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The role of empathetic leadership in fostering employee job satisfaction in the non-governmental organization

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Abstract

This study explores the intricate connection between empathetic leadership and job satisfaction in the unique setting of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Grounded in a qualitative methodological framework, the research investigates the experiences of 60 participants representing diverse roles across various NGOs. Through detailed interviews and thematic analysis, the study aims to uncover the complexities of empathetic leadership behaviors and their consequential impact on employee job satisfaction within this distinct sector. The primary aim of this research is to assess the role of empathetic leadership in fostering job satisfaction in the NGO. Beyond merely establishing a correlation, the study seeks to empower organizational leaders with qualitative insights into tangible behaviors that contribute to increased job satisfaction. Ultimately, this research aims to act as a catalyst for positive change within NGOs, promoting environments where empathetic leadership is acknowledged and embraced as a key driver of employee satisfaction and overall organizational success. The study's findings unveil a compelling and positive relationship between empathetic leadership and increased job satisfaction among NGO employees. The qualitative data clarifies specific impactful leadership behaviors, such as active listening, understanding, and providing emotional support. Participants consistently underscored the positive influence of leaders who genuinely cared about their well-being, fostering a sense of belonging and professional fulfilment. This research makes a significant contribution to the body of knowledge by providing a nuanced qualitative exploration of empathetic leadership in the NGO sector. While prior research has recognized the significance of leadership styles in organizational settings, this study specifically delves into the qualitative aspects within the unique context of NGOs. In doing so, it not only affirms the positive correlation between empathetic leadership and job satisfaction but also offers a deep understanding of the contextual nuances characterizing this relationship within the NGO landscape.

DECLARATION

I, Elijah Masubelele, hereby affirm that this dissertation is the outcome of my independent investigation and research. I declare that it has not been presented, either in part or in full, for any degree or submitted to any other university for a similar or different degree.

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Elijah Masubelele   Date

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NGO – Non-Governmental organization

WeForum – World Economic Forum

SLT – Social Learning Theory

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Empathetic leadership is the ability of a leader to understand and relate to the feelings and experiences of their followers. It is about seeing the world from their perspective and understanding their needs, motivations, and concerns(Miller,2022). Empathetic leaders are able to build strong relationships with their followers, create a positive and supportive work environment, and motivate them to achieve their goals. Empathetic leadership has always been important, but it is especially important in today's rapidly changing and complex world (Weforum,2021). Employees are increasingly looking for leaders who can understand and relate to them on a personal level. They want leaders who can help them to navigate the challenges they face both at work and in their personal lives.

The nature of empathetic leadership is evolving in a number of ways. First, empathetic leaders are becoming more aware of the importance of diversity and inclusion. They are working to create workplaces where everyone feels valued and respected (Emeritus, 2023). Second, empathetic leaders are becoming more comfortable with vulnerability (Chen Nielsen, D'Auria & Zolley, 2020:4). They are willing to share their own feelings and experiences with their followers. This helps to build trust and create a more authentic connection.

Third, empathetic leaders are becoming more adept at using technology to connect with their followers (Bray, 2023). They are using social media, video conferencing, and other tools to stay in touch with their teams and provide them with the support they need. Fourth, empathetic leadership is an essential skill for leaders who want to create a positive and productive work environment. It can also lead to increased employee engagement and job satisfaction (Kock, Mayfield, Mayfield, Sexton, & De La Garza, 2019).

This paper aims to qualitatively investigate how employees experience empathetic leadership and how it affects their job satisfaction in a typical non-governmental organization (NGO). The study will identify the factors that contribute to the relationship between these two concepts, such as leadership, culture and the organization. This research will contribute to our understanding of empathetic

leadership and employee job satisfaction in NGOs. This chapter provides an overview of the research problem, the aims and objectives of the study, the research questions to be answered, the significance of the study, and the chapter structure of the dissertation.

1.2   Background to the study

The most important lesson we have learned from the Covid 19 pandemic is that leadership is essential. The pandemic did not only teach us that leadership was critical, it also created a shift from the conventional leadership methods to one that focused more on understanding and identifying with other people's feelings and responding accordingly (Masubelele, 2022). In essence, the pandemic created a shift towards empathetic leadership. Empathy is now recognized as a key driver of social change (Segal, 2021). A lot of research has been done on different leadership styles, but relatively little has been done on empathetic leadership. This is likely due to a number of factors, including:

- The difficulty of defining and measuring empathy
- The relative newness of the concept of empathetic leadership
- The lack of a unified theoretical framework for studying empathetic leadership

However, there is a growing body of research on empathetic leadership, and the field is rapidly developing. The limited amount of research on empathetic leadership highlights the need for this study. This research will demonstrate that empathetic leadership is an important style for leaders in the non-governmental organizations.

1.3   Problem statement

Organizations today are constantly looking for new ways to boost productivity and profits, without sacrificing employee motivation and job satisfaction. The workforce is more diverse than ever before. Business leaders need to know how to manage these diverse teams effectively, overcome new challenges, and capitalize on the unique skills and perspectives of their team members. Leaders have a responsibility to help their teams perform at their best. To do this, they need to create an environment where employees are empowered and become more supportive of their followers' mental and emotional health. This will lead to increased employee motivation and job satisfaction,

which will in turn lead to better organizational performance. This study investigates the relationship between empathetic leadership and employee job satisfaction.

1.4   Aim of the study

The aim of the study is to explore the role of empathetic leadership in fostering employee satisfaction in the non-organizational organization.

1.5   Objectives of the study

- To explore the role of empathetic leadership in fostering job satisfaction.
- To explore the relationship between empathetic leadership and job satisfaction.
- To establish the close relationship between the presence of empathetic leaders and the overall satisfaction of employees in the non-governmental organization.

1.6   Research questions

- What is the role of empathetic leadership?
- What is the importance of empathetic leadership?
- What is the impact of empathetic leadership on job satisfaction.
- What is the role of empathetic leadership in fostering job satisfaction?

1.7   Significance of the study

The study is expected to investigate the role of empathetic leadership in fostering employee satisfaction in the non-organizational organization. NGOs play a vital role in society, providing essential services to people in need and working to address some of the world's most pressing challenges. However, NGOs often face significant challenges, such as limited resources, complex operating environments, and high workloads. These challenges can put a strain on employees and lead to burnout. Research has shown that empathetic leadership can have a number of positive benefits for both individuals and organizations. Empathetic leadership has been linked to increased employee satisfaction, engagement, and productivity. It has also been linked to reduced employee stress and burnout.

