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How Transformational Leadership Enhancing School's Performance: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

This study aims to systematically review the literature on how transformational leadership can improve school performance, as well as identify the factors that play a role in the effectiveness of such leadership in the educational environment. Using a systematic literature review (SLR) of empirical articles from leading journals in the past five years, the study filtered and encoded key findings to understand the influence of transformational leadership. The findings show that transformational leadership significantly impacts improving school performance through teacher motivation, collaborative culture development, and increased staff commitment. Trust, collegial support, and the school climate often mediate these effects. The main limitation of this study is that the scope of the data is limited by periods and geographical regions, which may affect the generalization of the findings. Further research is recommended to explore the long-term impact and integrate cross-cultural perspectives. These results guide school leaders and policymakers for effective leadership strategies to improve performance.

Keywords: Transformation Leadership, Enhancing Performance, School's Performance

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and significances

Transformational leadership (TL) has emerged as a prominent focus in educational research, with scholars exploring its potential to impact school performance and student outcomes positively (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). This systematic literature review aims to synthesize the existing empirical evidence on the relationship between TL in schools and their overall performance. In the context of Education, TL is characterized by leaders who can inspire and motivate their teams, encouraging them to strive for higher levels of achievement and driving innovation in delivering educational services (Armiyanti et al., 2023). A literature review suggests that TL in schools can significantly, primarily indirectly, affect student achievement and engagement (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). These effects are often mediated by factors such as school culture, teacher commitment, job satisfaction, and other variables. (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005) Transformational leadership has been shown to contribute to developing organizational capacity and commitment among education professionals. (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999).

For instance, a study (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005) found that transformational leadership in schools is associated with higher levels of teacher commitment and job satisfaction, leading to improved student outcomes. Supporting this, another study (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999) examined the effects of TL on select organizational conditions, such as school culture, and found that these leadership practices had a moderate but significant total impact on student engagement. These studies' findings underscore TL's importance in enhancing overall school performance. However, the research also suggests that the relationship between TL and school performance is complex and influenced by various factors. For example, a study (Meng, 2022) highlighted the importance of contextual factors, such as the specific academic environment, in determining the effectiveness of TL practices. While the existing literature has provided valuable insights into the positive impacts of TL on school performance, the mechanisms underlying these relationships are not yet fully understood. Research in Indonesia on TL in the context of educational services found that transformational leadership played a crucial role in improving the overall performance of academic institutions (Oktafia et al., 2021). Another researcher said that TL can improve education services, but more research is needed to clarify the specific pathways through which this occurs (Armiyanti et al., 2023).

To this end, a growing body of research has delved deeper into the antecedents and moderators that shape the efficacy of transformational school leadership (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005) (Ronksley-Pavia & Neumann, 2022). A literature review indicates that TL is related to three sets of antecedents: the leader's personal qualities, organizational features, and the characteristics of the leader's colleagues (Sun et al., 2017). For instance, a leader's emotional intelligence, self-awareness, and ability to inspire and motivate others are essential personal qualities that foster TL. (Ross & Gray, 2006) Moreover, organizational factors such as a supportive and collaborative school culture and the commitment and trust of a leader's peers have also been found to contribute to the emergence of TL in educational settings. (Sun et al., 2017). Transformational leaders can foster a sense of collective purpose and commitment among their staff by cultivating a shared vision, empowering teachers, and encouraging innovation; this, in turn, has been shown to lead to improved teaching practices, higher levels of teacher job satisfaction and retention, and ultimately, enhanced student learning outcomes. (Ronksley-Pavia & Neumann, 2022). For example, a study found that TL in schools was associated with increased teacher trust in the principal, which mediated the relationship between leadership and teacher commitment to school goals. Another study replicated these findings, demonstrating that TL practices contributed to favorable organizational conditions, such as a positive school climate, resulting in greater student engagement. (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999).

Despite the growing evidence on the benefits of TL in schools, the research also suggests that its impacts on school performance are not always direct. Transformational leadership may exert its influence through more complex, indirect pathways, with school culture, teacher commitment, and other mediating factors playing a crucial role. For instance, a study found that the effects of TL on student achievement were primarily mediated by teachers' instructional practices and collective efficacy (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). Similarly, another study revealed that teachers' job satisfaction and organizational commitment partially mediated the relationship between TL and student engagement. (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999).

This research aims to build on the existing knowledge base by further investigating the specific mechanisms and contingency factors that shape the effectiveness of TL in enhancing school performance and providing insights that can inform educational policy and practice.

