

THE IMPACT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND WORK ENGAGEMENT ON JOB PERFORMANCE WITH THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF JOB SATISFACTION

INDU WEERAKKODY

LINCOLN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, MALAYSIA

NIDHI AGARWAL

LINCOLN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, MALAYSIA

DINOKA PERERA

UNIVERSITY OF SRI JAYEWARDENEPURA, SRI LANKA

Abstract: Organisational psychology focuses on psychological factors that enhance institutional performance. National Colleges of Education, central to teacher education in Sri Lanka, face ongoing quality issues. This study examined the impacts of transformational leadership and work engagement on job performance, with job satisfaction as a mediator. In this exploratory study, data were collected from 226 teacher educators through a structured online questionnaire. Relationships among variables were analysed using the Structural Equation Modelling with Partial Least Squares. Seven hypotheses were tested, and five were supported. Accordingly, work engagement significantly impacts both job satisfaction and job performance, with job satisfaction partially mediating this relationship. Transformational leadership had a moderate direct effect on job performance but did not significantly influence job satisfaction or indirectly impact job performance. These findings highlight the key roles of work engagement and job satisfaction in enhancing job performance. Future research may explore alternative leadership styles to identify more effective strategies.

Keywords: Impact, Job Performance, Job Satisfaction, Transformational Leadership, Work Engagement

INTRODUCTION:

Teacher education in Sri Lanka operates within a multifaceted system (Sethunga et al., 2016). Pre-service teacher education is provided through university faculties, departments of education, and National Colleges of Education (NCoEs). While universities offer degree programs such as the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.), NCoEs specialise in providing National Diploma in Teaching. In-service teacher education is facilitated by universities, the National Institute of Education, and Teacher Training Colleges. The NCoEs serve as the principal institutions for preparing non-graduate pre-service teachers in the country (Asian Development Bank, 2017). As reported by the Ministry of Education (2021), the majority of teachers in the system have been produced by NCoEs. Accordingly, teacher educators of NCoEs are playing an increasingly influential role in the development of teacher education in Sri Lanka. It is essential for understanding and managing workplace dynamics, and improving teacher educators' well-being towards the success of the colleges.

Problem Justification

While work engagement, transformational leadership, and job satisfaction are widely acknowledged as critical determinants of job performance (Pracoyo et al., 2022), there is a lack of empirical research focusing on teacher educators of NCoEs in Sri Lanka. Although the individual effects of work engagement (El-Sherbeeney et al., 2023) and transformational leadership (Nurfaizi, & Muafi, 2022; Santya & Dewi, 2022) on job performance have been examined, few studies have explored these variables within an integrated framework that includes job satisfaction as a mediating variable (Pracoyo et al., 2022). Moreover, much of the existing research has focused on school teachers (John et al., 2022) or university academics (Hussain & Nadeem, 2023), thereby overlooking the distinctive intermediary role of teacher educators in NCoEs play within the education system. This highlights a pressing need to bridge this knowledge gap by exploring the interrelationships among transformational leadership, work engagement, job performance and job satisfaction within the context of teacher educators of NCoEs in Sri Lanka.

Problem Statement

According to the National Education Commission (2022, p.9), poor teacher quality caused by deficiencies in pre-service teacher education is a major issue in the general education system in Sri Lanka. Despite this, challenges persist, and the goal of producing fully professional teachers remains unmet (Jayasena, 2014).

However, Supermane et al. (2018) has identified that Transformational leadership is a catalyst for improving teacher education and is globally recognised for enhancing performance. However, empirical research on its impact on NCoEs is limited (Weerakkody et al., 2024). Additionally, work engagement is a known driver of job performance (Nkansah et al., 2023), and job satisfaction has long been linked to productivity (Moorman et al., 1993). This study investigates how transformational leadership and work engagement influence job performance, with job satisfaction as a mediator, among teacher educators of NCoEs in Sri Lanka. It seeks to address the research question: Do transformational leadership and work engagement impact job performance, with job satisfaction serving as a mediating variable, among teacher educators of the National Colleges of Education in Sri Lanka? To empirically examine this question, the study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

1. To examine the impact of work engagement on job performance among teacher educators of the NCoEs in Sri Lanka
2. To study the impact of work engagement on job satisfaction among teacher educators of the NCoEs in Sri Lanka
3. To explore the impact of job satisfaction on job performance among teacher educators of the NCoEs in Sri Lanka
4. To investigate the mediating role of job satisfaction between work engagement and job performance among teacher educators of the NCoEs in Sri Lanka
5. To examine the impact of transformational leadership on job performance among teacher educators of the NCoEs in Sri Lanka
6. To study the impact of transformational leadership on job satisfaction among teacher educators of the NCoEs in Sri Lanka
7. To investigate the mediating role of job satisfaction between transformational leadership and job performance among teacher educators of the NCoEs in Sri Lanka

LITERATURE REVIEW

Work Engagement

Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) described work engagement as a good and gratifying psychological state associated with work, characterised by vigour, dedication, and absorption. Vigour involves high levels of energy, mental resilience, and persistence in the face of challenges. Dedication reflects a strong sense of significance, enthusiasm, pride, and inspiration toward one's work. Absorption refers to being fully focused and deeply engrossed in work, where time seems to pass quickly and detachment becomes difficult. Together, these dimensions represent an employee's energetic, committed, and immersive approach to their job.

