers' Motivation, and Teachers' Performance*

	Transformational Leadership	Teacher's Performance	Teachers Motivation
N	166	166	166
Missing	0	0	0
Shapiro-Wilk W	0.985	0.568	0.982
Shapiro-Wilk p	0.062	<.001	0.030

The Relationship Between Transformational Leadership and Teachers' Motivation

The Spearman correlation analysis in Table 5 shows a very weak positive relationship between Transformational Leadership and Teachers' Motivation ($\rho = 0.070$, $p = 0.369$), which is not statistically significant. This indicates that, in this sample, the level of transformational leadership demonstrated by school administrators does not significantly influence teachers' motivation. Since the p-value (0.369) is greater than the significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis is not rejected.

Table 5. Relationship Between Transformational Leadership and Teachers' Motivation (Spearman Correlation)

		Transformational Leadership	Teachers Motivation
Teachers Motivation	Spearman's rho	0.070	—
	df	164	—
	p-value	0.369	—

From a theoretical perspective, this finding suggests that the expected relationship proposed by Self-Determination Theory may not fully operate in this setting. While transformational leadership is theorized to enhance motivation by supporting autonomy, competence, and relatedness, the weak correlation implies that these psychological needs may be shaped more strongly by other factors beyond leadership behavior, such as institutional policies, workload conditions, and individual teacher dispositions. From a methodological standpoint, the weak and non-significant relationship may also reflect measurement limitations. Although standardized instruments were used, variability in teacher perceptions, potential response bias, or weak alignment between leadership behaviors and perceived motivation indicators may have reduced the observable association between variables. In addition, if internal consistency issues exist within the measurement scale, this may further attenuate the strength of the correlation. From a statistical perspective, the very low correlation coefficient ($\rho = 0.070$) indicates a negligible effect size, suggesting that even if a relationship exists, it is practically minimal in magnitude. This implies that the dataset does not provide sufficient evidence of a meaningful linear association between transformational leadership and teachers' motivation in this sample. Such results are not uncommon in behavioral research, where complex human and organizational factors often produce weak bivariate relationships.

Similar nuances have been noted in several studies. For example, Didi and Achadi (2025) found that transformational leadership behaviors of school administrators were positively associated with teacher motivation and performance. However, the strength of the relationships varied by school context and support systems, suggesting that other factors, such as organizational climate and professional development opportunities, may influence teacher motivation. Likewise, Ermita and Baysa (2024) reported that while transformational leadership practices generally support teacher motivation, the direct impact differed across motivational components, indicating that teacher disposition and work environment play important roles. Additionally, De Los Santos, Ignalig, and Cayogyog (2024) observed that teacher motivation and commitment in Davao City schools are influenced not only by transformational leadership but also by organizational factors, highlighting the mediating role of commitment to change in modulating leadership effectiveness on teachers' attitudes and motivation.

The Relationship Between Transformational Leadership and Teachers' Performance

As shown in Table 6, the Spearman correlation between Transformational Leadership and Teachers' Performance is -0.032 with a p-value of 0.679, indicating a very weak negative relationship that is not statistically significant. This implies that transformational leadership does not have a direct significant influence on teachers' performance in the sampled schools. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected.

Table 6. Spearman Correlation Between Transformational Leadership and Teachers' Performance

		Transformational Leadership	Teacher's Performance
Teacher's Performance	Spearman's rho	-0.032	—
	df	164	—
	p-value	0.679	—

From a theoretical perspective, this finding suggests that the expected direct effect of transformational leadership, as proposed in Transformational Leadership Theory, may not fully manifest in this context. Although transformational leaders are theorized to enhance performance through inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualized support, the absence of a significant relationship suggests that teacher performance may be

influenced more strongly by contextual and structural factors, such as workload demands, institutional policies, resource availability, and classroom constraints, rather than by leadership style alone. From a methodological standpoint, the non-significant relationship may be due to measurement limitations or to the nature of the performance assessment used in the study. Teacher performance data obtained from observational tools may not fully capture the complexity and variability of actual classroom performance. Additionally, the cross-sectional correlational design limits the ability to establish causal influence, which may explain why leadership behaviors did not show a direct measurable effect on performance outcomes. From a statistical perspective, the correlation coefficient ($\rho = -0.032$) indicates a negligible and practically insignificant relationship. The near-zero value suggests that there is no meaningful linear association between transformational leadership and teachers' performance in this dataset. Such results indicate that even if a relationship exists, its effect size is extremely small and may not be detectable within the current sample or analytical framework.

