

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES THAT FOSTER A GROWTH
MINDSET AMONG TEACHERS IN A CHARTER SCHOOL: A MIXED-METHODS
CASE STUDY

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN EDUCATION:
EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

2026

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To the purpose that lived within me long before I had the words to understand it.

I dedicate this work to a calling that has never left me, a calling to serve, to uplift, and to make a lasting difference in the lives of students, teachers, colleagues, leaders, and the communities I am honored to be part of, yet at the heart of it all, it began with the students, not only my own, but the children we, as educators, are entrusted to serve, who give this work its meaning, its urgency, and its soul.

This journey was never simply about earning a degree, it was about becoming, about rising through moments of doubt, exhaustion, and uncertainty, and still choosing purpose every time. It was about answering a calling that refused to let me remain where I was, and instead pushed me toward who I was meant to be.

To my parents, Nabil and Sawsan, my foundation and my strength, there are no words that could ever fully express what you are to me. Every step I have taken carries your sacrifices, your love, and your unwavering belief in me. You saw something in me long before I could fully see it in myself, and because of you, I never stopped moving forward. This is not mine alone, it is yours.

To my brother, Mazen, and my sister-in-law, Fahima, thank you for your constant support and presence throughout this journey. And to my nephew Noah and my niece Nura, you are my joy, my light, and a reminder of the future this work is meant to serve.

To my extended family, my grandmas, uncles, aunts, cousins, and to my community, thank you for holding me up through prayers, encouragement, and quiet belief. Your presence in my life has been a source of strength that words cannot fully capture.

To my friends, who stood beside me through every high and every low, who reminded me of my strength when I questioned it, and who never allowed me to forget who I am, your presence has been a gift I will carry with me far beyond this journey.

To my students, you are the beginning of this story and the reason it continues, you are the reason I chose this path, the reason I stayed when it became difficult, and the reason I will continue long after this moment. You are not just part of my journey, you are the purpose behind it.

This journey began as a quiet dream in the heart of a young girl, a dream filled with hope, vision, and a deep knowing that she was meant to do something meaningful. There were moments when the path felt heavy, when the dream felt distant, and when giving up would have been easier, but purpose does not leave, it calls, it waits, and it carries you forward even when you feel you have nothing left. Today, that dream stands as a reality, not because the path was easy, but because it was guided by faith, strengthened by perseverance, and held together by love. Through it all, I chose to keep going, to keep believing, and to become someone who would not only achieve, but who would give, lead, and leave a mark that matters.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to begin by expressing my deepest and most sincere gratitude to my advisor, Dr. Julia Smith. Your mentorship throughout this journey has been both meaningful and transformative. You did not simply guide this work, you challenged me to think with depth, to write with purpose, and to lead with intention. Your patience, your insight, and your unwavering belief in me allowed me to grow not only as a researcher, but as a leader. You have played a deeply meaningful and guiding role in both my academic and professional journey, and I am profoundly grateful for the impact you have had on who I am and who I continue to become.

I extend my sincere appreciation to my committee members, Dr. Cynthia Carver, Dr. Shannon Flumerfelt, and Dr. Suzanne Klein. Your expertise, your thoughtful feedback, and your commitment to this process strengthened this research in meaningful ways. Each of you contributed to refining my thinking and elevating the quality of this work, and I am truly grateful for your support and guidance throughout this journey.

I would also like to acknowledge my colleagues and mentors, whose leadership, collaboration, and shared experiences have influenced both this study and my professional practice. The work we do in education is deeply interconnected, and the insights gained through these relationships have shaped the lens through which this research was developed.

To the participants of this study, I extend my sincere thanks for your time, your openness, and your willingness to share your experiences. Your voices are at the center of this work, and your contributions have made this research both meaningful and impactful.

To my family and friends, thank you for your continued support, encouragement, and understanding throughout this journey. Your presence provided strength and stability, allowing me to remain focused and committed to completing this work.

This accomplishment reflects not only my efforts, but the collective support, guidance, and influence of those who stood beside me throughout this process. I am deeply grateful to each of you.

Razan Zaher

PREFACE

This study is rooted in both professional practice and personal purpose. As an educator and leader, I have witnessed the impact that leadership has on shaping not only instructional practices, but also the beliefs educators hold about growth, potential, and possibility. These experiences guided my interest in examining how transformational leadership can influence the development of a growth mindset among teachers within a school setting.

Throughout my work in education, I have observed that leadership extends beyond systems and structures. It is reflected in daily interactions, in moments of support, and in the culture that is continuously shaped within a school community. I have seen how leadership practices can either limit or expand how teachers view their growth, their capacity, and their impact on students. These observations became the foundation for this study.

This research seeks to understand how leadership can serve as a catalyst for growth at both the organizational and individual levels. It focuses on leadership practices that foster trust, encourage risk-taking, support professional development, and sustain a shared sense of purpose.

At its core, this work is grounded in the belief that when educators are supported through intentional and transformational leadership, they are more likely to adopt and sustain a growth mindset, ultimately impacting teaching, learning, and student experiences.

ABSTRACT

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES THAT FOSTER A GROWTH MINDSET AMONG TEACHERS IN A CHARTER SCHOOL: A MIXED-METHODS CASE STUDY

by

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This mixed-methods case study examined transformational leadership strategies perceived by teachers as most effective in fostering a growth mindset within a suburban charter school setting. Grounded in transformational leadership theory and growth mindset theory, the study focused on the four dimensions of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Teachers at a K–12 suburban charter school filled out a Likert-scale survey and took part in semi-structured interviews to give us data. Quantitative findings indicated that teachers perceived transformational leadership practices as positively influencing the development of a growth mindset, with individualized consideration and inspirational motivation emerging as the most influential dimensions. Qualitative analysis revealed six themes: Trust Before Growth, Growth Feels Personal, Learning Requires Safe Risk-Taking, Purpose Sustains Effort, Growth Mindset as an Environmental Outcome, and Balancing Support and Accountability. These themes illustrate that leadership influence functioned as a developmental process in which trust established psychological safety, individualized support enabled improvement, intellectual stimulation promoted instructional risk-taking, and motivational practices sustained

persistence. Findings further suggest that a growth mindset emerged not solely as an individual belief but as an environmental outcome shaped by consistent leadership practices. Transformational leadership operated as an integrated system in which each dimension contributed a distinct yet interconnected role in supporting teacher development. This study contributes to the field of educational leadership by identifying specific leadership mechanisms that foster growth-oriented professional behaviors and sustain continuous improvement within charter school contexts. Implications for practice emphasize the importance of intentionally balancing support and accountability while cultivating professional environments that promote trust, reflection, risk-taking, and ongoing learning.

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CHAPTER ONE

OVERVIEW

Introduction

In the ever-evolving landscape of education, teachers' mindset plays a crucial role. It helps them navigate challenges such as integrating new technologies, meeting diverse student needs, and achieving higher academic standards. Teachers with a growth mindset believe that abilities and intelligence can develop through dedication and hard work (Dweck, 2015; Meierdirk, 2016). This mindset equips them to embrace new teaching methods, persevere through challenges, and continuously improve their instructional practices.

Educational leaders, including school-based administrators, play a pivotal role in shaping the environment and culture within their schools. Their leadership styles significantly influence teachers' motivation and professional development. For instance, a negative leadership style, characterized by micromanagement and lack of support, can lead to decreased teacher morale, reduced motivation, and hindered professional growth. Teachers in such environments may feel undervalued and overwhelmed, leading to burnout and high turnover rates (Yettick et al., 2016). Conversely, a positive leadership style that includes support, recognition, and professional development opportunities fosters a motivating and growth-oriented environment. Teachers in such settings are more likely to feel empowered, motivated, and committed to their professional development, resulting in improved instructional practices and student outcomes (Abdullah et al., 2018).

Charter schools differ significantly from public schools in their leadership and teaching circumstances due to their unique organizational structures and operational flexibility. Charter schools are publicly funded but operate independently of the traditional public school system, often under a charter or contract that outlines specific goals and performance criteria. This independence allows charter school leaders more flexibility in decision-making, curriculum design, and resource allocation compared to their counterparts in public schools (National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, 2020). However, this autonomy also brings challenges, such as the pressure to meet performance metrics and maintain student enrollment, which can impact leadership styles and practices. Charter school leaders often adopt transformational leadership approaches to inspire and motivate their staff, fostering a culture of flexibility and continuous improvement (Bulkley & Hicks, 2005).

Teaching circumstances in charter schools also differ from those in public schools. Due to their flexibility, charter schools can implement innovative teaching methods and curricula tailored to their students' needs. This flexibility can attract teachers who are enthusiastic about experimenting with new instructional strategies and who thrive in dynamic educational environments (Cannata, 2010). However, charter school teachers often face challenges such as lower job security, longer working hours, and higher expectations for performance outcomes. These conditions can lead to higher levels of stress and turnover compared to public school teachers (Miron & Applegate, 2007). Despite these challenges, many charter school teachers report higher job satisfaction due to the greater sense of autonomy and the ability to contribute to school-wide decision-making processes (Zimmer & Buddin, 2007). Thus, the unique leadership and teaching

circumstances in charter schools create both opportunities and challenges that significantly impact the professional experiences of teachers and the overall school environment.

The impact of leadership on fostering a growth mindset among teachers remains a critical area of exploration. Understanding how leadership styles, especially transformational leadership, can cultivate a growth mindset is essential for driving continuous improvement and innovation in educational practices.

By focusing on charter schools, the dissertation study will aim to explore the following question: What specific transformational leadership strategies are perceived by teachers at a charter school as most effective in fostering a growth mindset in a charter school environment?

Definitions of Keywords

The following keywords and definitions will help readers better understand the literature which will support the study. The listed key words and definitions involve terminologies that will be substantial to the research's question, aim, theoretical framework, and methodologies. The following terminologies have been presented to support readers in understanding the context in which the terms are used.

Fixed mindset refers to the belief that intelligence and abilities are static and unchangeable. Individuals with a fixed mindset often think they are either capable of something or not, without the possibility of improvement. For example, a student who believes they are inherently bad at math and will never improve, no matter how much they study, demonstrates a fixed mindset (Meierdirk, 2016).

Growth mindset is the belief that learning and abilities can be developed over time through effort, perseverance, and dedication. Individuals with a growth mindset understand that intelligence is not fixed and can be enhanced with hard work and learning from mistakes. For instance, a student who struggles with math but believes that with practice and persistence, they can improve, exemplifies a growth mindset (Dweck, 2016b).

Transformational leadership is a style of leadership in which a leader works with their followers to recognize required or necessary change, establishing a vision that would guide that change through inspiration and motivation. The transformational leader would lead and perform that change with the collaboration of committed team members of the organization (Campbell, 2018). The Four I's are the components of transformational leadership. The four I's components include Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individual Consideration (Bottomley et al., 2016).

Background

Historical Foundations of the American Educational System

The development of the American educational system reflects the nation's evolving societal, economic, and political priorities. In the 19th century, the introduction of "common schools" marked a significant step toward universal public education. Horace Mann, a leading advocate of the common school movement, argued that education was essential for promoting social equity and democratic participation. He envisioned schools as the "great equalizer," providing free, non-sectarian education to all children, regardless of socioeconomic background (Cremin, 1951). These principles

established a foundation for modern public education, emphasizing literacy, moral development, and equality of opportunity.

As industrialization transformed the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, education adapted to meet the demands of a changing society. The progressive education movement, championed by John Dewey, shifted the focus from rote memorization to experiential learning. Dewey (1938) argued that education should prepare students for active participation in democracy by fostering critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving skills. These ideas significantly influenced contemporary teaching practices, such as project-based learning and inquiry-driven instruction (Labaree, 2005). By emphasizing student engagement and adaptability, progressive education laid the groundwork for reforms that continue to shape the educational landscape.

Federal involvement in education expanded during the mid-20th century, reflecting efforts to address inequalities and promote national priorities. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 targeted funding to schools serving low-income communities, aiming to reduce disparities in educational resources and opportunities. The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 later introduced accountability measures through standardized testing, intending to improve student outcomes and close achievement gaps (Darling-Hammond, 2010). While these reforms emphasized equity and accountability, critics argued they often led to a narrowing of curricula and increased pressure on educators and students (Ravitch, 2010). The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015 replaced NCLB, granting states greater flexibility in defining success and implementing accountability systems (Gross & Hill, 2016). These

historical shifts highlight the enduring challenges of balancing equity, accountability, and innovation in education.

Limitations of Traditional Public Schools

Traditional public schools in the United States have historically operated under stringent state and federal mandates designed to ensure equity, accountability, and standardization. Policies such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in 2001 and its successor, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in 2015 emphasized high-stakes standardized testing and performance metrics as central tools for improving educational outcomes (Gross & Hill, 2016; Thomas B. Fordham Institute, 2023). However, these mandates often constrained schools' ability to adapt to the diverse needs of their student populations or implement innovative teaching strategies. Bureaucratic oversight, coupled with a focus on compliance, limited local control over resource allocation and curriculum design, leaving educators with little flexibility to address unique challenges within their communities (Kofoed & Fawson, 2020). In many underperforming districts, these rigid structures exacerbated inequalities, as schools struggled to equitably serve increasingly diverse and economically disadvantaged students while maintaining compliance with state mandates (Uttermark et al., 2024).

The limitations imposed by these policies generated widespread dissatisfaction among educators, parents, and policymakers, who criticized traditional public schools for their limited flexibility and inconsistent student outcomes. In response, charter schools emerged in the early 1990s as an alternative model designed to grant schools increased autonomy from certain state and district regulations (Poole, 2007; Fryer, 2014). This increased flexibility was intended to create conditions that could support innovative

practices in teaching and learning, though the extent and nature of such innovation vary across charter settings.

The Rise and Expansion of Charter Schools

Building on widespread dissatisfaction with traditional public schools, charter schools emerged in the 1990s as a response to perceived systemic limitations. Designed to offer families greater choice, charter schools are publicly funded but independently operated, and were established to prioritize increased flexibility in exchange for accountability. The first charter school law, passed in Minnesota in 1991, laid the foundation for a national movement. While these schools were envisioned as spaces where greater autonomy might allow for innovative practices, the degree and focus of such innovation vary significantly across charter settings (National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, 2021).

Over the past three decades, charter schools have grown significantly, serving approximately 3.4 million students in over 7,500 schools across the United States (NCES, 2021). Unlike traditional public schools, charter schools enjoy greater autonomy in curriculum design, staffing, and resource allocation. This flexibility enables them to implement specialized programs tailored to community needs, such as STEM education, arts integration, or bilingual instruction (Miron & Nelson, 2002). By addressing diverse student populations and community priorities, charter schools provide families with alternatives to standardized educational approaches.

Despite their autonomy, charter schools operate under rigorous accountability frameworks. These schools must meet performance benchmarks outlined in their charters or risk closure. Oversight is provided by authorizing bodies, such as state education

agencies or nonprofit organizations, which monitor academic outcomes, financial stability, and legal compliance (Gill et al., 2007). While proponents suggest that the combination of autonomy and accountability can create conditions conducive to innovation, critics argue that it may also lead to unintended consequences, such as selective enrollment or the exclusion of high-need students (Zimmer et al., 2009). As the charter sector continues to grow, the balance between flexibility and accountability remains a central feature of its governance model.

Theoretical Framework

Leadership is a cornerstone of any organization, shaping its culture, direction, and overall success. It involves the process of influencing others to achieve shared goals, inspiring individuals to reach their potential and contribute to organizational growth (Northouse, 2018). Effective leaders play a critical role in setting strategic objectives, guiding teams, and communicating a clear vision. Over time, various leadership theories and styles have emerged, offering unique perspectives on how leaders influence and drive organizational outcomes.

Transactional leadership emphasizes an exchange between leaders and followers, where rewards or punishments are provided based on performance. This approach ensures that goals are met through clearly defined expectations (Bass, 1990). While transactional leadership is effective in achieving short-term objectives, it often neglects the long-term development of followers, potentially limiting organizational growth and employee satisfaction (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Despite its limitations, transactional leadership remains relevant in contexts requiring clear accountability and results-driven approaches.

Transformational leadership focuses on aligning individual goals with the broader goals of the organization, fostering empowerment and commitment (Bass, 1985).

Transformational leaders inspire through vision and innovation, promoting a culture of growth and collaboration. Research highlights its effectiveness in enhancing teacher self-efficacy and professional development, particularly in educational settings (Lin et al., 2022). Furthermore, transformational leadership has been shown to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, significantly influencing student outcomes in economically disadvantaged contexts (Caines-Giralde, 2024). This leadership style is especially valuable in dynamic environments that demand continuous improvement and innovation.

Laissez-faire leadership, characterized by minimal leader involvement, grants independence to team members in decision-making. While this approach can empower highly motivated individuals, it may lead to confusion or lack of direction in situations requiring guidance (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Leaders must exercise discretion in applying this style, as its effectiveness may vary depending on organizational context (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Nonetheless, it remains a viable approach for organizations seeking to promote autonomy and innovation.

Servant leadership prioritizes the needs of followers, fostering collaboration and support within teams. This leadership style emphasizes empathy, ethical decision-making, and humility, creating an environment conducive to personal and professional growth (Greenleaf, 1977). In educational settings, servant leadership has been found to enhance trust and reduce teacher turnover, particularly in charter school environments (Valentine, 2024). By focusing on the well-being of teachers and staff, servant leaders contribute to creating a positive and resilient school culture.

Charismatic leadership leverages a leader's personal qualities, such as communication skills and emotional connection, to inspire and energize followers. Charismatic leaders often instill confidence and enthusiasm within their teams (Conger & Kanungo, 1987). However, the sustainability of this style depends heavily on the leader's traits and organizational structure (Deng et al., 2023). While effective in the short term, charismatic leadership requires complementary practices to ensure long-term organizational success.

Leadership styles vary widely in how leaders engage with their teams. Autocratic leadership involves unilateral decision-making, which can be effective in crisis situations or when quick decisions are needed (Lewin et al., 1939). However, this style can suppress creativity and reduce motivation among team members. Conversely, democratic leadership encourages collaboration and shared responsibility, fostering engagement and open communication (Lewin et al., 1939). Both styles have their place in organizational contexts, depending on the challenges and goals at hand.

Situational leadership emphasizes adaptability, requiring leaders to adjust their approach based on team needs and situational demands (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969). This flexible style is particularly effective in dynamic settings like charter schools, where leaders must address diverse challenges and opportunities (Poole, 2007). By tailoring their leadership strategies, situational leaders can optimize team performance and achieve organizational goals.

Paternalistic leadership blends authority with care, balancing structured decision-making with genuine concern for followers' well-being (Farh & Cheng, 2000). This style fosters loyalty and trust, creating a supportive environment for employees. In school

settings, leadership practices that emphasize support and relational trust have been associated with more positive school climates and improved teacher experiences, including greater satisfaction and reduced burnout (McCarley et al., 2016). Its effectiveness lies in the leader's ability to cultivate a culture of mutual respect and collaboration.

In educational contexts, leadership profoundly influences teacher and student experiences. Effective school leaders inspire, motivate, and guide their teams toward improving outcomes for all students (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000). Transformational leadership, in particular, has been shown to foster professional growth and collaboration among educators, creating a culture of continuous improvement (Lin et al., 2022). By prioritizing teacher development and innovation, educational leaders can achieve long-term success and innovation. In conclusion, leadership is a multifaceted concept encompassing various styles and approaches to influence and guide organizations. From transactional and transformational leadership to laissez-faire and servant leadership, each style offers unique strengths and challenges. In educational settings, transformational leadership stands out as a key driver of growth, collaboration, and innovation. This understanding provides a foundation for exploring how leadership theories evolve and adapt to meet the demands of modern organizations. This understanding provides a foundation for my dissertation, which explores the transformational leadership strategies that teachers in a charter school perceive as most effective in fostering a growth mindset.

Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational leadership has emerged as one of the most impactful leadership approaches due to its ability to inspire and engage followers deeply. Unlike transactional

leadership, which focuses on specific goals and rewards, transformational leadership emphasizes shared vision, motivation, and growth (Bass, 1985). This leadership style has proven effective in meeting the diverse needs of educational organizations, balancing long-term growth with immediate results (Caines-Giralde, 2024; Deng et al., 2023).

The Four I's of transformational leadership offer a detailed framework for understanding how leaders can inspire and elevate their teams. Idealized Influence refers to the leader serving as an ethical role model, earning the admiration, respect, and trust of their followers. For instance, a school principal who demonstrates fairness and integrity in decision-making cultivates a culture of accountability and trust. Anderson (2022) emphasized that ethical leadership practices are essential in fostering a positive and collaborative school environment, particularly in diverse educational settings. Idealized Influence establishes the moral foundation of transformational leadership, ensuring that leaders set an example for their followers to emulate.

Inspirational Motivation involves the articulation of a clear and compelling vision that motivates followers to strive for collective goals. Leaders who communicate a shared vision of academic success inspire teachers to work towards ambitious instructional objectives. Bass and Avolio (1993) noted that inspirational motivation enhances teacher morale by aligning their individual aspirations with the school's overarching mission. Carnaghan (2023) further demonstrated that leaders who celebrate achievements and foster a sense of collective purpose create an environment of collaboration and shared commitment. This component of transformational leadership energizes teams by providing them with a meaningful and motivating direction.

Intellectual stimulation challenges followers to think critically, question assumptions, and develop creative solutions. Transformational leaders encourage teachers to adopt innovative instructional practices, such as project-based learning and data-driven instruction, to enhance student outcomes. Research has highlighted the role of intellectual stimulation in empowering educators to experiment with new strategies and refine their practices based on evidence (Davis, 2023). This approach fosters a culture of continuous improvement, particularly during periods of change, such as the transition to online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Intellectual stimulation drives professional growth by encouraging reflective practice and innovation.

Individualized Consideration refers to the personalized support and mentorship that transformational leaders provide to their followers. By tailoring professional development opportunities to individual teacher needs and career goals, leaders demonstrate their commitment to the growth and well-being of their staff. Torres (2014) found that transformational leaders who practice individualized consideration significantly reduce teacher turnover in urban schools by fostering a sense of belonging and professional fulfillment. Additionally, Caines-Giralde (2024) emphasized that leaders who integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies into their individualized support create equitable learning environments that benefit both teachers and students. This component ensures that transformational leadership addresses the unique needs of every member of the organization.

Transformational leadership as a theory argues that effective leadership transcends task management by focusing on creating meaningful connections between leaders and followers. By fostering motivation, commitment, and ethical behavior,

transformational leaders inspire their teams to exceed expectations and embrace innovation. The theory emphasizes the development of followers into future leaders, promoting creativity and long-term organizational success. By leveraging the Four I's (Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualized Consideration) transformational leadership provides a holistic approach to driving meaningful change in diverse educational contexts.

Growth Mindset Theory

The concept of mindset, introduced by Carol Dweck, has become a foundational element in understanding learning and achievement. A growth mindset reflects the belief that intelligence and abilities can be developed through effort, persistence, and learning. In contrast, a fixed mindset assumes that these traits are static and unchangeable (Dweck, 2006). Teachers with a growth mindset are more likely to embrace challenges, seek feedback, and persist through difficulties, leading to better instructional practices and improved student outcomes (Yeager & Dweck, 2012).

Leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping teachers' mindsets and professional beliefs. Transformational leaders who model resilience and emphasize continuous improvement create an environment where teachers feel empowered to take risks and innovate. By providing constructive feedback, fostering collaboration, and encouraging reflective practices, leaders can help cultivate a growth-oriented culture within schools (Hattie, 2009). Schools that prioritize growth mindset interventions often experience increased teacher efficacy and student achievement, highlighting the importance of leadership in promoting these practices (Blackwell et al., 2007).

Mindsets do not emerge in isolation but are shaped by developmental, environmental, and social factors. For instance, Dweck (2006) underscores the impact of early childhood experiences and social interactions in forming cognitive and emotional patterns. Educators and psychologists have documented how positive reinforcement and supportive environments foster adaptive mindsets, leading to long-term benefits in academic and personal settings (Yeager & Dweck, 2012). Additionally, studies have shown that fixed mindsets, often rooted in environments that stress inherent ability, can limit potential by discouraging risk-taking and persistence (Boaler, 2013).

In educational contexts, a growth mindset transforms how students approach learning. For instance, when educators focus on praising persistence over innate ability, students are more likely to adopt adaptive learning strategies and embrace challenges as opportunities (Dweck, 2006; Blackwell et al., 2007). Additionally, growth-oriented classroom cultures lead to increased academic engagement and risk-taking among students, enhancing overall learning outcomes (Boaler, 2013).

In professional environments, the application of growth mindset principles has demonstrated a profound impact on organizational innovation and employee performance. Employees with growth mindsets actively seek opportunities for improvement and handle setbacks constructively, promoting a culture of resilience and adaptability (Heslin & Keating, 2017). Such environments foster collaboration and long-term success by valuing effort and progress over immediate results (Lin et al., 2022).

Growth Mindset Theory, developed by Carol Dweck (2006), emerged from her extensive research into how individuals perceive their abilities and intelligence. Dweck identified two contrasting beliefs: a fixed mindset, where individuals believe their

abilities are static and unchangeable, and a growth mindset, where they believe abilities can be developed through effort, learning, and persistence. Her research highlighted the transformative role of mindset in shaping how individuals approach challenges and achieve success. For instance, individuals with a growth mindset are more likely to embrace difficult tasks and learn from failure, leading to long-term personal and professional growth (Dweck, 2006). These insights underscore the significant influence of mindset on resilience, adaptability, and achievement.

The publication of *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* in 2006 brought Dweck's theory to a broader audience, sparking widespread interest in its applications across multiple fields. In education, the growth mindset concept has been linked to improved student performance and enhanced school culture (Dweck, 2015). For example, Blackwell, Trzesniewski, and Dweck (2007) found that middle school students who were taught to adopt a growth mindset showed substantial academic improvement, particularly in mathematics. Similarly, Boaler (2013) demonstrated that classrooms emphasizing growth mindset principles fostered greater student engagement and willingness to take on challenges. These findings underscore the vital role of a growth-oriented learning environment in improving educational outcomes and encouraging a love of learning.

Growth mindset theory has also had a profound impact on teaching practices and professional development for educators. Teachers who adopt a growth mindset approach their profession with an openness to learning and improvement, which in turn enhances their teaching effectiveness. Heslin and Keating (2017) noted that educators who view challenges as opportunities for growth are more likely to seek professional development and embrace constructive feedback. Furthermore, LaVacca (2021) highlighted how

growth mindset training for teachers in cyber charter schools not only boosted their confidence but also improved student engagement in virtual learning environments. These findings emphasize that when teachers model growth mindset behaviors, they create a ripple effect, positively influencing their students and peers.

There are four key components of growth mindset theory: the belief in the malleability of intelligence, the emphasis on learning and development, persistence in the face of challenges, and resilience when dealing with failure. Each of these components illustrate how the adoption of a growth mindset fosters personal and professional growth, supporting success in educational environments (Dweck, 2006; Dweck, 2015).

The first component is the “Belief in the Malleability of Intelligence.” This concept emphasizes that individuals with a growth mindset believe their intelligence and abilities can grow through effort, effective strategies, and learning from mistakes. This belief contrasts with a fixed mindset, where individuals perceive their abilities as static, often leading to a reluctance to tackle challenges. For example, Blackwell et al. (2007) demonstrated that students who learned about the malleability of intelligence showed greater persistence and improved performance in mathematics. Similarly, Boaler (2013) observed that students in classrooms emphasizing effort and growth were more likely to engage in challenging tasks and persevere through difficulties. Teachers who adopt this belief continuously seek innovative teaching methods to support student learning and adapt their strategies to meet diverse needs (LaVacca, 2021). By fostering the understanding that intelligence is not fixed, individuals feel empowered to pursue challenges and achieve their goals.

The second component is the “Emphasis on Learning and Development.” This component highlights the importance of focusing on the process of learning rather than merely the outcomes. Individuals with a growth mindset prioritize effort, reflection, and adaptation, recognizing that meaningful growth occurs over time (Dweck, 2006). For instance, a student who struggles with a new science concept may focus on refining their study habits and understanding rather than feeling defeated by initial failures. Teachers with this mindset regularly evaluate their teaching practices and implement feedback to enhance instructional effectiveness (Robinson, 2017). Lin, Yin, and Liu (2022) found that students who value learning as a continuous process show greater persistence and are more likely to develop creative problem-solving skills. This focus on development encourages resilience and adaptability, which are critical in both academic and professional settings.

The third component is “Persistence in the Face of Challenges.” Persistence refers to the ability to respond to difficulties with determination and view setbacks as opportunities for improvement. Individuals with a growth mindset are more likely to persist through challenges because they see them as an essential part of the growth process (Dweck, 2006). Zeng, Hou, and Peng (2019) found that students with a growth mindset demonstrated greater perseverance when tackling difficult academic tasks, leading to improved problem-solving abilities. Similarly, teachers who face obstacles, such as implementing new curricula or engaging diverse learners, persist by seeking professional development and refining their strategies (LaVacca, 2021). This persistence fosters a culture of continuous improvement, enabling individuals to overcome challenges and achieve long-term success.

The fourth component is “Resilience When Dealing with Failure.” Resilience involves recovering from setbacks and using failures as learning opportunities. Individuals with a growth mindset view failures not as endpoints but as part of the journey toward improvement (Dweck, 2006). For example, a student who performs poorly on an exam might analyze their mistakes, adjust their study strategies, and perform better on future assessments. Teachers who encounter challenges when implementing innovative teaching methods often reflect on their experiences, seek feedback, and refine their approaches to achieve better outcomes (Robinson, 2017). Research by Heslin and Keating (2017) demonstrated that resilience allows individuals to maintain motivation and a positive outlook, even in the face of repeated challenges. This ability to bounce back from failures is crucial for fostering growth and achieving success.

Growth Mindset Theory argues that individuals’ beliefs about their abilities directly influence their motivation, behavior, and achievement (Dweck, 2006). The theory explains that a growth mindset, characterized by the belief that abilities can be developed through effort, learning, and persistence, promotes resilience, a willingness to embrace challenges, and an openness to learning from failure. In contrast, a fixed mindset, which assumes that abilities are static and unchangeable, often leads individuals to avoid challenges and give up easily when faced with obstacles (Dweck, 2006). Growth mindset theory further suggests that individuals who believe they can improve their abilities are more likely to embrace challenges, maintain motivation despite setbacks, and persist in striving for improvement. This concept has significant applications, particularly in educational settings, where fostering a growth mindset has been shown to improve academic performance, increase student engagement, and encourage a focus on long-term

learning rather than short-term outcomes (Blackwell et al., 2007; Boaler, 2013; Dweck, 2006; Yeager & Dweck, 2012).

In charter schools, where flexibility and adaptability are often prioritized, fostering a growth mindset among teachers is particularly important. Teachers with a growth mindset are more likely to embrace new instructional strategies, adapt to the unique challenges of the charter school environment, and persist through difficulties (Zurawski & Mancini, 2016). Charter schools operate in an environment of autonomy and experimentation, which aligns well with the principles of growth mindset by allowing educators to innovate in their teaching practices without the constraints of traditional systems. For example, teachers who adopt a growth mindset are better equipped to experiment with novel approaches to classroom management and student engagement, fostering a culture of continuous improvement (Lin et al., 2022).

Leadership that emphasizes effort and learning from mistakes creates a school-wide culture that values growth over perfection, leading to a collective belief in improvement and success. Leaders who implement transformational leadership principles, such as individualized support and intellectual stimulation, can further reinforce the adoption of a growth mindset among their staff (Lin et al., 2022; Kreiness, 2020). For instance, a principal who regularly recognizes and celebrates the process of professional development among teachers—not just the outcomes—fosters an environment where staff are motivated to pursue continuous learning and self-improvement (Blackwell et al., 2007).

The application of Growth Mindset Theory in charter schools extends to student learning as well. Teachers who model a growth mindset can inspire their students to

adopt similar attitudes toward learning, leading to greater resilience, persistence, and academic achievement. When teachers demonstrate perseverance in overcoming instructional challenges, they set a powerful example for students, encouraging them to approach difficulties with the same mindset. For instance, a study showed that teachers with a growth mindset significantly influenced students' academic motivation and performance, particularly in challenging subjects like mathematics (O'Rourke et al., 2014). Similarly, teachers who encourage students to embrace mistakes as learning opportunities help create a classroom environment where students feel safe to take risks and engage deeply with their education (Dweck, 2006; Zeng et al., 2019).

The connection between charter schools and Growth Mindset Theory lies in their shared emphasis on adaptability, continuous improvement, and responsiveness to student needs. Charter schools are designed to operate with greater flexibility than traditional public schools, potentially allowing educators to implement instructional approaches that align with growth-oriented practices. This structural flexibility can support environments where both teachers and students are encouraged to embrace challenges, learn from setbacks, and pursue ongoing development. Teachers and leaders with a growth mindset are more likely to collaborate in implementing innovative practices and addressing challenges, creating a dynamic and resilient educational environment (Lin et al., 2022). For example, a study on teacher development highlighted growth-oriented environments, supported by transformational leadership, significantly improved teacher efficacy and classroom outcomes (Dweck, 2015). This alignment between the principles of growth mindset and the charter school model fosters an atmosphere where challenges are viewed

as opportunities for learning and improvement, benefiting both educators and students alike.

Intersection of Transformational Leadership and Growth Mindset in Charter Schools

The intersection of transformational leadership and growth mindset theories offers a robust framework for fostering an educational environment that supports continuous improvement, innovation, and resilience among both teachers and students. While each theory provides valuable insights independently, their combination creates a powerful synergy that can drive significant positive outcomes in charter schools, which are often characterized by their unique organizational flexibility and emphasis on innovative educational practices (Bass, 1985; Dweck, 2006). For example, a charter school leader who adopts both frameworks may foster an atmosphere where teachers are encouraged to take calculated risks in their instructional methods while maintaining a growth mindset that views challenges as learning opportunities (Lin et al., 2022). Together, these approaches create a foundation for building transformative educational experiences for both students and staff.

Figure 1.1 below visually illustrates the intersection of Transformational Leadership and Growth Mindset and the shared impact these two frameworks create when implemented together in educational settings. Each theory contributes distinct strengths. Transformational Leadership fosters ethical role modeling, vision-driven motivation, critical thinking, and personalized support. Growth Mindset promotes persistence, adaptability, learning from feedback, and embracing challenges. At their intersection, the shared impact includes increased innovation, collaboration, self-efficacy,

and engagement. These outcomes support environments where educators and students are encouraged to explore new ideas, build confidence, and stay motivated through continuous learning. The figure serves as a visual representation of how charter school leaders can integrate both approaches to create thriving, growth-oriented school communities.

Figure 1.1

The Intersection of Transformational Leadership and Growth Mindset



Several studies highlight the importance of these theories in influencing teacher motivation and instructional practices. Lin et al. (2022) demonstrated that transformational leadership and growth mindset significantly enhance teacher self-efficacy and professional attitudes, which in turn improve classroom practices. Similarly, Caines-Giralde (2024) explored how leaders integrate transformational leadership and growth mindset to support economically disadvantaged students through diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies. This approach yielded positive outcomes in student achievement and instructional decision-making. Valentine (2024) emphasized the role of teacher trust and relationships in reducing turnover, noting that leadership practices and teacher identity significantly influence perceptions of trust and efficacy. These studies reinforce the potential for leadership strategies to address equity challenges and enhance teacher retention in charter schools.

