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Transactional leadership practices, motivation, conflict management skills, and engagement among public school teachers

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Abstract

Aim: This study investigated the levels and interrelationships of transactional leadership practices among school heads, teacher motivation, conflict management skills, and teacher engagement among public school teachers in Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education (MBHTE) schools in the Division of Lanao del Sur I, Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), for the school year 2025–2026. The study sought to determine how these factors influence teacher engagement within the context of educational leadership and professional practice.

Methodology: The study employed a predictive correlational research design involving 352 public school teachers selected through proportionate stratified random sampling. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, canonical correlation analysis, multiple regression, and structural equation modeling (SEM) to examine the relationships and predictive effects among the variables.

Results: The findings revealed that transactional leadership practices, particularly active leadership, contingent rewards, and management by exception, were frequently practiced, while passive leadership was moderately practiced. Teachers demonstrated high levels of motivation, with intrinsic motivation slightly stronger than extrinsic motivation. Conflict management skills were generally moderate, with collaborating and accommodating identified as the most frequently used strategies. Teacher engagement was high across affective, behavioral, and cognitive dimensions, with cognitive engagement emerging as the strongest dimension. While leadership practices, motivation, and conflict management skills were significantly related to engagement, motivation emerged as the only significant predictor. Structural equation modeling further showed that motivation exerted the strongest direct influence on teacher engagement, while leadership had a smaller direct effect and conflict management influenced engagement indirectly.

Conclusion: The study concludes that teacher motivation plays a central role in enhancing teacher engagement in public schools. While leadership practices and conflict management contribute to engagement, their influence is largely mediated through teacher motivation. The findings highlight the importance of strengthening motivation-centered faculty development programs, leadership practices, and professional support systems to sustain teacher engagement and improve educational outcomes in MBHTE schools.

Keywords: *conflict management skills, motivation, teacher engagement, transactional leadership*

INTRODUCTION

Teacher engagement is a key factor in student achievement and school success worldwide. Engaged teachers support inclusive, equitable, and high-quality education, but burnout, heavy workloads, and limited professional support challenge both developed and developing countries. Leadership styles, motivation, and conflict management skills are important determinants of teacher engagement, which affects the sustainability of schools (Qi et al., 2025).

In the Philippines, large class sizes, limited resources, and administrative burdens impact teacher engagement, yet educators often show perseverance and dedication. Philippine educational policies, such as the Department of Education (DepEd) Order No. 42, s. 2017 (National Adoption and Implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers)

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and DepEd Order No. 2, s. 2015 (Guidelines on the Establishment and Implementation of the Results-Based Performance Management System), emphasize teacher quality, motivation, and professional growth. DepEd initiatives like recognition incentives and professional development aim to enhance motivation and performance, though regional differences persist. Teacher engagement is strongly influenced by leadership styles, particularly transactional leadership, shaping daily experiences and commitment (Duraku & Hoxha, 2021).

Engagement is vital for public school teachers in Lanao del Sur I, where conflict heightens stress and resource challenges, reflecting both dedication and resilience. Teachers play key roles in education and community rebuilding, with motivation, leadership support, and conflict management shaping outcomes (Duraku & Hoxha, 2021). As a multidimensional construct—affective, behavioral, and cognitive—engagement is strengthened by organizational support and leadership, which help prevent burnout and promote well-being (Giang et al., 2022).

Most research focused on transformational leadership and administrative conflict strategies, with limited attention to teachers' own conflict management skills and transactional leadership, especially in conflict-affected areas like Lanao del Sur I (Sumampong & Arnado, 2024). Unlike previous studies, the present research not only addresses this gap but also specifically examines the combined influence of transactional leadership, teacher motivation, and individual conflict management skills within a conflict-affected Philippine context, offering a more localized and integrative perspective.

This gap highlights the need to explore how motivation, conflict management, and leadership affect engagement in such contexts, aligning with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 4) on quality and inclusive education (Hieng et al., 2024). Due to limited local research, this study aimed to examine these relationships to provide insights for supporting teachers in challenging environments.

Review of Related Literature and Studies

Transactional Leadership Practices

Transactional leadership is based on structured interactions where leaders set clear roles and expectations, and use rewards or corrective actions to ensure performance and accountability. In this study, it refers to how school administrators in Lanao del Sur I guide teachers through active and passive leadership, contingent rewards, and management by exception.

Transactional leadership is viewed as an exchange system that promotes compliance through rewards or sanctions (Khoshnaw & Karadas, 2024). It is effective for achieving short-term goals in structured settings but may limit innovation and intrinsic motivation if overused, especially in dynamic environments (Liden et al., 2024).

Hieng et al. (2024) found through a meta-analysis that transactional leadership acts as a "double-edged sword," as contingent rewards can enhance follower performance by improving leader-member exchange (LMX), but may also reduce psychological empowerment, potentially hindering performance.

