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*The role of different leadership styles, managerial
control and workplace autonomy in shaping employee
performance and well-being*

*Il ruolo dei diversi stili di leadership, del controllo manageriale e dell'autonomia sul posto di
lavoro nel plasmare le prestazioni e il benessere dei dipendenti*

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ABSTRACT IN ITALIAN

La presente tesi esamina in che modo gli stili di leadership (autoritario, democratico, laissez-faire, trasformatore e transazionale), il controllo manageriale (controllo comportamentale, dei risultati e di gruppo) e l'autonomia sul posto di lavoro (autonomia nei metodi, negli orari e nei criteri di lavoro) influenzino le prestazioni e il benessere dei dipendenti, con particolare attenzione alle differenze tra i sottogruppi di dipendenti in base a genere, età, istruzione, anzianità di servizio, livello di ruolo e status lavorativo. È stato applicato un disegno di ricerca quantitativo mediante un questionario online compilato da 104 adulti occupati provenienti da diversi contesti organizzativi. I dati raccolti sono stati analizzati utilizzando statistiche descrittive e regressione lineare multipla, con analisi separate per sottogruppi condotte per diverse categorie demografiche e relative al lavoro.

I risultati mostrano che la leadership autoritaria influisce negativamente sul benessere sia degli uomini che delle donne, contrariamente all'ipotesi secondo cui le donne ne sarebbero state influenzate in misura maggiore. La leadership democratica migliora il benessere in egual misura per entrambi i sessi, ma ha un effetto positivo più marcato sulle prestazioni tra i dipendenti con istruzione secondaria rispetto a quelli in possesso di una laurea triennale o di titolo superiore. La leadership transazionale influisce negativamente sulle prestazioni dei dipendenti più recenti, mentre la leadership trasformatore apporta benefici sia ai dipendenti più recenti che a quelli con maggiore esperienza. Il controllo sui risultati migliora le prestazioni dei dipendenti a tempo pieno ma non influenza il benessere. Il controllo comportamentale ha un effetto leggermente negativo sulle prestazioni, mentre il controllo clanico è l'unico tipo di controllo manageriale associato a un miglioramento del benessere, sebbene tutti e tre i tipi di controllo influenzino le prestazioni. L'autonomia nei metodi di lavoro è più vantaggiosa per le prestazioni nelle strutture organizzative piatte e per il

benessere dei dipendenti alle prime armi. L'autonomia nell'orario di lavoro è particolarmente vantaggiosa per il benessere dei dipendenti di mezza età. L'autonomia nei criteri di lavoro mostra un andamento simile ma leggermente più debole, a vantaggio sia dei dipendenti giovani che di quelli di mezza età.

I risultati suggeriscono che le organizzazioni non possono applicare pratiche standardizzate di leadership, controllo o autonomia a tutti i dipendenti. Gruppi diversi di dipendenti rispondono in modo diverso alle pratiche organizzative. Nel complesso, la leadership trasformativa, il controllo sui risultati e un'elevata autonomia nei metodi di lavoro appaiono più vantaggiosi per le prestazioni dei dipendenti, mentre la leadership trasformativa, il controllo clinico e un'elevata autonomia nell'orario di lavoro sono associati agli esiti più favorevoli in termini di benessere. I risultati evidenziano l'importanza di allineare le pratiche organizzative alle caratteristiche e alle esigenze dei diversi gruppi di dipendenti per sostenere sia le prestazioni che il benessere dei dipendenti.

Parole chiave: stili di leadership, controllo manageriale, autonomia sul posto di lavoro, prestazioni dei dipendenti, benessere dei dipendenti.

1. INTRODUCTION

Employee performance and well-being are one of the major topics of organizational research, as they both influence individual work experiences and the overall effectiveness of the organization (Lin - Yu - Yi 2014, Van De Voorde - Paauwe - Van Veldhoven 2012, Khoreva - Wechtler 2018). Leadership styles, managerial control and workplace autonomy are recognized as important factors that shape these outcomes (Hermina - Yosepha 2019, Sihag - Rijdsdijk 2018, Zychová - Fejfarová - Jindrová 2024). However, the impact of these factors may not necessarily be the same for all employees, as individuals differ in terms of gender, age, educational background, length of employment, position, employment status and many others. Understanding how these differences influence the relationship between organizational practices and employee outcomes is important for the development of more productive and inclusive work environments.

The main research question of the thesis is *how leadership styles, managerial control and workplace autonomy influence employee performance and well-being?* and whether these outcomes change across different employee groups, for example based on job title or employment status. The aim is to determine which combinations of leadership style, control mechanism and workplace autonomy are associated with more favorable outcomes, and whether these relationships are stronger or weaker in certain subgroups.

The thesis uses primary quantitative research based on a questionnaire. It measures the five leadership styles, the three control types and the three autonomy dimensions using Likert scale items, based on the literature and Breugh's (1985) Work Autonomy Scale. The sampling technique is non-probability sampling, specifically purposive sampling, therefore the sample size could not be determined in advance (Vas 2021). For the analysis of the data multiple linear regression is used (Chatterjee - Simonoff 2013). To examine the relationships between

leadership styles, control mechanisms, workplace autonomy types, and the outcomes of performance and well-being, the following hypotheses are tested in this research:

1. *hypothesis:* Authoritarian leadership has a more negative effect on well-being for women than for men.
2. *hypothesis:* Democratic leadership leads to higher performance among employees with a bachelor's degree or higher, than among those with only a high school diploma.
3. *hypothesis:* Transactional leadership has a stronger positive effect on performance for employees who have been with the company for 3 years or less than for those who have been with the company for more than 4 years.
4. *hypothesis:* Outcome control is more positively associated with performance for full-time employees than for workers with other employment statuses.
5. *hypothesis:* Employees who perceive high levels of clan control report higher well-being than employees who perceive high levels of behavior control or outcome control.
6. *hypothesis:* Work method autonomy is more strongly associated with performance for senior or specialist employees than for entry-level, intermediate or flat structure employees.
7. *hypothesis:* Work schedule autonomy has a stronger positive effect on well-being for employees aged 35–54 than for those aged 18–34 or 55 and above.

By examining these relationships, the thesis aims to get a better understanding of the relationships between organizational practices and employees' perceptions and outcomes in the workplace. The findings may also have valuable implications for organizations looking to

improve both employee well-being and organizational performance through leadership, control mechanisms and autonomy practices.

The thesis is divided into six main parts, with Chapter 1 serving as the introduction. Chapter 2 reviews the relevant literature on leadership styles, managerial control, workplace autonomy, performance and well-being. It also provides the theoretical background for the primary empirical analysis. Chapter 3 describes the research methodology, including the questionnaire design, the data collection process and the analysis method, the reliability and validity of the questionnaire and the research limitations connected to the quantitative approach. Chapter 4 presents the results of the primary research, including respondent characteristics, descriptive statistics and the hypothesis testing results. Chapter 5 discusses the findings in relation to the existing literature and suggests directions for future research. Chapter 6 provides a summary of the literature review and the main findings, acknowledges the limitations and future research directions, and presents concluding observations.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews the existing literature on the major concepts relevant to this study. The chapter is organized into four main sections.

Section 2.1 provides an overview of the five leadership styles: authoritarian, democratic, laissez-faire, transformational and transactional. For each style, the theoretical foundation and main characteristics, then the advantages and disadvantages are explained. It should be noted that some sources cited in this section (Cherry 2006 and Hopkins 2022) are practitioner-oriented rather than peer-reviewed academic publications.

Section 2.2 examines managerial control based on two of Ouchi's frameworks. The three types that are reviewed is behavior control and outcome control from Ouchi's original research, and clan control from this second framework (Cardinal - Kreutzer - Miller 2017). As before, for each type the main aspects, then the advantages and disadvantages are presented.

Section 2.3 explores workplace autonomy using Breugh's framework. Its three dimensions are: work method autonomy, work schedule autonomy and work criteria autonomy. For each dimension, the meaning, measurement approach and what behavior looks like under high and low autonomy are discussed.

Section 2.4 focuses on performance and well-being. First, the relationship between performance and well-being is addressed. After that, the influence of leadership styles, managerial control and workplace autonomy on these two outcomes is examined based on the previous sections of the literature review and research findings. Lastly, the theoretical mechanisms linking leadership, managerial control and autonomy to employee outcomes is explored.

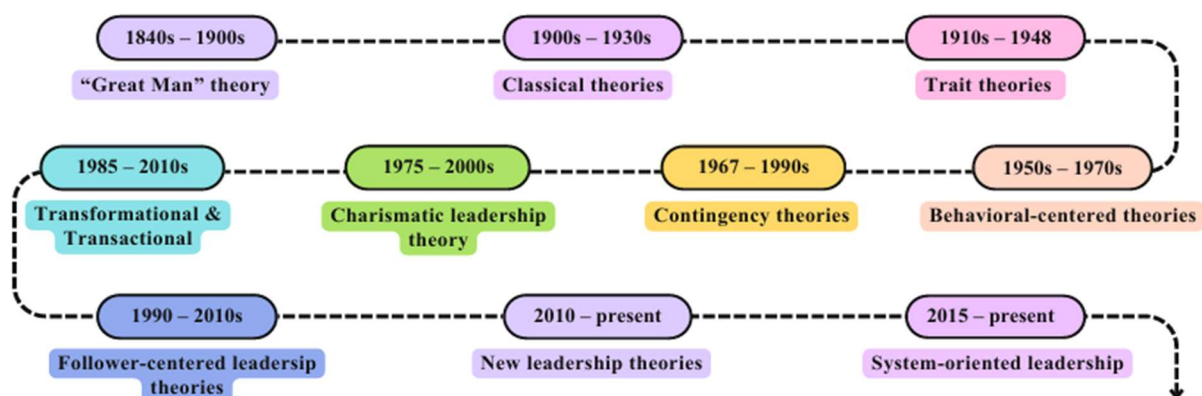
2.1. Leadership styles

Leadership is a concept that has been widely studied in organizational behavior-related research (Bakacsi 2004). As Dobák and Antal (2016) define it, *“leadership is a comprehensive activity in which a leader effectively gets things done through others and in collaboration with them (Dobák - Antal 2016, Digital edition).”* According to Bakacsi (2004), one of the most important characteristics of the behavioral concept known in the literature as leadership is that it intends to build a bridge between the individual and organizational goals. He also stated that leadership cannot be separated from followership. The leader takes the initiative and motivates employees to achieve goals that reflect the needs, values and expectations of both sides. The core of leadership lies within how a leader recognizes their own values and motivations and how they align them with those of their employees by addressing them and taking an active role in developing their motivational structure (Bakacsi 2004).

The research on leadership styles over the last 200 years has evolved significantly, with different eras emphasizing different aspects of effective leadership. Dobák and Antal (2016) define it as: *“Leadership style refers to the way a leader directly and personally influences subordinates in order to align individual and organizational goals. Essentially, it characterizes the interactions between the boss and the subordinate; the network of relationships from which it can be determined how much decision-making autonomy the leader and the employees have, as well as what the leaders’ personality traits are (Dobák - Antal 2016, Digital edition).”* The first formal leadership theory, referred to as the "Great Man" theory, was developed between the 1840s and the 1900s. It portrayed the leader as a “hero”, as someone who was born with the qualities necessary for leadership. From the 1900s to the 1930s, the classical theories focused on the organizational functions, highlighting that leaders assign tasks, give instructions and exercise authority; and between the 1910s and 1948, theories based on leadership traits appeared, focusing on internal personality characteristics. During the 1950s and the 1970s,

behavioral-centered theories came to the center of attention: decision-centered approaches categorize leadership styles based on how leaders make decisions and the degree to which they include others to participate in the decision-making process; while personality-centered approaches classify leadership styles according to the leader's personality, character traits and where their attention is directed. From 1967 to the 1990s, contingency theories emphasized that leadership style and leadership context must be in harmony with one another, and that different leadership styles are most effective in different situations. The charismatic leadership theory arose between 1975 and the 2000s, pointing out the importance of leadership sensitivity; and from 1985 to the 2010s, transactional and transformational leadership theories became mainstream, focusing on the importance of mutual motivation and ethical leadership. In the interval between 1990 and the 2010s, follower-centered leadership theories were based on service, trust and respect in the relationship between the leaders and the employees. Since 2010, new leadership theories prioritize leadership roles, the influence of ethics and moral development; and from 2015, system-oriented leadership focuses on the acceptance of the current system (Kuráth - Bányai 2024, Bencsik et al., 2018, Bakacsi 2004). The evolution of these main concepts is seen in *Figure 1*.

Figure 1 The evolution of leadership theories



Source: own edition based on Kuráth - Bányai (2024)

In the following sections of this thesis, from the decision-centered approaches the authoritarian, democratic and laissez-faire leadership styles will be explained in detail; followed by transformational and transactional leadership styles (Lewin et al. 1939, Hopkins 2022).

2.1.1. Authoritarian leadership style

The authoritarian leadership's core concept and characteristics include that on all the issues of importance the leader makes decisions; the next steps are always uncertain and unclear as a result of every phase of activity is carried out by the authority's instructions one by one. Each employee's responsibilities and coworkers or group members are usually administered by the leader. He is more amicable and detached than inhospitable; he also compliments and disapproves of the work of the individual workers in a personal or subjective manner, only participates in group activities if he has something to explain or train (Lewin et al. 1939, Dobák - Antal 2016).

Beyond describing these characteristics, it is important to consider the strengths associated with this approach. The organization's hierarchy as well as the order of roles are clear and the leader makes the decisions; the duties of the workers are well defined (Ekiyor - Dapper 2019). The group members can concentrate on completing their assigned tasks rather than worrying about making difficult decisions. Also, this can lead to the employees being highly effective in carrying out certain tasks. A strong leadership is necessary for specific tasks to be completed swiftly and successfully, particularly under challenging or stressful circumstances. Furthermore, this approach is favorable if the leader is the only person who has access to certain information that the group has not, or if he does the most expertise of the group in that particular field (Cherry 2006). The leader is only focusing on achieving the organization's goals, which includes that the projects are strictly managed and monitored (Ekiyor - Dapper 2019).

Despite these positive attributes, this style of leadership also has many negative ones. Leaders who adopt the authoritarian leadership style may be described as controlling and dictatorial, which features can lead to resentment among the group members and may increase staff turnover (Hopkins 2022). The decisions and rules are made solely by the leader and the group members have to follow every instruction without remark, even if they are disliked by the group or are being forced on them (Cherry 2006, Al Rahbi - Khalid Khan 2017). This style often reflects a lack of trust in workers and frequently relies on threats or disciplinary measures to keep them in line (Ekiyor - Dapper 2019).

In conclusion, this leadership style is acknowledged as being exceptionally effective and efficient, yet in today's modern business environment it is viewed as detrimental and unsuitable because of its dictatorial nature. As the leaders are mainly focusing on carrying out the organization's goals, they can be rather forceful, focused on authority and compliance in the workplace (Ekiyor - Dapper 2019). That attitude may lead to tensions and a negative work atmosphere, affecting the motivation and the performance of the team unfavorably (Cherry 2006, Dobák - Antal 2016).

2.1.2. Democratic leadership style

The essential aspects of this style include that the leader supports and encourages the employees to discuss important matters and make decisions as a group. The members create the framework for actions during the first planning phase; they outline the major steps the group will take to reach its goal. If technical instruction is needed, two or three alternative approaches may be suggested by the leader from which the group can choose from. In contrast to the previous category, the employees can choose who they would like to work with and the tasks are divided by the group members among themselves. The leader tries to fit into the group as a regular member of it, without taking on too much responsibility and workload. Furthermore, he

factually or objectively compliments and disapproves of the work of the individual workers (Lewin et al. 1939, Dobák - Antal 2016).

The strengths of this approach lie mainly in cooperation, active engagement, accountability and the distribution of tasks and responsibilities between the members, who are encouraged to voice their opinions, share ideas and different perspectives regarding the performance of tasks and roles (Al Rahbi - Khalid - Khan 2017, Ekiyor - Dapper 2019). As a result, the individuals are more engaged and dedicated to the project, keener to share their expertise and knowledge (Cherry 2006, Ekiyor - Dapper 2019). More opportunity for innovation and creativity results in higher-quality contributions, higher motivation and involvement from the team members (Hopkins 2022). Employees are also held accountable for actions, decisions and their commitment to maintain the group's freedom and autonomy (Al Rahbi - Khalid - Khan 2017).

On the other hand, as this leadership style prioritizes shared decision-making, this process may require a lot of time and it can lead to delays and unfinished projects (Al Rahbi - Khalid - Khan 2017, Ekiyor - Dapper 2019). Members of the group may lack the skills or knowledge needed to contribute effectively to decision-making; this can be disadvantageous if decisions must be made quickly (Cherry 2006, Al Rahbi - Khalid - Khan. 2017). As a result of high level of power distribution and sharing, the roles of the team members are often interdependent on each other (Ekiyor - Dapper 2019).

To conclude, this leadership style is the most recommended by scholars, it is most efficient in highly qualified teams with the expertise to contribute (Hopkins 2022, Ekiyor - Dapper 2019). The most valuable features of this concept are that it encourages creativity, innovation, equal participation in teamwork and involvement in decision-making, which leads to higher quality contributions and empowers team members while increasing their commitment to the organization's goals (Cherry 2006, Hopkins 2022, Al Rahbi - Khalid - Khan 2017). Although

this leadership style shows high productivity, it is less effective than the performance with the authoritarian style (Ekiyor - Dapper 2019).

