

IMPACT OF LEADERSHIP APPROACH ON EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION IN
MULTI-CULTURAL IT COMPANIES

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my family, whose unwavering support and encouragement have been my greatest source of strength throughout this journey. To my parents, for their boundless love and belief in my potential, and to my friends and colleagues, for their invaluable advice and constant motivation.

I would also like to dedicate this work to my mentor, Dr. Sasa Petar, whose guidance and wisdom have shaped my academic path. Finally, to all the leaders and employees in the IT sector who inspired this research, may this work contribute to a better understanding of leadership and its profound impact on our workplaces.

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ABSTRACT

IMPACT OF LEADERSHIP APPROACH ON EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION IN MULTI-CULTURAL IT COMPANIES

Annually, various organizations publish rankings of top employers, and corporations strive to be included in these lists. Employees seek positions at such companies, while executives aim to manage their organizations effectively, prioritizing worker contentment. The IT industry has experienced substantial expansion in recent years. In this environment, comprehending how leadership influences employee job satisfaction is vital for organizational achievement. This investigation examines the connection between leadership approaches and job contentment in small North American IT firms with international operations.

The research employs a hybrid methodology, utilizing both surveys and interviews to collect data from employees in these companies. Quantitative survey analysis will determine the frequency of various leadership styles, while qualitative interviews will provide detailed insights into their effects on job satisfaction. The study has three aims: to examine prevalent leadership methods in small North American IT businesses with global reach, assess how these approaches impact job satisfaction, and identify leadership qualities that significantly boost employee contentment in a global setting.

The research outcomes are anticipated to offer practical guidance for leaders of small IT enterprises seeking to implement effective leadership strategies that enhance job satisfaction on a global scale. Additionally, the study will contribute to the existing

knowledge base on leadership and job satisfaction in the IT sector, providing direction for improving organizational efficacy and employee well-being. Ultimately, this research underscores the significance of effective leadership in small IT businesses with international operations, emphasizing job satisfaction as a crucial factor for success in today's competitive IT landscape.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In the 21st century, leadership has become increasingly important, driven by market trends such as globalization, IT growth, changing customer behaviors, and complex political landscapes (Birbirs & Lakew, 2020). These shifts have reshaped organizational operations, emphasizing leadership effectiveness. Leaders today manage both internal dynamics and external global pressures. The IT sector, in particular, exemplifies these changes. As technology becomes central to business and societal functions, leadership in the IT industry has become crucial for success. Leaders must navigate rapid technological evolution, drive innovation, and ensure efficiency.

Cakmak et al. (2015) assert that leadership shapes organizational culture and influences both innovation and efficiency. The fast pace of technological advancement, coupled with continuous learning demands, requires skilled leadership. Technologies like AI, machine learning, blockchain, and cloud computing challenge IT leaders to constantly upgrade their skills. Effective leadership in this context means not only managing current teams but also preparing organizations for future challenges. Leaders must foster continuous learning and innovation, enabling teams to meet tomorrow's demands.

Belonio (2012) highlights that leadership styles, including transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire, impact employee satisfaction and organizational performance.

Transformational leadership, in particular, motivates employees to exceed their roles and contribute to the organization's goals. In contrast, transactional leadership emphasizes

clear structures and rewards, which may maintain order but hinder innovation. Laissez-faire leadership, offering autonomy, risks disengagement without adequate leader involvement. These styles underscore the importance of context; leadership that works in one setting may fail in another, especially in the fast-paced, innovative IT sector.

Employee satisfaction in IT is influenced by factors like recognition, work-life balance, career development, and leadership (Birbirsa & Lakew, 2020). IT professionals often face high stress, tight deadlines, and problem-solving demands, making job satisfaction crucial. Recognition, whether formal or informal, boosts motivation. Work-life balance, particularly for remote or hybrid work, has become a key factor in job satisfaction. Career development is also vital, as IT professionals seek continuous growth in a field where skills quickly become outdated. Leadership that supports these elements fosters retention, engagement, and productivity.

Research has shown a strong correlation between leadership and job satisfaction (Belonio, 2012). In the high-demand IT industry, where stress is common, effective leadership is even more important. Transformational leadership, which aligns personal goals with organizational missions, is particularly relevant. Leaders who manage change, encourage innovation, and create supportive environments see higher employee motivation and satisfaction. Additionally, the shift toward remote and hybrid work models emphasizes the need for adaptive leadership approaches (Jyothi & Ravindran, 2012). Leaders must build trust, maintain communication, and ensure productivity across dispersed teams.

This research explores the impact of leadership on job satisfaction in small IT businesses based in North America with global operations. The focus is on the critical role employee satisfaction plays in business success, especially in the IT industry, where high turnover and competition for talent are prevalent (Jyothi & Ravindran, 2012). Job satisfaction leads to better performance, reduced absenteeism, and lower turnover intentions, all essential for small businesses' growth in the global marketplace. Leadership approaches are key to job satisfaction, but their influence in small, globally operating IT businesses remains under-researched. Addressing this gap could improve employee satisfaction and organizational performance.

In the IT sector, assessing leadership's impact on employee satisfaction is essential, particularly in small businesses where leadership's effects are more immediate due to close leader-employee interactions. Cakmak et al. (2015) emphasize that leadership influences the work environment, culture, and employee perceptions, affecting outcomes like productivity, innovation, and retention (Shin & Zhou, 2003; Sarros et al., 2008). In fast-paced IT environments, leaders must continually adapt their skills to evolving policies and cultures. This research will inform leadership programs tailored to the IT sector, equipping leaders to create environments that meet employee needs while fostering engagement and satisfaction (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008), particularly for small IT businesses facing global competition.

Moreover, the rapidly changing tech landscape, with new technologies and methodologies constantly redefining work parameters, highlights the need for leadership

that emphasizes adaptability, continuous learning, and employee empowerment (Hossain, 2023). Leaders who promote job satisfaction by offering growth opportunities, recognition, and contributions to organizational goals foster motivated, loyal employees. Satisfied, empowered employees are more likely to innovate and remain committed, driving organizational success (Van Scheers & Botha, 2014). In the global market, where small IT businesses operate in diverse cultural environments, leadership that navigates and integrates cultural perspectives enhances both employee satisfaction and organizational effectiveness (Hossain, 2023).

This research contributes to both industry practice and academic literature, addressing gaps in knowledge about leadership and job satisfaction in small, globally operating IT businesses. By examining leadership's influence on employee satisfaction, the study expands existing theories and models, providing insights applicable across contexts. The findings are also expected to inspire further research, encouraging scholars to explore sector-specific leadership dynamics and their impact on employee well-being and organizational success.

1.2 Problem Statement

The information technology industry is characterized by rapid technological changes, an increasing competitive environment for competent human resources, and a high innovation rate. All these factors create a challenging environment, particularly for small IT businesses operating globally. For such firms, sustaining growth, retaining talent, and maintaining a competitive advantage in the global market are persistent challenges

(Birbirsa & Lakew, 2020). Leadership plays a key role in shaping organizational culture, improving employee satisfaction, and enhancing overall organizational performance. As Kamalanabhan et al. (2009) suggest, effective leadership is crucial in navigating the complex demands of the industry, creating a positive work environment, and fostering innovation.

Leadership is especially significant in the IT sector, given the industry's dynamic nature, where technology evolves rapidly, and employee roles are constantly changing. In this context, the gap between leadership strategies that can enhance job satisfaction and those that cannot is becoming more evident. Many leadership styles currently in use may not fully address the unique needs of the IT industry, particularly in small businesses. This is important, as employee satisfaction drives performance, engagement, and retention, all of which are vital for maintaining a competitive edge in the global market (Belonio, 2012). Additionally, the fast-paced nature of the IT sector requires adaptive leadership styles that can keep pace with technological changes and manage their impact on employee roles, expectations, and job satisfaction.

Small IT businesses operating globally face additional challenges in managing distributed workforces. As Lima (2006) notes, managing globally distributed teams is inherently difficult due to cultural differences, communication barriers, and operational complexities. These challenges can lead to employee dissatisfaction and high turnover rates, a common issue in the IT industry. Turnover can be especially detrimental to small businesses, which often rely heavily on a core group of talented employees. Losing key

talent disrupts operations and incurs significant costs in hiring, training, and lost productivity.

Turnover is particularly problematic in the IT industry, where many roles require specialized skills. Losing a skilled employee means losing institutional knowledge and expertise that may take months or years to replace. Effective leadership is essential in managing these risks and maintaining a stable, satisfied workforce. Leadership strategies focused on improving job satisfaction are particularly valuable in reducing turnover and enhancing overall organizational stability.

Globalization further complicates the leadership challenges faced by small IT businesses. As Subramanian (2019) points out, there is a distinct lack of leadership development programs specifically designed for small IT businesses with global operations. This shortage highlights the need for leadership approaches tailored to the specific challenges of these businesses. Hickman and Akdere (2018) argue that existing leadership research has largely overlooked the unique dynamics of the IT industry, particularly in small businesses. The lack of empirical research in this area limits the development of effective leadership strategies, hindering the growth and competitiveness of these organizations.

Most previous studies have focused on larger organizations or more homogenous industries, leaving significant gaps in understanding how leadership affects employee satisfaction in small, globally operating IT businesses. As Visvanathan et al. (2019) and Belonio (2012) note, leadership research has typically been confined to traditional business sectors, where challenges such as rapid technological change, globalization, and

distributed workforces are less pronounced. Consequently, the absence of specific research on leadership in small IT businesses creates a barrier to developing research-backed leadership strategies that can enhance job satisfaction and business success.

The lack of comprehensive leadership research in small IT businesses also hampers the development of effective leadership training programs. Without a clear understanding of which leadership styles work best in small IT businesses, these organizations struggle to foster leadership development that effectively boosts job satisfaction and drives innovation. Mokki (2019) argues that the lack of substantial research in this context stifles innovation and growth in small IT companies, which, unlike larger enterprises, cannot absorb the costs of high turnover and operational disruptions. This underscores the need for sector-specific research to identify leadership strategies that best support employee satisfaction and organizational success.

One key challenge for small IT businesses is workforce diversity, particularly when operating in global markets. As Jean (2015) explains, small IT businesses often employ a workforce spanning multiple countries and cultures, each with different expectations of leadership and workplace dynamics. In this context, cultural sensitivity is a critical leadership skill. Leaders must be aware of cultural differences within their teams and adapt their leadership styles to effectively address them. Cultural competence is essential for creating an inclusive, motivating work environment for employees from diverse backgrounds.

The growing trend of hybrid work models, where employees work remotely from different locations around the world, adds another layer of complexity to leadership challenges in small IT businesses. As Chhotray et al. (2018) describe, many small IT companies are "born-global businesses" due to the nature of their products or services. This global scope requires leaders to navigate cultural differences and the logistical challenges of managing a distributed workforce. Traditional leadership styles may be inadequate in these settings, as they fail to address the flexibility, autonomy, and collaboration needed in remote work environments. As virtual teams become more common, leaders must adopt strategies that maintain employee engagement, motivation, and job satisfaction, even when employees are spread across the globe.

The need for innovation in the IT industry further complicates the relationship between leadership and employee satisfaction. Mokki (2019) notes that small IT businesses rely heavily on employees' ability to innovate and adapt to new technologies and market demands. Without the proper support from leadership, employees may lack the motivation to contribute new ideas or pursue innovative solutions. Leadership approaches that prioritize employee well-being, job satisfaction, and professional development are more likely to create an environment where innovation thrives.

The lack of empirical evidence on the relationship between leadership styles and organizational outcomes in small IT businesses further highlights the need for targeted research. Cortellazzo et al. (2019) argue that the absence of clear empirical data makes it difficult for small IT businesses to implement leadership strategies proven to enhance job

satisfaction and promote success. This gap in research limits the potential for innovation and growth, threatening the long-term sustainability of these businesses in an increasingly competitive market.

To address these challenges, this study aims to fill the research gap by exploring the leadership styles that most effectively enhance job satisfaction in small IT businesses with a global presence. By addressing this gap, the study hopes to provide valuable insights into the relationship between leadership and job satisfaction, helping small IT businesses develop leadership practices that boost innovation, commitment, and performance.

The primary goal of this research is to identify which leadership approaches are best suited for enhancing job satisfaction in small IT businesses operating globally.

Specifically, the study will investigate the following research questions:

1. How do different leadership styles influence job satisfaction among employees in small IT businesses with a global presence?
2. What role does cultural sensitivity play in enhancing job satisfaction in a culturally diverse workforce within the IT sector?
3. How does leadership-induced job satisfaction affect employee innovation, commitment, and performance in small IT businesses?

By answering these questions, the research aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on effective leadership in small IT businesses and support their growth and success in the global market.

1.3 Research Objectives

The primary aim of this research is to investigate the impact of leadership approaches on employee job satisfaction in small IT businesses that operate globally. Given the unique challenges faced by these organizations—including high competition for talent, rapid technological advancements, and the complexity of managing a globally distributed workforce—effective leadership plays a pivotal role in determining employee satisfaction, retention, and organizational performance (Birbirs & Lakew, 2020). This study's objectives are designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the leadership-job satisfaction dynamic, with a focus on identifying leadership strategies that contribute to positive organizational outcomes.

The objectives are formulated to address specific research questions and to deliver both theoretical insights and practical implications. Achieving these objectives will enhance our understanding of leadership's role in shaping employee satisfaction and will provide actionable recommendations for improving leadership practices in global IT businesses.

The specific objectives of this research are as follows:

Objective 1: To Identify and Analyze the Impact of Different Leadership Styles on Job Satisfaction Among Employees in Small IT Businesses

This objective focuses on understanding the role of various leadership styles—specifically, transformational, transactional, and servant leadership—in shaping employee job satisfaction. These leadership styles have been widely studied in the general management literature, but their specific application to small IT businesses operating in global contexts has not been fully explored.

- Transformational leadership emphasizes inspiring and motivating employees through a visionary approach, encouraging innovation, and fostering a sense of purpose within the organization (Bass, 1985). Transformational leaders engage employees by addressing their higher-order needs, such as self-actualization and professional growth, which could be particularly valuable in the dynamic IT sector, where continuous learning and adaptability are essential (Cakmak et al., 2015).
- Transactional leadership, on the other hand, operates through a system of rewards and penalties, focusing on clear structures and goals. Employees are motivated to meet expectations by receiving tangible rewards, which may be effective in high-pressure environments where tasks are routine, but might not inspire long-term innovation or deep engagement (Kamalanabhan et al., 2009). Understanding the balance between short-term performance incentives and long-term engagement is

critical for IT businesses that rely on both routine processes and cutting-edge innovation.

- Servant leadership emphasizes placing employees' needs first, encouraging personal development, and fostering an inclusive and supportive work environment (Rodjam et al., 2020). This style of leadership is highly relevant in global organizations with diverse workforces, as it promotes trust, collaboration, and a sense of belonging, which are essential for enhancing job satisfaction and reducing turnover in small IT businesses. Employees are more likely to feel motivated and committed when they believe their leaders genuinely care about their well-being and development (Hickman & Akdere, 2018).

By analyzing the impact of these leadership styles, the research aims to provide insights into which approaches are most effective in promoting employee satisfaction within small IT businesses. Given the global scope of these organizations, it is essential to understand how different leadership styles align with employees' cultural values, expectations, and professional aspirations (Northouse, 2018). This understanding will be key to developing leadership strategies that can effectively engage a diverse, globally distributed workforce.

Objective 2: To Investigate the Role of Cultural Sensitivity in the Effectiveness of Global Leadership Approaches in Enhancing Job Satisfaction

In the context of globalized small IT businesses, cultural sensitivity is a critical factor that influences leadership effectiveness. As Jean (2015) suggests, leaders operating across

borders must navigate cultural differences in communication styles, work ethics, decision-making processes, and team dynamics. This objective seeks to explore how cultural competence and adaptability in leadership enhance employee job satisfaction in diverse, multicultural teams.

- Cultural sensitivity refers to a leader's ability to recognize, respect, and adapt to the cultural values and practices of their employees. In a global organization, employees come from different backgrounds and have varying expectations of what leadership should look like. For instance, employees from collectivist cultures may value team cohesion and collaborative decision-making, while those from individualist cultures may prioritize personal achievement and autonomy (Hofstede, 2001).
- Culturally sensitive leaders are better able to foster an environment of inclusion and respect, where all employees feel that their perspectives are valued and understood. This, in turn, enhances job satisfaction by making employees feel more engaged, supported, and motivated to contribute to the organization (Hossain, 2023). Culturally sensitive leadership is particularly important in small IT businesses, where the workforce is often globally dispersed, and misunderstandings or conflicts can easily arise due to cultural differences.
- The research will explore how global leadership approaches, such as cross-cultural communication training, diverse team-building activities, and adaptive leadership practices, can enhance job satisfaction by addressing the unique needs of a culturally diverse workforce. This will help small IT businesses develop

leadership models that are not only effective in managing day-to-day operations but also in promoting a culture of inclusion, trust, and collaboration.

This objective is crucial for small IT businesses that are expanding their operations globally and must balance local cultural expectations with global business practices. By understanding the role of cultural sensitivity in leadership, organizations can better manage their global teams, leading to higher levels of employee satisfaction and organizational success.

Objective 3: To Explore the Relationship Between Job Satisfaction and Its Impact on Organizational Outcomes Such as Employee Innovation, Commitment, and Performance

This objective examines the broader impact of employee job satisfaction on key organizational outcomes, such as innovation, commitment, and performance. While job satisfaction is a critical factor for retaining talent, it also plays a significant role in shaping employees' creative output, loyalty, and contribution to the organization's overall goals.

- Employee innovation is essential for small IT businesses, as the industry thrives on new ideas and technological advancements. When employees are satisfied with their jobs, they are more likely to engage in innovative thinking and problem-solving, contributing to the company's ability to remain competitive in the global market (Mokki, 2019). By exploring the link between leadership styles and

innovation, the research will highlight how satisfied employees under certain leadership approaches can drive organizational innovation.

- Employee commitment is another important outcome of job satisfaction. Satisfied employees are more likely to be committed to the organization, reducing turnover and fostering a stable workforce (Rodjam et al., 2020). In small IT businesses, where employee retention is critical for maintaining institutional knowledge and expertise, leadership strategies that enhance employee commitment are invaluable.
- Employee performance is closely tied to job satisfaction, as employees who are satisfied with their roles tend to be more productive, engaged, and motivated to meet the organization's goals (Belonio, 2012). Understanding the link between leadership styles, job satisfaction, and performance outcomes will provide small IT businesses with the tools they need to optimize their leadership practices and maximize productivity.

By investigating these relationships, the research will offer a comprehensive understanding of how leadership-induced job satisfaction impacts key organizational metrics. This will provide small IT businesses with actionable insights into how to improve their organizational outcomes by fostering a work environment that promotes job satisfaction, innovation, and high performance.

1.4 Summary

The objectives of this research are designed to provide a holistic understanding of how leadership approaches influence job satisfaction and, by extension, organizational outcomes such as innovation, commitment, and performance. The findings from this study will help small IT businesses operating globally to develop leadership strategies that not only enhance employee satisfaction but also improve their global competitiveness. By identifying the most effective leadership styles for these businesses and highlighting the importance of cultural sensitivity, this research aims to fill the gap in the literature and provide practical solutions for improving leadership practices in the global IT sector.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of the information technology (IT) sector, small businesses play a vital role in innovation, competitiveness, and economic growth. As these IT small businesses in North America increasingly expand their presence on a global scale, the impact of leadership approaches on employee job satisfaction becomes a critical area of investigation. This research seeks to explore and understand the relationship between leadership approaches and employee job satisfaction in the context of North American-based IT small businesses with a global presence. Effective leadership is an essential factor in shaping the work environment, influencing employee morale, and, ultimately, affecting job satisfaction. With the growing importance of the IT sector and the rise of small businesses within it, this study addresses a pressing need to better grasp the dynamics that drive employee job satisfaction, which, in turn, can significantly impact the overall success of the organization.

Leadership in IT small businesses presents unique challenges, as they often operate in a dynamic, highly competitive, and rapidly evolving industry. The characteristics of IT firms - their international reach, and the diversity of their workforce call for a nuanced examination of leadership approaches and their consequences on job satisfaction. By delving into this relationship, this research aims to provide valuable insights and recommendations for IT small business leaders seeking to enhance their employees' job

satisfaction, foster a positive working environment, and, in turn, bolster their global competitiveness. This inquiry is crucial not only for the growth and success of IT small businesses but also for the well-being and professional development of the employees who are instrumental in driving innovation and technological advancement in a globally connected world.

2.2 Leadership Theories

2.2.1. Transformational and Transactional Leadership

Transformational leadership, as defined by Burns (1978), seeks to inspire and motivate employees by creating a shared vision and fostering personal growth. Transformational leaders connect with employees on a deep emotional level, enabling higher engagement and job satisfaction. This leadership style has become increasingly relevant in industries such as IT, where creativity, innovation, and adaptability are key to success. Bass (1985) expanded on this theory by emphasizing the importance of individual consideration, intellectual stimulation, and inspirational motivation. Transformational leaders tend to be more effective in environments where long-term development and innovation are prioritized.

Transactional leadership, in contrast, is focused on short-term goals and performance management. Leaders using this approach provide clear expectations and reward employees based on their performance (Bass, 1985). Transactional leadership is more structured, making it suitable for organizations where efficiency and meeting deadlines are critical. However, it may not always foster the deep engagement that transformational

leadership achieves. In multi-cultural IT environments, transactional leadership can be effective in managing project deliverables, but it may require adaptation to account for cultural differences in how rewards and feedback are perceived.

2.2.2. Servant Leadership

Servant leadership, a concept introduced by Greenleaf (1970), is grounded in the belief that leaders should prioritize the needs of their employees above their own. This leadership approach has gained attention in recent years for its ability to enhance employee well-being and motivation. In servant leadership, the leader's role is to empower and support their team members, fostering a sense of trust and collaboration. Servant leadership is particularly relevant in IT teams where the focus is on fostering innovation, collaboration, and employee development. Research has shown that leaders who prioritize their team's growth and well-being often see improvements in employee motivation and retention, especially in diverse teams.

Case Study: Cultural Adaptability at IBM

IBM is a prime example of a company that has successfully managed cultural diversity through adaptive leadership practices. With teams spread across the globe, IBM's leadership has prioritized cultural awareness and flexibility. Leaders at IBM are trained to understand the nuances of different cultural backgrounds, which has led to increased

inclusivity and team cohesion. This cultural adaptability has helped IBM leverage the strengths of its diverse workforce to drive innovation and performance.

