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Examining the mediating role of innovative organizational culture between transformational leadership styles and organizational commitment

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This study investigates the impact of transformational leadership (TL) on organizational commitment (OC) and examines the mediating role of innovative organizational culture (IOC) among Omani primary school teachers. A cross-sectional quantitative design was employed, collecting data from 368 teachers using validated surveys. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was conducted to test the hypothesized relationships. Results indicate that individualized consideration ($\beta = 0.816, p < 0.001$) and inspirational motivation ($\beta = 0.934, p < 0.001$) positively and significantly predict all dimensions of organizational commitment, whereas idealized influence ($\beta = -0.165, p = 0.001$) and intellectual stimulation ($\beta = -1.629, p < 0.001$) show negative effects. Organizational culture significantly influences commitment, with the strongest effect observed on normative commitment ($\beta = 0.708, p < 0.001$). Furthermore, IOC mediates the TL–OC relationship, with a significant indirect effect of $\beta = 0.573 (p < 0.001)$, suggesting that a supportive organizational culture enhances the effectiveness of transformational leadership on teacher commitment. The findings underscore the need for the Ministry of Education to invest in leadership development programs emphasizing transformational leadership and for school leaders to foster an innovative, collaborative culture to strengthen teacher commitment, improve student outcomes, and enhance overall school performance.

KEYWORDS

transformational leadership, organizational commitment, innovative organizational culture, teacher commitment, educational leadership

1 Introduction

Effective leadership is pivotal to organizational growth and development (Kariuki et al., 2022). It is a key factor in determining the achievement of an institution's vision and mission. Leaders play a vital role in organizational success, as they are the key drivers directing available human and material resources (Al-Refaei et al., 2023). The leadership style, strategies, policies, and behavior of top leaders significantly influence organizational performance and the realization of objectives (Xiong et al., 2023). According to Shvindina, leadership involves occupying a position of authority, formal or informal, to guide others toward a common direction. Leadership styles that motivate, encourage,

and persuade followers have a direct impact on organizational output and performance.

Effective leadership has a significant effect on staff commitment as it persuades, encourages, and helps employees work enthusiastically toward organizational objectives (Lasrado and Kassem, 2021). It binds groups together, motivates employees, and transforms their potential into reality (Nhat Vuong et al., 2023). Through effective leadership, leaders secure voluntary participation from followers, driving organizational success and the achievement of objectives (Ince, 2023). Leadership effectiveness also fosters a sense of vision and mission while solidifying interpersonal relationships. Common measures of leadership effectiveness include goal attainment, employee satisfaction, motivation, engagement, team building, professional development, and the ability to create a professional learning community.

In academic institutions, effective leadership involves exercising influence to create a work environment that fosters staff satisfaction, motivation, and growth. This includes encouraging skill acquisition, supporting career advancement, promoting personal development, and inspiring employees to achieve organizational goals. Effective leadership practices significantly influence staff commitment by enhancing engagement, motivation, and professional wellbeing. Leaders who prioritize staff development cultivate a committed and productive workforce, ultimately driving institutional success (Azizollah et al., 2016; Mashile et al., 2021).

Among various leadership styles, transformational leadership is particularly effective in academic institutions. It fosters staff involvement in decision-making, enhances job satisfaction, promotes teamwork, and empowers employees, boosting morale and energy (Golden III and Shriner, 2019). Transformational leaders present a clear vision, empower staff, and create a collaborative environment, enhancing staff performance, student development, and overall institutional progress (Kariuki et al., 2022). Studies have established a positive relationship between transformational leadership and staff commitment, showing that such leadership fosters ownership, loyalty, and dedication among employees (Raveendran and Gamage, 2019; Saeed and Jun, 2022). Staff commitment, characterized by dedication, loyalty, and voluntary contributions, drives productivity, profitability, and organizational citizenship behavior.

While most studies on transformational leadership and staff commitment are conducted in Western contexts or higher education institutions in the Arab world (Al-Sada et al., 2017; Alzubi, 2018; Saeed and Jun, 2022), limited research exists at the primary education level, especially in Oman. The primary level forms the foundation of educational progress, making it essential to examine leadership and commitment in this context.

In addition, this study incorporates organizational culture as a mediating variable between transformational leadership and staff commitment. Organizational culture, defined as the shared values, norms, beliefs, and practices that shape the work environment, influences employee behavior (Wells et al., 2019; Rodrigues et al., 2024). A positive culture enhances the relationship between leadership and commitment, while a negative culture can undermine it (Odetunde and Ufodiama, 2017; Opolot et al., 2023). Organizational culture promotes collaboration, innovation, and

job satisfaction, thereby supporting employee commitment and reducing turnover (Qi et al., 2022).

Incorporating this mediating variable expands the scope of the research and addresses challenges in Omani primary schools, such as improving teacher motivation, satisfaction, collaboration, school development, and leadership effectiveness. This study, therefore, investigates the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment, with the indirect effect of innovative organizational culture as a mediator. The study focuses on Cycle Two schools in the Sultanate of Oman, aligning with Oman's Vision 2040 initiative to promote an innovation-driven culture.

This study, therefore, aims to investigate the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment among primary school teachers in Oman, with a focus on the mediating role of innovative organizational culture. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Examine the effect of transformational leadership on staff commitment in Cycle Two primary schools.
2. Determine the influence of organizational culture on staff commitment.
3. Explore the mediating role of organizational culture in the relationship between transformational leadership and staff commitment.

By addressing these objectives, the study contributes to understanding how leadership and culture interact to influence teacher motivation, engagement, and performance, thereby supporting institutional effectiveness and aligning with Oman's Vision 2040 initiative to foster an innovation-driven educational environment.