Transformational Leadership

According to Bass (2006), transformational leadership is a prime example of exceptional leadership performance. It consists of four core dimensions: idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration, all of which play a vital role in facilitating organisational change and development.

Job Performance

Recognising the complexity of performance, Koopmans et al. (2014) proposed a comprehensive framework identifying four core dimensions: task performance, contextual performance, and counterproductive work behaviour, thereby illustrating that job performance involves a dynamic range of positive and negative behaviours that influence organisational success.

Job Satisfaction

According to Rounds et al. (1981), employees possess diverse psychological needs, and it is the responsibility of organisations to fulfil these needs to ensure satisfaction and alignment with work roles. They identified the conditions that fulfil these needs and referred to them as reinforcers. In line with this perspective, the Minnesota Importance Questionnaire (MIQ) was developed to assess twenty psychological needs and six core work-related values within the framework of the Theory of Work Adjustment, focusing particularly on job satisfaction. These six fundamental values include achievement, comfort, status, altruism, safety, and autonomy, each representing a distinct domain that contributes to an individual's overall satisfaction and adjustment in the workplace.

METHODOLOGY

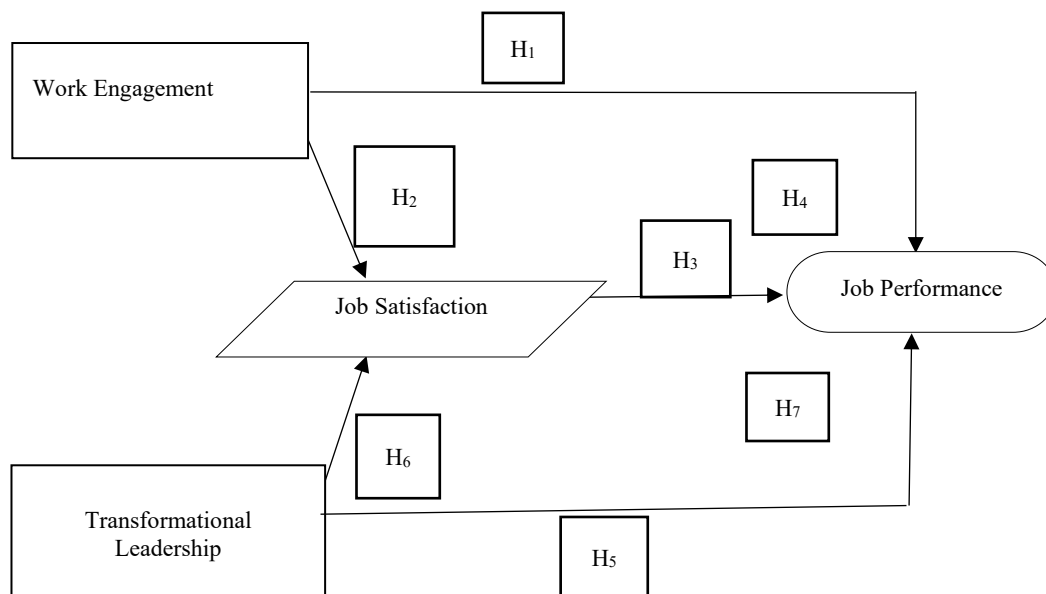
This exploratory study was conducted among teacher educators employed at NCoEs in Sri Lanka. The target population consisted of 548 teacher educators currently serving in these institutions. A sample of 226 participants was selected based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size determination table. Due to the geographical dispersion of the target population across the country and challenges related to accessibility, a non-

probability sampling method, convenience sampling, was adopted. Data were collected using an online questionnaire, which allowed for efficient and broad participant reach. Work engagement was operationalised using the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004), a self-report questionnaire comprising 17 items. Transformational leadership was measured using the Transformational Leadership Inventory (Supermane et al., 2018), which includes 22 items adapted from Bass and Avolio's (2004) Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire. Job performance was assessed using the 18-item Individual Work Performance Questionnaire (Koopmans et al., 2014). Job satisfaction was operationalised using the short form of the Minnesota Importance Questionnaire (Rounds et al., 1981), which measures six underlying value domains corresponding to twenty distinct job-related values. All study variables were measured using Likert scale items. Data analysis was performed using the Structural Equation Model with Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS), and mediation effects were examined through bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework, developed from a comprehensive review of empirical research, includes four key constructs: work engagement and transformational leadership as independent variables, job performance as the dependent variable, and job satisfaction as the mediator. Figure 1 outlines the relationships among these variables in the context of teacher educators of NCoEs in Sri Lanka.

FIGURE 1 The Conceptual Framework



Source. Developed based on literature (2025)

Formulating Hypotheses

Grounded in key theories, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, McClelland's Need for Achievement Theory, Goal-Setting Theory, the Job Demands-Resources Model (JD-R model), Work Adjustment Theory, and Social Exchange Theory, this study proposes seven hypotheses.

Impact of Work Engagement on Job Performance

The relationship between work engagement and job performance among teacher educators of NCoEs in Sri Lanka is supported by motivational theories and prior research. The JD-R Model suggests that resources such as support and training boost engagement and performance. Herzberg's theory emphasises intrinsic motivators like achievement and recognition, while McClelland's Need for Achievement theory links high engagement with strong performance. Goal-setting theory and Social Exchange theory also highlight how clear goals and supportive leadership enhance engagement and effort. Empirical studies (El-Sherbeeney et al., 2023; Perera & Wijewardene, 2019) confirm this positive link as;

H₁: There is a positive and significant impact of work engagement on job performance among teacher educators of NCoEs in Sri Lanka.

