

The Combined Mediating Effects of Employee Motivation and Employee Wellbeing on the Relationship Between Transformational Leadership of School Heads and Job Satisfaction of Public Secondary School Teachers

Lanie D. Sarco^{1*}, Eugenio S. Guhao, Jr.²

¹ Department of Education

² University of Mindanao

Corresponding Author: Lanie D. Sarco lanie_sarco@deped.gov.ph

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the combined mediating effects of employee motivation and employee wellbeing on the relationship between transformational leadership of school heads and job satisfaction among public school teachers. Using a descriptive-correlational quantitative design with path analysis, data were gathered through a validated survey and analyzed using mean, Pearson correlation, and linear regression. Results showed very high levels of transformational leadership, motivation, wellbeing, and job satisfaction. Significant relationships existed among these variables, with motivation and wellbeing partially mediating the link between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. Findings highlight the importance of transformational leadership in fostering motivated, healthy, and satisfied teachers through supportive and inspiring school leadership practices. This study supports UN Sustainable Development Goals 3, 4, and 8, promoting good health and well-being, inclusive quality education, and decent work with professional development for all.

INTRODUCTION

As more public-school teachers leave their positions for various reasons, the Philippine education sector faces a growing challenge in understanding and measuring teachers' job satisfaction. Ballarta and Roberto (2020) identified low job satisfaction as a primary factor contributing to teacher turnover and absenteeism, leading to poor-quality education. Similarly, Azeem, Bajwa, Shahzad, and Aslam (2020), supported by Cammayo, Aquino, and Gomez (2022), also found that job dissatisfaction among teachers decreases their motivation and commitment while simultaneously increasing turnover intentions and threatening the sustainability of public education. Dissatisfaction also weakens teacher retention, instructional quality, and student learning (Narciso & Guhao, 2020), particularly in remote and underserved areas (Guhao, 2019), hence, improving teachers' job satisfaction is crucial for the educational sector's stability (Alutaya & Guhao, 2023; Montero-Sieburth & Turcatti, 2022).

Job satisfaction is significant in public schools because it shows how teachers feel about their work and the conditions in which they teach, and their overall professional wellbeing (Dan Penyeberangan, 2022; Biason, 2020; Songcog & Guhao, 2020). When teachers are happy and satisfied with their occupation, they are more engaged, motivated, and willing to do their best in their job, which improves the quality of education (Zhang & Chang, 2024). Murtiningsih (2020) also pointed out that job satisfaction positively influences employee retention, which is important for organizational growth, workforce stability, and the efficient and effective use of resources. Furthermore, job satisfaction is shaped by various internal and external factors such as personal motivation, leadership practices, workload, and opportunities for professional growth that made them stay in their current job (Caballero & Guhao, 2020).

Recognizing the importance and relevance of addressing issues related to job satisfaction, the researcher conducted an extensive review of possible independent variables that factor into the satisfaction level among public school teachers with regard to their teaching jobs. Job satisfaction of employees who made them stay in their current organization can be attributed to various aspects (Silva & Guhao, 2020); thus, several factors have been identified as crucial in affecting job satisfaction, including transformational leadership, employee motivation, and employee wellbeing.

Many studies have shown that transformational leadership fosters supportive school climates and improves teachers' job satisfaction and performance (Tshewang & Dem, 2023; Alzoraiki, Ahmad, & Milhem, 2024). Moreover, the study of Rizzo, Marti, Perrozzi, and Mauro (2024) empirically revealed that transformational leadership was positively related to job satisfaction, which enhanced workplace fulfilment and team performance individually and by group. The empirical study of Evika and Budiono (2024) also showed that transformational leadership has a significant and positive effect to the employee's job satisfaction, which is supported by the empirical study of Masunag and Guhao (2024), which also demonstrated a very high significance in transformational leadership in relation to teachers' organizational commitment, manifesting positive job satisfaction among teachers.

Furthermore, research findings of AlShaikh and Hyams-Ssekasi (2024) demonstrated a positive correlation between transformative leadership and employee motivation. Likewise, Yusup and Maulani's empirical also revealed a strong positive correlation between transformational leadership and employee motivation, underscoring the key components that inspire people at work. Additionally, with motivation acting as a mediating component, Bai and Ghazali's (2024) empirical investigation discovered a positive relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction among employees.

