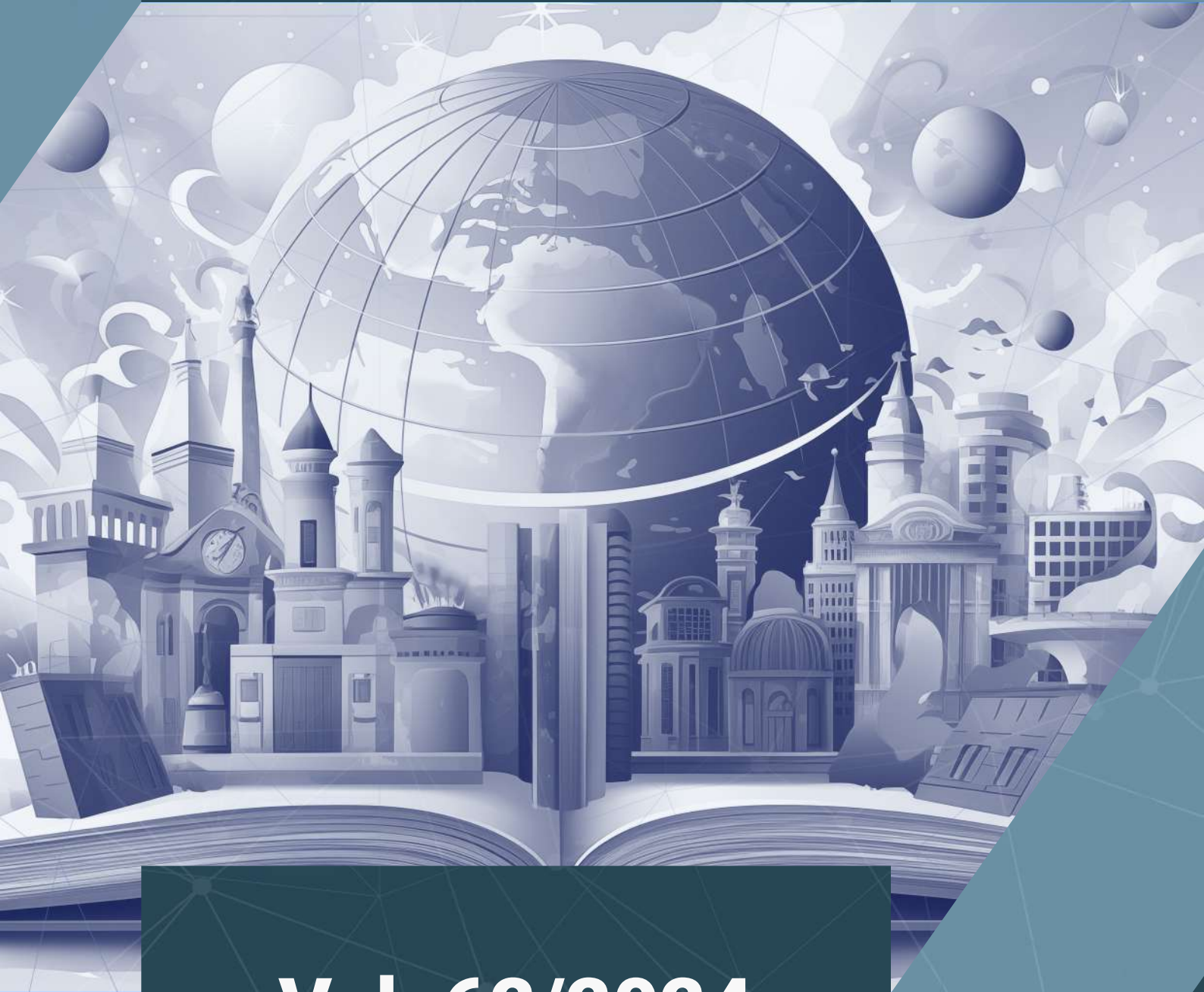




TECHNIUM
SOCIAL SCIENCES JOURNAL



Vol. 62/2024
A New Decade for Social Changes

PLUS
COMMUNICATION P



International
Communication & PR

Transformational Leadership Practices and Work Engagement among School Heads: An Explanatory-Sequential Mixed Method Inquiry

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Abstract. This study examined the transformational leadership and work engagement of 169 public school heads. It also sought an in-depth explanation of their transformational leadership and work engagement experiences. The sample was stratified, and the multifactor leadership questionnaire and Utrecht work engagement scale were used. Semi-structured interviews collected the qualitative data. In selecting 10 participants, maximum variation was employed. School heads' transformational leadership was great, and administrative experience correlated with it. Meanwhile, they had a very great work engagement. Their transformational leadership was associated with their work engagement. The qualitative phase generated four themes: values at the heart of a transformational leader; experience at the heart of shaping transformational leadership knowledge and skills; passion at the heart of a transformational leader; and organizational change and accomplishments mirror the influence of school heads' transformational leadership to work engagement. As a result, they transformed their organizations and achieved success. Their leadership style stimulated motivation, consideration, idealized influence, and intellectual stimulation among teachers. They have found fulfillment through work. Therefore, transformational leadership and work engagement are vital to a successful organization.

Keywords. Education, transformational leadership, work engagement, explanatory-sequential, public-school heads, Philippines

1.0 Introduction

Transformational leadership was conceptualized by Burns in 1978 [1] and further developed by Bass in 1995 [2]. It is primarily concerned about achieving extraordinary outcomes and allows employees to develop their leadership capabilities. According to Bateman and Snell [3], transformative leadership reshapes employees to follow institutional rather than personal goals. Claudine [4] also claimed that transformational leaders meet the needs of their followers and create a pleasant work environment by encouraging and challenging their followers to devise solutions to various problems. A transformational leader inspires their followers through a clear mission, optimism, enthusiasm, and emotional appeal [5]. The

relationship between transformative leadership and work engagement has recently received a lot of scholarly attention due to the upsurge of coronavirus disease.

Employees who are highly engaged are excited about their work and are frequently entirely immersed in it [6]. Work engagement is a good, rewarding state of mind characterized by zeal, dedication, and concentration [7]. Vigor as one of the work engagement dimensions is defined as having a lot of energy and being mentally tough while working. Dedication is being involved and feeling a sense of pride and challenge. Finally, absorption would be defined as being intensely focused and happily involved in one's work.

In Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) is in line with its commitment to support school heads to perform their roles in school, including improving teacher quality. The department adopted the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) [8]. The Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads is a public statement of professional accountability for school heads to reflect on and assess their leadership practice, as they aspire for and pursue professional development. As stewards of their institutions, school heads play a critical role in creating an enabling and supportive atmosphere for effective teaching and learning. Through their quality transformative leadership and work engagement, the mission and vision of the Department of Education will become a reality [9].

