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Leadership Level and Performance Outcome of Filipino Managers in Japanese Manufacturing Firms at Region Iv-A, Philippines: A Development of Performance Enhancement Framework

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ABSTRACT
Manufacturing has been one of the crucial sectors in building an economy. In the Philippines it plays a vital part as backbone of the economy, with the Japanese Firms having one of the largest contributors. As the sector thrives to grow, the continuous development for leadership and management is very much essential. This study focuses on understanding leadership level, with leadership style and management competency as its key indicators, and its impact to overall organizational performance outcome of Filipino Managers working in Japanese Manufacturing firms located at Region IV-A, Philippines. With the use of descriptive-correlational design of research, data were gathered in key economic zones through purposive sampling for Filipino Managers through Survey Questionnaires. The result reveals that there was significant relationship between leadership level and performance outcome of the organization. Although, the results showed that the most preferred style were Transformational leadership, it does not have statistically significant influence in organizational performance, emphasizing the importance of managerial skills and competencies rather than the use of certain leadership style alone in managing an organization. With the results that had obtained, a Performance Enhancement Framework was developed that could be use by current Filipino Managers in order to further strengthen, develop, and improve their skills and competency which required a more sustainable and long-term growth of Manufacturing Sector.

KEYWORDS - Leadership Level, Leadership Style, Managerial Competency, Performance Outcome, Filipino Managers, Japanese Manufacturing

1. INTRODUCTION

Manufacturing is an important backbone for stronger and stable economy, not only in the Philippines but most of the countries in the whole world. Here in the Philippines, according to the report of the Manila Bulletin (2025), the Manufacturing Industry was accounted for 29.5% of the country's GDP on the first quarter of the year 2025. And in order to strengthen and elevate Manufacturing further, the role of

Managers as Leaders are that crucial, as it is critical to ensure that leaders, themselves, have the skills and competencies they need to be successful in the future, because in today's tougher competitive business environment, developing strong leaders is essential for any organization to succeed (Stowers, 2023). In the Philippines, as it continues to position itself as a key manufacturing hub in Southeast Asia, the sector's resilience and adaptability will be very crucial in the next years in navigating the evolving global economic landscape (Taas Noo Pilipino, 2024). And on of the top investors in Manufacturing is Japan, which accounts for 79% of the gross equity capital of the sector in different products (Dumayas, 2022). Making a fresh investment commitments that cost of PHP 26.6 Bn, this could be a huge increase for the country's economy and its position to be one of the strong manufacturing hubs in the World. With this, the necessity for a competitive leadership is a must for Filipino Managers.

Managers are crucial for the continuous and future success of any organization, Leadership is a prerequisite and indispensable. John Maxwell, a world-renowned expert in Leadership, describe that Leadership is more of a process and rather than a position. That is why the role of Leaders will ever be challenging and important than before, where success is totally anchored on them. Leadership Level could be verified using two key indicators, the Leadership Style (Wei and Vasudevan, 2022) and the Managerial Competency (Gutterman, 2023). Leadership Style has been used widely by many researchers in determining the impact of which to organizational performance and its effectiveness in achieving company's goal. On the other hand, Managerial Competency is a necessity in order to be effective at work and in properly managing members and company resources. As Globalization further pushes, it significantly demands for higher level of Managers that are very effective and could decide efficiently wherein they could provide the effective use of the organization (Negi and Gupta, 2022). Hence, that is the reason why it is as well important to gauge the level of competency that the manager have, since this competency is directly proportional to managerial effectiveness.

The Leadership Level and the Performance Outcome should be determined and with this, further create a more robust management and organization that is prepared and ready to compete for the future. Hence, this is the future of manufacturing, without the development of managers, the existence of one company would be difficult, since the survival of a business will live and die depending on the Leadership Level of its Managers. This study aims to determine and understand the current Leadership Level particularly on indicators Leadership Style and Managerial Competency of Filipino Managers and identify the gap by assessing its Performance Outcome in different Japanese Manufacturing Firms. That is the main goal of this research, to define and determine the current gap between Leadership Level and Performance Outcome of Filipino Managers, and to develop and propose a Performance Enhancement Framework that will help strengthen and increase the Leadership Level of Filipino Managers and create a robust organization that is prepared, resilient and competitive.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Leadership and the Different Styles in becoming a Leader

(Transformational, Transactional and Authoritarian Style of Leadership)

Leadership mostly deals with people and their dynamics and which are continually changing and never static as John Maxwell further elaborates, and where Leadership is dealt with for excellence in performance from different perspectives, and among these elements is to consider the contribution of gender differences, the importance of values and ethics, the balance of core values and competencies, the identification and dissemination of values at the organization level and their application in different

sectors, whether it is a public sector or a sector (Addin, 2020). In the study of Al-Khaled and Chung (2020), they use Leadership Style to analyze the impact of which to Organizational Performance, they used Authoritarian, Democratic and Laissez Faire Leadership styles to understand how these styles affect how organization perform and its productivity. While in the study of Ashley-Osuzoka (2024), he found out that Leadership Styles has enormous influence on their followers with the use of strategic management skills, effective leadership has contingent impact on organizational performance.

Leadership Style is the Leader itself. But as Maxwell said, Leadership is a process. Leaders must continuously develop and grow as the requirement also increases. Leadership development is important, but to be effective, training must address the skills leaders need to not only drive success in today's world of work, but also in tomorrow's (Gallo, 2023). That is why Leadership is a process, it needs to evolve continuously, because people follow leaders willingly, eagerly, because leaders motivate and influence, and people perform at their best for leaders not because they were ordered to but because they want to (Diviney, 2021). Because the bottom line is Leaders create influence and provides inspiration.

2.2 The Filipino Concept and Japanese Ideology of Leadership

The concept of Leadership in the Philippines is becoming crucial as the requirement for future leaders to evolve and be adaptive is seemingly increasing and inevitable. The traditional way is still effective as a Filipino, but the question of sustainability for future growth is a must factor that must be provided answers and evolvement. Filipino Leadership is mostly seen as relational, as Filipinos are relational people and value relationship, that is why leadership in the Philippines is an art of building relationships with people with whom leaders work (Cimene and Aladano, 2022). As a full concept of Filipino Way of Leadership, Managers should be relational, as such, leadership and management styles in the Philippines are rooted in empathy, harmony, and respect, that is why it is a must to have leaders who live and lead with these values daily and mastering these nuances of Filipino management style is not optional-it's essential for any company serious about success in the Philippines (Ramos, 2025).

