The Impact of Leadership Style on Project Performance: In the Case of Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation (ECWC)

By: Zemach Guma

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Advisor: Seifu Mamo (PhD)

Addis Ababa University

School of Commerce

Department of Project Management

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STATEMENT OF DECLARATION

I declare that the project work entitled "The Impact of Leadership Style on Project Performance: In the Case of Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation" is my original work and all sources of material used for the work have been duly acknowledged.

ZEMACH GUMA GUGE

STATEMENT OF CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that, this project work "The Impact of Leadership Style on Project Performance: In the Case of Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation", undertaken by ZEMACH GUMA GUGE in partial fulfilment of the requirements for Master of Arts in Project Management at Addis Ababa University School of Commerce, is an original work and not submitted earlier for any Degree either at this university or any other university.

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Dereje Abi (PhD)

Research project advisor

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF COMMERCE

PROJECT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The Impact of Leadership Style on Project Performance:

In the Case of Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation

BY: ZEMACH GUMA GUGE

Approval of Examiners:

Dereje Abi (PhD)

_____

Advisor Signature

Internal Examiner	Signature	Date
External Examiner Signature Date	Signature	Date
Tarekegn T(PhD)		**June 18, 2026**
	Signature	Date

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ACCRONYMS/ ABBREVIATIONS

AAU- Addis Ababa University

APA- American Psychological Association

BIM- Building Information Modelling

ECWC- Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation

ERB- Institutional Review Board

ERP- Enterprise Resource Planning

LS- Leadership Styles

SPSS- Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

Abstract

This study investigates the impact of leadership styles on project performance in the Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation in Addis Ababa using a sequential explanatory research design, combining descriptive and explanatory methods. A quantitative approach was adopted and data were collected through a structured, self-administered 5-point Likert scale questionnaire administered to all 67 employees selected using census method. Data analysis involved both descriptive and inferential statistics including correlation and multiple linear regression analysis, using SPSS version 27. The results of correlation analysis show that project performance is positively correlated with transformational leadership (r=0.384, p=0.001), Transactional leadership (r=0.659, p=0.000) and democratic leadership (r=0.585, p=0.000). Autocratic leadership is negatively correlated with project performance (r=-0.250, p=0.041), however, laissez-faire leadership shows no significant correlation (r=0.173, p=0.161). The regression analysis indicates strong relationship between the independent variables and project performance (R = 0.723), with an R^2 value of 0.524, meaning that approximately 52.3% of the variability in project performance is explained by the leadership styles in the model (F=13.393, p < 0.001). Transactional leadership found to be the most significant predictor (beta = 0.415, p = 0.002), followed by democratic leadership (beta = 0.302, p = 0.011). The study aimed to provide evidence-based understanding on how different leadership styles influence project performance. Thereby the study designed contribute to improved management practices in the construction sector in Ethiopia.

***Keywords**: leadership styles, project performance, Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, laissez-faire leadership, autocratic leadership, democratic leadership.*

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the research by emphasizing the critical role of leadership styles in enhancing construction project performance, particularly within Ethiopia's rapidly expanding construction sector. It outlines the background of the industry, highlighting its contribution to national development, as well as the ongoing challenges such as cost overruns, schedule delays, and quality issues that hinder project success. The Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation (ECWC), as the country's leading state-owned construction firm, serves as the focal organization for this study.

The chapter details the research problem, which centers on understanding how different leadership styles influence project outcomes in the Ethiopian context, where limited empirical evidence exists. It sets out the specific objectives aimed at examining various leadership approaches—transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, autocratic, and democratic—and their impact on project performance. Additionally, it presents key research questions designed to guide the investigation.

Furthermore, the scope of the study is defined, focusing on projects within ECWC in Addis Ababa, while acknowledging certain limitations such as reliance on subjective data and the focus on a single organization. The significance of this research lies in its potential to inform project management practices and policy formulation, ultimately contributing to improved project delivery in Ethiopia's construction industry.

Finally, key terms related to leadership styles and project performance are clarified to ensure a shared understanding for subsequent chapters. This foundational chapter sets the stage for a comprehensive exploration of leadership's influence on construction project success in Ethiopia.

1.2 Background of the study

The construction industry represents an important pillar of economic development across the globe. In developing countries, it is major contributor to GDP growth, employment generation and infrastructure development (Zada *et al.*, 2024) including residential, commercial and infrastructure projects that collectively shape the built environment and socioeconomic landscape of nations.

In Ethiopia, the construction industry faces pressures to deliver projects on time, in budget and specified quality standards (Mengistu & Mahesh, 2020). The Ethiopian construction industry organizations like the Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation operate in a condition with rapid infrastructure expansion and modernization initiatives. However, the industry faces significant challenges that influence its performance and contribution to national development goals (Mengistu & Mahesh, 2020), as a result construction projects in the country experience persistent cost overruns ranging from 2% to 248%, with average overruns of 35% and schedule delays ranging from 1% to 802%, averaging 143% (Belay *et al.*, 2021).

Leadership is key determinant of organizational and project performance across industries which is important in the construction sector where complex coordination among different stakeholders is essential. Trait theory states that leadership arise from innate, relatively stable personal characteristics or traits (Khan, 2016), a universal characteristic that distinguishing leaders from non-leaders including intelligence, dominance, emotional stability and social skills (Day & Zaccaro, 2014). Behavioral theorists examine what leaders do and how behaviors correlate with follower responses and organizational outcomes, rather than seeking personality predictors (Day & Zaccaro, 2014). Two primary behavioral dimensions are consideration (people-oriented support) and initiating structure (task-oriented direction) (Singh *et al.*, 2024). Contingency theory proposes that leadership effectiveness depends on fit between leader characteristics, follower attributes and situational demands (Suharyanto & Lestari, 2020).

Effective leadership directly influences project outcomes across multiple dimensions. In construction, leadership styles have been shown to correlate with project success metrics including cost performance, schedule adherence, quality achievement and stakeholder satisfaction (Siddiqui *et al.*, 2023). Studies examining project managers in Thailand construction projects found that transformational leadership styles generate higher subordinate performance and commitment compared to transactional approaches (Limsila & Ogunlana, 2008). Research in the Ghanaian construction context revealed that democratic and transformational leadership styles show moderate positive relationships with growth mindset among project managers and stronger associations with project success compared to autocratic approaches (Owusu-Manu *et al.*, 2020).

Nevertheless, the full range leadership model includes multiple leadership styles that operate on a spectrum from transformational through transactional to passive-avoidant approaches (Ahmed *et*

al., 2023). Transformational leadership, transactional leadership, laissez-faire leadership, autocratic leadership and democratic leadership are approaches that project managers employ with varying effects on organizational and project outcomes. Research investigating these styles across different industries show that their effectiveness varies based on organizational context, project characteristics and employee expectation (Ahmed *et al.*, 2023). In construction specifically, studies have shown that different leadership styles produce differential impacts on safety outcomes, team performance, knowledge integration and project delivery success (Lingard *et al.*, 2019). Therefore, investigating the effect of each leadership style on project performance is very important to generate valuable evidence-based information.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Ethiopian construction projects continue to experience performance failures across multiple measurement frameworks including traditional project management triangle - cost, time and quality - as well as broader dimensions including stakeholder satisfaction, environmental sustainability, health and safety and socioeconomic performance (Alkilani & Loosemore, 2022). In this comprehensive framework, construction projects underperform. Evidence indicates that many projects in Ethiopia experience high-cost overruns, ranging from modest percentages to extreme outliers exceeding budget allocations by several hundred percent. Road and building infrastructure show high severity (Belay *et al.*, 2021). This causes direct financial losses to clients, inefficiencies for contractors and delays in realizing infrastructure benefits (Belay *et al.*, 2021).

Many international research has reported different relationships between leadership style and project performance outcomes in different industries and countries. These research report many consistent findings: (1) transformational leadership approaches leads to better performance compared to transactional or passive approaches in construction setting (Limsila & Ogunlana, 2008); (2) leadership effectiveness varies by context, organizational culture and project characteristics, indicating contingency relationships between leadership approach and success (Owusu-Manu *et al.*, 2020); (3) multiple dimensions of leadership like task orientation, relationship orientation, ethical foundation and visionary elements like collectively influence organizational and individual performance (Abiemo *et al.*, 2024); and (4) leadership impacts project outcomes both directly and through mediating mechanisms such as team commitment,

knowledge sharing, psychological availability and organizational citizenship behavior (Mahfouz *et al.*, 2020).

Research on construction in developing countries of Africa, Asia and the Middle East has validated these relationships. Studies in Ghana revealed that project managers practicing democratic or transformational leadership achieved superior project outcomes (Owusu-Manu *et al.*, 2020). South African research confirmed positive relationships between democratic and transformational leadership and project success (Liphadzi *et al.*, 2015) and Nigerian construction industry analysis identified leadership style management approach as important dimensions affecting project delivery outcomes (Oyewobi *et al.*, 2016).

Despite these international studies, significant knowledge gaps persist regarding the Ethiopian construction sector. There are limited empirical research that has examined leadership styles and their effects on project performance in Ethiopian construction. Though studies from neighboring African countries and other developing nations provide relevant information, the unique institutional, cultural and organizational characteristics of the Ethiopian context require direct investigation. Most Ethiopian construction research focuses on broader organizational challenges, project delays, cost overruns, rather than the leadership mechanisms underlying these challenges (Belay *et al.*, 2021; Mengistu & Mahesh, 2020). Existing Ethiopian construction research addresses leadership only in broader studies of organizational challenges and institutional reform without attention to how different leadership approaches produce differential project outcomes (Mengistu & Mahesh, 2020).

This research addresses these identified gaps through investigation of leadership style effects on project performance focusing in the Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation context. It examines five distinct leadership approaches such as transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, autocratic and democratic to identify specific leadership approaches that results in better performance in the Ethiopian construction context. This investigation will contribute to Ethiopian construction management practice by providing empirical evidence regarding effective leadership practices in the countries primary construction sector.

1.4 Objectives of the study

1.4.1 General Objective

To investigate the impact of different leadership styles on the performance of construction projects in the Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation.

1.4.2 Specific objectives

1. To assess the effect of transformational leadership style on project performance in the Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation.
2. To assess the effect of transactional leadership style on project performance in the Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation.
3. To assess the effect of laissez-faire leadership style on project performance in the Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation.
4. To assess the effect of autocratic leadership style on project performance in the Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation.
5. To assess the effect of democratic leadership style on project performance in the Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation.

