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Leadership Traits and Styles among Selected BPO Industries Vis-A-Vis Employees' Retention and Performance: A Leadership Flexibility-Adaptability Model (LFAM)

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship of leadership traits and leadership styles with employee retention and performance among selected Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) companies in Barangay San Antonio, Pasig City, and used the findings as the basis for a Leadership Flexibility-Adaptability Model (LFAM). A convergent parallel mixed-method design was employed. The quantitative strand involved 359 employees from five BPO companies selected through quota sampling, while in-depth interviews with selected employees provided qualitative accounts of leadership experiences. A researcher-developed questionnaire, validated by academic and industry experts, obtained a content-validation mean of 4.78 and a pilot-test Cronbach's alpha of 0.98. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, Kruskal-Wallis tests with Dunn's post hoc comparisons, and Spearman's rho; interview data were analyzed thematically. Results showed that flexibility, capacity to motivate, decisiveness, and eagerness to accept responsibility were seldom practiced, whereas self-confidence was frequently practiced. Pacesetter and autocratic approaches were among the more frequently practiced leadership styles. Retention was strong in attendance/punctuality and job security but low in job satisfaction, work-life balance, and compensation/benefits. Performance was high in communication, work quality, and technical proficiency but low in need for achievement and working relationships. Leadership traits and styles were significantly related to both retention and performance, with the strongest association observed between leadership style and performance ($\rho = .515$, $p < .001$). Qualitative findings reinforced the importance of accountability, collaborative decision-making, recognition, feedback, and employee-centered support. The findings support LFAM as a context-responsive leadership framework for improving retention, performance, and organizational sustainability in BPO settings.

Keywords: *leadership traits, leadership styles, employee retention, employee performance, BPO industry, leadership flexibility-adaptability model*

INTRODUCTION

Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) organizations operate in environments defined by rapid technological change, strict service-level expectations, distributed client relationships, and continuous pressure to deliver measurable outputs. These conditions make leadership consequential because employees must meet demanding performance targets while maintaining quality, customer responsiveness, and emotional regulation. Research on call-center work has consistently associated high workload and stress with exhaustion, burnout, and turnover intentions, while studies of post-pandemic call-center work have also emphasized the need to reconsider how

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organizations support employees in changing work arrangements (Chaudhary et al., 2023; Charoensukmongkol & Puyod, 2020; Fulaedzah, 2022; Tovar, 2022).

The Philippine BPO sector is especially relevant to this leadership problem because it combines a young, technology-oriented workforce with round-the-clock operations and globally standardized performance systems. In the thesis context, Barangay San Antonio, Pasig City represented a major BPO location where employees experienced demanding schedules, client pressure, and the challenge of balancing personal and work responsibilities. Related Philippine evidence has shown that workplace conditions, job satisfaction, and burnout are interrelated concerns in BPO settings, reinforcing the importance of organizational practices that protect employee well-being while sustaining productivity (Gumasing et al., 2023; Saiyed et al., 2024).

Leadership is central to this balance. Supportive and adaptive leadership can strengthen employee voice, engagement, and confidence, whereas highly controlling or poorly responsive approaches can intensify dissatisfaction and withdrawal. Studies have linked transformational and empowering leadership with innovative behavior, engagement, and performance, while laissez-faire and other leadership styles can generate different effects depending on context and employee characteristics (Ashfaq et al., 2021; Mutha & Srivastava, 2021; Rajbanshi, 2020; Zhang et al., 2023). In call-center settings, the quality of leader-member relationships has also been associated with affective commitment and employees' willingness to remain with the organization (Jabutay et al., 2021).

Despite this body of evidence, the thesis identified a practical gap in the local BPO context: leadership traits and leadership styles are often discussed separately from the combined outcomes of employee retention and performance, and many practices originating from parent organizations may not fully correspond to the expectations of Filipino employees. The study therefore examined leadership at the level of specific traits and styles, measured multiple dimensions of retention and performance, tested differences across employee demographic groups, and integrated quantitative results with employees' lived accounts of leadership behavior.