1.2 Influence of Transformational Leadership

While the literature generally supports the positive influence of TL on school performance, it is essential to note that certain contextual factors may constrain the effectiveness of this approach. For example, a study found that the benefits of TL were more pronounced in schools with more excellent organizational stability and resources, suggesting that this leadership style may be less effective in resource-constrained or turbulent environments (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). Additionally, some research has cautioned that an overemphasis on TL could lead to burnout among teachers, as the demands of this approach may be emotionally taxing (Leithwood et al., 1996). In this light, the research indicates that the efficacy of TL in enhancing school performance is not absolute but contingent on a complex interplay of contextual, organizational, and individual factors. While TL can be a

powerful tool for driving school improvement, it may need to be strategically combined with other leadership approaches that address a given school context's specific needs and challenges (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). The existing body of research on TL in educational settings provides a nuanced understanding of the potential benefits and limitations of this approach for enhancing overall school performance. (Sun & Leithwood, 2012).

Additionally, some scholars have raised concerns about the potential pitfalls of TL in schools. For example, a study by (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005) cautioned that an overemphasis on TL could lead to burnout among teachers, as the emotional demands of this approach may be taxing. Moreover, there are questions about the sustainability of TL's effects, as the departure of a transformational leader could potentially disrupt the hard-won gains in school performance (Barnett et al., 2001). Further, TL has been criticized for its potential to concentrate power in the hands of the leader, which could undermine the participatory and distributed nature of effective school leadership (Leadership for Student Learning, n.d). These criticisms underscore the need for a balanced approach to leadership in educational settings, one that harnesses the strengths of TL while mitigating its potential drawbacks.

In conclusion, the existing research on TL in schools suggests that this approach can be a powerful lever for enhancing school performance. Still, its effectiveness is contingent on various contextual, organizational, and individual factors. While TL has been shown to foster positive outcomes such as improved teacher commitment, job satisfaction, and student learning, the research also cautions about potential limitations, including the risk of teacher burnout and the need for a more balanced, distributed model of school leadership. As such, the systematic review of the literature presented in this paper highlights the nuanced and complex relationship between TL and school performance, underscoring the importance of carefully considering each educational context's specific needs and constraints when implementing this leadership approach.

1.3 Enhancing Performance through Transformational Leadership

As a theoretical framework, transformational leadership has been widely recognized as a powerful approach to driving organizational change and improving performance in various contexts, including the field of Education. At its core, TL is characterized by a leader's ability to inspire and motivate followers to transcend their self-interest for the organization's greater good (Muijs et al., 2006). Transformational leadership involves four key dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Yusuf & Kurniady, 2020). Idealized influence refers to the leader's ability to serve as a role model, embodying the values and vision of the organization (Buenvinida & Ramos, 2019). Inspirational motivation involves the leader's capacity to articulate a compelling vision and inspire followers to work towards a shared goal (Bass, 1999). Intellectual stimulation encourages followers to challenge the status quo and creatively problem-solve. At the same time, individualized consideration focuses on the leader's attentiveness to each follower's unique needs and developmental goals (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). By fostering these TL behaviors, school leaders can potentially enhance various aspects of school performance, such as teacher job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and student learning outcomes (Ronksley-Pavia & Neumann, 2022) (Sun & Leithwood, 2012) (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005) (Barnett et al., 2001). By promoting a shared vision, intellectual stimulation, and individualized support, transformational leaders can cultivate a positive school culture that empowers teachers, enhances their efficacy and engagement, and ultimately leads to improved student achievement.

Furthermore, TL theory is grounded in the notion that leaders can create meaningful change by tapping into the intrinsic motivations of their followers (Rao, 2014). By appealing to teachers' higher-order needs and values, transformational school leaders, according to (Muijs et al., 2006), can inspire them to go beyond their self-interests and work towards the collective goals of the school community; this is the process of "transforming" followers' beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors results in increased organizational commitment, innovative thinking, and a sense of ownership over the school's improvement efforts.

Transformational leadership also aligns with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, focusing on addressing the higher-level needs of self-esteem and self-actualization among followers. By providing individualized support, intellectual stimulation, and a compelling vision, transformational leaders can foster an environment that enables teachers to fulfill their need for growth, development, and meaningful contribution to the organization (Leithwood & Jantzi,

2000). In the context of schools, TL theory suggests that when principals adopt this approach, they can create a culture of trust, collaboration, and shared responsibility for student learning (Ash & Persall, 2000). Through cultivating a shared sense of purpose and the empowerment of teachers, transformational leaders can potentially catalyze improvements in school performance, as measured by student outcomes, teacher job satisfaction, and organizational effectiveness.