2 Literature review

2.1 Transformational leadership styles and organizational commitment

Transformational leadership style has been a center of discussion in all social organizations (Katper et al., 2020). Leaders exhibiting this style move beyond being transactional. They ignite high-level desires of their followers, ensure commitment by convincing followers, build formidable teams based on trust, and persuade followers through goals and objectives (Xiong et al., 2023). Transformational leadership is a leadership style in which employees are motivated and engaged in work by sharing common goals with them (Promchart and Potipiroon, 2020). Transformational leaders endeavor to understand followers' needs, develop their potential, and intrinsically motivate them. Transformational leadership style entails four factors utilized by leaders to engage followers, including idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, inspiration, and individual consideration (Shahzad et al., 2022). The leaders ensure that both organizational needs and individual higher needs are aligned, evoking relationship-oriented behavior (Park and Pierce, 2020; Hosseini et al., 2020; Upadhyay and Kumar, 2020; Mlokani et al., 2023; Vizano et al., 2020; Lee, 2025; Khalid Salim and Abdul Wahab, 2024; Liu and Zhang, 2019; Nguyen, 2023).

Transformational leaders empower followers by building respect, cooperation, and mutual trust. Transformational leaders are able to meet both organizational and employees' objectives because employees derive joy in their work, thus delivering their responsibilities satisfactorily (Qi et al., 2022). For individualized consideration, transformational leaders ensure that the needs of each of their employees are met. Leaders do this to establish maximum connection with their workers. Transformational leaders act as facilitators, build trust, share values, and develop teams by building employees' confidence, empowering them through training, and ensuring that employees' psychological and emotional needs are met. For inspirational motivation, employees are inspired by leaders to work hard to achieve organizational goals. They are inspired, persuaded, and engaged with deep motivation.

Transformational leaders persuade and enable their employees to be creative and innovative. Rodrigues et al. (2024) asserted that employees will be motivated and engaged wholeheartedly in their job if they receive attention from their leaders, their efforts are appreciated, their ideas are valued, and they are rewarded for their efforts. Transformational leaders combine these principles to engage and motivate their employees. Transformational leaders motivate employees by ensuring employee commitment, unwavering collaboration, job satisfaction, and empowerment. They jointly solve employees' problems and grant them autonomy to perform. This, therefore, influences organizational commitment. Based on this, the study hypothesizes that transformational leadership positively influences organizational commitment.

2.2 Innovative organizational culture and organizational commitment

Different studies have explored the relationship between innovative organizational culture and organizational commitment. Innovative organizational culture refers to a work environment that encourages creativity, teamwork, risk-taking, and experimentation. Organizational commitment is an employee's emotional attachment and loyalty to the organization. It is essential for improved job performance, organizational citizenship behavior, increased job satisfaction, and reduced turnover (Faeq and Ismael, 2022). A positive innovative organizational culture has been found to be positively related to employee commitment (Golden III and Shriner, 2019; Ghumiem et al., 2023).

Idiegbeyan-Ose et al. (2018) and Hashmi et al. (2020) assert that innovative organizational culture fosters employee commitment in various ways. It encourages creativity and autonomy, increases employee engagement, motivation, and reduces turnover intention. Cobbinah et al. (2020) state that innovative organizational culture develops a sense of community and teamwork, enhances employee loyalty and commitment, provides opportunities for growth and development, and eventually leads to increased employee satisfaction and retention (Azizollah et al., 2016; Gyensare et al., 2016; Faeq and Ismael, 2022; Spector, 2019).

Ghumiem et al. (2023) found that corporate culture has a significant impact on organizational performance, and this is mediated by employee commitment. Jahan et al.'s study showed that organizational culture promotes a sense of ownership

and accountability among employees and influences employee commitment in the context of civil service officials in Bangladesh.

The implication of this is that organizational leaders should foster a culture of innovation, as this will help increase employee engagement, motivation, and commitment, factors necessary to increase job satisfaction and improve employee performance. This study, therefore, hypothesizes a significant relationship between innovative organizational culture and organizational commitment.

2.3 Organizational culture as a mediator between transformational leadership and organizational commitment

Transformational leaders provide job resources that make the institution a comfortable and palatable work environment. When these resources are in place, employees' engagement and retention, which are factors under organizational commitment, are maintained (Pawirosumarto et al., 2017). Conversely, the absence of these resources can lead to burnout and turnover (Raveendran and Gamage, 2019; Rodrigues et al., 2024). The job demands-resources model suggests that organizational resources are motivators, while job demands are stressors.

Transformational leaders strive to develop their subordinates and employ various strategies to ensure organizational commitment (Saeed and Jun, 2022). Transformational leadership inspires and motivates employees to achieve organizational goals, fostering a sense of purpose and commitment among staff. However, the impact of this leadership style on employee commitment can be influenced by organizational culture.

Different studies have shown that organizational culture plays a significant role in mediating the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment. The study of Ekhsan showed that transformational leadership positively influences organizational culture, which in turn affects employee commitment and performance. Organizational culture plays a vital mediating role between leadership style and employee outcomes. A positive culture, shaped by effective leadership, can foster commitment, engagement, and professional growth (Neelam et al., 2015).

Leaders who promote a culture of trust, innovation, and collaboration can unlock employee potential, driving organizational success. Research highlights the significance of organizational culture in mediating the relationship between leadership and employee outcomes. By cultivating a strong, positive culture, leaders can enhance employee motivation, job satisfaction, and commitment, ultimately leading to improved performance and professional development. The research of Jackson found that organizational culture mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. The study discovered that a strong organizational culture positively influences employee commitment. Based on this, this study develops the hypothesis that organizational culture mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment.