Accordingly, the study assessed leadership traits in terms of flexibility, capacity to motivate people, self-confidence, decisiveness, and eagerness to accept responsibility; leadership styles in terms of autocratic, transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, and pacesetter approaches; employee retention through attendance and punctuality, job satisfaction, work-life balance, job security, and compensation and benefits; and employee performance through need for achievement, communication skills, work quality, technical proficiency, and working relationships. It further examined the perceived impact of leadership on job satisfaction, work engagement, organizational commitment, work-life balance, and career development opportunities, with the ultimate goal of developing the Leadership Flexibility-Adaptability Model (LFAM).

Literature Review

BPO Work Environment and Retention Pressures

Call-center and BPO work combines intensive customer interaction, performance monitoring, shift schedules, and technology-mediated tasks. These characteristics can produce substantial emotional and workload demands. Chaudhary et al. (2023) reported the adverse effects of workload and stress among call-center employees, while Fulaedzah (2022) synthesized burnout as a persistent occupational concern in contact-center environments. Charoensukmongkol and Puyod (2020), studying call-center agents in the Philippines, further showed that emotional exhaustion is shaped by both work and personal characteristics.

The strain associated with nonstandard work schedules is particularly relevant to the Philippine context. Saiyed et al. (2024) described graveyard-shift stress as a contributor to burnout, illustrating how the temporal structure of call-center work can undermine well-being. At the same time, ergonomic and organizational conditions influence job satisfaction and productivity; Gumasing et al. (2023) emphasized that a sustainable workplace requires attention to physical and organizational factors that support employee health and effectiveness.

Retention therefore cannot be reduced to compensation alone. It reflects employees' evaluation of work demands, organizational support, opportunities, and the quality of everyday leadership. Tovar (2022) noted that

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post-COVID call-center research increasingly needs to account for changing work arrangements and employee expectations. In the thesis, these pressures justified examining leadership together with job satisfaction, work-life balance, job security, compensation, and employees' willingness to remain. Alerta (2023) similarly situated Philippine BPO work within broader labor and ethical conditions, reinforcing the importance of examining workplace experiences alongside retention outcomes.

Leadership Traits and Adaptive Capability

Leadership traits provide a behavioral foundation for how supervisors respond to operational volatility. The thesis focused on flexibility, motivation capacity, self-confidence, decisiveness, and eagerness to accept responsibility because these qualities shape how leaders communicate expectations, respond to failure, and support teams during demanding periods. In virtual and technology-mediated teams, Mutha and Srivastava (2021) emphasized leadership practices that sustain engagement across changing work conditions, supporting the relevance of adaptability in contemporary BPO operations.

Supportive leader behavior is also closely connected to coaching and employee empowerment. Marrone et al. (2021) found that supportive coaching behaviors can facilitate boundary-spanning behavior and raise job satisfaction, while Proença and Rodrigues (2021) linked empowerment in call centers with customer satisfaction. These findings are consistent with the thesis assumption that leaders who motivate, communicate confidently, and give employees constructive support can improve both individual and organizational outcomes.

The capacity to accept responsibility and make timely decisions is especially important in high-pressure service settings. Employees interpret accountability not only through formal decisions but also through how leaders respond to mistakes, recognize contributions, and distribute responsibility. The thesis therefore treated leadership traits as observable practices rather than abstract attributes, allowing employees to assess whether their leaders actually demonstrate flexibility, motivation, confidence, decisiveness, and accountability in everyday work.

Leadership Styles and Employee Outcomes

Leadership style determines how authority, participation, feedback, and performance expectations are organized. Rajbanshi (2020) examined laissez-faire, transactional, and transformational leadership and demonstrated that these approaches are associated with different organizational consequences. Taouil and Baker (2023) similarly examined transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire styles in relation to employee motivation, underscoring the need to consider style as a multidimensional rather than a single leadership construct.