1.4 Transformational Leadership, Enhancing Performance School's Performance

The theoretical foundation of TL's potential to enhance school performance is further bolstered by its alignment with other influential educational leadership theories and models (Benwari & Dambo, 2014). For instance, TL shares common elements with instructional leadership, a framework that emphasizes the principal's role in directly shaping teaching and learning practices within the school (Leithwood & Sun, 2012). Both approaches underscore the importance of leaders as change agents who can inspire and motivate their followers to achieve ambitious goals.

Moreover, TL can be seen as a complementary approach to distributed leadership, emphasizing the importance of shared decision-making and the empowerment of multiple stakeholders within the school community. By cultivating a shared vision and intellectual stimulation, transformational leaders can create the conditions for broader participation and leveraging diverse expertise across the organization (Lange, 1993). Additionally, TL theory builds upon the concept of servant leadership, which prioritizes the leader's role in serving the needs of followers and the larger community (Smith et al., 2004). By placing the well-being and growth of teachers at the forefront, transformational school leaders can foster a sense of trust, loyalty, and commitment that ultimately benefits student learning and school improvement.

2. Method

This study utilizes the systematic literature review (SLR) technique to a selection of empirical studies conducted over five years, from 2019 to 2024, to ascertain the impact that TL plays in enhancing the performance of educational institutions. We restricted the search to these years to get more current and pertinent findings that could better explain the dynamics and function of TL and the difficulties that schools are currently facing. This study falls under a scoping review SLR, which seeks to gather as much pertinent data as possible to provide a thorough scope on a subject (Xiao & Watson, 2019). Additionally, this study adheres to the guidelines established by Guo et al. (2024), and Parveen et al. (2024) provide additional examples of SLR. The following are the steps:

- Create research questions,
- establish inclusion and exclusion standards,
- carefully catalog relevant studies,
- assessing the quality of the selected studies and
- integrating prominent findings.

2.1 Research Question

In this research, the following research questions will be addressed using the SLR technique, as explained in the introduction and literature review above:

RQ1. What are the key factors for success in transformational leadership?

RQ2. The extent to which transformational leadership practices affect teachers in improving school performance and teacher retention/loyalty in schools?

RQ3. What is the impact of transformational leadership on educational performance? .

2.2 Inclusion/exclusion criteria

Investigations were performed utilizing Dimensions AI (www.dimensions.ai), an online scientific research instrument associated with many databases, including Emerald Publishing, Scopus, ScienceDirect, and Taylor &

Francis (Toprak et al., 2023). Inclusion and exclusion criteria were employed to guarantee that only pertinent publications and associated studies were incorporated into the analysis. This research used multiple criteria to identify papers relevant to transformational leadership, performance enhancement, and school performance (refer to Table 1).

Table 1: Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion	Exclusion
Focus on the journal of transformational leadership	Report, dissertation, theses, books
Listed in Dimension AI	Not listed in Dimension AI
Publications of the last 5 years	Publications over 5 years
Written in English	Not written in English
Peer-reviewed article	Not peer-reviewed article
Empirical research	Not empirical research

Source: Prepared by the authors based on (Xiao & Watson, 2019).

2.3 Systematic Search Protocol

Through discussion and preliminary search, the search term is adjusted to the research topic as follows: The first time the search terms were entered into the Dimensions AI search box, 672 articles were found after limiting the search to 2019–2024. Following discussion, Dimensions AI's nineteen source names or journal picks were employed in the search procedure, producing 237 articles. Next, we limited the source titles to journals that were relevant to the subject. Examples include journals like the European Journal of Education Research, Journal of Educational and Social Research, Journal of Higher Education Theory and Practice, Journal of Governance and Regulation, Journal of Education Administration, Journal of Infrastructure, Policy and Development, Frontiers in Education, Edelweiss Applied Science and Technology, International Journal of Education Management, International Journal of Education for Business, International Journal of Education Development, International Journal of Education in Business, Journal of Management Development, International Journal of Education Research, International Journal of Education Management, and International Journal of Education for Business. Scimagojr.com showed that these nine journals were highly ranked. Then, 115 articles were submitted for screening and eligibility due to this restriction. The end process produced 13 papers that were judged appropriate for the subject. Figure 1 shows the workflow of the Preferred Reporting Items Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) from the systematic search carried out on October 28, 2024.