Moreover, the study by Nazar, Chohan, Adeeb, and Ilyas (2024) found that employee motivation has a positive, significant impact on workers' job satisfaction, which influences their desire to stay. Results of the empirical study of Ali and Anwar (2021) also demonstrated significant positive influence of employee motivation on job satisfaction with high level of significance to most of its indicators. On the other hand, the results of the study by Kahraman and Arastaman (2022) indicated that transformational leadership significantly predicts the wellbeing of teachers. Kim and Cruz (2022) also confirmed that transformational leadership is positively correlated with employee wellbeing, fostering a healthier and more engaged workforce. Furthermore, transformational leadership is a strong and favorable predictor of faculty occupational wellbeing, both directly and through the mediating effects of job crafting and teaching efficacy, according to Sun, Luo, and Yoon (2025).

Furthermore, Dreer (2024) discovered a strong positive relationship between wellbeing and job satisfaction, highlighting the critical role that pleasant emotions play in teacher retention and overall job fulfillment. Similar findings were reported by Kosec, Sekulic, Wilson-Gahan, Rostohar, Tusak, and Bon (2022) and Lariosa and Quines (2025), who both found strong positive correlation between wellbeing and job satisfaction. These findings further supported the idea that putting employee wellbeing first could led to higher productivity, which in turn improves an organization's overall performance.

On one hand, Putra (2024) claimed that transformational leadership creates supportive environments that affect how employees think and act. Khalis, Sanaullah, Hammad, and Halim (2025) also showed that transformational leaders who consistently motivate, challenge, and support their employees improve commitment and job satisfaction. Rahmalita, Syam, and Gistituati (2025) and Esogon and Gumban (2024) discovered that transformational leadership in the education sector enhanced teachers' motivation, facilitated the acquisition of new skills, and reinforced their commitment to their roles, consequently elevating job satisfaction. On the other hand, Judge, Zhang, and Glerum (2020) said that job satisfaction is very important in today's fast-paced work environment because happy employees are more likely to stay loyal and actively support their organizations (Wartenberg, Aldrup, Grund, and Klusmann, 2023; Bahtilla & Hui, 2021; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2020). Results from the study of Jeong and Kim (2024) and Žygaitienė and Venckienė (2023) implied that factors, such as resiliency, empowerment, influence at work, clarity of roles and communication, strengthened job satisfaction among teachers. Niu, Fan, Wang, and Chen (2023) stressed that teacher job satisfaction is very important for

keeping teachers from leaving and helping schools grow into high-quality places to learn.

Furthermore, employee motivation is closely linked to satisfaction. Jarkovská and Jarkovská (2024) noted that motivation is a key factor in how people behave in organizations, affecting their engagement, job performance, and happiness. Motivation can be intrinsic, like personal growth and meaningful work, or extrinsic, like rewards and recognition (Udoh, 2025; Alutaya & Guhao, 2023). Both types of motivation help employees stay focused on their goals and improve their attitudes at work. Cvjetković (2022) further stressed that motivated, happy employees are more enthusiastic and productive, leading to better performance and helping organizations reach their goals more quickly (Richter, Fütterer, Eisenkraft, & Fischer, 2025; Mather & Bam, 2025). Moreover, Pandey, Maheshwari, and Malik (2025) emphasized how important it is for employees to be happy at work, saying that it has a big effect on productivity, engagement, and retention. Pandey et.al. further stated that wellbeing includes physical, mental, emotional, and social aspects that affect how employees feel about their work and what they get done (Viac & Fraser, 2020). Olaleye, Olaleye, Balogun, and Balogun (2023) also found that wellbeing affects the link between work factors like work-life balance, organizational support and job performance, which in turn increased involvement and productivity, warranting its consideration as a strategic priority for the organization (Kutubidze & Gogiashvili, 2025).

Given the persistent issues of stress, burnout, and attrition among Filipino teachers (Cammayo et.al. 2023), examining the combined mediating effects of employee motivation and wellbeing on the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction offered critical insights for shaping leadership practices and policies that can sustain teacher retention, professional growth, and the overall quality of public education. Findings from related empirical studies suggested that motivated and well-supported employees are more likely to experience higher satisfaction, which, in turn, fosters improved performance and retention (Ma & Marion, 2025). In the teaching profession, these outcomes are critical, as teacher motivation and wellbeing directly affect not only individual satisfaction but also student achievement and overall school effectiveness (Sun, Lu & Yoon, 2025). Thus, this study's double mediation model contributed both theoretically and practically by deepening the understanding of how transformational leadership, motivation, and wellbeing interact in shaping teacher job satisfaction.