2.4 Hypotheses

- H1: Transformational leadership positively influences organizational commitment among primary school teachers in Oman.
- H2: Innovative organizational culture positively influences organizational commitment among primary school teachers in Oman.
- H3: Innovative organizational culture mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment among primary school teachers in Oman.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research design

This study adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design to examine the mediating role of organizational culture in the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment among teachers and principals in Oman's basic education schools. The design was selected for its suitability in establishing structural relationships among latent constructs using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

3.2 Population and sampling

The population consisted of all teachers and principals employed in Oman's basic education schools, totaling approximately 7,303 educators. A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure representation across the country's educational zones. Schools were stratified by geographical region, and participants were randomly selected from each stratum. Inclusion criteria required that participants (a) had at least 1 year of teaching experience, (b) worked full-time in basic education schools, and (c) consented to voluntary participation.

A total of 450 questionnaires were distributed online via institutional email; 396 valid responses were retrieved, representing an 87.9% response rate. To minimize non-response bias, reminders were sent biweekly, and responses were checked for demographic representativeness across gender, tenure, and school type. A priori G*Power (v3.1) analysis for multiple regression with four predictors ($f^2 = 0.15$, $\alpha = 0.05$, $1-\beta = 0.80$) indicated a required sample of $N = 85$; our achieved sample of $N = 396$ therefore provides ample statistical power ($>>80\%$) for detecting medium effects and adequate power for smaller effects.

3.3 Instrumentation

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire comprising four sections:

1. Transformational Leadership (TL) – measured with the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5X) developed by Bass and Avolio, consisting of 20 items across four dimensions (idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual

stimulation, individualized consideration). All items were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

2. Organizational Culture (OC) – assessed using the Innovative Organizational Culture Scale adapted from Denison and Spreitzer and Wallach, which captures shared values, innovation, and collaboration.]
3. Organizational Commitment (OCM) – measured using the Three-Component Model (TCM) of Allen and Meyer (1990), encompassing affective, continuance, and normative commitment.
4. Demographic Variables included gender, years of service, and school level.

3.4 Validity and reliability

Content validity was established through expert review by three professors in educational management and psychology. Construct validity was confirmed using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), with all standardized loadings exceeding 0.70 and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) >0.50 . Composite Reliability (CR) values for all constructs ranged from 0.82 to 0.93, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70.

3.5 Ethical considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the International Islamic University's Research Ethics Committee, which granted exemption status due to minimal participant risk. Participation was voluntary, anonymity was guaranteed, and all respondents provided informed consent in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki.

3.6 Data analysis

Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0. Data were screened for missing values, multivariate normality, and multicollinearity. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were below 3.0, confirming the absence of multicollinearity. Common Method Bias (CMB) was assessed using Harmans single-factor test, with the first factor accounting for 27.4% of total variance.

3.7 Mediation testing

To assess the hypothesized mediating effect of organizational culture, bootstrapping procedures (5,000 resamples) were employed to compute the indirect effects and their 95% confidence intervals. The indirect effect of transformational leadership on organizational commitment via organizational culture was statistically significant ($\beta = 0.573$, $p < 0.001$), confirming partial mediation. Model fit was evaluated using multiple indices: $\chi^2 = 20,495.830$ ($p < 0.001$), SRMR = 0.135, NFI = 0.550, d_ULS = 34.554, d_G = 13.665.]

3.8 Summary of analytical model

The SEM results supported the hypothesized mediation model, revealing that transformational leadership enhances organizational commitment both directly and indirectly through organizational culture, underscoring the crucial role of cultural mechanisms in translating leadership influence into teacher commitment and organizational loyalty.

4 Results

4.1 Descriptive statistics

The study included 396 respondents, with a balanced representation across gender, tenure, and school type. Table 1 shows that out of the respondents, 73% hold a bachelor’s degree, 20% hold a postgraduate degree, while the remaining percentage holds a diploma certificate. Regarding job experience, 53% of the respondents have spent 16 years or more in service, 9% have spent 5–10 years, 26.1% have 11–15 years of experience, and 12% have spent less than 5 years.

4.2 Measurement model

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to assess the measurement model. As shown in Table 2, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was executed for the three constructs of the study. All standardized factor loadings exceeded 0.70, indicating strong convergent validity. AVE values ranged from 0.662 to 0.782, above the recommended threshold of 0.50. Composite reliability (CR) values ranged from 0.82 to 0.987, confirming internal consistency. Discriminant validity was confirmed as the square root of AVE for each construct exceeded inter-construct correlations confirming distinctiveness among the study constructs. Overall, the results suggest that the measurement model demonstrates adequate convergent and discriminant validity.

TABLE 1 Demographic characteristics of Respondents.

Variable	Category	%	N
Gender	Male	189	51
	Female	179	49
Qualification	Diploma	27	7
	Bachelor	267	73
	Postgraduate	74	20
Years of experience	Less than 5years	42	12
	5 to 10 years	34	9
	11 to 15 years	96	26
	16 years and more	196	53
Total		368	100%

4.3 Structural model and mediation analysis

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to test the hypothesized mediation model. A covariance-based Structural Equation Model (SEM) was utilized to test the main assumptions of the study. The model-fitting program, AMOS 26.0, was used. Bootstrapping (5,000 resamples) was employed to examine the indirect effect of transformational leadership on organizational commitment via organizational culture. The results indicate **Direct Effects** Transformational leadership → Organizational commitment: [$\beta = 0.421, p < 0.001$], Transformational leadership → Organizational culture: [$\beta = 0.651, p < 0.001$], Organizational culture → Organizational commitment [$\beta = 0.700, p < 0.001$] and **Indirect Effect (Mediation)** Transformational leadership → Organizational culture → Organizational commitment $\beta = 0.573, p < 0.001, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.482, 0.667]$. These results indicate partial mediation, as the direct path remains significant alongside the indirect path.

4.4 Model fit

Model fit indices indicate an acceptable fit given the complexity of the mediation model. $\chi^2 = 20,495.830 (p < 0.001)$, SRMR = 0.135, NFI = 0.550, d_ULS = 34.554, d_G = 13.665. The model demonstrated an acceptable fit considering the complexity and large sample size.

