

The Impact of Transformational School Leadership on School Staff and School Culture in Primary Schools—A Systematic Review of International Literature

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Abstract: The purpose of this review is to examine transformational school leadership, responding to the question: ‘What is the research evidence in the international literature pertaining to the impact of transformational school leadership in primary schools on school staff and school culture?’. This review presents a synthesis of 15 studies performed between 2012 to 2022. The data are presented within a framework constructed from the dimensions and characteristics of transformational school leadership. They show transformational school leadership as a positive leadership style with a close interconnection between positive impact of transformational school leadership for school staff and for an enhanced school culture. An increased motivation in staff and the fostering of more positive school culture were found to be the leading impacts of transformational leadership on school staff and culture in this systematic literature review.

Keywords: transformational leadership; primary/elementary/early years middle school; staff; culture



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1. Introduction

Transformational school leadership is a leadership approach with the potential to generate reform in stakeholders, school culture, and educational organizations [1]. Research indicates that transformational leaders can transform the approach to people and culture within an organization [2,3]. Change has always been a factor in education and schooling. In recent years, significant and global social, political, and economic change has taken place because of many factors, both expected and unexpected, such as the COVID-19 pandemic [4,5], war [6,7], recession [8], and the development of educational technologies [9]. Considering these varied and often unpredictable events, one aspect that can be taken from these challenges is that change can be expected as a constant in school life. For schools to be enabled to navigating the complex nature of organizational change, school leaders require specific skills and practices [10]. That recent years have seen schools in an almost constant state of rapid and persistent transformation, would suggest that transformational leadership is a much-needed skills set for current school leaders.

However, school leadership itself is arguably undergoing more challenges and change than ever before. With societal trends, education systems are influenced, while also having the power to affect them [11]. Apart from tumultuous technological, social, economic, and political events that have affected schools on a global scale [9,12–16], an international staffing crisis in teaching and school leadership now pertains [17] and is likely to become worse because of decreasing rates of teacher recruitment and increases in teacher turnover [18,19]. Globally, as attempts to tackle a rapidly diversifying population [20–22], schools must respond to rapid and significant changes to remain relevant for the achievement of societal goals such as inclusion [23,24]. However, implementing change in organisations has been frequently and consistently linked to staff turnover [25,26], leaving school leaders in a paradoxical situation where they need to reduce staff attrition,

whilst implementing strategies for change that may increase the challenges associated with staff retention.

To influence necessary changes whilst minimising the negative impact that change may have on staff turnover intentions, transformational leadership may offer some potential solutions. Previous research has identified positive associations between transformational leadership, workplace engagement and reduced turnover intentions [27]. Despite its potential benefits and popularity in published articles pertaining to school leadership [28], transformational leadership is not the most prevalent leadership approach in policy or practice. For example, in Ireland, distributed leadership is promoted as the ideal leadership approach and is featured heavily in national policy [29,30]. Part of the reason for this gap between theory and practice has been linked to some of the criticisms of the transformational leadership theory [28,31], such as its lack of differentiation from other leadership styles [31,32] and the potentially dark side of this leadership style when a leader's personality and motivations are unethical or harmful in nature [33]. However, it has been argued that these criticisms should not lead to a departure from transformational leadership, but rather be seen as an opportunity to engage more deeply with associated challenges [28]. The purpose of the current review is to identify international research pertaining to the impact of transformational leadership on school staff and culture within a primary school context.

Before describing the methodology employed for this study, the following outlines the conceptualization of transformational leadership, transformational school leadership, and school culture that underpinned this study.

1.1. Transformational Leadership Conceptualization

Since initial conceptualizations, transformational leadership has received significant attention in academic research and literature [34]. This leadership approach has been both embraced and criticised, challenged, and refined in the half century since its initial introduction. In presenting an overview of some of the most popular and frequently referenced literature on transformational leadership through its development, one can see the developments in thinking on this phenomenon. In the 1940s, Max Weber sowed the seeds of transformational leadership with his theories of charismatic authority. In his seminal text, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* [35], charismatic authority was purported to exist when an individual had 'exceptional powers' (p. 358) and was 'a specifically revolutionary force' (p. 362). Downton, in the 1970s, developed the concept further, adding an understanding of rebel leadership and distinguishing among transactional, charismatic, and inspirational leadership. Later, rebel leadership was credited as having many of the characteristics of an early form of transformational leadership. In *Rebel Leadership* [36], Downton also advocates that a leader does not always necessarily lead from the front, but instead, 'the rebel leader who wants to maintain his authority . . . may have to follow as often as he leads' (p. 281).

However, it was MacGregor Burns who brought transformational leadership to popularity in his classic study of political leadership *Leadership* [37,38]. This work featured some of what are recognised as the major attributes of transformational leaders, which involve the belief that 'Leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation' [37] (p. 20). Bass introduced four elements of transformational leadership behaviour: idealised influence, intellectual stimulation, individualised consideration, and inspirational motivation. In identifying psychological structures, attributes such as transformational leaders 'motivating us to do more than we originally expected to do' [39] (p. 31) enter the discourse. Bass highlights transformational leader as: raising followers' awareness of the value of outcomes and how they are achieved, leading of followers to think of team outcomes over personal outcomes, and linking to achievement of Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Bennis and Nanus (1985) [40] focused on the qualities of a leader rather than their behaviours and saw the following four qualities as essential for transformational leaders: clear vision, clear communication, trustworthiness, and positive self and social regard.

Kouzes and Posner (1987) [41] then formulated a model providing transformational leaders with five practices: challenging processes, inspiring shared vision, enabling others to act, modelling the way, and encouraging the heart. Then, in 2010, Bass and Riggio [42] provide a definition for transformational leaders as ‘... those who stimulate and inspire followers to both achieve extraordinary outcomes and in the process, develop their own leadership capacity ... help followers grow and develop into leaders by responding to individual followers’ needs by empowering them and by aligning the objectives and foals of the individual followers, the leader, the group, and the larger organization’ (p. 76). This remains as a cogent definition.

Thus, it is evident that transformational leadership is associated with wide-ranging personal characteristics, behaviours, and practices. At the core of transformational leadership, is a relational and social engagement, embodying a human-centred approach and involving followers in the change process. This is evidenced in the mutual relationship between increased motivation and raised morality in leaders and followers [37,39,42], the importance of communication and shared vision in leaders and followers, and the importance of empowering followers and not just the leader [42]. These aspects separate transformational leadership from traditional leadership approaches, such as authoritarian, bureaucratic, and autocratic styles [30], in which the leader’s voice is predominant and allows little input from others, and those which promote the empowerment of the leader above others. Instead, transformational leadership aligns itself more with theories of human-centred or follower-centred leadership forms, such as ethical leadership, servant leadership, and authentic leadership [30]. Kellerman (2008) differentiates followership as the response of those in subordinate positions, (described as followers), to those in superior ones, (leaders) [43]. Kark and Shamir (2002) described how followers of transformational leaders develop identify with the leader and the team that is being led [44]. It should be noted, however, that the leader–follower relationship in modern leadership approaches would differ from that of previous models. Current political and social changes in the leader–follower relationship, as evident in social media suggest an ever-changing and complex nature of leader–follower dynamics with followers adopting a new level of voice, power and influence. In schools, an increase in teacher and student agency is similarly causing the leader–follower relationship to become, arguably, a somewhat healthier relationship for all parties [45].

1.2. Transformational School Leadership

School leadership is ‘the work of mobilizing and influencing others to articulate and achieve the school’s shared intentions and goals’ [46]. In the early 1980s, instructional leadership models emerged from research on the characteristics of effective schools. Leithwood and Montgomery [47], among others, identified a strong, directive leadership style that focused on curriculum and instruction in the principals of elementary schools who were effective in teaching the children of poor urban communities in the U.S. This model became very popular in schools globally until the 1990s, when scholars and practitioners began to popularise terms such as shared leadership, teacher leadership, distributed leadership, and transformational leadership. These leadership models moved away from the principal being the centre of expertise, power, and authority, with the transformational leadership model the most frequently used [48].

