**Review Article**

# Study of the impact of leadership in educational context of Portuguese Teachers

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### Abstract

*The present study focuses on the study of school director's leadership, its impact in motivation at work and teachers' commitment within Portuguese public education schools. Three main research goals were defined: (i) to identify the type of leadership (transformational, ethical and moral) most prevalent in those institutions, the necessary skills in the leadership profile, as well as the strategies and practices of motivation promotion developed and implemented there; (ii) to analyze the relationships between ethical leadership, motivation at work and the organizational commitment of teachers; (iii) to adapt and validate measurement instruments, capable of operationalizing and measuring the constructs of transformational, ethical and moral leadership, motivation at work and organizational commitment in the context of Portuguese education system.*

*It was found that school director's leaderships oscillate predominantly between the transactional and transformational types. It was also verified that the motivational practices, developed by school leaders for teachers, more often promote extrinsic motivation, more specifically introjected and identified regulation, than intrinsic motivation.*

*As to the analysis of the relationship between ethical leadership, organizational commitment and motivation at work, it was verified that ethical leadership has a positive correlation with intrinsic motivation and commitment. In addition, it was found that commitment has a mediating effect between ethical leadership and intrinsic motivation.*

*Finally, we consider the application and relevance of this study to the redefinition and evaluation of the director's leadership practices and in the improvement of the decision-making processes in the Portuguese educational context.*

**Keywords:** Transformational Leadership; Ethical Leadership; Moral Leadership; Organizational Commitment; Motivation At Work; Portuguese Public School System Institutions; School Directors; Teachers.

## Summary

This research focuses on the study of the leadership of the school principal (of a school or a group of schools) and its impact on the motivation at work and the commitment of teachers, within the education system. Portuguese audience. Three major research objectives have therefore been defined: (i) to identify the type of leadership (transformational, ethical and moral) predominant in these educational institutions, the skills needed in the leadership profile, as well as the strategies and practices that aim to promote the motivation developed and implemented there; (ii) analyze the relationships of ethical leadership with teachers' work motivation and organizational commitment; (iii) adapting and validating mea- surement instruments, able to operationalize and measure the con- structions of transformational, ethical and moral leadership, work motivation and organizational commitment in the Portuguese ed- ucational context.

Methodologically, a mixed research perspective was used, with a non-experimental and cross-sectional research design. Data col- lection was carried out using the survey method, with self-narra- tive questionnaire techniques and semi-structured interviews.

The procedures followed have highlighted the adequate psycho- metric qualities of the adapted and validated measurement in-

struments, as well as they have made it possible to conclude an acceptable degree of confidence in their application. It was concluded that the Ethical Leadership Questionnaire showed the best measurement indicators.

Considering the results, principals' leadership was found to vary between transactional and transformational types, as the most prevalent. It has also been found that practices that contribute to motivation most often promote extrinsic motivation, particularly introjected and identified regulation, at the expense of intrinsic motivation.

Regarding the analysis of the relationship between ethical leadership, organizational commitment and work motivation, it has been found that ethical leadership holds a positive relationship with intrinsic motivation and commitment. In addition, it has been verified that commitment has a mediating effect on the relationship between ethical leadership and intrinsic motivation.

Finally, we consider the suitability and relevance of this study in redefining and evaluating principals' leadership practices and in improving decision-making processes in the Portuguese educational context.

## Introduction

The economic, political, social, environmental and technological changes that have emerged and that delimited the main characteristics of today's society inevitably created changes in the paradigms of management of organizations and work processes. Given the complexity and ambiguity of operational contexts, the strategic nature of decisions and (re)actions became an integral part of the daily reality of organizations, including the role played by leaders. Thus, taking into account the systemic and contingent dimensions that define and characterize each organization, and specifically the educational organizations, the exercise of the role of leader and the required skills were subject to continuous redefinitions, so that it remained with an active contribution and determinant of the continuous improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of the performance of the organizational system as a whole. In this context, transformational leadership has been highlighted and portrayed in the literature as a differentiating factor for success in organizations, with positive relationships with different levels of performance – individual, group and organizational [1, 2].

Also associated with the countless changes and turmoil in the environment, there are also ethical and moral dimensions that interfere in the exercise of leadership. Leadership must therefore be based either on the establishment of an energetic and empowering emotional connection between the leader and those led, or on moral and ethical principles, socially and institutionally accepted and expressed through the existing organizational culture, as well as values, beliefs and ideals created and expanded within organizations.

Given the relevance of ethics and morals in organizations and the

crucial factors underlying their construction, referred that leadership is among those who most contribute to this desideratum [3]. The author also highlighted the responsibility of leaders in developing the way forward and in promoting strategies that promote trust, encouragement and reinforcement of excellent performances in the organizational climate, in order to contribute to the organizations that they manage to take on a more human, are respectful, responsible and ethical, assuming themselves as a true example of altruism – serving the other first.

Within the scope of the introductory considerations made, it is important to highlight the institutions of the Portuguese compulsory public education system as a teaching system that has traditionally been characterized by strongly centralized management mechanisms. However, school directors and teachers have witnessed and experienced a change that refers to an imposed autonomy, adding in itself the demand for greater flexibility in the approach to the school curriculum provided by schools. In this sense, they are no longer perceived as "curriculum delivery agencies" to assume and develop as "educational centers" [4].

Additionally, the more concrete field of the exercise of the teaching profession has been greatly affected over the years by the growing bureaucratization of procedures and work processes, by the greater responsibility instilled on the part of the various actors and stakeholders of the education system and even by the scrutiny and public discredit [5, 6, 7]. Together, these changing factors have inevitably contributed to a decrease in teachers' motivation, identification with the teaching profession and commitment to their schools, as well as to their increasingly widespread dissatisfaction at work. [5, 6, 7].

As the main professional contribution of the teacher is largely the result of a social construction, this is inevitably marked by the ambiguity and complexity of the cultural, political and historical context in which it belongs [8]. Thus, understanding its meaning implies taking into account the fact that it is a concept in a process of continuous construction and subject to various forms of interpretation and analysis, based on various political, professional and institutional efforts [7, 8, 9, 10].

Additionally, it is also in the school domain that the leader (ie, the school director) articulates, encourages and mobilizes the professionals with whom he works to achieve the goals related to the construction of quality education, the improvement of acquired skills and of the school classifications achieved by the students. Consequently, it is more than expected and understandable the identification of specific difficulties and challenges in the exercise of school leadership and in the teaching profession.

Over the last decade, a variety of publications dedicated to the theme of leadership in the field of educational institutions has been disseminated throughout the world, since leadership is considered as one of the fundamental variables for the positive evolution of

teachers and schools. In this domain, the work developed in Australia by, the comparative study between Portugal and England by Day, Flores and Viana the works in the USA by Liberman and by Gordon, Jacobs and Solis (2013), research developed in the United Kingdom by, by Frost and Durrant (2003), in the United Kingdom by Muijs and Harris, in Brazil by Polon as well as the study of historical evolution of thematic carried out by and de [11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17].