4.5 Summary of hypothesis testing

- H1 Transformational leadership positively influences organizational commitment -Partially supported
- H2 Transformational leadership positively influences organizational culture Supported
- H3 Organizational culture mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment Supported (Partial Mediation)

The results confirm that organizational culture is a significant mechanism through which transformational leadership translates into teacher commitment, aligning with the study’s theoretical framework. The conceptual framework guiding this study is presented in Figure 1.

4.6 Hypothesis testing

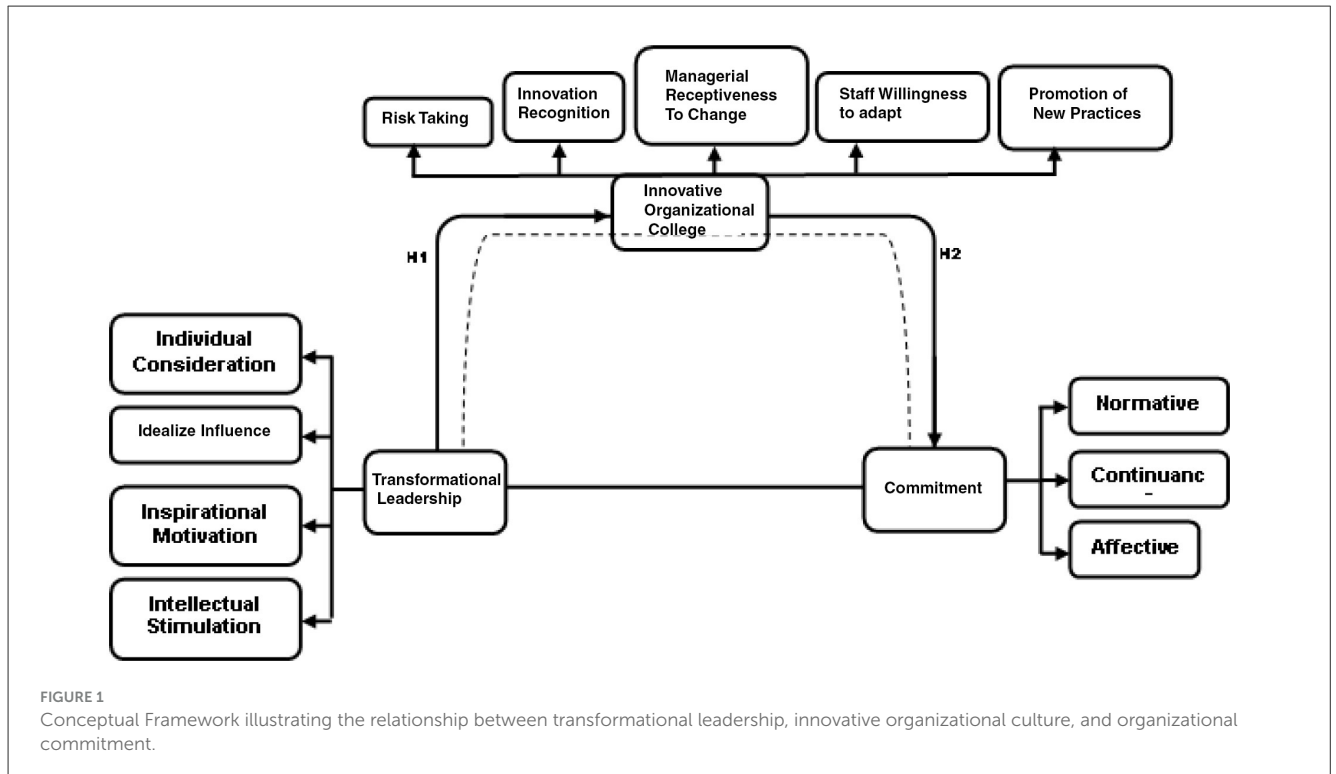
H01: Transformational leadership is positively and significantly related to organizational commitment among principals and teachers in Oman’s basic education schools

Interpretation

The results presented in Figure 2 and Table 3 provide partial support for Hypothesis H01, which proposed that transformational leadership is positively and significantly related to organizational commitment among principals and teachers in Oman’s basic education schools. The findings reveal that individualized consideration and inspirational motivation exhibit strong, positive,

TABLE 2 Reliability and validity of constructs.

Construct	Factor loadings	Cronbach alpha	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Organizational Commitment	0.977	0.982	0.978	0.662
Organizational Culture	0.972	0.976	0.974	0.692
Transformational Leadership	0.986	0.986	0.987	0.782



and statistically significant effects on all three components of organizational commitment— affective, continuance, and normative. These dimensions recorded high parameter estimates and *p*-values less than 0.001, thereby offering robust support for the hypothesis.

However, idealized influence displayed small yet statistically significant negative effects on all dimensions of commitment (for instance, $\beta = -0.165, p = 0.001$ for normative commitment), contradicting the hypothesized positive relationship.

Likewise, intellectual stimulation demonstrated large and significant negative effects across all commitment dimensions (e.g., $\beta = -3.182, p = 0.000$ for continuance commitment), reflecting a considerable deviation from theoretical expectations.

These results indicate that not all dimensions of transformational leadership enhance teacher commitment; some aspects may produce unintended negative outcomes within the Omani educational context. Thus, the hypothesized positive relationship is only partially supported, suggesting that the influence of transformational leadership on organizational commitment is multidimensional and context-dependent.