Research also underscores the broader impact of transformational leadership. Deng et al. (2023) synthesized evidence indicating that transformational leadership has medium to large effects on individual, team, and organizational outcomes, solidifying its relevance in educational settings. Furthermore, Dweck (2015) highlighted the central role of a growth mindset in fostering motivation and achievement, stressing the need to create a culture of growth within schools. Together, these findings demonstrate the wide-reaching benefits of combining transformational leadership with a growth mindset approach.

The COVID-19 pandemic further highlighted the importance of adaptive leadership. Research examining school leadership during the pandemic documented the challenges leaders faced in maintaining instructional quality and supporting teachers

through transitions in instructional delivery, emphasizing the need for strategic leadership and adaptability (Davis, 2023). These findings underscore the resilience and flexibility required of leaders to effectively meet the needs of diverse school communities during times of crisis.

In conclusion, the intersection of transformational leadership and growth mindset creates a robust framework for driving innovation, resilience, and continuous improvement in charter schools. This alignment is particularly effective in charter school settings, where flexibility and mission-driven leadership enable the implementation of innovative practices that benefit educators and students alike. By leveraging these theories, charter school leaders can build thriving learning environments that empower educators and inspire students to achieve their fullest potential. This approach ensures that transformational leadership and growth mindset remain at the forefront of educational improvement in diverse and evolving charter school contexts.

Framing the Research Issue

Leadership in Charter Schools

Effective leadership is a cornerstone of successful charter schools, where leaders often have greater decision-making authority compared to their counterparts in traditional public schools. This autonomy allows charter school leaders to implement innovative strategies and respond swiftly to challenges. Transformational leadership, in particular, has been identified as a highly effective approach in charter school contexts. Leaders who adopt transformational practices inspire and motivate their teams while fostering collaboration and professional growth (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Transformational leadership is defined by four key components: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Idealized influence involves leaders acting as role models, earning the trust and respect of their teams. Inspirational motivation focuses on articulating a compelling vision that inspires staff. Intellectual stimulation encourages critical thinking and innovation, while individualized consideration emphasizes personalized support for staff members (Leithwood & Sun, 2012). Research shows that transformational leadership positively impacts teacher satisfaction, retention, and instructional quality, making it particularly relevant in the high-pressure environment of charter schools (Day et al., 2016).

In charter schools, where teachers often face long hours, high accountability demands, and limited job security, transformational leadership can mitigate stress and create a supportive work environment. Leaders who prioritize professional development, foster collaboration, and recognize individual contributions help cultivate a positive school culture that benefits both teachers and students. By addressing the unique challenges and opportunities within charter school settings, transformational leaders may play a critical role in fostering adaptability, resilience, and a culture of continuous improvement within their organizations.

Charter Schools as Contexts for Leadership and Mindset Development

Charter schools provide a distinctive environment for exploring the relationship between leadership and teacher mindsets. Their operational flexibility enables leaders to implement innovative strategies, such as instructional coaching and professional learning communities, which align with transformational leadership principles. These approaches

foster a culture of continuous improvement and collaboration, supporting teacher growth and enhancing instructional quality (National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, 2021).

At the same time, the unique challenges of the charter school environment, including high accountability standards and resource constraints, can contribute to stress and burnout among teachers. Transformational leaders can address these challenges by promoting a shared vision, providing individualized support, and fostering a positive organizational culture (Leithwood et al., 2008). Understanding how leadership practices influence teacher mindsets is critical for sustaining innovation and improving outcomes in charter schools. By examining these dynamics, this research aims to contribute valuable insights into effective leadership practices in diverse educational contexts.

This research explores the transformational leadership strategies that teachers perceive as most effective in fostering a growth mindset within charter schools. By focusing on the unique leadership dynamics of these institutions, the study aims to provide actionable insights that support teacher development, enhance instructional quality, and improve student outcomes. These findings will contribute to the broader field of educational leadership, offering strategies for fostering resilience, innovation, and growth in diverse educational contexts.

Research Questions

The central question guiding my dissertation is: What specific leadership strategies are perceived by teachers at a charter school as most effective in fostering a growth mindset in a charter school environment? By specific leadership strategies, I am referring to behaviors such as planning, observing, listening, providing feedback, communicating, evaluating, and assessing.

To answer this central question, I will focus on the four key elements of Transformational Leadership Theory: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1993). Each of these elements is crucial in shaping the behaviors and attitudes of teachers, particularly in how they approach challenges, embrace learning opportunities, and persist through difficulties (Dweck, 2016; Costa & Faria, 2018). The specific research questions that I plan to explore are the following:

1. How does idealized influence impact teachers' growth mindset?
2. How does inspirational motivation impact teachers' growth mindset?
3. How does intellectual stimulation impact teachers' growth mindset?
4. How does individualized consideration impact teachers' growth mindset?

Through these questions, my dissertation will provide insights into the leadership strategies that are most effective in promoting a growth mindset among teachers in a charter school setting, ultimately contributing to improved educational practices and student outcomes.

Significance

Understanding the relationship between transformational leadership and the development of a growth mindset in teachers is a topic of increasing relevance in educational research. Firstly, it aims to explore leadership practices that may potentially increase teacher motivation and professional growth. Transformational leadership, known for its vision-setting, encouragement of innovation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized support, has been suggested to empower teachers towards adopting a growth mindset. This mindset, emphasizing the belief that skills and intelligence can

develop through effort, could potentially enhance teacher resilience and openness to educational changes.

Secondly, fostering a growth mindset among teachers is hypothesized to promote a dynamic and innovative educational environment. Teachers who possess a growth mindset are thought to be more likely to embrace challenges and explore new instructional approaches, which could theoretically improve teaching and learning experiences for students. This could potentially lead to improved student engagement, learning outcomes, and overall school effectiveness.

Moreover, this research seeks to contribute to the broader understanding of educational leadership by exploring the role of psychological factors, such as mindset, in shaping professional development. By investigating how transformational leadership strategies may influence teacher mindsets, this study aims to provide insights that can inform leadership practices aimed at supporting and motivating educators effectively.

In today's educational context, characterized by continual change and evolving educational needs, cultivating a culture that supports teacher growth and resilience is increasingly recognized as essential. This dissertation aims to explore which specific transformational leadership strategies are perceived by teachers as potentially effective in fostering a growth mindset. Through a rigorous mixed-method exploratory case study approach, including surveys, interviews, and observations, this research aims to uncover nuanced insights into the relationship between leadership styles and teacher mindsets. The findings will contribute to the ongoing discourse on effective educational leadership, offering practical considerations for enhancing teacher development and potentially benefiting student learning experiences.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Educational leadership plays a crucial role in shaping key aspects of teacher experience, including motivation, retention, and professional growth, each of which significantly impacts student achievement and the overall effectiveness of the school environment. Leadership styles influence not only administrative operations but also the school climate, fostering or hindering teacher engagement and satisfaction. Research has shown that school climates characterized by supportive, growth-oriented leadership are more likely to promote teacher engagement, which is essential for developing a cohesive educational environment (Leithwood et al., 2008). Charter schools, in particular, benefit from leadership that aligns with their mission-driven goals and flexible frameworks, which attract educators seeking alignment with specific educational values. In these settings, leadership approaches play a central role in creating environments that encourage motivation, professional growth, and a commitment to student success.

While there is growing interest in how leadership influences teacher motivation and retention, much of the existing research, particularly studies emphasizing transformational leadership, has been conducted outside the United States. Many recent international studies focus on primary and secondary education systems in countries such as Kenya, Malaysia, Turkey, and the Philippines. These studies offer valuable insights but may not fully capture the organizational and cultural dynamics unique to U.S. charter schools. Within the U.S. context, research on charter schools has often concentrated more

heavily on themes such as school choice, parent satisfaction, and student performance rather than leadership practices and teacher development. As such, this review intentionally prioritizes recent studies that investigate transformational leadership's impact on teacher motivation and professional growth while highlighting the need for deeper exploration into how these dynamics unfold in American charter schools. This focus addresses a critical gap in literature and underscores the relevance of understanding how transformational leadership strategies, when applied in mission-driven flexible school environments, can influence teacher resilience, retention, and instructional excellence.

However, charter schools face distinct challenges regarding teacher retention due to their unique organizational structures, higher performance expectations, and often limited administrative resources (Cravens et al., 2012). Unlike traditional public schools, charter schools operate with varying degrees of autonomy, allowing them to implement innovative educational approaches but also making them vulnerable to turnover if organizational support is lacking. Research highlights that principal leadership and school culture significantly impact teacher retention and morale in charter schools (Windham, 2020; Bickmore & Dowell, 2018). Moreover, teacher self-efficacy research suggests that when educators feel valued and connected to their institutions, they experience greater professional growth and job satisfaction (Valentine, 2024). Transformational leadership in charter settings has been linked to increased teacher innovation and instructional effectiveness, with leaders fostering a culture of high expectations, professional development, and long-term commitment (Deng et al., 2023). Additionally, fostering a growth mindset among teachers has been recognized as a key factor in professional

development, as it encourages adaptability, continuous learning, and resilience in the face of challenges (Dweck, 2015).

As educational institutions continue to evolve, it is crucial to explore how leadership strategies can enhance teacher motivation, engagement, and professional growth. Transformational leadership, characterized by idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, stands out for its comprehensive approach to fostering an environment conducive to teacher success. Studies highlight that transformational leadership plays a pivotal role in increasing teacher motivation, reducing turnover, and enhancing instructional effectiveness, particularly in charter school settings where adaptability and mission-driven goals are central (Lin et al., 2022). Further research suggests that transformational leadership fosters teacher self-efficacy and a professional learning culture, leading to improved student outcomes (Deng et al., 2023). Leaders who integrate growth mindset principles into their school culture help teachers adapt to challenges, promoting resilience, perseverance, and job satisfaction (Dweck, 2015; Caines-Giralde, 2024). The growth mindset framework is particularly relevant in charter schools, where innovation and flexibility are emphasized. Leaders who promote a growth mindset encourage teachers to embrace continuous learning, refine their instructional strategies, and persist through difficulties, ultimately fostering a more effective and motivated teaching workforce.

In addition to its role in motivation, growth mindset plays a fundamental role in teacher retention and professional growth. Educators who develop a growth-oriented perspective are more likely to embrace feedback, seek opportunities for development, and persist through obstacles. Transformational leadership aligns closely with this framework

by fostering a school culture that supports risk-taking, reflection, and the continuous pursuit of excellence. This is particularly significant in charter schools, where teachers often navigate dynamic and evolving educational demands. Leaders who emphasize intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration provide teachers with the tools and encouragement needed to refine their practices and remain committed to their profession. Through mentorship, professional learning communities, and structured support systems, transformational leaders help cultivate a resilient teaching workforce that is prepared to meet the demands of a rapidly changing educational landscape.

This research review examines how different leadership styles influence teacher motivation, retention, and professional growth, with a particular emphasis on transformational leadership. It explores how leadership strategies impact teacher motivation by comparing various styles, including transactional, servant, laissez-faire, charismatic, situational, and paternalistic leadership. The review also investigates how transformational leadership fosters long-term teacher commitment through role modeling, vision-building, intellectual stimulation, and individualized support. Additionally, the role of transformational leadership in promoting professional growth through mentoring, continuous learning, and career development is explored, with a particular focus on how the integration of growth mindset principles enhances these processes.

By synthesizing research on the impact of transformational leadership within charter school settings, this review aims to identify the most effective leadership strategies for fostering a growth mindset among teachers. Given the unique challenges charter schools face, emphasizing transformational leadership as a driver of motivation, retention, and professional growth provides valuable insights for educational leaders

seeking to build sustainable, high-performing school environments. Ultimately, the findings from this review will serve as a foundation for further research on the intersection of transformational leadership and growth mindset in education.

Transformational Leadership and Teacher Motivation in Charter Schools

Transformational leadership, developed by Burns (1978) and later expanded by Bass (1985), emphasizes a leadership style that prioritizes vision, empowerment, and personal growth, distinguishing itself from transactional approaches that focus on rewards and punishment. Transformational leadership fosters intrinsic motivation by connecting teachers to a shared mission, creating a culture rooted in support, respect, and continuous improvement. Research consistently shows that this leadership style aligns particularly well with charter schools, where mission alignment, flexibility, and teacher engagement play vital roles.

Studies confirm that transformational leadership enhances teacher motivation, commitment, and professional growth by empowering teachers and providing them with a meaningful sense of purpose. Williams (2020), in his study "Exploring transformational leadership of principals and the impact on the organizational commitment of teachers in high-poverty urban charter schools," conducted a mixed-methods study exploring the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment among teachers in high-poverty urban charter schools in the United States. This study utilized an online survey with both teachers and principals, followed by personal interviews to gain deeper insights into leadership practices. The quantitative analysis revealed two statistically significant causal relationships: idealized influence and inspirational motivation were positively correlated with teacher commitment. The qualitative data

supported this finding, with teachers reporting that transformational leaders who acted as role models and inspired their staff increased their sense of professional belonging and purpose. These results suggest that when school leaders inspire and act as role models, teachers are more likely to feel valued and motivated to stay in their institutions (Williams, 2020).

Additionally, transformational leadership plays a critical role in reducing teacher turnover in charter schools. Abdullah, Ling, and Sufi (2018), in their study "Principal transformational leadership and teachers' motivation," conducted a descriptive quantitative study in Malaysia, examining the relationship between transformational leadership and teacher motivation. The study sampled 283 teachers from 21 national schools in Seberang Perai Selatan, Penang, Malaysia, using random sampling. Data was collected through validated survey instruments, including the Transformational Leadership Scale and the Teacher Motivation Questionnaire. The results demonstrated a strong positive correlation between transformational leadership and teacher motivation. Regression analysis identified "individual support" as the most significant predictor of teacher motivation, highlighting the importance of personalized leadership in improving teacher morale and professional commitment (Abdullah et al., 2018).

Transformational leadership also fosters a collaborative and professional learning culture. Serin and Akkaya (2020), in their study "The relationship between school principals' perceived transformational leadership behavior and teachers' motivation," explored this relationship in a correlational study conducted in Istanbul, Turkey, involving 418 teachers from primary, middle, and high schools. Using the Multidimensional Work Motivational Scale (Gagné et al., 2010) and the

Transformational Leadership Scale (Brestrich, 2000), they analyzed the relationship between teachers' perceptions of their principals' leadership and their motivation levels. Their findings showed that while teachers initially perceived their principals as transformational leaders, intrinsic motivation tended to decrease over time. The study also identified significant demographic differences: female teachers exhibited higher motivation than male teachers, and teachers with longer tenure at a school perceived lower transformational leadership effectiveness. This suggests that while transformational leadership positively influences teacher motivation, its long-term effectiveness may vary based on teacher demographics and school contexts (Serin & Akkaya, 2020).

A key component of transformational leadership is its emphasis on professional growth and teacher development. Williams (2020) found that transformational leaders in high-poverty charter schools actively supported professional growth by fostering an environment of trust and high expectations. The qualitative portion of the study indicated that teachers felt more confident in their instructional practices when their principals provided regular, constructive feedback and recognized their contributions. Furthermore, teachers in schools with transformational leaders exhibited higher job satisfaction and a stronger sense of professional purpose. These findings reinforce the idea that transformational leadership plays a critical role in maintaining teacher engagement and effectiveness.

Moreover, transformational leadership promotes shared decision-making and democratic leadership practices, allowing teachers to have a voice in school policies and instructional strategies. Serin and Akkaya (2020) supported this assertion by demonstrating a significant relationship between transformational leadership and teacher

motivation. Their findings suggested that transformational leaders empower teachers through participatory decision-making, leading to increased motivation and professional commitment.

Charter schools, known for their flexibility and mission-driven focus, benefit significantly from transformational leadership. Unlike traditional public schools, charter schools operate with varying degrees of autonomy, allowing transformational leaders to implement innovative instructional and organizational strategies that enhance teacher engagement and student learning (Williams, 2020). Research highlights that transformational leadership positively influences school climate by fostering a culture of trust, respect, and collaboration. Abdullah et al. (2018) found that when leaders model ethical behavior, encourage creativity, and inspire a shared vision, they create an environment where teachers feel empowered to take initiative and contribute to school-wide success.

Transformational leadership plays a crucial role in teacher motivation, retention, and professional growth, particularly in charter schools. By fostering a positive school culture, providing opportunities for professional development, and inspiring teachers through a shared mission, transformational leaders contribute to sustained teacher engagement and long-term institutional success. Future research should continue exploring the specific mechanisms through which transformational leadership impacts teacher outcomes, particularly in urban and high-need charter school settings.

Idealized Influence and Teacher Motivation

Idealized influence, one of the core components of transformational leadership, involves leaders serving as ethical role models who inspire loyalty and trust by

embodying the values of the organization. Charter schools, where alignment with mission-driven objectives is central, benefit significantly from leaders who engage in idealized influence. Teachers in these environments are more motivated when their leaders demonstrate integrity and commitment to the school's vision, as they see their work as aligned with a greater purpose. Leaders who exhibit idealized influence foster a culture of trust and ethical behavior within schools, creating an environment where teachers feel a deep sense of respect and belonging.

Idealized influence, a core element of transformational leadership, has a direct impact on teacher motivation and commitment in high-poverty charter schools. Williams (2020), in his study "The relationship between transformational leadership and teacher commitment in high-poverty urban charter schools," examined how leadership behaviors influence teacher engagement and dedication. Using a mixed-methods approach, he collected survey responses from teachers and conducted qualitative interviews to explore leadership behaviors. The study found that idealized influence had a significant impact on teacher motivation, with regression analysis indicating that 17.6% of teachers' organizational commitment was directly attributed to their perceptions of their principal's idealized influence behaviors. Teachers reported that administrators who led by example, demonstrated strong ethical behavior, and modeled dedication to the school community inspired them to remain engaged and committed to their professional roles. The qualitative findings reinforced this, as teachers described how observing their administrators' patience and dedication influenced their own classroom management and instructional approaches (Williams, 2020). These findings underscore the value of ethical

leadership in sustaining teacher commitment and performance in challenging school environments.

The positive effects of idealized influence on job satisfaction and motivation extend beyond education to other organizational contexts. Njiraini, K'Aol, and Linge (2018), in their study "Effect of idealized influence and inspirational motivation on job satisfaction among employees in commercial banks in Kenya," examined the correlation between idealized influence and job satisfaction in a quantitative study involving managerial employees in commercial banks. The study utilized a descriptive correlational research design, surveying 424 employees using a stratified random sampling technique. Data was analyzed using Pearson's correlation, ANOVA, and multiple linear regression. The results revealed a strong positive correlation ($r = .496$, $p < .05$), confirming that leaders who modeled integrity, trust, and vision significantly enhanced employee motivation and job satisfaction. The study concluded that ethical leadership behaviors aligned with idealized influence contribute to a stable and committed workforce, findings that can be applied to the education sector, where teacher motivation and satisfaction are essential for school success (Njiraini et al., 2018). These results highlight the universal value of ethical, visionary leadership across professional fields.

While idealized influence is generally associated with positive outcomes, its effectiveness may be influenced by contextual challenges. Adarkwah and Zeyuan (2020), in their study "The paradoxical relationship between principals' transformational leadership styles and teachers' motivation," investigated the impact of transformational leadership dimensions, including idealized influence, on teacher motivation in Ghanaian schools. Using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ 6S), they analyzed data

from principals and teachers to assess how leadership influenced motivation levels. The study found that while idealized influence was generally perceived as positive, it did not have a statistically significant impact on teacher motivation. The findings suggest that external factors such as workload, administrative constraints, and limited professional development opportunities may moderate the effects of leadership behaviors on teacher motivation. Despite these limitations, the study emphasized the importance of continued leadership development programs to strengthen transformational leadership practices and enhance teacher engagement (Adarkwah&Zeyuan, 2020). This calls attention to the need for supportive organizational conditions alongside effective leadership.

Ethical leadership, grounded in idealized influence, also fosters innovation and reduces staff turnover in education and beyond. Teachers who perceive their leaders as acting ethically are more engaged and willing to contribute innovative ideas, fostering a motivated and high-performing school culture. Njiraini et al. (2018) found that ethical leadership plays a vital role in reducing employee turnover, as individuals are more likely to stay in organizations where they perceive their leaders as honest, supportive, and committed to their well-being. The study concluded that organizations led by ethical leaders experience lower turnover rates, as trust and security create a stable work environment that supports professional growth. These findings align with Williams (2020), who reported that transformational leadership behaviors, including idealized influence, contribute to long-term teacher retention in charter schools. Teachers who feel valued and respected by their school leaders are more likely to remain in their roles and actively contribute to school improvement efforts. Together, these findings support the

idea that ethical leadership is essential to building a sustainable and productive organizational culture.

Charter schools, which are often mission-driven, are especially impacted by leaders who embody idealized influence. When school leaders uphold high ethical standards and align their actions with the school's core values, they create an environment where teachers feel a deep sense of purpose and professional fulfillment. Williams (2020) found that in mission-driven schools, teachers who viewed their leaders as ethical role models reported higher levels of motivation and job satisfaction, reinforcing their commitment to the school's vision. Similarly, Adarkwah and Zeyuan (2020) highlighted the need for leadership training programs to ensure that school administrators effectively practice transformational leadership strategies that align with the core values of their institutions. By modeling integrity and commitment, leaders can inspire teachers to contribute meaningfully to the school's mission and culture.

Idealized influence is a crucial component of transformational leadership that strengthens teacher motivation, engagement, and retention in charter schools. By serving as ethical role models, transformational leaders inspire teachers to align with the school's mission, fostering a culture of trust, respect, and collaboration. The research conducted by Williams (2020), Njiraini et al. (2018), and Adarkwah and Zeyuan (2020) underscores the significance of idealized influence in shaping teachers' experiences, job satisfaction, and long-term commitment to their institutions. Future research should continue exploring how ethical leadership practices influence teacher satisfaction and performance, particularly in charter school environments where mission alignment plays

a critical role in long-term success. Emphasizing idealized influence in leadership development may help sustain teacher motivation and improve educational outcomes.

Inspirational Motivation and Teacher Motivation

Inspirational motivation, a fundamental component of transformational leadership, refers to a leader's ability to articulate a compelling vision, set high expectations, and inspire teachers to commit to collective goals. This leadership trait fosters enthusiasm, optimism, and a shared sense of purpose among teachers, enhancing their motivation and job commitment. Leaders who effectively apply inspirational motivation communicate a clear vision, build a positive school culture, and encourage teachers to strive for excellence. In the context of schools, particularly charter schools, inspirational motivation plays a crucial role in improving teacher engagement, job satisfaction, and retention.

Inspirational motivation plays a significant role in enhancing teacher job satisfaction, particularly when practiced by transformational school leaders. Furaha, Lyamtane, and Mandila (2023), in their study “Contribution of inspirational motivation on teachers’ job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Kagera Region, Tanzania,” examined the role of inspirational motivation in enhancing teacher job satisfaction. The study employed a mixed-methods convergent research design, targeting 201 public secondary schools, with a sample of 216 respondents, including teachers, assistant principals, and principals. Data were collected through questionnaires and interview guides, with validation ensured by research experts and reliability confirmed using Cronbach's Alpha. The findings revealed that principals who applied inspirational motivation moderately improved teachers' job satisfaction. Teachers in schools where

principals demonstrated strong inspirational motivation reported higher morale, a stronger connection to the school's mission, and a greater sense of belonging. The study concluded that while school leaders had some skills in inspirational motivation, further training and development were necessary to maximize its benefits (Furaha et al., 2023). These findings underscore the importance of strengthening leaders' capacity to inspire and connect with their staff.

There is a strong positive relationship between inspirational motivation and teacher job commitment in primary school settings. Malela and Gathumbi (2016), in their study "Influence of inspirational motivation on teachers' job commitment in public primary schools in Matinyani Sub County, Kitui County, Kenya," used a descriptive survey design to explore how inspirational motivation influences teacher behavior. The study sampled 25 head teachers and 169 teachers, collecting data through questionnaires. Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient was used to analyze the data, revealing a strong positive relationship ($r = .774$, $N = 160$) between inspirational motivation and teacher job commitment. Teachers in schools where principals exhibited high levels of inspirational motivation demonstrated increased enthusiasm, team spirit, and dedication to their work. The findings emphasized that inspirational motivation encourages teachers to commit to their professional responsibilities and align with the school's vision, reinforcing their job satisfaction and long-term commitment (Malela&Gathumbi, 2016). These results highlight the essential role of leadership inspiration in fostering dedicated school communities.

Inspirational motivation also contributes to improved teacher performance and continuous professional development. Anwar (2023), in the study "Inspirational

motivation for principal transformational leadership as an effort to improve teacher performance in PAUD institutions,” conducted a qualitative case study at Al Irsyad Islamic Kindergarten in Madiun City, Indonesia. Using interviews, observations, and document analysis, the study explored how principals apply inspirational motivation to improve teacher performance. The findings indicated that transformational leaders inspire teachers by serving as role models, offering professional development opportunities, and fostering a collaborative culture. The study found that principals who motivated teachers through inspirational strategies significantly improved teacher engagement and job performance. Teachers in these schools were more likely to pursue academic qualifications and engage in continuous professional development. The study concluded that inspirational motivation is a powerful tool for improving teacher competency and fostering a sense of collective responsibility for school success (Anwar, 2023). This study reinforces the connection between leadership inspiration and elevated professional standards among teachers.

In charter schools, inspirational motivation is particularly critical due to their mission-driven culture and demand for innovation and adaptability. Teachers in charter schools often work in dynamic environments where motivation and alignment with the school’s vision are essential for success. Research has demonstrated that inspirational motivation contributes to teacher job satisfaction and retention in these settings. Furaha et al. (2023) found that when school leaders in Tanzania effectively communicated their vision and inspired teachers, teacher morale and job satisfaction increased. Similarly, Malela and Gathumbi (2016) emphasized that inspirational motivation fosters a sense of purpose and teamwork, which are critical factors in sustaining teacher commitment in

schools that rely heavily on mission alignment. These studies suggest that charter school leaders who employ inspirational motivation can cultivate environments where teachers are more engaged and aligned with school goals.

Inspirational motivation in charter schools supports a collaborative, innovative culture that promotes both teacher development and institutional success. Anwar (2023) demonstrated that principals who actively motivate teachers create environments where educators feel valued and encouraged to develop professionally. This aligns with findings by Furaha et al. (2023), who suggested that training school leaders in effective motivational strategies could enhance teacher job satisfaction and overall school performance. The emphasis on collaboration and vision-driven leadership in charter schools makes inspirational motivation a particularly effective leadership strategy, ensuring that teachers remain engaged and committed to their roles. This alignment between leadership approach and institutional mission strengthens school performance and supports long-term teacher retention.

Inspirational motivation is a key driver of teacher motivation and job satisfaction in both traditional and charter school settings. Studies by Furaha et al. (2023), Malela and Gathumbi (2016), and Anwar (2023) highlight the importance of school leaders communicating a compelling vision, fostering a sense of purpose, and inspiring teachers to achieve their full potential. The findings suggest that school leaders who apply inspirational motivation effectively can create environments where teachers feel valued, motivated, and committed to their institutions. Future research should continue to explore how inspirational motivation can be further enhanced through professional development and leadership training programs, particularly in mission-driven educational institutions

such as charter schools. As a leadership strategy, inspirational motivation offers sustained benefits for teacher engagement, school climate, and educational outcomes.

Intellectual Stimulation and Teacher Motivation

Intellectual stimulation, a key element of transformational leadership, encourages teachers to think critically, challenge existing practices, and develop innovative teaching strategies. This leadership trait promotes a culture of continuous learning, inspiring teachers to seek new knowledge and refine their instructional methods. By fostering an intellectually stimulating environment, school leaders enhance teacher motivation and professional growth, ultimately benefiting student learning outcomes. Intellectual stimulation is particularly important in educational settings where teachers are encouraged to explore diverse perspectives, engage in reflective practice, and contribute to a dynamic and evolving school culture.

Intellectual stimulation has emerged as a powerful leadership strategy for enhancing teacher productivity in primary education settings. Butaki, Ndaita, and Matere (2024), in their study “The influence of intellectual stimulation on teacher productivity in public primary schools in Trans Nzoia West Sub County, Kenya,” investigated the role of intellectual stimulation in improving teacher productivity. The study was conducted in Trans Nzoia West Sub County, Kenya, using a descriptive research design. The researchers targeted 912 teachers from 72 public primary schools and employed a sample of 271 participants, including teachers and school administrators. Data collection methods included questionnaires and interviews, with statistical analysis performed using SPSS. The findings revealed that intellectual stimulation significantly influenced teacher productivity by fostering a sense of autonomy and encouraging teachers to engage in

continuous learning. Teachers in schools where intellectual stimulation was emphasized reported higher levels of job satisfaction, motivation, and professional growth. The study recommended that headteachers create conducive working environments that reward achievements, recognize successful teaching practices, and encourage independent thinking among teachers (Butaki et al., 2024).

Intellectually stimulating instructional practices also positively impact student engagement and intrinsic motivation. Bolkan, Goodboy, and Griffin (2011), in their study “Teacher leadership and intellectual stimulation: Improving students’ approaches to studying through intrinsic motivation,” explored how intellectual stimulation transforms classroom dynamics by promoting intrinsic motivation. The study was conducted in college classrooms in the United States, with a sample of 268 undergraduate students from two large universities. Using quantitative survey design, the researchers examined the relationship between intellectual stimulation and students’ intrinsic motivation. The results indicated that when teachers employed intellectually stimulating strategies such as interactive teaching methods, challenging students to think critically, and encouraging independent thought, students were more likely to engage deeply with the material. The study concluded that intellectual stimulation plays a crucial role in enhancing student motivation and cognitive engagement, reinforcing the idea that similar approaches could benefit teachers in primary and secondary education settings (Bolkan et al., 2011).

Transformational leadership strategies that emphasize intellectual stimulation have a direct influence on teacher motivation and instructional performance. Nyamubi (2021), in the study “The influence of heads of schools’ inspirational motivation on teachers’ work performance,” examined how school leaders’ use of transformational

leadership strategies, including intellectual stimulation, influenced teacher motivation and performance. Conducted in secondary schools in Tanzania, the study utilized a cross-sectional survey design, collecting data from 350 teachers in both urban and rural schools. The findings demonstrated a strong positive correlation between intellectual stimulation and teacher motivation. Teachers who perceived their school leaders as intellectually stimulating reported higher levels of engagement, job satisfaction, and willingness to embrace new teaching methodologies. The study emphasized that intellectual stimulation encourages teachers to view challenges as opportunities for growth, fostering a culture of continuous professional development. The research also suggested that school leaders who actively support teachers' intellectual development contribute to higher teacher retention and improved school performance (Nyamubi, 2021).

Charter schools, which emphasize innovation and adaptability, particularly benefit from leadership that promotes intellectual stimulation. In the context of charter schools, intellectual stimulation plays a crucial role in shaping teacher motivation and professional development. Charter schools, known for their emphasis on innovation and mission-driven instruction, benefit significantly from leaders who encourage intellectual exploration and creativity. Butaki et al. (2024) highlighted those teachers in intellectually stimulating environments exhibited higher productivity and engagement, which is particularly relevant in charter schools where teachers often take on multiple roles and responsibilities. Similarly, Bolkan et al. (2011) found that intellectual stimulation fosters intrinsic motivation, a critical factor in sustaining teacher commitment in charter schools.

Charter schools thrive on adaptability and continuous improvement, making intellectual stimulation an essential leadership practice.

The relationship between intellectual stimulation and teacher retention further underscores its relevance for charter schools. The findings of Nyamubi (2021) support the notion that intellectual stimulation enhances teacher retention in challenging school environments. Charter school leaders who prioritize intellectual stimulation by fostering a culture of inquiry, critical thinking, and innovation contribute to a positive work environment where teachers feel valued and motivated. The emphasis on intellectual stimulation in charter schools aligns with their mission-driven ethos, ensuring that teachers remain committed to delivering high-quality education while continuously improving their instructional practices.

Overall, intellectual stimulation represents a key component of transformational leadership that supports teacher growth, motivation, and retention across various educational settings. The studies by Butaki et al. (2024), Bolkan et al. (2011), and Nyamubi (2021) underscore the importance of fostering an intellectually stimulating school culture where teachers are encouraged to think critically, embrace challenges, and continuously improve their teaching methods. In charter schools, where innovation and adaptability are key, intellectual stimulation serves as a powerful tool for sustaining teacher motivation and enhancing overall school performance. Future research should continue exploring the specific mechanisms through which intellectual stimulation influences teacher outcomes, particularly in mission-driven and high-need educational settings.

Individual Consideration and Teacher Motivation

Individual consideration, a fundamental component of transformational leadership, involves leaders offering personalized support, mentorship, and professional development opportunities to their teachers. This approach fosters a culture of trust and respect, ensuring that teachers feel valued and motivated. By recognizing individual strengths, addressing personal needs, and providing tailored guidance, school leaders can enhance teacher motivation, commitment, and job satisfaction. Individual consideration plays a crucial role in educational settings, particularly in charter schools, where teacher retention and engagement are vital for long-term success.

Individualized consideration, a core component of transformational leadership, plays a significant role in promoting teacher motivation and professional well-being. It involves recognizing each teacher's unique strengths, providing personalized support, and fostering an environment that values growth and autonomy. When school leaders demonstrate individualized consideration, they help cultivate a culture of trust, reduce burnout, and increase professional commitment among teachers. Individualized consideration also enhances the quality of leader–member relationships and supports employee engagement. Zacher, Pearce, Rooney, and McKenna (2014), in their study "Leaders' personal wisdom and leader–member exchange quality: The role of individualized consideration," examined how transformational leadership behaviors influence leader–member relationships. Conducted with 75 religious leaders and their employees in Australia, the study used a quantitative approach, measuring the impact of leaders' wisdom and individualized consideration on employee engagement. The results indicated that leaders who practiced individualized consideration developed stronger

relationships with their followers, resulting in higher job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The study concluded that transformational leaders who actively support their staff create an environment conducive to motivation and long-term professional growth (Zacher et al., 2014). These findings underscore the power of meaningful professional relationships in shaping workplace engagement.

Research in diverse educational contexts has consistently shown that individualized support from school leaders improves teacher motivation. Lee and Kuo (2019), in their study “Principals' transformational leadership and teachers' work motivation: Evidence from elementary schools in Taiwan,” explored the impact of transformational leadership on teacher motivation. The research surveyed 430 teachers from 40 public elementary schools across Taiwan using a confirmatory factor analysis approach. The results showed that individualized consideration was one of the strongest predictors of teacher motivation. Teachers who received personalized mentorship and professional development support from their principals reported greater job satisfaction and a stronger commitment to their schools. The study highlighted that school leaders who recognize teachers' unique needs and provide targeted support foster a more motivated and engaged workforce (Lee & Kuo, 2019). Personalized leadership was found to be instrumental in cultivating long-term professional dedication.