In the Japanese context, they are very sophisticated, disciplined and focus on their objectives and goal. Japanese Leadership shows Japanese management system recognizes how top management creates the goals, values, and systems that navigate continuous performance progress, where Employee Participation or Collaboration is being emphasized (Ellitan and Anatan, 2025). Aside from Collaboration, the core principles and practices of Japanese Leadership include Continuous Improvement, Teamwork, Customer Focus, and Quality Control that have helped organizations achieve greater efficiency, productivity, and quality in the manufacturing line (Beijani, 2023). As Sayyadi and Provitera (2023) concluded in their study that, by adopting the Japanese approach to organizational design, the practice of leadership, and supportive collaborative discussions within organizations, executives can continue to prosper in the future.

2.3 Management and the Requirement to Bridge the Future

(Managerial Competency: Technical, Conceptual and Design Skills)

Leadership and Management, in many studies and research, has always been interconnected as prerequisite to become an Effective Manager. Although there are differences in terms of the two, still it cannot be separated fully as a must-to-have for Managers. In Leadership, it is mostly related to people, the Manager's Interpersonal Skills and Relationship to its followers, bringing influence and inspiration. This role required competencies that are merely part of Conceptual Skills that was first identified and developed by Robert Katz in 1955, together with Technical and Human Skills. These Conceptual Skills according to Gutterman (2023) are important for a Manager since it incorporates the skills associated with the ability to see and comprehend the "big picture", including recognizing and analyzing the significant elements of a particular

situation and how they fit together. In relation for this, strategic and systematic thinking is not enough, as Gutterman (2023) studied, Design Skills or the ability to make a quick response to problem and create a strong and accurate decision is same level necessary for Managers to possess.

Understanding the drivers of better management in the industry is a fruitful area for policy development (London School of Economics, 2023) that could lead to continuous growth and development of managers in the industry, that will certainly increase their level in Managerial Effectiveness and if the management of the organization works in an effective way to achieve the goal of the organization, in this regard, the organizational performance would be improved (Khan, 2022). That is why it is important manage competencies, where the aim is to obtain competencies that are not yet part of the company's repertoire, as well as maintain and develop existing ones, in order to achieve, through a structured effort, the objectives outlined in the strategy (Arruda, 2023).

2.4 Management, Key Indicators and Performance Outcome

(Key Performance Indices: Quality, Cost, Delivery, Service + Production)

Just like any other, Management is also being measured in terms of its effectiveness. Managerial effectiveness is the by-product of Managerial competencies of Managers that had been acquired through their development, experience and training. Since when managers develop their skills, it not only benefits them personally and professionally, but (when done in large numbers) it can also have positive benefits on others (Tonidandel et al.,2021). Organizations can use various KPIs, including operational, financial, and knowledge indicators, to evaluate their performance and improve their potential and measuring managerial competency is crucial for assessing management skills (Proaction International, 2023). Wherein usually, KPI is being used, and typical KPIs applied in the process industry to evaluate performance (Zhu et al., 2017).

In most of the Japanese Manufacturing Firms, it is very common to use the Concept of QCDS or Quality, Cost Delivery and Service or QCDS to measure the performance of the organization. And as also been studied by Ganeshkumar and Prabhavathy (2021), aside from QCDS, P or Production has been also used in order to create a holistic understanding of organizational performance outcome. This is where the interconnection of Management, KPIs and Performance Outcome matters, this will ensure the achievement of the organization on the set goal of the management, on how the organization delivers in order to create a progress for the company.

2.5 Manufacturing and the Future Outlook

In both Global and Domestic scale, Manufacturing have been a stable and major factor for the consistent growth of economic stance. Industrialized and Developing countries has been heavily reliant in Manufacturing for many years in order to ensure not only economic growth but as well as technological advancement. With this, we are looking for a far better future for the projection of growth in the Manufacturing Industry. Currently, as reported by Tamanna (2025) at Manufacturing Industry Outlook 2026, the manufacturing industry is composed of over 161,000 companies and 17,000 startups, employing and providing jobs for 12.3 million individuals globally.

With the outlook showing a brighter day ahead in Asia Pacific, Philippines will be one of the countries that will benefit with this the most. As ASEAN economies integrate and regional, plurilateral, and bilateral trade agreements are forged, Philippine's viability as an investment destination site for manufacturing deepen its participation in regional production hubs that is based on one of the reports of Arangkada Pilipinas. Currently, Japan has invested momentous Manufacturing Firms here in the Philippines. Japanese manufacturing firms creating significant presence in the country making a fresh investment commitments

to further boosts technological capabilities in their plants (Isip, 2025), this could have a big impact for the country's economy and its position to be one of the strong manufacturing hubs in the World.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study will use descriptive correlational design of research, wherein, this design will aim to provide stationary picture of situations as well as establish and explain the relationship between the variables Leadership Level and Performance Outcome of Filipino Managers that are currently working in different Japanese Manufacturing Firms. The descriptive correlational design which is believed to be appropriate in measuring whether a significant relationship exist between variable and present the data as accurate as possible without any forms of manipulation (Tiauzon et al., 2023).

3.2 Sources of Data

The researcher used Survey in Questionnaire form (through MS Forms) and gathered primary data from respondents in Mid Management Position from different Japanese Manufacturing Firms in Region IV-A where Industrial Parks are highly concentrated particularly within Laguna, Batangas and Cavite Provinces (Dumayas, 2022).

3.3 Population Study

The respondents of this research are comprised of 70 Managers in Mid Management Position in Japanese Manufacturing Firms, in which the locale had been within Economic Zones in Laguna, Batangas and Cavite Provinces. The researcher used Cluster Sampling Method for Companies in consideration with Industrial Parks within the target provinces, wherein 16 companies from different Economic zones participated in this study. Purposive Sampling Method had been used for the Managers, with which the same method as Cada (2020) used in his research regarding Management Styles among MSME Owners in the City of Manila.