In fact, when the institutional mission is focused on the development of both children and young people in terms of their training and education, the exercise of not only transformational but also ethical and moral leadership assumes a more significant relevance, with evident effects on society in general. In this regard (see following page), it should be noted that the ethical and moral dimensions of organizational activity have been highlighted as a concern for politicians, researchers and other social actors due to their consequences, which may be particularly relevant when they refer to the educational context [20]. Therefore, we consider that the effects of the conduct of institutions and their leaders in the interpersonal relationships that are established with teachers determine the psychosocial well-being of all participants in the educational and training process.

Taking into account the perspective of Deci and the principles that circumscribe the theory of self-determination, school leaders will be able to show themselves in the promotion of contexts with a low level of control that encourage autonomy, where each individual can pursue their own choices, as well as internalizing and integrating norms and values [21, 22, 23, 24]. Therefore, within this conceptual domain, the development of a sense of responsibility for the activities to be carried out or challenges to be faced and the creation of possibilities and opportunities to participate in decision-making, where the understanding of occasional negative situations or even tasks with a higher level of difficulty are potentiating the emergence of negative emotions. In other words, school leaders have the power and duty to foster the creation of organizational climates that contribute to promoting the realization of the needs for autonomy and positive interpersonal relationships among teachers. Through this way, these leaders will be able to increase the intrinsic motivation as well as the ability to internalize the extrinsic motivation of the teachers themselves and develop the affective commitment specifically with their school and enable the achievement of an effective performance in the activities that teachers realize the satisfaction in the work they develop, the perceived psychological well-being and, consequently, trigger positive attitudes towards work [25, 26, 27, 28].

Thus, the literature highlights leadership styles as factors that promote affective commitment and the connection that it is possible for teachers to establish with their school and facilitators of the organizational climate of the school and the support provided to teachers [12, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33].

In addition to the leadership of school directors, other significant factors stand out that have been pointed out as catalysts or inhibitors of teachers' commitment, highlighting, by their relevance, the behavior of students. Additionally, the perceived administrative support, the demands presented by parents at each level of education and the national education policies adopted may positively contribute to the commitment of teachers [35, 36, 37].

Effectively, over time, organizational commitment has been an expression frequently used by teachers to describe themselves as well as to refer to their professional colleagues, revealing and characterizing a part of their professional life [38, 39].

The present study thus approaches, the exercise of leadership, ethics, transformational and moral in the Portuguese educational context and specifically analyzes the effects of ethical leadership on teachers' motivation, work and organizational commitment, as well as the relationship established between ethical leadership, motivation and teacher commitment. It specifically considers the institutions of the Portuguese compulsory public education system, focusing on the role of school directors as leaders and teachers as leaders.

## Subsections Relevant for the Subject
### Description of the problem under study
Given the target organizational context of the empirical component of this work (ie, mandatory Portuguese public education system), we consider it very relevant to highlight the profound processes of restructuring and systematic and continuous changes that the educational context has undergone over the last few years, as a consequence guideline formulated by the Portuguese Ministry of Education. In this context, the theme of leadership seems to us to have also been playing a determining role, being recognized as one of the fundamental pillars of educational institutions, in order to catalyze changes to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and quality of their educational mission and training, as well as management systems and processes in its entirety. In this regard, we recall the principles described by as necessary for promoting the effectiveness of educational systems, among which we highlight the need for professional leadership of educational systems to go beyond a mere exercise of "bureaucratic control" of the themselves (p. 105) [40]. Considering the "increasing pace of considerable and structuring changes existing in schools", also highlighted leadership as an essential factor for the growth and evolution of these institutions [41].

Therefore, the focus of the problem under study is placed on the central figure of the director and on the content of the skills necessary for the leadership of schools, as well as on his responsibility to govern a vertical territory of teaching levels. That is, the principal will have to develop the skills that enable him to represent and manage hierarchically all the technical and administrative services of his school or grouping, as well as to ensure the quality of teaching in the various establishment(s) and the their respective assets and equipment  [42].

This centrality that the figure of the director took and the consequent responsibility for his performance accentuated the need to evaluate his conduct as a leader. Although the ethical, transformational and moral dimensions constitute a component that has been identified as a determinant for the exercise of leadership in various organizational and institutional contexts, which also include educational institutions, the need and concern to study these same dimensions, in order to deepen the understanding of their role and relevance for leaders, as well as their effects on the behavior and attitudes of those they lead [43-46].

The truth is that the investigations developed and focused on leadership have not contemplated the exploration of ethics and morals in their exercise in an educational context in their objectives. However, it is precisely because of this void in research that this study aims to respond and deepen, both theoretically and empirically, leadership, highlighting in particular the role of the ethical, transformational and moral dimensions within the exercise of leadership in an educational context, as well as the effects of ethical leadership on teachers' attitudes and behavior. In this way, starting from the perceptions of school leaders or directors, it is intended to identify: (i) the type of leadership (ethical, transformational and moral) predominant in schools in the Portuguese compulsory public education system; (ii) the competencies of a school principal's leadership profile; and (iii) the strategies and practices developed and implemented by school leaders or principals to promote motivation in the exercise of leadership. Additionally, this study also considers the effects of ethical leadership on work motivation and organizational commitment of teachers.

## Justification of this Work
With the change in the way of governing schools and in what is understood by school, and, in particular with the transition from a perspective of collegial leadership to a one-person leadership, this work takes on particular relevance and delimits itself on the need to assess a greater and a clearer understanding, both theoretical and empirical, about the role of the director's leadership in the context of Portuguese compulsory public service education institutions, in particular its ethical, transformational and moral dimensions, in the commitment and motivation of teachers. It will also be possible to assess changes in their practices and, consequently, also aligned with their intermediate leaderships. Thus, the focus of the problem is placed on the competences of the principal, necessary for the leadership of each of the levels of education, from pre-school to secondary education, with an impact on other members of the board, school coordinators/department and disciplinary groups. The work presented here seeks, in this way, to fill the gap identified in the literature, contributing to the affirmation and advancement of scientific knowledge in this field, in particular with regard to the dynamics and processes developed and operating in the target institutions of the study.

The studies carried out in this research work and the results obtained will certainly allow the construction of a broader and deep-er perspective on the perception that the leaders of Portuguese compulsory public education schools have about the predominant type of leadership within these institutions. Additionally, the studies developed will contribute to the definition of skills and trends in the exercise of leadership in an educational context, as well as motivational strategies and practices developed and implemented by them. Following the structure of this work, the conceptual framework described is complemented by the empirical component, which presents the effects of ethical leadership on work motivation and organizational commitment of teachers, as well as the mediating role of commitment in the relationship between leadership. ethics and motivation. Also noteworthy are the methodological procedures carried out in order to present and make available, to the scientific and professional communities, measuring instruments capable of validating constructs of ethical, transformational and moral leadership, work motivation and organizational commitment to the context of the system's institutions Portuguese compulsory public education. Overall, the studies presented are also a contribution to the delimitation and operationalization of future research carried out, not only in the context of educational institutions but also in the wide-ranging public and private organizational context.