Leithwood and Jantzi, [49] and Leithwood et al. [50] expanded on the transformational leadership framework model designed by Bass [39]. They made it relevant to education, promoting transformational school leadership behaviours in school leaders and demonstrating how its advantages correspond to a more effective school leadership. Transformational leadership became a requirement for the success of any school, with other leadership styles no longer sufficiently effective [51]. What makes the application of transformational leadership unique from other leadership approaches, and how its application in educational leadership is valuable, is its orientation to a long-term vision, its focus on the development of personal followers, and the transformation of its followers into leaders and moral

agents [37]. This includes an ethical component that connects transformational leadership with higher-order values, defining this style as a form of moral leadership. When this is applied in educational settings, the school leaders, teachers, and all those in the school community who lead learning, begin to have interactions that transform, motivate, and benefit everyone in the school. Leaders who appeal to the high ideals, moral values, and higher-order needs of followers can be called transformational leaders [52].

Leithwood [53] identified six dimensions of transformational school leadership: (a) identifying and articulating a vision, (b) fostering the acceptance of group goals, (c) providing individualised support, (d) intellectual stimulation, (e) providing an appropriate model, and (f) high performance expectations. A narrative study by Sun and Leithwood [54] reiterates the value of transformational school leadership and groups these various dimensions of transformational school leadership into four categories of leadership practice: (a) setting directions, creating a shared vision, and building a shared consensus among school staff; (b) developing people and building trusting relationships, with the leader acting as role model for shared beliefs and morals; (c) redesigning the organisation, building a positive school culture, strengthening relationships with parents and the community, and providing structures that allow the teachers to carry out their teaching tasks effectively; and (d) improving the instructional programme, engaging, and building the school's curriculum and teaching methodologies. The results from this study demonstrate the impact of transformational school leadership approaches on overall school performance. In their study, these authors used six different models and tools to measure transformational school leadership: (a) Bass and Avolio's (1995, 2005), two-factor model, using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire as the primary tool; (b) Leithwood, Aiken, and Jantzi's (2001), transformational school leadership model, measured using the Nature of School Leadership survey; (c) Kouzes and Posner's (1995), model, measured using the Leadership Practices Inventory; (d) Sashkin's model, measured using the Leadership Behaviour Questionnaire; (e) Chong-Hee No's (1994), model, measured using the Principal's Transformational Leadership Questionnaire; and (f) Wiley's (1998), model. Leithwood further developed a scale, The New Transformational School Leadership Scale for Teacher Respondents. In Mitchell's (2019) study that explored the relationships among an enabling school structure, transformational leadership, organisational citizenship, and professional teacher behaviour, this scale was found to have excellent reliability.

In the 1980s, the number of documents published in English containing the term 'school leadership' was less than fifty. In the 1990s, this number had more than doubled. This rate of increase has continued over the past three decades, coinciding with growth in the recognition of the value of transformational leadership [28]. The fact that transformational school leadership became so popular in the 1990s is linked to the degree of change in educational policy at the time [53,55]. There has continued to be a very significant volume of research literature, both theoretical and empirical, completed on both transformational leadership and transformational school leadership. Despite consistent findings in relation to the positive outcomes of transformational leadership, there has been an underlying body of research that has also highlighted a potential dark side of this organisational leadership approach. As with criticisms of other human-centred leadership styles, such as authentic leadership [30], transformational leadership has the potential to produce unethical outcomes should the values, morals, and ultimate goals of the leader be themselves unethical as perceived by wider societal standards. Several authors have outlined instances in which the outcomes of transformational leadership can be negative in nature [56].

Transformational school leadership is recognised as a key school leadership model that has the potential to empower all members of a school's community to share in a common vision, value, and set of objectives and therefore, to make many positive social changes [28,48,57]. This leadership model can involve not only school staff and students but also extended families and the wider community. Transformational leadership also has valuable applications in classroom settings, in developing student capacity, and in transcending self-interest and embracing change, adding to its potential impact [58].

1.3. School Culture

School culture is the personality of a school, or the underlying norms and values that shape attitudes, patterns of behaviour, and expectations of stakeholders in the school. Parents have attributed the quality of a school's culture to the attitude of the school leader towards the involvement of parents in the school, and openness to a collaborative approach towards parents as indicating a higher quality [59]. If schools want to maximise their ability to improve student learning and culture, they should work on building collaborative cultures [60–62]. Creating a collaborative culture, in which all members of an organisation share beliefs, rules, policies, mission, and goals, is vital for improving schools. School learning culture can be cohered under four main practices—(a) shared leadership, (b) collaborative culture, (c) collective learning, and (d) shared values and vision—sometimes measured utilising the Brown Learning Culture Assessment [63].

School culture permeates every aspect of school life. Cultural patterns need to serve the needs of a school, the quality of leadership practice influences the creation of positive school culture [64,65]. Changing school culture is challenging but is germane to effective school improvement. School improvement is linked with those leading learning supporting and transforming aspects of the school's culture to benefit in achieving a school's objectives, [66]. Principals are in a unique position to influence school culture [64] and are central in the school improvement agenda but it can be a tall order because, as well as effecting change, they also need to create a sense of belonging for teachers and students and leads to benefits in organisational culture via the overlapping of organisational and individual values [67].

School principals can promote a positive culture by building confidence in teachers and students that they can achieve more [68]. Effective school leaders adapt to and work with the climate and culture of their school and community to develop a school that embraces continuous improvement. In differentiating between school climate and culture, climate refers to the feel of the school environment, while the broader concept of culture includes the immediate environment and its people's beliefs and values. Both have an impact on the behaviours of group members. 'Culture is a product of the relationship history in a school while climate is a function of how people perceive those relationships in the present' [69].

Every school has its distinct culture, which can vary along a scale from supportive to toxic in terms of how it contributes to educational outcomes in the school's community. It comprises the norms, values, beliefs, traditions, and rituals that are built up in a school over time as people work together, solve problems, and produce outcomes that lead to expectations that shape how people think, feel, and act in schools [64,65]. School culture has a powerful effect on students' attitudes and academic achievement. A holistic model would see all members of the extended school community involved in developing a motivational school culture [70]. In cognisance the definition of school culture as the guiding beliefs, attitudes, and values that impact the way a school operates [71], this review looks at how transformational school leadership impacts school staff and school culture.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Purpose and Structure of Review

A systematic literature review provides 'a comprehensive, unbiased synthesis of many relevant studies in a single document using rigorous and transparent methods' [72]. Considering the existing research and given the state of change in which schools exist and the role that leadership plays in achieving successful organisational change, a scoping review was carried out to identify all recent papers and research that discuss this leadership style in a primary school context. The preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses (PRISMA) guidelines were followed to support transparency in reporting why this review was performed, what the process was, and what we found in the literature. The review was registered with Open Science Framework.

The review objectives were to: (a) source the literature on transformational school leadership in international research; (b) apply search strategies to explore evidence of the

impacts, effects, influences, results, consequences, and outcomes of transformational school leadership on school staff and school culture in primary, elementary, and early middle schools across literature written from 2012 to 2022; (c) identify the terminology in the literature associated with the impact of transformational school leadership on school staff and culture; (d) form a framework from the elements of a selection of revered principles and models of transformational school leadership to convey the impact of transformational school leadership on school staff and school culture; and (e) outline the impacts of the selected studies using the backdrop of this framework.

Seven electronic databases, which are both multidisciplinary and discipline specific, were searched for all types of literature: Academic Search Complete, APA PsycINFO, Business Source Complete, Education Source, Eric, Google Scholar, and Scopus. Boolean operators, limiting and expanding search terms, and keywords were used. The originality of this review is in the examination and synthesis of current research regarding the impact of transformational school leadership on school staff and culture in primary, elementary, and early middle schools on an international scale and presenting it within a framework based on the dimensions and behaviours of transformational school leadership.