In the context of NGOs, empathetic leadership can be particularly important in that it can help leaders to create a supportive and positive work environment where

employees feel valued and respected. This can lead to increased employee satisfaction and engagement, which can in turn help NGOs to achieve their goals more effectively. This study can help to improve the understanding of the role of empathetic leadership in fostering employee satisfaction in NGOs. By studying the relationship between empathetic leadership and employee satisfaction, the study can identify the specific ways in which empathetic leadership can benefit NGOs and their employees. The findings of the study can then be used to develop training programs and other resources to help NGO leaders to develop their empathetic leadership skills.

Overall, this study has the potential to make a significant contribution to the field of NGO leadership and to the well-being of NGO employees as well as to the growing field of empathetic leadership.

1.8 Structure of the research

This section describes the format of the dissertation and provides a brief overview of what each chapter contains.

Chapter One: Introduction
Chapter one introduces the dissertation by providing background information on the study, the research problem, the aims, objectives, research question, and the significance of the study.

Chapter Two: Literature Review
This chapter reviews the literature on empathetic leadership and its role in fostering job satisfaction, in order to establish a theoretical foundation for the study. All relevant concepts and theories are discussed and evaluated from previous research.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology
This chapter describes the research methodology and design used in the study, including the sampling strategy, sample size, and data analysis methods.

Chapter Four: Results, Discussions and Interpretation of the Findings

This chapter presents the results of the data analysis, including the results from demographic data and the data relating to the primary objectives of the study. The results are interpreted and discussed, with reference to the findings from the literature.

Chapter Five: Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter presents an integrated discussion of the findings from the previous chapters, in accordance with the study's objectives. The chapter also provides conclusions and recommendations for future research.

1.9   Conclusion

This chapter introduced the research problem, its background, aims, objectives, and research questions, and discussed the research problem in detail. It concluded with a presentation of the dissertation's chapter structure and a brief summary of each chapter's contents. The next chapter will present a comprehensive review of the literature on empathetic leadership, its importance, and its role in fostering job satisfaction.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Job satisfaction is an important factor in employee motivation, engagement, and productivity. Empathetic leadership is a leadership style that emphasizes understanding and sharing the feelings of others. Empathetic leaders are able to put themselves in the shoes of their team members and see things from their perspective. This allows them to build stronger relationships, create a more positive work environment, and make better decisions. There is a growing body of research that suggests that empathetic leadership has a positive impact on job satisfaction. A study by the University of Amsterdam found that employees who worked for empathetic leaders were more likely to report feeling satisfied with their jobs. The study also found that empathetic leadership had a positive impact on employee engagement and productivity.

There are a number of reasons why empathetic leadership is likely to lead to increased job satisfaction. Empathetic leaders are able to create a more positive and supportive work environment. They are also more likely to be fair and just in their dealings with employees. Additionally, empathetic leaders are more likely to provide employees with the resources and support they need to succeed. In a non-governmental organization (NGO), empathetic leadership is particularly important. NGO employees often work long hours under difficult conditions. They may also be dealing with emotionally charged issues. Empathetic leaders can help NGO employees to feel valued and supported, and they can help to create a more positive and productive work environment.

This section will explore the role of empathetic leadership on job satisfaction in a non-governmental organization. It will draw on existing research and case studies to illustrate the benefits of empathetic leadership for both employees and organizations.

2.2 Define Empathetic Leadership

The term empathy was first introduced in 1909 by psychologist Edward B. Titchener as a translation of the German term **einfühlung** (meaning "feeling into") (Greiner, 2012). It was however, Theodor Lipps(1851-1914) who made it a central part of the philosophy of the social and human sciences (Stueber, 2019). The idea of empathetic

leadership is a relatively new one. It was not until the early 20th century that scholars began to seriously consider the importance of empathy for leaders (Nembhard, & Edmondson,2020). One of the earliest proponents of empathetic leadership was the American psychologist, Carl Rogers. Rogers believed that empathy was essential for creating therapeutic relationships, and he argued that the same principles could be applied to leadership. He believed that leaders who were able to understand and empathize with their followers were more likely to be successful (Rogers, 1975).

In the 1970s and 1980s, research on empathy began to gain traction in the business world. Daniel Goleman's 1995 book, *Emotional Intelligence*, helped to popularize the idea that empathy was a key leadership skill. Goleman argued that empathetic leaders were better able to build relationships, motivate their followers, and manage conflict. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in empathetic leadership, particularly in light of the many challenges that organizations face today.

The writings of authors such as Brené Brown, who explores the role of vulnerability and empathy in leadership, have contributed to the popularization of empathetic leadership. High-profile leaders, including CEOs and political figures, have embraced empathetic leadership in their public personas and management styles, further highlighting its significance.

Roncero (2021) defines an empathic leader as:

Someone who has a genuine interest in his/her team members' lives, the challenges they face, and their overall feelings.

Empathetic leadership, in my view, aligns with the concept of 'Ubuntu,' as it not only enables us to empathize with others' emotions but also empowers us to foster relationships characterized by compassion, fairness, and respect.

According to Kock (2019), the empathetic leadership model is based on three key areas of research: workplace emotions, leader support for these emotions, and motivating language theory. Empathetic leadership continues to be a subject of academic research and leadership development programs. Organizations recognize its potential to improve team performance, innovation, and employee satisfaction. Empathetic leaders are seen as being better equipped to help their followers navigate through change, uncertainty, and stress (Nembhard & Edmondson, 2020).

2.3 Empathy in Action

Cerqueira (2019) suggest that empathy can be thought of as having three distinct levels, each with varying degrees of emotional depth and engagement. Cherry (2023) maintains that these levels help us understand how people connect with and relate to others on an emotional, cognitive and compassion level. Leaders play a pivotal role in guiding and influencing their teams and organizations. Van Bommel (2021) argues that to be effective and lead with authenticity, leaders need to develop competence in three levels of empathy. These levels of empathy can help leaders build trust, foster collaboration, and create a positive work environment. These levels are depicted in figure 1 below:
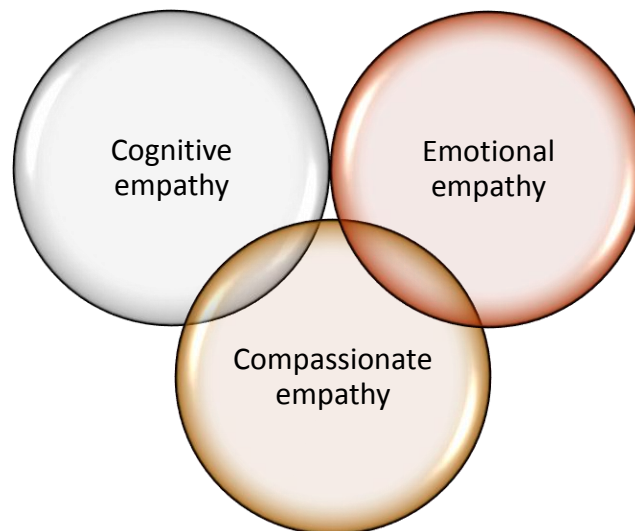
Figure 1: The triad of Empathy: Developed by the researcher

