

## UNLEASHING TEACHER PERFORMANCE: THE SYNERGY OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP, RESILIENCE, AND PERSON-ENVIRONMENT FIT

### *MOTIVAR O DESEMPENHO DOS PROFESSORES: A SINERGIA ENTRE A LIDERANÇA TRANSFORMACIONAL, A RESILIÊNCIA E A ADAPTAÇÃO PESSOA-AMBIENTE*

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#### **Abstract**

This study investigates the determinants of teacher performance by examining the roles of transformational leadership and teacher resilience, with Person-Environment Fit (P-E Fit) as a mediating variable. A quantitative approach using structural equation modeling (SEM) with a second-order construct was applied to analyze causal relationships among variables. The sample consisted of 338 early childhood education teachers in Tegal Regency selected through simple random sampling. Data were collected using structured questionnaires adapted from validated measurement scales. The findings show that both transformational leadership and teacher resilience have significant positive effects on teacher performance. P-E Fit mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and teacher performance, although the direct effect of leadership remains stronger. In contrast, the mediating role of P-E Fit in the relationship between teacher resilience and performance is statistically marginal, indicating that resilience contributes to performance primarily through direct psychological mechanisms. These results highlight the importance of both internal resources and supportive leadership in enhancing teacher performance. Strengthening transformational leadership practices and integrating resilience-building strategies into teacher development programs can substantially improve the quality

#### **Resumo**

*Este estudo investiga os fatores determinantes do desempenho dos professores, analisando os papéis da liderança transformacional e da resiliência dos professores, com a adequação pessoa-ambiente (P-E Fit) como variável mediadora. Foi aplicada uma abordagem quantitativa utilizando a modelação de equações estruturais (SEM) com um constructo de segunda ordem para analisar as relações causais entre as variáveis. A amostra consistiu em 338 professores de educação infantil na Regência de Tegal, selecionados através de amostragem aleatória simples. Os dados foram recolhidos através de questionários estruturados adaptados a partir de escalas de medição validadas. Os resultados mostram que tanto a liderança transformacional como a resiliência dos professores têm efeitos positivos significativos no desempenho dos professores. A Adequação P-E medeia a relação entre a liderança transformacional e o desempenho dos professores, embora o efeito direto da liderança continue a ser mais forte. Em contrapartida, o papel mediador da Adequação P-E na relação entre a resiliência dos professores e o desempenho é estatisticamente marginal, indicando que a resiliência contribui para o desempenho principalmente através de mecanismos psicológicos diretos. Estes resultados destacam a importância tanto dos recursos internos como de uma liderança de*



of teaching in early childhood education settings. This study contributes to the literature by providing a comprehensive model that links individual psychological strengths with organizational conditions in predicting teacher performance.

**Keywords:** Transformational Leadership. Teacher Resilience. Person-Environment Fit. Teacher Performance. Early Childhood Education.

*apoio na melhoria do desempenho dos professores. O reforço das práticas de liderança transformacional e a integração de estratégias de desenvolvimento da resiliência nos programas de desenvolvimento dos professores podem melhorar substancialmente a qualidade do ensino em contextos de educação infantil. Este estudo contribui para a literatura ao fornecer um modelo abrangente que associa as forças psicológicas individuais às condições organizacionais na previsão do desempenho dos professores.*

**Palavras-chave:** Liderança Transformacional. Resiliência do Professor. Adequação Pessoa-Ambiente. Desempenho do Professor. Educação Infantil.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Education is an important element in the development of human life in a country. which is Education plays an essential role in human development and national progress. This importance is reflected in Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). which emphasizes inclusive and quality education for all (UNESCO. 2014). Early childhood education (ECE) is particularly critical for achieving this goal because it supports children's cognitive. social. and emotional development and prepares them to participate effectively in society (Conçu. 2020). To reach these expectations. the quality of teaching and the performance of ECE teachers become central to ensuring meaningful learning.