As observed, school heads in schools' divisions in Northern Negros Occidental have the authority, responsibility, and accountability for taking care of people, while maximizing organizational performance by setting its direction, managing their systems and processes, promoting quality instruction, nurturing and engaging stakeholders in initiatives towards the improvement of school communities amid the pandemic. Hence, effective, transformative leadership is required, as well as enthusiasm, absorption, and dedication to one's task [10].

Most studies were conducted correlating the transformational leadership practices of school heads with teachers' work engagement [11,12]. However, although the relationship between the two constructs has been studied in detail using a single research design [13,1], insufficient attention has been paid to the usage of mixed-method inquiry, particularly the explanatory sequential design focusing on public school heads. This is the gap that this study would like to fill in.

Hence, this explanatory-sequential inquiry described and correlated the transformational leadership and work engagement of public-school heads in the schools' divisions in Northern Negros Occidental during 2021-2022 relative to sex, age, years of administrative experience, highest educational attainment, and civil status. Likewise, it sought an in-depth explanation of school heads' overall transformational leadership and work engagement. The findings of this study were used as the basis for designing a leadership training program for public school heads.

2.0 Worldview

This explanatory-sequential research was anchored on the postpositivist, social constructivist, and pragmatist frameworks. The postpositivist worldview believes in the scientific process of reductionism. Here, the concepts or theories are reduced to their component hypotheses, evaluated by observation, and suitable statistical analysis [14]. The present study embarks a postpositivist view as it espoused rigorous methods of quantitative data collection. The researcher associated the transformational leadership and demographics, work engagement and demographics, and transformational leadership and work engagement.

Meanwhile, social constructivism was based on the premise that people have an inbuilt need to seek explanation and purpose in the world in which they live [14]. They form subjective

interpretations of the experiences. In this paper, this framework provided in-depth analysis and interpretation to understand the quantitative data. Finally, the pragmatist view holds that the priority in a research effort must be applications or answers to issues [14]. In this study, the output becomes the answer to the issues. Here, the researcher designed a leadership training program that aimed to enhance the school heads' transformational leadership practices and work engagement.

3.0 Methods

Research design. This paper employed the explanatory-sequential mixed-method research design. This involved a two-phase data collection, quantitative then qualitative [14]. On one hand, the quantitative design described and correlated the school heads' transformational leadership and work engagement relative to sex, age, years of administrative experience, highest educational attainment, and civil status. On the other hand, the qualitative design gave an in-depth explanation of their overall transformational leadership and work engagement. Until then, the integration of data was established using the joint display. The data integration happened by bridging the results from the quantitative and qualitative phases.

Participants. In the quantitative phase, the respondents were the 169 public-school heads in the city schools' divisions of Northern Negros Occidental during 2021-2022. They were determined using stratified random sampling. In the qualitative phase, the participants were determined using the maximum variation sampling. The researcher selected 1 participant from the elementary and 1 from the secondary level in each school's divisions, who scored high and low in both transformational leadership practice and work engagement.

Research instrument. In the quantitative phase, the multifactor leadership questionnaire (MLQ) was used to measure the four dimensions of transformational leadership namely: individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence. This instrument was already validated by the author. However, this was pilot tested again to address the items' culture bias and yielded a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.91. Regarding the work engagement, it utilized the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-17) developed by Schaufeli and Bakker [7] which contains 3 dimensions namely: vigor, dedication, and absorption. This was also pilot tested and yielded a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.85. Meanwhile, both questionnaires were responded using very great to very poor ratings. In the qualitative phase, using the interview protocol, the researcher employed the semi-structured interview to deepen the school heads' transformational leadership and work engagement experiences.

Data Analysis Procedure. In analyzing the quantitative data, the descriptive-correlational analyses were employed. Mean and standard deviation were utilized to describe the public school heads' transformational leadership and work engagement. Meanwhile, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov's test was used to determine the normality of the variables. The result showed that the transformational leadership practices [KS=0.067, p=0.060] was normally distributed while work engagement [KS=0.098, p=0.000], age [KS=0.091, p=0.000], sex [KS=0.364, p=0.000], years of administrative experience [KS=0.144, p=0.000], highest educational attainment [KS=0.490, p=0.000], and civil status [KS=0.518, p=0.000] were not normally distributed. The Chi-square test of association determined the relationship between the demographics, transformational leadership practices, and work engagement of school heads. Additionally, the Spearman rank correlation test associated the transformational leadership practices and work engagement. In the qualitative phase, the thematic analysis was used, adopting the framework of Lichtman's [15] three Cs: coding, categorizing, and conceptualizing.

Data Trustworthiness. To show that the data analysis was valid and reliable, the researcher established the trustworthiness of the analysis namely credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. In credibility, the researcher employed member checking. In transferability, it established the thick and dense descriptions to present the participants' experiences. In dependability, the study employed field notes and recording devices. Finally, in confirmability, the data were subjected to audit trail where an external auditor checked the alignment of the participants' responses and the generated themes.

Ethical considerations. Lastly, the researcher adhered to the ethical guidelines set by the Philippine Health Research Ethics Board (PHREB). The researcher addressed the general principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice.

4.0 Results and Discussion

Quantitative Data

Transformational Leadership Practices among Public School Heads

Table 1 showed that, as a whole, school heads show a great extent of transformational leadership practices ($M=3.19$, $SD=0.39$) regardless of age, sex, years of administrative experience, highest educational attainment, and civil status. In the 4 dimensions of transformational leadership, school heads manifest a very great extent in inspirational motivation ($M=3.40$, $SD=0.45$) and individualized consideration ($M=3.26$, $SD=0.46$). Meanwhile, they have shown a great extent of individualized influence ($M=3.05$, $SD=0.48$) and intellectual stimulation ($M=3.18$, $SD=0.53$).

The school heads in Northern Negros Occidental school divisions were able to encourage and influence their subordinates to achieve the common good for the school. Also, they have considered the needs of their subordinates and developed their innovativeness in coping with the challenges in the workplace brought about by the pandemic. It is noted that school heads coming from diverse backgrounds place a premium on the impact of their leadership style on their subordinates in maintaining excellent education in the face of a worldwide health crisis. Additionally, Anderson [16] stated that transformative leadership by school heads is critical. They play a significant part in school development, as seen by their collaborative efforts to produce a shared vision. The transformational creation of a shared vision, which is key to the school heads' function as transformational leaders, provides the foundation for changing workers' ways of thinking and doing things.