2.1.3. Laissez-faire leadership style

The key components of this approach are that the leader does not involve themselves in individual or group-level decisions, giving the employees complete freedom in that aspect. He does not participate in work-related consultations, although provides the group with a variety of materials and offers to provide further information in response to questions. The leader also completely retreats from participating and resolving issues, rarely comments on individual or group activities and only does so when specifically asked. He does not attempt to engage or interfere with the course of events (Lewin et al. 1939, Dobák - Antal 2016).

On the positive side, this leadership style can be highly effective and beneficial if the group members are exceptionally skilled, motivated and capable of working independently (Cherry 2006). It is supportive of autonomy, flexibility and has proven to be highly effective as employees are free to apply their expertise in their own fields or job roles, although their responsibilities include self-monitoring and problem solving (Al Rahbi - Khalid - Khan 2017, Ekiyor - Dapper 2019). The leader is still accessible providing advice and feedback; however, they don't give their followers constant, critical guidance (Cherry 2006, Al Rahbi - Khalid - Khan 2017). Yet, it is still recommended to monitor whether the group is in line with the organization's objectives and to assess their effectiveness and provide feedback (Hopkins 2022).

On the negative side, without the guidance, feedback and constant monitoring of the leader, those team members who are not capable of working fully independently and setting their own deadlines may go off-track and miss deadlines (Cherry 2006). When the goals are not met, team members may blame one another instead of accepting accountability, which can lead to conflicts (Hopkins 2022). The lack of leadership can also affect the employees as they often do not have

a clear understanding of what are their roles and responsibilities (Al Rahbi - Khalid - Khan 2017).

In conclusion, this leadership style works well with very knowledgeable, skilled individuals and teams that are motivated and prefer autonomy, since it grants them more freedom with minimal leadership presence or control (Hopkins 2022, Ekiyor - Dapper 2019). However, the style is generally seen as insufficient, since the leader has little control over the behavior of the members in terms of reward or the ability to constrain (Ekiyor - Dapper 2019).

2.1.4. Transformational leadership style

The principal component of this leadership style is that it encourages positive, beneficial change in order to take care of other people's needs and behave according to the group's best interest.

In this style, the leader is the person who motivates and inspires members to achieve exceptional results. By paying close attention to the issues and developmental requirements of the individuals, the leader can help them see the challenges from a different perspective and additionally inspire and motivate the workers to make greater efforts to accomplish collective objectives (Odumeru - Ogbonna 2013). Transformational leaders are guided by the four fundamental principles of this style: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. Idealized influence is composed of the fact that the leaders inspire and motivate the workers by setting a positive example; demonstrating ethical behavior, social engagement and a strong sense of commitment to their work; and thereby encouraging reciprocal trust and respect. As part of inspirational motivation, employees are driven by straightforward communication and objectives that are in line with the organization's goals. This alignment helps team members feel inspired and personally motivated by being connected to a shared goal. In the context of intellectual simulation, leaders encourage the members to explore new opportunities to learn and improve in order to be able

to use that knowledge they have gained during organizational transitions. Lastly, within individual consideration, team member relationships are regarded as of great significance. Team members need to feel supported and encouraged, every member's individual strength and contribution are acknowledged (Hopkins 2022).

The positive aspects of this leadership style are that the leader recognizes the strengths and weaknesses of the employees, therefore it allows them to distribute the assignments in a way that could improve the individual's performance (Odumeru - Ogbonna 2013). This behavior could lead to high job satisfaction and reduced rates of turnover. This statement is also supported by the fact that employees can progress through the efforts of dedicated teams, they are granted involvement in decision - making and can work independently in the workplace (Hopkins 2022).

The negative aspects are that the leaders can take advantage of the employees who are trustworthy, loyal and perform their tasks with a greater level of creativity (Ekiyor - Dapper 2019). Also, for the team to be efficient, every individual has to respect the leader and agree with their plan of action. If the leader's vision differs from that of the organization, the team may begin to stray from the company's established policies and procedures. Additionally, small tasks may be neglected if the larger picture is given too much emphasis. Furthermore, the leader might experience burnout due to the active participation of giving constant feedback (Hopkins 2022).

To conclude, transformational leadership corresponds with four principles that encourage and support both individual growth and organizational development. Through idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration, leaders are able to motivate team members, establish strong relationships within the team and push for a shared objective. This leadership style can contribute to organizational growth, increased autonomy, a greater level of creativity, higher morale job satisfaction and reduced rates of

turnover within teams. However, the lack of alignment between the organization and the leader, too much focus on a larger vision and the possibility of leaders exploiting employees who demonstrate loyalty, trust and creativity could reduce its effectiveness (Hopkins 2022, Ekiyor - Dapper 2019, Odumeru - Ogbonna 2013).

2.1.5. Transactional leadership style

The core of the transactional leadership style is that it perceives the relationship between the leader and the workers as a kind of transaction (Ekiyor - Dapper 2019). The leader reaches out to the worker to offer something appealing in return for participation; using rewards, punishments and other types of exchanges to encourage compliance from the employees (Bakacsi 2004, Odumeru - Ogbonna 2013, Alharbi 2021). The leader is focused on effectively maintaining everyday operations rather than implementing organizational changes, maintaining the current circumstances and not changing the course of events (Odumeru - Ogbonna 2013, Hopkins 2022).

The relationship between the leader and the workers is clear and specified, their roles are acknowledged and recognized in accordance with the different kinds of responsibilities and compensations defined in the agreement (Ekiyor - Dapper 2019). Transactional leaders are guided by the two essential principles of this style: contingent reward and management-by-exception. Contingent reward could be verbal or material, and within the category two subcategories can be distinguished. Contingent positive reinforcement, such as praise or bonus, is given when the objectives have been achieved on schedule, ahead of schedule, or to maintain worker productivity at the different stages of during the execution of a task. Contingent negative reinforcement, such as criticism or suspension, is given the objectives have not been finished on schedule, or when the quantity or quality of performance is below output demands or targets (Odumeru - Ogbonna 2013). Management-by-exception happens when the leader intervenes in

order to correct a mistake, it also features two subcategories: active and passive. In the case of active management-by-exception, the leader continuously evaluates the worker's performance, predicts potential problems and makes improvements before the situation causes significant problems. On the other hand, in case of passive management-by-exception, the leader waits for the complications to arise, addressing them only after they have caused issues (Odumeru - Ogbonna 2013).

The advantages of this leadership style that teams may understand and implement this approach more easily than the other alternatives. Leaders and workers have their specific responsibilities. Also, employees can decide on the reward system and it prevents any uncertainty from the well-established chain of command. It is also associated with increased motivation and productivity from the members (Alharbi 2021, Hopkins 2022).

The disadvantages of this style are that it is usually controlling and demonstrates a rigorous commitment to policies, as well as to established work methods and techniques (Ekiyor - Dapper 2019). Moreover, instead of long-term goals, short-term objectives are prioritized; the emotional needs of the team members are typically neglected (Hopkins 2022). In this context, creativity, empathy and innovation decreased (Alharbi 2021).

In conclusion, transactional leadership views the relationship between the leader and team members as a form of exchange, where roles, goals and expectations are well-defined. Leaders focus on the achievement of goals with the use of rewards and disciplinary measures, while maintaining organizational policies and processes, productivity and structure. The benefits of this leadership style are increased motivation and motivation, along with defined roles and a strong command chain, which makes it easy for the members of the team to understand and cooperate. Nevertheless, this approach is limited as it concentrates on short-term results and gives lesser importance to innovation, creativity and empathy. This style is most useful in environments or circumstances where specific objectives, accountability and clear instructions

are required (Ekiyor - Dapper 2019, Hopkins 2022, Alharbi 2021, Odumeru - Ogbonna 2013, Bakacsi 2004).

To summarize the leadership styles of this section, authoritarian leadership is centered around the leader, who makes all decisions, defines roles, and strictly monitors the work of the team members. It might be efficient under certain circumstances, but it could cause resentment, high turnover and a negative atmosphere in the workplace (Lewin et al. 1939, Dobák – Antal 2016, Hopkins 2022, Cherry, 2006). Democratic leadership focuses on shared decision-making, accountability and collaboration among the workers. While it encourages creativity and innovation, it is more time-consuming, which could cause delays, and it is less productive than authoritarian style (Lewin et al. 1939, Dobák - Antal 2016, Hopkins 2022, Al Rahbi - Khalid - Khan 2017, Ekiyor - Dapper 2019, Cherry 2006). Laissez-faire gives its employees complete autonomy while the leader withdraws from involvement. It is often viewed as insufficient because of possible internal conflicts and unclear roles, but it works well for works well for skilled, autonomous and flexible teams (Lewin et al. 1939, Dobák - Antal 2016, Cherry 2006, Hopkins 2022, Al Rahbi - Khalid - Khan 2017, Ekiyor - Dapper 2019). Transformational leadership is guided by the principles of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. Despite the high job satisfaction and lower employee turnover, there is a risk of leader burnout and the exploitation of loyal employees (Hopkins 2022, Ekiyor - Dapper 2019). Lastly, transactional leadership views the relationship between the leader and the workers as an exchange and uses rewards and punishments to motivate them. It increases the productivity of the members, but is controlling, short-term focused and reduces creativity (Ekiyor - Dapper 2019, Alharbi 2021, Hopkins 2022). For visual clarity, the following *Table 1* presents the key characteristics of each leadership style.

Table 1 Overview and comparison of leadership styles

	Authoritarian	Democratic	Laissez-faire	Transformational	Transactional
Core concept	leader makes all important decisions	leader supports group discussion and shared decision-making	leader gives complete freedom	leader motivates and inspires for exceptional results	leader-worker relationship as a transaction
Leader role	gives instructions, controls activities	participates as group member	withdraws from participation	motivates, inspires, supports the team	supervises and intervenes when needed
Employee autonomy	none, workers follow instructions	employees choose who to work with and divide tasks	complete freedom	involved in decision-making, can work independently	employees can decide on reward system but follow command
Responsibilities	assigned by leader	divided among group members	not clearly defined	based on individual strengths	clearly defined
Instructions and guidance	step-by-step instructions	suggestions and alternatives	minimal guidance	provides vision and support	based on rules, rewards, punishments
Main advantages	clear hierarchy, defined roles and duties, effective in stressful situations	cooperation, engagement, accountability, creativity, innovation, motivation	effective if members are highly skilled, autonomy, flexibility	job satisfaction, motivation; development; strong relationships; creativity	clear roles and responsibilities, easy to understand, increased motivation
Main disadvantages	controlling and dictatorial, resentment among employees, high turnover rate, lack of trust	time-consuming, delays and unfinished projects, members may lack skills	lack of direction, missed deadlines, conflicts, unclear roles and responsibilities	leader may exploit employees, leader burnout, small tasks may be neglected	controlling, short-term focus, neglects emotional needs, reduced creativity
Performance	highly effective in tasks	high productivity, but less than authoritarian	depends on the capabilities of team members	high performance and organizational growth	increased productivity, but short-term focused
Work atmosphere	negative, tension	positive and collaborative	may be conflicts among members	positive and supportive	structured and not flexible

Control	strong control by leader	shared control	little control	balanced through influence	control through rewards and punishments
Best when	leader has most expertise, urgent tasks	members are skilled and knowledgeable	employees are highly skilled autonomous	organizational change and development are needed	clear objectives and structure are needed

Source: own edition based on Lewin et al. (1939), Dobák - Antal (2016), Ekiyor - Dapper (2019), Hopkins (2022), Alharbi (2021), Odumeru - Ogbonna (2013), Bakacsi (2004), Cherry (2006), Al Rahbi - Khalid - Khan (2017)

Dobák - Antal (2016) mention in their work that John Kotter differentiates between two complementary leadership roles. While a leader focuses on change in their leadership role and adaptation to the external environment, in their managerial role they primarily deal with the complexity of organizations and internal efficiency (Dobák - Antal 2016). A leader's management style influences what kind of control they prioritize, as well as whether they prefer to exercise strict/high or loose/low control. A leader's personality traits and desired leadership roles all influence the type and nature of control (Bakacsi 2004). The leadership role is primarily necessary in upper management positions, while the managerial role becomes important at the middle and lower management levels. The two leadership roles are not mutually exclusive, neither is better or more important than the other (Dobák - Antal 2016).

2.2. Managerial control

The management function of control is accountable for determining whether an organization is functioning in compliance with set standards (Kiss - Pallai 2018). According to Bodnár, Császár and Dobák (1996), control is a feedback-based process aimed at attaining organizational objectives, which means that managers define standards for particular characteristics of the unit

under supervision, for example efficiency, quality or targets. Then they analyze the current values of these attributes throughout the control process by collecting data through reports, observations or sensors. They also compare them against the established standards and take corrective action if differences arise between the standards and the actual attributes being evaluated (Bodnár - Császár - Dobák 1996).

Liu (2015) mentions in his work that certain authors adopted the term “controller” in reference to the person in charge of control design and execution within a user organization or department, and "controlee" to refer to a member of a project management team (Liu 2015). In his work it is also addressed that several control mechanisms can be implemented, which can be generally categorized in two groups: formal and informal control. Formal control affects the behavior of the controlee through the evaluation of both processes and outcomes, with corresponding rewards based on performance. Informal control, on the other hand, operates through social and self-management processes that encourage compliance with the collective objectives among controllers and controlees (Liu 2015).

The types of control mechanisms described further on are based on two of Ouchi's works. The first framework, behavior and outcome control, is based on Ouchi's original research in 1977, in which he defines management as an evaluation process based on monitoring behavior or results. Ouchi focused on these two forms of management because they were the only elements that could be systematically observed, tracked and quantified at the time. The origin of Ouchi's second framework was developed by the integration of organizational, economic and agency theories, through which he identified three control systems: bureaucracies, markets and clans. (Cardinal - Kreutzer - Miller 2017). In essence, market control is achieved through accurate measurement and reward of individual contributions, bureaucratic control is established through evaluation and shared objectives and clan control is accomplished through the alignment of individual and organizational interests and goals (Ouchi 1979). Market and

bureaucratic control, similar to behavior and outcome control, are both formal control types, while clan control is informal (Cardinal - Kreutzer - Miller 2017).

2.2.1. Behavior control

In behavior control, performance is determined based on how defined and established procedures are formulated and followed (Liu 2015). This control type is characterized by an organized work environment and predetermined compensation, typically in the form of salary. Management focus on monitoring behavior than on results, which leads to close supervision, frequent interaction between employees and managers and consistent reporting. Performance is often evaluated subjectively based on multiple factors and the organization carries most of the performance risk, not the employee (Oliver - Anderson 1995). The controllers in behavior control emphasize the level of accuracy and significance of the management processes (Liu 2015). Additionally, they also highlight guidelines and procedures that controlees are expected to follow in order to minimize project errors and modifications, which leads to improving the reliability of the system while carrying out their assigned tasks (Liu 2015, Sihag - Rijdsdijk 2018). Controllers assess controlees' performance on how they follow the defined procedures. An evaluation of how these explicitly stated rules and procedures are executed toward the accomplishment of project objectives enables team members to execute project tasks properly. Controllers are also capable of accurately monitoring the status of project outcomes. Behavior control ensures that the project is successfully carried out and implemented in accordance with the plan and provides an organized strategy of system development to prevent uncertainties and create a system that is consistent with the requirements of users (Liu 2015).

The advantages of this management style include consistency, a decrease in the number of mistakes and clear guidelines for performing responsibilities. Controlees develop a better understanding of how to perform their work through the use of standard procedures and certain

methods, which helps to ensure that duties are carried out correctly and effectively. In addition, controllers actively participate in behavioral management, providing guidance and support to the employees during the entire process. This continuous interaction encourages open communication and demonstrates the management's commitment, which can increase employee motivation and encourage compliance with existing procedures, which could lead to better performance (Sihag - Rijdsdijk 2018).

Behavior-based control also has disadvantages. The complexity and subjectivity of performance assessments can lead to inconsistency and unreliable evaluations (Anderson - Oliver 1987). As these systems become more comprehensive, they can also place a great workload on management, notably in terms of collecting, processing and coordinating large amounts of information (Anderson - Oliver 1987). In addition, effective implementation depends on managers having a complete understanding of how work processes are converted into results. Without this knowledge, it becomes difficult to develop effective procedures for employees to follow. Even when managers possess this understanding, monitoring employee behavior can be time-consuming and high-priced, thereby further limiting the efficiency of behavior-based control systems (Sihag - Rijdsdijk 2018).

In conclusion, the controlee performance is based on how well they follow established rules and procedures rather than by the outcomes they provide. This approach uses close supervision, regular interaction between the controller and controlee and subjective multi-factor evaluations, with the organization carrying most of the performance risk. Its advantages include better consistency, fewer errors, clear project rules and increased employee motivation through active manager involvement. However, the disadvantages include subjective and inconsistent evaluations, managerial workloads and monitoring costs, and also the necessity for managers to completely understand how processes lead to results (Oliver - Anderson 1995, Liu 2015, Sihag - Rijdsdijk 2018).

2.2.2. Outcome control

In outcome control, controllers evaluate how effectively controlees are performing and give them rewards based on how efficiently they meet their goals and targets (Liu 2015). The management is minimally involved in supervising employees' daily activities and there is little effort to direct how tasks are being carried out. Therefore, employees have minimal direct contact with the controllers and they are only required to provide minimal reporting. As a result, they are given more autonomy, as their performance is judged primarily on the outcomes they achieve rather than the methods they use. Performance is evaluated based on a small number of observable and measurable results. Compensation, which often takes the form of bonuses or commissions, is based on these straightforward and objective assessments. In consequence, a significant amount of performance-related risk is transferred to employees (Anderson - Oliver 1987, Oliver - Anderson 1995). It is important to note that, according to Liu's (2015) research, outcome-based management may be more prominent in complex situations. In such cases, the main focus is on achieving specific goals, which allows for more flexibility in the process while maintaining the emphasis on objectives and performance tasks. Controllers may review progress and evaluate results more frequently in order to ensure their alignment with the organization's goals (Liu 2015).