3.3 Instrumentation and Validation

The researcher utilized a Questionnaire Type of a Survey in order to identify and determine the Leadership Level and Performance Outcome of Filipino Managers working in different Japanese Manufacturing Firms in Region IV-A particularly in Laguna, Batangas and Cavite Area. The Questionnaire (through MS Forms) was created by the researcher with the help from Artificial Intelligence (ChatGPT). The Survey is consisted of the following parts: (1.1) Leadership Style, (1.2) Managerial Competency; and (2) Performance Outcome, that was all based on the research variables.

The Survey Part for Leadership Style, this had been based on Tannenbaum and Schmidt Leadership Theory regarding Authoritarian, Transactional and Transformational Style, and aligned with Filipino Concept of Leadership and Maxwell's Five Levels of Leadership. In order to create a more comprehensive level of identification on the preference of leadership style in accordance with the current practices within the organization, the researcher used five (5) key dimensions that was derived from Maxwells' Five (5) Levels of Leadership. These dimensions will serve as the basis in the assessment of behaviors and possible tendencies of Managers in terms with their approach. These Dimensions that are extracted from Maxwel's Leadership Level are critically connected on the Concept of Filipino Leadership which was used by Wadud (2020).

For Managerial Competency, this had been based on Katz's Theory of Leadership served as the theoretical basis for the managerial competency dimension of this study. Since human skills were already addressed under leadership style, the managerial competency component focused on the following key skills:

Technical skills, or proficiency in specific processes and methods required to perform tasks effectively;
Conceptual skills, or the ability to think strategically and creatively; and
Design skills, or the ability to identify and solve organizational problems.

To create a robust questionnaire for the survey, these skills are connected and aligned with the Japanese Concept of Manufacturing, with which is also based on the Key Performance Indices of Quality, Cost, Delivery, Service and Production (QCDS+P).

And for the Survey Part regarding Performance Outcome, the researcher used the Japanese QCDS as Key Performance Indices which is normally being used in Japanese Manufacturing Firm, but in addition of one index which is Production or P, that was part of the indices used by Ganeshkumar and Prabhavathy (2021) in their study, wherein is also aligned in relation to Japanese Manufacturing Concepts (Beijani, 2023; Sayyadi and Provitera , 2023). The Survey Questionnaire has been based on this KPI in connection with Japanese Manufacturing Concept that was already been tackled previously at Managerial Competency. QCDS+P is simply elaborated its core emphasis in Japanese Manufacturing as the following:

- **Quality** – defect prevention and continuous improvement;
- **Cost** – waste elimination and cost control;
- **Delivery** – timely and reliable output;
- **Service** – customer satisfaction and responsiveness; and
- **Production** – efficient and stable processes.

Given that the questionnaire is self-created by the researcher based on the Theories mentioned above, and in order to validate the instrument that the researcher will use, the survey had been assessed and reviewed by a Human Resources Development expert (for Japanese Manufacturing Firms) in order get professional advice and proposition about the subject matter. The survey had been verified and that the questions are inter linked and will answer the Purpose of the research.

3.4 Statistical Treatment of Data

The researcher utilized the following statistical tools in order to analyze and verify the relationship of the variables of the study:

1. Quantitative Descriptive Statistical Analysis using Univariate Analysis for single variable (Weighted Mean) and Ranking for the Leadership Level and Performance Outcome.
2. Bivariate Analysis (Pearson r Correlation Coefficient) is used to determine and understand the relationship between indicators of Leadership Level which are Leadership Style and Managerial Competency, and between Leadership Level and Performance Outcome.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Below presents the summary, analysis, and results of the data gathered using the research instruments, providing answers to the research problems. It consolidates the findings derived from the systematic analysis of the collected data.

4.1 The Leadership Style Preference of Filipino Managers

Based on the Tannenbaum and Schmidt Leadership Theory, three (3) leadership styles were examined based on respondents' preferences and current practices within their organizations: Authoritarian,

Transactional, and Transformational leadership. Using five (5) leadership dimensions, the results indicate that no single leadership style is strongly and consistently demonstrated among Filipino managers.

Table 1. Overall Leadership Level of Filipino Managers working in different Japanese Manufacturing Firms in terms of kind of Leadership Style Mostly Used

Scale	Domains	*WM*	*SD*	Rank
Leadership style	Authoritarian	1.97	0.73	3
	Transactional	3.11	0.588	2
	Transformational	3.92	0.811	1
OVERALL		3	0.634	

Figure 1. Leadership Style – Distribution of Respondents

Although Transformational Leadership is the most preferred style with 3.92 weighted mean as presented in Table 1, the findings suggest that no single leadership style is exclusively dominant among Filipino managers. Transactional Leadership is also applied on a case-to-case basis as seen in Table 1 having 3.11 weighted mean, which is being utilized as well depending on organizational needs and situational requirements. This is consistent with Puri and Yturralde (2022), who found that while Transformational Leadership is generally preferred, Transactional Leadership is still utilized, when necessary, with only minimal variation between the two styles.

In this context, given that there are factors affecting Leadership Style, as also can be seen in Figure 1, the Filipino managers in Japanese manufacturing firms predominantly prefer **Transformational Leadership**.

4.2 The Level in Managerial Competency of Filipino Managers

Managerial competency can be assessed using various theoretical frameworks, each offering different interpretations of competency levels. In this study, managerial competency is anchored on Katz's Theory of Leadership, incorporating Technical, Conceptual, and Design Skills as proposed by Gutterman (2023). The survey results indicate that Filipino managers demonstrate an overall Advanced Level of Competency across all managerial skills.

Table 2. Leadership Level of Filipino Managers working in different Japanese Manufacturing Firms in terms of Level of Managerial Competency Possessed

Indicators	WM	SD	Interpretation
Technical Skills	3.92	0.580	Advanced - strong and consistent managerial skills
Conceptual Skills	3.86	0.613	Advanced - strong and consistent managerial skills
Design Skills	3.85	0.642	Advanced - strong and consistent managerial skills
Managerial Competency	3.89	0.583	Advanced - strong and consistent managerial skills