Impact of Work Engagement on Job Satisfaction

The positive impact of work engagement on job satisfaction among teacher educators of NCoEs in Sri Lanka is supported by several motivational theories and empirical studies.

The JD-R Model explains that engaged educators who are supported by resources like professional development and leadership are more likely to feel fulfilled and satisfied. Herzberg's Two-Factor theory emphasised that engagement arises from intrinsic motivators such as recognition and meaningful work, which in turn increase job satisfaction. McClelland's Need Achievement Theory highlights that educators driven by internal goals feel more accomplished and satisfied. Goal-setting theory shows that pursuing challenging goals enhances both engagement and satisfaction. Social exchange theory suggests that when institutions reciprocate educator engagement with support and recognition, job satisfaction improves. This relationship is confirmed by studies (Wulandari & Hafidz, 2023; Majid et al., 2020). The second hypothesis can be formulated as;

H₂: There is a positive and significant impact of work engagement on job satisfaction among teacher educators of NCoEs in Sri Lanka.

Impact of Job Satisfaction on Job Performance

The relationship between job satisfaction and job performance among teacher educators of NCoEs in Sri Lanka is well supported by motivational theories and empirical research.

The JD-R Model highlights that satisfied educators, supported by adequate resources and leadership, are more resilient and productive. Herzberg's Two-Factor theory links intrinsic motivators such as recognition, growth, and responsibility to both satisfaction and high performance. McClelland's Need for Achievement theory suggests that satisfied educators are motivated by a sense of accomplishment, which drives performance. Goal-setting theory explains that satisfaction from achieving meaningful goals reinforces further performance. Social Exchange theory emphasises that when educators feel valued and supported, they reciprocate through greater effort and commitment. These theoretical insights are supported by findings from (Naqvi & Siddiqui, 2023; Rodrigo et al., 2022). The third hypothesis can be formulated as;

H₃: There is a positive and significant impact of job satisfaction on job performance among teacher educators of NCoEs in Sri Lanka.

Impact of Work Engagement on Job Performance Mediated by Job Satisfaction

Work engagement is defined by vigour, dedication, and absorption positively influence job performance, but this relationship is often mediated by job satisfaction. According to the JD-R Model, while job resources fuel engagement, sustained performance arises when this engagement leads to emotional fulfilment or satisfaction. Herzberg's two-factor theory supports this by showing that intrinsic motivators driving engagement also enhance satisfaction, which in turn boosts performance. McClelland's Need for Achievement theory suggests that engagement satisfies internal drives for success, and satisfaction reinforces this by increasing one's sense of achievement. Goal-setting theory explains how engaged educators achieve meaningful goals, and the satisfaction gained from goal attainment strengthens ongoing performance. Empirical studies confirm this mediating effect (Pracoyo et al., 2022; Perangin-Angin et al., 2020), all found that job satisfaction significantly mediates the link between engagement and performance. Therefore, job satisfaction is a crucial mechanism through which engagement translates into effective, consistent job performance.

H₄: There is a positive and significant impact of work engagement on job performance mediated by job satisfaction among teacher educators of NCoEs in Sri Lanka.

Impact of Transformational Leadership on Job Performance

Transformational leadership, which is characterised by idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration, positively influences job performance among teacher educators of NCoEs in Sri Lanka. According to Social exchange theory, when leaders foster trust, fairness, and support, educators reciprocate through greater commitment and enhanced performance.

The JD-R Model further explains that transformational leaders act as crucial job resources by offering emotional and professional support, helping educators manage demands and remain engaged, which ultimately improves performance. Herzberg's Two-Factor theory suggests that transformational leaders stimulate high-achieving behaviours by challenging goals, increasing their motivation, focus, and output.

Empirical studies support this theoretical linkage. Research by Balasuriya and Perera (2021) from Sri Lanka confirms that transformational leadership significantly enhances employee performance, and further evidence from Nurfaizi and Muafi (2022) reinforces this finding. Therefore, the fifth hypothesis can be formulated as follows:

H₅: There is a positive and significant impact of transformational leadership on job performance among teacher educators of NCoEs in Sri Lanka.

Impact of Transformational Leadership on Job Satisfaction

Transformational leadership significantly enhances job satisfaction among teacher educators in NCoEs by fostering a supportive, motivating, and empowering work environment.

Through the lens of Social Exchange theory, mutual trust and respect between leaders and educators promote a sense of fairness and reciprocity, boosting satisfaction. The JD-R Model emphasises how transformational leaders serve as key job resources by offering support, inspiration, and professional development, which is

crucial in resource-constrained settings. Herzberg's Two-Factor theory explains that such leaders reduce dissatisfaction and increase satisfaction through recognition and achievement. McClelland's theory and Goal-setting theory further suggest that by setting high expectations and aligning individual goals with institutional visions, transformational leaders satisfy educators' needs for achievement and personal growth, enhancing their job satisfaction. This claim can be supported by the evidence found in the literature (Hussain, 2023; Firdaus et al., 2023). The sixth hypothesis can be formulated as;

H₆: There is a positive and significant impact of transformational leadership on job satisfaction among teacher educators of NCoEs in Sri Lanka.