The advantages of this control include making the selection, planning and implementation of work processes more efficient, supporting the achievement of performance goals. It supports the precise definition of project goals and objectives, allowing developers to align with the expectations. Predefined references and evaluation criteria additionally contribute to the creation of quality systems. In addition, outcome-based control encourages development teams to reduce unnecessary complexity, as the flexibility provided by the system allows them to effectively handle complex problems, leading to more usable and better-designed systems (Liu

2015). As compensation is directly linked to performance outcomes, this control also provides strong individual motivation (Anderson - Oliver 1987).

The limited feedback the controllers provide can encourage behaviors that do not serve long-term goals of the organization. In this situation employees might focus on short-term results or prioritize easier tasks at the cost of the complex or important ones. To avoid these problems, managers can use multiple performance indicators instead of relying on just a few simple, straightforward ones. However, this increases the complexity of the system, requires more reporting and may involve subjective judgment when integrating the different metrics into a comprehensive performance evaluation. As a result, this increased complexity might shift the management system toward a behavior-based approach (Anderson - Oliver 1987).

In conclusion, outcome control involves employees being evaluated on measurable results rather than methods, with minimal supervision and infrequent reporting. Employees gain autonomy but carry most performance risk, as compensation is tied directly to outcomes. It enables efficient goal achievement and flexibility in complex situations; it also provides strong motivation since compensation links directly to performance. However, limited feedback may lead to short-term results, making employees prioritize easier tasks over complex goals. Adding multiple performance metrics increases complexity and may shift the system toward behavior-based control (Liu 2015, Anderson - Oliver 1987).

2.2.3. Clan control

Clan control is based on cultural norms, customs and socialization, and it operates through personal, informal mechanisms that internalize these norms (Dobák 2008). A range of social mechanisms minimize the differences among organizational and individual goals and create a strong sense of community; and as a result, organizational and individual goals are intertwined (Ouchi 1980). These mechanisms may include securing long-term employment, competitive

wages, internal promotion opportunities, people-oriented work environment, and supportive and encouraging working relationships with colleagues. As part of this type of control, clans are controlled through socialization rather than outcome or behavior, mostly through informal norms (Anderson - Oliver 1987). Even if clans might use a formal system of authority, they essentially differ from the other two control systems in that they have no need for explicit supervision and assessment. The organizations using clan control are typically highly interconnected or technologically advanced, where technologies change frequently, individual performance is uncertain and teamwork is common (Ouchi 1980).

Among the benefits of clan control is that it guides employees toward behaviors and actions that support the accomplishment of the desired performance goals. Common values and understanding offer indirect guidance as to what is considered acceptable or unacceptable behavior, without the need of supervision by the controller. It also promotes mutual trust and common interests through interactions with others. The growth of positive mutual expectations also encourages employees to invest in their relationship with their supervisors, which stimulates cooperative behavior (Sihag - Rijdsdijk 2018). The internalization of the norms helps to reinforce this process, as employees continuously adjust their behavior and actions according to norms adopted through socialization (Dobák 2008). For this reason, clan control plays an essential part in building mutual working relationships between controllers and controlees. This is further supported by the fact that mutual understanding between the parties leads to improved decision-making and helps to ensure that tasks are completed on time (Sihag - Rijdsdijk 2018).

The disadvantages of clan-based control mainly come from the internalization of the shared values. In contrast with formal mechanisms such as outcome and behavior control, these values cannot be quickly implemented or modified. Its effectiveness depends on both understanding the norms and forming a strong connection with them, which develops solely over time and requires a higher amount of commitment (Dobák 2008). This process is often supported

through training, during which controlees gain the knowledge and skills needed to understand different perspectives and adopt the organization's values and goals (Sihag - Rijsdijk 2018). Furthermore, as clans develop close relationships with their members, significant changes in membership can cause difficulties or even delay their operations (Dobák 2008). Performance is evaluated through subtle signals that only coworkers who know each other well can interpret, but these cannot be turned into explicit measures. Since strict monitoring and rule enforcement are not possible, this behavior can be harmful from the organization's perspective (Ouchi 1980). To conclude, clan control relies on cultural norms, customs and socialization instead of formal rules or strict supervision (Dobák 2008). With motivators like secure long-term employment, competitive wages, internal promotion opportunities and supportive colleagues, individual and organizational goals become strongly connected (Anderson - Oliver 1987). The two main benefits are that it guides employee behavior without direct supervision and it builds mutual trust and common interests among the team members. Mutual working relationships improve decision-making and help ensure that tasks are finished on time (Sihag - Rijsdijk 2018). On the other hand, its shared values could take a long time to establish and cannot be changed quickly (Dobák 2008). Also, performance can only be interpreted through subtle signals that are difficult to turn into accurate measurements (Ouchi 1980).

For visual comparison of this section, *Table 2* presents the main characteristics of each managerial control type:

Table 2 Overview and comparison of managerial control types

	Behavior control	Outcome control	Clan control
Control focus	following rules, procedures and processes	achieving goals, targets of the organization	shared values, norms and culture among employees
Manager involvement	high, close supervision and monitoring	low, limited supervision	very low, no direct supervision
Employee autonomy	low, tasks are defined and guided	high, freedom in how to work	moderate, guided by norms
Evaluation basis	how tasks are performed	measurable outcomes or results	Shared norms and mutual understanding
Performance measures	multiple subjective factors	few objective indicators	not explicit, hard to measure
Performance outcome	reliable, consistent, fewer errors	efficient goal achievement, flexibility	cooperative behavior, aligned goals
Responsibility for performance	mostly on organization	mostly on employee	shared responsibility
Compensation form	predetermined salary	bonuses or commissions	competitive wages
Instructions	clear rules and detailed procedures	limited instructions	norms learned through socialization
Strengths	consistency, clear guidelines, fewer errors, better understanding of tasks	flexibility in complex situations, strong motivation, efficient goal achievement	mutual trust and understanding, cooperation, guides behavior without controller supervision
Weaknesses	high managerial workload, monitoring costs, subjective evaluation	short-term focus, limited feedback, risk of ignoring complex tasks	slow to develop and hard to change, difficult to measure, can cause delays

Source: own edition based on Bodnár - Császár - Dobák (1996), Oliver - Anderson (1995), Liu (2015), Sihag - Rijdsdijk (2018), Anderson - Oliver (1987), Dobák (2008), Ouchi (1979), Ouchi (1980)

To summarize the managerial control types of this section, behavior control evaluates how effectively employees follow predetermined procedures rather than the results they create. It requires close supervision and subjective evaluation while the organization carries most performance risk. Consistency and fewer mistakes are some of its benefits, but high managerial workload, possible inconsistency, unreliable evaluations and monitoring expenses are among the disadvantages of this type of control (Bodnár - Császár - Dobák 1996, Oliver - Anderson 1995, Liu 2015, Sihag - Rijdsdijk 2018, Anderson - Oliver 1987). Outcome control evaluates employees based on measurable results with minimal supervision and more autonomy. This approach transfers the majority of the performance risk to employees, who receive bonuses or commissions based on objective evaluations. The advantages include strong motivation and flexibility in complex situations, while limited feedback may encourage employees to complete short-term tasks instead. Adding multiple performance indicators may shift the system toward behavior control (Liu 2015, Anderson - Oliver 1987, Oliver - Anderson 1995). Clan control operates through cultural norms and socialization with no explicit supervision, intertwining organizational and individual goals through long-term employment, competitive wages and supportive relationships. The benefits include guiding employee behavior without direct supervision towards the goals, supporting mutual trust and understanding. Disadvantages are that since the values of the clan change slowly, membership changes may cause challenges and the evaluation of performance by subtle non-explicit indicators (Dobák 2008, Ouchi 1980, Anderson - Oliver 1987, Sihag - Rijdsdijk 2018).

2.3. Workplace autonomy

Autonomy refers to the extent to which an individual feels that they are acting on their own initiative, making independent decisions and having meaningful choices regarding how they

perform their work. It can be experienced even when carrying out tasks assigned by others, as long as the individual feels responsible for their work and personally takes ownership of it (Csókási et al. 2019). Hackman and Oldham (1975) defined autonomy as *“The degree to which the job provides substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to the employee in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out (Hackman - Oldham 1975, p.162)”*

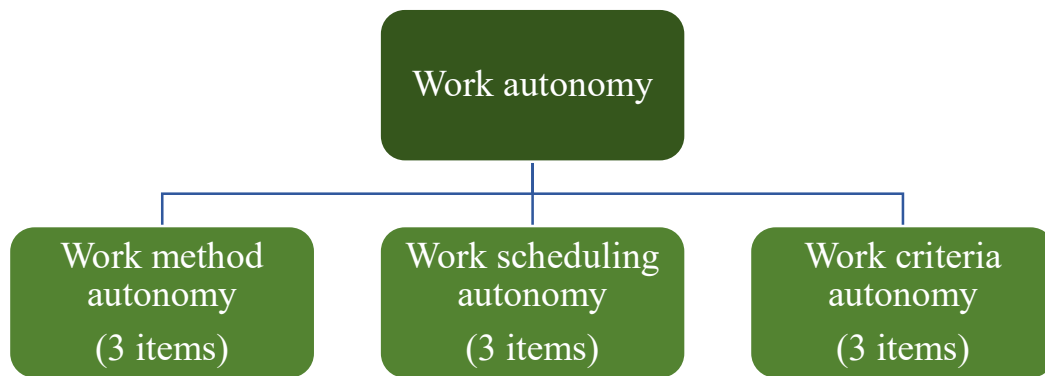
Autonomy most often appears as one of the elements examined in a particular model or theory. One of them is Hackman and Oldham's Job Characteristics Model, where autonomy is one of the core job dimensions inspected for its effect on employee well-being, motivation and performance (Hackman - Oldham 1976). The other is the Job Demands-Resources Model, which divides working conditions into two categories, into job demands and job resources, and autonomy is one of the resources studied in relation to employee engagement and burnout (Bakker - Demerouti 2007, Demerouti et al. 2001).

Breaugh (1985), building on Hackman and Oldham's (1975) work on job autonomy, identified three types of autonomy: (1) work method autonomy, the freedom to choose how to perform tasks; (2) work scheduling autonomy, the freedom to decide when to perform tasks; and (3) work criteria autonomy, the freedom to determine goals or standards. It is also important to note that there is no necessary correlation between the different types of autonomies. Different job roles differ not only in the degree to which an employee is free to choose the methods used to perform the work, but also in the degree to which they can determine their own work pace (Breaugh 1985).

Breaugh (1985) measured autonomy using nine items, as shown in *Figure 2*, that capture the three distinct dimensions. Three items were used to evaluate each dimension. A high score in a given dimension reflects a significant degree of employee autonomy, while a low score

indicates restricted working conditions (Breugh, 1989, Breugh 1999). Since these dimensions are independent, each was analyzed separately (Breugh, 1985).

Figure 2 Breugh's (1985) three-dimensional model of autonomy



Source: Breugh (1985)

2.3.1. Work method autonomy

Breugh (1985) defined work method autonomy in his work as *“The degree of discretion/choice individuals have regarding the procedures (methods) they utilize in going about their work (Breugh 1985, p. 556) “.*

The measurement of work method autonomy is through questions that reflect employees' freedom to decide how they perform their assigned tasks. The first refers to the extent the employee can decide which specific methods to use when completing their tasks, the second questions their ability to select the procedures and techniques that will be used during carrying them out and the third assesses if they are free to choose their preferred methods for performing work without being restricted by predetermined steps or procedures (Breugh 1985).

These three questions above help determine whether an employee experiences high or low method autonomy. High work method autonomy means that employees have judgment over the procedures and techniques they use to carry out their assigned tasks, while low work method

autonomy occurs when work methods are predetermined by organizational rules, standardized protocols or supervisory instructions (Breugh 1985, Breugh 1999). In experimental terms, high method autonomy involves choosing which tasks to work on and how to execute them. Low method autonomy, in contrast, involves being told exactly which tasks to do and how to complete them (Breugh - Becker 1987).

2.3.2. Work scheduling autonomy

Breugh (1985) defined work scheduling autonomy in his work as “*The extent to which workers feel they can control the scheduling/sequencing/timing of their work activities (Breugh 1985, p. 556)*”.

Breugh's (1985) measurement of scheduling autonomy is also assessed using three items, which in this case focus on control over timing and task order. The first one examines how much say employees have about how they organize their work throughout the day or week, including starting and ending times. Another question examines the ability to influence the order of activities, as deciding when to complete various tasks in relation to one another. The third one measures whether employees can decide for themselves when to do different work activities, for example choosing to complete certain assignments in the morning or in the afternoon (Breugh 1985).

As previously mentioned, the three items listed above help determine whether an employee experiences high or low scheduling autonomy. High work scheduling autonomy refers to employees' ability to control the timing, the priority and the order of their work activities, while low work scheduling autonomy occurs when work timing, deadlines and the order of tasks are determined by external or other factors (Breugh 1985, Breugh 1999). From a practical perspective, high scheduling autonomy involves deciding how much time to spend on each task, in what order to complete them and when to take breaks within a given time frame. In contrast,

low scheduling autonomy involves fixed time limits on each task, a predetermined order of work activities and breaks are only allowed at scheduled times (Breugh - Becker 1987).

2.3.3. Work criteria autonomy

Breugh (1985) defined work criteria autonomy in his work as *“The degree of which workers have the ability to modify or choose the criteria used for evaluating their performance (Breugh 1985, p. 556) ”*.

For criteria autonomy, Breugh's (1985) measurement focuses on the employees' ability to set or influence their own performance goals and evaluation standards. The first question is about how much the employee can modify the standard evaluation process to focus on certain aspects of their job while devaluing others' achievements. A second one examines whether they are able to change what their job objectives are, allowing them to have a say in how to determine success. The final question examines whether the employees have a say in what they are expected to accomplish, which includes what their supervisor views as their performance goals (Breugh 1985).

As before, these three factors help determine whether an employee experiences high or low criteria autonomy. High work criteria autonomy indicates the employees' influence over the objectives of their work, the performance expectations and the evaluation criteria, while low work criteria autonomy occurs when job objectives and performance standards are fully determined by the supervisors or the organizational systems (Breugh 1985, Breugh 1999) Under experimental circumstances, high criteria autonomy involves choosing to be evaluated by the quality or the quantity of performance and deciding for themselves what would be considered average, good or excellent work. In contrast, low criteria autonomy involves being told exactly which performance aspects matter, what the work objectives are and what fixed

evaluation scale must be used (Breugh - Becker 1987). The main characteristics of each autonomy type are presented in *Table 3* for visual comparison.

Table 3 Overview and comparison of autonomy types

	Work method autonomy	Work scheduling autonomy	Work criteria autonomy
Focus on	the ability to choose how to do tasks	the ability to choose when to do tasks	the ability to choose goals and standards
Measured by	items on deciding work methods, choosing procedures and selecting techniques	items on controlling work scheduling, priority and order of activities	items on modifying evaluation criteria, changing job objectives and setting performance goals
High autonomy	own work methods are chosen	own timing and order of tasks are chosen	own performance goals are set
Low autonomy	methods are predetermined by rules or supervisors	timing and order are already determined	goals and standards are assigned by supervisors

Source: own edition based on Breugh (1985), Breugh - Bekker (1987), Breugh (1999)

To summarize the autonomy types presented in this section, Breugh (1985), building on the work of Hackman and Oldham (1975) proposed three autonomy types. Work method autonomy is the freedom to choose how to perform tasks, assessed by indicators on work methods and procedures. Work scheduling autonomy is the ability to determine when to perform tasks, measured based on criteria related to work scheduling, prioritizing and order of activities. Work criteria autonomy is the influence to choose goals and standards, evaluated by indicators on evaluation criteria, job objectives and performance goals (Breugh 1985). High autonomy allows employees to select their own work methods, set their own schedules and

determine their own goals, while low autonomy means these aspects are determined by rules or supervisors (Breaugh - Becker 1987, Breaugh 1999).

2.4. Performance and well-being

The main focus of this section is the relationship between employee performance and well-being, including what these concepts are and why they are important for organizations. Further on, it will be explored how leadership styles, managerial control and workplace autonomy influence these outcomes. The purpose of this section is to build on the previous literature review with research findings to show how these variables shape employees' experiences, motivation and performance. At the end of this section, the four theoretical mechanisms linking leadership, managerial control and autonomy to employee outcomes is explored to provide greater depth to the literature review.

2.4.1. The relationship between performance and well-being

Work performance is referred to as the job-related behaviors that can be measured by the extent to which an employee contributes to the achievement of organizational goals (Lin - Yu - Yi 2014, Daniels - Harris 2000). It mainly includes in-role, or as commonly mentioned task performance, which consist of behaviors formally expected to carry out a specific role in the organization and demonstrates how efficiently employees perform their main responsibilities in terms of productivity and quality (Daniels - Harris 2000, Warr - Nielsen 2018, Taris - Schaufeli 2015). Taris and Schaufeli (2018) make a distinction between two types of performance, process performance and outcome performance. Process performance specifies the activities or behaviors workers perform to accomplish their job-related objectives, while outcome performance describes the goods or services generated and how well these align with the organization's broader goals and objectives. Important to note that high process

performance does not necessarily correlate with outcome performance (Taris - Schaufeli 2015). To maximize productivity, organizations have to balance between strict guidelines that guarantee consistent performance with enough flexibility to promote innovation and agility, while encouraging employees to freely experiment in response to challenges and unusual circumstances (Khoreva - Wechtler 2018). Work results and quality, effectiveness, work ethic and ambition all correlate with organizational effectiveness therefore can be used to evaluate employee performance (Triansyah - Hejin – Stefania 2023).