2.3.1 Cognitive Empathy

Clarke (2023) holds that cognitive empathy, often referred to as perspective-taking or intellectual empathy, represents the most basic level of empathy. It involves the ability to understand and recognize the emotions and perspectives of others, primarily through a rational and analytical process. Individuals with cognitive empathy can accurately identify and describe the feelings of others, even if they don't necessarily share those feelings. This level of empathy is rooted in cognitive understanding and can be seen as a prerequisite for higher levels of empathy. Misiaszek & McCarthy (2022) maintains that Leaders with cognitive empathy possess the ability to

understand and recognize the emotions and perspectives of their team members and colleagues. This level of empathy allows leaders to gain insight into their team's concerns, motivations, and needs. Cherry (2023) stresses that by understanding the emotional states and viewpoints of others, leaders can make informed decisions, resolve conflicts, and communicate more effectively. Maven (2022) suggest that a leader with cognitive empathy can recognize when team members are feeling overwhelmed and adjust workloads or offer support accordingly, leading to improved team morale and productivity.

2.3.2 Emotional Empathy

According to the Bogenberger (2023) emotional empathy, often referred to as affective empathy, represents a deeper level of empathetic engagement. It involves not only understanding another person's emotions but also feeling those emotions alongside them. This level of empathy allows individuals to experience a degree of emotional resonance with the other person. According to Psychology-today (2023) When one has emotional empathy, he or she can physically and emotionally sense what someone else is going through, which leads to a more profound connection. Wallbridge (2023) writes that emotional empathy takes leadership to a deeper level. Leaders who possess emotional empathy not only understand the emotions of their team but also genuinely share in those emotions. According to the Centre for Creative Leadership (2023) this level of empathy allows leaders to connect with their team members on a more profound emotional level, demonstrating that they care about their well-being. Hall (2023) stresses that when leaders exhibit emotional empathy, they can celebrate their team's successes with genuine joy and provide support during challenging times with a sincere understanding of the emotional impact. This fosters a sense of camaraderie and trust within the team.

2.3.3 Compassionate Empathy

According to Amatenstein (2020) compassionate empathy, often referred to as empathic concern or empathetic action, represents the highest and most altruistic level of empathy. It goes beyond understanding and sharing feelings; it motivates individuals to take positive and supportive action to alleviate another person's suffering or distress. Weiland (2023) posit that compassionate empathy involves not only recognizing and feeling another person's emotions but also actively wanting to help

and make a positive impact in their life. Hougaard, Carter, & Afton (2021) maintains that compassionate empathy represents the highest level of empathy for leaders. Furthermore, Hougaard, Carter, & Afton (2021) argue that leaders with compassionate empathy not only understand and share in the emotions of their team members but are also motivated to take positive and supportive action. They demonstrate a genuine desire to help and make a positive impact in the lives of their team. Compassionate leaders go beyond sympathy to actively support and uplift their team members. They offer assistance, provide resources, and create an environment where team members feel valued, supported, and empowered. This level of empathy can lead to increased loyalty, motivation, and overall well-being among team members Hougaard, Carter, & Afton (2021).

2.4 Conclusion

These three levels of empathy exist on a continuum, with some people naturally having a stronger inclination toward one level or another. However, MacCormick (2019) mentions that empathy can be developed and nurtured over time, and individuals can work to improve their empathetic skills. Clarke (2023) posit that the ability to move from cognitive empathy to emotional empathy and, ideally, to compassionate empathy can lead to more meaningful and fulfilling relationships, as it allows people to connect with and support one another on a deeper emotional level.

2.5 The Importance of Leaders' proficiency in the three Levels of empathy

According to O'Mally (2021) Leaders who develop competence in these three levels of empathy - cognitive, emotional, and compassionate - are better equipped to connect with their team members on a deeper level, understand their needs, and create a positive and productive work environment. According to Sharma (2023) empathetic leadership does not only benefits the team but also enhances the leader's effectiveness and long-term success in their role by:

1. *Building Trust* - Cognitive empathy helps leaders understand their team's needs and concerns, while emotional empathy fosters a sense of connection and trust. Trust is the foundation of effective leadership, and empathetic leaders are more likely to earn the trust and respect of their team members.

2. *Enhancing Communication* - Understanding and sharing in the emotions of team members enables leaders to communicate more effectively. This leads to better feedback, active listening, and more empathetic responses, improving overall communication within the team.

3. *Conflict Resolution* - Leaders who possess cognitive empathy can identify potential conflicts early, while those with emotional empathy can navigate conflicts with greater sensitivity. Compassionate empathy motivates leaders to find constructive solutions that benefit all parties involved.

4. *Employee Well-Being* - Compassionate empathy drives leaders to prioritize their team's well-being, which can result in reduced stress, improved job satisfaction, and higher morale. This, in turn, leads to higher productivity and engagement.

2.6 Theoretical frameworks of empathetic leadership

Empathetic leadership can be explained and understood using a variety of theoretical frameworks, with emotional intelligence and social learning theory as the two most pertinent frameworks.

2.6.1 Social learning theory

Social learning theory (SLT), developed by Albert Bandura, suggests that individuals acquire knowledge and behaviors by observing, imitating, and modelling the actions of others. SLT emphasizes the notion that learning extends beyond personal experiences and encompasses the experiences of others as well. This implies that we can gain new skills and behaviors simply by observing others, even if we have never personally attempted them (Bandura, 1977). For example, if an employee sees their manager being empathetic and compassionate towards other employees, they are more likely to learn how to be empathetic and compassionate themselves.