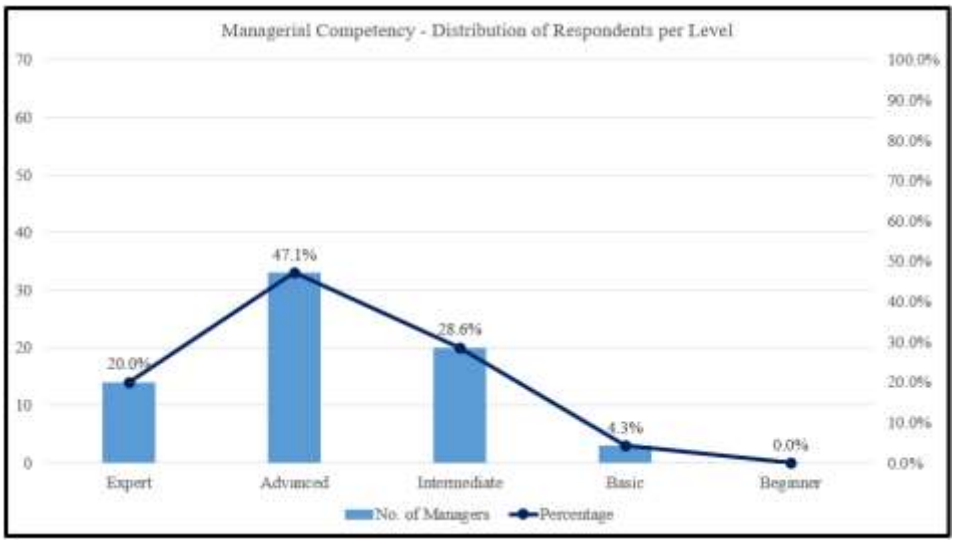


Figure 2. Managerial Competency – Distribution of Respondents

All competency areas fall within the advanced category based on weighted means. And based on above Table 2, Technical Skills recorded the highest mean at 3.92, indicating strong technical proficiency. Conceptual and Design Skills also fall within the advanced range, reflecting strong capabilities in planning, critical thinking, and decision-making. This is consistent with Gutterman (2023), who noted that technical skills tend to be more developed due to managers' prolonged experience in specific functional areas, while conceptual and design skills also strengthen through managerial exposure. Additionally, the relatively low standard deviation indicates that responses are closely clustered around the mean, reflecting a high level of agreement among respondents. Overall, the weighted mean of 3.89 and standard deviation of 0.583 confirm that Filipino managers possess an advanced level of managerial competency with minimal variation.

With this the results clearly indicate, as also can be observe in Figure 2, that Filipino managers demonstrate an **Advanced Level** of Managerial Competency.

4.3 Filipino Manager Leadership Level: Balance Combination of Style and Competency

Leadership Level is seen in this research as balanced combination of Leadership Style and Managerial Competency. Calculation of 50% from Leadership Style and 50% from Managerial Competency has been used. Based on the Theoretical Framework, the researcher emphasize that the Level should be a combination of how the Manager handles their members and in combination with the skills and ability in Manufacturing Management.

The result shown in Figure 3, wherein the distribution of respondents in Leadership Level presents that 71.4% of the responded Filipino Managers are at Intermediate or Average Level. Although, this level already is equipped with System-Level Thinking that is critical in managing an organization. In this level, the Manager also have the orientation to mostly focused for Process Optimization and Team Development. On the other hand, there are 28.6% from the respondents that are categorized as Strategic Manager.

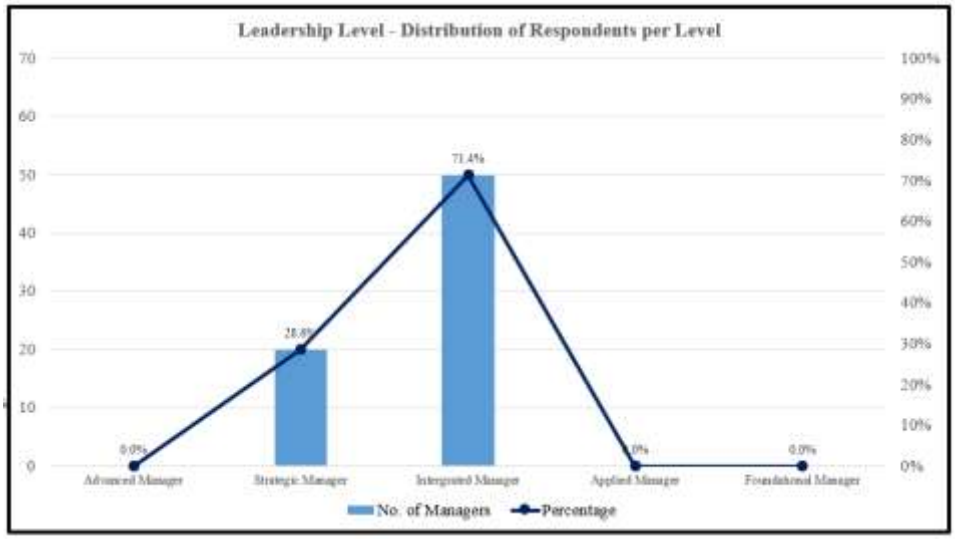


Figure 3. Leadership Level – Distribution of Respondents

The distribution mostly shows that the current level of responded Filipino Managers working in Japanese Manufacturing Firms are within expected category that could possibly bring anticipated performance of the handled organization, resulting that the Mid Management Level could only be categorized between the level of Intermediate Manager and Strategic Manager.

4.4 The Performance Outcome of Filipino Managers

Manufacturing is not different from the others; it needs competent and performing Managers that will bring out the best outcome that will leads to continuous growth and development of the firm. In most of the Japanese owned and managed Manufacturing Firms, even here in the Philippines, QCDS or Quality, Cost, Delivery and Service are the basic measurement of firm's overall performance, not to mention the addition of Production's performance.