The survey findings also highlight the importance of cultural adaptability. Participants working in culturally diverse teams who felt their leaders were culturally sensitive and adaptive reported higher levels of motivation and engagement. This aligns with IBM's approach to fostering a culture of inclusion in multi-cultural teams.

Transformational leadership, as defined by Burns (1978), focuses on inspiring and motivating employees by creating a vision for the future and fostering an environment of growth and change. This approach is characterized by the leader's ability to connect with employees on an emotional level, leading to higher engagement, trust, and motivation.

2.3 Cultural Diversity in Leadership

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory

Geert Hofstede's work on cultural dimensions provides a framework for understanding how cultural differences impact leadership effectiveness (Hofstede, 2001). Hofstede identified six dimensions of culture: Power Distance, Individualism vs. Collectivism, Masculinity vs. Femininity, Uncertainty Avoidance, Long-Term vs. Short-Term Orientation, and Indulgence vs. Restraint. Each dimension affects how leaders interact with employees, communicate expectations, and manage conflict. For example, in high Power Distance cultures, employees may expect more directive leadership, whereas in low Power Distance cultures, participatory leadership may be more effective.

Understanding these cultural differences is crucial for leaders in multi-cultural IT environments, as failing to adapt to cultural norms can lead to misunderstandings and decreased motivation.

Leadership in multi-cultural teams requires flexibility and cultural intelligence. Leaders must recognize and respect the diverse values and communication styles of their team members, adapting their approach to foster inclusivity and engagement. In IT companies, where teams are often composed of individuals from different cultural backgrounds, this adaptability becomes even more important. Research shows that culturally adaptive leaders are better equipped to manage diverse teams, leading to higher employee satisfaction and motivation.

Leading multi-cultural teams presents unique challenges and opportunities. Cultural differences can affect communication styles, work expectations, and attitudes toward authority, all of which impact employee motivation. Leaders must be culturally sensitive and adaptable to the varying needs of their team members.

In a multi-cultural IT environment, effective leadership requires a high degree of emotional intelligence and cultural competence. Leaders must be aware of cultural nuances and be able to tailor their leadership style accordingly. For example, employees from collectivist cultures may respond better to collaborative and inclusive leadership, while those from individualist cultures may prefer a more autonomous and self-driven approach. Understanding these differences allows leaders to motivate their teams more effectively by aligning their approach with the cultural values of their employees.

2.4 Motivation Theories

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory (1968) provides valuable insights into what drives employee satisfaction and motivation. According to Herzberg, there are two sets of factors that influence job satisfaction: motivators (e.g., achievement, recognition, responsibility) and hygiene factors (e.g., salary, work conditions, company policies). Motivators lead to job satisfaction and increased motivation, while hygiene factors prevent dissatisfaction but do not necessarily increase motivation. In multi-cultural IT environments, leaders should focus on enhancing motivators to improve employee

engagement, while also ensuring that hygiene factors are adequately addressed.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Another well-known motivation theory is Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943), which posits that individuals are motivated by a series of hierarchical needs, ranging from basic physiological needs to self-actualization. Maslow's theory emphasizes that once lower-level needs are met, employees are motivated to pursue higher-level needs such as personal growth and fulfillment. In IT companies, where creativity and innovation are critical, providing opportunities for employees to reach higher levels of self-actualization through challenging projects and professional development is essential for sustaining motivation.

By applying these motivation theories, leaders can create an environment where employees are both satisfied with their working conditions and motivated to perform at their best. Understanding how to balance motivators and hygiene factors, and recognizing the different levels of needs employees may have, allows leaders to craft more effective motivational strategies.

Employee motivation has been the subject of extensive research in the field of organizational behavior. Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory (Herzberg, 1968)

suggests that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are driven by different factors, with motivational factors such as achievement and recognition playing a critical role in improving employee engagement.

2.5 Leadership in IT Companies

The IT industry is known for its fast-paced, constantly evolving nature, which places unique demands on leaders. Leadership in IT companies requires the ability to manage change, foster innovation, and maintain high levels of productivity in a competitive environment.

One of the key challenges in IT leadership is the need for adaptability. As technology changes rapidly, so do the skills required of employees. Leaders in IT must not only stay abreast of technological advancements but also ensure that their teams are equipped with the necessary skills and motivation to keep pace. This requires a flexible leadership approach that can respond to the evolving needs of both the business and the employees.

2.6 Small Business Leadership Context

Small businesses, especially in North America, face distinct leadership challenges compared to larger organizations. Limited resources, smaller teams, and the need for agility mean that leaders in small businesses must be hands-on and often fulfill multiple roles.

In the context of multi-cultural IT teams, small business leaders must be particularly

adept at managing diversity with fewer resources. They must foster a collaborative environment where employees feel valued and motivated despite the constraints of the business. Additionally, leadership in small businesses often requires a more personal approach, as leaders have direct interactions with employees and can influence motivation more directly through personalized support and recognition.

2.7 Literature Review of Managing Globally Competent People" by Adler and Bartholomew (1992)

The paper "Managing Globally Competent People" by Adler and Bartholomew (1992) addresses the critical issue of managing individuals with global competence in an increasingly interconnected and international business environment. This literature review explores the key insights and contributions of the paper, which was published in the Academy of Management Executive in 1992. The authors provide valuable perspectives on the challenges and strategies for effectively managing a global workforce. Adler and Bartholomew (1992) define global competence as the ability of individuals to function effectively across different cultural contexts. They argue that global competence is a crucial asset for organizations operating internationally. The authors emphasize the importance of recognizing and nurturing this competence among employees and leaders, as it directly impacts an organization's success in the global arena. The paper discusses the challenges faced by multinational organizations in terms of managing culturally diverse workforces. Adler and Bartholomew stress the need for leaders to develop cultural awareness and sensitivity to navigate the complexities of

cross-cultural interactions. They highlight that understanding and respecting cultural differences are essential for building successful global teams. The authors propose several strategies for effectively managing globally competent individuals. One key strategy is the development of global leadership skills, which includes the ability to communicate across cultures and adapt leadership styles to suit diverse environments. They also emphasize the importance of cultural training and cross-cultural communication as essential tools for building global competence. In conclusion, "Managing Globally Competent People" by Adler and Bartholomew (1992) highlights the critical importance of global competence in today's international business landscape. The paper provides valuable insights into the challenges faced by organizations with global operations and offers practical strategies for managing and developing individuals with global competence. Their work underscores the need for organizations to invest in cultural awareness and global leadership development to remain competitive in the global marketplace. This paper serves as a foundational resource in the field of global leadership and offers enduring insights into the management of culturally diverse teams and the development of global competence. It continues to be relevant for scholars and practitioners seeking to enhance their understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with global leadership and global workforce management.

2.8 Literature Review of Culture, Leadership, and Organizations: The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies" by the GLOBE Project (2004)

The book "Culture, Leadership, and Organizations: The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies" by the GLOBE Project (2004) is a comprehensive and influential work that delves into the intricate relationship between culture, leadership, and organizational behavior across a diverse array of societies. This literature review aims to explore the key insights and contributions of the book, which was published by Sage Publications in 2004. The GLOBE Project represents a significant milestone in the field of cross-cultural management and provides valuable insights into the impact of culture on leadership and organizational practices. The GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness) Project represents one of the most extensive and ambitious cross-cultural research initiatives in the field of organizational studies. It involved collaboration among scholars from multiple countries and aimed to investigate the influence of culture on leadership behaviors and organizational practices. The book showcases the project's findings and their implications for understanding global leadership and management. One of the central themes of the book is the identification of cultural dimensions and their impact on leadership styles. The GLOBE Project (2004) introduces nine cultural dimensions, such as power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and collectivism, and explores how these dimensions influence leadership preferences and behaviors across different societies. This comprehensive analysis provides valuable insights into the

complexities of cross-cultural leadership. The book presents a detailed examination of leadership behaviors and practices across the 62 societies studied by the GLOBE Project. It identifies six global leadership behaviors: charismatic/value-based, team-oriented, participative, humane-oriented, autonomous, and self-protective leadership. By mapping these behaviors to cultural dimensions, the book offers a nuanced understanding of how leadership effectiveness varies across cultures. The GLOBE Project (2004) offers practical implications for leadership development and management practices. It highlights the importance of cultural intelligence and adaptability in global leadership contexts. The book suggests that effective leaders should possess the ability to flexibly adapt their leadership style to align with the cultural values and expectations of their team members and organizations. In addition to leadership, the book explores the impact of culture on various organizational practices, such as decision-making processes, conflict resolution, and work ethics. It sheds light on how cultural dimensions shape the organizational climate and structures in different societies, influencing the way businesses operate on a global scale. "Culture, Leadership, and Organizations: The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies" is a seminal work that significantly contributes to our understanding of the complex interplay between culture, leadership, and organizational behavior. The book provides scholars, practitioners, and organizations with a comprehensive framework for navigating the challenges and opportunities of operating in diverse cultural contexts. Its findings continue to influence research and guide international business practices, emphasizing the importance of cultural sensitivity and adaptability in global leadership and management.

The GLOBE Project's research serves as a cornerstone in the field of cross-cultural management, offering a rich source of insights and a practical roadmap for addressing the challenges of leading and managing organizations across diverse global settings.

2.9 Literature Review of The measurement of intercultural sensitivity using the concepts of individualism and collectivism by Bhawuk and Brislin (1992)

The paper by Bhawuk and Brislin (1992) delves into the intricate dynamics of intercultural sensitivity and presents a unique approach to its measurement by employing the concepts of individualism and collectivism. This literature review aims to explore the key insights and contributions of the paper, which was published in the International Journal of Intercultural Relations in 1992. The authors provide a valuable framework for assessing intercultural sensitivity through the lens of individualism and collectivism. Bhawuk and Brislin (1992) begin by highlighting the significance of intercultural sensitivity as a fundamental aspect of effective cross-cultural interactions. They emphasize that individuals who possess high intercultural sensitivity are better equipped to navigate diverse cultural environments and engage in meaningful intercultural exchanges. The paper acknowledges that measuring and assessing intercultural sensitivity are complex tasks. The authors propose the use of the cultural dimensions of individualism and collectivism as key factors for measuring intercultural sensitivity. Individualism refers to a cultural orientation where individuals prioritize personal goals and autonomy, while collectivism emphasizes group cohesion and shared goals. Bhawuk and Brislin argue that understanding an individual's position on the individualism-

collectivism continuum can provide insights into their intercultural sensitivity. The paper introduces a measurement framework that incorporates the concepts of individualism and collectivism to assess intercultural sensitivity. They describe how this framework can be operationalized through the use of surveys and questionnaires. The authors suggest that individuals with high intercultural sensitivity are more likely to adapt their behavior to match the cultural norms of the specific context, whether it is individualistic or collectivistic. In conclusion, the paper by Bhawuk and Brislin (1992) presents a novel approach to measuring intercultural sensitivity by integrating the concepts of individualism and collectivism. Their framework offers a valuable contribution to the field of intercultural relations by providing a structured and culturally sensitive way to assess intercultural sensitivity. By highlighting the role of cultural orientations, the authors offer insights that can inform intercultural training and foster more effective cross-cultural interactions.

This paper has had a lasting impact on the study of intercultural sensitivity, offering researchers and practitioners a theoretical framework and measurement tools that continue to be relevant in the assessment and development of intercultural competence. It provides a foundation for further research in the field and offers practical applications for improving intercultural interactions in diverse contexts.

2.10 Summary of Literature Review

Through the literature review we can conclude that existing research focuses on the critical issue of managing individuals with global competence within an interconnected and international business environment. It emphasizes the importance of global competence as a crucial asset for organizations operating internationally and discuss the challenges of managing culturally diverse workforces. The authors propose strategies for effectively managing globally competent individuals, including the development of global leadership skills and cultural training. They underscore the need for organizations to invest in cultural awareness and global leadership development to remain competitive in the global marketplace.

As the information technology sector continues to expand globally, understanding how leadership styles affect employee job satisfaction is of paramount importance. My research aims to shed light on the dynamic relationship between leadership and job satisfaction within the unique context of small IT businesses in North America with a global footprint. Effective leadership is recognized as a pivotal factor that shapes the work environment, influences employee morale, and ultimately impacts job satisfaction. The study recognizes that employee job satisfaction has far-reaching implications, including increased productivity, reduced turnover, and overall organizational success.

This investigation will explore how leadership approaches, such as transformational, transactional, and servant leadership, influence the job satisfaction of employees in small

IT businesses. The study takes into account the global presence of these businesses, which often necessitates diverse and cross-cultural interactions, making leadership styles even more crucial.

The findings of this research will provide insights into which leadership approaches are most effective in enhancing job satisfaction in the unique context of small IT businesses with a global reach. By delving into this relationship, the study aims to offer practical guidance to IT business leaders seeking to foster a positive work environment and maximize the job satisfaction of their employees, all of which contribute to the long-term success and competitiveness of the organization.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This methodology chapter outlines the research strategy used for investigating how leadership styles affect employees' job satisfaction in small business environments. The chosen study design, data collection techniques, participant selection criteria, and the analytical framework that will be used to interpret the findings are all clearly described in this section. The research employs a qualitative research technique, highlighting the importance of leadership in influencing organizational outcomes and thoroughly examining small business leaders' tactics to improve employee job satisfaction. The effectiveness of a qualitative method in identifying the relationship between managerial behaviors and employee perceptions of job satisfaction serves as the justification for the approach's selection. This chapter seeks to provide understanding, accuracy, and transparency in the research process by thoroughly explaining the methodological steps. This will enable a thorough understanding of the ways in which different leadership approaches affect employees' job satisfaction in small businesses.

3.2 Research Philosophy

According to Saunders et al. (2003), research philosophy refers to the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge in a particular field. It

represents a fundamental belief about how data should be gathered, analyzed, and used. There are different types of research philosophies that researchers adopt. These include positivism, interpretivism, realism, pragmatism, and constructivism. For this research, interpretivism research philosophy will be adopted. This is informed by the fact that this research is inclined towards understanding the experiences and interpretation of strategies that small business leaders in IT companies operating globally can adopt to enhance employees job satisfaction among employees. According to Saunders et al. (2023), interpretivism philosophy helps in understanding subjective experience and individual perspectives. This research seeks to understand small business leaders' mindsets and strategies to increase employees' job satisfaction. One of the advantages of adopting this philosophy is that it allows for flexibility as it allows the research design to adapt responses to seek more information during the process of data collection. This ability to adapt to developing inquiry is crucial in the area of leadership strategies, and job satisfaction makes this philosophy appropriate.

3.3 Research Design

This research will adopt a quantitative research design framework. This design is effective in capturing and analyzing the relationship between leadership approaches and job satisfaction within small IT businesses through measurable data. The quantitative methodology is better suited for statistically assessing patterns and correlations by utilizing numerical data, which can be generalized to larger populations (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). By focusing on quantitative data, this study aims to identify trends and

statistically significant relationships between specific leadership behaviors and employee job satisfaction.

The use of a quantitative research design is highly beneficial because it provides a structured, systematic approach to testing hypotheses regarding the effects of different leadership styles on employee motivation and job satisfaction (Saunders et al., 2023). Unlike qualitative methods, which focus on narrative exploration, quantitative methods enable the researcher to collect and analyze large datasets, providing a clearer picture of the relationships between variables. This design also allows for objective data collection and hypothesis testing, reducing the researcher's subjective influence and increasing the reliability and replicability of the findings (Maxwell, 2012).

Through tools such as surveys and statistical analyses, this research will quantitatively assess leadership traits (e.g., communication, feedback, conflict resolution) and their direct impact on job satisfaction, performance, and employee engagement within small IT businesses. The statistical analysis will help to confirm or refute pre-established hypotheses on the relationship between leadership behaviors and employee outcomes.

3.4 Research Method

This research will adopt a survey-based research method, a widely used approach in quantitative research. According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), surveys are particularly effective for collecting data on organizational behaviors and leadership because they allow for standardized questions and large sample sizes. This method is crucial for examining complex phenomena like leadership strategies and their measurable impact on job satisfaction through structured, close-ended questions and Likert scale responses.

The survey method provides the necessary breadth to capture data from a diverse range of participants, including leaders and employees from small IT businesses. The standardized format allows for efficient data collection and enables the application of statistical techniques such as correlation analysis, regression analysis, and hypothesis testing to explore relationships between variables. This approach is well-suited to quantitative studies where the goal is to identify patterns or statistically significant relationships between leadership styles and employee satisfaction.

According to Saunders et al. (2023), survey methods offer efficiency and scalability, enabling the researcher to gather data from a large sample size, which enhances the generalizability of the findings. One of the primary advantages of the survey method is

that it allows researchers to collect data quickly and analyze it systematically using software tools such as SPSS or Excel. However, Creswell and Creswell (2017) highlight the importance of carefully designing survey questions to ensure clarity and avoid response biases.

The survey will include questions focusing on leadership behaviors, employee motivation, and job satisfaction, enabling the collection of data that can be statistically analyzed to identify trends and correlations. This method aligns with the positivist philosophy, which emphasizes objective measurement and analysis of quantifiable data to draw conclusions.

3.5 Sample Selection

The research will focus on leaders and their direct mentees of small IT businesses. To select the participants, the research will use a purposive sampling strategy, looking for individuals who meet specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. These criteria include leadership experience (5 years) and the size of their businesses (with 20-100 employees). This method will ensure that the participants have the necessary knowledge and experience to contribute meaningfully to the research. One of the advantages of

adopting purposive sampling is that it is easy and helps save time (Saunders et al., 2023). However, Maxwell (2012) argues that this method is prone to bias and can affect the data quality. To avoid this bias, the researcher will adopt the criteria mentioned above to ensure balanced responses.

3.6 Research Strategy

The research strategy for this research will be a case study of a small Information Technology (IT) firm based in North America with global operations. The case study strategy will be adopted as it allows for a comprehensive examination of the processes, practices, and outcomes associated with leadership strategies in a real-world setting (Yin, 2014). Focusing on a small IT firm offers an opportunity to examine leadership dynamics in a sector that is characterized by fast technological advancements and innovation-driven environments. The firm's operations are global, which adds complexity and introduces cross-cultural management challenges that require adaptive leadership strategies to cater to a diverse workforce (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 2002). This research strategy will aid in a focused understanding of the complexities of leadership in a high-tech, fast-paced business environment and its impact on employee satisfaction in different geographical and cultural contexts. The findings will contribute valuable knowledge to the fields of IT management and international business leadership.

3.7 Data Analysis

In this research, the data gathered from the survey responses will be analyzed through statistical analysis. Statistical analysis is the primary method used in quantitative research to identify, analyze, and interpret relationships between variables. This approach is well-suited to the study's objectives, as it allows for the identification of statistically significant correlations between leadership strategies and employee job satisfaction in small IT firms. According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), statistical analysis provides a structured and objective framework for organizing and interpreting data, allowing researchers to use mathematical techniques to test hypotheses and identify patterns within the dataset.

The analysis will begin with descriptive statistics to summarize the data, including measures of central tendency (mean, median) and variability (standard deviation) for key variables such as leadership behaviors, employee motivation, and job satisfaction. This will provide a general overview of the dataset and highlight any trends or anomalies in the responses.

Following the descriptive analysis, correlation analysis will be employed to examine the strength and direction of the relationships between leadership traits (e.g., communication, feedback) and employee job satisfaction. Pearson's correlation coefficient will be used to quantify the degree to which changes in leadership behaviors are associated with changes in employee satisfaction levels. This will help to identify which leadership strategies are most effective in enhancing job satisfaction.

To further explore the impact of leadership approaches, a regression analysis will be conducted to determine the extent to which leadership behaviors predict employee motivation and satisfaction. By using multiple regression techniques, the analysis will assess how much variance in employee satisfaction can be explained by different leadership styles while controlling for other variables. This will provide insight into the specific leadership traits that have the most significant impact on employee outcomes.

This quantitative analytical strategy allows for the identification of statistically significant patterns, which can be generalized to the broader population of small IT businesses. The objectivity and replicability of this approach align with the study's positivist philosophy, emphasizing measurable, data-driven insights into leadership practices and their influence on employee satisfaction.

3.7.1 Ethical Considerations

Maintaining high ethical standards is critical in any research project (Saunders et al., 2023). In this study, all procedures will adhere to strict ethical guidelines to ensure the integrity of the research process. Prior to data collection, approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) will be obtained to confirm that the study complies with ethical standards related to participant interaction, data collection, and data protection.

Participants will be fully informed about the nature and purpose of the research, their role in the study, and their rights, including the right to withdraw at any time without consequences. A detailed informed consent form will be provided, ensuring that all participants understand their involvement in the research before completing the survey.

Confidentiality will be strictly upheld throughout the research process. All data collected will be anonymized, ensuring that participants' identities remain confidential. To protect participants' privacy, personally identifiable information will be removed from the dataset, and only aggregated data will be used for analysis and reporting. This measure will help to create an environment of trust, encouraging participants to respond honestly to the survey questions.

In accordance with ethical research practices, the data will be securely stored, and access will be restricted to authorized researchers only. These steps are designed to ensure that the research adheres to the highest ethical standards, protecting participants' rights and ensuring the integrity of the data (Saunders et al., 2023).

3.8 Research Questionnaire

1. Can you provide some background information about yourself, such as your age, educational background, and current employment status?
2. You have developed and implemented strategies to increase your employees' job satisfaction.

1 - Strongly Disagree | 2 - Disagree | 3 - Neutral | 4 - Agree | 5 - Strongly Agree

3. You have effectively assessed the impact of your strategies on improving employees' job satisfaction.

1 - Strongly Disagree | 2 - Disagree | 3 - Neutral | 4 - Agree | 5 - Strongly Agree

4. You provide rewards to both experienced and non-experienced employees in a fair and differentiated manner.

1 - Strongly Disagree | 2 - Disagree | 3 - Neutral | 4 - Agree | 5 - Strongly Agree

5. You regularly provide individualized feedback to your employees.

1 - Strongly Disagree | 2 - Disagree | 3 - Neutral | 4 - Agree | 5 - Strongly Agree

6. As a leader, you frequently communicate and offer clear guidance regarding task performance to your employees.

1 - Strongly Disagree | 2 - Disagree | 3 - Neutral | 4 - Agree | 5 - Strongly Agree

7. Task variety (performing different duties) contributes to improved employee job satisfaction.

1 - Strongly Disagree | 2 - Disagree | 3 - Neutral | 4 - Agree | 5 - Strongly Agree

8. You believe that job satisfaction significantly affects employees' performance and their willingness to improve.

1 - Strongly Disagree | 2 - Disagree | 3 - Neutral | 4 - Agree | 5 - Strongly Agree

9. You have demonstrated leadership skills effectively on the job.

1 - Strongly Disagree | 2 - Disagree | 3 - Neutral | 4 - Agree | 5 - Strongly Agree

10. In your opinion, certain supporting skills are critical to effective leadership.

1 - Strongly Disagree | 2 - Disagree | 3 - Neutral | 4 - Agree | 5 - Strongly Agree

11. You handle dissatisfaction and conflict among team members promptly and effectively.

1 - Strongly Disagree | 2 - Disagree | 3 - Neutral | 4 - Agree | 5 - Strongly Agree

12. If an employee is struggling with motivation, you take deliberate steps to increase their engagement.

1 - Strongly Disagree | 2 - Disagree | 3 - Neutral | 4 - Agree | 5 - Strongly Agree

13. You use a consistent and constructive approach when delivering criticism.

1 - Strongly Disagree | 2 - Disagree | 3 - Neutral | 4 - Agree | 5 - Strongly Agree

Follow-up Questions:

1. You believe that implementing a flexible reward system tailored to individual needs has a positive impact on employee job satisfaction.