The general quality of an employee's experience and functioning at work is referred to as employee well-being (Van De Voorde - Paauwe - Van Veldhoven 2012). Employee well-being can be separated into two categories, into subjective well-being, which focuses on how individuals perceive their lives, and psychological well-being, which emphasizes living a life that fully matches one's potential, like moving happiness from potential to accomplishment (Lin - Yu - Yi 2014). Van Horn et al.'s (2004) conceptualization of work-related well-being includes five categories, is described by Taris and Schaufeli (2018). Affective well-being includes emotional tiredness and fatigue, professional determination and satisfaction at work. Professional well-being refers to ambition, proficiency in work and autonomy. Social well-being addresses detachment toward coworkers and quality of interpersonal interaction. Cognitive well-being reflects the ability to focus at work and learn new information. Lastly, psychosomatic well-being includes health problems like headaches, nausea and symptoms of potential cardiovascular problems (Taris - Schaufeli 2015). One of the measurement techniques of well-being is the WERS Survey of Employees, where the individual's job is evaluated by nine aspects, such as a sense of achievement, participation or influence over the work itself among others (Bryson - Forth - Stokes 2017).

Prior researches have shown that there is a close connection between well-being and job performance, as increasing the employee's perception of well-being can enhance their job

performance. In contrast, if an employee's level of well-being at work is low, their ability to concentrate on their work decreases, resulting in lower job performance (Lin - Yu - Yi 2014). Employee performance is improved by a safe and friendly, encouraging, stress-free work atmosphere, while social well-being contributes to a positive and engaging workplace environment. Employees value employers who provide similar conditions since they spend a large amount of their lives at work. By promoting an environment that is focused on well-being and personal development, organizations may improve both employee outcomes and performance, including in-role and innovative behaviors (Khoreva - Wechtler 2018).

2.4.2. Leadership styles' influence on performance and well-being

Leadership style is one of the most significant factors that might influence the performance of employees in an organization (Hermina - Yosepha 2019).

As it was mentioned in the first chapter of the literature review, authoritarian leadership can lead to employees being highly effective at carrying out certain tasks. This strong leadership is also necessary for specific tasks to be completed swiftly and successfully, especially under challenging or stressful circumstances (Cherry 2006). It was also mentioned that it can lead to resentment among group members and may increase staff turnover since decisions and rules are made solely by the leader and group members have to follow every instruction without remark, even if those instructions are disliked by the group or are being forced on them (Cherry 2006, Al Rahbi - Khalid - Khan 2017). This style often shows a lack of trust in workers and frequently relies on threats or disciplinary measures to keep them in line, all of which may negatively impact their well-being (Ekiyor - Dapper 2019). Mitchell (2025) also suggests that it may produce short-term benefits in emergencies or high-risk circumstances, but it negatively affects long-term productivity as a consequence of its suppressive and dictatorial nature

(Mitchell 2025). Based on these findings, the first hypothesis was formulated as follows: “Authoritarian leadership has a more negative effect on well-being for women than for men.”

The democratic approach, in relation to performance and well-being includes the distribution of tasks and responsibilities among the members (Al Rahbi - Khalid - Khan 2017, Ekiyor - Dapper 2019). Accordingly, individuals are more engaged and dedicated to the project, more willing to share their expertise and knowledge, leading to higher motivation and involvement (Ekiyor - Dapper 2019, Cherry 2006, Hopkins 2022). Greater opportunities for innovation and creativity also facilitate higher-quality contributions and involvement (Hopkins 2022). However, the shared decision-making characteristic of this approach may require a lot of time and it can lead to delays and unfinished projects, which negatively impacts performance (Al Rahbi - Khalid - Khan 2017, Ekiyor - Dapper 2019). Woods (2021) highlights in his research that this approach supports well-being through an environment that values both individuality and sense of belonging. In addition, it encourages mutual respect and cooperative participation, which contributes to social well-being and positive self-worth (Woods 2021). Based on the literature reviewed above, the second hypothesis was formulated as the following: “Democratic leadership leads to higher performance among employees with a bachelor’s degree or higher, than among those with only a high school diploma.”

The laissez-faire leadership style is highly effective for performance, as employees are given autonomy to apply their expertise within their roles, although they are also responsible for self-monitoring and problem-solving (Al Rahbi - Khalid - Khan 2017, Ekiyor - Dapper 2019). However, in the absence of constant monitoring, guidance and feedback from the leader, members who are not able to work fully independently or set their own deadlines may lose direction or miss deadlines. Members may blame each other rather than taking responsibility if the objectives are not met, which can cause tension and arguments, which could negatively influence well-being (Cherry 2006, Hopkins 2022). Erskine and Georgiou’s (2017) research

shows that laissez-faire leadership is connected to lower performance, and they also highlight findings that this style is connected to higher levels of anxiety under harsh supervision, as well as uncertainty, elevated role conflict and workplace harassment (Erskine - Georgiou 2017). Erschens et al. (2022) found that it is also associated with hostility toward the leader, increased intention to leave the organization and a negative relationship with employee performance and well-being.

In transformational leadership, the leader encourages and inspires the employees to achieve remarkable results in terms of performance. By closely observing the issues and developmental requirements of the individuals, the leader may assist them see challenges from another perspective as well as motivate them to make greater efforts to accomplish shared goals. As they are aware of the individual's strengths and weaknesses, they may assign projects that would improve their performance (Odumeru - Ogbonna 2013). Regarding well-being, this behavior can lead to high job satisfaction and reduced rates of turnover, since employees can progress via the efforts of committed teams, participate in decision-making and work autonomously (Hopkins 2022). Various studies also support these findings. Transformational leadership was found to be more efficient in terms of both their own and their employee's performance irrespective of the output's measurement level, such as individual, team or corporation. It improves social exchanges between the individuals and the leaders, which consecutively encouraged the subordinates to show their appreciation by performing their work to a higher quality. It also shows a positive impact on emotional well-being, which is influenced by increased meaning in work, self-worth, role clarity and developmental possibilities (Erskine - Georgiou 2017). Furthermore, transformational leadership is thought to be the most effective leadership style for fostering employee well-being since it has been shown to have the biggest influence on it (Erschens et al. 2022).

The core of the transactional leadership style is that it perceives the relationship between the leader and the workers as a kind of transaction (Ekiyor - Dapper 2019). The leader reaches out to the worker to offer something appealing in return for participation; using rewards, punishments and other types of exchanges to encourage compliance from the employees (Bakacsi 2004, Odumeru - Ogbonna 2013, Alharbi 2021) Contingent negative reinforcement, such as criticism or suspension, is given the objectives have not been finished on schedule, or when the quantity or quality of performance is below output demands or targets (Odumeru - Ogbonna 2013). Existing research suggests that transactional leadership has a conditional relationship with employee outcomes and well-being. While it shows some positive correlation with employee performance and supports organizational efficiency through transparent processes and contingent rewards, it does not necessarily support well-being. A strong focus on performance metrics may lead to stress, lack of engagement and low job satisfaction without attention to individual needs. As a result, although transactional approaches can improve short-term performance and motivation, over-reliance on them may contribute to long-term disengagement and increased turnover intentions (Tribhuvan et al. 2025). Based on these considerations, the third hypothesis was formulated as the following: “Transactional leadership has a stronger positive effect on performance for employees who have been with the company for 3 years or less than for those who have been with the company for more than 4 years.”

2.4.3. Managerial control’s influence on performance and well-being

Performance in behavior control is assessed by the extent to which employees follow established and defined rules and procedures rather than outcomes. Compensation is predetermined and does not depend on performance, and the organization carries most performance risk (Oliver - Anderson 1995). System reliability improves, the number of errors

decreases and performance improves since control ensures that tasks are successfully completed and executed according to plan (Liu 2015, Sihag - Rijsdijk 2018). Active involvement of managers also contributes to positive results, as well as consistency, clarity of guidelines and increased motivation of employees (Sihag - Rijsdijk 2018). In terms of well-being, behavior control offers guidance and support to employees during all phases of the process. Constant interaction encourages open and transparent communication and reflects the management's commitment, which can increase employee motivation, while supporting well-being (Sihag - Rijsdijk 2018). On the other hand, the complexity and subjectivity of the performance evaluations can lead to inconsistency. Alongside this, these systems can increase management workload as the constant monitoring of employee behavior can be time-consuming, which may affect well-being negatively (Anderson - Oliver 1987, Sihag - Rijsdijk 2018).

In outcome control, performance is assessed on how effectively controlees are performing, based on observable and measurable results like goals and targets (Liu 2015). Compensation directly linked to these outcomes, and significant performance risk is transferred to employees (Anderson - Oliver 1987, Oliver - Anderson 1995). The effective achievement of goals, flexibility in complex situations, clear definition of project objectives and strong individual motivation all contribute to overall performance success (Liu 2015, Anderson - Oliver 1987). However, limited feedback may encourage them to complete short-term tasks and may lead employees to prioritize easier tasks over complex projects. Multiple performance indicators increase complexity and may shift the system toward behavior-based control (Anderson - Oliver 1987). Regarding well-being, outcome control provides employees more autonomy, minimizes direct contact with supervisors and reduces reporting requirements to the necessary minimum amount (Anderson - Oliver 1987, Oliver - Anderson 1995). As compensation is directly linked to performance outcomes, it provides strong individual motivation, contributing positively to well-being (Anderson - Oliver 1987). In the same way, performance-based compensation can

negatively affect it, as performance-related risk is transferred to the employees. Limited managerial feedback could also increase pressure and uncertainty (Anderson - Oliver 1987, Oliver - Anderson 1995). From the literature discussed, the fourth hypothesis was formulated as the following: “Outcome control is more positively associated with performance for full-time employees than for workers with other employment statuses.”

Clan control influences performance and well-being through shared norms, customs and socialization, rather than formal rules or direct supervision (Dobák 2008, Ouchi 1980). Employees are encouraged to take on behaviors and actions that support the achievement of the desired performance goals. Mutual understanding between controllers and controlees leads to improved decision - making and helps ensure that tasks are completed on time (Sihag - Rijdsdijk 2018). However, performance is evaluated through subtle signals that only coworkers who are familiar with one another can interpret (Ouchi 1980). The lack of formal evaluation mechanisms and reliance on informal signals may make performance difficult to measure and manage effectively (Ouchi 1980). In terms of well-being, it is positively influenced by factors such as secure employment, competitive wages, promotion opportunities, people-oriented work environment, supportive colleagues, mutual trust and cooperative relationships, as they create a sense of belonging and collective commitment (Anderson - Oliver 1987, Sihag - Rijdsdijk 2018). Clan control is based on the gradual internalization of shared values among employees through organizational socialization, which requires time and strong commitment to develop. Changes in membership may disrupt established relationships and delay operations, thereby negatively affecting well-being (Dobák 2008). Based on the literature reviewed above the fifth hypothesis was formulated as follows: “Employees who perceive high levels of clan control report higher well-being than employees who perceive high levels of behavior control or outcome control.”

2.4.4. Workplace autonomy's influence on performance and well-being

Zychová, Fejfarová and Jindrová (2024) refers to autonomy as a basic psychological need and it is necessary to foster a work environment that supports well-being, performance and motivation. Based on other researches, Khoshnaw and Alavi (2020) highlight that autonomy is an important element in improving employee performance. Chiang (2024) mentions that the feeling of autonomy refers to the extent to which an individual feels they have control over their own actions. When they believe that their choices are made by their own free will and not by orders, pressure or threats, they are more likely to act in accordance with their chosen goals (Chiang 2024).

Autonomy is advantageous for the well-being of individuals and the success of organizations, especially when reinforced by other organizational resources. Employees are more prone to feel inner motivation and commitment when they are given autonomy, which improves their ability to manage responsibilities and maintain high performance. Hybrid work models, in comparison with entirely remote or on-site positions, may generate higher performance and satisfaction amongst IT workers (Manna 2025). According to McAnally and Hagger (2024), those who perform their jobs from home may feel more autonomy and need a sense of fulfillment than those in normal work environments, as this flexibility allows more responsibility and ownership to support autonomous motivation. In general, autonomy promotes positive attitudes and sentiments at work and offers considerable benefits to companies in terms of staff retention (Wheatley 2017).

However, a lack of autonomy may strengthen control and hierarchical authority while also lowering performance, increasing staff turnover and lack of attendance, causing stress, irritation, resentment and anxiety (Khoshnaw - Alavi 2020). Fleming (2017) also found that teams with low degrees of monitoring and high individual freedom perform worse than groups in which both factors are high, or with low autonomy, independent of the degree of monitoring.

Among employees working remotely performance could differ depending on conditions, even if many of them claimed consistent or increased productivity. Additionally, employees may not be able to manage their job efficiently if flexibility is given without proper training, which may result in irritation rather than satisfaction (McAnally - Hagger 2024).

Autonomy is considered a basic psychological need necessary for well-being and performance (Khoshnaw - Alavi 2020). Performance is improved when employees feel control over their actions and decisions (Chiang 2024). Research shows that it is often beneficial in flexible or hybrid work environments as it may increase satisfaction and productivity (Manna 2025). However, its effects depend on the circumstances, as too much autonomy without structure may reduce performance (Fleming 2017).

Based on these considerations, the sixth and seventh hypothesis was formulated as the following: “Work method autonomy is more strongly associated with performance for senior or specialist employees than for entry-level, intermediate or flat structure employees.” and “Work scheduling autonomy has a stronger positive effect on well-being for employees aged 35–54 than for those aged 18–34 or 55 and above.”

For visual clarity, the following *Table 4* presents an overview and comparison of leadership styles, managerial control types and workplace autonomy on performance and well-being.

Table 4 Overview and comparison of leadership styles, managerial control types and workplace autonomy on performance and well-being

	Performance	Well-being
Authoritarian leadership	effective for specific tasks under pressure	increases turnover, lack of trust, threats and discipline harm well-being
Democratic leadership	increases motivation and innovation, may cause delays	supports belonging, mutual respect and positive self-worth
Laissez-faire leadership	allows autonomy but linked to lower performance	linked to anxiety, role conflict, harassment and hostility toward leader
Transformational leadership	most efficient across all levels, improves work quality	highest impact on well-being, increases meaning, self-worth, role clarity
Transactional leadership	positive for performance, contingent rewards support efficiency	may cause stress, low engagement, low satisfaction, long-term disengagement
Behavior control	improves reliability, reduces errors, ensures consistency	offers guidance and support, increases management workload
Outcome control	effective goal achievement, flexible, strong motivation	provides autonomy, transfers performance risk to employees
Clan control	improves decision-making, performance difficult to measure	fosters belonging and trust, requires time and commitment
High workplace autonomy	improves performance, hybrid models increase satisfaction	basic psychological need, promotes positive attitudes when supported
Low workplace autonomy	reduces performance, high autonomy with low monitoring performs worse	causes stress, anxiety, frustration, flexibility without training

Source: own edition based on Cherry (2006), Al Rahbi - Khalid - Khan (2017), Ekiyor - Dapper (2019), Mitchell (2025), Hopkins (2022), Woods (2021), Erskine - Georgiou (2017), Erschens et al. (2022), Odumeru - Ogbonna (2013), Tribhuvan et al. (2025), Sihag - Rijdsdijk (2018), Liu (2015), Anderson - Oliver (1987), Oliver - Anderson

(1995), Dobák (2008), Ouchi (1980), Manna (2025), McAnally - Hagger (2024), Wheatley (2017), Khoshnaw - Alavi (2020), Fleming (2017), Zychová - Fejfarová - Jindrová (2024)

2.4.5. Theoretical mechanisms linking leadership, managerial control and autonomy to employee outcomes

The previous sections reviewed the direct influence of leadership styles, managerial control mechanisms and workplace autonomy on employee performance and well-being. However, it is also important to understand the theoretical mechanisms through which these effects occur. Several organizational and psychological theories help explain why certain leadership behaviors, control systems and levels of autonomy contribute to more favorable employee outcomes than others. These theories help to gain a better understanding of the processes through which workplace conditions influence employees' motivation, attitudes, behavior and overall working conditions. The most important theoretical frameworks include the Self - Determination Theory, the Job Demands - Resources Model, Social Exchange Theory and Leader - Member Exchange Theory, each of which offers a different perspective on the factors shaping employee outcomes (Ryan - Deci 2000, Demerouti et al. 2001, Cropanzano - Mitchell 2005, Erdogan - Bauer 2015).

Self - Determination Theory, shortly SDT, was developed by Ryan and Deci (2000) and it describes how social and environmental factors influence human motivation and well-being. This theory states that individuals have three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence and relatedness. Autonomy reflects the experience of choice and self-direction in one's actions, competence reflects a sense of ability and effectiveness, and relatedness describes the existence of meaningful social relationships with others. According to this approach, meeting these needs encourages self-motivation, psychological growth and well-being. Individuals are more likely to be motivated and committed if they feel that their environment supports autonomy, which

provides opportunities to develop competence and encourages the forming of positive relationships. In contrast, environments that prevent the meeting of these needs can lower motivation and negatively impact well-being. In an organizational context, SDT proposes that managerial behaviors and workplace practices influence employee performance through their impact on these psychological needs. Therefore, work environments that support employee autonomy, growth and positive interpersonal relationships are more likely to lead to positive employee well-being and performance (Ryan - Deci 2000).