I am conducting a quality analysis. A scoping review seeks to gather pertinent information from the existing literature, which includes methodologies, findings, variables, and additional aspects. The review presents a comprehensive overview of the field and a detailed examination of existing work (Xiao & Watson, 2019). A scoping analysis serves to delineate the conceptual boundaries of a field, assess the size of the research pool, evaluate the type of evidence available, and pinpoint gaps in existing research.

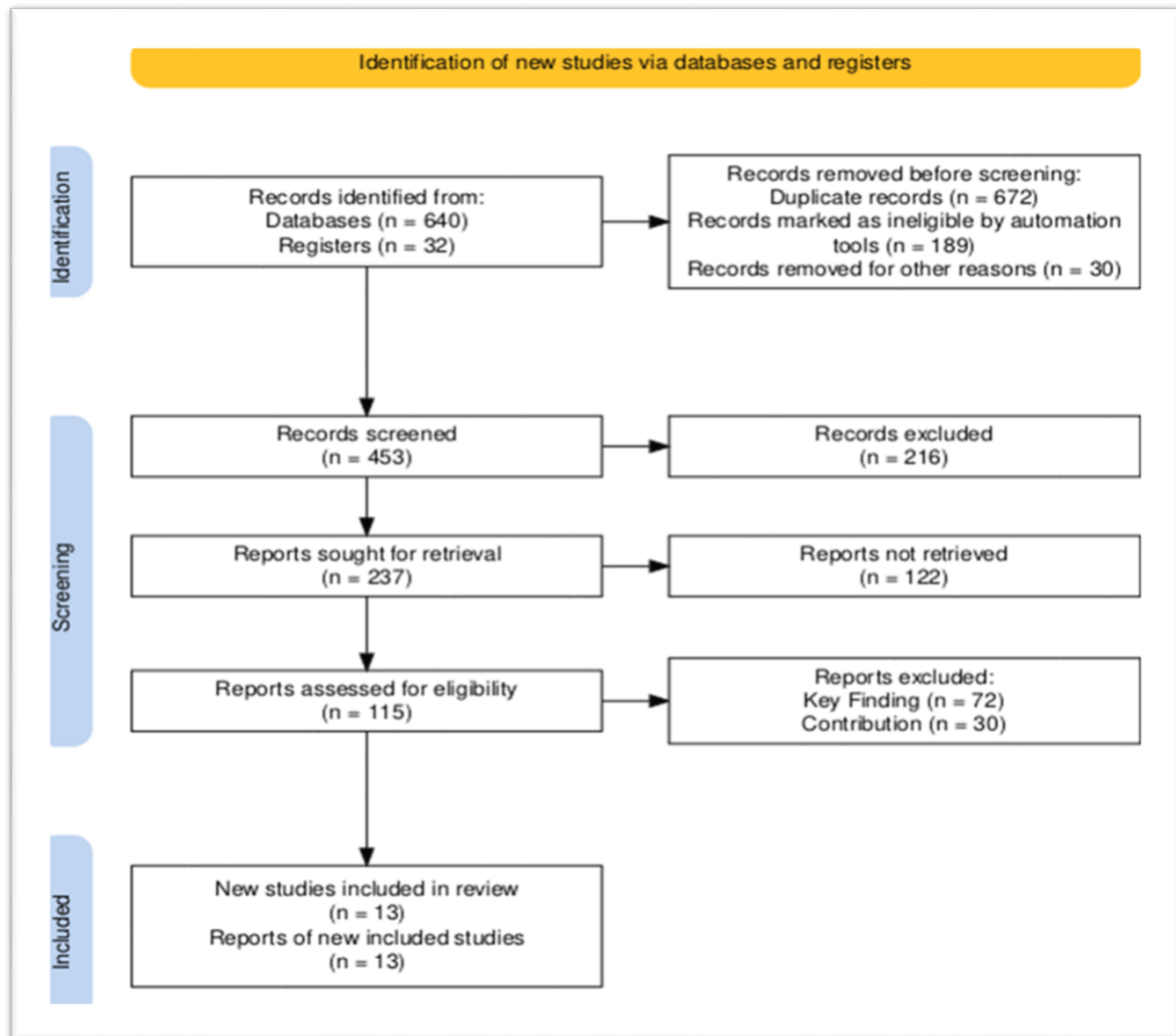
This review utilized empirical articles from reputable journals using Dimensions AI through a systematic search methodology. These articles were selected through a comprehensive assessment of the content, which led to the identification of 13 articles. The quality of each article was confirmed through a thorough evaluation process

2.4 Extraction of findings

The first step was to enter the selected articles into Microsoft Excel using the template provided for metadata extraction. Next, irrelevant data had to be removed and replaced with essential research elements, such as year of publication, author, title, abstract, publication title, research context, research theme, author's discipline, author's leadership position, theoretical anchor, research questions or assumptions, research approach, methodology, findings, and views on transformational or innovative leadership in the context of educational institutions, as well as recommendations for future research. The research aspects were obtained by carefully analyzing the articles

and then coded according to each element. Findings are derived from the coded data and will be presented in the next section.