In addition to enhancing motivation, individualized consideration strengthens teacher-leader relationships and contributes to transformational leadership effectiveness. Khan, Amin, and Saif (2022), in their study “The contributions of inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation in connecting individualized consideration and idealized influence,” examined how individualized consideration contributes to overall

transformational leadership outcomes. Using a cross-sectional research design, the study analyzed survey responses from 300 educators in Pakistan. The findings revealed that individualized consideration significantly enhances teacher engagement by fostering meaningful relationships between school leaders and teachers. The study emphasized that when leaders provide one-on-one mentorship, encourage professional growth, and acknowledge teachers' individual needs, they create a supportive work environment that enhances teacher motivation and retention (Khan et al., 2022). These results reinforce the importance of intentional, individualized support in effective leadership.

Emerging frameworks continue to emphasize the central role of individualized consideration in teacher engagement and school success. Sumampong and Arnado (2024), in their study "The influence of transformational leadership on teacher motivation and engagement: Proposed TELM framework," proposed a conceptual framework linking transformational leadership with teacher engagement. Conducted in elementary schools in the Philippines, the study employed a descriptive-correlational research design, surveying teachers and school administrators. The results highlighted that individualized consideration plays a crucial role in fostering teacher motivation. Teachers who felt valued and supported by their school leaders were more likely to remain engaged and committed to their schools. The study recommended that school leaders prioritize individualized mentorship and create an inclusive school culture to enhance teacher motivation (Sumampong&Arnado, 2024). These findings suggest that individualized consideration should be a core element of leadership development efforts.

In the context of charter schools, individualized consideration is especially critical due to their mission-driven nature and personalized educational models. Unlike

traditional public schools, charter schools often grant educators more autonomy while expecting them to fulfill broader responsibilities aligned with the school's unique mission and vision. Lee and Kuo (2019) demonstrated that teachers who feel personally supported by their school leaders are more likely to remain committed to their institutions, especially when that support includes mentorship, professional development, and recognition of individual contributions. This kind of personalized leadership fosters a sense of belonging and trust, which is essential in environments that demand high levels of adaptability and innovation. Charter school leaders who prioritize individualized consideration are better equipped to create inclusive and collaborative school cultures where teachers feel empowered to take initiative, grow professionally, and contribute meaningfully to student success. Ultimately, this approach supports teacher retention, enhances instructional quality, and strengthens the school's overall performance, making it an essential leadership strategy in the charter school setting.

Research also affirms that individualized consideration supports long-term teacher retention and continuous professional development in charter schools. The findings of Khan et al. (2022) support the idea that individualized consideration enhances teacher retention and professional growth by creating a supportive and nurturing work environment. Additionally, Sumampong and Arnado (2024) highlighted that transformational leadership strategies, including individualized consideration, directly influence teacher motivation and engagement, making it a critical factor in sustaining high-performing charter schools. These studies collectively demonstrate that teachers are more likely to thrive when they feel individually recognized and supported by their leaders.

Individualized consideration is a crucial component of transformational leadership that significantly impacts teacher motivation, engagement, and professional development. The studies by Zacher et al. (2014), Lee and Kuo (2019), Khan et al. (2022), and Sumampong and Arnado (2024) collectively emphasize the importance of personalized support, mentorship, and recognition in fostering a motivated and committed teaching workforce. In charter schools, where teacher engagement and retention are essential for success, individualized consideration serves as a powerful tool for sustaining teacher motivation and enhancing overall school performance. Future research should continue exploring how individualized consideration can be further integrated into leadership practices to maximize teacher satisfaction and effectiveness. As leadership practices continue to evolve, individualized support remains essential to building empowered, resilient, and successful school communities.

Transformational Leadership and Teachers' Commitment in Charter Schools

The role of transformational leadership in education has been widely recognized for its ability to inspire, motivate, and cultivate a strong sense of commitment among teachers. Developed by Burns (1978) and later expanded by Bass (1985), transformational leadership fosters a shared vision, instills confidence, and encourages professional growth. In the educational sector, this leadership approach has been identified as a crucial factor in promoting teacher commitment, enhancing motivation, and fostering a collaborative school culture. Teacher commitment, defined as the psychological attachment and dedication to their schools and students, is essential for improving student outcomes and sustaining long-term educational success. Research has increasingly emphasized the role of transformational leadership in fostering teacher

commitment, particularly in high-poverty urban charter schools, where teacher retention is often a challenge (Williams, 2020).

Transformational leadership has a great impact on teacher organizational commitment, particularly in high-poverty charter schools. Williams (2020), in his study “Exploring transformational leadership of principals and the impact on the organizational commitment of teachers in high-poverty urban charter schools,” conducted a mixed-methods study to examine the relationship between transformational leadership and teacher organizational commitment. The study utilized an online survey administered to teachers and principals, followed by qualitative interviews to gain deeper insights into leadership behaviors and their effects on teachers. The results indicated that two subcomponents of transformational leadership, idealized influence and inspirational motivation, were statistically significant predictors of teacher commitment. Teachers who perceived their principals as ethical role models and visionaries were more likely to remain dedicated to their schools. The qualitative findings reinforced these results, with teachers describing how transformational leaders inspired loyalty, trust, and a shared sense of mission. These findings suggest that transformational leadership, particularly through idealized influence and inspirational motivation, plays a crucial role in fostering teacher commitment in high-poverty charter schools (Williams, 2020).

Understanding the core components of transformational leadership is essential for identifying how leadership behaviors influence teacher commitment. Transformational leadership consists of four key components: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Each of these elements contributes to teacher commitment in unique ways. Idealized influence refers to leaders

serving as ethical role models, demonstrating integrity, and instilling trust among their teachers. Leaders who exhibit high moral standards and a strong sense of purpose create a school culture where teachers feel valued and committed to the institution's mission. Inspirational motivation involves articulating a compelling vision that energizes and engages teachers, fostering a shared commitment to achieving educational goals. Intellectual stimulation encourages teachers to think critically, embrace innovation, and continuously improve their instructional practices. Individualized consideration ensures that teachers receive personalized support, professional development, and mentorship, strengthening their sense of belonging and commitment to their schools (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Together, these components form a comprehensive framework for effective leadership in schools.

A detailed exploration of each transformational leadership component provides deeper insight into how leadership practices shape teacher commitment. In the following sections, this paper will review research examining how each of these transformational leadership components influences teacher commitment. Specifically, the review will focus on the relationships between idealized influence and teacher commitment, inspirational motivation and teacher commitment, intellectual stimulation and teacher commitment, and individualized consideration and teacher commitment. By synthesizing findings from existing literature, this section aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how transformational leadership fosters a committed and motivated teaching workforce. This targeted approach allows for a clearer understanding of which strategies are most impactful in educational settings.

Charter schools, with their mission-driven models and high expectations, particularly benefit from transformational leadership strategies that support teacher engagement and retention. Unlike traditional public schools, charter schools often require educators to work in high-demand environments with fewer resources and support systems. As a result, leadership plays a critical role in sustaining teacher engagement and reducing turnover. Williams (2020) found that transformational leadership was especially effective in high-poverty urban charter schools, where principals who demonstrated idealized influence and inspirational motivation created strong school cultures that enhanced teacher loyalty and job satisfaction. Given the autonomous and flexible nature of charter schools, transformational leadership provides a strategic advantage in fostering teacher commitment and ensuring the long-term success of both educators and students. Effective leadership in these settings can create resilient school cultures capable of overcoming external challenges.

Synthesizing current research on transformational leadership provides actionable insights into how school leaders can cultivate committed and growth-oriented teaching teams. By synthesizing research on the impact of transformational leadership on teachers' commitment within charter school settings, this review aims to identify the most effective leadership strategies for fostering a growth mindset among teachers. Understanding how transformational leadership influences teacher commitment is critical for enhancing professional development, improving retention rates, and strengthening overall educational effectiveness in charter schools. The following sections will examine each subcomponent of transformational leadership in detail, highlighting its specific contributions to teacher commitment and motivation. This review sets the stage for a

nuanced discussion of leadership practices that can drive success in mission-driven educational environments.

Idealized Influence and Teacher Commitment

Idealized influence, a core component of transformational leadership, refers to leaders who act as ethical role models, demonstrating integrity, trustworthiness, and commitment to their organization's mission. This form of leadership is particularly relevant in educational settings, where teachers' commitment to their schools, students, and professional growth is critical for student success and institutional stability. By embodying ethical principles, transformational leaders inspire teachers to adopt a shared vision, reinforcing their sense of purpose and dedication. Studies have explored the role of idealized influence in shaping teacher commitment, highlighting its impact on motivation, retention, and overall job satisfaction.

Idealized influence, a central component of transformational leadership, plays a significant role in shaping teacher commitment and institutional trust. Licayan (2024), in the study "School leadership and teachers' commitment to change," conducted a quantitative descriptive survey to examine how idealized influence impacts teachers' commitment levels in the public schools of Duero District. The study employed a survey design to assess school leadership practices and their correlation with teacher commitment. Participants included 124 teachers and nine elementary school principals, with data collected through the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and an additional 21-item commitment checklist. The findings indicated that school leaders in the district excelled in idealized influence, consistently demonstrating ethical leadership, reliability, and the ability to articulate a strong vision. Teachers who perceived their

leaders as role models expressed higher levels of affective commitment, feeling a strong emotional attachment to their institutions. However, the study also found that while ethical leadership contributed positively to trust and morale, it did not significantly predict teachers' commitment to change. This suggests that while idealized influence fosters a stable work environment, additional leadership components may be necessary to drive dynamic organizational transformation (Licayan, 2024).

Transformational leadership, especially through idealized influence, also significantly impacts teacher dedication in broader educational settings. Sii Ling (2012), in the study "The influence of transformational leadership on teacher commitment towards organization, teaching profession, and student learning in secondary schools in Miri, Sarawak, Malaysia," conducted a quantitative survey exploring the relationship between transformational leadership and teacher commitment in Malaysian secondary schools. The study involved 1,014 teachers across 27 schools, utilizing survey instruments based on transformational leadership theories. The findings revealed a direct and indirect relationship between transformational leadership and teacher commitment, with idealized influence emerging as a crucial factor in shaping teachers' dedication to their profession. Teachers who viewed their principals as ethical leaders with a strong moral compass reported higher commitment levels toward their schools, profession, and students. The study underscored the need for leadership development programs to cultivate transformational qualities in school administrators, emphasizing that idealized influence plays a vital role in sustaining teacher motivation and institutional effectiveness (Sii Ling, 2012). These insights support the broader application of idealized influence in leadership training and school culture development.

Idealized influence not only supports teacher commitment but also contributes to sustained teaching performance over time. Alzoraiki et al. (2023), in their study “Impact of teachers’ commitment to the relationship between transformational leadership and sustainable teaching performance,” conducted a quantitative study exploring how transformational leadership fosters long-term teaching effectiveness. Using a stratified random sampling technique, the study surveyed 374 teachers across various institutions and analyzed the mediating role of teacher commitment. The results demonstrated that transformational leadership positively influences both teacher commitment and sustainable teaching performance. Idealized influence was identified as a key driver of teacher dedication, with leaders who exhibited ethical integrity and strong vision fostering a culture of trust and collaboration. The study concluded that transformational leadership enhances teacher performance by cultivating commitment through ethical leadership, underscoring the need for school leaders to adopt a role-modeling approach (Alzoraiki et al., 2023). These findings reinforce the connection between ethical leadership and high-performing instructional environments.

In charter school contexts, idealized influence becomes especially important due to the sector’s emphasis on mission, autonomy, and innovation. The implications of idealized influence in charter schools are particularly significant. Given the mission-driven nature of charter schools, where flexibility and innovation are often emphasized, leaders who embody ethical values and inspire trust can have a profound impact on teacher commitment. In environments where educators face unique challenges such as limited resources and high student needs, transformational leaders who exemplify integrity and a clear vision can enhance teacher retention and job satisfaction. Research

has shown that charter school teachers are more likely to remain in their positions when they perceive their leaders as role models who align with the school's core values (Williams, 2020). This suggests that fostering idealized influence is essential for supporting staff and maintaining a committed workforce in charter school settings.

By integrating research on idealized influence across educational contexts, school leaders can better understand how ethical leadership shapes institutional outcomes. By synthesizing research on the role of idealized influence in fostering teacher commitment, this review highlights the importance of ethical leadership in educational settings. As demonstrated in studies by Licayan (2024), Sii Ling (2012), and Alzoraiki et al. (2023), leaders who exemplify strong moral character and inspire trust can significantly enhance teacher dedication and institutional success. Future research should continue exploring how idealized influence interacts with other transformational leadership components to create sustainable teacher commitment, particularly within charter schools, where alignment with mission-driven objectives is crucial. Emphasizing integrity and trust in leadership practices remains a foundational strategy for cultivating lasting teacher engagement and institutional resilience.

Inspirational Motivation and Teacher Commitment

Inspirational motivation, a critical component of transformational leadership, refers to a leader's ability to articulate a compelling vision, instill enthusiasm, and foster a sense of collective purpose among employees. In educational settings, inspirational motivation plays a pivotal role in enhancing teacher commitment by creating an environment where educators feel valued, engaged, and motivated to contribute to their schools' long-term success. When school leaders demonstrate optimism, encourage

professional development, and communicate high expectations, teachers develop a strong sense of purpose, which in turn enhances their job commitment and performance. Various studies have examined the relationship between inspirational motivation and teacher commitment, highlighting the significance of transformational leadership practices in educational institutions.

Inspirational motivation, a key dimension of transformational leadership, plays an important role in fostering teacher commitment when effectively applied. Okafor (2023), in the study “Principals’ application of inspirational motivation for improving teachers’ job commitment in public secondary schools in Awka South, Anambra State,” conducted a quantitative descriptive survey to investigate how principals apply inspirational motivation to enhance teacher commitment. The study sampled 339 respondents, including 18 principals and 321 teachers from public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed through mean scores and standard deviation. The findings revealed that while principals recognized the importance of inspirational motivation, its practical application in schools was inconsistent. Teachers reported that they rarely received professional training recommendations or career development opportunities, which negatively impacted their commitment levels. The study recommended that educational administrators allocate more resources to professional development initiatives, emphasizing the need for motivational leadership practices to sustain teacher engagement (Okafor, 2023). These findings suggest that without consistent application, even well-understood leadership principles may fall short in influencing teacher commitment.

The positive relationship between inspirational motivation and teacher commitment has been confirmed in related research focused on transformational leadership components. Ikedimma and Okorji (2023), in the study “Principals’ idealized influence and inspirational motivation as correlates of teachers’ commitment in secondary schools in Anambra State,” conducted a quantitative correlational study to examine the relationship between transformational leadership components and teacher commitment. The study surveyed 540 secondary school teachers in Anambra State using the Transformational Leadership Questionnaire (TLQ) and the Teacher Commitment Questionnaire (TCQ). The Pearson correlation analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between principals’ inspirational motivation and teacher commitment ($r = 0.67, p < 0.05$). The study concluded that when principals effectively communicate a shared vision, demonstrate enthusiasm, and involve teachers in goal-setting, teachers exhibit higher levels of loyalty, engagement, and willingness to contribute to institutional success (Ikedimma&Okorji, 2023). These results emphasize the importance of vision-driven, motivational leadership in enhancing school culture and teacher dedication.

Findings from other sectors also demonstrate the universal value of inspirational motivation in building organizational commitment. Kimeto et al. (2017), in the study “The influence of inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation on organizational commitment in commercial banks in Kenya,” explored the impact of transformational leadership behaviors on employee commitment in non-educational settings. Using a descriptive correlational design, the study sampled 150 senior managers from commercial banks in Kenya, employing stratified random sampling. The analysis, conducted through multiple linear regression, revealed that inspirational motivation significantly predicted

organizational commitment ($R^2 = 0.722$, $\beta = 0.249$, $p < 0.05$). Employees who perceived their supervisors as inspirational leaders exhibited greater job satisfaction, loyalty, and willingness to exceed performance expectations. Although this study focused on the banking sector, its findings align with educational leadership research, reinforcing the idea that inspirational motivation fosters employee commitment across different organizational contexts (Kimeto et al., 2017). This cross-sector alignment highlights the consistency of transformational leadership effects on organizational performance.

Charter schools, which often operate in demanding and mission-driven contexts, greatly benefit from leaders who demonstrate inspirational motivation. The role of inspirational motivation is particularly significant in charter schools, where mission alignment and institutional flexibility require strong leadership to sustain teacher engagement. Charter schools operate under unique challenges, including higher workload expectations and resource constraints, making leadership a crucial factor in maintaining teacher commitment. Research suggests that in these environments, principals who emphasize a shared vision encourage professional development, and foster a sense of belonging contribute to higher teacher retention and job satisfaction. Studies, such as those conducted by Okafor (2023) and Ikedimma and Okorji (2023), indicate that when charter school leaders practice inspirational motivation, teachers feel more connected to their schools' mission, leading to improved instructional quality and overall school performance. Leadership practices that motivate and engage teachers can have long-lasting positive effects on school culture and student achievement.

By synthesizing research on the role of inspirational motivation in fostering teacher commitment, this review underscores the importance of motivational leadership

in educational settings. As demonstrated in studies by Okafor (2023), Ikedimma and Okorji (2023), and Kimeto et al. (2017), principals who effectively inspire and engage their teachers contribute to a more dedicated, enthusiastic, and committed teaching workforce. Future research should continue exploring how inspirational motivation interacts with other transformational leadership components to create sustainable teacher commitment, particularly within charter schools, where leadership effectiveness is critical to long-term institutional success. Strengthening inspirational leadership approaches can be a powerful tool in supporting teacher retention, satisfaction, and overall school improvement.

Intellectual Stimulation and Teacher Commitment

Intellectual stimulation, a fundamental aspect of transformational leadership, refers to the ability of leaders to encourage innovation, creativity, and critical thinking among their followers. In educational settings, intellectual stimulation plays a crucial role in fostering teacher commitment by challenging teachers to engage in problem-solving, professional development, and continuous learning. Teachers who experience intellectual stimulation from their leaders are more likely to remain dedicated to their schools, as they feel valued and supported in their pursuit of professional growth. This section explores how intellectual stimulation impacts teacher commitment, drawing from recent studies that have examined this relationship in diverse educational settings.

Intellectual stimulation, a central element of transformational leadership, has been shown to positively influence teacher commitment in various educational contexts. Ikedimma and Okorji (2023), in their study “Principals’ intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration behaviors as correlates of teachers’ commitment in

secondary schools in Anambra State,” conducted a quantitative correlational study to investigate the impact of intellectual stimulation on teacher commitment. The study sampled 540 teachers from public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria, using the Transformational Leadership Questionnaire (TLQ) and the Teacher Commitment Questionnaire (TCQ). The findings revealed a high positive correlation ($r = 0.73$) between principals’ intellectual stimulation and teachers’ job commitment. Teachers who perceived their principals as leaders who encouraged critical thinking, problem-solving, and innovation were more likely to demonstrate higher levels of commitment. The study recommended that educational policymakers in Anambra State emphasize the adoption of intellectual stimulation as a leadership strategy to enhance teacher dedication and overall school performance (Ikedimma & Okorji, 2023). These results underscore the effectiveness of intellectually engaging leadership in fostering dedicated teaching staff.

Principals who employ intellectual stimulation also support teacher growth by cultivating continuous professional development opportunities. Sholeh (2021), in the study “Transformational leadership: Principal intellectual stimulation in improving teacher competences,” explored how intellectual stimulation contributes to teacher professional development in two Islamic educational institutions in East Java, Indonesia. This qualitative study utilized a multi-case research design, collecting data from 16 teachers, one school committee member, one student guardian, one community leader, and one school employee through interviews, documentation, and observations. The study found that principals who employed intellectual stimulation facilitated teacher growth by implementing structured professional development programs. These included in-service education, advanced degree support, training workshops, and collaborative

problem-solving initiatives. Teachers in these schools demonstrated a higher commitment to their profession due to the encouragement and opportunities provided by their leaders to improve their competencies. The study emphasized that principals who actively engage teachers in intellectual stimulation create a learning culture that enhances teacher commitment and institutional success (Sholeh, 2021). These findings highlight the critical role of leadership in building professional capacity and motivation among educators.

Intellectual stimulation also serves as a bridge between teacher commitment and long-term instructional effectiveness. Alzoraiki et al. (2023), in the study “Impact of teachers’ commitment to the relationship between transformational leadership and sustainable teaching performance,” examined the mediating role of teacher commitment in the relationship between transformational leadership and sustainable teaching performance. This quantitative study employed a stratified random sampling technique to survey 374 teachers across different educational institutions. Using statistical analysis, the study found that intellectual stimulation significantly influenced teacher commitment, which in turn contributed to improved teaching performance. Teachers who worked under intellectually stimulating principals reported greater engagement in their instructional practices, were more willing to adopt new pedagogical approaches, and exhibited a stronger sense of professional dedication. The study concluded that transformational leaders who prioritize intellectual stimulation contribute to both short-term teacher commitment and long-term teaching effectiveness, reinforcing the importance of leadership development programs that cultivate such qualities in school administrators (Alzoraiki et al., 2023). These findings further validate the long-term value

of intellectually stimulating leadership in advancing both educator growth and student outcomes.

The importance of intellectual stimulation is particularly evident in charter school environments that prioritize innovation and autonomy. The relevance of intellectual stimulation in charter schools is particularly pronounced due to the dynamic and innovative nature of these institutions. Charter schools often emphasize pedagogical experimentation, interdisciplinary approaches, and flexibility in curriculum design. As such, intellectual stimulation from school leaders is crucial in fostering an environment where teachers feel empowered to explore new instructional strategies and contribute to the school's mission. Research suggests that in charter school settings, leaders who promote intellectual stimulation not only enhance teacher commitment but also contribute to higher student achievement and institutional resilience. The studies by Ikedimma and Okorji (2023), Sholeh (2021), and Alzoraiki et al. (2023) collectively underscore that when principals actively encourage teachers to think critically, challenge traditional methods, and engage in continuous learning, they create an educational culture that sustains teacher motivation and long-term commitment. This approach aligns with the needs of charter schools to remain adaptable and mission-driven in their instructional goals.

By synthesizing research on the role of intellectual stimulation in fostering teacher commitment, this review highlights the importance of visionary leadership in educational institutions. As demonstrated in the aforementioned studies, principals who inspire teachers through intellectual stimulation contribute significantly to teacher dedication, professional growth, and institutional success. Future research should explore

the long-term effects of intellectual stimulation on teacher retention and job satisfaction, particularly in charter schools, where adaptability and mission-driven teaching play pivotal roles in shaping school culture and student success. Cultivating leadership that supports intellectual engagement is essential to developing empowered educators and thriving school communities.

Individualized Consideration and Teacher Commitment

Individual consideration, a critical element of transformational leadership, refers to a leader's ability to provide individualized support, mentorship, and attention to employees' unique needs. In educational settings, individual consideration plays a vital role in fostering teacher commitment by ensuring that educators feel valued, supported, and motivated to contribute to their schools' long-term success. Transformational leaders who recognize teachers' strengths and areas for growth create a culture that promotes professional development, teacher engagement, and long-term commitment. Research has demonstrated that individual consideration enhances teachers' job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and willingness to go beyond their standard responsibilities.

Individualized consideration, as a dimension of transformational leadership, positively influences teacher motivation and commitment when school leaders address individual needs and provide mentorship. Ikedimma and Okorji (2023), in the study "Principals' intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration behaviors as correlates of teachers' commitment in secondary schools in Anambra State," conducted a quantitative correlational study to investigate the relationship between school leadership behaviors and teacher commitment. The study involved a sample of 540 secondary school teachers in Anambra State, Nigeria, using the Transformational Leadership

Questionnaire (TLQ) and the Teacher Commitment Questionnaire (TCQ). Data were analyzed using Pearson's correlation coefficient to determine the relationship between leadership behaviors and teacher commitment. The findings revealed a moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.58$, $p < 0.05$) between individualized consideration and teacher commitment. Teachers reported higher levels of engagement and professional fulfillment when their principals demonstrated concern for their individual needs and provided mentorship opportunities. The study concluded that school administrators should integrate individualized consideration into their leadership approaches to enhance teacher motivation and commitment (Ikedimma & Okorji, 2023). These results emphasize the importance of supportive leadership in fostering a committed school environment.

The impact of individualized consideration extends beyond education, as demonstrated in research within organizational settings such as banking. Kimeto et al. (2017), in the study "The influence of idealized influence and individualized consideration on organizational commitment in commercial banks in Kenya," conducted a quantitative descriptive correlational study to examine the impact of transformational leadership on organizational commitment in the banking sector. This study surveyed 150 senior managers from 40 commercial banks in Kenya using stratified random sampling. The researchers employed multiple linear regression analysis to determine the predictive strength of individualized consideration on organizational commitment. The results demonstrated that individualized consideration significantly influenced organizational commitment ($R^2 = 0.738$, $\beta = 0.295$, $p < 0.05$). Employees who received personalized attention, mentorship, and support from their supervisors exhibited greater job satisfaction, engagement, and loyalty. While the study focused on a non-educational

setting, its findings align with educational leadership research, reinforcing the importance of individualized consideration in fostering commitment among employees (Kimeto et al., 2017). This cross-sector evidence supports the consistency of transformational leadership practices in promoting organizational loyalty.

Personalized leadership also plays a vital role in school reform and innovation by encouraging teacher engagement and continuous improvement. Geijsel et al. (2003), in the study “Transformational leadership effects on teachers’ commitment and effort toward school reform,” conducted a quantitative survey study exploring the impact of transformational leadership on teacher commitment in Canadian and Dutch schools. The study employed structural equation modeling (SEM) to analyze data from 450 Canadian and 1,246 Dutch teachers. The findings highlighted that individualized consideration significantly influenced teacher commitment and extra effort toward school reform. Teachers who perceived their school leaders as supportive and attentive to their individual needs demonstrated higher commitment levels and a greater willingness to engage in instructional improvement initiatives. The study emphasized that transformational leadership components, particularly individualized consideration, play a crucial role in sustaining teacher motivation and fostering a collaborative school culture (Geijsel et al., 2003). These findings suggest that attention to teachers’ individual strengths can spark meaningful institutional growth.

In charter schools, individualized consideration is particularly valuable due to the need for adaptive leadership in innovative and mission-driven environments. The role of individualized consideration is particularly relevant in charter schools, where flexibility, innovation, and mission alignment require strong leadership to sustain teacher

commitment. Charter school leaders who recognize teachers' unique skills and aspirations contribute to higher job satisfaction, professional engagement, and long-term institutional stability. Research suggests that in these settings, principals who prioritize mentorship, provide professional development opportunities, and offer personalized support enhance teacher motivation and retention rates. Studies by Ikedimma and Okorji (2023) and Geijsel et al. (2003) indicate that when school leaders practice individualized consideration, teachers feel more valued and connected to their schools' mission, leading to improved instructional quality and overall school performance. These outcomes illustrate how individualized leadership is aligned with the foundational goals of charter education.

By synthesizing research on the role of individualized consideration in fostering teacher commitment, this review underscores the significance of personalized leadership in educational settings. As demonstrated in studies by Ikedimma and Okorji (2023), Kimeto et al. (2017), and Geijsel et al. (2003), transformational leaders who actively mentor, support, and develop teachers contribute to a more committed and engaged teaching workforce. Future research should continue exploring how individualized consideration interacts with other transformational leadership components to create sustainable teacher commitment, particularly within charter schools, where leadership effectiveness is critical to long-term institutional success. Emphasizing personalized leadership practices may ultimately improve teacher retention and enhance school culture across diverse educational settings.

Transformational Leadership and Professional Growth in Charter Schools

Transformational leadership is widely recognized as a significant driver of professional growth in educational settings. By fostering a culture of innovation, self-improvement, and continuous learning, transformational leaders play a crucial role in advancing teachers' professional development. This leadership style creates an environment where educators are encouraged to refine their instructional practices, engage in lifelong learning, and embrace challenges as opportunities for growth. Professional growth in teaching encompasses skill development, pedagogical enhancement, and an increased commitment to student success, all of which are reinforced by the core elements of transformational leadership.

Research indicates that transformational leadership significantly impacts professional growth through four key dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Leaders who exhibit idealized influence serve as ethical role models, demonstrating strong moral values and visionary leadership that inspire teachers to improve their professional practices. Inspirational motivation fosters a shared vision, encouraging educators to strive for excellence by setting high expectations and providing meaningful encouragement. Intellectual stimulation challenges teachers to think critically, innovate, and continuously improve their instructional methods, fostering a culture of creativity and problem-solving. Individualized consideration ensures that teachers receive tailored support, mentorship, and opportunities for professional development, thereby enhancing their personal and professional capacities.

Transformational leadership has a strong positive influence on teacher motivation, particularly when school leaders provide individualized support and foster professional growth. Abdullah, Ling, and Sufi (2018), in their study “Principal transformational leadership and teachers’ motivation,” examined the relationship between transformational leadership and teacher motivation in Malaysian schools. The study utilized a descriptive quantitative approach and surveyed 283 teachers from 21 national schools in the district of Seberang Perai Selatan, Penang. Using validated survey instruments, including the Transformational Leadership Scale and the Teacher Motivation Questionnaire, the researchers found a significant positive correlation between transformational leadership and teachers’ motivation. The findings highlighted that among the dimensions of transformational leadership, individual support was the strongest predictor of teacher motivation, reinforcing the importance of leadership-driven professional development (Abdullah et al., 2018). These results emphasize the critical role of supportive leadership in cultivating motivated and professionally invested teachers.

Perceptions of transformational leadership behaviors also influence teacher engagement in professional development, though sustained motivation requires career advancement opportunities. Serin and Akkaya (2020), in their study “The relationship between school principals’ perceived transformational leadership behavior and teachers’ motivation,” investigated the connection between school leaders' transformational leadership behaviors and teacher motivation. The study surveyed 418 teachers from primary, middle, and high schools in Istanbul, Turkey, employing the Multidimensional Work Motivational Scale (Gagné et al., 2010) and the Transformational Leadership Scale (Brestich, 2000). The results indicated that teachers who perceived their principals as

transformational leaders reported higher engagement in professional development initiatives. However, the study also found that long-term exposure to transformational leadership without substantial career advancement opportunities could lead to decreased motivation, highlighting the importance of continuous leadership-driven professional growth strategies (Serin & Akkaya, 2020). These findings suggest that transformational leadership must be accompanied by tangible professional advancement to sustain high levels of teacher motivation over time.

In the context of charter schools, the impact of transformational leadership on professional growth is particularly significant. Charter schools operate under unique conditions that emphasize mission-driven instruction, innovation, and flexible pedagogical approaches. Unlike traditional public schools, charter schools often require educators to adapt to evolving instructional methodologies, making professional development a critical component of their success. Williams (2020), in his dissertation *Exploring Transformational Leadership of Principals and the Impact on the Organizational Commitment of Teachers in High-Poverty Urban Charter Schools*, conducted a mixed-methods study examining the relationship between transformational leadership and teacher commitment in U.S. charter schools. Through online surveys and follow-up interviews, the study found that transformational leadership behaviors, particularly idealized influence and inspirational motivation, were significant predictors of teachers' professional engagement and long-term commitment to their institutions. The study emphasized that charter school leaders who actively support professional growth initiatives create environments where teachers feel valued and motivated to continuously improve their teaching practices (Williams, 2020).

By synthesizing research on the impact of transformational leadership on professional growth, this review highlights the most effective leadership strategies for cultivating a learning-oriented school culture. Understanding how transformational leadership influences professional development is essential for school administrators, policymakers, and educators seeking to enhance teacher capacity and educational outcomes. The following sections will explore each of the four transformational leadership components in detail, examining their respective roles in supporting and advancing teachers' professional growth.

Idealized Influence and Professional Growth

Idealized influence, a key dimension of transformational leadership, refers to a leader's ability to serve as an ethical role model, demonstrating integrity, vision, and commitment to fostering professional excellence among followers. In educational settings, idealized influence plays a crucial role in supporting teachers' professional growth by inspiring them to embrace lifelong learning, adopt innovative instructional practices, and engage in reflective teaching. Transformational leaders who embody idealized influence cultivate a school culture that encourages professional development by modeling high ethical standards, motivating teachers to pursue continuous learning, and fostering a shared vision for educational excellence.

Idealized influence, a key component of transformational leadership, significantly contributes to professional engagement and job satisfaction by promoting ethical leadership and visionary guidance. Njiraini, K'Aol, and Linge (2018), in the study "Effect of idealized influence and inspirational motivation on job satisfaction among employees in commercial banks in Kenya," conducted a quantitative correlational study

examining how idealized influence impacts professional engagement and job satisfaction. The study surveyed 424 employees in Kenyan commercial banks using structured questionnaires and statistical analyses conducted through SPSS. The findings indicated that leaders who exhibited high levels of idealized influence created a culture of professional growth by inspiring employees to develop new competencies, seek mentorship, and engage in collaborative learning. Although conducted outside the educational sector, this study aligns with existing literature on educational leadership by demonstrating that leaders who model ethical behavior and visionary leadership significantly contribute to employees' professional development (Njiraini et al., 2018). These findings reinforce the universal value of ethical leadership across professional environments.

Transformational leadership, particularly idealized influence, also enhances teacher motivation and professional commitment in educational settings. Adarkwah and Zeyuan (2020), in the study “The paradoxical relationship between principals’ transformational leadership styles and teachers’ motivation,” explored the impact of transformational leadership on teachers' professional commitment in Ghanaian secondary schools. Using a quantitative survey method with 200 teachers as participants, the study employed the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) to assess leadership behaviors. The results revealed that teachers who viewed their principals as role models with strong ethical leadership and idealized influence demonstrated higher levels of professional engagement and motivation to pursue further training. However, the study also noted that without structured professional development opportunities, the impact of idealized influence could be limited, suggesting the need for school leaders to integrate

formal training programs into their leadership strategies (Adarkwah&Zeyuan, 2020).

These results highlight the importance of pairing ethical leadership with tangible growth opportunities to sustain motivation.

In charter schools, idealized influence fosters a strong professional learning culture by encouraging teachers to pursue continuous growth. Williams (2020), in the study “Exploring transformational leadership of principals and the professional growth of teachers in charter schools,” conducted a mixed-methods study in high-poverty urban charter schools in the United States to examine how transformational leadership fosters teacher professional development. The study combined quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews, gathering data from 45 principals and 220 teachers. The findings highlighted that principals who demonstrated idealized influence significantly contributed to teachers' willingness to engage in professional learning communities, instructional coaching programs, and continuous development initiatives. Teachers reported that working under transformational leaders who embodied integrity and high professional standards encouraged them to pursue further education, enhance their pedagogical skills, and adopt evidence-based teaching practices. The study concluded that transformational leadership, particularly through idealized influence, plays a pivotal role in fostering teacher commitment to lifelong learning (Williams, 2020). These findings affirm the importance of visionary leadership in advancing both teacher capacity and student outcomes.