1.5 Research Questions

1. How does transformational leadership style affect project performance in the Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation?
2. What is the effect of transactional leadership style on project performance in the Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation?
3. How does laissez-faire leadership style affect project performance in the Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation?
4. What is the effect of autocratic leadership style on project performance in the Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation?
5. How does democratic leadership style influence project performance in the Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation?

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the study

1.6.1 Scope/Delimitation of the study

The study focuses on the effect of leadership style on project performance in the construction sector, specifically in the setting of Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation, the manufacturing, technology, and industry products development section building project in Addis Ababa from April 1, 2026 to April 30, 2026. The purpose of this study is to determine how several leaderships styles-autocratic/authoritative, democratic, laissez-fair, transformational, and transactional -affect project performance.

The organization's managers, team heads (coordinators) and employees are the main sources of data for the study using self-administered questionnaire with the research design of descriptive and explanatory method. The study will not look into more general organizational issues other than the above-mentioned specific project that have little to do with project performance and leadership styles.

1.6.2 Limitations of the study

This research focused on a single project with in a single company, ECWC which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to the broader construction sector in Ethiopia. The study also relied on subjective information provided by respondents to assess project performance, which may introduce bias as individual perception can vary significantly and may not accurately reflect objective performance metrics. In addition, the research did not incorporate mediating or moderating variables, which may limit the understanding of the complex relationships between leadership styles and project performance and restrict the identification of potential pathways through which leadership impacts outcomes. Also, the study relied on self-reported data may lead to response bias; Participants provide socially desirable answers rather than their true perception which can affect the validity of the findings.

1.7 Significance of the Study

As this study examined how leadership influences project outcomes in the construction sector in Ethiopia, it enhances the understanding of leadership dynamics. It assessed the impact of transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, autocratic and democratic leadership styles on project performance. The recommendations proposed can support project managers and leaders to

optimize their leadership techniques. The study also contributes to the academic literature by filling existing research gaps regarding the impact of leadership in the Ethiopian construction industry, while also supporting policy and decision-making by assisting policymakers and organizational leaders in designing leadership development programs that align with project success goals.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

In the research the following key terms and acronyms used repetitively.

• **Leadership styles**: the consistent patterns of behavior, attitudes and methods-including communication, decision-making and interaction techniques-that a leader employs to influence, motivate and direct their team toward achieving specific goals.

Key Types of Leadership Styles

Transformational Leadership: Focuses on inspiring and motivating teams to innovate and create change, driving long-term goals. Source: Bass, B. M. (1985). Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations. New York: Free Press.

Transactional Leadership: Relies on a system of exchanges-rewards for performance and punishment for failure-to maintain order and meet targets. Source: Burns, J. M. (1978). Leadership. Harper & Row.

Autocratic (Authoritarian) Leadership: Decisions are made by the leader alone, ideal for crisis situation or when quick decisions are required. Source: Lewin, K., Lippitt, R., & White, R. K. (1939). "Patterns of aggressive behavior in experimentally created social climates." Journal of Social Psychology, 10(2), 271–299.

Democratic (Participative) Leadership: Encourages team input and collaboration, creating high employee engagement and innovation. Source: Vroom, V. H., & Jago, A. G. (1988). The New Leadership: Managing Participation in Organizations. Prentice-Hall.

Laissez-Faire (Delegate) Leadership: Allows team members high autonomy to make their own decisions and manage their work. Source: Lewin, K., Lippitt, R., & White, R. K. (1939).

Project Performance: Describes the outcomes, results and achievements of a project in terms of meeting objectives, delivering deliverables in budget and schedule, adhering to quality standards and satisfying stakeholder expectation. Source: PMI (Project Management Institute). (2017). A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide), 6th Edition.

Project Management: The discipline of planning, organizing, executing, monitoring and

controlling resources to achieve specific project goals and objectives. Source: PMI. (2017). A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide), 6th Edition.

1.9 Organization of the study

This study has been organized in five chapters. The first chapter deals with the introduction part. The second part provides a review of the relevant literature while the research design and methodology are presented in the third chapter. Data analysis and interpretation and discussion are covered in chapter four. The fifth chapter is about the conclusion based on the finding of the study and forward strategic recommendations based on the findings.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This literature review synthesizes different previous researches on leadership styles and their impact on project performance. The review examines conceptual frameworks, theoretical foundations and empirical evidence to establish the relationship between leadership approaches and construction project performance; The review is structured around six major themes: the concept of leadership and its significance in project-based environments; different leadership styles and their characteristics; project performance measurement frameworks; theoretical perspectives on leadership; empirical evidence from construction sectors globally and in Africa; and identified research gaps, and presents conceptual framework and hypothesis of the study.

2.2 Conceptual Review

2.2.1 Concept of Leadership

Leadership is defined as the process by which an individual influences group of individuals to achieve a common goal (Khan, 2016). It represents more than formal authority or positional power, rather, it includes the ability to inspire, motivate and guide followers toward organizational objectives. In the today's world, leadership involves an interaction between the leader, followers and the situational environment, however, its effectiveness dependent on the leader's capacity to adapt behavior to contextual demands (Hughes *et al.*, 1995).

In project-based environments, leadership has high importance due to the temporary nature of projects, the diversity of team composition and the urgency of delivering specified outcomes within the constraint. Project leaders must show exceptional interpersonal skills, technical competence and adaptive capacity (Rehman Toor & Ogunlana, 2008), because the construction industry is characterized by multidisciplinary teams (designers, contractors, consultants and regulatory stakeholders) requires leaders who can navigate complex organizational boundaries and manage stakeholder relationships at multiple hierarchical levels (Ochieng & Price, 2009). Research shows that effective leadership directly influences subordinate performance, organizational commitment for successful project delivery (Limsila & Ogunlana, 2008b).

2.2.2 Leadership Styles

2.2.2.1 Autocratic (Authoritative) Leadership Style

Autocratic (authoritative) leadership is characterized by centralized decision-making authority. It is known by directive communication and emphasis on compliance with established procedures (Carmona & Bento, 2024); Leaders make decisions unilaterally without input from subordinates, communicate expectation clearly and maintain strict control over project execution (Jung *et al.*, 2014).

Autocratic leadership has certain advantages in construction projects. The directive approach enables rapid decision-making in time-pressured environments and facilitates clear communication of technical requirements and safety protocols (Buba & Tanko, 2017). This style is mainly effective for routine, well-defined tasks. It is also preferrable in contexts where project complexity is manageable and subordinates have lower maturity levels (Setiawan *et al.*, 2019). Several studies in developing country construction contexts including Nigeria and Ethiopia, reveal that directing leadership styles correlate positively with achievement of specific quality and functional performance criteria (Buba & Tanko, 2017).

However, in modern construction environments autocratic leadership exhibits significant disadvantages as the approach suppresses employee initiative, reduces motivation and commitment and inhibits innovation (Costa *et al.*, 2023). Research indicates that autocratic styles correlate with lower employee satisfaction, increased turnover and diminished intrinsic motivation among construction professionals (Mohamed & Saeed, 2022). Excessive autocracy may be perceived as tyrannical, producing work withdrawal behaviors and reduced task performance (Ahmad *et al.*, 2022).

2.2.2.2 Democratic Leadership Style

Democratic leadership emphasizes collaborative decision-making. It values employee input and creates participative processes (Carmona & Bento, 2024). Leaders employing this approach involve team members in problem-solving, encourage open communication and build consensus-based decisions, also maintaining accountability (Eagly & Johnson, 1990). In construction setting, democratic leadership generate high benefits. Research from South African construction firms shows positive relationships between democratic styles and project success (Liphadzi *et al.*, 2015) as the approach enhances employee commitment, increases job satisfaction and promotes

collective ownership of project outcomes (Limsila & Ogunlana, 2008b). Democratic leaders in construction environments facilitate cross-functional collaboration. They reduce conflict through inclusive dialogue and create psychologically safe environments where team members willingly contribute ideas (Hoque & Raya, 2023). The style is effective for complex projects requiring innovation, knowledge integration and adaptive problem-solving (Ahmed *et al.*, 2023).

Limitations of democratic leadership include potential delays in decision-making. Difficulties in crisis situation require immediate action. Democratic approach is also challenged when team members have limited expertise (Carmona & Bento, 2024). In construction contexts with tight timelines the nature of democratic decision-making may affect performance (Al-Khasawneh & Futa, 2012).

2.2.2.3 Laissez-faire Leadership Style

Laissez-faire leadership, also termed permissive or liberal leadership is characterized by minimal leader intervention, delegation of decision-making to subordinates and limited monitoring or feedback provision (Carmona & Bento, 2024); This style assumes high subordinate competence and intrinsic motivation.

Research indicates laissez-faire leadership produces inconsistent outcomes in construction environments as it can have both negative, positive or no effect on performance depending on context. For example, the studies from South Africa reveal no relationship between laissez-faire styles and construction project success (Liphadzi *et al.*, 2015). It shows weakness in providing necessary structure, supervision and feedback essential for construction project coordination (Jony *et al.*, 2019). This leadership style requires highly autonomous technical teams. Construction context is characterized by interdependencies, standardized procedures and the need for coordinated execution and Laissez-faire leadership is ineffective in this sector (Hoque & Raya, 2023).

2.2.2.4 Transformational Leadership Style

Transformational leadership is a paradigm that emphasize inspiration, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration and idealized influence (Singh *et al.*, 2024) - Transformational leaders articulate compelling visions, challenge conventional thinking, provide personal attention to followers' development and model desired behaviors through their own conduct (Naile & Selesho, 2014).

In construction projects transformational leadership shows positive impacts on multiple performance dimensions; it directly correlates with higher project success across cost, time and quality parameters (Zavari & Afshar, 2021). Transformational leaders enhance subordinate motivation through inspiring vision and intellectual stimulation. It increases employee commitment to organizational objectives and creates innovation and creative problem-solving (Maqbool *et al.*, 2017). In construction safety contexts, transformational leadership is effective, with safety-specific transformational approaches showing the strongest correlation with safety performance improvements (Sankar & Anandh, 2024). The style enhances team cohesion, improves communication effectiveness and increases employee willingness to exert extra effort (Lingard *et al.*, 2019).

Research from construction firms in multiple countries confirms that transformational leadership's superiority over transactional approaches (Limsila & Ogunlana, 2008b) through higher quality output, increased quantities of work completed and enhanced problem-solving capacity among subordinates (Limsila & Ogunlana, 2008a). This leadership style is effective in cultural contexts needing collective achievement as transformational behaviors align with collectivist values (Javalagi *et al.*, 2024).

2.2.2.5 Transactional Leadership Style

Transactional leadership operate through exchange relationships; leaders provide rewards contingent on task completion and when performance deviates from standards they implement correction (Nanjundeswaraswamy *et al.*, 2024). It stresses active management by exception, clear contingent rewards and monitoring of subordinate compliance (Olasunkanmi *et al.*, 2023).