Transactional leadership supports compliance and short-term performance (Khoshnaw & Karadas, 2024) but may limit innovation and intrinsic motivation (Liden et al., 2024), with mixed effects on empowerment and performance (Hieng et al., 2024). However, its relationship with teacher motivation, conflict management, and engagement remains underexplored, particularly in culturally distinct contexts like MBHTE schools in Lanao del Sur I, BARMM. This study addresses this gap.

Motivation among Public School Teachers

Teacher motivation refers to internal and external factors that drive public school teachers to perform effectively, including intrinsic aspects like passion and extrinsic factors such as compensation and recognition. It is essential for educational quality, as motivated teachers are more innovative, effective, and engaged, and it is linked to self-efficacy, professional development, and job satisfaction (Nalipay et al., 2021).

Studies show that Filipino teachers generally exhibit high motivation. Agbot and Baguio (2025) found strong motivation for innovation and problem-solving linked to creative practices, while Natividad et al. (2024) reported high intrinsic and extrinsic motivation associated with positive attitudes, self-efficacy, and engagement in professional development.

Ahmad et al. (2022) conducted research in Karachi, Pakistan, including 140 instructors, and found that motivated teachers have a beneficial impact on student academic achievement. While remuneration and working circumstances were not key motivators, professional growth was discovered to be essential for maintaining motivation.

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Teacher motivation, shaped by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, enhances instructional quality, professional growth, and student outcomes (Nalipay et al., 2021; Ahmad et al., 2022). However, evidence suggests that intrinsic drivers and opportunities for professional development play a more critical role in sustaining long-term motivation and effectiveness (Natividad et al., 2024; Agbot & Baguio, 2025; Ahmad et al., 2022).

Conflict Management Skills

Public school teachers' conflict management skills involve strategies for effectively resolving classroom conflicts, including communication, emotional control, problem-solving, and approaches like collaboration, compromise, accommodation, avoidance, and competition. These skills are vital for maintaining a positive learning environment and are a key focus of teacher development (Aggrawal & Magana, 2024).

Conflict is a normal part of school life, and effective resolution enhances communication, respect, and problem-solving. Teachers are encouraged to see conflict as an opportunity for personal and organizational growth, with conflict management skills—supported by emotional intelligence—being essential for a supportive school environment.

Studies show a strong link between leadership, emotional intelligence, and conflict strategies. Teachers with higher emotional intelligence tend to use collaborative approaches, while effective leadership—both transformational and transactional—improves conflict outcomes (Valente et al., 2022). Similarly, Filipino teachers commonly use accommodating, compromising, and collaborative strategies, highlighting the importance of continuous conflict resolution training for better school performance (Dolor & Aranguren, 2022).

Nagaytsev et al. (2024) conducted research in a Russian school and found a strong desire among teachers for better conflict resolution skills, particularly through mentoring and information support. Teachers showed a willingness to improve their abilities in conflict prevention, diagnosis, management, and resolution, and the study offered recommendations for developing these skills further.

Conflict management skills are vital for positive classroom environments and school effectiveness (Aggrawal & Magana, 2024), and are strengthened by emotional intelligence and effective leadership, promoting collaborative strategies (Valente et al., 2022). In the Philippine context, teachers commonly use accommodating and collaborative approaches, though ongoing training remains necessary to further develop these skills (Dolor & Aranguren, 2022; Nagaytsev et al., 2024).

Teacher Engagement among Public School Teachers

Teacher engagement refers to the cognitive, emotional, and social involvement of public school teachers in their work, including enthusiasm, dedication, collaboration, and participation in teaching and school improvement. It also involves reflective practice and continuous professional development.

Aliste and Basañes (2024) found high engagement among Filipino primary teachers, influenced by gender, education, experience, and leadership, recommending targeted support. Ventista and Brown (2023) also reported high engagement and positive outcomes but found no strong link with organizational support, while Holmström et al. (2022) identified engaged, exhausted, and burned-out profiles shaped by efficacy and collaboration.

Salter and Tett (2021) and Pastolero (2024) emphasized that collaboration and reflective practice enhance engagement and student outcomes.

Overall, teacher engagement is shaped by individual and contextual factors and is generally linked to positive teaching and student outcomes (Aliste & Basañes, 2024; Ventista & Brown, 2023). However, variations such as burnout are influenced by self-efficacy and collaboration (Holmström et al., 2022). Sustained engagement is strongly supported by collaborative practices and reflective teaching (Salter & Tett, 2021; Pastolero, 2024).

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in four key theories: Bass (1990) Transactional Leadership Theory, which explains how structured leadership practices influence teacher performance; Self-Determination Theory of Deci and Ryan (2020), which highlights the role of intrinsic motivation in sustaining commitment; Thomas and Kilmann's Conflict Management Theory, which describes how teachers handle interpersonal conflicts; and Kahn's Engagement Theory (1990), which emphasizes meaningful work and psychological presence in fostering affective, behavioral, and cognitive engagement (Oliveira et al., 2023; Li et al., 2025).