The following search strings were applied sequentially: (a) 'transformational leadership', (b) 'transformational school leadership', (c) 'transformational school leadership and', (d) 'primary school or elementary and early years middle school or primary education or elementary and early years middle education', (e) 'transformational school leadership and effects or impact or consequences or influence or change or outcomes or results and school staff', and (f) 'transformational school leadership and effects or impact or consequences or influence or change or outcomes or results and school culture'. Once the papers of specific focus were selected, they were analysed and synthesised. The characteristics and behaviours of transformational leadership, outlined by Bass [39], Podsakoff et al. [73], Sun and Leithwood [54], and Kouzes and Posner [41], were combined to form a framework with six elements for conveying the impact of transformational school leadership in the 15 selected studies on school staff and school culture.

2.2. Search Strategies, Inclusion, and Exclusion Selection Criteria

From the seven databases, all records with full texts published in English or Irish were included. No time limit was put on search strings (a) or (b) to ensure a broad view of the history and background of transformational school leadership. A period of ten years from 2012 to 2022 was applied to search strings (d)–(f) at their second level screening to ensure that records were based on relatively recent practice.

The following inclusion criteria were applied: (a) transformational school leadership must be reported on from primary, elementary, or early middle school settings, (b) reporting must be on the effects, impacts, consequences, influences, changes, outcomes, or results of TSL on school staff or culture, (c) published resources and grey literature to ensure depth of the research material. Exclusion criteria included: (a) records that included educational settings other than primary, elementary, or early middle schools, (b) the term 'climate;' it was not considered as equating with culture.

2.3. Screening, Grading of Papers, and Resulting Documents for Synthesis

Figure 1 below represents the screening process leading resulting in 15 studies selected for specific focus using the Prisma 202 flow chart.

Pre-screening Level: From seven databases, 7328 titles were identified. These were imported into an Endnote library with duplicates removed. The resulting 6365 titles were read for relevance, leading to 963 remaining readings. First Level Screening: Abstracts of records were independently screened and sorted for potential inclusion based on search strategies, i.e., full texts published in English, resulting in 949 texts. Second Level Screening: The third search strategy was then applied, excluding 367 records, and retaining 582. Of those eliminated at this level, 11 of the most relevant were further retained. Although these predated 2012, they were deemed of value for providing background on leadership,

transformational leadership, and transformational school leadership theories. This resulted in 593 retained records in total. These 593 records were read in full.

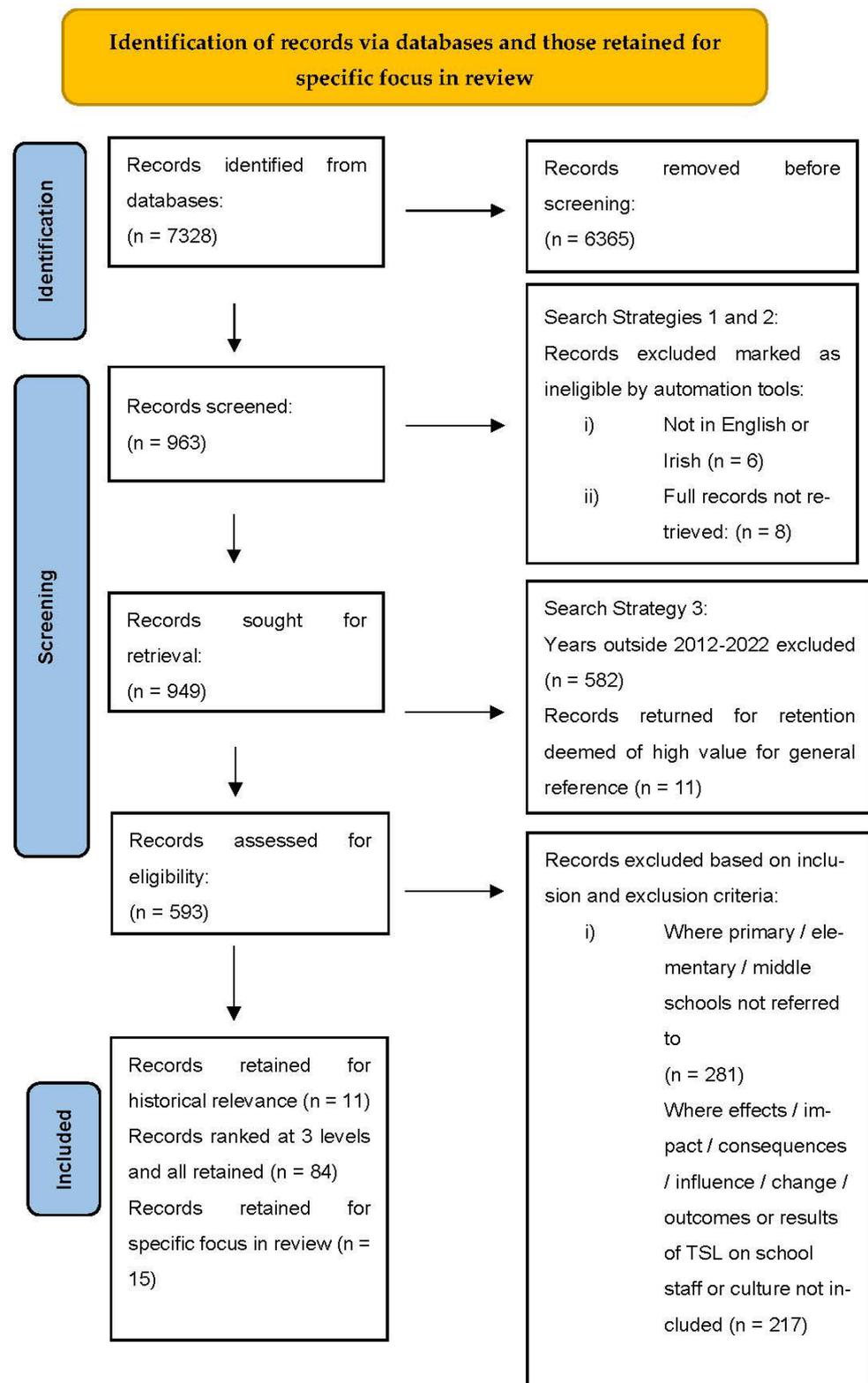


Figure 1. Prisma 2020 flow chart.

The six inclusion and exclusion selection criteria were then applied, ensuring rigorous assessment for eligibility. Applying the criteria, 281 records were excluded for not being

from primary/elementary/early middle school settings, with 217 further excluded in which the effects/impacts/consequences/influences/changes/outcomes/results of TSL on school staff or culture were not mentioned. In total, 498 records were eliminated for not being sufficiently aligned with the purpose of the current review but retained for potential further research on transformational school leadership. This resulted in the remaining 95 records being exported into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and briefly summarised. Of these, the 11 records that were written outside the years 2012–2022, retained for historical value, were deemed eligible for general reference.

The remaining 84 records were then ranked in three levels based on their (a) standard of record content, (b) research quality, (c) extent to which transformational school leadership (TSL) was discussed, (d) impact on school staff, and (e) impact on school culture. As per the Table 1 below, 16 records qualified for the top ranking, Level 1, meaning they were of very high relevance to transformational school leadership and for specific focus and were deemed suitable to retain. A total of 44 were categorised as being at Level 2, or of high relevance to this review and to further research on transformational school leadership, but not for specific focus. Next, 24 were ranked at Level 3, meaning they were of relevance to this review and further research on transformational school leadership but did not qualify for specific focus. Google Scholar updates continued to inform our study throughout the review and subsequently produced another record. This record was put through the same rigorous screening process and was added to those being retained, bringing the total to 17 records.

Table 1. Record quality levels.

Level	Relevance	Number
Level 1	Of very high relevance to TSL and for specific focus	17
Level 2	Of high relevance to this review but not for specific focus	44
Level 3	Of relevance to this review but not for specific focus	24

Looking at the 95 records retained for reference in this review, Table 2 below outlines the origins of these records, with the wide range of research evidence found showing the international perspective of the review.

Table 2. Origin countries of the 95 records retained for use in this review.

Country	Number	Country	Number
Australia	2	Kuwait	1
Belgium	2	Malaysia	3
Canada	3	Mongolia	1
Chile	1	Pakistan	1
China	6	Philippines	1
Cyprus	2	Singapore	1
India	1	Switzerland	1
Indonesia	1	South Africa	2
Iran	1	Taiwan	1
Ireland	6	Turkey	16
Israel	8	United Arab Emirates	1
Jamaica	1	United Kingdom	4
Japan	1	Unites States of America	25
Jordan	1	China and US	1

Table 3 below informs the years of publication, and how many studies were found to have been published that fulfilled the wider criteria of 95 records retained for broader reference in this review.