According to Horsburgh & Ippolito (2018:2) Bandura's social learning theory offers a valuable framework for comprehending how individuals acquire knowledge and skills through observation and modelling. Gazali & Ghani (2018) posits that social Learning theory proposes that external factors shape an individual's personality. This theory is built upon three interconnected pillars: environmental, personal, and behavioral factors. As depicted in Figure 2, these factors influence each other and ultimately

shape an individual's behavior. Social Learning Theory further suggests that people acquire knowledge and skills by observing their surroundings, particularly those with whom they have close ties.
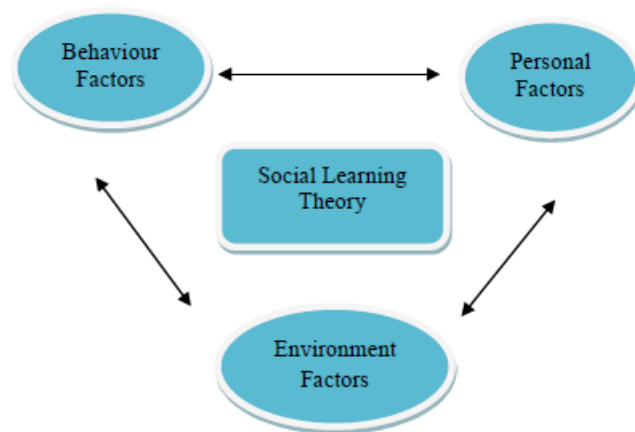
Figure 2: Social learning theory Adapted from (Gazali & Ghani, 2018)

Rock (2017) emphasise that Social Learning Theory (SLT) can play a significant role in fostering empathetic leadership. It must be noted that SLT emphasizes the importance of observation, imitation, and modeling in learning, suggesting that individuals can acquire new behaviors and attitudes by observing and interacting with others. In the context of leadership, this means that leaders can cultivate empathy by observing and modeling empathetic behaviors themselves. Firmansyah & Saepuloh (2022) propose that Social Learning Theory (SLT) can be applied to cultivate empathetic leadership through the following methods:

- **Modelling empathetic behavior**: Leaders who consistently demonstrate empathy provide a powerful model for others to follow. By actively listening to their team members, showing compassion for their experiences, and offering support when needed, leaders can set a high standard for empathy within their organizations.

- **Providing opportunities for observation and imitation**: Leaders can create opportunities for team members to observe and interact with empathetic individuals, whether through training programs, mentorship initiatives, or exposure to real-world examples of empathy in action.

- **Encouraging reflective practice**: Leaders can encourage team members to reflect on their own empathetic behaviors and consider how they can improve

their ability to connect with others. This can involve journaling, seeking feedback from others, or participating in group discussions about empathy.

- **Rewarding empathetic behavior**: Leaders can recognize and reward team members who demonstrate empathy, reinforcing the importance of this quality and encouraging others to follow suit.

Overall, Social Learning Theory provides a valuable framework for developing empathetic leadership. Mcleod (2023) mentions that by modeling empathetic behaviors, providing opportunities for observation and imitation, encouraging reflective practice, and rewarding empathetic behavior, leaders can create a culture of empathy within their organizations that can lead to a wide range of benefits.

2.6.2 Emotional intelligence

Goleman (1995) noted that the significance of emotional intelligence in empathetic leadership is pivotal. Emotional intelligence, which involves the ability to understand and manage one's own emotions and those of others, plays a crucial role in fostering empathy among leaders (Goleman, 1995). Leaders with high emotional intelligence can better comprehend the feelings and perspectives of their team members, leading to more compassionate and empathetic leadership (Goleman 1998).

According to Decety & Meyer (2009) emotionally intelligent leaders are adept at recognizing and interpreting emotions, both in themselves and in others. This heightened awareness allows them to respond to their team members with empathy, understanding, and sensitivity. Additionally, emotional intelligence enables leaders to navigate challenging situations with composure and empathy, contributing to the creation of a supportive and positive work environment (Issah, 2018).

In empathetic leadership, emotional intelligence facilitates effective communication, as leaders can attune their responses to the emotions of their team members This, in turn, enhances trust and rapport within the team, creating a more collaborative and empathetic organizational culture (Kock et al., 2019).

In essence, emotional intelligence forms the cornerstone of empathetic leadership, shaping leaders' abilities to understand, establish connections with, and react to the emotions of their team members (Ovans, 2015). Karawadia (2023) states that the integration of emotional intelligence into leadership practices contributes significantly

to the development of empathetic leaders who can foster a positive and empathetic workplace environment.

Social learning theory and emotional intelligence are two of the most relevant frameworks of empathetic leadership. Social learning theory suggests that empathetic leadership can be learned, while emotional intelligence suggests that empathetic leaders have the ability to understand and manage their own and others' emotions.

2.7 Comparison of Empathetic leadership style with other leadership styles

Empathetic leadership is a leadership style that is characterized by empathy, compassion, and understanding. Empathetic leadership can differ from other leadership styles in the following ways:

- Empathetic leaders are more likely to listen to their employees and take their feedback into account. This can help to create a more collaborative and supportive work environment (Brower, 2021).

- Empathetic leaders are more likely to be understanding and compassionate when employees are struggling. This can help to reduce stress and anxiety among employees (Hall, 2023).

- Empathetic leaders are more likely to provide their employees with emotional support. This can help to improve employee morale and job satisfaction (Hougaard, Carter, & Afton 2021). .

Other leadership styles, such as transactional leadership and transformational leadership, authentic leadership and servant leadership, do not focus as heavily on empathy. The following section compares empathetic leadership with the following leadership styles:

2.7.1 Transactional leadership

According to Western Governor University, the concept of Transactional Leadership Theory was initially articulated by Max Weber in 1947, under the term "Legal–Rationality authority." Weber posited that leaders inherently embody characteristics of charisma, authority, tradition, and transactional tendencies. Cherry (2022) mentions that transactional leaders focus on exchanging rewards and punishments to motivate

their employees, while transformational leaders focus on inspiring and motivating their employees to achieve a common goal. Key characteristics of transactional leadership include:

1. *Contingent Rewards:* Leaders provide rewards, such as recognition, promotions, or tangible incentives, in exchange for the accomplishment of specific tasks or goals (Laulié, L., Pavez, I., Martinez, J., Cea, P. & Jiménez, G. 2021).

2. *Management by Exception:* Leaders intervene and take corrective action when performance deviates from set standards. There are two forms of management by exception: active, where leaders proactively monitor for deviations, and passive, where they only step in when a significant problem arises (Midani, 2018:102).

3. *Laissez-Faire Leadership:* Transactional leaders may also adopt a laissez-faire approach, allowing employees a high degree of autonomy in their work as long as performance meets established standards (Thanh & Quang, 2022:4).

4. *Clear Structure:* Transactional leadership often operates within a clear and structured hierarchy, with well-defined roles and expectations (Rahman, 2023).

5. *Task-Oriented:* This leadership style is typically task-oriented, focusing on achieving specific objectives and maintaining efficiency in day-to-day operations (Udayanga, 2022:299).

Cherry (2022) mentions that though transactional leadership may prove effective in specific scenarios, it frequently receives criticism for its restricted focus on employee growth, creativity, and the formulation of long-term strategic visions. It is most commonly associated with routine and structured work environments where clear guidelines and expectations are crucial for success(Cherry, 2022).

