

Transformational Leadership and Educational Development in Seventh-Day Adventist Schools of The Central Malagasy Conference, Madagascar

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Article History	Abstract
Original Research Article	<i>Despite increased research interest in leadership of educational quality among developing countries, there are few documented studies on the transformational dynamics of religious school leadership in Africa, especially resource-constrained learning environments like Madagascar. This study examines the impact of transformational leadership on school educational development in Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) secondary schools in the Central Malagasy Conference of Madagascar. Using a mixed-methods approach, quantitative surveys (n=28) and qualitative interviews (n=34) assessed leadership style, teacher motivation, student performance, and adherence to Adventist educational philosophy. Quantitative findings showed a strong correlation between transformational leadership and academic achievement, with teacher motivation the strongest predictor ($r = .658$, $\beta = .412$, $p = .016$). The highest transformational leadership schools experienced 21% to 28% improvement across various indicators. Qualitative findings revealed four main themes: a shared inspiring vision, individualized support, shared governance, and addressing contextual challenges, including limited resources. Findings indicate that transformational leadership rooted in Malagasy values of service and cultural values improves teacher motivation, student achievement, and institutional growth, even if hampered by material constraints. However, the leadership effect is moderated by resource constraints, explaining 47.6% of unexplained variance. The study extends transformational leadership theory by demonstrating that changes are required in faith-based, communal, and resource-poor contexts. Practical recommendations are leadership development programs that embed transformational competencies in Adventist philosophy, institutional support mechanisms that reduce administrative workload, and policy systems that ensure leadership succession. This research contributes to the application of leadership theories from across the globe to African faith-based educational settings and provides evidence-based guidance for SDA educational leadership development.</i> Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Educational Development, Madagascar, Faith-Based Education, Teacher Motivation, Mixed-Methods.
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Copyright © 2025 The Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use provided the original author and source are credited. Citation: Oliva Colombe ANDRIAMPANIRY RATSIMBA, Angela Ewhonne Nwaomah, Ph.D. (2025). Transformational Leadership and Educational Development in Seventh-Day Adventist Schools of The Central Malagasy Conference, Madagascar. UKR Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (UKRJAHSS), Volume 1(9), 98-108.	

Introduction

Leadership plays an important role in all sectors today and is crucial to the success of any organization. In the field of education, it is said that leadership has long been recognized as one of the main determinants of educational quality, influencing teacher motivation, instructional quality, and student learning (Bush, 2020; Leithwood & Sun, 2018). Among the various models, transformational

leadership has gained growing attention with its promises to inspire vision, promote collaboration, and build the capacity of teachers and students. Research demonstrates that transformational leaders positively influence teacher commitment, school culture, and students' learning outcomes across different contexts (Ng, 2021; Hitt & Tucker, 2016).

Despite this global praise, the majority of low- and middle-income countries still face leadership issues, including limited resources, lack of training, and conflicting demands between academic accountability and holistic education (Oduro, 2020). At a regional scale, the African educational systems, particularly faith-based institutions, hold a unique position because they not only pursue academic excellence but also moral and spiritual development. Such leadership extends the responsibilities of management to values leadership and servant leadership that has its impact on the overall school community (Muleya, 2022). Spiritual elements of education and, accordingly, SDA school leadership extend the administrative leadership roles of decision making and policy enforcement to moral guidance, character building, as well as students' all-around development (White, 1903; Knight, 2016).

Locally, in Madagascar, there are several long-term problems with the Adventist schools within the CMC (Central Malagasy Conference). Razafiarivony and Andriamanalina (2023) cite that among them are the scarce funding, absence of teachers, high staff turnover rates of up to 35% annually, a lack of professional learning experiences, and growing pressures for instructional accountability. Despite the challenges, SDA schools remain among the highly rated institutions for instructional quality as well as spiritual growth in Madagascar. While several studies have examined leadership in the African faith-based environments more broadly, there remains a significant gap regarding the specific dynamics in Madagascar's Adventist educational system (Razafiarivony & Andriamanalina, 2023).