Table 3. Years and numbers of all selected records retained for use in this review.

Year	Number	Year	Number	Year	Number
1992	1	2012	8	2018	9
2004	1	2013	3	2019	8
2006	1	2014	4	2020	10
2007	1	2015	8	2021	9
2010	1	2016	12	2022	4
2011	7	2017	9	Total	95

2.4. Records for Specific Focus and Appraisal

Seventeen records were selected from countries and cultures across the world. The methodology was assessed by the authors using the Joanna Briggs Institute Critical Appraisal Checklist for Systematic Reviews and Research Syntheses. This appraisal tool assesses the methodological quality of a study and determines the extent to which a study has addressed the possibility of bias in its design, conduct, and analysis. Our methodology was approved. All records met the required standards of the CASP checklist tool. Records were reviewed by the authors using the Rayyan program, ensuring inter-rater reliability and minimising the risk of bias in the selected literature. A total of 15 records were approved and brought forward to the next stage of the review.

2.5. Analysis of Selected Studies

Our analysis of the literature shows the extensive positive impact of transformational school leadership on school staff and school culture. Significantly, all references to the impact of transformational school leadership were positive across the selected records, although the world 'positive' in relation to impact was not part of the search strategy. A very close interconnection between the positive impact of transformational school leadership on school staff and an enhanced school culture was also observed.

2.6. Characteristics of Selected Studies

Table 4 outlines the characteristics of the selected studies, providing insight into the range of literature that focused on the impact of transformational leadership on school staff and school culture in primary, elementary, and early middle schools from 2012 to 2022. Considering all the other inclusion criteria, the table additionally shows the impacts of transformational school leadership on school staff and school culture in primary, elementary, and junior middle schools from the international literature of the past 10 years. It also shows evidence of the value and importance of transformational school leadership in junior education across countries and cultures that strongly substantiates the theory. These studies are listed in alphabetical order according to the principal investigators.

Table 4. Characteristics of selected studies.

Record	Author(s)	Year	Country	Study/Book	Participant/Study Nos	Peer-Reviewed Journal
1 [74]	Berkovic, I.; Eyal, O.	2017	Israel	Quantitative Study	Participants: 639	Journal of Educational Administration
2 [75]	Dumay, X.; Galand, B.	2012	Belgium	Quantitative Study	Participants: 660	British Educational Research Journal
3 [76]	Duraku, Z.H.; Hoxha, L.	2021	Kosovo	Quantitative Study	Participants: 357	Frontiers in Education
4 [77]	Eliophotou-Menon, E.M.; Ioannou, A.	2016	Cyprus	Literature Review	Studies: 21	Academy of Educational Leadership Journal
5 [78]	Hauserman, C.; Stick, S.L.	2013	Canada	Qualitative and Quantitative Study	Participants: 9 ≈340	Canadian Journal of Education
6 [79]	Karabag Kose, E.; Guçlu, N.	2017	Turkey	Quantitative Study	Participants: 591	International Online Journal of Educational Sciences
7 [80]	Khumalo, S.S.	2019	South Africa	Quantitative Study	Participants: 95	Discourse and Communication for Sustainable Education
8 [81]	Lee, Y.D.; Kuo, C.T.	2019	Taiwan	Quantitative study	Participants: 430	International Journal of Organisational Innovation
9 [82]	Muliati, L.; Asbari, M.; Nadeak, M.; Novitasari, D.; Purwanto, A.	2022	Indonesia	Quantitative Study	Participants: 210	International Journal of Social and Management Studies
10 [83]	Nir, A.; Piro, P.L.	2016	Israel	Quantitative Study	Participants: 756	International Journal of Educational Reform
11 [84]	Plichta, B.P.	2018	United States of America	Qualitative study	Participants: 15	Doctoral study
12 [85]	Thomas, L.; Tuytens, M.; G. Devos, G.; Kelchtermans, G.; Van-derlinde, R.	2020	Belgium	Quantitative Study	Participants: 292	Educational Management Administration and Leadership
13 [86]	Toprak, M.; Inandi, B.; Colak, A.L.	2015	Turkey	Quantitative Study	Participants: 151	International Journal of Social and Management Studies
14 [87]	Veeriah, J.; Yan Piaw, C.; Yan Li, S.; Enamul Hoque, K.	2017	Malaysia	Quantitative Study	Participants: 331	Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Management
15 [88]	Windlinger, R.; Warwas, J.; Hostettler, U.	2020	Switzerland	Quantitative Study	Participants: 1702	School Leadership and Management

3. Results

3.1. Literature Synthesis

This systematic literature review set out to investigate research evidence in the international literature pertaining to the impact of transformational school leadership on school staff and culture. A total of 15 studies from across the globe were selected for specific focus, and in synthesising the findings from these records, it was found that transformational school leadership is portrayed in a very positive light with significant impacts on school staff and school culture. The findings also showed a very close interconnection between the positive impact of transformational school leadership on school staff and enhanced school culture. Teachers are the primary foundation upon which a principal effects transformational leadership, and there is a very strong correlation between transformational school leadership and school culture [53,89]. The following synthesis of the literature from a 10-year period, 2012–2022, looking at the impact of transformational school leadership on school staff and school culture, provides insight into many of the current influences of transformational school leadership on primary education internationally.

So as to convey our findings in respect of the international principles of transformational leadership and transformational school leadership, in line with the fourth review objective, we constructed a framework combining the following revered sets of principles, developed over recent decades, as below in Table 5 (1) four major dimensions of transformational leadership, developed by Bass [39] and recognised as guiding transformational school principals' attitudes toward developing their schools [90]; (2) the adaption of these dimensions for application in educational settings and studies of transformational school leadership by Podsakoff et al. [73]; (3) Sun and Leithwood's [54] further categorisation of four practices of transformational school leadership behaviours; and (4) Kouzes and Posner's 1987 model of transformational leadership behaviour [41] with five key practices.

Table 5. The four revered sets of principles of transformational and transformational school leadership selected to construct the framework to depict the findings of this review.

1.	Bass [39]	(a) idealised influence (b) inspirational motivation (c) individualised consideration (d) intellectual stimulation
2.	Podsakoff et al. [73]	(a) identifying and articulating a vision (b) providing an appropriate model (c) fostering the acceptance of group goals (d) providing individualised support (e) holding high-performance expectations (f) providing intellectual stimulation
3.	Sun and Leithwood [54]	(a) setting directions (b) developing people (c) redesigning the organisation (d) improving the instructional programme
4.	Kouzes and Posner [41]	(a) challenging the process (b) inspiring the shared vision (c) enabling others to act (d) modelling the way (e) encouraging the heart

Similar practices across these principles were combined to form a framework of six elements that convey the impact of transformational school leadership on school staff and school culture:

1. Idealised influence, providing an appropriate model, and modelling the way.
2. Inspirational motivation, setting direction, inspiring, identifying and articulating a shared vision, and fostering acceptance of group goals.
3. Individualised consideration, developing people, enabling others to act, and providing individualised support to school staff and culture.
4. Intellectual stimulation, holding high-performance expectations, challenging the process, and encouraging the heart in school staff and school culture.
5. Redesigning the organisation of school staff and culture.
6. Improving the instructional programme of school staff and culture.

In line with the fifth objective for this review, the backdrop of this framework was used to outline the impacts of transformational school leadership on school staff and school culture found in the selected records within each of these six elements.

3.2. Results Presented in Two Separate Perspectives: Impacts on School Staff and School Culture

3.2.1. Impacts of the First Element of the Framework, 'Idealized Influence, Providing an Appropriate Model, and Modelling the Way', on School Staff and School Culture

Five records in particular convey the impact of 'idealized influence, providing an appropriate model, and modelling the way' behaviours on school staff and culture.

