



The Impact of Leadership Styles on Employee Performance in Myanmar Companies

Nyein Yan Naing
6617190033

**AN INDEPENDENT STUDY SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
SIAM UNIVERSITY
2026**



The Impact of Leadership Styles on Employee Performance in Myanmar Companies

Nyein Yan Naing

This Independent Study Has Been Approved as a Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Business Administration

Advisor.....

(Dr. Warangrat Nitiwanakul)

Date: 26 September, 2026

.....
(Associate Professor Dr. Jomphong Mongkhonvanit)

Dean, Graduate School of Business

Date.....17, Oct, 2027.

Title: The Impact of Leadership Styles on Employee Performance in Myanmar Companies
Researcher: Nyein Yan Naing
Degree: Master of Business Administration
Major: Marketing

Advisor:


.....
(Dr. Warangrat Nitiwanakul)

26 / September / 2024
.....

ABSTRACT

Employee performance plays a crucial role in the growth and competitiveness of organizations in Myanmar, particularly as the country continues to undergo rapid economic and organizational transformation. However, identifying which leadership styles most effectively enhance employee performance remains a key challenge for many Myanmar-based companies. This study analyzes the impact of six leadership styles: laissez-faire, autocratic, transformational, transactional, democratic, and servant leadership, on employee performance within Myanmar organizations. The primary objective was to examine how these leadership approaches shape employee outcomes and to provide practical managerial insights for improving workforce effectiveness in the Myanmar context.

A quantitative research method was employed, utilizing a structured online questionnaire distributed to employees working across various sectors in Myanmar, with 389 valid responses collected. Data analysis included descriptive and inferential statistical techniques, with Pearson correlation analysis used to examine the relationships among the variables. The findings indicate that transformational leadership and servant leadership shows the strongest positive correlations with

employee performance, highlighting their importance in motivating, inspiring, and supporting employees. Democratic and transactional leadership also showed meaningful positive effects, while laissez-faire and autocratic leadership demonstrated comparatively moderate yet significant influences.

The study concludes that Myanmar organizations can enhance employee performance by emphasizing people-centered leadership approaches, particularly transformational and servant leadership, while also integrating democratic and other leadership practices where appropriate. Managers are encouraged to prioritize communication, empowerment, ethical conduct, and supportive supervision to foster a more productive and motivated workforce.

Keywords: leadership styles, employee performance, transformational leadership, Myanmar companies, organizational management.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my advisor, Dr. Warangrat Nitiwanakul, for her invaluable guidance, unwavering support, and continuous encouragement throughout my Independent Study. Her insightful feedback and constructive suggestions have greatly enhanced the overall quality of my work.

I am also deeply grateful to Associate Professor Dr. Jomphong Mongkhonvanit, Dean of the Graduate School of Business, for his support and encouragement during my studies. His dedication to the graduate program and commitment to academic excellence have motivated me to strive for higher achievement.

Finally, I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to all the faculty members and staff of Siam University who have contributed to my academic growth and personal development. Their constant support and encouragement have been a significant source of inspiration and motivation throughout my journey.

Nyein Yan Naing

DECLARATION

I, Nyein Yan Naing, hereby declare that this Independent Study entitled “The Impact of Leadership Styles on Employee Performance in Myanmar Companies” is an original work and has never been submitted to any academic institution for a degree.

Nyein Yan Naing
September 25, 2025



CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	I
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	III
DECLARATION.....	IV
CONTENTS	V
LIST OF TABLES	VII
LIST OF FIGURES	VIII
Chapter 1 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Problems of the Study.....	1
1.3 Objectives of the Study.....	2
1.4 Scope of the Study	2
1.5 Significance of the Study.....	3
Chapter 2 Literature Review	4
2.1 Theoretical Foundation.....	4
2.1.1 Laissez-faire Leadership	4
2.1.2 Autocratic Leadership	7
2.1.3 Transformational Leadership	9
2.1.4 Transactional Leadership	12
2.1.5 Democratic Leadership	15
2.1.6 Servant Leadership	17
2.1.7 Employee Performance	20
2.2 Research Framework	23
2.3 Research Hypotheses	24
Chapter 3 Research Methodology.....	25
3.1 Research Design	25
3.2 Questionnaire Design	25

3.3 Population and Sampling.....	28
3.3.1 Sample Size	28
3.3.2 Sampling Unit	30
3.3.3 Sampling Procedure	31
3.4 Data Collection	32
3.5 Data Analysis.....	34
3.5.1 Reliability	34
3.5.2 Validity.....	35
3.5.3 Analysis of Questionnaire Data.....	40
Chapter 4 Findings and Discussion.....	41
4.1 Introduction	41
4.2 Descriptive Statistical Analysis	41
4.3 Correlation Analysis	43
4.4 Hypothesis Test Results.....	45
Chapter 5 Conclusion and Recommendation	48
5.1 Conclusion.....	48
5.1.1 Demographic Factors	48
5.1.2 Factors Affecting Employee Performance in Myanmar Companies ...	49
5.1.3 Impact of Different Leadership Styles on Employee Performance.....	50
5.2 Recommendation	52
5.3 Implication of the Study	55
5.4 Limitation and Direction of Future Research	58
5.4.1 Limitation	58
5.4.2 Future Research.....	60
References.....	63
Appendix.....	71

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1 Questionnaire Items.....	26
Table 3.2 Reliability Analysis	33
Table 3.3 KMO & Bartlett's Spherical Tests of Laissez-faire Leadership.....	36
Table 3.4 KMO & Bartlett's Spherical Tests of Autocratic Leadership.....	37
Table 3.5 KMO & Bartlett's Spherical Tests of Transformational Leadership.....	37
Table 3.6 KMO & Bartlett's Spherical Tests of Transactional Leadership.....	38
Table 3.7 KMO & Bartlett's Spherical Tests of Democratic Leadership.....	38
Table 3.8 KMO & Bartlett's Spherical Tests of Servant Leadership.....	39
Table 3.9 KMO & Bartlett's Spherical Tests of Employee Performance.....	40
Table 4.1 Descriptive Statistics of Sample.....	42
Table 4.2 Correlation Analysis.....	44
Table 4.3 Hypothesis Test Results.....	45

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Research Framework.....	23
Figure 4.1 Final Model.....	46



Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping organizational outcomes, particularly employee performance, which is a critical determinant of business success. In today's highly competitive environment, organizations rely heavily on their human capital to maintain efficiency, innovation, and adaptability. Effective leadership has been widely recognized as one of the most influential factors in enhancing employee motivation, engagement, and productivity. Conversely, unproductive leadership may result in disengagement, high turnover, and reduced performance levels. In the context of Myanmar, the role of leadership has become increasingly significant due to the country's evolving business environment. Following recent economic reforms and the opening of markets, companies in Myanmar face both opportunities and challenges in building organizational competitiveness. Employees are expected to deliver high-quality performance to sustain business growth, yet this largely depends on the leadership styles adopted by managers and supervisors. Leadership approaches such as laissez-faire, autocratic, transformational, transactional, democratic, and servant leadership represent diverse ways in which leaders influence employee behavior, satisfaction, and overall performance.

1.2 Problems of the Study

Although leadership is widely acknowledged as a major factor influencing employee performance, existing research in Myanmar remains scarce and fragmented. Most leadership studies have been conducted in Western or regional contexts, and the findings cannot be directly generalized to Myanmar due to differences in cultural, social, and organizational characteristics. Moreover, Myanmar organizations are currently undergoing significant changes, driven by globalization, technological adoption, and competitive pressures.

A key problem is that many managers in Myanmar companies may rely on traditional or hierarchical leadership approaches, which might not be effective in motivating today's workforce. Employees are increasingly seeking supportive, participatory, and transformational leaders who encourage collaboration, innovation, and career development. Without empirical evidence, companies risk continuing to adopt leadership styles that may not align with employee expectations, potentially reducing motivation and overall performance. Therefore, a comprehensive study is required that examines the impact of various leadership styles, including laissez-faire, autocratic, transformational, transactional, democratic, and servant leadership, on employee performance in Myanmar companies. This will provide valuable insights for both academic understanding and practical applications in management practices.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this study was to examine the relationships between laissez-faire leadership, autocratic leadership, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, democratic leadership, servant leadership and employee performance in Myanmar companies.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study was confined to examining employee performance in Myanmar companies across selected regions. The research focused on leadership styles, including laissez-faire, autocratic, transformational, transactional, democratic, and servant leadership, as the independent variables, while employee performance is considered the dependent variable. Data were collected from a sample of employees working in various industries and organizations in Myanmar to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the factors affecting performance.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is significant for several reasons. Firstly, it addresses the lack of empirical research on leadership and employee performance in Myanmar, providing new insights into how different leadership styles impact organizational outcomes. Secondly, it contributes to leadership theory by testing the applicability of established leadership models in a Myanmar context, where cultural and organizational factors may influence leadership effectiveness.

From a practical perspective, the findings are valuable for managers, business leaders, and human resource professionals in Myanmar companies. Understanding which leadership styles enhance employee performance can help organizations design more effective leadership training and development programs. Furthermore, it can assist leaders in adapting their management approaches to align with employee expectations, ultimately improving motivation, reducing turnover, and enhancing organizational competitiveness. Finally, the study also serves as a reference for future researchers and policymakers interested in leadership development in Myanmar, thereby contributing to the broader discourse on organizational effectiveness in emerging markets.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Foundation

Leadership theory explains how leader behaviors shape employee attitudes and performance across contexts. This section reviews six widely studied leadership styles and the construct of employee performance, showing the insights to Myanmar's organizational environment.

2.1.1 Laissez-faire Leadership

Laissez-faire leadership, also known as a delegative style, is characterized by minimal interference from leaders, allowing employees to exercise considerable independence in their roles. This leadership style emphasizes trust in subordinates, with leaders adopting a hands-off approach, granting high autonomy, and limiting direct supervision (Skogstad et al., 2014). Its effectiveness is largely dependent on employee competence, as skilled individuals may thrive while less experienced workers may struggle. Despite potential challenges, laissez-faire leadership can encourage creativity and innovation, making it a style with both risks and opportunities for employee performance in Myanmar companies (Yang, 2015).

Hands-off Approach: Laissez-faire leadership is characterized by a non-interventionist, hands-off approach where leaders provide minimal guidance and allow employees to manage their own tasks and responsibilities (Skogstad et al., 2014). This style contrasts with directive or authoritarian leadership, as it grants employees to do the decision-making. While this approach may work well in organizations where employees are highly skilled and motivated, it can result in confusion or lack of accountability if workers are inexperienced. In Myanmar, where many companies are still adapting to modern corporate structures, a purely hands-off approach may create

difficulties because employees often expect clearer direction and hierarchical guidance due to cultural norms emphasizing authority and respect for leaders.

High Autonomy: One of the defining features of laissez-faire leadership is the high autonomy it grants to employees. Leaders practicing this style delegate authority extensively and encourage employees to take ownership of their work (Bass & Riggio, 2006). High autonomy can foster independence, self-confidence, and accountability among workers. In certain Myanmar organizations, particularly in technology startups or creative industries, this autonomy can be beneficial because younger employees often prefer flexible environments where they can innovate freely. However, in traditional Myanmar companies, where hierarchical structures dominate, high autonomy might be misinterpreted as a lack of leadership involvement, potentially leading to reduced morale and direction.

Limited Supervision: Another important aspect of laissez-faire leadership is limited supervision. Leaders adopting this style tend to step back from daily monitoring, trusting employees to meet goals and deadlines independently (Yang, 2015). This can reduce stress associated with micromanagement and empower employees to find their own solutions. However, in Myanmar companies where clear guidance is often expected, limited supervision could result in employees feeling abandoned or unsupported. Many employees in Myanmar organizations are accustomed to structured systems and explicit instructions, and too little supervision might hinder productivity, especially in industries where teamwork and coordination are essential.