Several studies reveal complex dynamics between leadership styles and teachers' performance. For instance, Yongco (2026) found that transformational leadership was a significant predictor of teacher performance and student achievement in secondary schools, highlighting the potential of supportive leadership even amid varying school conditions. However, a study by Samonte and Lo (2025) reported no significant relationship between interpersonal leadership engagement and teachers' performance in several Camarines Norte secondary schools, suggesting that leadership influence may be mediated by other school or individual factors. Similarly, Canonizado (2025) observed that while transformational school leadership fosters teachers' work engagement, this influence operates alongside other aspects of teachers' experience and the school environment. These findings suggest that while transformational leadership can enhance performance under certain conditions, its direct impact on teachers' performance may not always be significant, aligning with the non-significant correlation observed in the current study.

Examining Teachers' Motivation as a Mediator Between Transformational Leadership and Performance

A mediation analysis in Table 7 was conducted to determine whether teachers' motivation mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and teachers' performance. The results show that the indirect effect of transformational leadership on teachers' performance through teachers' motivation was not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.0283$, $SE = 0.0367$, $p = 0.441$, 95% CI [-0.0427, 0.107]). Since the confidence interval includes zero, this indicates that the mediating effect of teachers' motivation is not significant. Furthermore, the direct effect of transformational leadership on teachers' performance was also not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.1513$, $SE = 0.2887$, $p = 0.600$), and the total effect was likewise non-significant ($\beta = -0.1230$, $SE = 0.2905$, $p = 0.672$). These findings suggest that transformational leadership neither directly influences teachers' performance nor does it affect it indirectly through teachers' motivation.

Table 7. Mediation Analysis of Teachers' Motivation on the Relationship Between Transformational Leadership and Teachers' Performance

Effect	Estimate	SE	95% Confidence Interval		Z	p
			Lower	Upper		
Indirect	0.0283	0.0367	-0.0427	0.107	0.771	0.441
Direct	-0.1513	0.2887	-0.7061	0.426	-0.524	0.600
Total	-0.1230	0.2905	-0.6897	0.445	-0.423	0.672

From a theoretical perspective, the absence of a significant mediating effect suggests that the assumptions of Self-Determination Theory and Transformational Leadership Theory may not fully explain the performance mechanism in this context. Although transformational leadership is theorized to enhance motivation, which in turn improves performance, the findings imply that teachers' motivation alone may not be the primary pathway through which leadership influences performance. This suggests that other unmeasured variables—such as institutional support systems, workload demands, policy constraints, or professional development opportunities—may play a more dominant role in shaping teachers' performance outcomes. From a methodological standpoint, the non-significant mediation effect may be influenced by several factors related to model specification and measurement. First, the use of cross-sectional data limits the ability to capture dynamic causal processes assumed in mediation models. Second, measurement limitations in assessing leadership, motivation, and performance may have weakened the observed relationships. Third, if internal consistency issues exist within any of the measurement scales, this may have reduced the statistical power needed to detect indirect effects. Additionally, mediation analysis is sensitive to small effect sizes, and weak bivariate relationships among variables may result in non-significant indirect pathways. From a statistical perspective, the indirect effect ($\beta =$

0.0283) is very small, and the confidence interval crossing zero confirms the absence of a meaningful mediating effect. The non-significant direct and total effects further indicate that the overall model explains very little variance in teachers' performance. These results suggest that the hypothesized mediation model does not fit the observed data well, likely due to weak inter-variable correlations and minimal effect sizes across constructs.

The result that teachers' motivation does not significantly mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and teachers' performance is supported by previous research indicating that leadership effects are often indirect and context-dependent. For instance, Yongco (2026) found that although transformational leadership significantly influenced teacher performance in some Philippine secondary schools, its effect varied depending on contextual factors such as school resources and organizational climate, suggesting that motivation alone may not fully explain performance outcomes. Similarly, Samonte and Lo (2025) reported no significant direct relationship between leadership engagement and teachers' performance, emphasizing that performance may be shaped by broader institutional and structural variables. In another study, Canonizado (2025) observed that while transformational leadership significantly enhances teachers' work engagement, this does not automatically translate into measurable performance gains without additional supportive mechanisms. These studies suggest that the pathway from leadership to performance is complex and may not operate solely through teachers' motivation, which aligns with the present study's finding of a non-significant indirect effect.