Research Objectives

This study aims to examine the link between transformational leadership styles and education development outcomes in Adventist schools in the Central Malagasy Conference of Madagascar.

Research Questions

1. What are the leadership styles being adhered to by Adventist school leaders in the Central Malagasy Conference?
2. How do leadership styles influence teacher motivation, students' academic performance, teacher retention, community engagement, and spiritual growth?
3. To what extent do leadership practices align with the Adventist philosophy of education?
4. What are the challenges and opportunities for school leaders to promote educational development?

Research Hypotheses

H1: There is a significant positive correlation between Adventist schools' transformational leadership competencies and teacher motivation.

H2: There is a significant positive correlation between transformational leadership styles and educational development outcomes (teacher motivation, academic success, teacher retention, community engagement, and spiritual growth) in Adventist schools compared to other types of leadership.

H3: There is a considerable positive relationship between the Adventist philosophy of education-oriented leadership practices and both spiritual growth and academic performance in Adventist schools.

H4: Resource constraints moderate the relationship between transformational leadership and educational development.

This study contributes to the literature by examining the impact of leadership styles on teachers' motivation, students' accomplishment, and organizational development within the framework of Adventist education philosophy. The research provides both practical and theoretical insights into faith-based school leadership by analyzing leadership challenges specific to Madagascar's socioeconomic environment.

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

This study includes four interconnected theories: Transformational Leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1994), Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1977), Adventist Philosophy of Education (White, 1903), and Educational Change Theory (Fullan, 2001; 2020).

These four theories provide a comprehensive approach for studying leadership in religious education.

Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational leadership is focused on the capacity of the leader to motivate, inspire, and allow followers to exceed their own capabilities (Bass & Avolio, 1994). It encompasses four dimensions: inspirational motivation, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Transformational leadership in schools can be seen to have the following impact: greater teacher motivation, improved student performance, and more collaborative school environments (Leithwood & Sun, 2018; Gunawan et al., 2021; Lumpkin, 2021).

Servant Leadership and Faith-Based Contexts

Servant leadership by Greenleaf (1977) involves leaders meeting their subordinates' needs first before their own. Servant leadership naturally aligns with Christian and Adventist education values of humility, compassion, service, and fellowship, as Black (2019) explains, "Servant leadership emphasizes the leader's role as one who nurtures, empowers, and develops the spiritual, emotional,

and professional well-being of teachers and students in faith-based schools” (p. 245). Thus, servant leaders are defined as empowering teachers, supporting spiritual development, and establishing relational trust in schools.

Educational Change Theory

Fullan's (2001, 2020) Theory of Educational Change suggests that leadership should promote capacity, collaboration, and sustainable improvement in organizations. This theory has considerable relevance in a resource-constrained context like Madagascar, particularly since leaders must manage the tension between continuing to improve and operating the business daily (Hitt and Tucker, 2016).

Adventist Philosophy of Education

The SDA education philosophy is holistic development that encompasses spiritual, intellectual, physical, and social dimensions of learning (White, 1903; Knight, 2016). As White (1903) emphasizes, “True education means more than the pursuit of a certain course of study. It means more than preparation for the life that is now. It has to do with the whole being, and with the whole period of existence possible to man” (p. 13). Moreover, leadership in an Adventist school is about academic achievement, character formation of teachers and students, and spiritual values. Muleya (2022) states, “In faith-based education, the leadership responsibility is to promote not only academic excellence but also spiritual nurture, moral formation, and the complete character development of both students and staff” (p. 45).

Empirical Studies of Related Studies

Transformational Leadership in Education

Empirical evidence repeatedly indicates that transformational leadership transforms teachers into more motivated staff, enhances school culture, and results in improved student outcomes. Leithwood and Sun (2018) analyzed over 70 empirical studies and determined that transformational leaders indirectly improve students' learning through teachers' professional commitment. Hitt and Tucker (2016) further indicated that vision and support leaders sustain school development. In developing countries, transformational leadership reallocates scarce resources by promoting teamwork and shared purpose (Bush, 2020). In religious contexts in Africa, vision-driven leadership coupled with empathy and service has worked (Muleya, 2022).