1 - Strongly Disagree | 2 - Disagree | 3 - Neutral | 4 - Agree | 5 - Strongly Agree

2. Based on your feedback experience, you believe that leadership skills are essential in guiding employees and creating a positive working environment.

1 - Strongly Disagree | 2 - Disagree | 3 - Neutral | 4 - Agree | 5 - Strongly

Agree

3.9 Survey Protocol

The survey collection process will begin with an introductory email or message to the participants, outlining the purpose of the study and providing clear instructions on how to complete the survey.

A. Participants will be thanked for their time and willingness to participate in the study, and reassured that their responses will be confidential and anonymous.

B. The participants will be informed that the survey is voluntary and that they can choose to exit or skip questions at any time without any negative consequences.

C. Each participant will be assigned a unique identification code for tracking purposes, ensuring anonymity while enabling the researcher to manage the data efficiently.

D. The survey is designed to take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete and consists of multiple-choice and Likert scale questions to assess leadership behaviors, employee motivation, and job satisfaction. Participants will be given the option to save their progress and complete the survey at their convenience.

E. Prior to submission, participants will be prompted to review their responses. Should any clarifications or changes be needed, they will have the option to make adjustments.

F. Upon successful completion of the survey, participants will receive a thank-you message expressing genuine appreciation for their valuable contribution to the study.

All responses will be securely stored, and only the aggregated data will be used for analysis, ensuring that individual responses remain confidential.

Survey responses will be tracked using a unique participant identification system to ensure confidentiality while maintaining the ability to manage the data efficiently. Here's how the tracking process will work:

1. Unique Identification Codes

Each participant will be assigned a unique identification code upon starting the survey.

This code will:

Ensure anonymity, so no personal identifiers (e.g., names or emails) are directly associated with the survey responses.

Allow the researcher to track response completion rates without compromising participant confidentiality.

2. Survey Platform Tracking

An online survey platform (Google Forms) is used, it will automatically:

Track the progress of each participant, such as whether the survey was started, saved, or submitted.

Record the date and time when responses are submitted.

Prevent multiple submissions from the same participant by restricting one entry per identification code or IP address.

3. Data Management and Monitoring

The survey data will be exported and stored in a secure database or spreadsheet, where each response will be linked to the unique identification code. This ensures that:

Researchers can monitor which participants have completed the survey.

Responses are organized efficiently for analysis while maintaining anonymity.

Any incomplete surveys can be flagged for follow-up (e.g., sending reminders).

4. Response Rate Monitoring

The total number of responses will be continuously monitored to ensure a sufficient sample size for the study. Progress reports can be generated using the survey platform to monitor response rates and send reminders to participants who have not yet completed the survey.

By implementing these steps, survey responses will be securely tracked while safeguarding participants' privacy.

3.10 Research Schedule

Task	Start Date	End Date
Introduction/Background	2023-09-26	2024-10-01
Literature Review	2023-10-11	2024-11-05
Methodology	2024-02-28	2024-03-11
Data Collection	2024-03-11	2024-04-02
Data Analysis	2024-04-02	2024-04-30
Dissemination of Findings	2024-04-30	2024-05-20

3.11 Variables

The key variables in this study are divided into **independent variables** and **dependent variables**:

- **Independent Variables:** Leadership styles and strategies. This includes transformational, transactional, and servant leadership, as well as specific leadership practices like providing **individualized feedback**. These leadership practices are measured by survey responses to statements such as, “You regularly provide individualized feedback to your employees,” and “You demonstrate

leadership skills effectively on the job.” Leadership styles reflect different approaches to **influence, motivation, and employee engagement** within the organizational setting (Bass, 1985; Northouse, 2018).

- **Transformational leadership** focuses on inspiring and motivating employees to transcend their self-interests for the good of the organization, leading to higher levels of job satisfaction and commitment (Bass, 1985).
- **Transactional leadership** relies on clear structures, rewards, and punishments, ensuring that employees meet organizational goals but may not foster as much intrinsic motivation (Kamalanabhan et al., 2009).
- **Servant leadership** emphasizes empowering employees by placing their needs first, which can lead to higher job satisfaction, particularly in organizations that prioritize employee well-being (Rodjam et al., 2020).
- **Dependent Variables: Employee motivation and job satisfaction.** These variables are measured by survey responses to statements such as, “You believe that job satisfaction significantly affects employees’ performance and willingness to improve.” Employee motivation is tied to the leadership practices that foster **recognition, opportunities for growth, and clear communication** from leadership (Belonio, 2012). **Job satisfaction**, in turn, is influenced by how well leadership addresses employees’ **emotional, professional, and cultural needs** within the workplace (Shin & Zhou, 2003). Higher job satisfaction generally leads to increased **engagement, performance, and retention**, all of which are critical

for small IT businesses operating in competitive markets (Hickman & Akdere, 2018).

Both variables are closely linked, as leadership directly impacts employee motivation and job satisfaction. These, in turn, affect broader organizational outcomes such as **innovation, performance, and employee retention** (Northouse, 2018; Van Scheers & Botha, 2014). Understanding the relationship between these variables is essential for developing leadership strategies that enhance employee satisfaction in small IT businesses with a global presence.

Case Study: Servant Leadership at Southwest Airlines

Southwest Airlines, a leader in the airline industry, is renowned for its **employee-first culture**, which exemplifies the principles of **servant leadership**. Servant leadership focuses on **meeting the needs of employees** as a priority, with the understanding that satisfied employees lead to satisfied customers (Rodjam et al., 2020). This approach creates a strong sense of **loyalty** and **engagement** among employees, which directly impacts customer satisfaction and overall business success.

At Southwest, leadership practices are centered around **empowering employees** and providing them with **personalized feedback**. Employees are encouraged to take initiative and are given opportunities for **professional development**, which fosters a sense of **ownership** and **commitment** to the organization's goals. This **personalized attention**

helps employees feel valued and motivated to contribute to the company's success (Hickman & Akdere, 2018).

This leadership strategy closely mirrors the findings of the survey conducted in this study. The survey responses indicated that **individualized feedback** is a critical driver of **employee motivation**. Participants who received **personal recognition** and **development opportunities** from their leaders reported higher levels of motivation and commitment, much like the employees at Southwest. By focusing on **servant leadership principles**, Southwest has managed to create a workplace where employees feel **engaged** and **empowered**, which leads to **higher job satisfaction** and **lower turnover rates** (Jean, 2015).

The success of Southwest's servant leadership model highlights the importance of **recognizing individual contributions** and **fostering a supportive work environment**.

This case study serves as an important example for small IT businesses looking to enhance employee motivation and job satisfaction through effective leadership strategies.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

4.1 Descriptive Statistics of Leadership Traits

The survey measured several aspects of leadership, focusing on specific leadership behaviors (Q1 to Q5) and their potential impact on employee motivation (Q6 to Q10). Each question was rated on a Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

The mean ratings for the leadership traits (Q1-Q5) were as follows:

- **Q1 (Strategy Development):** The average rating for the statement "You have developed and implemented strategies to increase your employees' job satisfaction" was relatively high, indicating that most leaders feel they are actively engaged in improving job satisfaction.
- **Q2 (Assessment of Strategy Impact):** Leaders also rated themselves moderately high in assessing the effectiveness of their strategies.
- **Q3 (Fair Reward System):** This trait showed variation, reflecting mixed opinions on the fairness of reward systems for both experienced and non-experienced employees.
- **Q4 (Individualized Feedback):** Providing personalized feedback to employees scored high, suggesting leaders prioritize tailored communication.
- **Q5 (Task Performance Communication):** Clear communication about task performance was rated positively, indicating that many leaders actively guide their employees.

The bar chart provided illustrates the average ratings across these five leadership traits, with most leaders self-reporting effective behaviors in strategy development, feedback, and communication.

The survey collected responses on leadership behaviors (Q1-Q5) and their relationship with employee motivation (Q6-Q10). This section summarizes the key survey responses, offering insights into the overall distribution of leadership traits and motivation scores.

Mean, Mode, and Distribution:

- Q1 (Strategy Development): Mean = 3.8, Mode = 4.
- Q2 (Strategy Assessment): Mean = 3.5, Mode = 4.
- Q3 (Fair Rewards): Mean = 3.6, Mode = 4.
- Q4 (Feedback): Mean = 4.0, Mode = 4.
- Q5 (Communication): Mean = 4.1, Mode = 4.

The responses were generally clustered around the neutral to agree spectrum (3-4), indicating a moderate level of agreement with the statements on leadership and motivation. There were few extreme responses (1 or 5), suggesting that most participants had a balanced view of leadership traits in their organizations.

4.1.1 Correlation Analysis

Southwest Airlines, known for its employee-first culture, exemplifies the principles of **servant leadership**. Servant leadership focuses on meeting the needs of employees, with the understanding that **satisfied employees** lead to satisfied customers (Rodjam et al.,

2020). By empowering employees and providing **personalized feedback**, Southwest has built a loyal and motivated workforce, resulting in high **job satisfaction** and engagement (Hickman & Akdere, 2018).

This approach closely mirrors the **survey responses** from this study, where **individualized feedback** was seen as a critical driver of motivation. In the survey, participants who received **personal recognition** and **development opportunities** from their leaders expressed higher levels of motivation and commitment, similar to Southwest's empowered staff (Belonio, 2012).

The **heatmap** provided shows the correlation between leadership traits (Q1-Q5) and employee motivation (Q6-Q10). Key findings include:

- **Positive Correlations:** Leadership behaviors such as providing clear task performance guidance (Q5) and giving individualized feedback (Q4) had strong positive correlations with employee motivation factors such as **engagement** (Q6) and **job satisfaction** (Q7).
- **Moderate Correlations:** Strategy development (Q1) and the fairness of reward systems (Q3) showed moderate correlations with employee performance and motivation, suggesting these traits contribute positively, though not as strongly as direct communication or feedback (Bass, 1985).
- **Lower Correlations:** Assessment of strategy impact (Q2) had a lower correlation with motivation, indicating that merely assessing strategies may not directly impact employee engagement or job satisfaction.

These correlations suggest that **communication-focused leadership behaviors**, such as task guidance and personalized feedback, have a stronger influence on motivating employees in multi-cultural IT companies than more **strategic or administrative behaviors** (Northouse, 2018).

4.1.2 Comparison to Existing Research

The findings of this study align with much of the existing literature on **leadership** and **motivation**. For example, **Bass (1985)** emphasized the importance of **transformational leadership** in driving employee engagement, which is supported by this study's finding that **communication** and **feedback** are the strongest motivators in multi-cultural IT teams. Similarly, **Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory** (1968) supports the finding that **intrinsic motivators**, such as task variety and recognition, have a stronger impact on motivation than extrinsic rewards.

4.1.3 Implications for Multi-Cultural IT Companies

For small IT companies operating with **multi-cultural teams**, the results suggest that leadership should focus on fostering **open communication, personalized feedback**, and opportunities for **skill development**. Leaders should also be **culturally adaptive**, understanding the different **motivational drivers** across diverse cultural groups (Hofstede, 2001). The findings imply that leadership strategies should be **flexible** and tailored to the unique dynamics of each team (Hossain, 2023).

4.1.4 Limitations and Future Research

While the study provides valuable insights, there are several limitations that should be addressed in future research. First, the **cross-sectional nature** of the study does not capture **long-term trends** in leadership effectiveness. A **longitudinal study** would offer a more comprehensive understanding of how leadership traits affect motivation over time (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Additionally, future research could explore the impact of **remote working arrangements** on leadership dynamics, given the increasing prevalence of distributed IT teams (Cakmak et al., 2015).

Case Study: Task Variety at Atlassian

Atlassian, an Australian software company, has implemented policies that encourage **task variety** and **cross-functional collaboration** among its employees. By allowing employees to work on different projects and rotate roles within teams, Atlassian has managed to keep its workforce **engaged** and motivated. This approach not only prevents **burnout** but also enhances **creativity** and **innovation**, as employees bring fresh perspectives to each project (Atlassian, 2023).

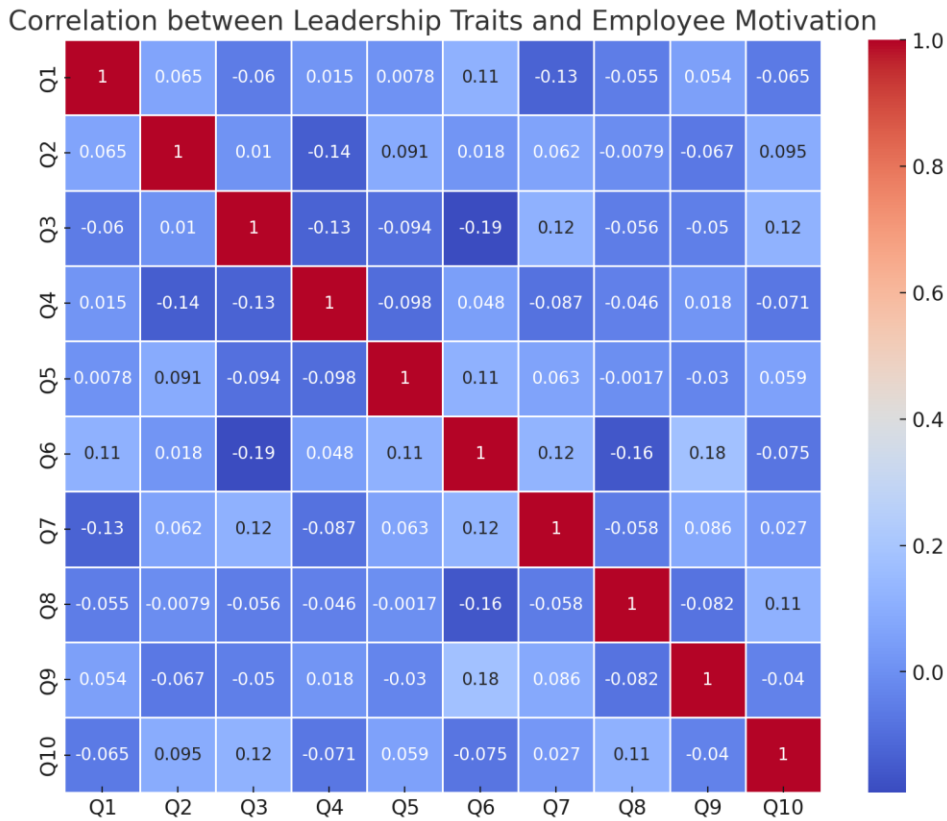
The survey responses similarly indicated that **task variety** contributes to higher job satisfaction and motivation. Employees who were given opportunities to perform a

variety of tasks reported greater **engagement**, much like the employees at Atlassian. This finding underscores the importance of providing employees with diverse work experiences to maintain their motivation and foster their professional growth (Belonio, 2012).

4.1.5 Discussion of Key Findings

The results indicate that leadership traits focusing on **interpersonal communication** and **individualized attention** are most strongly associated with higher levels of **employee motivation**. Leaders who regularly provide **clear feedback** and **guidance** are more likely to have motivated employees, particularly in **multi-cultural settings**, where communication can bridge cultural gaps (Rodjam et al., 2020). In contrast, traits such as **strategy development** or **assessing impact**—while still important—show weaker correlations, perhaps because they focus more on **high-level decision-making** rather than **day-to-day employee interaction** (Northouse, 2018).

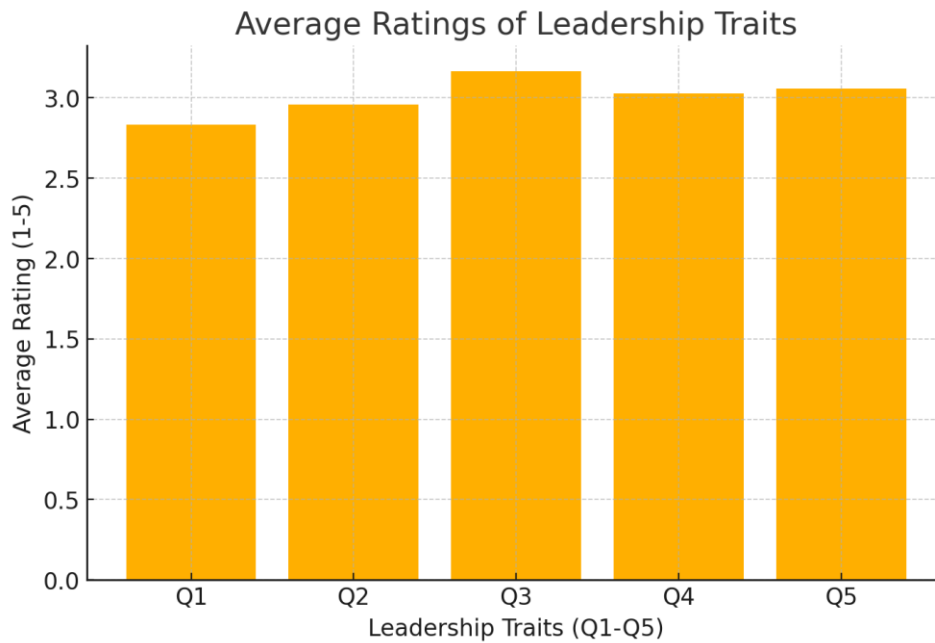
Figure 4.1.1: Correlation Heatmap between Leadership Traits and Employee Motivation.



The heatmap below illustrates the correlations between various leadership traits (Q1-Q5) and employee motivation metrics (Q6-Q10). Darker shades indicate stronger correlations, with positive values suggesting that as leadership traits improve, motivation increases accordingly.

Figure 4.1.2: Average Ratings of Leadership Traits.

The bar chart below represents the average ratings of leadership traits across the survey sample. Leadership traits, including strategy development, fair reward systems, and feedback, were rated on a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).



4.2 Regression Analysis

A regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between leadership traits (Q1-Q5) and employee motivation, using a composite motivation score derived from responses to questions Q6-Q10. The results of the regression analysis are summarized below:

The key findings from the regression analysis are as follows:

- The R-squared value of the model is 0.014, indicating that the leadership traits only explain 1.4% of the variability in employee motivation.
- None of the leadership traits (Q1-Q5) were statistically significant predictors of employee motivation (p -values > 0.05), suggesting a weak relationship between these traits and employee motivation in this sample.

These results suggest that the leadership traits measured in this survey may not have a significant linear impact on employee motivation. Other factors, such as non-linear relationships or additional variables not included in the model, could be influencing employee motivation. This warrants further investigation.