Transformational leadership is generally associated with inspiration, empowerment, and innovation. Ashfaq et al. (2021) found that transformational leadership can influence innovative behavior through psychological empowerment and employee proactivity. By contrast, laissez-faire leadership can produce both positive and negative effects depending on employee orientation and organizational conditions (Ulukök & Merdan, 2022; Zhang et al., 2023). These differences are important in BPO environments where some employees need clear structure while others respond more positively to autonomy and participatory decision-making.

The thesis also included autocratic, transactional, and pacesetter approaches because target-driven BPO systems commonly emphasize rules, metrics, and high standards. Such styles may support speed and control but can reduce employee voice if applied rigidly. The study consequently evaluated which styles were most frequently practiced and how employees connected those styles with retention, performance, work engagement, and organizational commitment.

Employee Retention, Performance, and Leadership Support

Employee retention reflects a combination of satisfaction, security, balance, and perceived organizational support. Ismail et al. (2021) linked talent management practices and employee engagement with retention, while Ojo and Alli (2024) emphasized the role of talent management and organizational performance in employees' decisions to stay. Sean and Ozer (2024) likewise highlighted the importance of retention strategies in Asian emerging markets, where employees compare available opportunities and organizational conditions.

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Within call centers, relational experiences with leaders can be particularly influential. Jabutay et al. (2021) showed that leader-member exchange is implicated in affective commitment among Filipino call-center employees. Kashfitanto and Febriansyah (2023) further linked work stress and work values with turnover intention among Generation Z call-center employees. These findings support the thesis focus on a predominantly young workforce and the need to understand how demographic differences shape responses to leadership.

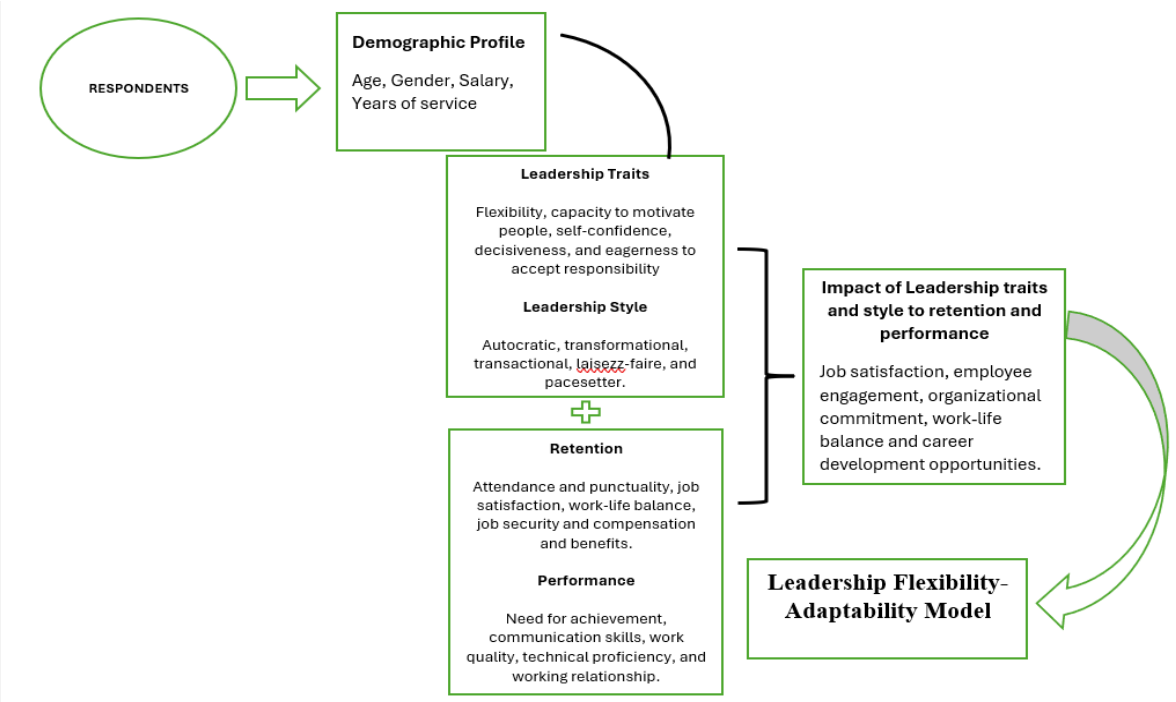
Performance is similarly affected by both capability and organizational climate. Ahmad et al. (2021) examined internal marketing practices and service-recovery performance among call-center employees, while Kushwaha et al. (2020) showed that growth needs and job satisfaction can support talent sustainability in BPOs and call centers. Pinzon et al. (2023) also linked organizational learning culture with turnover intentions among telecommuting call-center agents. Taken together, these studies suggest that retention and performance should be interpreted as interconnected outcomes influenced by leadership, development opportunities, and the broader work environment.