However, challenges remain. Transformational leadership's focus on inspiration may not actually transcend such structural barriers as insufficient resources and oppressive administrative pressures (Dimmock & Walker, 2005). Successful leadership in resource-constrained

situations thus requires both transformational actions and institutional support systems.

Educational Development in Faith-Based Schools

Educational progress includes academic achievement, teacher development, and spiritual advancement (White, 1903; Knight, 2016). Leadership is central to achieving these outcomes. Black (2019) found that transformational leaders increase teacher satisfaction and retention through cooperation and trust. Teacher motivation, a powerful mediating factor, maximizes the link between leadership and student outcomes (Gunawan et al., 2021; Lumpkin, 2021). In religious contexts, motivation rises when leaders are spiritually authentic and mission-driven (Ng, 2019).

Along with academic success, participative leadership fosters healthier school-community relations (Bush & Glover, 2016). Yet in Madagascar, persistent challenges of teacher turnover and resource availability limit the effectiveness of leadership in the context of high enthusiasm for moral and religious instruction (Razafiarivony & Andriamanalina, 2023).

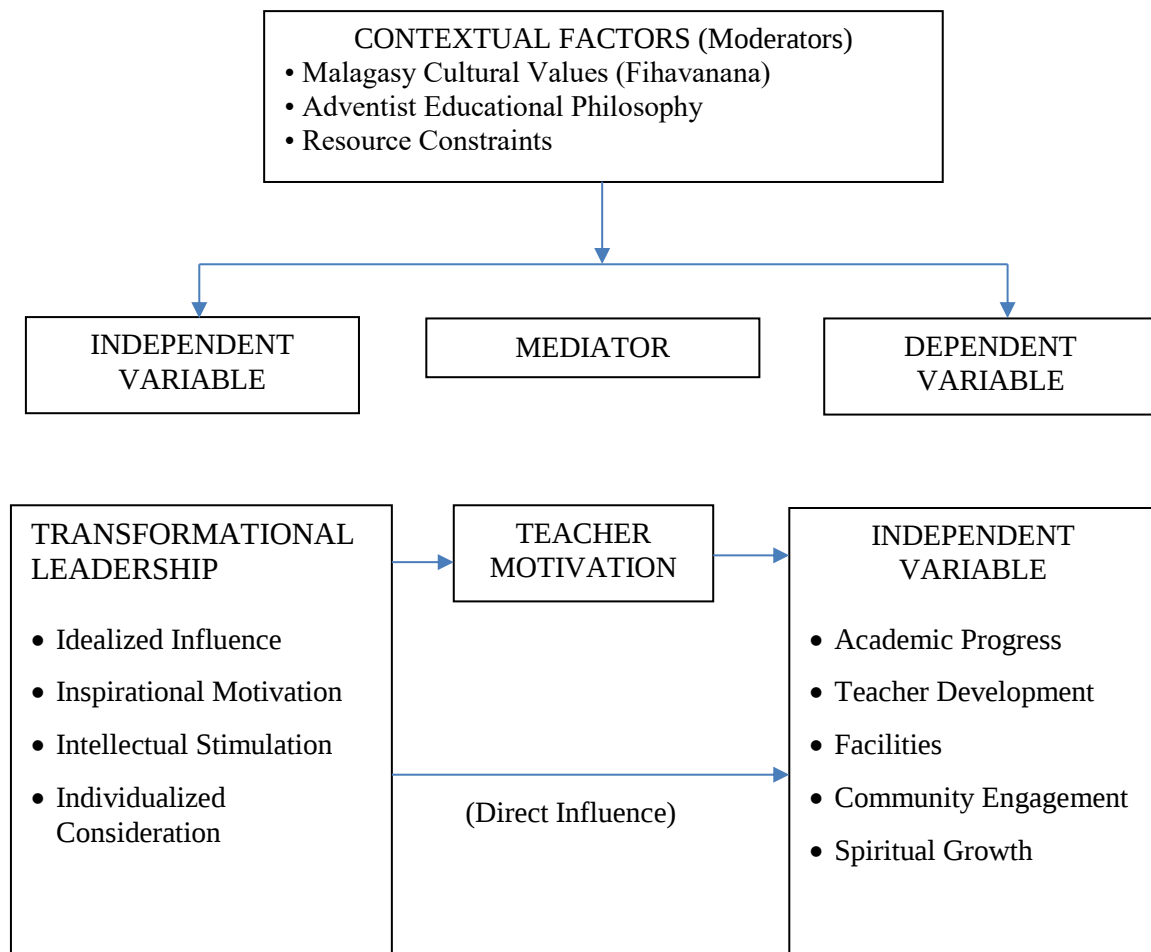
Research Gap

Amid significant research on leadership theories across the globe, very few empirical studies have focused on how these kinds of theories function in African SDA school systems. There have been even fewer studies that directly measured Adventist schools in Madagascar (Razafiarivony & Andriamanalina, 2023). As they explain, “Leadership in faith-based schools in Madagascar must carefully balance limited financial resources, cultural diversity, and the ongoing need to preserve the spiritual identity of Adventist education” (p. 92). This study tries to close the gap in the research.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 shows the conceptual map of the study, drawing upon Bass and Avolio's (1994) transformational leadership theory and White's (1903) Adventist philosophy of education. Transformational leadership (independent variable) influences educational development (dependent variable) via four dimensions, which are viewed through five indicators. Separating the two is teacher motivation, while contextual factors, such as Malagasy cultural values, Adventist philosophy, and limitations in resources, moderate the effectiveness of leadership.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



The framework demonstrates direct effects (leadership → results), mediated effects (leadership → teacher motivation → results), and moderate effects (contextual variables moderating the intensity of the relationship), guiding the hypotheses and analytical approach of the study.