Its foundation was elaborated from the approach to the concepts of ethical leadership, transformational leadership, moral leadership, work motivation and organizational commitment. In this context, it seeks to develop a sustained understanding of the relationship between the leadership of school directors and its effects on teachers' motivation and commitment to their school/organization. We also serve the institutional context targeted by this investigation, that is, Portuguese compulsory public education institutions. There are also some questions that we intend to answer, such as the differentiation between leadership styles, namely ethical, transformational or moral leadership. What do they measure? How do they differ? What skills are perceived in the literature as necessary for the leadership profile of directors in the educational context under study? What are the most important skills for directors in the current educational context? Consequently, what are the most important competencies of the intermediate leadership? What strategies do the authors describe as promoting motivation by leaders within their leadership practices? What is the vision that principals have about the school? What is the impact of leadership on teacher commitment? What relationship can be established between principals' leadership, teachers' motivation and commitment? What is the legal framework that justifies the most recent changes in the educational context and that interfere with the perception of the directors' leadership regarding the creation of groups and the definition of rankings? The conceptual framework presented below includes the analysis of these and other issues.

## Leadership in and of Organizations
We can observe that, in different cultures and in the history of mankind, and even considering the etymological origin of the word, the leader is the one who guides, the one who shows the path to

be followed and who stands out as the head of a group, being successively studied the its pragmatism in performance or the effectiveness of its methodology in the followers. In fact, leadership in and within organizations has been asserting itself as a central theme within the social sciences that are dedicated to the study and understanding of organizational behavior and its effectiveness, and the adoption of this excessive pragmatism attributed to leadership in more specific contexts (ie, educational context), where the knowledge and skills of the leader go beyond the traditionally defined knowledge and will have to be nurtured by the culture of this educational context. We believe that valuing the effectiveness of leadership is even more relevant given the contextual conditions in which organizations currently operate, marked by strong competitive aggressiveness and differentiating performance, by the continuous and significant evolutions of the markets, as well as by the rapid and uncertain changes that occur. processes and working methods as well as technologies. These and other additional factors are increasingly pushing organizations to devise new methods of planning and organizing work. Furthermore, "a successful performance in a given domain will tend to increase self-efficacy beliefs, strengthening the interests and goals of individuals", in this case, of the leaders in that same domain [47]. Here, factors such as delegation, teamwork, the definition of progressively more rigorous goals and the ability to provide quick and effective responses to problems and challenges delimit the difference between organizations being successful or being organizations that present some type of difficulty in terms of its continuity or subsistence in the market [43]. In a generic sense and regardless of the underlying theoretical model, we believe that the role of leadership is to build human capital, that is, to engage in the construction and development of knowledge, skills, commitment and motivations, in order to raise the value of human resources of an organization. People management enables the construction of this human and social capital in organizations. However, to lead is also to have the ability to motivate people to change, as well as to commit them to that change. In a more specific sense, the understanding woven about the construct and the exercise of leadership is guided, in the literature, by a diverse set of current definitions and theoretical models. Since 1967, Fiedler even stated that it could even be considered in the literature on this subject that there are as many definitions as there are researchers who dedicated themselves to its study.

In our perspective, it will be important to mention the definitions that have been most consensual in the literature. as one of the authors who enabled the creation of strong consensus in the literature, views leadership as a behavioral process that consists of the ability to influence individually or in a group to achieve the proposed objectives [48]. Despite its general nature, the definition presented is useful both from a conceptual and operational point of view, as it presents the characterizing dimensions of the theme. Here, the preponderance exercised by the leader is highlighted, with a view to achieving certain objectives, whether at the group or social level [49]. As an example of the dimensions that characterize leadership, we can highlight the set of norms and rules that determine the way

interpersonal relationships work within the team, the most relevant motivational strategies and techniques, the description of feedback behaviors, the strategies defined within the group to achieve the desirable results and, finally, the decision-making processes [50]. Additionally, the construct can be framed in the procedural dynamics of the interaction between the attributes of the person in charge and the employees who are part of this interaction, as well as the nature of the situation [51]. Leadership only exists if, at the same time, the following conditions are fulfilled: the existence of two or more people as a group, the definition of at least one task shared by all and the differentiation of the assigned responsibilities. So, is it enough, then, to describe the dimensions involved in the leadership process for its better understanding?

We can add the influence of carrying out a "psychological contract" based on the compensations that the group members expect to obtain for being followers of a leader's ideas [52]. Underlying this orientation, there is also a reflection on the reasons that underlie and explain the adherence of individuals to the ideas, guidelines and decision-making of their leaders. The effectiveness of the interactions established between the two parties (leaders and followers) can be explained and understood precisely from the psychological contract established, in which the rewards received by the members of the group and/or organization, and which they may assume, are more or less implicit. the format of remuneration, perks or privileges, when accepting the directives proposed by the leadership [52]. In order to complete the understanding of the concept, it is also crucial to understand the perceptions and assessments built by the followers themselves against the power exercised by the respective leaders [53]. Given the theoretical models underlying the conceptualization of the leadership construct, three main paradigms are identified in its conceptualization. A first paradigm focuses on the study of the distinctive personality traits that describe the leader. In this context, the focus of the study is centered on the identification and characterization of personal attributes, in order to define personality patterns that differentiate leaders from those who are not. A second paradigm aims to analyze the behavior of leaders in the performance of their daily tasks and activities, aiming to identify, determine and differentiate behaviors that promote effective leadership. Finally, a third paradigm focuses on identifying situational variables that contribute to increased leadership effectiveness. In this context, a conceptualization of contingent leadership is advocated and an observation of environmental factors that can influence or facilitate its exercise is privileged. It should be noted that, in the domain of this paradigm, as described by, two distinct orientations coexist [54]. On the one hand, there is a focus and interest in understanding key external factors that contribute to influencing leadership and, on the other hand, there is a preponderance in identifying the situational factors that most contribute to establishing a relationship between the definition of the traits that describe the leader's personality and the explanation of behaviors related to the effectiveness in the exercise of leadership.

In recent decades, a new paradigmatic movement has emerged,

integrated in the orientation of situational factors. This focuses on the intrinsic characteristics of the leader, such as his personality traits and his charisma, which, associated with the effectiveness of his performance, can demonstrate his transformational capacity and establish a positive interaction between the members of a group, leading to organization for higher levels of performance [55]. We will see this perspective in more detail below.