Idealized influence is especially impactful in charter school environments where leadership autonomy allows for strategic investment in teacher development. The implications of idealized influence in professional growth are particularly relevant in

charter schools, where leadership effectiveness is critical to maintaining high standards of teaching and innovation. Unlike traditional public schools, charter schools operate with increased autonomy, allowing principals to implement leadership strategies that directly support teacher development. Transformational leaders in charter schools who model ethical behavior and commitment to professional excellence inspire teachers to engage in continuous learning, contributing to school-wide instructional improvement. Williams (2020) found that charter school leaders who exhibited idealized influence fostered environments where teachers were more likely to seek out mentorship, engage in peer collaboration, and pursue professional certifications. This aligns with broader research suggesting that when charter schoolteachers perceive their leaders as visionary role models, they demonstrate increased professional commitment, motivation, and adaptability to pedagogical advancements. Moreover, in mission-driven charter schools, where alignment with institutional values is essential, leaders who exhibit idealized influence strengthen teachers' dedication to ongoing growth and instructional excellence. These insights emphasize the relevance of ethical, inspirational leadership in mission-centered school settings.

By synthesizing research on the role of idealized influence in fostering professional growth, this review highlights the significance of transformational leadership in enhancing teacher development. As demonstrated in studies by Njiraini et al. (2018), Adarkwah and Zeyuan (2020), and Williams (2020), transformational leaders who serve as ethical role models inspire teachers to continuously improve their professional skills and engage in meaningful learning experiences. Future research should explore how idealized influence interacts with structured professional development programs to ensure

sustained teacher growth, particularly in charter schools, where leadership plays a defining role in institutional success. Strengthening professional learning through visionary leadership may be key to improving both teacher retention and instructional quality.

Inspirational Motivation and Professional Growth

Inspirational motivation, a key dimension of transformational leadership, involves leaders articulating a compelling vision, fostering enthusiasm, and encouraging employees to work towards shared goals. In educational settings, inspirational motivation is crucial for professional growth, as it empowers teachers, enhances job satisfaction, and fosters an environment conducive to continuous learning and development. Teachers who perceive their leaders as sources of encouragement and inspiration are more likely to engage in self-improvement, embrace challenges, and remain committed to their professional advancement. Various studies have examined the relationship between inspirational motivation and professional growth, shedding light on the mechanisms through which transformational leadership facilitates teachers' development.

Inspirational motivation is a powerful leadership strategy that encourages teacher development and improved performance through vision-driven guidance and continuous support. Anwar (2023), in the study “Inspirational motivation for principal transformational leadership as an effort to improve teacher performance in PAUD institutions,” conducted a qualitative case study at Al Irsyad Islamic Kindergarten in Madiun City, Indonesia. The study employed interviews, documentation, and observation methods to examine how school principals utilize inspirational motivation to enhance teacher performance and growth. The findings revealed that principals who actively

inspire teachers by modeling continuous learning and setting high expectations foster a culture of academic and professional advancement. Teachers in institutions where leaders prioritized motivation and goal setting demonstrated higher levels of professional commitment, actively pursuing additional qualifications and professional certifications. The study concluded that inspirational motivation is instrumental in fostering teacher development and performance improvement, particularly when principals act as role models for continuous learning (Anwar, 2023). These findings emphasize the need for school leaders to lead by example in cultivating a growth-oriented teaching environment.

Inspirational motivation also contributes significantly to teacher satisfaction and professional growth when leaders promote vision, collaboration, and opportunity. Furaha, Lyamtane, and Mandila (2023), in the study “Contribution of inspirational motivation on teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Kagera Region, Tanzania,” employed a convergent mixed-methods research design to explore the role of inspirational motivation in teacher satisfaction and professional growth. The study surveyed 216 respondents, including school heads and teachers, and analyzed data through descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. The results indicated that principals who effectively communicated a vision, encouraged professional development, and engaged teachers in decision-making processes contributed significantly to teacher satisfaction and professional growth. Teachers who worked under leaders who provided inspirational motivation were more likely to participate in professional training, collaborate with colleagues, and seek further academic qualifications. The study recommended equipping school leaders with training on inspirational motivation to maximize its impact on teacher professional development (Furaha et al., 2023). These

findings highlight the importance of equipping school leaders with the skills needed to cultivate a collaborative, growth-focused school culture.

Leadership rooted in inspirational motivation is also strongly correlated with teacher job commitment and long-term professional growth. Malela and Gathumbi (2016), in the study “Influence of inspirational motivation on teachers’ job commitment in public primary schools in Matinyani Sub County, Kitui County, Kenya,” conducted a descriptive survey to examine the impact of inspirational motivation on teacher commitment and professional growth. The study sampled 25 head teachers and 169 teachers, employing Pearson correlation analysis to assess relationships between leadership practices and teacher motivation. Findings demonstrated a significant and positive correlation ($r = .774$, $N = 160$) between inspirational motivation and teacher commitment, with teachers in environments characterized by strong inspirational leadership displaying higher levels of job satisfaction and professional growth. The study emphasized the need for head teachers to actively foster a culture of inspiration, encouraging teachers to engage in continuous learning and self-improvement (Malela&Gathumbi, 2016). These results reinforce that inspirational leadership plays a central role in building teacher capacity and school commitment.

In charter schools, where autonomy and innovation are core values, inspirational motivation is especially critical to sustaining teacher development and instructional quality. The role of inspirational motivation is particularly critical in charter schools, where flexibility, mission alignment, and autonomy create unique professional development opportunities. Charter schools often emphasize innovation and instructional leadership, requiring school leaders to foster environments where teachers feel inspired to

advance their skills and pedagogical knowledge. Research suggests that in these schools, leaders who utilize inspirational motivation effectively can enhance teacher retention, job satisfaction, and overall instructional quality. As demonstrated by Anwar (2023) and Furaha et al. (2023), when charter school leaders provide clear visions, celebrate professional growth, and invest in teacher development programs, they cultivate a culture of continuous learning. Teachers in charter schools where inspirational motivation is emphasized are more likely to engage in reflective teaching practices, seek out leadership roles, and contribute to institutional success. These insights affirm that inspirational motivation is key to creating thriving professional learning environments in mission-driven school contexts.

By synthesizing research on the impact of inspirational motivation on professional growth, this review underscores the significance of transformational leadership in fostering teacher development. Studies by Anwar (2023), Furaha et al. (2023), and Malela and Gathumbi (2016) highlight that school leaders who effectively inspire and motivate their teachers contribute to a more skilled, engaged, and committed workforce. Future research should continue to explore how inspirational motivation interacts with other transformational leadership components to support long-term teacher development, particularly in charter schools, where leadership effectiveness plays a crucial role in shaping institutional success. Promoting vision-driven, inspirational leadership may be vital for sustaining innovation, retention, and teacher satisfaction in dynamic educational settings.

Intellectual Stimulation and Professional Growth

Intellectual stimulation, a key component of transformational leadership, refers to a leader's ability to challenge followers to think critically, seek innovative solutions, and continually improve their skills. In educational settings, intellectual stimulation plays a crucial role in fostering professional growth among teachers, encouraging them to engage in reflective practices, embrace continuous learning, and experiment with new instructional strategies. School leaders who engage in intellectual stimulation provide opportunities for teachers to develop their problem-solving abilities and explore creative teaching methodologies. Research has demonstrated that when teachers are intellectually stimulated by their leaders, they are more likely to adopt an adaptive mindset, stay motivated in their profession, and contribute to a culture of ongoing professional development.

Intellectual stimulation is a powerful leadership strategy that promotes teacher productivity, innovation, and ongoing professional development. Butaki et al. (2024), in the study “The influence of intellectual stimulation on teacher productivity in public primary schools in Trans Nzoia West Sub County, Kenya,” conducted a quantitative study to investigate how intellectual stimulation affects teacher productivity. The study, based in Kenya’s Trans Nzoia County, sampled 271 respondents, including public primary school teachers, curriculum support officers, and education administrators. Data were collected using structured questionnaires and analyzed through statistical techniques, including means, standard deviations, and regression analysis. Findings indicated that teachers who received intellectual stimulation from their school leaders exhibited greater academic and professional growth. Specifically, headteachers who

encouraged teachers to engage in problem-solving and critical thinking significantly enhanced their ability to develop innovative teaching strategies. The study concluded that intellectual stimulation fosters a conducive working environment, where teachers feel motivated to pursue professional development initiatives that contribute to both personal growth and student learning outcomes.

Research in higher education settings further reinforces the value of intellectual stimulation in advancing professional effectiveness and teacher satisfaction. Bolkan, Goodboy, and Griffin (2011), in the study “Teacher leadership and intellectual stimulation: Improving students’ approaches to studying through intrinsic motivation,” explored how intellectual stimulation enhances professional growth in a higher education setting. This study employed a mixed-methods design, combining qualitative interviews and a quantitative survey of 268 undergraduate students in the United States. The study found that teachers who employed intellectually stimulating leadership strategies such as encouraging independent thought, fostering discussion, and challenging students to engage deeply with course material significantly enhanced their own professional effectiveness. Teachers who utilized these leadership strategies reported higher levels of job satisfaction and professional growth due to the increased engagement and motivation they inspired in their students. The findings reinforced the idea that intellectual stimulation not only benefits students but also promotes continuous learning among teachers, as they are required to refine and adapt their pedagogical methods to meet evolving educational demands.

The role of intellectual stimulation in supporting teacher performance has also been demonstrated in secondary school environments. Nyamubi (2021), in the study “The

influence of heads of schools' inspirational motivation on teachers' work performance," conducted a descriptive cross-sectional study in Tanzania to examine how school leaders' transformational leadership strategies, including intellectual stimulation, impact teacher performance and growth. This study surveyed 350 secondary school teachers from urban and rural districts using structured questionnaires and statistical analyses, including t-tests and Pearson correlation coefficients. The study found that teachers who worked under leaders who promoted intellectual stimulation demonstrated higher levels of professional engagement and were more likely to take on leadership roles within their institutions. The findings underscored the importance of school heads creating an environment that fosters intellectual curiosity and continuous learning, which in turn drives teachers' professional growth and commitment to their schools. These results demonstrate that intellectual stimulation contributes to a stronger, more empowered school workforce.

Charter schools, which emphasize flexibility, innovation, and collaborative practice, are particularly suited to benefit from intellectually stimulating leadership. The role of intellectual stimulation is particularly relevant in charter schools, where flexibility and innovation are integral to institutional success. Charter schools often operate under conditions that require teachers to adapt to diverse student needs, implement creative instructional strategies, and participate in collaborative decision-making processes. Research suggests that school leaders who provide intellectual stimulation within charter schools encourage teachers to engage in ongoing professional development, explore new pedagogical approaches, and contribute to institutional improvement. Butaki et al. (2024) emphasized that in environments where intellectual stimulation is prioritized, teachers exhibit higher levels of engagement and professional satisfaction, ultimately leading to

enhanced student learning outcomes. The findings from Bolkan et al. (2011) further support the notion that intellectual stimulation is a crucial driver of teacher effectiveness and instructional innovation, making it an essential leadership practice in charter school settings. These insights affirm the critical role of intellectually stimulating leadership in cultivating dynamic and growth-oriented teaching communities.

By synthesizing research on the role of intellectual stimulation in fostering professional growth, this review highlights the importance of intellectually engaging leadership in educational settings. As demonstrated in studies by Butaki et al. (2024), Bolkan et al. (2011), and Nyamubi (2021), school leaders who challenge teachers to think critically and pursue continuous learning significantly contribute to their professional development. Future research should continue exploring how intellectual stimulation interacts with other transformational leadership components to enhance teacher growth, particularly in charter schools, where leadership effectiveness is essential to institutional success. Promoting intellectual stimulation may be a key lever for improving teacher development, retention, and instructional quality in both traditional and charter school environments.

Individualized Consideration and Professional Growth

Individual consideration, a critical element of transformational leadership, refers to the leader's ability to address the unique needs, aspirations, and professional development of each individual teacher. This approach fosters a culture of continuous learning, personalized mentorship, and professional growth by ensuring that educators receive tailored guidance and support. Leaders who practice individualized consideration are often perceived as mentors who recognize the specific strengths and developmental

areas of their teachers, creating a nurturing environment conducive to growth and engagement. Research highlights the strong correlation between individualized consideration and professional development, demonstrating its effectiveness in improving teacher performance, motivation, and long-term career satisfaction.

Individualized consideration is an essential aspect of transformational leadership that fosters meaningful professional relationships, supports teacher growth, and enhances overall school culture. Zacher, Pearce, Rooney, and McKenna (2014), in their study “Leaders’ personal wisdom and leader–member exchange quality: The role of individualized consideration,” conducted a mixed-method study examining how wisdom-driven leadership contributes to individualized support and professional engagement. Surveying 75 religious leaders and 158 employees across various institutions, the researchers found that leaders who integrated cognitive, reflective, and affective wisdom characteristics were more likely to exhibit individualized consideration, resulting in stronger professional relationships and higher employee commitment. Although the context was outside of K–12 education, the findings align with transformational leadership research in schools by showing that leaders who offer personalized mentorship and emotional support contribute to increased motivation, job satisfaction, and instructional effectiveness. When school leaders recognize each teacher’s unique needs and aspirations, they foster an environment of trust, empowerment, and continuous development. This type of leadership enables teachers to feel valued, reflect on their practices, and invest in their long-term professional journey. Ultimately, individualized consideration is not only a powerful leadership strategy but also a catalyst for cultivating committed, high-performing educators and building resilient school communities.

Supportive leadership grounded in individualized consideration has also been shown to boost teacher motivation across diverse school settings. Lee and Kuo (2019), in their quantitative study “Principals’ transformational leadership and teachers’ work motivation: Evidence from elementary schools in Taiwan,” examined the direct impact of individualized consideration on teacher motivation and professional development. Conducted across 40 public elementary schools in New Taipei City, Taichung City, and Kaohsiung City, Taiwan, the study distributed 550 questionnaires, yielding 430 valid responses. The data were analyzed using confirmatory factor analysis and common method variance analysis, confirming a strong positive correlation between transformational leadership and teacher motivation. Specifically, teachers who perceived their principals as supportive and invested in their career advancement exhibited higher levels of enthusiasm, job satisfaction, and engagement. The study concluded that individualized consideration was a key predictor of teacher motivation, emphasizing the need for school leaders to prioritize professional development programs that cater to teachers' specific needs and aspirations. These findings demonstrate how tailored leadership approaches can foster energized, purpose-driven educators.

Individualized consideration also strengthens professional commitment by creating relational trust and encouraging long-term teacher development. Khan, Amin, and Saif (2022), in the study “The contributions of inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation in connecting individualized consideration and idealized influence,” conducted a quantitative study to explore how individualized consideration serves as a mediating factor in strengthening professional relationships and enhancing professional growth. Surveying 374 teachers from various educational institutions, the

researchers found that individualized consideration significantly influenced teachers' perceptions of their leaders as role models. Teachers who felt valued and supported in their individual career paths reported greater professional fulfillment and a stronger commitment to their schools. The study highlighted the importance of mentorship and continuous feedback in fostering a culture of growth and collaboration within educational institutions (Khan et al., 2022). These findings highlight that sustained leadership support enhances teacher morale and school stability.

In charter schools, individualized consideration is especially essential due to their emphasis on innovation, adaptability, and alignment with institutional missions. Unlike traditional public schools, charter schools often operate with greater autonomy while facing unique challenges, such as limited resources, evolving student populations, and heightened accountability expectations. These conditions make effective leadership a critical factor in sustaining teacher motivation, retention, and professional growth. Research suggests that transformational leaders in charter schools who practice individualized consideration help foster a strong sense of belonging by offering mentorship, personalized support, and opportunities for advancement. Teachers who feel seen, supported, and professionally developed are more likely to remain committed to their institutions and contribute meaningfully to instructional improvement. Studies such as those by Lee and Kuo (2019), Zacher et al. (2014), and Khan et al. (2022) support the notion that personalized leadership strategies lead to greater job satisfaction, higher performance, and stronger professional identity among educators.

By synthesizing research on the role of individualized consideration in fostering professional growth, this review emphasizes the significance of personalized mentorship

and leadership support in charter school environments. School leaders who demonstrate individualized consideration create cultures of continuous learning, collaboration, and trust. These leadership behaviors not only enhance teacher motivation and engagement but also contribute to long-term institutional success. Future research should continue to explore how individualized consideration can be effectively embedded in leadership development and school improvement frameworks. In mission-driven and innovative school settings like charter schools, prioritizing individualized consideration remains a key strategy for cultivating empowered educators and high-performing learning communities.

Conclusion

Transformational leadership serves as a critical framework for effective educational leadership, particularly within charter school environments where flexibility, innovation, and mission alignment shape teacher experiences. This research review demonstrates that transformational leadership significantly influences teacher motivation, commitment, and professional growth through its four core components: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Collectively, these dimensions contribute to the development of a supportive and growth-oriented school culture characterized by trust, engagement, and sustained professional commitment.

Table 2.1 provides a conceptual summary of how the four components of transformational leadership interact to influence teacher motivation, commitment, and professional growth. Drawing from the major themes identified throughout the literature, the figure illustrates how each leadership dimension operates both independently and in

relation to one another to shape teacher experiences within charter school settings. Idealized influence establishes ethical alignment and trust, inspirational motivation reinforces purpose through vision and encouragement, intellectual stimulation promotes reflective practice and innovation, and individualized consideration ensures personalized support that responds to teachers’ professional needs. Together, these dimensions form an integrated leadership approach that fosters resilience, instructional improvement, and sustained engagement. Additionally, this framework informs the thematic structure for subsequent data analysis by distilling the key conceptual patterns emerging from literature.

Table 2.1

The Influence of Transformational Leadership Components on Teacher Motivation, Commitment, and Professional Growth

	Idealized Influence	Inspirational Motivation	Intellectual Stimulation	Individual Consideration
Teacher Motivation	Ethical role modeling fosters trust and alignment with school mission	Clear vision and optimism inspire purpose and intrinsic motivation	Encourages critical thinking and reflection, enhancing engagement and purpose	Personalized support makes teachers feel valued, boosting morale and job satisfaction. Personalized support makes teachers feel valued, boosting morale and job satisfaction
Teachers’ Commitment	Builds loyalty and emotional attachment to the school	Promotes shared goals and collaborative culture, reinforcing institutional dedication	Fosters adaptability and ownership of school reforms	Strengthens leader–teacher relationships, increasing organizational commitment
Professional Growth	Inspires pursuit of excellence through role modeling	Motivates continuous learning through high expectations and recognition	Encourages innovation and inquiry, promoting lifelong professional learning	Provides tailored mentorship and PD opportunities, nurturing long-term career development

Idealized influence emerges as a foundational element in fostering teacher commitment, as leaders who consistently model ethical behavior, vision, and integrity cultivate trust and organizational loyalty. Within charter school contexts, where alignment with institutional mission is central, this dimension strengthens teachers' sense of purpose and belonging, thereby supporting long-term engagement. Inspirational motivation further enhances teacher commitment by articulating a shared vision and reinforcing collective goals. Leaders who communicate high expectations while maintaining optimism create environments in which teachers are motivated to contribute meaningfully to their school communities.

Intellectual stimulation plays a central role in promoting professional growth by encouraging teachers to question existing practices, engage in reflective thinking, and pursue continuous improvement. In charter school settings that often require adaptability and innovation, this leadership dimension supports the development of instructional flexibility and evidence-based practice. Individualized consideration complements this process by ensuring that teachers receive tailored support, mentorship, and professional development opportunities. When leaders respond to teachers' individual needs and provide ongoing guidance, teachers are more likely to experience increased confidence, job satisfaction, and long-term career commitment.

This research review draws upon a diverse body of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods studies conducted across various educational and international contexts. The methodologies represented include descriptive surveys, correlational analyses, case studies, structured interviews, and advanced statistical modeling techniques. Data collection instruments such as the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), Teacher

Motivation Questionnaires, and Work Motivation Scales, alongside qualitative interview protocols, provide a comprehensive understanding of how transformational leadership behaviors are perceived and enacted. The inclusion of diverse participant groups across grade levels, institutional contexts, and demographic backgrounds strengthens the breadth and applicability of the findings.

While literature consistently supports the positive impact of transformational leadership, important gaps remain. Much of the existing research is situated outside of U.S. charter school contexts or focuses broadly on leadership outcomes without examining how specific leadership behaviors are experienced by teachers within their professional environments. Additionally, limited attention has been given to how the four components of transformational leadership function collectively to influence teachers' beliefs, responses to challenges, and long-term professional growth.

Therefore, this study seeks to address these gaps by examining how specific transformational leadership strategies are perceived by teachers within a suburban charter school as fostering a growth mindset. By focusing on teacher perceptions and the interaction of leadership practices within a real-world context, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how leadership creates conditions that support sustained professional growth and adaptive instructional practices.

As educational systems continue to evolve, understanding how leadership practices shape teacher development remains essential. Transformational leadership offers a framework through which schools can cultivate environments that support teacher engagement, resilience, and continuous improvement. By examining the intersection of leadership practices and growth mindset development, this study

contributes to ongoing conversations regarding effective leadership strategies that promote both teacher success and student achievement.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

Overview

As a school leader and researcher, I recognized that leadership plays an integral role in shaping the professional landscape of education, particularly in supporting teacher motivation, professional growth, and instructional innovation. With the increasing complexity of demands placed on educators, I maintained that schools must rely on leadership that is not only strategic but also transformational, driven by vision, responsiveness, and a commitment to empowering teachers. From this perspective, the intersection of transformational leadership and growth mindset development provided a compelling framework for understanding the conditions that nurture resilient, adaptive, and engaged educators.

I was particularly interested in leadership behaviors such as communicating a clear vision, promoting intellectual risk-taking, providing individualized support, and encouraging reflective practices, as these have been shown to influence teacher perceptions and outcomes in meaningful ways.

Research Question

The central purpose of this study was to explore how specific leadership strategies, particularly those rooted in transformational leadership theory, were perceived by teachers as contributing to the development of a growth mindset within a charter school setting. The study specifically examined how leadership behaviors such as planning, observing, listening, providing feedback, communicating, evaluating, and

assessing were experienced by educators, and how these actions influenced their motivation, adaptability, and approach to professional growth.

The primary research question guiding this study was: What specific leadership strategies are perceived by teachers at a charter school as most effective in fostering a growth mindset within a charter school environment? For the purpose of this study, specific leadership strategies referred to behaviors such as planning, observing, listening, providing feedback, communicating, evaluating, and assessing.

To address this question, the study focused on the four key elements of transformational leadership theory: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1993). Each of these elements was examined in relation to how it shaped teachers' behaviors and attitudes, particularly in how they approached challenges, engaged in learning opportunities, and persisted through difficulties (Dweck, 2016; Costa & Faria, 2018).

The following research questions guided the study:

1. How did idealized influence impact teachers' growth mindset?
2. How did inspirational motivation impact teachers' growth mindset?
3. How did intellectual stimulation impact teachers' growth mindset?
4. How did individualized consideration impact teachers' growth mindset?

These questions were designed to examine the relationship between leadership practices and teachers' beliefs in their ability to grow and succeed. Drawing from growth mindset theory and transformational leadership practices, the study explored how leadership contributed to the development of environments that supported teacher

growth, encouraged persistence, and promoted reflective and innovative practice.

Ultimately, this study contributed to a more nuanced understanding of leadership's role in shaping professional mindset and influencing outcomes for both teachers and the students they serve.

Research Design

To explore how leadership influences teacher development in nuanced and meaningful ways, this study adopted a mixed-methods case study approach that was both explanatory and instrumental in design. Drawing upon the theoretical foundations established by Yin (2018) and Stake (1995), this methodology was designed to enable an in-depth exploration of the processes and perceptions underlying effective leadership practices within a charter school setting. The explanatory dimension of the case study allowed for a rigorous examination of how leadership behaviors contributed to fostering a growth mindset among educators, while the instrumental perspective ensured that findings from this case provided insights applicable to similar educational contexts.

A mixed-methods approach was selected due to its suitability for investigating complex educational phenomena. This approach enabled the study to capture both the breadth and depth of participants' experiences. Quantitative data were collected through structured surveys, providing measurable indicators of the prevalence and perceived impact of key leadership strategies. Qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, offering rich, narrative insights into how educators interpreted and internalized leadership behaviors within their professional environments. The integration of these methods enhanced the credibility and validity of the study through triangulation,

ensuring that the findings were grounded in both empirical trends and participants lived experiences.

A single suburban charter school was selected as the research site due to the study's emphasis on contextual relevance. Charter schools often operate within unique organizational structures that allow for innovation, flexibility, and localized leadership practices. These environments provided an appropriate setting for examining how transformational leadership manifested in practice and how it was perceived by those most directly impacted, including teachers and administrators. By situating the study within this context, the findings offer detailed insights while also contributing to broader discussions on educational leadership and teacher development.

Case Study Design

I selected a case study design because it allowed for an intensive, holistic investigation of a bounded system. Case studies enabled the researcher to explore a specific instance in great detail, providing profound insights into processes, relationships, and outcomes (Gerring, 2004). In this study, the case consisted of a single suburban charter school that operated with organizational autonomy and a focus on innovative instructional practices. This setting was particularly appropriate for examining how transformational leadership supported teacher growth, as charter schools often provided leaders with greater flexibility to enact vision-driven and individualized strategies.

Focusing on a single case enabled an in-depth exploration of leadership practices and their impact within a specific cultural and organizational context. As Yin (2018) noted, case studies were especially effective for addressing how and why questions, allowing for an examination of how leadership strategies influenced teacher mindsets and

why certain practices were perceived as more effective. This design provided a comprehensive understanding of the lived experiences of teachers and administrators, offering detailed insights that broader survey-based research might have overlooked.

Yin's explanatory case study approach served as the analytical backbone of this research, guiding the investigation of causal relationships between leadership practices and teacher outcomes. Explanatory case studies were designed to explore presumed cause-and-effect relationships within real-life contexts where experimental control was not feasible (Yin, 2018). Through this lens, the study examined theoretical propositions derived from Transformational Leadership Theory (Bass, 1985), including the influence of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration on teacher attitudes and professional development. Yin's methodology emphasized the use of multiple sources of evidence and systematic analytic strategies, including pattern matching, explanation building, and the consideration of rival explanations. These strategies strengthened the credibility of the findings and supported a nuanced understanding of the complexities inherent in educational leadership.

Complementing Yin's explanatory framework, Stake's instrumental approach to case study research was also incorporated. According to Stake (1995), instrumental case studies used a specific case to gain insight into a broader phenomenon rather than focusing solely on the case itself. In this study, the suburban charter school served as an illustrative example through which broader issues related to transformational leadership and teacher development in similar educational contexts were examined. Stake emphasized the importance of context and the co-construction of meaning between the

researcher and participants. By engaging directly with teachers and administrators, the study sought to understand how leadership behaviors were interpreted within the school's unique cultural, organizational, and interpersonal dynamics. These insights not only enriched understanding of the specific case but also provided implications for other charter schools and educational settings in which transformational leadership may play a critical role.

Rationale for Mixed-Methods

To fully address the multifaceted nature of leadership and its influence on teacher growth, this study employed a mixed-methods approach that integrated both qualitative and quantitative data. Mixed-methods research allowed for a more comprehensive exploration of complex educational phenomena, offering the depth of qualitative inquiry alongside the generalizability of quantitative analysis (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

The qualitative component consisted of semi-structured interviews with teachers and administrators. The development of the interview protocol was intentionally aligned with the theoretical framework of transformational leadership, with questions organized around the four core dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. These interviews provided detailed narratives of participants' experiences with leadership strategies, focusing on how specific leadership behaviors supported or hindered their professional growth and mindset development. Thematic analysis, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), was used to identify recurring patterns within and across these dimensions, enabling a rich interpretation of how leadership practices were enacted and experienced within the school context.

The quantitative component involved the administration of structured surveys to a broader group of participants. Similar to the qualitative instrument, survey items were designed to reflect the four dimensions of transformational leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1993), ensuring consistency across data sources. The surveys assessed participants' perceptions of leadership effectiveness, and the data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to identify trends and relationships associated with each leadership dimension. This alignment allowed for direct comparison and integration of findings across qualitative and quantitative strands.

This mixed-methods approach facilitated methodological triangulation, thereby strengthening the validity and reliability of the study through the integration of multiple data sources (Baxter & Jack, 2009). While the interviews provided rich, contextually grounded insights, the surveys offered empirical data that enhanced the scope and applicability of the findings. Together, these methods allowed for a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of how leadership strategies influenced teacher motivation and professional resilience.

The methodological framework of this study was intentionally designed to examine leadership strategies perceived by teachers as most effective in fostering a growth mindset within a suburban charter school. By integrating Yin's explanatory and Stake's instrumental approaches within a mixed-methods case study design, the study generated findings that were both contextually rich and broadly informative.

During data analysis, both qualitative and quantitative data were initially examined within the predefined categories of transformational leadership to maintain alignment with the theoretical framework. Through iterative coding and analysis, patterns

within and across these categories were identified, leading to the development of broader themes that reflected participants lived experiences. These themes, presented in Chapter 5, represent an integration of the theoretical constructs and empirical findings, providing a cohesive link between the framework, methodology, and results of the study.

Understanding the influence of leadership on teacher development required a research approach capable of capturing the complexity and context-specific nature of educational environments. Leadership directly influenced teacher motivation, professional growth, instructional innovation, and ultimately student outcomes (Leithwood et al., 2020). Therefore, it was essential to examine not only which leadership strategies were implemented, but also how these strategies were experienced and internalized by teachers within their professional settings. The case study design was particularly well-suited for investigating real-world educational leadership, as it provided both in-depth qualitative insights and broader quantitative patterns. The integration of both qualitative and quantitative methods enhanced the depth and breadth of the study, while the case study design ensured a contextually grounded understanding of leadership dynamics.

Context and Boundaries of the Case Study

Understanding the specific context in which leadership operated was essential for interpreting how teachers experienced and responded to various leadership strategies. In this study, context was not treated as background information; rather, it was central to understanding the dynamic relationship between leadership behaviors and teacher development. The suburban charter school selected for this research provided a unique environment characterized by organizational autonomy, cultural and student diversity,

and a strong emphasis on transformational leadership practices. Consistent with Stake's (1995) emphasis on the importance of context in case study research, the setting was examined as an integral component of meaning-making, shaping how leadership practices were interpreted and experienced by participants. This section described the setting of the school, the educational and leadership environment in which the study took place, and the clearly defined boundaries that guided the scope of the case study.

Suburban Charter School Setting

The case selected for this study was a suburban charter school located in a culturally diverse community in the United States. The school served approximately 500 students from elementary through middle school, with all students qualifying for free lunch, reflecting a community experiencing notable economic challenges. The student body was further characterized by cultural diversity, with a significant proportion of students from immigrant and first-generation families. This school was intentionally selected because charter schools, unlike traditional public schools, often operated with greater flexibility in curriculum design, staffing, and resource allocation. This autonomy enabled school leaders to implement innovative strategies, particularly those aligned with transformational leadership principles.

The suburban context provided a distinct combination of socio-economic diversity and community involvement. Compared to urban settings, this suburban school benefited from a relative balance of resources and consistent parental engagement, both of which influenced leadership priorities in meaningful ways. Class sizes typically ranged from 25 to 28 students, with a maximum capacity of 30 per classroom. This structure supported a more personalized approach to instruction and facilitated close,

individualized interactions between teachers and students, as well as between teachers and school leaders. Within this environment, leaders were positioned to cultivate strong relational trust, encourage instructional innovation, and emphasize both academic achievement and social-emotional development.

Educational and Leadership Environment

The leadership structure at the school consisted of a principal, an assistant principal, and several instructional coaches who collaborated to support teacher development and enhance instructional quality. The leadership philosophy was grounded in the principles of transformational leadership, with leaders emphasizing the development of a shared vision, the provision of individualized support, and the cultivation of a culture that valued continuous learning and professional reflection.

Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the school adopted the Leader in Me program as a central component of its leadership and character development initiatives. Based on *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen Covey, this framework emphasized leadership development among both students and staff, promoting personal responsibility, goal setting, and proactive behaviors. Implemented during a period of significant disruption, the program became an embedded aspect of the school's leadership approach, reinforcing growth-oriented mindsets across the school community.

Professional development remained an ongoing priority within the school, with regular workshops, instructional coaching cycles, and collaborative planning meetings designed to strengthen both instructional practices and leadership capacity among staff. Teachers were encouraged to engage in reflective practice, take intellectual risks, and

approach challenges as opportunities for professional growth. The leadership team provided frequently targeted feedback, facilitated ongoing dialogue around teaching and learning, and supported teacher-led initiatives, including professional learning communities (PLCs) that promoted collaborative leadership and shared accountability.

The school's mission extended beyond academic achievement to include social-emotional learning, community engagement, and student empowerment. Leaders worked to cultivate an environment in which teachers felt valued and supported, recognizing that teacher well-being contributed directly to overall school effectiveness. Through consistent communication and distributed leadership opportunities, the school fostered a climate characterized by mutual respect, relational trust, and a commitment to continuous improvement.

Boundaries of the Case

This case study was clearly bound both contextually and temporally. The study focused exclusively on a single suburban charter school, examining leadership practices and teacher perceptions within its distinct cultural and organizational setting. The temporal scope of the study encompassed one full academic year, allowing for a sustained examination of leadership behaviors and their perceived impact over time.

Participants included school administrators, such as the principal, assistant principal, and instructional coaches, as well as classroom teachers across multiple grade levels. The study explored participants' experiences with transformational leadership and how these practices were perceived to foster a growth mindset. The inquiry centered on participants' reflections, beliefs, and professional experiences and did not extend to the direct measurement of student outcomes.

The case was further bounded by its theoretical framework, focusing exclusively on transformational leadership as the lens through which teacher development was examined. The study did not seek to compare multiple leadership models; rather, it aimed to provide an in-depth exploration of transformational leadership in practice.

Additionally, the case was situated within a school context that emphasized structured engagement with community stakeholders. School leaders actively involved parents and families through regular communication, forums, and school-based events, fostering shared ownership of school goals and priorities. These contextual features provided additional insight into the relational dimensions of leadership within the school setting.

By establishing these boundaries, the study remained focused, manageable, and contextually grounded, while still offering meaningful insights applicable to similar educational environments.

Researcher's Role

I served as the building leader for the lower campus of a suburban charter school and also held the role of Early Childhood Coordinator, directly overseeing Pre-K, Kindergarten, and first-grade programs. While my primary leadership responsibilities were concentrated in the early grades, I was also recognized across the broader K–12 system, including elementary, middle, and high school levels, as a member of the administrative leadership team. Teachers and staff across grade levels were aware of my leadership role, positioning me as a familiar figure within the school community. This insider status provided valuable contextual insight into the school's culture, leadership practices, and professional expectations; however, it also introduced the potential for

participants to feel cautious or reserved when sharing their perspectives, particularly regarding leadership practices and professional growth. Acknowledging this dynamic was essential to maintaining the integrity of the study.

My dual role as both a school leader and the primary investigator required intentional and ongoing reflexivity. I engaged in continuous self-reflection to examine how my positionality may have influenced data collection, interpretation, and analysis. To maintain clear boundaries between my administrative responsibilities and research activities, I maintained a reflexive journal throughout the study, documenting analytic decisions, emerging assumptions, and reflective insights. I refrained from drawing on prior knowledge of individuals or internal school dynamics when interpreting data and ensured that all research instruments, particularly the quantitative survey, were designed using neutral, non-evaluative language to minimize bias. I approached data collection and analysis with a focus on identifying patterns and themes rather than relying on personal familiarity with participants. These strategies supported the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings.