Methodology

Research Design

This study used mixed methods research to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of transformational leadership on academic achievement in religious schools. This research design is useful because it allows for triangulation of data sources, including statistical comparisons (quantitative) and a deeper understanding of key findings (qualitative). According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2018), mixed-methods research is particularly useful in education because complex interpersonal relationships lend themselves well to narrative analysis and understanding.

Qualitative Approach

Participants and Sampling Strategy

There are 48 schools in the Central Malagasy Conference. The participant selection, through purposive sampling, included 34 participants from five Adventist secondary

schools of the Central Malagasy Conference. These schools were chosen to capture diverse settings (rural and urban) and represent different administrative levels within the Adventist education system. The total population of the five schools stood at 130, consisting of administrators and teaching staff.

Since Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) indicate that 12 participants may be sufficient to reach data saturation with qualitative data, and Morse (2015) recommends 30 to 40 participants for triangulated multiple views of stakeholders, having 34 participants assisted in offering rich, triangulated data and satisfied accepted methodological requirements for qualitative adequacy of the sample.

Sample Composition

The total number of participants in this study was 34, including:

- 20 teachers (58.82%) in primary and secondary education in urban and rural areas
- 8 principals (23.53%), including principals, vice principals, and academic coordinators
- 6 key sources (17.65%), including conference education directors, experienced principals, and experienced teachers.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants (n = 34)

Characteristic	Category	n	%
Role	Teachers	20	58.82
	Administrators	8	23.53
	Key Informants	6	17.65
School Type	Primary	14	41.18
	Secondary	20	58.82
Location	Urban	17	50.00
	Rural	17	50.00
Experience	3-5 years	11	32.35
	6-10 years	14	41.18
	More than 10 years	9	26.47

Average years of experience = 7.3 years

Data Collection Procedures

Concerning the procedures, data were collected through semi-structured, face-to-face interviews between July and September 2025. Face-to-face interaction was used instead of e-interviews to enhance trustworthiness, authenticity, and a culturally attuned communication platform, central to Malagasy social worlds, valuing relational harmony (fihavanana). Interviews were conducted in participants' preferred language (Malagasy) to enhance higher accuracy and cultural sensitivity, and each interview lasted approximately 45–60 minutes.