2.7.2 Transformational leadership

Nguon (2022) notes that the initial exploration of transformational leadership was carried out by James MacGregor Burns. Burns introduced the theory of transformational leadership, asserting that supportive leadership helps followers and encourages them to pursue a shared objective. Another scholar, Bernard M. Bass

(1985), expanded on Burns' research by elucidating that transformational leadership entails the capacity to inspire and propel others. According to Daft (2018:362) transformational leadership relies on the personal values, convictions, and attributes of the leader rather than being rooted in an exchange process between leaders and followers. Daft (2018:363) emphasizes that transformational leadership distinguishes itself from other leadership styles in the following four key areas:

1. Transformational leadership articulates an ambitious vision for a desired future and conveys it in a manner that renders the challenges of change worthwhile.
2. Transformational leadership motivates followers to surpass their individual self-interests for the benefit of the collective
3. Transformational leadership shifts the focus of followers' concerns from basic physical needs, like safety and security, to more advanced psychological needs, such as self-esteem and self-actualization.
4. Transformational leadership nurtures followers into leaders. Rather than exerting strict control, transformational leaders aim to evoke the best in their followers.

2.7.3 Authentic leadership

According to Luenendonk (2020) Authentic leadership finds its origins in Ancient Greek philosophy, where authenticity was deemed a crucial aspect of existence. The concept emphasized taking control of one's destiny and staying true to oneself as a person. The term "authentic" is derived from the Greek word "*authentikos*," signifying principles or genuineness. Individuals considered authentic were genuine in both their self-expression and their interactions with the world around them. However, Nikolić, Grudic Kvasic, & Grbic (2020) mentions that authentic leadership is a modern leadership theory that has arisen in response to the worldwide economic and political upheavals. It serves as a "moral compass," addressing the repercussions of unethical management, advocating for social responsibility, and ensuring the well-being and growth of employees. Gavin (2019) wites that authentic leaders establish trust and connection with their followers by embracing their true selves and openly acknowledging both their strengths and weaknesses. Powlus (2017) provides the following five characteristics of authentic leadership:

1. Authentic leadership focuses on having a clear sense of purpose and direction.

2. Authentic leadership centers on adhering to one's values, understanding them well, and steadfastly refusing to compromise on those values.

3. Authentic leadership prioritizes cultivating relationships with others and fostering a strong sense of connection with followers.

4. Authentic leadership involves self-discipline, providing leaders with concentration and resolve; the capability to stay focused on a goal and advance toward it despite encountering setbacks.

5. Authentic leadership shows attentiveness to the needs of others and is ready to provide assistance.

2.7.4 Servant leadership

According to Langhof & Güldenberg (2020:32) the concept of servant leadership was introduced by Robert Greenleaf in 1970 through his essay "The Servant as Leader." At its core, servant leadership emphasizes the fundamental priority of fostering the growth and well-being of both followers and their respective organizations or communities. Daft (2018:176) asserts that servant leadership marks a progression beyond stewardship, where leaders relinquish control and deliberately choose to serve their employees. Along the continuum, the emphasis of leadership transitions from the leader to the followers. The objective of servant leadership is to establish authority and influence through the support and service of employees, steering clear of potentially harmful, controlling methods seen in certain leadership styles and the more distant approach found in others (Tenney, 2023). According to Greenleaf (1970) cited in Smith (2005) servant leadership concerns itself with the following:

1. *Serving* - Servant-leadership commences when a leader takes on the role of a servant in their dealings with followers. Genuine and valid leadership emerges not through the exertion of power or self-centred actions but from an innate desire to initially assist others.

2. *Comprehensive Work Philosophy* - Servant-leadership believes that "The work is as meaningful to the individual as the individual is to the work.*"*

3. *Encourages a unified community Spirit* - Servant leadership actively fosters and nurtures a profound sense of community among its members. It goes beyond the mere acknowledgment of individuals within a group and strives to cultivate a shared ethos, where each member feels interconnected and valued.

4. Delegation of Decision-Making Authority - The true essence of effective servant-leadership is exemplified not only through one's *personal actions but also by instilling the principles of servant-leadership in others.*

2.8 Empathetic leadership and its influence on job satisfaction

According to Daft (2018:5) leadership is the process of influencing others to achieve a common goal. It is an essential component of any organization, and it can have a significant impact on job satisfaction. There is a large body of research on the relationship between leadership and job satisfaction. The majority of this research suggests that empathetic leadership has a positive impact on job satisfaction. For example, a meta-analysis of 32 studies found that the correlation between leadership and job satisfaction was 0.32 (Avolio, Waldman & Yammarino 1991). This correlation is considered to be moderately strong, suggesting that leadership is a significant predictor of job satisfaction.

Figure 3: Empathetic Leadership word clout

Muttalib, Muhammad & Zehri (2023) mentions that there are a number of different ways that empathetic leadership can influence job satisfaction. According to Herrity (2022) one way is by creating a positive and supportive work environment. Leaders can do this by setting clear expectations, providing regular feedback, and offering opportunities for professional development. Jaffe (2022) states that leaders can also create a positive work environment by being fair and impartial, and by treating their employees with respect.

Tenney (2023) suggest that another way that leadership can influence job satisfaction is by motivating and inspiring employees. Leaders can do this by setting clear and achievable goals, and by providing employees with the resources they need to be successful. Empathetic leaders have the ability to inspire and drive employees by acknowledging their achievements and offering avenues for career progression (Tenney, 2023).

A study by Muttalib, Muhammad & Zehri (2023) highlights the complex relationship between leadership and job satisfaction, and observes that this relationship is influenced by a number of factors, such as the leader's style, the employee's characteristics, and the organizational culture. However, the study suggests that leadership plays a significant role in determining job satisfaction.

In 2014, a survey conducted by the Society for Human Resource Management revealed that 73% of employees affirmed that the leadership style adopted by their supervisors directly influenced their level of job satisfaction. Another study, conducted by Gallup discovered that employees who enjoy a positive rapport with their managers are more inclined to be actively engaged in their work and are more likely to express satisfaction with their jobs (Gallup, 2013). In his research, Guo (2022) found that employees who believe that their leaders are ethical and honest are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs.These studies suggest that empathetic leadership has a significant impact on job satisfaction. Leaders who are able to create a positive and supportive work environment are more likely to have satisfied employees.

2.9 Job Satisfaction in Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

Owa & Owa (2020) asserts that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) play a vital role in society, providing essential services and advocating for social change. However, Humanitarian Careers (2023) cautions that working in an NGO can also be challenging and demanding. Employees may be required to work long hours in difficult conditions, and they may face significant job insecurity (Humanitarian careers, 2023). Despite these challenges, many people choose to work in NGOs because they are passionate about the cause and they want to make a difference in the world (Yashitabarai,2021). This suggests that job satisfaction is an important factor for employees in NGOs.