Likewise, the Department of Education emphasized the role of school heads as stewards of their institutions, which play a key role in building an enabling and supportive environment for effective teaching and learning [9]. Despite the abrupt move from traditional face-to-face class conduct to flexible modalities, fostering transformational leadership practices supports teachers since school leaders address their needs and build a good work environment [4]. This finding is supported by Al-Husseini et al. [17], stressing that transformational leadership could motivate teachers to participate in educational programs intended to develop abilities that can later be used to offer outstanding services.

In terms of the domains, the data shows that school heads demonstrate a very great extent in motivation ($M=3.40$, $SD=0.45$) and consideration ($M=3.26$, $SD=0.46$) respectively. The figures in table 1 show that school heads, regardless of age, sex, years of administrative experience, highest educational attainment, and civil status, are motivating and extending their consideration towards their teachers. School heads' inspirational motivation and individualized consideration are important aspects in their management in times of the pandemic, especially

in implementing flexible learning classes. Motivating their subordinates, either intrinsically or extrinsically, could empower them to perform their best to achieve institutional goals.

Eide et al. [18] noted that motivation influences behavior. It influences what people do and how they do it. A core technique of inspiring motivation is integrating human needs with the needs of an organization. Transformational leaders strive to foster a climate of collaboration and commitment by establishing the organization's vision, mission, and strategic goals and instilling a strong feeling of resolve among its personnel [19]. Meanwhile, a school head with individualized consideration cares deeply for their followers, respects them as people, gets to know them well, and listens to both their worries and suggestions [20]. As a result, people prefer to reciprocate by promoting the leader's goal and exceeding expectations.

The idealized influence ($M=3.05$, $SD=0.48$) and intellectual stimulation ($M=3.18$, $SD=0.53$) of school heads are also vital in their leadership. Data shows that school heads, when taken as a whole, demonstrate a great extent. Influence or charisma are valued by school heads, and intellectual stimulation is key to leadership. In action and words, leaders should inspire subordinates to do the right thing, and challenge their subordinates to develop novel solutions to workplace challenges to boost their self-esteem.

In idealized influence, school heads act as models for followers. They are respected, trusted, and emulated by their followers. Followers admire their leader's perseverance and determination. The leader takes ethical and moral risks to achieve organizational or personal goals [21]. They set a good example by sharing risks with employees and demonstrating ethical behavior [22]. Thus, the leader is a model of honesty and trust, setting concrete goals, having high expectations, encouraging people and providing support and recognition, stirring people's emotions and passions, and motivating them to look beyond their self-interests and strive for higher goals [23].

Intellectual stimulation is when school heads excite followers' curiosity, promote reexamining and questioning old ideas, and encourage critical thinking and novel methods. Intellectually stimulating leaders inspire followers to try new approaches to work [24]. For Thuan [25], followers are more likely to focus on and be engaged in their job rather than other concerns. In other words, intellectual leader stimulation increases the intrinsic motivation of followers.

Regarding the demographics, younger ($M=3.17$, $SD=0.39$) and older ($M=3.20$, $SD=0.39$) school heads practice transformational leadership to a great extent. Male school heads are very transformational ($M=3.21$, $SD=0.38$). Data show that school heads with more administrative experience are more transformational ($M=3.24$, $SD=0.39$). School heads without a master's degree demonstrate a very great extent ($M=3.26$, $SD=0.39$). Lastly, single school heads are very transformational ($M=3.30$, $SD=0.37$) than their married counterparts. The findings above imply that whether young or old, school heads often develop ideas, encourage people, and transform the talents of their teachers to uphold the standards in assuring the delivery of excellent education in the country through quality leadership, as specified by the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH).

As a public statement of school heads' professional accountability, the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads emphasized the importance of supervision in school management. It emphasizes school leaders' accountability and transparency [9]. Considering the importance of their leadership, school heads, regardless of age, tend to develop close relationships through warmth and compassion among their subordinates. An individual's propensity to focus on the good elements of social interactions can be characterized as amicability [26].

In transformational leadership, men are more assertive and dominant than women. Male school heads are more transformational than females. Their innovation explains this. When male leaders demonstrate transformational leadership, subordinates become more innovative, say Ariyani and Hidayati [27]. Ominini [28] said that while gender has advantages and disadvantages for management success, principal competency is more important. Social role theory says people use implicit assumptions about a job's expectations to determine if men or women are better suited for it. Because men traditionally held more power, they were assigned breadwinner and higher status roles, and are assumed to be more assertive than women. As homemakers and lower-status roles were more common for women, it was assumed they were less assertive. Women exercised power more democratically than men [29].

More experienced school heads show they have leadership and management knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs). More experienced leaders have a more complex identity in terms of KSAs [30]. School heads with leadership skills can help their subordinates innovate. When school heads engage in participative decision-making in a knowledge-sharing culture, employees can get more solutions, opinions, proposals, ideas, and information from coworkers [31].

According to Gates et al. [32], well-trained and supported leaders may move schools forward faster than less-prepared administrators. However, some of the major constraints to principals participating in professional development are, in terms of priority, conflict with working hours, a lack of incentives, a high training costs, a lack of training opportunities, a lack of employer support, family obligations, and necessities [10].

Coaching is a newer way to help leaders grow. A coach helps a motivated participant set professional goals and improve leadership skills [33]. Omemu [34] says education and experience are key to developing leadership skills. This means school leaders gain skills through formal training and guided practice. In addition, Haug and Mork [35] argue that specialized training both inside and outside the school community, such as professional development seminars, group discussions, and deliberations among colleagues, may frequently aid in the resolution of challenging management difficulties and challenges.

In civil status, leaders who are single have a very great transformational leadership practice because they can devote their complete attention to leadership tasks owing to the absence of additional marital commitments. According to research, many female school heads can't balance work and family. They put family before work. When female leaders work, their work and home responsibilities often conflict [36]. Longer work hours in school leadership positions often cause work-life conflict [37]. However, Omori and Bassey [38] found that married employees are more satisfied with their jobs than unmarried employees, promoting better work performance.