The interview protocol was composed of open-ended questions examining participants' familiarity with transformational leadership, its impact on student learning and teacher motivation, and challenges incurred in implementing leadership practices. Finally, all interviews were recorded with consent and professionally transcribed into English for analysis.

Ethical considerations

This research was approved by the Ministry of Education of the Central Malagasy Conference. All participants provided written informed consent stating the following:

- Voluntary participation and freedom to withdraw without penalty
- Confidentiality and anonymization processes
- Data storage and use procedures
- Potential risks and benefits of participation

Confidentiality was maintained in the research process, and all identifying information was stripped from transcripts and reports. Audio tapes are stored on password-protected devices and will be destroyed after the required retention period.

Qualitative Data Analysis

For analysis, qualitative data were analyzed thematically following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step process to

identify recurring patterns and meaning of the stories of participants. Analysis began with familiarization of the data, where all the interview transcripts and the field notes were read multiple times to have a detailed sense of the context and the tone. After that, manual initial codes were developed to identify key concepts related to leadership practices, teacher motivation, and student outcomes. They were then coded in more overarching categories, such as relations between ideas, while maintaining correspondence with the four research questions of the study.

Finally, with successive refinement and comparison, there were four dominant themes identified: (1) Inspirational and Transformational Leadership Practices; (2) Transformational Leadership and Educational Development; (3) Leadership Alignment with the Adventist Philosophy of Education; and (4) Contextual Challenges and Opportunities to Leadership Practice.

Trustworthiness Measures

To foster credibility and trustworthiness, member checking was utilized by the researcher in the form of initial findings being given to selected participants for verification. Peer debriefing was also conducted with two qualitative research experts to check for consistency in coding and interpretation. All the qualitative data were kept secure, and analysis was facilitated by the ethical guidelines of confidentiality and respect for participants' voices.

Qualitative Results

For the results, there are four main themes reflecting the development of transformative leadership practices in Adventist schools. Table 1 summarizes these themes, their relevance to the research topics, and key insights from participant stories.

Table 2. Summary of Qualitative Findings

Theme	Aligned Research Question	Key Insight	Main Message
1. Inspirational and Transformational Leadership Practices	RQ1 – What leadership styles are adhered to by Adventist school leaders?	Leaders demonstrate vision, faith-based integrity, and servant-minded attitudes that inspire teachers through moral example and collaboration.	Transformational and servant leadership coexist, fostering motivation and shared purpose.
2. Transformational Leadership and Educational Development	RQ2 – How do leadership styles influence teacher motivation, student performance, and institutional growth?	Visionary and supportive leadership enhances teacher motivation, innovation, and community engagement, strengthening academic and spiritual outcomes.	Transformational leadership drives holistic educational development.
3. Leadership Alignment with the Adventist Philosophy of Education	RQ3 – To what extent do leadership practices align with the Adventist philosophy of education?	Leadership integrates faith, learning, and service through worship and moral formation, though administrative duties can limit spiritual mentoring.	Faith-based leadership aligns academic excellence with spiritual mission.
4. Contextual Challenges and Opportunities to Leadership Practice	RQ4 – What challenges and opportunities do school leaders face in promoting educational development?	Resource shortages, workload, and infrastructure gaps hinder progress, but cultural values such as <i>fihavanana</i> and strong community trust sustain morale.	Context moderates leadership success, but faith and social harmony maintain effectiveness.

Summary of Table 2:

As shown in Table 2, the four themes suggest that transformational leadership and servant leadership are closely linked in Adventist schools and influence teacher motivation and deep learning. Christian leadership stimulates intellectual achievement and religious development, although it is influenced by context. Overall, the findings suggest that shared characteristics, a shared vision, and collaboration are important for academic success in environments described as resource-limited.