In detailed view per indicator, Table 3 shows that three (3) out of five (5) are viewed as Within Standard Achievement or Achieved above 80%, and these are; Quality, Cost and Production. The result suggests with relatively low standard deviation values, having a consistent perception of the outcome with minimal variations on these three (3) indicators. While two (2) of which are Target Fully Achieved or Achieved 100%, and these are: Delivery and Service, showing consistently strong in results with minimal variation resulting to standard deviation of 0.569 and weighted mean of 3.46, with Delivery and Service as key strengths while Quality, Cost and Production remain solid and within acceptable performance standards, but still requires continuous improvement

Table 3. Performance Outcome of Filipino Managers working in different Japanese Manufacturing Firms

Indicators	WM	SD	Interpretation
Quality	3.39	0.605	Within Standard Achievement (Achieved above 80%)
Cost	3.36	0.685	Within Standard Achievement (Achieved above 80%)
Production	3.31	0.627	Within Standard Achievement (Achieved above 80%)
Delivery	3.48	0.626	Target Fully Achieved (Achieved 100%)
Service	3.74	0.621	Target Fully Achieved (Achieved 100%)
Performance Outcome	3.46	0.569	Target Fully Achieved (Achieved 100%)

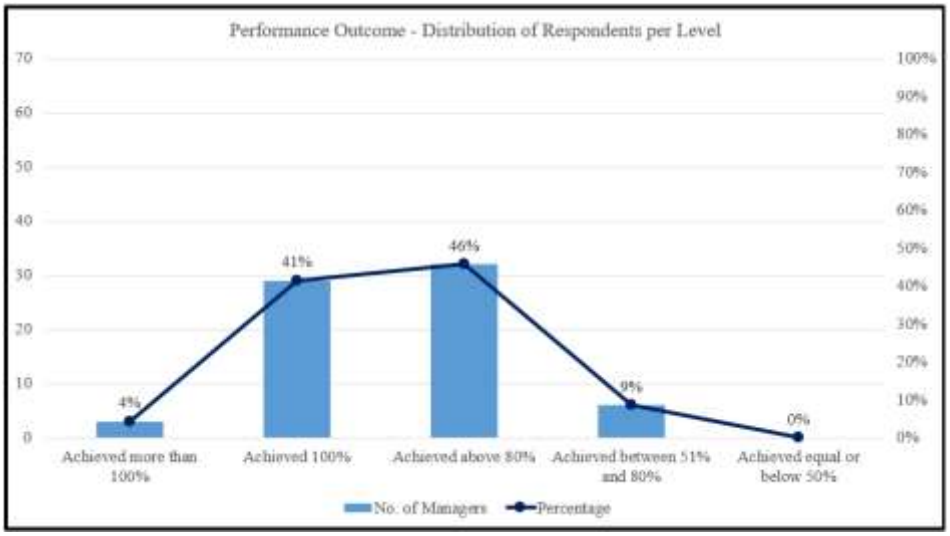


Figure 4. Performance Outcome – Distribution of Respondents

The results indicated that the **Overall Performance Level is Target Fully Achieved (100%)**, reflecting generally strong managerial performance across the surveyed firms as per shown as well in Figure 4.

4.5 Relationship between Leadership Style and Managerial Competency as Key Indicator for Leadership Level

Independent	Dependent	Pearson's r^a	p-value	Decision	Interpretation[b]
Authoritarian	Managerial competency	-0.053 (very weak)	0.665	Fail to reject H_0	Not Significant
Transactional		-0.075 (very weak)	0.537	Fail to reject H_0	Not Significant
Transformational		0.101 (very weak)	0.406	Fail to reject H_0	Not Significant

Note. [a]Correlation: 0.00 – 0.19 (very weak); 0.20 – 0.39 (weak); 0.40 – 0.59 (moderate); 0.60 – 0.79 (strong); 0.80 – 1.00 (very strong). (Evans, 1996) [b]Significant at <.05.

Table 4. Relationship Between the Leadership Style and Managerial Competency as Key Indicator of Leadership Level among Filipino Managers working in different Japanese Manufacturing Firms

The relationship of each of the Leadership Style with Managerial Competency has been compared and analyzed as shown in Table 4. As per result, there are no statistically significant relationship between any of the three (3) Leadership Styles, whether it is Authoritarian, Transactional and Transformational, and Managerial Competency among Filipino Managers working in Japanese Manufacturing firms. There is no measurable influence the way the Filipino Manager lead their organization with the level of Managerial Competency that they possess. This means that Managerial Competency is basically shaped more on structural, organizational and conceptual factors that builds the skills and abilities that the competency evolves and not by the preference or the way the Manager would like to portray Leadership to their organization.

Because Leadership Style is being determined through Values, Culture and Core of the Manager towards its organization (Al-Khaled et al., 2020. While Managerial Competency, specifically in Japanese Manufacturing firms, is being guided by standardized systems, clearly defined roles and responsibilities, operational guidelines and performance measures (Sayyadi et al., 2023). The findings, in overall, confirmed that Leadership Style and Managerial Competency operate as independent constructs. The Pearson r correlation results, supported by p-values above the 0.05 significance level, lead to the rejection of hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between Leadership Style and Managerial Competency.

4.6 Relationship between Leadership Level (Leadership Style and Managerial Competency as Key Indicators) and Organizational Performance Outcome

Independent	Dependent	Pearson's r [a]	p-value	Decision	Interpretation [b]
Leadership level	Performance outcome	1.00 (very strong)	< 0.001	Reject H_0	Significant

Note. [a]Correlation: 0.00 – 0.19 (very weak); 0.20 – 0.39 (weak); 0.40 – 0.59 (moderate); 0.60 – 0.79 (strong); 0.80 – 1.00 (very strong). (Evans, 1996) [b]Significant at <0.05.

Table 5. Relationship Between the Leadership Level (Combined Leadership Style and Managerial Competency) and Performance Outcome of Filipino Managers Working in different Japanese Manufacturing Firms

The analysis between Leadership Level and Performance Outcome was shown above in Table 5, and as can be observed, the Pearson r Correlation shows a value of 1.00 which indicates a very strong correlation and positive relationship between the two analyzed variables. This means that there is a significant relationship between Leadership Level and Performance Outcome, wherein the there is a direct proportional manner of relationship. The direct proportional manner of relationship has been identified by Penagos et al. (2021) and Nuwagaba (2023) in their research, wherein it is significant that if the Manager's Leadership Level or Competency is high, it will certainly result to increase in the Performance of the Organization.

Aside from the correlation, it can be noticed that the p-value result is less than 0.001which is far below the standard of 0.05 level of significance. This results actually confirms the direct proportional relationship between Leadership Level and Performance Outcome is Statistically Significant and unlikely that only occurred by chance. Based on the Pearson correlation results and statistical significance, the findings lead to the rejection of the hypothesis of significant relationship between Leadership Level and Performance Outcome.