Impact of Transformational Leadership on Job Performance Mediated by Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction serves as a key mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership and job performance among teacher educators in NCoEs.

Transformational leaders, by fostering trust, recognition, and intellectual stimulation, improve job satisfaction (Social exchange theory, Herzberg's theory, JD-R model). This satisfaction, in turn, enhances motivation, resilience, and commitment for sustained high performance. When educators feel valued and emotionally connected to their work, they are more likely to go beyond their formal roles. Empirical evidence (Santya & Dewi, 2022; Pracoyo et al., 2022) confirms that job satisfaction fully mediates this relationship, strengthening the impact of transformational leadership on performance. Then the final hypothesis can be formulated as;

H₇: There is a positive and significant impact of work engagement on job performance mediated by job satisfaction among teacher educators of NCoEs in Sri Lanka.

DATA ANALYSIS

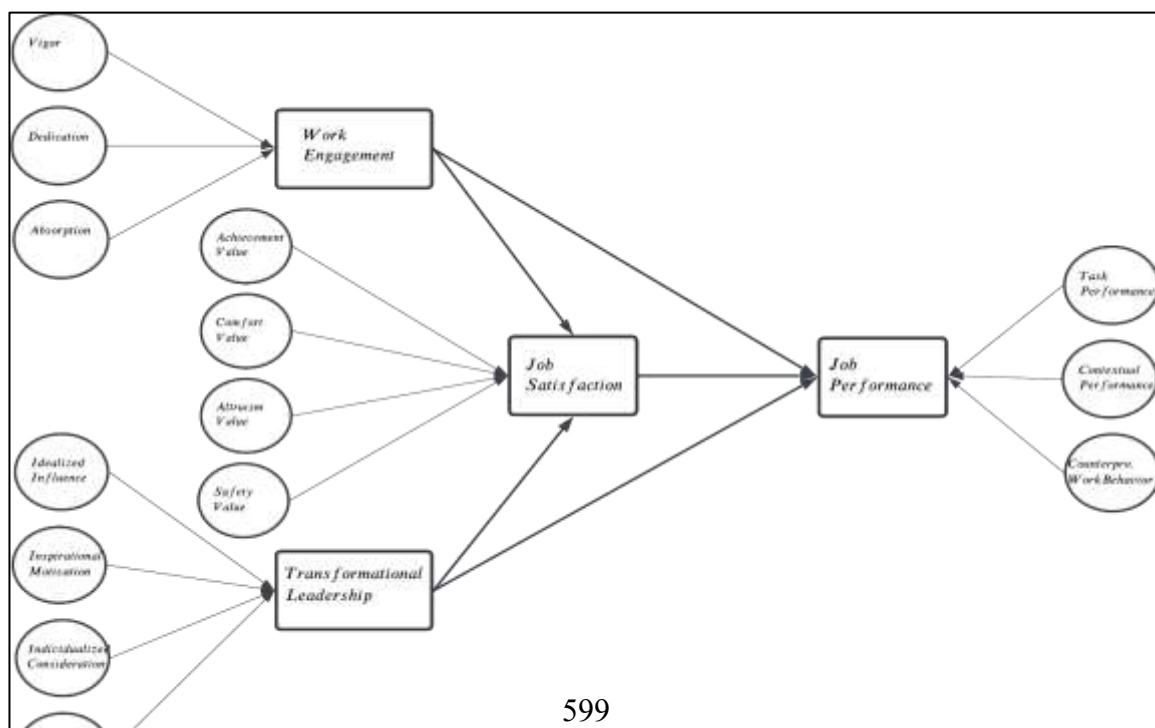
The study achieved a high response rate of 90%, since 226 out of 250 responses were returned, and no missing data were found in this study. The study employed a Higher-Order Model to represent the four constructs, modelling them as formative second-order constructs composed of their respective first-order dimensions. In PLS-SEM, model evaluation comprises two fundamental components: the measurement model and the structural model (Hair et al., 2017).

Model Evaluation

First, the research validated the measurement model to ensure that the latent constructs were consistently and properly assessed. This included tests of internal consistency, convergent and discriminant validity, and indicator reliability. Dimensional collinearity, significance, and relevance were assessed using formative second-order constructs and reflecting first-order dimensions.

Once verified, the study shifted to the structural model, which investigated the expected links across constructs using path coefficients, R^2 , f^2 , Q^2 , and mediation analysis. This two-stage model evaluation guaranteed both theoretical soundness and empirical rigour in evaluating the performance of the model according to Hair Jr. et al. (2017).

FIGURE 2 Formative Hierarchical Component Modelling



Source: SmartPLS Output (2025)

Modelling all second-order constructs as formative is theoretically appropriate and improves the parsimony, interpretability, and explanatory power of the PLS-SEM model. It also enables assessment of each first-order dimension's contribution to the higher-order construct, providing deeper insights and modelling flexibility (Sarstedt et al., 2019). It is illustrated in Figure 2.

Measurement Model Evaluation

In PLS-SEM, evaluating the measurement model is the essential first step before assessing the structural relationships between constructs. Since the current study employs a purely reflective measurement model, where indicators are assumed to be caused by the underlying latent construct, its evaluation involves four key criteria: indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity (Hair Jr. et al., 2017).

