

# Examining Teacher Job Satisfaction Levels During a Pandemic

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## Examining Teacher Job Satisfaction Levels During a Pandemic: The Role of Transformational Leadership, Work-Life Balance and Interpersonal Communication

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### Abstract

In the current pandemic period, every teacher is encouraged to do things that contribute to performance effectiveness and promote job satisfaction. The essence of transformational leadership, work-life balance, and interpersonal communication during the current pandemic is a crucial aspect of maintaining the level of stability and optimization of work related to teaching. The main objective of this study is to determine the contribution of transformational leadership, work-life balance, and interpersonal communication in encouraging teacher job satisfaction. The sample in this study amounted to 110 respondents who were none other than private high school teachers in Pematangsiantar City determined by a purposive sampling approach. Data collection using a questionnaire instrument which is then distributed online. Data analysis utilizing the SPSS application, which displays data processing findings from research instrument tests such as validity and reliability tests, multiple regression analysis, coefficient of determination, and hypothesis testing. Based on the results of data analysis, it is concluded that transformational leadership contributes positively and significantly to job satisfaction. The results of subsequent studies confirmed that work-life balance contributed positively but not significantly to job satisfaction. The results of the latest research explain that interpersonal communication contributes positively and significantly to job satisfaction.

**Keywords:** *Transformational Leadership; Work-Life Balance; Interpersonal Communications; Job satisfaction*

### 1. Introduction

In general, the development and existence of an organization can survive depending on the characteristics and competencies of its human resources (Djajasinga et al., 2021). Representatives of valuable human resource management development are seen from the organization's strategic activities in managing its human resources so that it is expected to improve organizational performance (Indajang et al., 2021). Several decades ago, every teacher was categorized as one of the factors of production, but for now, the perception regarding this has changed because teachers are empowered as an essential element for schools in achieving school goals and objectives (Lie et al., 2021). To achieve the goals and objectives that have been set, of course, the school represented by the principal needs to pay attention to the job satisfaction aspect of each teacher (Pakpahan et al., 2019). This is crucial considering that dissatisfied teachers tend to do work slowly and will eventually hinder this achievement (Sherly et al., 2021). For this reason, in this case, it is necessary to have a solid stimulant to encourage job satisfaction, one of which is by applying good transformational leadership, stable work-life balance, and harmonious interpersonal communication within the school.

Transformational leadership is one of the behavior-oriented leadership styles (Astutik & Karwanto, 2020) and the ability of leaders to inspire followers so that employees can work

well and produce the desired performance (Jumiran et al., 2020). The transformational leadership model focuses on behavior to help transform individuals and organizations by motivating subordinates to perform harder (Y. Anggraeni & Santosa, 2013). Representative transformational leaders are known for their wide thinking, which allows them to make a paradigm shift by replacing outdated organizational practices with newer, more relevant ones (Cahyono et al., 2020). The leadership style displayed by a transformational leader is expected to increase the efforts of subordinates to achieve optimal work results and encourage job satisfaction (Tanuwijaya et al., 2021). The results of previous studies inform the high job satisfaction obtained by a teacher, one of which is influenced by the effectiveness of transformational leadership (Sulaeman et al., 2018); Mahdi et al., 2020).

Work-life balance is when a person can manage and divide between work responsibilities, family life, and other responsibilities. These conditions help to avoid conflicts between personal life and work (Khoury, 2021). Simply put, this is a condition in which a worker can manage time and energy balance between work, personal needs, recreation, and family life (D. W. Anggraeni & Mulyana, 2020). A productive and high-performing worker is one who maintains a solid work-life balance. He is also happier and more creative since his external environment, such as his house and companionship, encourages his development. (Qodrizana & Musadieg, 2018). No one is successful without the support of coworkers, bosses, spouse and children at home, friends, all of which are part of the factors that underpin success. Therefore, every teacher should do their best in every job to create a balance in teaching (D. W. Anggraeni & Mulyana, 2020). Previous research that examined the relationship and effect of work-life balance on teacher job satisfaction confirmed a positive and significant influence between the two (D. W. Anggraeni & Mulyana, 2020; Qodrizana & Musadieg, 2018).