Transformational leadership: conceptual delimitation and characterizing dimensions We believe that the concept of transformational leadership, contextualized in the context of the new approaches mentioned above, emerged from an interest and need to deepen the knowledge about the processes underlying the relationships between leaders and subordinates, seeking to go beyond explanations based on personality characteristics or behaviors observed in the structuring of tasks, [56, 57]. These two aspects of analysis were clearly insufficient to build a deeper understanding of the range of behaviors that, given their results, could be understood with the same level of individual effectiveness in leaders [58]. In this sense, there was a concern with the observation of leaders capable of causing transformations, as well as the way in which those led are motivated to exceed initial expectations in their dedication to their work. This point is particularly relevant in the dynamics of the educational context, especially in the public context, as there are few ways to reward individuals. The concept of transformational leadership was initially presented with the aim of differentiating those individuals who excel in the exercise of their action compared to other leaders, in particular vis-à-vis transactional leaders [59, 60]. Thus, the process of defining transformational leadership has also been equivalent to making efforts to differentiate it from transactional leadership. According to the conceptualization proposed by , it can be concluded that transactional and transformational leadership represent, respectively, less and more effective ways of leading and can be understood as two extreme poles of the same continuum [60]. of one type of leadership tends to correspond to less use of the other type of leadership, which is visible even today [60]. With regard to the transactional leader, as a less effective way of leading, the literature has defined this type of leadership as one that uses and values the achievement of defined objectives, the establishment of the assumption of consent and the validation of the leader's proposals, thus as well as the control exercised over the fulfillment of the performance and tasks previously defined in the context. To promote and control performance in terms of objectives, reinforcements, rewards and punishments are used. Through these essential strategies, the involvement and dedication of employees will be possible, as well as the clarification of the definition of the roles and requirements of the tasks of the subordinates [61]. This type of leader can be described as a leader who is able to promote motivation and lead their own followers in the reward/performance transaction [61]. The relationship between the transactional leader and his followers is still dependent on changes in their interests, which may manifest itself in fluctuations in effort and commitment, depending on the type of reinforcements anticipated. In this way, the leader legit-

imizes authority and its recognition in formal terms as a way of exercising their power, promoting, as the most common practices, the affirmation of the rules as well as the norms that are determined at the higher level. In contrast, with regard to the transformational leader, as the most effective form of leadership, he is focused, above all, on the processes of motivation and change of attitudes of his followers, based on the development of moral values as well as the definition of superior ideals that they must transcend individual interests. It can be considered that transformational leaders are sources of trust that seek to develop this leadership within their group, exemplify self-sacrifice and assume themselves as precursors of morality. In this way, they allow the followers to focus on achieving objectives that surpass the demands of the group they belong to and the level of work they develop [62]. Thus, the transformational leader bases his vision on the ability to formulate the inspiration of his followers in the achievement and achievement of common goals and constitute himself as a vision shared by all and deserving of recognition, trust and support. It is supposed to go beyond the satisfaction of individual needs, pursuing the construction of a common sense of identity, based on a collective purpose or ideal. Transformational leadership includes, in addition to the reciprocity of objectives and means shared by the elements that make up the relationship between leader and led, also an elevation of the parts that we agree are transformation and positive change. Therefore, it ultimately becomes a moral leader, insofar as it enables the elevation of the level of conduct and human behavior and the search for the moral aspiration of the leader and the led, which will gain the transforming effect of both.

Transformational leaders use and refine a set of four competencies [63, 64]. The first refers to the ability to formulate and share a vision, which may represent an objective, a plan or a set of priorities. The second is related to the ability to convey the form of realization of the vision. The third competence allows the capacity to build an environment of trust based on justice and coherence in which its persistence overcomes barriers and problems. Finally, they have a positive self-esteem and strive to encourage the development of their abilities as well as those of others in order to achieve success. In short, what distinguishes the two types of leadership referred to – transformational and transactional – is the nature of the exchange or reciprocity relationships that are established between the leader and the followers. The relationships, in this context, are guided by dimensions that provide higher levels of pressure within the group and/or resistance and resilience in the face of the emergence of problematic situations or organizations through, for example, the satisfaction of individual needs or, in opposition, from high levels of commitment and mutual help to a moral uplift of those involved. Adopting a more integrative model of leadership, which is assumed to be more complete and comprehensive, we find, from the perspective of, the reference to basic principles that distance us from the conceptualization proposed by, with the presentation of three domains of particular relevance to the advancement of the literature in this area [65]. As a result of this process, a first version of the model presented by Bass (1985)

emerged, with some changes introduced in later publications [66, 67]. First, and in contrast to perspective, we can consider the importance that the transformational and transactional dimensions of leadership are not part of the same continuum, so that the most effective leaders demonstrate behaviors associated with both dimensions [65, 67]. We can consider that the basis of transformational leadership is the construction from the results obtained in the performance that transactional leadership generates and the levels of effort and commitment that surpass the performance obtained in the transactional approach of the subordinates [68]. It should also be noted that both leaderships may be considered equally effective in different situations, that is, transformational leadership becomes relevant in periods of change, foundation or organizational creation and transactional leadership may be distinguished as more effective in relatively stable environments and in periods of slower evolution [65, 69]]. This premise may also apply, in particular, to the educational context in different phases of change and redefinition of regulations and reorganization of educational structures and strategies.

Secondly, the difference between the perspectives of the two authors is not limited merely to conceptual principles, as it brings obvious and practical implications for the focus where the assessment of transformations driven by who is the agent of power is placed. Hence, with regard to the effects arising from a transformational leadership, the emphasis should be on the typology of impact achieved, regardless of whether the consequences thereof can be perceived as positive or negative for those being led [67]. The need to differentiate the existence of a shared and beneficial ideal for all the followers that constitutes the basis of the actions taken by the transformational leader is also highlighted, and can, therefore, be pointed out as an example of a social model to be followed [65, 67]. Thirdly, it emphasizes the need to develop and provide an understanding of leadership that addresses not only the scope, but also the deepening of the specificities of the variables involved in each of these transactional and transformational dimensions [65]. The model in question, which we adopted in this study, applied to the educational context, proposes a set of seven dimensions of leadership, specifically: (i) the "influence on ideals or charisma" (transformational leadership dimension); (ii) the "inspirational motivation" (transformational leadership dimension); (iii) "intellectual stimulation" (transformational leadership dimension); (iv) "individual consideration" (transformational leadership dimension); (v) the "contingent reinforcement" (transactional leadership dimension); (vi) the "crisis intervention level" (transactional leadership dimension); and (vii) "laissez-faire leadership" (or lack of leadership or avoidance of exercising leadership) [65]. It should be noted that these dimensions were proposed based on the results achieved with the initial version of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), having been divided into its two main dimensions, respectively named "active leadership" (dimensions that make up transformational and transactional leadership) and "passive leadership" (the dimension that makes up laissez-faire leadership). However, this double formulation does not

replace the understanding that must be made individually of each of the dimensions [67, 70]. It is considered highly relevant that the model incorporates principles adopted by proposals defined above, centered on the identification and recognition of the behaviors of those in leadership, but concomitantly adds the integration of new knowledge related to the domain of transformational leadership [43]. In this perspective, all dimensions of the model have a particular and intrinsic relevance in conceptual terms, as they allow the description by employees of a set of leadership behaviors [57, 65, 66,67,70, 71]. Therefore, it is not intended to identify a new two-factor theory for the study and understanding of leadership, which would follow the logic of more traditional approaches.