In construction projects, transactional leadership maintains practical relevance, for example Nigerian construction project managers frequently employ transactional styles through the active management-by-exception approach. It including clear final instructions, continuous progress monitoring and risk assessment (Olasunkanmi *et al.*, 2023), South African construction research shows positive correlations between transactional leadership and project success (Liphadzi *et al.*, 2015). It is effective in structured project environments where roles, responsibilities and performance criteria are clearly defined (Ahmed *et al.*, 2023).

However, transactional approaches exhibit limitation in innovation generation and employee motivation development compared to the transformational leadership that show stronger

correlations with subordinate performance than transactional approaches (Limsila & Ogunlana, 2008b), creative problem-solving and employee intrinsic motivation, transactional leadership alone is insufficient in construction contexts requiring adaptation, (Maqbool *et al.*, 2017).

2.2.3 Concept of Project Performance

Project performance is the extent to which projects achieve specified objectives in predetermined constraint and also satisfy stakeholder expectation (Ibrahim *et al.*, 2024). Traditional project management uses the "iron triangle" comprising three primary performance dimensions: time, cost and quality (Zid *et al.*, 2020), but recent researches acknowledge additional key performance indicators, stakeholder satisfaction, safety outcomes, environmental impact and resource productivity (Kunkcu *et al.*, 2022).

Time Performance measures schedule adherence, project completion timeliness and milestone achievement; Cost performance tracks budget management, cost containment and prevention of cost overruns; Quality performance shows specification compliance, workmanship standards and functional capability (Ibrahim *et al.*, 2024). Stakeholder satisfaction refers to the degree to which project outcomes meet or exceed expectation of clients, users and regulatory bodies (Tunji-Olayeni *et al.*, 2016). Safety performance is about injury prevention, incident rate and implementation of preventive safety measures (Sankar & Anandh, 2024). Resource productivity measures efficient utilization of labor, materials, equipment and financial resources (Tripathi *et al.*, 2019). Performance measurement in construction projects employs both financial and non-financial indicators (Ibrahim *et al.*, 2024). Financial measures include budget variance, cost performance index and return on investment, whereas non-financial indicators involve schedule variance, quality defects, rework rate, safety incidents and customer satisfaction scores (Kunkcu *et al.*, 2022). In developing country including Ethiopia, performance measurement frameworks must account for unique challenges including inflation, foreign exchange volatility, supply chain disruptions and regulatory instability (Abate *et al.*, 2024).

Research from construction projects in Jordan shows that project cost, time, quality, health and safety, sustainability and socio-economic performance constitute six integrated project-related performance constructs (Alkilani & Loosemore, 2022). Intra-organizational factors including leadership, management capabilities, human resources and technical resources impact project performance (Alkilani & Loosemore, 2022). In the Ethiopian construction sector, client

incompetence, contractor limitations, project input constraint and unfavorable external environmental conditions are key failure factors (Abate *et al.*, 2024).

2.3 Theoretical Review

2.3.1 Trait Theory of Leadership

Trait theory states that leadership arise from innate, relatively stable personal characteristics or traits (Khan, 2016), a universal characteristic that distinguishing leaders from non-leaders including intelligence, dominance, emotional stability and social skills (Day & Zaccaro, 2014).

Main assumptions include the proposition that leaders have distinctive trait profiles, that these traits are highly stable over time and contexts and that trait directly predicts leadership and effectiveness (Nanjundeswaraswamy *et al.*, 2024). Strengths of trait theory include its intuitive appeal and its recognition that individual differences influence leadership outcomes (Javalagi *et al.*, 2024). Contemporary trait research shows that Big Five personality dimensions such as Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, Openness to Experience predict becoming leader. Extraversion and that trait effects are mediated by leader behavior (Javalagi *et al.*, 2024).

Weaknesses include failure to account for situational factors, inconsistent predictive validity in different sutuation and inability to explain why trait-identical individuals show varying leadership effectiveness (Day & Zaccaro, 2014); for construction projects, trait theory gives limited guidance on behavioral adaptation to evolving project needs (Jawoosh *et al.*, 2021). The theory's assumption of stable traits poorly fits construction environments and demands flexibility across distinct project phases and diverse team compositions (Hughes *et al.*, 1995).

2.3.2 Behavioral Theory of Leadership

Behavioral theory shifts focus from inherent traits to observable, learnable leadership behaviors (Nanjundeswaraswamy *et al.*, 2024); behavioral theorists examine what leaders do and how behaviors correlate with follower responses and organizational outcomes, rather than seeking personality predictors (Day & Zaccaro, 2014). Two primary behavioral dimensions are consideration (people-oriented support) and initiating structure (task-oriented direction) (Singh *et al.*, 2024).

Main assumptions stat that effective leadership comprises identifiable, teachable behaviors rather than fixed personality traits. Strengths include the practical applicability for leadership development, emphasis on flexibility and showed correlations between certain behaviors and follower satisfaction and performance (Eagly & Johnson, 1990) behaviors are inherently more modifiable than traits, behavioral theory enables more targeted leadership training than trait approaches, (Jawoosh *et al.*, 2021).

Weaknesses of this theory is incomplete specification of which behaviors prove optimal across situation, and failure to account for situational contingencies and insufficient explanation of behavioral influence mechanisms (Day & Zaccaro, 2014). For construction applications, behavioral theory acknowledges that effective leaders combine task and people orientations but gives limited guidance on when to emphasize each dimension (Hughes *et al.*, 1995).

2.3.3 Contingency Theory

Contingency theory proposes that leadership effectiveness depends on fit between leader characteristics, follower attributes and situational demands (Suharyanto & Lestari, 2020). Fiedler's Least Preferred Coworker model and Hersey-Blanchard's situational leadership framework exemplify contingency approaches. According to these theories, there is no universally optimal leadership style (Vidal *et al.*, 2017).

Main assumptions include the proposition that leadership effectiveness requires situational analysis that different situation demand different leadership approaches and that leader-situation fit predicts performance outcomes (Suharyanto & Lestari, 2020), Strengths of this theory include recognition of situational complexity, and giving emphasis to adaptive leadership and showed predictive validity in different contexts (Hou, 2024). Contingency theory is relevant for construction projects, resource constraint and stakeholder diversity create highly differentiated situational demands (Ametepe & Onokala, 2023).

Weaknesses of this theory include difficulty in measuring key situational variables, insufficient specification of which specific situation-behavior matches optimize performance and complexity in practical implementation (Nanjundeswaraswamy *et al.*, 2024).

2.3.4 Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational leadership theory, developed by Bass and expanded by subsequent researchers, proposes that effective leaders transform follower motivation through inspiring vision, providing intellectual stimulation, offering individualized consideration (Singh *et al.*, 2024), and modeling idealized influence.

The theory assumes that the proposition that leadership can elevate follower motivation beyond expectation satisfaction, that vision articulation and inspiration generate follower commitment, that intellectual challenge develops follower capability and that personal attention addresses individual development needs (Singh *et al.*, 2024), include extensive empirical validation across diverse organizational contexts, showed correlations with superior organizational performance and particular effectiveness in driving innovation and organizational change (Costa *et al.*, 2023). Transformational approaches are especially relevant for construction projects requiring adaptation to novel challenges, integration of technical expertise and motivation maintenance throughout project lifecycles (Zavari & Afshar, 2021).

Weaknesses include potential risk of charismatic leadership misuse, unclear mechanisms explaining how inspiration translates to performance and questions regarding universal applicability (Paul *et al.*, 2002). In some developing country, transformational leadership effectiveness may be moderated by cultural expectation and organizational maturity levels (Jinga *et al.*, 2024).

2.4 Empirical Review

2.4.1 Studies on Leadership Styles and Construction Project Performance

Empirical evidence from global construction research report strong correlations between leadership styles and project performance outcomes with transformational and democratic approaches produce superior performance outcomes compared to autocratic or laissez-faire styles (Ahmed *et al.*, 2023). Site manager transformational leadership directly correlates with construction project success through mediation by team-building and team innovation (Zavari & Afshar, 2021). In Pakistani construction firms, emotional intelligence and transformational leadership combine to enhance project success (Maqbool *et al.*, 2017),

Leadership style impacts safety climate perception and behaviors among construction professionals (Sankar *et al.*, 2024). Safety leadership predicts management commitment to safety, safety equipment and procedures, safety training, communication and group safety culture (Sankar *et al.*, 2024); transformational leadership is especially effective for safety performance enhancement in construction contexts (Sankar & Anandh, 2024).

In China studies show, Ugwuanyi (2023) investigated how different project leadership philosophies affected a construction company's performance. In their investigation of the role of paternalistic leadership in China's Belt and Road Initiative, Yunpeng & Zaman (2023) concluded that an authoritarian leadership style could pose a threat to the success of mega-construction projects. In a study looking at how leadership style affects worker performance, Biloa (2023) found that both democratic and laissez-faire leadership styles have a positive impact on worker job performance because the former creates opportunities for learning while the latter encourages personal growth. On the other hand, an environment of frustration is fostered by an autocratic leadership style, which has a negative impact on employee job performance.

2.4.2 Empirical Studies in Africa

African construction research is limited compared to developed country studies. South African construction firms show positive relationships between transactional leadership and project success. No significant relationship for laissez-faire approaches (Liphadzi *et al.*, 2015). South African construction research identifies directing leadership style as frequently employed and most influential on quality and functional performance criteria (Buba & Tanko, 2017). In Ghana, democratic and transformational leadership styles show positive correlations with organizational citizenship behavior among SME employees. However, autocratic styles show insignificant relationships when emotional intelligence moderate effects (Abdullahi *et al.*, 2020). Nigerian construction research identifies key failure factors arising from client incompetence, contractor limitations, project inputs and external environmental challenges (Abate *et al.*, 2024). Nigerian construction project managers also use of transactional leadership emphasizes active management by exception-providing clear instructions, monitoring progress and assessing risk (Olasunkanmi et al., 2023). Ssenyange (2023) construction projects under the Kampala Capital City Authority in Uganda, the results show a favorable and significant correlation between project performance and

a democratic (participatory) leadership style. South African construction research confirms positive relationships between transactional leadership and project success, with no significant relationship for laissez-faire approaches (Liphadzi et al., 2015). Construction professionals perceive transformational and democratic styles as most effective for performance enhancement (Hoque & Raya, 2023), but autocratic styles correlate with negative outcomes.

Construction health and safety research across African developing countries reveals focus on risk-based approaches, accidents and safety management, with limited attention to emerging topics like industry 4.0 implications and safety culture (Umeokafor *et al.*, 2022).