Dependent on Employee Competence: The success of laissez-faire leadership largely depends on the competence and professionalism of employees (Skogstad et al., 2014). Competent employees can thrive in an autonomous environment, while less experienced workers may struggle without guidance. In the Myanmar context, the workforce is diverse, with some employees being highly skilled and internationally

trained, while others may lack exposure to modern management practices. As a result, laissez-faire leadership may produce mixed outcomes: high-performing employees may excel, while less capable workers may experience decreased productivity and job dissatisfaction. This dependency highlights the need for Myanmar companies to carefully evaluate when and how to apply this leadership style.

Encouragement of Creativity: One of the potential benefits of laissez-faire leadership is its ability to encourage creativity and innovation. By granting employees freedom, leaders can foster a culture where individuals feel empowered to propose new ideas and experiment with solutions (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014). In creative industries such as marketing, design, or IT, this can lead to significant innovation. For Myanmar companies seeking to compete in regional markets, encouraging creativity among employees is crucial. Younger generations of Myanmar workers, particularly millennials and Gen Z, often value autonomy and opportunities to express their ideas, making this leadership style potentially effective in nurturing innovation.

Impact of Laissez-faire Leadership on Employee Performance: The impact of laissez-faire leadership on employee performance is complex and context dependent. Some studies suggest that laissez-faire leadership can negatively affect performance, leading to role ambiguity, conflict, and stress due to lack of guidance (Skogstad et al., 2014; Yang, 2015). In contrast, other research indicates that in environments with competent employees, this leadership style can foster self-reliance, creativity, and improved job satisfaction (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014). For Myanmar companies, the effectiveness of laissez-faire leadership will likely depend on the industry, organizational culture, and employee readiness. While this style may encourage innovation in forward-looking companies, it could reduce efficiency in traditional sectors that rely on structured leadership. Thus, managers in Myanmar should apply laissez-faire leadership selectively, balancing autonomy with appropriate levels of support and supervision.

2.1.2 Autocratic Leadership

Autocratic leadership, also referred to as authoritarian leadership, is a style where decision-making authority is concentrated in the hands of leaders, with minimal input from subordinates. This approach emphasizes strict supervision, control, and compliance with rules. While autocratic leadership has often been criticized for limiting employee creativity and participation, it remains common in many organizational settings, particularly in environments where hierarchical systems and cultural traditions support centralized authority. In the context of Myanmar, where respect for authority and hierarchical management practices is deeply rooted, autocratic leadership continues to play a significant role in shaping employee behavior and performance in companies.

Centralized Decision-Making: A core characteristic of autocratic leadership is centralized decision-making, where leaders hold full authority to make critical organizational choices without consulting subordinates (Bhatti et al., 2012). This structure ensures consistency in policies and strategies, but it reduces opportunities for employees to share ideas or contribute to decisions. In Myanmar, many companies, especially in traditional sectors such as manufacturing and family-owned businesses, rely heavily on centralized decision-making. Employees often accept this system due to cultural norms emphasizing respect for hierarchy and seniority. However, younger employees in urban firms may feel constrained under such rigid systems, as they increasingly value participation and collaboration.

Strict Control: Autocratic leaders are known for maintaining strict control over processes and people to ensure adherence to organizational rules and objectives (Iqbal et al., 2015). This can create efficiency, especially in industries where compliance, safety, and standardization are critical. For example, in Myanmar's construction and production industries, strict control may help maintain discipline and meet deadlines. However, excessive control can also lead to fear, stress, and disengagement among

employees, particularly in service-oriented sectors where creativity and flexibility are essential. This duality makes strict control both a strength and limitation of autocratic leadership in Myanmar companies.

Clear Authority: Clear authority is another defining element of autocratic leadership, as leaders establish strong hierarchies and expect subordinates to follow instructions without question (Gandolfi & Stone, 2018). Employees may benefit from this clarity, as it removes ambiguity in roles and responsibilities. In Myanmar, where many employees are accustomed to hierarchical relationships both in society and at work, clear authority can create stability and predictability. However, the same clarity can stifle employees' sense of empowerment, discouraging them from taking initiative or voicing concerns. This tension highlights the importance of balancing authority with some level of employee engagement.

Fast Decision-Making: One of the advantages of autocratic leadership is fast decision-making, since leaders are not required to consult widely before acting (De Hoogh et al., 2015). In crisis situations or when organizations face urgent challenges, autocratic leaders can provide quick responses that may be critical for business survival. Myanmar companies, particularly in volatile industries such as logistics or trading, may find this aspect useful in navigating uncertainties. However, while fast decisions may be efficient, they can also overlook valuable employee insights, which may lead to errors or resistance in implementation.

Low Employee Input: Autocratic leadership is characterized by low employee input in organizational matters. Leaders typically discourage dissent and prefer compliance over collaboration (Bhatti et al., 2012). For Myanmar employees, this lack of participation may be viewed differently depending on cultural orientation. Older employees may accept it as part of traditional organizational culture, while younger

professionals, particularly those influenced by global business trends, may perceive it as restrictive and demotivating. This dynamic is particularly relevant as Myanmar's workforce becomes increasingly diverse, blending traditional expectations with modern demands for inclusivity and empowerment.

Impact of Autocratic Leadership on Employee Performance: The impact of autocratic leadership on employee performance is complex. On one hand, it can improve efficiency, discipline, and clarity, especially in settings requiring strict adherence to rules and procedures (Iqbal et al., 2015). On the other hand, prolonged reliance on this style can lead to reduced motivation, job dissatisfaction, and higher turnover (Gandolfi & Stone, 2018). In Myanmar, where many employees still operate in hierarchical corporate cultures, autocratic leadership may achieve short-term performance improvements. However, as companies face global competition and shifting employee expectations, excessive reliance on this leadership style could hinder innovation, creativity, and long-term organizational growth. Balancing autocratic control with elements of participatory leadership may therefore be necessary for sustainable employee performance in Myanmar organizations.

2.1.3 Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is a style where leaders inspire and motivate employees to transcend their personal interests for the benefit of the organization. This approach emphasizes vision, innovation, personal development, and strong leader–follower relationships. Unlike transactional leadership, which focuses on reward and punishment, transformational leadership seeks to elevate followers' values and encourage them to perform beyond expectations (Bass & Riggio, 2006). In Myanmar companies, transformational leadership has gained growing relevance as organizations face the dual challenges of modernization and cultural transition. As firms strive to remain

competitive in dynamic markets, leaders who can articulate vision, inspire innovation, and build strong emotional connections with employees are increasingly critical.

Vision-Driven: At the core of transformational leadership is a compelling vision that guides employees toward achieving organizational goals (Northouse, 2021). Transformational leaders clearly communicate long-term aspirations and create a sense of purpose that aligns with employee values. In Myanmar, where many organizations are undergoing restructuring and modernization, vision-driven leadership can provide direction and stability. For example, leaders in the banking or technology sectors who articulate a forward-looking vision can help employees adapt to digital transformation, fostering resilience and commitment despite uncertainties. Vision-driven leadership thus plays a vital role in aligning Myanmar's workforce with global business trends.

Motivation of Beyond Self-Interest: Transformational leaders inspire followers to look beyond their self-interest and contribute to organizational success (Bass, 1999). This often involves instilling a sense of collective responsibility and moral purpose. In Myanmar, where collectivist cultural values are strong, motivating employees beyond self-interest can resonate effectively. Leaders who appeal to shared goals, such as community development or organizational reputation, may foster loyalty and dedication among employees. For instance, employees in Myanmar's healthcare and education sectors often feel motivated when leaders emphasize their work's social impact, reinforcing commitment beyond financial rewards.

Encouragement of Innovation: Encouraging creativity and innovation is a hallmark of transformational leadership. Leaders adopting this style challenge employees to question existing practices and explore new solutions (Birasnav, 2014). In Myanmar, where many industries are transitioning from traditional to modern business models, transformational leaders can stimulate innovation by creating an environment that

values experimentation and learning. For example, in the growing fintech and e-commerce sectors, leaders who empower teams to develop novel digital solutions can drive organizational growth. This ability to encourage innovation is particularly relevant as Myanmar companies seek to compete regionally and globally.

Emphasis on Personal Growth: Transformational leadership places strong emphasis on employee development and personal growth, often through coaching, mentoring, and training (Podsakoff et al., 1990). By focusing on individual strengths, leaders help employees achieve their potential and improve long-term performance. In Myanmar organizations, where professional development opportunities have historically been limited, transformational leadership can be especially impactful. Leaders who invest in employee training, such as in IT skills, language proficiency, or management practices, not only enhance performance but also increase job satisfaction and retention. This emphasis on personal growth is critical for building a skilled workforce in Myanmar's emerging economy.

Strong Emotional Connection: A defining feature of transformational leadership is the ability to build strong emotional connections with employees through trust, respect, and empathy (Harms & Credé, 2010). Leaders who demonstrate genuine concern for employees' well-being foster higher levels of commitment and motivation. In Myanmar, where workplace relationships often reflect cultural values of respect and interpersonal harmony, emotional connection plays a central role. Leaders who listen to employees' concerns and recognize their contributions can strengthen loyalty and reduce turnover. This emotional bond is particularly valuable in industries such as hospitality and services, where employee engagement directly affects customer satisfaction.

Impact of Transformational Leadership on Employee Performance: The impact of transformational leadership on employee performance is consistently positive across

numerous studies. Research shows that transformational leaders enhance employee motivation, creativity, and organizational commitment, leading to higher performance levels (Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Birasnav, 2014). In Myanmar companies, adopting transformational practices can be a catalyst for improving productivity and innovation, especially as businesses face competitive pressures from regional markets. However, the effectiveness of this style depends on leaders' ability to adapt vision, motivation, and emotional support to the cultural and organizational context. Overall, transformational leadership provides a pathway for Myanmar organizations to elevate employee performance and sustain growth in a rapidly changing business environment.

2.1.4 Transactional Leadership

Transactional leadership is a style grounded in structured exchanges between leaders and employees, where performance is based on clear tasks, rewards, and punishments. Unlike transformational leadership, which inspires and motivates through vision and values, transactional leadership emphasizes structured systems and short-term results (Bass, 1990). This style has been widely applied in organizations seeking stability, efficiency, and clear performance outcomes. In Myanmar, transactional leadership continues to be common, particularly in industries such as manufacturing, logistics, and family-owned businesses, where task completion and compliance with rules remain central to operations.

Task-Focused: A key characteristic of transactional leadership is its strong task orientation. Leaders focus on defining roles, responsibilities, and tasks to ensure that employees know exactly what is expected of them (Northouse, 2021). This approach can be beneficial in Myanmar organizations where employees often prefer clear instructions and defined responsibilities, especially in traditional sectors where ambiguity may reduce productivity. For instance, in Myanmar's garment industry, task-focused leadership ensures production efficiency and alignment with international

standards. However, while this clarity promotes consistency, it may also limit employee creativity and engagement in problem-solving activities.

Reward and Punishment System: Transactional leadership relies heavily on a system of rewards and punishments to influence behavior (Bass, 1990). Employees who meet or exceed performance expectations receive incentives, while those who underperform may face penalties. This system is effective in motivating compliance and ensuring accountability. In Myanmar, where many organizations still use performance-linked bonus structures, this leadership style resonates with employees accustomed to tangible incentives. However, overreliance on extrinsic motivation may reduce long-term job satisfaction, as employees may perceive work as transactional rather than meaningful (Jansen et al., 2009). Thus, while the reward–punishment system can drive short-term performance, it may fail to foster long-term employee loyalty.

Short-Term Goals: Transactional leadership is often oriented toward achieving short-term, measurable objectives rather than long-term vision. Leaders prioritize efficiency and immediate results over innovation and strategic growth. In Myanmar, this short-term orientation is evident in many small and medium enterprises (SMEs), which focus on meeting daily operational targets due to resource constraints. For example, retail companies may emphasize monthly sales goals rather than broader market expansion strategies. While this can help organizations survive in competitive environments, it may also limit their ability to adapt to market changes and achieve sustainable growth.