Given the description of each defined dimension, we can consider that the dimension called "influence on ideals" constitutes the highest level of transformational leadership and reflects the perception of the leader as a leadership model to adopt and that represents trust, admiration, persistence and respect with regard to its image [67]. The leader is recognized as a person with skills qualified as extraordinary and with great determination in their work. This dimension is also reflected in a strong identification between the followers and their leader, as the ideals pursued and that drive their behavior are understood as intentions to act guided by high ethical and moral standards and according to what is best for all. The "dimension of inspirational motivation" is described as the leader's ability to create, challenge and transmit a sense and a stimulus for the accomplishment of the tasks to be carried out by the followers, in order to contribute to the motivation and inspiration of the group members. This facet is characterized by the development of skills such as the promotion of group cohesion and affirmation as a team and by the ability to resist adversity in a positive way. In this context, the leader tends to be perceived as a focus of initiative capacity and high energy, which demonstrates confidence and optimism about a positive evolution of the group. The "dimension of intellectual stimulation" reflects the ability of the leader to encourage his followers to develop a work of continuous improvement, calling into question the principles adopted, suggesting new strategies for carrying out each of the tasks and for reformulating the perspective of problems that arise. To this end, leaders must promote creativity and the use of innovative strategies. Originality is considered and promoted by the leader as an important value, so their behavior manifests itself in spontaneous reactions to the emergence and elaboration of proposals different from their own, emphasizing, in particular, the diversity that lies in the genesis of duality. Thus, the dimension in question also reflects the existence of a climate of openness to new and better ideas and proposals. The "dimension of individual consideration" refers to the interpersonal relationships established between the leader and the subordinates and represents the leader's expressions of concern with the needs for personal and professional achievement and growth of his followers. In the scope of the model under analysis, the leader is designated as transformational if he also presents behaviors that promote a work context where there are in fact opportunities for development and individual differences are recognized

and accepted at the level of ambitions and needs. The acceptance of the individual dimension of the led implies the adoption of different behaviors and adapted to the characteristics of each individual who is part of the group, providing, for example, the growing autonomy of the more experienced and who reveal more knowledge about the execution of tasks or providing greater encouragement and detail in the instructions to who starts a function. In this way, the ability to communicate openly with the whole group and the ability to delegate tasks is valued by the leader. The "dimension of contingent reinforcement" reflects the use by the leader of a strategic reinforcement system and attribution of rewards in view of the performance of his followers and the fulfillment (or not) of the established objectives. The use of positive reinforcements can translate a dimension of leadership effectiveness, but it is not considered to present the same gains when compared to the four dimensions presented above. This fact is essentially due to the fact that this leadership action is based on an act of rewarding the performance of the subordinate (approaching the concept of transactional leadership), not being considered as a transformation of ideals or values between the subordinates and the leader. Thus, the relationship between the parties involved (i.e., leader and subordinates) is defined in terms of the tasks and intended objectives, as well as the possibility of reinforcing and rewarding the fulfillment of objectives and performance levels defined above. In order to take full advantage of the behaviors represented by this dimension, the leader must seek to understand the needs of the followers, in order to adjust the positive reinforcements to what is valued by the latter and ensure that they are united. the essential conditions that ensure that the expected performance standards are met.

The "dimension of crisis intervention" (translation of the original "management-by-exception") represents the behavior of leaders who only act when goals are not achieved or when there are performances that do not correspond (or deviate from) the standards initially defined. Intervention actions can occur from one of two attitudes: (i) intervention in active crisis, that is, with the purpose of anticipating any deviations, errors or mistakes in the execution of tasks by the followers or (ii) intervention in passive crisis, that is, a posture that is reserved by the leader, who defines measures for solving problems only when they actually occur. It should be noted that both have similar effects on the followers, reporting a low level of motivation to take risks and innovate, as they fear reprisals and negative reactions from the leader. In terms of leadership effectiveness, this dimension of the leader tends to contribute to the presentation of worse results compared to the dimension of contingent reinforcement, as well as in face of all dimensions that make up transformational leadership. There may still be situations where it is more appropriate to adopt crisis intervention behaviors [66]. By way of example, the situations of leadership of a high number of employees who perform very routine and standardized tasks where it is not possible to individualize or receptive to alternative proposals for carrying out the tasks stand out. In this context, leaders feel more secure by reducing the margin of freedom to the actions of their subordinates and, in this way, placing the emphasis

on carrying out tasks and developing a work environment according to the existing methods, logic and previous procedures [57, 72]. Finally, the "laissez-faire dimension" advocates the avoidance or absence of leadership performance by the leader, which, as a rule, translates into ineffective results obtained. It is defined by the facet of a leader who neither defines nor assumes an action plan and postpones decision making. It neglects its responsibilities and does not exercise the power or authority that is its due. The "laissez-faire dimension" is an inversion of leadership itself as opposed to the dimensions of transformational and transactional leadership, as this leader does not exercise leadership. According to Avolio and, the dimensions of leadership fall into two axes: (i) level of effectiveness of the performances presented and the results obtained and (ii) level of involvement of the leader [63, 70]. Thus, the increased involvement of tasks and the pursuit of objectives will contribute to improved results and final performance (i.e. demonstrating the performance inherent in each of the dimensions of transformational leadership mentioned above). The "contingent reinforcement dimension" represents the point that marks the difference between passive leaders (i.e. laissez-faire dimension) and more active leaders (i.e. "crisis intervention dimension") and integrates a high number of representative behaviors from the other dimensions. Taking into account the studies that were carried out at the level of the United States of America (USA) and in other countries (eg, Austria, China, Spain, India, Japan, Singapore, etc.), the phenomenon of leadership styles has differential effects in the various publications. As an example, an association was made between each of the seven factors in the model and measures related to effort, efficacy and satisfaction, which was named as hierarchy of correlations [67]. It was found that the more leaders assume transformational leadership with their followers, the more likely they are to outperform anticipated expectations [65]. Additionally, there is also the possibility for the transformational leader to develop and foster other capabilities and potentials such as leadership skills in other employees, triggering a multiplier effect from the top to the bottom of the organization's hierarchy [65].