Communication is the process of delivering messages from the communicator to the communicant to achieve a specific goal (Muruf, 2016). One of the essential aspects of a person's skills is the mastery of sound and correct ways of communicating. This shows that interpersonal communication is a necessary thing in human life. Communication can train a person to express his attitude or character to someone (Poernomo, 2021). In addition, communication also provides openness in the problems that a person is facing (Muhtadin, 2014). Interpersonal communication is seen as the primary method of influencing behavior change, and communication links psychological processes on the one hand and language on the other (Pertwi et al., 2019). The importance of communication is interpersonal relationships aimed at mutual respect. This is related to the growth of tolerance in a person (Orebiyi & Orebiyi, 2011). People who have a sense of tolerance can usually respect the opinions of others in the communication process, so that good communication will have implications for the smooth running of work and will ultimately impact the level of satisfaction in doing work. The results of previous studies inform the high job satisfaction obtained by a teacher, one of which is influenced by interpersonal communication that is well established between the principal, co-workers, students, and parents of students (Simanjuntak et al., 2020); Poernomo, 2021).

According to several scholars and management practitioners, the transformational leadership model is the ideal leadership paradigm for characterizing the characteristics of leaders, resulting in increased job satisfaction (Sarros & Butchatsky, 1996; Bass & Ovolio, 1994). We believe that transformational leadership supported by good interpersonal communication is needed by teachers to carry out activities, especially during the current pandemic (Sudirman et al., 2021). On the other hand, during the current pandemic, a teacher's work-life balance is also needed in carrying out his duties and responsibilities to become more productive (Liu et al., 2021). This is because the conditions felt by the person are quite supportive and increase their satisfaction in doing work. The urgency of this research is to find out the contribution of transformational leadership, work-life balance and interpersonal communication in influencing teacher job satisfaction. It is hoped that the findings of this research will contribute to principals and teachers in developing strategies to increase job satisfaction based on aspects of transformational leadership, work-life balance, and interpersonal communication.

## 2. Method

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Quantitative research design with associative approach is used in this study. The data used in this study uses primary data sourced from data collected by distributing online questionnaires. The research population is private high school teachers in Pematangsiantar City. Due to the unknown number of the population, the sampling used purposive sampling technique. according to (Hair, 2014), if the population is not known, ideally the size of the representative respondents depends on the sum of all indicators in the variable multiplied by 5-10. This study has 17 indicators, so the minimum number of respondents for this study is  $17 \times 6 = 102$ . Therefore, the number of respondents who were taken for this study after being rounded up involved 110 respondents. Testing the questionnaire data using a validity test, where if rcount 0.3 with 95% significance it is declared valid (Sugiyono, 2017) and the reliability test, where a variable is said to be reliable, if it has a Cronbach alpha value  $> 0.60$  (Taber, 2018). Furthermore, multiple regression tests were carried out, hypothesis testing with simultaneous and partial methods and correlation tests with the coefficient of determination. Therefore, the conceptual framework of this study can be explained in Figure 1 below:

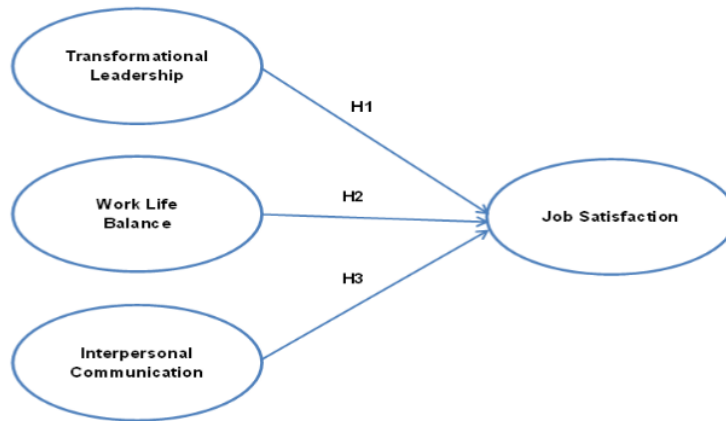


Figure 1. Model Framework

## 3. Results and Discussion

### Results

#### 3.1. Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1. General Profile of Respondents

Category	Details	Amount	Percentage (%)
Gender	Men	47	42.73
	woman	63	57.27
Age (years)	20-29	36	32.73
	30-39	50	45.45
	40-49	24	21.82
Length of work (years)	< 1	25	22.73
	1 – 5	35	31.82
	5 – 10	30	27.27