Impact on School Staff: The impacts of these features of transformational school leadership on school staff are featured strongly in these papers in relation to a teacher's commitment to the job, their school, change, and learning. Eliophotou-Menon and Ioanou's review references 14 studies in which 'commitment' is evidenced as an impact of transformational leadership. It reports on previous research hypothesising that the greater the commitment, the higher the productivity, and that 'transformational leaders can inspire teachers to achieve more and become more committed to their work and the mission of the organization' [77] (p. 20). Thomas et al. [85] reported from the findings of their study, a strong correlation between how strongly teachers in their first year perceive their principals to have transformational abilities and how effectively they feel committed to their school and satisfied with their job as a result. Hauserman and Stick [78] referred to how transformational leadership has been found to produce better levels of commitment than transactional leadership. This study also reports this category of behaviours as the result of a principal impacting their building leadership capacity, inspired by effective role modelling, and employing distributed leadership behaviours and leading by example with fairness. A Swiss study by Windinger et al. [88] refers to two studies specifically in which transformational school leadership impacted teacher commitment, as does a study on teacher attitudes by Duraku and Hoxha [76]. Khumalo's study [80] concludes that a transformational school leader promotes the individual teacher's commitment. Dumay and Galand [75] examined the impacts of transformational leadership on the commitment of 660 primary education teachers in Belgium and confirmed the positive impact of transformational leadership on the commitment of teachers to their school and work.

Impact on School Culture: Trust among all school personnel affects how a school functions and what it achieves and is a fundamental sentiment as principals work to improve schools [90]. This first category of behaviours is seen in the selected studies to impact teachers' trust very positively, thus enhancing school culture. Eliophotou-Menon and Ioanou [77] reported on many studies of primary school leaders, such as an Iranian study [91] that shows the impact of transformational leadership behaviour on the development of a high degree of staff trust and confidence in the principal. These authors believe that transformational school leadership creates trust, confidence, and cooperation, and that this is significant as it impacts school culture for the well-being of the school. It was also reported that trust in a leader leads to the improvement of a school. They reported on an Australian case study by Browning [92] that found ten practices of transformational leadership contributing to the development of a teacher's trust in their principal, ranging from the principal making joint decisions with the staff to listening to staffs' opinions and openly admitting to mistakes. When a transformational primary school leader creates a

culture of trust and cooperation for the well-being and inspired confidence of their staff, it leads to overall school improvement [93]. Lee and Kuo [81] expressed how cooperation and trust are valued aspects of transformational leadership for accomplishing organisational requirements and developing goals. Hauserman and Stick [78] found a significant impact on teachers in their Canadian study in relation to how trustworthy the teacher interviewees considered their principals.

3.2.2. Impact of the Second Element of the Framework, 'Inspirational Motivation, Setting Direction, Inspiring, Identifying and Articulating a Shared Vision, and Fostering Acceptance of Group Goals', on School Staff and School Culture

13 of the 15 selected studies show the impact of 'inspirational motivation, setting direction, inspiring, identifying and articulating a shared vision, and fostering acceptance of group goals.' This number informs us of the importance of these behaviours on the impact of transformational leadership.

Impact on School Staff: Compelling evidence has been shown regarding a correlation between the impact of transformational school leadership on school staff and teacher motivation [81]. The study focuses specifically on principals' transformational leadership and teachers' work motivation and is the most significant study in this category of behaviours. It reports on previous studies that indicate that leaders should propose a common organisational vision to develop their members' motivation. With leadership charisma and the proposal of a vision, followers are motivated to accept and work hard toward achieving goals and are wholly involved during the transformation. Their study found that a principal's transformational leadership significantly influenced teachers' work motivation. They proposed that principals use transformational leadership, making it relevant to their school's culture and characteristics, to enhance teachers' work motivation. An Indonesian study by Muliati et al. [82] found that transformational leaders' behaviour in guiding collective work to align with their school's vision and mission has an important positive impact on teacher performance. Toprak et al. [86] echoed this finding. Windlinger et al. [88] highlighted the transformational leader's impact on school staff by their showing confidence in the group's collective ability to achieve the agreed-upon goals, informed by previous research, that encourage and effect collaboration. They stated that the more a principal is deemed to consistently provide inspirational motivation and idealised influence, the stronger are the shared beliefs of group capability among school staff. Duraku and Hoxha [76] also studied the impact of transformational school leadership on teachers' motivation for work, in their case comparing it to that of transactional leadership. They reference previous research findings that a principal's leadership style has a major impact on their teachers' level of motivation to work. The Work Tasks Motivation Scale for Teachers, developed by Fernet et al. [94], was used in their study to assess motivation levels among the participating teachers, and their results confirm the hypothesis that a principal's leadership styles and practices impact their teachers' work motivation. They found transformational leadership to have far greater impacts than transactional leadership across many aspects of teacher motivation, with findings that suggest transformational leadership behaviours predict autonomous motivation for work. In their Israeli study, Berkovic and Eyal [74] found that empirical evidence substantiates the notion that transformational leadership, mediated through emotional reframing by principals, has a very positive impact on autonomous motivation. Eyal and Roth [95] considered autonomous motivation to be the extent to which a person pursues a goal based on the individual's personal internal drive and meaning. In their study, Berkovic and Eyal [74] found that transformational leadership predicts autonomous motivation among teachers, with transactional leadership predicting controlled motivation. The notion of transformational leadership shaping teachers' emotional actions supports previous research that it leads to impacting teachers' work-related attitudes. Their study also evidenced that emotional reframing is an important mediating mechanism for the effects of transformational behaviours on affective organisational commitment that has very high impact value, meaning that teachers develop an emotional attachment to their school and the feeling that their personal values, beliefs, and priorities are consistent with

those of the school. This is consistent with previous findings that transformational leadership had both direct and indirect impacts on teacher commitment to the school mission and the professional learning community. In one study, teachers are considered nation builders that contribute to social, environmental, and economic development [80]. The impact of transformational school leadership on school staff in the study is the promotion of teacher commitment, which the author sees as the psychological attachment that a teacher has towards the teaching profession in conjunction with their identification and involvement with the school. His findings show that transformational school leadership motivates teachers towards commitment, and that this is a factor in helping the attainment of sustainable development in South Africa. From previous studies referenced in his research, the author also evidences that teacher commitment has been found to result in increased student learning outcomes, lower educator absenteeism, and higher staff retention, thus enhancing school culture. Dumay and Galand's study [75] found that transformational leadership could be mediated by the school context and school culture regarding teachers' organisational commitment. They also found that the level of collective efficacy mediates the influence of a principal's transformational leadership on organisational commitment, which extends the findings of earlier studies in a multilevel framework. Their overall findings show a positive effect of transformational leadership on teachers' commitment to their work and the collective goals of the organisation via cognitive (cultural strength) and motivational (collective efficacy) pathways. This study is particularly valuable as it connects many of the impacts of transformational leadership on school staff and school culture. These authors relate the value of the impact on staff motivation and organisational commitment to job satisfaction and teacher retention, supporting each element of this with previous studies. Thomas et al. [85] focused on how transformational leadership is directly related to teachers' attitudes about their jobs. In the literature of both international organisational psychology and educational leadership, they found that transformational leadership is linked to intrinsic motivation for a job, affective organisational commitment, and job satisfaction, which, in turn, impacts teacher retention. Transformational leaders have also been found to have the potential to motivate staff to look beyond their own needs and interests, and by increasing teachers' involvement in reaching group goals and decision processes at the organisational level, there is an increase in teachers' organisational commitment. Eliophotou-Menon and Ioannou [77] referenced Sun and Leithwood [54], who found that transformational leadership behaviours, such as building relationships, staff development, and the advancement of a common vision, had a strong influence on teachers' commitment to their school. They also reviewed Mirza and Redzuan's Iranian study [91], which reported a significant relationship between transformational leadership and a teacher's commitment to their school. This is supported by Karabeg et al. [79], who reported from earlier research that transformational leadership gives staff a sense of responsibility that is increased by strengthening their commitment, enabling staff to make positive contributions toward the future of the institution. These researchers also found a strong, positive correlation between transformational leaders' communication and vision sharing with school staff and school learning and decreasing organisational silence. Their results show that as transformational leadership behaviours increase, organisational silence decreases, thereby allowing school staff free emotional expression. Plichta's research [84] refers to the impact of a transformational leader's inspirational, motivating behaviour on school staff in setting an expectation for collaboration and working towards a collective vision to improve educational outcomes.