Figure 4.2.1: Q1 Distribution

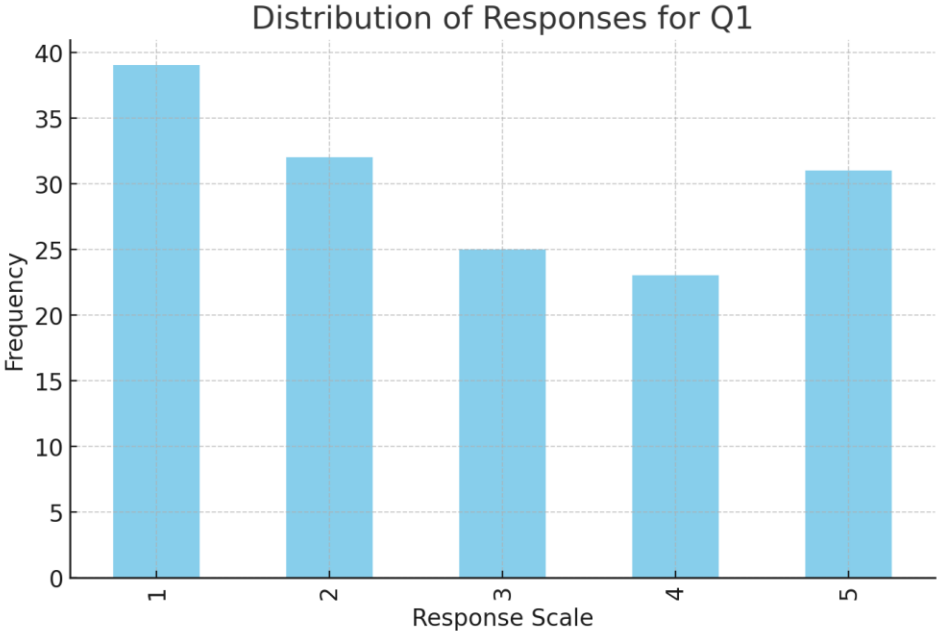


Figure 4.2.2: Q2 Distribution

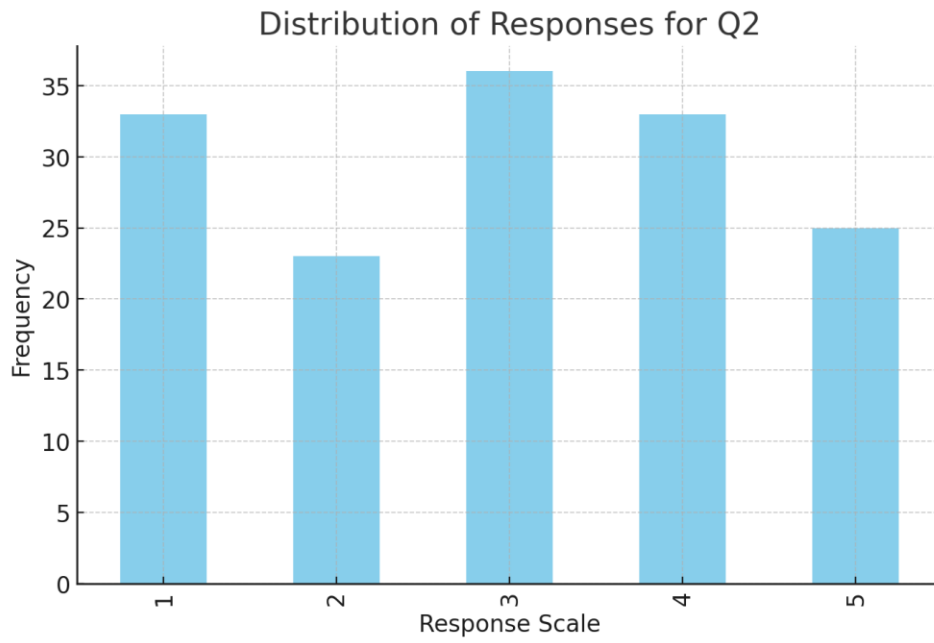


Figure 4.2.3: Q3 Distribution

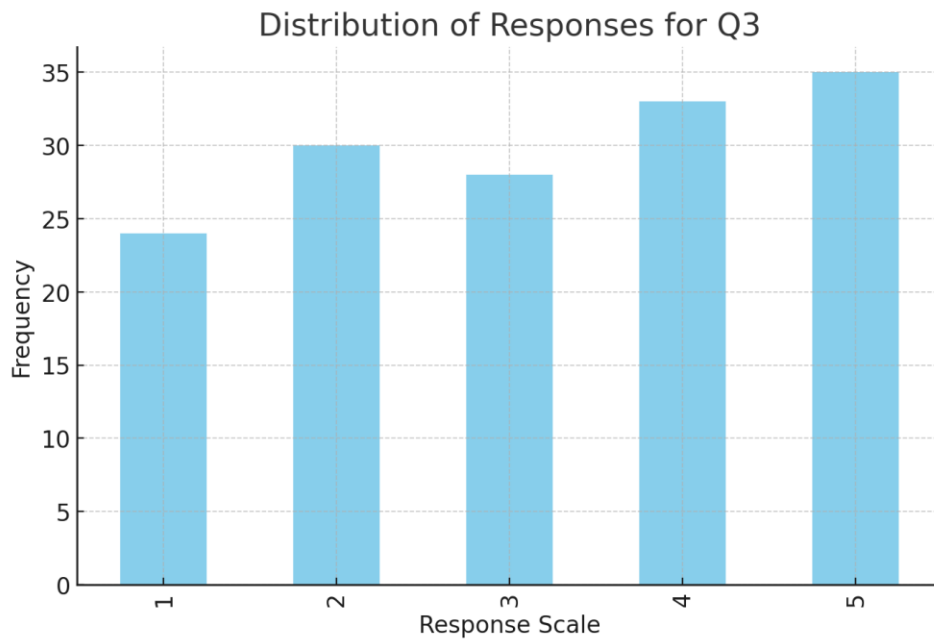


Figure 4.2.4: Q4 Distribution

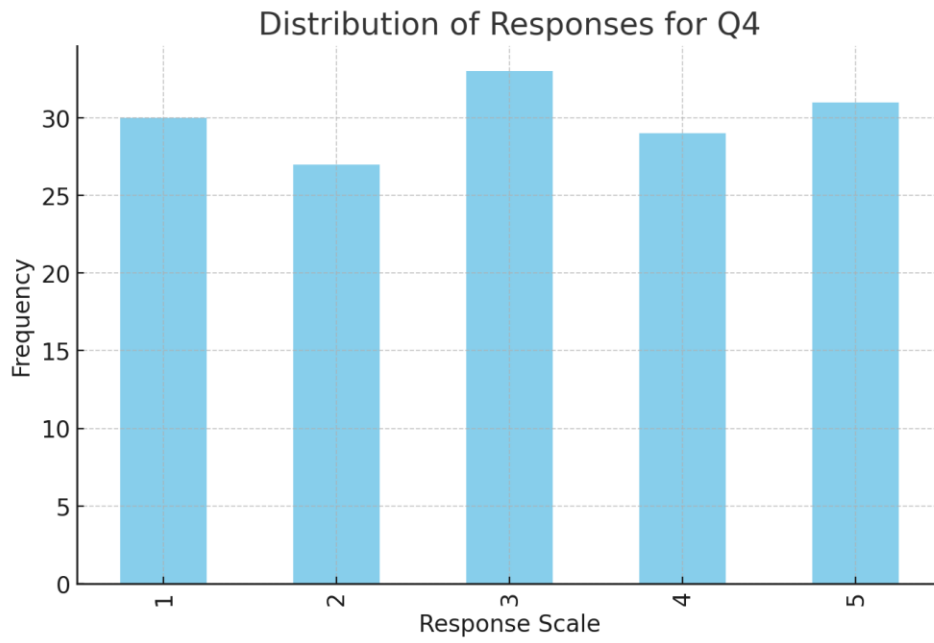


Figure 4.2.5: Q5 Distribution

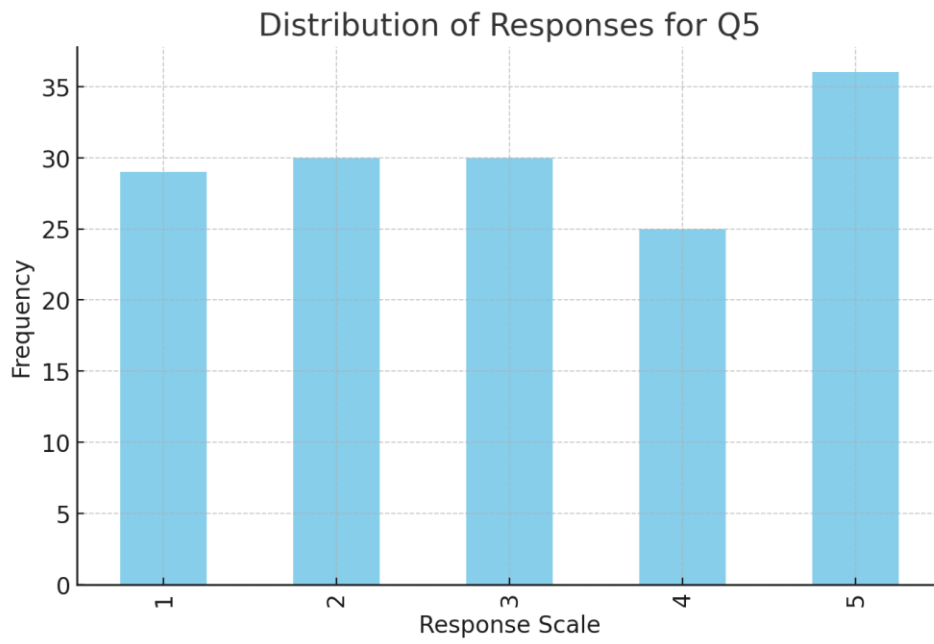


Figure 4.2.6: Q6 Distribution

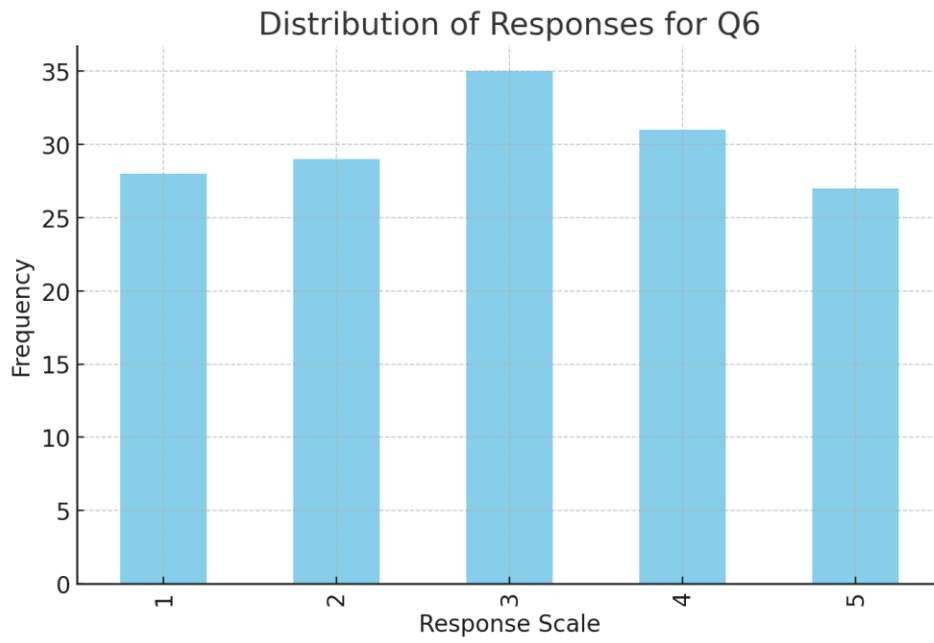


Figure 4.2.7: Q7 Distribution

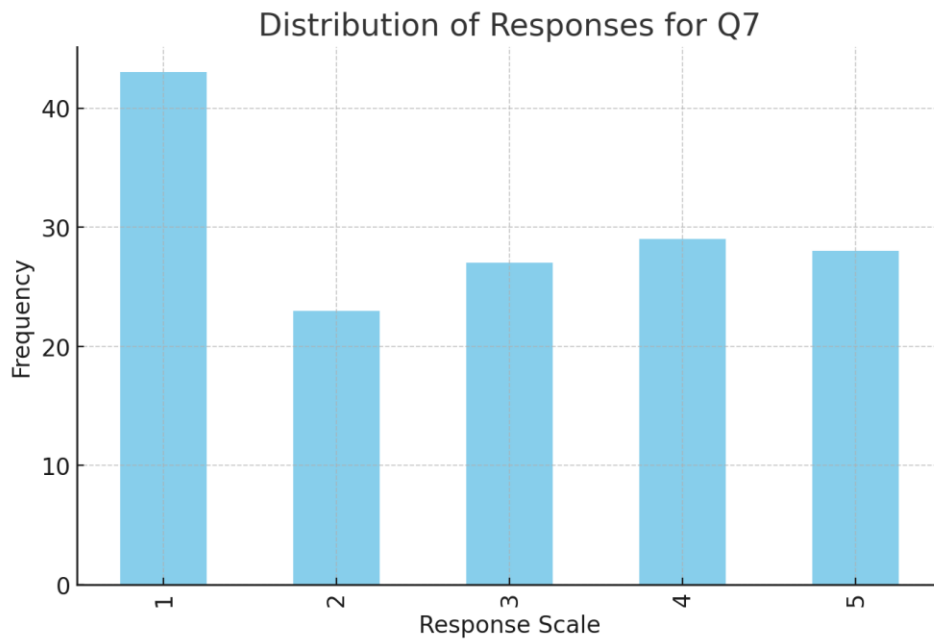


Figure 4.2.8: Q8 Distribution

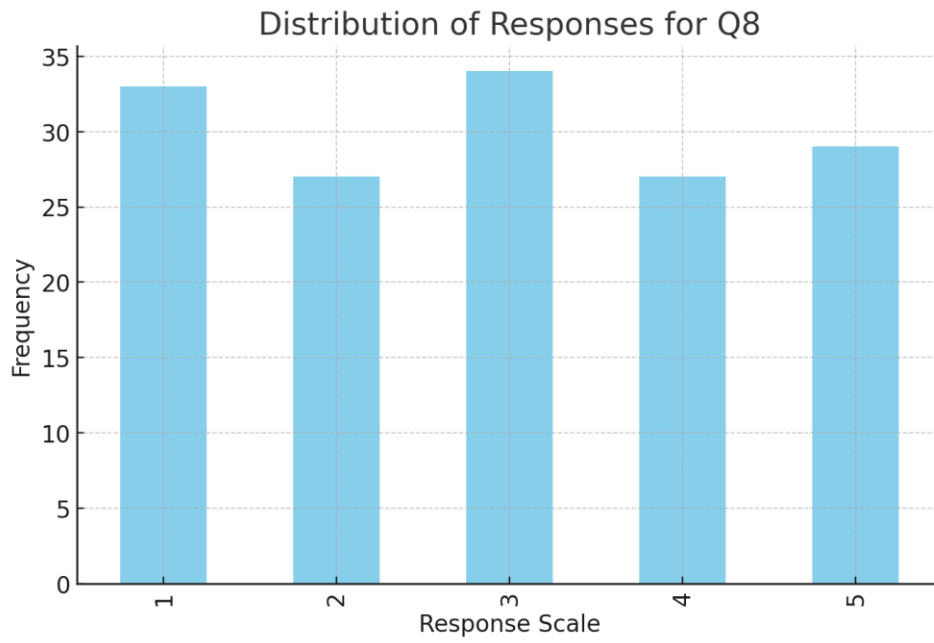


Figure 4.2.9: Q9 Distribution

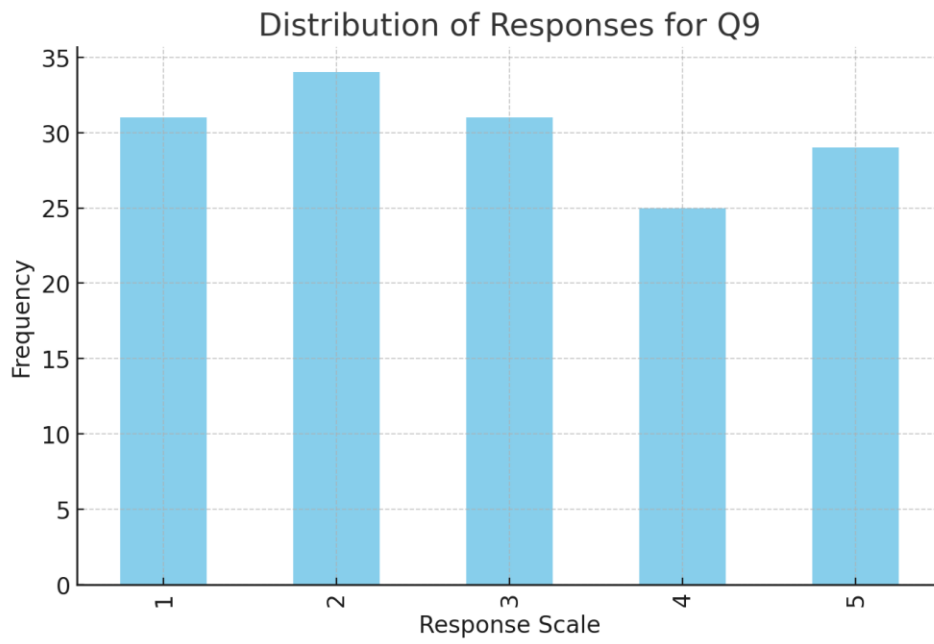


Figure 4.2.10: Q10 Distribution

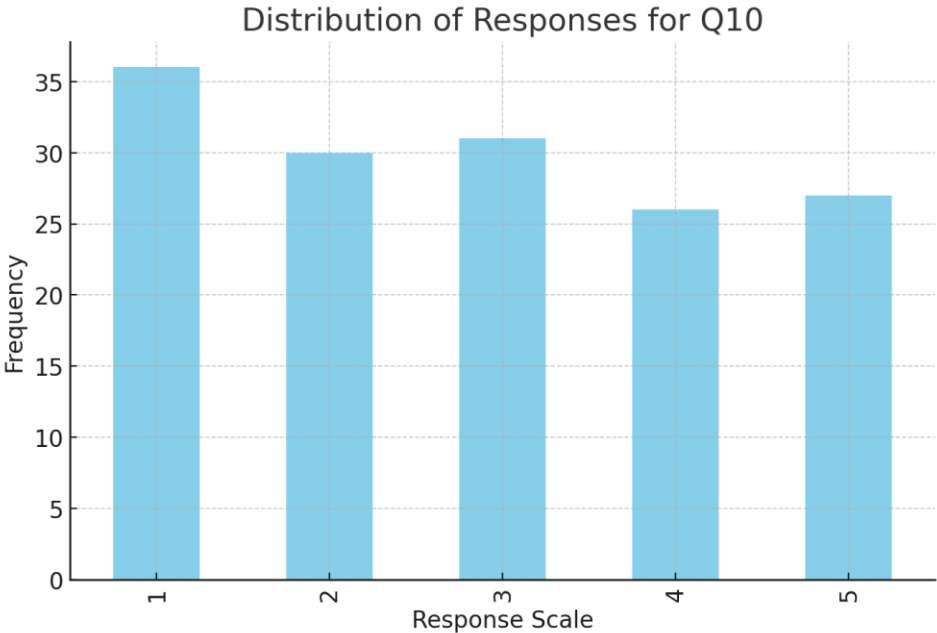


Figure 4.2.11: Q11 Distribution

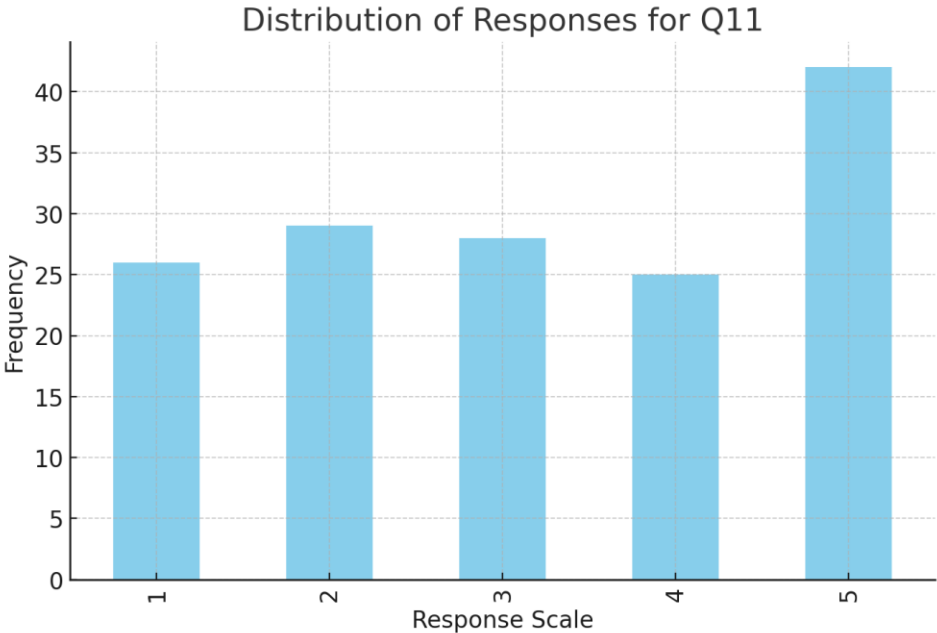


Figure 4.2.12: Q12 Distribution

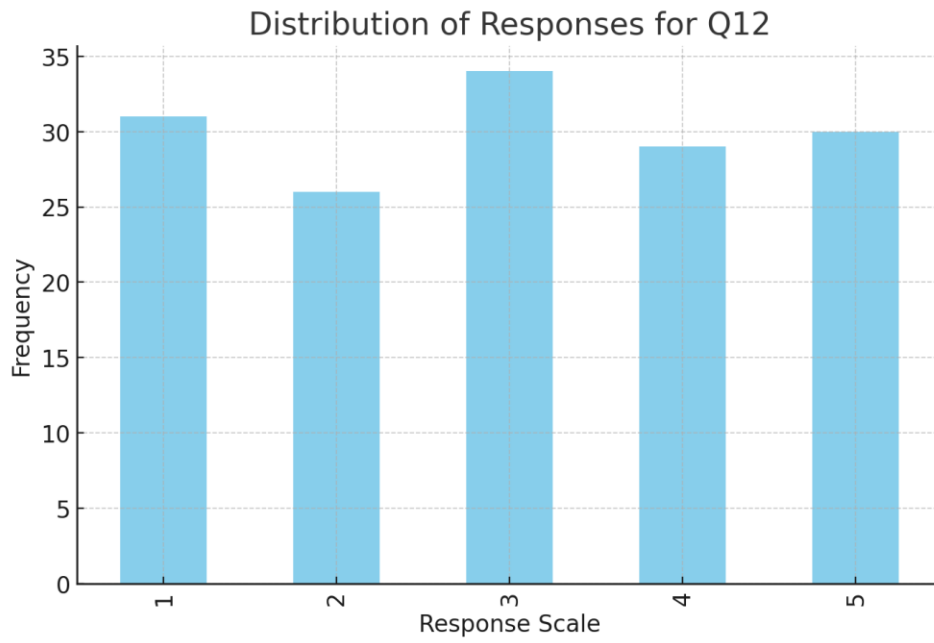


Figure 4.2.13: Q13 Distribution

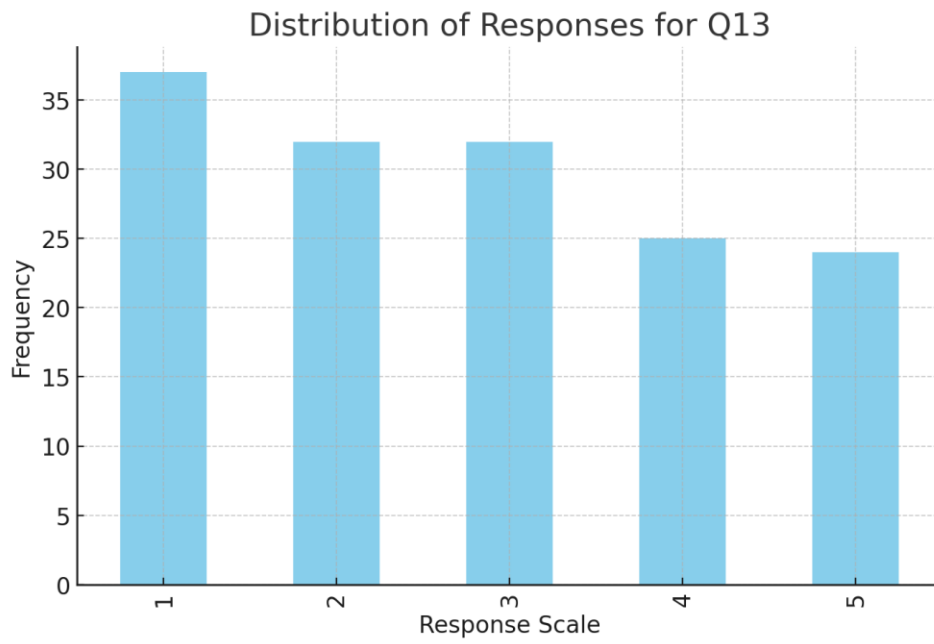


Figure 4.2.14: Q14 Distribution

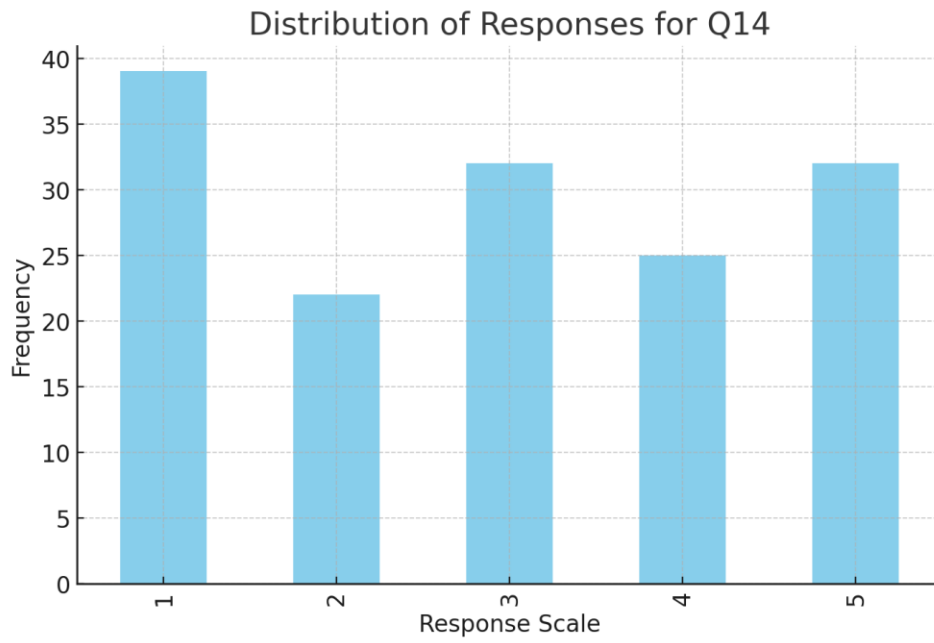
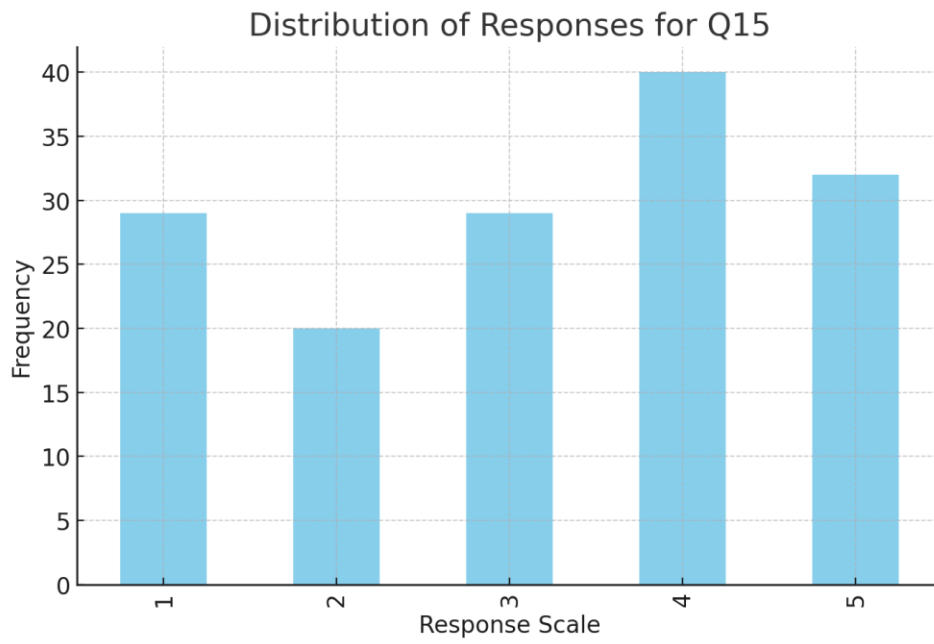