	> 10	20	18.18
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### 3.2. Validity and Reliability Test

**Table 2. Validity Test Results**

Variable	Corrected item- Total correlation	N of Items	Test results
Transformational Leadership	0.422	4	Valid
Work-Life Balance	0.342	3	Valid
Interpersonal Communication	0.396	5	Valid
Job Satisfaction	0.581	5	Valid

Based on the validity test of table 1 above, it is concluded that all indicators in the study have a value above 0.30, therefore the measurement items used in this research are valid. Next, a reliability experiment is carried out, which is used to measure the measurement items on the questionnaire items that describe the indicators of the variables. A questionnaire is reliable if a person's response to a question does not change or is normal from time to time.

**Table 3. Reliability Test Results**

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	Test results
Transformational Leadership	0.825	4	Reliable
Work-Life Balance	0.814	3	Reliable
Interpersonal Communication	0.812	5	Reliable
Job Satisfaction	0.701	5	Reliable

Based on the results of the reliability experiment shown in table 2 above, it proves that all indicators have a Cronbach alpha value for each instrument > 0.70, so it can be concluded that all instruments used are reliable.

### 3.3. Multiple Regression Test

**Table 4. Multiple Regression Test Results**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	tcount	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	7,478	1,737		4,306	.000
1 Transformational Leadership	,426	0.075	.450	5.653	.000
Work Life Balance	,128	,097	.107	1.321	.189
Interpersonal Communication	,200	0.060	.270	3.334	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

The results of the multiple linear regression above, obtained the equation model: =  $7.478 + 0.426 X_1 + 0.128 X_2 + 0.200 X_3$ , which means that transformational leadership, work-life balance and interpersonal communication have a positive effect on job satisfaction. Based on these equations, it can be interpreted as follows:

1. The constant value of 7,478 can be interpreted if transformational leadership, work-life balance and interpersonal communication are considered zero, then the value of job satisfaction will be in the range of 7,478.
2. The value of the beta coefficient on the transformational leadership variable is 0.426, which means that every change in the transformational leadership variable by one unit will result in a change in job satisfaction of 0.426 units assuming that the other variables are at a constant value.
3. The value of the beta coefficient on the work-life balance variable is 0.128, which means that every change in the work-life balance variable by one unit will change job satisfaction of 0.128 units assuming the other variables are at a constant value.

4. The beta coefficient value on the interpersonal communication variable is 0.200, which means that every change in the interpersonal communication variable by one unit will result in a change in job satisfaction of 0.200 units assuming that the other variables are at a constant value.

### 3.4. Simultaneous and Partial Hypothesis Testing

To examine the variable binding simultaneously, experiment F was used. Simultaneous hypothesis testing attempted to identify whether the variables of transformational leadership, work-life balance, and interpersonal communication were tried to influence job satisfaction simultaneously.

**Table 5. Simultaneous Test Results**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	F	Sig.
1 Regression	87,331	3	21.404	.000b
Residual	144,160	106		
Total	231.491	109		

Based on the results of the simultaneous test analysis in table 5, the Fount value is 21.404 > from Table with (0.05; 4 vs 116) of 2.46 or with a significant 0.000 <  $\alpha$  0.05, it can be interpreted transformational leadership, work-life balance and interpersonal communication that is tried to influence job satisfaction simultaneously are acceptable. Subsequently, a partial test was carried out to determine the relationship between transformational leadership, work-life balance, and interpersonal communication variables, which partially influenced job satisfaction. Based on the results of data analysis in table 4, the results of the t-test in this study are as follows:

1. Transformational leadership obtained a significant level of 0.000 0.05, meaning that transformational leadership significantly affects job satisfaction.
2. Work-life balance obtained a significant level of 0.189 > 0.05, meaning that work-life balance has no significant effect on job satisfaction.
3. Interpersonal communication obtained a significant level of 0.001 0.05, meaning that interpersonal communication significantly affects job satisfaction.