Conclusion

This study examined the influence of transformational leadership on teachers' motivation and performance, including the mediating role of motivation in public secondary schools in Kabacan, North Cotabato. Findings revealed that transformational leadership is not significantly related to teachers' motivation or performance, and teachers' motivation does not significantly mediate this relationship.

From a theoretical perspective, these results suggest that the expected pathways proposed by Transformational Leadership Theory and Self-Determination Theory may not fully operate in the current school context. Although transformational leadership is theorized to enhance motivation through inspirational and supportive behaviors, the findings indicate that teachers' motivation and performance may be influenced more strongly by contextual and structural factors such as workload demands, institutional policies, resource constraints, and school environment conditions.

The absence of both direct and indirect effects further suggests that the relationship among leadership, motivation, and performance is nonlinear in this setting. Instead, the dynamics appear to be more complex and possibly influenced by unmeasured variables that may moderate or override leadership effects. Thus, transformational leadership alone may not be sufficient to explain variation in teachers' motivation and performance across the sampled schools.

Overall, the study contributes to the growing evidence that leadership theories developed in other contexts may not always translate directly into measurable effects across all educational environments, particularly in public secondary schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, several recommendations are proposed.

School leadership frameworks should consider integrating contextual and structural factors alongside transformational leadership behaviors. Since the findings suggest that motivation does not mediate leadership effects in this setting, future theoretical models should explore additional mediating or moderating variables such as organizational climate, teacher workload, and institutional support systems to better explain teacher performance outcomes.

Although transformational leadership did not show a significant direct or indirect effect, school administrators are still encouraged to continue practicing supportive leadership behaviors such as intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. However, greater emphasis should also be placed on improving working conditions, reducing administrative workload, and strengthening institutional support mechanisms, as these factors may have a stronger influence on teacher motivation and performance in practice.

Future research should consider employing longitudinal designs to better capture the dynamic nature of leadership effects over time. In addition, expanding the model to include additional variables beyond motivation is recommended, as the current findings suggest that a simple mediation model may not sufficiently represent the complexity of relationships among leadership, motivation, and performance. Improving measurement reliability and ensuring stronger internal consistency of instruments is also essential for more accurate estimation of relationships.

Further studies may explore alternative mediators such as teacher commitment, job satisfaction, or organizational support. It is also recommended that future research be conducted across multiple regions or school types to determine whether contextual differences influence the relationship between transformational leadership and teacher outcomes.

Contributions of Authors

Author 1: conceptualization, data gathering, data analysis, results and discussion

Author 2: data gathering, results and discussion

Author 3: data gathering, results and discussion

Author 4: conceptualization, results and discussion

Funding

The authors received no specific funding for this research from any public, commercial, or not-for-profit funding agencies.

Acknowledgment

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to the school administrators and teachers who participated in this study. Their cooperation and willingness to share their experiences made this research possible. Appreciation is also extended to colleagues and mentors who provided valuable insights and guidance throughout the research process.