Teacher performance is crucial for achieving optimal learning outcomes. implementing developmentally appropriate pedagogy. and creating supportive classroom environments. Teachers in early childhood settings face distinctive challenges related to the characteristics of young learners. increasing curriculum demands. and the integration of digital tools. These conditions require teachers to possess strong instructional competencies as well as personal and environmental resources that support their work (L Rajendra. 2014; Ülger et al.. 2014). Understanding the factors that strengthen teacher performance is therefore an important area of educational research.

Transformational leadership is widely recognized as a leadership style that enhances teacher motivation. commitment. and performance. Leaders who articulate a clear vision. provide inspiration. and encourage professional growth can increase teachers' engagement and readiness to meet workplace demands (Bartlett. 2009; Sitthisomjin et al.. 2020). Meanwhile.

teacher resilience, defined as the capacity to cope with stress and adapt to challenges, has gained increased attention as an essential personal resource that supports effectiveness and well-being (Mansfield et al., 2012; Nguyet Trang & Thang, 2023). Resilient teachers are more capable of maintaining motivation and managing job-related pressure.

However, the interactions between personal factors and contextual factors in shaping performance are still not fully understood, especially in ECE settings. Person–Environment Fit (P–E Fit), which refers to the alignment between individuals and their work environment, is an important construct in this relationship ((Badger Darrow & Behrend, 2017; Tjahjono et al., 2018). Teachers who experience a high level of fit tend to report stronger satisfaction, greater engagement, and better performance (Z. Zhang et al., 2024). Although transformational leadership and resilience may influence perceptions of fit, empirical evidence on how these variables relate remains limited.

A conceptual gap remains regarding the distinction between teacher resilience and P–E Fit, particularly in relation to leadership. Many previous studies have treated resilience as an outcome of supportive leadership, which blurs the boundary between personal capacities and environmental alignment (Byantara et al., 2023; Yu & Jang, 2024). In fact, resilience is an internal psychological resource that reflects adaptability, persistence, and emotional regulation (Mansfield et al., 2012), whereas P–E Fit represents an evaluation of how well individuals match the demands, values, and resources of their work environment (Tjahjono et al., 2018). These constructs operate at different theoretical levels and should not be viewed as components of the same adaptive process.

Only a small number of studies have examined how resilience influences teachers' perceptions of fit independently of leadership. Even fewer studies have explored the role of P–E Fit as a mediator linking resilience to teacher performance. This gap is particularly relevant in early childhood settings, where teachers depend on both personal coping abilities and supportive environments to perform effectively (Holmes et al., 2021; Nasir et al., 2022). Addressing this gap is important for building a clearer understanding of how internal psychological resources and external contextual conditions work together to shape teacher outcomes.

Based on these gaps, this study examines the influence of transformational leadership and teacher resilience on teacher performance, with P–E Fit as a mediating variable. By clearly distinguishing personal capacity from environmental congruence, this study offers a more comprehensive explanation of the mechanisms that influence performance in early childhood education (Meyer et al., 2002; Purnama et al., 2020). The proposed model provides new insight

into the interplay between individual and contextual factors and extends existing research on teacher effectiveness.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Teacher performance is widely regarded as a central outcome in educational research because it determines instructional quality and the achievement of learning objectives. In early childhood education in particular, teachers are required to demonstrate effective instruction, adaptability, socio-emotional support, collaboration, and strong professional responsibility. These expectations underscore that teacher performance is shaped simultaneously by school-level leadership practices and the psychological resources teachers bring to their work. Understanding how these contextual and personal factors interact is therefore essential for explaining variations in teachers' behavioural consistency and overall instructional effectiveness.

Within this broader framework, transformational leadership has emerged as one of the most influential contextual predictors of teacher performance. Leaders who articulate a compelling vision, provide individual support, encourage reflective thinking, and model professional integrity cultivate an environment that strengthens teachers' confidence, satisfaction, and engagement (Hasani & Xhomara, 2024; Virgana & Fitriani, 2025). These conditions foster reciprocal relationships in which teachers respond to supportive leadership with greater effort, collaboration, and commitment (Cetin & Kinik, 2015a; Dust et al., 2014a; Katou, 2015a; Zhu et al., 2013a). Because such leadership directly shapes the climate in which teachers work, it is expected to generate improvements in teacher performance.