4.7 The Development of Performance Enhancement Framework

The result indicates that it is not Leadership Style alone that influence Performance Outcome, but it is Managerial Competency that has significant influence and has the most critical and crucial role for Organizational Performance. Transformational Style has been the most preferred and currently being utilized by the respondents, while their Managerial Competency is at Advanced Level, which means they shows strong and consistent managerial skills that frequently meets and sometimes exceeds expectations, effectively manages responsibilities, and demonstrates sound judgment and leadership ability. But on the contrary, even though in level, the Performance Outcome achievement is at 100%, still the Weighted Mean is only at 3.46, which is too near at lower limit of that level at 3.40.

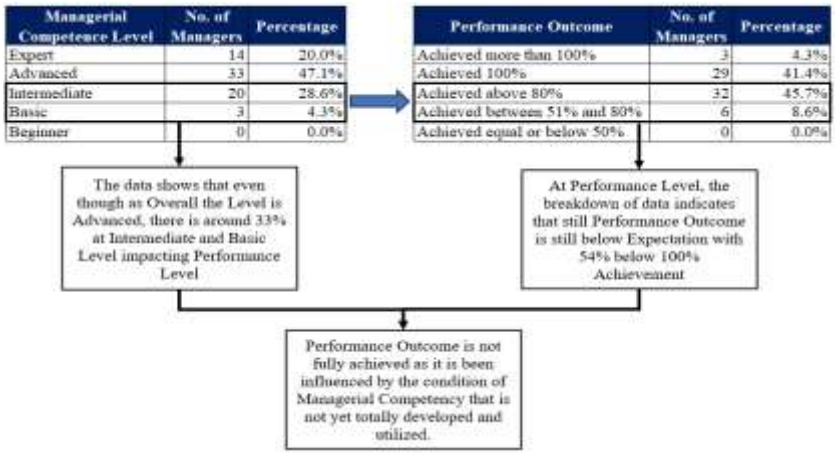


Figure 5. Impact of Managerial Level to Performance Outcome

At Figure 5, it can be seen clearly the great impact of Managerial Competency to Performance Outcome. It can be noticed that there is 54% not achieving 100% as basic expectation as Performance Outcome, the probability is that there is still 33% below Advanced Level in Managerial Competency.

This is further reflected in the respondents' demographics result, which depicts that 63% hold Assistant or Junior Manager positions, an entry-level role in mid-management, and at below as well in Figure 19, 50% of respondents have only 1 to 5 years of managerial experience. This means that most of the current respondents that holds Assistant or Junior Manager level either lacks Managerial and still in the early stages of developing managerial experience and competency, which are essential in consistently meeting full performance expectations.

In order to maximize the capability of Mid Management Members, it is necessary to make sure their development, beyond Technical Skills and most for Conceptual and Design Skills. To connect Managerial Competency enhancement to Performance Outcome, and achieve expected results, it is better as well to identify the focus points at Key Performance Index which is QCDS+P, wherein Internal KPI (Quality, Cost, Production, is obvious that the result suffers below 100% target achievement

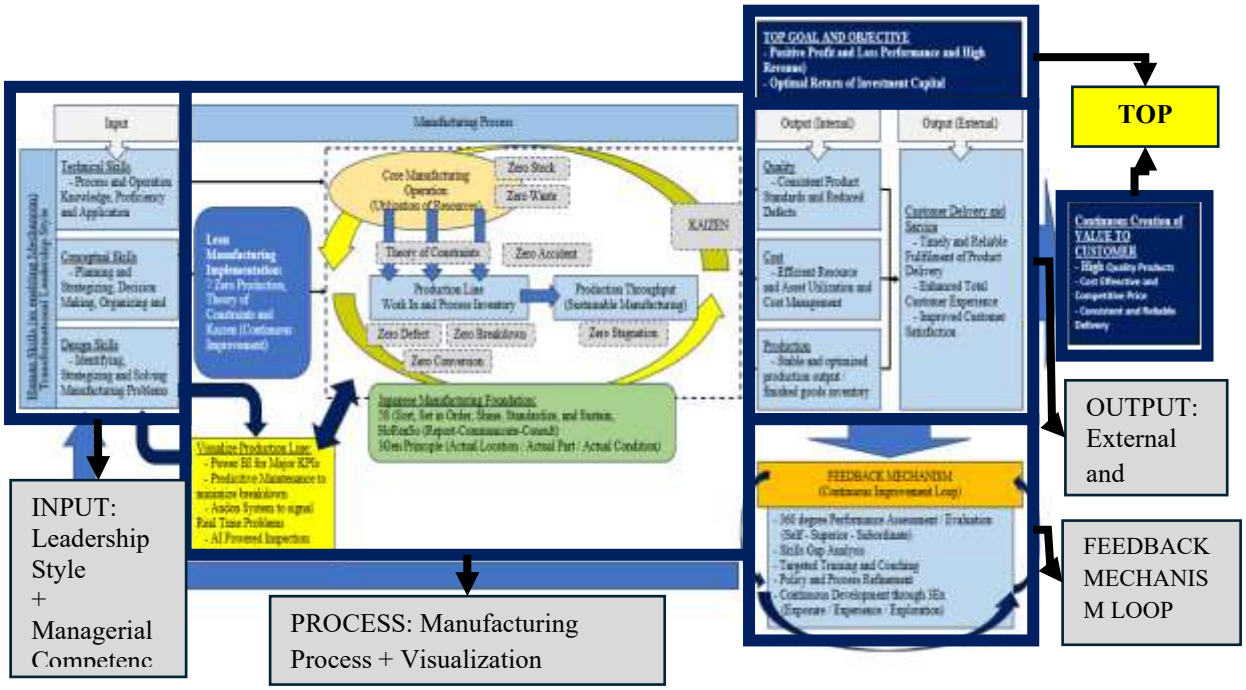
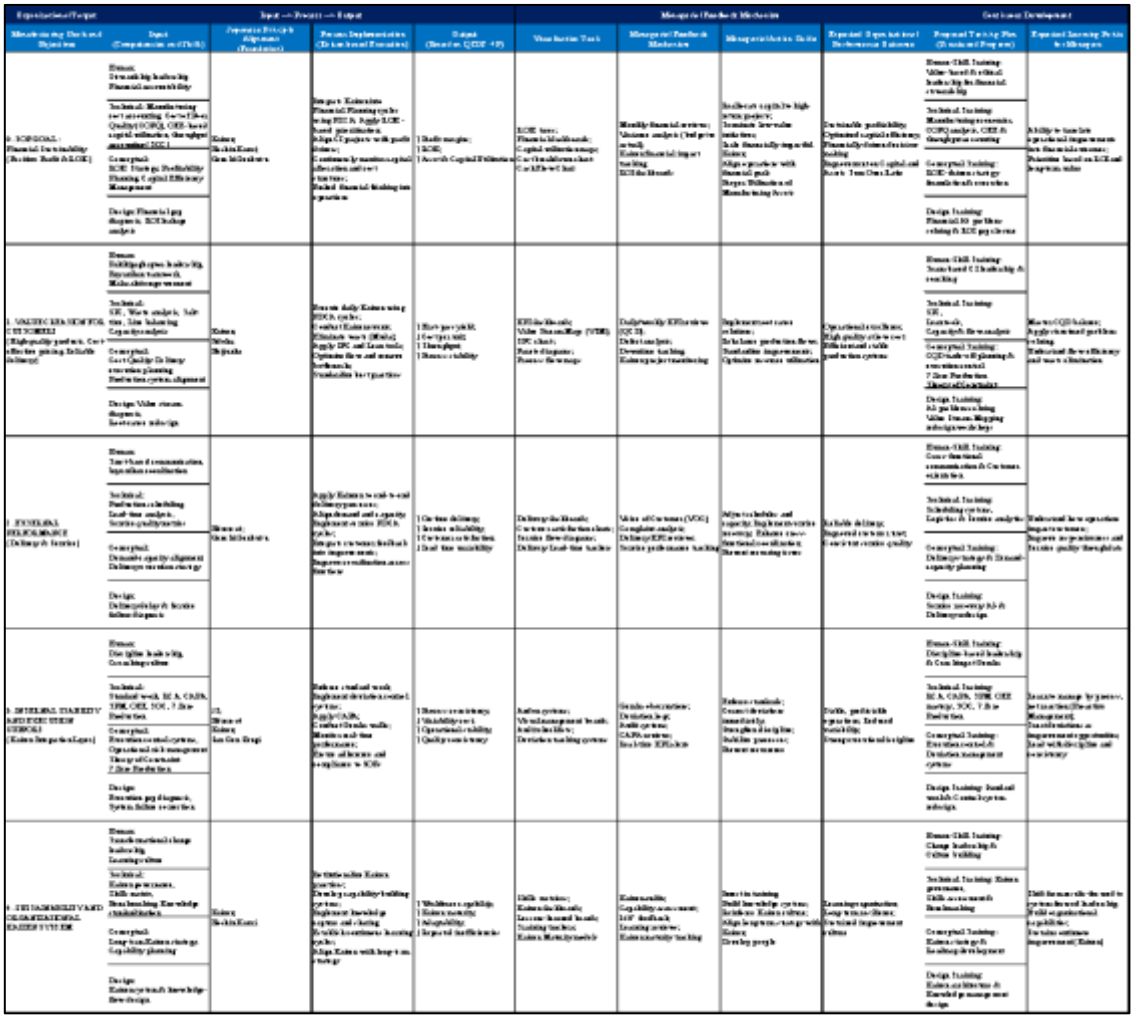