2.4.3 Empirical Studies in Ethiopia

Ethiopian construction research addressing leadership are limited, showing that there is significant gap. However, studies examining broader construction management dimensions provide relevant context. For example, A hybrid Delphi-AHP analysis comparing Ethiopian public and private sector construction success factors reveals key variations: private sector prioritizes clear project goals, contractor financial capacity and consulting firm competency. Public sector on the other hand, emphasizes fund adequacy, political environment and project clarity (Belay *et al.*, 2021).

Ethiopian construction project failure factors analysis identifies key causes emanating from unfavorable socio-economic conditions and owner incompetence. Other challenges such as bureaucratic delays, contractor incompetence, payment challenges and labor productivity issues (Abate *et al.*, 2024). Challenges in developing the Ethiopian construction industry include delayed policy implementation, corruption, weak contractor and consultant capacity, lack of collaboration and professionalism and insufficient benchmarking practices (Mengistu & Mahesh, 2020).

Leadership behavior and organizational change research in Ethiopian public universities found positive significant impacts of autocratic, democratic, laissez-faire and transactional leadership on organizational change management. But transformational leadership showed negative impacts in this specific context (Jinga *et al.*, 2024) indicating that contextual moderation of leadership style effectiveness in Ethiopian institutional setting.

2.4.4 Summary of Research Gaps

The literature analysis shows that there are several research gaps in existing literature:

There are limited empirical research directly examining leadership styles and project performance relationships in Ethiopian construction. Existing studies focus on developed countries or other African regions. In addition, inadequate integration of leadership style research with project performance measurement frameworks. Most studies examine leadership or performance independently rather than integrated relationships. Also, lack of organizational case studies examining leadership in practice in specific construction organizations like the Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation.

2.6 Conceptual framework

The study explores how leadership style effects project success at Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation. It proposes project performance as the dependent variable and leadership style; dominant leadership style and challenges related to leadership style as the independent variable. Investigating the connection between these two factors is the main goal.

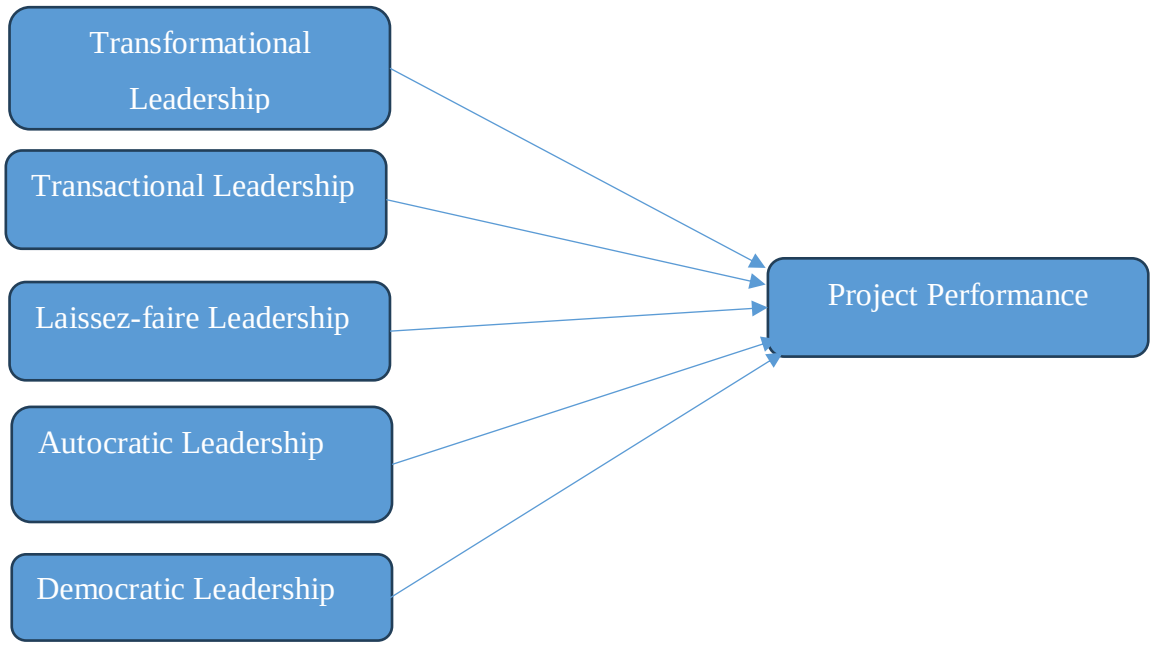


Figure 1: Conceptual Frame work representing the effect of leadership styles on project progress

Source: Adapted from Adewumi Olamide (2025), The influence of leadership style on project team performance

2.7 Hypothesis of the study

Based on the discussion in the previous sections of the related literature review, the following hypothesis is forwarded.

$H1_1$: Autocratic leadership style has significant negative effect on project performance in Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation.

$H1_2$: Democratic leadership style has significant positive effect on project performance in Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation.

$H1_3$: Laissez-faire leadership style has significant negative effect on project performance in Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation.

$H1_4$: Transformational leadership style has significant positive effect on project performance in Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation.

$H1_5$: Transactional leadership style has significant positive effect on project performance in Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The methods employed to achieve the specific objectives in this study including the research design, research approach and sample selection technique, method of data collection and method of data analysis are discussed in this chapter. In addition, the measures that will be taken to ensure validity, reliability and ethical consideration is also discussed.

Background of the organization

The Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation (ECWC) is Ethiopia's largest state-owned construction firm, established by Council of Ministers Regulation No. 366/2015 through the amalgamation of the Ethiopian Road Construction Corporation, Ethiopian Water Works Construction Enterprise and Ethiopian Prefabricated Building Parts Production Enterprise in December 2015 to consolidate expertise in infrastructure like roads, dams, buildings and airfields. With significant capital, thousands of employees and extensive machinery, ECWC aims to be a leading regional player, handling different projects and offering equipment services, focusing on quality, technology (like ERP, BIM) and expansion into East/Central Africa.

Vision: To be one of the best three African origin construction and manufacturing companies in East and Central Africa by 2030.

Mission: Deliver quality construction, assemble equipment, manufacture parts, provide maintenance and manage water infrastructure.

3.2. Research Design and Approach

3.2.1. Research Design

According to Creswell (2014), research design is the specific process involved in the research process. It is a strategic plan to for gathering, analyzing and interpreting data (Kothari, 2004). This study employed mixed method research designs. Descriptive method is used to understand trends

about the leadership styles practiced in the study organization. Explanatory research method was used to evaluate the cause-effect relationships between the independent and dependent variables.

3.2.2. Research Approach

According to Marczyk and Festinger (2005), research approach is classified as qualitative, quantitative, or mixed. This study adopts quantitative research approach to collect and analyze data needed to achieve the research objectives. Quantitative data were collected through structured questionnaire administered to sampled respondents and this data is used to test hypotheses through statistical model.

3.3. Sampling Design

3.3.1. Population and Target population of the study

The population of this study are all (67) employees of project managers, team leaders (coordinators) and employees of the manufacturing, technology and industry products development section building project of Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation, Addis Ababa.

3.3.2. Sample Size and Sampling technique

The study will employ census method to include all employees at Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation, Addis Ababa in the survey. This because the research found the total number of the employees manageable to be included in the study and that census method increases the accuracy of the data as it obtains the perception of each and every individual in the target population. According to Kothari (2004), complete enumeration of all individuals in the 'population' is known as a census inquiry and it can be presumed that in such an inquiry, when all items are included, no element of chance is left and highest accuracy is obtained.

3.4 Types and source of data

This study relied on the primary data in order to get a picture of the present situation regarding the effect of leadership style on project Performance. This primary data collected from the managers, team leaders (coordinators) and employees of the manufacturing, technology and industry products development section building project of Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation, Addis Ababa April, 2026 by preparing a self-administrated paper based questionnaire distributed in person.

3.5. Data Collection Instruments

For quantitative data, a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire was designed to collect the perception of respondents regarding leadership practices and their effects on project performance. The questionnaire will have different sections including demographic, the leadership styles (transformational, transactional, laisses faire, autocratic and democratic) and the dependent variable, project performance.

3.6. Data analysis Method

Both descriptive and inferential analysis were used to analyze the data. The descriptive statistics was used to assess trends in the data using mean, standard deviation, percentages and counts. Inferential analysis such as correlation and multiple linear regression analysis was employed to assess the relationship between the dependent and independent variables in SPSS version 27.

3.6.1 Model Specification

The multiple linear regression equation is specified for this study as follows:

$Y= b_0+b_1X_1+b_2X_2+b_3X_3+b_4X_4+b_5X_5+e$

Where; Y =Project Performance

X1= Transformational leadership

X2= Transactional leadership

X3= Laissez faire leadership

X4= Autocratic leadership

X5= Democratic leadership

b_0 =constant term

b_1- b_5 are regression coefficients corresponding to each of the independent variable.

3.7 Validity and Reliability

3.7.1 Test of Validity

The researcher has sought an expert review to confirm the validity of the questionnaire, particularly taking into account the research supervisor's input. Before starting the primary data collection, a

pilot test with 21 respondents was also carried out to find any mistakes or ambiguous questions or phrasing and make the required corrections. Based on the response from pilot respondent, the major correction made specifically in the project performance items.

3.7.2 Reliability Test

Cronbach's alpha was used to examine the survey items' reliability, which is a measure of their internal consistency. This approach is frequently used to gauge reliability or internal consistency. A coefficient of alpha greater than or equal to 0.7 was considered acceptable (Kothari, 2004). As a result, the Cronbach's alpha value determined for this study is given below:

Table 1: Reliability results

Reliability Statistics		
Variable	**Cronbach's Alpha**	**N of Items**
Transformational Leadership	0.884	5
Transactional Leadership	0.785	5
Laissez-faire Leadership	0.843	5
Autocratic Leadership	0.898	5
Democratic Leadership	0.852	5
Project Performance	0.74	8

3.8 Ethical considerations

Before contacting the respondents, permission was acquired from Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation. Confidentiality and informed consent were obtained during data collection. Participants have only participated in the study if they have given their consent after the purpose of the study was explained to them. In addition, the responses and information were kept completely private. In addition, respondents were given the freedom to leave the study at any moment without facing any repercussions.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the results of data analysis of the data collected from 64 employees of the Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation in Addis Ababa. All questionnaire were completed and returned making the response rate of 100%. This high response rate increases the validity of the results derived from the analysis of these data. The chapter begins with the demographic information of the respondents and proceeds to the descriptive and inferential analysis results and the discussion of the findings.

