

INFLUENCE OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP, PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY, AND BURNOUT ON ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

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Abstract: This quantitative correlational study examined the relationships among transformational leadership, psychological safety, burnout, and organizational performance among 40 public-school teachers from selected schools in Davao del Sur and Sarangani Province. Data were obtained using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, a psychological safety scale, the Maslach Burnout Inventory, and Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form ratings. Descriptive findings indicated generally high ratings for leadership dimensions and psychological safety. Emotional exhaustion and depersonalization were low, while the personal accomplishment result requires cautious interpretation because the direction of scoring was not fully specified. Pearson correlation analysis found no statistically significant relationship between organizational performance and transformational leadership ($r = -.062$, $p = .702$), psychological safety ($r = .051$, $p = .756$), or burnout ($r = .186$, $p = .251$). Relationships among the three predictor variables were also small and nonsignificant. These findings do not demonstrate that leadership, safety, and well-being are unimportant; rather, no detectable linear associations emerged in this small cross-sectional sample. Restricted variation in performance ratings, limited statistical power, and reliance on self-report measures may have reduced the ability to identify effects. Future studies should use larger samples, report instrument reliability, adopt longitudinal designs, and test mediating variables such as engagement, efficacy, and team learning.

Keywords: transformational leadership; psychological safety; burnout; organizational performance; IPCRF

Introduction

Organizational performance in schools is shaped by the interaction of leadership behavior, workplace climate, employee well-being, and the systems used to evaluate performance. School leaders influence how teachers understand organizational goals, respond to change, collaborate with colleagues, and manage the emotional demands of teaching. At the same time, performance outcomes may not reflect leadership conditions directly because they are also affected by administrative procedures, rating practices, and contextual constraints.

Transformational leadership emphasizes inspiration, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and the development of a shared vision (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978). Leaders who communicate purpose, support teacher development, and encourage new approaches may strengthen motivation and collective capacity. Contemporary research generally links transformational leadership with favorable organizational outcomes, particularly when innovation, engagement, or other relational processes operate as mediators (Agazu et al., 2025; Peng et al., 2021).

Psychological safety refers to a shared belief that a team is safe for interpersonal risk-taking (Edmondson, 1999). In psychologically safe schools, teachers can raise concerns, request help, acknowledge mistakes, and offer new ideas without expecting humiliation or punishment. Such a climate supports learning behavior, team efficacy, and communication, which may improve performance indirectly (Kim et al., 2020; Kerrissey et al., 2024). Psychological safety is therefore a plausible mechanism through which leadership practices influence professional behavior.

Burnout presents a contrasting organizational condition. The Maslach model describes burnout through emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Job Demands-Resources theory similarly proposes that sustained job demands can deplete workers, whereas resources such as supportive leadership, autonomy, and collegial trust can protect engagement and well-being (Bakker & Demerouti, 2024). Recent evidence connects transformational leadership with healthier psychological profiles and lower burnout, although the magnitude and pathway of these relationships vary by context (Cortes-Denia et al., 2024; Yuan, 2025).

Despite these theoretical expectations, direct statistical relationships with formal teacher performance ratings may be difficult to detect. Performance scores can be compressed within a narrow range, and leadership or psychological safety may influence performance through intermediate variables rather than through a simple bivariate relationship. This study therefore examined transformational leadership, psychological safety, burnout, and Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) ratings among public-school teachers.

Research Objectives

The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the perceived level of transformational leadership in terms of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized

- consideration, contingent reward, management-by-exception, and laissez-faire leadership?
2. What is the level of psychological safety in terms of individual safety, team respect, and team learning?
 3. What is the level of teacher burnout in terms of emotional exhaustion, personal accomplishment, and depersonalization?
 4. Are transformational leadership, psychological safety, and burnout significantly related to organizational performance as measured by IPCRF ratings?

Theoretical Framework

The study integrated Transformational Leadership Theory, Edmondson's Psychological Safety Framework, and the Maslach model of burnout. Transformational Leadership Theory explains how leaders can influence motivation and performance through vision, support, intellectual challenge, and individualized attention. The Psychological Safety Framework explains how team members become willing to speak, learn, and take interpersonal risks. The burnout model identifies emotional and relational depletion that may constrain performance. Together, these perspectives suggest that leadership, climate, and employee well-being may each be associated with organizational performance, either directly or through intermediate mechanisms.