Figure 1: Publication Title



Source: Prepared by the authors based on (Xiao & Watson, 2019)

3. Results

The analysis and results are discussed in this section. First, a table presents the eligible articles collected from the search by year of publication, author, title, critical finding, contribution, and research question (see Table 2). Then, general aspects, including the publication title, the author's discipline, leadership position, theoretical anchors, research approaches, methodologies, findings, suggestions for future research, and views on TL, were explored afterward.

3.1 Publication titles

The articles were published in 13 publication or journal titles, namely, Sage Open Journal (Q2) (1 article; see Chen., Yuan, 2021), Computational Intelligence and Neuroscience (Q1) (1 article; see Meng.,2022), European Journal and Education Research (Q3) (1 article; see Muhimmah, at.al, 2022), Journal of Educational and Social Research (Q4) (1 article; see Liswati, et.al, 2023), Journal of Higher Education Theory and Practice (Q4) (1 article; see Hambali., at.al, 2023), Journal of Governance and Regulation (Q4) (1 article; see Subaidi, et.al, 2023), Journal of Education Administration (Q1) (1 article; see Sliwka., at.al, 2023), Journal of Infrastructure, Policy and Development (Q2) (1 article; see Buhari., et.al, 2024), Frontiers in Education (Q2) (1 article; see Alzoraiki., at.al,

2024), Edelweiss Applied Science and Technology (Q4) (1 article; see Mulyadi, Sobri, 2024), International Journal of Learning (Q3) (1 article; see Kou., et.al, 2024), Journal of Sustainability (Q1) (1 article; see Habeeb, Eyupoglu, 2024), Humanities and Social Science (Q2) (1 article; see Şahin, Bilir, 2024). The journals and articles are all related to their respective scopes and objectives.

Each of these journals is closely aligned with the scope of the research, emphasizing empirical research and advanced analytical approaches relevant to transformation leadership and inspiration leadership. Most of the journals in this selection are well-known for publishing high-impact research in business management and technology. Notably, 9 out of 13 journals are attributed to Elsevier, while Hindawi published one and one by Emerald (see Sliwka et al., 2023). This affiliation with a reputable publisher further validates the reliability and academic contributions of the sources used in this study. This section presents the findings from a systematic literature review, focusing on TL to improve the school's performance. The study included in this review highlights various aspects of the impact of TL on decision-making practices in schools and all-stakeholder engagement strategies. The table below summarizes the primary empirical studies published from 2019 to 2024, including their contributions and critical findings.

Studies on TL's role in improving educational institutions' performance were conducted in various global regions, with representatives from Europe, Southeast Asia, East Asia, and Southwest Asia—studies conducted in Southeast Asia (7 articles. See (Mulyadi & Sobri, 2024); (Muhimmah et al., 2022); (Liswati et al., 2023); (Hambali et al., 2023); (Subaidi et al., 2023); (Bohari et al., 2024); (Kou et al., 2024) mainly focus on the role of transformational leadership in carrying out vision, competitiveness and morality in the educational environment, while research in Southwest Asia (1 article. See (Alzoraiki et al., 2024); and in East Asia (2 articles see (Chen & Yuan, 2021); (Meng, 2022), emphasizing leadership innovation in Education—meanwhile, European Studies (3 articles. See (Habeeb & Eyupoglu, 2024) (Şahin & Bilir, 2024) (Sliwka et al., 2024) highlight the role of leadership in shaping perceptions and implementing learning in schools.

3.2 Research Themes

The research themes in this review evolved from the role of TL to more targeted studies that addressed the impact of specific transformations and innovations; for the first analysis, studies centered on how TL can improve overall school performance, such as the fulfillment of teacher training, school facilities, learning environments, and predictive analytics. Over time, the theme narrowed, focusing on the role of transformation and innovation leadership in driving teacher satisfaction, increasing loyalty to the school, and developing other strategies.