References

- Andriadi, D., & Sulistiyo, U. (2025). The influence of transformational and instructional leadership styles of school principals on teacher performance, motivation, job satisfaction and student achievement. *PPSDP International Journal of Education*. <https://doi.org/10.59175/pijed.v3i2.335>
- Anong, S.H.B. (2024). Influence of transformational leadership on teachers' motivation in public elementary schools in Davao Oriental. *Nexus International Journal of Science and Education*, 1(2).
- Apostol, M. (2026). Transformational school leadership and teachers' work motivation in public elementary schools. *International Journal of Education Humanities and Social Science*, 9(1), Article 1191. <https://doi.org/10.54922/IJEHSS.2026.1191>
- Baron, R.M., & Kenny, D.A. (1986). The moderator–mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51(6), 1173–1182. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.51.6.1173>
- Basco, L., & Espiritu, D. (2025). Transformational leadership practices and their impact on teacher performance in public elementary schools in Del Gallego District, Camarines Sur. *Psychological Education: Modern Journal*, 48(3), 417–443. <https://doi.org/10.70838/pemj.480308>
- Bass, B.M., & Avolio, B.J. (1995). MLQ Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire. Mind Garden.
- Berkovich, I., & Eyal, O. (2021). Transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and moral reasoning. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 20(1), 131–148. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15700763.2019.1585551>
- Bulac, C.G., & Villocino, R. (2024). Transformational leadership and teacher performance: A descriptive correlational study (Compostela West District, Davao de Oro, Philippines). *International Journal of Advance Research and Innovative Ideas in Education*, 10(4), 1117–1129. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.13121713>
- Cabayag, S.J., & Guhao, E., Jr. (2024). Self-efficacy, job performance, and transformational leadership: A structural equation model on organizational commitment among public school teachers. *European Journal of Education Studies*, 11(1). <https://doi.org/10.46827/ejes.v11i1.5168>
- Caharian, I., & Cabanlit, E. (2024). A systematic review on the influence of transformational leadership and teacher commitment to educational institutions. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 8(9), 65–78. <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.809006>
- Canonizado, I. (2025). Transformational school leadership and teachers' work engagement in public schools. *International Journal of Education Humanities and Social Science*, 8(06), 1140. <https://doi.org/10.54922/IJEHSS.2025.1140>
- De Los Santos, J., Ignalig, W., & Cayogyog, A. (2024). Transformational leadership and organizational behavior: The mediating role of commitment to change among teachers in Davao City. *European Journal of Arts Humanities and Social Sciences*, 1(3), 161171. [https://doi.org/10.59324/ejahss.2024.1\(3\).14](https://doi.org/10.59324/ejahss.2024.1(3).14)
- Deci, E., & Ryan, R. (1985). Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior. Springer Science & Business Media. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4899-2271-7>
- Didi, K., & Achadi, B.S. (2025). Transformational leadership practices and teacher motivation and performance. *Journal of Social Studies Arts and Humanities*, 5(1), 25–30. <https://doi.org/10.33751/jssah.v5i1.12838>
- Encallado, H., Bajarías, N., De Guzman, R., & Peligro, V. (2025). The effectiveness of transformational leadership: A quantitative study of teachers' perceptions. *Journal of Education, Learning and Management*, 2(2), 296–303. <https://doi.org/10.69739/jelm.v2i2.836>
- Ermita, L., & Baysa, M. (2023). Transformational leadership practices of school heads: Teachers' motivation and school performance. *Jurnal Inovasi Pendidikan*, 3(3), Article 499. <https://doi.org/10.60132/jip.v3i3.499>
- Fernet, C., Trépanier, S.-G., Austin, S., Gagné, M., & Forest, J. (2015). Transformational leadership and optimal functioning at work: On the mediating role of employees' perceived job characteristics and motivation. *Work & Stress*, 29(1), 11–31. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02678373.2014.1003998>
- Galila, R., Valdez, W., & Escarlos, G. (2025). Transformational leadership theory and its application to educational governance and administration in the Philippines: A systematic review. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 9(10), 3499–3504. <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.910000285>
- Kriswanto, D., & Santosa, A.B. (2025). The impact of transformational leadership practices on teachers' motivation and school performance. *Journal of Social Studies Arts and Humanities (JSSAH)*, 5(1), 25–30. <https://doi.org/10.33751/jssah.v5i1.12838>
- Mind Garden, Inc. (n.d.). Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5X) psychometric properties: Reliability, validity, and scoring manual. <https://tinyurl.com/5n8v5xtj>
- Penonia, M., & Quines, L. (2021). The mediating effect of teachers' trust on the relationship between transformational leadership of school heads and teachers' self-efficacy of public school teachers. *American Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Innovation*, 1(6), Article 1013. <https://doi.org/10.54536/ajmri.v1i6.1013>
- Salipong, J., Ubayubay, R., & Corpuz, G. (2024). Motivation and teaching styles among teachers in Claveria District, Misamis Oriental. *American Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Innovation*, 4(2), Article 4351. <https://doi.org/10.54536/ajmri.v4i2.4351>
- Samonte, J., & Lo, N. (2025). Interpersonal leadership engagement on teachers' performance. *International Journal of Research and Scientific Innovation*. <https://doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2025.12040012>
- Yongco, J. (2026). Impact of leadership styles on teacher performance and student achievement in Philippine secondary schools. *Discover Sustainability*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43621-026-02794-w>