Figure 6. The Proposed Performance Enhancement Framework

Table 6. The Proposed Performance Enhancement Framework



With this, the concept of the Proposed Performance Enhancement Framework as seen in Figure 6, is for Filipino Managers working in different Japanese Manufacturing Firms and that will cover the focus points that this research has been able to identify and to further achieve higher level of possible Performance Outcome. In Table 8, the detailed framework for Performance Enhancement is presented and showing that it is a structured and systematic model that shows how Managerial Competencies, Management Practices and Methodology and Organizational Processes interact to improve operational and organizational performance that will certainly ensure achievement of the Company's Goal and Objectives. This will serve as a critical guide for Managers in identifying key capability areas, aligning managerial actions with production goals, and continuously improving performance outcomes. The Performance Enhancement Framework will use the Input-Process-Output Model with Feedback Mechanism Loop for Continuous Improvement and on top of which are the Company Goals and Objectives.

The Framework basically identifies Managerial Competency as primary driver of performance for Managers, wherein Leadership Style, particularly Transformational will serve as the catalyst for effective and proper execution in the manufacturing process. Through the incorporation of the Japanese Manufacturing principles as foundation, lean practices such as 7 Zero Production and Theory of Constraints, and the inclusion of Feedback Mechanism, the framework could provide a holistic, systematic, evidence and result based approach for a sustainable manufacturing.

4.8 Discussions

1. Leadership Level, as a combination of Leadership Style and Managerial Competency, shows no extreme variation in distribution. Most respondents (71.4%) fall under the intermediate or average level, which is consistent with mid-management expectations, emphasizing system-level thinking, process optimization, and team development.
    - Filipino managers in Japanese manufacturing firms predominantly prefer Transformational Leadership (71.4%), followed by Transactional Leadership (20%) and Authoritarian Leadership (8.6%). Transformational Leadership obtained the highest weighted mean (3.92) with a standard deviation of 0.811.
    - Managerial Competency is at an advanced level, with Technical, Conceptual, and Design Skills all showing strong and consistent results. The overall weighted mean is 3.89 with a standard deviation of 0.583, indicating closely clustered responses and strong agreement among respondents.
2. Performance Outcome shows strong results in customer-related KPIs—Delivery and Service—which are both rated at 100% achievement (3.48 and 3.74, respectively). However, internal KPIs such as Quality, Cost, and Production are only within standard achievement (above 80%), indicating room for improvement in internal operational efficiency.
3. The correlation analysis shows no significant relationship between Leadership Style and Managerial Competency. Even Transformational Leadership recorded a weak correlation ($r = 0.101$, $p = 0.406$), leading to the failure to reject Hypothesis 1. This suggests that Managerial Competency is shaped more by structural and organizational factors rather than leadership preference.
4. Leadership Level shows a strong and significant relationship with Performance Outcome ($r = 1.00$, $p < 0.001$), leading to the rejection of Hypothesis 2. This indicates that higher leadership levels are associated with better organizational performance and stronger alignment of organizational goals.
5. The findings indicate that while overall Performance Outcome reaches "target fully achieved" in customer-facing KPIs, internal KPIs remain weaker. Improvement is needed in Conceptual and Design