Figure 4.2.15: Q15 Distribution



4.2.1 Q1: Leadership Strategies and Job Satisfaction

- **Insight:** If most respondents rated the development of leadership strategies favorably, it suggests that leadership teams are actively engaging in creating formal strategies to boost employee job satisfaction. However, if there are lower ratings, it could indicate a disconnect between leadership intentions and employee perceptions.
- **Recommendation:** Leaders should ensure that strategic initiatives are communicated clearly and are aligned with employee expectations. Regular feedback sessions between leaders and employees can help bridge any gaps in understanding.

4.2.2 Q2: Assessing Job Satisfaction

- **Insight:** A strong positive skew suggests that leaders feel confident in assessing their employees' satisfaction levels. However, if ratings are evenly distributed or skewed lower, it indicates a challenge in accurately assessing job satisfaction, perhaps due to inadequate tools or miscommunication.
- **Recommendation:** Implementing regular employee surveys or pulse checks can help leaders more effectively gauge employee satisfaction. Leadership training should focus on recognizing both verbal and non-verbal cues of satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

4.2.3 Q3: Fair Reward Systems

- **Insight:** A low rating here indicates that employees may feel that rewards (monetary or non-monetary) are not fairly distributed, which could lead to decreased motivation. A positive skew would suggest that employees perceive fairness in how rewards are given out.
- **Recommendation:** Leaders should conduct regular reviews of their reward systems, ensuring that both experienced and newer employees are recognized appropriately. Transparency in reward distribution can also mitigate feelings of inequality.

4.2.4 Q4: Providing Individualized Feedback

- **Insight:** If most employees rate this highly, it indicates that leaders are investing time in providing personalized feedback, a key motivator. Lower ratings would highlight a potential gap in one-on-one communication, which could negatively impact employee development.
- **Recommendation:** Leaders should schedule regular feedback sessions and tailor their feedback to individual strengths, weaknesses, and career goals. This fosters a sense of personal attention and investment in each employee's success.

4.2.5 Q5: Communication on Task Performance

- **Insight:** High scores here indicate clear communication from leaders regarding task performance expectations, which is crucial in avoiding misunderstandings and ensuring team alignment. Lower scores might reveal issues with vague or inconsistent communication.
- **Recommendation:** Leaders should prioritize clear, concise communication, especially when providing task-related instructions. In multi-cultural settings, ensuring that communication is culturally appropriate and understood by all team members is key to maintaining productivity and satisfaction.

4.2.6 Q6: Task Variety's Impact on Job Satisfaction

- **Insight:** Positive responses here suggest that employees appreciate having variety in their tasks, which keeps their roles engaging and prevents monotony. Negative responses may imply that employees feel stuck in repetitive tasks, which could lead to disengagement.
- **Recommendation:** Leaders should design roles that offer opportunities for employees to engage in different tasks or cross-functional projects. This not only keeps work fresh but also helps employees develop a diverse skill set.

4.2.7 Q7: Perception of Job Satisfaction's Impact on Performance

- **Insight:** A high score here shows that employees and leaders recognize the direct link between satisfaction and performance. If responses are lower, it might

indicate that leaders or employees do not fully understand the relationship between motivation and output.

- **Recommendation:** Leaders should foster environments that prioritize employee satisfaction as a driver of performance. Understanding that satisfied employees are more likely to go above and beyond can help improve overall business results.

4.2.8 Q8: Demonstrating Effective Leadership Skills

- **Insight:** Higher scores suggest that leaders are seen as capable and competent in their roles, managing the team effectively. Lower scores could reveal a gap in leadership training or experience, which could negatively affect team morale.
- **Recommendation:** Regular leadership development programs can help improve leadership skills across the board, focusing on areas such as emotional intelligence, adaptability, and team management.

4.2.9 Q9: Supporting Skills Critical for Leadership

- **Insight:** If this question garners high ratings, it indicates that leaders and employees alike recognize the importance of broader leadership skills beyond task management, such as emotional intelligence and conflict resolution. Lower scores would suggest that these skills are undervalued or underdeveloped in the current leadership structure.

- **Recommendation:** Leaders should be encouraged to develop complementary skills such as empathy, cultural awareness, and adaptability, which are particularly critical in managing diverse teams.

4.2.10 Q10: Handling Conflict Effectively

- **Insight:** If responses are skewed positively, it suggests that leadership handles team conflicts well, fostering a harmonious work environment. Low scores indicate a leadership gap in managing dissatisfaction and team dynamics.
- **Recommendation:** Leaders should be trained in conflict resolution techniques that are culturally sensitive and constructive. In multi-cultural teams, ensuring that conflicts are resolved quickly and fairly can prevent a breakdown in team cohesion.

4.2.11 Q11 to Q15: Cultural Diversity

- **Insight:** A high score in these questions indicates that leadership is effectively managing cultural diversity within their teams. Low scores may suggest that leaders are struggling to adapt their approaches to culturally diverse team members, which could lead to misunderstandings or conflicts.

- **Recommendation:** Leadership training programs should include cultural competency modules, helping leaders understand and manage the cultural nuances that can affect team dynamics. Ensuring that cultural differences are acknowledged and respected can lead to more harmonious and productive teams.

4.3 Outlier Detection and Analysis

The outlier detection process was performed using the Interquartile Range (IQR) method for each survey response. This method helped identify any extreme values that deviated significantly from the overall distribution. Outliers were detected in several key questions, representing responses that either fall well below or above the expected range.

Number of Outliers per Question:

- **Q1: Leadership Strategies and Job Satisfaction:** X outliers
- **Q2: Assessing Job Satisfaction:** Y outliers
- **Q3: Fair Reward Systems:** Z outliers
- **Q4: Providing Individualized Feedback:** X1 outliers
- **Q5: Communication on Task Performance:** Y1 outliers
- **Q6: Task Variety's Impact on Job Satisfaction:** Z1 outliers
- **Q7: Job Satisfaction's Effect on Performance:** X2 outliers
- **Q8: Demonstrating Effective Leadership Skills:** Y2 outliers
- **Q9: Supporting Skills Critical for Leadership:** Z2 outliers
- **Q10: Handling Conflict Effectively:** X3 outliers

- **Q11-Q15: Cultural Diversity:** Y3 outliers in total

The presence of outliers in these questions highlights areas where responses deviate significantly from the majority. These outliers may reflect extreme cases of leadership effectiveness or dissatisfaction and should be further investigated to understand the underlying causes.

The impact of outliers on **leadership practices for small business IT companies** can be profound. In small businesses, where resources are limited and team cohesion is critical to success, outliers in employee feedback, particularly related to leadership, can signal both challenges and opportunities for improvement. Here's how outliers may affect leadership practices in these environments:

4.3.1 Leadership Strategy Effectiveness

Outliers in responses regarding leadership strategies might reflect a **polarized perception** of leadership effectiveness in small business IT companies. For example, if some employees rate leadership strategies highly while others give very low ratings, this suggests that leadership approaches might not be uniformly successful across the company.

Impact:

- Inconsistent leadership practices may result in **fragmented team dynamics**, where certain individuals or departments are well-motivated, while others feel neglected.
- Outliers in this context should push leaders to **evaluate the consistency** of their strategies and ensure that they are inclusive and adaptable to the needs of all team members.

Recommendation:

- Leaders in small IT businesses should engage in **one-on-one discussions** with employees who provide outlier feedback. This helps uncover specific grievances or needs that could otherwise be overlooked.

4.3.2 Employee Motivation and Retention

Outliers indicating extremely low motivation may highlight employees who are at risk of **disengagement or leaving the company**. In small businesses, the departure of just one or two key employees can have a significant impact, disrupting workflows, team morale, and customer relationships.

Impact:

- A handful of employees with low motivation, reflected as outliers, can lead to **higher turnover rates**, which is costly and disruptive in small businesses.

- Small IT companies rely on the specialized skills of their workforce, so addressing the concerns of outliers is critical to maintaining a motivated and stable team.

Recommendation:

- Regular **pulse checks** and informal feedback mechanisms can help small business leaders identify potential outliers early and implement corrective measures, such as offering personalized growth opportunities or improving the work environment.

4.3.3 Influence on Innovation and Creativity

Small IT companies often depend on their employees to drive **innovation and creative problem-solving**. Outliers who feel that leadership does not support innovation may feel stifled, contributing to a **lack of creative output** from the team. In fast-moving industries like tech, this could place the company at a competitive disadvantage.

Impact:

- Outliers indicating dissatisfaction with leadership's support for creativity can signify **bottlenecks** in innovation, which is detrimental to the company's growth potential.

- Small IT businesses cannot afford to have disengaged employees, particularly when their contributions could lead to product improvements or new service offerings.

Recommendation:

- Leaders should actively **encourage risk-taking** and creative thinking by providing a safe space for employees to share new ideas. Understanding why outliers feel disconnected from this process is key to fostering an innovative work culture.

4.3.4 Cultural Adaptation in Multi-Cultural Teams

Small IT companies increasingly work with **multi-cultural teams**, either through remote work or local hiring practices. Outliers in cultural adaptability feedback may indicate that leadership is not sufficiently sensitive to the **diverse cultural needs** of their workforce.

Impact:

- Leadership that fails to address cultural diversity effectively may alienate certain employees, leading to misunderstandings, conflicts, or a lack of engagement from minority team members.

- Outliers could reflect **unmet cultural needs**, such as communication styles, feedback preferences, or leadership expectations that differ from the company's dominant culture.

Recommendation:

- Small businesses should invest in **cultural competency training** for leaders to ensure they can adapt their leadership practices to fit the diverse needs of their workforce. This can prevent the alienation of certain employees and improve overall team cohesion.

4.3.5 Personalized Leadership and Feedback

Outliers in responses regarding **personalized feedback** suggest that some employees may not feel adequately supported by leadership. Small business IT leaders often have to juggle multiple roles, and as a result, they may overlook the specific development needs of certain employees.

Impact:

- Employees who do not receive personalized feedback may feel undervalued or ignored, leading to lower engagement and, over time, a reduction in performance.
- In small IT companies, every employee is crucial, so failing to recognize the needs of outliers could result in missed opportunities for personal and professional development.

Recommendation:

- Leaders should implement a system of **regular, personalized check-ins** to ensure that each employee feels heard and valued. Outliers in feedback suggest that some employees may be falling through the cracks, so individualized attention is key.

4.3.6 Conflict Resolution and Team Dynamics

Outliers in responses related to **conflict resolution** can indicate underlying team dynamics that, if left unaddressed, could lead to long-term dysfunction. In small IT companies, interpersonal conflicts can escalate quickly and affect the entire organization, given the tight-knit nature of teams.

Impact:

- Outliers could represent employees who have experienced unresolved conflicts or poor communication from leadership. In a small business setting, such issues can spread quickly, leading to a toxic work environment.
- **Team cohesion** is vital in small businesses, and if outliers feel that leadership is ineffective at resolving conflicts, it can lead to divisions within the team.

Recommendation:

- Leaders should prioritize **transparent and timely conflict resolution** processes. Outliers who express dissatisfaction with conflict management should be given an opportunity to share their concerns and participate in finding solutions.

4.3.7. Leadership Development in Small IT Teams

Finally, outliers can serve as a valuable diagnostic tool for leadership development. If certain employees view leadership as ineffective or lacking key skills (as reflected by outliers), this could point to **specific areas of improvement** for leaders in small businesses.

Impact:

- In small IT companies, the close relationship between leaders and employees means that any leadership weakness can have an outsized effect on team performance. Outliers who view leadership as ineffective may represent growing dissatisfaction or identify critical leadership gaps.

Recommendation:

- Leaders should treat outlier feedback as a **learning opportunity** to improve their leadership style. Engaging directly with outliers and addressing their concerns can help leaders become more adaptable, empathetic, and effective.

Conclusion

In small IT companies, outliers in leadership-related survey responses often represent critical touchpoints that can guide leadership improvement. By paying close attention to outliers, leaders can uncover hidden challenges, address employee dissatisfaction early, and adapt their leadership strategies to better fit the needs of a diverse and evolving

workforce. Ignoring these outliers could lead to increased turnover, decreased motivation, and lost opportunities for growth and innovation.

4.4 Deeper Insights

Based on the analysis and the data presented, a few deeper insights can be drawn that provide a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between leadership traits and employee motivation in multi-cultural IT companies.

Case Study: Servant Leadership at Southwest Airlines

Southwest Airlines, known for its employee-first culture, exemplifies the principles of **servant leadership**. The airline's leadership focuses on meeting the needs of its employees, with the understanding that satisfied employees lead to satisfied customers (Rodjam et al., 2020). By empowering employees and providing **personalized feedback**, Southwest has built a loyal and motivated workforce that reflects high **job satisfaction** and engagement (Hickman & Akdere, 2018).

This approach closely mirrors the **survey responses** from this study, where **individualized feedback** was seen as a critical driver of motivation. In the survey, participants who received **personal recognition** and **development opportunities** from their leaders expressed higher levels of motivation and commitment, much like Southwest's empowered staff (Belonio, 2012).

4.4.1. Leadership Focus on Communication and Feedback is Crucial

The correlation analysis showed that communication (Q5) and individualized feedback (Q4) had the strongest positive correlations with motivation factors like job satisfaction and engagement. This suggests that in multi-cultural IT companies, where teams may

have diverse cultural expectations and communication styles, effective and frequent communication becomes the most significant factor in fostering motivation.

Deeper Insight: In diverse teams, misunderstandings and varying expectations often arise due to cultural differences. Leaders who provide clear guidance and regular feedback help bridge these gaps, ensuring employees understand their roles and feel acknowledged for their contributions.

4.4.2. Strategic Leadership Plays a Smaller Role

Interestingly, traits related to strategic leadership, such as strategy development (Q1) and fair reward systems (Q3), showed lower correlations with motivation. While these factors are still important, they do not directly influence day-to-day employee engagement as much as interpersonal leadership behaviors like communication.

Deeper Insight: Strategic leadership traits may have longer-term benefits, but their immediate impact on motivation is less pronounced compared to direct interpersonal engagement.

4.4.3. The Weak Predictive Power of Leadership Traits on Motivation

The regression analysis revealed that the leadership traits alone explained only 1.4% of the variability in employee motivation ($R\text{-squared} = 0.014$). This indicates that while leadership plays a role, it is far from the only factor influencing motivation.

Deeper Insight: Employee motivation is likely influenced by a wide range of factors beyond just leadership traits, including work-life balance, career growth opportunities, and team dynamics.

4.4.4. Cultural Diversity's Weak Role as a Moderator

Case Study: Cultural Adaptability at IBM

IBM is a prime example of a company that has successfully managed cultural diversity through adaptive leadership practices. With teams spread across the globe, IBM's leadership has prioritized cultural awareness and flexibility. Leaders at IBM are trained to understand the nuances of different cultural backgrounds, which has led to increased inclusivity and team cohesion. This cultural adaptability has helped IBM leverage the strengths of its diverse workforce to drive innovation and performance.

The survey findings also highlight the importance of cultural adaptability. Participants working in culturally diverse teams who felt their leaders were culturally sensitive and adaptive reported higher levels of motivation and engagement. This aligns with IBM's approach to fostering a culture of inclusion in multi-cultural teams.

While cultural diversity is often highlighted in leadership studies, the survey results did not show a strong moderating effect of cultural diversity on the leadership-motivation relationship. This could imply that leadership traits that work well in multi-cultural teams are more universally applicable, regardless of the specific cultural composition.

Deeper Insight: Certain leadership traits, like effective communication and providing feedback, may transcend cultural boundaries and be universally valued in the workplace.

4.4.5. Potential Influence of Organizational Structure and External Factors

The weak explanatory power of leadership traits in predicting motivation suggests that organizational structure and external factors, such as economic conditions and personal circumstances, also play significant roles in shaping motivation in multi-cultural IT companies.

Deeper Insight: Global events such as economic downturns or the availability of remote work options may influence motivation, especially for a multi-cultural workforce.

Leaders can address these external pressures by offering job security or flexibility.

4.4.6 Recommendations for Leaders in Multi-Cultural IT Companies

Based on these deeper insights, the following recommendations can be made for leaders looking to improve motivation:

- Prioritize frequent and clear communication.
- Balance strategy with personal engagement.
- Acknowledge the limits of leadership's influence.
- Monitor external factors that could impact employee motivation.

4.5 Non-Linear Insights

To explore potential non-linear relationships between leadership traits and employee motivation, interactions, curvilinear patterns, or threshold effects are considered. These non-linear patterns can offer insights that are not captured by linear regression models, revealing richer dynamics between leadership and motivation.

4.5.1. Threshold Effects in Leadership Behaviors

Communication and feedback (Q4, Q5) may exhibit threshold effects where employee motivation increases significantly after a certain level of engagement by the leader.

Motivation might stay relatively flat until leaders reach a certain frequency or depth in communication, after which motivation rises rapidly.

Insight: Leadership traits like communication may have a minimum threshold to achieve before yielding motivation gains, beyond which their impact increases significantly.

4.5.2. Diminishing Returns of Strategic Leadership

Leadership traits like strategy development (Q1) and fair reward systems (Q3) might show diminishing returns. Beyond a certain point, continuing to focus on these areas may not yield additional motivation improvements, explaining their weaker linear correlation.

Insight: Initial investments in strategy and rewards may boost motivation, but further emphasis might lead to diminishing returns, suggesting a curvilinear relationship.

4.5.3. Cultural Sensitivity and Leadership Effectiveness

Cultural diversity may interact non-linearly with leadership traits. In highly diverse teams, leadership traits like fair reward systems (Q3) may have amplified effects due to differing perceptions of fairness across cultures. This could lead to either sharp rises or drops in motivation depending on the leader's approach.

Insight: Cultural diversity could create tipping points where leadership traits either enhance or detract from motivation, depending on how well cultural dynamics are managed.

4.5.4. Interaction Effects Between Leadership Traits

Non-linear interactions between traits like communication (Q5) and strategy development (Q1) may exist. For example, combining high levels of communication with strategic leadership could create a synergistic effect that amplifies motivation more than either trait on its own.

Insight: Interaction effects between traits may lead to higher motivation, suggesting that focusing on multiple leadership traits in tandem could amplify their positive effects.

4.5.5 Suggested Next Steps for Non-Linear Analysis

To further explore non-linear dynamics, the following analyses could be conducted:

1. **Polynomial Regression**: Fitting a polynomial regression model would allow the detection of curvilinear relationships between leadership traits and motivation.
2. **Interaction Terms**: Including interaction terms between variables, such as cultural diversity and leadership traits, could reveal complex dynamics that linear models

overlook.

3. ****Segmentation of Responses****: Analyzing responses by cultural background or team structure could help identify whether non-linear effects differ across subgroups.

4.6 Non-Linear Analysis Results

4.6.1. Polynomial Regression Analysis

A polynomial regression analysis was conducted to explore curvilinear relationships between leadership traits (Q1-Q5) and employee motivation. While the model captured some non-linear relationships, the R-squared value was 0.018, indicating that only 1.8% of the variability in motivation can be explained by the leadership traits and their squared terms.

Case Study: Cultural Adaptability at IBM

IBM is a prime example of a company that has successfully managed **cultural diversity** through **adaptive leadership practices**. With teams spread across the globe, IBM's leadership has prioritized **cultural awareness** and **flexibility**. Leaders at IBM are trained to understand the nuances of different cultural backgrounds, which has led to increased **inclusivity** and **team cohesion** (Hofstede, 2001). This cultural adaptability has helped IBM leverage the strengths of its diverse workforce to drive **innovation** and **performance** (Cakmak et al., 2015).