Beyond its theoretical contributions, the study has practical significance for educational management and policy. Globally, this study may contribute to the growing discourse on teacher job satisfaction by offering a model adaptable across education systems facing similar challenges, thereby strengthening international strategies for teacher retention and performance. Socially, it aimed to underscore the importance of fostering supportive and motivating work environments that enhance not only the quality of education but also the overall wellbeing of communities served by public schools' teachers. Aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the study supported Goal 3

(Good Health and Wellbeing) by addressing teacher stress and burnout, Goal 4 (Quality Education) by linking teacher satisfaction to student achievement, and Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) by promoting sustainable work conditions that ensure long-term educational stability.

For teachers, the findings highlighted how transformational leadership, coupled with motivation and wellbeing, can lead to higher job satisfaction, greater professional growth, and improved retention. For students, the study emphasized that motivated and well-supported teachers create more effective learning environments, ultimately leading to better educational outcomes. Furthermore, this study provides a foundation for future researchers to examine additional variables that may serve as predictors of job satisfaction, potentially offering solutions to the prevailing challenges in this area.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Self-Determination theory

Proposed by Deci and Ryan (1985, 2000), which explains job satisfaction through the fulfillment of individuals' basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The theory posited that when these needs are supported within the work environment, employees experience higher levels of intrinsic motivation, improved psychological wellbeing, and positive work attitudes, including job satisfaction. Conversely, when these needs are frustrated, motivation declines, wellbeing deteriorates, and dissatisfaction increases (Deci & Ryan, 1985; 2000). In this study, the transformational leadership of school heads plays a crucial role in supporting teachers' psychological needs. These leadership behaviors positively influence employee motivation and employee wellbeing, which jointly function as mediating mechanisms that explain how transformational leadership leads to increased job satisfaction among public secondary school teachers. Anchoring the study on Self-Determination Theory allows for a clear explanation of how leadership affects job satisfaction through internal motivational and wellbeing processes rather than through external rewards alone (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

H_{1a}: Transformational leadership of school heads significantly influences employee motivation.

H_{1b}: Transformational leadership of school heads significantly influences employee wellbeing.

H_{1c}: Employee motivation significantly influences job satisfaction.

H_{1d}: Employee wellbeing significantly influences job satisfaction.

H_{1e}: Transformational leadership of school heads significantly influences job satisfaction.

H_{1f}: Employee motivation and employee wellbeing jointly mediate the relationship between transformational leadership of school heads and job satisfaction.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

This study is further supported by Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs, which provides a complementary perspective on how leadership practices

contribute to teachers' motivation and wellbeing. Maslow's theory suggests that individuals must satisfy lower-level needs, such as physiological security, safety, and stability, before higher-level needs for belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization can be fulfilled. The fulfillment of these needs enhances teachers' motivation and wellbeing, thereby reinforcing job satisfaction. While Self-Determination Theory served as the primary explanatory framework, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs strengthened the theoretical foundation of the study by illustrating the progressive nature of teachers' needs fulfillment in relation to leadership, motivation, wellbeing, and job satisfaction. Together, these theories and recent findings supported the model that transformational leadership influences teacher job satisfaction directly and indirectly through employee motivation and wellbeing.

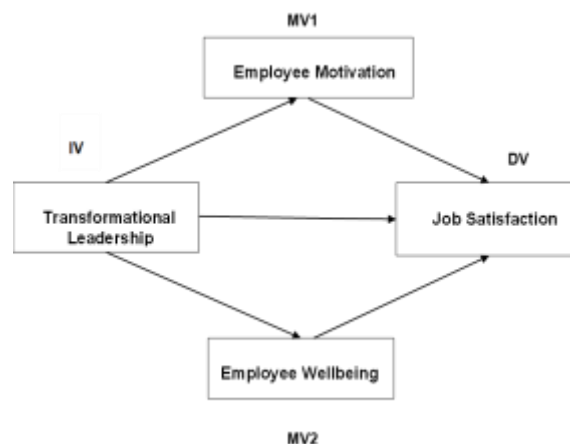


Figure 1. The conceptual framework showing the combined mediating effects of employee motivation and employee wellbeing on the relationship between transformational leadership of school heads and job satisfaction of public-school teachers

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Region XI (Davao Region), Philippines, involving 400 public secondary school teachers selected through stratified sampling from a population of 18,432. Sample size was determined using Slovin's formula at a 5% margin of error. Data were collected using a validated questionnaire adapted from established instruments measuring transformational leadership (Moolenaar, Daly, & Slegers, 2010), employee motivation (Comighud & Arevalo, 2020), employee wellbeing (Pradhan & Hati, 2022), and job satisfaction (Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1967). Content validity was confirmed by six experts ($M = 4.51$), and pilot testing showed high reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.70$). A quantitative, non-experimental, descriptive-correlational design was employed, with path analysis used to examine the direct and mediating relationships among variables.