Clear Expectations: Clarity of expectations is central to transactional leadership. Leaders set explicit performance standards, monitor compliance, and evaluate results (Podsakoff et al., 2006). This clarity reduces role ambiguity and ensures that employees understand their responsibilities. In Myanmar companies, where many employees value structured guidance from superiors, transactional leadership can provide the stability

needed for consistent performance. However, excessive focus on compliance may discourage employees from going beyond their assigned roles, thereby constraining innovation and initiative. In sectors like customer service, clear expectations ensure consistent delivery, but rigid application can limit responsiveness to customer needs.

Efficiency in Stable Environments: Transactional leadership is often most effective in stable environments where routine tasks dominate, and innovation is less critical (Bass, 1990). By focusing on structure, rules, and performance monitoring, this style enhances operational efficiency. In Myanmar, many traditional industries such as agriculture, construction, and transport benefit from being efficient. For example, in logistics companies, where tasks are standardized and deadlines strict, transactional leadership ensures operational reliability. However, in dynamic sectors such as technology or startups, where adaptability and creativity are essential, transactional leadership may not provide the flexibility required for sustained success.

Impact of Transactional Leadership on Employee Performance: The impact of transactional leadership on employee performance is largely context dependent. Studies show that transactional leadership can improve performance by clarifying expectations and rewarding compliance, but it may also reduce intrinsic motivation and creativity over time (Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Podsakoff et al., 2006). In Myanmar companies, transactional leadership can enhance discipline and task completion, particularly in industries where compliance and structure are essential. However, its limitations become evident in sectors requiring innovation, employee empowerment, and long-term engagement. To maximize performance, Myanmar leaders may need to balance transactional practices with transformational elements, ensuring both efficiency and employee development.

2.1.5 Democratic Leadership

Democratic leadership is a style where leaders actively involve employees in decision-making and value their input in shaping organizational outcomes. Unlike autocratic leadership, which centralizes authority, democratic leadership emphasizes collaboration, respect, and shared responsibility (Gastil, 1994). This approach is especially relevant in today's organizations, where employee engagement and inclusivity are critical for innovation and long-term performance. In Myanmar, democratic leadership is gradually gaining attention as businesses modernize, and younger employees increasingly seek active participation and recognition in their workplaces.

Participative Decision-Making: A defining feature of democratic leadership is participative decision-making. Leaders consult with employees before finalizing strategies or solutions, ensuring that decisions reflect diverse perspectives (Somech, 2006). This practice fosters ownership and accountability, as employees feel that their opinions matter. In Myanmar companies, particularly in emerging sectors such as technology and education, participative decision-making can be a powerful tool to harness the knowledge and creativity of employees. However, in more traditional Myanmar businesses with rigid hierarchies, implementing this approach may face resistance from leaders accustomed to centralized authority. Still, gradual inclusion of employees in discussions can help build trust and adaptability.

Encouragement of Collaboration: Democratic leadership also emphasizes collaboration by creating a team-oriented environment where individuals work together toward shared goals (Bhatti et al., 2012). This collaborative culture can enhance communication, reduce conflicts, and improve problem-solving. In Myanmar, collaboration aligns well with collectivist cultural values, where teamwork and mutual support are highly regarded. For example, in Myanmar's service industry, collaboration

between employees supported by democratic leadership can improve customer satisfaction through coordinated teamwork. Encouraging collaboration not only strengthens interpersonal relationships but also increases organizational efficiency.

Respect for Opinions: Respect for employee opinions is a cornerstone of democratic leadership. Leaders practicing this style listen actively, acknowledge contributions, and integrate valuable suggestions into organizational decisions (Woods, 2005). Such respect enhances trust between leaders and followers. In the Myanmar context, where cultural norms often emphasize deference to authority, democratic leadership introduces a shift by valuing diverse viewpoints. Younger employees in Myanmar, particularly millennials and Gen Z, often seek validation of their ideas and contributions. Leaders who respect and recognize these inputs can build stronger engagement and loyalty within their teams.

Balanced Authority: Democratic leadership promotes balanced authority by combining managerial control with employee participation (Iqbal et al., 2015). Leaders set the overall direction while allowing employees the freedom to contribute to operational decisions. This balance ensures that authority is maintained while still empowering employees. In Myanmar organizations, this balanced approach can help bridge the gap between traditional hierarchical leadership and modern participatory practices. For instance, in family-owned companies transitioning into more corporate structures, balanced authority allows leaders to retain strategic control while involving employees in daily decision-making, creating smoother organizational change.

Boost of Morale and Engagement: One of the key benefits of democratic leadership is its positive impact on employee morale and engagement. When employees are involved in decisions and feel their opinions are valued, they tend to demonstrate greater job satisfaction and motivation (Bhatti et al., 2012). In Myanmar, where many

employees historically lacked opportunities to influence organizational direction, democratic leadership can create a refreshing change. For example, in multinational corporations operating in Myanmar, participatory practices have been shown to enhance employee commitment and reduce turnover. By boosting morale and engagement, democratic leadership helps employees feel connected to organizational success.

Impact of Democratic Leadership on Employee Performance: Democratic leadership has a generally positive impact on employee performance, as it promotes inclusivity, collaboration, and mutual respect. Research indicates that participative leadership enhances creativity, problem-solving, and commitment, ultimately improving organizational performance (Somech, 2006; Iqbal et al., 2015). In Myanmar, adopting democratic leadership can significantly benefit companies seeking to retain skilled employees, particularly younger generations who value empowerment and recognition. However, the effectiveness of this style depends on organizational readiness; in highly hierarchical companies, it may require gradual cultural shifts. Overall, democratic leadership provides a strong foundation for enhancing employee performance and building sustainable organizational growth in Myanmar.

2.1.6 Servant Leadership

Servant leadership is a people-centered leadership style that prioritizes serving others above personal ambition or authority. Introduced by Greenleaf (1977), this approach emphasizes leaders acting as servants first, focusing on the growth, well-being, and empowerment of employees. Unlike authoritarian or transactional approaches, servant leadership seeks to build trust, develop community, and align organizational success with human development. In Myanmar, servant leadership is particularly relevant as cultural and religious traditions emphasize compassion, humility, and collective well-

being. Leaders who adopt servant leadership practices may therefore resonate strongly with employee expectations, enhancing both performance and loyalty.

Focus on Serving Others: At the core of servant leadership is a commitment to serving others. Leaders prioritize employee needs, personal growth, and well-being before focusing on organizational gains (Eva et al., 2019). This creates an environment where employees feel valued and supported, fostering loyalty and stronger performance. In Myanmar companies, especially in service-oriented industries such as hospitality and healthcare, leaders who practice servant leadership by supporting staff needs can create a culture of care and responsibility. This approach aligns with local values of respect and community orientation, making it an effective model for building sustainable organizational practices.

Empathy and Compassion: Servant leadership is deeply rooted in empathy and compassion, requiring leaders to understand employees' challenges and respond with genuine concern (Liden et al., 2008). Leaders practicing empathy not only improve employee well-being but also strengthen interpersonal trust. In Myanmar, cultural and religious values, particularly influenced by Buddhism, emphasize compassion and empathy, making this leadership style highly compatible with local contexts. For example, in Myanmar's education and non-profit sectors, empathetic leaders who prioritize staff well-being can reduce stress and foster commitment, contributing positively to organizational stability.

Empowerment: A key feature of servant leadership is empowering employees by delegating authority, encouraging participation, and promoting professional development (Van Dierendonck, 2011). Empowerment builds confidence and enables employees to take ownership of their work, enhancing creativity and performance. In Myanmar companies, empowerment is particularly important as organizations adapt to

global business standards and employees seek opportunities for skill development. Leaders who provide training, mentorship, and decision-making opportunities empower employees to contribute beyond routine tasks. This is especially valuable in Myanmar's growing technology and entrepreneurial sectors, where innovation and initiative are critical.

Community-Building: Servant leadership fosters community-building by creating a sense of belonging and shared purpose among employees (Greenleaf, 1977). Leaders build inclusive cultures where collaboration and trust are prioritized. In Myanmar, where collectivist values remain strong, community-oriented leadership can resonate deeply with employees. For instance, in family-owned businesses, fostering a community spirit encourages loyalty, reduces turnover, and strengthens interpersonal relationships. Servant leaders in Myanmar can leverage this sense of community to improve collaboration and align employees toward common goals.

Ethical and Value-Driven: Servant leadership is grounded in ethics, integrity, and moral responsibility (Parris & Peachey, 2013). Leaders practicing this style make decisions that prioritize fairness, transparency, and social responsibility. In Myanmar, where ethical leadership has often been a challenge due to governance and accountability issues, servant leadership offers an alternative model that emphasizes trust and integrity. Ethical leaders who uphold fairness can inspire employees to maintain high standards of professionalism and contribute positively to the company's reputation. This value-driven approach is especially crucial for multinational corporations operating in Myanmar, where ethical practices are critical for building credibility in global markets.

Impact of Servant Leadership on Employee Performance: The impact of servant leadership on employee performance has been consistently positive in research. Servant

leaders improve employee satisfaction, loyalty, and commitment by fostering supportive environments (Liden et al., 2008; Eva et al., 2019). By focusing on empowerment, empathy, and ethical values, servant leadership encourages intrinsic motivation and long-term engagement, which in turn enhance employee performance. In Myanmar, servant leadership is especially impactful in sectors where employee well-being and interpersonal trust are critical, such as hospitality, healthcare, and education. By aligning leadership practices with cultural values of compassion and community, servant leadership provides a sustainable model for improving employee performance in Myanmar companies.

2.1.7 Employee Performance

Employee performance refers to the effectiveness with which employees carry out their roles and contribute to organizational objectives. It encompasses both quantitative outcomes, such as productivity and efficiency, and qualitative aspects, such as creativity, innovation, and collaboration (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). Performance is influenced by multiple factors, including motivation, leadership, organizational culture, and individual competencies. In modern organizations, employee performance is not only a reflection of individual effort but also the result of leadership styles and management practices that shape workplace behavior. For Myanmar companies, improving employee performance is particularly critical as businesses face competitive regional markets and pressures to modernize.

Task Efficiency and Productivity: One key dimension of employee performance is task efficiency, which refers to completing assigned work within specified timelines and standards. Productivity is often measured by the output of employees in relation to the resources and time invested (Khan et al., 2010). In Myanmar's manufacturing and service sectors, efficiency plays a vital role in competitiveness, especially as companies compete with regional neighbors like Thailand and Vietnam. Leaders who clearly

define goals and provide adequate resources enable employees to perform tasks more effectively. Conversely, poor leadership and lack of direction can reduce task efficiency, highlighting the role leadership styles play in shaping productivity.

Quality of Work: Beyond efficiency, the quality of work reflects the accuracy, attention to detail, and creativity employees bring to their roles. High-quality work often results from motivation, proper supervision, and constructive feedback (Borman & Motowidlo, 2009). In Myanmar companies, employees in industries such as hospitality, healthcare, and education are particularly judged on quality outcomes that affect customer satisfaction and organizational reputation. Leadership styles that emphasize support, empathy, and continuous feedback, such as servant or transformational leadership, can significantly improve work quality by fostering employee engagement and accountability.

Adaptability and Innovation: Employee performance also includes adaptability and innovation, especially in rapidly changing business environments. Employees who can adjust to new technologies, market demands, and organizational changes are more likely to sustain long-term performance (Pulakos et al., 2000). In Myanmar, adaptability is crucial as companies increasingly adopt digital systems, e-commerce platforms, and international business practices. Leadership styles such as transformational and democratic leadership encourage employees to embrace change and innovate. However, in more rigid organizations, autocratic leadership may restrict adaptability, limiting employees' capacity to innovate. Thus, leadership approaches directly influence how well employees adapt to Myanmar's evolving corporate landscape.