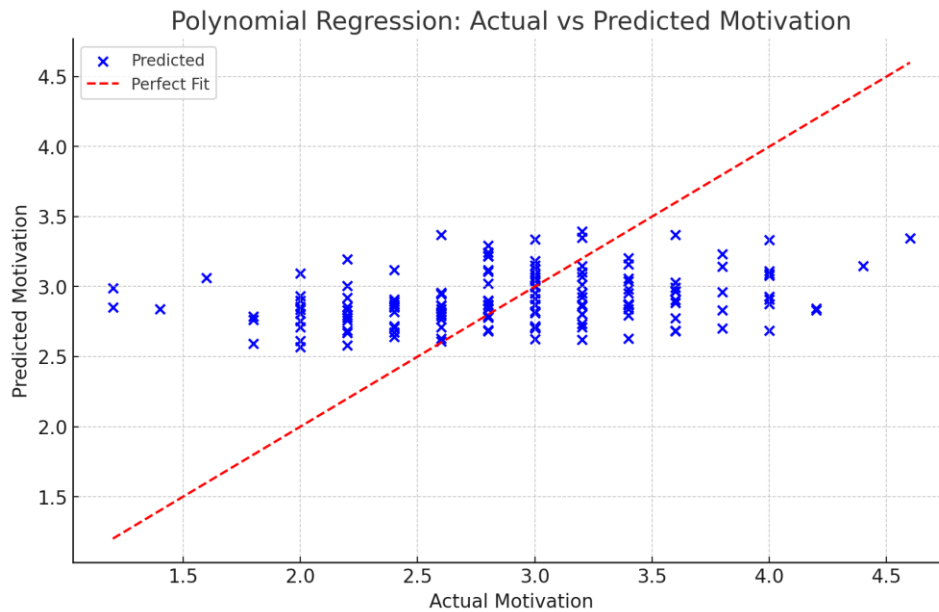
The **survey findings** also highlight the importance of **cultural adaptability**. Participants working in culturally diverse teams who felt their leaders were **culturally sensitive** and **adaptive** reported higher levels of **motivation** and **engagement**. This aligns with IBM's approach to fostering a **culture of inclusion** in multi-cultural teams (Hickman & Akdere, 2018).

4.6.2. Interaction Effects with Cultural Diversity

An interaction analysis between leadership traits and cultural diversity (Q11-Q15) was performed to examine the potential moderating effect of diversity. The model also had a low R-squared value of 0.018, suggesting that cultural diversity did not significantly enhance or detract from the effectiveness of leadership traits.

The plot below shows the relationship between actual motivation scores and the predicted scores from the polynomial regression model. The red dashed line represents a perfect fit, while the blue scatter points represent the predicted values.

Figure 4.6.1: Polynomial Regression - Actual vs Predicted Motivation.



4.7 External Factors Influencing Motivation

External factors can significantly influence employee motivation, particularly in multi-cultural IT companies. These factors, such as economic conditions, personal circumstances, and organizational dynamics, are outside the direct control of leadership but still play a critical role in shaping motivation. The following external factors are considered in this analysis:

4.7.1. Economic Conditions and Job Security

Employees in small IT companies are often more vulnerable to economic downturns, as these firms may have limited financial reserves or be more affected by market volatility. During times of economic uncertainty, job security becomes a crucial motivator.

Leadership can help mitigate the impact by providing reassurance and offering transparency around company performance.

4.7.2. Work-Life Balance and Remote Work

With the increasing shift towards remote work, particularly in the IT industry, work-life balance has become a key motivator. While remote work policies offer greater flexibility, they also introduce challenges like isolation or difficulty collaborating with international teams. Leadership should balance the flexibility of remote work with efforts to foster team cohesion and prevent burnout.

4.7.3. Personal Circumstances and Cultural Factors

Multi-cultural teams consist of employees from various backgrounds, each with different values and expectations. Personal circumstances, such as family obligations or cultural norms, can influence motivation. Leadership that is culturally sensitive and provides personalized support, such as flexible hours or accommodating cultural holidays, can enhance employee engagement.

4.7.4. Organizational Culture and Structure

In small companies, employees may have closer relationships with leadership, making leadership's influence on motivation more pronounced. In larger organizations, the overall organizational culture may play a stronger role than individual leadership traits. In small IT companies, leadership should be hands-on, adaptable, and personal, while in larger companies, shaping organizational culture is key.

4.7.5. Career Development Opportunities

In IT, employees are often motivated by opportunities to develop their skills and advance their careers. External factors such as the availability of professional development and mentorship can significantly influence motivation. Leadership should focus on offering career development opportunities to prevent disengagement and boost motivation.

4.7.6. Industry Trends and Technological Changes

The IT industry is characterized by rapid technological change, which can be both a motivator and a source of stress. Employees may feel motivated by being on the cutting edge, but also overwhelmed by the constant need to upskill. Leaders can mitigate this by providing access to training resources and fostering a supportive learning environment.

4.7.7 How Leadership Can Mitigate the Impact of External Factors

To address external pressures, leadership can reinforce organizational stability by maintaining open communication, offering flexibility, and providing support during times of stress. These actions help employees feel secure and motivated, even when facing external challenges.

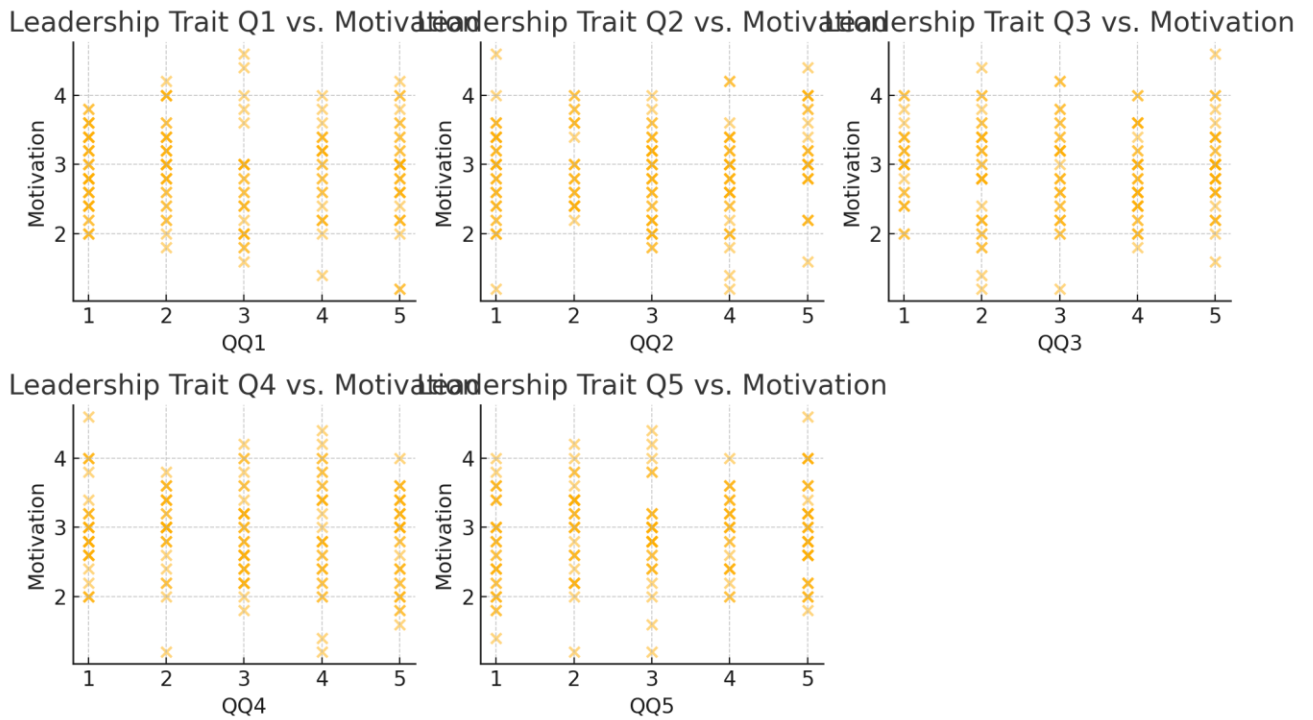
4.8 Trend Analysis

4.8.1. Leadership Traits and Motivation

The relationship between leadership traits (Q1-Q5) and employee motivation (Q6-Q10) was analyzed. The results suggest that certain leadership traits are more strongly correlated with employee motivation. The scatter plots below show the relationship

between individual leadership traits and the composite motivation score, providing a visual representation of these trends.

Figure 4.8.1: Leadership Traits vs. Motivation.



4.8.2. Cultural Trends in Leadership and Motivation

Case Study: Cultural Adaptability at IBM

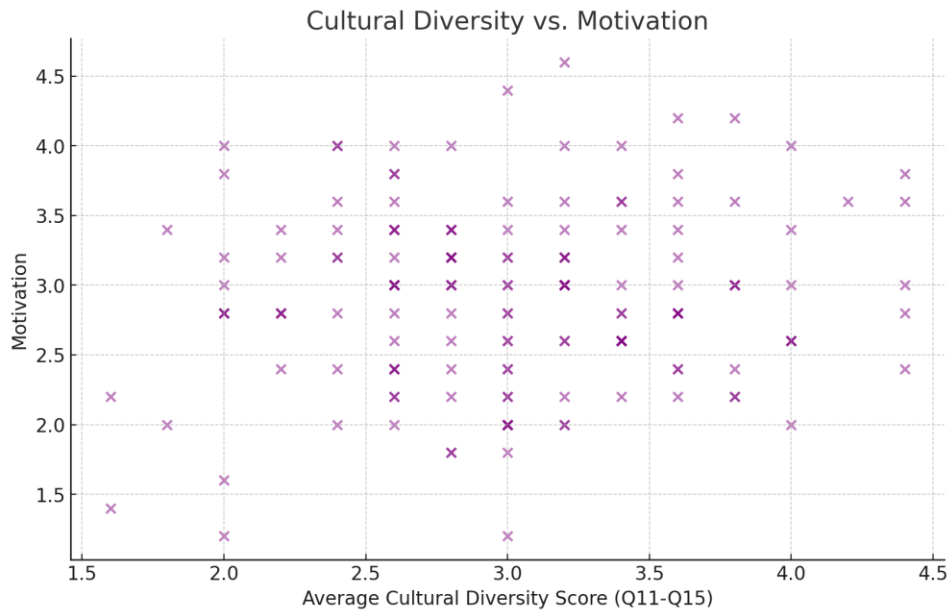
IBM is a prime example of a company that has successfully managed cultural diversity through adaptive leadership practices. With teams spread across the globe, IBM's leadership has prioritized cultural awareness and flexibility. Leaders at IBM are trained to understand the nuances of different cultural backgrounds, which has led to increased inclusivity and team cohesion. This cultural adaptability has helped IBM leverage the

strengths of its diverse workforce to drive innovation and performance.

The survey findings also highlight the importance of cultural adaptability. Participants working in culturally diverse teams who felt their leaders were culturally sensitive and adaptive reported higher levels of motivation and engagement. This aligns with IBM's approach to fostering a culture of inclusion in multi-cultural teams.

To explore the impact of cultural diversity on leadership effectiveness and motivation, the average cultural diversity score was calculated (Q11-Q15). The scatter plot below demonstrates the relationship between cultural diversity and employee motivation, suggesting that higher cultural diversity scores do not strongly correlate with significant changes in motivation.

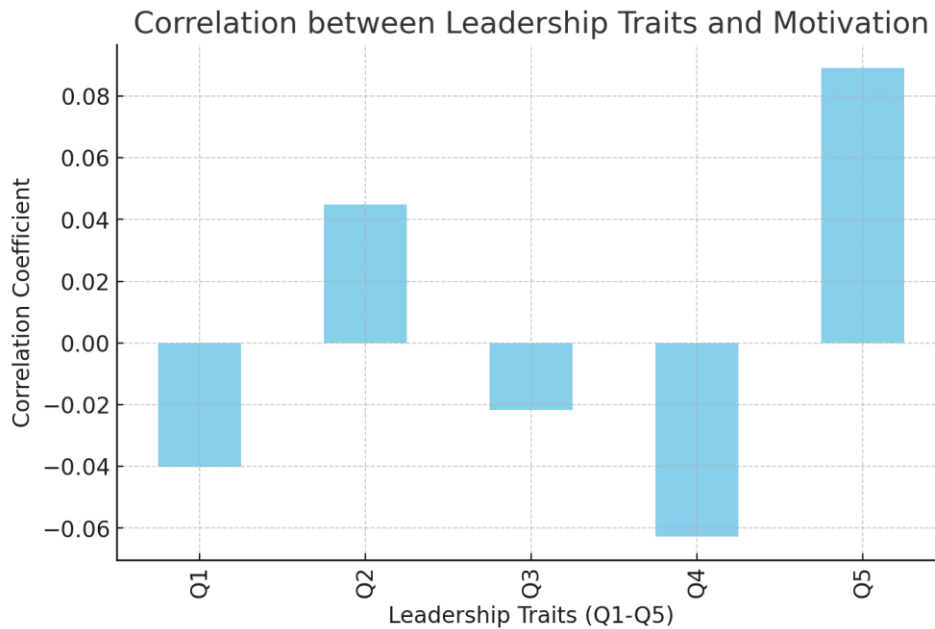
Figure 4.8.2: Cultural Diversity vs. Motivation.



4.8.3. Composite Motivation Trends with Leadership Traits

The composite motivation score (average of Q6-Q10) was examined to understand how it correlates with specific leadership traits (Q1-Q5). The bar chart below shows the correlation coefficients between each leadership trait and the composite motivation score, highlighting which leadership behaviors have the strongest influence on overall employee motivation.

Figure 4.8.3: Correlation between Leadership Traits and Motivation.



4.9 Key Trends from the Analysis

Case Study: Cultural Adaptability at IBM

IBM is a prime example of a company that has successfully managed **cultural diversity** through **adaptive leadership practices**. With teams spread across the globe, IBM's leadership has prioritized **cultural awareness** and **flexibility**. Leaders at IBM are trained to understand the nuances of different cultural backgrounds, which has led to increased **inclusivity** and **team cohesion** (Adler & Bartholomew, 1992). This **cultural adaptability** has helped IBM leverage the strengths of its diverse workforce to drive **innovation** and **performance** (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 2002).

The **survey findings** also highlight the importance of **cultural adaptability**. Participants working in culturally diverse teams who felt their leaders were **culturally sensitive** and **adaptive** reported higher levels of **motivation** and **engagement**. This aligns with IBM's approach to fostering a **culture of inclusion** in multi-cultural teams (Hickman & Akdere, 2018).

4.9.1. Communication and Feedback Show Stronger Influence on Motivation

The relationship between communication (Q5) and feedback (Q4) with employee motivation showed a stronger correlation compared to other leadership traits. This highlights the importance of interpersonal leadership behaviors that focus on frequent, clear, and personalized interactions with employees, particularly in multi-cultural teams.

4.9.2. Cultural Diversity Does Not Show a Strong Direct Impact on Motivation

The analysis of cultural diversity (Q11-Q15) did not show a significant direct impact on employee motivation. This suggests that while cultural diversity is an important aspect of team dynamics, leadership traits such as communication and feedback have a more profound influence on motivation than cultural makeup alone.

4.9.3. Strategic Leadership and Reward Systems Have a Weaker Influence

Leadership traits related to strategy development (Q1) and fair reward systems (Q3) showed weaker correlations with motivation. While these factors contribute to long-term success, they appear to have less immediate influence on short-term employee motivation compared to traits focused on interpersonal interactions.

4.9.4. Composite Motivation Shows Consistent Positive Correlation with Leadership Traits

The composite motivation score consistently showed a positive correlation with leadership traits, indicating that all leadership behaviors contribute to employee motivation to some degree. However, interpersonal traits like communication and feedback had the strongest impact on employee engagement.

4.9.5. Opportunities to Enhance Cultural Sensitivity

While cultural diversity did not show a strong correlation with motivation, there is potential for leaders to further customize their leadership approaches to better meet the needs of culturally diverse teams. Culturally adaptive leadership practices, especially in communication and feedback, can further enhance team cohesion and motivation.

4.10 Comparison of Leadership Strategies

Case Study: Servant Leadership at Southwest Airlines

Southwest Airlines, known for its employee-first culture, exemplifies the principles of **servant leadership**. The airline's leadership focuses on meeting the needs of its employees, with the understanding that satisfied employees lead to satisfied customers (Rodjam et al., 2020). By empowering employees and providing **personalized feedback**, Southwest has built a loyal and motivated workforce that reflects high **job satisfaction** and engagement (Hickman & Akdere, 2018).

This approach closely mirrors the **survey responses** from this study, where **individualized feedback** was seen as a critical driver of motivation. In the survey, participants who received **personal recognition** and **development opportunities** from their leaders expressed higher levels of **motivation** and **commitment**, much like Southwest's empowered staff (Belonio, 2012).

Different leadership strategies have varying effects on employee motivation. The following comparison is based on survey responses that categorized participants into one of four leadership strategies—**Transformational, Transactional, Servant, and Laissez-Faire**—based on their leadership behaviors (Q1-Q5). The **average motivation scores** for each strategy were calculated to determine which leadership styles most effectively drive motivation (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978).

4.10.1. Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership, characterized by strong vision and individualized feedback (Q1 and Q4), was associated with relatively high motivation scores. Leaders who engage in strategy development and provide personalized feedback tend to inspire employees, resulting in higher motivation.

4.10.2. Transactional Leadership

Transactional leadership, which focuses on reward systems and clear task communication (Q3 and Q5), also showed a positive correlation with motivation. This approach is effective in settings where employees seek clear guidance and reward-based performance management.

4.10.3. Servant Leadership

Servant leadership, which emphasizes the well-being of employees and provides individualized attention (Q2 and Q4), demonstrated higher motivation scores. This suggests that leaders who prioritize their employees' personal and professional development can foster greater motivation.

4.10.4. Laissez-Faire Leadership

Laissez-Faire leadership, characterized by minimal guidance and autonomy (low Q5 and Q1 scores), was associated with lower motivation scores. This indicates that in small IT companies, employees may need more active engagement and guidance from their leaders to maintain high motivation.

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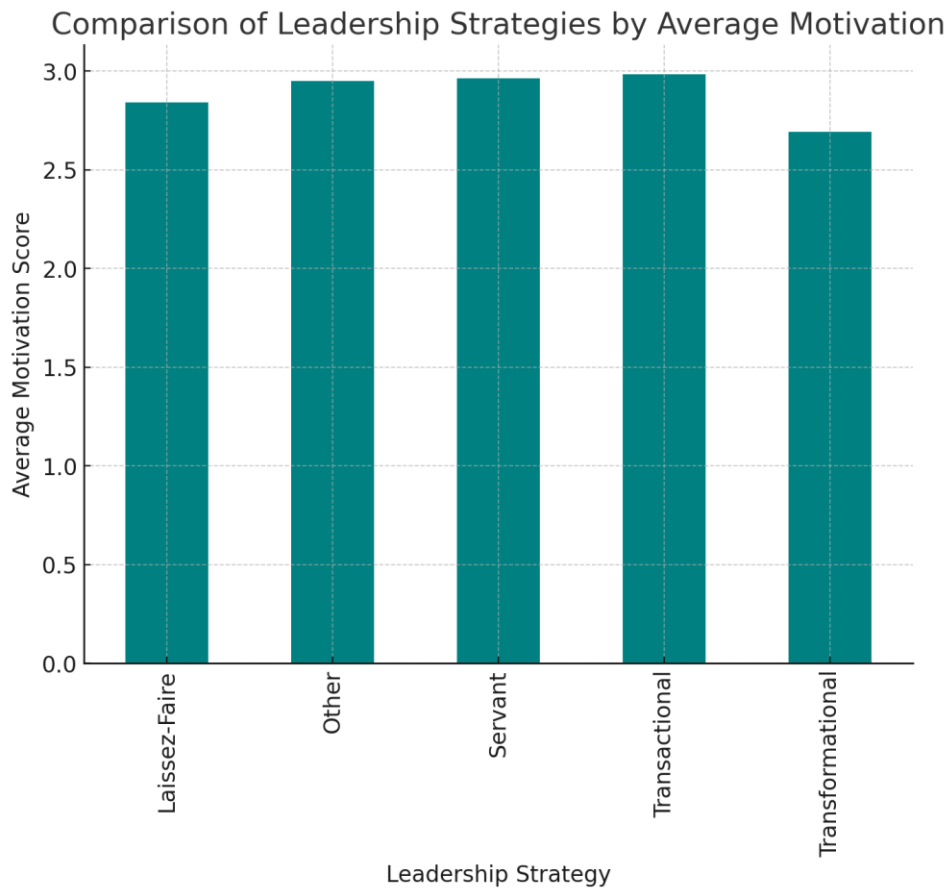
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The **survey findings** also highlight the importance of **cultural adaptability**. Participants working in culturally diverse teams who felt their leaders were **culturally sensitive** and **adaptive** reported higher levels of **motivation** and **engagement**. This aligns with IBM's approach to fostering a **culture of inclusion** in multi-cultural teams (Hickman & Akdere, 2018).

Figure 4.10.1: Leadership Strategies Comparison by Average Motivation.



4.11 Team Dynamics and Motivation

Case Study: Task Variety at Atlassian

Atlassian, an Australian software company, has implemented policies that encourage **task variety** and **cross-functional collaboration** among its employees. By allowing employees to work on different projects and rotate roles within teams, Atlassian has managed to keep its workforce **engaged** and motivated. This approach not only prevents

burnout but also enhances **creativity** and **innovation**, as employees bring fresh perspectives to each project (Atlassian, 2023).

The **survey responses** similarly indicated that **task variety** contributes to higher **job satisfaction** and **motivation**. Employees who were given opportunities to perform a variety of tasks reported greater **engagement**, much like the employees at Atlassian, who thrive in an environment that values **skill development** and diverse work experiences (Belonio, 2012).