Validating the Measurement Model of the First-order Constructs

The measurement model demonstrated strong reliability and validity across all constructs. Indicator reliability was confirmed with outer loadings above 0.70 or, where slightly lower, retained due to statistical and theoretical justification. Internal consistency was supported by Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability, all exceeding the 0.70 threshold. Convergent validity was established through Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values above 0.50, while discriminant validity was confirmed using the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio (all values < 0.90) and the Fornell-Larcker criterion (square root of AVE > inter-construct correlations). For Work Engagement, its three dimensions demonstrated strong psychometric properties. Similarly, the four dimensions of Transformational Leadership and the first-order constructs of Job Satisfaction met all validity criteria. For Job Performance, its dimensions also showed adequate reliability and validity, with discriminant validity confirmed through HTMT ratio, Fornell-Larcker, and cross-loadings. Overall, these results affirm the measurement model's conceptual integrity and statistical robustness.

Validating the Measurement Model of the Second-order Constructs

The validation of second-order formative constructs, Transformational Leadership, Work Engagement, Job Satisfaction, and Job Performance, was conducted using the disjoint two-stage approach suitable for hierarchical component models. All constructs demonstrated strong psychometric and theoretical validity through three key criteria: low multicollinearity (Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) < 5.0), statistically significant and theoretically meaningful outer weights and loadings, and high convergent validity confirmed via redundancy analysis (path coefficients > 0.70). The dimensions of Work Engagement showed strong contributions and a path coefficient of 0.846. The components of Transformational Leadership, with the weaker yet conceptually essential Intellectual Stimulation, also showed validity (path coefficient = 0.904). Job Satisfaction was supported by its four dimensions, including a negative but theoretically justified contribution from Altruism Value, with a high convergent validity score (0.920). Job Performance, though Contextual Performance showed a weak statistical contribution, was validated by its overall path coefficient of 0.916. Overall, all second-order constructs were confirmed to be both statistically sound and conceptually comprehensive, justifying their use in the structural model.

Structural Model Evaluation

Following the validation of both first and second-order constructs, the structural model was evaluated to test the hypothesised relationships among latent variables. This model was empirically assessed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Model (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS 4. The structural model evaluation involved the following key steps (Hair Jr. et al., 2021; Hair Jr et al., 2014):

1. Assessment of collinearity among predictor constructs (Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values)
2. Examination of path coefficients and their significance via bootstrapping
3. Calculation of Coefficient of Determination (R^2) to evaluate explanatory power
4. Analysis of Effect Sizes (f^2) to determine the relative impact of predictors
5. Assessment of Predictive Relevance (Q^2) using the blindfolding procedure
6. Evaluation of model fit indices, where applicable in the PLS-SEM context

Assessment of Collinearity among Predictor Constructs

To assess multicollinearity among first-order latent variables, bootstrapped VIF values with 5,000 resamples were computed, offering a robust assessment suitable for PLS-SEM, especially with smaller samples and non-normal data. Most constructs had VIF values well below the conservative 3.3 threshold, and all were below the liberal benchmark of 5.0. For instance, Absorption (1.729), Altruism Value (1.247), Achievement

Value (1.244), and Counterproductive Work Behaviour (1.014) showed minimal collinearity. Moderate but acceptable VIFs were noted for Dedication (2.556), Individualised Consideration (2.405), Idealised Influence (2.245), and Vigour (2.271). Inspirational Motivation had the highest upper-bound Confidence Interval (CI) (3.345) but remained within acceptable limits. Overall, multicollinearity was minor and did not compromise the model.

For inner model paths, all VIF values remained below 3.3, confirming no multicollinearity issues: Work Engagement → Job Performance (1.542), and Work Engagement → Job Satisfaction (1.200), Job Satisfaction → Job Performance (1.371), Transformational Leadership → Job Performance (1.203), Transformational Leadership → Job Satisfaction (1.200). Narrow confidence intervals further reinforced the stability of these estimates. Thus, multicollinearity was not a concern in either the measurement or structural models.

Examination of Path Coefficients and Their Statistical Significance

The structural model was assessed to test the hypothesised relationships among the latent constructs using bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples in SmartPLS. Key criteria for hypothesis testing included path coefficients (β), t-statistics, and p-values.

The structural model revealed that Work Engagement significantly influenced both Job Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.500$, $t = 8.592$, $p < 0.001$) and Job Performance ($\beta = 0.407$, $t = 5.731$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H1 and H2 and aligning with the JD-R model. Job Satisfaction also positively affected Job Performance ($\beta = 0.292$, $t = 3.750$, $p < 0.001$), confirming H3 and theories like Expectancy Theory. However, the path from Transformational Leadership to Job Satisfaction was not significant ($\beta = 0.046$, $t = 0.622$, $p = 0.534$), rejecting H6, while its direct effect on Job Performance was only marginally significant ($\beta = 0.177$, $t = 1.907$, $p = 0.057$), offering partial support for H5. These results, highlighted in Table 1, provide evidence for the acceptance or rejection of the proposed hypotheses.