Theoretical and Conceptual Integration

The thesis was conceptually informed by Leadership Trait Theory, Leadership Style Theory, and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory. Together, these perspectives support the premise that leadership involves both relatively stable behavioral qualities and context-dependent approaches to directing and motivating employees, while retention and performance are influenced by both motivating conditions and work-environment factors. This integrated orientation allowed the study to connect leader behavior with employees' satisfaction, security, work-life balance, achievement, communication, technical competence, and workplace relationships.

The resulting conceptual framework treated employee demographic characteristics as contextual inputs, examined leadership traits and styles alongside retention and performance, and assessed their combined impact on job satisfaction, employee engagement, organizational commitment, work-life balance, and career development opportunities. The framework culminated in the Leadership Flexibility-Adaptability Model, which was intended to help BPO organizations align leadership responses with diverse employee needs and changing operational demands.

Figure 1. *Research Paradigm of the Study*



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Conceptual framework retained from the original thesis manuscript.

METHODS

Research Design

The study employed a convergent parallel mixed-method design. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected during the same general period, analyzed separately, and subsequently integrated for interpretation. The quantitative strand assessed leadership traits, leadership styles, employee retention, employee performance, perceived leadership impact, group differences, and relationships among the major variables. The qualitative strand used in-depth interviews to capture employees' experiences of leadership, support, decision-making, satisfaction, and performance.

This design was appropriate because the statistical results established the direction and magnitude of patterns across the larger sample, whereas the interview accounts clarified how leadership practices were experienced in day-to-day BPO work. Integration occurred during interpretation and informed the development of the Leadership Flexibility-Adaptability Model.

Research Locale

The study was conducted among selected BPO companies located in Barangay San Antonio, Pasig City. The Business Permits and Licensing Office listed 212 registered BPO companies in Pasig City. Five companies met the study criteria: location in Barangay San Antonio, more than five years of operation, a workforce of at least 500 employees, U.S.-based operations, and Filipino immediate supervisors and team leaders. The participating organizations were anonymized as Companies A, B, C, D, and E.

Across the five selected companies, the source manuscript reported a combined employee population of 3,597. The locale was selected because it represented a concentrated BPO setting in which leadership, retention, and performance could be examined across organizations that shared a comparable service environment while maintaining distinct organizational practices.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The quantitative sample consisted of 359 BPO employees directly involved in customer-facing service and support roles. Quota sampling was used to maintain representation across the five companies, and Slovin's formula was used in determining the sample allocation. Company A contributed 83 respondents, Company B 97, Company C 65, and Companies D and E 57 respondents each.

The qualitative strand involved in-depth interviews with selected BPO employees during the same data-gathering period. Interviewees were identified through coded labels in the thesis (e.g., E001, E009, E024) to maintain confidentiality. The source manuscript did not report a separate numerical size for the qualitative interview group; therefore, no interview sample count was introduced in this journal conversion.