A double mediation path model was constructed to examine both direct and indirect relationships among the study variables. The model included direct paths from transformational leadership to teacher job satisfaction, as well as indirect paths through the mediating variables of employee motivation and employee wellbeing. Data collection commenced with the finalization of the

survey questionnaire from October to November 2024. Ethical approval was granted by the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee (UMERC) in January 2025 (Protocol No. UMERC-2025-015). Upon approval, an endorsed request letter was submitted to the DepEd Regional Director and subsequently to the Superintendents of the eleven (11) Divisions in DepEd Region XI. Questionnaire distribution and retrieval were conducted from March to April 2025. Collected data were encoded and organized using Microsoft Excel and submitted to a statistician for analysis.

The study complied with ethical standards, ensuring voluntary participation, anonymity, and confidentiality in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (RA 10173). Informed consent was obtained after participants were briefed on the study's purpose and procedures. Academic integrity was maintained through adherence to APA 7th edition guidelines and the use of plagiarism detection tools. This research was personally funded by the author, with no external financial support.

RESULTS

This section presents and discusses data analysis and findings on transformational leadership, employee motivation, and employee wellbeing in relation to teacher job satisfaction.

Transformational Leadership

Table 1 presents the level of transformational leadership as perceived by public secondary school teachers, with an overall mean of 4.37 and a standard deviation of 0.615, interpreted as *Very High*. Specifically, the mean ratings of the indicators are disclosed as follows: *vision building* with a 4.33 mean or rated as *Very High*, individualized consideration which showed a 4.39 mean or *Very High*, *intellectual stimulation* with 4.35 mean or *Very High*, and *innovative climate* that garnered a mean of 4.40 which was rated as *Very High*.

Table 1. Level of Transformational Leadership

Indicators	SD	Mean	D.E.
Vision Building	0.738	4.33	Very High
Individualized Consideration	0.653	4.39	Very High
Intellectual Stimulation	0.665	4.35	Very High
Innovative Climate	0.643	4.40	Very High
Overall	0.615	4.37	Very High

Employee Motivation

Table 2 displays the level of employee motivation as perceived by public secondary school teachers, with an overall mean of 4.42 and a standard deviation of 0.599, rated as *Very High*. This exhibited that public secondary school teachers are highly motivated in their work environment. Furthermore, this shows that the provision of fringe benefits and bonuses contributed to teachers' satisfaction, and recognition for promoting professional growth and development. In addition, opportunities for learning and skill development are also made

available to teachers by the school, through attending seminars, workshop, and training activities. The results also showed that public secondary school teachers have friendly and congenial peers or colleagues in the workplace.

Table 2. Level of Employee Motivation

Items	SD	Mean	D.E.
Have adequate salary with respect to the nature of my work or the teaching profession	0.652	4.58	Very High
Have sufficient benefits and compensations which are at par with other organizations	0.660	4.51	Very High
Have financial incentives through fringe benefits and bonuses	0.619	4.59	Very High
Have wide range of health benefits like that of medical care	0.968	4.29	Very High
Have primary needs such as house amenities	0.833	4.35	Very High
Fosters supportive climate to its members	0.796	4.39	Very High
Has friendly and congenial peers or colleagues in the office or in the workplace	0.759	4.43	Very High
Promotes good working conditions through presence of camaraderie	0.774	4.45	Very High
Demonstrates social acceptance and belongingness	0.708	4.48	Very High
Promotes trust and confidence in the workplace	0.754	4.45	Very High
Opportunities to learn new things through attending seminars, workshops and training activities	0.747	4.41	Very High
Breaks to use my special abilities in working as part of a team and in a variety of work commitments	0.730	4.29	Very High
Recognition for promoting professional growth and development	0.692	4.35	Very High
Work related activities to enhance my skills and abilities	0.708	4.36	Very High
Opportunities to engage in feedback system mechanism to the top-level management in order to enhance organizational practices	0.747	4.31	Very High
Remarks or constant feedback regarding my work progress and development for better engagement	0.693	4.43	Very High
Overall	0.599	4.42	Very High

Employee Wellbeing

Table 3 reveals that the overall teacher wellbeing among public secondary school teachers has 4.36 overall mean score and a standard deviation of 0.590, or *Very High*, encompassing the indicators, which include psychological, social, workplace, and subjective wellbeing. This indicated that teachers generally experienced positive mental and emotional states, supportive interpersonal relationships, and favorable working conditions (Ray, 2022; Kahraman & Arastaman, 2022).