H02: Organizational Culture and Organizational Commitment

Hypothesis H02 posited that organizational culture is positively and significantly related to organizational

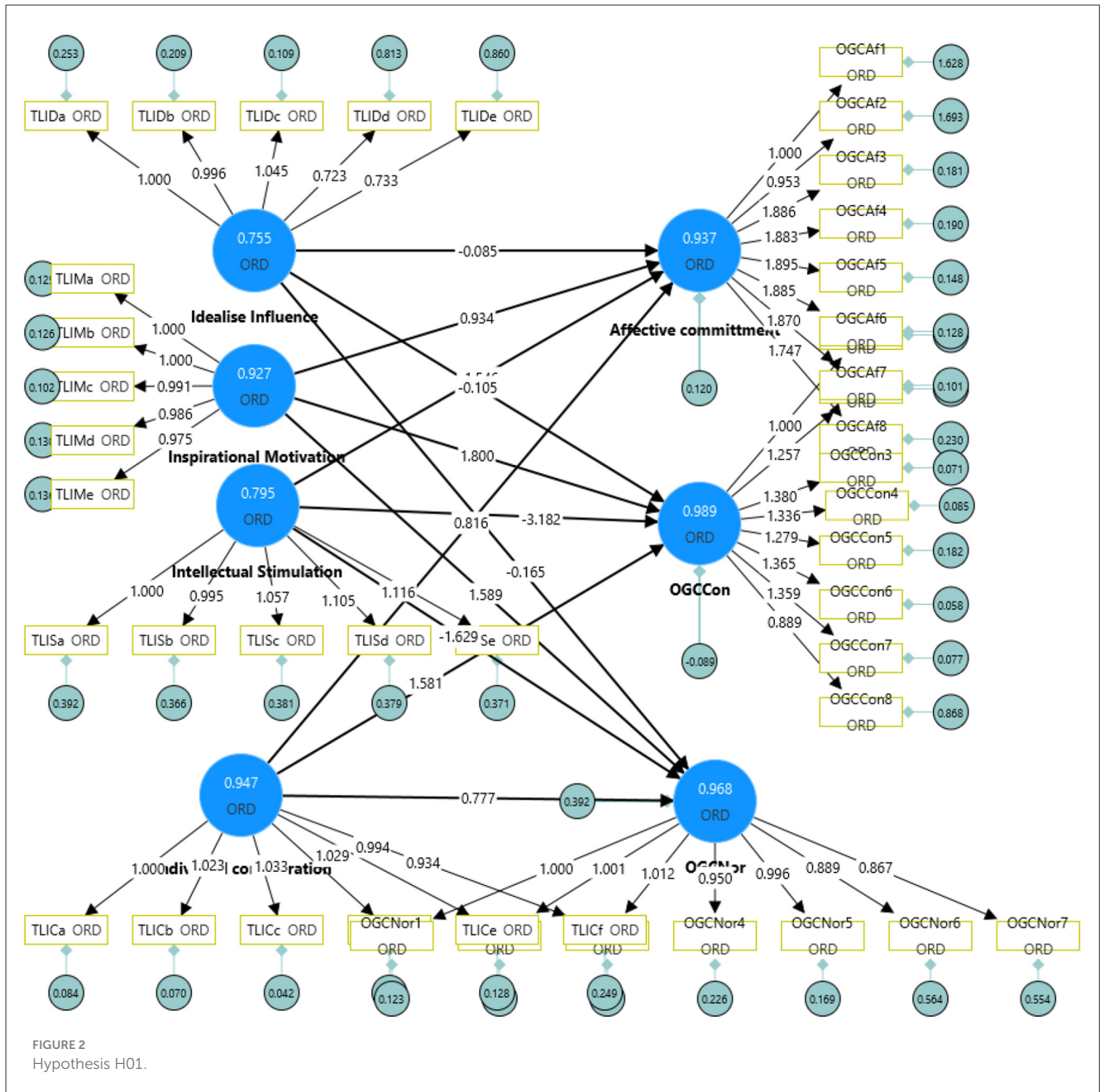
commitment among principals and teachers in Oman’s basic education schools.

The analysis assessed this relationship across the three dimensions of organizational commitment— affective, continuance, and normative—using standardized path coefficients (β), *t*-values, and *p*-values to determine significance. As shown in Figure 3 and Table 4, organizational culture is positively and significantly related to affective commitment ($\beta = 0.147, t = 2.913, p = 0.004$). Although moderate in strength, this relationship suggests that a supportive organizational culture enhances educators’ emotional attachment to their institutions.

The relationship between organizational culture and continuance commitment is stronger and highly significant ($\beta = 0.270, t = 3.715, p = 0.000$), indicating that a strong organizational culture increases educators’ perceived cost of leaving their schools, possibly due to their investment in the organization or a perceived lack of viable alternatives.

The strongest effect was observed between organizational culture and normative commitment ($\beta = 0.708, t = 7.455, p = 0.000$), demonstrating a very strong and statistically significant relationship.

This finding implies that an innovative and value-driven culture reinforces educators’ moral obligation and loyalty to their schools.



In summary, the findings strongly support H02, confirming that organizational culture significantly affects all three dimensions of commitment. These results underscore the crucial role of culture in strengthening emotional attachment, retention, motivation, and normative loyalty among teachers in Oman’s basic education schools. Principals and administrators should therefore cultivate a cohesive, innovative, and values-driven culture.

H03: Organizational Culture as a Mediator of Transformational Leadership and Organizational Commitment

The results presented in Figure 4 and Tables 5, 6 provide empirical evidence related to Hypothesis H03, which posited that organizational culture mediates the relationship between