Research Instrument

A researcher-developed questionnaire served as the principal quantitative instrument. It gathered demographic information on age, gender, salary, and years of service; assessed leadership traits of flexibility, capacity to motivate people, self-confidence, decisiveness, and eagerness to accept responsibility; measured autocratic, transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, and pacesetter leadership styles; and assessed retention and performance dimensions. A four-point response scale was used to avoid neutral responses.

The instrument also measured the perceived impact of leadership traits and styles on job satisfaction, employee engagement, organizational commitment, work-life balance, and career development opportunities. Academic and industry experts reviewed the questionnaire for clarity, alignment, relevance, and suitability. The ten validation indicators produced a combined mean of 4.78, interpreted in the thesis as Very Much Valid. A pilot test with 35 respondents outside the actual sample yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.98, supporting high internal consistency.

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Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher first reviewed relevant local and international literature and obtained an updated list of registered BPO firms from the Pasig City Business Permits and Licensing Office. Formal communications were sent to the selected companies to secure organizational permission and coordinate participation.

The validated questionnaire was administered in printed and electronic forms, including Google Forms accessed through links or QR codes. Surveys and interviews were conducted concurrently. After retrieval, quantitative and qualitative datasets were organized separately, analyzed using their respective procedures, and integrated during interpretation. The combined findings were then used to formulate LFAM.

Data Analysis

Frequency, percentage distribution, and ranking were used to summarize the demographic profile. Weighted means based on the four-point scale were used to describe leadership traits and styles, retention and performance levels, and the perceived impact of leadership. Spearman's rank-order correlation was used to test the relationships between leadership traits/styles and employee retention/performance.

Kruskal-Wallis analysis of variance was used to determine whether assessments differed across demographic groups, with Dunn's post hoc comparisons applied when significant omnibus differences were found. Qualitative interview recordings were transcribed, coded, grouped into themes, and interpreted through thematic analysis. Participant statements were used in the thesis to substantiate the emergent patterns.

Ethical Consideration

The researcher sought organizational consent from participating BPO companies before collecting data. Respondents received informed-consent information describing the purpose of the study, research procedures, anticipated benefits, confidentiality provisions, voluntary participation, and the right to withdraw without penalty.

The study was presented to the Olivarez College Ethical Review Board before implementation. The ethical review considered participant rights, privacy, confidentiality, data security, and the appropriateness of the study procedures. Company identities and interview participants were anonymized in the reporting of findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Profile

The sample was predominantly young. Fifty-six percent of respondents were 18-27 years old, while only 1% were 48 years old and above. The gender distribution was relatively balanced, with 40% female and 38% male, and a small proportion choosing another response or not stating gender. Thirty-five percent earned between PHP 15,001 and PHP 20,000 per month, and 57% had been employed by their current BPO company for less than three years. These characteristics indicate an early-career workforce in which retention and leadership responsiveness are particularly salient.

Table 1. *Summary of Respondent Profile*

Profile Variable	Largest Category	Frequency / Share
Age	18-27 years	202 (56%)
Gender	Female	142 (40%)
Monthly salary	PHP 15,001-PHP 20,000	126 (35%)
Years of service	Less than 3 years	204 (57%)

The concentration of younger and shorter-tenured employees is consistent with research showing that call-center turnover is sensitive to stress, work values, perceived support, and career opportunities (Kashfitanto & Febriansyah, 2023; Sean & Ozer, 2024). For organizations, this means leadership practices that build trust and development pathways may be as important as formal employment conditions in stabilizing the workforce.