Commitment and Job Satisfaction: Employee performance is closely linked to commitment and job satisfaction, which drive motivation and long-term organizational success (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Committed employees are more likely to stay with the

organization, reducing turnover and maintaining institutional knowledge. In Myanmar, where high employee turnover is often a challenge, leadership styles that foster trust, respect, and empowerment can strengthen organizational commitment. For example, democratic and servant leadership practices can create inclusive environments where employees feel valued, thereby improving both job satisfaction and performance. Autocratic approaches, while effective in maintaining discipline, may reduce commitment if employees perceive limited opportunities for participation or growth.

Interpersonal and Teamwork Skills: Another critical aspect of employee performance involves interpersonal effectiveness and teamwork. Collaborative employees contribute to organizational harmony and improve collective output (Campbell, 1990). In Myanmar, where collectivist cultural values emphasize harmony and cooperation, interpersonal skills and teamwork are particularly important. Leadership styles that encourage collaboration and respect, such as democratic leadership, align well with these cultural norms, fostering improved teamwork and group performance. Effective leaders not only evaluate individual performance but also create conditions where teams can thrive collectively.

Role of Leadership in Employee Performance: Leadership plays a decisive role in shaping employee performance across all these dimensions. Research consistently shows that leadership styles directly affect motivation, satisfaction, adaptability, and commitment (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). In Myanmar companies, where leadership is often influenced by hierarchical traditions, the effectiveness of leadership styles varies depending on employee expectations and organizational culture. While transactional leadership may improve short-term efficiency, transformational and servant leadership are more effective in enhancing long-term employee engagement, adaptability, and innovation. Therefore, understanding the relationship between leadership styles and

employee performance is crucial for Myanmar organizations striving to improve competitiveness and sustainability.

2.2 Research Framework

This study's research framework was developed to examine the relationship between leadership styles, including laissez-faire leadership, autocratic leadership, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, democratic leadership and servant leadership, and their influence on employee performance. The framework suggests that each of these leadership styles, whether considered individually or in combination, affects employee performance within companies in Myanmar.

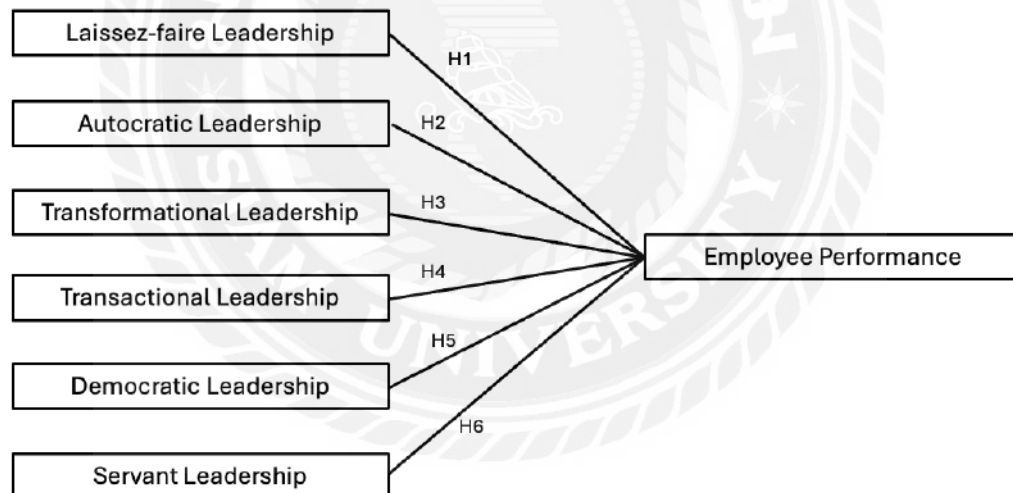


Figure 2.1- Research Framework

2.3 Research Hypotheses

The hypotheses derived from the research framework are as follows:

- H1: Laissez-faire leadership has a positive impact on employee performance in Myanmar Companies.
- H2: Autocratic leadership has a positive impact on employee performance in Myanmar Companies.
- H3: Transformational leadership has a positive impact on employee performance in Myanmar Companies.
- H4: Transactional leadership has a positive impact on employee performance in Myanmar Companies.
- H5: Democratic leadership has a positive impact on employee performance in Myanmar Companies.
- H6: Servant leadership has a positive impact on employee performance in Myanmar Companies.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study investigated how different leadership styles influence employee performance within companies in Myanmar. The research focused on the following variables: laissez-faire leadership, autocratic leadership, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, democratic leadership, servant leadership, and employee performance.

A quantitative research approach was adopted, using a structured questionnaire to gather data for statistical analysis. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section covered general demographic information of the respondents, while the second section measured the research variables. A five-point Likert scale was employed as the measurement tool. After the questionnaires were distributed and collected, the responses were analyzed, and the results were summarized accordingly.

3.2 Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire items were adapted from previously validated measurement scales in the literature to ensure each construct was accurately represented. The study incorporated six independent variables: laissez-faire leadership, autocratic leadership, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, democratic leadership, and servant leadership, examined as determinants of the dependent variable, employee performance.

In total, 28 measurement items were included, all rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”). Each leadership style and the dependent variable were assessed through 4 items, designed to capture respondents’ perceptions or behavioral intentions toward each construct.

This structured format offered a solid basis for analyzing the impact of different leadership styles on employee performance. It allowed the study to generate meaningful

insights into leadership practices within Myanmar organizations. SPSS software was utilized for data analysis to ensure statistical reliability and validity. Reliability and validity assessments were performed to confirm that the measurement items met acceptable standards for research quality.

Table 3.1 Questionnaire Items

Variable	Measurement Item	Code
Laissez-faire Leadership (Skogstad et al., 2014)	1. My supervisor gives employees complete freedom to make decisions about their work.	QS1
	2. My supervisor avoids interfering in how employees complete their tasks.	QS2
	3. My supervisor delays making important decisions.	QS3
	4. My supervisor gives little guidance and allows employees to work independently.	QS4
Autocratic Leadership (Iqbal et al., 2015)	5. My supervisor makes decisions without consulting subordinates.	QS5
	6. My supervisor expects employees to follow instructions without questioning.	QS6
	7. My supervisor closely monitors all employee activities.	QS7
	8. My supervisor believes that strict control is necessary to achieve good performance.	QS8

Variable	Measurement Item	Code
Transformational Leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006)	9. My supervisor communicates a clear and inspiring vision for the future.	QS9
	10. My supervisor encourages employees to think creatively and solve problems innovatively.	QS10
	11. My supervisor motivates employees to perform beyond their expectations.	QS11
	12. My supervisor supports personal growth and development among employees.	QS12
Transactional Leadership (Bass, 1990)	13. My supervisor rewards employees when they achieve performance targets.	QS13
	14. My supervisor clarifies what is expected in return for rewards.	QS14
	15. My supervisor points out mistakes and takes corrective action immediately.	QS15
	16. My supervisor emphasizes following established rules and procedures to meet objectives.	QS16
Democratic Leadership (Bhatti et al., 2012)	17. My supervisor encourages employees to share their opinions in decision-making.	QS17
	18. My supervisor values the ideas and input of subordinates before making final decisions.	QS18
	19. My supervisor promotes teamwork and cooperation among employees.	QS19
	20. My supervisor balances authority with participation and employee involvement.	QS20

Variable	Measurement Item	Code
Servant Leadership (Liden et al., 2008)	21. My supervisor places the needs of employees above personal interests.	QS21
	22. My supervisor shows genuine concern for employees' well-being.	QS22
	23. My supervisor helps employees develop their skills and careers.	QS23
	24. My supervisor acts with integrity and fairness toward all employees.	QS24
Employee Performance (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020)	25. I always complete my assigned tasks efficiently and on time.	QS25
	26. I strive to maintain high quality in my work performance.	QS26
	27. I contribute positively to teamwork and organizational goals.	QS27
	28. I adapt well to changes and challenges in my job.	QS28

3.3 Population and Sampling

3.3.1 Sample Size

This study aimed to examine the impact of different leadership styles on employee performance within companies in Myanmar. Since the total population of employees working in Myanmar companies could not be precisely determined, the required sample size was calculated using Cochran's formula for an infinite population. This method is

widely used in quantitative research to estimate an appropriate sample size when the population size is large or unknown.

The formula is expressed as follows:

$$N = \frac{Z^2 \times P(1 - P)}{E^2}$$

Where:

- $Z = 1.96$, which corresponds to a 95% confidence level,
- $P = 0.5$, which assumes maximum variability in the population, and
- $E = 0.05$, which represents the desired margin of error (5%).

Substituting these values into the formula:

$$N = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.5 \times (1 - 0.5)}{(0.05)^2} = \frac{3.8416 \times 0.25}{0.0025} = 384.16$$

Thus, the minimum required sample size for this study was approximately 384 respondents. To ensure reliability and account for potential non-responses or incomplete questionnaires, a total of 400 questionnaires were distributed among employees working in various organizations across Myanmar. This sample size exceeded the minimum requirement and was sufficient to ensure the validity and generalizability of the findings for quantitative analysis within the Myanmar business context.

3.3.2 Sampling Unit

In this study, the sampling unit refers to the individual employees working in companies across different sectors in Myanmar. Each employee represents a single unit of observation from which data were collected. The rationale for selecting employees as the sampling unit lies in the nature of the research objective: to understand how various leadership styles influence employee performance. Leadership styles, including laissez-faire, autocratic, transformational, transactional, democratic, and servant leadership, directly impact employees' attitudes, motivation, and productivity within organizations (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Therefore, employees' perceptions and experiences were the most suitable source of information for evaluating the effectiveness of leadership practices in the Myanmar business context.

Myanmar's corporate landscape includes a mix of local enterprises, multinational corporations, and family-owned businesses, each characterized by different management practices and leadership approaches. The country's growing economy and evolving labor force provide a diverse setting for leadership research. Employees in these organizations are often influenced by hierarchical structures and cultural values that emphasize respect, collectivism, and harmony. These socio-cultural characteristics make Myanmar a compelling context for studying leadership effectiveness, as leadership behaviors and employee responses may differ from those observed in Western contexts.

The sample included respondents from different organizational levels, such as frontline staff, supervisors, and mid-level managers. This diversity allowed for a more holistic understanding of how leadership styles affect performance across roles and hierarchical positions. It also enhanced the representativeness of the study by capturing employees' perceptions from both operational and managerial perspectives.

3.3.3 Sampling Procedure

Employees were selected based on their active employment status and direct interaction with organizational leaders or supervisors. This criterion ensured that participants had firsthand experience of their leaders' behaviors and could accurately assess the impact on their performance. This study adopted a stratified random sampling approach to capture diverse perspectives from employees working in different companies across Myanmar. According to Kish (1965), stratified sampling involves dividing the population into meaningful subgroups (strata) based on relevant characteristics and then randomly selecting participants from each subgroup. This method enhances representativeness and allows for generalization of findings across the broader population of employees (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Given Myanmar's diverse workforce, comprising employees from various industries, educational backgrounds, and organizational levels, stratified random sampling ensured that the study accurately reflected differences in employee perceptions of leadership styles and performance outcomes.

Strata Definition

The population was stratified by key demographic factors of age, gender, education level, position, and years of work experience. These demographic variables were selected because they are known to influence employees' perceptions of leadership behavior and performance outcomes (Yukl, 2013). For instance, younger employees in Myanmar organizations may value participative or transformational leadership styles, while older or more experienced workers may respond better to autocratic or transactional approaches. This structure enabled the study to analyze variations in employee performance across demographic segments, in line with the recommendations of Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2019), who emphasized the importance of stratification to ensure representative and balanced samples in organizational research.