To promote ethical integrity and protect participants, I provided clear written and verbal communication outlining the purpose of the study, participant rights, and the distinction between my researcher and leadership roles. Participation was voluntary, and all responses were collected anonymously. No identifying information was linked to participant data, and findings were not used for evaluative or professional purposes. I emphasized that this study was conducted as part of my doctoral research through Oakland University and adhered to ethical guidelines approved by the Institutional Review Board. Throughout the study, I maintained the role of a neutral investigator,

encouraging participants to share their experiences openly with the assurance that their contributions would remain confidential and used solely for research purposes.

Participants

This study involved participants who held various roles within the selected suburban charter school. The purpose of participant selection was to include individuals directly engaged in the leadership and instructional processes of the school to explore their perceptions of leadership practices and their influence on teacher development and growth mindset. Participants included both administrators and teachers to ensure a broad representation of perspectives related to leadership within the school context.

The participant group consisted of school administrators and classroom teachers. Administrators included the principal, assistant principal, and instructional coaches, as they were responsible for developing and implementing leadership strategies within the school. These individuals contributed to instructional leadership, professional development, and organizational planning, positioning them to provide insight into how leadership practices were intended and enacted.

Teachers were recruited from a range of grade levels, including early childhood, elementary, and middle school. Their role in the study was to share their experiences and perceptions of leadership behaviors and how these related to their professional growth and mindset development. Including teachers with varying years of experience allowed for a range of perspectives on leadership impact across different stages of a teaching career.

Participants were selected using purposeful sampling, which focuses on identifying individuals with relevant experience to address the research questions (Patton,

2015). Permission was obtained from school administration prior to recruitment. Following approval, administrators were invited to participate through direct communication, while teachers were invited via email and informational sessions.

All potential participants received detailed information regarding the purpose of the study, their role in the research, and their rights, including confidentiality and the option to withdraw at any time. Informed consent was obtained prior to any data collection activities. Participation was voluntary, and efforts were made to ensure representation across grade levels, roles, and professional backgrounds.

Diversity among participants was intentionally sought in terms of roles, grade levels, and years of teaching experience. The inclusion of both administrators and teachers allowed for multiple perspectives on leadership practices within the school. Teachers from different grade levels and instructional contexts, including general and special education, were included to reflect the range of experiences present within the school setting.

Participants represented a range of professional experience, from early-career educators to those with extensive service in the field. This variation supported a more comprehensive understanding of how leadership practices were perceived across different professional stages and instructional environments.

Data Sources and Collection Methods

In this study, I collected data on leadership practices and their influence on teacher development within a suburban charter school. Data was gathered using two primary methods: semi-structured interviews and surveys. Semi-structured interviews

allowed for an in-depth exploration of participants' perspectives and experiences, while surveys provided quantitative data to support and extend the scope of the findings.

Both data sources were intentionally aligned with the study's theoretical framework of transformational leadership. Interview questions and survey items were designed to reflect the four core dimensions of transformational leadership—idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration—ensuring consistency across qualitative and quantitative strands.

The integration of these methods supported methodological triangulation, strengthening the credibility and depth of the study. While the interviews provided rich, contextually grounded insights into participants' lived experiences, the surveys offered measurable data that allowed for the identification of patterns and relationships across a broader group of participants. Together, these methods facilitated a comprehensive understanding of how transformational leadership practices influenced the development of a growth mindset among teachers and administrators.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Interview Protocols and Rationale

I conducted semi-structured interviews with both administrators and teachers. This method allowed consistency in the themes and topics addressed while providing participants with the flexibility to elaborate on their individual experiences. Semi-structured interviews were particularly appropriate for leadership research, as they enabled participants to share detailed reflections that varied based on their roles, responsibilities, and professional contexts (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

To guide the interviews, I developed an interview protocol aligned with the research questions and the theoretical framework of transformational leadership. The protocol included open-ended questions designed to explore leadership behaviors, perceptions of support, professional growth opportunities, and the role of leadership in fostering a growth mindset. While administrators and teachers received slightly different protocols tailored to their roles, the overarching themes remained consistent to allow for meaningful comparison across participant groups. The semi-structured format also enabled me to ask follow-up questions and probe for clarification, ensuring a deeper understanding of participants' perspectives.

Key Leadership Behaviors Explored

The interviews focused on four key behaviors associated with transformational leadership, as outlined by Bass and Avolio (1993): idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. These dimensions guided both the structure of the interview protocol and the focus of participant responses.

Participants were asked to describe how they experienced these leadership behaviors within their school context. I explored how these practices influenced their daily work, professional growth, and overall mindset toward challenges and learning. Participants were also invited to share specific examples of how leadership impacted collaboration, feedback, and the broader school culture. These insights supported a deeper understanding of the relationship between transformational leadership practices and the development of a growth mindset within the educational setting.

Recording and Transcription Methods

For both in-person and virtual interviews, I obtained participant consent to audio record each session. Audio recordings were used to ensure accuracy and completeness in data collection. All interviews were transcribed verbatim, and each transcript was reviewed carefully to verify accuracy and consistency with the original recordings. To maintain confidentiality, all identifiable information was removed from the transcripts, and pseudonyms were assigned for use in all reports and dissemination of findings.

For interviews conducted via email, transcription was not required, as participants provided written responses. These responses were compiled and formatted consistently with the transcribed interview data to ensure uniformity across all data sources. Email responses were treated with the same level of rigor and were included in the overall thematic analysis.

All data, including audio recordings, transcripts, and email responses, were stored securely in password-protected files accessible only to me. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis, following the process outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), which included familiarization with the data, initial coding, identification of patterns, development of themes, and interpretation of findings in relation to the research questions and theoretical framework.

Surveys

Design of Survey Instrument

To complement the qualitative data collected through interviews, I administered a survey to gather quantitative information regarding participants' perceptions of leadership behaviors within the school. The survey was designed to measure key

components of transformational leadership using Likert-scale items, along with a limited number of open-ended questions to capture additional context when needed. The instrument was adapted from established measures, including the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), and was tailored to align with the specific context of this study (Bass & Avolio, 1993). The survey provided a broader overview of how leadership behaviors were perceived across the school, complementing the more detailed accounts obtained through interviews. By collecting data from a wider range of participants, the survey enabled the identification of patterns and trends that supported or contrasted with qualitative findings.

Connection to Transformational Leadership Dimensions

Survey items were directly aligned with the four dimensions of transformational leadership. Items related to idealized influence assessed the extent to which leaders were perceived as demonstrating integrity and serving as role models. Inspirational motivation items examined how effectively leaders communicated a shared vision and motivated staff. Intellectual stimulation items explored the degree to which leaders encouraged innovation, reflection, and the questioning of existing practices. Individualized consideration items focused on how leaders supported teachers' individual professional and personal development needs.

Participants responded to Likert-scale items by indicating their level of agreement with statements such as "My school leader inspires me with a shared vision." This format generated ordinal data that were analyzed to identify patterns in participants' perceptions and experiences (Fowler, 2014). The Likert-scale structure supported the quantitative measurement of attitudes and allowed for comparison across leadership dimensions.

Electronic Administration Details

The survey was administered electronically using a secure online platform. Participants received an email invitation containing a link to the survey, along with information outlining the purpose of the study and the voluntary nature of participation. All responses were collected anonymously to ensure confidentiality. The survey was designed to be concise, with an estimated completion time of approximately 10 to 15 minutes, to encourage participation. Reminder emails were sent one week following the initial invitation to increase response rates.

Upon completion of data collection, survey responses were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods to identify common patterns and trends related to leadership behaviors. These quantitative findings were then integrated with qualitative interview data to provide a comprehensive understanding of how transformational leadership was experienced and how it influenced the development of a growth mindset

Data Analysis Strategies

In this study, I implemented a comprehensive and methodologically rigorous data analysis strategy that integrated both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Given the complexity of transformational leadership within educational environments, particularly in a charter school context, a mixed-methods design was used to examine both the depth of individual experiences and the breadth of leadership patterns. Qualitative data from semi-structured interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis to capture nuanced, contextually grounded insights (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Quantitative data from surveys were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to examine measurable trends and relationships within the data. Through methodological triangulation, the findings

were strengthened to ensure credibility and alignment with the real-world complexities of leadership practice (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

Thematic Analysis for Interviews

The qualitative data collected from semi-structured interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis. This approach allowed for the identification of patterns of meaning related to leadership behaviors and their perceived influence on teacher motivation and growth mindset development. Thematic analysis, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), provided flexibility and depth, making it well-suited for examining how participants interpreted leadership within their professional context.

Open and Axial Coding

I began the analysis by engaging in open coding, during which each transcript and email response was reviewed carefully to generate initial codes. These codes were inductively derived and reflected significant concepts, behaviors, and perceptions expressed by participants (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). For example, a participant statement such as “My principal challenges us to rethink our teaching strategies” was coded as intellectual stimulation. Following the open coding phase, axial coding was conducted to group initial codes into broader categories and themes. This process allowed the data to be organized around key constructs of transformational leadership, including idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass & Avolio, 1993), while remaining open to emergent themes that extended beyond the predefined framework.

Iterative Refinement

Codes and themes were refined through an iterative and reflexive process to ensure that the analysis accurately represented participants' perspectives. Transcripts were reviewed multiple times, comparisons were made across responses, and the coding framework was adjusted as needed to reflect emerging insights from the data. Throughout this process, analytic memos and an audit trail were maintained to document decision-making and enhance transparency (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To further support credibility, member checking was conducted by sharing preliminary themes with selected participants to confirm the accuracy and alignment of the interpretations with their experiences.

In addition to the qualitative analysis, survey data provided complementary quantitative evidence regarding participants' perceptions of transformational leadership within the school. These data were analyzed to identify general trends and examine relationships between specific leadership behaviors and outcomes such as teacher professional growth. Descriptive statistics, including means, frequencies, and standard deviations, were calculated to summarize participant responses and understand the overall distribution of leadership perceptions.

Inferential statistical analyses were conducted, where appropriate, to explore relationships between variables. For example, Pearson's correlation was used to assess whether higher levels of inspirational motivation were associated with increased reports of teacher engagement. Additionally, t-tests or analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to examine differences in leadership perceptions across participant subgroups, such as years of experience or grade level.

This analytic process informed the development of themes that are presented in Chapter 4 and further interpreted in Chapter 5. These themes reflect an integration of the transformational leadership framework and participants lived experiences, ensuring alignment between the study's design, analysis, and findings.

Use of Triangulation for Validation

Triangulation was used to enhance the validity and reliability of the findings by integrating multiple sources of data. Qualitative themes derived from interview analysis were compared with quantitative trends identified through survey data to ensure that conclusions were grounded in converging evidence (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). For example, when individualized consideration emerged as a key theme in the qualitative data, corresponding survey responses were examined to determine whether similar patterns were reflected quantitatively. This process allowed for the validation of findings, identification of consistencies across data sources, and the development of a more comprehensive understanding of how transformational leadership was perceived and enacted within the case study school. Triangulation also enabled the identification of discrepancies between qualitative and quantitative findings, providing deeper insight into the complexity of leadership dynamics. These integrated findings informed the themes presented in Chapter 4 and their subsequent interpretation in Chapter 5, ensuring alignment between data sources, analysis procedures, and the overall conclusions of the study.

Ethical Considerations

As a researcher committed to maintaining high standards of scholarly integrity, I ensured that all aspects of this study were guided by established ethical principles that

protected the rights, dignity, and well-being of participants. Ethical rigor was essential not only to safeguard participants but also to uphold the credibility and trustworthiness of the research process and its outcomes. A comprehensive ethical framework was implemented, including informed consent, confidentiality, institutional compliance, and ongoing reflexivity regarding my positionality as the researcher. These measures ensured that the study was conducted in a manner that was both ethically sound and methodologically rigorous.

Informed Consent and Confidentiality

I obtained informed consent from all participants through a detailed and transparent process. Each participant received a written explanation of the study's purpose, research procedures, potential risks and benefits, confidentiality measures, and their rights as research participants, including the right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. The consent process was designed to be dialogic, allowing participants to ask questions and fully understand the scope of their involvement. For email-based interviews, consent forms were distributed electronically, and participant agreement was confirmed prior to the initiation of any data collection.

All participant data were treated with strict confidentiality. Pseudonyms were assigned to all participants, and any identifying information was removed from interview transcripts and survey data to protect anonymity. Digital data, including audio recordings, transcripts, and survey responses, were securely stored on password-protected and encrypted devices accessible only to me. Any physical documents were stored in a locked and secure location. Data were retained only for the duration necessary for analysis and

reporting and were scheduled for secure destruction in accordance with institutional policies and ethical research guidelines.

Managing Bias and Research Positionality

Recognizing that no researcher is entirely free from bias, I engaged in ongoing reflexivity to manage and mitigate potential influences arising from my positionality. As an educational leader conducting research within a school setting, I remained particularly attentive to how my professional role and prior experiences could shape data collection, interpretation, and representation. To address this, I maintained a reflexive journal throughout the research process to critically examine my assumptions, decision-making, and interactions with participants. This process supported awareness of potential power dynamics, particularly when engaging with teachers and administrators who may have perceived me as a peer or authority figure.

To further minimize bias, I designed all data collection instruments to reduce the presence of leading questions and maintained a neutral, non-evaluative stance during both interviews and survey administration. Participants were encouraged to share a wide range of perspectives and were reassured that there were no right or wrong responses. Through these practices, I aimed to ensure that the findings remained grounded in participants' authentic experiences.

By maintaining transparency and engaging in continuous reflexivity, I sought to produce findings that were both credible and ethically sound, reflecting a balanced and trustworthy interpretation of the data.

Conclusion

This study was designed to provide a comprehensive and contextually grounded exploration of how transformational leadership strategies were perceived by teachers as most effective in fostering a growth mindset within a suburban charter school environment. Through the use of a mixed-methods case study design, guided by Yin's explanatory and Stake's instrumental approaches, the study examined both the nuanced experiences of educators and the broader patterns of leadership behaviors that influenced professional growth, motivation, and resilience.

The methodological approach was intentionally structured to balance depth and breadth. Qualitative data from semi-structured interviews captured the lived experiences of teachers and administrators, while quantitative data from surveys provided measurable evidence of leadership perceptions and their relationships with professional outcomes. Through triangulation, these data sources were integrated to produce findings that were robust, credible, and reflective of the complexities of educational leadership.

Ethical integrity remained central to the study. Informed consent, confidentiality, and ongoing reflexivity were maintained throughout the research process to ensure that participants' voices were authentically represented and that the influence of researcher positionality was carefully managed. While the study was bounded by its focus on a single case, which limited generalizability, the detailed description of the school context, leadership environment, and participant perspectives enhanced the transferability of the findings to similar educational settings.

The findings derived from these methodological processes are presented in Chapter 4 and further interpreted in Chapter 5. Together, these chapters provide insight

into how transformational leadership practices were experienced and how they contributed to the development of a growth mindset among educators.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

Qualitative Findings

This chapter presents the findings of the study using a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data to examine how transformational leadership strategies are perceived by teachers as fostering a growth mindset within a suburban charter school. As outlined in Chapter 3, the study employed an explanatory mixed-methods case study design guided by Yin's explanatory framework and Stake's instrumental approach. The integration of survey data and interview findings provides a comprehensive understanding of leadership practices by capturing both broad patterns and in-depth teacher perspectives.

The chapter begins with the presentation of quantitative survey findings, which provide descriptive insights into teachers' perceptions of leadership behaviors aligned with the four dimensions of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, as well as perceptions of a growth mindset climate. These survey results establish patterns and areas of relative strength across leadership dimensions.

Following the quantitative results, qualitative interview findings are presented to further explain, contextualize, and deepen understanding of the survey patterns. The qualitative data are initially organized according to the four dimensions of transformational leadership, consistent with the structure of data collection. These categories serve as the foundation for identifying patterns that are later developed into

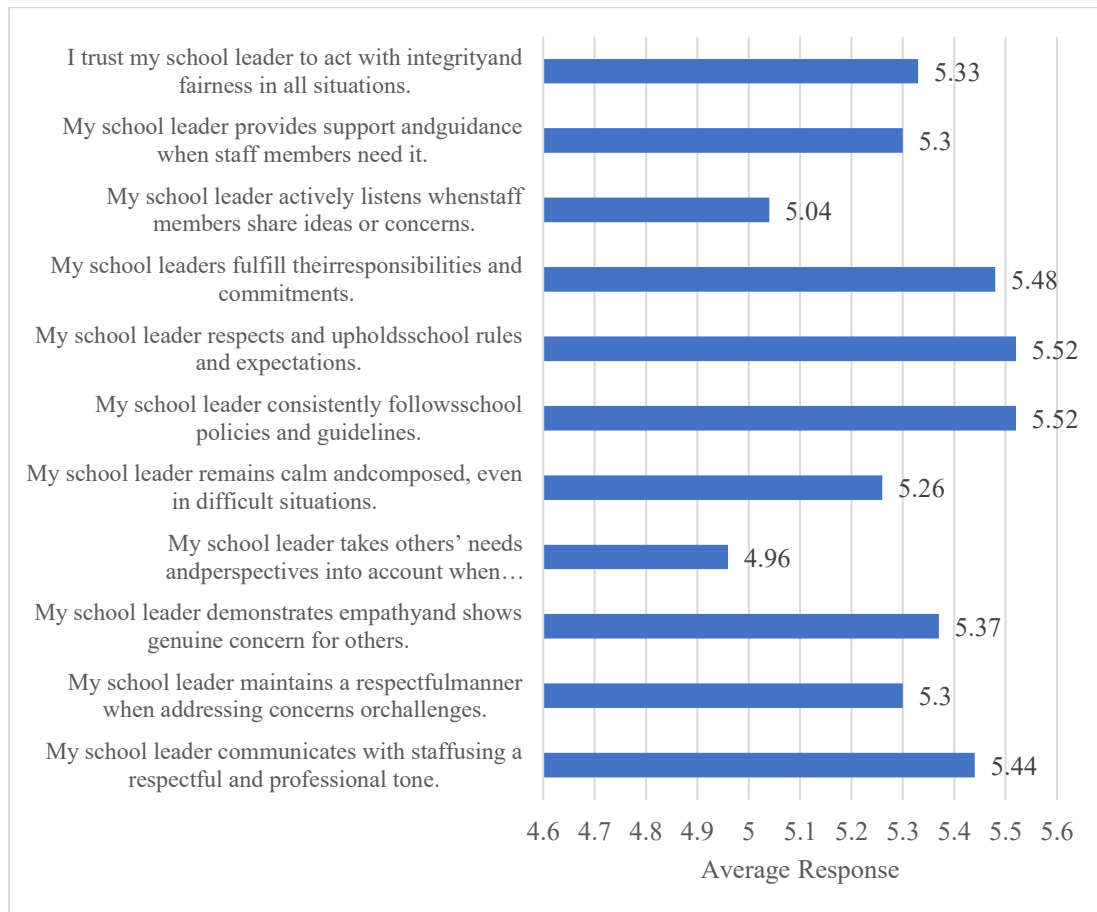
themes, as presented in Chapter Five. Together, these data sources offer a cohesive and triangulated portrayal of how leadership strategies are experienced by teachers and how these strategies contribute to the development of a growth-oriented professional climate.

Teacher Responses to Transformative Leadership Areas

The first section of the survey examined participants' perceptions of idealized influence. This section was organized into three conceptually distinct subsets: ethical leadership, trust, and role modeling, each representing key aspects of idealized influence. Responses were measured using a Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (6). The results of the ethical leadership subset are presented in Figure 4.1

Figure 4.1

Average Teacher Responses to Ethical Leadership Items (Idealized Influence)

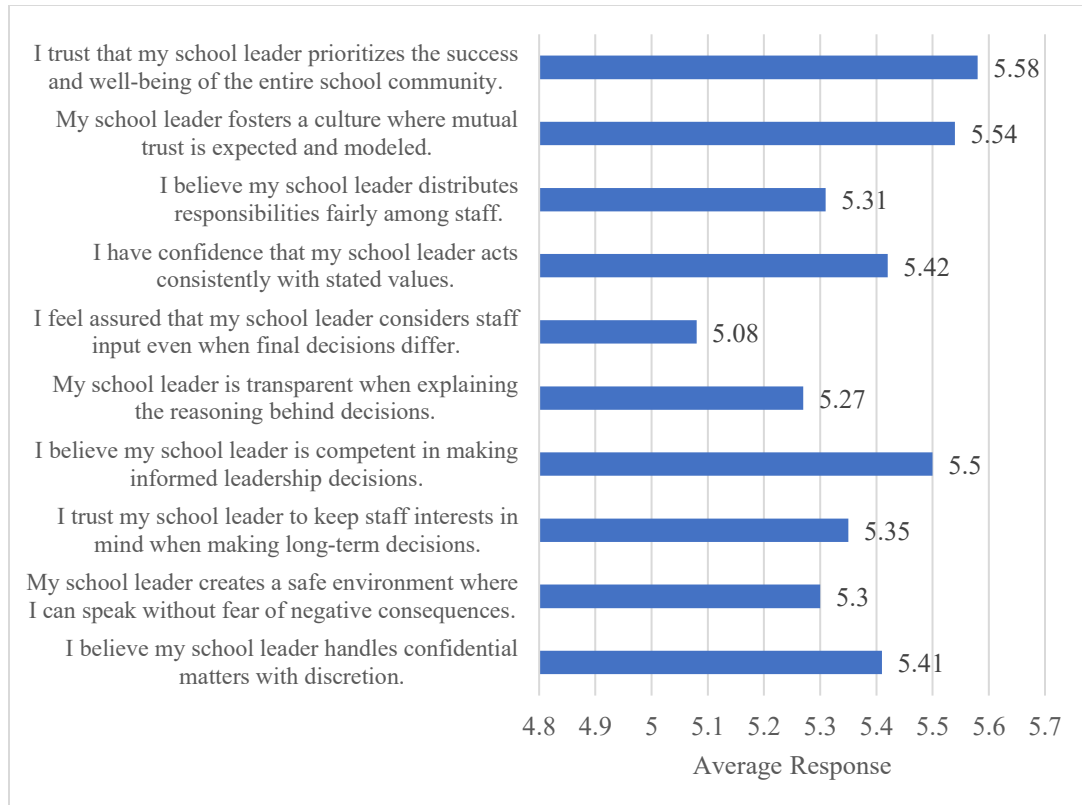


It is interesting to note that all of these responses were quite high, with mean scores at or above 5 on a 6-point scale. The statements with the strongest agreement were “*My school leader respects and upholds school rules and expectations*” and “*My school leader consistently follows school policies and guidelines,*” each with a mean score of 5.52. The statement with the weakest agreement was “*My school leader takes others’ needs and perspectives into account when making decisions,*” with a mean score of 4.96.

The results of the second set of these statements, representing trust within idealized influence, are shown in Figure 4.2. This figure is presented in the same format as Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.2

Average Teacher Responses to Trust Items (Idealized Influence)

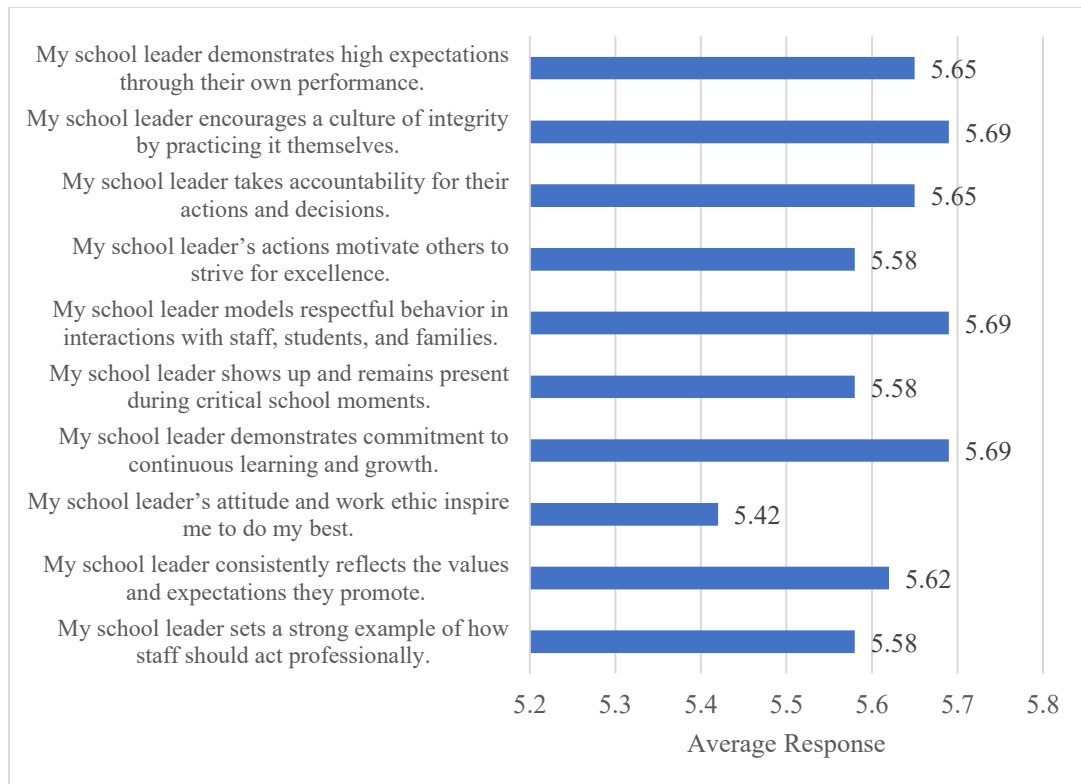


It is interesting to note that, once again, all of these responses were quite high, with mean scores at or above 5 on a 6-point scale. The statement with the strongest agreement was “*I trust that my school leader prioritizes the success and well-being of the entire school community,*” with a mean score of 5.58. The statement with the weakest agreement was “*I feel assured that my school leader considers staff input even when final decisions differ,*” with a mean score of 5.08.

The results of the third set of these statements, representing role modeling within idealized influence, are shown in Figure 4.3. This figure is presented in the same format as Figures 4.1 and 4.2.

Figure 4.3

Average Teacher Responses to Role Modeling Items (Idealized Influence)



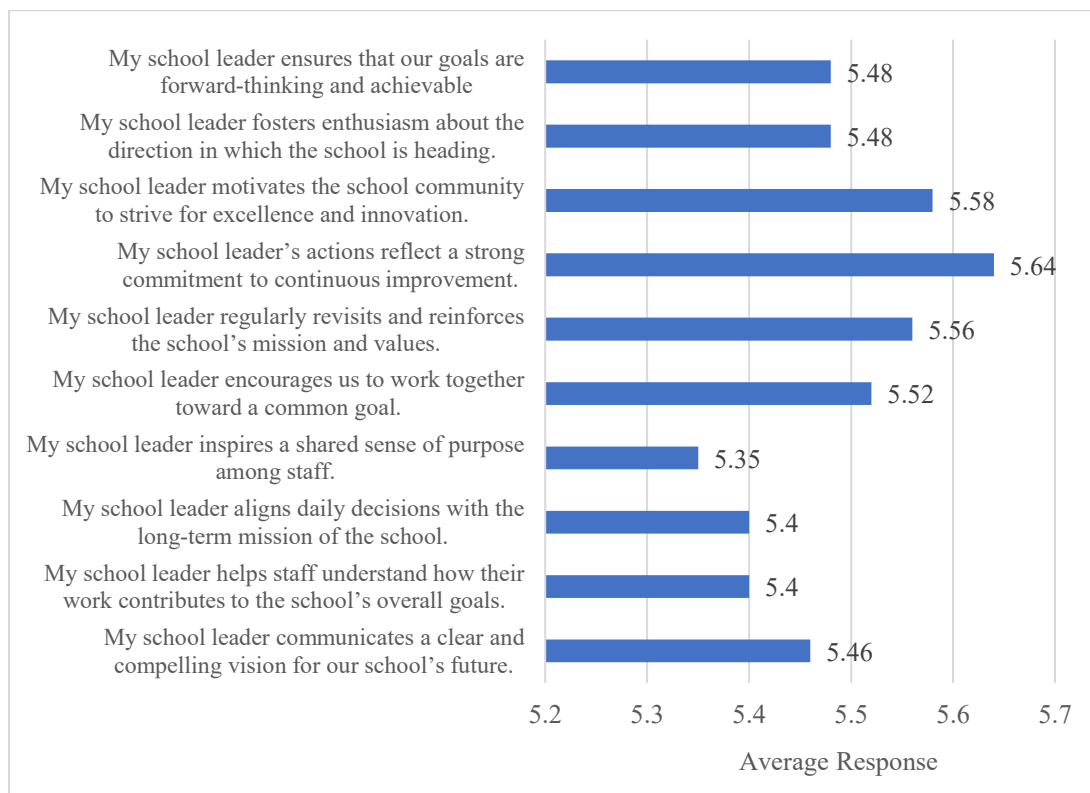
It is noteworthy that, once again, all responses were relatively high, with mean scores at or above 5 on a 6-point scale. The statements with the strongest agreement were “*My school leader encourages a culture of integrity by practicing it themselves,*” “*My school leader models respectful behavior in interactions with staff, students, and families,*” and “*My school leader demonstrates commitment to continuous learning and growth*”, each had a mean score of 5.69. The statement with the weakest agreement, “*My*

school leader's attitude and work ethic inspire me to do my best," had a mean score of 5.48.

The second section of the survey asked participants about aspects of inspirational motivation. There were three sets of statements concerning this area: reflecting vision, purpose, and motivation. The responses could range from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (6). The results of the first set of these statements, reflecting vision, are shown in Figure 4.4.

Figure 4.4

Average Teacher Responses to Reflecting Vision Items (Inspirational Motivation)



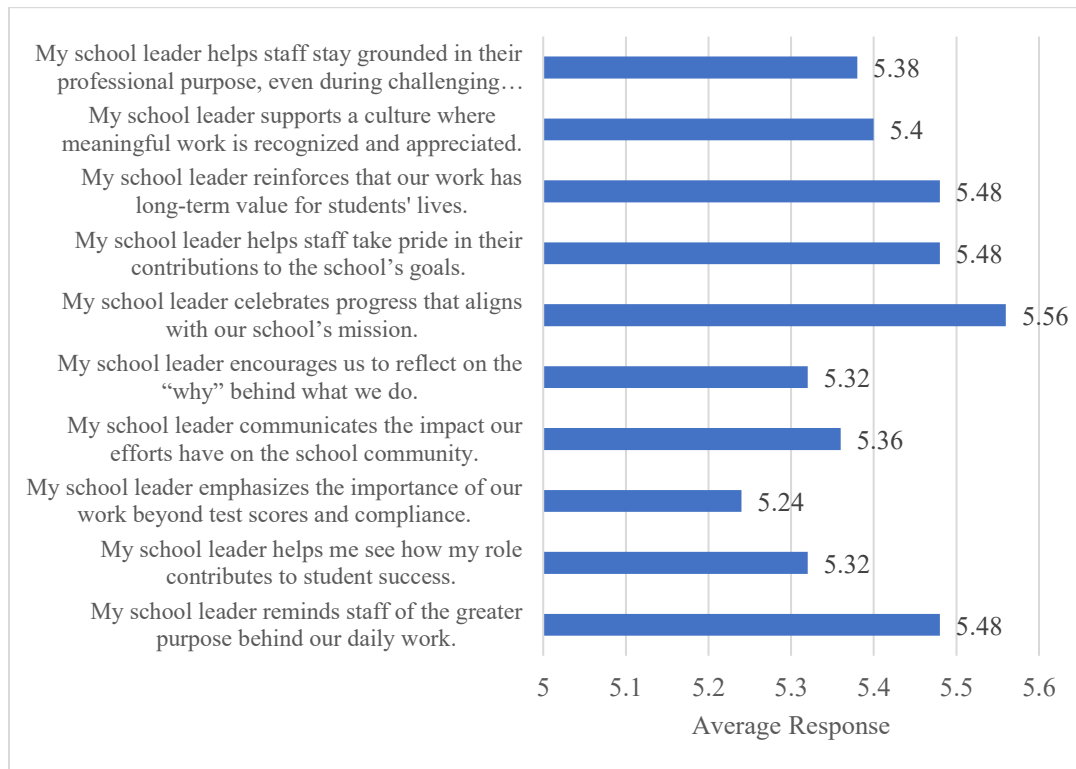
It is interesting to note that all of these responses were quite high, with mean scores at or above 5 on a 6-point scale. The statement with the strongest agreement was *"My school leader's actions reflect a strong commitment to continuous improvement,"*

with a mean score of 5.64. The statement with the weakest agreement was “*My school leader inspires a shared sense of purpose among staff,*” with a mean score of 5.35.

The results of the second set of these statements, purpose, are shown in Figure 4.5. This figure is set in the same manner as Figure 4.4.

Figure 4.5

Average Teacher Responses to Purpose Items (Inspirational Motivation)

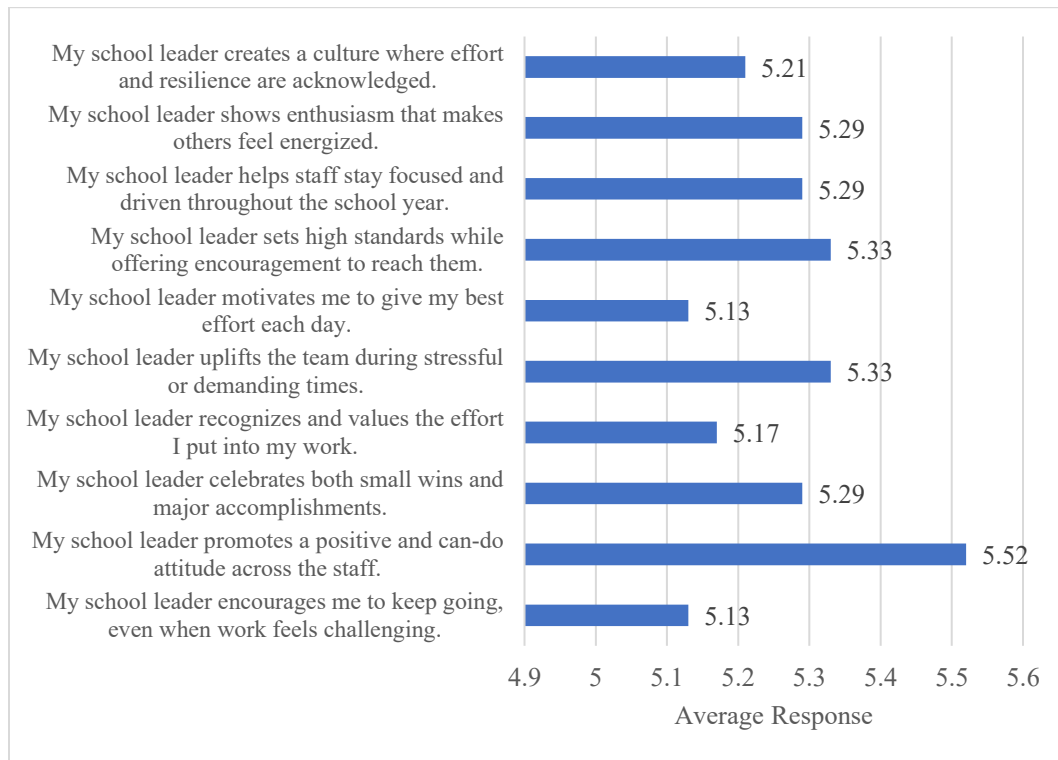


It is interesting to note that, once again, all of these responses were quite high, with mean scores at or above 5 on a 6-point scale. The statement with the strongest agreement was *"My school leader celebrates progress that aligns with our school's mission,"* with a mean score of 5.56. The statement with the weakest agreement was *"My school leader emphasizes the importance of our work beyond test scores and compliance,"* with a mean score of 5.24.