Table 1. Extent of Transformational Leadership Practices among Public School Heads

Variable	Idealized Influence			Inspirational Motivation			Intellectual Stimulation			Individualized Consideration			Leadership Practice		
	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int
Age															
Younger	3.06	0.46	GE	3.40	0.39	VGE	3.11	0.56	GE	3.22	0.46	VGE	3.17	0.39	GE
Older	3.04	0.49	GE	3.40	0.49	VGE	3.23	0.50	VGE	3.29	0.45	VGE	3.20	0.39	GE
Sex															
Male	3.10	0.46	GE	3.42	0.43	VGE	3.14	0.58	GE	3.29	0.42	VGE	3.21	0.38	VGE
Female	3.00	0.49	GE	3.39	0.46	VGE	3.21	0.48	VGE	3.24	0.48	VGE	3.17	0.40	GE
Years of Administrative Experience															
Shorter	2.99	0.47	GE	3.41	0.40	VGE	3.13	0.56	GE	3.22	0.47	VGE	3.15	0.38	GE
Longer	3.12	0.48	GE	3.40	0.51	VGE	3.24	0.48	VGE	3.31	0.44	VGE	3.24	0.39	VGE
Highest Educational Attainment															
w/ Masters	3.03	0.47	GE	3.41	0.45	VGE	3.13	0.52	GE	3.23	0.47	VGE	3.17	0.39	GE
w/o Master	3.11	0.53	GE	3.35	0.46	VGE	3.38	0.53	VGE	3.37	0.39	VGE	3.26	0.39	VGE
Civil Status															
Single	3.16	0.49	GE	3.47	0.45	VGE	3.37	0.44	VGE	3.34	0.50	VGE	3.30	0.37	VGE
Married	3.03	0.48	GE	3.39	0.45	VGE	3.15	0.54	GE	3.25	0.45	VGE	3.17	0.39	GE
Whole	3.05	0.48	GE	3.40	0.45	VGE	3.18	0.53	GE	3.26	0.46	VGE	3.19	0.39	GE

Note: VGE=Very Great Extent, GE=Great Extent

Work Engagement among Public School Heads

Table 2 shows school heads' work engagement. Overall, school heads are very engaged in their work (M=5.36; SD=0.48). School heads show great vigor (M=5.30, SD=0.57), dedication (M=5.63, SD=0.43), and absorption (M=5.18, SD=0.62). Young (M=5.34, SD=0.54) and old (M=5.37, SD=0.43), male (M=5.33, SD=0.48) and female (M=5.38, SD=0.48), both shorter (M=5.34, SD=0.50) and longer (M=5.38, SD=0.45) administrative experience, with masters (M=5.35, SD=0.49) and non-masters (M=5.40, SD=0.43) degree holder and both single (M=5.41, SD=0.40) and married (M=5.35, SD=0.49) school heads demonstrated a very great extent of work engagement. However, male school heads were found to be less absorbed (M=5.12, SD=0.62) than their female counterparts (M=5.24, SD=0.61).

The data above showed that school heads are vigorous, dedicated, passionate and focused on achieving their institutional goals despite the pandemic. Also, male school heads are less focused on their jobs than females. Vigor is a positive affective response to one's job and work environment that integrates physical strength, emotional energy, and cognitive liveliness [7]. According to the Conservation resources theory by Hobfoll [39] people have the motivation to obtain, retain, and protect the resources they value. Resources are personal energies, characteristics, objects, and conditions valued by individuals or used to obtain other objects, characteristics, conditions, or energies. Optimism, self-esteem, and self-efficacy are internal resources.

Psychological empowerment affects school heads' vigor. Monje-Amor et al. [40] describe it as a motivating factor consisting of job meaning. Competence or self-efficacy refers to work mastery. Self-determination is a person's independence in initiating and completing tasks. Impact is how much employees believe their work will affect organizational results. Another component that generates a high level of vigor among school heads is the so-called person and organizational context psychological capital. Self-efficacy, hope, optimism, resilience, and followership is linked to feeling vigorous and productive at work and job satisfaction [41].

Dedication involves enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge. This is when a person is dedicated to his or her job [7]. Goal achievement and goal progress are drivers of dedication in work engagement. For VandeWalle et al. [42], to understand the role of goal-directed behavior for work engagement, we relied on goal orientation theory as a motivating factor that relates to the specific aims that people pursue in instances of accomplishment. It has been proven that those with a high learning goal orientation are more likely to succeed in school by demonstrating good self-regulation [43]. As a result, such a goal orientation should aid in the

identification, construction, or utilization of resources at work and, therefore, in the maintenance of work engagement [44].

Absorption means concentration and being engrossed in work, so passing time is intangible. Absorption is manifested when someone is happy with their job [7]. Job satisfaction is an emotional response to job predictors [45]. Lee [46] defines intrinsic job satisfaction as an individual's satisfaction about the nature of job. Bektas [47] adds that in intrinsic satisfaction, an individual's perceptions match her/his expectations and evoke them. Achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement, growth, and work itself affect intrinsic satisfaction [48].

Another significant finding was that male school heads are less absorbed with their job compared to their female counterparts. They are not engrossed or immersed in their work, and they have no difficulty detaching from it. They also do not forget everything around them, including time. Some male school heads find themselves at a crossroads between work and family, with children who rely on them for a good education. They do, however, have families who rely on them emotionally [49]. Moreover, women are endowed with abilities and competencies that go beyond cognitive performance, such as attention and memory [50]. These characteristics are attentiveness, task persistence, eagerness to learn, learning independence, flexibility and engagement, and better work organization [51].

Table 2. *Extent of Work Engagement among Public School Heads*

Variable	Vigor			Dedication			Absorption			Work Engagement		
	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int
Age												
Younger	5.28	0.61	VGE	5.61	0.52	VGE	5.20	0.65	VGE	5.34	0.54	VGE
Older	5.32	0.54	VGE	5.65	0.36	VGE	5.17	0.60	VGE	5.37	0.43	VGE
Sex												
Male	5.27	0.57	VGE	5.65	0.42	VGE	5.12	0.62	GE	5.33	0.48	VGE
Female	5.33	0.57	VGE	5.62	0.45	VGE	5.24	0.61	VGE	5.38	0.48	VGE
Years of Administrative Experience												
Shorter	5.27	0.59	VGE	5.60	0.47	VGE	5.20	0.61	VGE	5.34	0.50	VGE
Longer	5.34	0.54	VGE	5.68	0.37	VGE	5.16	0.63	VGE	5.38	0.45	VGE
Highest Educational Attainment												
with Masters	5.30	0.58	VGE	5.63	0.44	VGE	5.16	0.63	VGE	5.35	0.49	VGE
without Master	5.33	0.54	VGE	5.65	0.40	VGE	5.27	0.57	VGE	5.40	0.43	VGE
Civil Status												
Single	5.38	0.47	VGE	5.70	0.38	VGE	5.20	0.50	VGE	5.41	0.40	VGE
Married	5.29	0.58	VGE	5.62	0.44	VGE	5.18	0.64	VGE	5.35	0.49	VGE
Whole	5.30	0.57	VGE	5.63	0.43	VGE	5.18	0.62	VGE	5.36	0.48	VGE

Note: VGE=Very Great Extent, GE=Great Extent

Relationship between the Demographics and Transformational Leadership Practices

As shown in table 3, age [2(2)=2.315, p=0.314], sex [2(2)=0.441, p=0.800], highest educational attainment [2(2)=0.512, p=0.774], and civil status [2(2)=2.226, p=0.329] had no relationship with transformational leadership practices of school heads. Years in administrative service [2(2)=8.431, p=0.015] correlated with school heads' transformational leadership practices. The more leadership and management experience a school head has, the more he or she learns about how to lead successfully.