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Together, these frameworks offer a comprehensive lens for examining how leadership, motivation, and conflict management interact to influence teacher engagement in the educational setting.

Conceptual Framework

The study posits that transactional leadership, teacher motivation, and conflict management skills influence teacher engagement, defined through affective, behavioral, and cognitive involvement. Transactional leadership shapes structure and accountability, motivation drives effort and commitment, and conflict management helps maintain positive relationships and reduce stress. Together, these factors determine the level of teacher engagement, ultimately impacting performance and student outcomes.

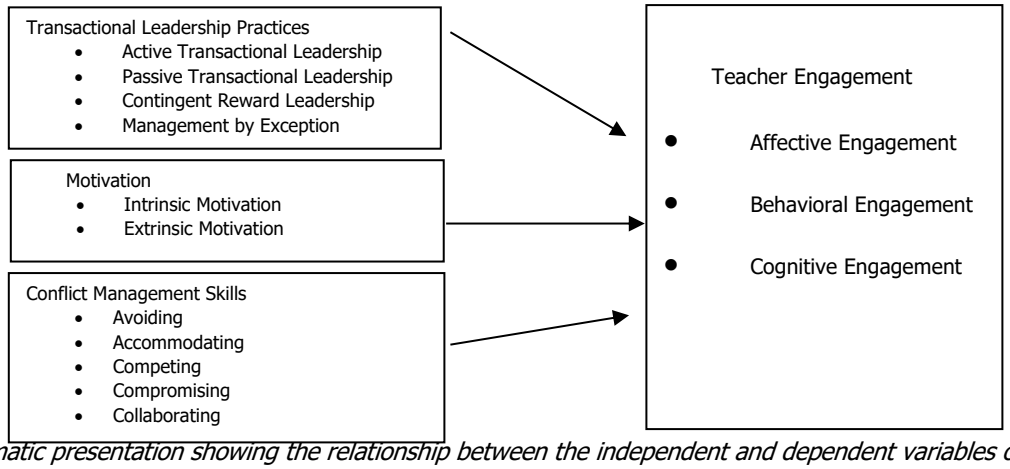


Figure 1. Schematic presentation showing the relationship between the independent and dependent variables of the study

Statement of the Problem

Teacher engagement is widely recognized as a critical factor influencing teaching effectiveness, student achievement, and the overall quality of educational institutions. Engaged teachers demonstrate greater commitment to instructional responsibilities, actively participate in professional development, and contribute positively to school improvement initiatives. However, sustaining teacher engagement remains a challenge in many educational contexts due to various organizational, motivational, and interpersonal factors.

In the Philippine educational system, teachers often encounter challenges such as large class sizes, limited resources, heavy administrative responsibilities, and increasing expectations for professional performance. These conditions may affect teachers' motivation, professional satisfaction, and overall engagement in their work. Leadership practices in schools, particularly the ways school heads manage and motivate teachers, play a crucial role in shaping teachers' professional attitudes and commitment. In addition, teachers' ability to manage interpersonal conflicts within the school environment may influence collaboration, workplace relationships, and engagement in teaching and learning activities.

Previous studies have explored the effects of leadership styles and teacher motivation on teacher performance and engagement. However, many of these studies focus primarily on transformational leadership and administrative strategies, with limited attention given to the role of transactional leadership practices, teachers' own conflict management skills, and their combined influence on teacher engagement. Moreover, few studies have examined these variables within the unique socio-cultural and educational context of schools in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), particularly in the Division of Lanao del Sur I.

Given these gaps in the literature, it is important to examine how transactional leadership practices, teacher motivation, and conflict management skills relate to teacher engagement among public school teachers in MBHTE schools in Lanao del Sur I. Understanding these relationships may provide insights that can inform leadership practices, teacher development programs, and strategies aimed at improving teacher engagement and educational outcomes in the region.

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Research Objectives

General Objective

The general objective of this study was to examine the relationships among transactional leadership practices, teacher motivation, conflict management skills, and teacher engagement among public school teachers in the Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education (MBHTE), Division of Lanao del Sur I.

Specific Objectives

Specifically, the study aimed:

1. To assess the level of school heads' transactional leadership practices in terms of:
    - active transactional leadership
    - passive transactional leadership
    - contingent reward leadership
    - management by exception
2. To determine the level of teachers' motivation in terms of:
    - intrinsic motivation
    - extrinsic motivation
3. To determine the level of teachers' conflict management skills in terms of:
    - avoiding
    - accommodating
    - competing
    - compromising
    - collaborating
4. To determine the level of teachers' engagement in terms of:
    - affective engagement
    - behavioral engagement
    - cognitive engagement
5. To examine the significant relationship between teachers' engagement and:
    - transactional leadership practices
    - teacher motivation
    - conflict management skills
6. To identify which variables significantly predict teachers' engagement.
7. To determine the structural model that best fits teachers' engagement.

Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the level of school heads' transactional leadership practices as assessed by teachers in terms of:
    1.1 Active transactional leadership
    1.2 Passive transactional leadership
    1.3 Contingent reward leadership
    1.4 Management by exception
2. What is the level of teachers' motivation in terms of:
    2.1 Intrinsic motivation
    2.2 Extrinsic motivation
3. What is the level of teachers' conflict management skills in terms of:
    3.1 Avoiding
    3.2 Accommodating
    3.3 Competing

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3.4 Compromising
3.5 Collaborating

4. What is the level of teachers' engagement in terms of:
   4.1 Affective engagement
   4.2 Behavioral engagement
   4.3 Cognitive engagement
5. Is there a significant relationship between teachers' engagement and their:
   5.1 Transactional leadership practices
   5.2 Motivation
   5.3 Conflict management skills
6. Which variable or combination of variables significantly predicts teachers' engagement?
7. What structural model best explains teachers' engagement?

Hypotheses

H01: There is no significant relationship between teachers' engagement and transactional leadership practices.
H02: There is no significant relationship between teachers' engagement and teacher motivation.
H03: There is no significant relationship between teachers' engagement and conflict management skills.
H04: Transactional leadership practices, teacher motivation, and conflict management skills do not significantly predict teachers' engagement.

METHODS

Research design

The study employed a predictive correlational research design to examine the relationships among transactional leadership practices, teacher motivation, conflict management skills, and teacher engagement. This design allowed the researcher to analyze natural relationships between variables without manipulating them, which is appropriate in real educational settings. To further analyze the relationships among the variables, Structural Equation Model (SEM) analysis was used to identify both direct and indirect effects, providing a deeper understanding of how leadership practices, motivation, and conflict management influence teacher engagement.

Population and Sampling

The study was conducted in the Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education (MBHTE), Division of Lanao del Sur I in BARMM, involving public school teachers. From approximately 4,100 teachers, only those with at least three years of experience were included. Using Cochran's Sample Size Calculator (95% confidence level, 5% margin of error), 352 respondents were selected through proportionate stratified random sampling to ensure district representation.

Instruments

The instrument had four parts assessing transactional leadership (Samodien et al., 2024), teacher motivation (Oliveira et al., 2023), conflict management skills (Aggrawal & Magana, 2024), and teacher engagement (Salter & Tett, 2021). Its validity and reliability were ensured through expert review (CVI), pilot testing with 30 respondents, and statistical analysis, yielding high reliability scores: 0.966 (leadership), 0.968 (motivation), 0.903 (conflict management), and 0.959 (engagement).

Data Collection

Data collection commenced after securing the necessary permissions from the Schools Division Office of Lanao del Sur I and the respective school authorities. Participants were approached and provided with a clear explanation of the study's purpose, ensuring that their participation was voluntary. Informed consent was obtained prior to data gathering, with assurances of confidentiality and anonymity.

The researcher administered structured questionnaires to the selected respondents. Prior to distribution, participants were briefed on how to accomplish the instrument and were given sufficient time to respond. The researcher remained available to address

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any clarifications during the process. Completed questionnaires were collected immediately after administration to ensure a high retrieval rate and data completeness. The gathered data were then organized, encoded, and prepared for statistical analysis

Treatment of Data

For data analysis, descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were used to summarize and describe the levels of the variables. Canonical Correlation Analysis was employed to examine the multivariate relationships between sets of independent variables and the teachers' engagement. Multiple Regression Analysis was used to determine the predictive influence of each independent variable on teacher engagement. Structural Equation Modeling was applied to test the overall model and assess the direct and indirect relationships among variables simultaneously.

Ethical Considerations

The study upheld strict ethical standards to protect participants' rights and ensure research integrity. Approval was first obtained from the Liceo Research Ethics Board (LREB), followed by informed consent from all participants, who were briefed on the study's purpose and voluntary participation. Confidentiality and anonymity were ensured, and participants could withdraw at any time without penalty. Multiple reviews were also conducted to ensure ethical compliance, accuracy, and adherence to institutional guidelines.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

This chapter presents, analyzes, and interprets the study's findings and includes a discussion. The orderly presentation of the study's problem statement serves as the basis for the presentation of the results.

1. Level of School heads' transactional leadership practices as assessed by the teachers

Table 1 summarizes how teachers view the transactional leadership practices of school heads. The overall mean score is 3.64 with a standard deviation of 0.69, showing these practices are frequently practiced. This means teachers generally agree that school heads use transactional leadership, and their views are similar across different aspects of leadership.

Public school teachers in Lanao del Sur often see school heads setting clear rules, checking performance, and giving rewards. These leadership actions help keep the school organized and accountable, which is important because the province faces challenges like big class sizes, limited resources, and strict education rules.