The results of the third set of these statements, motivation, are shown in Figure 4.6. This figure is set up in the same manner as Figures 4.4 and 4.5.

Figure 4.6

Average Teacher Responses to Motivation Items (Inspirational Motivation)



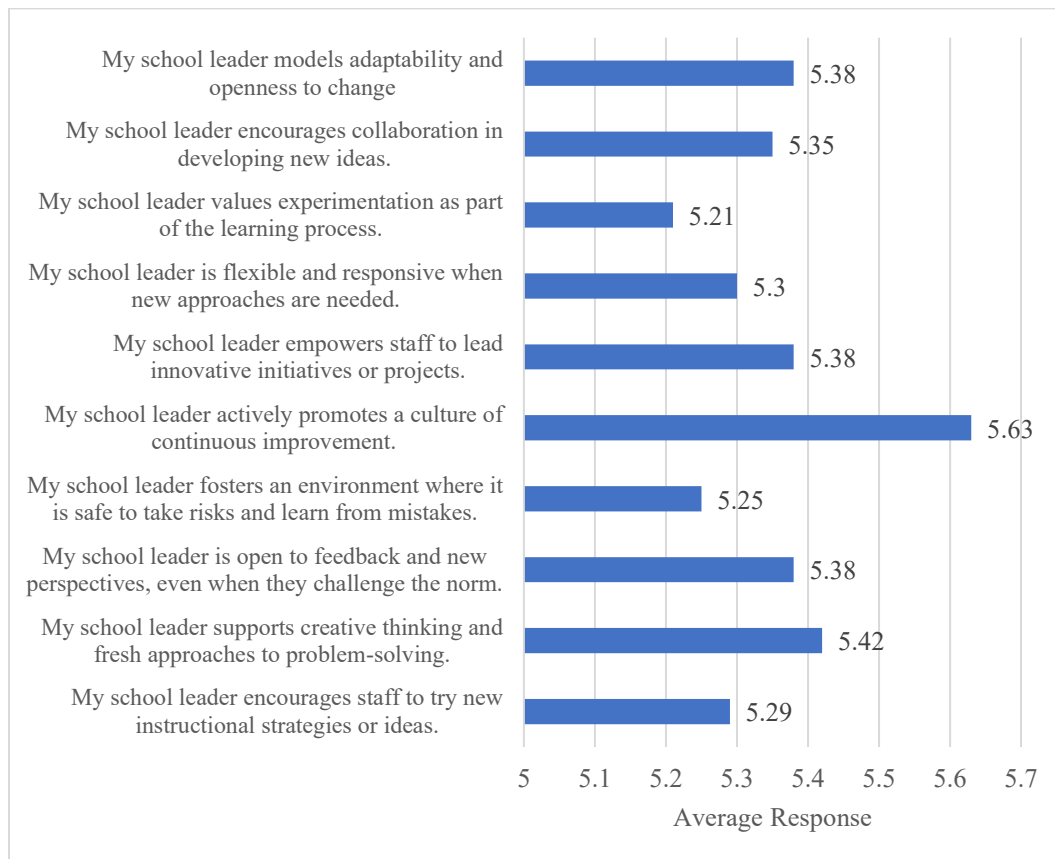
It is noteworthy that, once again, all responses were relatively high, with mean scores at or above 5 on a 6-point scale. The statement with the strongest agreement was *“My school leader promotes a positive and can-do attitude across the staff,”* with a mean score of 5.52. The statements with the weakest agreement were *“My school leader motivates me to give my best effort each day”* and *“My school leader encourages me to keep going, even when work feels challenging,”* each with a mean score of 5.13.

The third section of the survey asked participants about aspects of intellectual stimulation. There were three sets of statements concerning this area: innovation, critical thinking, and professional growth. The responses could range from Strongly Disagree (1)

to Strongly Agree (6). The results of the first set of these statements, innovation, are shown in Figure 4.7.

Figure 4.7

Average Teacher Responses to Innovation Items (Intellectual Stimulation)

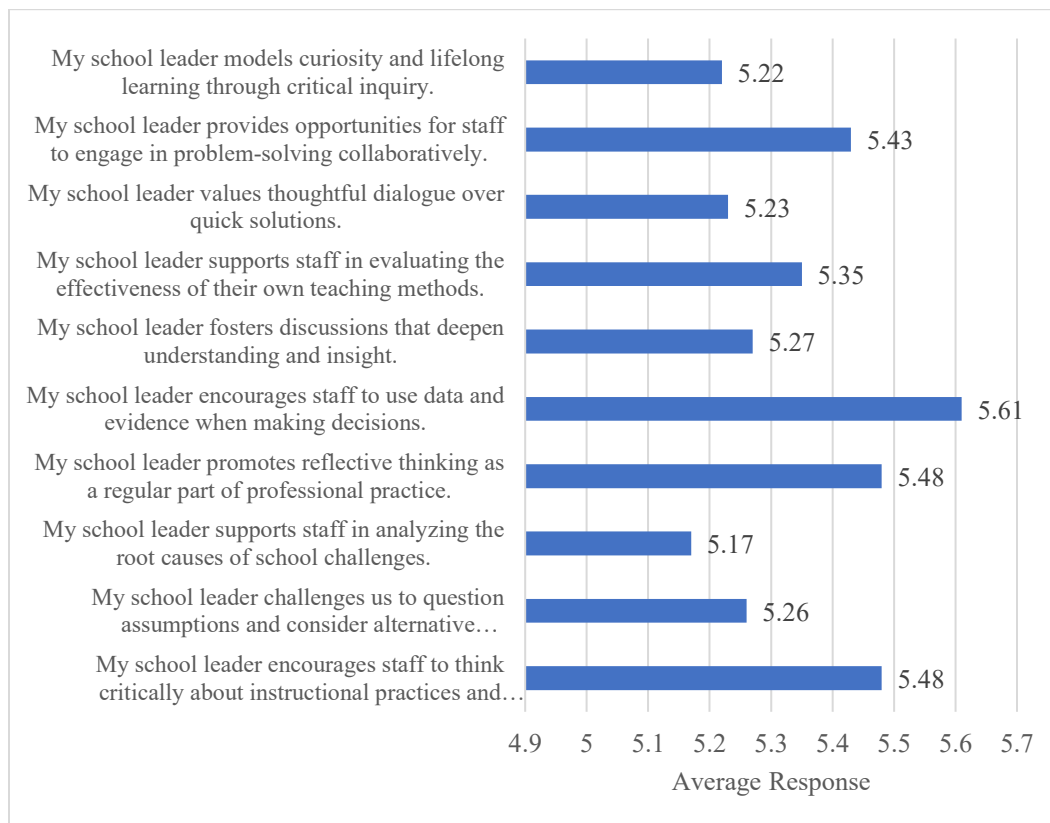


It is interesting to note that all of these responses were quite high, with mean scores at or above 5 on a 6-point scale. The statement with the strongest agreement was “*My school leader actively promotes a culture of continuous improvement,*” with a mean score of 5.63. The statement with the weakest agreement was “*My school leader values experimentations as part of the learning process,*” with a mean score of 5.21.

The results of the second set of these statements, critical thinking, are shown in Figure 4.8. This figure is set in the same manner as Figure 4.7.

Figure 4.8

Average Teacher Responses to Critical Thinking Items (Intellectual Stimulation)

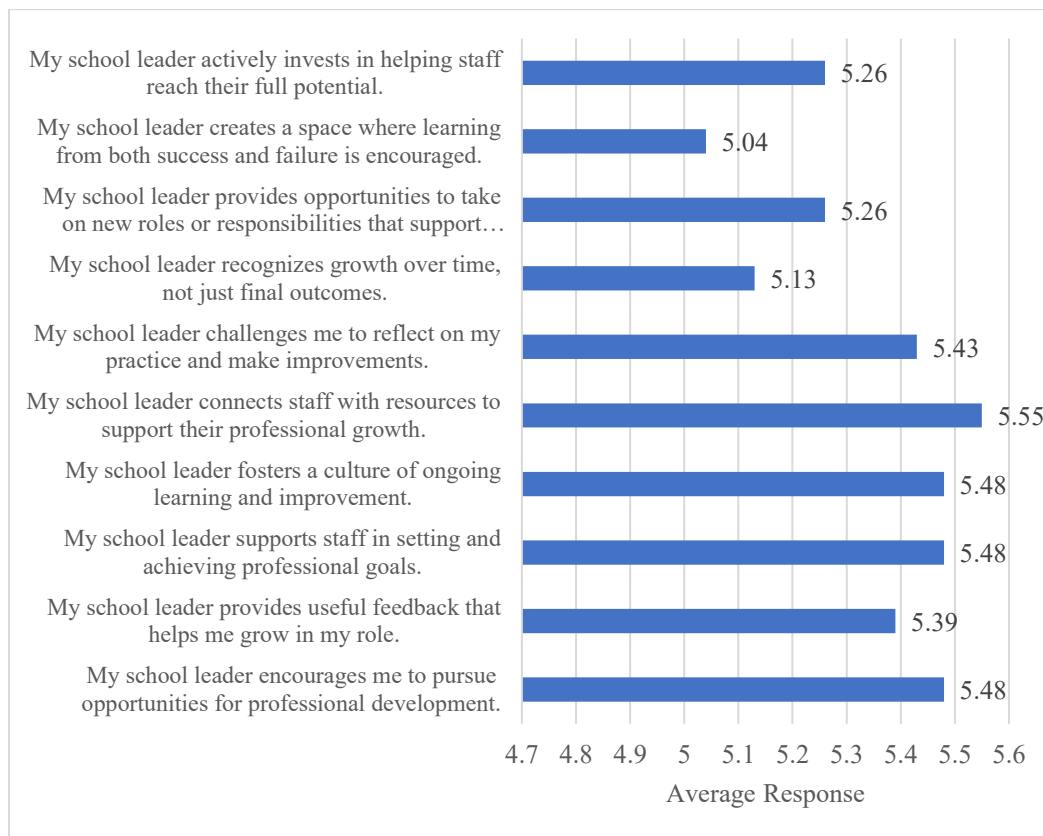


It is interesting to note that, once again, all of these responses were quite high, with mean scores at or above 5 on a 6-point scale. The statement with the strongest agreement was “*My school leader encourages staff to use data and evidence when making decisions,*” with a mean score of 5.61. The statement with the weakest agreement was “*My school leader supports staff in analyzing the root cause of school challenges,*” with a mean score of 5.17.

The results of the third set of these statements, professional growth, are shown in Figure 4.9. This figure is set up in the same manner as Figures 4.7 and 4.8.

Figure 4.9

Average Teacher Responses to Professional Growth Items (Intellectual Stimulation)



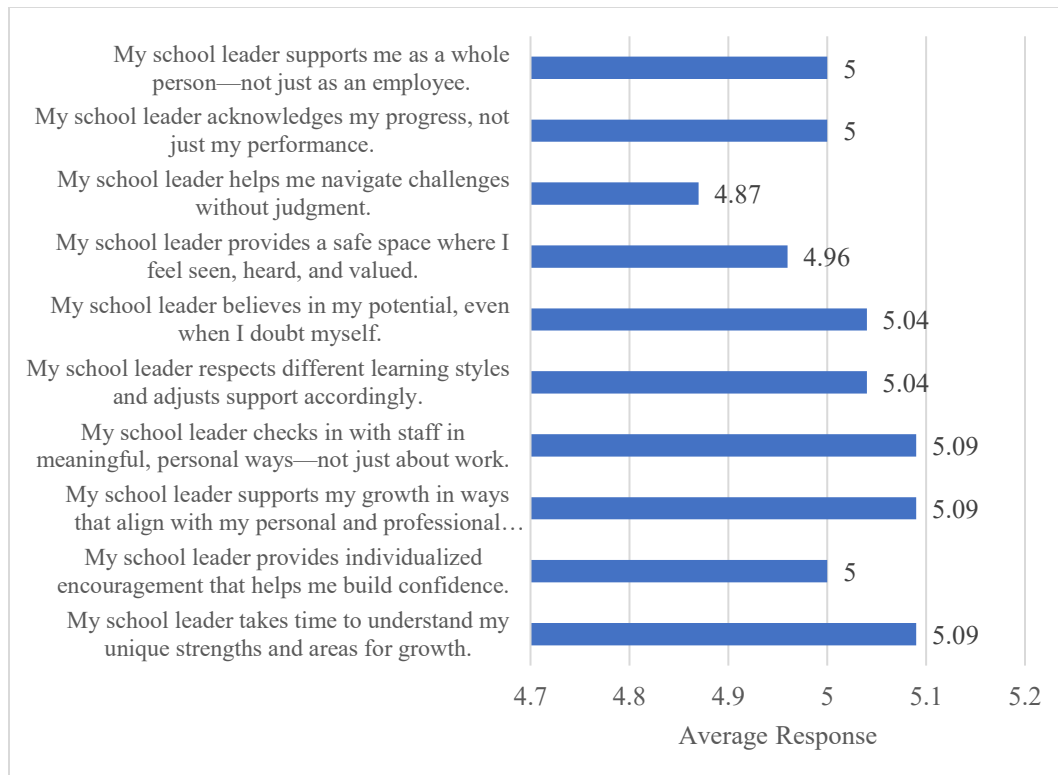
It is noteworthy that, once again, all responses were relatively high, with mean scores at or above 5 on a 6-point scale. The statement with the strongest agreement was *“My school leader connects staff with resources to support their professional growth,”* with a mean score of 5.55. The statements with the weakest agreement were *“My school leader creates a space where learning from both success and failure is encouraged,”* with a mean score of 5.13.

The fourth section of the survey asked participants about aspects of individualized consideration. There were two sets of statements concerning this area: support for individual growth and well-being. The responses could range from Strongly Disagree (1)

to Strongly Agree (6). The results of the first set of these statements, support for individual growth, are shown in Figure 4.10.

Figure 4.10

Teacher Responses to Support for Individual Growth Items (Individualized Consideration)



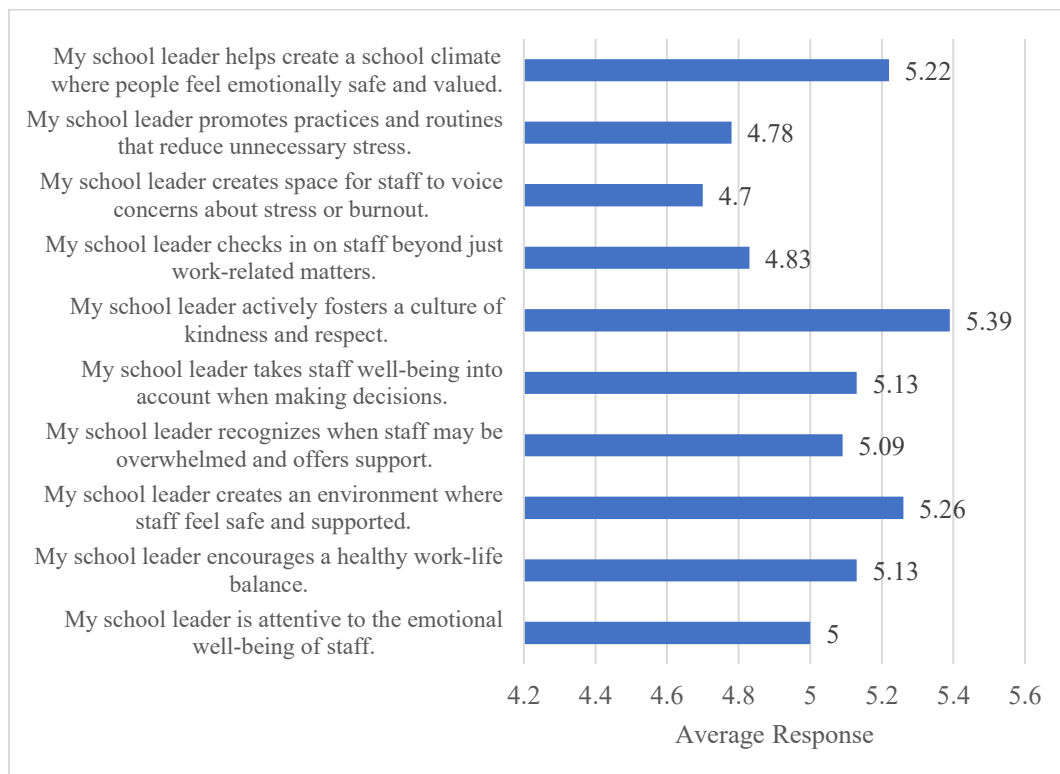
It is interesting to note that all of these responses were quite high, with mean scores at or above 5 on a 6-point scale. The statements with the strongest agreement were “My school leader checks in with staff in meaningful, personal ways—not just about work,” “My school leader supports my growth in ways that align with my personal and professional goals,” and “My school leader takes time to understand my unique strengths and areas for growth,” each with a mean score of 5.09. The statement with the weakest

agreement was “*My school leader helps me navigate challenges without judgment,*” with a mean score of 4.87.

The results of the second set of these statements, well-being, are shown in Figure 4.11. This figure is set in the same manner as Figure 4.10.

Figure 4.11

Average Teacher Responses to Well-Being Items (Individualized Consideration)



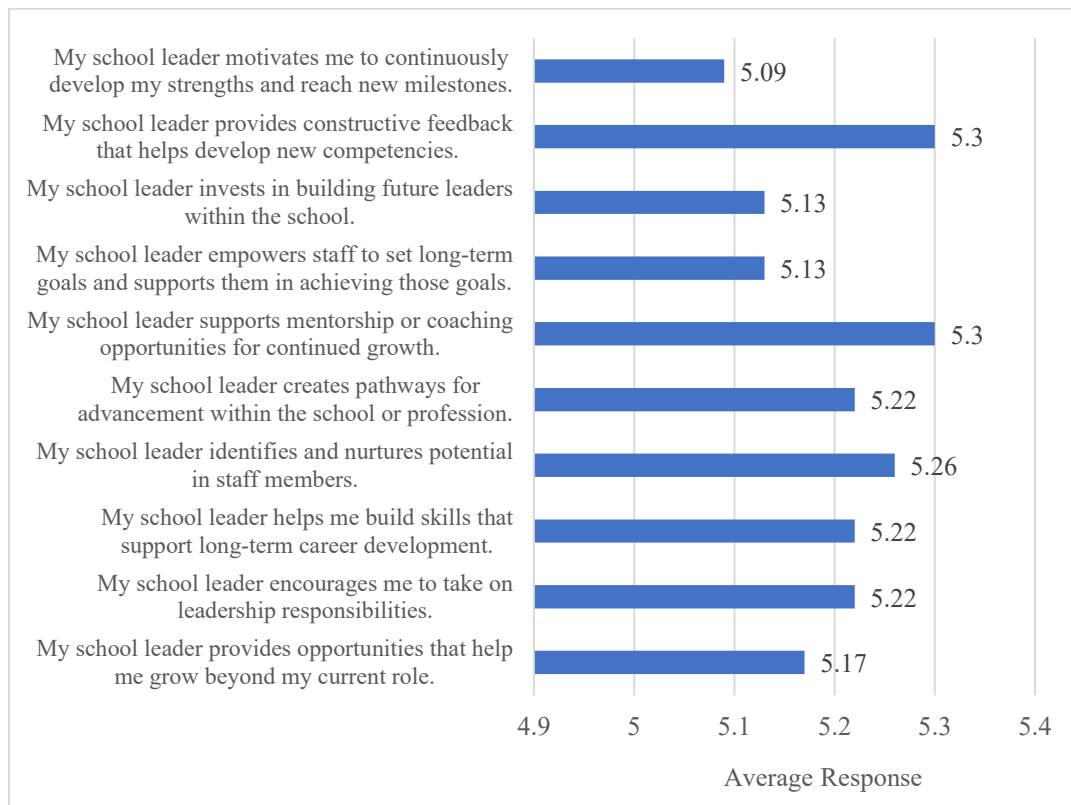
It is interesting to note that, once again, all of these responses were quite high, with mean scores at or above 5 on a 6-point scale. The statement with the strongest agreement was “*My school leader actively fosters a culture of kindness and respect,*” with a mean score of 5.39. The statement with the weakest agreement was “*My school leader creates space for staff to voice concerns about stress and burnout,*” with a mean score of 4.7.

Teachers' Responses Concerning Growth Mindset

The fifth and last section of the survey asked participants about aspects of growth mindset climate. There were three sets of statements concerning this area: development, resilience, and support. The responses could range from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (6). The results of the first set of these statements, development, are shown in Figure 4.12.

Figure 4.12

Average Teacher Responses to Development Items (Growth Mindset Climate)



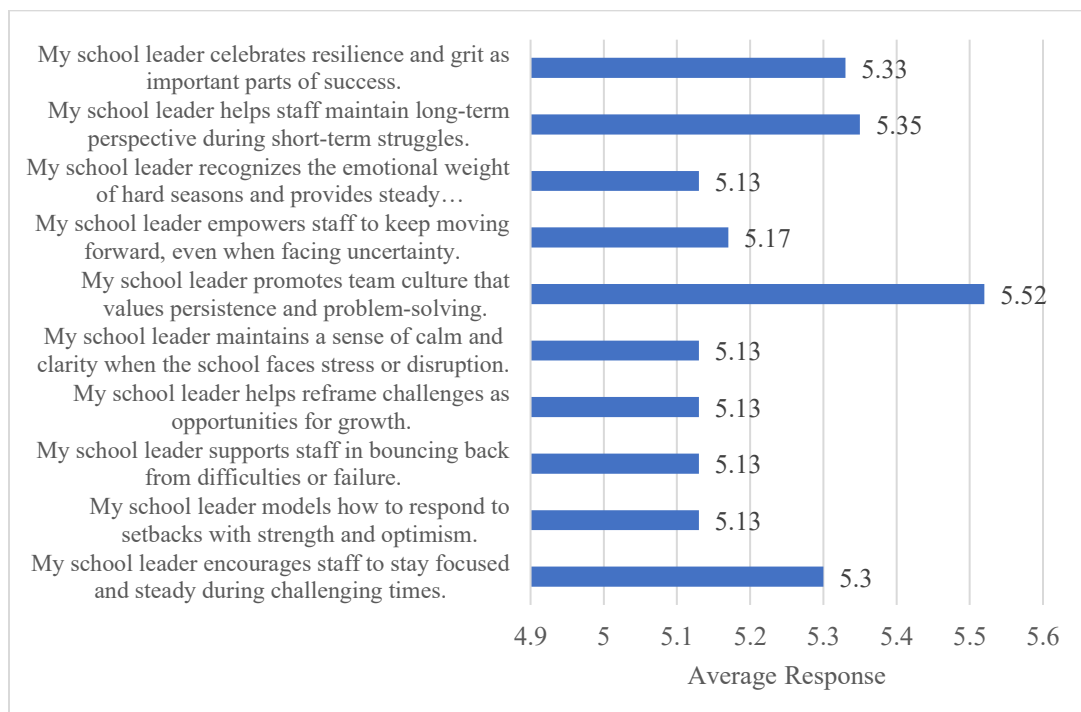
It is interesting to note that all of these responses were quite high, with mean scores at or above 5 on a 6-point scale. The statements with the strongest agreement were “My school leader provides constructive feedback that helps develop new competencies,” “My school leader supports my growth in ways that align with my

personal and professional goals,” and *“My school leader supports mentorship or coaching opportunities for continued growth,”* each with a mean score of 5.30. The statement with the weakest agreement was *“My school leader motivates me to continuously develop my strengths and reach new milestones,”* with a mean score of 5.09.

The results of the second set of these statements, resilience, are shown in Figure 4.13. This figure is set in the same manner as Figure 4.12.

Figure 4.13

Average Teacher Responses to Resilience Items (Growth Mindset Climate)



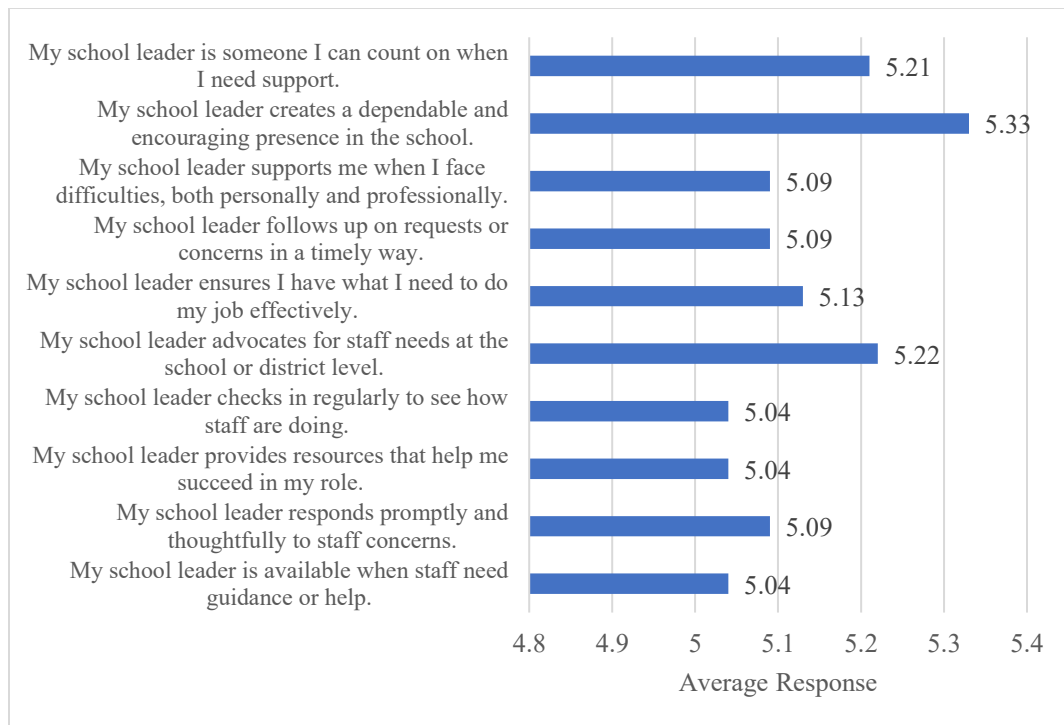
It is interesting to note that, once again, all of these responses were quite high, with mean scores at or above 5 on a 6-point scale. The statement with the strongest agreement was *“My school leader promotes team culture that values persistence and problem-solving,”* with a mean score of 5.52. The statements with the weakest agreement

were “My school leader recognizes the emotional weight of hard seasons and provides steady encouragement,” “My school leader maintains a sense of calm and clarity when the school faces stress or disruption,” “My school leader helps reframe challenges as opportunities for growth,” “My school leader supports staff in bouncing back from difficulties or failure,” and “My school leader models how to respond to setbacks with strength and optimism,” all with a mean score of 5.13.

The results of the third and last set of these statements, support, are shown in Figure 4.14. This figure is set in the same manner as Figures 4.12 and 4.13.

Figure 4.14

Average Teacher Responses to Support Items (Growth Mindset Climate)



It is noteworthy that, once again, all responses were relatively high, with mean scores at or above 5 on a 6-point scale. The statement with the strongest agreement was

“My school leader creates a dependable and encouraging presence in the school,” with a mean score of 5.33. The statements with the weakest agreement were *“My school leader checks in regularly to see how staff are doing,”* *“My school leader provides resources that help me succeed in my role,”* and *“My school leader is available when staff need guidance or help,”* with a mean score of 5.04.

Conclusion of Quantitative Survey Findings

Overall, the quantitative survey findings indicate that teachers reported consistently high levels of agreement across all four dimensions of transformational leadership and the growth mindset climate. Mean scores across survey items generally remained at or above the upper end of the response scale, suggesting that teachers perceive leadership practices within the school as strongly aligned with transformational leadership principles. While variations existed among specific items within each leadership dimension, the results collectively point to a leadership environment characterized by trust, consistency, encouragement, professional support, and an emphasis on continuous growth.

These findings provide a broad, descriptive understanding of how leadership behaviors are perceived at the organizational level. However, while the survey data reveal patterns and trends, they do not fully capture how teachers interpret these leadership practices in their daily professional experiences. To further explore and explain the quantitative results, the following section presents qualitative interview findings that offer deeper insight into how transformational leadership strategies are enacted and experienced by teachers within the school context.

Qualitative Findings

The purpose of this mixed-methods case study was to examine the leadership strategies that teachers in a suburban charter school perceived as most effective in fostering a growth mindset, guided by Transformational Leadership Theory. This chapter presents the qualitative findings derived from seven semi-structured interviews with teachers at the school. The purpose of this chapter is descriptive in nature and focuses on presenting participants' responses in their own words, documenting how they experienced leadership, and describing how they understood leadership actions within the school context. Interpretation, theoretical integration, and implications are intentionally reserved for Chapter 5.

The interviews followed a protocol aligned with the central research questions and focused on participants' experiences related to why they chose to work at the school and what has kept them there, leadership practices associated with the four dimensions of Transformational Leadership Theory—Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualized Consideration—and leadership's role in supporting professional growth and growth mindset. The interview data yielded detailed descriptions of leadership practices and how teachers perceived their influence on emotions, instructional decisions, professional growth, and mindset. The findings are organized by research questions and leadership dimensions and are supported by direct participant quotes to preserve authenticity and voice.

Why Participants Chose the School and What Keeps Them There

Why Participants Chose the School

When asked why they chose to work at the school, participants described varied entry points shaped by opportunity, mission alignment, belief from leadership, and placement circumstances. While their pathways differed, all participants articulated reasons grounded in professional access, values, or situational timing.

Several participants described mission alignment and student-centered values as key reasons for choosing the school. These participants emphasized the school's focus on students and a values-driven environment. Participant 1 explained that they chose the school *"because it's all about the kids here,"* adding that from the moment they entered, *"the environment matched the values I wanted to embody as a teacher."* Another participant similarly noted that the school's mission aligned with their personal beliefs about teaching and student advocacy.

A second group of participants identified opportunity and access to teaching in the United States as the primary reason for choosing the school, particularly for those entering from overseas. Participant 2 shared that the school *"opened the door for me to teach in the U.S.,"* describing it as a meaningful professional entry point. Participant 3 echoed this experience, stating, *"I chose to work at a charter school because it was the institution that offered me an opportunity to teach in the U.S. as an overseas educator."* Participant 5 expressed a similar experience, explaining, *"It was actually the first school that gave me the opportunity to enter the U.S.,"* and noted that they *"weren't aware of the school culture before coming."*

Other participants described placement, timing, or external contracting arrangements as influential factors rather than an intentional selection of the school model. Participant 4 explained, “*Before applying to teach in the U.S., I submitted applications to different school districts, and <redacted> was the first to hire me,*” adding that at the time they “*didn’t fully understand what a charter school was.*” Participant 6 shared a similar experience, stating, “*I didn’t necessarily choose this school on my own, as I am contracted through <redacted>,”* though they noted that the placement aligned with their interest in serving the Arabic-speaking community.

Belief and trust from the school also emerged as a motivating factor. Participant 7 emphasized this point, stating, “*<redacted> was the school that believed in me the first time I applied.*” Collectively, participants’ responses indicate that choosing the school was shaped by a combination of professional opportunity, mission alignment, and situational factors.

What Has Kept Them There

When asked what has kept them at the school, participants consistently referenced relationships, leadership support, and opportunities for personal and professional growth as central influences on their decision to remain.

Several participants emphasized relationships and a sense of community. Participant 2 explained that the school fosters “*a sense of community and collaboration among staff that value teamwork and support.*” Participant 6 shared, “*What has kept me here is the love I have for these kids and the relationships I have built with staff and school leaders.*”

Leadership support was repeatedly cited as a key factor in retention. Participant 3 described feeling supported by leadership, stating that *“my leaders always find solutions without judgment,”* which allowed them to feel *“comfortable being honest.”* Participant 5 similarly explained, *“I feel motivated and encouraged when leaders stand with me, show support, and trust me to find solutions.”* Participant 1 also noted that leadership practices aligned with their values and contributed to feeling *“supported and understood.”*

Growth and development over time were also highlighted as reasons for remaining at the school. Participant 7 reflected that although the transition was initially overwhelming, *“along the way it made me more confident and bold to do the job day by day.”* Participant 4 described staying because leadership supported instructional improvement, explaining that leaders *“closely monitor student progress and use data to guide decisions.”* Participant 6 added that leadership attention to well-being influenced their decision to stay, noting that leaders *“check in regularly and remind me to take care of myself.”*

Taken together, participants’ responses show that while their reasons for choosing the school varied, their decisions to remain were consistently shaped by relationships, leadership support, and opportunities for growth, as expressed in their own words.

Idealized Influence — Ethical Leadership, Professional Modeling, and Trust

Idealized Influence emerged as a central dimension of leadership across participant interviews. Participants consistently described leadership influence as grounded in ethical conduct, professionalism, and trust-building behaviors rather than positional authority. Leaders were viewed as role models whose actions, particularly

during moments of challenge or uncertainty, shaped participants' perceptions of integrity, fairness, and credibility.

Participant 1 described leadership influence through leaders' ability to remain calm and respectful during stressful situations. They noted that *"even when things are stressful, they remain calm and respectful,"* which reinforced trust and modeled professionalism. Although this participant acknowledged that *"sometimes things take longer than expected,"* they emphasized that leadership *"always comes back to address concerns,"* suggesting that trust was sustained through follow-through rather than immediacy.

Participant 2 emphasized leaders' ethical influence through their visible alignment with the school's mission and values. They explained that leaders modeled expectations by *"demonstrating a commitment to the school's mission and values"* and by *"modeling behaviors such as respect, empathy, and a growth mindset."* This modeling was strengthened by leaders being *"visible, approachable, and actively engaged in the school community,"* which reinforced credibility and trust.

Participant 3 described Idealized Influence through leaders' nonjudgmental approach to problem-solving. They shared that trust developed because leaders *"always find solutions without judgment,"* which made them feel *"comfortable being honest."* Although high expectations were sometimes challenging, the participant emphasized that leaders *"still aim to help teachers grow and improve,"* reinforcing trust through ethical consistency and supportive intent.

Participant 4 described leadership influence through direct observation of leaders' behavior in difficult situations. They explained that leaders modeled professionalism *"by*

showing us exactly how they expect us to treat students.” Recalling a moment when a student became dysregulated, the participant stated, *“They didn’t raise their voice. They didn’t show frustration. They showed me how to respond, and that taught me more than any training.”* Integrity was further described as evident through *“fairness, transparency, and consistency in decision-making,”* with leaders holding themselves accountable.

Participant 5 emphasized ethical leadership through leaders’ willingness to stand with staff during moments of conflict or crisis. They explained that *“when problems occur between teachers and students or parents, it is the leader’s responsibility to stand before the staff.”* The participant described being inspired by how leadership addressed student behavior calmly, stating that *“she talked very calm with positivity,”* which reinforced the understanding that *“they are kids and still learning.”* These actions strengthened trust and professional commitment.