Integration with Madagascar Context

The findings show how transformational leadership settles into the specific economic and cultural context in Madagascar. The collaboration orientation is compatible with Malagasy cultural values of *fihavanana* (kinship) and shared responsibility. The resource constraints are most clearly realized in Madagascar, where learning centers continue to be underdeveloped despite recent progress.

Spiritual-academic integration is the common thread that explains how leadership theories from across the globe are being interpreted within religious contexts and how transformational leadership for Adventist schools will necessarily incorporate theologically and culturally aware strategies that go beyond secular leadership theory.

Relation to Transformational Leadership Theory

The themes correspond directly to the dimensions of transformational leadership defined by Bass and Riggio

(2006): Inspirational Vision Sharing reflects inspirational motivation; Individualized Support reflects individualized consideration; Collaborative Governance reflects intellectual stimulation through mutual engagement; and Contextual Challenges acknowledge the influence of the environment on leadership. But the emphasis on spiritual development and community partnerships goes beyond transformational leadership theory's secular origins, and it may be that faith-based educational contexts necessitate integrative theoretical constructs combining religious educational philosophy and secular leadership theory.

Quantitative Approach

Research Design

The quantitative aspect of this study applied a descriptive correlational research design. The design applied was meant to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between the practices of transformational leadership (independent variable) and educational development results (dependent variable) in Adventist secondary schools of the Central Malagasy Conference. It is suitable to apply a correlational design, as Creswell and Creswell (2018) posit, when one has no desire to manipulate variables but just to record associations between them. This design enabled the researcher to measure the effect of leadership behaviors on teacher motivation, student achievement, and school development in actual settings.

Population and Sampling

The target population included teachers and administrators from Adventist secondary schools under the Central Malagasy Conference. Using stratified random sampling, 28 respondents were selected to represent different schools and roles (teachers, principals, and administrators). This sample size was considered adequate for correlational analysis, following the guidelines of Cohen (1992), who suggested that 25–30 participants can yield meaningful correlations at the 0.05 significance level in small-scale educational studies.

Instrumentation

Data were gathered through a systematic questionnaire in three sections. Section A collected demographic information (gender, age, role, experience, and type of school); Section B measured transformational leadership practices in four dimensions, such as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration; and Section C measured educational development outcomes like teacher motivation, student achievement, retention, community involvement, and spiritual development. All items in Sections B and C were rated on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The instrument, taken from established scales of leadership and education (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Leithwood & Sun, 2018), was translated into Malagasy so that it could remain clear and contextually applicable.

Validity and Reliability

The instrument was tested and validated by three research methodology and educational leadership experts, who reviewed the clarity of items, content, cultural sensitivity, and appropriateness. The results of the Cronbach's alpha were .785, indicating high internal consistency of the instrument, and the KMO measure of sampling adequacy was .742, which indicates that the instrument was valid and reliable for measuring transformational leadership and

educational development outcomes in the Adventist school context.

Data collection procedures

Questionnaires were distributed to participants online or in person to accommodate varying levels of technological access between city and rural schools. Informed consent was required before the completion of the voluntary contribution. The questionnaire took about 20-25 minutes to complete, and all responses were anonymously submitted for confidentiality.

Data Analysis

First of all, statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS Version 26. Moreover, to test the hypotheses of the study, Pearson correlation was used to determine the inter-relationships between the transformational leadership variables and educational development indicators and multiple regression analysis to assess the predictive capability of leadership dimensions (idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration) on teacher motivation and institutional growth.

The significance level was set at $p < .05$, and statistically, as well as theoretically significant, results were interpreted. The reliability of the instrument was ensured by a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .89 indicating high internal consistency. Quantitative findings were then integrated with qualitative findings during interpretation to provide a comprehensive explanation of transformational leadership's effects in faith-based schools.

Quantitative Results

Quantitative study tested the four hypotheses to determine the relationships between transformational leadership and Adventist secondary schools' development. Table 2 presents the summary of statistical results, interpretations, and conclusions of each hypothesis.