3.3 Author disciplines

Most of the 51 authors are from educational administration (23), followed by management (6), Education (5), business science (5), computer science (6) and cultural dal others (6). This finding is expected given the nature of the subject, which is educational leadership and performance in general. Unexpectedly, there were several authors from different disciplines, namely computer science and culture. However, this unexpected finding cannot justify the multidisciplinary nature of the research object, as it does not provide sufficient evidence.

Table 2: Summary of Empirical Studies on the Integration of Big Data in CRM (2019-2024)

Author	Year	Title	Key Finding	Contribution	Research Question
Chen., Yuan	2021	“The Study of the Relationships of Teacher’s Creative Teaching, Imagination, and Principal’s Visionary Leadership”	This study found that teachers' imagination affects teaching creativity, but principals' visionary leadership is insignificant.	This paper discusses the relationship between principals' visionary leadership and teachers' teaching creativity.	How does the principal's visionary leadership influence teachers' teaching creativity?
Muhimmah et al.	2022	Inspirational Leadership in	Inspirational leadership, which has proactivity, vision, and humanism	This journal discusses inspirational	Why is inclusive higher Education still not widely

		Inclusive Higher Education	values, is essential in inclusive higher Education.	leadership at UNESA to support students with special needs.	implemented in Indonesia?
Liswati et al.	2023	“Implementation of Principal's Visionary Leadership in Learning Innovation”	The study concluded that principals have implemented visions and strategies to anticipate changes in learning innovations.	This research highlights the role of principals' visionary leadership in improving teachers' skills and learning innovation.	How does the principal translate the school vision and anticipate changes in learning innovations?
Hambali., et. al	2023	“The Effect of Visionary Leadership and Job Rewards on Teacher Professional Commitment”	Visionary leadership affects teachers' professional commitment by 46.6%, while job appreciation affects it by 58.9%.	This journal explores the influence of visionary leadership and rewards on teacher commitment.	How do visionary leadership and job appreciation influence teachers' commitment?
Subaidi et al.	2023	“Visionary Leadership to Improve the Quality and Competitiveness of Private Islamic Schools”	The study concluded that visionary leadership and school quality improve school competitiveness.	This study proves the influence of visionary leadership and school quality on the competitiveness of Islamic schools.	To what extent do visionary leadership and school quality influence competitiveness while upholding morality?
Meng.	2022	“Relationship analysis of transformational leadership and deep learning-based education management”	Meng's study found transformational leadership has a positive effect on teacher-teaching innovation.	This article explores the role of transformational leadership in educational management in Chinese universities.	How does transformational leadership influence educational management innovation?
Sliwka., at. al	2023	“Transformational leadership for deeper learning: shaping innovative school practices for enhanced learning.”	Principals play an important role in shaping the perception and implementation of deep learning through stakeholder engagement.	This study provides an analytical understanding of strategies to support school transformation toward deep learning.	What is the role of the principal in shaping the perception and implementation of deep learning in schools?
Buhari., et.al	2024	“Transformational leadership's role in shaping Education 4.0 within higher education”	Transformational leadership is essential to drive innovation, technology integration, and improvement in higher Education.	The study emphasized the importance of transformational leadership for universities' relevance in the digital age.	How does transformational leadership influence the adoption of innovative practices in education 4.0?
Alzoraiki., at.al	2024	“The role of transformational leadership in enhancing school culture and teaching performance in Yemeni public schools”	Transformational leadership influences school culture, which improves teaching performance in Yemeni schools.	This journal discusses the role of transformational leadership in improving school culture and teaching performance in Yemen.	What is the role of transformational leadership in improving school culture and teaching performance?

Mulyadi, Sobri	2024	“A study on the transformational leadership of madrasah principals from the perspective of educators and educational staff”	The transformational leadership of Madrasah heads in Bengkulu is positively assessed, but inclusiveness needs improvement.	This study explored teachers' and staff's perceptions of the transformational leadership of the head of a Bengkulu Madrasah.	What are the perceptions of teachers and staff about the transformational leadership style of the Madrasah head?
Kou., et.al	2024	“The influence of transformational leadership on teacher performance in Shandong University through psychological contract.”	Through understanding motivation, transformational leadership empowers followers, encourages cooperation, and exceeds expectations.	Transformational leadership builds shared values, trust, and collaboration to achieve common goals.	How does transformational leadership affect organizations, and what research issues are identified?
Habeeb, Eyupoglu	2024	“Strategic planning, transformation leadership, and organizational performance: drivers of sustainability in higher education in Nigeria”	Through understanding motivation, transformational leadership empowers followers, encourages cooperation, and exceeds expectations.	Transformational leadership builds shared values, trust, and collaboration to achieve common goals.	How does transformational leadership affect organizations, and what research issues are identified?
Şahin, Bilir	2024	“The effect of transformational leadership and personal cultural values on creating a learning organization”	The results show transformational leadership is effective, while personal cultural values are partially effective.	This research examines the role of transformational leadership and cultural values in forming a learning organization.	How do transformational leadership and personal cultural values influence the creation of a learning organization?