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Leadership Traits and Leadership Styles

The leadership-trait results revealed uneven practice. Self-confidence was the only trait classified as frequently practiced (M = 2.57). Flexibility (M = 2.33), capacity to motivate people (M = 2.48), decisiveness (M = 2.47), and eagerness to accept responsibility (M = 2.31) were rated as seldom practiced. These patterns suggest that leaders were perceived as capable of projecting confidence but less consistent in adapting, motivating, making employee-responsive decisions, and taking ownership of outcomes. Such gaps are relevant because supportive coaching, empowerment, and leader-member relationships can strengthen satisfaction, engagement, and commitment (Jabutay et al., 2021; Marrone et al., 2021; Proença & Rodrigues, 2021).

All five leadership styles were rated as frequently practiced, although at different levels. Pacesetter leadership obtained the highest mean (M = 3.10), followed closely by autocratic (M = 3.09) and transactional leadership (M = 3.05). Transformational (M = 2.64) and laissez-faire (M = 2.54) were also frequently practiced but at lower means. The dominance of pacesetter, autocratic, and transactional tendencies is consistent with a metrics-intensive work environment; however, a rigid emphasis on control and targets may limit employee voice and development. Prior evidence shows that transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire styles can have distinct motivational and performance consequences (Rajbanshi, 2020; Taouil & Baker, 2023; Zhang et al., 2023).

Table 2. *Core Quantitative Findings on Leadership, Retention, Performance, and Leadership Impact*

Domain	Dimension	Mean	Interpretation
Leadership trait	Flexibility	2.33	Seldom practiced
Leadership trait	Capacity to motivate	2.48	Seldom practiced
Leadership trait	Self-confidence	2.57	Frequently practiced
Leadership trait	Decisiveness	2.47	Seldom practiced
Leadership trait	Eagerness to accept responsibility	2.31	Seldom practiced
Leadership style	Autocratic	3.09	Frequently practiced
Leadership style	Transformational	2.64	Frequently practiced
Leadership style	Transactional	3.05	Frequently practiced
Leadership style	Laissez-faire	2.54	Frequently practiced
Leadership style	Pacesetter	3.10	Frequently practiced
Retention	Job satisfaction	2.07	Low level
Retention	Attendance and punctuality	3.25	High level
Retention	Work-life balance	2.24	Low level
Retention	Job security	3.11	High level
Retention	Compensation and benefits	2.36	Low level
Performance	Need for achievement	2.27	Low level
Performance	Communication skills	2.74	High level
Performance	Work quality	2.98	High level
Performance	Technical proficiency	2.98	High level
Performance	Working relationships	2.41	Low level
Leadership impact	Job satisfaction	3.73	Very high impact
Leadership impact	Work engagement	3.61	Very high impact
Leadership impact	Organizational commitment	3.71	Very high impact
Leadership impact	Work-life balance	3.76	Very high impact
Leadership impact	Career development opportunities	3.70	Very high impact

Employee Retention and Performance

Retention results were mixed. Attendance and punctuality (M = 3.25) and job security (M = 3.11) were rated high, indicating that employees generally maintained attendance expectations and perceived a degree of employment stability. However, job satisfaction (M = 2.07), work-life balance (M = 2.24), and compensation and benefits (M = 2.36) were low. This contrast is important: employees may remain present and feel relatively secure while still experiencing dissatisfaction with rewards and work-life conditions. Talent-management and retention research similarly emphasizes that continued employment is shaped by engagement, growth opportunities, and organizational support rather than by a single factor (Ismail et al., 2021; Ojo & Alli, 2024).

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Performance showed a comparable pattern. Communication skills (M = 2.74), work quality (M = 2.98), and technical proficiency (M = 2.98) were high, while need for achievement (M = 2.27) and working relationships (M = 2.41) were low. Thus, employees appeared capable of meeting core technical and service requirements, but motivational drive and collaborative relationships represented weaker areas. This distinction suggests that operational competence does not necessarily guarantee sustained engagement or team cohesion. Organizational learning, empowerment, and supportive leadership can help convert technical capability into stronger motivation and longer-term performance (Ahmad et al., 2021; Pinzon et al., 2023; Pojanes & Japos, 2022).