2.9.1 What is job satisfaction?

Locke (1969) characterizes job satisfaction as a state of positive or pleasurable emotions that arise from evaluating one's experiences in the workplace. According to Spector (1997), job satisfaction pertains to the emotional sentiments' individuals have regarding their employment and various facets associated with it. Cranny, Smith, & Stone (1992) view job satisfaction as an emotional response to one's job, arising from the evaluation of real achievements against desired outcomes. Judge, Bono, & Locke (2000) argue that job satisfaction is an intricate notion shaped by various elements such as the employee's personality, the workplace environment, and the characteristics of the job.

2.9.2 The importance of job satisfaction in NGOs

Omah & Obiekwe (2019:6) argue that job satisfaction is important for employees in all organizations, but it is especially important for employees in NGOs (Bakhtawar, 2016:7). This is due to the fact that individuals working in NGOs are frequently driven by intrinsic factors, such as a commitment to making a positive impact on the world (Bakhtawar, 2016:8). As per Hackman & Oldham (1976:254), when employees experience satisfaction in their roles, they are more inclined to be actively engaged and motivated to perform at their highest level. In Omah and Obiekwe's study (2019), it was discovered that job satisfaction holds significance for the overall success of NGOs. When employees find satisfaction in their roles, they are more inclined to remain with the organization, fostering increased productivity and enhanced performance. Moreover, in line with Bakhtawar's findings in (2016), satisfied employees are more prone to act as positive advocates for the organization. According to NGO-Connect (2011) donors are showing a growing interest in social impact investing, seeking assurance that their funds contribute to organizations that exhibit not just effectiveness but also ethical and responsible conduct. A favourable workplace atmosphere and satisfied employees can serve as indications of an organization's dedication to ethical standards and sound governance. Rumage (2023) maintains that assessing job satisfaction is a significant method for determining employees' satisfaction with their work. When employees experience happiness or satisfaction, they are more inclined to stay with their organization, resulting in elevated morale and increased overall productivity. A report from the UK Charity Commission

in 2022 revealed that charitable organizations with satisfied and actively involved employees enjoy greater volunteer retention and heightened public trust. Stukas, Snyder & Clary (2016) suggest that NGOs perceived as having elevated job satisfaction are more likely to draw in a higher number of committed volunteers. Weisberg & Dent (2016) discovered in their research that there is a positive correlation between employee satisfaction and the effectiveness of an NGO in accomplishing its mission.

It is evident from the above that the importance of job satisfaction within Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) cannot be overstated. A satisfied and engaged workforce not only reflects the organization's commitment to its employees' well-being but also plays a pivotal role in achieving the broader mission and goals of the NGO. High job satisfaction contributes to enhanced employee retention, increased productivity, and the cultivation of a positive organizational culture. It serves as a catalyst for innovation, effective collaboration, and the attraction of volunteers and donors. Ultimately, the impact of job satisfaction in NGOs extends beyond the individual employee, resonating throughout the organization and positively influencing its ability to make a meaningful and lasting impact on the communities and causes it serves. Prioritizing job satisfaction is not just a matter of employee welfare; it is a strategic imperative for the overall success and effectiveness of NGOs in creating positive social change.

2.9.3 Factors that influence job satisfaction in NGOs

NGOs are influenced by many factors, and a key to their success is ensuring that employees are happy and engaged in their work. Job satisfaction in NGOs involves various factors that impact the well-being of employees and the organization's ability to achieve its goals. This section looks into the different factors that influence job satisfaction in NGOs, including how the organization operates, the work environment, and individual motivations. Understanding these factors is crucial for NGOs that want to create an environment where employees are not only attracted and stay but are also empowered to make a meaningful impact on the challenges they aim to tackle.

2.9.3.1. The employee's personality

Furnham, Petrides, Tsaousis, Pappas & Garrod (2005) conducted a study where they found that an employee's personality has a big impact on how happy they feel at work. The study further found that positive and optimistic people usually enjoy their jobs more because they focus on the good parts of their tasks. The study by Apoi, Latip & Takong, (2021) revealed that employees with a strong adaptability trait expressed greater job satisfaction, even when confronted with elevated job demands, especially in environments characterized by a fast-paced work pace. Balasubramaniam (2019:150) conducted a study and found that Individuals who score highest in conscientiousness exhibit traits such as self-control, meticulous planning, organizational skills, purposefulness, strong-willed determination, and carefulness. These individuals are known for their methodical and organized approach, making it easy for them to become experts in their respective tasks. They are achievement-oriented, reliable, and often demonstrate high levels of job satisfaction. According to Furnham et al., (2005) the distinction between introversion and extroversion is significant as well. Introverts may favor independent tasks, while extroverts might find enjoyment in collaborative work. The ability to manage stress effectively is also pivotal for ensuring job satisfaction. When a person's values, motivation style, and preferred leadership match the workplace, it adds to their overall job satisfaction. In short, how well a person's personality fits their job affects how happy they are at work (Furnham et al.,2005).

2.9.3.2. The work environment

According to Herrity (2023) the work environment within a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) holds significant sway over job satisfaction, influencing the commitment and well-being of its employees. Agarwal (2018) mentions that in an NGO, a positive work environment characterized by a shared dedication to the organization's mission, transparent communication, and a supportive atmosphere fosters higher job satisfaction. Guyo & Mutumbu, (2019) maintains that the sense of purpose and social impact associated with NGO work often contributes positively to employees' overall contentment. Furthermore, Bakhtawar (2016) asserts that job satisfaction is elevated in the NGO sector when there is an inclusive and collaborative workplace, fostering a sense of value among team members and recognizing their

contributions. Conversely, Sleek (2023) notes that a challenging or toxic work environment, marked by ineffective communication, a lack of recognition, or an absence of work-life balance, can lead to decreased job satisfaction and potential burnout. Given the often emotionally taxing nature of NGO work, cultivating a positive and supportive work environment becomes crucial for sustaining employee well-being and motivation in pursuit of the organization's philanthropic objectives (Herrity, 2023).

