THE MODERATING EFFECT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE READINESS AND TEACHER'S BEHAVIORAL INTENTION; EVIDENCE FROM NORTHERN CYPRUS UNIVERSITIES

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Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has had a major impact on education, among other industries, as a result of the rapid improvements in technology (Farmanesh et al., 2025). To improve student achievement and efficiency, AI readiness—which includes the expertise, abilities, and readiness needed to integrate and use AI technology—has become essential (Liu et al., 2025). Although AI readiness is acknowledged to be important, little empirical research has been done on how it affects teachers' behavioral intentions to use AI. This relationship may be influenced by transformational leadership, which has become known for inspiring and encouraging individuals to achieve organizational goals. To bridge this gap, this study examines how teachers' behavioral intentions are impacted by AI readiness and how transformational leadership especially moderates this link among students in North Cyprus's art and design universities (See Figure 1).

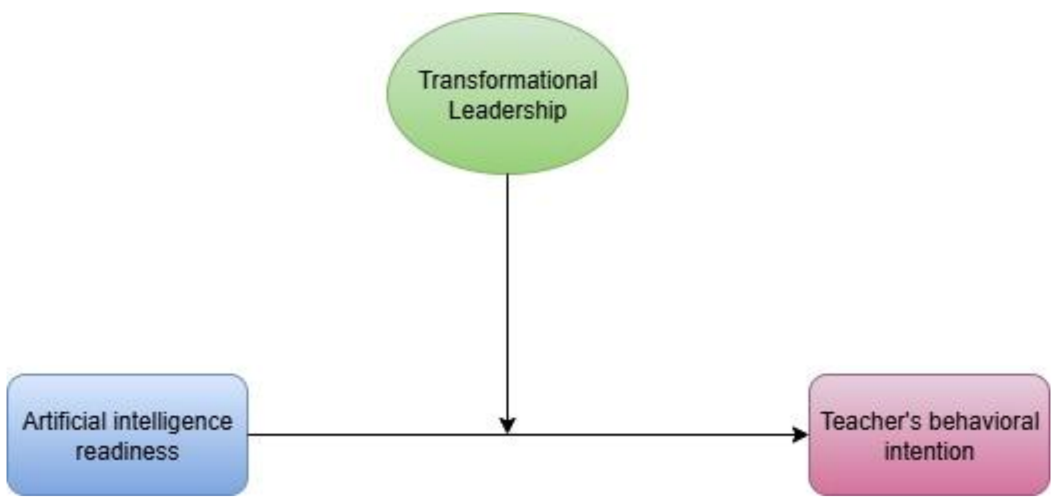

Figure 1. Conceptual Model

Objective:

The purpose of this research is

1. To investigate how teachers' behavioral intents to use AI in North Cyprus' art and design universities are impacted by their level of AI readiness.
2. To look into how transformational leadership affects the relationship between teachers' behavioral intentions and AI preparedness.

Literature Review

Earlier studies indicate that educators' willingness to embrace AI technology is significantly influenced by their level of AI readiness (Liu, 2025). Instructors who are more prepared for AI demonstrate greater flexibility, less worry, and a greater desire to include AI in their teaching methods. Furthermore, prior studies have demonstrated that the components of transformational leadership are universally applicable, contributing significantly to the development of a positive psychological environment in businesses and encouraging employee behavior and innovation (Aly et al., 2025). Leaders who demonstrate transformational leadership have a big impact on how their subordinates behave when it comes to adopting AI technologies and other creative practices.

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Methodology

In order to assess the data collected, this quantitative study used Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with Smart PLS 4. 244 art and design students from universities in North Cyprus have been chosen by simple random sampling method and distributed a structured questionnaire. Gpower 3.1 determines the quantity of study survey respondents (see Figure 2). Standard scales modified from current research are incorporated in the questionnaire:

- **The AI Readiness variable is adapted from Liu (2025)**

- **Transformational Leadership developed by Chen and Chang (2013) with a six rating point items, which were modified from Aly et al. (2025).**
- **The behavioral intention of teachers is assessed using a validated Bissing-Olson et al. (2013) including six ranking items.**

HTMT analysis, average variance extracted (AVE), and composite reliability were used to assure validity and reliability. bootstrapping techniques, path coefficients, T-values, and P-values were used in the hypothesis analysis.