Impact on School Culture: In a study by Karabeg et al. [79], data show that the stronger the transformational leadership competencies are, the stronger is their impact on a school's learning culture. A strong, positive relation was found between transformational leadership and organisational learning, which they stated would positively impact school staff and culture. Thomas et al. [85] showed evidence from the literature for transformational leaders providing professional collegial support and impacting school culture by cultivating collegiality as well as collective and mutual responsibility. Hauserman

and Stick's findings [78] show that teachers who worked with highly transformational principals praised the positive organisational culture at their school very highly. Their research also reports how much teachers appreciate that transformational school leaders work collaboratively with staff in creating a consistent vision. In their literature review, they referenced previous studies carried out by researchers in which high-functioning schools were found to have transformational principals who created positive learning and collegial cultures and fostered teacher empowerment by guiding the vision and learning processes of the school. Collaborative decision-making guided by a transformational leader caused teachers to be more involved in their schools, which enhances culture. The increased sense of empowerment they experienced led to greater self-confidence in their knowledge and ability to focus on student learning needs. Toprak et al. [86] concluded that the behaviours of transformational leaders in collaborating to create a shared vision, thus inspiring and influencing teachers to realise the school's mission and goals, have a significant impact on teachers who believe they have a healthier school environment and culture as a result and are stronger in adapting to unexpected events, which is of interest to the authors of this review.

3.2.3. Impact of the Third Element of the Framework, 'Individualized Consideration, Developing People, Enabling Others to Act, and Providing Individualized Support', on School Staff and School Culture

A total of 10 records explored the impact of 'individualized consideration, developing people, enabling others to act, and providing individualized support' on school staff and culture. These behaviours take place when a leader respects each staff member as a unique person with feelings and needs and mentors them accordingly to develop staff potential, which fosters empowerment by attending to 'person-specific strengths, weaknesses and requirements, and supporting each staff member like a coach or mentor' [88], (p. 70).

Impact on School Staff: A transformational leader delegates tasks that provide a challenge but are within the teacher's capacity, yielding learning opportunities and empowerment. As a result, the transformational school leader builds a respectful, appreciative, and trusting relationship with each follower [88]. This is supported in Plichta's study [84], where the findings indicate that a principal should support individual teachers' needs just as a teacher should support individual students' needs. Berkovic and Eyal [74] found that when a transformational school leader adopts emotional reframing behaviour, transforming an individual's negative affect into a more positive affect, it leads to an increase in the individual-level variables of a teacher's autonomous motivation and affective organisational commitment. This supports previous research that suggests staff members' cognitive expectancy of their behaviours leading to the desired outcomes can be influenced by their emotional experiences. This can indirectly affect their work commitment and their attempts to achieve the organisation's goal. Lee and Kuo [81] also found that the higher the individualised consideration is, the stronger the work motivation of teachers is. Khumalo [80] referenced how Burns [37] emphasised that a leader needs to talk to an individual employee's emotions to be a true motivator. This study is the only one amongst those selected that reports on teacher motivation in areas such as reducing teacher absenteeism and positively affecting punctuality. It also found that transformational leadership behaviours impact teachers' involvement in extra-curricular activities. Duraku and Hoxha's study [76] found that the individual consideration dimension of transformational school leadership predicts motivation for complementary tasks. These include tutoring, involvement in extracurricular activities, and other activities outside the classroom. This impact is significant for teachers' motivation and for an enhanced school culture [96]. These researchers also referenced a study that found that when school principals employ a transformational leadership style, providing teachers with individual support for professional development, there is a positive impact on teachers regarding their sense of competence and self-efficacy. Hauserman and Stick [78] also referenced previous studies in which transformational leaders shape the school vision. Thomas et al.'s study, Ref. [85], found that the mentoring role of a transformational leader has an impact on teachers' self-efficacy through

professional collegial support. Individual coaching by transformational leaders is found to stimulate a teacher's capacity, thus raising their self-efficacy. This study found that the more a principal appropriates individualised consideration and intellectual stimulation, the higher are staff members' self-efficacy beliefs. This, in turn, was found to increase teacher retention. The transformational leadership style leads to each employee being treated as a unique individual, with the leader expressing respect and authentic interest in each one. Windlinger et al. [88] referenced Kark and Shamir's attitude toward individual-focused transformational behaviours that 'transmit the message that the leader believes in the follower and has high confidence in his integrity and ability' [97] (p. 93).

Impact on School Culture: Karabeg et al. [79] found that transformational school principals show a personal interest in their staff members, which positively impacts organisational learning and reduces organisational silence, thus building a positive school culture. Hauserman and Stick's study [78] found that teachers valued individual consideration behaviours, including listening and caring; consulting involved parties; being consistent, caring, and supportive of individual teachers; discussing problems; encouraging reflection; and allowing teachers to be involved in decision-making processes. Principals with these behaviours were considered colleagues rather than bosses who dealt with matters in an ethical manner. Teachers found these behaviours to impact their trust in a principal and in their co-workers and to promote a healthy school culture.

3.2.4. Impact of the Fourth Element of the Framework, 'Intellectual Stimulation, Holding High-Performance Expectations, Challenging the Process, and Encouraging the Heart', on School Staff and School Culture

The studies included in the review also show considerable evidence of the impact of 'intellectual stimulation, holding high-performance expectations, challenging the process, and encouraging the heart' on school staff and school culture.

Impact on School Staff: From the results on perception in a teacher questionnaire for their Taiwanese study, Lee and Kuo [81] found intellectual stimulation to be the highest dimension of transformational leadership, and that the higher the degree of a principal's transformational leadership is, the higher the teachers' overall work levels of motivation, commitment, identification, participation, enjoyment, self-evaluation, and concentration are. The most prevalent impacts of behaviours in this category are when a follower's thinking goes beyond traditional beliefs towards motivating them to find innovative solutions to challenges and enabling them to participate in, develop, and adapt to change [76]. Hauserman and Stick [78] found that there was a high positive impact value in teachers regarding their transformational leaders' behavioural styles in setting high expectations, as this encouraged them to achieve above their own expectations. This also applied to problem-solving being a collaborative process, which led to teachers enjoying working with these principals. The value of collaboration was reported from a previous study in which the authors stated that respecting collaboration is critical for implementing change, and that transformational principals are the best in this regard. Nir and Piro's review [83] of the literature pertaining to these behaviours shows evidence of principals positively impacting teachers creative thinking and their reconsideration of their own values through problem-solving. Khumalo's study [80] reveals a positive impact on teacher creativity and on teachers working harder due to appropriate motivation. Thomas et al.'s study [85] found that when transformational leaders motivate staff intellectually and lead each one to prioritise an interest in collective goals, there is significant impact on their staffs' job satisfaction, which is also supported in their study with previous research. Duraku and Hoxha [76] supported findings in the literature that provide evidence of these behaviours impacting teachers' ambition for autonomy by encouraging individual efforts and providing individual direction based on their needs. Windlinger et al.'s findings [88] show that these behaviours impact individual teacher efficacy. Muliati et al.'s study [82] reports that transformational school leadership positively and significantly impacts teachers' performance. Plichta reported [84] on how Corey's study [98] emphasises the impact of a

principal's support for individual teachers' needs and goals on promoting the development of the team, the individual teacher, and student achievement.