Source: Prepared by the authors based on data extracted from the articles.

3.4 Authors' leadership positions

Of the 51 authors, 15 were lecturers, while the rest were researchers and undergraduate, master, and doctoral students; this implies that academic and Education activists often conduct studies on leadership, management innovation, change management, and educational institutions' performance. It is important to note that information about their leadership positions was taken outside the article as they did not provide such information. The information was obtained through a Google search of their names and the institutions to which they belong. Then, the information was selected according to the year of their article.

3.5 Linkage between theoretical foundations and research themes

In the context of research on theoretical fundamentals, it is very relevant to understand how TL can improve school performance. Based on the literature review in the document, TL significantly influences school performance through various mechanisms, including strengthening school culture, increasing teacher commitment, and higher job satisfaction. This theoretical basis suggests that influential school leaders can inspire and motivate staff to achieve collective goals and increase innovation in teaching methods. Transformational leadership includes four main dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. These aspects contribute to creating a school culture that supports performance improvement, where teachers feel supported and recognized in their efforts to develop effective and innovative teaching methods. This influence is often mediated by organizational commitment and a positive school climate, ultimately impacting student learning outcomes. This research emphasizes that the success of TL depends not only on the leader's personal qualities but also on the organization's support and the trust built between the leader and his colleagues; this is in line with the view that TL creates a sense of shared responsibility and strengthens commitment to educational goals.

3.6 Answers to research questions

RQ1: Key success factors in TL include emotional intelligence, self-awareness, motivation, and creating and sharing a solid vision. In addition, collegial support and a collaborative work environment are essential in facilitating leadership effectiveness.

RQ2: TL practices can significantly impact teachers, especially regarding work commitment and satisfaction. Research shows that teachers who feel supported by inspirational leaders are more likely to be highly motivated to improve the quality of teaching and remain loyal to the institution they work for.

RQ3: The impact of TL on educational performance includes improving student learning outcomes, increasing teacher involvement in the teaching process, and creating a more positive and conducive school climate for learning. Innovative teaching practices and an inclusive school culture often mediate these effects.

4. Discussion

In this study, it was found that TL has a significant influence on improving school performance, but various mediating factors often influence its impact. Factors such as school culture Yuan (2021), commitment, and teaching practices significantly affect the effectiveness of transformational leadership. This study's results align with the findings of Awodiji & Naicker (2024), who show that the impact of TL on student performance is often mediated by teacher effectiveness and school climate. In addition, the study also highlights the importance of contextual aspects, such as organizational stability and resource availability, which can affect the successful implementation of TL. Several studies have criticized TL's effectiveness in Education over the last five years. These studies highlight that while there is evidence to support the positive impact of TL, its effectiveness often depends on contextual and organizational conditions. For example, research by Şahin and Bilir (2024) shows that while TL is efficacious in improving school performance, its effects can be limited if relevant cultural values in the school do not support it; this suggests that the application of this leadership style may not be entirely successful in environments with different cultures or that do not support an inspirational leadership approach.

In addition, a study by Mulyadi and Sobri (2024) revealed that although the TL of madrasah heads in Bengkulu is considered positive, there are challenges in the inclusivity aspect; this shows that TL, while it can increase teacher commitment and performance, requires a more inclusive approach so that all parties can feel the impact equally.

Although older, research by Barnett et al. (2001) remains relevant and reinforced by new studies that show that the stress created by the demands of TL can lead to teacher burnout. This effect is more pronounced in less stable environments or with limited resources. Moreover, this is relevant to the findings of Leithwood and Jantzi (2005), who found that this leadership style is more effective in schools with strong organizational support and adequate resources. However, this study also has criticisms and limitations. Leithwood and Jantzi (2005) stated that the effectiveness of TL tends to decline in schools with limited resources. Barnett et al. (2001) highlighted that high emotional stress on teachers can lead to burnout. In addition, the long-term impact of this leadership is questionable because of the potential disruptions that arise when a transformational leader leaves office (Leithwood et al., 1996).