The Job Demands - Resources (JD - R) Model was developed by Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner and Schaufeli (2001), and it explains how work conditions contribute to burnout. The model divides all work conditions into two main categories: job demands and job resources. Job demands are work-related factors that require continuous effort from the employees, such as time pressure, physical strain or difficult interactions with others, and which represent a psychological or physical burden. Job resources are factors that help employees achieve their work objectives, reduce the negative impact of demands or promote personal growth, such as feedback on performance, control over how work is performed, support from supervisors or rewards. Based on this model, burnout develops because of two reasons. High job demands contribute to exhaustion, which is the feeling of being overburdened and having run out of energy. The lack of job resources tends to lead to dissociation, where a person becomes detached from their work and develops a negative attitude toward it. Consequently, burnout is a condition that occurs when employees face high demands and low resources at the same time and suffer from both exhaustion and disengagement. This model proposes that within an organizational setting the best way to prevent burnout is to increase workplace resources and reduce high job demands. It is worth to note that the specific demands and resources associated with burnout may be different depending on the type of job, which means that interventions must be adjusted to each specific work environment (Demerouti et al. 2001).

The Social Exchange Theory, shortly SET, describes how workplace relationships are formed through a series of interactions that create commitments between the individuals involved. The main idea is that when one person gives another a certain advantage, the person receiving it feels an obligation to return the favor. This is known as the norm of reciprocity. With time, these mutual exchanges may develop into close, high-quality relationships based on trust. Unlike economic exchanges that involve clear negotiations and defined terms of repayment, social exchanges involve undefined commitments and uncertain future obligations. Individuals may differ in the degree to which they are committed to reciprocity: whereas some keep track of obligations, others are less concerned with doing so. In an institutional context, when employers or managers treat employees with fairness and support, employees reciprocate with beneficial behaviors such as commitment, organizational civility and high performance. Regarding corporate environments, positive workplace relationships are formed through the mutual exchange between employees and the organization. When the employers or leaders treat employees fairly and supportively, employees in turn reciprocate with favorable behaviors like trust, commitment and high performance. Positive interaction on the part of the organization also results in socially beneficial interactions, which in turn result in positive employee performance (Cropanzano - Mitchell 2005).

The Leader - Member Exchange (LMX) theory is a relationship - based perspective on leadership. In contrast to theories that focus on the leader's specific behaviors, LMX theory suggests that the effectiveness of the leadership depends on the quality of the relationship between the leader or manager and the individual employees. Strong relationships are defined by trust, empathy, respect and loyalty. A characteristic feature of this theory is that the leaders build relationships of different quality with different employees, even if they are within the same team. Based on the principles of social exchange, the leaders in good-quality relationships provide support, mentoring and new opportunities and in return, employees feel they are

obligated to reciprocate this with commitment, effort and voluntary behavior. A good Leader - Member Exchange is consistently associated with positive results such as job satisfaction, commitment and productivity, as well as lower turnover intentions. The theory also suggests that the quality of leader - employee relationships directly influences employees' well-being and performance (Erdogan - Bauer 2015)

In conclusion, the four theories reviewed above provide additional explanations of how leadership, organizational practices and workplace conditions impact employee performance and well-being. Self - Determination Theory focuses on the importance of meeting employees' basic needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness, while the Job Demands - Resources model highlights the role of workplace demands and resources in shaping employee engagement and burnout. The Social Exchange Theory and the Leader - Member Exchange Theory both focus on the quality of workplace relationships and the reciprocal exchanges that occur between employees, leaders and organizations. Although these theories approach employee behavior from different perspectives, they all suggest that a positive, supportive work environment, good relationships and sufficient resources contribute to more favorable employee outcomes and positive well-being (Ryan - Deci 2000, Demerouti et al. 2001, Cropanzano - Mitchell 2005, Erdogan - Bauer 2015).

To summarize this section, leadership styles, managerial control types and workplace autonomy all influence employee performance and well-being (Hermina - Yosepha 2019, Sihag - Rijdsdijk 2018, Zychová - Fejfarová - Jindrová 2024). Transformational leadership is most supportive of both outcomes, while laissez-faire is associated with lower performance and anxiety (Erskine - Georgiou 2017). Behavior control offers guidance and support to employees, while outcome control supports motivation but transfers performance risk to employees (Sihag - Rijdsdijk 2018, Anderson - Oliver 1987, Oliver - Anderson 1995). High autonomy improves performance and

well-being, and promotes positive attitudes, but low autonomy reduces performance and may cause stress and anxiety (Manna 2025, Wheatley 2017, Khoshnaw - Alavi 2020, Fleming 2017). After identifying these direct effects, the following subsection examined the underlying theoretical mechanisms. Four frameworks helped explain these underlying processes, such as the Self - Determination Theory, the Job Demands - Resources Model, the Social Exchange Theory and the Leader - Member Exchange Theory (Ryan - Deci 2000, Demerouti et al. 2001, Cropanzano - Mitchell 2005, Erdogan - Bauer 2015).

Based on the theoretical frameworks and empirical findings reviewed above, the following *Table 5* connects each hypothesis to the relevant section of the literature review. This connection ensures that the hypotheses are grounded in existing research.

Table 5 Hypotheses and corresponding literature

Hypothesis	Connecting section of literature
<i>1. hypothesis:</i> Authoritarian leadership has a more negative effect on well-being for women than for men.	2.1.1. Authoritarian leadership style 2.4.2. Leadership styles' influence on performance and well-being (2.1.2. Democratic leadership style 2.1.3. Laissez-faire leadership style)
<i>2.hypothesis:</i> Democratic leadership leads to higher performance among employees with a bachelor's degree or higher, than among those with only a high school diploma.	2.1.2. Democratic leadership style 2.4.2. Leadership styles' influence on performance and well-being
<i>3. hypothesis:</i> Transactional leadership has a stronger positive effect on performance for employees who have been with the company for 3 years or less than for those who have been with the company for more than 4 years.	2.1.5. Transactional leadership 2.4.2. Leadership styles' influence on performance and well-being (2.1.4 Transformational leadership)

4. <i>hypothesis</i> : Outcome control is more positively associated with performance for full-time employees than for workers with other employment statuses.	2.2.2 Outcome control 2.4.3 Managerial control's influence on performance and well-being
5. <i>hypothesis</i> : Employees who perceive high levels of clan control report higher well-being than employees who perceive high levels of behavior control or outcome control.	2.2.3. Clan control 2.4.3. Managerial control's influence on performance and well-being (2.2.1. Behavior control 2.2.2. Outcome control)
6. <i>hypothesis</i> : Work method autonomy is more strongly associated with performance for senior or specialist employees than for entry-level, intermediate or flat structure employees.	2.3.1. Work method autonomy 2.4.4. Workplace autonomy's influence on performance and well-being
7. <i>hypothesis</i> : Work scheduling autonomy has a stronger positive effect on well-being for employees aged 35–54 than for those aged 18–34 or 55 and above.	2.3.2. Work schedule autonomy 2.4.4. Workplace autonomy's influence on performance and well-being (2.3.3. Work criteria autonomy)

Source: own edition

3. METHODOLOGY

The topic of this chapter of the thesis is the primary research, which can be briefly defined as follows: *“Primary research refers to the collection of original data that has not yet been published or made public, for one’s own research purposes (Bauer A. - Berács J. - Kenesei 2016 Digital edition).”*

The basis of the primary research and the framework for the sampling is provided by a questionnaire falling within the scope of quantitative research. The questionnaire was chosen as the most suitable method for this research because it allows to collect a large amount of data derived from real-life observations in a relatively short time and at a low cost (Kelley et al. 2003). It also provides consistency in responses, guarantees anonymity and grants freedom to the respondents, all of which can increase participation (Mathiyazhagan – Nandan 2010). These characteristics made the questionnaire suitable for reaching a diverse sample of employed adults across different organizational settings.

This chapter describes the research methodology used to answer the research questions. It covers the design of the questionnaire and the variables measured, as well as the data collection procedure and analysis methods. The reliability and validity of the questionnaire, along with the research limitations, are also discussed in this chapter.

3.1. Questionnaire design

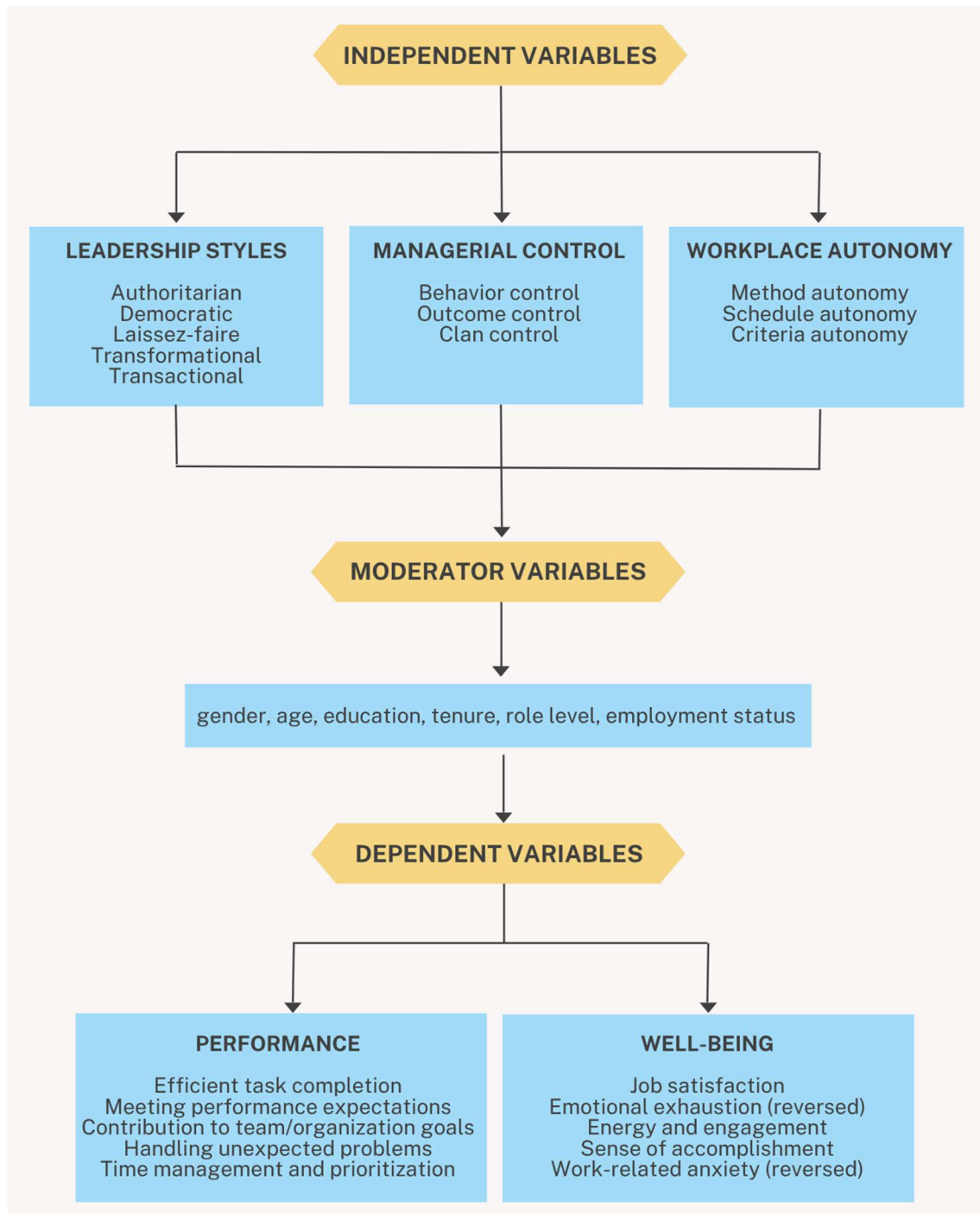
The questionnaire was designed to collect information on how employees perceive and experience leadership styles, managerial control, workplace autonomy, performance and well-being. It was divided into six sections, with the first being demographics and the other five covering the topics mentioned above.

As previously stated, the first section collected demographic information. Respondents were asked about their gender, age, highest education level, current employment status and their role level. They were also asked how long they have been working at their current organization, what the organization's size is, the geographic scope of operations and which industry sector they work in. All demographic questions used multiple-choice response options. The second section measured the five leadership styles, namely authoritarian, democratic, laissez-faire, transformational and transactional leadership. Each style was assessed using three topic-specific statements on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). In the third section, management control styles were evaluated: behavioral control, outcome control and clan control. Similarly, each type was assessed using three subject-specific statements on a 5-point Likert scale. The fourth section examined workplace autonomy using Breugh's (1985) Work Autonomy Scale. This nine-item scale measures the three dimensions of autonomy: method, scheduling and criteria autonomy. Each was rated using three topic-specific items on a 5-point Likert scale. The fifth section measured employee performance using five items on a 5-point Likert scale. The evaluation took into account efficient task completion, meeting performance expectations, contribution to team or organizational goals, handling unexpected problems, and time management and prioritization. The sixth section examined employee well-being using five items on a 5-point Likert scale. The items measured were overall job satisfaction, emotional exhaustion, energy and engagement, sense of accomplishment and purpose, and work-related anxiety outside of working hours. All Likert scale items used the same points: 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree and 5 = Strongly agree.

The following *Figure 3* illustrates the hypothesized relationships between independent variables (leadership styles, managerial control and workplace autonomy) and dependent

variables (performance and well-being), with moderator variables (gender, age, education, tenure, role level and employment status) proposed to influence these relationships.

Figure 3 Conceptual structure of the research



Source: own edition based on Lewin et al. (1939), Ouchi (1979, 1980), Breugh (1985)

3.2. Data collection process and analysis method

In terms of sampling, my population consists of any working adult, regardless of their industry, job title, length of their employment or organization size. No specific inclusion or exclusion criteria were used beyond being currently employed.

The sampling technique is non-probability sampling, specifically falling under the category of purposive sampling; furthermore, the sample size could not be determined in advance (Vas 2021).

The data was collected using an online Google Forms survey. To reach as many potential respondents as possible, the questionnaire was posted on different social media platforms, specifically in academic survey completion groups on Facebook and Reddit; and shared within personal networks, such as family and friends. This made it possible to distribute the survey among a diverse group of individuals working in different industries and organizational settings. The data collection process took place over a two-week period, during which 104 responses were received. Participation in the survey was voluntary and anonymous, which served to reduce response bias and encourage more honest answers.

After the target number of 100 responses was reached, the survey was closed, and the responses were organized and prepared for analysis. The responses from the Likert scale were converted into numerical values ranging from 1 to 5, facilitating quantitative analysis.

To examine the relationships between leadership styles, control mechanisms, workplace autonomy types and the outcomes of performance and well-being, multiple linear regression is being used (Chatterjee - Simonoff 2013).

The structure of the dataset allows comparisons between leadership styles, levels of managerial control and autonomy, and employee performance and well-being (Vas 2021).

3.3. Reliability and validity

Reliability reflects the consistency of the measurement tool, while validity refers to whether the tool accurately measures the intended constructs. To be able to provide credible study findings, both of these must be ensured (Cohen - Manion - Morrison 2018).

To make the study more valid, the questionnaire was designed based on established scales from prior research. Leadership styles were measured mainly using the frameworks of Lewin, Lippitt and White (1939), Dobák and Antal (2016) and Hopkins (2022) for the authoritarian, democratic and laissez-faire styles; and Odumeru and Ogbonna (2013), Hopkins (2022) and Bakacsi (2004) for the transformational and transactional styles. Managerial control was measured using Ouchi's (1979, 1980) framework, while workplace autonomy was measured using Breugh's (1985) Work Autonomy Scale. The use of these established concepts contributed to the content validity of the questionnaire.

A standardized five-point Likert scale was used in the questionnaire and the same instructions were provided to all participants to ensure consistency in the data collection. However, since the study was based on self - reported data, the responses reflected participants' own perceptions and personal experiences.

As a result, the findings may have been influenced by response biases, for example social desirability bias, which occurs when respondents provide answers not entirely honestly but in a manner that is considered socially acceptable (Podsakoff et al. 2003). Nevertheless, reliability and validity were supported through the use of clear questions, theoretical frameworks and standardized measurement procedures.

Cronbach's alpha, a measure of internal consistency that indicates how closely related a set of items are as a group, was calculated for each dimension in order to evaluate the multi-item scales. The alpha values ranged from 0.84 (transactional leadership) to 0.97 (work method

autonomy). The highest levels of internal consistency were observed for the work autonomy scales, especially work method autonomy ($\alpha = 0.97$) and work schedule autonomy ($\alpha = 0.95$), indicating that employees interpreted these items in a very consistent way. The leadership and control scales also showed strong reliability, with alpha values ranging from 0.84 to 0.93. Performance ($\alpha = 0.91$) and well-being ($\alpha = 0.92$) showed very good internal consistency as well. All scales exceeded the generally accepted minimum limit of 0.70, confirming satisfactory to excellent internal consistency across all dimensions (Cohen - Manion - Morrison - 2018). These results confirm the reliability of the questionnaire, suggesting that the items consistently reflected the intended constructs.