Participant 6 highlighted Idealized Influence through leaders’ empathy and fairness. They described leaders as *“fair, honest, and deeply invested in students and their education,”* despite demanding responsibilities. Leaders’ regular check-ins and reminders *“to take care of myself”* were perceived as ethical leadership practices that balanced authority with care. Although leadership styles varied, these behaviors consistently reinforced trust.

Participant 7 emphasized integrity as alignment between words and actions. They described leaders as effective role models when *“they do what they speak,”* explaining that *“actions speak louder than words.”* Professionalism was described as maintaining dignity and respect during chaotic situations and *“accommodating imperfection without*

judgment.” Fairness was central to trust, with the participant noting that leaders “*don’t pick favorites,*” creating a sense of consistency and security.

Across participants, Idealized Influence was experienced as leadership rooted in ethical conduct, calm professionalism, and consistent modeling of values. Trust was not dependent on flawless leadership but on fairness, transparency, and leaders’ alignment between words and actions. Participants described leadership behaviors that shaped both their perceptions of trust and their own professional practices, reinforcing Idealized Influence as a foundational element of leadership within the school.

Inspirational Motivation — Encouragement, Purpose, and Emotional Support

Inspirational Motivation emerged as a meaningful dimension of leadership across participant interviews. Participants described leadership motivation as encouragement rooted in purpose, reassurance, and emotional support, particularly during moments of challenge, uncertainty, or transition. Leaders were viewed as motivating teachers by reinforcing the school’s vision, acknowledging effort, and providing guidance that helped participants persevere through difficult situations.

Participant 1 described leadership motivation as being grounded in reminders of purpose and guidance during moments of uncertainty. They explained that leaders “*always remind us of our ‘why’ and connect everything back to student growth and success.*” When facing challenges, the participant shared that leaders were “*easy to talk to and always help me find a solution or guide me in a better direction when things get hard,*” which encouraged them to continue in the profession and pursue further growth.

Participant 2 emphasized encouragement through recognition and support. They described leadership motivation as being communicated through acknowledgment of

effort, stating that leaders encourage staff by “*giving support and recognition, acknowledging the challenges we face, and celebrating our efforts and success.*” The participant explained that these gestures reinforced motivation and commitment, noting that recognition “*makes you feel like your work matters.*”

Participant 3 described Inspirational Motivation through leadership communication of vision and encouragement during challenges. They explained that leaders communicate purpose by “*clearly explaining goals and expectations to staff and modeling these values in their actions.*” When facing difficulties, the participant shared, “*I feel encouraged when leadership offers guidance, support, and understanding during challenges,*” adding that knowing leaders listen and provide solutions helped them “*stay motivated and confident in my work.*”

Participant 4 described leadership motivation through visible support during challenging situations involving student behavior and safety. They recalled a moment when leaders intervened during a crisis, explaining that leadership “*immediately stepped in, followed proper protocol, and calmly de-escalated the situation.*” Observing leaders “*handle the moment with clear procedures, professionalism, and care*” reinforced the participant’s confidence and helped them “*persevere through the moment with confidence.*”

Participant 5 described feeling motivated when leadership stood alongside teachers during difficulties. They explained that encouragement came when leaders “*stand with me to show support and trust me in finding solutions.*” The participant also described leadership communication of vision as motivating, stating that leaders “*clearly articulate the vision to staff, teachers, and students and ensure that it is reflected in daily*

practices and routines.” Feeling trusted and supported strengthened motivation during challenging periods.

Participant 6 described Inspirational Motivation through affirmation, emotional support, and leadership emphasis on school climate. They shared that leaders motivated them through *“words of affirmation and by highlighting the positive things I’ve done.”* The participant also noted that leadership frequently *“talks about the kind of climate we want in our building and the environment we want to create for our students,”* which reinforced purpose and sustained motivation, particularly when working across multiple settings.

Participant 7 described leadership motivation as encouragement during periods of emotional strain and transition. Reflecting on early experiences, the participant shared that although the transition was overwhelming at first, *“along the way, it made me learned, confident, and bold to do the job day by day.”* Leadership encouragement, reminders of goals, and reassurance during difficult moments helped the participant persevere and continue developing confidence over time.

Across participants, Inspirational Motivation was experienced as leadership encouragement grounded in purpose, recognition, reassurance, and emotional support. Participants described leadership behaviors that helped them persist through challenges, remain focused on students, and continue growing professionally. These experiences reinforced Inspirational Motivation as a central leadership dimension shaping teachers’ resilience and commitment within the school.

Intellectual Stimulation — Critical Thinking, Innovation, and Reflective Practice

Intellectual Stimulation emerged as a leadership dimension through participants' descriptions of environments that encouraged reflection, critical thinking, and instructional experimentation. Participants described leadership as emphasizing learning over perfection, creating space for teachers to question their practices, try new approaches, and reflect on outcomes without fear of judgment.

Participant 1 described leadership encouragement to engage in experimentation and reflective learning. They shared that leaders encouraged teachers to “*try new strategies and see what works best for our students,*” emphasizing that “*there’s no fear of failing, just learning.*” This message reassured the participant that instructional risk-taking was expected and supported, contributing to a sense of psychological safety.

Participant 2 described Intellectual Stimulation through leadership support for instructional growth and innovation. They explained that leaders encouraged critical thinking by providing “*opportunities for professional development, such as workshops, peer coaching, and collaborative planning time.*” The participant also noted that when trying something new, they felt supported, stating simply, “*Yes,*” when asked whether leaders supported instructional risk-taking, reinforcing that experimentation was permitted within the school environment.

Participant 3 described leadership encouragement to think critically through feedback and open dialogue. They shared that leaders encouraged exploration of new strategies through “*supportive feedback, professional development opportunities, and open discussions with administrators.*” When proposing new ideas, the participant

explained that leaders “*encourage innovation and consider suggestions that could improve teaching and learning,*” which supported reflective practice.

Participant 4 described Intellectual Stimulation through leadership use of data and feedback to prompt reflection. They explained that teachers were encouraged to think critically by “*reflecting on student data and using it to adjust instruction.*” While valuing feedback, the participant noted that “*frequent brief classroom observations without demonstration lessons can make it challenging to fully understand expectations.*” Although feedback was described as helpful, the participant explained that the frequency of observations could increase pressure, even when intended to support growth.

Participant 5 described leadership encouragement to think beyond prescribed approaches. They shared that they were encouraged to explore instructional strategies “*if they let me use my own strategies to teach my students and let me think outside the box.*” However, the participant also noted that limited preparation time could affect innovation, explaining that “*doing everything we need to do during weekends makes us exhausted,*” which sometimes “*limits us to do more and think critically.*”

Participant 6 described Intellectual Stimulation through leadership openness to teacher ideas. They explained that leaders “*stop what they’re doing to listen to my ideas or possible solutions to problems,*” and that leadership “*genuinely takes my input into consideration.*” This responsiveness encouraged the participant to engage in problem-solving and share innovative ideas.

Participant 7 described Intellectual Stimulation as being prompted by challenges in student learning. They explained that when strategies were ineffective or student performance declined, they felt encouraged to “*go beyond my limitations to fill the gap*

they need to achieve their goals.” While the participant noted feeling supported at times, they also shared that *“pressure to meet standardized testing benchmarks and strict curricula”* sometimes made it difficult to deviate from established practices.

Across participants, Intellectual Stimulation was experienced as leadership encouragement to reflect, experiment, and engage in critical thinking. While participants valued feedback, professional learning opportunities, and openness to ideas, some also described tension related to time constraints and observation frequency. Nevertheless, leadership was described as fostering an environment where learning, reflection, and growth were emphasized over perfection.

Individualized Consideration — Personalized Support and Responsiveness

Individualized Consideration emerged as a significant leadership dimension across participant interviews. Participants described leadership as attentive to individual needs, responsive to personal and professional well-being, and committed to supporting growth through personalized feedback and ongoing check-ins. Leaders were viewed as recognizing teachers as individuals rather than treating support as one-size-fits-all.

Participant 1 described personalized support through leadership’s understanding of individual communication styles and professional needs. They explained that *“my leader knows me well and understands how I communicate, so her feedback always fits how I work and think.”* This individualized approach helped the participant feel supported in a way that aligned with their personal and professional preferences.

Participant 2 described Individualized Consideration through structured feedback and coaching tailored to individual growth. They explained that leaders *“offer regular feedback through iObservation, coaching, and mentoring,”* which helped them *“identify*

areas for growth and develop strategies for improvement.” They also shared that leadership monitored individual growth plans, noting that leaders *“check on the growth plan and provide professional development sessions and coaching to help us grow professionally.”*

Participant 3 described personalized support through regular check-ins and access to resources. They explained that leaders *“check in regularly and give feedback or resources that directly help us improve in the classroom.”* They also shared that leaders demonstrated understanding of individual growth needs by *“recognizing areas where I wanted to improve and providing specific guidance and resources.”*

Participant 4 described leadership responsiveness through individualized coaching and attention to classroom challenges. They shared that when leaders noticed specific struggles, *“they met with me to discuss strategies to use,”* explaining that feedback was targeted to their particular needs. The participant also described support through ongoing conversations, stating that leaders *“check in on our professional well-being by holding regular one-on-one meetings to discuss goals, challenges, and progress.”*

Participant 5 described Individualized Consideration through leadership attention to personal needs and instructional preparation. They explained that leaders supported them by *“taking time to support my needs by providing relevant resources and recognizing my strengths and areas for growth.”* They also shared appreciation for instructional coaching, stating, *“I am glad I have an instructional coach who checks in regularly and asks what I need in my classroom for planning my lessons.”*

Participant 6 described individualized support through leadership attention to well-being and workload. They shared that leaders *“genuinely care about staff’s well-*

being,” noting that leaders “*check in regularly to see how my workload is going.*” The participant explained that reminders “*to take care of myself*” made them feel supported and valued, particularly when managing demanding responsibilities.

Participant 7 described Individualized Consideration through consistent personal connection and encouragement. They shared that leaders “*check on us regularly in different ways, during meetings and even by visiting our classroom,*” explaining that leadership ensured “*everything is in place as the day ends.*” They also described leadership encouragement related to well-being, stating that leaders motivate staff “*to take care of our well-being and self-care.*”

Across participants, Individualized Consideration was experienced as leadership responsiveness to individual needs, personalized feedback, and attention to professional and personal well-being. Participants described leadership practices that helped them feel known, supported, and guided in ways that enhanced confidence and sustained professional growth.

Growth Mindset — Encouraging Reflection, Persistence, and Continuous Improvement

Growth mindset emerged across participant interviews through reflections on professional growth, learning from challenges, and adapting practice over time. Participants described growth as an ongoing process shaped by experience, reflection, and leadership actions that encouraged learning rather than perfection.

Participant 1 described professional growth as gradual and reflective. They explained, “*I’ve grown a lot since starting as a paraprofessional, and even more now as a teacher. Each year I’ve learned more about myself, my teaching style, and how to*

support my students better.” When asked about leadership’s role in fostering a growth mindset, they shared that leadership contributed by *“pushing us to keep learning and reminding us that mistakes are part of growing as teachers.”* These actions supported reflection and continued learning.

Participant 2 described their growth as intentional and ongoing. They explained, *“I am developing a growth mindset, embracing challenges, reflecting on my practices, and continually seeking opportunities for improvement and innovation.”* They believed leadership fostered this mindset by *“providing a supportive environment where risks are encouraged, feedback is used as a learning tool, and effort and progress are recognized and celebrated.”* These leadership actions helped them feel more adaptable and reflective in their practice.

Participant 3 described their professional growth as continuous and positive. They explained, *“I would describe my growth as continuous and positive. Over time, I’ve become more confident, reflective, and open to new teaching strategies that improve my practice.”* They attributed this growth to leadership encouragement, stating that leaders *“encourage teachers to try new strategies, learn from challenges, and view mistakes as opportunities for growth.”* These practices supported adaptability and reflection. The participant did not identify leadership practices that discouraged their growth.

Participant 4 described growth through early struggle followed by increased confidence. They shared, *“I honestly felt like giving up because it seemed like none of my strategies were working.”* Over time, leadership support influenced their growth, as they explained, *“With the help of training, guidance, and the strategies I learned at school, I became more confident and effective.”* They believed leadership fostered growth by

“encouraging us to reflect on challenges, try new strategies, and learn from both successes and mistakes.” However, they also noted that *“frequent brief classroom observations without demonstration lessons”* could sometimes feel discouraging.

Participant 5 described growth as continuing despite challenges. They explained that leadership supported growth by *“encouraging us to keep learning and improve,”* and by offering *“constructive feedback, professional development sessions, peer feedback, and admin support.”* They also noted a discouraging experience when leadership response to a parent concern felt delayed, explaining that *“delayed action in difficult situations”* initially felt discouraging, though they recognized growth as an ongoing learning process.

Participant 6 described growth through collaboration and reflection. They explained, *“During PD, my school leaders open the floor for teachers to share difficult situations, allowing staff to collaborate and find solutions together.”* These leadership actions helped them feel *“more resilient, reflective, and adaptable in my practice.”* They also shared that growth felt hindered at times when they felt *“not involved in decisions that affect my position.”*

Participant 7 did not provide a direct response to the Growth Mindset interview questions. While the participant reflected on professional growth and perseverance in other sections of the interview, no distinct statements were offered in response to the questions specifically focused on growth mindset, resilience, or continuous improvement.

Across participants, growth mindset was described through professional learning, reflection on challenges, and leadership practices that encouraged persistence and adaptability. Participants identified leadership actions that supported growth, as well as

specific practices that occasionally hindered it, providing a balanced and grounded representation of growth mindset within the school context.

Conclusion of Qualitative Findings

This chapter presented the qualitative findings from seven semi-structured interviews with teachers at a suburban charter school. The findings addressed participants' reasons for choosing the school, factors influencing their decision to remain, and their perceptions of leadership practices as experienced through the four dimensions of transformational leadership and growth mindset.

Participants described varied pathways to the school, including mission alignment, professional opportunity, belief from leadership, and placement circumstances. While initial reasons for joining differed, participants consistently identified relationships, leadership support, and opportunities for growth as key factors that contributed to their decision to remain at the school. A strong sense of community, trust in leadership, and alignment with the school's values were central across responses.

Leadership practices reflected all four dimensions of transformational leadership. Idealized Influence was experienced through ethical conduct, calm professionalism, fairness, and consistency, which contributed to trust and credibility. Inspirational Motivation was reflected in leadership encouragement, purpose-driven messaging, recognition, and emotional support that helped teachers persevere during challenging moments. Intellectual Stimulation emerged through leadership practices that encouraged reflection, instructional experimentation, and critical thinking, while also acknowledging constraints such as time and observation frequency. Individualized Consideration was

evident through personalized feedback, attention to well-being, and responsiveness to individual needs, contributing to teachers feeling known, supported, and valued.

Growth mindset findings highlighted professional growth as an ongoing process shaped by reflection, persistence, and learning from challenges. Participants described leadership actions that supported adaptability, resilience, and continuous improvement, as well as specific practices that occasionally hindered growth. One participant did not provide a direct response to the growth mindset questions, and this was transparently documented.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that leadership practices played a central role in shaping teachers' experiences, professional growth, and commitment to the school. This chapter provided a descriptive account of participants' perspectives in their own words. Chapter 5 will interpret these findings, connect them to existing literature and theoretical frameworks, and discuss implications for leadership practice and future research.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

The previous chapter presented the integrated quantitative and qualitative findings of this mixed-methods case study. The survey results showed that teachers noticed a steady use of transformational leadership practices, including idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, along with a positive environment for growth. The qualitative findings expanded these patterns by illustrating how teachers experienced leadership behaviors in practice. Teachers characterize leadership as a factor that affects their readiness to solicit feedback, embrace instructional risks, endure difficulties, and participate in reflective enhancement. When considered together, the findings suggested that leadership influence operated as a connected developmental process rather than a set of isolated behaviors.

The purpose of this chapter is to interpret what these findings mean and how they explain the development of a teacher-growth mindset within the school context. Analysis of the data revealed six major themes. The first theme, Trust Before Growth (Idealized Influence), demonstrated that teachers engaged in improvement only after establishing psychological safety. The second theme, Growth Feels Personal (Individualized Consideration), demonstrated that tailored feedback and coaching converted effort into measurable enhancement. The third theme, Learning Requires Safe Risk Taking (Intellectual Stimulation), indicated that teachers changed practice when challenges occurred within a supportive environment. The fourth theme, Purpose Sustains Effort

(Inspirational Motivation), illustrated that encouragement-maintained persistence during difficulty. The fifth theme, Growth Mindset as an Environmental Outcome, suggested that the combined leadership practices produced a shared professional culture of improvement. The final theme, Balancing Support and Accountability, highlighted that leadership influence depended on the timing and delivery of expectations.

This chapter examines each theme in connection with the research questions and conceptual framework to elucidate how transformational leadership practices cultivate a growth mindset among teachers. The findings are then synthesized to examine the relative influence of the four dimensions of transformational leadership. Following the interpretation of findings, the chapter presents the limitations of the study and directions for future research. The chapter concludes by considering the broader implications of these findings for understanding leadership influence on teacher development and professional learning environments.

Revisiting the Theoretical Framework: Explicit Connection Between the Framework and Theme Development

This section revisits the theoretical framework to explicitly explain how the six themes presented in Chapter 5 were developed and how they are directly connected to the conceptual foundation and data structure of the study. This clarification is necessary to ensure transparency in how the findings were generated and to demonstrate that the themes were not created independently but rather emerged through a structured and theory-driven analytic process.

The study was grounded in two complementary frameworks: Transformational Leadership Theory and Growth Mindset Theory. Transformational leadership was

operationalized through its four core dimensions—Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualized Consideration, which served as the primary organizational structure for examining leadership practices. Growth Mindset Theory provided the developmental lens for understanding how teachers responded to challenge, feedback, effort, and professional learning. Together, these frameworks established that leadership practices create the conditions under which growth-oriented behaviors can emerge.

Importantly, this theoretical framework did not remain conceptual. It directly informed the design of the study, particularly the structure of data collection and analysis. Both the quantitative survey and the qualitative interview protocol were intentionally organized around the four dimensions of transformational leadership. Survey items were grouped into sections aligned with each leadership dimension, followed by a section addressing growth mindset climate. Similarly, interview questions were designed to elicit teacher experiences within each of the four leadership dimensions, as well as their perceptions of professional growth and mindset. As a result, the data collected in Chapter 4 were already structured through the theoretical framework. The development of themes followed a three-stage analytic process that moved from structured categorization to interpretive meaning.

In the first stage, all data was organized using the predefined theoretical categories. Survey findings were analyzed by leadership dimension, identifying patterns within Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualized Consideration, as well as within growth mindset climate. Similarly, interview responses were categorized under these same dimensions. This ensured that the

initial analysis remained directly aligned with the theoretical framework rather than being guided by unstructured or unrelated groupings.

In the second stage, repeated patterns were identified within each category. These patterns reflected how teachers experienced leadership practices in their daily professional context. For example, within Idealized Influence, teachers consistently described fairness, consistency, calmness, and trust-building behaviors. Within Individualized Consideration, they described personalized feedback, ongoing support, and responsiveness to individual needs. Within Intellectual Stimulation, they described reflection, problem-solving, and opportunities to try new instructional strategies. Within Inspirational Motivation, they described encouragement, emotional support, and reminders of purpose. At this stage, the analysis focused on identifying consistency across participant responses rather than generating themes.

In the third stage, these repeated patterns were interpreted in relation to Growth Mindset Theory. This step moved the analysis from description to meaning. Rather than simply restating leadership behaviors, the analysis examined how those behaviors influenced teachers' willingness to take risks, reflect on practice, persist through challenges, and engage in professional growth. It is at this stage that the six themes were developed. The themes therefore represent interpretive statements that explain how transformational leadership practices functioned in relation to the development of a growth mindset. Each theme maintains a direct connection to the theoretical framework while extending it to reflect the lived experiences of participants.

The theme *Trust Before Growth* was derived from the Idealized Influence dimension. While Idealized Influence is defined in the framework as ethical leadership,

credibility, and role modeling, the data revealed a more specific pattern: teachers did not engage in growth behaviors until trust was first established. Teachers described becoming willing to seek feedback, admit challenges, and improve only after experiencing fairness, consistency, and nonjudgmental leadership. The theme therefore reflects how Idealized Influence functioned as a prerequisite condition for growth rather than as a direct driver of improvement.

The theme *Growth Feels Personal* emerged from the Individualized Consideration dimension. The framework defines this dimension as personalized support and mentorship. However, the data showed that growth occurred most effectively when support was tailored, specifically, and directly connected to teachers' individual classroom contexts. Teachers emphasized that improvement was not driven by general feedback, but by feedback that felt personal, actionable, and ongoing. This theme therefore captures how Individualized Consideration translated effort into observable growth.

The theme *Learning Requires Safe Risk-Taking* was derived from the Intellectual Stimulation dimension. While the framework emphasizes critical thinking and innovation, the data revealed that teachers engaged in experimentation only when the environment felt psychologically safe. Teachers described being willing to try new strategies, reflect on failures, and revise instruction when mistakes were not penalized. This theme therefore extends Intellectual Stimulation by showing that challenge alone was insufficient; it needed to be paired with safety to produce growth-oriented behavior.

The theme *Purpose Sustains Effort* emerged from the Inspirational Motivation dimension. The framework defines this dimension as vision, encouragement, and

inspiration. However, the data indicated that motivation functioned primarily as a sustaining force rather than an initiating one. Teachers described relying on encouragement, reassurance, and reminders of purpose during periods of difficulty. This theme reflects that Inspirational Motivation helped teachers persist through challenges rather than initiating change independently.

The theme *Growth Mindset as an Environmental Outcome* was developed by examining patterns across all four leadership dimensions. Rather than being tied to a single category, this theme reflects the combined influence of trust, support, challenge, and motivation. The data showed that teachers did not describe growth mindset as an individual belief formed in isolation. Instead, they described it as a shared experience shaped by consistent leadership practices over time. This theme therefore represents the integration of Transformational Leadership Theory and Growth Mindset Theory, demonstrating that growth mindset emerged as a cultural and environmental condition.

The final theme, *Balancing Support and Accountability*, also emerged across categories. This theme was developed by examining areas where teacher responses reflected tension rather than consistency. While leadership was generally perceived as supportive, teachers described situations in which expectations, timing, or workload influenced how leadership actions were experienced. The same leadership behavior could be perceived as supportive or stressful depending on context. This theme highlights that leadership influence was not uniform, and that growth mindset development depended on how support and expectations were balanced in practice.

Taken together, the six themes represent a direct extension of the theoretical framework rather than a departure from it. Four of the themes correspond directly to the

four dimensions of transformational leadership, while the remaining two capture the interaction and complexity of those dimensions within the school environment. The themes were developed through a systematic process that began with theory, was reflected in the structure of data collection, and was refined through the interpretation of patterns across both quantitative and qualitative findings.

This process ensures that the themes are both theoretically grounded and empirically derived. They are grounded in the conceptual framework that guided the study, and they are derived from consistent patterns in teacher responses. Accordingly, the themes serve as an explicit analytic bridge linking the theoretical framework, the structured data, and the resulting interpretive analysis.

Summary and Implications of Findings

Trust Before Growth (Idealized Influence)

Teachers' survey responses consistently reflected strong agreement that leadership demonstrated professionalism, fairness, and consistency in applying expectations. Leadership behavior was experienced as stable rather than situational. However, there was less agreement about leaders taking teachers' views into account when making decisions. This suggests that trust in leadership did not depend on shared authority. The answers to the interviews made this pattern clearer. Teachers described trust forming through repeated interactions in which leaders communicated calmly, followed through on concerns, and responded without judgment during moments of tension. Participants explained they became willing to discuss instructional weaknesses only after observing fairness and emotional steadiness from leadership. Across both data

sources, trust was associated less with leadership position and more with interpersonal reliability.

This finding suggests teachers evaluated leadership intentions before engaging in professional vulnerability. Reflection, help-seeking, and willingness to improve appeared only after teachers believed mistakes would not threaten their professional standing. Idealized influence therefore functioned as a psychological entry condition for growth-oriented behavior. Rather than motivating improvement directly, credibility reduced interpersonal risk, allowing teachers to interpret feedback as support instead of evaluation. In relation to growth mindset, teachers adopted adaptive responses to challenges when they felt secure revealing areas of difficulty. Growth behaviors emerged after safety was established, indicating trust enabled learning behaviors rather than resulting from them.

Transformational leadership theory identifies idealized influence as the dimension through which leaders establish credibility and moral trust (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Educational leadership research similarly indicates that teacher commitment and openness to feedback increase when leadership is perceived as ethical and consistent (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005; Leithwood et al., 2008). The present findings extend this work by suggesting that credibility operates sequentially rather than simultaneously with other leadership practices; teachers first establish a sense of relational safety before interpreting instructional guidance as supportive. This interpretation aligns with growth mindset theory, which posits that individuals are more likely to engage in learning behaviors when errors are not perceived as threats to competence or identity (Dweck, 2006). Together, these findings support prior literature while contributing a mechanism-

level explanation: idealized influence does not directly produce growth behaviors but instead establishes the psychological conditions necessary for such behaviors to emerge.

Growth Feels Personal (Individualized Consideration)

Survey responses indicated that teachers perceived leadership as supportive and attentive to individual needs. Teachers generally agreed that leaders provided guidance, checked in regularly, and offered assistance when challenges arose. However, agreement was less consistent regarding leaders addressing stress or emotional strain directly, suggesting that while support was present, its depth varied across situations. Interview findings clarified this distinction. Teachers described individualized consideration as moments when leaders tailored feedback, provided specific strategies, and adjusted expectations based on teacher readiness. Participants emphasized that improvement occurred when feedback was concrete and connected to their own classroom context rather than generalized advice. Teachers also reported that follow up conversations and ongoing check-ins strengthened their confidence to attempt changes. Across both data sources, individualized consideration was associated with teachers feeling understood rather than evaluated.

This pattern suggests individualized consideration functioning as the mechanism that translated effort into measurable growth. Trust allowed teachers to reveal challenges, and intellectual stimulation encouraged experimentation, but individualized support enabled improvement. Teachers described being more willing to revise instruction when leaders provided actionable guidance and monitored progress over time. Teachers sustained growth mindset behaviors when they observed that effort yielded improvement through guided support. Instead of interpreting difficulty as inability, teachers interpreted

it as a stage within a supported learning process. Individualized consideration therefore reinforced the belief that ability could be developed through structured practice. Within the transformational leadership framework, this dimension appeared to have the most direct connection to a growth mindset because it linked feedback to observable progress.

Research consistently identifies individualized consideration as a predictor of teacher development and efficacy. Transformational leadership scholarship characterizes this dimension as the leader's responsiveness to individual needs and their capacity for coaching (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Educational studies demonstrate that personalized feedback and mentoring significantly influence teacher confidence and instructional improvement (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005; Nyamubi, 2021). Additional research shows that coaching-oriented leadership strengthens professional learning and long-term instructional change (Khan et al., 2022; Sumampong & Arnado, 2024). Growth mindset theory similarly explains that individuals adopt adaptive beliefs when effort leads to visible improvement (Dweck, 2006, 2016). The current results add to this research by showing that personalized attention helps put growth mindset into action, as teachers see progress through guided support instead of just motivation.

Learning Requires Safe Risk-Taking (Intellectual Stimulation)

Survey findings indicated strong agreement that school leaders encouraged problem-solving, reflection, and professional development. Teachers expressed strong agreement with statements that challenged them to think differently, refine their instructional practices, and pursue continuous growth. However, items related to reframing setbacks and modeling responses to failure showed slightly lower means compared to other intellectual stimulation items. This suggested that teachers consistently

experienced less support during instructional failure, even though they perceived encouragement toward innovation. Interview data deepened this finding. Teachers described intellectual stimulation as moments when leaders asked reflective questions, encouraged experimentation, or pushed them to justify instructional decisions. Participants frequently described being challenged to think, asked to explain reasoning, and invited to try new approaches. Teachers emphasized that growth happened not just because they faced challenges, but also because these challenges took place in a psychologically safe environment. Across both data sources, intellectual stimulation was linked most clearly to actual shifts in instructional practice.

This pattern indicates that intellectual stimulation served as the behavioral link between leadership and a growth mindset. While idealized influence-built trust and inspirational motivation sustained effort, intellectual stimulation activated change. Teachers described growth as emerging when they were encouraged to analyze data, revisit lesson design, or test alternative strategies without fear of punitive evaluation. When leaders made revision normal and framed instructional improvement as normal instead of unusual, taking risks was seen as safe. Growth mindset behaviors, such as persistence, reflective practice, and adaptive instruction, were most directly associated with leadership behaviors that prompted critical thinking and innovation. The data show that out of the Four I's, intellectual stimulation likely had the strongest link to teaching improvement because it pushed teachers to apply mindset principles instead of just agreeing with them.

Existing literature consistently identifies intellectual stimulation as central to professional growth. Bass (1985) and Bass and Avolio (1993) describe this dimension as

the leader's capacity to challenge assumptions and encourage creative problem solving. Empirical research indicates that intellectually stimulating leadership correlates with teacher innovation, productivity, and professional engagement (Butaki et al., 2024; Nyamubi, 2021). Research also shows that environments encouraging inquiry and reflection increase teacher efficacy and adaptability (Deng et al., 2023; Liu et al., 2023), which in turn fosters a culture of continuous improvement and resilience among educators. From a growth mindset perspective, intellectual stimulation aligns directly with Dweck's (2006, 2016) assertion that learning occurs when individuals confront challenges and revise understanding. The current results add to this research by indicating that providing intellectual stimulation might be the leadership behavior most connected to putting a growth mindset into practice, as it turns beliefs into teaching actions.

Purpose Sustains Effort (Inspirational Motivation)

Survey responses indicated that teachers generally experienced leadership as encouraging and oriented toward improvement. Teachers perceived leaders as maintaining a positive tone and reinforcing commitment to school goals. However, agreement was less consistent when teachers considered support during particularly demanding periods, suggesting that encouragement was experienced more strongly during routine instruction than during sustained challenge. Interview findings clarified this pattern. Teachers described motivation emerging not from formal expectations but from reminders of student impact and reassurance during difficult moments. Participants emphasized that leaders acknowledged effort, normalized struggle, and reframed setbacks as part of progress. Encouragement was experienced most strongly when teachers felt overwhelmed or uncertain rather than when performance was stable. Across both data

sources, motivation was associated with reinforcement of purpose rather than pressure to perform.

This finding suggests inspirational motivation functioned as a sustaining influence rather than an initiating one. Teachers did not rely on leadership to begin improvement but relied on leadership to continue advancement when effort became emotionally demanding. When leaders connected daily instructional tasks to long-term student growth, teachers remained engaged in refining instruction despite frustration. Growth mindset behaviors were therefore tied to how effort was interpreted rather than how much effort was required. By framing challenges as meaningful leadership reduced discouragement and supported persistence. Within the transformational leadership framework, inspirational motivation reinforced teachers' willingness to remain engaged in learning processes, following the establishment of trust, which enabled vulnerability, and the provision of individualized support, which facilitated improvement.

Transformational leadership literature describes inspirational motivation as communication of meaningful vision that strengthens commitment (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Burns, 1978). Educational leadership research similarly shows that leaders who reinforce shared purpose increase teacher engagement and perseverance (Williams, 2020; Serin & Akkaya, 2020). Additional studies indicate that emotional encouragement from leadership supports resilience during demanding instructional conditions, particularly by fostering a positive environment that helps educators cope with stress and maintain their commitment to student success (Deng et al., 2023; Patterson, 2022). Growth mindset theory posits that individuals persevere when effort is perceived as integral to learning rather than as an indication of inadequacy (Dweck, 2006, 2016). The current results add

to this research by showing that inspirational motivation mainly helps keep people engaged after they start making improvements, suggesting it plays a supportive role in developing a growth mindset rather than starting it.

Growth Mindset as an Environmental Outcome (Integrated Transformational Leadership)

Survey patterns indicated consistently positive perceptions across all leadership dimensions rather than isolated strengths within a single area. Teachers reported experiencing a mix of support, challenge, and encouragement. Instead, responses reflected a combined leadership presence in which expectations, guidance, reflection, and reassurance occurred together. Interview findings reinforced this pattern. Teachers rarely described a single leadership behavior as responsible for their development. Rather, they explained that trust, support, challenge, and motivation interacted over time. Participants discussed gaining confidence gradually through repeated cycles of feedback, revision, and encouragement. Improvement was described as an ongoing process shaped by daily interactions rather than specific initiatives. Across both data sources, growth mindset appeared not as an individual decision but as a shared experience within the professional environment.

This pattern suggests a growth mindset developed as a cultural outcome rather than a taught belief. Individualized consideration enabled improvement, intellectual stimulation encouraged experimentation, inspirational motivation sustained persistence, and idealized influence maintained psychological safety. Together these conditions shaped how teachers interpreted mistakes, effort, and progress. Teachers increasingly viewed instructional challenges as part of normal professional learning rather than

indicators of inadequacy. Over time, responses to difficulty shifted from avoidance to reflection. Growth mindset therefore emerged through repeated experiences that reinforced improvement as expected practice. Instead of adopting new beliefs first and changing behavior later, teachers changed behavior through supported practice and then internalized growth-oriented beliefs. The Four Is collectively created an environment in which improvements became routine.

Transformational leadership theory proposes that its dimensions operate interactively to influence organizational culture rather than independently affecting behavior (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Leithwood et al., 2008). Research in educational settings similarly shows sustained leadership practices shape professional norms and collaborative learning cultures (Day & Gu, 2014; Abdullah et al., 2018), which in turn foster an environment conducive to continuous improvement and professional development among educators. Growth mindset scholarship also emphasizes that beliefs develop through repeated experiences of effort leading to progress rather than isolated instruction (Dweck, 2006, 2016). The current results add to this research by showing that transformational leadership acts as a system for development, where each part helps create a different psychological condition, all working together to foster a teaching culture focused on growth. Growth mindset, therefore, appears less as an internal teacher trait and more as an environmental outcome of consistent leadership practice.

Balancing Support and Accountability (Tension Within Transformational Leadership)

Survey responses showed generally positive perceptions of leadership across dimensions, yet items related to emotional support during stressful periods and responses

to mistakes demonstrated comparatively lower agreement than other areas. This indicated that although leadership was generally perceived as supportive, specific circumstances engendered ambiguity regarding the mode of support provided. Interview findings clarified this tension. Teachers described occasions in which observation timing, workload pressure, or urgency of expectations affected how leadership actions were interpreted. The same feedback that was helpful in one context felt stressful in another when time constraints were high. Participants explained that they valued accountability but struggled when improvement expectations felt immediate rather than developmental. Across both data sources, leadership behaviors were interpreted differently depending on context and emotional readiness.

This finding suggests transformational leadership did not operate uniformly across circumstances. Support and pressure existed simultaneously, and the balance between them influenced whether teachers engaged in growth behaviors or protective behaviors. When accountability was paired with guidance and time for adjustment, teachers reflected and revised practice, leading to improved instructional strategies and student outcomes. Teachers prioritized performance over learning when expectations felt pressing and there wasn't enough time for processing. Growth mindset behaviors therefore depended not only on the presence of leadership practices but also on their pacing and delivery, which must strike a balance between high expectations and adequate support to foster a positive learning environment. The same leadership action could encourage improvement or discourage risk-taking depending on how it was experienced, such as whether it was perceived as supportive or overly demanding by the team

members. This information indicates that growth mindset development required both support and appropriately timed challenges.