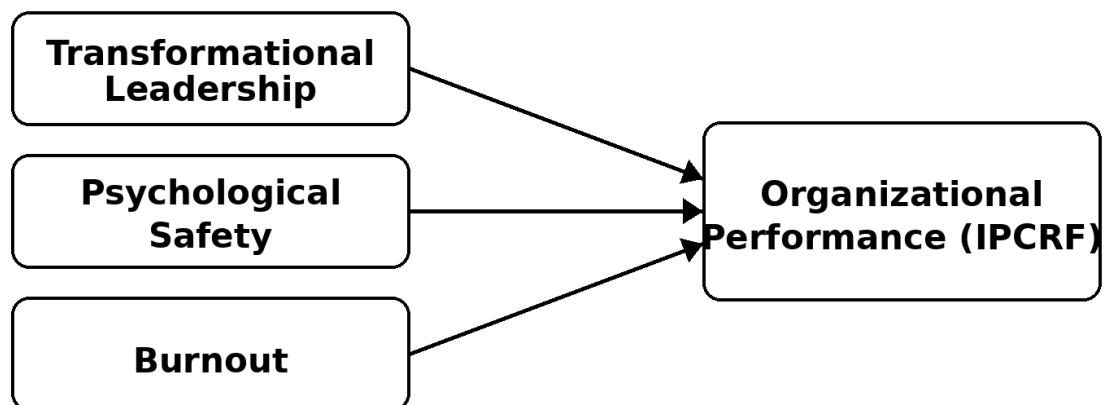


Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study

Research Method

Research Design and Participants

A quantitative, non-experimental, cross-sectional correlational design was used. This design was appropriate because the study measured naturally occurring differences in leadership perceptions, psychological safety, burnout, and performance without manipulating school conditions. The participants were 40 public-school teachers from selected schools in Davao del Sur and Sarangani Province. Data were collected at one point in time.

Research Instruments

Transformational leadership was assessed using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), which covered idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, contingent reward, management-by-exception, and laissez-faire leadership. Items were rated on a five-point frequency scale. The MLQ is widely used in leadership research, although scholars have also emphasized the importance of checking its measurement structure in each context (Batista-Foguet et al., 2021).

Psychological safety was measured using items based on Edmondson's (1999) framework. The instrument examined individual safety, team respect, and team learning, with responses recorded on a five-point agreement scale. Burnout was assessed using the Maslach Burnout Inventory, covering emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Organizational performance was represented by teachers' IPCRF ratings. The manuscript did not report internal-consistency coefficients for the present sample; this is treated as a methodological limitation.

Data Analysis and Ethical Considerations

Means and standard deviations were used to describe the study variables. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to test linear relationships among transformational leadership, psychological safety, burnout, and organizational performance. Statistical significance was evaluated at the .05 level. Because the sample included 40 teachers, the degrees of freedom for bivariate correlations were 38.

The study followed the Data Privacy Act of 2012 and general ethical principles for human-participant research. Permission was sought from school principals, participants were informed of the study's purpose and voluntary nature, and informed consent was obtained. No identifying names were included in the questionnaires. Responses were treated as confidential, stored securely, and used only for academic purposes. Participation or refusal was not intended to affect employment or performance evaluation.

Results

Transformational Leadership

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Transformational Leadership

Dimension	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Idealized influence	10.90	2.51	High
Inspirational motivation	11.30	2.53	High
Intellectual stimulation	10.20	2.47	High
Individualized consideration	11.20	2.64	High
Contingent reward	10.30	2.64	High
Management-by-exception	10.90	2.57	High
Laissez-faire leadership	10.90	2.47	High

Source: Survey data reported in the source manuscript.

All seven leadership dimensions were interpreted as high. Inspirational motivation obtained the highest mean ($M = 11.30$, $SD = 2.53$), followed by individualized consideration ($M = 11.20$, $SD = 2.64$). These ratings suggest that respondents generally perceived school leaders as communicating purpose, encouraging effort, and providing support. Transactional dimensions were also rated highly, indicating the presence of clear expectations, rewards, and corrective monitoring. The high laissez-faire score requires caution because it may represent either perceived autonomy or insufficient leadership involvement; the available data cannot distinguish between these explanations.

Psychological Safety

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Psychological Safety

Dimension	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Individual safety	3.92	0.666	High
Team respect	4.08	0.757	High
Team learning	3.90	0.650	High

Source: Survey data reported in the source manuscript.

Psychological safety was rated high across all dimensions. Team respect had the highest mean ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 0.757$), followed by individual safety ($M = 3.92$, $SD = 0.666$) and team learning ($M = 3.90$, $SD = 0.650$). The results indicate that respondents generally felt respected, able to communicate, and supported in learning from errors and feedback. The larger variability for team respect suggests that this experience was not equally strong for every participant.

Teacher Burnout

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for Burnout

Dimension	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Emotional exhaustion	2.58	1.00	Low burnout
Personal accomplishment	3.62	0.64	Reported as high burnout*
Depersonalization	2.27	0.92	Low burnout

*The source manuscript interpreted the personal-accomplishment score as high burnout, but it did not specify whether this subscale was reverse-coded. The result should therefore be interpreted cautiously.