Experience gives school heads specialized skills, manage operations and resources, lead instructionally, lead strategically, and build networks. Learning from experience is a popular way to develop leaders. It improves intrapersonal leadership-related knowledge, skills, and abilities. It may involve interpersonal changes, such as social capital development, that improve collective leadership [52]. Successful school leadership involves applying knowledge

and skills learned over time to build and grow a successful school, with the principal's success measured by the school's performance and the principal's effective leadership in varied school environments [53].

Table 3. Relationship between Extent of Transformational Leadership Practices and demographics

Variables	χ^2	df	p
Age	2.315	2	0.314
Sex	0.441	2	0.800
Years of Administrative Experience	8.431*	2	0.015
Highest Educational Attainment	0.512	2	0.774
Civil Status	2.226	2	0.329

Note: Relationship is significant at $p \leq 0.05$

Relationship between the Demographics and Work Engagement

Table 4 shows that there was no relationship between the age [$\chi^2(3)=2.246$, $p=0.523$], sex [$\chi^2(3)=3.410$, $p=0.333$], years of administrative experience [$\chi^2(3)=2.389$, $p=0.496$], highest educational attainment [$\chi^2(3)=3.868$, $p=0.774$], civil status [$\chi^2(3)=0.341$, $p=0.952$] and work engagement of school heads. This means that work engagement among school heads has nothing to do with their profile. Regardless of their diverse backgrounds, school heads are vigorous, dedicated, happy, and fully concentrated in their work to effectively realize the goals, mission, and vision of the Department of Education despite the pandemic.

School heads are aware of their responsibilities and capabilities at work. Folger et al. [54] contended that vigor is a resource that affects one to be more driven and capable of action. It consists of a positive emotional state that might increase work motivation and effort in work initiatives [55]. Individuals with a high level of vigor may also be able to continue in their efforts for a longer period [56]. Meanwhile, school heads showed their dedication to their work by identifying the goals of the organization. Goal directed behavior motivates school heads to be more dedicated in their work [42]. Furthermore, Pashiardis and Kafa [57] emphasized that a successful school head creates a solid culture of cooperation and collaboration, promotes school commitment, and is dedicated to carrying out national and institutional goals.

Table 4. Relationship between Extent of Work Engagement and demographics

Variables	χ^2	df	p
Age	2.246	3	0.523
Sex	3.410	3	0.333
Years of Administrative Experience	2.389	3	0.496
Highest Educational Attainment	3.868	3	0.276
Civil Status	0.341	3	0.952

Note: Correlation is significant at $p < 0.05$

Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Work Engagement

As depicted in table 5, there was a small positive relationship between transformational leadership practices and work engagement [$r_s(167)=0.277$, $p=0.000$]. This indicate that transformational leadership practices of school heads influence their work engagement. This suggests that school heads are more committed, dedicated and have found meaning in their work to the extent that they are more transformative in their schools.

A typical transformational school head has a high level of psychological ownership over the institution, which results in improved job performance and a decreased propensity to engage in deviant behavior. Additionally, they have greater organizational dedication, job satisfaction, and organizational self-esteem. Highly engaged school heads are completely

absorbed in their work [6]. It is an intrinsic motivation, driven by enjoyment and interest in one's work, and it is advantageous to the organization [58]. The direct relationship between transformational leadership and work engagement of school heads varies in intensity depending on the circumstances.

They contend that such direct impact is difficult to achieve and can arise from assisting employees in construing meaningfulness in their work. Finding a purpose in work greater than the task's external outcome is important to meaningful work [59]. In like manner, Lips-Wiersma et al. [60] describe meaningful work or meaning in work as the importance or value of work that the individual perceived. However, having meaningful work does not imply a continuous psychological state. People have various episodic experiences at work that are important or meaningless, which they integrate into a belief system about the importance of their work [61].

Table 5. Relationship between Transformational Leadership Practices and Extent of Work Engagement

Variables	rs	df	p
Leadership Practice x Work Engagement	0.277*	167	0.000

Note: *Correlation is significant at $p \leq 0.05$

Synthesis

The transformational leadership practice among school heads in Northern Negros Occidental as a whole was of great extent, with inspirational motivation and individualized consideration as very great extent and intellectual stimulation and idealized influence to a great extent. Also, it was found that a relationship existed between transformational leadership practice and school heads' administrative experience. Meanwhile, their work engagement was of very great extent regardless of the domains and their demographics. There was no relationship that existed between work engagement and demographics. Lastly, results revealed that transformational leadership practice has a relationship with work engagement.

Qualitative Data

Theme 1: Values at the heart of transformational leadership

School heads shared their experiences as they practiced transformational leadership in their institution during pandemic. Similar statements were organized into 7 subthemes: team player, walking the talk, vision-oriented, concerned for others, critical thinker and innovator, inspiring motivator, and charismatic.

Team player. The ability of a school head to build a team was regularly cited as a hallmark of transformative leadership by the participants. The importance of working together as a team cannot be overstated for an organization's success.

“School heads who work with their teachers firsthand, who make them feel that they part of the team, boost the morale of the school. Once the relationship is established, it is easier for teachers to follow regulations and policies and accomplish tasks a lot better at work” (Selene, personal communication, March 21, 2022).

“The reason being that transformational leadership is a member-focused approach to leadership where my members would be able to grow on their own under my facilitation and guidance” (Alvin, personal communication, March 23, 2022).

Walking the talk. It is important for a school head to be a role model for their employees to inspire and motivate them. Members of an organization should be led and guided by their leaders.

"His skills in leadership and of understanding human relations provide useful ways of motivating others. By setting an example in his action, he may persuade others to emulate him" (Alexa, personal communication, March 22, 2022).

"Active participation is another way to show that you are a motivational leader because motivation is not always about sitting down and talking to them to raise their morale. In participating, you show exemplary behavior as a leader that your constituents will take inspiration from or follow" (Alvin, personal communication, March 23, 2022).