Sampling Frame

The sampling frame consisted of employees currently working in Myanmar companies across sectors which includes manufacturing, education, finance, hospitality, and services. Respondents were selected from both private and public organizations to reflect Myanmar's evolving corporate landscape. Inclusion criteria required that respondents be full-time employees with direct supervision under a manager or leader, ensuring that they could accurately evaluate their supervisors' leadership styles. Daniel (2012) emphasized that a well-defined sampling frame enhances consistency with research objectives and improves the validity of results. By focusing on employees with active work experience, the study ensured relevant and credible responses that reflect real organizational dynamics in Myanmar.

Random Selection within Strata

Within each stratum, simple random sampling was applied to select respondents proportionally. This method reduces sampling bias and maintains equal representation of demographic groups (Bryman, 2021). Respondents were randomly chosen using systematic distribution methods, such as sending questionnaires via email or workplace contacts, to ensure fairness and inclusivity. This approach ensured that each employee had an equal chance of being selected, enhancing the credibility and generalizability of the study's findings. Overall, the combination of stratified and random sampling allowed for the collection of accurate and representative data regarding the relationship between leadership styles and employee performance in Myanmar companies.

3.4 Data Collection

Data for this research were gathered through an online structured questionnaire administered via Google Forms between August 15 and September 12, 2025. The target respondents were employees from various organizations across Myanmar, including

private companies, public institutions, and small to medium enterprises. The primary purpose of the survey was to collect employees' perceptions of their leaders' behaviors and to evaluate how different leadership styles, laissez-faire, autocratic, transformational, transactional, democratic, and servant leadership, affect their performance at work.

Questionnaire Distribution: A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed electronically through professional and social networks, email invitations, and company contacts to reach a diverse group of respondents. The use of an online platform allowed for efficient data collection and wider geographic coverage across Myanmar's major cities such as Yangon, Mandalay, and Naypyidaw. The questionnaire employed a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"), and included items measuring leadership styles and employee performance. The design ensured anonymity and voluntary participation, thereby reducing response bias and encouraging honest feedback.

Criteria for Valid Responses: To ensure reliability and data integrity, several criteria were established to identify and exclude invalid responses.

- **Uniform Scoring:** Responses that displayed identical scores across all questions were removed, as they indicated a lack of engagement or attention.
- **Incomplete Responses:** Questionnaires with unanswered or partially completed sections were excluded from the dataset.
- **Extremely Short Completion Time:** Questionnaires completed in under one minute were disregarded, as they suggested insufficient reading and reflection on the questions.

Based on these criteria, 11 invalid responses were detected and removed from the dataset. As a result, a total of 389 valid responses were retained for further statistical

analysis. This number was deemed sufficient for meeting the minimum sample size requirements and ensuring representativeness of the employee population in Myanmar.

Data Management: The valid data collected via Google Forms were exported to Microsoft Excel for initial cleaning and organization. Subsequently, the dataset was imported into SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) for detailed statistical analysis, including reliability testing, descriptive statistics, correlation, and hypothesis testing. This process ensured that the collected data were systematically processed, validated, and analyzed to maintain high standards of accuracy, consistency, and reliability in the research findings.

3.5 Data Analysis

3.5.1 Reliability

The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, a statistical indicator that examines the internal consistency of the measurement items associated with each key construct in this study: laissez-faire leadership, autocratic leadership, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, democratic leadership, servant leadership, and employee performance. A Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.7 or above is considered acceptable, signifying that the items reliably measure the same underlying construct (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Table 3.2 Reliability Test

Variate	Cronbach	Item
Laissez-faire Leadership	0.783	4
Autocratic Leadership	0.796	4
Transformational Leadership	0.874	4
Transactional Leadership	0.862	4
Democratic Leadership	0.853	4
Servant Leadership	0.868	4
Employee Performance	0.881	4

Based on the results presented in Table 3.2, all Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were above the acceptable benchmark of 0.70, demonstrating strong internal consistency among the measurement items for each construct. Thus, the questionnaire used in this study is deemed reliable and suitable for further statistical analysis.

3.5.2 Validity

Validity refers to the extent to which a research instrument accurately measures what it is intended to measure (Carmines & Zeller, 1979). In this study, validity testing was performed to ensure that the questionnaire effectively captured the constructs of leadership styles, laissez-faire, autocratic, transformational, transactional, democratic, and servant leadership, and their influence on employee performance in Myanmar companies. Establishing validity enhances the credibility and representativeness of the collected data (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

To assess structural validity, factor analysis was conducted using Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The main evaluation indices included the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, cumulative contribution rate, and factor loadings (Kaiser, 1974). The KMO value determines the sampling adequacy, with values closer to 1 indicating higher suitability for factor analysis. According to Kline (2015), a KMO value of 0.70 or above is considered acceptable. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity assesses whether the data exhibit sufficient correlation for factor analysis; a significance level of $p < 0.05$ indicates appropriateness (Field, 2018).

1) Laissez-faire leadership

Laissez-faire leadership was subjected to Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to assess the adequacy of the data for factor analysis. Table 3.3 presents the KMO and Bartlett's test results for the Laissez-Faire Leadership variable. The KMO value of 0.812 (≥ 0.70) indicates that the sampling is adequate, suggesting that the dataset is suitable for factor analysis.

Table 3.3 KMO and Bartlett's Spherical Tests of Laissez-Faire Leadership

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Myer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy		0.812
The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	462.47
	df	6
	Sig.	0.000

2) Autocratic leadership

Autocratic leadership was tested using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to determine the suitability of data for factor analysis. Table 3.4 shows the results for the Autocratic Leadership construct. The KMO value of 0.803

(≥ 0.70) indicates that the sampling adequacy meets the recommended threshold, suggesting that the dataset is appropriate for conducting factor analysis.

Table 3.4 KMO and Barlett's Spherical Tests of Autocratic Leadership

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Myer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy		0.803
The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	451.69
	df	6
	Sig.	0.000

3) Transformational leadership

Transformational leadership was analyzed using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to determine the adequacy of the sample and suitability of data for factor analysis. Table 3.5 presents the results for the Transformational Leadership construct. The KMO value of 0.847 (≥ 0.70) indicates strong sampling adequacy, demonstrating that the dataset is appropriate for factor extraction.

Table 3.5 KMO and Barlett's Spherical Tests of Transformational Leadership

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Myer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy		0.847
The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	489.36
	df	6
	Sig.	0.000

4) Transactional leadership

Transactional leadership was evaluated using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to determine the suitability of the dataset for factor analysis. Table 3.6 displays the results for the Transactional Leadership construct. The KMO value of 0.838 (≥ 0.70) indicates an adequate level of sampling adequacy, signifying that the data are well-suited for factor analysis.

Table 3.6 KMO and Bartlett's Spherical Tests of Transactional Leadership

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Myer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy		0.838
The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	472.54
	df	6
	Sig.	0.000

5) Democratic leadership

Democratic leadership was examined using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to evaluate data adequacy and suitability for factor analysis. Table 3.7 presents the results for the Democratic Leadership construct. The KMO value of 0.804 (≥ 0.70) indicates an acceptable level of sampling adequacy, confirming that the dataset is suitable for factor analysis.

Table 3.7 KMO and Bartlett's Spherical Tests of Democratic Leadership

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Myer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy		0.804
The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	458.72
	df	6
	Sig.	0.000

6) Servant leadership

Servant leadership was evaluated using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to verify the adequacy of the sample and the suitability of the data for factor analysis. Table 3.8 presents the results for the Servant Leadership construct. The KMO value of 0.784 (≥ 0.70) indicates an acceptable level of sampling adequacy, confirming that the data are suitable for factor analysis.

Table 3.8 KMO and Bartlett's Spherical Tests of Servant Leadership

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Myer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy		0.784
The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	436.18
	df	6
	Sig.	0.000

7) Employee Performance

Employee performance was assessed using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to determine the adequacy and suitability of the data for factor analysis. Table 3.9 shows the results for the Employee Performance construct. The KMO value of 0.814 (≥ 0.70) indicates a good level of sampling adequacy, confirming that the dataset is appropriate for factor analysis.

Table 3.9 KMO and Barlett's Spherical Tests of Employee Performance

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Myer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy		0.814
The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	465.29
	df	6
	Sig.	0.000

3.5.3 Analysis of Questionnaire Data

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were applied to summarize and present the key characteristics of the collected data, including measures of central tendency (mean, median) and dispersion (standard deviation, variance). This process helped to provide an overview of respondents' demographic profiles and responses to each variable, ensuring that the data were suitable for further statistical analysis.

Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was performed to examine the relationships among the main variables, leadership styles and employee performance. The Pearson correlation coefficient was utilized to determine both the strength and direction of linear relationships between the variables. This analysis helped identify how different leadership styles are associated with employee performance in Myanmar companies.

Chapter 4 Findings and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the data analysis conducted to examine the impact of different leadership styles on employee performance within companies in Myanmar. The data were gathered through a structured questionnaire distributed to employees from various organizations across Myanmar and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques.

The findings in this chapter aim to provide a clear understanding of how leadership styles, namely laissez-faire, autocratic, transformational, transactional, democratic, and servant leadership, influence employee performance. By examining the relationships among these variables, the study offers insights into the leadership approaches that most effectively enhance performance and motivation among employees in the Myanmar workplace context.

4.2 Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Table 4.1 presents a demographic overview of the 389 respondents, covering gender, age, educational level, occupation, and income level. Male respondents make up a slightly higher proportion of the sample (56.0%), while females account for 44.0%. The largest portion of participants falls within the age range of 26–40 years (50.4%), followed by those aged 18–25 years (27.2%) and 41 years and above (22.4%). This distribution reflects a balanced representation of young and mid-career employees in Myanmar organizations.

In terms of educational attainment, most respondents possess a bachelor's degree (64.8%), followed by those with a master's degree or higher (23.4%), and 11.8% with education lower than a bachelor's level. This indicates that the majority of respondents are well-educated, capable of providing informed perspectives on leadership and performance within their workplaces.

Occupation-wise, the private sector represents the majority of the sample (54.5%), followed by employees in the government sector (21.6%) and those working in non-governmental or non-profit organizations (12.1%). A smaller portion comprises self-employed individuals (6.7%) and others (5.1%). This diverse occupational distribution ensures a broad view of leadership practices across different types of organizations in Myanmar.

Regarding income levels, middle-income respondents form the largest group (56.6%), while 21.3% fall under the low-income category and 22.1% under high income. This variation allows for a comprehensive understanding of how leadership styles influence employees with different economic backgrounds. Overall, the demographic diversity of the respondents strengthens the study's ability to generalize findings across multiple sectors of the Myanmar workforce.

Table 4.1 Descriptive Statistics of Sample

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	218	56
	Female	171	44
Age	18–25 years	106	27.2
	26–40 years	196	50.4
	41 years and above	87	22.4
Educational Level	Lower than Bachelor's	46	11.8
	Bachelor's Degree	252	64.8
	Master's Degree or Higher	91	23.4

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Occupation	Private Sector	212	54.5
	Government Sector	84	21.6
	NGO/Non-Profit Organization	47	12.1
	Self-Employed	26	6.7
	Others	20	5.1
Income Level	Low Income	83	21.3
	Middle Income	220	56.6
	High Income	86	22.1

4.3 Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between various leadership styles: laissez-faire leadership, autocratic leadership, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, democratic leadership, servant leadership, and employee performance within Myanmar companies. The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was applied to measure both the strength and direction of linear associations between variables. This method identifies which leadership styles most strongly influence employee outcomes such as motivation, engagement, and productivity (Cohen et al., 2014). According to Hair et al. (2013), correlation values closer to ± 1 indicate stronger relationships. The analysis provides insights into how leadership approaches positively affect performance within Myanmar's evolving corporate environment (Yukl, 2018; Northouse, 2019).