Table 1
Summary of Teachers' Perceptions on Transactional Leadership Practices

Transactional Leadership Practices	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Active Transactional Leadership	4.05	0.70	Frequently Practiced
Passive Transactional Leadership	3.14	1.27	Moderately Practiced
Contingent Reward Leadership	3.64	0.97	Frequently Practiced
Management by Exception	3.73	0.79	Frequently Practiced
Overall	**3.64**	**0.69**	**Frequently Practiced**

4.51 - 5.00- Fully Practiced
3.51 - 4.50-= Frequently Practiced
2.51 - 3.50= Moderately Practiced
1. 51 - 2.50 -Rarely Practiced
1.00 - 1.50- Not Practiced

Active Transactional Leadership recorded the highest mean (M = 4.05, SD = 0.70), indicating that school heads are frequently perceived as actively monitoring, guiding, and reinforcing teacher performance. This suggests that administrators regularly set clear expectations, provide support, and give timely feedback, helping teachers stay aligned with school goals and standards. The low standard deviation shows consistent responses among teachers, indicating general agreement that this active leadership style is commonly practiced.

Passive Transactional Leadership had the lowest mean (M = 3.14, SD = 1.27), indicating moderate use and less emphasis on delayed intervention or minimal supervision. This suggests that school heads are less likely to ignore issues, instead favoring more active supervision and corrective action, with teachers still experiencing some autonomy.

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Overall, transactional leadership is frequently applied, with stronger use of active strategies and limited reliance on passive approaches, consistent with studies highlighting its effectiveness in maintaining structure and performance in schools, though it is best complemented with other leadership styles for long-term teacher development (Samodien et al., 2024).

2. Level of Participants' Motivation

Table 2 presents data on teachers' motivation in both intrinsic and extrinsic domains. The overall mean of 4.25 and standard deviation of 0.63 indicate a high and consistent level of motivation among teachers. This finding suggests that Public school teachers in Lanao del Sur demonstrate strong motivation, reflecting resilience and commitment despite local challenges. Their motivation extends beyond basic responsibilities and is driven by personal fulfillment, job stability, and recognition.

Table 2

Level of Participants' Motivation

Motivation	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Intrinsic Motivation	4.49	0.65	High level of motivation
Extrinsic Motivation	4.00	0.79	High level of motivation
Overall	**4.25**	**0.63**	**High level of motivation**

Legend: 4.51 - 5.00- Very High Level of Motivation
3.51 - 4.50-= High Level of Motivation
2.51 - 3.50= Moderate Level of Motivation
1. 51 - 2.50 – Low Level of Motivation
1.0 - 1.50- Very low Level of Motivation

Intrinsic motivation showed a higher mean (4.49) and lower variability (SD = 0.65), indicating that teachers are mainly driven by personal satisfaction, enjoyment, and a sense of accomplishment. This strong internal drive supports persistence, creativity, and commitment, and is consistently shared among teachers. Extrinsic motivation had a slightly lower mean (4.00) with greater variability (SD = 0.79), suggesting that rewards and recognition still influence teachers, but to a lesser extent.

Teachers in Lanao del Sur rely more on intrinsic motivation than extrinsic rewards, making it a more sustainable source of engagement, especially in resource-limited contexts. This aligns with research showing that intrinsic motivation is key to teacher effectiveness, job satisfaction, and long-term commitment, with similar patterns observed in other settings where intrinsic motivation consistently outweighs extrinsic factors (Supriadi et al., 2025)

3. **L**evel of participants' Conflict Management Skills

Table 3 shows a summary of teachers' conflict management skills in five areas: avoiding, accommodating, competing, compromising, and collaborating. The overall average score of 3.46 with a standard deviation of 0.66 means teachers have an average level of conflict management skills. This suggests that teachers are generally somewhat skilled at handling conflicts, using different approaches depending on the situation, and most respondents had similar views.

Table 3

Level of Participants' Conflict Management Skills

Conflict Management Skills	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Avoiding	3.44	0.96	High Conflict Management Skills
Accommodating	3.58	0.92	High Conflict Management Skills
Competing	2.64	1.01	Average Conflict Management Skills
Compromising	3.30	1.03	Average Conflict Management Skills
Collaborating	4.33	0.68	High Conflict Management Skills
Overall	**3.46**	**0.66**	**Average Conflict Management Skills**

Legend: 4.51 - 5.00- Very High Conflict Management Skills
3.51 - 4.50-= High Conflict Management Skills
2.51 - 3.50= Average Conflict Management Skills
1. 51 - 2.50 – Low Conflict Management Skills
1.0 - 1.50- Very low Conflict Management Skills

Among public school teachers in Lanao del Sur, conflict management reflects a balanced and situational approach, with teachers adjusting their strategies based on context, relationships, and the nature of issues while maintaining harmony and professional standards.

Collaborating had the highest mean (4.33), indicating it is the most preferred approach, emphasizing cooperation and shared problem-solving, while competing had the lowest mean (2.64), showing limited use of dominance-based strategies. Overall, teachers

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favor collaborative and accommodating styles, with moderate use of avoiding and compromising, aligning with studies that highlight flexible and cooperative approaches as most effective in promoting trust and positive school environments (Aggrawal & Magana, 2024).

