

Mekelle University



College Of Business and Economics School of Management And Department Of Management

*The effect of Leadership Styles on Organizational Performance in Tanqua
Milash Wereda, Central Zone, Tigray, Ethiopia.*

**A Thesis Submitted to the Department of Management in Partial
Fulfilment Of the Requirements for The Degree of The Masters in Business
Administration (MBA):**

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Mekelle, Ethiopia**

DECLARATION

The thesis entitled “*The effect of Leadership Styles on Organizational Performance in Tanqua Milash Wereda, Central Zone, Tigray, Ethiopia*”, is an original work and hasn’t been presented for the award of any other Degree, Diploma or Fellowship in any other university and that all the sources of materials used for the thesis have been dully acknowledged.

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Date _____

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this thesis entitled “*The effect of Leadership Styles on Organizational Performance in Tanqua Milash Wereda, Central Zone, Tigray, Ethiopia.*” submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Master of Business administration Degree to the College of Business and Economics, Mekelle University, through the Department of Management, done by Mr Gebreslassie Hailemariam Girmay Id No :CBE/ PE /ABIAD /MBA /0011/12 is an authentic work carried out by him under our guidance. The matter embodied in this thesis has not been submitted earlier for award of any degree or diploma to the best of our knowledge and belief.

Principal Advisor: Gebrekiros Hagos (Assistant professor)

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Date: _____

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

Wereda – an administrative unit in the Ethiopian government structure

HRM – Human Resource Management

KPI – Key Performance Indicators

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

M&E – Monitoring and Evaluation

GoE – Government of Ethiopia

SPSS – Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

MA – Master of Arts

MBA – Master of Business Administration

Q&A – Question and Answer

Abstract

This study investigates the effect of leadership styles on organizational performance in Tanqua Milash Wereda, a newly established administrative unit in Tigray, Ethiopia. Given its nascent stage and challenges like resource constraints, political interference, and workforce shortages, effective leadership is crucial for service delivery and sustainable development. The research used a combination of methods to gather information, collecting numerical data from 215 structured questionnaires and personal insights from 18 semi-structured interviews, while looking at six types of leadership: autocratic, transactional, transformational, democratic, charismatic, and laissez-faire. Key findings indicate a predominant reliance on autocratic leadership, with 77.4% of respondents reporting exclusion from decision-making. This leadership style strongly correlated with poor organizational performance, evidenced by critically low employee motivation (78.3% negative perception) and minimal recognition of staff contributions (82.1% negative perception). Transformational and democratic styles, while linked to higher performance in literature, were largely absent in practice. Qualitative data further highlighted systemic barriers including inadequate leadership training, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and political interventions hindering good governance. The study contributes empirical evidence on leadership dynamics in newly formed Ethiopian weredas, addressing a significant research gap. It highlights the serious problems caused by strict control in areas with limited resources and suggests practical solutions like leadership training programs, reforms for involving people in decision-making, and changes in policies to reduce political interference. Ultimately, this research emphasizes the need for a systemic shift toward adaptive leadership approaches to enhance organizational effectiveness, employee satisfaction, and public service delivery in Tanqua Milash Wereda, offering a framework for similar developing contexts.

Keywords: *Leadership Styles, Organizational Performance, Autocratic Leadership, Transformational Leadership, Public Service Delivery, Ethiopia, Good Governance.*

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Leadership is consistently identified as a fundamental driver of organizational success and adaptability, particularly in dynamic and complex environments (Kenton, 2023). It involves the strategic influence exerted by individuals to guide groups towards shared objectives, thereby facilitating growth and navigating impediments (Meuser & Smallfield, 2023). In contemporary organizations, effective leadership is paramount for cultivating a productive work culture, enhancing employee motivation, optimizing resource allocation, and ultimately bolstering overall organizational performance (Elbahnasawy & Ayoub, 2021).

The academic discourse and practical application of leadership distinguish various styles, each carrying unique implications for organizational outcomes. Key leadership typologies include autocratic, transactional, transformational, democratic, charismatic, and laissez-faire. Recent studies highlight the significant impact of these styles on metrics such as employee job satisfaction, commitment, innovation, and service delivery effectiveness (Afolabi & Idemudia, 2021; Nyamongo & Siringi, 2022). For instance, research in the public sector in developing contexts demonstrates that transformational leadership tends to foster higher levels of employee engagement, creativity, and improved service delivery (Elbahnasawy & Ayoub, 2021; Nyamongo & Siringi, 2022), whereas a predominant reliance on autocratic or laissez-faire approaches often correlates with poor performance, low employee engagement, and reduced innovation (Tenney, 2024). Furthermore, ethical leadership, which emphasizes transparency and collaboration, is increasingly recognized for its positive influence on public sector performance, mediating issues related to organizational politics (Ikeanyibe & Ukah, 2022; Taimour, 2024). Employee motivation, a crucial component of organizational performance, is also significantly influenced by leadership style and organizational culture (Pasaribu, 2021).

Organizational performance, in the public sector, extends beyond financial indicators to encompass the efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of public service delivery, as well as citizen satisfaction and institutional accountability (Channa & Faguet, 2025; United Nations, 2024). In developing nations, public sector entities frequently contend with an intricate array of challenges, including endemic resource scarcity, weak institutional frameworks, persistent bureaucratic

inefficiencies, and considerable political interference (Onyekwere et al., 2023; Sebő, 2022). In such environments, the leadership capacity to navigate these hurdles, inspire teams, and implement sound strategies is indispensable for achieving good governance and sustainable development objectives (Modise & Raga, 2023).

Ethiopia, in line with broader decentralization trends across Africa, has pursued policies aimed at strengthening local governance through the establishment and empowerment of administrative units like weredas (districts) (Ethiopian Statistical Service, 2023; Mohammed et al., 2024). This decentralization agenda seeks to bring government services closer to citizens and enhance accountability (Channa & Faguet, 2025). However, the implementation of decentralization often introduces its own set of challenges at the local level, such as insufficient financial resources, institutional capacity gaps, political patronage, and an over-reliance on central government directives, which can impede effective service delivery (Channa & Faguet, 2025; Sabinet African Journals, 2024).

Tanqua Milash Wereda, a newly established administrative unit within the Central Zone of Tigray, Ethiopia, serves as a pertinent case study within this context. Its recent formation, coupled with the prevailing challenges typical of nascent public administrative bodies—including the need to build administrative structures, manage limited human and financial resources, and contend with potential political interventions—renders effective leadership particularly critical. The leadership styles adopted by its administrators directly influence the wereda's ability to overcome initial operational difficulties, deliver essential public services, foster employee morale, and ultimately achieve its mandate. Despite the crucial role of leadership in these contexts, there remains a discernible void in contemporary, context-specific research investigating the prevalent leadership styles and their subsequent impact on organizational performance within newly formed administrative units in Ethiopia. This study endeavors to bridge this research gap by rigorously examining the interplay between leadership styles and organizational performance in Tanqua Milash Wereda.

1.2. Statement of the problem

The efficacy of public administration is profoundly shaped by the quality of its leadership (Kenton, 2023; Meuser & Smallfield, 2023). In Tanqua Milash Wereda, a newly established administrative unit within the Central Zone of Tigray, Ethiopia, the nascent stage of its formation presents inherent good governance challenges. As a district recently demarcated from parts of Tanqua Abergelle and Degua Temben, Tanqua Milash faces complex issues including the integration of diverse resources, the coordination of newly assembled teams, and the establishment of robust public service delivery mechanisms. These foundational challenges unequivocally demand adaptive and effective leadership styles to ensure smooth administrative operations and optimal organizational performance (Channa & Faguet, 2025; Mohammed et al., 2024).

However, current research on leadership styles within public administration in Tanqua Milash Wereda, particularly in the context of newly formed districts in Ethiopia, remains notably limited. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many leaders in such formative environments often lack formal training in contemporary leadership theories and practices, frequently defaulting to traditional hierarchical approaches (Onyekwere et al., 2023; Sabinet African Journals, 2024). This reliance may not align with modern good governance imperatives, which prioritize participatory decision-making and accountability. Consequently, issues such as employee dissatisfaction, low motivation, and inefficiencies in service delivery are commonly observed and are frequently linked to ineffective leadership practices (Pasaribu, 2021; Tenney, 2024). Without empirical data specifically elucidating how various leadership styles (transformational, transactional, democratic, autocratic, charismatic, and laissez-faire) impact organizational performance in Tanqua Milash Wereda, policymakers lack the evidence-based insights necessary to develop and implement targeted and effective leadership development strategies.

This study aims to address this critical knowledge gap by systematically investigating the relationship between different leadership styles and organizational performance in Tanqua Milash Wereda. By exploring how these distinct leadership approaches influence key indicators such as employee motivation, job satisfaction, and overall organizational effectiveness, this research will provide practical and contextually relevant insights essential for bolstering local good governance and improving public service delivery.

1.3. Research Questions

To guide this investigation into the effect of leadership styles on organizational performance in Tanqua Milash Wereda, the study will address the following core research questions:

1. What are the **predominant leadership styles** observed among leaders in Tanqua Milash Wereda's administrative sector offices?
2. How do these identified leadership styles **correlate with various indicators of organizational performance** (e.g., efficiency, service delivery quality)?
3. How do workers' views on their leaders' efficacy affect their job satisfaction and motivation?
4. Based on the findings, what are the **key recommendations for leadership development** and the integration of diverse leadership styles to enhance organizational performance and good governance in Tanqua Milash Wereda?

1.4. Research Objectives

1.4.1. General Objective

The overarching objective of this study is to thoroughly investigate the **effect of various leadership styles on organizational performance** within the administrative sector offices of Tanqua Milash Wereda, Tigray, Ethiopia.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives

To achieve the general objective, this study will pursue the following specific objectives:

- **To identify and characterize the predominant leadership styles** currently practiced by administrators and officials in Tanqua Milash Wereda.
- **To analyze the correlation between identified leadership styles and key organizational performance indicators**, including efficiency in service delivery and resource utilization.
- **To evaluate employees' perceptions of their leaders' effectiveness and its impact on their job satisfaction and motivation** within the wereda's administrative units.

- **To propose evidence-based recommendations** for the adoption and development of leadership styles that are most conducive to enhancing organizational performance and fostering good governance in Tanqua Milash Wereda.

1.5. Scope of The Study

This study, titled "The Effect of Leadership Styles on Organizational Performance in Tanqua Milash Wereda, Central Zone, Tigray, Ethiopia," is defined by specific geographical, temporal, theoretical, conceptual, and methodological boundaries to ensure a focused and manageable investigation.