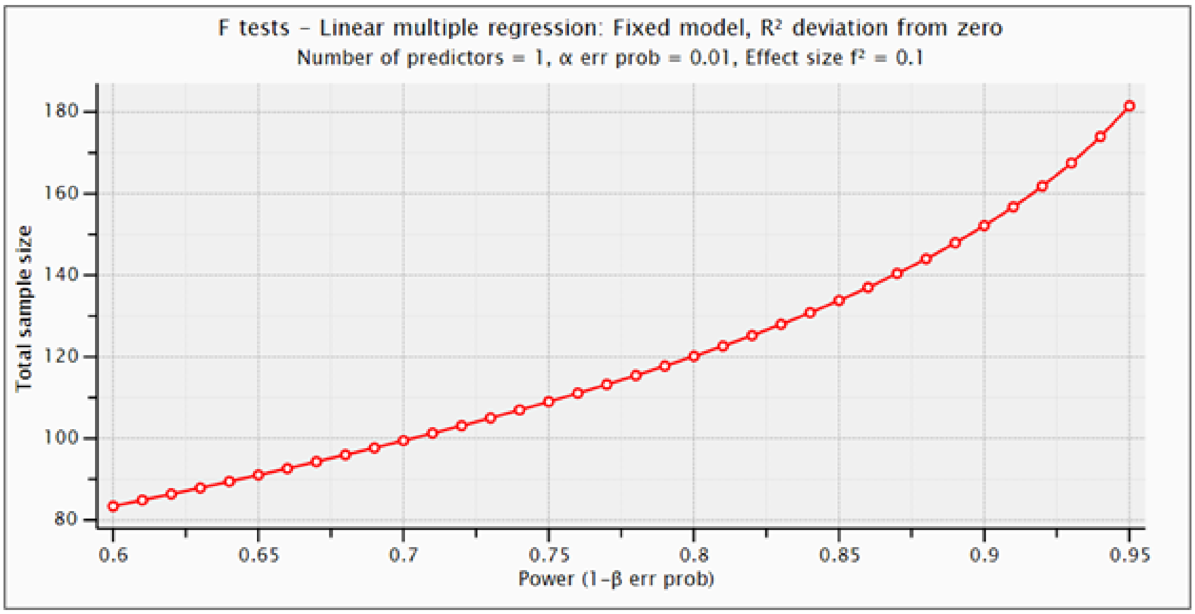

Figure 2.F test- Linear multiple regression

Discussion

The findings of the study highlight that teachers' intents to incorporate AI technology into their teaching practices are mostly determined by their level of AI readiness. Additionally, transformational leadership's moderating function highlights how crucial it is in educational environments, greatly increasing instructors' receptivity to AI adoption. By encouraging employees to act sustainably at work and participate in creative and eco-friendly activities, the transformational leadership style had a positive impact on employee behavior and creativity (Aly et al., 2025). Leaders that use transformational techniques promote hope and create a welcoming atmosphere that encourages the acceptance of technical innovation. These observations have applications for universities in North Cyprus, suggesting concurrently funding for leadership development and AI training initiatives.

Conclusion

By empirically illustrating the significance of AI readiness in affecting behavioral intentions toward AI adoption, especially within art and design faculties in North Cyprus, this study makes a substantial contribution to the body of recent literature. The study's findings also shown how transformational leadership functions as a moderator between students' behavioral intention toward students and their preparedness for artificial intelligence in the emerging are of KKTC. Transformational leadership's significant moderating effect emphasizes how important strong leadership is to enabling technology integration in educational environments. To gain a deeper understanding of these dynamics, future study might take cross-cultural analyses and longitudinal studies into perspective.

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