Table 4.2 Correlation Analysis

Variables	Laissez-faire Leadership	Autocratic Leadership	Transformational Leadership	Transactional Leadership	Democratic Leadership	Servant Leadership	Employee Performance
Laissez-faire Leadership	1.0	0.182	0.214	0.167	0.195	0.203	0.226
Autocratic Leadership	0.182	1.0	0.176	0.193	0.187	0.169	0.218
Transformational Leadership	0.214	0.176	1.0	0.243	0.257	0.265	0.292
Transactional Leadership	0.167	0.193	0.243	1.0	0.228	0.214	0.267
Democratic Leadership	0.195	0.187	0.257	0.228	1.0	0.239	0.278
Servant Leadership	0.203	0.169	0.265	0.214	0.239	1.0	0.285
Employee Performance	0.226	0.218	0.292	0.267	0.278	0.285	1.0

Interpretation of Results

The correlation analysis presented in Table 4.3 demonstrates the relationships between various leadership styles and employee performance in Myanmar companies. All six independent variables, laissez-faire leadership, autocratic leadership, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, democratic leadership, and servant leadership, show positive correlations with employee performance, though the strength of these correlations varies.

Among the six styles, transformational leadership ($r = 0.292$) shows the strongest positive correlation with employee performance, indicating that leaders who inspire, motivate, and guide employees through a shared vision tend to enhance overall productivity and engagement. Similarly, servant leadership ($r = 0.285$) and democratic leadership ($r = 0.278$) also exhibit relatively higher positive correlations, suggesting that supportive, participative, and people-centered approaches contribute meaningfully to improved performance outcomes.

Transactional leadership ($r = 0.267$) and laissez-faire leadership ($r = 0.226$) display moderate positive relationships, implying that while task-oriented and hands-off approaches can motivate employees to some degree, they are less effective in sustaining long-term performance. Autocratic leadership ($r = 0.218$) shows the weakest correlation, indicating that rigid, top-down decision-making may have limited impact on motivating employees in Myanmar's modern organizational environment.

These findings align with previous leadership studies (Northouse, 2019; Yukl, 2018; Hair et al., 2013), which suggest that transformational and participative leadership approaches foster greater employee motivation and performance. The results highlight the growing importance of adaptive and human-centered leadership styles in enhancing workforce effectiveness within Myanmar's evolving business context.

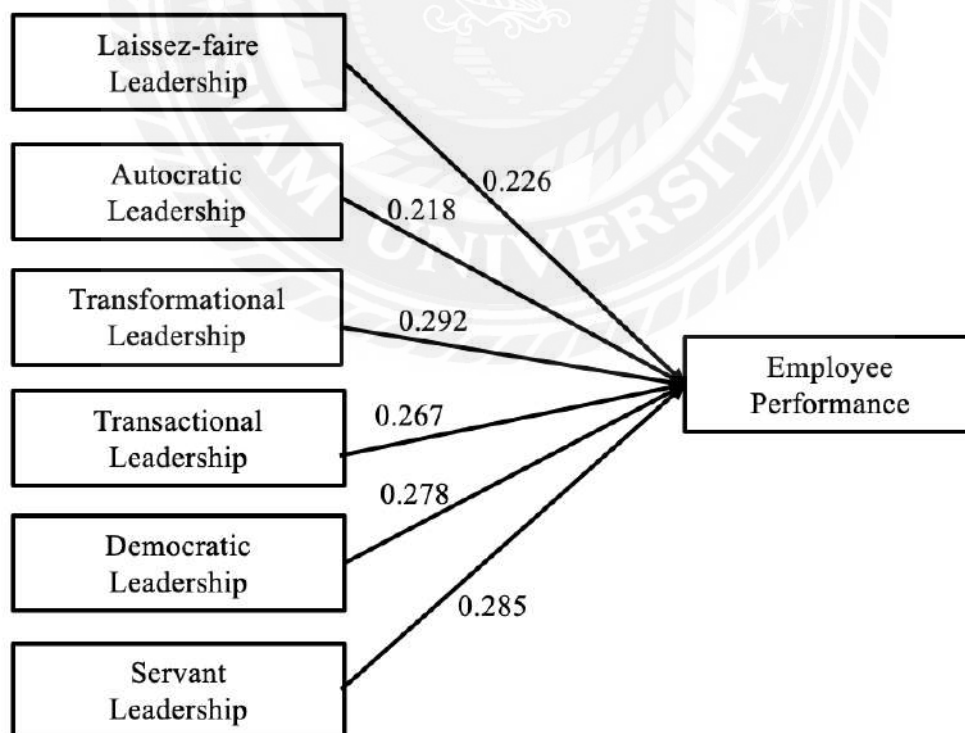
4.4 Hypothesis Test Results

Table 4.3 Hypothesis Test Results

Hypothesis	Statement	Correlation Coefficient (r)	p-value	Result
H1	Laissez-faire leadership has a positive impact on employee performance in Myanmar companies.	0.226	<0.05	Supported
H2	Autocratic leadership has a positive impact on employee performance in Myanmar companies.	0.218	<0.05	Supported
H3	Transformational leadership has a positive impact on employee performance in Myanmar companies.	0.292	<0.05	Supported

Hypothesis	Statement	Correlation Coefficient (r)	p-value	Result
H4	Transactional leadership has a positive impact on employee performance in Myanmar companies.	0.267	<0.05	Supported
H5	Democratic leadership has a positive impact on employee performance in Myanmar companies.	0.278	<0.05	Supported
H6	Servant leadership has a positive impact on employee performance in Myanmar companies.	0.285	<0.05	Supported

Figure 4.1 Final Model



According to the hypothesis test results in Table 4.4 and the relationships illustrated in Figure 4.1, all six leadership styles show positive and statistically significant correlations ($p < 0.05$) with employee performance in Myanmar companies. Among them, transformational leadership ($r = 0.292$) emerges as the strongest predictor, suggesting that visionary, motivational, and change-oriented leaders most effectively enhance employee performance and engagement. Servant leadership ($r = 0.285$) and democratic leadership ($r = 0.278$) also demonstrate meaningful positive impacts, emphasizing the importance of supportive and participatory management approaches in fostering commitment and productivity. Transactional leadership ($r = 0.267$) shows a moderate yet positive correlation, indicating that reward-based systems still play a role in short-term performance outcomes.

Conversely, laissez-faire ($r = 0.226$) and autocratic leadership ($r = 0.218$) display weaker but still positive relationships, implying that overly passive or rigid styles may be less effective in Myanmar's evolving organizational culture, where employees increasingly value empowerment and collaboration. Overall, these findings confirm that leadership style is a key determinant of employee performance in Myanmar's business environment. Organizations that emphasize transformational, servant, and democratic leadership approaches are more likely to build motivated, high-performing teams aligned with contemporary workplace values.

Chapter 5 Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

In this study, a quantitative research design was utilized to examine the factors that influence employee performance within companies in Myanmar. Data were gathered through an online structured questionnaire distributed to employees working in Myanmar organizations. A 5-point Likert scale was applied to measure the key variables, which included Laissez-faire Leadership, Autocratic Leadership, Transformational Leadership, Transactional Leadership, Democratic Leadership, Servant Leadership, and Employee Performance. The collected data were analyzed using Pearson correlation analysis to determine the strength and direction of the relationships between these leadership variables and employee performance.

5.1.1 Demographic Factors

The demographic profile of the 389 respondents provides essential insights into the characteristics of employees working in various companies across Myanmar. Gender distribution in the sample shows a slightly higher proportion of male respondents (56.0%) compared to female respondents (44.0%), indicating a relatively balanced representation of both genders in Myanmar's workforce.

In terms of age, the largest segment of respondents falls within the 26–40 age range (50.4%), followed by those aged 18–25 years (27.2%), and respondents aged 41 years and above (22.4%). This distribution suggests that a significant portion of Myanmar's organizational workforce consists of young to middle-aged employees who are actively involved in day-to-day corporate operations and decision-making.

Educational background reveals that most respondents possess a bachelor's degree (64.8%), while 23.4% hold a master's degree or higher. Only 11.8% reported education levels below a bachelor's degree. This reflects a relatively well-educated workforce,

which may positively influence employees' perceptions of leadership effectiveness and their responsiveness to different leadership styles.

With regard to occupation, the private sector accounts for the highest proportion of respondents (54.5%), followed by the government sector (21.6%), non-profit organization (12.1%), self-employed (6.7%) and others (5.1%). This diversity indicates that the findings of this study represent a broad range of professional environments within Myanmar, enabling meaningful comparisons across different types of workplaces.

Income-level distribution shows that the majority of respondents fall within the middle-income group (56.6%), followed by high-income earners (22.1%) and low-income respondents (21.3%). This variation reflects Myanmar's evolving economic landscape and provides insight into how leadership styles may influence employees across different income levels.

Overall, the demographic characteristics of the sample contribute to a comprehensive understanding of Myanmar's workforce. These insights support the interpretation of leadership–performance relationships by ensuring that the perspectives included in this study are drawn from a diverse and representative employee population.

5.1.2 Factors Affecting Employee Performance in Myanmar Companies

The correlation analysis reveals several key leadership factors that significantly influence employee performance within Myanmar companies. Among the examined variables, Transformational Leadership ($r = 0.292$) shows the strongest positive relationship with employee performance. This indicates that employees who perceive their leaders as inspirational, supportive, and development-oriented tend to exhibit higher motivation, stronger commitment, and improved performance. Transformational behaviors, such as encouraging innovation and providing individualized consideration, appear to resonate deeply within Myanmar's organizational culture, where employees value guidance and empowerment.

Closely following this, Servant Leadership ($r = 0.285$) and Democratic Leadership ($r = 0.278$) also demonstrate substantial positive correlations with performance. Servant Leadership emphasizes empathy, ethical conduct, and prioritizing employee well-being, which aligns well with Myanmar's collectivist work norms. Democratic Leadership, which promotes participation and shared decision-making, helps create a sense of ownership among employees, thereby enhancing engagement and productivity. Transactional Leadership ($r = 0.267$) exhibits a moderate positive influence, suggesting that reward-based systems and clear performance expectations remain important for driving employee outcomes, particularly in structured corporate environments. Meanwhile, Laissez-faire Leadership ($r = 0.226$) and Autocratic Leadership ($r = 0.218$) show positive but comparatively weaker relationships with performance. This indicates that although some employees may benefit from autonomy or directive instructions, these styles are less effective overall in fostering sustained performance in Myanmar's evolving workplaces.

Overall, the findings highlight that leadership styles emphasizing guidance, participation, trust, and employee development exert the strongest influence on performance outcomes. These insights align with broader leadership research, which emphasizes the importance of supportive and transformational approaches in enhancing organizational performance (Northouse, 2021; Yukl, 2020).

5.1.3 Impact of Different Leadership Styles on Employee Performance

This study applied the quantitative research method using Pearson correlation analysis to examine how different leadership styles influence employee performance in Myanmar companies. The empirical findings clearly revealed varying degrees of positive impact among the leadership factors analyzed:

1. Transformational Leadership demonstrated the strongest positive correlation with employee performance ($r = 0.292$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). This highlights the critical role of inspirational motivation, individualized support, and vision-sharing in enhancing employee engagement and productivity. Employees who feel encouraged and empowered by transformational leaders tend to perform at higher levels.
2. Servant Leadership showed a substantial positive correlation ($r = 0.285$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$), indicating that leaders who prioritize empathy, ethical behavior, and employee well-being significantly contribute to stronger performance outcomes. This aligns with Myanmar's collectivist cultural values, where supportive and caring leadership is highly respected.
3. Democratic Leadership also displayed a notable positive correlation ($r = 0.278$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). The findings suggest that involving employees in decision-making processes and encouraging open communication fosters a sense of ownership and commitment, thereby enhancing performance levels.
4. Transactional Leadership exhibited a meaningful positive correlation with performance ($r = 0.267$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). Clear expectations, structured rewards, and performance-based reinforcement contribute effectively to employee motivation, especially in formal, hierarchical corporate environments commonly found in Myanmar.
5. Laissez-faire Leadership showed a moderate yet positive correlation ($r = 0.226$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). This suggests that while excessive freedom may not always be effective, granting autonomy to capable employees can still support performance to some extent by enabling independent problem-solving and creativity.
6. Autocratic Leadership had the weakest positive correlation ($r = 0.218$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$), indicating that although directive leadership can provide clarity and control, it plays a supplementary rather than dominant role in enhancing

performance. Employees may respond positively to structured guidance, but over-centralization may limit engagement and innovation.