4. Level of Participants' Engagement

Table 4 shows an overall average of 4.41, meaning a high level of engagement. This means respondents demonstrated a high level of professional engagement, showing strong emotional, behavioral, and cognitive participation. Overall, they consistently showed active interest and involvement in the activities measured in the study.

Table 4
Level of Participants' Engagement

Engagement	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Affective	4.43	0.60	High level of Engagement
Behavioral	4.36	0.60	High level of Engagement
Cognitive	4.44	0.59	High level of Engagement
Overall	**4.41**	**0.60**	**High level of Engagement**

Legend: 4.51 - 5.00- Very High Level of Engagement
3.51 - 4.50-= High Level of Engagement
2.51 - 3.50= Moderate Level of Engagement
1. 51 - 2.50 – Low Level of Engagement
1.0 - 1.50- Very low Level of Engagement

Of the three dimensions, cognitive engagement had the highest average of 4.44. This shows that participants were deeply focused on understanding the content, thinking critically, and putting effort into completing learning tasks. It suggests learners were truly engaged in processing and understanding the material, not just participating superficially.

In contrast, behavioral engagement recorded the lowest mean of 4.36, although it is still interpreted as a high level of engagement. This means that participants generally demonstrated positive participation behaviors, such as paying attention, engaging in activities, and completing tasks, but to a slightly lesser extent than their cognitive and affective involvement.

Overall, the findings show that participants consistently demonstrated high engagement across emotional, behavioral, and cognitive domains, with cognitive engagement being the strongest. These results support Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris's (2004) view that engagement involves behavioral, emotional, and cognitive components that support learning. Likewise, Fuertes et al. (2023)noted that teachers who are strongly engaged in these areas tend to be more motivated, persistent, and academically successful.

5. Significant relationship between teachers' engagement and the School Heads' Transactional leadership practices, motivation, and conflict management skills

Table 5
Significant Relationship Between Teachers' Engagement and School Heads' Transactional Leadership Practices

Variable	Cross loading	R_c	R_c^2	F(12, 553)	P
Transactional Leadership Practices					
Active Transactional Leadership	-0.37				
Passive Transactional Leadership	-0.04				
Contingent Reward Leadership	-0.36				
Management by Exception	-0.34	0.42	0.18	4.026*	<.001
Teacher's Engagement					
Affective Engagement	-0.35				
Behavioral Engagement	-0.41				
Cognitive Engagement	-0.37				

**Significant at 0.05 two-tailed alpha level*

Table 5 shows the canonical correlation analysis between transactional leadership practices and teachers' engagement. The result revealed that there is a significant positive low canonical correlation between Transactional Leadership Practices and Teachers' Engagement, $F(12, 553) = 4.026$, $p < .001$, $R_c = 0.42$, $R_c^2 = 0.18$. The result indicates that approximately 18 percent of the variability in Teacher's Engagement is associated with Transactional Leadership Practices. The relationship reflects a limited shared variance

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between the two variable sets. The cross-loading values show that Active Transactional Leadership (loading = −0.37) and Contingent Reward Leadership (loading = −0.36) are the strongest contributors within the Transactional Leadership Practices construct.

Management by Exception (loading = −0.34) contributes modestly, while Passive Transactional Leadership (loading = −0.04) shows minimal contribution. For teacher engagement, Behavioral Engagement (loading = −0.41) is most affected, followed by Cognitive Engagement (−0.37) and Affective Engagement (−0.35). Overall, transactional leadership shows a modest association with teacher engagement, with active and reward-based behaviors more relevant to teachers' participation, thinking, and emotional involvement.

The results indicate that transactional leadership has a noticeable but limited effect on teacher engagement in Lanao del Sur, explaining only a small portion of it. While practices like clear expectations, monitoring, and rewards can enhance engagement, other factors, such as workload, resources, community expectations, and personal commitment, also play significant roles.

Overall, transactional leadership contributes to engagement but is not sufficient on its own. This aligns with studies showing that while rewards and active management support performance, deeper engagement is more influenced by intrinsic motivation and supportive environments, suggesting the need to combine leadership approaches for greater impact (Wang & Shakibaei, 2025).

Table 6 shows the canonical correlation analysis between Motivation and teachers' engagement. The result revealed that there is a significant positive moderate canonical correlation between Motivation and Teacher's Engagement, $F(6, 422) = 21.273$, $p < .001$, $R_c = 0.64$, $R_c^2 = 0.41$. The result indicates that approximately 41 percent of the variability in Teachers' Engagement is associated with Motivation.

The shared variance indicates a meaningful relationship between the two variable sets. Within motivation, Intrinsic Motivation (loading = −0.62) is the strongest contributor, followed by Extrinsic Motivation (loading = −0.45). For teacher engagement, Behavioral Engagement (loading = −0.61) shows the highest loading, followed by Cognitive Engagement (loading = −0.60) and Affective Engagement (loading = −0.56). The results suggest that higher motivation is associated with stronger teacher engagement, with intrinsic motivation showing the strongest influence on teachers' behavioral, cognitive, and affective involvement.