Impact on School Culture: Toprak et al. [86] concluded through their study that when school leaders encourage collaboration and inspire and influence teachers, there is a very positive impact on school culture, enabling adaptation to unforeseen circumstances. The findings in Nir and Piro's [83] research support the understanding that a principal's ability to improvise and to be creative and innovative impacts the individual needs of teachers, and therefore increases school effectiveness and promotes a culture of organisational flexibility. They also recognise a growth in the awareness of the importance of creative thinking, innovation, improvisation, spontaneity, and the use of intuition over the past number of decades, all producing an alternative to the original plan. Their study promotes the value of an increase in leaders' flexibility and freedom in encouraging a culture of creativity, which is of value in changing or local circumstances. As school autonomy varies from one country to another, this has more specific applications in schools where there is little independence in regulation. Thomas et al. [85] found that transformational leadership, i.e., incorporating staff collaboration, stimulating teachers intellectually, and creating a collective sense of responsibility for achieving organisational goals, is particularly important for newly qualified teachers, for whom it positively impacts job attitudes; satisfaction, organisational commitment, and intrinsic motivation to teach. They referred to earlier research that found that a transformational leader's behaviour creates a stimulating and challenging environment, positively impacting employees' competencies, and their feelings of belonging to a team, and that when teachers feel more united, they are found to be more likely to have open communication and participate in collaboration initiatives and opportunities to exchange ideas. Previous researchers have found that doing so positively impacts the development of a team culture. Toprak et al. [86] found that transformational leaders guiding school staff towards self-development positively impacts teacher satisfaction and confidence, which leads to a positive impact on the school's culture through organisational health. Veeriah et al. [87] found that transformational leadership practices that provide intellectual stimulation contribute significantly to a positive school culture in primary cluster schools in Selangor, Malaysia.

3.2.5. Impact of the Fifth Element of the Framework, 'Redesigning the Organization', on School Staff and School Culture

Six studies give focus to the impacts of 'redesigning the organization' on school staff and school culture.

Impact on School Staff: Thomas et al. [85] referenced studies in which transformational leaders are shown to impact the respect of school staff by creating opportunities, time, and space for teachers to develop collaboration groups and professional support links [99], valuing the importance of a physical school structure for teachers by providing an inviting staffroom [100].

Impact on School Culture: Sun and Leithwood found that there was evidence of leaders 'redesigning the organization' behaviour building a positive school culture, including the development of healthy relationships among school staff, parents, and the community and the creation of conditions for teachers to effectively enact their teaching tasks [54]. Hauserman and Stick [78] referenced previous studies in which a transformational leader established a collegial culture, positively impacting teacher empowerment and involvement and fostering reflection and increased teacher confidence. Lee and Kuo's study [81] concludes that transformational leadership integrates a school's culture with organisational characteristics, creating a positive impact on teachers' work level motivation. Dumay and Galand's findings [75] report a positive impact of transformational leadership on the commitment of teachers to their school and work, with school context and culture potentially affecting the level of impact. Khumalo [80] also concluded that transformational leaders promote a culture of commitment, and in so doing, lay a foundation for sustainable development, which was the central theme of this study. Karabeg et al. [79] emphasised

the value of transformational leadership in impacting a participative culture in schools to avoid organisational silence. Windlinger et al. [88] referred to Hallinger's study [101], which draws attention to the external conditions and context of a school that can affect the impacts of transformational leadership. These cover such aspects as community, political, or economic conditions. There is very little evidence in the literature for an impact of transformational school leadership on school culture that extends to the wider parent community, though Plichta [84] referred to Wang et al. (2016) [102], who found that high-performing school leaders create a vision for the school by working with teachers, parents, and community stakeholders.

3.2.6. Impact of the Sixth Element of the Framework, 'Improving the Instructional Programme', on School Staff and School Culture

Only two records directly referenced the impact of 'improving the instructional programme' on school staff and culture.

Impact on School Staff: Windlinger et al. [88] indicated that transformational leaders' impact school staff by increasing job satisfaction and efficacy beliefs through collaboration on instructional improvements. Collaboration has been a focus of educational policy and research over the past thirty years and is now considered essential for positively impacting teachers' professionalism [82,103].

Impact on School Culture: Windlinger et al. [88] found that transformational leaders' have a positive influence on the organisational commitment of teachers through working on instructional improvements. Hauserman and Stick [78] also referenced previous studies in which transformational leaders improved learning processes, thus creating a positive learning culture.

With the spread of records for specific analysis coming from countries across the globe, the impacts on school staff and school culture in primary schools was shown to be very similar regardless of country, culture, or state educational policy. The range of impacts on school staff and school culture, which includes the values, beliefs, and actions as depicted, verifies the high regard in which transformational school leadership is held in educational research on an international basis, and how transferable a leadership style it is, applicable to communities the world over.

In addressing the third objective of this literature review, identifying the terminology in the literature associated with the impacts of transformational school leadership on school staff and culture, there was an extensive list of positive terminology evidenced in the studies that met the criteria for this review. Table 6 highlights the prominent terminology extracted from a synthesis of the studies selected for specific focus in relation to the impact of transformational school leadership on school staff and school culture in primary, elementary and junior middle schools from the international literature written in the 10-year period, 2012–2022. Such positive terminology is evidence that the impacts of transformational school leadership on school staff and culture across countries and cultures strongly substantiates the continued and increasing potential of transformational school leadership, as referenced in this review.

Table 6. Terminology extracted from a synthesis of the selected studies reviewing the impact of transformational school leadership on school staff and culture.

The Impact of Transformational School Leadership in Primary, Elementary, and Early Middle Schools on School Staff and School Culture from the Studied Literature		
Achievement	Autonomous motivation	Autonomy
Balance	Capacity for problem-solving	Change adaptation
Collaboration	Collegiality	Commitment

Table 6. Cont.

The Impact of Transformational School Leadership in Primary, Elementary, and Early Middle Schools on School Staff and School Culture from the Studied Literature		
Competence	Concentration	Confidence
Cooperation	Creativity	Decreased organisational silence
Educational outcomes	Efficacy	Expression and attachment
Empowerment	Enjoyment	Excellence
Group capability	Group goal creation	Ideas exchange
Identification	Improvisation	Individual needs
Innovation	Inspiration	Intuition
Instructional improvement	Involvement	Leadership capacity
Lower teacher absenteeism	Open communication	Organisational commitment
Organisational flexibility	Organisational health	Organisational learning
Participation	Peer support	Performance
Positive learning culture	Productivity	Professional support
Punctuality	Reduced organisational silence	Reflection
Relationships	Respect and appreciation	Responsibility
Role modelling	Satisfaction	School effectiveness
School improvement	Self-development	Self-efficacy
Self-evaluation	Shared vision	Spontaneity
Staff retention	Sustainable development	Team development
Teachers' capacity	Trust	Change implementation
Unity	Vision creation	Work level motivation

4. Discussion

This study aimed to review published literature that outlines the impact of transformational school leadership on school staff and school culture in primary, elementary, and early middle schools to present a context for the further discussion of transformational school leadership. In response to the objectives outlined for this review, (a) a search of the international literature yielded 7328 records; (b) search strategies were applied to explore evidence of the impacts, effects, influences, results, consequences, and outcomes of transformational school leadership on school staff and school culture in primary, elementary, and early middle schools across the literature written from 2012 to 2022, with recent years being of value to the authors, which yielded 15 records for specific analysis and synthesis; (c) a wide range of positive terminology associated with the impacts of transformational school leadership on school staff and culture was found in the literature, most of which are widely used in educational leadership policies in relation to aspirations for education; (d) a framework was constructed from the elements of a selection of revered principles and models of transformational school leadership to convey the impacts of transformational school leadership on school staff and school culture; and (e) the backdrop of this framework was used to outline the impacts identified in the records selected for specific focus.

The 15 studies evidenced positive impacts of transformational leadership on school staff and culture. These impacts were found to lie in creating organisational and team cohesiveness, collaboration, organisational health, collective efficacy, effective learning and staff development, and increased school productivity. Motivation was found to be the leading behavioural impact of transformational leadership on staff in this review, greatly influencing teachers' personal, educational, and organisational results [82,104]. In addition

to being a model for encouraging motivation, transformational leadership models authentic, strong leadership and encourages its followers to adopt the high moral standards, ethical work environment, and clear values, priorities, and standards of the organisation [105]. Transformational leadership can, therefore, be seen as a moral endeavour, concentrated on raising the morale and motivation of a leader and their followers to a higher level far beyond their normal expectations [3,106]. This raises levels of teachers' self-efficacy and enables transformational school leadership behaviour to positively impact teacher agency [107]. The data in this review showed a close interconnection between the positive impact of transformational school leadership on school staff and enhanced school culture, in which the benefits of an impact on a school's staff impact the school culture.