Table 3. Summary of Quantitative Findings

Hypothesis	Statistical Result	Interpretation	Conclusion
H1: There is a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership competencies and teacher motivation.	$r = .68, p < .01$	Strong positive correlation shows that leaders who inspire and support teachers enhance motivation and commitment.	Supported – Transformational leadership increases teacher motivation.
H2: Transformational leadership significantly influences educational development outcomes.	$R^2 = .48, p < .01$; $\beta = .412$ (motivation), $\beta = .367$ (inspiration)	Leadership explains nearly half of educational development variance; motivation and inspiration are the strongest predictors.	Supported – Leadership strongly impacts academic educational development.
H3: Leadership practices aligned	$\beta = .39, p < .05$	Faith-integrated leadership	Supported – Alignment

Hypothesis	Statistical Result	Interpretation	Conclusion
with the Adventist philosophy of education predict higher spiritual and academic growth.		improves morale and student performance through spiritual and moral guidance.	with Adventist values enhances holistic growth.
H4: Resource constraints moderate the relationship between transformational leadership and educational development.	$\beta = -.29, p < .05$	Limited resources weaken the positive impact of leadership on development outcomes.	Supported – Context moderates leadership effectiveness.

Summary of Table 3:

As shown in Table 3, all four hypotheses were supported. Transformational leadership positively affected teacher motivation and school improvement strongly, because it is actually inspirational and moral leadership that inspires institutional improvement. But contextual limitations such as stringent funding and work overload moderated the intensity of these effects. The findings justify the proposed conceptual framework of the hypothesized conceptual framework and reinforce the moderation effect of resource adequacy in Malagasy faith-based schools.

Discussion

Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

This study clearly demonstrates that transformational leadership has a significant impact on academic achievement in Seventh-day Adventist schools in the Central Conference of Madagascar. A synthesis of the research findings and literature reveals the specific influences of leadership and their impact on academic achievement.

Teacher Motivation as a Significant Mediator

Teacher motivation was found to be the strongest predictor of academic achievement ($r = 0.658, \beta = 0.412, p = 0.016$), and motivated teachers achieved better results ($M = 4.32$ vs. $3.51, p = 0.004$). Qualitative results showed that teachers placed a high value on individual support and recognition. One teacher stated: "When my vice-principal gave me feedback, I felt supported as a Christian teacher, not just an employee." This shows that the commitment to individual support is reflected in mentoring practices and confirms that this personalized support increases motivation (Leithwood & Sun, 2018) and extends professional development to religious contexts related to spiritual formation.

Spiritual-Academic Integration: Theory and Practice

Strong correlations between adherence to Adventist philosophy and spiritual growth ($r = 0.623, p < 0.01$) and academic achievement ($r = 0.492, p < 0.01$) reinforce the theme of a Shared Inspirational Vision. Leaders who articulated holistic visions achieved 19% greater spiritual growth and 21% higher high school graduation rates. One

principal stated, "We help students understand how education fulfills God's purpose." This builds on the inspiring argument of Bass and Riggio (2006), who show that an effective vision in schools must integrate spiritual identity with the quality of education (Ng, 2019) and emphasize that leadership in religious organizations requires a combination of spiritual mission and academic achievement.

Resource Limitations as Critical Moderators

Although the regression model showed high correlations ($R^2 = 0.524, F = 4.817, p = 0.004$), it only explained 52.4% of the variance. Qualitative findings revealed that resource scarcity and administrative burden limit leadership effectiveness. As one administrator put it: "Due to budget constraints and excessive workloads, we are not able to focus on instructional leadership." The 47.6% unexplained variance and non-significant community involvement effect ($\beta = .196, p = .151$) demonstrate that transformational leadership requires institutional capacity and cannot be overcome.