Table 1 Testing the statistical significance of the path coefficient

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Work Engagement -> Job Performance	0.407	0.408	0.071	5.731	0.000
Work Engagement -> Job Satisfaction	0.500	0.496	0.058	8.592	0.000
Job Satisfaction -> Job Performance	0.292	0.294	0.078	3.750	0.000
Transformational Leadership -> Job Performance	0.177	0.175	0.093	1.907	0.057
Transformational Leadership -> Job Satisfaction	0.046	0.077	0.073	0.622	0.534

Source: SmartPLS Output (2025)

Mediation analysis

Mediation analysis, as shown in Table 2, highlights that Job Satisfaction partially mediated the link between Work Engagement and Job Performance ($\beta = 0.146$, $t = 3.318$, $p = 0.001$), supporting H4, but did not mediate the effect of Transformational Leadership on Job Performance ($\beta = 0.013$, $t = 0.596$, $p = 0.551$), rejecting H7. Total effects indicated that Work Engagement had the strongest influence on Job Performance ($\beta = 0.552$), followed by Job Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.292$). Transformational Leadership showed a modest total effect on Job Performance ($\beta = 0.191$) but had no significant effect on Job Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.046$).

TABLE 2The mediation effect of job satisfaction

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Work Engagement -> Job Satisfaction -> Job Performance	0.146	0.146	0.044	3.318	0.001
Transformational Leadership -> Job Satisfaction -> Job Performance	0.013	0.022	0.022	0.596	0.551

Source: SmartPLS Output (2025)

Overall, five of the seven hypotheses were supported, highlighting the central role of Work Engagement and Job Satisfaction in driving performance, while the effects of Transformational Leadership appeared context-dependent and indirect.

Model Evaluation Summary

The coefficient of determination (R^2) indicates moderate to substantial explanatory power, with Job Performance ($R^2 = 0.490$, $t = 6.885$, $p < 0.001$) and Job Satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.270$, $t = 5.987$, $p < 0.001$) explained primarily by Work Engagement, while other factors like workplace climate may influence satisfaction.

Effect size (f^2) analysis showed that Work Engagement had large effects on Job Satisfaction ($f^2 = 0.285$) and Job Performance ($f^2 = 0.210$), while Job Satisfaction had a medium effect on performance ($f^2 = 0.122$). Transformational Leadership had negligible effects, highlighting Work Engagement as the strongest predictor.

Predictive relevance (Q^2) values for Job Performance (0.293) and Job Satisfaction (0.233) confirmed moderate to strong predictive accuracy. PLSpredict results outperformed benchmarks, particularly for indicators like Task and Contextual Performance.

The model demonstrated strong theoretical and predictive validity, supporting five of seven hypotheses. It emphasises the central role of Work Engagement while highlighting the need for deeper exploration into the contextual impact of leadership.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The structural model evaluation offers a clear understanding of the causal links among Work Engagement, Transformational Leadership, Job Performance, and Job Satisfaction in the context of teacher educators in Sri Lanka's National Colleges of Education. The findings support established theories like Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, McClelland's Need for Achievement Theory, Goal-Setting Theory, the Job Demands-Resources Model, Work Adjustment Theory, and Social Exchange Theory while also revealing context-specific factors that account for both supported and unsupported hypotheses. This research empirically validated hypotheses H1–H5, supporting El-Sherbeeney et al. (2023), Wulandari and Hafidz (2023), Naqvi and Siddiqui (2023), Pracoyo (2022), and Balasuriya and Perera (2021), respectively.

The findings offer strong empirical support for the pivotal role of Work Engagement in enhancing both Job Performance and Job Satisfaction, thereby affirming the applicability of the JD-R model within educational contexts. While Job Satisfaction does not universally mediate all relationships, it remains a key mechanism through which engagement influences performance. Transformational Leadership, although relevant, appears to exert a more conditional effect on satisfaction, potentially shaped by institutional and cultural dynamics unique to the teacher education system in Sri Lanka.

CONCLUSIONS

The structural model testing supported five of the seven proposed hypotheses. Work engagement significantly influenced both job performance (H1) and job satisfaction (H2), and job satisfaction also had a significant positive impact on job performance (H3). Mediation analysis confirmed that job satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between work engagement and job performance (H4). Transformational leadership had a direct but moderate effect on job performance (H5), while its effects on job satisfaction (H6) and the mediated path through job satisfaction to job performance (H7) were not supported. Overall, the findings highlight the central role of work engagement and job satisfaction in driving performance, with limited impact from transformational leadership.

In conclusion, these insights underscore the need for policymakers and administrators to prioritise strategies that foster engagement, such as professional development and effective workload management, as they are most likely to boost satisfaction and performance. Additionally, leadership training programs should be tailored to ensure they not only drive performance but also enhance job satisfaction.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. Firstly, the research was conducted exclusively within the context of National Colleges of Education (NCoEs) in Sri Lanka. While this focus provides valuable insights into a specific and important educational setting, it may limit the generalizability of the findings to other educational institutions, both within Sri Lanka and internationally. Differences in organisational culture, leadership styles, educational policies, and socio-economic conditions across countries and institutions may affect the applicability of the results.

Leadership training programs should be customised to enhance both job performance and job satisfaction by incorporating diverse leadership competencies beyond transformational leadership. Future research should

explore and compare various leadership styles, such as transactional, servant, authentic, and democratic, to determine their effectiveness in improving organisational outcomes. Such comparative studies can guide the adoption of evidence-based leadership styles suited to specific institutional contexts.