Therefore, given the model under analysis, the optimal leadership profile, that is, one that translates into greater and better levels of effectiveness, satisfaction and extra effort, is characterized by low levels of the laissez-faire dimension, higher levels from the transactional dimensions and significantly higher levels of the transformational dimensions, which constitute the main core of leadership actions [70, 73]]. A final reference to the model under analysis refers to the fact that, regardless of the cultural context, when people describe the individuals who have left deeper and more positive marks on them, there is a tendency to praise the qualities of transformational and charismatic leaders. [74, 75]. As an example, we can refer to a study carried out with managers of companies in the chemical and oil sectors, in different countries, regarding the type of leadership chosen with the greatest contribution to exceptional performance. As a result, it was concluded about the most distinctive areas in the performance of managers, who value the transformational and transactional dimensions as the vision of the work to

be developed (89%); intellectual stimulation (80%); training and teamwork (73%); and the reinforcement and recognition of good performance (62%) [76]. In summary, transformational leaders are distinguished by their ability to present positive behaviors that promote change in four distinct areas: (i) stimulation of the followers to create and adopt new perspectives, ideas and common values about work; (ii) stimulation of shared mission and vision and common involvement; (iii) creation of a sense of efficiency and greater competence at work and (iv) increased availability to exhibit self-sacrificing and self-interested overlapping behaviors [77]. Referring to the theory of self-concept and the transformational leader's ability to promote motivational strategies, a set of three main strategies applied by transformational leaders can be identified: (i) increased self-efficacy (ie, it conveys a vision and sense of direction; it expresses high performance expectations and high confidence in the capabilities of its subordinates); (ii) facilitating members' social identification with their group (i.e., implies the process by which individuals identify with a group, feel proud of that belonging and perceive participation in the group as an important aspect of their identity or self-concept); and (iii) approximation of work values with the organization's values (i.e., internalization of work value and self-involvement with work) [78]. In this sense, commitment becomes possible when a role or action is consistent and capable of expressing an individual's self-concept. Thus, work activities not only represent merely the work, but the person doing the work. Additionally, transformational leaders emphasize intrinsic rewards, such as self-expression, self-consistency, and self-efficacy, over extrinsic rewards.

## Ethics and Morals In Leadership

We can consider that the transformational leadership construct integrates values and ethics as concepts [69]. Furthermore, the ethical dimension considered in transformational leadership is, in itself, seen as morally neutral, as transformational leaders may, therefore, act in both ethical and unethical ways and, to that extent, they are dependent on the values that have been incorporated into their vision and strategic planning, as has been empirically verified [43, 44]. The ethical and moral evaluation of leadership cannot, therefore, be limited to analyzing the results of leadership itself, even if its effects are positive, according to other criteria. It is, therefore, necessary to differentiate the moral character of the leader and have this assumption integrated into the conceptualization of leadership, as well as the legitimacy of the ethics of its values inherent to its vision in relation to the morality of behaviors and decision-making processes. Ultimately, we can see two leaders with identical transformational leadership behaviors and with identical consequences of their behaviors, but with completely different moral principles of conduct and rules for applying the principles completely (differentiating the ethics and morals of behaviors). Referring to the differentiation of these concepts, and with regard to ethics, as a philosophical subdiscipline, it refers to the study of codes of universal or quasi-universal values that define the behavior of human beings and that determine their decisions in a specific context. It also constitutes a reflection and

a Socratic questioning about the moral of these same behaviors. We therefore consider that the main distinction between ethics and morals is that ethics is concerned with moral principles and morals with contextualized norms and rules for the application of these principles. Value codes, in turn, are based on a set of consensual moral principles, according to the perspective of what is considered right or wrong in conduct in a given context. In the organizational environment, ethics presupposes the set of moral codes that guide decision-making processes, based on socially accepted rights and duties, both individually and collectively, in the adoption of a certain behavior. In organizations identified as ethical, conduct is considered socially responsible and current policies are recognized in balance with the adopted morality, previously submitting to ethical reflection any activities and strategies carried out in order to be socially valued [46, 79]. Organizations should, therefore, assume the social responsibility of finding strategies to repair social problems caused by their impact, being socially responsible in the adoption, dissemination and development of their ethical values in this context [80]. Such conduct becomes particularly relevant in educational organizations that convey value codes and where the need for reflection on the moral behavior of the entire educational community should be encouraged. Thus, and with regard to morality, we can consider that a conduct based on moral principles should respect the surrounding environment and the values of the organizational context, and those responsible for the organization should progressively be concerned with the social consequences of the behavior of their workers. In the globalizing society in which we live, the ability to understand the differences in the ethical and moral motivations of each organizational leader's behavior to ensure its success becomes unavoidable [81]. Following the distinction between the concepts of ethics and morals in leadership, additional conceptualizations have emerged with the aim of narrowing the focus on the nature of their underlying issues and hence in the literature the conceptual and operational foundation of the constructs of ethical and moral leadership. Additionally, efforts have been increased, in particular, towards understanding the effects of ethical and moral leaders on their followers [45, 46]. Ethical leadership emerges as part of the leadership construct and constitutes a field of investigation that is still little explored in the field of organizational management [42]. We adopt in this research work the perspective that ethical leadership can be defined by how leaders should behave, as opposed to how they actually act [46, 79]. Additionally, the ethical leadership construct can be defined as conduct that manifests itself as "normatively adequate through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, as well as the promotion of such conduct for followers through bidirectional communication, reinforcement and decision-making" [46, 82]. Based on investigations carried out on the definition of Brown et al., ethical leaders were described as showing the attributes of solidary, honest, trustworthy and fair, whose attitudes and behavior are guided by ethics, in order to create and encourage fair decision-making in the workplace [22, 46]]. These leaders contrast with despotic leaders who have goals and attitudes oriented towards the superposition of their individual benefits compared to

those of the organization and other members and authoritarian, exploitative and interpersonal dominance behaviors [83]. In this regard, ethical leadership is particularly important due to the results and impact that the leader's conduct may have on the organization and its members, as well as on organizational performance, which also integrates factors of a cultural and social dimension [22, 79, 81]. The concept of ethical leadership can be assessed through the following four dimensions: (i) morality and justice, which assesses "honesty", "reliability" and "high ethical standards of the leader" as well as "most considerate and just" of the leader with the followers; (ii) power sharing, which assesses the ability of the "leader to allow the followers to participate in decision-making"; (iii) role clarification, which defines the "leader's commitment to open communication" as well as "clarification of responsibilities and expectations" and (iv) despotic leadership, which translates into "authoritarian behavior that serves the individual interest of the leader himself", translating into self-centeredness, insensitivity and exploitation of others [82, 84]. In this work, we adopt a multidimensional approach to ethical leadership, which defends and assumes the antagonistic conception of the constructs of ethical leadership (evaluated by the first three dimensions) and despotic leadership (evaluated by the last dimension) [82, 84]. The ethical leadership construct translates how leaders should behave, as opposed to how they behave in practice. The despotic leadership construct, in contrast, reflects authoritarian behavior that serves the individual leader's interests, as well as his self-centeredness and insensitivity. Although a continuity between them is identified, we can consider their study as independent constructs, which are negatively correlated and can be measured through the dimensions mentioned [22, 84, 82] . The study of leadership ethics has focused on the attributes of ethical leaders and unethical leaders, highlighting the personal qualities of ethical leaders and the definition of contextual factors (e.g., organizational culture) that are promoters of ethical or unethical behavior. The literature dedicated to ethical leadership has thus been marked by a dual approach: (i) positive perspective and (ii) negative perspective, based on retrospective analysis and case studies, namely, with public impact.

The positive perspective is focused on leaders and ethical organizations, with a normative orientation (i.e., focused on the appropriate behavior of leaders). The negative perspective, on the other hand, is centered on a more pessimistic analysis, focusing on cases of organizational misbehavior in which ethics are ignored by leaders and subordinates [85]. Closely linked to ethics in organizations and their leaders, there is also the concept of judgment or moral reasoning of the leader. This concept has been defended as the ability to differentiate right from wrong, to have strong moral convictions and to have adjusted behaviors, integrating the way universal principles are applied to values, goals and performance [86]. This reasoning also leads us to the construct of moral leadership (Olívar, 2003), which is based on the assumption that the moral dimension of leadership is understood as the normative rationality of what we consider to be good [87]. At this level we can differentiate two perspectives of analysis of moral leadership [88].