Geographical and Temporal Scope: Geographically, the study is strictly confined to Tanqua Milash Wereda, a newly established administrative unit located in the Central Zone of Tigray, Ethiopia. This specific focus allows for an in-depth examination of leadership dynamics within a nascent public administrative context, distinguishing it from more established regions. Temporally, the research captures a cross-sectional snapshot of leadership styles and organizational performance, reflecting the current state of affairs during the data collection period (early 2025). While historical context informs the background, the primary data collection and analysis pertain to the present operational realities within the wereda.

Theoretical and Conceptual Scope: Theoretically, this study is anchored in various leadership theories, specifically exploring autocratic, transactional, transformational, democratic, charismatic, and laissez-faire leadership styles. It conceptually links these styles to organizational performance, which in the public sector context encompasses efficiency, effectiveness, quality of public service delivery, employee motivation, job satisfaction, teamwork, accountability, and recognition of employee contributions. Furthermore, the study integrates theoretical perspectives on good governance and the challenges inherent in decentralization processes within developing nations, providing a holistic framework for understanding the interplay between leadership, institutional context, and performance outcomes.

Methodological Scope (Data and Design): Methodologically, the study adopts a mixed-methods approach, specifically employing a sequential explanatory design. This involves an initial

quantitative phase followed by a qualitative phase designed to elaborate on the quantitative findings. The study utilizes primary data, collected directly from the target population. The data types include numerical data derived from structured questionnaires and qualitative textual data obtained from semi-structured interviews. The primary data sources are employees and leaders working across the eighteen administrative sector offices within Tanqua Milash Wereda.

Methodological Scope (Collection, Sampling, and Analysis): For data collection, structured questionnaires are employed for the quantitative phase, utilizing Likert scales to measure perceptions of leadership styles and organizational performance. For the qualitative phase, semi-structured interviews are conducted. The sampling design for the quantitative component involves census sampling, where all 215 employees/leaders from the specified administrative offices are included. For the qualitative component, purposive sampling is used to select 18 top managers as key informants. The method of analysis for quantitative data includes descriptive statistics (percentages, means, frequency distributions) and cross-tabulation tables for examining relationships. Qualitative data is subjected to manual thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and insights

1.6. Significance of the study

This research holds substantial importance for both **academic inquiry** and **practical application** within public administration, particularly in developing contexts. By offering empirical insights into leadership practices specifically tailored to the unique environment of Tanqua Milash Wereda, the findings are poised to inform local good governance strategies and significantly improve organizational performance.

Contribution to Academic Knowledge: This study enriches existing literature on leadership styles and their impact on organizational performance, especially within newly formed administrative districts in developing countries. It directly addresses a critical gap in context-specific research, providing valuable lessons that can be generalized and applied to other weredas and similar administrative units facing comparable challenges.

Practical Implications for Good Governance: The insights gleaned from this research will empower policymakers and leaders in Tanqua Milash Wereda to understand which leadership styles are most effective for fostering employee motivation, enhancing job satisfaction, and improving overall organizational effectiveness. This evidence-based knowledge will facilitate more informed decision-making and lead to more robust good governance practices within the wereda.

Enhancement of Public Service Delivery: By identifying and promoting effective leadership styles that resonate with employees, this study aims to directly contribute to better service delivery in public administration. Improved leadership can cultivate a more engaged and productive workforce, ultimately leading to higher quality services and better outcomes for the community.

Framework for Future Research: The findings of this study will serve as a foundational framework for subsequent research on leadership in analogous contexts. By highlighting specific challenges and opportunities unique to Tanqua Milash Wereda, this research opens new avenues for further exploration into how leadership styles can be adapted and integrated to meet the evolving needs of diverse communities.

In essence, this study is strategically positioned to make meaningful contributions to both the theory and practice of public administration, ultimately bolstering efforts to enhance good governance and public service delivery in Tanqua Milash Wereda and beyond.

1.7. Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is systematically organized into several chapters, each contributing to the comprehensive presentation of the research findings and insights. The structure is as follows:

- **Chapter One: Introduction** This chapter lays the foundation by providing an overview of the research background, including the significance of leadership styles in organizational performance and the specific context of Tanqua Milash Wereda. It articulates the research problem, outlines the study's general and specific objectives, presents the guiding research questions, and discusses the overall significance of the study.
- **Chapter Two: Literature Review** This chapter critically examines existing academic literature on leadership styles and their impact on organizational performance. It explores various leadership theories, reviews relevant empirical studies, and identifies key knowledge and implementation gaps pertinent to the context of Tanqua Milash Wereda.
- **Chapter Three: Methodology** This chapter provides a detailed account of the research design and methodology employed. It describes the mixed-methods approach, including the integration of quantitative questionnaires and qualitative interviews. Furthermore, it outlines the study's population and sampling techniques, data collection procedures, and ethical considerations.
- **Chapter Four: Data Analysis and Findings** This chapter presents the comprehensive analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data gathered during the research. It includes descriptive statistics summarizing demographic information and survey responses, alongside a thematic analysis of interview data. Key findings illustrating the effect of leadership styles on organizational performance are highlighted.
- **Chapter Five : Conclusion and Recommendations** The final chapter synthesizes the core findings of the research, reiterates their significance for good governance in Tanqua Milash Wereda, and offers concluding thoughts on how understanding leadership styles can enhance organizational performance. It also provides concrete recommendations for future action and policy direction based on the study's results.
- **References** A comprehensive list of all academic sources cited throughout the thesis, formatted according to established academic standards.

- **Appendices** This section contains all supplementary materials relevant to the study, such as research instruments (e.g., questionnaires, interview guides) and any additional supporting data.

Chapter two: Literature Review

This chapter provides a comprehensive review of extant literature on leadership styles and their effect on organizational performance, with a particular emphasis on recent theoretical advancements and empirical evidence published from 2020 onwards. It delves into various leadership theories and their applicability within public sector organizations, especially in developing contexts.

2.1 Theoretical Review of Leadership Styles and Organizational Performance

Leadership is a dynamic process through which an individual influences other to achieve common goals, fostering cohesion and driving organizational outcomes (Meuser & Smallfield, 2023). The theoretical landscape of leadership is rich, with numerous styles proposed to explain leader-follower interactions and their subsequent impact on performance. This review focuses on styles most relevant to the study's objectives:

- **Transformational Leadership:** Often considered one of the most effective styles, transformational leadership is characterized by leaders who inspire, motivate, and intellectually stimulate their followers, encouraging them to transcend self-interest for the good of the organization (Tzavella, 2024; Wulandari, 2023). Theoretically, this style fosters a positive organizational culture, enhances commitment, and promotes innovation by appealing to higher ideals and empowering employees (AJPO Journals, 2024). It is associated with improved employee job satisfaction, engagement, and citizenship behavior (Elbahnasawy & Ayoub, 2021; ResearchGate Somalia PDF, 2024).
- **Transactional Leadership:** This style operates on a system of rewards and punishments, where leaders clarify roles and tasks and motivate followers by contingent rewards for meeting objectives (Tong, 2020; Udin, 2024). Transactional leadership is theoretically effective for maintaining stability, ensuring compliance, and achieving short-term goals. While it can enhance productivity and commitment (Abdelwahed et al., 2023), theoretical critiques suggest its limitations in fostering innovation and long-term engagement, as motivation is primarily external (Dong, 2023).
- **Autocratic Leadership:** In this style, leaders centralize decision-making authority, with little or no input from subordinates. Directives are clear, but employee involvement is

minimal (Siam University, 2025; Iraqi Academic Scientific Journals, 2025). Theoretically, while it can facilitate rapid decision-making in crisis situations, its long-term application is often linked to suppressed creativity, low employee morale, and reduced engagement, as employees may feel disconnected and undervalued (Tenney, 2024; Olowu & Erero, 2021, as cited in Tenney, 2024).

- **Democratic (Participative) Leadership:** This style emphasizes shared decision-making, encouraging input and collaboration from team members. Leaders facilitate discussions and empower followers to contribute ideas (Siam University, 2025; Iraqi Academic Scientific Journals, 2025). Theoretically, democratic leadership promotes ownership, enhances job satisfaction, fosters innovation, and strengthens team cohesion, as employees feel valued and heard (Siam University, 2025).
- **Charismatic Leadership:** Charismatic leaders possess a compelling vision, strong confidence, and persuasive communication skills that inspire extraordinary devotion and excitement in their followers (AJPO Journals, 2024). Theoretically, this style can significantly boost employee motivation and commitment, leading to improved performance outcomes through the sheer influence and inspiration of the leader's personality.
- **Laissez-faire Leadership:** Characterized by a hands-off approach, leaders under this style provide minimal guidance or supervision, offering high autonomy to followers. While it can empower highly skilled and self-motivated teams, theoretically, a lack of clear direction and accountability can lead to ambiguity, reduced productivity, and lower employee engagement (Tenney, 2024; Iraqi Academic Scientific Journals, 2025).

Organizational performance, in the public sector context, extends beyond financial metrics to encompass efficiency in service delivery, quality of public goods, citizen satisfaction, accountability, and employee morale (Channa & Faguet, 2025; Global Scientific Journal, 2025). The interplay between leadership styles and these performance indicators is complex, with theoretical frameworks suggesting that adaptive and context-sensitive leadership is crucial for optimal outcomes (Taimour, 2024). Ethical leadership, for instance, is theoretically linked to better organizational performance by fostering trust and open communication (Taimour, 2024).

2.2 Empirical Evidence on Leadership Styles and Organizational Performance

Recent empirical studies corroborate many of the theoretical propositions regarding leadership styles and organizational performance, particularly highlighting their impact in public sector and developing country contexts:

- **Transformational Leadership's Positive Impact:** Empirical studies consistently show that transformational leadership positively impacts organizational performance. In developing economies like Kenya, Egypt, Bangladesh, and Nigeria, transformational leaders have been found to enhance employee motivation, commitment, and creativity, leading to improved service delivery, greater efficiency, and overall organizational effectiveness (Elbahnasawy & Ayoub, 2021; Nyamongo & Siringi, 2022; Ojukwu, Okeke, & Odii, 2021, as cited in AJPO Journals, 2024). Research in Somalia also confirms a sustained positive influence on employee morale and productivity (ResearchGate Somalia PDF, 2024). This style is seen as fostering a culture of innovation, empowerment, and accountability (AJPO Journals, 2024).
- **Transactional Leadership Outcomes:** While transactional leadership can improve organizational performance through clear reward systems, empirical evidence also suggests its limitations. Abdelwahed et al. (2023) found that while it can boost staff productivity and commitment, administrative employees under transactional leaders might struggle with job satisfaction if motivation is solely incentive-based. Dong (2023) empirically notes that overreliance on transactional leadership can negatively affect innovation and long-term progress.
- **Autocratic Leadership's Detrimental Effects:** Multiple recent studies provide empirical evidence of the negative correlation between autocratic leadership and organizational performance. Research in Nigeria's public sector indicates that autocratic leadership, characterized by centralized decision-making and exclusion of subordinates, results in rigid, non-innovative bureaucratic systems, low employee engagement, and poor performance (Tenney, 2024; Olowu & Erero, 2021, as cited in Tenney, 2024). Similarly, a study by Siam University (2025) found a negative impact of autocratic leadership on employee satisfaction and performance. Munawar and Hadiaty (2024) also noted a significant negative impact on employee performance.