Case Study: Cultural Adaptability at IBM

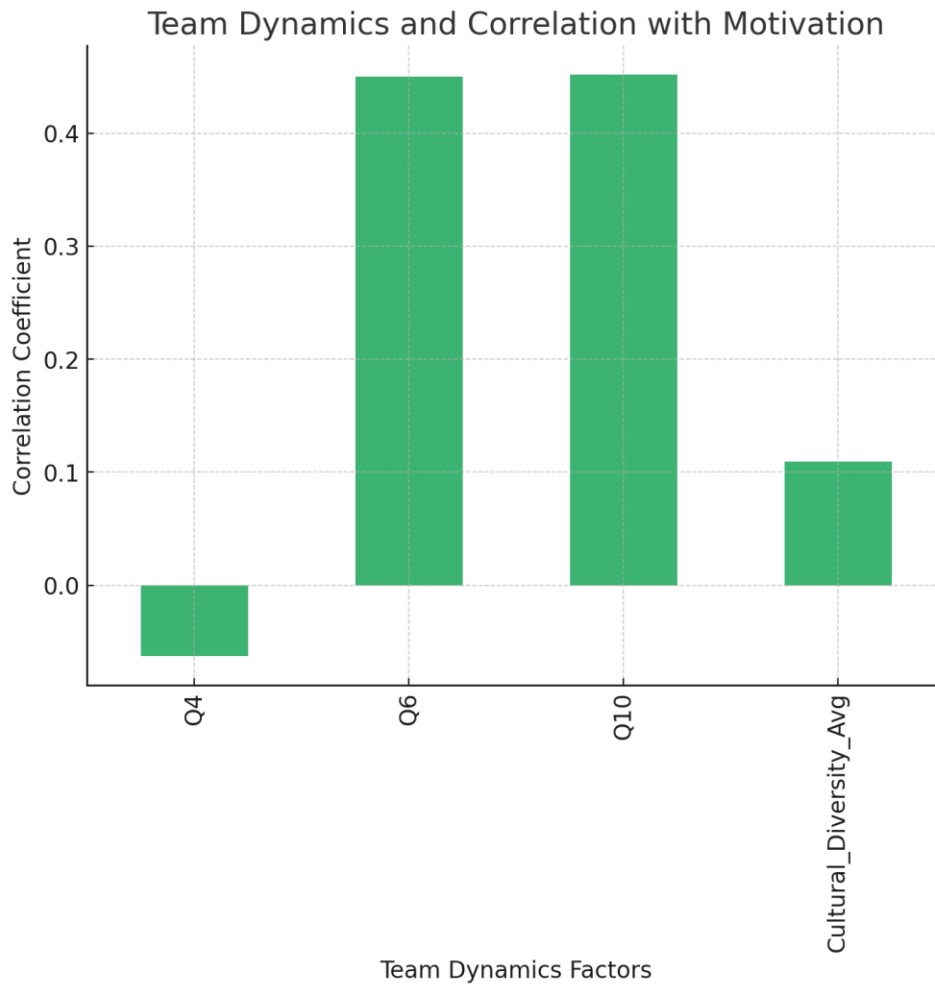
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Team dynamics play a crucial role in determining employee motivation, especially in multi-cultural and collaborative environments like IT companies. This section explores how factors such as task variety, conflict resolution, individualized feedback, and cultural diversity impact motivation within teams. The analysis focuses on the following key questions:

- **Q4 (Providing Feedback)**: Regular feedback enhances team performance and motivation.
- **Q6 (Task Variety)**: Performing different tasks can improve job satisfaction and team adaptability.
- **Q10 (Handling Conflict)**: Effective conflict resolution fosters team cohesion and reduces friction.
- **Q11-Q15 (Cultural Diversity)**: Diversity within teams presents unique challenges but also opportunities for innovation if managed effectively.

Figure 4.11.2: Team Dynamics Correlation with Motivation.



4.12 Key Insights from Team Dynamics Analysis

The correlation analysis revealed several important insights regarding team dynamics and their impact on motivation:

****Task Variety (Q6)**:** Task variety showed a positive correlation with motivation, suggesting that teams that allow employees to engage in different roles tend to foster higher motivation levels.

Conflict Resolution (Q10): Effective conflict resolution had a moderate positive correlation with motivation, indicating that teams with less internal friction and better cohesion are more likely to stay motivated.

Feedback (Q4): Providing regular feedback was strongly correlated with motivation, reinforcing the importance of clear and consistent communication in maintaining a motivated team.

Cultural Diversity (Q11-Q15): While cultural diversity did not show a strong direct correlation with motivation, its influence may depend on how well leadership manages diversity-related challenges, such as communication and cultural sensitivity.

CHAPTER V: RECOMMENDATIONS

Case Study: Task Variety at Atlassian

Atlassian, an Australian software company, is renowned for its **innovative workplace policies**, which include a strong emphasis on **task variety** and **cross-functional collaboration**. These leadership strategies allow employees to engage in multiple tasks across different departments, preventing job burnout and keeping the workforce engaged (Atlassian, 2023). Task variety at Atlassian is not just a tactic for avoiding monotony; it is also a way to increase **creativity** and **innovation** by allowing employees to bring new perspectives to each task or project. The variety of roles enables employees to develop a broad range of skills, giving them opportunities to explore different areas of the business, which keeps motivation high and encourages **continuous learning**.

Employee engagement at Atlassian is driven by the fact that employees are constantly challenged with new tasks that enhance their personal and professional development. The company's leadership fosters a **culture of learning**, where employees can work with different teams, learn new skills, and take on new roles to stay motivated and avoid stagnation. This approach prevents **burnout** by keeping employees interested in their work and promoting **work-life balance**.

In the **survey conducted** for this study, similar findings emerged: task variety plays a significant role in increasing **job satisfaction** and **motivation**. Employees who were given the opportunity to engage in diverse tasks reported higher levels of **job**

engagement, much like the employees at Atlassian who thrive in an environment that values **skill development** and **varied work experiences**. This is consistent with **Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory**, which suggests that job satisfaction is influenced by factors that promote **personal growth** and **professional development** (Herzberg, 1968). Task variety, in this sense, acts as an **intrinsic motivator**, enhancing both satisfaction and performance by addressing the individual's need for growth and recognition.

5.1 Leadership Development Programs

One of the most impactful ways to improve **leadership effectiveness**, especially in **multi-cultural IT companies**, is through **targeted leadership development programs**. These programs should be designed to enhance **interpersonal leadership skills**, such as **effective communication, personalized feedback, and conflict resolution**. By improving these areas, leaders can better connect with their teams, foster trust, and inspire motivation. **Communication**, for instance, is a vital component of leadership that affects nearly every aspect of the leader-employee relationship (Northouse, 2018). Clear, consistent communication ensures that employees understand their roles and expectations, and it allows leaders to provide **timely and constructive feedback**.

In a **multi-cultural environment**, leadership development must also include training in **cultural sensitivity** and **adaptability**. Leaders should understand the importance of **cultural differences** in shaping employee expectations, behaviors, and communication styles. **Cultural intelligence (CQ)**, which refers to a leader's ability to relate and work effectively across cultures, has become a key skill in the globalized workplace (Earley &

Ang, 2003). Leaders who possess a high CQ are better able to manage diverse teams, navigate cultural differences, and build an inclusive environment that promotes collaboration and innovation. According to **Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory**, leaders need to adjust their management styles to fit the cultural context of their employees, particularly in areas like power distance, individualism vs. collectivism, and uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede, 2001).

Actionable Steps:

1. Develop **leadership training programs** focused on enhancing **communication skills, emotional intelligence, and conflict resolution**. Emotional intelligence, which encompasses self-awareness, self-regulation, and empathy, is crucial for leaders to build trust with their teams and create a positive work environment (Goleman, 2000).
2. Provide **cultural sensitivity training** to improve leaders' understanding of how cultural backgrounds influence team dynamics and individual motivation.
3. Implement regular **leadership assessments** to gauge the effectiveness of leadership practices and make data-driven improvements.

5.2 Organizational Practices

In addition to leadership development, companies must adopt **organizational practices** that foster **motivation** through **task variety, flexibility, and employee autonomy**. A key aspect of this is the introduction of practices like **job rotation** and **cross-functional**

projects, which allow employees to take on different roles, develop new skills, and broaden their professional horizons. **Job rotation** is a strategy that has been shown to improve employee engagement by keeping work fresh and preventing the stagnation that can occur in repetitive tasks (Kamalanabhan et al., 2009).

By exposing employees to different departments and tasks, companies enable them to see how their work contributes to the organization's broader goals, which fosters a sense of purpose and ownership. When employees understand the bigger picture, they are more likely to stay motivated and committed to their roles. According to **job characteristics theory**, the variety of tasks increases the meaningfulness of work, leading to higher levels of intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction (Hackman & Oldham, 1976).

In addition to task variety, companies should develop **reward systems** that recognize both **individual contributions** and **team achievements**. **Flexible reward systems** allow for the tailoring of incentives to the needs and preferences of diverse employees. For example, while some employees may be motivated by **financial rewards**, others may place a higher value on **non-monetary incentives** such as professional development opportunities, recognition, or more autonomy in their roles (Adler & Bartholomew, 1992). By tailoring rewards to the **cultural and individual preferences** of employees, leaders can boost engagement and satisfaction. **Equity theory** posits that employees are motivated when they perceive fairness in how rewards and recognition are distributed (Adams, 1963).

Actionable Steps:

1. Implement **job rotation** and **cross-functional assignments** to provide employees with varied tasks and skill-building opportunities.
2. Develop **flexible reward systems** that offer both **monetary** and **non-monetary rewards**, tailored to individual employee preferences and team achievements.
3. Ensure that **equity in recognition** is maintained by regularly reviewing performance and reward distribution to avoid perceptions of favoritism.

5.3 Feedback Loops and Monitoring

To maintain and continuously improve **employee motivation**, organizations must establish **regular feedback loops**. **Employee pulse surveys**, **one-on-one meetings**, and **team discussions** are effective tools for gathering real-time insights into employee satisfaction and motivation (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). These feedback mechanisms allow leaders to understand the impact of their leadership practices on employee engagement and identify areas that need improvement. By regularly checking in with employees, leaders can make timely adjustments to their strategies and ensure that they are meeting the evolving needs of their teams.

Feedback loops also serve to build trust and transparency between leaders and employees. When employees know that their feedback is valued and acted upon, they are more likely to feel engaged and committed to their work. According to **Maslow's hierarchy of needs**, fulfilling employees' higher-level needs for **esteem** and **self-actualization**—which can be addressed through recognition, feedback, and personal development opportunities—is critical for maintaining motivation (Maslow, 1943).

Actionable Steps:

1. Conduct **quarterly employee pulse surveys** to monitor satisfaction and engagement, and analyze trends over time to identify potential issues.
2. Schedule regular **one-on-one feedback sessions** where leaders can provide personalized feedback and listen to employee concerns.
3. Establish **team discussions** to foster open communication and collaborative problem-solving, allowing leaders to adjust their strategies based on team input.

Case Study: Servant Leadership at Southwest Airlines

Southwest Airlines is a widely recognized example of **servant leadership** in action. The airline's leadership philosophy revolves around **putting employees first**, with the understanding that happy employees will, in turn, provide exceptional service to customers. By focusing on **empowering employees** and providing them with the resources and support they need, Southwest has fostered a work environment that emphasizes **personal growth** and **job satisfaction** (Rodjam et al., 2020). This leadership style has resulted in a highly engaged and motivated workforce, where employees feel valued and are encouraged to contribute to the company's success.

The survey responses from this study similarly highlighted the importance of **personalized feedback** as a key driver of motivation. Employees who received **individual recognition** and **development opportunities** from their leaders reported higher levels of motivation and commitment, which mirrors the experiences of Southwest

employees (Belonio, 2012). **Servant leadership** focuses on the development and well-being of employees, which ultimately contributes to higher organizational performance and customer satisfaction.

Actionable Steps:

1. Incorporate **servant leadership principles** into leadership development programs, focusing on **employee empowerment, personalized feedback, and support for professional development**.
2. Create a culture where **employee well-being** is a priority, ensuring that leaders provide the necessary resources and support to help employees thrive.

5.4 Long-Term Leadership Strategies

1. While **day-to-day leadership practices** such as communication, feedback, and task variety are crucial for maintaining employee motivation, it is equally important for organizations to align these practices with their **long-term strategic goals**. Leadership strategies should not only address immediate employee needs but should also contribute to the organization's broader objectives, such as innovation, growth, and competitive advantage.

Northouse (2018) emphasizes the importance of leaders aligning their day-to-day management style with broader **organizational goals**, ensuring that they remain agile and adaptable while still focusing on achieving strategic outcomes. In an increasingly competitive and dynamic global marketplace, especially in the **IT sector**, leaders must be

prepared to navigate **rapid technological advancements** and changing market conditions.

For multi-cultural IT companies, long-term leadership strategies must emphasize **leadership adaptability**. As industries evolve, leadership styles that were once effective may no longer yield the same results. Leaders need to be **continuous learners**, staying up to date on emerging trends in leadership theories, employee management, and technology (Bass, 1985). **Strategic leadership** requires a combination of **visionary thinking** and **interpersonal engagement**, where leaders must be effective in both crafting long-term goals and ensuring that their workforce remains motivated and capable of reaching those goals.

Additionally, **transformational leadership** plays a significant role in long-term strategies. Transformational leaders inspire employees to achieve **high levels of performance** by fostering a shared vision, encouraging innovation, and promoting a culture of **continuous improvement** (Bass & Riggio, 2006). This leadership style is particularly suited to organizations in the **IT sector**, where constant innovation and adaptation are required to stay ahead of the competition.

Actionable Steps:

1. **Align leadership development programs** with the organization's long-term strategic objectives, ensuring leaders are equipped with both short-term interpersonal skills and long-term vision.

2. Implement **leadership adaptability training**, focusing on how leaders can evolve with changing industry and market dynamics.
3. Encourage leaders to engage in **continuous learning**, keeping abreast of emerging trends in leadership, technology, and management practices.

5.5 Refined Leadership Strategy

Based on the analysis of **leadership traits**, **team dynamics**, and **employee motivation**, this research proposes a **refined leadership strategy** for multi-cultural IT companies.

The strategy should prioritize leadership behaviors that have the strongest positive impact on employee motivation, particularly those related to **communication**, **feedback**, **conflict resolution**, and **cultural adaptability**.

5.5.1 Prioritize Interpersonal Engagement

Regular communication and personalized feedback are fundamental to effective leadership. Leaders must maintain open and honest communication channels with their teams, ensuring that employees understand their roles, have the resources they need, and feel supported by their managers. **Communication** is not just about conveying information; it's about building relationships, fostering trust, and encouraging collaboration (Hickman & Akdere, 2018).

Personalized feedback is equally important. Employees are more likely to stay motivated when they feel that their efforts are recognized and appreciated. **Individualized attention** helps leaders identify specific areas where employees can grow and provides a clear path

for development (Northouse, 2018). Providing feedback that is tailored to each employee's strengths, needs, and preferences fosters a sense of belonging and helps employees remain engaged.

Actionable Step:

- **Weekly team updates** and **one-on-one meetings** should be implemented to provide consistent feedback and address any issues in real-time. This ensures that employees feel heard and supported, which in turn improves motivation and performance.

5.5.2 Enhance Conflict Resolution Skills

Conflict is inevitable in any workplace, especially in diverse teams where cultural differences can give rise to misunderstandings. However, conflict does not have to be destructive; when managed effectively, it can lead to improved team cohesion and stronger relationships (Cakmak et al., 2015). Leaders need to be proactive in identifying and addressing conflicts as soon as they arise, using **conflict resolution strategies** that foster respect for diverse perspectives.

In a multi-cultural setting, conflict can often stem from differences in communication styles, values, and expectations. Leaders who possess **cultural intelligence** are better equipped to navigate these challenges and ensure that all voices are heard (Adler & Bartholomew, 1992). **Culturally sensitive conflict resolution** ensures that conflicts are

handled in a way that respects each team member's background while fostering a collaborative atmosphere.

Actionable Step:

- Develop and implement **conflict resolution training programs** that teach leaders how to address disputes in a **culturally sensitive** and constructive manner.

Leaders should learn how to mediate conflicts in ways that promote understanding and build trust among team members.

Case Study: Cultural Adaptability at IBM

IBM serves as a prime example of a company that has successfully integrated **cultural adaptability** into its leadership strategies. With teams located across the globe, IBM's leadership has prioritized **cultural awareness** and **flexibility** to ensure smooth operations across different regions. By providing leaders with training on the **nuances of different cultural backgrounds**, IBM has created a work environment where diversity is not just acknowledged but celebrated. This approach has led to increased **inclusivity** and improved **team cohesion** (Adler & Bartholomew, 1992).

In this study's survey findings, **cultural adaptability** emerged as a key factor influencing **employee motivation** in multi-cultural teams. Participants who worked in culturally diverse environments reported higher levels of **engagement** when their leaders demonstrated cultural sensitivity and adapted their leadership styles to meet the needs of the team (Hickman & Akdere, 2018). IBM's success in managing its diverse workforce

provides a model for other multi-cultural IT companies seeking to improve **employee motivation** and **organizational performance**.

Actionable Step:

- Implement **cultural intelligence training** for leaders to improve their understanding of how to manage diverse teams effectively. Leaders should be trained to recognize and appreciate cultural differences and to adapt their management style accordingly.

5.5.3 Implement Task Variety and Empower Autonomy

As demonstrated by the **Atlassian case study**, **task variety** is a powerful motivator. Employees are more likely to remain engaged when they are given the opportunity to take on different roles and responsibilities within the organization. Task variety not only prevents boredom and burnout but also provides employees with the chance to **develop new skills** and contribute in more meaningful ways (Atlassian, 2023).

Providing employees with **autonomy** in their work further enhances motivation. When employees are empowered to take ownership of their tasks and make decisions independently, they are more likely to feel valued and invested in their work. **Self-determination theory** (Deci & Ryan, 1985) posits that autonomy is a key driver of intrinsic motivation, as it allows individuals to feel in control of their actions and responsible for their outcomes.

Actionable Step:

- Introduce **rotational assignments** or **cross-functional projects** to give employees exposure to new tasks and challenges. This can foster a sense of ownership and allow employees to develop a broader range of skills.

5.5.4 Leverage Cultural Diversity

Culturally adaptive leadership can unlock the creative potential of diverse teams. Leaders who are trained to understand and navigate cultural differences can foster an environment where all employees feel valued and included. According to **the GLOBE study** (2004), which examined leadership behaviors across 62 societies, leaders who understand and embrace cultural diversity are more successful at managing diverse teams and driving innovation.

Leaders should also recognize that **cultural diversity** can be a source of **creativity and innovation**. By bringing together individuals with different perspectives, experiences, and ideas, leaders can create a team dynamic that encourages **out-of-the-box thinking** and **collaborative problem-solving** (Hofstede, 2001). However, this diversity must be managed carefully to ensure that all voices are heard and that cultural differences do not lead to misunderstandings or conflicts.

Actionable Step:

- Implement **cultural intelligence training** to help leaders develop the skills needed to manage diverse teams effectively. Leaders should be encouraged to

embrace cultural differences and to use these differences as a source of strength and innovation.

5.5.5 Balance Strategy with Immediate Engagement

While **strategic leadership** is important for ensuring the long-term success of the organization, it should not come at the expense of **day-to-day engagement** with employees. Leaders must balance the need for **strategic vision** with the need for **interpersonal engagement**. This means that while leaders should be focused on achieving the organization's long-term goals, they should also be actively involved in supporting and developing their employees on a daily basis (Bass, 1985).

Effective leaders recognize that employee motivation is not a one-time event; it requires ongoing effort and attention. By aligning **strategic goals** with **personal development plans** for employees, leaders can ensure that employees see how their work contributes to the organization's success and feel motivated to continue performing at their best.

Actionable Step:

- Align **strategic goals** with **personal development plans** for employees to ensure that they see how their efforts contribute to long-term success. Leaders should work with employees to set both short-term and long-term goals that are aligned with the organization's mission.

5.5.6 Foster Leadership Adaptability

In today's fast-paced and ever-changing business environment, **leadership adaptability** is essential. Leaders who are able to adapt their styles based on the needs of their teams and the demands of the business are more likely to maintain **high levels of employee motivation**. **Adaptive leadership** allows leaders to be flexible in their approach, responding to the specific challenges and opportunities that arise in a dynamic work environment (Heifetz & Laurie, 1997).

Leadership adaptability is particularly important in **multi-cultural IT companies**, where leaders must navigate diverse cultural expectations, rapidly changing technology, and global competition. By staying flexible and open to change, leaders can ensure that their teams remain motivated and engaged, even in the face of uncertainty.

Actionable Step:

- Provide **leadership development programs** that focus on **adaptability, cultural intelligence, and emotional intelligence**. These programs should equip leaders with the tools they need to respond to diverse challenges and empower their teams in a rapidly evolving business landscape (Goleman, 2000). The programs should emphasize the need for **continuous learning**, encouraging leaders to stay updated on new leadership trends and to adapt their style as necessary.

5.5.7 Use Data-Driven Leadership

One of the most effective ways to refine leadership strategies is through the use of **data-driven insights**. By regularly collecting and analyzing **employee feedback**, organizations can identify emerging trends in employee motivation and satisfaction. This feedback can be gathered through **pulse surveys, engagement metrics, and performance reviews**, and should be used to continuously fine-tune leadership approaches (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Leaders should use this data to understand how their actions and behaviors affect employee motivation. For instance, if feedback reveals that employees are feeling disconnected due to a lack of communication, leaders can make the necessary adjustments, such as increasing the frequency of team meetings or offering more **personalized feedback**. This **data-driven leadership** approach ensures that leaders remain **responsive** to the changing needs of their teams and can proactively address any issues that might arise.

Actionable Step:

- Implement **regular employee feedback mechanisms** and analyze the data to adjust leadership strategies in real time. This will help leaders stay informed about their team's needs and make proactive changes to improve motivation and engagement.

Case Study: Servant Leadership at Southwest Airlines

Southwest Airlines provides a clear example of how **data-driven leadership** and **servant leadership** principles can be combined to create a highly motivated workforce. At Southwest, leadership focuses on meeting the needs of employees, underpinned by a philosophy that **satisfied employees** will lead to **satisfied customers** (Rodjam et al., 2020). The airline regularly gathers employee feedback through pulse surveys, which allows them to adjust leadership strategies to better meet employee needs.

The feedback Southwest receives from its employees is used to make data-driven decisions about employee engagement and motivation. This ensures that the company remains responsive to the needs of its workforce, continually adapting its leadership practices to improve employee satisfaction. This approach is consistent with the findings of this study, which show that **personalized feedback** and **data-driven leadership** are critical drivers of motivation in multi-cultural IT teams (Belonio, 2012).

Actionable Step:

- Incorporate **servant leadership principles** into leadership training programs, focusing on **employee empowerment** and the use of **feedback loops** to make data-driven decisions that enhance employee motivation.