### 2.1 H1: Transformational leadership positively influences teacher performance

Beyond leadership, teachers' performance is also influenced by their internal psychological resources, particularly resilience. The pressures and emotional demands of early childhood settings require sustained adaptability, emotional steadiness, and perseverance, which are qualities characteristic of resilient teachers (Beltman et al., 2011; Mansfield et al., 2012). When complemented by autonomy, constructive feedback, collegial support, and developmental opportunities, resilience enables teachers to maintain instructional quality even under demanding conditions (Chen, 2024; Chen & Chi-Kin Lee, 2022). As personal resources

interact with contextual demands. resilience becomes a central mechanism through which teachers sustain effective performance.

## **2.2 H2: Teacher resilience positively influences teacher performance**

The influence of both leadership and resilience is further shaped by how well teachers perceive themselves to fit within their work environment. Person–environment fit (P–E Fit) reflects the perceived alignment between individual characteristics and work conditions, including values, abilities, job demands, and interpersonal relations. Strong fit is associated with higher wellbeing, stronger commitment, and greater retention (Badger Darrow & Behrend, 2017; Bakker & Leiter, 2010; Edwards, 2008). Teachers who perceive clarity and compatibility in their roles tend to experience less strain and display more consistent professional behaviour (Cable & Judge, 1996; Perrone & Eddy-Spicer, 2021; Xiong et al., 2022). Because fit shapes how teachers interpret and respond to their work context, it is expected to reinforce their performance.

## **2.3 H3: P–E Fit positively influences teacher performance**

Given its evaluative nature, P–E Fit can also be shaped by leadership practices, linking contextual influence to teachers' perceptions of their environment. Transformational leaders who communicate shared goals strengthen value alignment, while personalised support enhances connection with supervisors and clarifies expectations. These conditions improve the match between teachers' abilities and job requirements (Bui et al., 2017; Guay, 2013; Udin, 2024). By providing trust, autonomy, and resources, such leaders influence teachers' interpretations of their compatibility with the organizational setting (Li et al., 2021; Powers, 2009). This process suggests that transformational leadership plays a formative role in shaping P–E Fit.

## **2.4 H4: Transformational leadership positively influences P–E Fit**

Because P–E Fit enhances clarity, belonging, and alignment, it is positioned to serve as a mechanism through which transformational leadership translates into stronger performance. Teachers who perceive compatibility with organizational values, supervisory expectations, and job demands tend to reciprocate supportive leadership with greater behavioural engagement and

instructional effectiveness (Bettencourt, 2004; N. P. Podsakoff et al., 2010; P. M. Podsakoff et al., 1996; Qalati et al., 2022). This mechanism is particularly salient in early childhood settings, where high emotional and instructional demands require coherence between teacher competencies and workplace expectations (Guay, 2013). Thus, P–E Fit is likely to mediate the positive effects of transformational leadership on teacher performance.

### **2.5 H5: P–E Fit mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and teacher performance**

The role of fit becomes even more critical when considering teachers' internal resources, particularly resilience. Although the two constructs are sometimes conflated, resilience represents an internal psychological capacity, whereas P–E Fit reflects an evaluative judgment about contextual compatibility. Nonetheless, resilient teachers may be better able to interpret demands, utilize support, and adapt to work conditions, thereby forming more favourable perceptions of fit (Chen, 2024; Romano et al., 2021). This relationship positions resilience not merely as a response to stressors but as a factor that shapes how teachers perceive their environment.

### **2.6 H6: Teacher resilience positively influences P–E Fit**

When favourable perceptions of fit are present, the benefits of resilience are more effectively channelled into professional action. Teachers who perceive compatibility with their roles, organizational expectations, and interpersonal conditions can convert their resilience into more consistent instructional behaviour and sustained commitment ((Huang et al., 2024; Romano et al., 2021). Supportive conditions further reinforce this alignment, enabling resilient teachers to maintain high performance even during challenging periods. Consequently, P–E Fit is expected to mediate the influence of resilience on teacher performance.