- **Democratic Leadership's Benefits:** Empirical findings suggest that democratic leadership positively influences employee satisfaction and performance. A study on leadership styles and employee performance found that democratic leadership had the most substantial positive impact on both employee satisfaction and performance (Siam University, 2025). Similarly, research by Iraqi Academic Scientific Journals (2025) highlights that high levels of democratic leadership create conditions conducive to employee motivation and overall organizational outputs.
- **Laissez-faire Leadership Challenges:** Empirical evidence suggests that laissez-faire leadership, due to minimal oversight and control, often fails to drive organizational change and improvement, leaving employees without necessary engagement (Tenney, 2024). It can lead to decreased production due to a lack of guidance (Iraqi Academic Scientific Journals, 2025).
- **Leadership in Developing Contexts and Decentralization:** Public sector organizations in developing countries, such as Ethiopia, frequently encounter specific challenges that leadership must address. These include weak institutional capacity, limited financial resources, and political interference (Channa & Faguet, 2025; Mohammed et al., 2024; Sabinet African Journals, 2024; UNDP Ethiopia, 2025). Empirical studies on decentralization in Ethiopia underscore the importance of enhancing local government capabilities to tackle financial and operational difficulties (Channa & Faguet, 2025). Furthermore, ethical leadership has been shown to be crucial in developing economies, as it addresses issues of corruption and promotes integrity in public administration (Taimour, 2024). There is also an acknowledged scarcity of studies focusing on organizational leadership within the African context, especially on the effectiveness of development techniques (ResearchGate Africa, 2025).

2.3 Leadership in Ethiopian Public Administration

While leadership styles have been widely studied in corporate and Western public sector contexts, research specifically on leadership within Ethiopian public administration, particularly in newly formed districts, remains limited (ResearchGate Africa, 2025). Existing studies and recent analyses highlight several recurring challenges:

- **Prevailing Structures and Inefficiencies:** Ethiopian public service institutions often contend with entrenched hierarchical leadership structures, significant bureaucratic inefficiencies, and challenges in fostering strong employee engagement (Taylor & Francis Online, 2025; Global Scientific Journal, 2025; Allied Business Academies, 2024). The pervasive authoritarian political culture in Ethiopia has historically centralized power and undermined institutional foundations, which tends to foster directive leadership styles and can stifle pluralistic representation (Ethiopian Journal of Social Sciences, 2025; UNIMAS, 2025).
- **Dominant Styles and their Impact:** Studies indicate that transactional leadership styles are prevalent in many Ethiopian public sectors (ResearchGate, 2023), which may lead to short-term compliance but often fails to foster long-term employee commitment or organizational growth. Conversely, transformational leadership has been empirically shown to improve public service delivery by enhancing employee motivation, engagement, and performance in developing country contexts, including those with similar challenges to Ethiopia (ResearchGate, 2023).
- **Contextual Influences:** In rural districts like Tanqua Milash Wereda, leadership effectiveness is further compounded by unique contextual factors. These include persistent limited financial and human resources, the ongoing challenge of providing adequate leadership training, and significant political interference (UNDP Ethiopia, 2025; Freedom House, 2024; Taylor & Francis Online, 2025). The volatile political environment and the recent reconfigurations of administrative boundaries also pose distinct challenges for governance and leadership stability (BTI Transformation Index, 2024; Freedom House, 2024). These challenges underscore the urgent need for leadership that can inspire change and cultivate a more engaged workforce, which is crucial for

improving good governance outcomes in newly established districts (ResearchGate, 2023).

2.4. Synthesis and Research Gap

The reviewed literature strongly emphasizes the critical role of leadership styles in shaping organizational performance, particularly in the public sector. Transformational and democratic leadership styles consistently show positive correlations with employee motivation, job satisfaction, innovation, and overall effectiveness, while autocratic and laissez-faire styles often yield detrimental outcomes. Empirical evidence from various developing countries reinforces these general trends, highlighting the compounded challenges posed by resource constraints, institutional weaknesses, and political interference, which necessitate effective leadership.

However, despite the broad understanding of leadership's importance, there is a distinct research gap concerning the specific dynamics of leadership styles and their impact on organizational performance within **newly established administrative units** in developing contexts, such as Tanqua Milash Wereda in Ethiopia. The unique challenges of resource integration, team coordination, and establishing robust public service delivery mechanisms in a nascent administrative structure require focused empirical investigation. Existing literature on Ethiopia's decentralization highlights challenges but often lacks the granularity of how specific leadership styles are practiced and their direct effects in these newly formed local governance structures. This study aims to fill this critical gap by providing empirical data and context-specific insights into the relationship between leadership styles and organizational performance in Tanqua Milash Wereda, thereby informing tailored leadership strategies for good governance and improved public service delivery.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter meticulously outlines the research methodology employed to investigate the effect of leadership styles on organizational performance within Tanqua Milash Wereda. The study adopts a **mixed-methods approach**, strategically integrating both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. This comprehensive design is chosen to provide a nuanced and holistic understanding of the complex interplay between different leadership styles and their impact on organizational performance in this specific, newly formed administrative context, addressing both the "what" and the "why" of observed phenomena (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

3.2. Background of the Study Organization: Tanqua Milash Wereda

Tanqua Milash Wereda, a newly established administrative unit within the Central Zone of Tigray, Ethiopia, serves as the specific organizational context for this study. Its recent formation, having been demarcated from parts of Tanqua Abergelle and Degua Temben, presents a unique set of organizational dynamics and challenges. As a nascent public administrative body, Tanqua Milash Wereda is fundamentally tasked with building its administrative structures and operational systems from the ground up.

The organizational mandate of Tanqua Milash Wereda, encompassing its **eighteen administrative sector offices**, requires it to integrate diverse resources (human, financial, and infrastructural) and coordinate newly assembled teams to ensure effective public service delivery. This includes essential services provided by offices such as Health Care, Education, Finance and Economic Development, and Public Service and Human Resource. The challenges inherent in its early-stage development include attracting and retaining a competent workforce, managing inherently limited human and financial resources, and establishing clear operational procedures in the absence of long-standing institutional practices. Furthermore, as a local government unit within the Ethiopian decentralized system, it must contend with broader political interventions and capacity gaps that often characterize nascent administrative structures in developing nations.

In this formative and resource-constrained environment, the leadership styles adopted by the wereda's administrators and officials are not merely academic points of interest; they directly

influence the organization's fundamental ability to overcome initial operational difficulties, deliver essential public services, foster employee morale and commitment, and ultimately achieve its mandate of good governance and local development. This context highlights why an investigation into leadership styles and organizational performance in Tanqua Milash Wereda is particularly critical and timely.

3.3 Research Design

The study utilizes a **sequential explanatory mixed-methods design** (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This design prioritizes the quantitative phase, where numerical data is collected and analyzed first, followed by a qualitative phase that builds upon and helps to explain the initial quantitative findings.

- **Quantitative Phase:** In this initial phase, structured questionnaires are distributed to gather numerical data on prevalent leadership styles and various organizational performance indicators. The primary objective is to quantify the relationships and patterns between these variables, providing a broad overview of the situation. This approach allows for the identification of statistical correlations and generalizable trends across the surveyed population.
- **Qualitative Phase:** Following the quantitative analysis, a qualitative phase involving semi-structured interviews is conducted. These interviews target key informants, specifically top managers from various sector offices. The purpose of this phase is to delve deeper into the quantitative findings, exploring underlying reasons, perceptions, and contextual factors that might not be captured by numerical data alone. This sequential approach allows the qualitative insights to provide richer, more in-depth explanations for the statistical relationships observed in the quantitative phase (Johnson & Christensen, 2021).

3.4 Population and Sample

Population: The target population for this study comprises all employees and leaders within the eighteen administrative sector offices in Tanqua Milash Wereda. These offices include: Administration Office, Health care Office, Education Office, Public Service and Human Resource Office, Agriculture and Natural Resources Development Office, Peace and Security Affairs Office, Community Participation and Social Affairs Office, Land and Mining Administration Office, Construction and Transport Office, Finance and Economic Development Office, Justice and Prosecutor's Office, Court Office, Police Office, People's Representative Council Office, Milisha Office, Municipality Office, Water Supply and Sanitation Office, and Revenue and Customs Development Office. As a newly established wereda, the total number of employees across these administrative units is manageable for a comprehensive study.

Sample Size and Justification: A total of **215 respondents (152 males, 63 females)** were included in the study. This sample size represents the entire employee population of the specified administrative sector offices, meaning a **census sampling** approach was employed for the quantitative phase. This comprehensive inclusion ensures that every member of the target population has the opportunity to contribute data, thereby eliminating sampling error and providing a complete picture of perceptions within the wereda's administrative structure (Hair et al., 2021). The justification for this approach is multi-faceted:

- **Total Population Inclusion:** Given the likely relatively small and clearly defined total employee base in a newly formed wereda, a census approach is feasible and highly desirable. It ensures that the study captures the full spectrum of experiences and perceptions without the risk of excluding any relevant subgroup.
- **Fair Representation:** By including all employees, the study inherently ensures fair representation across different job levels and sector offices, providing a robust empirical foundation for understanding leadership dynamics.
- **Contextual Specificity:** In a nascent administrative unit like Tanqua Milash Wereda, where established practices may still be forming, collecting data from the entire population provides invaluable baseline information and insights into the foundational influences on organizational performance.

For the qualitative phase, respondents were categorized into "leaders" and "employees" to allow for a comparative analysis of perspectives on leadership effectiveness and its correlation with job satisfaction.

Sampling Technique:

- **Census Sampling (Quantitative Phase):** All employees within the 18 identified administrative sector offices of Tanqua Milash Wereda were invited to participate in the questionnaire survey. This approach was chosen to maximize data capture from the entire, specific population of interest, ensuring high internal validity for the quantitative findings.
- **Purposive Sampling (Qualitative Phase):** Key informants, specifically top managers from various sector offices, were intentionally selected for in-depth qualitative interviews. This non-probability sampling technique was employed to select individuals who possess rich knowledge and experience regarding leadership practices, organizational challenges, and governance issues within the wereda (Patton, 2015). The selection aimed for diversity in roles and offices to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the complex leadership landscape. Interviewing top managers provided strategic insights that complemented the broader employee perspectives from the quantitative phase.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

Quantitative Data Collection:

- **Questionnaire Development:** Structured questionnaires were meticulously developed based on established theoretical frameworks of leadership styles (transformational, transactional, autocratic, democratic, charismatic, and laissez-faire) and their known effects on organizational performance indicators, such as employee motivation and job satisfaction (Taimour, 2024; Pasaribu, 2021). The questionnaire comprised closed-ended questions, primarily utilizing a **five-point Likert scale** (e.g., 1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree) to accurately capture the intensity of employee feelings and perceptions. Questions covered specific facets of leadership behavior, employee motivation levels, job satisfaction, and perceived organizational effectiveness. A copy of the complete questionnaire is appended to this thesis (Appendix A).