Table 6
Significant Relationship Between Teachers' Engagement and Motivation

Variable	Cross loading	R_c	R_c^2	F(6, 422)	P
Motivation					
Intrinsic Motivation	-0.62				
Extrinsic Motivation	-0.45				
Teacher's Engagement		0.64	0.41	21.273*	<.001
Affective Engagement	-0.56				
Behavioral Engagement	-0.61				
Cognitive Engagement	-0.60				

**Significant at 0.05 two-tailed alpha level.*

The results indicate that motivation is strongly correlated with teacher engagement among public school teachers in Lanao del Sur. A moderate correlation and 41% shared variance suggest that motivated teachers are more likely to participate in school activities, engage in reflective teaching practices, and maintain a strong connection to their professional roles.

In essence, the findings demonstrate that motivation, particularly internal motivation, is a critical determinant of teacher engagement. These results are consistent with previous research, which found that teachers with strong internal motivation exhibit higher engagement, employ more effective teaching strategies, and display greater commitment to their profession (Alonzo et al., 2025). Collectively, these findings underscore the importance of fostering both internal and external motivation to enhance teacher engagement in public schools in Lanao del Sur.

Table 7 shows a significant moderate positive relationship between Conflict Management Skills and Teachers' Engagement ($F(15, 575) = 7.811$, $p < .001$, $Rc = 0.59$), with about 35% shared variance. Collaborating emerged as the strongest contributor among conflict management skills, while other dimensions showed weaker effects. On the engagement side, behavioral, affective, and cognitive engagement all showed strong associations. The findings highlight that collaborative conflict management is moderately linked to higher teacher engagement across key dimensions.

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Table 7
Significant Relationship Between Teachers' Engagement and Conflict Management Skills

Variable	Cross loading	R_c	R_c^2	F(15, 575)	P
Conflict Management Skills					
Avoiding	-0.17				
Accommodating	-0.23				
Competing	0.07				
Compromising	-0.11				
Collaborating	-0.57	0.59	0.35	7.811*	<.001
Teacher's Engagement					
Affective Engagement	-0.55				
Behavioral Engagement	-0.56				
Cognitive Engagement	-0.53				

**Significant at 0.05 two-tailed alpha level.*

The findings show that conflict management skills, especially working together, are important for increasing teacher engagement. Earlier research also shows that collaborative conflict management builds trust, cooperation, and positive relationships at work, which lead to higher engagement and better performance (Valente et al., 2022). Studies in schools find that teachers who resolve conflicts together are more likely to take part, show commitment, and engage thoughtfully in their work (Kakembo & Annet, 2025). These results highlight the need to develop collaborative conflict-management skills to keep teachers engaged in public schools in Lanao del Sur.

In summary, the study found that teachers' engagement is significantly related to leadership style, motivation, and conflict management skills, though their influences vary. Leadership showed a weak positive effect, motivation had a moderate and strongest influence—especially intrinsic motivation—and conflict management skills also demonstrated a moderate relationship by supporting collaboration and positive work behavior. These results confirm that teachers' engagement is significantly associated with these factors, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis.

6. Predictor of Teachers' Engagement

Table 8
Regression Analysis of Transactional Leadership Practices, Motivation, and Conflict Management Skills on Teachers' Engagement

Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficients		β	95% CI		T	P
	B	SE		Lower	Upper		
Constant	1.89	0.24		1.43	2.36	8.01*	<.001
Transactional Leadership Practices	0.08	0.05	0.097	-0.02	0.18	1.51	0.133
Motivation	0.48	0.05	0.555	0.38	0.58	9.66*	<0.001
Conflict Management Skills	0.06	0.05	0.070	-0.04	0.16	1.13	0.261

Model Summary

R = 0.617 R^2 = 0.381 Adjusted R^2 = 0.373 F(4,212) = 43.5* p<.001

Note. B = unstandardized beta coefficient, SE = standard error, β = standardized beta coefficient, 95% CI = 95% confidence interval, t = t statistic, p = probability value. *Significant at 0.05 two-tailed alpha level.

Model Equation: E = 0.48M + 1.89
Legend: E = Teacher's Engagement, M = Motivation

Table 8 shows that the regression model is significant, F(4, 212) = 43.5, p < .001, explaining 37.3% of the variance in teacher engagement (Adj R^2 = 0.373). Motivation is the only significant predictor (β = 0.555, t = 9.66, p < .001), while transactional leadership practices and conflict management skills are not significant, indicating that engagement is primarily driven by motivation (E = 0.48M + 1.89).

Overall, the results highlight that teacher engagement in Lanao del Sur is mainly influenced by motivation, suggesting that personal drive and commitment outweigh the direct effects of leadership and conflict management. While these factors may still

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contribute indirectly, motivation plays the most central and direct role in shaping engagement, consistent with studies showing its strong impact on teacher effectiveness and persistence (Wang & Shakibaei, 2025; Nalipay et al., 2021).