### **2.7 H7: P–E Fit mediates the relationship between teacher resilience and teacher performance**

The proposed hypotheses outline an integrative framework in which teacher performance arises from the interaction between contextual conditions and individual psychological resources. Transformational leadership shapes the relational and organizational

environment through which teachers interpret expectations and enact their professional roles. whereas resilience equips teachers with the internal capacity to sustain effective practice under pressure. Person–environment fit serves as the central mechanism connecting these influences by providing a sense of alignment, clarity, and compatibility within the work setting. Through this pathway, supportive leadership and resilient dispositions are more readily translated into consistent instructional behavior and sustained professional commitment. Overall, the framework suggests that teacher performance is not attributable to any single antecedent but is instead the product of converging forces that integrate leadership practices, personal resources, and teachers' perceived fit with their organizational context.

### 3 RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a simple random sampling technique for sample selection, which allows each element of the population to have an equal chance of being selected as a member of the sample, without using a specific pattern. This sample selection is suitable because the population is not limited by geographical factors. The sample was taken from the population of formal and non-formal ECE teachers in Tegal Regency, which amounted to 2,814 teachers. Based on calculations with the Cochran formula (Cochran, 1977) with a confidence level of 95% ( $Z=1.96$ ), the expected proportion of the population 0.5, and a margin of error of 5% (0.05), the number of samples required before correction for a limited population is 384.16. After adjusting for a limited population, the number of samples required is 338 people.

The research analysis used the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) method. This analysis is used to explain the cause-and-effect relationships that occur in the model that has already been built. Second-order constructs have the advantage of simplifying the model and clarifying its conceptual structure. This is because the variables of this study have their forming dimensions. The operational variables of the research can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1***Variables and Indicators*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Performance Dimensions</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Source</b>
Teacher Performance	Task Performance (TP)	P 1	Evaluate the ability to complete the assigned tasks well.	This dimension is built based on research that has been conducted by Pattnaik 2021 (Pattnaik & Pattnaik, 2021). which is based on the dimensions of task performance, interpersonal, and job dedication which is also supported by previous researchers. (Ángeles López-Cabarcos et al., 2022; Noor & Rafiq, 2021; Pradhan & Jena, 2017; Rokim & Tentama, 2020; Yasmin et al., 2023)
		P 2	Evaluate whether job responsibilities are always fulfilled according to the job description.	
		P 3	Assessment of the implementation of the expected tasks in the job role.	
		P 4	Evaluate the fulfillment of formal performance requirements set out in the job.	
		P 5	Assess the extent of involvement in activities that affect performance assessment.	
		P 6	Whether the mandatory aspects of the work are never overlooked (reverse question for evaluation).	
		P 7	Evaluate accuracy in carrying out key tasks without fail.	
	Interpersonal Facilitation (IPF)	PF 1	An assessment of whether colleagues are valued when they achieve something.	
		PF 2	Evaluate the support and assistance provided to colleagues who have personal problems.	
		PF 3	An assessment of involvement in discussions with others before taking actions that may affect them.	
		PF 4	Assess whether positive statements are expressed to make colleagues feel appreciated.	
		PF 5	Ability assessments to encourage colleagues to overcome differences and work together.	
		PF 6	Assess fair attitudes towards colleagues.	
	Job Dedication (JD)	D 1	Evaluation of readiness to help colleagues without being asked.	
		D 2	Assessment of dedication to working longer hours to get the job done on time.	
		D 2	Assess the meticulousness of paying attention to important details in the work.	