Leadership literature acknowledges that transformational leadership includes high expectations alongside support (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). However, research also shows that excessive pressure can reduce experimentation and professional learning (Zacher et al., 2014; Khan et al., 2022), indicating that a balance must be struck between challenge and support to foster a productive learning environment. Educational studies indicate that teachers participate in adaptive improvement when they combine challenge with psychological safety and manageable pacing (Day & Gu, 2014; Nyamubi, 2021). The growth mindset theory also says that challenges only help people learn when they think they can succeed with hard work (Dweck, 2006, 2016). The present findings extend this literature by identifying delivery timing as a critical factor influencing whether transformational leadership fosters or inhibits growth mindset behaviors. Leadership effectiveness therefore depends not only on practices themselves but also on how teachers experience the balance between support and accountability.

Relative Influence of the Four Dimensions on Teacher Growth Mindset

Across the integrated findings, each dimension of transformational leadership contributed to the development of a growth mindset in teachers in a distinct way rather than exerting equal influence. Teachers did not describe growth emerging from a single leadership behavior. Instead, they experienced a sequence of conditions that progressively enabled learning-oriented responses to challenges. Trust allowed teachers to acknowledge difficulty, individualized support allowed them to improve, intellectual

challenge prompted them to revise instruction, and motivational reinforcement sustained persistence over time. When considered together, the dimensions functioned less as independent variables and more as interdependent stages within a developmental process. Growth mindset, therefore, appeared to emerge through interaction among leadership practices rather than from any single practice alone.

Among the four dimensions, individualized consideration demonstrated the most direct connection to observable teacher growth. Teachers consistently reported enhancements following the receipt of targeted guidance, feedback, and continuous coaching. Intellectual stimulation showed the clearest connection to behavioral change, as teachers experimented with instructional strategies when encouraged to analyze and revise practice, leading to enhanced student engagement and improved learning outcomes. Idealized influence functioned as a prerequisite condition by establishing psychological safety necessary for vulnerability, which allowed teachers to openly share their challenges and seek help without fear of judgment. Inspirational motivation sustained engagement but rarely initiated change independently. This pattern suggests the strongest immediate influence on growth mindset behaviors occurred when teachers experienced personalized developmental support, while the remaining dimensions created the conditions that allowed that support to be effective.

Transformational leadership theory conceptualizes the Four I's as complementary dimensions that collectively influence professional learning (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Leithwood et al., 2008). Educational leadership research similarly indicates that teacher development depends on both relational trust and instructional guidance (Day & Gu, 2014; Abdullah et al., 2018). Growth mindset literature proposes that beliefs about ability

change when individuals repeatedly experience improvement through effort (Dweck, 2006, 2016). The present findings extend these frameworks by proposing a functional hierarchy within the Four I's. Idealized influence creates psychological readiness, individualized consideration produces improvement, intellectual stimulation promotes adaptive experimentation, and inspirational motivation maintains persistence. Growth mindset develops through a series of leadership influences instead of just one type of leadership behavior, indicating that transformational leadership works as a step-by-step process in teacher learning environments.

Limitations

When interpreting the findings of this study, one should consider several limitations. These limitations do not invalidate the results but instead provide context regarding how the findings should be understood and applied.

One limitation of this study relates to the use of a single-site case study design. Data were collected within one charter school environment, and leadership practices were examined within a specific organizational culture. School norms, expectations, and relational dynamics may differ across schools and districts. Teachers' perceptions may have been shaped by shared experiences specific to their local context, as leadership behaviors are interpreted through that lens. As a result, the findings describe how transformational leadership functioned within this particular environment rather than representing all educational contexts. In schools with different structural conditions, levels of administrative stability, or staff turnover, teachers may interpret similar leadership behaviors differently. Therefore, the transferability of findings should be considered in relation to contextual similarity rather than assumed generalizability.

A second limitation involves the sample size and participation structure. The number of participants was limited to teachers within the selected school, and participation was voluntary. Those who opted in may have been more engaged, reflective, or willing to share their views than those who opted out. This may have resulted in responses that emphasized collaborative experiences over disengaged perspectives. If dissatisfied or disconnected teachers opted out, the study might miss negative perceptions of leadership practices. Consequently, the findings may reflect the experiences of actively involved staff more strongly than those of less involved staff members.

Another limitation concerns the reliance on self-reported perception data. Both survey responses and interviews required participants to interpret and describe their experiences. Teachers may unintentionally present their experiences in a socially desirable manner, particularly when discussing leadership within their workplace. Even with assurances of confidentiality, participants may have moderated criticism to maintain professionalism or protect relationships. Such conduct may have influenced the strength of positive responses and reduced the expression of dissatisfaction. As a result, the findings represent perceived leadership influence rather than independently observed behavior.

The mixed methods design also introduced a timing-related limitation. Data were collected during an active school year in which teachers were simultaneously engaged in instructional responsibilities, evaluation cycles, and ongoing professional demands. Participants' perceptions may have been affected by their current workload, stress levels, or recent interactions with leadership at the time of participation. A particularly positive

or stressful period may have affected how teachers interpreted leadership practices, leading to varying perceptions that could change over time as their circumstances evolve. Therefore, responses represent perceptions within a specific moment in time rather than stable attitudes across multiple years.

Additionally, the researcher's professional familiarity with the educational setting presents a potential limitation. Although steps were taken to maintain neutrality during data collection and analysis, participants may have interpreted the research through existing professional relationships. This could have influenced how openly individuals shared experiences or how cautiously they expressed critique. The researcher's prior understanding of the school context may also have shaped interpretation of qualitative data despite efforts to apply systematic coding procedures. For this reason, findings should be viewed as interpretive rather than purely detached observation.

Finally, the study examined perceived leadership influences on growth mindsets rather than directly measuring changes in teacher mindsets over time. The research design captured how teachers experienced leadership practices and how they believed they influenced their thinking and behavior. However, the study did not include longitudinal measurement of mindset development. Therefore, conclusions describe perceived developmental influence rather than causal psychological change. While perceptions are meaningful in understanding professional learning environments, they may not fully represent measurable cognitive change across extended periods, particularly because the study lacked longitudinal data to track actual changes in mindset over time.

Taken together, these limitations suggest the findings are best interpreted as a contextual explanation of how transformational leadership practices were experienced within a specific educational environment. The results provide insight into mechanisms of influence rather than universally generalizable effects, indicating that the specific context of the educational environment is key to the development of these influences. Future research conducted across multiple sites, extended timeframes, and varied educational contexts would further clarify the stability and scope of these relationships.

Directions for Future Research

This study examined how transformational leadership strategies were perceived by teachers as fostering a growth mindset within a charter school environment. While the findings clarify how the four dimensions of transformational leadership functioned within this context, they also raise important questions regarding the stability, generalizability, and long-term development of these relationships. Future research should extend this line of inquiry beyond a single site and moment in time to determine how leadership practices shape teacher growth across diverse educational environments.

A primary direction for future research involves expanding the study across multiple school contexts. Because the present study examined leadership influence within one organizational setting, it cannot determine whether the developmental sequence identified operates similarly in different environments. Schools vary in structure, student populations, leadership stability, and accountability demands, all of which may influence how leadership behaviors are interpreted. Future multi-site studies could compare charter, public, and private school environments to examine whether relational trust, individualized support, intellectual challenge, and motivational reinforcement function

consistently across settings. Comparative case studies would allow researchers to distinguish context-specific leadership effects from those that appear consistent across educational systems.

Another important direction involves longitudinal research designs. The present study captured teacher perceptions at a single point in time, which described how leadership was experienced but did not determine how growth mindset develops over extended periods. Future research should follow teachers across multiple years to examine whether sustained exposure to leadership practices leads to measurable changes in instructional confidence, adaptability, and persistence during instructional challenges. Longitudinal studies, which track the same subjects over an extended period, would clarify whether growth mindset emerges gradually through repeated experiences or whether certain leadership interactions produce more immediate developmental shifts.

Future studies should also incorporate direct measurement of teacher mindset development. The current study examined perceived influence rather than psychological change. Researchers could combine leadership perception instruments with validated growth mindset measures to determine whether teachers' beliefs about learning and ability change over time. Adding classroom observations would make the results stronger by linking mindset beliefs to visible teaching actions like helping struggling students, changing lessons, and adjusting teaching methods.

The role of individualized consideration warrants further investigation. Findings suggested that personalized feedback and coaching were most directly associated with teacher improvement behaviors. Future experimental or quasi-experimental studies could examine specific coaching structures to determine which forms of feedback most strongly

influence teacher learning. Researchers might compare structured coaching cycles, collaborative reflection meetings, and informal feedback interactions to identify how different support models influence professional growth.

Future research should also examine the balance between accountability and support identified in this study. Teachers described leadership expectations as motivating in some Situations can be stressful for some and not for others, depending on timing and delivery. Additional research could investigate how evaluation systems, observation frequency, and performance feedback interact with transformational leadership practices. Understanding how leaders maintain high expectations while preserving psychological safety would help clarify how growth-oriented professional cultures are sustained.

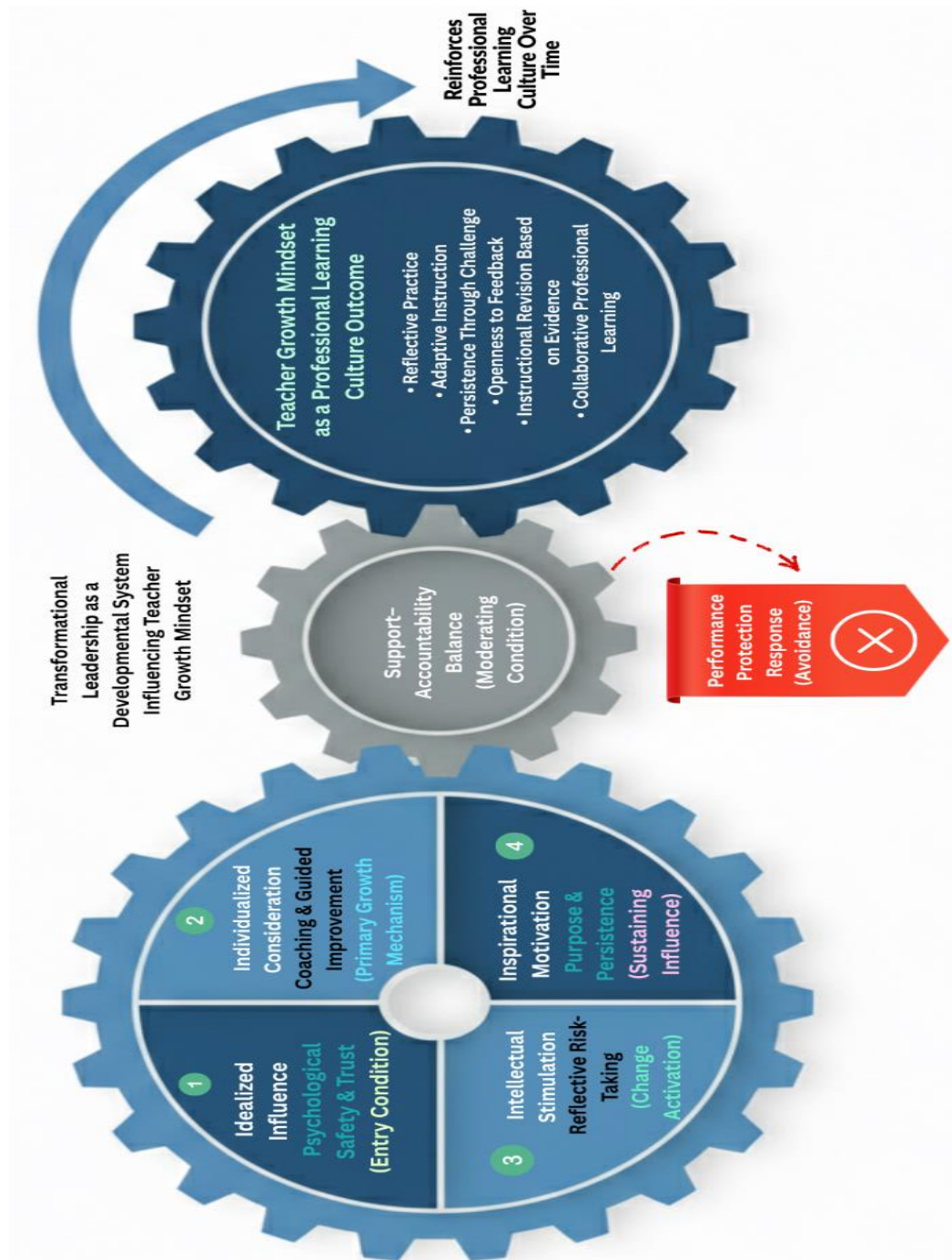
Finally, future research should address participant perspective and researcher positionality through varied research designs. Studies conducted by external researchers or large-scale anonymous surveys may capture different perceptions than site-embedded studies. Including teachers at different career stages across multiple schools would also clarify whether leadership influence on growth mindset differs based on professional experience.

Collectively, these directions suggest the need for broader, longitudinal, and methodologically diverse investigations into the relationship between leadership practices and teacher development. By analyzing various contexts, assessing shifts in mindset over time, and identifying particular leadership behaviors, subsequent research can transcend contextual analysis to achieve a more universal comprehension of how leadership environments facilitate continuous teacher development.

The development of the conceptual model presented in Figure 5.1 is directly grounded in the structure of the study's data collection and analysis. As outlined in Chapter 4, survey findings were organized according to the four dimensions of transformational leadership and further categorized into specific leadership practices within each dimension. These structured categories served as the foundation for identifying patterns in teacher responses. Through iterative analysis of qualitative interview data, these patterns were examined and interpreted, leading to the development of broader themes presented in this chapter. This progression from theoretically grounded data organization to empirically derived themes illustrate how leadership practices collectively shape teacher experiences and contribute to the development of a growth mindset within the school context. Figure 5.1 summarizes the conceptual model derived from the findings of this study. The model illustrates how transformational leadership functions as a developmental system shaping teacher growth mindset within the school context.

Figure 5.1

Transformational Leadership as a Developmental System Influencing Teacher Growth Mindset



Idealized influence establishes psychological safety and trust as the entry condition that enables teachers to engage in professional learning. Individualized consideration supports teacher development through coaching and guided improvement, while intellectual stimulation encourages reflective risk-taking and instructional experimentation, ultimately leading to enhanced teaching practices and student outcomes. Inspirational motivation reinforces persistence by sustaining purpose and effort during challenging moments. Together, these leadership influences contribute to developing a teacher growth mindset as an outcome of a professional learning culture. The model also shows how the balance between support and accountability affects whether teachers choose to learn and grow or play it safe, which can impact their development and effectiveness in the classroom.

Conclusions

This mixed-methods case study examined how teachers perceived transformational leadership strategies as fostering a growth mindset within a charter school environment. The results indicate that a teacher's growth mindset is optimally perceived as a developmental outcome influenced by leadership conditions, rather than as a static trait or a belief that can be reinforced solely through messaging. Teachers described growth-oriented thinking emerging through repeated experiences of trust, guidance, challenge, and encouragement. When these conditions were consistently present, teachers reported greater willingness to reflect, revise practice, and persist through instructional challenges. For leaders in the field, these results emphasize that

fostering a growth mindset among teachers requires intentional design of the professional environment, including how feedback, expectations, and support are delivered over time.

A key conclusion is that trust functions as the entry point to professional growth. Teachers' perceptions indicated that growth-oriented behaviors such as help-seeking, reflection, and openness to feedback occurred only after psychological safety was established. Leadership credibility and emotional steadiness shaped whether teachers interpreted feedback as developmental or evaluative. For practitioners, this suggests that the effectiveness of any instructional leadership strategy depends on relational trust. Even high-quality professional development and coaching may have limited impact when teachers do not feel secure acknowledging uncertainty. Leaders who wish to cultivate teacher learning should prioritize consistency, fairness, and respectful communication in both routine interactions and moments of stress. This does not imply lowering expectations. Instead, it highlights that accountability is received differently depending on whether teachers trust the leader's intent.

A second conclusion is that individualized support is central to translating effort into growth. Teachers described meaningful development occurring when leaders provided actionable feedback, tailored guidance, and follow-up over time. These experiences shaped teachers' beliefs about learning by allowing them to see improvement as attainable through structured practice. For practitioners, the result reinforces the importance of coaching-oriented leadership. General encouragement, while valued, was not described as sufficient for sustaining improvement. Teachers emphasized growth when feedback was specific and connected directly to classroom realities. This suggests that leadership influence becomes strongest when leaders move beyond supervision and

enact individualized development. In practical terms, leaders can strengthen growth mindset by aligning feedback to clear instructional goals, scaffolding improvement through manageable steps, and creating opportunities for teachers to revisit strategies and reflect on progress.

A third conclusion is that intellectual stimulation appears to be directly tied to growth mindset enactment through instructional risk taking. Teachers described changing practice when leaders prompted reflection, encouraged experimentation, and supported revision. However, this finding also underscores that challenge is productive only when paired with psychological safety. Teachers were more willing to experiment when mistakes were normalized and when revision was treated as an expected part of professional learning. For leaders, this suggests that creating a culture of inquiry requires more than asking teachers to innovate. It requires protecting the learning process, framing mistakes as information, and providing space for teachers to test strategies without fear of punitive judgment. This is particularly relevant in environments where evaluation is frequent, time constrained, or perceived as high stakes. Leaders must be intentional about how they communicate the purpose of feedback and the developmental nature of instructional refinement.

A fourth conclusion is that inspirational motivation sustains persistence rather than initiating growth. Teachers described encouragement as most impactful during demanding periods, when effort felt difficult and confidence was reduced. Motivation was strengthened when leaders connected daily work to student impact and reframed struggle as part of progress. For those in the field, this suggests that sustaining teacher growth requires leaders to engage in meaning-making. Teachers persist when they

believe their effort matters and when leadership acknowledges the emotional demands of teaching. Encouragement that is relational and responsive appears more influential than broad vision statements. Leaders can strengthen persistence by recognizing progress, reinforcing purpose, and supporting teachers' resilience during periods of stress.

When considered collectively, the findings suggest that transformational leadership operates as a developmental system rather than a set of independent practices. Each dimension contributes a distinct function. Idealized influence establishes psychological readiness. Individualized consideration supports improvement. Intellectual stimulation activates experimentation and revision. Inspirational motivation sustains persistence. Together, these dimensions contribute to a professional culture in which a growth mindset becomes normalized as a shared practice. For leaders, this implies that improvement efforts are most effective when they are comprehensive. Programs that emphasize coaching without trust building or that emphasize high expectations without developmental support hinder sustained growth. Instead, the field may benefit from leadership strategies that deliberately incorporate relational trust, individualized development, secure challenge, and purpose-driven encouragement into routine practice.

An additional conclusion is that the balance between support and accountability is a critical condition shaping whether leadership fosters growth or compliance. Teachers described accountability as valuable when it was paired with guidance and time for adjustment but stressful when expectations felt urgent without sufficient developmental support. This suggests that leadership effectiveness depends not only on what leaders do but also on when and how they deliver expectations. For practitioners, this study reinforces the importance of pacing and responsiveness. Leaders can maintain high

standards while still fostering a growth mindset by clarifying developmental timelines, separating coaching from evaluation when possible, and providing structured opportunities for revision.

Overall, this study contributes a practical implication for the field. Leadership strategies that foster teacher growth mindset are not limited to encouragement or professional development initiatives. Instead, they involve creating conditions in which teachers feel safe to acknowledge struggle, supported to improve, challenged to think critically, and motivated to persist. In the Four I's, personalized attention and encouraging critical thinking were most closely linked to visible growth behaviors, while being a role model was necessary, and inspiring motivation helped maintain progress. For educational leaders seeking to strengthen teacher development, these findings suggest that growth mindset is fostered most effectively through coherent leadership systems that integrate trust, coaching, safe challenge, and purpose into the daily professional environment.

APPENDIX A
INTERNAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL



Date: September 29, 2025

Study #: IRB-FY2026-71

Study Title: Leadership Strategies that Foster a Growth Mindset in Charter Schools

Submission Type: Initial

IRB Decision: Exempt

Research Team:

Razan Zaher

Julia Smith

Based on applicable federal regulations, the above referenced study has been determined to be Exempt, with the following categories:

Category 2.(ii). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:

Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation; or

Notes for Researcher(s):

This submission includes the following approved documents:

- Recruitment Advertisement
- Date-Stamped Information Sheet - Interview V. 9-29-2025
- Date-Stamped Information Sheet - Survey V. 9-29-2025
- Interview Protocol
- Survey
- Permission Letter - Location Access - Oakland International Academy

- Permission Letter - Email List - Oakland International Academy

Letter and Consent Document:

This letter along with the IRB approved (date-stamped) consent document can be found in Cayuse in the Submission Details page under Letters and Attachments, respectively. Please make sure to use the most recent IRB approved version of the consent form in consenting participants.

Permission from Research Site(s):

Please note the following:

- This IRB exemption determination letter means that this research has met one or more of the federal criteria for exemption per 45 CFR 46.104-Exempt Research.
- Before the research is initiated, permission to conduct research at a given site must be obtained from all research locations listed in the IRB submission. You must keep copies of all such permission letters for your files.
- It is the responsibility of each researcher to follow all applicable policies and procedures of any outside institution where the research will be conducted.

Modifications:

Any changes to this exempt project must be reviewed by the IRB prior to initiation by submitting a MODIFICATION request. Do not collect data while the changes are being reviewed. Data collected during this time cannot be used in research.

Record Retention:

Exempt projects will be retained by the IRB office for three years after the last action on the project.

You are approved to start the research. Please retain a copy of this notification for your records. If you have any questions, please contact the IRB office.

Thank you.

The Oakland University IRB

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Transformational Leadership and Growth Mindset Development in Charter Schools

Researcher: Razan Zaher

Institution: Oakland University

Date:

Interview Format: Semi-Structured (In-person, Virtual, or Email)

Estimated Duration: 30–45 minutes

Consent: Confirmed prior to interview. Participant pseudonyms will be used.

Introduction Script

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. The purpose of this conversation is to explore your perspectives on leadership practices in your school and how these practices may influence your professional growth and mindset. Your insights will help inform a broader understanding of effective leadership strategies in charter schools. There are no right or wrong answers—please feel free to share your honest thoughts and experiences. This interview will be recorded (if in-person or virtual) and transcribed for analysis. Your responses will remain confidential.

Section I: Background and Role

1. Can you briefly describe your current role and how long you have worked at this school?
2. How would you describe the leadership style practiced at your school?

Section II: Transformational Leadership Dimensions

1. Idealized Influence

- How do school leaders serve as role models or set an example for staff?
- Can you share an experience where a leader's actions inspired your commitment or trust?
- In what ways do you see integrity or ethics play out in leadership at your school?

2. Inspirational Motivation

- How do leaders at your school communicate a shared vision or mission?
- How do you feel encouraged or motivated by leadership when facing challenges?
- Can you recall a time a leader's vision helped you persevere through a tough situation?

3. Intellectual Stimulation

- In what ways are you encouraged to think critically or explore new teaching methods?
- Have you felt supported when trying something new or taking instructional risks?
- How do leaders respond when you propose new ideas or solutions?

4. Individualized Consideration

- How do school leaders provide you with support that feels personalized or meaningful?
- Can you share an example of when a leader showed an understanding of your individual growth needs?
- How do leaders check in on your professional well-being or personal development goals?

Section III: Growth Mindset and Leadership

1. How would you describe your mindset towards professional growth and learning?
2. Do you believe leadership at your school contributes to fostering a growth mindset? If so, how?
3. What leadership actions have made you feel more resilient, adaptable, or reflective in your practice?
4. Are there any leadership practices that have hindered or discouraged your growth?

Section IV: Closing

1. Is there anything else you would like to share about how leadership has impacted your development as an educator?
2. Do you have any feedback or suggestions for how leadership at your school could better support teacher growth?

Thank you so much for sharing your time and experiences. Your insights are deeply valued and will contribute meaningfully to this research.

APPENDIX C

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Leadership and Growth Mindset: Teacher Perceptions in a Charter School Context

Purpose:

This survey aims to explore how teachers perceive leadership behaviors at their school and the influence of those behaviors on professional growth and growth mindset. Your honest feedback is confidential and will support leadership practices that empower and inspire educators.

Instructions:

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement based on your experiences at your current school.

Scale:

1 – Strongly Disagree | 2 – Disagree | 3– Agree | 4 – Strongly Agree

Section I: Idealized Influence

Reflecting ethical leadership, trust, and role-modeling

➤ **Ethical Leadership** – *Defined by respectful conduct, emotional maturity, rule adherence, and trustworthy behavior*

1. My school leader communicates with staff using a respectful and professional tone.
2. My school leader maintains a respectful manner when addressing concerns or challenges.

3. My school leader demonstrates empathy and shows genuine concern for others.
4. My school leader takes others' needs and perspectives into account when making decisions.
5. My school leader remains calm and composed, even in difficult situations.
6. My school leader consistently follows school policies and guidelines.
7. My school leader respects and upholds school rules and expectations.
8. My school leaders fulfill their responsibilities and commitments.
9. My school leader actively listens when staff members share ideas or concerns.
10. My school leader provides support and guidance when staff members need it.
11. I trust my school leader to act with integrity and fairness in all situations.

➤ **Trust** – *Defined as psychological safety, belief in leadership fairness, competence, and relational transparency*

1. I believe my school leader handles confidential matters with discretion.
2. My school leader creates a safe environment where I can speak without fear of negative consequences.
3. I trust my school leader to keep staff interests in mind when making long-term decisions.
4. I believe my school leader is competent in making informed leadership decisions.
5. My school leader is transparent when explaining the reasoning behind decisions.
6. I feel assured that my school leader considers staff input even when final decisions differ.
7. I have confidence that my school leader acts consistently with stated values.
8. I believe my school leader distributes responsibilities fairly among staff.

9. My school leader fosters a culture where mutual trust is expected and modeled.
10. I trust that my school leader prioritizes the success and well-being of the entire school community.

➤ **Role Modeling** – *Defined as leading by example, embodying school values, and setting the tone for professionalism and behavior*

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

1. My school leader sets a strong example of how staff should act professionally.
2. My school leader consistently reflects the values and expectations they promote.
3. My school leader's attitude and work ethic inspire me to do my best.
4. My school leader demonstrates commitment to continuous learning and growth.
5. My school leader shows up and remains present during critical school moments.
6. My school leader models respectful behavior in interactions with staff, students, and families.
7. My school leader's actions motivate others to strive for excellence.
8. My school leader takes accountability for their actions and decisions.
9. My school leader encourages a culture of integrity by practicing it themselves.
10. My school leader demonstrates high expectations through their own performance.

Section II: Inspirational Motivation

Reflecting vision, purpose, and motivation

➤ **Reflecting Vision** – *Defined as articulating clear goals, aligning actions to purpose, and inspiring a shared direction for the school community*

1. My school leader communicates a clear and compelling vision for our school's future.

2. My school leader helps staff understand how their work contributes to the school's overall goals.
3. My school leader aligns daily decisions with the long-term mission of the school.
4. My school leader inspires a shared sense of purpose among staff.
5. My school leader encourages us to work together toward a common goal.
6. My school leader regularly revisits and reinforces the school's mission and values.
7. My school leader's actions reflect a strong commitment to continuous improvement.
8. My school leader motivates the school community to strive for excellence and innovation.
9. My school leader fosters enthusiasm about the direction in which the school is heading.
10. My school leader ensures that our goals are forward-thinking and achievable
 - **Purpose** – *Defined as reinforcing meaning, connecting work to student impact, and instilling pride in professional contributions*
1. My school leader reminds staff of the greater purpose behind our daily work.
2. My school leader helps me see how my role contributes to student success.
3. My school leader emphasizes the importance of our work beyond test scores and compliance.
4. My school leader communicates the impact our efforts have on the school community.
5. My school leader encourages us to reflect on the “why” behind what we do.

6. My school leader celebrates progress that aligns with our school's mission.
7. My school leader helps staff take pride in their contributions to the school's goals.
8. My school leader reinforces that our work has long-term value for students' lives.
9. My school leader supports a culture where meaningful work is recognized and appreciated.
10. My school leader helps staff stay grounded in their professional purpose, even during challenging times.

➤ **Motivation** – *Defined as energizing staff, promoting perseverance, and encouraging a positive, driven work environment*

1. My school leader encourages me to keep going, even when work feels challenging.
2. My school leader promotes a positive and can-do attitude across the staff.
3. My school leader celebrates both small wins and major accomplishments.
4. My school leader recognizes and values the effort I put into my work.
5. My school leader uplifts the team during stressful or demanding times.
6. My school leader motivates me to give my best effort each day.
7. My school leader sets high standards while offering encouragement to reach them.
8. My school leader helps staff stay focused and driven throughout the school year.
9. My school leader shows enthusiasm that makes others feel energized.
10. My school leader creates a culture where effort and resilience are acknowledged.

Section III: Intellectual Stimulation

Reflecting innovation, critical thinking, and professional growth

➤ **Innovation** – *Defined as encouraging creativity, supporting new ideas, and creating a safe space for experimentation and continuous improvement*

1. My school leader encourages staff to try new instructional strategies or ideas.
2. My school leader supports creative thinking and fresh approaches to problem-solving.
3. My school leader is open to feedback and new perspectives, even when they challenge the norm.
4. My school leader fosters an environment where it is safe to take risks and learn from mistakes.
5. My school leader actively promotes a culture of continuous improvement.
6. My school leader empowers staff to lead innovative initiatives or projects.
7. My school leader is flexible and responsive when new approaches are needed.
8. My school leader values experimentation as part of the learning process.
9. My school leader encourages collaboration in developing new ideas.
10. My school leader models adaptability and openness to change

➤ **Critical Thinking** – *Defined as promoting reflection, problem-solving, questioning assumptions, and encouraging thoughtful decision-making*

1. My school leader encourages staff to think critically about instructional practices and outcomes.
2. My school leader challenges us to question assumptions and consider alternative perspectives.
3. My school leader supports staff in analyzing the root causes of school challenges.

4. My school leader promotes reflective thinking as a regular part of professional practice.
5. My school leader encourages staff to use data and evidence when making decisions.
6. My school leader fosters discussions that deepen understanding and insight.
7. My school leader supports staff in evaluating the effectiveness of their own teaching methods.
8. My school leader values thoughtful dialogue over quick solutions.
9. My school leader provides opportunities for staff to engage in problem-solving collaboratively.
10. My school leader models curiosity and lifelong learning through critical inquiry.

➤ **Professional Growth** – *Defined as supporting continuous learning, providing development opportunities, and encouraging reflective improvement*

1. My school leader encourages me to pursue opportunities for professional development.
2. My school leader provides useful feedback that helps me grow in my role.
3. My school leader supports staff in setting and achieving professional goals.
4. My school leader fosters a culture of ongoing learning and improvement.
5. My school leader connects staff with resources to support their professional growth.
6. My school leader challenges me to reflect on my practice and make improvements.
7. My school leader recognizes growth over time, not just final outcomes.

8. My school leader provides opportunities to take on new roles or responsibilities that support development.
9. My school leader creates a space where learning from both success and failure is encouraged.
10. My school leader actively invests in helping staff reach their full potential.

Section IV: Individualized Consideration

Reflecting support for individual growth and well-being

➤ **Support for Individual Growth** – *Defined as recognizing individual needs, encouraging personal development, and nurturing potential with care and attention*

1. My school leader takes time to understand my unique strengths and areas for growth.
2. My school leader provides individualized encouragement that helps me build confidence.
3. My school leader supports my growth in ways that align with my personal and professional goals.
4. My school leader checks in with staff in meaningful, personal ways—not just about work.
5. My school leader respects different learning styles and adjusts support accordingly.
6. My school leader believes in my potential, even when I doubt myself.
7. My school leader provides a safe space where I feel seen, heard, and valued.
8. My school leader helps me navigate challenges without judgment.

9. My school leader acknowledges my progress, not just my performance.
10. My school leader supports me as a whole person—not just as an employee.

➤ **Well-being** – *Defined as promoting emotional balance, work-life sustainability, and a supportive school climate where staff feel cared for and respected*

1. My school leader is attentive to the emotional well-being of staff.
2. My school leader encourages a healthy work-life balance.
3. My school leader creates an environment where staff feel safe and supported.
4. My school leader recognizes when staff may be overwhelmed and offers support.
5. My school leader takes staff well-being into account when making decisions.
6. My school leader actively fosters a culture of kindness and respect.
7. My school leader checks in on staff beyond just work-related matters.
8. My school leader creates space for staff to voice concerns about stress or burnout.
9. My school leader promotes practices and routines that reduce unnecessary stress.
10. My school leader helps create a school climate where people feel emotionally safe and valued.

Section V: Growth Mindset Climate

Reflecting beliefs about development, resilience, and support

➤ **Development** – *Defined as expanding staff capacity, nurturing leadership skills, and preparing individuals for long-term growth and impact*

1. My school leader provides opportunities that help me grow beyond my current role.
2. My school leader encourages me to take on leadership responsibilities.

3. My school leader helps me build skills that support long-term career development.
4. My school leader identifies and nurtures potential in staff members.
5. My school leader creates pathways for advancement within the school or profession.
6. My school leader supports mentorship or coaching opportunities for continued growth.
7. My school leader empowers staff to set long-term goals and supports them in achieving those goals.
8. My school leader invests in building future leaders within the school.
9. My school leader provides constructive feedback that helps develop new competencies.
10. My school leader motivates me to continuously develop my strengths and reach new milestones.

➤ **Resilience** – *Defined as supporting staff through challenges, promoting perseverance, and fostering strength during adversity*

1. My school leader encourages staff to stay focused and steady during challenging times.
2. My school leader models how to respond to setbacks with strength and optimism.
3. My school leader supports staff in bouncing back from difficulties or failure.
4. My school leader helps reframe challenges as opportunities for growth.
5. My school leader maintains a sense of calm and clarity when the school faces stress or disruption.

6. My school leader promotes team culture that values persistence and problem-solving.
7. My school leader empowers staff to keep moving forward, even when facing uncertainty.
8. My school leader recognizes the emotional weight of hard seasons and provides steady encouragement.
9. My school leader helps staff maintain long-term perspective during short-term struggles.
10. My school leader celebrates resilience and grit as important parts of success.

➤ **Support** – *Defined as being present, responsive, and actively helping staff meet their needs and responsibilities*

1. My school leader is available when staff need guidance or help.
2. My school leader responds promptly and thoughtfully to staff concerns.
3. My school leader provides resources that help me succeed in my role.
4. My school leader checks in regularly to see how staff are doing.
5. My school leader advocates for staff needs at the school or district level.
6. My school leader ensures I have what I need to do my job effectively.
7. My school leader follows up on requests or concerns in a timely way.
8. My school leader supports me when I face difficulties, both personally and professionally.
9. My school leader creates a dependable and encouraging presence in the school.
10. My school leader is someone I can count on when I need support.

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