7. Best model that fits teachers' engagement

Table 9 shows that Conflict Management Skills significantly influence Transactional Leadership Practices (estimate = 0.222, p = 0.028), while Motivation has a strong direct effect on both Transactional Leadership (estimate = 0.610, p < .001) and Teacher Engagement (estimate = 0.676, p < .001). Transactional Leadership also significantly affects engagement (estimate = 0.113, p = 0.022). Motivation is the strongest predictor of both leadership and engagement, while Conflict Management Skills affect engagement indirectly through leadership, suggesting a partial mediating role of Transactional Leadership Practices

Table 9

Model 2 Regression Weights

Path			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
TLP	<---	CMS	0.222	0.101	2.202*	0.028
TLP	<---	M	0.610	0.145	4.211*	<.001
TE	<---	M	0.676	0.098	6.915*	<.001
TE	<---	TLP	0.113	0.049	2.290*	0.022

*Note. TLP = Transactional Leadership Practices, CMS = Conflict Management Skills, M = Motivation, TE = Teacher's Engagement. *Significant at 0.05 alpha level.*

Figure 2. Model 2 Path Diagram of the Relationship among Transactional Leadership Practices, Motivation, Conflict Management Skills, and Teachers' Engagement

Legend: TLP = Transactional Leadership Practices; ATL = Active Transactional Leadership; CRL = Contingent Reward Leadership; M = Motivation; IM = Intrinsic Motivation; EM = Extrinsic Motivation; CMS = Conflict Management Skills; Avoid = Avoiding; Compro = Compromising; TE = Teacher's Engagement; AE = Affective Engagement; BE = Behavioral Engagement; CE = Cognitive Engagement

The path diagram in Figure 1 shows the structural relationships among Transactional Leadership Practices (TLP), Motivation (M), Conflict Management Skills (CMS), and Teacher's Engagement (TE), along with their respective indicators. The values on the paths represent standardized regression weights or loadings, indicating the strength of the links between constructs and their indicators, as well as the structural relationships among the latent variables. For Motivation, the indicators Intrinsic Motivation (IM) and Extrinsic Motivation (EM) have loadings of 0.83 and 0.65, respectively.

Motivation is more strongly driven by intrinsic than extrinsic factors and shows a moderate positive effect on Transactional Leadership Practices (0.41). Conflict Management Skills, represented mainly by compromising (1.00) and to a lesser extent avoiding (0.59), have a weak positive effect on leadership (0.16). Transactional Leadership Practices are well reflected by contingent reward and active leadership, indicating their relevance in shaping leadership behavior.

These findings align with studies of Mazzetti and Schaufeli (2022), emphasizing the role of motivation in leadership effectiveness and engagement. Research also shows that strong conflict management improves leadership and organizational outcomes, indirectly boosting engagement, while transactional leadership practices like clear expectations and rewards enhance teacher engagement, especially among motivated individuals.

Conclusions

The findings of the study indicate that school leadership in MBHTE schools in the Division of Lanao del Sur I is characterized by structured and performance-oriented management practices. School heads frequently employ transactional leadership strategies such as contingent rewards, active monitoring, and management by exception to maintain accountability and organizational order in public schools.

The results further demonstrate that public school teachers exhibit high levels of motivation and engagement, particularly in terms of intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic factors such as personal purpose, professional fulfillment, and commitment to teaching appear to sustain teachers' active participation in their professional responsibilities despite the challenges present in the educational environment. Among the variables examined, teacher motivation emerged as the strongest predictor of teacher engagement. The findings suggest that motivated teachers are more likely to demonstrate affective, behavioral, and cognitive engagement in their professional roles.

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While transactional leadership practices and conflict management skills contribute to teacher engagement, their effects are largely mediated through motivation.

These findings contribute to educational leadership and teacher professional development by emphasizing the importance of motivation-centered leadership strategies and supportive school environments. The proposed Motivation-Driven Engagement Model highlights the role of teacher motivation as a central mechanism through which leadership practices and professional relationships influence teacher engagement in public schools.

Recommendations

1. The Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education (MBHTE) may strengthen faculty development programs that enhance teachers' intrinsic motivation by providing opportunities for professional growth, leadership training, recognition programs, and supportive workplace policies that promote teacher engagement.
2. School administrators may implement leadership practices that combine clear performance expectations with meaningful recognition and constructive feedback. Strengthening collaborative school cultures and providing professional learning opportunities related to conflict management may further support teacher engagement and professional satisfaction.
3. Teachers may continue to strengthen their professional engagement through continuous professional development, reflective teaching practices, and collaborative learning communities that support professional growth and motivation.
4. Teacher education institutions may integrate training on motivation, leadership awareness, and conflict management strategies into teacher preparation and professional development programs to better equip educators for collaborative school environments.
5. Future researchers may explore additional factors influencing teacher engagement, such as organizational climate, teacher well-being, and professional learning communities, and may employ longitudinal or mixed-method research designs to further examine the Motivation-Driven Engagement Model in different educational contexts.

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