4.2 Demographic Information of the Respondents

According to the demographic results provided in the table below, majority of the respondents (88.1%) were male and only 11.9% are female. This high gender difference shows the underrepresentation of women in the construction sector. Regarding the age of the respondent's majority (50.7%.) of respondents are in the 31-35 years age group. The second largest group is those aged 26-30 years, representing 32.8% of the total. Only 13.4% of respondents are in the 36-40 years age group and 3% are above 41 years. This age distribution results show that the workforce is relatively young. Regarding educational status, 58.2% of the of the respondents hold a university degree, 41.8% have postgraduate qualifications showing well-educated workforce in the study corporation. This may contribute positively to project performance and management capabilities.

Considering their role in the corporation, 50.7% of the respondents are team members, 7.5% of the respondents are project managers, while 41.8% hold other roles implying that the majority of the workforce is engaged in support roles rather than leadership positions. A total of 56.7% of respondents have between 6 to 10 years of experience, indicating moderately experienced workforce. Those respondents with 2 to 5 years of experience represent 29.9% and those with more than 10 years shares 13.4% of the total. This indicates that the study includes the perception of both newer and experienced professionals in the construction sector.

Table 2: Demographic information

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	59	88.1
	Female	8	11.9
Age	26-30 years	22	32.8
	31-35 years	34	50.7
	36-40 years	9	13.4
	Above 41 years	2	3
Educational status	University degree	39	58.2
	Postgraduate	28	41.8
Role in the project	Project manager	5	7.5
	Team member	34	50.7
	Other	28	41.8
Years of experience in construction projects	2-5 years	20	29.9
	6-10 years	38	56.7
	More than 10 years	9	13.4
	Total	67	100

4.2 Leadership Styles Practiced by Project Managers

4.2.1 Transformational Leadership

Respondents have strong positive perception about transformational leadership practices. For example, a combined total (agree + strongly agree) of 96.9% of respondents perceived that the project manager encourages team members to come up with new and innovative ideas (Mean=4.51, SD=0.612). When asked about the project manager's ability to inspire and motivate the team to achieve project goals, a total of 89.6% of respondents agreed with only 3% of disagreement (Mean=4.49, SD=0.766) indicating that team members feel positively about motivational skills of their project managers. According to the 90% of the respondents the project managers show genuine concern for the personal development of team members with nearly 10% neutral stance and no disagreement (Mean=4.58, SD=0.655). This shows strong agreement on the commitment of project managers to personal development.

In terms of communication, a total of 93.9% of respondents have positive perception about the project manager communicating a clear vision that energizes the team (Mean=4.46, SD=0.611) which shows that there is a practice of effective communication and vision sharing among the team. Also, the statement concerning the project manager encouraging collaboration and team

spirit indicates that 92.5% of respondents agree or strongly agree. A total of 3% disagreed (Mean=4.48, SD=0.785) revealing that team members feel strong sense of collaboration facilitated by their project manager.

The grand mean of 4.504 (SD=0.685) across all items indicates the positive view of transformational leadership practices in the project team. This also indicate that the project manager effectively engages, motivates and develops team members.

Table 3: Transformational leadership practices

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	SD
The project manager encourages team members to come up with new and innovative ideas.	N	0	1	1	28	37	4.51	0.612
	%	0	1.5	1.5	41.8	55.2		
The project manager inspires and motivates the team to achieve project goals.	N	0	2	5	18	42	4.49	0.766
	%	0	3	7.5	26.9	62.7		
The project manager shows genuine concern for the personal development of team members.	N	0	0	6	16	45	4.58	0.655
	%	0	0	9	23.9	67.2		
The project manager communicates a clear vision that energizes the team.	N	0	0	4	28	35	4.46	0.611
	%	0	0	6	41.8	52.2		
The project manager encourages collaboration and team spirit.	N	1	1	3	22	40	4.48	0.785
	%	1.5	1.5	4.5	32.8	59.7		
Grand mean							**4.504**	**0.685**

4.2.2 Transactional Leadership

The results regarding transactional leadership practices reveal a mixed but generally positive perception among team members about their project manager's approach. The item assessing whether the project manager clearly defines roles and responsibilities for each team member shows that 86.5% of respondents either agree or strongly agree, while 3% disagree (Mean =4.36, SD= 0.792). This indicates strong clarity in role definition. This is essential for effective team functioning. The statement about the project manager providing rewards or recognition for good performance, only 59.7% of participants agree or strongly agree, while 9% disagree (Mean=3.75,

SD=0.927). This indicates that while some recognition occurs, there is room for improvement in how achievements are acknowledged in the team. The item regarding the project manager closely monitoring project activities to ensure deadlines are met received a favorable response, with 92.6% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing and only 1.5% disagreeing (Mean=4.34, SD=0.664). This reflects strong commitment to monitoring project progress and ensuring timely completion.

In terms of corrective actions, a total of 74.7% of respondents showed agreement that the project manager using corrective actions when team members do not meet expectation. However, 25.3% of the respondents are neutral. The mean value of 4.04 (SD=0.747) shows agreement regarding the presence of proactive approach to managing performance. The project manager also emphasizes the adherence to rules and procedures as witnessed by 85.1% of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement agree. Only 3% disagreeing (Mean=4.19, SD=0.821). This shows strong adherence to established protocols, which is important for maintaining order and consistency in project execution.

The grand mean of 4.136 (SD=0.790) for all items shows that the availability of transactional leadership practices was positively viewed among the project team. This also indicate that the project manager effectively defines roles, monitors performance and emphasizes adherence to rules.

Table 4: Transactional leadership practices

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	SD
The project manager clearly defines roles and responsibilities for each team member.	N	0	2	7	23	35	4.36	0.792
	%	0	3	10.4	34.3	52.2		
The project manager provides rewards or recognition for good performance.	N	0	6	21	24	16	3.75	0.927
	%	0	9	31.3	35.8	23.9		
The project manager closely monitors project activities to ensure deadlines are met.	N	0	1	4	33	29	4.34	0.664
	%	0	1.5	6	49.3	43.3		
The project manager uses corrective actions when team members do not meet expection.	N	0	0	17	30	20	4.04	0.747
	%	0	0	25.4	44.8	29.9		

The project manager emphasizes adherence to rules and procedures.	N	1	1	8	31	26	4.19	0.821
	%	1.5	1.5	11.9	46.3	38.8		
Grand mean							**4.136**	**0.790**

4.2.3 Laissez-faire Leadership

The survey results regarding laissez-faire leadership practices indicate that the team members have positive perception about their project manager's leadership style. For example, the item assessing whether the project manager avoids making decisions and leaves the team to work independently has got the mean value of 3.21 (SD=1.297) with a total of 52.2% agreement and 32.8% of disagreement. This indicates that though some team members have recognized the autonomy, many others feel lack of decisive leadership. The statement assessing if the project manager being often unavailable when the team needs guidance also got relatively low mean (Mean=2.30, SD=1.101). For this statement, 62.7% of the respondents have disagreed or strongly disagreed, indicating that many do not perceive lack of availability as an issue. In other words the high percentage of disagreement shows that the project manager is generally seen as accessible. Only 16.4% of the respondents agree with this statement showing the concern of accessibility of their project manager.

Respondents were also asked to show their agreement about the project manager providing little direction or feedback on project progress received a high level of disagreement and a total of 62.7% of respondents disagreed (Mean=2.42, SD=1.183) with 19.4% agreed confirming lack of direction or feedback. These results indicate that team members feel they are receiving sufficient guidance and feedback. This is important for the project success. In terms of conflict resolution, a total of 40.3% of respondents disagree that the project manager allows team members to resolve conflicts on their own without intervention (Mean=3.13, SD=1.242). This reflects a divided opinion on the project manager's approach to conflict management. Concerning the project manager delaying in responding to issues or problems raised by the team a total of 49.2% of respondents disagree or strongly disagree and a total of 20.8% of the respondents disagree (Mean=2.70, SD=1.142). These results indicates that some team members may experience delays, the majority do not perceive this as a problem.

The low mean of all items 2.75 (SD=1.19) show that laissez faire leadership style is relative less exercised style in the study sector.

Table 5: Laissez-faire leadership practices

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	SD
The project manager avoids making decisions and leaves the team to work independently.	N	9	13	10	25	10	3.21	1.297
	%	13.4	19.4	14.9	37.3	14.9		
The project manager is often unavailable when the team needs guidance.	N	18	24	14	9	2	2.3	1.101
	%	26.9	35.8	20.9	13.4	3		
The project manager provides little direction or feedback on project progress.	N	15	27	12	8	5	2.42	1.183
	%	22.4	40.3	17.9	11.9	7.5		
The project manager allows team members to resolve conflicts on their own without intervention.	N	7	15	18	16	11	3.13	1.242
	%	10.4	22.4	26.9	23.9	16.4		
The project manager delays in responding to issues or problems raised by the team.	N	8	25	20	7	7	2.7	1.142
	%	11.9	37.3	29.9	10.4	10.4		
Grand mean							**2.752**	**1.193**

4.2.4 Autocratic Leadership

Regarding autocratic leadership practices, the survey results show that a total of 49.3% of respondents perceive that the project manager makes decisions unilaterally without consulting the team. However, 31.3% indicated disagreement. The mean value of 3.30 (SD=1.446) for this statement indicate that nearly half of team members feel excluded from the decision-making process. In addition, the perception about the project manager expecting strict obedience from team members has got a total of 31.3% of participants show agreement, 41.8% indicated disagreement (Mean=2.90, SD=1.208) indicating that the division in perception regarding the expectation of obedience. Many team members not feeling that strict compliance is required.

The item regarding the project manager relying heavily on authority and commands to manage the team shows that 43.3% of respondents agree and 35.8% disagree. The mean value of 3.09 (SD=1.252) show reliance on authoritative management, some team members may perceive

negatively. About encouraging team input or participation, the statement indicates that a total of 58.2% of respondents perceive that the project manager rarely encourages team input, but a total of 31.4% show disagreement indicating that their project manager encourages their inputs (Mean=3.46, SD=1.318). This show that many team members feel their contributions are not valued leading to lack of engagement. The statement concerning the project manager enforcing rules rigidly and expecting compliance shows that a total of 40.3% of respondents generally agree and 43.3% disagree (Mean=2.99, SD=1.343) showing the perception of rigidity in rule enforcement. However, the responses are somewhat balanced. The grand mean (3.148, SD=1.313) across all items moderate view of autocratic leadership practices in the project team. This indicates that team members feel a lack of involvement in decision-making and input. They also believe experiencing a degree of rigidity in management style.