		D 3	J	Evaluation of efforts is harder than necessary to achieve the best results.	
		D 4	J	Assessment of initiative in requesting challenging tasks to improve abilities.	
		D 5	J	Assess personal discipline and self-control at work.	
		D 6	J	Evaluate initiatives in solving problems at work.	
		D 7	J	Assessment of persistence in completing tasks despite obstacles.	
		D 8	J	Evaluate enthusiasm and enthusiasm for facing difficult tasks.	
Transformational Leadership	Idealized Influence (Pengaruh Ideal)	I 1	I	Evaluate how leaders provide examples of ethical and responsible behavior.	Transformational leadership was introduced by Bass (Bass, 2006) as a new approach to explain leadership styles, which is a development of transactional leadership. This variable indicator has been developed by various researchers. In this study, the development of 4 ideal indicators, motivation, stimulus, and consideration was used to explain the details of transformational leadership styles. (Cetin & Kinik, 2015b; Dust et al..
		I 2	I	Assess respondents' trust and respect for leaders because of their integrity.	
		I 3	I	Measure the positive impact of leaders in inspiring respondents to imitate them.	
		I 4	I	Assessment of motivation resulting from the leader's values.	
		I 5	I	Evaluate the feelings of safety and support that the leader provides to respondents.	
	Inspirational Motivation (Motivasi Inspiratif)	M 1	I	Assess how clear the leader's vision is in arousing the enthusiasm of respondents.	
		M 2	I	Evaluate the influence of leaders' communication in encouraging harder efforts from respondents.	
		M 3	I	Measure the inspiration that leaders provide to achieve team goals.	
		M 4	I	Evaluate the influence of the leader's positive words on the respondent's work morale.	
		M 5	I	Assess the additional motivation that respondents feel thanks to the leader's encouragement.	
	Intellectual Stimulation (Stimulasi Intelektual)	S 1	I	Evaluate the leader's impulse to think creatively and seek new solutions.	
		S 2	I	Assess the leader's support in encouraging the respondents' creative ideas.	
		S 3	I	Measuring the influence of leaders in inspiring alternative approaches to problems.	

		S 4	I	Evaluate the sense of security that the leader gives to try new things.	2014b; Katou. 2015b; Zhu et al.. 2013b) Questions from previous research were taken in accordance with the characteristics of school organizations, where the main goal is service and education – not profit orientation.
		S 5	I	Assessment of the critical thinking challenges given by leaders.	
	Individualized Consideration (Pertimbangan Individual)	C 1	I	Evaluation of the leader's attention to the respondent's career development.	
		C 2	I	Assess the extent to which the leader understands the needs and aspirations of respondents.	
		C 3	I	Measure the guidance and feedback that leaders provide for respondent development.	
		C 4	I	Assessment of the leader's personal support in facing work challenges.	
		C 5	I	Evaluate the adjustment of the leader's approach to help the best potential of the respondent.	
Teacher Resilience	Professional	1	P	Assess the ability to face challenges professionally.	Teacher resilience is a measurement to determine whether the level of teacher work resilience can determine the success and improvement of the work carried out. This measurement dimension was developed from research to get an in-depth idea of these variables (Nguyet Trang & Thang. 2023). Support from previous researchers (Chen. 2024; Demirkasimoğlu. 2010; Mansfield et al.. 2012). who supported with a different approach. This study
		2	P	Measure confidence in the achievement of work goals.	
		3	P	Describe flexibility in dealing with change.	
		4	P	Demonstrates resilience in high-stress situations.	
		5	P	Measuring organizational and time management capabilities.	
	Emotional	1	E	Assess emotional control under stress.	
		2	E	Describe the awareness of emotions and their influence.	
		3	E	Demonstrate the ability to maintain a positive attitude.	
		4	E	Measures emotional resilience and psychological stability.	
		5	E	Assess the ability to recover after experiencing stress.	
	Motivational/Psychological	1	M	Describe the perception of benefits of facing difficulties.	
		2	M	Measure perseverance and commitment.	