Perceived Impact of Leadership

Respondents rated the impact of leadership traits and styles as very high across all five outcome areas: work-life balance (M = 3.76), job satisfaction (M = 3.73), organizational commitment (M = 3.71), career development opportunities (M = 3.70), and work engagement (M = 3.61). These results show that employees did not view leadership merely as a supervisory mechanism; rather, leadership behavior was perceived as shaping their experience of the organization, opportunities for growth, and capacity to balance performance demands with personal needs. This supports the argument that leadership development in BPO settings should be treated as a retention and performance strategy, not only as a managerial competency initiative.

Differences Across Demographic Groups

The thesis reported significant differences in leadership traits, leadership styles, retention, and performance when respondents were grouped by age. Gender significantly influenced retention and performance. Salary level also produced significant differences in retention and performance, while years of service was a significant factor in leadership-style perceptions, retention, and performance. Dunn's post hoc tests were used in the original analysis to locate specific group differences following significant Kruskal-Wallis results.

Table 3. *Summary of Significant Demographic Differences Reported in the Thesis*

Demographic Variable	Leadership Traits	Leadership Styles	Retention	Performance
Age	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Gender	Not emphasized as significant	Not emphasized as significant	Significant	Significant
Salary	No significant difference reported	No significant difference reported	Significant	Significant
Years of service	No significant difference reported	Significant	Significant	Significant

These differences reinforce the study's central premise that leadership cannot be applied as a one-size-fits-all practice. A young employee with short tenure may respond differently to directive leadership, career opportunities, or performance pressure than an experienced employee. Likewise, differences related to compensation and gender indicate that leadership approaches must be sensitive to varied expectations and workplace needs. This demographic responsiveness is one of the practical foundations for leadership flexibility and adaptability.

Relationships Among Leadership, Retention, and Performance

All four tested relationships were statistically significant. Leadership traits had low positive relationships with employee retention ($\rho = .243$, $p < .001$) and employee performance ($\rho = .222$, $p < .001$). Leadership styles were also positively related to retention ($\rho = .321$, $p < .001$) and showed a moderate positive relationship with performance ($\rho = .515$, $p < .001$). The strongest association was therefore between leadership style and employee performance.

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Table 4. *Spearman Correlations of Leadership with Retention and Performance*

Relationship	Spearman ρ	Degree	Significance
Leadership traits - Employee retention	.243	Low positive	$p < .001$
Leadership traits - Employee performance	.222	Low positive	$p < .001$
Leadership styles - Employee retention	.321	Low positive	$p < .001$
Leadership styles - Employee performance	.515	Moderate positive	$p < .001$

Although the coefficients for leadership traits were modest, their statistical significance indicates that more favorable leadership-trait practice tended to accompany stronger retention and performance. The larger coefficient for leadership style and performance suggests that the overall way leaders organize authority, participation, expectations, and support may have a more visible connection with how employees perform. This is consistent with research linking transformational and supportive leadership with empowerment, engagement, and innovative behavior (Ashfaq et al., 2021; Mutha & Srivastava, 2021).

Qualitative Themes

The qualitative findings provided context for the statistical patterns. Employees described contrasting experiences in how leaders handled failure: some shifted blame to employees, while others treated setbacks as learning opportunities. Leadership attitude also varied from demanding and pressure-oriented to calm, strategic, and collaborative. One participant described a leader as remaining "calm under pressure" (E009), whereas another account indicated that highly directive decision-making could leave employees feeling "unheard or micromanaged" (E001).

Decision-making experiences likewise ranged from centralized control to collaborative and decentralized practices. Employees associated retention with recognition, growth opportunities, positive work environments, competitive salaries, incentives, and benefits. In relation to performance, participants valued regular constructive feedback, one-on-one guidance, mentorship, and training. They also identified communication, time management, conflict resolution, and technical skills as areas requiring continued development.