Table 3. Level of Employee Wellbeing

Indicators	SD	Mean	D.E.
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Adapt easily to day-to-day changes of my life and manage my responsibilities well.	0.750	4.30	Very High
Care for things that are important to me, not what is important to others	0.688	4.44	Very High
Feel I am a sensible person	0.611	4.45	Very High
Feel I am capable of decision-making.	0.610	4.44	Very High
Do not feel depressed from the stress and demands of day-to-day life.	0.861	4.19	High
Believe that I have a purpose and direction in life	0.625	4.50	Very High
An important part of my team and organization.	0.729	4.43	Very High
In a team with people who are trustworthy	0.738	4.42	Very High
Close to my teammates in my organization.	0.767	4.35	Very High
In a team that is a great source of social support.	0.726	4.38	Very High
In a team where my views are well accepted by my teammates.	0.776	4.35	Very High
Am quite satisfied with my job.	0.731	4.35	Very High
Have work achievement that often acts as a source of motivation.	0.716	4.39	Very High
Have a job that provides ample scope for career growth.	0.732	4.31	Very High
Maintain a balance in work and home life	0.754	4.32	Very High
Am in a work that offers challenges to advance my skills.	0.720	4.35	Very High
Mostly feel happy	0.793	4.28	Very High
Am an optimistic person.	0.733	4.38	Very High
Feel good about myself.	0.870	4.20	Very High
Have a life that is not sorrowful.	0.754	4.35	Very High
Overall	0.590	4.36	Very High

The results indicate that public secondary school teachers place a high value on their overall wellbeing. Teachers reported strong adaptability to daily changes and effective management of responsibilities, supporting evidence that wellbeing is crucial for teaching effectiveness and educational outcomes (Dreer, 2023). They also perceived themselves as important members of their teams, benefiting from social support within their organizations. Although slightly lower, the item on experiencing stress and depression scored a mean of 4.19 (High), highlighting areas for attention and reflecting findings of high burnout rates among teachers due to heavy workloads and fast-paced environments (Kutubidze & Gogiashvili, 2025; Olaleye et al., 2023).

Job Satisfaction

Table 4 presents the level of job satisfaction among public secondary school teachers, with an overall mean score of 4.28 (SD = 0.676), indicating a very high level. Among the specific indicators, Job Responsibilities received the highest rating (M = 4.35, Very High), followed by Community Attachments/Linkages (M = 4.34, Very High), Work Environment (M = 4.26, Very High), and Security (M = 4.18, Very High). These results suggest that teachers generally derive fulfillment and meaning from their work, feeling

satisfied when performing tasks that align with their abilities, uphold their values, and allow them to engage in community activities and outreach programs.

Table 4. Level of Job Satisfaction

Indicators	SD	Mean	D.E.
Security	0.731	4.18	High
Work Environment	0.747	4.26	Very High
Job Responsibilities	0.715	4.35	Very High
Community Attachments	0.716	4.34	Very High
Overall	0.676	4.28	Very High

Significance on the Relationship between Levels of Transformational Leadership and Employee Motivation

As shown in Table 5, transformational leadership demonstrated a strong and statistically significant positive relationship with employee motivation among public secondary school teachers ($r = 0.770$, $p = 0.000$). This indicates that higher levels of transformational leadership exhibited by school heads are associated with increased teacher motivation. Among the dimensions, Innovative Climate showed the highest correlation with motivation ($r = 0.782$), followed by Intellectual Stimulation ($r = 0.719$), Vision Building ($r = 0.678$), and Individualized Consideration ($r = 0.634$), all significant at $p = 0.000$. These results suggest that teachers are more motivated when their leaders are innovative, intellectually stimulating, visionary, and personally supportive, consistent with AlShaikh and Hyams-Ssekasi (2024).