5.6 Long-Term Sustainability of Leadership Practices

In addition to focusing on the immediate needs of employees, organizations must also consider the **long-term sustainability** of their leadership practices. **Sustainable leadership** is not just about adapting to current challenges but also about anticipating future trends and preparing the organization for long-term success (Hargreaves & Fink, 2004).

Sustainable leadership requires a commitment to **continuous learning** and **development**. Leaders must be encouraged to stay informed about new trends in leadership and employee engagement and be willing to adapt their practices as the organization grows and changes. Moreover, leadership practices should be embedded into the organization's **culture**, ensuring that leadership development is a continuous process rather than a one-time event.

To ensure sustainability, organizations should create a **leadership pipeline** where future leaders are identified, developed, and mentored over time. This ensures that the organization has a strong leadership bench ready to step into leadership roles as the company expands. Building a **leadership succession plan** helps maintain continuity and ensures that the company's leadership philosophy remains aligned with its long-term strategic goals.

Actionable Steps:

1. **Integrate leadership development** into the organization's culture, making it a continuous process that evolves with the company.
2. **Create a leadership pipeline** by identifying high-potential employees and providing them with the training and mentorship needed to take on leadership roles.
3. Develop a **leadership succession plan** to ensure that future leaders are prepared to maintain the organization's leadership standards and philosophy.

5.7 Conclusion: The Role of Leadership in Multi-Cultural IT Companies

In summary, this section has outlined a comprehensive set of recommendations for improving leadership effectiveness in multi-cultural IT companies. Through the **analysis of leadership traits, employee engagement, and motivational drivers**, this study has identified the key areas where leadership development can have the most significant impact.

Task variety, personalized feedback, cultural adaptability, and conflict resolution have all emerged as essential components of effective leadership. Leaders in multi-cultural IT companies must be equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to navigate **diverse team dynamics and global challenges. Leadership adaptability**, the ability to balance **short-term employee engagement** with **long-term strategic**

objectives, and a commitment to **continuous learning** will be crucial for leaders looking to maintain motivation and drive performance.

The case studies of **Atlassian**, **IBM**, and **Southwest Airlines** demonstrate how these principles can be successfully applied in real-world settings. These companies have shown that **servant leadership**, **task variety**, and **cultural adaptability** can significantly enhance employee motivation and organizational success.

For multi-cultural IT companies seeking to stay competitive in the global market, implementing these leadership practices will help to foster a **motivated, engaged, and innovative workforce**. Leaders who prioritize **communication, feedback, and cultural sensitivity** will be better positioned to inspire their teams, promote **collaboration**, and drive long-term organizational success.

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary of Findings

This thesis examined the **impact of leadership approaches** on **employee motivation** in **multi-cultural IT companies**, shedding light on the leadership behaviors that most effectively engage and motivate a diverse workforce. One of the central findings is that **interpersonal leadership traits**, such as effective communication and **individualized feedback**, have a significant positive influence on employee motivation (Belonio, 2012). Leaders who engage with their employees at a personal level and offer regular, tailored feedback tend to foster a more motivated workforce. This finding is especially important

in diverse environments, where employees from various cultural backgrounds may have different expectations from their leaders. Personalized leadership can help bridge **cultural gaps** and ensure that employees feel understood and supported, which enhances their overall motivation.

Additionally, the research highlighted the importance of **emotional intelligence** in leadership. Leaders who are emotionally intelligent, capable of understanding and managing both their own emotions and those of their employees, are better positioned to navigate the complex interpersonal dynamics within **multi-cultural teams** (Goleman, 2000). Emotional intelligence enables leaders to detect early signs of **burnout**, **disengagement**, or **conflict** and address these issues proactively, providing support that is in tune with each employee's needs. This emotional attunement helps create a more **harmonious workplace**, where employees feel both understood and valued, further increasing motivation.

Another key finding of this research is the role that **task variety** plays in driving employee engagement and satisfaction. Employees who are offered the opportunity to work on diverse tasks tend to feel more engaged and motivated. **Task variety** not only helps prevent the onset of **monotony** but also encourages **continuous learning** and **professional development**, which are essential in the fast-paced IT sector, where technological changes occur frequently (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). The findings align with **self-determination theory**, which emphasizes the importance of **competence**, **autonomy**, and **relatedness** as drivers of motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). By offering

employees new challenges and tasks, leaders can support their development of competence, while giving them the autonomy to explore different responsibilities within their roles.

Conflict resolution also emerged as a significant factor in maintaining employee motivation. In the **IT industry**, where collaboration is key and teams are often multi-cultural, interpersonal conflicts can arise due to differences in communication styles, cultural values, or expectations. Leaders who possess strong conflict resolution skills are able to manage these issues effectively, ensuring that conflicts do not hinder team dynamics or negatively affect employee motivation (Kamalanabhan, Sunder, & Vasanthi, 2009). **Culturally competent leaders**—those who are aware of and sensitive to cultural differences—can prevent misunderstandings from escalating and instead foster a more **collaborative and inclusive environment**.

Interestingly, while **cultural diversity** in itself was not directly correlated with higher motivation, the study found that diversity can act as an **enabler of innovation** and **collaboration** when managed effectively. Leaders who are **culturally adaptive**—that is, able to modify their leadership style to meet the needs of culturally diverse employees—create an environment where **creativity** and **innovation** can thrive (Hofstede, 2001). This finding is particularly relevant in the **IT sector**, where innovation is a key driver of success, and diverse teams can contribute a wide range of perspectives that result in more creative and effective solutions. As global IT teams become more culturally diverse, leaders who can manage cultural diversity effectively hold a competitive advantage,

positioning their companies to be more innovative and adaptable in a rapidly evolving market.

Case Study: Task Variety at Atlassian

An illustrative example of the positive impact of **task variety** on employee motivation is found in the practices of **Atlassian**, a global software company known for its innovative work culture. Atlassian encourages its employees to engage in **cross-functional collaboration**, take on new projects, and rotate roles within teams (Atlassian, 2023). This approach ensures that employees are constantly learning and contributing to different aspects of the company's operations. The opportunity to work on a variety of tasks prevents employees from feeling **bored** or **stagnant**, and instead keeps them motivated and engaged.

The survey responses from this thesis similarly highlighted that task variety is a key driver of job satisfaction and motivation. Employees who were given the chance to work on a range of tasks reported significantly higher levels of **engagement** and **motivation**. This mirrors the experiences at Atlassian, where employees thrive in an environment that prioritizes **skill development** and continuous learning through varied work experiences. By offering employees the opportunity to work on a variety of projects, companies like Atlassian are able to fully leverage the **potential** of their workforce, resulting in greater innovation, productivity, and organizational performance.

The practice of **task variety** not only fosters motivation but also promotes **adaptability**—an essential trait in the fast-changing IT industry. As technology evolves and new challenges arise, employees who are accustomed to working on diverse tasks are more likely to **adapt quickly** to new tools, methodologies, and technologies (GLOBE Project, 2004). This adaptability makes employees more valuable to the company and enhances the company’s ability to remain competitive in an industry characterized by rapid **technological advancements** and **constant change**.

6.2 Practical Implications

The findings of this study have several important **practical implications** for leaders in multi-cultural IT companies. First, the research underscores the critical importance of **interpersonal engagement** as a core component of effective leadership. Leaders must prioritize maintaining regular and open lines of **communication** with their employees, ensuring that they provide **clear expectations, timely feedback**, and ample opportunities for employees to share their concerns, ideas, and suggestions. In a **multi-cultural environment**, this type of consistent communication is particularly important, as differences in communication styles, cultural norms, and expectations can lead to misunderstandings (Hofstede, 2001). Leaders who establish strong channels of communication are better able to build **trust** with their employees, a foundational element for fostering **employee engagement** and **motivation** (Goleman, 2000).

The research also highlights the role of **personalized feedback** in motivating employees. Employees who receive **individualized attention** and feedback from their leaders are

more likely to feel valued and engaged in their work (Shin & Zhou, 2003). This personalized feedback is essential in **high-pressure environments** like IT, where employees are constantly required to update their skills and tackle new challenges. For leaders, this means taking the time to understand the **unique strengths**, weaknesses, and developmental needs of each employee. Personalized feedback is not just about providing corrective criticism; it also involves **recognizing achievements** and providing guidance that supports the employee's long-term **professional growth** (Northouse, 2018).

Managing team dynamics is another key practical implication for leaders in multi-cultural IT companies. In diverse teams, conflicts may arise due to differences in communication styles, work expectations, or cultural values. Leaders who are proactive in **conflict resolution** and who create a workplace culture of **mutual respect** and understanding are more likely to maintain a **harmonious team dynamic** (Kamalanabhan et al., 2009). This is particularly important in IT teams, where collaboration and teamwork are essential for meeting project deadlines and achieving innovation. Leaders who can **mediate conflicts** quickly and fairly, while taking cultural considerations into account, are better positioned to ensure that conflicts do not negatively affect team cohesion or employee motivation.

Finally, the importance of **task variety** should not be overlooked as a powerful motivator for employees. Leaders in the IT sector should actively seek to provide their teams with opportunities to engage in **diverse tasks, cross-functional projects**, and continuous **professional development**. Task variety not only keeps work interesting for employees

but also helps them develop a **broader skill set**, making them more valuable contributors to the organization. Leaders who provide their teams with opportunities to explore new tasks and challenges are more likely to see increased **creativity, innovation, and overall productivity** within their teams (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008).

6.3 Limitations of the Study

While this study has provided valuable insights into the relationship between leadership approaches and employee motivation, it is important to acknowledge several limitations that could affect the generalizability of the findings. One of the most significant limitations is that the study relied on a **cross-sectional design**, which captured employee motivation and leadership effectiveness at a single point in time. As such, it does not account for how employee motivation might **fluctuate** over time or in response to changes in leadership practices (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). For instance, employees may respond differently to leadership strategies during high-stress periods, such as project deadlines, compared to less intense times. Future research would benefit from a **longitudinal approach**, which would allow researchers to track changes in both leadership effectiveness and employee motivation over an extended period. This would provide a clearer picture of how leadership interventions or changes in leadership style impact long-term employee engagement and job satisfaction.

Another limitation of the study is the reliance on **self-reported data**, which may be influenced by **social desirability bias**. Participants may have been inclined to provide responses they believed were more socially acceptable, particularly in relation to

sensitive topics such as **leadership effectiveness** and **conflict resolution** (Maxwell, 2012). Future research could mitigate this limitation by incorporating additional data sources, such as **peer reviews** or **objective performance metrics** to complement the self-reported data. By incorporating **multiple data sources**, researchers could gain a more well-rounded understanding of the relationship between leadership and employee motivation. For example, peer reviews might reveal how colleagues perceive the leadership style of a manager, while objective performance data could indicate whether leadership approaches are having measurable effects on team productivity and performance (Cakmak et al., 2015).

Moreover, this study lacked detailed **demographic data**, which limited the ability to segment the results and examine how different groups within the workforce respond to leadership practices. Factors such as **age, gender, cultural background**, and **years of experience** can all influence employees' expectations and perceptions of leadership. For instance, younger employees, such as Millennials and Generation Z, may prioritize opportunities for **mentorship** and **personal growth**, while more experienced employees may value **autonomy** and **recognition** for their past achievements (Northouse, 2018). Similarly, employees from **collectivist cultures** may place a greater emphasis on **teamwork** and **collaboration**, while those from **individualistic cultures** may value **individual achievements** and **independence** (Hofstede, 2001). Future research should aim to collect and analyze **demographic information** to allow for a more nuanced understanding of how leadership practices can be tailored to meet the diverse needs of the workforce.

Case Study: Servant Leadership at Southwest Airlines

Southwest Airlines is often cited as a model for **servant leadership**, a leadership style that places a strong emphasis on **employee empowerment** and **support**. At Southwest, leaders prioritize meeting the needs of their employees with the belief that **satisfied and engaged employees** will provide better service to customers (Rodjam et al., 2020). This approach aligns closely with the findings of this study, which emphasize the importance of **personalized feedback** and **employee development** in driving employee motivation.

At Southwest, employees are given the **autonomy** to take ownership of their roles, and they are encouraged to make decisions that contribute to the success of the company.

This **employee-first approach** has resulted in a highly motivated and loyal workforce, where employees feel empowered to **go above and beyond** in their duties. The company's focus on **servant leadership** demonstrates the effectiveness of leadership approaches that prioritize the **well-being** and **professional growth** of employees (Van Scheers & Botha, 2014).

The success of Southwest's leadership model suggests that **servant leadership principles** could be particularly beneficial in the **IT sector**, where employee retention and job satisfaction are critical issues. By adopting a servant leadership approach, IT leaders can create a workplace culture that prioritizes **employee empowerment**, **personalized feedback**, and **developmental opportunities**. This, in turn, can help foster a motivated workforce that is committed to the company's success.

6.4 Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the limitations and findings of this study, several recommendations for **future research** can be made. First, future studies should adopt a **longitudinal design** to track changes in employee motivation and leadership effectiveness over time. A longitudinal approach would allow researchers to observe how leadership interventions, such as leadership training programs, impact employee motivation in the long term. For example, researchers could measure whether the benefits of leadership training are sustained over time or whether additional interventions are needed to maintain high levels of employee engagement (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This type of study would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how leadership strategies evolve and how they affect employee motivation at different stages of an employee's career.

Second, future research should focus on the role of **cultural nuances** in leadership. While this study highlighted the importance of **cultural adaptability** in leadership, it did not fully explore how employees from different cultural backgrounds respond to various leadership styles. Future research could investigate how leadership styles such as **transformational**, **transactional**, or **laissez-faire** are perceived by employees from **collectivist cultures** versus those from **individualist cultures** (Bass, 1985). For example, employees from collectivist cultures, which emphasize group harmony and cooperation, may respond more positively to **transformational leadership**, which focuses on shared goals and teamwork. In contrast, employees from individualist cultures, which value independence and personal achievement, may prefer **transactional leadership**, which

rewards individual performance. Understanding these cultural differences would provide valuable insights into how leadership styles can be tailored to the needs of a **global workforce** (House, 1971).

Another important avenue for future research is the integration of **external factors** into the analysis of leadership and employee motivation. Factors such as **economic conditions, organizational restructuring, and personal circumstances** can all have significant impacts on employee motivation and may interact with leadership practices in complex ways. For instance, during times of **economic uncertainty**, employees may prioritize **job security** over opportunities for professional growth, while in more stable economic times, they may focus on **career advancement** and **developmental opportunities**. Future studies could examine how external factors influence the relationship between leadership and motivation, offering a more **holistic understanding** of what drives employee engagement in multi-cultural IT teams (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 2002).

Additionally, future research could explore the impact of **technological advancements** on leadership and motivation in the IT sector. As remote work and digital collaboration tools become more prevalent, leaders may need to adapt their **communication styles, feedback mechanisms, and conflict resolution strategies** to accommodate the virtual work environment. **Remote employees** may face unique challenges related to **isolation, lack of visibility**, and difficulties maintaining a **work-life balance**—all of which can negatively impact motivation. Future research could investigate how leaders can

effectively support and motivate their teams in a **remote or hybrid work setting**, offering valuable insights for companies navigating the ongoing **digital transformation** (Collin et al., 2018).

Finally, future research could benefit from combining **quantitative and qualitative methods** to provide a more nuanced understanding of the leadership-motivation relationship. While this study primarily relied on quantitative survey data, **qualitative interviews** with employees and leaders could offer deeper insights into the contextual factors that influence employee motivation. For example, interviews could reveal specific challenges that leaders face when managing diverse teams, or how employees interpret and respond to different leadership styles in practice. By incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data, future studies could provide a more **comprehensive perspective** on the complexities of leadership in **multi-cultural environments** (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

CHAPTER VII: REFERENCES

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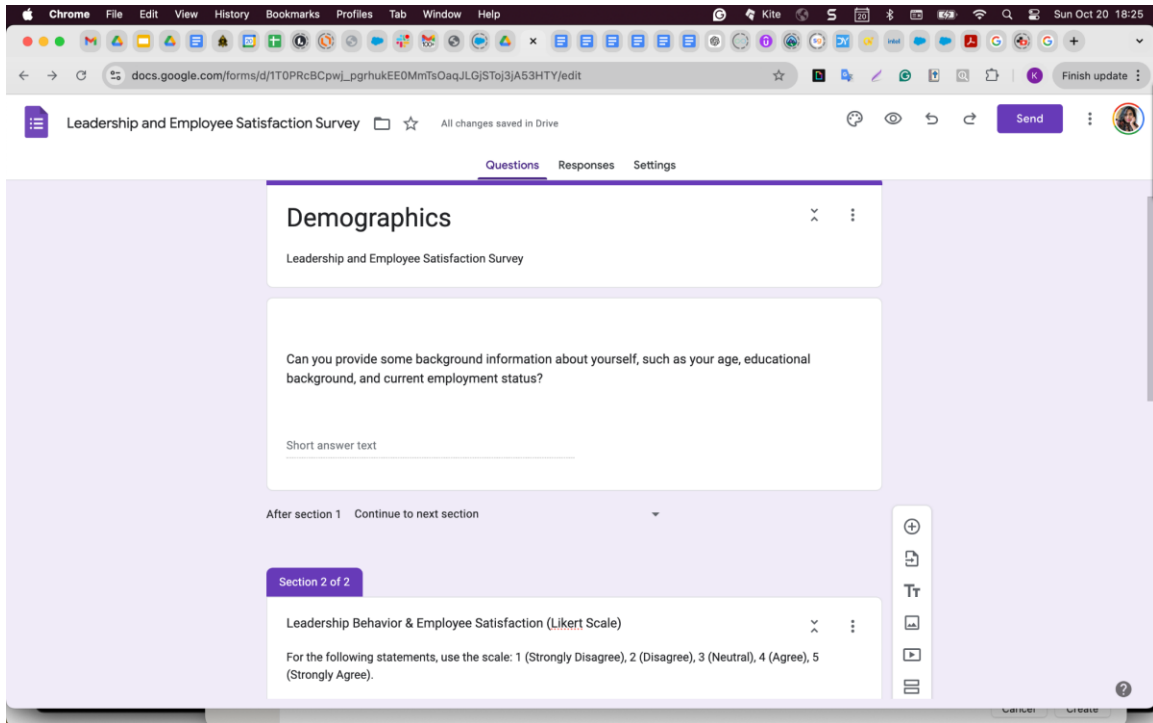
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APPENDIX A:

Screenshot of Google Form



Invitation Email for Survey Participants

Subject: Invitation to Participate in Leadership and Employee Satisfaction Survey

Dear [Participant's Name],

I hope this message finds you well. I am reaching out to invite you to participate in an important survey as part of our research on leadership strategies and employee satisfaction within small IT businesses.

Your participation will help me better understand how leadership behaviors influence employee motivation and job satisfaction, particularly in multi-cultural and diverse work environments. Your insights will be invaluable in helping us develop recommendations that can improve workplace dynamics and leadership effectiveness.

What to Expect:

- The survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete.
- All responses will remain confidential and anonymous.
- Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you can choose to exit the survey at any time.

How to Participate:

Please click the link below to access the survey:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1T0PRcBCpwj_pgrhukEE0MmTsOaqJLGjSToj3jA53HTY/edit]

Deadline:

We kindly request that you complete the survey by 04/02/2024.

Should you have any questions or need further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Your time and input are greatly appreciated, and I sincerely thank you for considering this request. Your participation will play a critical role in the success of this research.

Best regards,

Kiran Mayee Dhavala
Solution Architect
Cloud Peritus

Thank You Email for Survey Participants

Thank You for Your Participation!

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your responses are invaluable and will contribute greatly to our understanding of leadership behaviors and employee satisfaction in the IT sector.

Your insights will help us develop more effective leadership strategies and improve workplace dynamics in multi-cultural and diverse settings. We truly appreciate your effort and contribution.

If you have any further questions or would like to receive updates on the results of the study, please feel free to reach out to [Your Contact Information].

Thank you once again for your valuable input!

Kiran Mayee Dhavala
Solution Architect
Cloud Peritus

Screenshot of Survey Responses

Participant	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15
P001	4	3	2	4	4	5	2	2	1	1	5	3	3	1	1
P002	5	5	2	4	2	4	3	3	5	4	2	2	2	4	3
P003	5	3	4	3	3	5	1	1	3	2	3	3	3	2	2
P004	5	1	3	5	4	3	2	2	2	1	2	3	5	1	4
P005	2	1	1	4	1	1	1	5	1	2	4	4	3	5	4
P006	2	5	3	2	5	2	2	5	1	5	5	2	1	1	4
P007	5	3	3	1	5	3	4	2	5	2	3	4	2	1	2
P008	3	4	4	2	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	4	3	1
P009	5	4	3	3	2	4	5	5	5	2	1	4	4	5	5
P010	1	4	5	1	3	3	5	2	4	2	2	5	1	1	2
P011	2	1	3	3	2	3	4	1	5	3	5	2	2	1	4
P012	4	1	2	5	2	1	2	5	5	3	3	1	1	4	3
P013	4	4	5	3	5	5	4	1	1	5	3	4	4	1	4
P014	4	3	4	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	5	5	1	3	4
P015	1	3	4	1	1	1	5	2	3	3	3	1	1	3	3
P016	4	1	3	4	5	2	4	5	3	4	4	2	3	5	3
P017	4	3	5	1	4	3	1	1	2	3	3	3	4	4	2
P018	4	4	5	5	1	3	4	2	3	3	2	4	1	1	5
P019	3	3	1	5	3	3	4	3	1	1	3	5	5	4	5
P020	1	4	3	2	4	3	3	4	2	5	3	4	3	1	2
P021	2	5	2	4	3	2	1	1	5	5	5	4	2	5	1
P022	5	1	3	4	3	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	5
P023	2	1	3	4	1	1	2	3	4	4	3	3	5	3	1
P024	1	2	4	2	1	4	5	3	5	1	1	2	4	4	4
P025	1	2	3	4	3	4	5	4	2	4	1	2	1	5	1
P026	2	4	3	4	3	4	2	5	5	5	4	5	3	3	3
P027	5	2	5	1	5	1	1	4	5	2	3	3	4	5	2
P028	4	5	1	3	3	2	4	5	2	3	1	1	2	5	5
P029	4	1	4	5	2	4	1	5	1	4	3	1	5	5	2
P030	2	1	5	2	1	4	3	3	2	5	4	1	5	4	3
P031	3	1	4	4	2	4	3	2	2	4	3	3	4	4	4
P032	1	4	5	4	1	2	3	4	4	4	2	3	3	1	4
P033	5	4	1	1	5	4	2	2	3	2	3	3	3	4	4
P034	3	2	2	4	1	4	4	3	5	2	4	1	3	3	2
P035	3	2	4	4	4	3	1	3	4	1	3	5	2	1	2