2.9.3.3. Mission and Values Alignment

Bakhtawar (2016) posits that in the realm of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), the alignment of an individual's values with the mission and principles of the organization holds particular significance in shaping job satisfaction. According to Personio Foundation (2022) when employees in an NGO resonate with the overarching mission, which often involves addressing societal challenges and promoting positive change, they are more likely to experience a profound sense of purpose and fulfilment in their work. The alignment of personal values with the organization's mission enhances the connection between an employee's beliefs and the nature of their responsibilities, contributing to a deeply meaningful and rewarding professional experience (Culture Works, 2022). This alignment in values not only fosters job satisfaction but also cultivates a stronger commitment to the NGO's objectives, as employees perceive their contributions as integral to a larger, impactful cause. On the contrary, Gibbs (2023) notes that a misalignment between personal values and the NGO's mission may result in diminished job satisfaction, highlighting the pivotal role of shared values in shaping the overall job experience within the NGO sector.

2.9.3.4. Work-Life Balance

Within the context of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), the impact of work-life balance on job satisfaction is particularly crucial. Mengistu (2020) notes that employees engaged in the noble pursuits of NGOs often grapple with emotionally taxing and demanding tasks. Achieving an optimal work-life balance becomes paramount for sustaining job satisfaction (Mengistu, 2020). According to Njeri (2014)NGOs that prioritize and support work-life balance initiatives create an environment where employees can effectively contribute to their organization's mission while also maintaining personal well-being. A balanced approach ensures that

the dedicated efforts of individuals in the NGO sector are sustainable in the long term, preventing burnout and fostering a positive organizational culture (Mengistu, 2020). Conversely, a lack of work-life balance, characterized by extended work hours and heightened stress, may diminish job satisfaction, potentially impacting the effectiveness of the organization in achieving its philanthropic goals (International Labour Organization, 2022). Chen, Huang, Obeid & Zucker (2022) posit that recognizing and addressing the unique challenges of work-life balance in the NGO sector is vital for both employee well-being and the overall success of the organization's mission.

2.9.3.5. Recognition and Appreciation

According to Bakhtawar (2016) recognition and appreciation hold substantial significance in influencing job satisfaction within the unique context of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). According to research conducted by Worktango, In the NGO sector, where employees are often passionately dedicated to meaningful causes, acknowledgment of their efforts takes on added importance. The research further found that regular recognition and appreciation for the contributions made toward social or environmental goals contribute to a profound sense of purpose and fulfilment. Weir (2023) notes that employees who feel valued for their work in advancing the organization's mission are more likely to experience heightened job satisfaction. Conversely, the absence of acknowledgment for achievements within an NGO can foster a sense of diminished importance, potentially leading to decreased morale and diminished dedication from its workforce (O'Flaherty, Sanders & Whillans,2021). Acknowledging the selfless character of NGO work and recognizing the influence of individual contributions not only enhances job satisfaction but also cultivates a favourable organizational culture (Masale, Barkhuizen, Schutte & van der Sluis, 2021). This reinforcement underscores the interconnectedness of each employee's role in advancing the NGO's overarching goals.

2.9.3.6. Professional Development Opportunities

According to Parsons (2022) access to professional development opportunities is a critical factor influencing job satisfaction among employees. This is true in the NGO space. The Wharton University (2023) mentions that the provision of avenues for skill enhancement, training programs, and opportunities for career growth contribute

significantly to the overall job satisfaction within an organization. Thompson (2020) argues that employees who have the chance to acquire new skills, expand their knowledge, and progress in their careers are more likely to feel fulfilled and motivated in their roles. Parsons (2022) notes that professional development not only enhances individual capabilities but also signals an organization's investment in its workforce. This investment, according to Parsons (2022) fosters a positive work environment, where employees feel valued and supported in their personal and professional growth. In contrast, according to DeCarbo (2023) a lack of professional development opportunities can lead to stagnation, reduced motivation, and diminished job satisfaction. Therefore, NGO's that prioritize and facilitate ongoing learning and career advancement contribute to a more satisfied and engaged workforce.

2.9.3.7. Salary and Benefits

In the context of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), the impact of salary and benefits on job satisfaction remains a critical consideration. Research by Namono, Kazaara, Deus, & Kaazara (2023) found that while employees in NGOs are often motivated by a sense of purpose and commitment to social causes, fair and competitive compensation remains essential for their overall job satisfaction. Bakhtawar (2016) found that adequate salaries and comprehensive benefits not only recognize the value of employees' contributions but also provide a level of financial security, contributing to their well-being. Given the often-demanding nature of NGO work and the emotional toll it can take, fair compensation becomes even more crucial for sustaining job satisfaction. On the contrary, Mabaso (2018:82) observed that a lack of competitive salaries or essential benefits may lead to feelings of undervaluation and, potentially, impact the morale and dedication of employees. It is therefore crucial that the critical link between fair pay, comprehensive benefits, and a motivated workforce can be recognized by NGOs so that they can build resilient teams, enhance job satisfaction, and ultimately achieve greater impact.

2.9.3.8. Leadership and Management

Daud, (2020) notes that effective leadership and management within a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) are pivotal factors that significantly impact job satisfaction among employees. According to Brown (2022) inspirational and empathetic leadership fosters a positive work culture, where employees feel motivated

and valued. Jung (2014) states that clear communication of organizational goals, transparency in decision-making, and supportive management practices contribute to a sense of purpose and direction, enhancing job satisfaction. Conversely, according to Jung (2014) poor leadership characterized by lack of communication, unclear directives, or unsupportive management can lead to confusion and dissatisfaction. According to Forbes (2021) NGO employees, often driven by a shared commitment to social impact, thrive under leaders who understand and appreciate their contributions. When leadership aligns with the organization's mission and values, employees are more likely to find fulfilment and satisfaction in their roles, contributing to a cohesive and dedicated workforce. It is evident that strong leadership skills and sound management practices are fundamental to cultivating a positive and productive work environment within NGOs, ultimately influencing both employee well-being and organizational effectiveness.

2.9.3.9. Workload and Stress

Foo, Tay, Yang, & Verdeli (2023) notes that in the unique context of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), the impact of workload and stress on job satisfaction is a critical consideration. Given the often complex and challenging nature of the issues NGOs address, employees may experience heightened workload and stress (Foo, Tay, Yang, & Verdeli, 2023). Shielva (2020) posits that while a certain level of challenge can be motivating, an excessive workload and sustained stress can lead to diminished job satisfaction. NGO employees, driven by a commitment to social impact, may find fulfilment in their work, but an overwhelming workload can result in burnout and reduced satisfaction (Foo, Tay, Yang, & Verdeli, 2023). According to Martins (2020) effective workload management, clear expectations, and supportive mechanisms for dealing with stress are essential in maintaining job satisfaction. There is no doubt that by actively managing workloads and equipping employees with stress management resources, NGOs cultivate a healthy and supportive work environment. This, in turn, fosters higher job satisfaction and empowers the organization to achieve its mission with greater effectiveness.