Table 5. Significance on the Relationship between Levels of Transformational Leadership and Employee Motivation

Transformational Leadership	Employee Motivation
	Overall
Vision Building	.678* (0.000)
Individualized Consideration	.634* (0.000)
Intellectual Stimulation	.719* (0.000)
Innovative Climate	.782* (0.000)
Overall	.770* (0.000)

*Significant at 0.05 significance level.

Significance in the Relationship between Levels of Employee Motivation and Job Satisfaction

As shown in Table 6, employee motivation has a strong and statistically significant positive correlation with overall job satisfaction ($r = 0.782$, $p = 0.000$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Examination of specific dimensions

indicates that employee motivation is significantly correlated with security ($r = 0.650, p = 0.000$), work environment ($r = 0.763, p = 0.000$), job responsibilities ($r = 0.744, p = 0.000$), and community attachments and linkages ($r = 0.752, p = 0.000$). These results suggest that enhancing employee motivation is closely linked to higher job satisfaction across all facets of teachers' work.

Table 6. Significance on the Relationship between Levels of Employee Motivation and Job Satisfaction

Employee Motivation	Job Satisfaction				Overall
	Security	Work Environment	Job Responsibilities	Community Attachments	
Overall	.650* (0.000)	.763* (0.000)	.744* (0.000)	.752* (0.000)	.782* (0.000)

*Significant at 0.05 significance level.

Significance in the Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Employee Wellbeing

The findings in Table 7 show a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and overall employee wellbeing, with an r -value of 0.760 ($p = 0.000$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Among the dimensions of transformational leadership, innovative climate exhibited the strongest correlation with employee wellbeing ($r = 0.752, p = 0.000$), followed by intellectual stimulation ($r = 0.730, p = 0.000$). Individualized consideration ($r = 0.687, p = 0.000$) and vision building ($r = 0.615, p = 0.000$) also demonstrated significant positive relationships, highlighting that multiple aspects of transformational leadership contribute meaningfully to enhancing teacher wellbeing.

Table 7. Significance on the Relationship between Levels of Transformational Leadership and Employee Well Being

Transformational Leadership	Employee Well Being
	Overall
Vision Building	.615* (0.000)
Individualized Consideration	.687* (0.000)
Intellectual Stimulation	.730* (0.000)
Innovative Climate	.752* (0.000)
Overall	.760* (0.000)

*Significant at 0.05 significance level.

Significance in the Relationship between Levels of Employee Wellbeing and Job

Satisfaction

The results in Table 8 indicate a very strong and statistically significant positive relationship between employee wellbeing and job satisfaction, with an overall r-value of 0.865 ($p < 0.05$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This suggests that teachers reporting higher levels of wellbeing are substantially more likely to experience job satisfaction. Examining specific dimensions of wellbeing, community attachments and linkages showed the strongest correlation with job satisfaction ($r = 0.827$, $p < 0.05$), followed closely by work environment ($r = 0.825$, $p < 0.05$). Job responsibilities ($r = 0.816$, $p < 0.05$) and job security ($r = 0.750$, $p < 0.05$) also exhibited significant positive correlations, highlighting that multiple facets of wellbeing contribute meaningfully to teachers' job satisfaction.

Table 8. Significance on the Relationship between Levels of Employee Well Being and Job Satisfaction

Employee Well Being	Job Satisfaction				
	Security	Work Environment	Job Responsibilities	Community Attachment	Overall
Overall	.750* (0.000)	.825* (0.000)	.816* (0.000)	.827* (0.000)	.865* (0.000)

*Significant at 0.05 significance level.

Significance in the Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction

The findings from Table 9 indicate a strong and significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction among public secondary school teachers, with an overall correlation coefficient of $r = .791$ and $p < .05$. This suggested that when teachers perceive their leaders as transformational, capable of fostering innovation, intellectual engagement, individualized support, and a clear vision; they are more likely to express satisfaction with their job.

Table 9. Significance on the Relationship between Levels of Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction

Transformational Leadership	Job Satisfaction				
	Security	Work Environment	Job Responsibilities	Community Attachment	Overall
Vision Building	.594* (0.000)	.685* (0.000)	.604* (0.000)	.620* (0.000)	.674* (0.000)
Individualized Consideration	.581* (0.000)	.665* (0.000)	.658* (0.000)	.672* (0.000)	.693* (0.000)
Intellectual Stimulation	.635* (0.000)	.716* (0.000)	.696* (0.000)	.698* (0.000)	.738* (0.000)
Innovative Climate	.655* (0.000)	.769* (0.000)	.743* (0.000)	.766* (0.000)	.789* (0.000)

Overall	.675* (0.000)	.776* (0.000)	.738* (0.000)	.753* (0.000)	.791* (0.000)
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*Significant at 0.05 significance level.