Table 5. *Major Qualitative Themes and Their Meaning*

Theme	Key Pattern	Implication for Leadership
Handling failures	Blame-shifting contrasted with learning-oriented responses	Accountability and psychological safety are important.
Leader attitude	Demanding behavior contrasted with calm, strategic guidance	Composure and collaboration can strengthen confidence.
Leadership approach and decision-making	Centralized control contrasted with participatory decision-making	Employee voice should be balanced with operational speed.
Employee well-being and retention	Recognition, growth, compensation, and environment shaped willingness to stay	Retention requires both relational and material support.
Leader support and development	Feedback, one-on-one guidance, mentorship, and training supported performance	Continuous coaching can strengthen capability and engagement.

Implications for the Leadership Flexibility-Adaptability Model

The integrated findings support LFAM as a response to two simultaneous realities in BPO work: organizations need leaders who can meet strict service and performance requirements, while employees need leadership that is responsive to differences in age, tenure, compensation, developmental needs, and work-life conditions. The model therefore rests on the thesis conclusion that effective BPO leadership should be flexible, adaptive, accountable, supportive, and capable of modifying its approach according to workforce and operational demands.

In practical terms, the findings indicate that LFAM should guide leadership development toward stronger flexibility, motivation, decisiveness, responsibility-taking, employee-centered communication, and context-appropriate use of leadership styles. It also supports organizational measures that protect work-life balance, improve compensation and benefits, strengthen career-development opportunities, and reinforce feedback and

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mentoring. These priorities directly reflect the weaknesses and high-impact areas documented in the study rather than introducing new model components beyond the original research context.

CONCLUSION

The study demonstrates that leadership is a meaningful organizational factor in both employee retention and performance within the selected BPO companies in Barangay San Antonio, Pasig City. Employees perceived self-confidence as a frequently practiced leadership trait, but flexibility, motivation capacity, decisiveness, and eagerness to accept responsibility were less consistently demonstrated. Pacesetter, autocratic, and transactional styles were prominent, reflecting a target-driven operating environment. At the employee level, attendance, job security, communication skills, work quality, and technical proficiency were comparatively strong, while job satisfaction, work-life balance, compensation and benefits, need for achievement, and working relationships were weaker. Leadership was perceived to have a very high impact on satisfaction, engagement, commitment, work-life balance, and career development.

Statistically significant relationships were found between leadership traits/styles and both retention and performance, with leadership style showing the strongest association with employee performance. Qualitative accounts reinforced these results by showing that accountability, collaborative decision-making, recognition, feedback, and supportive guidance affect how employees experience their work. The study therefore contributes a context-based foundation for the Leadership Flexibility-Adaptability Model as a means of aligning leadership behavior with workforce diversity, retention needs, and performance demands in BPO organizations.

Recommendation

1. BPO organizations should institutionalize leadership-development programs that strengthen flexibility, motivation, decisiveness, accountability, and adaptive use of leadership styles. Coaching and mentoring should help supervisors move beyond purely target-driven or controlling practices when employee needs require a more supportive approach.

2. Management should address the low-rated retention areas by reviewing compensation and benefits, improving work-life balance arrangements, strengthening wellness and mental-health support, and providing visible career-development pathways for early-career and shorter-tenured employees.

3. Organizations should sustain employee performance through structured feedback, one-on-one coaching, recognition programs, technical upskilling, communication development, conflict-resolution support, and team-building initiatives that improve working relationships and need for achievement.

4. Leadership policies and training should account for demographic differences, particularly age, gender, salary level, and years of service, because the study found significant differences in several leadership, retention, and performance outcomes across these groups.

5. The Leadership Flexibility-Adaptability Model should be considered as a guiding framework for continuous leadership assessment and organizational improvement. Future studies may validate the model in other BPO locations, compare company-level contexts, and test whether targeted LFAM-based interventions produce measurable changes in retention and performance over time.

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