Vision-oriented. One strategy to make an organization effective and productive is to set and communicate its goals to all of its members. An effective school head understands the importance of communicating these goals to the entire team.

"Schools can achieve goals through the cooperation of teachers and through the guidance of the school heads. School heads are not only pillars of the school, not only the person who held the helm, but they are also a team member who can-do hands-on work if necessary" (Selene, personal communication, March 21, 2022).

"While it is important to have leaders with the appropriate orientation defining tasks and managing interrelationships, it is even more important to have leaders who can bring organizations into futures they have not yet imagined as it is said that transformational leadership is the essence and sustaining competitive advantage" (Alexa, personal communication, March 22, 2022).

Concern for others. Creating a welcoming and loving work atmosphere fosters a sense of belonging among employees. To be fruitful, school heads should provide genuine support and empowerment to all organization members. Employees will respond with high levels of engagement and commitment when their needs are addressed, and they feel aligned with the organization's mission, vision, and values. They come to work with a positive attitude and are eager to go above and beyond to help the organization succeed.

"I think for a leader to be a great motivator, his or her presence should be felt in school not only as an idea but of real support and care. If the teachers feel supported, respected and generally cared for, they will have the energy to work better therefore accomplishing better outputs than all the other schools in the division" (Selene, personal communication, March 21, 2022).

"Building a supportive work environment for our teachers to develop their potentials through the various programs, activities and projects we are implementing in our respective school for the welfare of our employees both teaching and non-teaching personnel" (Telma, personal communication, March 23, 2022).

Critical thinker and innovator. Inviting members of the organization to use their critical thinking skills could help them improve the quality of their job. It is also critical for school heads to tap into the innovation of their members. Innovation is a strategy for achieving long-term success.

“On the other hand, it is important that a leader will stimulate the innovativeness and creativity of his subordinates in dealing with challenges and problems in school. In this manner, empowering his subordinates to become leaders on their own rights” (Alexa, personal communication, March 22, 2022).

“They are given opportunities to hone their knowledge and skills and allowing them to be resourceful and initiative in addressing the issues and concerns in the teaching and learning process rather than imposing in them to act on orders” (Telma, personal communication, March 23, 2022).

Inspiring motivator. The main goal of motivation is to provide the employees with the correct blend of direction, advice, techniques, assets, and compensation to inspire them and make them engage in working. Employees are, without a doubt, the most valuable resource for every organization.

“What is an effective motivational leader? If it means having the ability to push teachers to accomplish the amount of tasks assigned to them every day Then I guess I am. I think for a leader to be a great motivator, his or her presence should be felt in school not only as an idea but of real support and care” (Selene, personal communication, March 21, 2022).

“Effective motivational leader should have a good communication skill that encourages and persuade members to work as a team. Communication is essential in the organization in this way, the members understand what is supposed to deliver with clarity” (Kig, personal communication, March 21, 2022).

Charismatic. The ability of school heads to persuade their members to be dedicated to their job aids in achieving institutional goals. Members would consider him or her as a role model worth following because of his or her beneficial influence.

“In the context of a school head, there are some school heads who are good in influencing people and persuading its members to follow his decision and make their solutions to problems innovatively because of the leader's intellectual capability” (Kig, personal communication, March 21, 2022).

“Indeed, leaders need his or her charm to influence others. Good communication persuasiveness and the ability to connect with your subordinates are valuable and essential to develop and promote empowerment to the teachers and other subordinates” (Bok, personal communication, March 22, 2022).

Theme 2: Experience at the heart of shaping transformational leadership knowledge and skills.

School heads expressed their thoughts on the impact of experience on the development of leadership knowledge and skill. Because leaders are made, not born, it is important to have prior experience. The best experiences take school heads out of their comfort zones and extend their knowledge in leadership.

“A wise and experienced school leader can be more efficient and effective in running the school and so does his or relationship with the teachers. With wisdom, he or she can be a good learning resource for the teachers, an

enthusiast that can help guide the teachers do better at work” (Selene, personal communication, March 21, 2022).

“A leader with experience in all aspect of organizational functions obtained high respect from his subordinates or members. This is because people think of a leader that has knowledgeable in all aspect of administrative tasks and that years of experience manifest mastery in job performance” (Kig, personal communication, March 21, 2022).

Theme 3: Passion at the heart of a transformational leader

The participants confidently expressed their opinions on being passionately engaged in their job. The same statements were grouped into two subthemes: school heads' sense of accountability and school heads' work engagement to keep the flame alive.

Sense of work accountability. Organizational trust is built by high levels of accountability, particularly among school heads. Members have a high level of trust in their leaders because they know they will accept responsibility for their decisions and build stronger relationships with each other.

“School heads who work better than others are not due to his or her credentials. It can be due to how they are regarded in the workplace as a responsible leader” (Selene, personal communication, March 21, 2022).

“It is part of the function of the school head to actively engage in all programs, projects and activities. It is the quality or characteristics of the school head regardless of age, sex, years of administrative experience, educational attainment and civil status to take part of the organizational task as a whole” (Kig, personal communication, March 21, 2022).

Sense of work commitment. Passionate school leaders can engage employees' hearts and minds, encourage commitment and dedication, and empower them to achieve important goals. These school heads create an energizing atmosphere by combining enthusiasm, employee involvement, and transparency.

“When a school head is committed to his or her work, every task given will be fully accomplished in a given set of time. Dedication to work is not a matter of age, sex, or years of administrative experience” (Selene, personal communication, March 21, 2022).

“Yes, it is because if you have the passion, strong commitment to your work, positive communication and connection to your subordinates then I am sure you will be able to be motivated to go to work every day. Keeping things light but remain productive with honesty and trustworthy will lead to strong commitment to the achievement of goals. So, work engagement depends on your commitment and job enthusiasm” (Bok, personal communication, March 22, 2022).

Theme 4: Organizational change and accomplishments mirror the influence of transformational leadership to work engagement among school heads.

Increased work engagement and organizational success are the results of transformational leadership. As a people-oriented leadership style, transformational leadership practices increase the morale of all members of an organization, making them more effective and productive. When all components of the organization are performing effectively, school leaders will be more enthusiastic and committed to their work, resulting in the achievement of goals.

“Being a transformative leader is relative to the work engagement of school heads. When a school head learns to work well with the teachers in school, values their differences and guides them well in accomplishing the goals set by the end of the school year, then work engagement is only a by-product of this kind of leadership” (Selene, personal communication, March 21, 2022).