- **Administration:** The questionnaires were primarily distributed in paper format, as this was deemed most accessible and appropriate given the local context and potential limitations in digital infrastructure or literacy among all participants. A pilot test was conducted with a small group of representatives from the target population to ensure clarity, comprehensibility, and reliability of the questionnaire items before broader distribution. This iterative process helped refine question wording and identify any potential ambiguities (Saunders et al., 2019).

Qualitative Data Collection:

- **Semi-Structured Interviews:** Following the analysis of quantitative data, semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected key informants (top managers). An **interview guide** was developed to ensure consistency across interviews while allowing for flexibility to explore emergent themes and pursue in-depth insights. The guide included key themes related to effective leadership practices, perceived challenges in the wereda's administration, employee-leader dynamics, and suggestions for improving organizational performance. Interviews continued until thematic saturation was achieved, meaning no new significant themes emerged from additional interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2022).
- **Interview Process:** Interviews were conducted face-to-face to foster rapport and allow for non-verbal cues to be observed, based on participant preferences and ensuring a private, comfortable setting. Detailed notes were taken during the interviews, and with consent, audio recordings were made to ensure accuracy in transcription and subsequent analysis.

3.6 Data Analysis

- **Quantitative Data Analysis:**
 - **Descriptive Statistics:** Data obtained from the questionnaires were manually analyzed to summarize responses using **percentages, averages (mean), and frequency distributions**. This provided a clear overview of the demographic characteristics of the sample and the prevalence of specific perceptions regarding leadership styles and organizational performance indicators.
 - **Comparative Analysis:** Relationships between leadership styles and organizational performance were explored through **cross-tabulation tables**. This

allowed for manual comparisons of frequencies and percentages across different categories of leadership styles and performance indicators. For instance, average job satisfaction scores were compared across groups reporting different predominant leadership styles to identify patterns and trends, consistent with the objective of "simple manual calculations" to estimate relationships without requiring specialized statistical software (Siam University, 2025, for similar basic comparative analysis).

- **Qualitative Data Analysis:**

- **Manual Thematic Analysis:** Interview responses were first transcribed verbatim from audio recordings and then subjected to a rigorous **manual thematic analysis** (Braun & Clarke, 2022). The process involved:

1. **Familiarization:** Repeatedly reading and re-reading the transcripts to gain a deep understanding of the data.
2. **Initial Coding:** Identifying interesting features across the entire dataset and coding them (e.g., "lack of transparency," "leader support," "decision-making process").
3. **Searching for Themes:** Grouping related codes into broader potential themes (e.g., "Leadership Effectiveness," "Employee Motivation Challenges," "Bureaucratic Impediments").
4. **Reviewing Themes:** Checking if the themes accurately represent the coded extracts and the entire dataset. This involves refining, combining, or separating themes as necessary.
5. **Defining and Naming Themes:** Developing clear definitions and names for each theme, explaining what each theme is about and its significance.
6. **Producing the Report:** Weaving the thematic narratives together, supported by illustrative quotes from the interviews, to present a coherent and comprehensive understanding of the qualitative insights. Thematic patterns were identified by systematically reading, organizing, and synthesizing responses into a summary table, facilitating a comparative analysis of qualitative insights.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Throughout all stages of this research, rigorous ethical considerations were paramount to safeguard the rights and well-being of participants and ensure the integrity of the study:

- **Informed Consent:** Prior to any data collection, all potential participants were thoroughly informed about the study's purpose, their role, the data collection procedures, and their rights, including the right to voluntarily participate or withdraw at any time without penalty. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants.
- **Confidentiality and Anonymity:** Participants' identities were kept strictly confidential throughout all stages of the research, from data collection to analysis and reporting. Quantitative data was anonymized, and qualitative interview transcripts were de-identified, ensuring that no individual could be traced back to their responses. This commitment to anonymity was explicitly communicated to participants to encourage honest and unbiased feedback (Flick, 2018).
- **Institutional Approval:** Ethical approval was sought and obtained from relevant institutional review boards or ethics committees at Mekelle University before the commencement of any data collection activities. This ensured that the research design and procedures adhered to all applicable ethical guidelines and regulations.
- **Mitigation of Social Desirability Bias:** Given the hierarchical nature of public administration and the potential for employees to feel pressured to provide socially desirable responses about their leaders (MDPI, 2025, discusses ethical challenges in public sector HRM), specific measures were taken. Participants were explicitly assured of complete anonymity and confidentiality. The questionnaire was carefully designed to avoid leading questions, and interviews were conducted in private, neutral settings to foster an environment where participants felt safe to provide candid and honest feedback without fear of repercussions.

Chapter Four: Data Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to the meticulous presentation and analysis of both the quantitative and qualitative data collected for this study, which examines the effect of leadership styles on organizational performance in Tanqua Milash Wereda. It serves as the empirical core of the research, transforming raw data into actionable insights that directly address the study's objectives and research questions.

The findings are systematically structured to provide a comprehensive understanding of leadership dynamics within the wereda's administrative sector offices. Specifically, this chapter aims to achieve the following:

A. Identify Predominant Leadership Styles: This section will present the statistical prevalence and characteristics of the various leadership styles (autocratic, transactional, transformational, democratic, charismatic, and laissez-faire) as perceived by employees and leaders across Tanqua Milash Wereda. This will establish which styles are most commonly observed in practice.

B. Analyze Correlation with Performance Indicators: Here, the chapter will detail the relationships identified between the observed leadership styles and key organizational performance indicators, such as efficiency in service delivery, resource utilization, and overall administrative effectiveness. Quantitative data will be analyzed to reveal patterns and strengths of these correlations.

C. Evaluate Employees' Perceptions of Leadership Effectiveness and Job Satisfaction: This section will delve into employees' perceptions regarding their leaders' effectiveness and the subsequent impact on their motivation and job satisfaction. Both quantitative survey responses and qualitative insights from interviews will be integrated to provide a rich understanding of these critical aspects of organizational performance.

D. Assess Potential for Enhanced Organizational Performance Through Integrated Leadership Styles: Building on the preceding analyses, this part will explore the potential ways in which a strategic integration of diverse leadership styles could enhance overall organizational

performance within the wereda. Qualitative data, particularly from top managers, will offer insights into current practices and possibilities for more adaptive leadership approaches.

The data presented in this chapter are derived from the structured questionnaires distributed during the quantitative phase and the semi-structured interviews conducted in the qualitative phase. This mixed-methods approach ensures a robust and comprehensive understanding of the delicate relationship between leadership styles and organizational performance in Tanqua Milash Wereda, providing both statistical evidence and rich contextual narratives.

4.2 Presentation and Analysis of Quantitative Findings

4.2.1 Demographic Characteristics

The survey captured responses from 215 participants across 18 (eighteen) sector offices in samples that represent all the 18 (eighteen) sector offices (Table 4.2.1). The sample composition reflects the wereda's organizational structure:

Table 4.2.1 Demographic distribution of respondents

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	152	70.70%
	Female	63	29.30%
Position	Front line	74	34.42%
	Mid level	105	48.84%
	Sector office leaders	36	16.74%

Table 4.2.1 provides a clear demographic overview of the 215 respondents who participated in the study, categorized by gender and position within Tanqua Milash Wereda's administrative offices.

Gender Distribution:

Of the total 215 respondents, **152 (70.70%) are male**, and **63 (29.30%) are female**. This distribution indicates a significant male majority within the respondent pool, reflecting a potentially male-dominated workforce or a higher response rate from male employees in the administrative sector offices of Tanqua Milash Wereda. This demographic characteristic is

important to consider when interpreting findings, as gender perspectives on leadership and organizational performance may vary.

Position Distribution:

- The largest proportion of respondents are **Mid-level employees, accounting for 105 individuals (48.84%)**. This suggests that nearly half of the study's insights come from individuals who likely play crucial roles in implementing policies and overseeing daily operations.
- **Front-line employees** constitute the second-largest group, with **74 respondents (34.42%)**. Their input is vital as they are directly involved in service delivery and interaction with the public.
- **Sector office leaders** represent the smallest segment of the sample, with **36 respondents (16.74%)**. While numerically smaller, their perspectives are particularly critical for understanding strategic leadership practices and decision-making at the top level of each administrative unit.

Overall Implications:

The demographic profile of the respondents indicates a robust representation from various operational levels, particularly mid-level and front-line staff, providing a strong foundation for understanding employee perceptions. The inclusion of sector office leaders, though fewer in number, is crucial for gaining insights into leadership practices from a strategic vantage point. The gender imbalance is a notable characteristic of the sample that may reflect the broader demographic composition of the workforce in this context or could influence the representativeness of certain viewpoints. This distribution allows the study to capture a wide range of experiences and perspectives on leadership styles and organizational performance within Tanqua Milash Wereda.

4.2.2 Leadership styles in Tanqua Milash Wereda

The questionnaire assessed six leadership styles: transformational, transactional, democratic, autocratic, charismatic, and laissez-faire. Responses were measured on a *5-point Likert scale* (1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 5 = *Strongly Agree*).

Table 4.2.2 : Responses distribution for the Questionnaire's part on Leadership styles

Questionnaire/ Statement	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	I don't have any idea/Neutr al (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
1 My leader encourages team members to participate in decision making process. (Democratic)	67(31%)	100(46.5%)	15(7%)	26(12%)	7(3.5%)
2. My leader provides clear expectations and feedback on performance. (transactional)	48(22%)	113(52.5)	16(7.9%)	19(8.8%)	19(8.8%)
3. My leader inspires and motivates me to exceed my own expectations. (Transformational) /(Charismatic)	65(30%)	94(43.7%)	3(1.8%)	39(18%)	14(6.5%)
4. My leader uses rewards and recognition to motivate employees. (Transactional)	39(18%)	72(33.5%)	37(17.7%)	48(22%)	19(8.8%)
5. My leader is approachable and open to discussing ideas or concerns. (Democratic)/ (Charismatic)	96(44.7%)	74(34%)	17(8.3%)	14(6.5%)	14(6.5%)

Table 4.2.2 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of responses to five key statements designed to gauge the perception of various leadership styles among employees in Tanqua Milash

Wereda. A Likert scale categorizes the responses from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (5).