Transformational leadership collaboration behaviour was found to facilitate organisational commitment and learning, thus building trust among workers, and to develop organisational learning, with both leaders and followers mutually raising one another's levels of motivation and integrity [34,40,41,108,109]. This makes the vision more achievable and leads to school leaders and staff moving a vision into action [110]. This enhances school culture, allowing it to be less bureaucratic and instead empowering staff to operate with ownership of their journey and be the school's own transforming agent [111].

Cultural change, growth, and progress require changes in behaviour and beliefs, knowledge as to where a school has been, and a shared vision as to where it intends on going. It takes skilled professionals to execute cultural change, which if effective, leads to transformation [112]. Transformational leadership has been found to lead to high productivity, which enriches the culture, effectiveness, and efficiency of a school. Lee and Kuo [81] concluded that transformational leadership integrates a school's culture with its organisational characteristics, creating a positive impact on teachers' work level motivation, and underlined the importance of transformational school leaders keeping their school's culture at the fore of all planning and development [113].

Schools are embedded in surrounding communities, with which there can be a mutual relationship and benefit. Transformational leadership impacting school culture leads to teachers' working collaboratively with members of the extended school community, building the respect and trust of parents, the wider community, and school staff [114–116]. This relationship has been of relevance in recent years as a result of the need for schools to work with parents and the wider community during the intense period of COVID-19. In terms of supporting schools during this time, the family and society were essential as they provided emotional and practical support for their children [117]. Within the current, ongoing disruptive times, leadership operates outside of known parameters with unpredictability and uncertainty at the fore [118]. The literature, however, showed the strengths of transformational school leadership and how principals' behaviour leads school staff to find innovative and creative solutions for problems and to adapt to change [10,52]. In seeking the appropriate leadership model for impacting school staff and school culture in current times, it was found that transformational leaders can become inspirational agents of major social change [119]. Kouzes and Posner [41] proposed that school leaders who use their five transformational leadership practices will generate exemplary educational reform. In all 15 studies for specific focus, transformational school leaders were found to be principals. Considering that school leadership teams headed by a principal with a deputy principal and in-school leadership teachers are a model in many countries, there is further potential for a discussion as to whether school leadership teams can share transformational school leadership behaviours with all staff, students, and the extended school community to lead learning for all. The literature shows the extensive positive impacts of transformational school leadership on school staff and school culture. Veeriah et al. [87] recommended transformational leadership for ensuring school success. The positive impacts associated with the performance of transformational school leadership has been evidenced in this literature review at the personal, inter-personal, and organisational levels.

To summarise, this review suggests that amongst the impacts of transformational school leaders' behaviours on school staff are the following: an increase in teachers' au-

onomous work motivation and commitment to the job, school, change, and learning; an increased leadership capacity; a collective vision and goal setting; affective organisational commitment and, thus, responsibility; an openness to change and innovation; assurance in emotion-sharing; self-efficacy; the fostering of empowerment; a reduction in stress; an increased job satisfaction leading to staff retention; the development of self-evaluation; and staff confidence. In relation to school culture, the behaviours of transformational school leaders foster a culture of trust, co-operation, collaboration, and shared responsibility among staff members, which leads to greater ownership and investment in the school's goals, increased motivation, and engagement. They create a positive learning culture with a shared vision experience for the school's community, inspiring and influencing teachers to realise the school's mission and goals.

5. Conclusions

Leadership has been one of civilisation's oldest obsessions, and writings on leadership date back over 5000 years to ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics and to the philosophers of Ancient Greece. After many centuries of writing and exploration, the methodical study of leadership began in the 1930s. Over the past century, leadership has been defined in hundreds of ways by both academics and practitioners, with no single acceptable definition, theory, model, or standard but with continuous new and exciting alternate leadership concepts presented [120]. Over the past fifty years, leadership has been researched extensively and has become a more complex and involved topic. James McGregor Burns's definition of leadership has remained highly regarded: 'Leadership is the reciprocal process of mobilising, by persons with certain motives and values, various economic, politic, and other resources, in a context of competition and conflict, to realise goals independently or mutually held by both leaders and followers' [37] (p. 425). Burns paved the way for the concept of transformational leadership characterised by a leader who motivates their followers to work towards visionary group goals, guiding change through inspiration and bringing members beyond self-interest to a higher level of morale and commitment [37]. This review documented many of the major themes in the international literature pertaining to transformational school leadership and school culture. Over the past five decades, transformational leadership has been highly regarded, with over two decades of research on its successful application in school settings having been produced. Anderson [121] reported that most researchers hold the opinion that transformational leadership is the most appropriate leadership style for today's schools.

In this review, the impacts of transformational school leadership on school staff and school culture in primary, elementary, and early middle schools from literature written between 2012 and 2022 were shown to be very similar regardless of country, culture, or state educational policy. A total of fifteen papers were selected for specific focus, with twelve quantitative studies, one qualitative, one quantitative and qualitative, and one literature review. The findings were synthesised and plotted on a framework constructed from the major dimensions of transformational leadership and transformational school leadership presented over the decades from Bass [39], Podsakoff et al. [73], Sun and Leithwood [54], and Kouzes and Posner [41]. There was a strong interrelation found between the impacts on school staff and school culture. This interrelation was seen to create a very positive sense of growth in schools. An extension of this interrelation was found to be an increase in job satisfaction and, hence, staff retention.

The extensive range of benefits from the impacts of transformational school leadership on school staff were seen to include such benefits as motivation, increased commitment, shared vision, autonomy, collaboration, confidence, achievement, efficacy, emotional expression, empowerment, improvisation, innovation, inspiration, leadership capacity, lower teacher absenteeism, increased self-evaluation and communication, unity, increased productivity, reflection, relationships, role modelling, satisfaction, school effectiveness, spontaneity, and staff retention. The benefits from the impacts of transformational school leadership on school culture included trust, organisational commitment, adaptation to and implementa-

tion of change, decreased organisational silence, group capability, organisational flexibility, organisational health, and spirit. While impacts have been looked at under the lenses of school staff and school culture, there was found to be a strong interrelation between the two. In highlighting that the literature shows that transformational leadership can affect and benefit the staff and culture of a school, an exploration of the facilitating and inhibiting factors of transformational school leadership will be the next step following from this review.

There are several potential areas for further research according to these researchers. Transformational school leadership is a proven-successful behavioural style for school leaders looking to transform their educational institutions and meet the demands of all stakeholders [121]. However, there was very little evidence in the selected studies related to the specific impacts of transformational school leadership on any staff member teams or non-teaching support staff. School leadership teams, educational support staff, and ancillary staff are all valuable school staff members who contribute significantly to school life and culture. How transformational school leadership can impact these members is one area that warrants further research. Another is the extent to which members of the school community can be transformational leaders in their school.

Many researchers have acknowledged the value of the changes that principals cause in the people at their schools through transformational leadership. Some of these are enhanced student outcomes, instructional practices [122–124], and teachers' beliefs and confidence that they can enable student learning [125]. Process management in relation to school culture is also seen as an important aspect of transformational leadership in that 'school leadership and school culture can be defined as nested processes' [126] (p. 157). In focusing on improving school culture, transformational leadership creates conditions conducive to benefitting teaching and learning [48]. When teachers experience transformational leadership and adopt the behaviours, students can have very positive outcomes [58]. With a growth in teacher and student agency in current times, this is yet another potential area for further research. An in-depth look at recommendations and structures for enabling the best transformational leadership practices would also be of value and could focus on professional development for aspiring leaders, training, and applications [127].

A high-level leadership style is essential for a principal to achieve the mission and vision of a school while leading the staff to work with the changes occurring in the external environment [128]. In this review there were many studies where the impact of transformational leadership on school staff and school culture were closely connected. The interrelation of the impact of transformational leadership on school staff and school culture can be seen where staff are transformed, resulting in an improved school culture [129]. As our world constantly evolves, presenting complex challenges for society, school leaders, and school staff, the results from this literature review highlight the positive impact of transformational school leadership on school staff and culture, how it remains relevant today, and the potential that exists for transformational school leadership to be the leading model in the future.

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