“The relationships of these constructs can be seen in the performance. Transformative leadership affects work engagement in the organization. It only means that a leader who wants to transform that causes change in the individual or society in work it must involve engagement to obtain such transformation” (Kig, personal communication, March 21, 2022).

Discussion

Theme 1. Values at the heart of transformational leader

Defining the value profile of a transformational school leader requires going into the very core of their value system. The researcher culled out 7 values: team player, walking the talk, vision-oriented, concerned for others, critical thinker and innovator, inspiring motivator, and charismatic.

Team player. Forming a working team that is active and capable of working together to achieve organizational goals should be highlighted in the school’s strategic management. It is noted in Polega et al. [62] that effective leadership stresses cooperation and collaboration. When schools commit to a culture of teamwork, principals are responsible for the transformational shift that occurs.

Walking the talk. To lead by example is to guide others by your actions rather than your words. Teachers want to see that their school head's actions match their words. This entails matching habitual practices, routines, and behaviors with the school heads' core values. According to Kouzes and Posner [63], transformational leaders model the way by articulating values, setting a clear example, and acting on the alignment of their personal values, the values of their subordinates, and the values of the organization.

Vision oriented. School heads in industrial revolution 4.0 are expected to define the educational institution's goals as stated in the school's vision and mission statement. To bring educational institutions to follow the technological innovations, information, and communication that developed in the industrial revolution 4.0, the ability to formulate future goals plays a critical role. Prestiadi et al. [64] stated that education leaders who have a clear vision will be able to better prepare themselves in terms of human resources and the facilities and infrastructure that educational institutions need.

Concern for others. The leader must not look down on others or see them as interchangeable and replaceable machinery. The leader must be concerned about the people’s well-being. Concurring to Ryan and Deci [65], school heads' leadership practices set the groundwork for teachers' personal resources and work outcomes. Practices that enhance individuals' self-initiation and empowerment are called autonomy-supportive leadership.

Critical thinker and innovator. It is also vital for leaders to engage in their students' creativity. The school heads’ intellectual stimulation and inspiring motivation are critical to the organization's innovation [66]. Effective school heads are cognizant of their employees' socioemotional needs, particularly through offering encouragement and encouraging success. They relate rewards to desired performance so that members' needs and the organization’s goals are aligned [63].

Inspiring motivator. An effective school leader motivates you to achieve greatness, and oftentimes extraordinary levels of performance, through gestures, words, doing things differently, and correctly timed rewards for jobs well-done. Khalili [67] mentioned that transformational leaders inspire and motivate their followers to try things and own their outcomes, which, in turn, harnesses the creative environment and encourages people to work in new ways.

Charismatic. The school heads' ability to persuade their members to be dedicated to their job aids in the achievement of institutional goals. Members would consider him or her as a role model worth following because of his or her beneficial influence. They must impart knowledge through modeling learning behavior to motivate employees to generate new ideas, which leads to the achievement of goals [68].

Theme 2. Experience at the heart of shaping transformational leadership knowledge and skills.

School heads are made, not born. The best experiences take school heads out of their comfort zones and extend their knowledge in leadership. For Elprana et al. [69], having more experience will give school heads an advantage because they will have spent more time practicing to be a leader. Traditionally, school heads were supposed to administer schools; however, the role of a principal has changed in years.

Sense of work accountability. Members have a high level of trust in their leaders because they know they will accept responsibility for their decisions and build stronger relationships with each other. Accountability's inception and spread can be attributed to a number of political and social trends. These worldwide trends, namely, massification, marketization, decentralization, standardization, and growing documentation in education, are expected to continue, reflecting the growing significance of education in society [70]. The school heads' function is frequently accompanied by responsibility and accountability. When they accept responsibility for using their authority for the intended purpose, they are held accountable to guarantee that the power is used responsibly to pursue the desired outcomes [71].

Sense of work commitment. Passionate school leaders can engage employees' hearts and minds, encourage their commitment and dedication, and empower them to achieve important goals. These heads create an energizing atmosphere by combining enthusiasm, employee involvement, and transparency. For Rana et al. [72], employees that are engaged in work with zeal and have a strong bond with their organization.

Theme 4. Organizational change and accomplishments mirror the influence of transformational leadership to work engagement among school heads.

Transformational leadership behaviors like intellectual stimulation and individual consideration may help to create a supportive organizational atmosphere that encourages high work engagement [40]. Accomplishments and positive change in the organization are reflected in school heads' work performance, job satisfaction, and school commitment, resulting in a more productive organization [73].

Synthesis

The various themes and sub-themes that emerged from the interviews revealed that school leaders are employing various transformational leadership practices in their respective organizations. It was also stated that having more leadership experience provides school leaders with more knowledge and skills. Moreover, some heads consider that having the correct

leadership attitude is more important than having tenured experience. Furthermore, heads demonstrated job dedication and enthusiasm and were fully engaged in their responsibilities. Finally, they concluded that transformative leadership and work engagement are intertwined in leading their schools.

Mixed Method Data

Discussion and Integration of Data

The core attributes of a transformational leader. The quantitative findings revealed that school heads had a great extent of transformational leadership, implying that they are capable of developing ideas, encouraging, and transforming the skills of their teachers. This was strengthened by a qualitative theme that highlighted the required values of a transformational leader, which eventually led to the meta-inference the core attributes of a transformational leader.

According to Bass [74], transformational leaders are able to inspire followers to change expectations, perceptions, and motivation toward the accomplishments of the common goal through the strengths of the leaders' visions and core values, which encompass both personal and professional qualities. The charisma, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, transformational school heads aim to elevate the needs of their members that are congruent with their own objectives. As a result, a transformational school head can be described as a visionary, a futurist, or a change catalyst who takes a proactive approach to leadership [75]. Meanwhile, idealized influence, means providing an influence that encourages the growth of new ideas, and inspirational motivation, which means attempting to provide continuous motivation that causes the growth of new inspirations that develop a productive work environment, and intellectual stimulation, which is providing intellectual stimulation to employees [76].

Leading by experience. The quantitative analysis showed that years of administrative experience were correlated with transformational leadership. A qualitative theme experience at the heart of shaping transformational leadership knowledge and skills reinforced this finding, which led to the meta-inference leading by experience. Every leader has a story to tell about the lessons and experiences that helped them achieve their goals. Experience is very essential to learning how to lead among school heads [77]. No job is smooth. Even the capable and resilient school heads face adversity. Challenges teaches them how to be resourceful and resilient. The COVID-19 outbreak has created adaptation challenges, reminding all stakeholders that the best way to address collective challenges is through collaboration and cooperation [78]. Therefore, every year of experience enables school heads to become more effective in their roles [79].