FUNDINGS: The authors declare that no funds, grants, or other support were received during the preparation of this manuscript.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: I would like to express gratitude to Professors (Dr.) Nidhi Agarwal and Professor (Dr.) Dinoka Perera for their valuable feedback, and to the faculty of Social Science, Arts, and Humanities at Lincoln University College, Malaysia, for their support in facilitating the research.

REFERENCES

1. Asian Development Bank. (2017). *Innovative strategies for accelerated human resource development in South Asia: Teacher professional development—Special focus on Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka*. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/385091/teacher-professional-development-sa.pdf>
2. Assiddiki, A. H. (2023). Influence of Leadership and Work Environment on Job Satisfaction and Its Impact on Employee Performance. *International Journal of Business, Management and Economics*, 4(4), 293–310. <https://doi.org/10.47747/ijbme.v4i4.1454>
3. Balasuriya, B. L. L. A., & Perera, G. D. N. (2021). The Impact of Transformational Leadership on Employee Performance: The Mediating Role of Employee Engagement in Selected Porcelain Manufacturing Companies in Sri Lanka. *Vidyodaya Journal of Management*, 7(2), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.31357/vjm.v7iii.5093>
4. Bass, B. M. (2006). From Transactional to Transformational leadership: Learning to share the vision. *Acorn*, 19(3), 4–6.
5. El-Sherbeeney, A. M., Al-Romeedy, B. S., Abd elhady, M. H., Sheikhsouk, S., Alsetoohy, O., Liu, S., & Khairy, H. A. (2023). How Is Job Performance Affected by Ergonomics in the Tourism and Hospitality Industry? Mediating Roles of Work Engagement and Talent Retention. *Sustainability*, 15(20), 14947. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su152014947>
6. Fidyah, D. N., & Setiawati, T. (2020). *Influence of Organizational Culture and Employee Engagement on Employee Performance: Job Satisfaction as Intervening Variable*. 9(4), 64–81. <https://doi.org/10.33830/jom.v18i2.3706.2022>
7. Firdaus, L., Azhar, R., & Kesumah, F. S. D. (2023). The effect of transformational leadership and organizational culture on employee performance with job satisfaction as an intervening variable. *Asian Journal of Economics and Business Management*, 2(1), 326–345. <https://doi.org/10.53402/ajebm.v2i1.263>
8. Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2017). *A primer on partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM)*.
9. Hair Jr., J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., Sarstedt, M., Danks, N. P., & Ray, S. (2021). Review of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) Using R: A Workbook. In *Structural Equation Modelling: A Multidisciplinary Journal* (Vol. 30, Issue 1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/10705511.2022.2108813>
10. Hair Jr., J. F., Hult, G. T., Ringle, C., & Sarstedt, M. (2017). A Primer on Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). In *Sage* (Second Edi). SAGE Publications Inc. file:///E:/Journals/Psychological Studies/PS/_A Primer on Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling_Hair.pdf
11. Hair Jr, J. F., Sarstedt, M., Hopkins, L., & Kuppelwieser, V. G. (2014). Partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM): An emerging tool in business research. *European Business Review*, 26(2), 106–121. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EBR-10-2013-0128>
12. Hussain, S. (2023). *Impact of Transformational Leadership on Job Satisfaction: A Mediating Role of School Climate in School Teachers of Pakistan*. January, 16–34.
13. Hussain, W., & Nadeem, M. (2023). Effect of Leadership Styles and Motivation on Job Performance among University Academicians. *Nature of Learning*, 3(2), 1–14.
14. Jayasena, A. (2014). *The Teacher Education Programmes in National Colleges of Education* (pp. 1–3). http://nec.gov.lk/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/National_Colleges_of_Education.pdf
15. John, S., Shah, N. H., Ihsan, A., & Ali, A. (2022). *Impact Of Transformational Leadership On Job Performance Of Public Sector Schools ' Teachers, Pakistan : Mediating Role Of Job Satisfaction And Work Engagement*. 6(9), 2773–2786.
16. Koopmans, L., Bernaards, C. M., Hildebrandt, V. H., De Vet, H. C. W., & Van Der Beek, A. J. (2014). Construct validity of the individual work performance questionnaire. *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 56(3), 331–337. <https://doi.org/10.1097/JOM.0000000000000113>
17. Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining Sample Size for Research Activities. *Educational*