Another weakness identified in this study is the limited geographical scope and period, which affects the generalization of the findings. Armiyanti et al. (2023) emphasized the need to explore specific pathways in which TL influences education services and the need for more holistic research, including cross-cultural approaches and blended methods.

One of the critical points in this discussion is that although TL contributes to increased teacher job satisfaction, which is associated with teacher retention and better quality of Education Ronksley & Neumann (2022), it improves teacher motivation and performance; the study also shows potential risks such as burnout in teachers if expectations are set too high (Ma et al., 2021) As such, it is crucial to consider the balance between the demands of leadership and the well-being of teachers.

In the future, research needs to explore how contextual factors, such as organizational culture and technology, affect the effectiveness of TL. Cross-cultural studies and longitudinal research are recommended to understand these leadership dynamics better.

In conclusion, TL has a strong positive impact on improving school performance, but its success depends on contextual and organizational factors. This approach requires conducive environmental support and must be combined with other leadership styles to ensure a sustainable and balanced impact

5. Discussion

This study concludes that TL is essential in improving school performance by inspiring and motivating staff, building commitment, and encouraging innovation in teaching. However, its effectiveness is greatly influenced by contextual factors such as organizational culture, collegial support, and available resources. These results confirm that while TL is an effective tool for improving school performance, its application must be tailored to each school's specific needs and unique conditions (Alzoraiki et al., 2023)

5.1 Implications

The results of this study have several implications for school leaders, policymakers, and education practitioners. (1) TL can be used to create a supportive school environment where teachers feel valued and motivated to innovate. However, paying attention to the balance between work demands and teachers' welfare is essential so that burnout does not occur. (2) Policy implications involve the need to support leadership development programs for principals that focus on transformational aspects, including training on motivating staff and managing change effectively. (3) Teachers and support staff can benefit from the work environment created by transformational leaders, where they can develop professionally and contribute to creating a positive school atmosphere.

5.2 Recommendations

For future research and practice, here are some of the proposed recommendations: (1) There is a need for a training and development program for school principals that emphasizes elements of TL, such as inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation. (2) A longitudinal study is recommended to assess the long-term impact of TL on school performance and teacher welfare. (3) The integration of TL with other leadership styles, such as instructional or participatory leadership, can be explored to understand the combined influence on school performance. (4) Further research is needed to identify burnout prevention strategies in implementing transformational leadership.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization and Research Design, Ardin Sianipar led the conceptualization of the study, formulating the research questions, and designing the research methodology, including focusing on transformational leadership in the context of school performance AND Ayu Yulianti Putri contributed to the initial discussions that helped shape the study framework and provided input on the scope and focus of the research. Data Collection: Ardin Sianipar was primarily responsible for data collection, including conducting the systematic literature review, selecting articles from academic databases, and organizing data in line with inclusion and exclusion criteria AND Ayu Yulianti Putri supported the data collection process by organizing data tables and making adjustments to selection criteria to ensure consistency. Data Analysis: Ardin Sianipar conducted a thorough data analysis, including identifying key themes and coding findings. He synthesized results within the context of transformational leadership and school performance AND Ayu Yulianti Putri contributed by verifying and validating the analyzed data, offering feedback on data interpretation, and assisting in creating flow diagrams and supporting tables. Reference Management: Ayu Yulianti Putri led the compilation and formatting of references according to journal guidelines, ensuring all cited works were relevant and up-to-date AND Ardin Sianipar verified the sources used to ensure the validity of the study's findings. Manuscript Submission and Coordination: Ardin Sianipar managed communications with the journal, including the manuscript submission and follow-ups on any

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Conflicts of Interest: The authors, Ardin Sianipar and Ayu Yulianti Putri, declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this study. The research was conducted independently and objectively, without any influence from personal, financial, or institutional relationships that could affect the study's outcomes. All findings and interpretations are based solely on rigorous data analysis and scholarly integrity.

Informed Consent Statement/Ethics approval: This study was conducted in accordance with ethical guidelines for research. Informed consent was obtained from all participants involved, ensuring they understood the purpose, methods, and potential implications of the study. Participation was voluntary, with assurances of confidentiality and anonymity. The study received ethics approval from the relevant institutional review board, underscoring compliance with ethical standards and respect for participant rights and welfare throughout the research process.

Data Availability Statement: The data utilized and analyzed in this study are available upon reasonable request from the corresponding author, Ardin Sianipar. Due to ethical considerations and confidentiality agreements, sensitive data are restricted to protect participant privacy. Non-identifiable data, however, may be provided for academic and research purposes upon request, in accordance with ethical guidelines and data-sharing policies applicable to this study.

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