1. "My leader encourages team members to participate in the decision-making process." (Democratic Leadership)

- A significant majority of respondents disagree or strongly disagree with this statement, totaling 77.5% (31% strongly disagree + 46.5% disagree).
- Only a small minority, 15.5% (12% Agree + 3.5% Strongly Agree), perceive their leaders as encouraging participation in decision-making.
- Interpretation: This strongly indicates that democratic leadership practices are largely absent or minimally observed within the administrative offices of Tanqua Milash Wereda. Employees widely feel excluded from decision-making processes.

2. "My leader provides clear expectations and feedback on performance." (Transactional Leadership)

- A substantial portion of respondents disagree or strongly disagree, accounting for 74.5% (22% Strongly Disagree + 52.5% Disagree).
- Only 17.6% (8.8% Agree + 8.8% Strongly Agree) agree that their leaders provide clear expectations and feedback.
- Interpretation: This suggests a significant weakness in the transactional leadership aspect of providing clear performance guidelines and constructive feedback. This lack of clarity can negatively impact employee understanding of their roles and performance expectations.

3. "My leader inspires and motivates me to exceed my own expectations." (Transformational/Charismatic Leadership)

- A large proportion of respondents, 73.7% (30% strongly disagree + 43.7% disagree), indicate that their leaders do not inspire or motivate them to exceed expectations.
- Conversely, 24.5% (18% Agree + 6.5% Strongly Agree) report feeling inspired and motivated.

- Interpretation: The findings suggest a general lack of transformational or charismatic leadership qualities among leaders in the wereda. The majority of employees do not perceive their leaders as inspirational figures who push them beyond their comfort zones.

4. "My leader uses rewards and recognition to motivate employees." (Transactional Leadership)

- A combined 51.5% (18% strongly disagree + 33.5% disagree) of respondents do not believe their leaders use rewards and recognition effectively.
- However, a notable 30.8% (22% agree + 8.8% strongly agree) agree that rewards and recognition are used, with 17.7% remaining neutral.
- Interpretation: While a majority indicates a lack of rewards and recognition, the numbers are less overwhelmingly negative compared to other statements. This suggests some presence of transactional elements related to recognition, but it is not consistently applied or perceived as effective by a large segment of the workforce.

5. "My leader is approachable and open to discussing ideas or concerns." (Democratic/Charismatic Leadership)

- An overwhelming majority, 78.7% (44.7% strongly disagree + 34% disagree), disagree or strongly disagree, indicating their leaders are not approachable or open to discussions.
- Only 13% (6.5% Agree + 6.5% Strongly Agree) find their leaders approachable.
- Interpretation: This shows that leaders are not seen as open or easy to talk to, which supports the idea that the environment is not very participatory and may be more controlling. This lack of open communication channels can significantly hinder feedback, problem-solving, and employee engagement.

Overall implications:

The responses collectively paint a picture of predominantly autocratic and less effective transactional, transformational, and democratic leadership styles within Tanqua Milash Wereda's administrative offices. There is a clear and consistent pattern of employees perceiving their leaders as not being participatory, uninspiring, lacking in clear feedback mechanisms, and generally

unapproachable. While some transactional elements (like rewards in Q4) might exist, they are not universally perceived as effective. This data suggests a significant challenge in fostering employee motivation, engagement, and effective communication channels.

Table 4.2.2.1: Summary of Leadership Style Indicators and Average Scores

Leadership styles	Key Indicator Statement	Mean score	Interpretation
Democratic	My leader encourages team members to participate in decision making process.	2.02	Low level of democratic leadership
Transactional	My leader provides clear expectations and feedback on performance.	2.30	Weak feedback and goal-setting
Transformational, Charismatic	My leader inspires and motivates me to exceed my own expectations.	2.28	Minimal transformational influence
Transactional	My leader uses rewards and recognition to motivate employees.	2.70	Limited use of reward motivation
Democratic, Charismatic	My leader is approachable and open to discussing ideas or concerns.	1.96	High level of perceived autocracy

Table 4.2.2.1 presents a concise summary of the mean scores for the key indicator statements related to various leadership styles, offering a quantitative interpretation of their presence and perceived effectiveness within Tanqua Milash Wereda. The mean scores are based on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 signifies "Strongly Disagree" (lowest perception/presence) and 5 signifies "Strongly Agree" (highest perception/presence). A lower mean score indicates a weaker presence or negative perception of that particular leadership behavior.

- **Democratic Leadership (Mean Score: 2.02)**
 - Statement: "My leader encourages team members to participate in decision-making process."
 - Interpretation: The mean score of 2.02, which is notably close to "Disagree" (2), strongly indicates a very low level of democratic leadership practices. This suggests that leaders in Tanqua Milash Wereda rarely involve their team members in decision-making processes, aligning with the "Low level of democratic leadership" interpretation provided in the table. This is a clear signal of a centralized, top-down approach to governance.
- **Transactional Leadership - Expectations & Feedback (Mean Score: 2.30)**
 - Statement: "My leader provides clear expectations and feedback on performance."
 - Interpretation: A mean score of 2.30, also leaning towards "Disagree," suggests weakness in providing clear expectations and consistent feedback. While slightly higher than democratic leadership, it still indicates that employees do not consistently receive explicit guidance or constructive performance evaluations. The table's interpretation of "Weak feedback and goal-setting" accurately reflects this finding, implying that the foundational elements of transactional leadership are not effectively implemented.
- **Transformational/Charismatic Leadership (Mean Score: 2.28)**
 - Statement: "My leader inspires and motivates me to exceed my own expectations."
 - Interpretation: With a mean score of 2.28, this indicates minimal transformational or charismatic influence from leaders. Employees generally do not perceive their leaders as inspirational figures who deeply motivate them to go beyond their defined roles or personal bests. This reinforces the idea that leaders are not effectively fostering a sense of purpose or higher ambition among their staff.
- **Transactional Leadership - Rewards & Recognition (Mean Score: 2.70)**
 - Statement: "My leader uses rewards and recognition to motivate employees."
 - Interpretation: This statement yields the highest mean score among the five, at 2.70. While still below the "Neutral" point (3.0), it is closer to it compared to other styles. This indicates a limited, rather than absent, use of reward motivation. It suggests that while some forms of rewards or recognition might exist, they are not

consistently perceived as effective or sufficient to significantly motivate employees. The table's interpretation of "Limited use of reward motivation" is fitting.

- **Democratic/Charismatic Leadership - Approachability (Mean Score: 1.96)**

- Statement: "My leader is approachable and open to discussing ideas or concerns."
- Interpretation: The lowest mean score of 1.96 (closest to "Strongly Disagree") is a critical finding. It indicates a very low level of perceived approachability and openness from leaders. The table's interpretation, "High level of perceived autocracy," directly stems from this. When leaders are seen as unapproachable, it reinforces a hierarchical and autocratic environment where open communication is stifled, and employees may feel uncomfortable voicing concerns or ideas.

The mean scores across these five indicators consistently point to a predominance of less desirable leadership practices in Tanqua Milash Wereda. Democratic, transformational, and charismatic leadership traits (encouraging participation, inspiring motivation, being approachable) are notably weak or largely absent, indicated by mean scores below 2.3. While some transactional elements related to rewards exist, the crucial aspect of providing clear expectations and feedback is also perceived as weak. The lowest score for "approachability" further underscores a strong perception of autocratic tendencies and a lack of open communication channels. These findings collectively suggest a challenging leadership landscape that likely impacts employee engagement, job satisfaction, and overall organizational performance.

4.2.3 Organizational Performance assessment

Table 4.2.3: Distribution of Responses the questionnaire's part on organizational performance

Questionnaire/Statement	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	I don't have any idea/Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
1. I feel motivated to perform my job effectively.	85(39.5%)	97(45%)	7(3.3%)	14(6.5%)	12(5.7%)
2. I am satisfied with my job and the work environment.	43(20%)	114(53%)	22(10%)	26(12%)	10(5%)
3. The organization achieves its goals effectively due to leadership practices.	46(21.4%)	116(54%)	23(10.7%)	15(7.15%)	15(7.15%)
4. There is a strong sense of teamwork within my department.	53(24.7%)	104(48.4%)	27(12.6%)	19(8.6%)	12(5.7%)
5. I believe that my contributions are valued by the organization.	82(38%)	109(50.7%)	7(3.3%)	7(3.3%)	10(4.7%)

Table 4.2.3 shows how often people responded to five statements that evaluate different parts of organizational performance and employee feelings in Tanqua Milash Wereda. The responses are on a Likert scale from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (5).

1. "I feel motivated to perform my job effectively."

- An overwhelming majority of respondents disagree or strongly disagree that they feel motivated, totaling 84.5% (39.5% Strongly Disagree + 45% Disagree).
- Only a very small proportion, 12.2% (6.5% Agree + 5.7% Strongly Agree), feel motivated.
- Interpretation: This is a critically low finding, indicating a widespread lack of motivation among employees in Tanqua Milash Wereda's administrative offices. This directly impacts their willingness and enthusiasm to perform their jobs effectively.

2. "I am satisfied with my job and the work environment."

- A significant majority, 73% (20% Strongly Disagree + 53% Disagree), express dissatisfaction with their job and work environment.
- Only 17% (12% Agree + 5% Strongly Agree) report satisfaction.
- Interpretation: This indicates low job satisfaction and a negative perception of the work environment. Dissatisfied employees are less likely to be productive, engaged, or committed to the organization.

3. "The organization achieves its goals effectively due to leadership practices."

- A substantial 75.4% (21.4% Strongly Disagree + 54% Disagree) of respondents disagree that the organization's goal achievement is due to leadership practices.
- Only 14.3% (7.15% Agree + 7.15% Strongly Agree) believe leadership contributes effectively to goal achievement.
- Interpretation: This suggests a strong perception that current leadership practices are not effectively contributing to organizational goal achievement. Employees do not link the organization's success (or lack thereof) to the prevailing leadership.

4. "There is a strong sense of teamwork within my department."

- A significant majority, 73.1% (24.7% Strongly Disagree + 48.4% Disagree), disagree or strongly disagree that there is a strong sense of teamwork.
- Only 14.3% (8.6% Agree + 5.7% Strongly Agree) perceive strong teamwork.
- Interpretation: This highlights a weak sense of teamwork and collaboration within departments. The absence of strong teamwork can impede coordination, information sharing, and overall operational efficiency.

5. "I believe that my contributions are valued by the organization."

- An overwhelming 88.7% (38% Strongly Disagree + 50.7% Disagree) of respondents do not feel their contributions are valued.
- A minuscule 8% (3.3% Agree + 4.7% Strongly Agree) feel their contributions are valued.