- and Psychological Measurement*, 30(3), 607–610. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001316447003000308>
18. Majid, M., Ramli, M. F., Badyalina, B., Roslan, A., & Azreen Jihan Che Mohd Hashim, A. J. (2020). Influence of engagement, work-environment, motivation, organizational learning, and supportive culture on job satisfaction. *International Journal of Human Resource Studies*, 10(4), 186. <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijhrs.v10i4.17822>
19. Ministry of Education. (2021). *Annual School Census of Sri Lanka*. 151. <https://moe.gov.lk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/cenreport.pdf>
20. Moorman, R. H., Niehoff, B. P., & Organ, D. W. (1993). Treating employees fairly and organizational citizenship behaviour: Sorting the effects of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and procedural justice. *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, 6(3), 209–225. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01419445>
21. Naqvi, S. T. A., & Siddiqui, A. N. (2023). The Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Job Performance with a Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction. *Market Forces*, 18(1), 63–96. <https://doi.org/10.51153/mf.v18i1.606>
22. National Education Commission. (2022). *National Education Policy Framework (2020-2030) Extended Summary*. National Education Commission. http://nec.gov.lk/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/NATIONAL-EDUCATION-POLICY-FRAMEWORK-2020-2030_Extended-Summary.pdf
23. Nkansah, D., Gyimah, R., Kwasi Annan, J., & Agyemfour-Agyemang Sarpong, D. (2023). The Effect of Employee Engagement on Employee Performance in Ghana's MSMEs Sector During Covid-19: The Moderating Role of Job Resources. *Journal of Social Science*, 4(3), 677–697. <https://doi.org/10.46799/jss.v4i3.453>
24. Nurfaizi, M. I., & Muafi, M. (2022). The impact of Islamic work ethics and transformational leadership on job performance with the mediating role of intrinsic motivation. *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science (2147- 4478)*, 11(3), 120–129. <https://doi.org/10.20525/ijrbs.v11i3.1779>
25. Omar, M. S., Rafie, N., & Ahmad Selo, S. (2020). Job Satisfaction Influences Job Performance Among Polytechnic Employees. *International Journal of Modern Trends in Social Sciences*, 3(14), 39–46. <https://doi.org/10.35631/ijmtss.314003>
26. Perangin-Angin, M. R., Lumbanraja, P., & Absah, Y. (2020). The Effect of Quality of Work Life and Work Engagement to Employee Performance with Job Satisfaction as an Intervening Variable in PT. Mopoly Raya Medan. *International Journal of Research and Review (Ijrrjournal.Com)*, 7(2), 72.
27. Perera, G. D. N., & Wijewardene, L. (2019). The Impact of Employee Engagement on Employee Performance in Sri Lankan Licensed Commercial Banks. *Rajarata Journal of Social Sciences Volume*, 4(2), 27–40. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/349103243_THE_IMPACT_OF_EMPLOYEE_ENGAGEMENT_ON_EMPLOYEE_PERFORMANCE_IN_SRI_LANKAN_LICENSED_COMMERCIAL_BANKS
28. Pracoyo, N. A., Tubastuvi, N., Santoso, S. B., & Wahyuni, S. (2022). Determinants of employee performance: The mediating role of job satisfaction. *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science (2147- 4478)*, 11(2), 144–156. <https://doi.org/10.20525/ijrbs.v11i2.1595>
29. Qodariah, M. A., & Mauluddin, M. (2019). Effect of work engagement, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment to employee performance. *International Journal of Recent Technology and Engineering*, 8(2 Special Issue 4), 815–822. <https://doi.org/10.35940/ijrte.B1164.0782S419>
30. Rodrigo, J. A. H. N., Kuruppu, C. L., & Pathirana, G. Y. (2022). The Impact of Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance : A Case at ABC Manufacturing Company. *Asian Journal of Economics, Business and Accounting*, 22(2), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.9734/ajeba/2022/v22i230541>
31. Rounds, J. B., Henly, G. A., Dowis, R. V., Lofquist, L. H., & Weiss, D. J. (1981). Manual for the Minnesota Importance Questionnaire: A measure of vocational needs and values. *Vocational Psychology Research*, 1–68. http://vpr.psych.umn.edu/sites/g/files/pua2236/f/miq_counselors_manual_1981.pdf
32. Sarstedt, M., Hair, J. F., Cheah, J. H., Becker, J. M., & Ringle, C. M. (2019). How to specify, estimate, and validate higher-order constructs in PLS-SEM. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 27(3), 197–211. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ausmj.2019.05.003>
33. Schaufeli, W. B., & Bakker, A. B. (2004). Utrecht Work Engagement Scale Preliminary Manual Version 1.1. In the *Occupational Health Psychology Unit, Utrecht University* (Issue December). <https://doi.org/10.1037/t01350-000>
34. Sethunga, P., Wijesundera, S., Kalamany, T., & Karunanayake, S. (2016). Study on the Professional Development of Teachers and Teacher Educators in Sri Lanka. In *Action in Teacher Education* (Vol. 22, Issue 3). <https://doi.org/10.1080/01626620.2000.10463017>
35. Supermane, S., Tahir, L. M., & Aris, M. (2018). Transformational Leadership in Teacher Education. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 8(3). <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarbss/v8-i3/3925>
36. Weerakkody, I. P., Agarwal, N., & Perera, G. D. N. (2024). Influence of Transformational Leadership on Job Performance in the Education Context - A Review. *International Journal of Emerging Issues in Social Science, Arts, and Humanities*, 3(December), 73–86.

-
- <https://doi.org/doi.org/10.60072/ijeissah.2024.v3i01.008>
37. Wijayanti, K., & Aini, Q. (2022). The Influence of Transformational Leadership Style to Nurse Job Satisfaction and Performance in the Hospital. *Journal of World Science*, 1(7), 485–499. <https://doi.org/10.36418/jws.v1i7.69>
38. Wulandari, V. try, & Hafidz, G. P. (2023). The Influence of Job Stress, Workaholism and Work Engagement on Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention in the Garment Industry. *International Journal of Social Science, Education, Communication and Economics (SINOMICS JOURNAL)*, 2(2), 341–354. <https://doi.org/10.54443/sj.v2i2.142>