Cultural Adaptations of Transformational Leadership

The Shared Governance theme and moderate leadership-community involvement correlation ($r = .473, p < .05$) both show that effective leadership in Madagascar exemplifies fihavanana (kinship), the Malagasy concept of community and communal responsibility. One of the key informants mentioned: "When parents and church are involved in decision-making, school is healthier. Leadership is not lonely, it is shared." This perception resonates with idealized influence practiced in humility and inclusivity. In keeping with Bush and Glover (2016), participatory leadership within African education builds communal legitimacy and trust. Within the Adventist setting, shared governance is in keeping with collective mission philosophy, and it suggests that transformational leadership, as originally cast in individualistic cultures, must be extrapolated to communal and religious leadership practice.

Theoretical Implications

The findings confirm the validity of transformational leadership in Madagascar's Christian schools and reveal three theory extensions. Successful religious leadership

involves the integration of academic success into spiritual development, as evidenced by the strong correlation between philosophy-spiritual growth ($r = .623$), which calls for models that integrate secular leadership theory and Christian school philosophy.

Second, transformational leadership varies among communal cultures, and collaborative government and community participation demonstrate that efficacy favors collective over individual action, with theory stretching beyond Western origins to recognize principles such as *fiHAVANANA* (Bush & Glover, 2016). Third, resource restrictions fundamentally moderate leadership effectiveness, with the model accounting for just 52.4% of variance, demonstrating that influence is dependent on institutional capabilities rather than leader conduct (Dimmock & Walker, 2005).

Practical Implications

The findings suggest three practical implications. Training for leadership development must emphasize individualized consideration ($\beta = .412$), vision articulation that includes spiritual-academic goals, and culture-sensitive joint decision-making. Institutional support must reduce administrative burden via support staff, networks of shared resources, and church-school alliances. Policy design should establish leadership standards consistent with Adventist philosophy, succession planning, and context-appropriate evaluation systems.

Summary Findings

Transformational leadership, based on Christian values and institutional support, contributes significantly to academic and spiritual growth in Christian schools.

Leadership based on integrity, promoting a shared vision, and supporting teachers has a positive impact on teacher motivation and institutional development. The lack of resources and infrastructure remains an ongoing challenge. Overall, the data support the idea that spirituality-focused leadership is essential to holistic educational development in Adventist institutions in Madagascar.

Conclusion, Limitations, and Recommendations

Conclusion

This mixed-methods study found that transformational leadership had a significant impact on educational development in Adventist schools in Madagascar, with teacher motivation being the strongest predictor ($r = 0.658$, $\beta = 0.412$, $p = 0.016$). Schools with high levels of transformational leadership performed 21–28% better on several indicators. However, the model explained only 52.4% of the variance, indicating that leadership effectiveness was hindered by limited resources and systemic barriers.

Four qualitative themes emerged: shared motivational vision, individual support, collaborative management, and contextual challenges. Motivational motivation and individual attention were the most important ($M = 4.21$ and 4.08 , respectively). Leaders who aligned their practices with Adventist philosophy experienced greater spiritual growth ($r = 0.623$, $p < 0.01$) and better academic performance ($r = 0.492$, $p < 0.01$). The results suggest that transformational leadership requires contextual adaptation to resource-limited religious and community settings. This requires integrating Adventist values and balancing spiritual and academic priorities.

Limitations on the Study

There are a few limitations to note. First, specifically, the small quantitative sample ($n=28$) may limit the potential for generalizability beyond the context of this particular research within the Central Malagasy Conference. Second, the correlational design identifies associations but cannot determine causality. Third, self-reported data in religious contexts may introduce social desirability bias. Fourth, the possibility of transfer to similar religious schools with limited resources is limited. Finally, the lack of longitudinal data prevents the investigation of the sustainability of leadership effects over time.

Recommendations

Based on the combined findings, the following evidence-based practice and policy recommendations are presented:

To School Administrators: Instill transformational and servant leadership principles by modeling ethical behavior, encouraging teacher growth, and inspiring vision for the Adventist mission.

To Institutions and Policy Makers: Develop institutional capacity through leadership training, resource mobilization, and church, community, and governmental collaborations.

For Future Research: Conduct longitudinal and comparative research in both religious and public schools to determine the long-term effects of transformational leadership on learning outcomes.

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