3.4. Research limitations

As it was mentioned in the previous section, there are limitations that should be taken into account during the interpretation of the results of this research.

The research used non-probability purposive sampling, also known as convenience sampling. This means that not all members of the target population had the same chance to be included in the survey, so the sample may not fully represent the broader population. For this reason, the results cannot be easily generalized to all employees (Vas 2021).

Quantitative methods depend on strict assumptions and may reduce complex social situations into simple terms. The use of standard Likert scale questions may not fully reflect the employees' real experiences with leadership, control and autonomy. Quantitative research also turns complex human behavior into numbers, which could raise questions about the validity and reliability of the results. The research did not consider important contextual factors such as organizational culture or industry - specific conditions that could have an influence on the results (Sapkota 2024).

The sample size was also relatively small ($N = 104$), which is a restrictive factor, especially in the case of subgroup analyses where some groups became very small, such as older employees ($n = 8$) and flat structure employees ($n = 14$). A small sample size reduces the statistical significance, increases the risk of missing real effects and the results may not be applicable to other organizational contexts or employee groups (Sapkota 2024).

The study relied on self-reported data, all information was collected through the questionnaire. This creates a risk of common method bias, where the relationships between the variables may be influenced by the method the data were collected rather than by the actual connections between the concepts being studied. Also, the respondents may give socially desirable answers, as they might respond in ways they consider more acceptable rather than being completely honest (Podsakoff et al. 2003).

The research used cross-sectional design: the data were collected only once, as the questionnaire was distributed on one occasion and respondents were not monitored over time. This type of design can show that variables are related and demonstrate associations between variables, but it cannot prove that one variable causes another. To understand the relationship between causes and effects, longitudinal research following the same people over time would be needed (Vas 2021).

The regression analyses were carried out separately for each subgroup and did not include control variables such as industry sector or organization size. Therefore, the observed relationships may be influenced by unmeasured factors. For example, an employee working at a company with a flat organizational structure who reports high method autonomy and high performance may also be younger or work in the technology sector. The lack of control of these factors makes it difficult to rule out the impact of other variables on the observed performance effect (Cohen - Manion - Morrison - 2018).

Although the introductory paragraph of the questionnaire mentioned multinational corporations (MNCs) and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), the analysis did not compare these two organizational forms. The research questions and the hypotheses focus on individual-level relationships without making a distinction between the organizational types.

Despite these limitations, the chosen quantitative research method was considered the most suitable for addressing the research objectives and providing information about how leadership styles, managerial control and workplace autonomy affect employee performance and well-being across different employee groups. These limitations are acknowledged in order to be able to interpret the findings correctly and to suggest options and directions for future research (Vas 2021, Sapkota 2024, Podsakoff et al. 2003).

4. RESULTS

This chapter covers the results of the primary research. The respondent characteristics, descriptive statistics and hypothesis testing results are presented in detail in the following sections.

The goal regarding the completion of the questionnaire was to receive 100 responses from the target population. Over the course of two weeks, 104 people completed the questionnaire. As no specific inclusion or exclusion criteria were used beyond being currently employed, all 104 responses were valid and suitable for analysis.

4.1. Respondents' profiles

The questionnaire collected demographic data on the respondent's gender (*Table 6*), age (*Figure 4*), highest level of education (*Table 7*), employment status (*Table 8*), role level (*Figure 5*), length of service (*Table 9*), organization size (*Table 10*), geographic scope (*Table 11*) and industry sector (*Figure 6*).

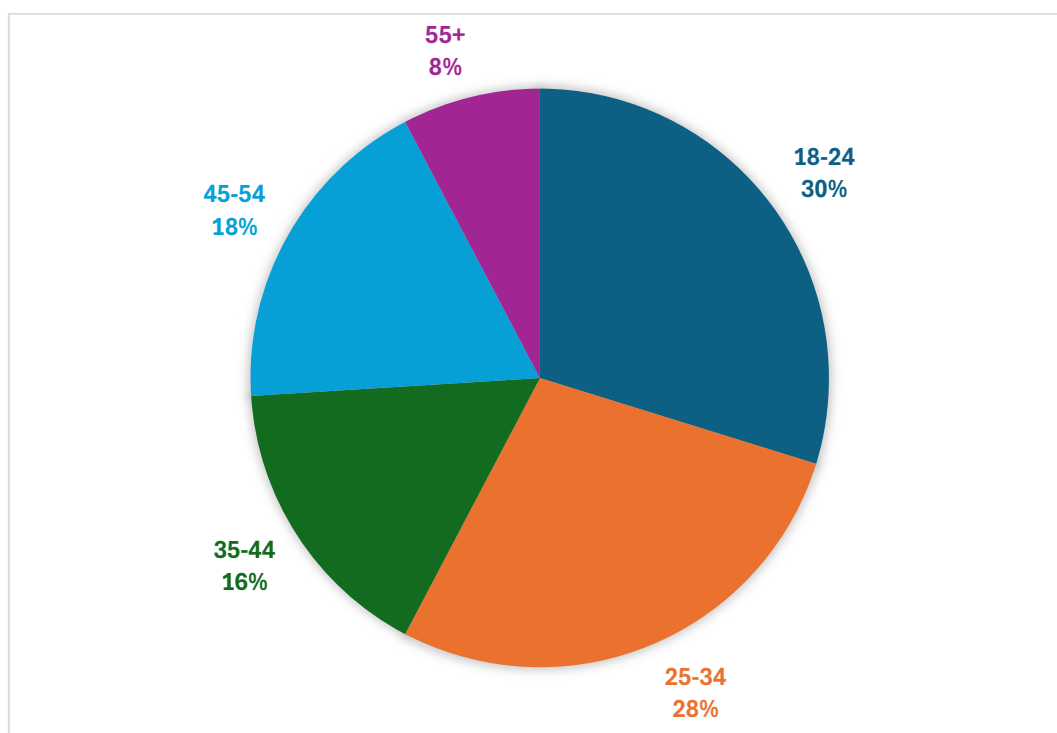
Table 6 Distribution of respondents by gender

Gender	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Women	51	49.0
Men	50	48.1
Other	2	1.9
Prefer not to answer	1	1.0

Source: own research

The questionnaire was completed by 51 women and 50 men, meaning that 49 percent of the respondents were women and 48.1 percent were men. Two respondents identified as “other” (1.9 %), and one respondent preferred not to answer (1%).

Figure 4 Distribution of respondents by age



Source: own research

Regarding age, 31 (29.8%) people from the 18-24 age group completed the questionnaire, 29 (27.9%) people from the 25-34 age group, 17 (16.3%) people from the 35-44 age group, 19 (18.3%) from the 45–54 age group and 8 (7.7%) were aged 55 or above.

Table 7 Distribution of respondents by highest education level

Education level	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
High school	47	45.2
Bachelor's degree	34	32.7
Master's degree	21	20.2
Doctorate	2	1.9

Source: own research

In terms of education, 47 (45.2%) respondents had a high school diploma, 34 (32.7%) held a bachelor's degree, 21 (20.2%) held a master's and 2 (1.9%) had a doctorate degree.

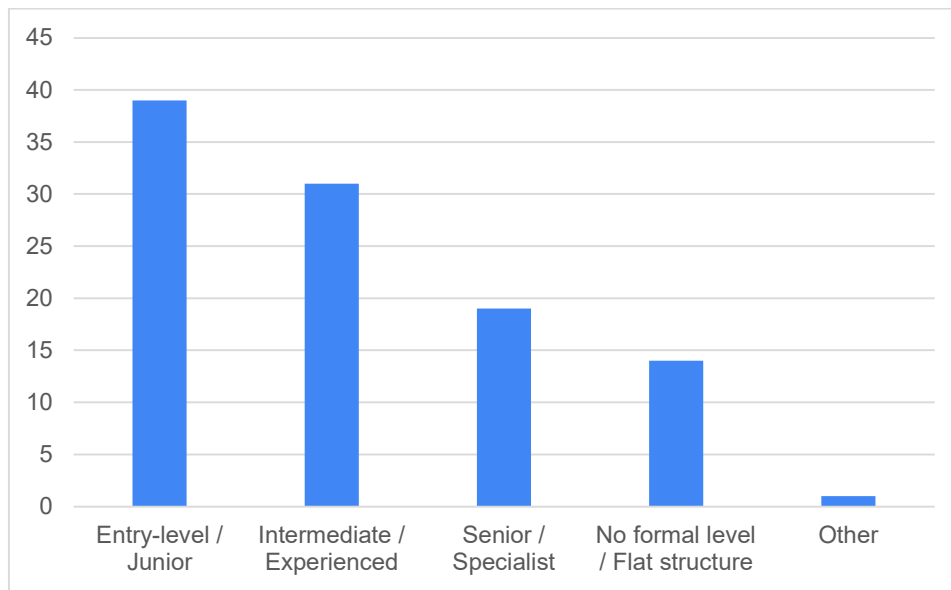
Table 8 Distribution of respondents by employment status

Employment status	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Full-time	75	72.1
Part-time	14	13.5
Intern / Trainee	6	5.8
Seasonal	5	4.8
Temporary / Fixed-term contract	3	2.9
Other	2	1.0

Source: own research

Regarding employment status, 75 (72.1%) respondents worked full-time, 14 (13.5%) worked part-time, 6 (5.8%) were interns or trainees, 5 (4.8%) were seasonal workers, 3 (2.9%) had a temporary or fixed-term contract and 2 (1%) people selected "other", as they could be self-employed, volunteering or might be retired but working part-time.

Figure 5 Distribution of respondents by role level



Source: own research

In terms of role level, 39 (37.5%) of respondents were entry-level or junior position, 31 (29.8%) were intermediate or experienced, 19 (18.3%) were senior or specialist, 14 (13.5%) worked in a flat structure or with no formal level of hierarchy, and 1 (1%) person selected “other.”

Table 9 Distribution of respondents by length of service

Length of service	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Less than 1 year	28	26.9
1-3 years	27	26.0
4-6 years	18	17.3
7-10 years	12	11.5
More than 10 years	19	18.3

Source: own research

Regarding how long they have been working at their current organization, 28 (26.9%) respondents had worked there for less than 1 year, 27 (26%) for 1-3 years, 18 (17.3%) for 4-6 years, 12 (11.5%) for 7-10 years, and 19 (18.3%) for more than 10 years.

Table 10 Distribution of respondents by organization size

Organization size	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
250+ employees	41	35.6
50-249 employees	27	26.0
10-49 employees	31	29.8
Less than 10 employees	9	8.7

Source: own research

In terms of organization size, 41 (35.6%) respondents worked at organizations with 250 or more employees, 27 (26%) at organizations with 50-249 employees, 31 (29.8%) at organizations with 10-49 employees, and 9 (8.7%) at organizations with fewer than 10 employees.

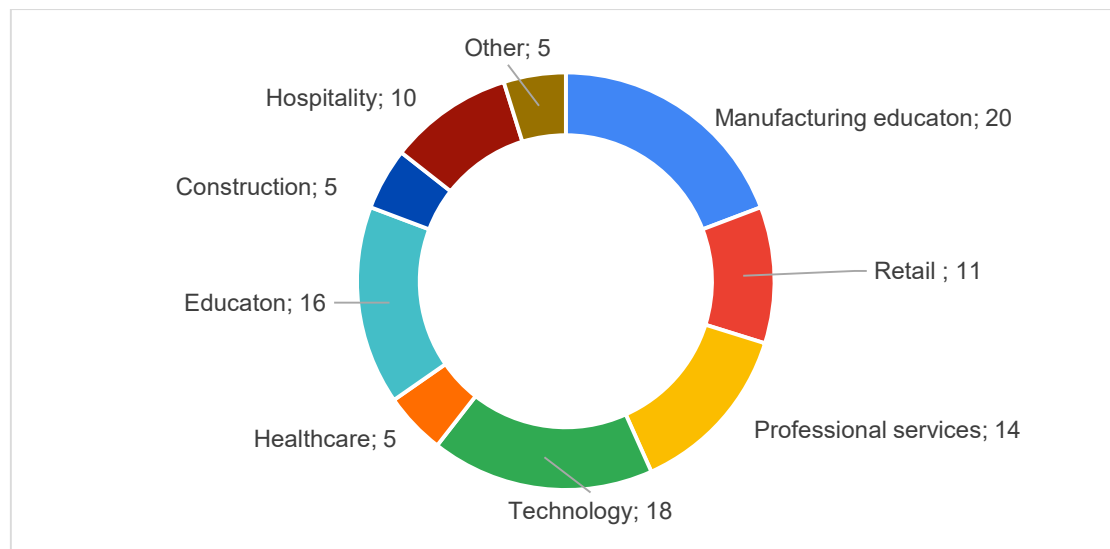
Table 11 Distribution of respondents by geographic scope

Geographic scope	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Locally (city or region)	41	39.4
Nationally (within one country)	39	37.5
Internationally (multiple countries)	24	23.1

Source: own research

Regarding the geographic scope, 41 (39.4%) respondents worked at organizations operating locally (city or region), 39 (37.4%) nationally (within one country) and 24 (23.1%) internationally (multiple countries).

Figure 6 Distribution of respondents by industry, person



Source: own research

Finally, in terms of industry sector, 20 (19.2%) respondents worked in manufacturing, 18 (17.3%) in technology, 16 (15.4%) in education, 14 (13.5%) in professional services, 11 (10.6%) in retail, 10 (9.6%) in hospitality, 5 (4.8%) in construction, 5 (4.8%) in healthcare and 5 (4.8%) in some other field.

4.2. Analysis of descriptive statistics

Before testing the hypotheses, descriptive statistics were calculated for the main variables. The mean shows the average response, while the standard deviation indicates how much responses differ from each other (Cohen - Manion - Morrison 2018). *Table 12* presents the means and

standard deviations for the leadership styles, managerial control and workplace autonomy types, and for performance and well-being.

Among the leadership styles, transactional leadership had the highest mean ($M = 3.49$, $SD = 1.09$), suggesting that reward - based leadership practices are relatively common among the organizations included in the sample. Democratic leadership ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 1.23$) and authoritarian leadership ($M = 3.09$, $SD = 1.29$) were also moderately present. On the other hand, laissez-faire leadership had the lowest mean ($M = 2.34$, $SD = 1.20$), indicating that passive leadership approaches are less common. In addition, the relatively high standard deviation for transformational leadership ($SD = 1.38$) indicates significant variations in the employees' experiences, implying that transformational leadership was strongly perceived in some workplaces but less commonly in others.

Regarding the managerial control mechanisms, outcome control had the highest mean and the smallest standard deviation ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 0.86$). This result suggests that employee performance is primarily evaluated based on measurable results and goal achievement. The relatively low standard deviation also indicates that there is a high degree of agreement among respondents regarding the presence of outcome - based evaluation. Clan control ($M = 3.34$, $SD = 1.26$) and behavior control ($M = 3.40$, $SD = 1.21$) received lower average scores than outcome control ($M = 4.15$) and showed more variation. Clan control had the highest variation ($SD = 1.26$) and the smallest mean ($M = 3.34$), while behavior control had the second smallest mean ($M = 3.40$). This indicates that organizational culture-based control and direct monitoring practices are less consistently applied across organizations compared to outcome control.

Among the workplace autonomy dimensions, work method autonomy had the highest mean ($M = 3.38$, $SD = 1.28$), implying that employees generally have a moderate degree of freedom in deciding how to perform their tasks. Work scheduling autonomy ($M = 3.21$, $SD = 1.00$) and

criteria autonomy ($M = 2.68$, $SD = 1.19$) were perceived as lower. This suggests that employees have less control over when their work is performed and over the criteria used to evaluate their performance. These results may reflect traditional organizational structures in which work schedules and performance standards are determined by management.

Employee performance showed a rather high mean score and a small standard deviation ($M = 3.97$, $SD = 0.83$), indicating that respondents generally evaluated their own performance positively and with a relatively high degree of consistency. Employee well-being received a lower mean score ($M = 3.05$, $SD = 1.12$) and greater variation among the respondents compared to performance. This suggests that while many employees reported positive levels of well-being, others experienced lower levels. The difference between the average performance and well-being scores may indicate that high employee performance does not necessarily go hand in hand with an equally high level of well-being. This finding supports the distinction that performance and well-being are independent yet interrelated concepts, as discussed in the literature review (Lin - Yu - Yi 2014, Van De Voorde - Paauwe - Van Veldhoven 2012, Khoreva - Wechtler 2018).

Table 12 Mean and standard deviation values for all measured variables

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation
Leadership styles		
Authoritarian	3.09	1.29
Democratic	3.19	1.23
Laissez-faire	2.34	1.20
Transformational	2.94	1.38
Transactional	3.49	1.09

Managerial control		
Behavior control	3.40	1.21
Outcome control	4.15	0.86
Clan control	3.34	1.26
Workplace autonomy		
Work method autonomy	3.38	1.28
Work schedule autonomy	3.21	1.00
Work criteria autonomy	2.68	1.19
Performance and well-being		
Performance	3.97	0.83
Well-being	3.05	1.12

Source: own research

4.3. Testing the hypotheses

This section presents the research findings through the previously stated hypotheses. To examine the relationships between the predictors, such as leadership styles, control and autonomy types, and the outcomes, such as performance and well-being, multiple linear regression was used. Separate analyses were conducted for each subgroup, including gender, age group, education level, time spent with the organization, role level and employment status. The unstandardized coefficient (B) indicates the expected change in the outcome for a one-unit increase in a predictor. A positive B means a positive association, a negative B means a negative association. The p-value tests whether this relationship is statistically significant. A p-value lower than .05 indicates that the result is unlikely to be due to coincidence. The lower the p-value, the stronger the evidence is, as $p < .001$ expresses very strong evidence, $p < .01$ represents

strong evidence and $p < .05$ represents moderate evidence. A p-value above .05 means no statistically significant conclusion can be made (Chatterjee - Simonoff 2013).