Overall, these insights highlight the importance of prioritizing transformational, servant, and democratic leadership behaviors within Myanmar companies. By fostering empowerment, trust, communication, and employee well-being, organizations can significantly strengthen performance outcomes and build more motivated, productive workforces that contribute to long-term organizational success.

5.2 Recommendation

Based on the research results, the following recommendations are proposed to strengthen employee performance within Myanmar companies. These suggestions focus on the six leadership styles examined in the study, laissez-faire, autocratic, transformational, transactional, democratic, and servant leadership, ranked according to their level of influence on employee performance.

Prioritizing Transformational Leadership (Top Priority)

Transformational leadership showed the strongest positive correlation with employee performance. Myanmar companies should:

- Encourage leadership training programs that develop vision-driven, motivational, and inspirational capabilities among managers.
- Promote open communication, allowing leaders to share organizational goals clearly and inspire employees toward collective achievement.
- Recognize and reward innovation, fostering an environment where employees feel confident proposing new ideas.

Strengthening Servant Leadership

Servant leadership also demonstrated a substantial effect on performance. Organizations should:

- Foster a culture of empathy and support, encouraging leaders to prioritize employee well-being and development.
- Provide mentoring systems, enabling leaders to guide staff through personalized coaching and skills enhancement.
- Encourage ethical leadership behaviors, reinforcing trust and team cohesion.

Enhancing Democratic Leadership

Democratic leadership showed a notable positive influence. Myanmar companies can:

- Include employees in decision-making processes, especially in projects, operational improvements, and team-related tasks.
- Conduct regular team discussions or feedback meetings to ensure employees' voices are heard and valued.
- Empower staff with autonomy, encouraging participation and accountability.

Optimizing Transactional Leadership

Transactional leadership remains useful for promoting structure and clarity. Companies should:

- Define clear performance expectations, outlining goals, KPIs, and measurable outcomes.
- Use reward-based systems, such as bonuses or recognition, to reinforce strong performance.
- Implement consistent performance reviews, allowing employees to understand areas for improvement.

Managing Laissez-faire and Autocratic Leadership Carefully

Although they positively influence performance, their impact is weaker and requires balanced application.

For laissez-faire leadership:

- Provide autonomy only to employees who are experienced and self-driven.
- Ensure minimal guidance does not become neglect by setting clear checkpoints.

For autocratic leadership:

- Use directive leadership only in urgent or high-risk situations where fast decisions are needed.
- Avoid excessive control, as it may demotivate employees and reduce engagement.

Developing Long-Term Leadership Capabilities

To ensure sustainable performance improvement, Myanmar companies should:

- Invest in continuous leadership development, including soft skills, emotional intelligence, and communication.
- Implement succession planning, preparing future leaders who can maintain effective leadership practices.
- Promote blended leadership styles, allowing managers to adapt based on employee needs and organizational situations.

Enhancing Workplace Communication and Feedback Systems

Strong communication contributes significantly to leadership effectiveness. Companies should:

- Adopt transparent communication channels, ensuring clarity in expectations, responsibilities, and organizational updates.
- Encourage upward feedback, where employees can safely express concerns or suggestions.
- Utilize digital tools for communication, especially in remote or hybrid work environments.

Supporting Employee Development and Motivation

To complement leadership strategies, companies should also:

- Offer training programs that develop technical and interpersonal skills.
- Provide career advancement opportunities, including promotions, certifications, and role expansions.
- Improve workplace conditions, such as providing supportive supervisors, healthy work environments, and fair compensation.

Overall Recommendation Summary

The findings highlight the importance of prioritizing transformational, servant, and democratic leadership to maximize employee performance in Myanmar companies. By integrating supportive, participatory, and motivational leadership approaches, organizations can significantly enhance productivity, engagement, and long-term organizational success.

5.3 Implication of the Study

This study offers meaningful insights into how different leadership styles influence employee performance in Myanmar companies, providing valuable implications for managerial practice, organizational development, and academic research.

Managerial Implications

The findings indicate that Transformational Leadership ($r = 0.292$), Servant Leadership ($r = 0.285$), and Democratic Leadership ($r = 0.278$) have the strongest positive influence on employee performance. This suggests that Myanmar organizations should prioritize leadership approaches that emphasize inspiration, ethical behavior, employee well-being, collaboration, and shared decision-making. Strengthening these leadership capabilities can improve motivation, engagement, and productivity within teams.

Managers can apply these results by delivering leadership training programs focused on empathy, communication, empowerment, and team participation—key elements shown to enhance performance (Bass & Riggio, 2019). Additionally, emphasizing servant-focused behaviors such as supporting employee growth and fostering trust can contribute to a more positive and productive work environment (Liden et al., 2013). These insights help organizations design leadership development initiatives that align with Myanmar's evolving corporate climate, where employees increasingly value supportive and participatory leadership.

Implications of Organizational Development

The study also highlights the importance of structured management practices that reflect effective leadership behaviors. With Transactional Leadership ($r = 0.267$) and Laissez-faire Leadership ($r = 0.226$) showing moderate positive associations, organizations may still benefit from clear expectations, reward systems, and autonomy when properly balanced. Myanmar companies should integrate leadership strategies that combine transformational and democratic elements with well-designed performance systems to support accountability and role clarity.

This is because Autocratic Leadership ($r = 0.218$) demonstrated the weakest correlation, organizations should minimize overly controlling leadership behaviors, as these may restrict creativity and reduce long-term performance. Instead, shifting toward more participative and supportive leadership frameworks can enhance job satisfaction and reduce workplace stress, contributing to healthier organizational cultures.

Implication of Human Resource and Employee Experience

HR departments can use these insights to enhance recruitment, training, and performance management policies. Placing greater emphasis on leadership competencies during hiring and internal promotion decisions can help build a stronger leadership pipeline. Additionally, leadership development programs that nurture

empathy, communication, and inspiration can significantly improve employee experience and retention; areas of growing importance within Myanmar's corporate sector as competition for skilled workers increases.

Implementing feedback systems and employee engagement initiatives can further strengthen the relationship between leadership and performance, ensuring that employees feel valued and supported in their roles.

Academic Implications

This study contributes to the broader leadership and organizational behavior literature by providing empirical evidence from the Myanmar context, an area where academic research remains limited. The findings confirm the global relevance of transformational, democratic, and servant leadership in enhancing performance, while also highlighting cultural nuances that affect leadership effectiveness.

Future scholars may build upon this research by exploring moderating variables such as organizational culture, remote work environments, generational differences, or industry-specific dynamics within Myanmar. Additionally, qualitative research could provide deeper insights into why certain leadership styles resonate more strongly with Myanmar employees.

In conclusion, the implications of this study underscore the importance of leadership approaches centered on empowerment, integrity, collaboration, and employee support. By applying these insights, Myanmar companies can strengthen workforce performance, enhance organizational effectiveness, and foster sustainable development in a rapidly changing business environment.

5.4 Limitation and Direction of Future Research

5.4.1 Limitation

While this study provides meaningful insights into how different leadership styles influence employee performance in Myanmar companies, several limitations should be acknowledged:

Sample Size and Generalizability

The study utilized a sample of 389 respondents, which is statistically adequate for correlation analysis. However, the sample may not fully capture the diversity of employees working across Myanmar's various industries, regions, and organizational structures. As Myanmar's workforce varies significantly in terms of culture, organizational hierarchy, and sector-specific norms, the extent to which these findings can be generalized remains limited. Future research should collect data from a larger and more geographically diverse population to enhance the external validity of the results (Bryman, 2021).

Cross-Sectional Research Design

This study applied a cross-sectional design, collecting all data at one specific point in time. Although appropriate for identifying relationships between leadership styles and performance, this approach cannot capture how leadership effectiveness or employee performance may change over time. Longitudinal research would allow scholars to observe leadership, performance dynamics more accurately and identify patterns that evolve with organizational growth or environmental change (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Self-Reported Measures

All variables were measured using self-reported questionnaires, which may introduce bias. Employees may provide overly positive evaluations of leadership due to fear of judgment or the desire to present themselves favorably, a well-known issue in organizational behavior research (Podsakoff et al., 2012). This may influence the accuracy of responses concerning leadership effectiveness and performance. Future studies may incorporate objective data sources such as supervisor evaluations, HR performance records, or peer assessments to minimize response bias (Organ, 2018).

Exclusive Focus on Quantitative Data

The study relied solely on quantitative methods, which, while useful for establishing statistical relationships, may not capture deeper contextual or emotional factors influencing how employees perceive leadership. Leadership effectiveness often involves complex interpersonal and cultural dynamics that numbers alone cannot fully explain. Employing a mixed-methods approach, integrating interviews or focus groups, could enhance the depth and richness of findings (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

Context-Specific Constraints

The research focused exclusively on companies operating within Myanmar, a context characterized by unique cultural values, hierarchical norms, and transitional economic conditions. While this provides meaningful insights into Myanmar's corporate environment, it may limit applicability to different cultural or organizational contexts. Comparative studies involving firms from various Southeast Asian or global markets could provide broader perspective and help determine whether these findings reflect universal leadership, performance patterns or Myanmar-specific dynamics (Hofstede, 2010).

5.4.2 Future Research

To address the limitations of this study and further strengthen understanding of leadership influences on employee performance in Myanmar companies, future research can explore several important directions. These suggestions aim to deepen theoretical contributions while offering practical insights for Myanmar's evolving organizational landscape.

1. Laissez-faire Leadership

Future research should examine laissez-faire leadership under different workplace conditions to understand when a hands-off approach may contribute positively or negatively to employee performance. Since Myanmar's work culture traditionally values guidance and structure, it is important to analyze how autonomy interacts with job complexity, team maturity, and organizational trust (House et al., 2004). Longitudinal research could also capture how laissez-faire leadership evolves over time as employees gain experience (Ployhart & Vandenberg, 2010).

2. Autocratic Leadership

Autocratic leadership may operate differently across hierarchical industries in Myanmar. Future studies could investigate how strict authority influences stress, morale, and compliance in public versus private organizations (Bryman, 2021). Qualitative approaches such as interviews may provide deeper insight into employee perceptions and emotional reactions, helping researchers understand the nuanced effects of top-down leadership in culturally hierarchical environments (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

3. Transformational Leadership

Given that transformational leadership demonstrated strong influence on employee performance, future research should explore how specific behaviors, such as inspirational motivation and individualized consideration, shape Myanmar employees' engagement and innovation. As workplaces undergo digital transformation, it will be valuable to examine how transformational leadership supports adaptation and learning in rapidly changing environments (Edmondson, 1999). Mixed-methods studies could further reveal underlying psychological processes that enhance long-term commitment (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003).

4. Transactional Leadership

Future research should explore how transactional leadership functions across various reward and feedback systems in Myanmar. Different reinforcement mechanisms may have varying effects depending on industry type or employee role (House et al., 2004). Experimental designs could help determine whether positive reinforcement or corrective feedback yields stronger performance results. Researchers may also investigate how transactional leadership combines with other styles to produce hybrid approaches suitable for Myanmar organizations.

5. Democratic Leadership

Democratic leadership encourages participation, which may be increasingly relevant as Myanmar organizations shift toward more collaborative structures. Future research could examine how participatory decision-making affects team cohesion, innovation, and job satisfaction within local cultural contexts (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Comparative studies may also reveal whether democratic leadership is more effective in younger, more modernized sectors compared to traditional industries.