Table 6: Autocratic leadership style

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	SD
The project manager makes decisions unilaterally without consulting the team.	N	11	10	13	14	19	3.3	1.446
	%	16.4	14.9	19.4	20.9	28.4		
The project manager expects strict obedience from team members.	N	8	20	18	13	8	2.9	1.208
	%	11.9	29.9	26.9	19.4	11.9		
The project manager relies heavily on authority and commands to manage the team.	N	8	16	14	20	9	3.09	1.252
	%	11.9	23.9	20.9	29.9	13.4		
The project manager rarely encourages team input or participation.	N	5	16	7	21	18	3.46	1.318
	%	7.5	23.9	10.4	31.3	26.9		
The project manager enforces rules rigidly and expects compliance.	N	10	19	11	16	11	2.99	1.343
	%	14.9	28.4	16.4	23.9	16.4		
Grand mean							**3.148**	**1.313**

4.2.5 Democratic Leadership

The democratic leadership practices in the study sector have got highly positive perception among team members. Accordingly, the project manager encourages team members to participate in decision-making. A total of 73.1% of respondents either agree or strongly agree and only 4.5%

disagreed (Mean=4.00, SD=0.853) indicating that team members feel actively involved in the decision-making process. The project manager also value team members' opinions and ideas according to the total of 88% of participants indicated. The mean value of 4.22 (SD=0.692) also shows strong appreciation for team input, showing an inclusive environment. For the item regarding the project manager promoting open communication in the team, a total of 73.1% of respondents indicated the presence of such practice (Mean=4.04, SD=0.843). This shows the presence of a culture of openness and transparency in the study sector.

Also, a total of 88% of respondents perceived their manager facilitating consensus-building among team members (Mean=4.19, SD=0.723). This shows that the project manager is effective in promoting collaboration and agreement among team members. A total of 98.5% of respondents agree that the project manager shares leadership responsibilities with the team resulting in high mean (Mean=4.61, SD=0.521) and showing strong sense of shared leadership which can enhance team cohesion and empowerment.

In addition, the mean of 4.212 (SD=0.726) across all items indicate a positive view of democratic leadership practices in the study sector. This indicates that the project manager effectively engages team members in decision-making, values their input, promotes open communication, facilitates consensus and shares leadership responsibilities which can contribute to the better project performance.

Table 7: Democratic leadership practices

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	SD
The project manager encourages team members to participate in decision-making.	N	0	3	15	28	21	4.00	0.853
	%	0	4.5	22.4	41.8	31.3		
The project manager values team members' opinions and ideas.	N	0	1	7	35	24	4.22	0.692
	%	0	1.5	10.4	52.2	35.8		
The project manager promotes open communication in the team.	N	0	2	16	26	23	4.04	0.843
	%	0	3	23.9	38.8	34.3		
The project manager facilitates consensus-building among team members.	N	0	2	6	36	23	4.19	0.723
	%	0	3	9	53.7	34.3		

The project manager shares leadership responsibilities with the team.	N	0	0	1	24	42	4.61	0.521
	%	0	0	1.5	35.8	62.7		
Grand mean							**4.212**	**0.726**

4.2.6 Project Performance

The data shows that respondents have mainly perceived project performance as slightly positive. According to a total of 43.3% of the respondents, the project is currently on schedule and progressing according to the planned timeline. However, 13.4% disagree that it is on track. The mean value of 3.51 (SD=0.975) also show that team members feel the project is on track, but there is some uncertainty or disagreement regarding its progress. Also, the perception of the respondents regarding the project being in the allocated budget for its completion a total of 37.3% were agreed, even though, 29.9% remain neutral and13.4% disagree (Mean=3.63, SD=0.951). This indicates that many team members believe the project is financially managed. However, significant portion of the respondents also believe that the project is not cost efficient

In addition, 77.6% of respondents believe that the quality of the construction work meets required standards and specifications with only 3% expressing disagreement. The mean value of 3.99, SD=0.749) also shows high level of confidence in the quality of work being delivered. In terms of achieving intended objectives, 52.2% of respondents agree or strongly agree. A total of 37.3% are neutral and 10.4% disagree (Mean=3.55, SD=0.858) indicating that that majority of team members feel the project is on track to meet its goals. The item concerning effective resource management indicates that a total of 74.6% of respondents expressed agreement. The mean value of 3.79 (SD=0.749) also shows strong belief in the project team's ability to manage resources effectively to ensure progress. Stakeholder satisfaction was also one of the project performance measures presented for the respondents and a total of, 59.7% of respondents agree that stakeholders are satisfied with the final outcome of the project. However, 37.3% are neutral and 3% disagree resulting in the mean value of the 3.76 (SD=0.799) which shows that the majority of team members believe stakeholders are pleased with the project's results.

Also, 77.6% of respondents believed that the project met or exceed safety standards and regulations (Mean=3.91, SD=0.733). This indicates strong commitment to safety in the project. Also, respondents have (64.2%) positive perception about the presence of clearly defined project

deliverables and scope. But, 20.9% are neutral and 14.9% disagree (Mean=3.63, SD=1.042) indicating that team members feel positively about the.

The mean of 3.721 (SD=0.857) for all items also show that team members generally believe the project is progressing well, meeting quality standards and achieving its objectives. However, the perception of the respondents who disagreed or neutral about the statements show areas of uncertainty regarding schedule and budget adherence that needs improvement.

Table 8: Perception on project performance

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	SD
The project is currently on schedule and progressing according to the planned timeline.	N	0	9	29	15	14	3.51	0.975
	%	0	13.4	43.3	22.4	20.9		
The project is currently in the allocated budget for its completion.	N	0	9	20	25	13	3.63	0.951
	%	0	13.4	29.9	37.3	19.4		
The quality of the construction work met the required standards and specifications.	N	0	2	13	36	16	3.99	0.749
	%	0	3	19.4	53.7	23.9		
The project successfully achieved its intended objectives.	N	0	7	25	26	9	3.55	0.858
	%	0	10.4	37.3	38.8	13.4		
The project team effectively managed resources to ensure project progress.	N	0	5	12	42	8	3.79	0.749
	%	0	7.5	17.9	62.7	11.9		
Stakeholders expressed satisfaction with the final outcome of the project.	N	0	2	25	27	13	3.76	0.799
	%	0	3	37.3	40.3	19.4		
The project met or exceeded safety standards and regulation.	N	0	3	12	40	12	3.91	0.733
	%	0	4.5	17.9	59.7	17.9		
The project deliverables and scope were clearly defined and all agreed-upon scope requirements were effectively included and completed.	N	3	7	14	31	12	3.63	1.042
	%	4.5	10.4	20.9	46.3	17.9		
Grand mean							**3.721**	**0.857**

4.3 Effect of Leadership Styles on Project Performance

4.3.1 Correlation Analysis

The correlation results indicate that transformational leadership is positively correlated with project performance (r=0.384, p=0.001); higher levels of transformational leadership are associated with improved project outcomes. Similarly, transactional leadership shows stronger positive correlation with project performance (r=0.659, p=0.000), indicating that effective transactional leadership practices is associated with enhanced project success. In contrast, laissez-faire leadership does not show significant correlation with project performance (r=0.173, p=0.161), indicating that lack of active leadership may not negatively impact project outcomes.

Autocratic leadership has negative correlation with project performance (r=-0.250, p=0.041), which shows that more rigid and authoritative leadership is associated with lower project success. On the other hand, the positive significant correlation between democratic leadership and the project performance (r=0.585, p=0.000), shows the importance of inclusive decision-making in achieving positive project results.

Table 9: Correlation analysis results

		Project Performance	Transformational Leadership	Transactional Leadership	Laissez-faire Leadership	Autocratic Leadership	Democratic Leadership
Project Performance	Pearson Correlation	--					
Transformational Leadership	Pearson Correlation	.384**	--				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001					
Transactional Leadership	Pearson Correlation	.659**	.512**	--			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000				
Laissez-faire Leadership	Pearson Correlation	.173	-.157	.237	--		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.161	.206	.054			
Autocratic Leadership	Pearson Correlation	-.250*	.255*	-.201	-.703**	--	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.041	.038	.103	.000		
Democratic Leadership	Pearson Correlation	.585**	.481**	.606**	.094	-.029	--
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.448	.818	
	N	67	67	67	67	67	67

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

4.3.2 Regression Analysis

4.3.2.1 Model Assumptions test

Normality of the Error Term Distribution

In linear regression analysis residuals should be normally distributed to consider the results reliable. For this study data normality was tested using histogram and the histogram presented below shows that the data is equally distributed. There is no significant skew in both sides.

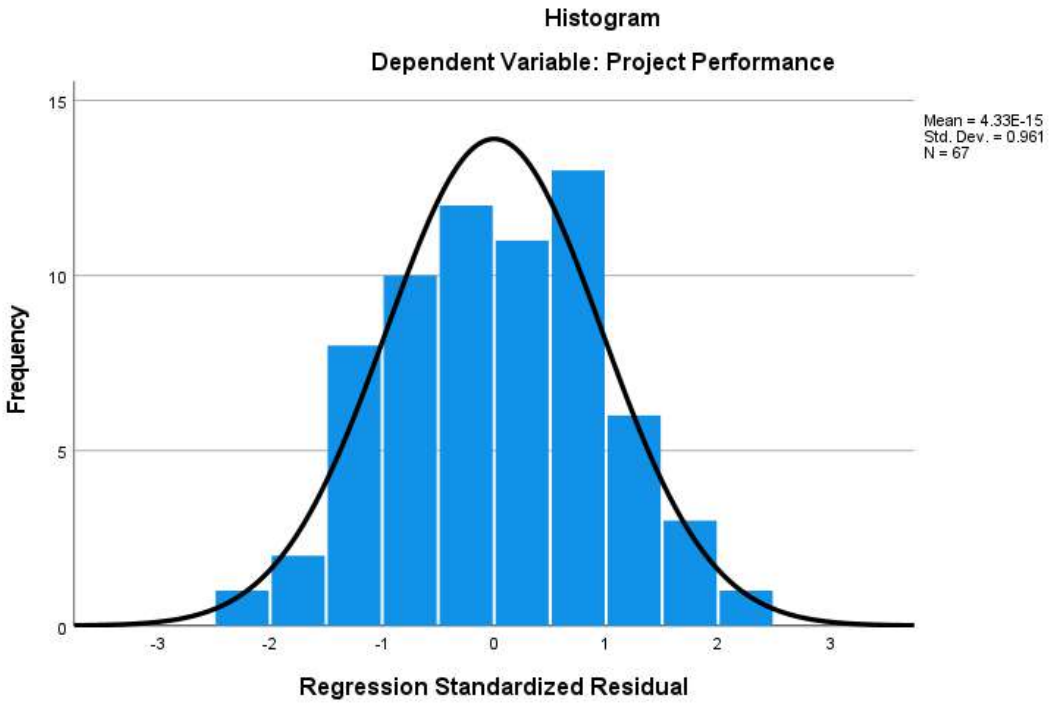


Figure 2: Histogram for normality test

Multicollinearity

Independent variables should not be multicollinear to be included in the multiple linear regression. In this study multicollinearity among independent variables was tested using variance inflation factor (VIF) in SPSS 27 and the VIF value should be less than 5 and the tolerance value should be between 0.1 and 1 to ensure that there is no significant multicollinearity among the independent variables. Accordingly, no multicollinearity problem was detected in the current data and tolerance values were less than 1 and VIF values were around 1.00 and less than 2.2, indicating no multicollinearity.