		3	M	Demonstrate job satisfaction and intrinsic motivation.	combines indicators/questions from previous research, and is adjusted to the school organization so that teachers can understand in filling in these indicators.			
		4	M	Assess the desire to develop and adapt.				
		5	M	Demonstrate self-confidence and self-efficacy.				
	Social	1	S	Assess the ability to socialize and build networks.				
		2	S	Describe the skill of asking for support.				
		3	S	Demonstrate social support and collaboration.				
		4	S	Assess the strength of professional relationships.				
		5	S	Measure communication and teamwork.				
	Person-Environment Fit	Fit	Person-Organization	O 1		P	Assess the suitability between teachers' personal values and school values and culture.	The identification of this variable is based on the Ozdemir research (Özdemir & Ergun, 2015). The results of his research explain that these three variables can explain the person-environment fit that occurs in an organization. By adding some previous articles (De Cooman & Vleugels, 2022; Misra et al., 2024), to provide a clear picture of the indicators that need to be used in this study.
				O 2		P	Measure how well the school's grades are in accordance with the teacher's personal preferences.	
O 3				P	Demonstrate the teacher's satisfaction with the job offer and personal needs.			
O 4				P	Assess the fulfillment of teachers' expectations by current work.			
O 5				P	Shows the teacher's level of satisfaction with the current job.			
O 6				P	Assess the alignment between the teacher's life values and the school's values.			
Person-Supervisor Fit		S 1	P	Measure the compatibility between the personal values of teachers and superiors.				
		S 2	P	Assess the alignment of values between teachers and superiors.				
		S 3	P	Show the match of values between the boss and the teacher regarding life priorities.				
Demands-Abilities Fit		A 1	D	Assess whether the teacher's abilities and training are in accordance with the demands of the job.				
		A 2	D	Measure the suitability between teachers' abilities and education with the demands of their work.				

## 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study uses the variables of teacher resilience, transformational leadership, and person-environment fit in explaining teacher performance. The SEM structural model is a second-order construct, which is used to explain in depth the theoretical conceptual of the latent variables used. The suitability of this model is appropriate, because it has a critical value of the Goodness of Fit (GoF) test threshold, where this test is important to determine the feasibility of the model (J. Hair Jr et al., 2019; J. F. Hair Jr et al., 2013). The results of the GoF test can be seen in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*Goodness of Fit (GoF) Estimation Results of Second Order Model*

Testing	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.063	0.063
d_ULS	0.417	0.417
d_G	0.274	0.274
Chi-Square	510.852	510.852
NFI	0.844	0.844

The results of the model suitability test in the second order showed good suitability based on several indices. The SRMR value on both models is 0.063, below the threshold of 0.08, which indicates a good fit. The d\_ULS and d\_G values on both models are 0.417 and 0.274, which also indicate a good fit. Chi-Square calculated at 510.852 shows the corresponding deviation between the model and the data. Finally, the NFI value is 0.844, which indicates that the model fits the existing data, although lower than the ideal threshold of 0.90, but is still within the acceptable range to demonstrate model suitability. Variable testing using path analysis showed good results. The results of the test are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3***Path Coefficient Analysis*

Variable Testing	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics ((O/STDEV))	P Values	Information
P-E Fit -> Teacher Performance	0.110	2.059	0.040	Significant
Teacher Resilience -> P-E Fit	0.489	8.478	0.000	Significant
Teacher Resilience -> Teacher Performance	0.305	4.619	0.000	Significant
Transformational Leadership -> P-E Fit	0.357	5.912	0.000	Significant
Transformational Leadership -> Teacher Performance	0.514	8.259	0.000	Significant
Teacher Resilience -> P-E Fit -> Teacher Performance	0.054	1.942	0.052	Insignificant
Transformational Leadership -> P-E Fit -> Teacher Performance	0.039	1.978	0.048	Significant

The findings of this study reinforce the central role of teacher resilience in shaping performance in early childhood education settings. Previous research has consistently shown that higher levels of resilience contribute to improved instructional quality and classroom outcomes (Chen, 2024; Gu & Day, 2007; Öncü, 2024; Palupi & Tjahjono, 2016). The present study aligns with these findings by demonstrating that resilient teachers are better able to sustain focus, regulate emotions, and adapt to situational pressures, which ultimately strengthens their effectiveness as educators (Bagdžiūnienė et al., 2023). This reinforces the argument that resilience functions not merely as a coping skill but as a core psychological resource that directly enables teachers to maintain performance under conditions of stress. The implications point to the need for resilience-building programs in early childhood teacher education, particularly those that integrate stress-coping strategies, emotional-regulation techniques, and psychological empowerment modules.