1. hypothesis: Authoritarian leadership has a more negative effect on well-being for women than for men.

The first hypothesis proposed that authoritarian leadership would have a more negative effect on well-being for women than for men. In order to test this, separate regressions were performed for each gender. The results revealed, as seen in *Table 13*, that authoritarian leadership predicted lower well-being for both women ($B = -0.51$, $p < 0.001$) and men ($B = -0.56$, $p < 0.001$) as well.

Table 13 Regression results for authoritarian leadership predicting well-being, by gender

Leadership style	Gender	B (coefficient)	P-value
Authoritarian	Women	-0.51	< 0.001
	Men	-0.56	< 0.001

Source: own research

In contrast to the hypothesis, the negative effect was somewhat stronger for men ($B = -0.56$) than for women ($B = -0.51$), so it appears that authoritarian leadership harms the well-being of both genders, with men being slightly more affected.

Additional analyses investigated whether the impact of democratic and laissez-faire leadership styles on well-being by gender differs as well. Democratic leadership predicted higher well-being for both men ($B = 0.64$, $p < 0.001$) and women ($B = 0.63$, $p < 0.001$), with nearly identical effect sizes. This suggests that this leadership style benefits everyone's well-being equally. Similarly to authoritarian leadership, as shown in *Table 14*, the small p-values indicate that

these findings are reliable and not due to random coincidence. On the other hand, laissez-faire leadership did not significantly predict well-being for men ($B = 0.11$, $p = 0.147$) nor for women ($B = -0.12$, $p = 0.192$), indicating that this leadership style has no statistically significant effect on employee well-being regardless of gender, as the p-values are larger than the conventional significance level of 0.05.

Table 14 Regression results for leadership styles predicting well-being, by gender

Leadership style	Gender	B (coefficient)	P-value
Authoritarian	Women	-0.51	< 0.001
	Men	-0.56	< 0.001
Democratic	Women	0.63	< 0.001
	Men	0.64	< 0.001
Laissez-faire	Women	-0.12	0.192
	Men	0.11	0.147

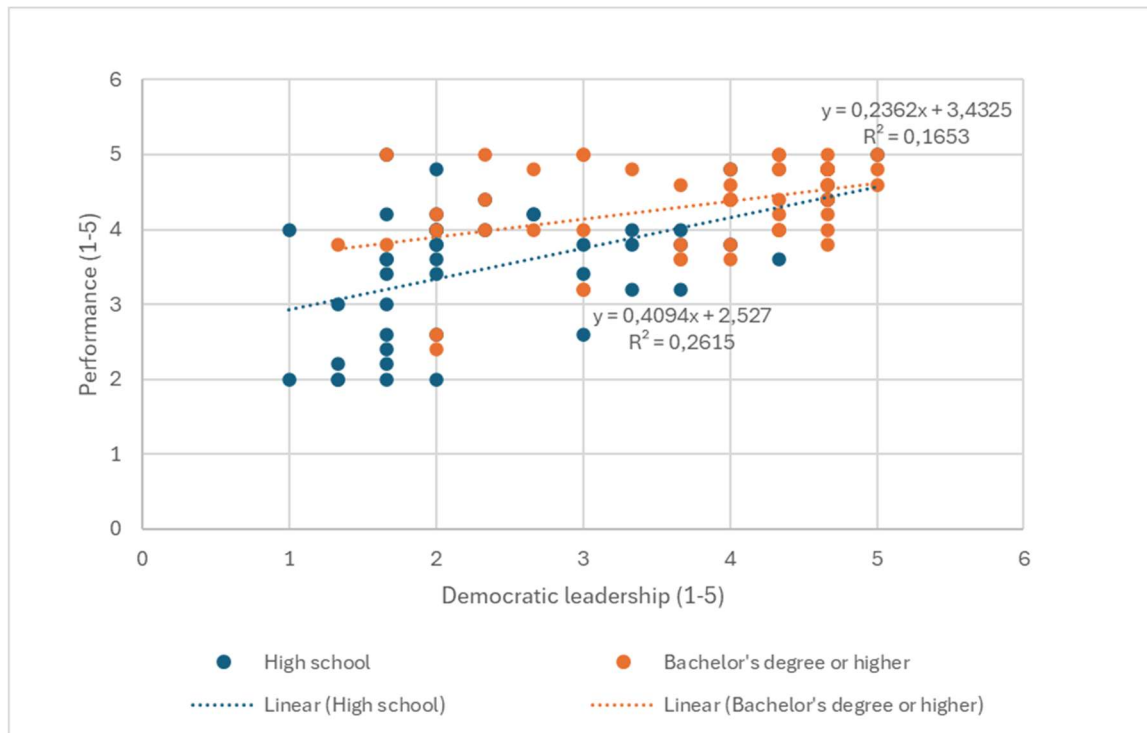
Source: own research

2. hypothesis: Democratic leadership leads to higher performance among employees with a bachelor's degree or higher, than among those with only a high school diploma.

To test this hypothesis, separate regression analyses were executed for employees with a high school diploma and those with a bachelor's degree or higher education. Democratic leadership predicted higher performance for both groups. For employees with a high school diploma, the effect was positive and significant ($B = 0.41$, $p < 0.001$); and for employees with a bachelor's degree or higher, the effect was also positive but weaker ($B = 0.24$, $p = 0.002$). *Figure 7* illustrates the relationship between democratic leadership and performance. Separate trend lines

are shown for high school graduates, with the color blue, and employees with a bachelor's degree or higher, with the color red. High school graduates have a stronger positive association, as demonstrated by the steeper slope.

Figure 7 Democratic leadership predicting performance, by education level



Source: own research

It is also worth examining if the same pattern holds for well-being as well. Separate regression analyses were carried out to test whether democratic leadership leads to higher well-being among high school graduates compared to those with a bachelor's degree or higher education. Democratic leadership significantly predicted higher well-being for both groups, as displayed in *Table 15*. For employees with a high school diploma, the effect was strong and significant ($B = 0.77, p < 0.001$). For employees with a bachelor's degree or higher achieved educational level, the effect was also significant but weaker ($B = 0.62, p < 0.001$).

Table 15 Democratic leadership predicting well-being, by education level

Highest education	B (coefficient)	P-value
High school	0.77	< 0.001
Bachelor's degree or higher	0.62	< 0.001

Source: own research

3. hypothesis: Transactional leadership has a stronger positive effect on performance for employees who have been with the company for 3 years or less than for those who have been with the company for more than 4 years.

This hypothesis proposed that transactional leadership would have a stronger positive effect on performance for newer employees than for more experienced employees. For newer employees who have been with the company for 3 years or less, transactional leadership negatively predicted performance ($B = -0.39$). For more experienced employees who have been with the company for more than 4 years, no meaningful effect was found ($B = -0.05$). Therefore, the results showed the opposite pattern of what was expected. The analysis also presented that transactional leadership was significant for newer employees ($p < 0.001$), but not for the experienced ones ($p = 0.639$), as it is shown in Table 16.

Table 16 Transactional and transformational leadership predicting performance by time with the company

Leadership style	Time with the company	B (coefficient)	P-value
Transactional	Short (≤ 3 years)	-0.39	< 0.001
	Long (> 4 years)	-0.05	0.639
Transformational	Short (≤ 3 years)	0.30	< 0.001
	Long (> 4 years)	0.24	0.004

Source: own research

Transformational leadership, in addition to transactional leadership, is also worth examining in this regard. Transformational leadership positively predicted higher performance for both categories; however, the effect was higher among newer employees ($B = 0.30$, $p < 0.001$) than for those with more experience ($B = 0.24$, $p = 0.004$).

4. hypothesis: Outcome control is more positively associated with performance for full-time employees than for workers with other employment statuses.

For this hypothesis, which proposed that outcome control would be more positively associated with performance for full-time employees than for employees with other employment statuses, separate regression analyses were made for full-time employees ($n = 75$) and all the other employment statuses combined ($n = 29$). Outcome control positively predicted performance ($B = 0.32$, $p = 0.005$) among full-time employees, but showed no meaningful effect for employees with other employment statuses, such as part-time, seasonal, intern or temporary ($B = -0.09$, $p = 0.630$). The following *Table 17* contains the relevant information as well. This result indicates

that outcome control is effective for full-time employees but overall, not helpful for the individuals in other employment arrangements.

Table 17 Outcome control predicting performance, by employment status

Employment status	B (coefficient)	P-value
Full-time	0.32	0.005
Other employment statuses	-0.09	0.630

Source: own research

To examine whether outcome control would be more positively associated with well-being for full-time employees than for other employment statuses, a separate regression analyses were also made. For full-time employees, as *Table 18* below also indicates, outcome control showed a positive but minor effect on well-being ($B = 0.24$, $p = 0.123$). For employees with other employment statuses, no significant effect was found ($B = -0.07$, $p = 0.789$). This implies that regardless of employment status outcome control may have an influence performance, but has no effect on the employee's well-being.

Table 18 Outcome control predicting well-being, by employment status

Employment status	B (coefficient)	P-value
Full-time	0.24	0.123
Other employment statuses	-0.07	0.789

Source: own research

5. hypothesis: Employees who perceive high levels of clan control report higher well-being than employees who perceive high levels of behavior control or outcome control.

This hypothesis proposed that employees who perceive high levels of clan control report higher well-being compared to those employees who perceive high levels of behavior control or outcome control. A multiple regression analysis was done to verify this with the three control types as variables of well-being. Clan control positively predicted well-being ($B = 0.23$, $p = 0.005$), as indicated in *Table 19*. However, there are no statistically significant effects for behavior control ($B = -0.14$, $p = 0.126$) and outcome control ($B = 0.11$, $p = 0.196$) in connection with well-being. These findings demonstrate that out of the three control types, clan control is the only one that meaningfully contributes to employee well-being.

Table 19 Control types predicting well-being

Control type	B (coefficient)	P-value
Behavior control	-0.14	0.126
Outcome control	0.11	0.196
Clan control	0.23	0.005

Source: own research

To examine whether clan control also predicts higher performance than behavior or outcome control, a similar multiple regression analysis was conducted. The results revealed that all three control types significantly predicted performance. As shown in *Table 20* below, clan control had the highest positive effect ($B = 0.27$, $p < 0.001$), followed by outcome control ($B = 0.23$, $p = 0.008$), and behavior control showed a smaller negative effect ($B = -0.14$, $p = 0.038$).

Table 20 Control types predicting performance

Control type	B (coefficient)	P-value
Behavior control	-0.14	0.038
Outcome control	0.23	0.008
Clan control	0.27	< 0.001

Source: own research

These results indicate that although clan control is beneficial for both well-being and performance, outcome control also improves performance in contrast to well-being, and behavior control appears to slightly decrease performance.

6. hypothesis: Work method autonomy is more strongly associated with performance for senior or specialist employees than for entry-level, intermediate or flat structure employees.

This hypothesis proposed that work method autonomy would be more strongly associated with performance for senior or specialist employees than for the other role levels. Separate regression analyses were conducted for the four examined role levels: entry-level, intermediate, senior and no formal level/flat structure. The results showed that work method autonomy significantly predicted performance for all four groups, as reported in *Table 21*. However, the strongest effect was found for employees in flat structures ($B = 0.54$, $p = 0.038$), followed by intermediate ($B = 0.30$, $p = 0.019$), then entry-level ($B = 0.25$, $p = 0.015$), and lastly for senior employees ($B = 0.24$, $p = 0.013$). This suggests that work method autonomy is the most beneficial for employees in non-hierarchical, flat organizational structures.

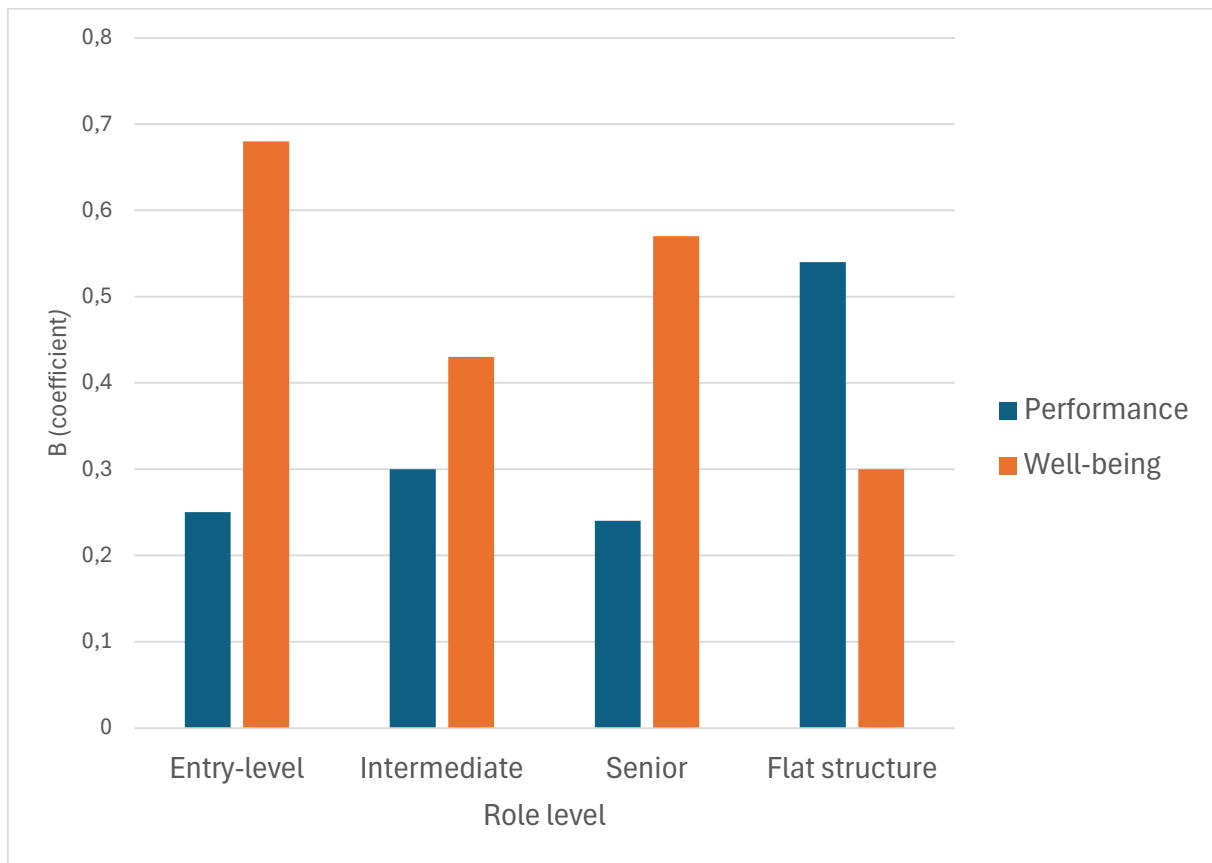
Table 21 Work method autonomy predicting performance

Role level	B (coefficient)	P-value
Entry-level / Junior	0.25	0.015
Intermediate / Experienced	0.30	0.019
Senior / Specialist	0.24	0.013
No formal level / Flat structure	0.54	0.038

Source: own research

To examine whether work method autonomy predicts well-being differently across role levels, separate regression analyses were conducted for each group. Results showed that, as presented in *Figure 8* below, work method autonomy significantly predicted well-being for entry-level ($B = 0.68$, $p < 0.001$), senior ($B = 0.57$, $p < 0.001$) and intermediate employees ($B = 0.43$, $p = 0.003$), but not for employees in flat structures ($B = 0.30$, $p = 0.418$).

Figure 8 Work method autonomy predicting performance and well-being by role level



Source: own research

The pattern for performance was different from the pattern for well-being. Flat structure employees had the strongest increase in performance ($B = 0.54$), but no significant effect in their well-being was observed. Senior-level employees had the weakest performance score ($B = 0.24$), while entry-level employees had the strongest well-being effect ($B = 0.68$). This suggests that work method autonomy supports performance in flat structures and promotes well-being among entry-level employees.

7. hypothesis: Work schedule autonomy has a stronger positive effect on well-being for employees aged 35–54 than for those aged 18–34 or 55 and above.

The last hypothesis suggested that work schedule autonomy would have a stronger positive effect on well-being for employees aged between 35–54 years than any other age group. According to the results, work schedule autonomy positively predicted well-being for middle-aged employees between the ages of 35 and 54 ($B = 0.78, p < 0.001$). A significant, but weaker effect was found among young employees between the ages of 18 and 34 ($B = 0.50, p < 0.001$). For older employees, work schedule autonomy had a negative effect on well-being, but it was not statistically significant ($B = -0.21, p = 0.759$). These results imply that work schedule autonomy is beneficial for young and middle-aged employees, with no significant benefit for older ones.

To compare work schedule and work criteria autonomy, as summarized in *Table 22*, separate regression analyses were conducted for each age group. For young employees, both autonomy types had similar positive effects on well-being, as presented in the table below. For middle-aged employees, work schedule autonomy had a stronger effect than work criteria autonomy; and for older employees, neither autonomy type significantly predicted well-being. These results suggest that while both forms of autonomy are equally advantageous for younger employees, work scheduling autonomy is especially advantageous for middle-aged workers.