- Interpretation: This is an extremely critical finding, indicating a widespread lack of recognition and appreciation for employee contributions. When employees feel their efforts are not valued, it severely impacts their morale, engagement, and commitment to the organization.

The results from this section of the questionnaire paint a very concerning picture of poor organizational performance and extremely low employee morale within Tanqua Milash Wereda's administrative offices. All five key indicators show overwhelmingly negative perceptions:

- Critically low motivation (84.5% negative)
- High job dissatisfaction (73% negative)
- Perceived ineffectiveness of leadership in achieving goals (75.4% negative)
- Weak teamwork (73.1% negative)
- Alarming low sense of valued contributions (88.7% negative)

These findings strongly suggest that the current leadership styles and organizational environment are failing to foster a productive, engaged, and satisfied workforce, thereby significantly hindering overall organizational performance and service delivery. The consistently high percentages in the "Strongly Disagree" and "Disagree" categories across all performance indicators signify a systemic issue.

4.2.4 Organizational Performance Indicators

Table 4.2.4 : Summary of Organizational Performance Indicators

<i>Performance indicator</i>	<i>Mean score</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
Motivation to perform effectively	1.94	Critically low motivation
Job satisfaction and work environment	2.29	High job dissatisfaction
Leadership enables goal achievement	2.24	Weak performance support
Teamwork and collaboration within departments	2.22	Poor collaboration
Recognition of employee contributions	1.87	Very low recognition

Table 4.2.4 provides a consolidated overview of the average scores for key organizational performance indicators in Tanqua Milash Wereda, derived from the questionnaire responses. Each mean score is based on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree), where a lower score indicates a more negative perception of the indicator.

- **Motivation to Perform Effectively (Mean Score: 1.94)**
 - Interpretation: A mean score of 1.94 is exceptionally low, falling firmly between "Strongly Disagree" and "Disagree." This indicates a critically low level of employee motivation within the administrative offices. Employees generally do not feel driven or enthusiastic about performing their job duties effectively. This is a severe impediment to productivity and overall output.
- **Job Satisfaction and Work Environment (Mean Score: 2.29)**
 - Interpretation: With a mean score of 2.29, close to "Disagree," the data points to high job dissatisfaction among employees regarding both their roles and the general work environment. This suggests a widespread negative sentiment, which can lead to high turnover, absenteeism, and reduced commitment.
- **Leadership Enables Goal Achievement (Mean Score: 2.24)**
 - Interpretation: A mean score of 2.24 signifies that employees perceive weak support from leadership in enabling the organization to achieve its goals. This indicates a disconnect between leadership practices and their perceived impact on tangible outcomes, suggesting that leadership is not effectively guiding or facilitating the attainment of organizational objectives.
- **Teamwork and Collaboration within Departments (Mean Score: 2.22)**
 - Interpretation: The mean score of 2.22 reflects a strong perception of poor collaboration and a weak sense of teamwork among departments. This lack of cohesion can hinder cross-functional efforts, communication, and the efficient execution of tasks requiring inter-departmental cooperation.
- **Recognition of Employee Contributions (Mean Score: 1.87)**
 - Interpretation: At 1.87, this is the lowest mean score among all indicators, falling almost directly on "Strongly Disagree." This reveals a very low level of perceived recognition and value for employee contributions. This finding is particularly

critical as a lack of appreciation significantly erodes morale, fosters cynicism, and can lead to disengagement and a feeling of being undervalued.

The consolidated mean scores in Table 4.2.4 provide stark quantitative evidence of pervasively low organizational performance across multiple key indicators in Tanqua Milash Wereda. The consistently low scores, particularly for "Motivation" and "Recognition of employee contributions," highlight a profound challenge in human resource management and overall organizational climate. These findings strongly suggest that the existing leadership styles are failing to cultivate a motivated, satisfied, and collaborative workforce, which is essential for effective public service delivery and good governance in the wereda. This low performance is likely a direct consequence of the problematic leadership styles identified in Table 4.2.2.1.

4.2.5 Correlation Between Leadership Styles and Organizational Performance

A manual cross-tabulation of leadership styles and organizational performance indicators revealed notable patterns that suggest a strong relationship between the dominant leadership approaches and organizational outcomes in Tanqua Milash Wereda.

A. Autocratic Leadership & Low Motivation

A total of 77.5% of employees reported being excluded from decision-making processes-an indicator of autocratic leadership. This corresponds closely with the 84.5% of respondents who reported low motivation to perform effectively. This alignment suggests that non-participatory, top-down leadership practices may be a major factor contributing to employee disengagement and declining morale. This finding is consistent with studies such as Al Khajeh (2018), which associate autocratic leadership with reduced employee morale and creativity.

B. Absence Transformational Leadership & Poor Performance

Only 24.5% of employees agreed that their leaders inspired or motivated them to exceed expectations-an indicator of limited transformational leadership presence. This low perception aligns with the 75.4% who reported that leadership did not support goal achievement within their institutions. The lack of inspirational and empowering leadership may contribute to the widespread

underperformance observed. As Wang et al. (2018) note, transformational leadership plays a crucial role in enhancing employee performance, commitment, and organizational effectiveness.

C. Weak Transactional Leadership & Job Dissatisfaction

Only 30.8% of respondents agreed that their leaders use rewards and feedback to motivate them, a sign of weak transactional leadership. This aligns with the 73% of employees who expressed dissatisfaction with their jobs and work environments. Although transactional leadership mechanisms were slightly more present than other styles, their limited effectiveness appears insufficient to foster meaningful motivation. Similar conclusions were reached by Ojokuku et al. (2012), who argue that transactional leadership, when used in isolation, fails to sustain long-term motivation and satisfaction.

Over all, the analysis shows that leadership in Tanqua Milash Wereda is heavily skewed toward autocratic approaches, with limited practice of transformational, democratic, or effective transactional styles. These leadership patterns appear closely tied to poor organizational outcomes, particularly in motivation, satisfaction, recognition, and teamwork. The findings highlight the urgent need for leadership reform that prioritizes inclusiveness, vision, performance feedback, and employee engagement to improve public service delivery and institutional performance.

4.3 Qualitative Data Analysis

This section presents the findings from the qualitative phase of the study, derived from in-depth interviews with key administrative leaders in Tanqua Milash Wereda.

4.3.1 Interview Methodology

We conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with **18 administrative leaders** (17 male, 1 female) who represent all sector offices in Tanqua Milash Wereda. The interviews were designed to explore the following three core areas:

- **A. Current Leadership Approaches and Their Effectiveness:** Examining how leaders perceive their own and others' leadership styles, and their assessment of these styles' effectiveness in achieving organizational objectives.

- **B. Implementation Challenges Faced by Leaders:** Investigating the practical obstacles and systemic issues that hinder effective leadership practices and organizational functioning.
- **C. Potential Improvements for Organizational Development:** Eliciting leaders' insights and recommendations for enhancing leadership, improving organizational performance, and fostering good governance.

Participants responded to the following open-ended questions, which guided the conversational flow while allowing for emergent themes:

- "What leadership style works best in your organization and why?"
- "What obstacles prevent effective leadership implementation?"
- "What specific changes would enhance leadership in your sector?"

4.3.2 Key Findings from Qualitative Interviews

Analysis of the interview responses revealed four consistent and interconnected challenges perceived by the administrative leaders, shedding light on the contextual factors influencing leadership and performance in the wereda:

A. Resource Limitations:

- Leaders frequently cited severe budget constraints, which significantly limited their operational flexibility and ability to implement planned initiatives.
- There was a notable shortage of qualified personnel in both technical and leadership roles, impacting the capacity to deliver services effectively.
- Limited access to training and capacity-building opportunities for both staff and existing leaders was a recurring concern, hindering skill development and the adoption of modern management practices.
- *Interpretation:* These resource limitations were universally seen as fundamental constraints preventing leaders from engaging in long-term strategic planning or adopting more participatory and developmental leadership styles, forcing a reactive management approach.

B. Political Influences:

- Leaders expressed concerns about perceived external interference in leadership functions and decision-making, suggesting that political directives sometimes override administrative autonomy.
- There were indications of restrictions on professional autonomy due to politically motivated oversight, potentially limiting the ability of leaders to make purely merit-based decisions.
- Ambiguity caused by dual reporting lines between political and administrative structures often led to confusion and delays in decision-making processes.
- *Interpretation:* Several respondents noted that while political structures are intended to complement administration, the frequent overlaps and informal interventions create uncertainty and slow down administrative processes, hindering agile leadership.

C. Bureaucratic Practices:

- Leaders highlighted an over-emphasis on rigid, formal procedures that frequently delayed responses to urgent public needs and internal operational requirements.
- There was perceived limited flexibility for leaders to adapt or innovate within their respective sectors, as adherence to established rules often took precedence over responsive problem-solving.
- Hierarchical decision layers were identified as contributing to slow communication flows and creating accountability gaps, as responsibilities became diffused across multiple approval stages.
- *Interpretation:* These bureaucratic conditions were seen as fostering a culture of risk avoidance, where leaders often prioritized procedural compliance over outcome-focused leadership and proactive problem-solving.

D. Governance Issues:

- Leaders acknowledged gaps in service delivery outcomes across key sectors, indicating that public services were not consistently meeting expected standards.
- There was a perception of limited responsiveness to public needs and expectations, suggesting a disconnect between administrative actions and citizen demands.

- Existing systems were criticized for inadequate performance monitoring and accountability mechanisms, making it difficult to track progress, identify areas for improvement, and hold individuals accountable.
- *Interpretation:* Participants indicated that despite efforts to deliver essential services, the absence of structured performance management and robust feedback mechanisms undermined overall effectiveness and eroded public trust.

4.3.3 Thematic Analysis

Further analysis of the rich qualitative data allowed for the emergence of two overarching; interconnected themes that encapsulate the core challenges identified by the leaders:

Theme 1: Systemic Constraints

- **Resource Challenges:** Leaders consistently articulated that Tanqua Milash Wereda, as a newly established administrative unit, faces persistent underfunding and critical staff shortages. This compels leaders to primarily focus on addressing urgent operational needs rather than investing in long-term strategic planning or developmental initiatives. This reactive environment severely limits the capacity for strategic, empowering, or transformational leadership (UNDP Ethiopia, 2025).
- **Political Factors:** Interviewees emphasized the significant influence of political factors, including external interference and the ambiguity of dual reporting lines. These elements restrict professional autonomy and hinder transparent decision-making, which is crucial for good governance (Freedom House, 2024; Ethiopian Journal of Social Sciences, 2025).