The results also confirm the importance of transformational leadership as a key determinant of teacher performance. Previous studies have shown that transformational leadership enhances teaching motivation, instructional quality, and teacher-student interactions (Hasani & Xhomara, 2024; Pounder, 2006; Selamat et al., 2013; Yu & Jang, 2024). The current findings support and extend this body of research, demonstrating that leaders who offer inspiration, professional autonomy, and intellectual stimulation help teachers navigate classroom challenges and embrace innovative pedagogical approaches (Firmansyah et al., 2022). Consistent with earlier comparisons emphasizing the superiority of transformational leadership over transactional styles in fostering intrinsic motivation (Baškarada et al., 2017). This study highlights that leadership that prioritizes vision, empowerment, and professional growth produces more substantial gains in teacher performance. These results reinforce the importance of leadership development programs that build principals' capacity to motivate, mentor, and support teachers within early childhood contexts.

Beyond these direct effects, the study also provides meaningful insights into the role of Person-Environment Fit in early childhood education settings. The results indicate that teachers who perceive stronger alignment between their abilities, values, and the conditions of their workplace tend to perform better, a finding consistent with existing literature on the importance of organizational fit in shaping work-related outcomes. At the same time, the indirect pathways observed in this study provide nuance to the existing theoretical landscape. The mediating role of P-E Fit in the association between transformational leadership and teacher performance, although modest, suggests that leadership contributes to performance partly by helping teachers feel more aligned with their work environment. This is consistent with prior studies emphasizing that supportive leadership enhances perceptions of compatibility and belonging within the organization.

In contrast, the mediating role of P-E Fit in the link between teacher resilience and performance was not statistically significant. This finding adds an important perspective to existing scholarship. While earlier studies suggest that resilient teachers tend to experience more positive perceptions of their environment, the current results indicate that resilience exerts its influence on performance primarily through direct psychological mechanisms rather than through changes in perceived fit. In other words, teachers with strong resilience maintain productivity and instructional quality even when environmental

conditions are less than ideal. This pattern echoes prior research indicating that personal resilience enables teachers to remain effective despite contextual constraints (Dahri et al., 2023; Qamari et al., 2020; S. Zhang & Luo, 2023).

Taken together, these findings underscore that both personal and contextual factors contribute to teacher performance, but they operate through different pathways. Resilience emerges as a strong internal driver of performance, while transformational leadership enhances performance both directly and through the creation of a more supportive and congruent work environment. These results offer a more refined understanding of how teacher-related and school-related factors interact in early childhood education settings and highlight strategic entry points for improving performance through both individual capacity building and leadership strengthening.

## 5 CONCLUSION

This study concludes that a dynamic interaction between personal psychological resources and contextual workplace factors shapes teacher performance in early childhood education. Teacher resilience emerges as a particularly powerful internal driver, directly enhancing performance by enabling teachers to regulate emotions, sustain motivation, and remain effective even under challenging conditions. Transformational leadership likewise demonstrates a substantial direct effect, improving teacher performance through inspiration, empowerment, and intellectual stimulation, while also indirectly contributing by strengthening teachers' sense of alignment with their work environment. Although Person–Environment Fit plays a meaningful role in supporting performance, its mediating influence is modest and varies depending on the predictor. Specifically, P–E Fit partially mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and teacher performance, but does not mediate the link between teacher resilience and performance, indicating that resilience primarily operates through internal psychological mechanisms rather than through changes in perceived environmental compatibility. Overall, the findings highlight the importance of simultaneously developing teacher resilience and strengthening transformational leadership practices to enhance performance in early childhood settings. These results extend current theoretical understanding by demonstrating that personal capacities and leadership-driven contextual supports contribute through distinct pathways.

offering strategic directions for improving teacher effectiveness through both individual-level and organizational-level interventions.

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### Authors' Contribution

All authors contributed equally to the development of this article.

### Data availability

All datasets relevant to this study's findings are fully available within the article.

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