6. Servant Leadership

Servant leadership aligns closely with Myanmar's collectivist and relationship-oriented values. Future research should examine how empathy, humility, and community building influence psychological safety, trust, and organizational citizenship behaviors (Edmondson, 1999). Multi-level studies may investigate servant leadership effects at both individual and team levels, identifying how servant-oriented leaders shape broader organizational culture (House et al., 2004).

7. Employee Performance

Future research should expand the measurement of employee performance to include mediators such as job satisfaction, work engagement, and organizational commitment, which may provide deeper understanding of how leadership affects outcomes (Ployhart & Vandenberg, 2010). Longitudinal studies are also recommended to track performance changes over time in response to leadership behaviors. Additionally, including diverse industries and regions within Myanmar will enhance generalizability and ensure broader applicability of findings (Bryman, 2021).

By following these recommendations, future research can generate a more holistic understanding of how leadership shapes employee performance, helping organizations in Myanmar adapt to evolving workplace expectations and foster stronger, long-term employee effectiveness.

References

- Amundsen, S., & Martinsen, Ø. L. (2014). Self–other agreement in empowering leadership: Relationships with leader effectiveness and subordinates' job satisfaction. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 25(4), 784–800.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2014.04.007>
- Armstrong, M., & Taylor, S. (2020). *Armstrong's handbook of human resource management practice* (15th ed.). Kogan Page.
- Bass, B. M. (1990). From transactional to transformational leadership: Learning to share the vision. *Organizational Dynamics*, 18(3), 19–31.
[https://doi.org/10.1016/0090-2616\(90\)90061-S](https://doi.org/10.1016/0090-2616(90)90061-S)
- Bass, B. M. (1999). Two decades of research and development in transformational leadership. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 8(1), 9–32. <https://doi.org/10.1080/135943299398410>
- Bass, B. M., & Riggio, R. E. (2006). *Transformational leadership* (2nd ed.). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Bass, B. M., & Riggio, R. E. (2019). *Transformational leadership* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Bhatti, N., Maitlo, G. M., Shaikh, N., Hashmi, M. A., & Shaikh, F. M. (2012). The impact of autocratic and democratic leadership style on job satisfaction. *International Business Research*, 5(2), 192–201.
<https://doi.org/10.5539/ibr.v5n2p192>

- Birasnav, M. (2014). Knowledge management and organizational performance in the service industry: The role of transformational leadership beyond the effects of transactional leadership. *Journal of Business Research*, 67(8), 1622–1629. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2013.09.006>
- Borman, W. C., & Motowidlo, S. J. (2009). Task performance and contextual performance: The meaning for personnel selection research. *Human Performance*, 10(2), 99–109. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327043hup1002_3
- Bryman, A. (2021). *Social research methods* (6th ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Campbell, J. P. (1990). Modeling the performance prediction problem in industrial and organizational psychology. In M. D. Dunnette & L. M. Hough (Eds.), *Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology* (2nd ed., Vol. 1, pp. 687–732). Consulting Psychologists Press.
- Carmines, E. G., & Zeller, R. A. (1979). *Reliability and validity assessment*. SAGE Publications.
- Cohen, J., Cohen, P., West, S. G., & Aiken, L. S. (2014). *Applied multiple regression/correlation analysis for the behavioral sciences* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Daniel, J. (2012). *Sampling essentials: Practical guidelines for making sampling choices*. SAGE Publications.

- De Hoogh, A. H., Greer, L. L., & Den Hartog, D. N. (2015). Diabolical dictators or capable commanders? An investigation of the differential effects of autocratic leadership on team performance. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 26(5), 687–701. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2015.01.001>
- Edmondson, A. (1999). Psychological safety and learning behavior in work teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 44(2), 350–383. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2666999>
- Eva, N., Robin, M., Sendjaya, S., Van Dierendonck, D., & Liden, R. C. (2019). Servant leadership: A systematic review and call for future research. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 30(1), 111–132. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2018.07.004>
- Field, A. (2018). *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Gandolfi, F., & Stone, S. (2018). Leadership, leadership styles, and servant leadership. *Journal of Management Research*, 18(4), 261–269.
- Gastil, J. (1994). A definition and illustration of democratic leadership. *Human Relations*, 47(8), 953–975. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001872679404700805>
- Greenleaf, R. K. (1977). *Servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness*. Paulist Press.
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2013). *Multivariate data analysis* (8th ed.). Cengage Learning.

- Harms, P. D., & Credé, M. (2010). Emotional intelligence and transformational and transactional leadership: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 17(1), 5–17. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051809350894>
- Hersey, P., & Blanchard, K. (2015). *Management of organizational behavior*. Pearson.
- Hofstede, G. (2010). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind*. McGraw-Hill.
- House, R. J., Hanges, P. J., Javidan, M., Dorfman, P., & Gupta, V. (2004). *Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies*. SAGE Publications.
- Iqbal, N., Anwar, S., & Haider, N. (2015). Effect of leadership style on employee performance. *Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review*, 5(5), 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.4172/2223-5833.1000146>
- Jansen, J. J. P., Vera, D., & Crossan, M. (2009). Strategic leadership for exploration and exploitation: The moderating role of environmental dynamism. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 20(1), 5–18. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2008.11.008>
- Judge, T. A., & Piccolo, R. F. (2004). Transformational and transactional leadership: A meta-analytic test of their relative validity. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 89(5), 755–768. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.89.5.755>

- Kaiser, H. F. (1974). An index of factorial simplicity. *Psychometrika*, 39(1), 31–36.
- Khan, M. R., Ziauddin, J., & Ramay, M. I. (2010). The impacts of organizational commitment on employee job performance. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 15(3), 292–298.
- Kish, L. (1965). *Survey sampling*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Kline, R. B. (2015). *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling* (4th ed.). Guilford Press.
- Liden, R. C., Wayne, S. J., Liao, C., & Meuser, J. D. (2013). Servant leadership and serving culture: Influence on individual and unit performance. *Academy of Management Journal*, 57(5), 1434–1452.
- Liden, R. C., Wayne, S. J., Zhao, H., & Henderson, D. (2008). Servant leadership: Development of a multidimensional measure and multi-level assessment. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 19(2), 161–177.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2008.01.006>
- Meyer, J. P., & Allen, N. J. (1997). *Commitment in the workplace: Theory, research, and application*. SAGE Publications.
- Northouse, P. G. (2019). *Leadership: Theory and practice* (8th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Northouse, P. G. (2021). *Leadership: Theory and practice* (9th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Nunnally, J. C., & Bernstein, I. H. (1994). *Psychometric theory* (3rd ed.). McGraw-Hill.

Organ, D. W. (2018). Organizational citizenship behavior: Recent trends and developments. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 5, 295–306.

Parris, D. L., & Peachey, J. W. (2013). A systematic literature review of servant leadership theory in organizational contexts. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 113(3), 377–393. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-012-1322-6>

Ployhart, R. E., & Vandenberg, R. J. (2010). Longitudinal research: The theory, design, and analysis of change. *Journal of Management*, 36(1), 94–120. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206309356954>

Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2012). Sources of method bias in social science research and recommendations on how to control it. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 63, 539–569.

Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Moorman, R. H., & Fetter, R. (1990). Transformational leader behaviors and their effects on followers' trust, satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behaviors. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 1(2), 107–142. [https://doi.org/10.1016/1048-9843\(90\)90009-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/1048-9843(90)90009-7)

Pulakos, E. D., Arad, S., Donovan, M. A., & Plamondon, K. E. (2000). Adaptability in the workplace: Development of a taxonomy of adaptive performance. *Journal*

of *Applied Psychology*, 85(4), 612–624. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.85.4.612>

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research methods for business students* (8th ed.). Pearson Education.

Skogstad, A., Hetland, J., Glasø, L., & Einarsen, S. (2014). Is avoidant leadership a root cause of subordinate stress? *International Journal of Stress Management*, 21(1), 64–87. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0035701>

Somech, A. (2006). The effects of leadership style and team process on performance and innovation in functionally heterogeneous teams. *Journal of Management*, 32(1), 132–157. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206305277799>

Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (2003). *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research*. SAGE Publications.

Teddlie, C., & Tashakkori, A. (2009). *Foundations of mixed methods research*. SAGE Publications.

Van Dierendonck, D. (2011). Servant leadership: A review and synthesis. *Journal of Management*, 37(4), 1228–1261. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206310380462>

Woods, P. A. (2005). Democratic leadership in education. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 33(1), 21–39. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143205048169>

Yang, I. (2015). Positive effects of laissez-faire leadership: Conceptual exploration.

Journal of Management Development, 34(10), 1246–1261.

<https://doi.org/10.1108/JMD-02-2015-0016>

Yukl, G. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed.). Pearson Education.

Yukl, G. (2018). *Leadership in organizations* (9th ed.). Pearson Education.



Appendix

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire is part of my research project, conducted by me, Nyein Yan Naing, as a requirement for the Master of Business Administration program at SIAM University, Bangkok. The study aims to investigate “The Impact of Leadership Styles on Employee Performance in Myanmar Companies.” If you have any questions or would like further information about this research or survey, please feel free to contact me. All information collected will be used solely for academic purposes. Your responses will remain strictly confidential, and only summarized results will be reported.

QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION 1:

Personal Information

Gender:
☐ Male
☐ Female
Age Group:
☐ 18-25 years
☐ 26-40 years
☐ 41 years and above
Educational Level:
☐ Lower than bachelor's degree
☐ Bachelor's Degree
☐ Master's Degree or Higher

Occupation:
☐ Private Sector
☐ Government Sector
☐ Non-Profit Organization
☐ Self-Employed
☐ Others (Please Specify)

SECTION 2:

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements by selecting the most appropriate option and marking the corresponding number “√”. The questionnaire utilizes a five-point Likert scale, where 1 represents strongly disagree, 2 represents disagree, 3 represents neutral, 4 represents agree, and 5 represents strongly agree.

Questionnaire Measurement Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Laissez-faire Leadership					
1. My supervisor gives employees complete freedom to make decisions about their work.					
2. My supervisor avoids interfering in how employees complete their tasks.					
3. My supervisor delays making important decisions.					
4. My supervisor gives little guidance and allows employees to work independently.					

Questionnaire Measurement Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Autocratic Leadership					
5. My supervisor makes decisions without consulting subordinates.					
6. My supervisor expects employees to follow instructions without questioning.					
7. My supervisor closely monitors all employee activities.					
8. My supervisor believes that strict control is necessary to achieve good performance.					
Transformational Leadership					
9. My supervisor communicates a clear and inspiring vision for the future.					
10. My supervisor encourages employees to think creatively and solve problems innovatively.					
11. My supervisor motivates employees to perform beyond their expectations.					
12. My supervisor supports personal growth and development among employees.					

Questionnaire Measurement Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Transactional Leadership					
13. My supervisor rewards employees when they achieve performance targets.					
14. My supervisor clarifies what is expected in return for rewards.					
15. My supervisor points out mistakes and takes corrective action immediately.					
16. My supervisor emphasizes following established rules and procedures to meet objectives.					
Democratic Leadership					
17. My supervisor encourages employees to share their opinions in decision-making.					
18. My supervisor values the ideas and input of subordinates before making final decisions.					
19. My supervisor promotes teamwork and cooperation among employees.					
20. My supervisor balances authority with participation and employee involvement.					

Questionnaire Measurement Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Servant Leadership					
21. My supervisor places the needs of employees above personal interests.					
22. My supervisor shows genuine concern for employees' well-being.					
23. My supervisor helps employees develop their skills and careers.					
24. My supervisor acts with integrity and fairness toward all employees.					
Employee Performance					
25. I always complete my assigned tasks efficiently and on time.					
26. I strive to maintain high quality in my work performance.					
27. I contribute positively to teamwork and organizational goals.					
28. I adapt well to changes and challenges in my job.					