Skills, as these are lower than Technical Skills and are critical according to Katz's Model for higher managerial effectiveness. Based on the results, there is a clear need to develop a structured Performance Enhancement Framework to strengthen Managerial Competency and improve Performance Outcomes among Filipino managers in Japanese manufacturing firms.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

1. Overall Leadership Level, reflecting the balance of Leadership Style and Managerial Competency, is generally at an intermediate or average level, consistent with mid-management expectations. Managers at this level demonstrate system-level thinking, with emphasis on process optimization and team development. The absence of extreme outliers further indicates a uniform perception of leadership effectiveness.

a. Filipino managers predominantly prefer Transformational Leadership, indicating a strong inclination toward motivating, inspiring, and developing employees. Transactional Leadership serves as a secondary preference, while Authoritarian Leadership is least favored. This suggests alignment with participative and developmental leadership practices commonly observed in modern organizational settings, particularly within Japanese manufacturing firms.

b. Filipino managers demonstrated an advanced level of managerial competency across Technical, Conceptual, and Design Skills. The low variability in responses indicates strong agreement among respondents, reflecting a solid and consistent competency foundation for handling managerial responsibilities and operational demands.

2. Performance outcomes show strong achievement in customer-related KPIs, particularly Delivery and Service, both reaching full achievement. However, internal KPIs such as Quality, Cost, and Production achieved only standard or slightly above-standard levels. This reflects a strong customer-oriented focus while indicating the need to strengthen internal operational performance for sustained improvement.
3. The analysis confirms no statistically significant relationship between Leadership Style and Managerial Competency, indicating that these constructs operate independently. This suggests that managerial competency is shaped more by structural and organizational factors than by leadership style preference, leading to the failure to reject the first null hypothesis.
4. A strong and statistically significant relationship exists between Leadership Level and Organizational Performance Outcome. This confirms that the combined effect of Leadership Style and Managerial Competency plays a critical role in achieving organizational goals, leading to the rejection of the second null hypothesis.
5. The results indicate that overall performance outcomes of Filipino managers in Japanese manufacturing firms fall slightly above 80% of target achievement, indicating acceptable but not in optimal performance. Internal KPIs (Quality, Cost, and Production) lag behind external KPIs (Delivery and Service), revealing a performance imbalance that requires improvement. Strengthening Conceptual and Design Skills is essential to address this gap and enhance internal operational performance. Based on these findings, there is a clear need to develop and implement a structured Performance Enhancement Framework. This framework will serve as a strategic guide for improving managerial competencies, addressing performance gaps, aligning managerial capabilities with organizational goals, and enhancing overall performance outcomes in Japanese manufacturing firms.

5.2 Recommendations

1. Since most of the Managers level are at Intermediate Leadership, wherein this has been identified with consistency in mid-management roles and responsibilities, the Top Management should create a clear path for leadership development such as Career Development Plan. This will ensure the continuous development and growth of the Managers towards higher position in the management. It is necessary to emphasize the need for current Managers is to transform from being an Operational Manager to Strategic Manager through exposure to more strategic, companywide and systematic planning, execution and control.
    - As Filipino's prefer Transformational Leadership, organizations must institutionalize this leadership style as part of training. As this leadership style shows and reflects Filipino Values and Culture. Although, it is also necessary to take into consideration that style could be change depending on situation and condition of the manufacturing. That is why, it is also a must that the Top Management will consider Situational Leadership Training as part of Leadership enhancement.
    - Although current Filipino Managers demonstrates Advance Level in all of the competencies, still it is visible that Technical is the highest. From this, Top Management must focus on enhancing and developing Conceptual Skills through strategic planning and execution, and Design Skills by systematic problem-solving approach and decision making. Development will be more strategic if the Managers will be Exposed, Experience and Exercise their skills through handling of higher level of role and responsibilities.
2. Strong point is the Performance Outcome pertaining to Customer side. This is very Japanese, since trust and satisfaction of customers matters the most. But in order to continuously create value for the customer, it is necessary to achieve Internal KPI such as Quality, Cost and Production. With the Performance Enhancement Framework, the strategic and systematic procedure of execution could ensure the achievement of such indices. Through Lan Manufacturing with Kaizen as catalyst and Japanese Concepts as foundation, this will ensure long term benefits that will eventually converts the result into values for the customer.
3. Top Management and the organization must understand that Leadership Style and Managerial Competency are two independent variables that basically stands alone with each other. Leadership Style is an enabler while Managerial Competency is the driver to achieve Performance Outcome. Managers look onto it as two separate entities for development. Organizations must develop a structured competency-based development plan in order to achieve the desired level for the managers that could contribute results for the firm. While Leadership could be further developed through mentoring and coaching that could eventually use to enable the execution, control and monitoring of the activities of the organization.
4. Leadership Level and Performance Outcome has a strong relationship, wherein it could be seen that competency and skills could be resulted into results. With this, the organization must use a systematic and strategic development plan, this is when Performance Enhancement Framework enters. The framework will provide a holistic and theoretically inclined Training and Practical applications in manufacturing line. Eventually could result to a improved and enhanced Performance Outcome for the firm.
5. To further enhance and develop Leadership Level, specifically Conceptual and Design Skills, and improve the result of Performance outcome of the organization, the researcher recommends to adopt

and implement the proposed Performance Framework. The Framework emphasizes on the strengthening Managerial Competencies, aligned with Transformational Leadership Style. This showcases the integration of several manufacturing systems such as 7 Zero Production, Theory of Constraints, with Kaizen as catalyst for continuous improvement and Japanese Manufacturing concepts such as 5S, Horenso and 3Gen as foundation, the framework ensures systematic and integral application in manufacturing line, in addition with the promotion discipline, standardization and effective problem-solving. Adopting Digitalized Tools for visualization and inspection will enhance efficiency at work through real time decisions and timely actions. Lastly, the Feedback Mechanism will ensure that the Manager will be properly evaluated and assessed in order to create a continuous development and growth.

6. For future researchers, the following are recommended to further strengthen this field of study and improve the proposed framework:
   - Implement the framework in actual manufacturing environments to evaluate its effectiveness and identify areas for improvement.
   - Expand the scope of the study beyond Japanese manufacturing firms to include Korean, European, and American companies, as well as other regions beyond Region IV-A.
   - Conduct 360-degree assessments involving subordinates and superiors to obtain a more holistic evaluation of managerial leadership levels creating a Career Development Plan.

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