Table 10: Multicollinearity test results

Model	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	**VIF**
Transformational Leadership	0.572	1.747
Transactional Leadership	0.489	2.047
Laissez-faire Leadership	0.494	2.024
Autocratic Leadership	0.463	2.161
Democratic Leadership	0.592	1.688

Heteroscedasticity

Multiple linear regression assumes that the variance of the error terms (residuals) should be constant (homoscedastic) across all levels of the independent variables or it shouldn't be non-constant distribution (heteroscedastic) of the residuals. The Heteroscedastic assumption can be checked using scatterplots or residual plots and the scatter plots of standardized residuals versus the fitted values for the regression model were visually inspected in figure 3. This shows that the data has no heteroscedasticity problem and the assumption is met.

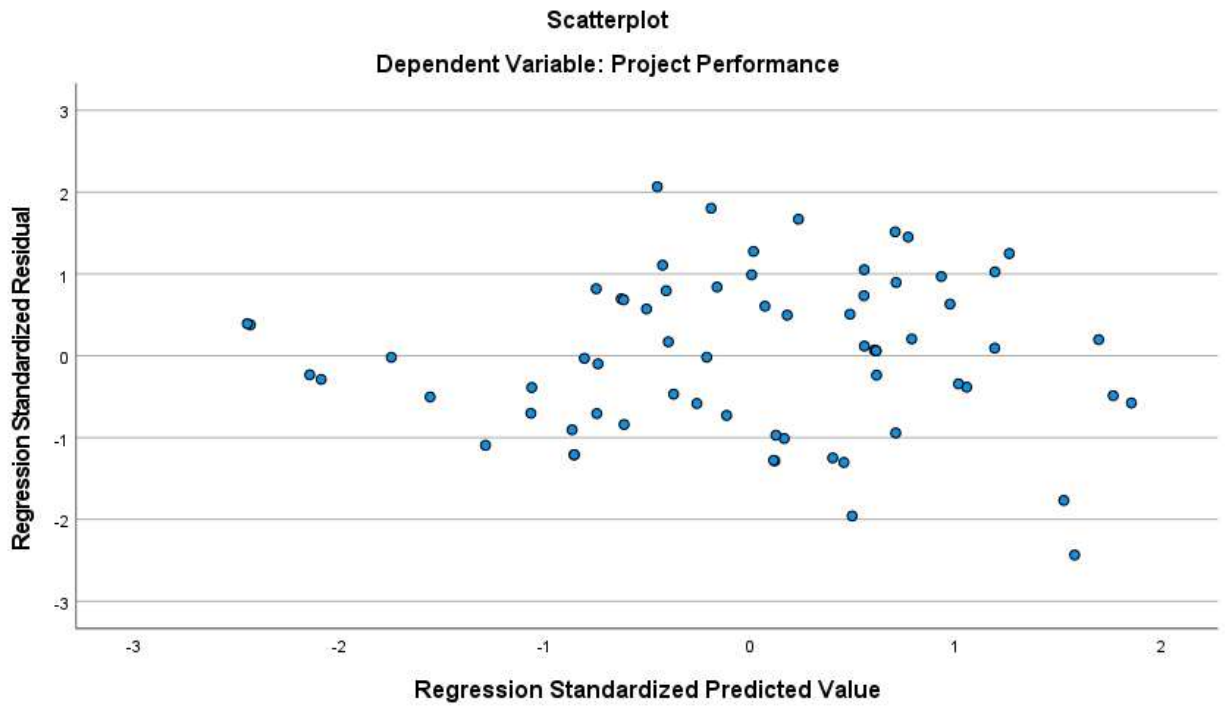


Figure 3: Scatter plot test for Heteroscedastic

Auto-correlation

Autocorrelation occurs when the dependent variable at time t is related to its value at the previous time period. The Durbin-Watson test detects auto-correlation in regression analysis. A value of 2 indicates no autocorrelation and the acceptable range for no autocorrelation is 1.5<DW<2.5. For this study the Durbin-Watson value is 1.63, which falls in the acceptable range showing no significant autocorrelation.

4.3.2.2 Model Results

The regression analysis results indicate strong correlation between the independent variables and the dependent variable (R = 0.723). The R2 value of 0.523 indicates that approximately 52.3% of the variability in project performance can be explained by the leadership styles included in the model. The ANOVA results reveal that the regression model is statistically significant (F=13.393, $p < 0.001$) indicating that the model significantly predicts project performance.

Table 11: Regression Model summary and ANOVA

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.723[a]	.523	.484	.40726	1.632

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	11.107	5	2.221	13.393	.000[b]
	Residual	10.117	61	.166		
	Total	21.224	66			

When measuring the individual influence of different leadership styles on project performance, transactional leadership become the most significant predictor (beta = 0.415, p = 0.002), indicating strong positive effect on project performance. Effective transactional leadership practices significantly enhance project outcomes. Democratic leadership also shows significant positive effect (beta = 0.302, p = 0.011) making it the second most influential predictor which shows the importance of inclusive decision-making in contributing to project success. On the other hand, autocratic leadership has significant negative impact on project performance (beta = -0.269, p = 0.043) showing that more rigid and controlling leadership style can hinder project performance. However, laissez-faire leadership does not have significant effect on project performance (beta = -0.130, p = 0.304). This indicates that lack of active leadership may not necessarily detract from project success. And transformational leadership has negligible effect on project performance (beta = 0.074, p = 0.527), indicating that it does not significantly contribute to project performance in this context when compared to other leadership styles.

Table 12: Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.836	.597		1.400	.167
	Transformational Leadership	.080	.126	.074	.637	.527
	Transactional Leadership	.455	.139	.415	3.280	.002
	Laissez-faire Leadership	-.082	.079	-.130	-1.037	.304
	Autocratic Leadership	-.139	.067	-.269	-2.067	.043
	Democratic Leadership	.310	.118	.302	2.630	.011

4.4 **Discussion**

This study presented an important finding about the effect of leadership style on project performance that can benefit the project management and the policymakers.

The findings indicate that transformational leadership practices are perceived positively, specifically regarding the project manager's ability to encourage innovation, motivation and personal development. Despite the strong positive perception, the regression analysis show that transformational leadership has a minimal effect on project performance showing that the team members appreciate the motivational and developmental aspects of transformational leadership, but it may not directly affect the project outcomes in the study area context. The findings imply that transformational practices, while essential for team morale and engagement, may need to be the non-significant effect of transformational leadership style in this research agrees with the previous study that also found minimal direct effect of this variable on project performance (Ahmed et al., 2023). In the telecommunications sector, study of Indonesian project managers found that transformational and transactional leadership alone do not directly affect project performance, but rather their influence is mediated through ambidextrous leadership (Misbahuddin

& Maarif, 2024). However, the research conducted in banking sector in Nepal found both the significant positive effect of transformational leadership on performance (Lama et al., 2024). Similarly, a study undertaken in higher education institutions in South Africa found transformational leadership explained the most variance in institutional performance among the three leadership styles examined (Samodien et al., 2024). These inconsistent findings show that the direct impact of transformational leadership may be context-specific and potentially moderated by organizational or industry-specific factors not present in this study.

The results regarding transactional leadership practices also show positive perception among team members in terms of role clarity and performance monitoring. The presence of clear definition of roles and responsibilities indicates that team members feel secure in their positions and the commitment to monitor project activities show proactive approach to ensure deadlines are met. This is key for project success. However, the mixed responses regarding recognition for good performance indicates area needing improvement. The regression findings indicate that transactional leadership is the most significant predictor of project performance indicating that the structured approach of transactional leadership, with its focus on clear expectation, monitoring and corrective actions, plays key role in driving project success.

These finding aligns with research on construction projects in Thailand, where transactional leadership showed stronger association with subordinate commitment and work performance metrics (Ansari et al., 2024). Nigerian construction project managers frequently employ active management by exception as the most utilized transactional factor and found better project performance (Olasunkanmi et al., 2023). In a large-scale study of building professionals across multiple countries, transactional leadership was significantly correlated with leader effectiveness and extra effort from employees (Chan, 2005). However, current findings about the effect of the transactional leadership disagrees with in agile project management contexts, where transactional leadership didn't have direct associations with project performance (Misbahuddin & Maarif, 2024). This indicates that whether or not the transactional leadership significantly affect the project performance depends on organizational context,

The perception of laissez-faire leadership practices among team members shows that there is some acknowledgment of the autonomy granted by the project manager, but many of disagreement regarding the lack of decisive leadership indicates that this leadership style is less practices in the

study organization. Regression analysis shows that laissez-faire leadership does not significantly impact project performance. However, this finding shouldn't be interpreted as lack of active leadership may not necessarily hinder project success, but the current finding implies that laissez-faire practices is not significantly practiced in the study organization to determine project outcomes. This finding is in agreement in high school educational setting, laissez-faire leadership show the lowest impact on sustaining academic performance compared to democratic and autocratic styles (Maqbool et al., 2024). Similarly, in restaurant operations in Bangladesh, laissez-faire leadership showed no significant positive effects on organizational outcomes (Jony, 2019).

On the other hand, autocratic leadership practices indicate different perception among team members. Many of the team members felt excluded from the decision-making process confirming that the project manager makes unilateral decisions undermining team engagement. This perception can lead to feelings of exclusion among team members, which in turn negatively affect morale and collaboration. The regression results show that autocratic leadership has significant negative impact on project performance. It also shows the need for an inclusive environment where team members feel valued and empowered to contribute. The evidence indicates that, while some structure is necessary, overly authoritarian approaches can lead to disengagement and reduced effectiveness, showing the need for more balanced leadership style that encourages participation and collaboration.