Emotional exhaustion ($M = 2.58$, $SD = 1.00$) and depersonalization ($M = 2.27$, $SD = 0.92$) were interpreted as low. These results suggest that most respondents did not report persistent emotional depletion or strong cynical detachment from their work. The personal-accomplishment dimension produced a higher mean ($M = 3.62$, $SD = 0.64$). Because higher personal accomplishment ordinarily indicates greater efficacy unless items are reverse-scored, the absence of explicit scoring information limits a definitive burnout interpretation.

Relationships with Organizational Performance

Table 4. Pearson Correlations among Study Variables

Variable Pair	r	p	Decision at $\alpha = .05$
IPCRF and MLQ	-.062	.702	Not significant
IPCRF and PS	.051	.756	Not significant
IPCRF and BO	.186	.251	Not significant
MLQ and PS	.191	.237	Not significant
MLQ and BO	.122	.452	Not significant
PS and BO	.068	.678	Not significant

Note. $N = 40$; $df = 38$. IPCRF = organizational performance; MLQ = transformational leadership; PS = psychological safety; BO = burnout.

None of the correlations reached statistical significance. The absolute coefficients ranged from .051 to .191, indicating small linear associations. The largest coefficient was between transformational leadership and psychological safety ($r = .191$, $p = .237$), while the largest relationship involving performance was between IPCRF and burnout ($r = .186$, $p = .251$). Based on these data, the null hypotheses of no linear relationship were not rejected.

Discussion

The descriptive results portray schools in which teachers generally perceived leadership and psychological safety positively, while emotional exhaustion and depersonalization were relatively low. These patterns are compatible with theories proposing that supportive leadership and safe team climates serve as organizational resources. However, favorable mean ratings did not translate into significant correlations with formal performance scores.

The nonsignificant leadership-performance relationship should not be interpreted as evidence that leadership has no organizational value. Transformational leadership may affect performance indirectly through engagement, innovation, motivation, efficacy, or team learning. This interpretation is consistent with reviews showing that leadership effects are often mediated by innovation and other employee processes (Agazu et al., 2025) and with evidence that psychological safety supports team performance through efficacy and learning behavior (Kim et al., 2020). A bivariate correlation with a narrow administrative rating may not capture these pathways.

The absence of significant relationships may also reflect measurement and design constraints. The sample of 40 participants provides limited power to detect small effects. IPCRF ratings may show restricted variation because formal performance systems often cluster scores near the upper end. Restricted range reduces correlation coefficients even when meaningful differences exist in practice. In addition, leadership, safety, and burnout were measured through self-report, whereas performance came from an administrative rating system that may reflect different criteria and sources of variance.

The burnout findings require particular care. Emotional exhaustion and depersonalization were low, but the source classified a relatively high personal-

accomplishment score as high burnout without documenting reverse scoring. Under the conventional MBI interpretation, reduced personal accomplishment—not high accomplishment—contributes to burnout. Reliability coefficients and a clear scoring protocol are therefore necessary before strong conclusions can be drawn from this dimension.

Practical Implications and Limitations

School leaders should continue to strengthen respectful communication, teacher voice, and opportunities for collaborative learning, even though these factors were not directly correlated with IPCRF scores in this sample. Well-being programs should distinguish among exhaustion, detachment, and professional efficacy rather than treating burnout as a single undifferentiated condition. Performance systems should also be reviewed to ensure that they discriminate meaningfully among levels of teaching practice and are sensitive to organizational conditions.

The study is limited by its small sample, cross-sectional design, unspecified sampling procedure, reliance on self-report measures, absence of reliability coefficients for the current sample, and possible score compression in IPCRF ratings. These limitations restrict generalization and prevent causal conclusions. Future research should use larger and more diverse samples, longitudinal data, multiple performance indicators, and mediation or moderation models involving engagement, efficacy, team learning, workload, and organizational support.

Conclusion

Teachers in the study reported high transformational-leadership and psychological-safety ratings, low emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, and generally favorable workplace conditions. Nevertheless, transformational leadership, psychological safety, and burnout were not significantly correlated with organizational performance as measured by IPCRF ratings. The findings indicate an absence of detectable linear relationships in this sample, not proof that leadership and well-being are irrelevant to performance.

The results highlight the need for stronger measurement and research designs. Larger samples, explicit scoring procedures, reliability reporting, longitudinal observation, and models of indirect influence are required to clarify how leadership and psychological safety may shape teacher performance. In practice, schools should preserve supportive leadership and psychologically safe working environments while improving the sensitivity of performance evaluation systems and monitoring distinct dimensions of teacher burnout.

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