Mediating Effect: Path Analysis

the results of the path analysis demonstrated that transformational leadership has a statistically significant positive effect on employee motivation ($p < 0.001$, ***). The unstandardized estimate of 0.699 indicates that a one-unit increase in transformational leadership corresponds to a 0.699-unit increase in employee motivation, highlighting its crucial role in enhancing teachers' motivation. This finding is consistent with AlShaikh and Hyams-Ssekasi (2024) and is supported by studies showing that transformational leadership strengthens motivation through its core components, which in turn promotes teacher satisfaction and engagement by serving as a key mediating factor (Yusup & Maulani, 2023; Bai & Ghazali, 2024).

Table 10. Mediating Effect: Path Analysis

PATH	ESTIMATES		SE	CR	P
	Unstandardized	Standardized			
TL → EM	.699	.770	.029	24.114	***
EM → JS	.284	.239	.041	6.890	***
TL → EWB	.717	.760	.031	23.380	***
EWB → JS	.636	.656	.039	16.297	***
TL → JS	.214	.199	.047	4.585	***

Table 11 shows that transformational leadership has a statistically significant overall effect on teachers' job satisfaction. The total effect coefficient of 0.8691 indicates a strong positive relationship, with the 95% confidence interval (0.8030–0.9353) confirming its significance and reliability. This overall effect reflects the combined contributions of direct and indirect pathways through employee motivation and wellbeing.

Table 11. Total, Direct, and Indirect Effects

Effect	0	95% CI	
		b	Lower
Upper			
Total		.8691	.8030 .9353
Direct		.2144	.1312 .2975
Indirect (mediation)		.6547	.4537 .8187

The direct effect of 0.2144 demonstrates that transformational leadership positively influences job satisfaction even without the mediators, where a one-unit increase in transformational leadership corresponds to a 0.2144-unit increase in job satisfaction. This finding aligns with Rizzo et al. (2024) and other studies (Alutaya&Guhao, 2023; Bahtilla& Hui, 2021), indicating that school

leaders who inspire, support, and promote professional growth foster more positive attitudes and greater satisfaction among teachers.

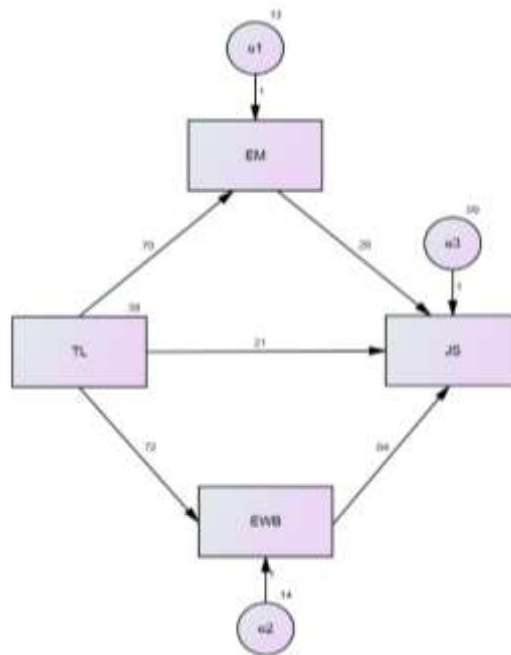


Figure 2. The combined mediating effects of employee motivation and employee wellbeing on the relationship between transformational leadership of school heads and job satisfaction of public-school teachers

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate a strong alignment with previously published research on transformational leadership, teacher motivation, wellbeing, and job satisfaction in educational settings. Public school teachers in this study strongly perceived their school heads as practicing transformational leadership, particularly through inclusive decision-making, active listening, and support for both professional and personal goals. This confirms the assertions of Tshewang and Dem (2023) and Alzoraiki et al. (2024), who found that transformational school leaders create supportive and high-performing environments by articulating a clear vision, which demonstrates individualized consideration, and fostering intellectual stimulation. Also, the present findings extend these studies by showing that such leadership behaviors are not only perceived positively but are also strongly embedded in day-to-day leadership practices within public secondary schools.