The current finding that autocratic leadership has significant negative impact on project performance contrasts with previous research in high school educational environments (Maqbool et al., 2024) that found autocratic leadership showed positive impact on academic performance, significantly lower than democratic approaches. However, current findings agree with the reports of construction firms examining leadership effectiveness across 40 architectural offices in Turkey found that authoritative leadership styles were less preferred than affiliative and democratic combinations (Kasapoğlu, 2013).

The findings of this study on democratic leadership practices show highly positive perception as strong belief in the value of inclusive decision-making was acknowledged by the respondents. Team members feel actively involved in the decision-making process, which increases sense of ownership and commitment to project goals. The finding also show that democratic leadership has significant positive effect on project performance, making it one of the most influential predictors.

This this shows important role of inclusive leadership in achieving key project outcomes; when team members feel engaged and valued, they are more likely to contribute effectively to project goals. The result is supported by previous researches including comparative studies of high school teaching that reported democratic leadership showed highly positive impact on academic performance, outperforming both autocratic and laissez-faire approaches (Maqbool et al., 2024). In construction project teams specifically, this collaborative approach correlates with improved outcomes through enhanced team focus and equitable relationships (Franz & Olopade, 2023).

The current findings support integration of democratic principles into construction project management moving from traditional hierarchical approaches which aligns with the indication of recent research on construction leadership that recognized inclusivity as essential for creating collaborative, innovative work environments (Adham & Sukkar, 2024). However, the strong effects of both transactional and democratic leadership in the current study indicates that optimal performance depends not from choosing singular approaches but from combining structured accountability with inclusive decision-making.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

This study examined the effect of leadership styles on project performance focusing on leadership styles such as transformational, transactional, laissez faire, autocratic and democratic leadership practices.

Respondents showed strong positive perception of transformational leadership practices. They recognized high agreement on the project manager's ability to encourage innovation, inspire the team, show genuine concern for personal development and effective communication and collaboration. The grand mean of 4.504 (SD=0.685) shows that the project manager successfully engages and motivates team members. However, regression analysis no significant effect of this leadership on project performance (beta = 0.074, p = 0.527), indicating it does not significantly contribute to project outcomes at the presence of the other leadership styles.

Transactional leadership practices also have positive assessment from team members with majority expressing agreement on the project manager's commitment to defining roles, ensuring timely completion and adhering to established protocols. This positive perception is shown in the grand mean of 4.136 (SD=0.790). Regression results also indicate that transactional leadership is the most significant predictor of project performance (beta = 0.415, p = 0.002).

The findings on laissez-faire leadership indicate a mixed perception among team members, with majority indicating the absence of such practices in the study organization. In addition, the low mean of 2.75 (SD=1.19), indicate that this leadership style is less exercised in the study sector. The regression results also confirms that it does not significantly affect project performance (beta = -0.130, p = 0.304), indicating that lack of active leadership may not detract from project success.

The survey results for autocratic leadership practices mixed, but is more of negative. Nearly half of the respondents feeling excluded from decision-making processes. Regression analysis indicates significant negative impact on project performance (beta = -0.269, p = 0.043). This indicates that rigid leadership style can hinder project success.

Democratic leadership practices are viewed very positively appreciating the project manager's encouragement of participation in decision-making and valuing of team input. The high grand mean of 4.212 (SD=0.726) reflects an inclusive environment that promotes open communication and collaboration and the positive effect of this style indicated in the regression results supports this (beta = 0.302, p = 0.011). It is the second most influential predictor of project performance included in this study.

Project performance perceived by respondents as slightly positive. Majority believe the project is on schedule and in budget. The grand mean of 3.721 (SD=0.857) indicates general confidence in the quality of work and stakeholder satisfaction, with dominating agreement on safety standards being met.

5.2 Conclusion

The strong perception of transformational practices shows its effectiveness in motivating team engagement and empowering individuals to contribute creatively to project goals. However, the minimal regression effect on actual project performance indicate that even though transformational leadership has role in enhancing team morale, engagement and organizational commitment. It doesn't automatically affect project performance when compared to transactional and democratic leadership styles implying that transformational leadership must be complemented by more structured, performance-oriented approaches to drive tangible results. The strongest positive impact of transactional leadership on project performance indicates the role of this leadership style in clear definition of roles, performance monitoring and results-oriented focus provide the structured framework essential for ensuring deadlines are met and budgets are adhered to.

However Laissez-faire leadership has no effect on project performance as this leadership style is less practiced in the study organization. Small percentage of the respondents reported the presence of the leadership indicating laissez faire style. In this case, some autonomy can benefit experienced and self-directed professionals, but excessive hands-off management creates ambiguity and diminishes accountability, the optimal application of autonomy requires intentional calibration based on team maturity and project complexity.

On the other hand, autocratic leadership show significant negative impact on project performance, indicating that command-and-control approaches create barrier to innovation, knowledge sharing and collaborative problem-solving which leads to low project performance. Even though some

structure and clear direction are necessary, excessive centralization of decision-making isolates team members and weakens project performance.

The study found democratic leadership as second most influential predictors of project performance. This is due to when team members feel valued, consulted and invested in decisions, they contribute more effectively to project goals. The culture of transparency and trust created through democratic practices enhance communication, reduces conflicts and creates psychological safety for innovation and continuous improvement. This indicates that democratic leadership should be the default leadership approach in modern project environments, combining the best elements of team engagement with accountability structures. However, democratic practices must be applied thoughtfully in time-sensitive situation where rapid decision-making is required. Effective project managers develop contextual flexibility to shift between collaborative and decisive modes when circumstances demand.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study presented and discussed in the above sections, the following recommendations are proposed.

- The findings indicate that transactional leadership is identified as the most significant predictor of project performance. Project managers should maintain transactional leadership as their primary operational approach through implementing structured systems for defining roles, setting expectation, monitoring progress consistently and holding teams accountable to timelines and budgets. The organizations must also create visible mechanisms to recognize and reward good performance.
- This study found that transformational leadership has a negligible effect on project performance. Therefore, project managers should integrate more structured leadership approaches alongside transformational practices to ensure that motivational efforts translate into improved project outcomes.
- Democratic leadership characterized by inviting team input, encouraging participation in decisions and valuing team perspectives was the second most powerful predictor of project success. Therefore, project managers should continue to promote democratic practices in their decision-making while maintaining the transactional accountability structures.

- Autocratic leadership which is characterized by centralized decision-making and limited team input, showed a negative relationship with project performance. Therefore, organizations should deliberately move away from command-and-control cultures, consciously distributing decision-making authority rather than centralizing it; Even when final decisions rest with the manager, teams should feel genuinely consulted.

Recommendation for Future Research

Future research should address three key methodological limitations of the current study. The current research did not include mediation and moderation to manage the scope and maintain focus on the primary leadership styles being examined. Therefore, future research should consider incorporating mediating and moderating variables to understand the mechanisms through which leadership styles influence performance outcomes, moving beyond direct relationships to explain why certain leadership approaches prove more effective. In addition, as this study relied on subjective information from respondents to measure project performance due to constraint such as lack of accessibility to objective data, as well as budget and time limitations that hindered the collection of more comprehensive performance metrics, future research should aim to include objective performance metrics such as actual budget variance, schedule adherence, quality defect rate and stakeholder satisfaction scores to validate and complement the findings.

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Appendix A

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF COMMERSE

MASTERS OF ARTS IN PROJECT MANAGMENT

Dear respondent:

I would like to express my earnest appreciation for your generous time, honest and prompt response. The main purpose of this questionnaire is to collect data which will be helpful in research work titled "**The Impact of Leadership Style on Project Performance: Case of Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation**". Please answer the following questions based on your experience and perception. Your responses will be kept confidential and will help improve leadership practices in the Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation.

Section A: Demographic Information

1. Sex
    - Male
    - Female
2. Age
    - Less than 25 years
    - 26-30 years
    - 31-35 years
    - 36-40 years
    - Above 41 years
3. Educational Status
    - Completed secondary education
    - Some college or vocational training
    - Completed college or university degree
    - Postgraduate or professional degree
    - Other (please specify)

4. What is your role in the project?

    - Project Manager
    - Team Leader
    - Site engineer
    - Office engineer
    - Other (please specify) __

5. How many years of experience do you have in construction projects?

    - Less than 2 years
    - 2-5 years
    - 6-10 years
    - More than 10 years

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements regarding your project manager's leadership behavior during construction projects. Use the following scale:
1 = Strongly Disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neutral
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly Agree

Section B: Transformational Leadership

Leadership Behaviour	1	2	3	4	5
1. The project manager encourages team members to come up with new and innovative ideas.					
2. The project manager inspires and motivates the team to achieve project goals.					
3. The project manager shows genuine concern for the personal development of team members.					
4. The project manager communicates a clear vision that energizes the team.					
5. The project manager encourages collaboration and team spirit.					

Section C: Transactional Leadership

Leadership Behaviour	1	2	3	4	5
1. The project manager clearly defines roles and responsibilities for each team member.					
2. The project manager provides rewards or recognition for good performance.					
3. The project manager closely monitors project activities to ensure deadlines are met.					
4. The project manager uses corrective actions when team members do not meet expectation.					
5. The project manager emphasizes adherence to rules and procedures.					

Section D: Laissez-faire Leadership

Leadership Behaviour	1	2	3	4	5
1. The project manager avoids making decisions and leaves the team to work independently.					
2. The project manager is often unavailable when the team needs guidance.					
3. The project manager provides little direction or feedback on project progress.					
4. The project manager allows team members to resolve conflicts on their own without intervention.					
5. The project manager delays in responding to issues or problems raised by the team.					

Section E: Autocratic (Authoritarian) Leadership

Leadership Behaviour	1	2	3	4	5
1. The project manager makes decisions unilaterally without consulting the team.					
2. The project manager expects strict obedience from team members.					
3. The project manager relies heavily on authority and commands to manage the team.					
4. The project manager rarely encourages team input or participation.					
5. The project manager enforces rules rigidly and expects compliance.					

Section F: Democratic (Participative) Leadership

Leadership Behaviour	1	2	3	4	5
1. The project manager encourages team members to participate in decision-making.					
2. The project manager values team members' opinions and ideas.					
3. The project manager promotes open communication within the team.					
4. The project manager facilitates consensus-building among team members.					
5. The project manager shares leadership responsibilities with the team.					

Section G: Project Performance

Items measuring project performance	1	2	3	4	5
1. The project is currently on schedule and progressing according to the planned timeline.					
2. The project is currently within the allocated budget for its completion.					
3. The quality of the construction work met the required standards and specifications.					
4. The project successfully achieved its intended objectives.					
5. The project team effectively managed resources to ensure project progress.					
6. Stakeholders expressed satisfaction with the final outcome of the project.					

Thank you very much for your time and cooperation!