The first is described as spiritual leadership and is related to the recognition of a higher-order perspective, almost like a religious affiliation [88]. The second is called credible moral leadership and involves the leader's ability to be consistent with an ethical system, as well as demonstrate consistency between theory and practice, apply principles to new situations, create a common language, explain and justify decisions in moral terms, sustain the principles over time and reinterpret or re-establish, if necessary, those same principles [88]. We consider this perspective particularly relevant as more morally competent leaders show greater consistency in their behavior and greater alignment with moral principles, values and beliefs, which results in positive consequences for those they lead and for the organization as a whole [89]. According to the authors, moral competence is defined by four dimensions, specifically: (i) integrity (acting consistently with universal principles and personal beliefs and values, being truthful, preserving what is considered correct and keeping promises ); (ii) responsibility (self-responsibility for their personal choices, admitting their mistakes and failures and taking responsibility for their subordinates); (iii) compassion (concern for others); (iv) forgiveness (forgiving your mistakes, as well as the failures of your followers). Effectively, the competence and judgment or moral reasoning of the leader may have a determining impact on the set of values of the organization that he is leading and on the dominant structural level of development or moral reasoning [90]. Based on the model which advocates the existence of three levels of development of reasoning or moral judgment, from childhood to adulthood, the level of moral reasoning pre- -conventional, the conventional moral reasoning level and the postconventional moral reasoning level [91]. With regard to the leader's moral reasoning, we can consider the level of preconventional moral reasoning to be the thinking of children in a younger age group, who evaluate what is right taking into account their immediate individual interests [91]. That is, correct or adequate behavior is one that is motivated by the avoidance of punishment and that meets the guidelines issued by the authority that will provide a more immediate benefit. Conventional moral reasoning frames the adopted behaviors and their moral issues in accordance with the defined norms, the conceived expectations, the defended interests and the instituted social order, so that the conventional leader is considered as a manager of the situation in which the organization finds itself. or those who are led and he is not a true leader. In turn, the post-conventional leader will be distinctive in terms of the impact of their behaviors on the organization and on those they lead, being able to establish criteria, differentiate the norms from their surroundings, define which values are considered instrumental and which are the principles and ethical values that should be universally defended and, consequently, applied to the entire organization and by those being led, as ultimate values[90]. The postconventional leader is considered as someone transformational in their thoughts and attitudes and less conventional in the reference groups, as they act according to their own judgment or moral reasoning based on values and beliefs and on the underlying ethical issues with practical implications . This leader has, thus, a profile humanely and evolute and does not adhere to the

rules, convictions or beliefs established in the context, but assumes a different view of the world, manifesting a transforming capacity of the environment, its life and others. In this way, it manages to inspire and legitimize dialogues that promote relationships of trust, freedom and sensitivity to others. It is the one who has the need to fight inertia and counteract the intimidating speech about changes, norms, rules that are not defensible for humanity [90]. Assuming that values are the result of internalized beliefs about how we should act, human freedom refers us, above all, to the basic ability to distinguish and differentiate between good and evil [92]. In conclusion, the importance of the leader's moral reasoning leads us to the relevance of developing a post-conventional leadership profile in educational organizations, with a high capacity to transform their environment, their life and that enhances the development of the entire educational community.

## Motivation at Work: Conceptual Delimitation

Motivation at work represents a traditionally studied construct and variable, with a long history of scientific development and maturity. In general terms, motivation is defined as the force or energy that drives behavior [93]. In this context, the question of what determines a behavior or pattern of behavior in individuals and what level of effort applied is defined. Additionally, motivation integrates an orientation of behavior, that is, it defines what determines the preferences of individuals and how they choose between alternative and conflicting courses of action. Finally, it also integrates persistence or sustained behavior, that is, it defines what determines the beginning, maintenance and end of a behavior. In the context of work organizations, we can characterize motivation as the "set of energetic forces" that may originate inside or outside the individual, to start the behavior framed in work and that "determines its form, direction, intensity and duration" [94]. Motivation at work can be materialized in the desire to achieve high levels of performance to achieve organizational goals and allow these efforts to enable the satisfaction of individual needs [95]. These authors also considered as fundamental elements of their definition the effort, which represents the measure of intensity or impulse to achieve the objective; the need, which corresponds to the individual's internal state and which determines the degree of attraction that a result represents; and the objective, which expresses the goal towards which the behaviors are directed. The current literature on theories of human motivation is still based on two basic premises (Dahlgaard & Dahlgaard, 2003) [96]. First, the human being is a biological entity that dedicates a large part of its activities to satisfying the needs arising from this condition. The need for food, shelter and protection, as well as the need to avoid pain and death are some of the biological needs that can be identified. Second, the human being is also a mental or psychological entity that devotes much of its energy to satisfying various mental or psychological needs. Recognition by others, personal identity and self-respect, the mobilization of creativity, the desire to apply and expand skills are examples of some of these needs. Particularly considering the theories of motivation at work, these are categorized according to three main groups: (i) "content theory"; (ii) "process and contin-

gency theories"; and (iii) "outcome theories". "Content theories" focus on the object of motivation and understanding. They focus on identifying the factors internal to individuals (i.e., the innate structure of human needs) that constitute the driving forces of motivation. In this context, are the proposals of the "theory of needs" by Maslow (1943; 1954); Herzberg's "bifactorial theory" (1966); McClelland's "theory of motives" (1961) and Alderfer's (1972) "ERG theory" (existence, relatedness, growth), Deci and Ryan's meta-theory of "self-determination" (2000) and the so-called theory of "cognitive assessment" by Deci (1975). "Process theories" address the different forms of expression of motivation, seeking to explain human motivation through the characterization of situational models that integrate different variables and the interrelationships between them [97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103]. They consider that the behavior of individuals does not always meet their needs and differ in terms of their motivations, which vary over time. In this context, as an example and as a representation of the study of the evolution of the concept over time, the "theory of expectations" by Vroom (1964) and Lawler (1986), the theory called "equity" by Adams are included. (1965) [104, 105]. Finally, "outcome theories" focus on the reasons that underlie the maintenance of motivational behaviors. They seek to understand motivational behavior, taking into account the factors that can be controlled and that contribute to predicting work performance. As an example of this group, the "goal setting theory" of Drucker (1954) and Locke (1968) is framed [107, 108]. Given the objectives defined for this study in an educational context, as well as the target population of research (eg teachers and school principals), the following point looks at the adopted "motivation theory", that is, the "meta-theory of self-determination " by Deci and Ryan (2000) [109].