Consistent with global literature, the results also underscore the critical role of compensation, benefits, and collegial support in enhancing teacher motivation. Studies by Elacqua et al. (2025), Jeong and Kim (2024), and Žygaitienė and Venckienė (2023) similarly reported that fair remuneration and supportive professional relationships serve as key motivational drivers among teachers. This study reinforces these conclusions by demonstrating that positive interpersonal relationships and social relevance within the school context significantly

strengthen teacher engagement and motivation, corroborating the findings of Chen and Rong (2023) and Richter et al. (2025). This suggests that motivation in public schools is shaped not only by material incentives but also by the quality of social and professional interactions.

The findings further support earlier researches emphasizing the importance of a positive work environment, strong interpersonal connections, and effective stress management in sustaining teacher motivation and wellbeing. Pandey et al. (2025), Olaleye et al. (2023), and Kutubidze and Gogiashvili (2025) similarly identified workplace climate and stress-related factors as essential determinants of teacher wellbeing. In addition, this study corroborates prior evidence that job security, meaningful responsibilities, and supportive working conditions significantly enhance job satisfaction (Bahtilla and Hui, 2021; Wartenberg et al., 2023; Caballero and Guhao, 2020). These findings reinforce the view of Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2020) that high job satisfaction contributes to greater engagement, reduced turnover intentions, and improved workforce stability in schools.

In line with prior research, the findings also confirm transformational leadership as a significant predictor of employee wellbeing. Kahraman and Arastaman (2022) and Kim and Cruz (2022) reported similar results, emphasizing that leadership practices characterized by inspiration, empowerment, and support foster positive psychological and occupational outcomes. The current study adds to this body of literature by demonstrating that transformational leadership contributes to teacher wellbeing both directly and indirectly through enhanced motivation and job satisfaction, supporting the conclusions of Sun et al. (2025).

Finally, the study corroborates earlier empirical evidence indicating a strong and reciprocal relationship between employee wellbeing and job satisfaction (Kosec et al., 2022; Lariosa and Quines, 2025; Dreer, 2024). Consistent with AlShaikh and Hyams-Ssekasi (2024) and Rizzo et al. (2024), transformational leadership emerged as a central factor in fostering motivation, wellbeing, and job satisfaction. These findings suggest that transformational leadership is instrumental in sustaining teacher engagement, commitment, and performance, even within demanding and resource-constrained public school environments.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, transformational leadership, employee motivation, employee wellbeing, and job satisfaction among public secondary school teachers in Davao Region (Region XI, Philippines) are strongly interrelated. Path analysis revealed significant positive relationships between transformational leadership and both employee motivation and wellbeing, which in turn significantly influenced teacher job satisfaction, confirming that transformational leadership is a key predictor of satisfaction both directly and indirectly through internal employee factors. Teachers reported that leaders who provide psychological support, foster a balanced work environment, recognize achievements, and empower staff are more effective in enhancing motivation, wellbeing, and overall job satisfaction. These findings align with Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory, emphasizing that fulfilling needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness increases engagement and wellbeing, and with

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, showing that safe and supportive work environments enable teachers to meet foundational needs and achieve higher levels of fulfillment. The study also highlights that specific dimensions of transformational leadership, such as innovative climate, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and vision building, are strongly associated with employee motivation and wellbeing, which in turn positively relate to various facets of job satisfaction, including job responsibilities, work environment, security, and community attachments. Given these results, school heads are encouraged to strengthen leadership practices through emotional support, responsive communication, and wellness-based leadership, complemented by professional development in inclusive decision-making and motivational strategies. To further enhance teacher motivation, recognition systems, coaching, participatory governance, and programs that amplify teacher voice and autonomy should be implemented, while wellness initiatives such as mental health check-ins, peer counseling, support groups, and resilience training should be systematized at the school and regional levels. Policy integration at the national level could link transformational leadership to teacher job satisfaction, emphasizing workload management, leadership training, and accessible psychosocial support. Finally, future research using qualitative approaches, broader regional coverage, private schools, or longitudinal designs could provide deeper insights into how leadership, motivation, and wellbeing interact to affect teacher satisfaction and retention. Collectively, the findings suggest that transformational leadership that actively addresses teacher needs, fosters motivation, and promotes wellbeing creates an empowering work environment, improving engagement, job satisfaction, retention, and overall school effectiveness.

FURTHER STUDY

Future research is recommended to expand the scope of this study by including a larger and more diverse sample across different educational levels or regions, as well as by incorporating additional variables such as organizational culture, work environment, or teacher engagement to further explore the dynamics between transformational leadership, employee motivation, employee wellbeing, and job satisfaction.

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