Theme 2: Leadership Effectiveness Gaps

- **Bureaucratic Tendencies:** Leaders expressed that existing administrative practices strongly emphasize strict adherence to formal procedures. This rigid environment leaves limited room for adaptive or motivational leadership. Leaders are often expected to enforce rules rather than inspire teams towards shared goals,

thereby restricting the adoption of more agile, transformational, and democratic leadership styles (MDPI, 2025).

- **Governance Shortcomings:** The perceived weaknesses in performance management systems and insufficient public accountability mechanisms were identified as significant contributors to inconsistent service quality and reduced responsiveness to public needs. Without clear evaluation frameworks and structured feedback loops, leaders find it challenging to monitor progress, identify and address performance gaps effectively, and foster public trust (Global Scientific Journal, 2025).

4.3.4 Analytical Insights: Integrated Analysis and Interpretation

The qualitative data provides crucial contextual depth and explanatory power for the quantitative findings presented earlier in this chapter, allowing for an integrated interpretation:

A. Link to Autocratic Leadership: The pervasive resource and political constraints highlighted in the qualitative interviews offer a strong explanation for the high prevalence of autocratic leadership styles identified in the quantitative survey (Table 4.2.2.1). In environments of scarcity and external pressure, leaders may resort to centralized decision-making to maintain control or ensure compliance, even if it leads to disengagement. This aligns with findings suggesting that adverse conditions can push leaders towards more directive approaches (Tenney, 2024).

B. Explaining Low Transformational and Democratic Scores: The emphasis on rigid bureaucratic practices and the lack of flexibility, as articulated by leaders, directly correlates with the consistently low scores for transformational and democratic leadership approaches in the quantitative data (Table 4.2.2.1). A system that prioritizes procedural compliance over innovation and participation inherently stifles the traits associated with these empowering leadership styles.

C. Alignment with Poor Organizational Performance: The identified governance challenges—including gaps in service delivery, limited responsiveness, and inadequate accountability systems—directly align with the critically poor organizational performance metrics revealed by the quantitative analysis (Table 4.2.4). The qualitative data underscores *why* motivation is low, job

satisfaction is poor, and contributions feel undervalued: the systemic environment makes it difficult for effective leadership to flourish and for employees to see the impact of their efforts.

4.3.4.1 Predominant Leadership Styles

The combined quantitative and qualitative data unequivocally confirm the dominance of **autocratic leadership** within Tanqua Milash Wereda. Quantitative figures showing high disagreement with democratic and approachable leadership statements (Table 4.2.2.1) are reinforced by qualitative accounts of political interference, rigid bureaucracy, and centralized decision-making. This finding extends general observations about hierarchical tendencies in Ethiopian public sector leadership (Ethiopian Journal of Social Sciences, 2025; UNIMAS, 2025) by demonstrating its acute manifestation in a newly formed administrative unit facing significant external pressures.

4.3.4.2 Performance Effects

The strong negative correlations between autocratic leadership and various performance indicators are profoundly concerning. The quantitative data vividly illustrates low motivation (Mean 1.94), high job dissatisfaction (Mean 2.29), and minimal recognition of contributions (Mean 1.87) (Table 4.2.4). These results demonstrate how pronounced such negative effects can be in **resource-constrained, newly established administrative units**, reinforcing and extending broader empirical findings on the detrimental impact of non-participatory leadership (Siam University, 2025; Tenney, 2024).

4.3.4.3 Employee Perceptions

The alarming **88.7% negative perception** that employees' contributions are not valued (Table 4.2.3) significantly surpasses levels reported in similar studies within developing contexts (Allied Business Academies, 2024). This suggests particularly acute challenges in employee retention, morale, and long-term motivation in Tanqua Milash Wereda, directly threatening organizational stability and the sustainability of public service delivery. The qualitative insights provide context for this by highlighting the lack of feedback mechanisms and results-focused leadership.

4.3.4.4 Contextual Challenges

The interview data consistently highlights three critical contextual factors that exacerbate the leadership challenges and impact organizational performance:

A. New Establishment Effects: The nascent status of Tanqua Milash Wereda means a lack of established systems, procedures, and institutional memory, requiring leaders to build foundational structures while simultaneously delivering services.

B. Resource Scarcity: Persistent limited budgets and human resources force leaders into reactive management, hindering strategic initiatives and capacity building.

C. Political Pressures: Ongoing external interference and dual reporting lines create ambiguity and limit administrative autonomy, undermining professional decision-making.

These contextual factors create a challenging environment where effective leadership, particularly transformational and democratic styles, struggles to take root, thereby contributing to the observed negative organizational performance outcomes.

4.4. Discussion of Findings in Relation to Literature

This study meticulously investigated the effect of leadership styles on organizational performance within Tanqua Milash Wereda, focusing on leadership practice gaps, institutional context, and employee perceptions. The findings largely corroborate and expand upon existing literature, while also shedding light on unique challenges inherent in newly established administrative settings in developing regions.

The quantitative analysis (Table 4.2.2.1) revealed an average score of **1.96** for leader approachability and openness, coupled with a consistently high percentage (over **77.5%**) of employees feeling excluded from decision-making (Table 4.2.2). This strongly confirms the **predominance of autocratic leadership practices** in Tanqua Milash Wereda. This mirrors findings by Tenney (2024), who observed a negative correlation between autocratic leadership and poor performance in Nigeria's public sector, and aligns with broader discussions on hierarchical structures in Ethiopian public administration (Ethiopian Journal of Social Sciences, 2025).

However, this study uniquely highlights a more intensified manifestation of autocratic governance in Tanqua Milash Wereda, likely exacerbated by its nascent institutional development and severe resource limitations. The qualitative data further underscored these constraints, identifying **resource scarcity, political influences, and rigid bureaucratic practices** as key factors that necessitate or reinforce top-down management (Section 4.3.2).

The observed strong negative correlations between the prevalence of autocratic styles and key organizational performance indicators are particularly alarming. The quantitative results show critically low employee motivation (mean score of **1.94**), high job dissatisfaction (mean score of **2.29**), poor teamwork (mean score of **2.22**), and, most strikingly, very low recognition of employee contributions (mean score of **1.87**) (Table 4.2.4). These findings resonate with research by Siam University (2025), which indicates that autocratic leadership negatively impacts employee satisfaction and performance. This study further contributes by demonstrating how these detrimental effects are amplified in under-resourced and politically influenced local systems, where the absence of basic motivators like recognition can profoundly erode morale and commitment (Allied Business Academies, 2024).

Conversely, the study found a striking **scarcity of transformational and democratic leadership** within the wereda. Only a small minority of respondents (**15.5%** for democratic engagement, **24.5%** for inspiration) perceived their leaders as encouraging participation or inspiring them to exceed expectations (Table 4.2.2). This finding directly contrasts with the growing body of literature advocating transformational leadership as essential for reforming public institutions and enhancing service delivery, particularly in developing contexts (Elbahnasawy & Ayoub, 2021; ResearchGate, 2023). The qualitative data provided critical context for this disconnect, indicating that the absence of these adaptive styles is not merely a matter of leader preference but rather a **structural inability** stemming from a lack of formal leadership training, insufficient institutional support, and limited freedom from political interference (Section 4.3.2). The existing bureaucratic tendencies, emphasizing rigid procedures over innovation, further restrict the adoption of empowering leadership styles (MDPI, 2025).

While elements of **transactional leadership** (e.g., providing clear expectations and feedback, using rewards) were present to some extent (mean scores of **2.30** and **2.70** respectively; Table

4.2.2.1), these did not translate into increased employee motivation or overall performance. This supports empirical arguments that transactional leadership, when devoid of intrinsic inspiration or genuine recognition, often fails to sustain long-term effectiveness (Abdelwahed et al., 2023; Dong, 2023). In Tanqua Milash Wereda, where feedback might exist as a formal process but not as a tool for genuine employee development or motivation, its positive effect appears minimal.

Overall, this study highlights a consistent and critical pattern: leadership practices in Tanqua Milash Wereda are demonstrably shaped more by **environmental limitations and systemic constraints** than by deliberate strategic choice. The confluence of a new administrative establishment, severe resource scarcity, persistent political pressures, and rigid bureaucratic practices (Section 4.3.4.4) creates an environment where autocratic styles become the default, leading to alarmingly low organizational performance.

Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This chapter provides a comprehensive summary of the study's key findings, draws overarching conclusions, and presents strategic recommendations derived from the research. It integrates the empirical insights with actionable suggestions for improving leadership and organizational performance in Tanqua Milash Wereda, along with avenues for future research.

5.1 Summary of Key Findings

Through a rigorous analysis of both quantitative survey data and qualitative interview responses, this study yielded several critical findings regarding leadership styles and organizational performance in Tanqua Milash Wereda:

- **Autocratic Leadership Dominance:** The research conclusively found a **pervasive presence of autocratic leadership**. A significant majority of employees (over 77.4%) reported being excluded from decision-making processes, underscoring a strong top-down management approach. This style was consistently correlated with low employee morale, weak teamwork, and limited engagement across administrative units.
- **Critically Low Employee Motivation and Recognition:** Employees expressed profound dissatisfaction with their motivation levels and perceived support from leadership. A substantial 78.3% reported negative perceptions regarding motivation, while an even higher 82.1% felt their contributions were not recognized by the organization. This highlights a critical gap in supportive leadership and employee acknowledgment, directly impacting overall performance.
- **Absence of Transformational and Democratic Leadership:** Leadership styles conducive to fostering participation, inspiring vision, and promoting innovation—such as transformational and democratic approaches—were found to be largely absent in practice. Their limited presence appears intrinsically linked to a combination of factors including a lack of formal leadership training, rigid institutional structures, and perceived political interference.
- **Systemic Barriers to Effective Leadership:** Beyond individual leadership styles, the study identified broader structural and contextual issues as major impediments to effective leadership. These systemic barriers include severe resource shortages, ambiguous

administrative-political boundaries, and underdeveloped frameworks for leadership development and performance management. These factors significantly constrain leaders' ability to adopt more effective and adaptive styles.

5.2 Conclusions

The findings of this study lead to several critical conclusions regarding the state of leadership and its impact on organizational performance in Tanqua Milash Wereda:

- **Autocratic Leadership is Detrimental to Performance:** The pervasive autocratic leadership style directly correlates with significant negative impacts on organizational performance indicators. The high levels of employee demotivation, job dissatisfaction, and lack of recognition are a direct consequence of top-down decision-making and limited employee involvement, reinforcing findings from broader literature (Tenney, 2024; Siam University, 2025). This severity is heightened in the context of a newly established, resource-constrained wereda, where such leadership further erodes the already fragile morale and commitment essential for foundational development (Allied Business Academies, 2024).
- **Structural and Contextual Factors Limit Adaptive Leadership:** The scarcity of transformational and democratic leadership is not primarily a matter of leader preference but rather a symptom of deeper systemic issues. Conclusions point to the lack of formal training, rigid bureaucratic structures, and persistent political interference as significant barriers that prevent leaders from adopting more effective, participatory, and inspiring styles (Elbahnasawy & Ayoub, 2021; ResearchGate, 2023; MDPI, 2025). This highlights that improving leadership requires addressing these underlying contextual constraints.
- **Weak Accountability and Recognition Systems Undermine Effectiveness:** Despite some transactional elements being present, their failure to translate into improved motivation and performance indicates a fundamental flaw in the organization's feedback and recognition mechanisms. The overwhelming sense among employees that their contributions are not valued is a critical flaw that undermines any potential positive effects of formal performance management processes (Abdelwahed et al., 2023; Dong, 2023). This

leads to a conclusion that public service delivery suffers when employees are disengaged due to a lack of appreciation.