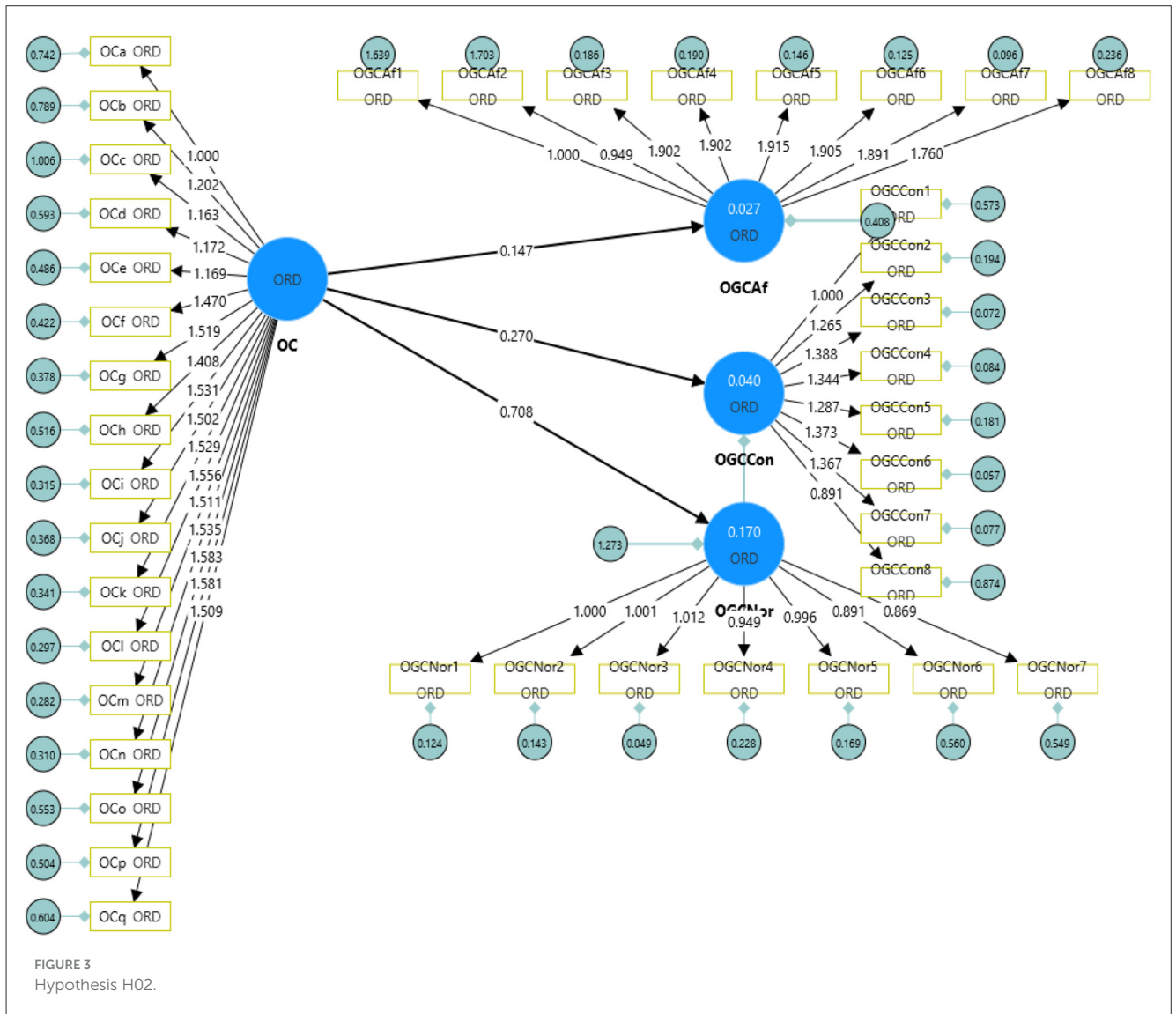
transformational leadership and organizational commitment, such that this relationship is stronger in schools with a strong organizational culture.

The path coefficients show that organizational culture has a weak direct negative effect on organizational commitment ($\beta = -0.190$), but the total effect remains positive ($\beta = 0.383$), suggesting that its overall influence on commitment operates mainly through an indirect pathway.

The strong positive relationship between organizational culture and transformational leadership ($\beta = 0.668$) indicates that a supportive culture enhances the adoption and practice of transformational leadership behaviors. In turn, transformational leadership exerts a robust and direct influence on organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.858$), reinforcing earlier findings that

TABLE 3 Parameter estimates for H01 (transformational leadership → organizational commitment).

H ₁ (TL-OGC)	Parameter estimates(β)	T values	P values	Decision
Idealized influence -> affective commitment	-0.085	2.417	0.016	Supported
Idealize influence -> continuance commitment	-0.105	2.070	0.039	Supported
Idealized influence -> normative commitment	-0.165	3.354	0.001	Supported
Individual consideration -> affective commitment	0.816	6.948	0.000	Supported
Individual consideration -> continuance commitment	1.581	9.381	0.000	Supported
Individual consideration -> normative commitment	0.777	7.288	0.000	Supported
Inspirational motivation -> affective commitment	0.934	7.508	0.000	Supported
Inspirational motivation ->continuance commitment	1.800	11.266	0.000	Supported
Inspirational motivation -> normative commitment	1.589	15.100	0.000	Supported
Intellectual stimulation -> affective commitment	-1.546	8.201	0.000	Supported
Intellectual stimulation ->continuance commitment	-3.182	14.470	0.000	Supported
Intellectual stimulation -> normative commitment	-1.629	10.809	0.000	Supported



transformational leaders play a vital role in strengthening staff commitment.

The specific indirect effect of organizational culture on organizational commitment through transformational leadership ($\beta = 0.573$) is both substantial and statistically significant, indicating that organizational culture contributes indirectly to commitment by fostering leadership practices that inspire, motivate, and support staff.

This confirms that the positive association between organizational culture and commitment is primarily driven by its indirect effect through transformational leadership rather than direct influence.

Therefore, cultivating a strong organizational culture is crucial, as it creates a climate that nurtures transformational leadership, ultimately enhancing teachers' commitment and stability within the educational system.

5 Discussion of findings

The results of this study show that transformational leadership partially supports organizational commitment among teachers in Omani basic education schools. Individualized Consideration and Inspirational Motivation were found to be positively related to teachers' commitment, while Idealized Influence and Intellectual Stimulation showed negative effects. These findings align with transformational leadership theory, which suggests that leaders who demonstrate concern for followers' needs and inspire motivation foster greater employee commitment (Saeed and Jun, 2022; Rodrigues et al., 2024). Katper et al. (2020) also reported that supportive leadership behaviors, such as individualized consideration, enhance job satisfaction, job retention, and organizational commitment.