Table 22 Work schedule and work criteria autonomy predicting well-being, by age group

Age group	Work schedule autonomy		Work criteria autonomy	
	B (coefficient)	P-value	B (coefficient)	P-value
Young (18-34)	0.50	< 0.001	0.54	< 0.001
Middle (35-54)	0.78	< 0.001	0.67	< 0.001
Older (55+)	-0.21	0.759	0.22	0.470

Source: own research

5. DISCUSSION

This chapter interprets the main findings of the research presented in the previous chapter in relation to the proposed hypotheses. Each hypothesis is reviewed based on the regression results presented in the previous chapter, with reference to the relevant literature. A summary of whether each hypothesis was supported or not is presented in *Table 23* below. The chapter also presents the future research opportunities connected to this research.

5.1. Interpretation of the results

The first hypothesis, which assumed that authoritarian leadership would have a more negative effect on well-being for women than for men, was not supported. Authoritarian leadership reduced well-being among women and men as well, but it had a slightly stronger negative effect for men ($B = -0.56$) than for women ($B = -0.51$). This style's overall negative impact could be due to its controlling and dictatorial characteristics, along with the negative work atmosphere associated with this type (Hopkins 2022, Cherry 2006, Dobák - Antal 2016). Democratic leadership on the other hand equally benefited the well-being of both men ($B = 0.64$) and women ($B = 0.63$), supporting the approach that this leadership style fosters positive work environments, encourages mutual respect and cooperative participation, which contributes to social well-being and positive self-worth (Woods 2021). The laissez-faire leadership style did not show any significant effect on well-being for either gender.

The second hypothesis, which predicted that democratic leadership would lead to higher performance for employees with a bachelor's degree or higher, was not supported. It had a stronger positive effect on performance for high school graduates ($B = 0.41$) than for those who participated in higher education, so with a bachelor's degree or higher ($B = 0.24$). This finding

suggests that employees with lower education may value and respond more positively, possibly because democratic leadership promotes equal participation in teamwork and involvement in decision-making, which they may not typically experience in many workplaces (Cherry 2006, Hopkins 2022, Al Rahbi - Khalid - Khan 2017). The pattern for well-being was similar, as it was higher among high school graduates compared to more educated employees. For similar reasons as stated above, as democratic leadership creates an environment that values both individuality and a sense of belonging, high school graduates, who may have fewer opportunities to experience supportive work environments, may benefit more in terms of well-being (Woods 2021). This result is also consistent with Hackman and Oldham's (1976) Job Characteristics Theory. Employee participation practices usually have a stronger motivational effect when they differ from employees' usual work experiences. For employees with lower levels of education, democratic leadership may represent a more noticeable and meaningful change than for highly educated employees who may encounter participative practices more frequently in their work environments (Hackman - Oldham 1976).

The third hypothesis, which predicted that transactional leadership would have a stronger positive effect on performance for newer employees, was not supported. Transactional leadership actually negatively predicted performance for newer employees ($B = -0.39$) and showed no effect on more experienced employees ($B = -0.05$). This could suggest that using rewards, punishments and other types of exchanges to encourage compliance may be discouraging for employees who are still learning organizational norms and building their competence to perform their tasks properly (Bakacsi 2004, Odumeru - Ogbonna 2013, Alharbi 2021). This finding is consistent with Self - Determination Theory, which suggests that externally regulated motivation may undermine internal motivation and performance, especially for employees who are still developing their competences in a new role and adapting to organizational norms (Ryan - Deci 2000). In contrast, transformational leadership positively

predicted performance for both groups, with a stronger effect for newer employees ($B = 0.30$) than for experienced ones ($B = 0.24$). This could be explained by the fact that transformational leaders are aware of each individual's strengths and weaknesses, so they purposefully assign projects that would improve their performance (Odumeru - Ogbonna 2013).

The fourth hypothesis examined if outcome control is more strongly associated with performance for full-time employees than for workers with other employment statuses. This hypothesis was supported, as outcome control was more positively associated with performance for full-time employees ($B = 0.32$) and had no significant effect for the other workers ($B = -0.09$). This could indicate that, since compensation is directly linked to performance outcomes, full-time employees may feel more motivated to achieve targets (Anderson - Oliver 1987). However, outcome control significantly predicted well-being neither for full-time employees nor for individuals with other employment statuses.

The fifth hypothesis, which stated that employees who perceive high levels of clan control report higher well-being than employees who perceive high levels of behavior control or outcome control, was supported. Clan control was the only control type that significantly predicted well-being ($B = 0.23$), while behavior and outcome control showed no significant effects. This implies the importance of common values and understanding, mutual trust, common interests and supportive culture for employee well-being (Sihag - Rijdsdijk 2018). For performance, all three control types were significant. While clan and outcome control improved performance, behavior control slightly reduced it.

The sixth hypothesis proposed that work method autonomy is more strongly associated with performance for senior or specialist employees than for entry-level, intermediate or flat structure employees. This hypothesis was not supported. Work method autonomy benefited performance most strongly for employees in flat structures ($B = 0.54$), not for senior employees ($B = 0.24$). A possible reason for this is that in flat organizational structures, for example in

companies that adopted the laissez-faire leadership style, there is no formal hierarchy to provide guidance and monitoring from the higher levels (Cherry 2006). Therefore, in flat structures, high work method autonomy becomes necessary for reaching performance goals. Work method autonomy improved well-being most for entry-level employees, followed by seniors, then intermediate-level employees. Entry-level employees may have less control over their work compared to intermediate or senior colleagues, so work method autonomy gives them a sense of ownership, which may explain why its effect on well-being is strongest for this group (Wheatley 2017).

The seventh hypothesis claimed that work schedule autonomy has a stronger positive effect on well-being for employees aged 35–54 than for those aged 18–34 or 55 and above. This hypothesis was supported: work schedule autonomy had the strongest positive effect on well-being for middle-aged employees ($B = 0.78$), followed by young employees ($B = 0.50$), with no significant effect for older employees. This may be attributed to the fact that middle-aged employees often have to balance work and family obligations, such as taking care of children or aging parents. High schedule autonomy allows them to control the timing, the priority and the order of their work activities, therefore giving more flexibility to balance those demands, which promotes positive attitudes and well-being. (Breugh 1985, Breugh 1999, Wheatley 2017). Work criteria autonomy showed a similar but a slightly weaker pattern, benefiting young and middle-aged employees as well.

Table 23 Decision on the hypotheses

Hypothesis	Supported or not supported
1. <i>hypothesis</i> : Authoritarian leadership has a more negative effect on well-being for women than for men.	Not supported
2. <i>hypothesis</i> : Democratic leadership leads to higher performance among employees with a bachelor's degree or higher, than among those with only a high school diploma.	Not supported
3. <i>hypothesis</i> : Transactional leadership has a stronger positive effect on performance for employees who have been with the company for 3 years or less than for those who have been with the company for more than 4 years.	Not supported
4. <i>hypothesis</i> : Outcome control is more positively associated with performance for full-time employees than for workers with other employment statuses.	Supported
5. <i>hypothesis</i> : Employees who perceive high levels of clan control report higher well-being than employees who perceive high levels of behavior control or outcome control.	Supported
6. <i>hypothesis</i> : Work method autonomy is more strongly associated with performance for senior or specialist employees than for entry-level, intermediate or flat structure employees.	Not supported
7. <i>hypothesis</i> : Work scheduling autonomy has a stronger positive effect on well-being for employees aged 35–54 than for those aged 18–34 or 55 and above.	Supported

Source: own edition

Taken together, these results suggest that leadership styles, managerial control mechanisms and workplace autonomy practices do not affect all employees equally. Instead, their effects depend on employee characteristics such as gender, age, education, years of employment, role level and employment status.

5.2. Future research directions

Based on the limitations and the results discussed above, there are several directions for future research.

Future research could use larger samples and probability sampling methods to improve generalizability, as non-probability sampling reduces the representativeness of the results (Vas 2021). Larger sample sizes would also provide more reliable subgroup analyses, since some subgroups in the study, such as older employees or those in flat organizational structures, were too small to draw definitive conclusions (Sapkota 2024). Furthermore, the use of longitudinal methods would allow for a more accurate examination of causal relationships between variables, which cannot be determined using cross-sectional research (Vas 2021). Future research could also address common method bias by collecting data from multiple sources, for example by combining employee self-reports with supervisor ratings or objective performance indicators; or by measuring variables at different points in time (Podsakoff et al. 2003).

Combining quantitative questionnaires with qualitative interviews or focus groups would allow researchers to investigate the underlying reasons behind the observed patterns and give more insight into statistical results (Vas 2021). As Sapkota (2024) noted in their work, quantitative research can oversimplify complex social patterns and does not necessarily reflect employees' actual experiences accurately. Qualitative approaches would allow researchers to explore the underlying reasons behind the observed patterns and provide deeper insights into how employees perceive leadership, control and autonomy in their day-to-day work (Sapkota 2024). Additional contextual factors could also be examined. This study did not take into account organizational culture, industry-specific conditions or national cultural differences. Comparative studies involving different industries, organizational sizes or countries could provide insight into whether the findings are generally applicable or whether contextual factors

moderate the effects of leadership, control and autonomy on employee outcomes (Sapkota 2024, Vas 2021).

Given the increasing adoption of hybrid and remote work arrangements, future research could investigate how leadership and autonomy function in these contexts. Generational differences, such as Generation Z, Millennials and Generation X, could also be examined to understand whether different age groups respond differently to leadership styles and autonomy practices.

6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The thesis examined how different leadership styles, managerial control and workplace autonomy types influence employee performance and well-being, with a focus on subgroup differences by gender, age, highest education, role level, employment status and time spent with the organization.

The literature review covered the five leadership styles: authoritarian, democratic, laissez-faire, transformational and transactional leadership. Next, the three managerial control types were presented: behavior control, outcome control and clan control. Afterwards, the three dimensions of workplace autonomy were addressed: work method, work schedule and work criteria autonomy. In the final part of the review, the relationships between the different leadership styles, managerial control and workplace autonomy, and the outcomes of employee performance and well-being were discussed.

The main findings of the research include that authoritarian leadership negatively affected the well-being of both men and women, while democratic leadership improved both genders' well-being equally and improved performance more for high school graduates than for employees with a bachelor's degree or higher. Newer employees performed worse under transactional leadership, while newer and older employees performed better under transformational leadership. Outcome control had no effect on well-being, but it improved performance for full-time employees. Behavior control had a slightly negative effect on performance among the examined workers, and out of the three control types, only clan control improved well-being. Work method autonomy was most beneficial for performance among the employees whose organization has no formal levels, and for well-being among entry-level employees. Work schedule and criteria autonomy was most beneficial in terms of well-being for middle-aged employees. In summary, for achieving better performance, the best leadership style is

transformational, the best managerial control is outcome control and the best workplace autonomy is high work method autonomy. For employee well-being, the best leadership style is transformational, the best managerial control is clan control and the best workplace autonomy is high work schedule autonomy.

The gap between the average performance ($M = 3.97$) and the average well-being ($M = 3.05$) suggests that employees may be performing well while experiencing only a moderate level of well-being. The observation that some practices improve performance without affecting well-being indicates a larger challenge for organizations, and it is a practical concern that managers should consider when designing performance management systems.

There are also limitations connected to the study that were mentioned. Based on Sapkota's (2024) study about the critique of quantitative research, quantitative methods depend on strict assumptions. This approach can reduce complex social circumstances into simple terms. Also using standard Likert scale questions may not accurately represent the employees' true experiences with leadership, control and autonomy. Secondly, quantitative research usually transforms complex human behavior into numbers, which could question the validity and reliability of the results. This study did not take into account important contextual factors like organizational culture or industry-specific conditions that could impact the findings. Thirdly, the small sample size and the use of convenience sampling limit generalizability. The results may not apply to other organizational contexts or employee groups (Sapkota 2024). The use of self-reported data gathered through a single questionnaire also creates the risk of common method bias, where relationships between variables may be influenced by the method of data collection rather than actual relationships between the concepts (Podsakoff et al. 2003). Finally, the cross-sectional design of this research can only demonstrate the relationships between variables but cannot determine cause-and-effect relationships, since the data were collected at only one time (Vas 2021).

Future research could use larger samples and probability sampling methods to improve generalizability because non-probability sampling reduces the representativeness of findings (Vas 2021). Larger sample sizes would also enable more reliable subgroup analyses, since some subgroups in this study, such as older employees or those in flat organizational structures, were too small to draw definitive conclusions (Sapkota 2024). Longitudinal methods would also allow for a more accurate examination of causal relationships, which cross-sectional research cannot (Vas 2021). Common method bias could also be addressed by collecting data from multiple sources, such as combining employee self-reports with supervisor ratings or objective performance indicators, or by measuring variables at different points in time (Podsakoff et al. 2003). Combining quantitative questionnaires with qualitative interviews or focus groups would allow researchers to investigate the underlying reasons behind the perceived patterns and give more insight into statistical results (Vas 2021). Qualitative approaches would also allow researchers to explore how employees perceive leadership, control and autonomy in their day-to-day work (Sapkota 2024).

As demonstrated by the evaluation of the hypotheses, different employees need different organizational approaches. Leadership, control and autonomy practices that work for one individual or group may be less effective or damaging for another. A research - based approach that adapts to the different needs of the employees may be the most effective way to improve both employee performance and well-being. Overall, the results indicate the importance of aligning organizational practices with the characteristics and needs of different employee groups in order to create workplaces that support both performance and employee well-being.

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8. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: The research questionnaire

The influence of leadership styles, managerial control and workplace autonomy on employee performance and well-being in MNCs and SMEs

Dear Participant,

This survey is part of a master's thesis research examining how leadership styles, managerial control and workplace autonomy influence employee performance and well-being in multinational corporations (MNCs) and small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Your participation is voluntary and all responses are anonymous. By completing this survey, you consent to participate in this research. The survey will take approximately 8 minutes to complete.

Thank you for your time and contribution to this research!

What is your gender?

- Woman
- Man
- Other
- I prefer not to answer

What is your age?

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55+

What is your highest level of education?

- High school
- Bachelor's degree

- Master's degree
- Doctorate
- Other

What is your employment status?

- Full-time
- Part-time
- Temporary / Fixed-term contract
- Seasonal
- Intern / Trainee
- Other

Which of the following best describes your role level?

- Entry-level / Junior
- Intermediate / Experienced
- Senior / Specialist
- No formal level / Flat structure
- Other

How long have you been working at your current organization?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-3 years
- 4-6 years
- 7-10 years
- More than 10 years

How many employees does your organization have?

- <10
- 10–49
- 50–249
- 250+

Where does your organization primarily operate?

- Locally (city or region)
- Nationally (within one country)
- Internationally (multiple countries)

Which industry sector best describes your organization?

- Manufacturing
- Retail
- Professional Services
- Technology
- Healthcare
- Education
- Construction
- Hospitality
- Other

The following questions are about the leadership styles used by your manager or supervisor.

Please rate each statement from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

- My leader makes decisions without consulting me or my team.
- My leader expects strict compliance to their instructions.
- My leader closely controls how I complete my tasks and disciplines me for mistakes.
- My leader encourages team members to participate in important decisions.
- My leader asks for my input before making decisions that affect my work.
- My leader values open discussion and different opinions within the team.
- My leader avoids making decisions and leaves problems unsolved.
- My leader gives me little guidance or direction for my work.
- My leader is absent or unavailable when I need support or feedback.
- My leader inspires me with a clear vision for the future.
- My leader encourages me to think creatively and try new approaches.
- My leader shows genuine care for my personal development.
- My leader makes clear what rewards I will receive if I meet my targets.
- My leader monitors my work closely and corrects me when I make mistakes.
- My leader provides recognition or bonuses when I achieve my goals.

The following questions are about how your manager or supervisor monitors, evaluates, and guides your work. Please rate each statement from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

Behavioral Control

- My manager or supervisor closely monitors how I perform my daily tasks.
- There are detailed procedures and rules that guide how I do my work.
- I am required to get approval from my manager or supervisor before making important decisions.
- My performance is evaluated based on specific, measurable results I achieve.
- I have clearly defined performance targets or goals that I am expected to meet.
- My manager or supervisor evaluates my performance based primarily on whether I achieve my targets.
- There is a strong sense of shared values and beliefs among members of my team.
- I feel a strong personal association with the goals and mission of my organization.
- Our team's shared values strongly influence how we behave at work.

The following questions are about how much freedom and control you have over your work. Please rate each statement from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

- I am allowed to decide how to go about getting my job done (the methods to use).
- I am able to choose the way to go about my job (the procedures to utilize).
- I am free to choose the method(s) to use in carrying out my work.
- I have control over the scheduling of my work.
- I have some control over the sequencing of my work activities (when I do what).
- My job is such that I can decide when to do particular work activities.
- My job allows me to modify the normal way we are evaluated so that I can emphasize some aspects of my job and play down others.
- I am able to modify what my job objectives are (what I am supposed to accomplish).
- I have some control over what I am supposed to accomplish (what my supervisor sees as my job objectives).

The following questions are about your own work performance

- I complete my work tasks efficiently and to a high standard.
- I meet or exceed the performance expectations set for my role.

- I contribute effectively to my team's or organization's goals.
- I handle unexpected problems or challenges at work effectively.
- I manage my time well and prioritize tasks effectively.

The following questions are about how you feel about your work and your job.

- I feel satisfied and content with my job overall.
- I feel mentally and emotionally drained by my work.
- I feel energized and engaged while performing my work duties.
- I feel a sense of accomplishment and purpose from my work.
- I feel anxious or stressed about my work outside of working hours.