## Organizational Commitment

Conceptual delimitation and main constituent dimensions Organizational commitment has asserted itself in the literature as one of the main variables associated with the study of organizational behavior (Hislop, 2003; Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Meyer & Allen, 1997) [110-112]. The consolidated path that was being traced theoretically and empirically led to this construct being among the most studied in the field of social sciences, whose research focus is concentrated on understanding the human factors that act in the organizational context (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990)[113] . It is a concept consensually defined as the bond that employees have to the organization they are part of (Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982), delimited through three main descriptors: (i) the belief in the organization and in acceptance of its norms, goals and values; (ii) the aspiration to exert the necessary effort and effort in favor of the organization where it is integrated and (iii) the convinced desire to continue participating as an element of the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Fields, 2002; Morgan & Hunt, 1994) [111, 114-116]. Organizational commitment can be defined, in the present work, in its conceptualization in three components that, although they differ from each other, are related and not mutually exclusive (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1991) [114, 117]. In this context, the "affective commitment" (i.e., desire), the "normative

commitment" (i.e., duty and obligation) and the "continuity commitment" or "calculative commitment" (i.e., necessity) are reported. Given firstly the "affective commitment", this can be defined by the sense of the employees' emotional orientation towards the organization, that is, by the strengthened feeling of belonging and emotional identification of employees towards the organization. It represents the pride and satisfaction of employees for being part and participating members of a given organization. Assuming high levels of "affective commitment", employees have a strong desire for dedication and involvement in the activities of the organization they are part of, being driven to achieve the organization's goals and towards it, as they also see their own individual goals. In other words, employees who have a high "affective commitment" are those who remain in an organization because they want to dedicate themselves and become involved in it. "Normative commitment" represents the employees' sense of duty and obligation to remain in the organization where they work, essentially due to common and shared values and norms. It represents loyalty and the internalization of the moral duty of continuity, as well as the development of actions leading to the achievement of organizational interests and objectives, regardless of the status achieved or the satisfaction obtained over the years. Employees with the highest levels of "normative commitment" are those who remain in a particular organization who have this obligation and because they feel they should. Finally, the "commitment to continuity" is defined by the desire of employees to remain in an organization based on the consideration that they elaborate on the costs and benefits of their continuity as participating members of an organization, not being those related to affective or emotional dimensions of binding. It thus represents the perceived costs of leaving the organization (e.g., loss of benefits linked to seniority or exposure to lower wages in the labor market). Extrinsic and financial needs are the pillars on which this form of commitment is anchored (Mavondo & Rodrigo, 2001) [118]. Employees with higher levels of "commitment to continuity" only remain linked to the organization due to the inexistence, at the present time, of employment opportunities with equal or similar benefits. In other words, employees with a high commitment to continuity with the organization are those who remain mainly because they need to. Given the above, organizational commitment allows us to assess the strength or success of the relationship that employees maintain with a given organization, reflecting the effect of other variables (eg, leadership), as well as having an important effect on others, including professional performance [115]. The literature review also allowed to identify the establishment of a positive relationship between the variables attendance and organizational commitment and to analyze an inverse relationship between organizational commitment and the intention of organizational turnover [30, 25, 119, 120].

In short, in the literature, the construct of "organizational commitment" has been referred to over time as a "outcome variable" and concomitantly as "the status of a variable that enables the mediation" of the relationship between leadership, job satisfaction and organizational climate [22, 25, 26, 28, 121-124]. This allows us

to question to what extent commitment, as a mediating variable of outcome, will have a mediating effect, namely in the relationship between leadership and teacher motivation in an educational context.

## Discussion

Leadership(s), motivation and commitment in the educational context:
The context of Portuguese public education and the integration of concepts Following the previous sections, which conceptually present and delimit the core valences in a study assigned to transformational, ethical and moral leadership, work motivation and organizational commitment, this point aims to integrate and apply these same constructs to the context of institutions of compulsory public education in Portugal, particularly considering the roles played by school principals, as leaders and by teachers, as led. In this context, considerations are made about some of the dimensions that characterize the target context of the study, some questions are raised about the relationship established between the variables under study - leadership, motivation and commitment - and the main fundamentals that can be considered are presented. for the study of the relationships between them.

Leadership of school directors and the motivation and commitment of teachers: (inter)relations in public education With regard to the types of leadership most referenced in the literature and their effects in the educational context, transformational leadership stands out as consensually appointed with the most positive effects on a set of attitudes and behaviors of those being led, namely in motivation, commitment, satisfaction, citizenship organizational and performance [25, 26, 29, 30, 70, 125, 65, 63, 126-129]. This type of leadership has emerged in studies as being the most effective in terms of the collective results it produces, compared to others, namely in comparison with transactional leadership, which is based on the application of motivational strategies of an extrinsic nature [66, 70, 126]. The transformational leader is described as an element of the group or organization who is respected, who inspires confidence, who motivates those who are led, in short, an example to follow for the proactivity that he reveals in achieving his vision and mission and for the attention he pays to needs of his followers. In the context of educational institutions, the studies carried out also allowed to verify that local and national culture and educational policies influence the development of transformational leadership [128, 129]. However, it has the potential to positively affect the goals and culture of the school, the performance of teachers, as well as their levels of commitment to the school and changes in strategies [128, 129]. For example, studies carried out in Canadian high schools have empirically found that the most important behaviors of transformational leadership are related to defining the school vision, designing high performance expectations, building consensus around group goals and development of an intellectually stimulating climate [129]. However, as previously mentioned in the present work, despite the positive consequences and effects they tend to produce, some authors have

mentioned the fact that transformational leaders may present either ethical or unethical behavior, since transformational leadership is itself morally neutral [43, 44]. It is therefore essential to consider the conceptualization and operationalization of the constructs of ethical leadership and moral leadership, particularly when it comes to its application to the educational context, as discussed above [82, 131-140]. As for teacher motivation, the "self-determination theory", in the literature, emphasizes that school leaders are motivational promoters in teachers through the creation of contexts that encourage autonomy and allow internalization and integration of norms [21,23, 24, 27]. In this way, the possibility emerges for teachers to integrate decisions and promote their understanding in the face of possible negative emotions in the face of difficult tasks, as well as the attribution of a meaning about the activities to be carried out. In this way, educational leadership constitutes a driver of motivation and a facilitator of intrinsic motivation [33, 141]. School directors can, therefore, constitute themselves as essential agents in the support and motivation of teachers, in the development of justice and trust, as well as in the attention they pay to the development needs both in the personal and professional dimensions of their subordinates - the teachers [21, 26, 28, 33, 141]. Given the extrinsic and intrinsic dimensions of motivation, the literature has, as always, highlighted the insufficiency of motivational factors (and respective measures) based on extrinsic rewards to motivate teachers. It is also considered that these tend to favor the resignation of individuals, in contexts where obedience and pure conformism are intended. In the case of teaching activities, extrinsic incentives can contribute to a greater commitment to carrying out less important tasks, such as the correction of tests and other tasks of a more bureaucratic nature to the detriment of other tasks that involve involvement in educational ethics adopted at the school, collaboration in improvement plans, initiatives in the participation of projects or collegial relations, for example [142-243].

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