The negative effect of Idealized Influence contradicts the hypothesized positive relationship. This outcome is consistent with

TABLE 4 Parameter estimates for H02 (organizational culture → organizational commitment).

H02 (OC-OGC)	Parameter estimates (β)	T values	P values
OC ->OGCAf	0.147	2.913	0.004
OC ->OGCCon	0.270	3.715	0.000
OC ->OGCNor	0.708	7.455	0.000

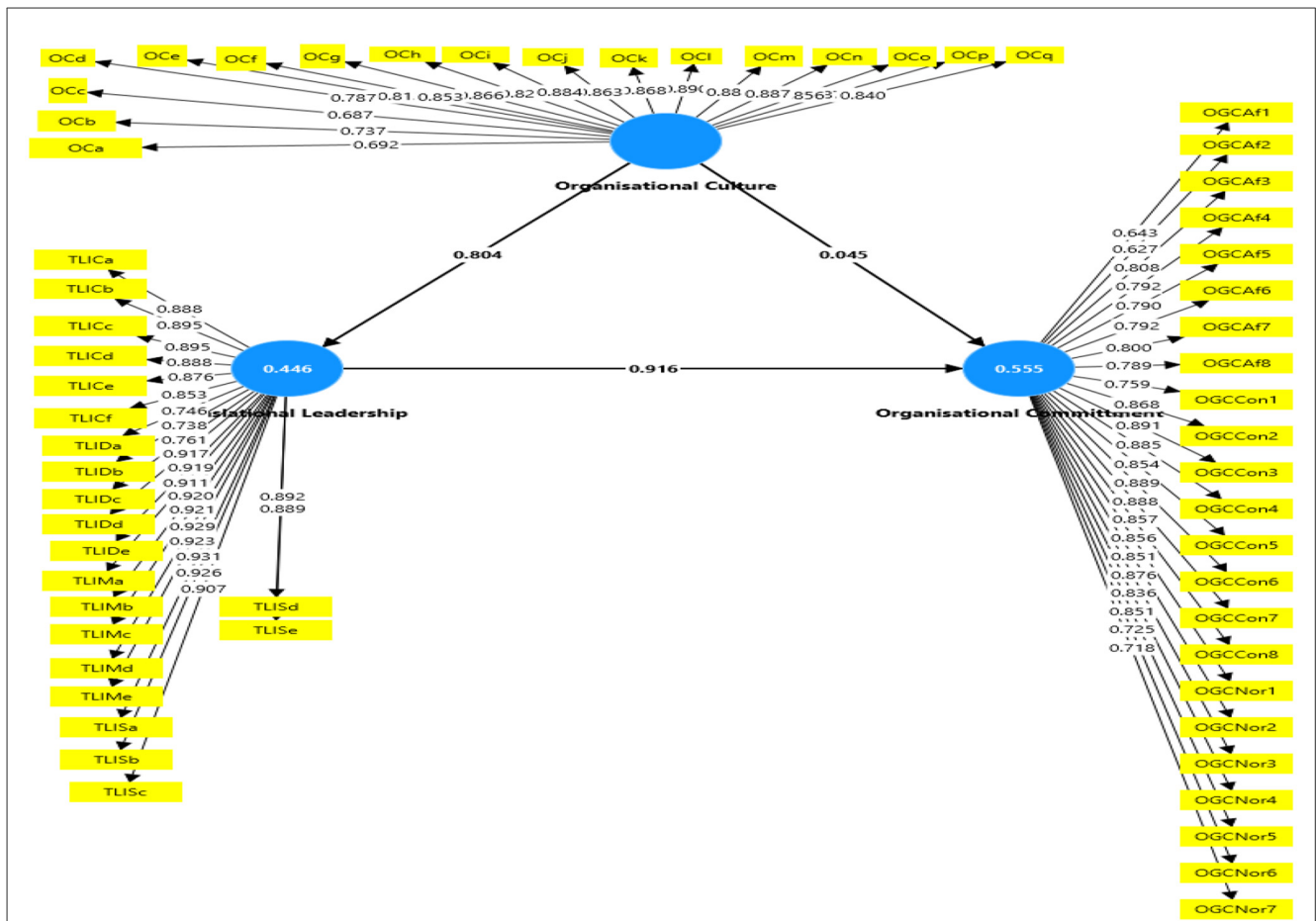


FIGURE 4 Moderating effect of organization culture.

TABLE 5 Path coefficients and effects.

	Path coefficients
Organizational Culture ->Organisational Commitment	-0.190
Organizational Culture -> Translational Leadership	0.668
Translational Leadership ->OrganisationalCommitment	0.858
	Specific indirect effects
Organizational Culture -> Translational Leadership ->OrganisationalCommitment	0.573
	Total effects
Organizational Culture ->OrganisationalCommitment	0.383
Organizational Culture -> Translational Leadership	0.668
Translational Leadership ->OrganisationalCommitment	0.858

TABLE 6 Model fit indices.

	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.135	0.135
d_UIS	34.554	34.554
d_G	13.665	13.665
Chi-square	20495.830	20495.830
NFI	0.550	0.550

Manoppo, who found that overly charismatic leaders can create staff dependence, inaction, and reduced autonomy. Research has shown that charismatic leadership styles can have both positive and negative effects on organizational outcomes (Lasrado and Kassem, 2021). In contrast, the large negative effect of Intellectual Stimulation on commitment is unexpected, given theoretical assumptions that it should enhance commitment (Mashile et al., 2021). However, the findings align with studies suggesting that excessive intellectual stimulation can lead to stress, burnout, and decreased job satisfaction. This implies that Omani teachers may perceive intellectual stimulation from leaders as challenging or overwhelming.