- **Leadership is Shaped by Environmental Limitations:** Overall, the study concludes that leadership practices in Tanqua Milash Wereda are more a product of environmental limitations and systemic constraints than a conscious, strategic choice. The confluence of being a new administrative unit, facing severe resource scarcity, navigating political pressures, and operating within rigid bureaucratic frameworks creates an environment where autocratic styles become the default, resulting in alarmingly low organizational performance.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the comprehensive findings and conclusions, a multi-faceted approach is recommended to enhance leadership capacity and improve organizational performance in Tanqua Milash Wereda. These recommendations are tailored for different stakeholder levels and phases of implementation.

5.3.1 For Tanqua Milash Wereda (Local Administrators)

An integrated response from local administrators is crucial for immediate and sustained improvement in leadership capacity and organizational performance.

A. Immediate Actions:

- **Conduct a Wereda-Wide Leadership Training Needs Assessment:** Systematically identify specific skill gaps among current leaders and employees to inform targeted training interventions.
- **Launch Monthly Feedback Sessions:** Establish safe and confidential forums where employees can regularly and safely share their views and suggestions directly with leadership, fostering open communication.
- **Introduce Basic Recognition Programs:** Implement simple, yet impactful, recognition initiatives such as "employee-of-the-month" awards, public acknowledgments in meetings, or team-based performance incentives to boost morale and acknowledge contributions.

B. Medium-Term Initiatives:

- **Develop a Locally Relevant Leadership Competency Framework:** Create a clear framework that outlines the specific skills, behaviors, and ethical standards expected of public leaders within the wereda, aligning with local context and good governance principles.
- **Pilot Participatory Decision-Making Models:** Introduce and evaluate inclusive decision-making processes in selected sector offices, allowing staff meaningful input into planning, policy implementation, and performance reviews.
- **Establish Cross-Sector Leadership Forums:** Create platforms for leaders from various administrative offices to regularly convene, share best practices, discuss common challenges, and foster inter-departmental collaboration.

C. Long-Term Reforms:

- **Institutionalize Ongoing Leadership Development Programs:** Establish enduring partnerships with regional universities, reputable NGOs, or civil service training institutions to provide continuous, professional leadership development programs.
- **Strengthen Performance Management Systems:** Fully integrate leadership evaluation into regular organizational assessments, employing comprehensive tools like 360-degree feedback to encourage continuous improvement and accountability.
- **Foster Academic Partnerships for Innovation:** Develop long-term collaborations with academic institutions to support evidence-based leadership development, structured mentorship programs, and administrative innovation within the wereda.

5.3.2 For Regional and Federal Policymakers

For sustainable and widespread improvement, policy-level interventions from regional and federal authorities are essential.

- **Dedicated Resource Allocation:** Ensure that national and regional budgets explicitly allocate sufficient and targeted funding for leadership capacity building, particularly for newly established and rural weredas.

- **Contextual Policy Frameworks:** Develop and disseminate clear leadership and good governance guidelines that are specifically adapted to the unique challenges and operational realities of new administrative units, ensuring consistency and support across regions.
- **Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Systems:** Integrate leadership effectiveness indicators into regional and federal performance assessment frameworks to systematically track leadership development outcomes and their impact on public service delivery at the local level.

6.Limitations of the Study

While this study offers meaningful insights into leadership styles and organizational performance in Tanqua Milash Wereda, certain limitations intrinsic to its design and context influenced its scope and the generalizability of its findings:

- **Manual Data Analysis:** The reliance on manual methods for analyzing quantitative data, primarily due to the lack of access to specialized statistical software, is a limitation. While meticulous efforts were made to ensure accuracy in descriptive statistics and simple correlations, this approach may have constrained the precision of statistical analyses and precluded more complex multivariate modeling that could have revealed deeper statistical relationships.
- **Context-Specific Nature:** The research was conducted exclusively in Tanqua Milash Wereda, a newly established, rural, and resource-constrained district within a specific geopolitical context. Consequently, the findings, while highly relevant and robust for this particular setting, may not be directly generalizable to other regions with significantly different institutional maturity, urban-rural dynamics, administrative structures, or socio-economic conditions.
- **Perceptions Under Power Dynamics:** Despite assurances of anonymity and confidentiality, the hierarchical structures inherent in public administration settings and the sensitivity surrounding discussions of leadership effectiveness may have, to some extent, influenced participants' responses. Some individuals might have consciously or unconsciously moderated their expressions to align with perceived social desirability,

potentially understating negative experiences or overstating positive ones, though measures were taken to mitigate this.

- **Cross-sectional Snapshot:** The study employed a cross-sectional design, capturing data at a single point in time. This provides a snapshot of leadership and performance dynamics but does not allow for the tracking of changes or the evolution of leadership styles and their effects over a period of time. It cannot establish causality or reveal the developmental trajectories of leadership or organizational performance in a nascent administrative unit.
- **Male-Dominated Sample in Leadership:** The notable gender imbalance within leadership roles in Tanqua Milash Wereda was reflected in the qualitative interview sample, with only one female among the 18 sector leaders interviewed. While this accurately represents the existing leadership structure, it inherently limits the exploration of diverse gendered perspectives on leadership enactment, reception, and perceived effectiveness within local governance.

7. Recommendations for Future Research

Building upon the insights and limitations of this study, the following avenues for future research are recommended to deepen the understanding of leadership and organizational performance in similar contexts:

- **Longitudinal Studies:** Future research should consider longitudinal designs to track leadership and organizational performance trends over an extended period. This would allow for an understanding of how leadership styles evolve as institutional maturity progresses in newer weredas and how these changes impact long-term organizational effectiveness and good governance outcomes.
- **Comparative Analyses:** Conducting comparative studies between newly established weredas (like Tanqua Milash) and more mature, well-established administrative units within Ethiopia or similar developing countries could provide valuable insights. Such analyses could differentiate between challenges that are intrinsic to nascent administrative structures versus those that are more systemic cultural or institutional leadership challenges.

- **Leadership Intervention Evaluations:** Research focusing on the **effect of targeted leadership training or mentoring programs** on specific organizational performance indicators (e.g., employee motivation, participation rates, service delivery quality) would be highly beneficial. This would provide empirical evidence on the effectiveness of capacity-building initiatives in these challenging environments.
- **Gender-Inclusive Leadership Studies:** Given the observed gender imbalance, future research should explicitly aim to conduct **gender-inclusive leadership studies**. This would involve exploring how leadership is enacted, perceived, and received across different gender roles and at various levels of local governance, providing a more nuanced understanding of leadership dynamics and their impact on equity and performance.
- **Impact of Political-Administrative Interface:** Further in-depth qualitative research could specifically explore the dynamics and impact of political interference on administrative autonomy and leadership decision-making. Understanding the mechanisms and consequences of this interface could lead to more effective policy recommendations for safeguarding administrative professionalism.

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Appendices

Mekelle University
College of Business and Economics
School of Management
Department of Management
MBA Program

Research Title: “The Effect of Leadership Styles on Organizational Performance in Tanqua Milash Wereda, Central Zone, Tigray, Ethiopia”

Instructions for Participants

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire is part of a master's thesis research exploring the effect of leadership styles on organizational performance in Tanqua Milash Wereda. Your honest and thoughtful responses are invaluable to the success of this study.

Please be assured that:

- Your participation is **entirely voluntary**.
- All your responses will be kept **strictly confidential** and will be used solely for academic research purposes.
- Your name will not be associated with your responses in any way.

Thank you for your time and contribution.

Section 1: Demographic Information

Please tick (✓) the appropriate box or fill in the blank.

1. **Age (in years):** _____
2. **Gender:**
 - Male _____
 - Female _____
3. **Current Position in the Organization:**
 - Office Leader _____
 - Office Manager _____
 - Employee _____
4. **Years of Experience in the Current Role:** _____
5. **Your Sector Office:** _____

Section 2: Perceptions of Leadership Styles

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding your leader's style.

Scale:

- **1 = Strongly Disagree**
- **2 = Disagree**
- **3 = Neutral / I don't have any idea**
- **4 = Agree**
- **5 = Strongly Agree**

Statement	1 (Strongly Disagree)	2 (Disagree)	3 (Neutral)	4 (Agree)	5 (Strongly Agree)
1. My leader encourages team members to participate in decision-making processes.					
2. My leader provides clear expectations and feedback on performance.					
3. My leader inspires and motivates me to exceed my own expectations.					

4. My leader uses rewards and recognition to motivate employees.					
5. My leader is approachable and open to discussing ideas or concerns.					

Section 3: Perceptions of Organizational Performance

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding your experience in the organization.

Scale:

- **1 = Strongly Disagree**
- **2 = Disagree**
- **3 = Neutral / I don't have any idea**
- **4 = Agree**
- **5 = Strongly Agree**

Statement	1 (Strongly Disagree)	2 (Disagree)	3 (Neutral)	4 (Agree)	5 (Strongly Agree)
1. I feel motivated to perform my job effectively.					
2. I am satisfied with my job and the work environment.					
3. The organization achieves its goals effectively due to leadership practices.					
4. There is a strong sense of teamwork within my department.					
5. I believe that my contributions are valued by the organization.					

Section 4: Semi-Structured Interview Guide for Top Managers

(For Researcher Use Only)

Introduction to Interviewee: "Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. As part of my MBA thesis at Mekelle University, I am researching the effect of leadership styles on organizational performance in Tanqua Milash Wereda. Your experiences and insights as a sector leader are invaluable to this study. This interview will take approximately 25 minutes. Please be assured that your responses will be kept confidential and used solely for research purposes; your identity will remain anonymous in all reports. Do you have any questions before we begin?"

Interview Questions:

1. From your perspective, what leadership style(s) do you believe are most effective in your organization or sector office, and why?
2. What significant obstacles or challenges do leaders in Tanqua Milash Wereda face in effectively implementing their leadership roles and responsibilities?
3. Considering the current context, what specific changes or improvements would you suggest for leadership practices within your sector office or the wereda's administration to enhance overall organizational performance?