### 3.5. Coefficient of Determination Test

The coefficient of determination is done to measure how far the ability of a model to explain the variation of the dependent variable. The results of the determination test in this study can be explained in Table 6 below:

**Table 6. Coefficient of Determination Test Results**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.614	.377	.360	1.166

Based on the results of data analysis in table 6 above, the coefficient of determination value is 0.377, which means that the level of job satisfaction of 37.7% can be explained by transformational leadership, work-life balance and interpersonal communication, while factors can explain the remaining 62.3% others not discussed in this study.

## Discussion

Testing the hypothesis mentioned with (H1) obtained the results of data analysis that informed transformational leadership had a significant effect on job satisfaction. This result confirms that the role of transformational leaders can provide an example as a role model for teachers, so this is what triggers them to behave creatively, innovatively, and able to solve problems with new approaches (Y. Anggraeni & Santosa, 2013). Furthermore, the endpoint of innovation-oriented behavior can be interpreted as an indicator of high job satisfaction. In addition, transformational leaders also care about the problems faced by teachers and

always motivate to improve performance so that job satisfaction will be created for teachers (Anjilusa et al., 2019). On the other hand, based on the results of data analysis obtained from interviews with respondents on aspects of individual-based considerations and fostering intellectual stimulation, they gave excellent responses, so this is what causes the transformational leadership effect on job satisfaction to be significant.

Testing the hypothesis mentioned by (H2) obtained the results of data analysis which informed that work-life balance had no significant effect on job satisfaction. This is because teachers cannot be more flexible in doing their work because of the lack of positive energy due to unfulfilled personal and family needs (Endrastyana et al., 2015). Generally, this is due to the high demands of work experienced by a teacher during the current pandemic. If a person does not have a good work-life balance, his performance tends to decline and can damage other areas of life, including a decrease in the level of satisfaction in doing work (Sari, 2020). The results of this research align with research (Pranindhita & Wibowo, 2020), which confirms that a high level of work-life balance cannot increase job satisfaction, and vice versa, a low level of work-life balance cannot reduce an individual's job satisfaction.

Testing the hypothesis mentioned by (H3) obtained the results of data analysis which informed that interpersonal communication had a significant effect on job satisfaction. The components that form interpersonal communication of sympathy and empathy are the most important parts for maintaining relationships, because our sympathy and empathy can feel what our friends feel, such as providing support or motivation when our co-workers are in trouble and if our co-workers are happy, then we are too. will feel the joy (Chudaifah, 2020). In addition, the principal's positive attitude and openness to the teachers impact the motivation of teachers to carry out their work well. Furthermore, applying good interpersonal communication will indirectly support the smooth process in carrying out the duties and responsibilities, and the implications will increase job satisfaction (Desmet et al., 2015).

#### 4. Conclusion and suggestions

Based on the results of the discussion of this study, transformational leadership has a significant effect on job satisfaction. This emphasizes that transformational leaders pay attention to individual differences in the needs of subordinates for growth and development. They set an example and assign individual basic tasks to meet the immediate needs of subordinates and enhance the needs and abilities of subordinates to increase their level of competence and capability. The results of further research inform that work-life balance has no significant effect on job satisfaction. The inability of teachers to balance work time with self-involvement in all activities in the field of teaching has implications for a decrease in job satisfaction. With the imbalance of job satisfaction will undoubtedly have an impact on the level of organizational performance. Then this study also informs that interpersonal communication has a significant effect on job satisfaction. Openness and equality in judgment are the most critical things in communicating in interpersonal relationships. Communication can train a person to be open in expressing his attitude or character to someone. In addition, communication also provides openness in the problems that someone is facing. This is related to the positive attitude that is built-in carrying out the work. This study has limitations in terms of the use of research variables as predictors of job satisfaction, so that for further research, it is necessary to design a more complex research model with additional research variables. In addition, the limitations in taking research samples are also a weakness of this study which only focuses on the level of job satisfaction of private high school teachers in Pematangsiantar City. For further research, increasing the number of samples by placing different objects or in cities with a larger population of teachers is necessary.

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