Hypothesis H02, which posited that innovative organizational culture significantly influences all three dimensions of organizational commitment among teachers in Oman's basic education schools, was supported by the study findings. This positive correlation between the two variables is consistent with earlier research (Golden III and Shriner, 2019; Ghumiem et al., 2023), which highlights the critical role of organizational culture in shaping employee commitment. Notably, a strong relationship was observed between organizational culture and normative commitment ($\beta = 0.708$), indicating that culture strongly fosters a sense of moral obligation and organizational citizenship behavior among educators—essential components of employee commitment.

Faeq and Ismael (2022) assert that organizational culture plays a vital role in promoting employee loyalty and commitment.

Furthermore, the study identified significant relationships between organizational culture and both affective commitment ($\beta = 0.147$) and continuance commitment ($\beta = 0.270$). These findings suggest that a supportive culture enhances teachers' emotional attachment, reduces turnover, and boosts retention and motivation (Ghumiem et al., 2023; Jahan et al., 2022). The strong positive correlation between innovative organizational culture and organizational commitment indicates that employees working in a culture that values innovation, creativity, and critical thinking are more likely to remain committed to their organization.

Therefore, educational leaders and policymakers should strive to cultivate a cohesive, innovative, and values-driven culture in schools to strengthen staff commitment and improve the overall performance of the education system (Hashmi et al., 2020).

The results of this study also provide strong support for Hypothesis H4, indicating that innovative organizational culture mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment. The findings show that innovative organizational culture has a strong positive association with transformational leadership ($\beta = 0.668$), which in turn exerts a robust direct influence on organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.858$). These results are consistent with previous studies that highlighted the indirect effect of organizational culture in shaping employee commitment.

The significant indirect effect of organizational culture on commitment through transformational leadership ($\beta = 0.573$) suggests that innovative organizational culture contributes meaningfully to commitment, though indirectly. Leadership behaviors that encourage, inspire, motivate, and support employees can significantly strengthen commitment. DEL: Leadership behaviors that encourage, inspire, motivate, and support will trigger commitment. Al-Husseini emphasized that organizational culture plays a crucial role in promoting effective leadership practices, while Alruwais found that organizational culture influences both leadership style and employee outcomes.

A favorable organizational culture creates an environment that fosters effective leadership, commitment, and institutional stability. Tomi et al. further note that a positive culture enhances motivation, job satisfaction, and professional growth, ultimately improving overall organizational performance.

5.1 Theoretical implications

The study contributes to leadership theory by highlighting that not all dimensions of transformational leadership uniformly enhance teacher commitment. The negative effects observed for idealized influence and intellectual stimulation indicate the need to reinterpret the universal applicability of transformational leadership across cultural settings. Future theoretical models should account for how national culture, institutional hierarchy, and teacher expectations moderate leadership effectiveness. Furthermore, the study establishes innovative organizational culture as a mediating mechanism linking transformational leadership and commitment, advancing prior research that mainly viewed culture as a moderator or contextual variable. Finally, by confirming that affective, continuance, and normative commitment

respond differently to leadership and cultural influences, the study supports a multidimensional conceptualization of commitment in educational settings.

5.2 Practical implications

1. The Ministry of Education in Oman should design leadership development programs that strengthen transformational leadership competencies, especially individualized consideration and inspirational motivation, which have proven most effective in this context.
2. Programs should also emphasize cultural awareness, helping school leaders understand how certain leadership behaviors (e.g., excessive intellectual stimulation) may have unintended negative consequences in hierarchical school systems.
3. At the institutional level, principals should foster innovative and collaborative organizational cultures that promote participation, creativity, and professional growth among teachers. Such environments enhance teacher engagement, motivation, and retention, contributing to improved student outcomes and overall school effectiveness.
4. Policymakers should integrate these findings into leadership evaluation frameworks and school improvement strategies to align leadership practices with Oman Vision 2040 educational objectives.

5.3 Limitations and future research

This study is limited to principals and teachers in Oman's public basic education schools, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Future research could examine the relationships among transformational leadership, organizational culture, and commitment in different educational levels or private institutions. Comparative studies between primary and secondary schools could reveal whether cultural and leadership effects differ across educational tiers. Employing mixed-methods designs—combining surveys with interviews or focus groups—could provide deeper insight into the mechanisms underlying these relationships and strengthen causal interpretations.

6 Conclusion

This study examined the effect of transformational leadership on organizational commitment and identified the mediating role of innovative organizational culture among Omani primary school teachers. The findings demonstrate that not all dimensions of transformational leadership yield uniformly positive effects. While individualized consideration and inspirational motivation enhanced commitment, idealized influence and intellectual stimulation exerted negative influences. These results emphasize the importance of contextual and cultural factors in interpreting leadership effectiveness within hierarchical educational systems.

The study further establishes innovative organizational culture as a mediating mechanism that strengthens the link between leadership behaviors and teacher commitment. This suggests that fostering a culture of innovation and collaboration is essential

for maximizing the benefits of transformational leadership in schools. Overall, the findings underscore the importance of combining effective leadership practices with supportive cultural environments to enhance teacher engagement and commitment. The study contributes both theoretically and practically by extending transformational leadership theory to a Middle Eastern educational context and offering evidence-based recommendations for policy and practice.

Practically, the results call for the Ministry of Education to institutionalize leadership development programs and promote innovative school cultures to improve teacher retention, professional growth, and student outcomes—thereby supporting the goals of Oman Vision 2040.

Data availability statement

The raw data supporting the conclusions of this article will be made available by the authors, without undue reservation.

Author contributions

SA: Methodology, Conceptualization, Investigation, Writing – original draft, Formal analysis, Visualization, Writing – review & editing. DYA-H: Conceptualization, Supervision, Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Visualization. AA: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – original draft, Investigation, Data curation, Funding acquisition, Project administration, Resources, Software.

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