Finding meaning and a sense of fulfillment in work. The quantitative results found out that school heads demonstrated very great work engagement, implying that they have worked with high energy, showing the significance of the profession, and are involved in their work daily. This finding was deepened by the qualitative theme, passion at the heart of a transformational leader. The integration of the two results led to the meta-inference, find meaning and a sense of fulfillment in work. According to Carnevale and Hatak [80], the term meaningfulness is defined as one's perspective of the relevance of goals and tasks carried out at work in relation to oneself and life. Additionally, Han et al. [81] added that work meaningfulness is the actualization or manifestation of one's life purpose through work activities in an organization, leading to a feeling of fulfillment.

Bringing change and success to the organization. The quantitative data revealed that transformational leadership influenced school heads' work engagement. This was confirmed by the qualitative theme, organizational change and accomplishments mirror the influence of transformational leadership on school heads' work engagement. The combination of the two results resulted in the metainference, bring about transformation and success for the organization.

Transformational school heads promote and sustain closer relationships with their people. This connection is built on mutual trust between the leader and the subordinate, ensuring that communication is open and rich and feedback between them [82]. Also, highly engaged school heads are really enthusiastic about their work and are frequently completely involved in it [6]. This is due to the fact that work engagement is a manifestation of intrinsic motivation, which is fueled by a desire to do the work well [58].

Table 6. Joint Display of the Quantitative Results and Qualitative Themes

Quantitative Results	Qualitative Themes	Metainferences
1. School heads demonstrate transformational leadership to a great extent (often develop ideas, encourage, and transform the talents of their teachers).	Theme 1: Values at the heart of transformational leader a. Team player b. Walking the talk c. Vision oriented d. Concern for others e. Critical thinker and innovator f. Inspiring motivator g. Charismatic	A. The core attributes of a transformational leader
2. Years of administrative experience are associated with transformational leadership.	Theme 2: Experience at the heart of shaping transformational leadership knowledge and skills	B. Leading by experience
3. School heads demonstrate work engagement to a very great extent (work with a high level of energy, show the significance of the profession, and are happily involved in their work daily)	Theme 3: Passion at the heart of a transformational leader a. Sense of work accountability b. Sense of work commitment	C. Finding meaning and a sense of fulfillment in work
4. Transformational leadership influences the work engagement of school heads	Theme 4: Organizational change and accomplishments mirror the influence of transformational leadership on to work engagement of school heads	D. Bringing change and success to the organization

Synthesis

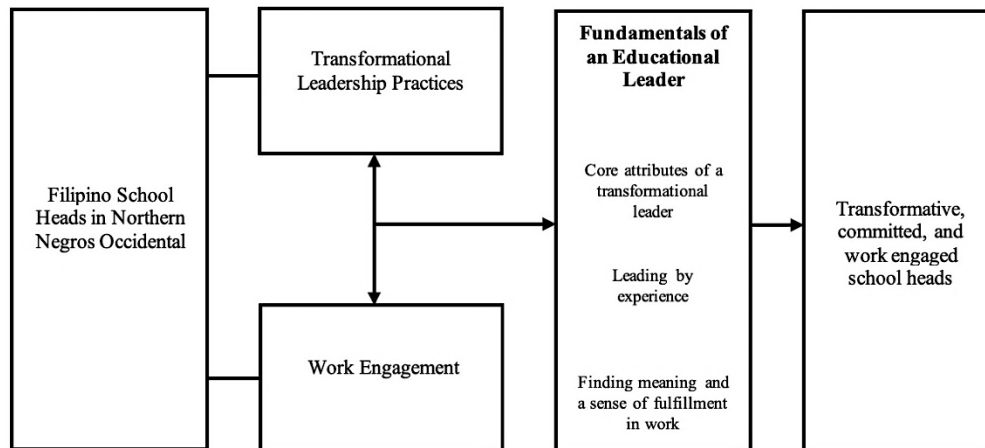
The integration of the quantitative and qualitative results revealed the essential attributes of a transformational leader, namely: team player, walking the talk, vision-oriented, concern for others, critical thinker and innovator, inspiring motivator, and charismatic. Also, it was found that experience has an association with the way school heads practice transformational leadership skills. Furthermore, school heads find meaning and feel a sense of fulfillment in their work, thus increasing their work engagement and bringing about positive change in the organization.

Emerging Framework

The school heads of Northern Negros Occidental were found to be transformative and engaged in their work. The relationship between their transformational leadership and work engagement was manifested in their core attributes as a leader, which was strengthened by their

administrative experience. They found meaning and felt a sense of fulfillment in their work. Because of this, they have brought change and even success to their organizations.

Figure 1. *Emerging framework on transformational leadership and work engagement*



5.0. Conclusion

School heads from Northern Negros Occidental's five school divisions have been identified as transformational and work engaged leaders. Transformational leadership style allows school heads to guide and motivate members and seeks new opportunities and challenges. It creates ideal conditions for innovation by forming innovative teams. Through their transformative practices, they have brought their organizations to success. Moreover, work engagement also plays a crucial role in promoting positive outcomes in an organization. School heads with high levels of engagement lead better. Hence, transformational leadership and work engagement of school heads are key to successfully lead an organization.

6.0 Limitations of the Study

The paper recognized a limitation in the generalizability of the results. Since the study only covers the school divisions in Northern Negros Occidental, the results might not apply to other divisions in other parts of the island. Another limitation perceived by the researcher was the limited access to data brought about by travel restrictions because of COVID-19. It could have been better if the researcher could interact face-to-face with the respondents rather than on virtual platforms.

7.0 Practical Value of the Paper

In addressing the school heads' continuous leadership improvement, a well-crafted Leadership Training Program that covers the different domains of transformational leadership and work engagement, will assist school heads in their professional leadership improvement. This can be utilized by the human resource specialist in each school division to enhance the leadership capability of school heads. Likewise, future researchers could replicate this study to a wider scope, to establish the generalizability of the results.

8.0 Directions for future research

Future researchers may undertake similar studies in other schools division of Negros Occidental to support the findings of the current study and establish the generalizability of the results. They can also look at the constructs under investigation via the lens of phenomenological inquiry. Furthermore, researchers could include school heads in private schools.

9.0. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

10.0 Acknowledgement

The author extends his appreciation to his advisor Dr. Dennis V. Madrigal for providing insightful guidance, expertise, and unwavering support throughout the course of this research. The author also acknowledges the encouragement and patience of his family whose support was instrumental in the completion of this work. Lastly, heartfelt thanks go to Dr. Joel M. Bual for his meticulous review and valuable feedback on the paper.

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