2.10. Maslow's hierarchy of needs of empathetic leadership and job satisfaction

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a well-known psychological theory that describes the basic human needs in a hierarchical fashion, starting from the most fundamental

physiological needs and progressing towards higher-level psychological needs. The following empathetic leadership model based on Maslow's Hierarchy is developed to highlights the importance of leadership needs on job satisfaction as depicted in figure below. This theory suggests that people are motivated to fulfill these needs in a specific order, with each level serving as a foundation for the next. The hierarchy consists of the following levels, from the most fundamental to the highest:
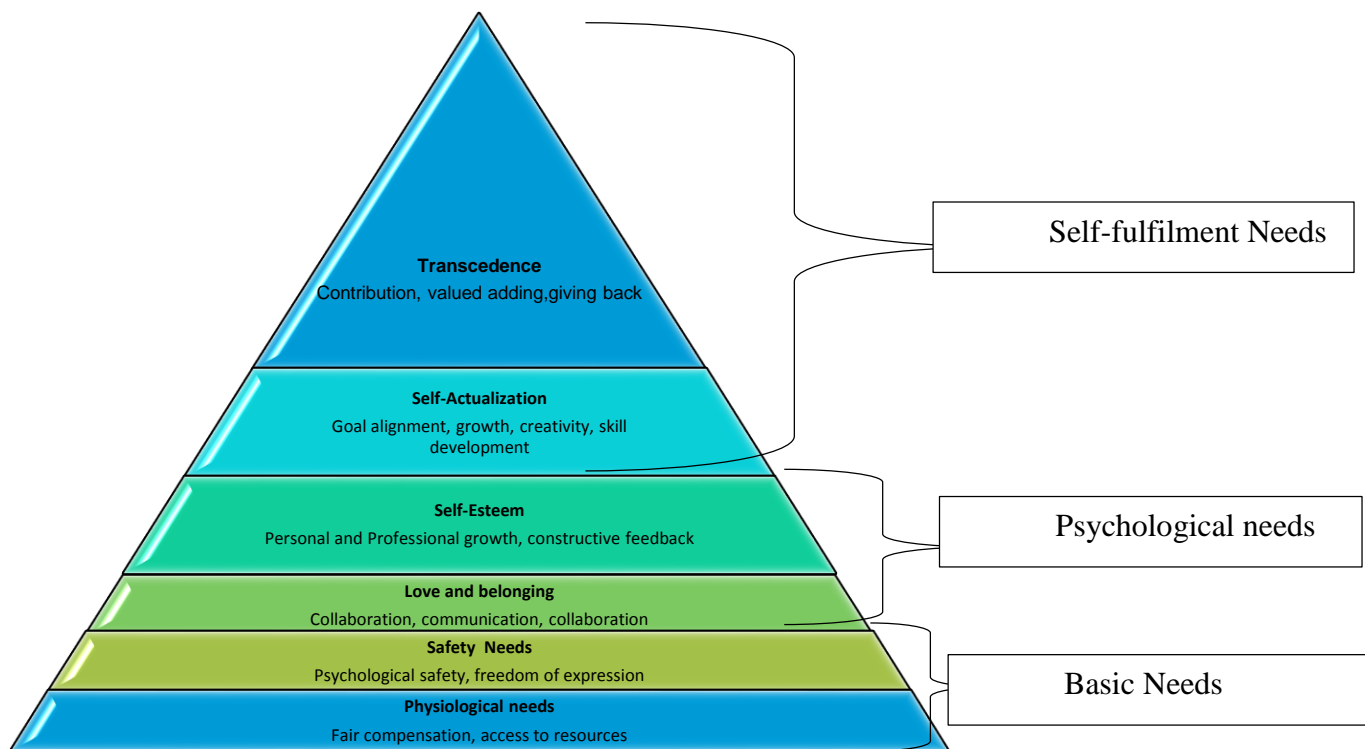
Figure 4: Maslow's hierarchy of empathetic leadership needs: Developed by the researcher based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs

2.10.1. Physiological Needs

Maslow (1970) identified the most fundamental needs for human existence, including air, water, food, shelter, sleep, and other physiological necessities, as the bedrock of his hierarchy of needs. Applying a concept similar to Maslow's, an empathetic leader can guarantee that the fundamental physiological needs of their team members are fulfilled. This involves ensuring equitable remuneration, establishing a secure and pleasant workplace, and providing access to the essential resources required for their roles.

2.10.2.Safety Needs

Maslow's hierarchy prioritizes safety and security as the next step after fulfilling basic physiological needs. This includes feeling secure in one's person, finances, health, and freedom from harm (Maslow, 1970). Empathetic leadership acknowledges the importance of physical and emotional safety. Leaders should create a culture of psychological safety where team members feel free to express their ideas and concerns without fear of repercussions. Additionally, leaders should take steps to ensure the physical safety of their team.

2.10.3.Love and Belongingness

Maslow's hierarchy climbs towards social needs after basic and security needs are met. This level craves connection through friendship, intimacy, family, and belonging (Maslow, 1970). A key component of this level is building a sense of belonging and community within the team. Empathetic leaders foster positive relationships among team members by promoting open communication, collaboration, and inclusivity.

2.10.4. Esteem Needs

Maslow's ladder ascends beyond social connection to the pursuit of esteem, encompassing self-respect, recognition from others, and a sense of accomplishment (Maslow, 1970). Empathetic leaders help their team members build self-esteem and confidence. They recognize individual achievements and provide constructive feedback. They also encourage personal and professional growth and development.

2.10.5. Self-Actualization

After conquering all other needs, the human spirit on Maslow's journey yearns for self-actualization, reaching for self-discovery, realizing potential, and achieving peak performance (Maslow, 1970). In this level, empathetic leadership focuses on helping team members reach their full potential. Leaders should provide opportunities for skill development, creativity, and personal growth, aligning individual goals with those of the team and the organization.

2.10.6. Transcendence

This level emphasizes the idea of contributing to a cause greater than oneself. Maslow (1968) defined self-transcendence as an individual's capacity to achieve a unified

awareness with other humans. The transcendent individual can perceive the world and their purpose in it in connection with other human beings on a broader scale, acknowledging their potential impact not only within their immediate surroundings but on a global scale. Empathetic leaders encourage their team members to contribute to the well-being of others, whether through charitable activities, mentoring, or socially responsible projects.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs provides a framework for understanding human motivation and the factors that influence human behavior and well-being (Maslow, 1970). Leaders can integrate the following principles based on Maslow's hierarchy into their leadership style, and create a model that not only considers the needs of their team members but also empowers them to thrive, both personally and professionally, within the organization.

2.11. The role of empathetic leadership in fostering Job satisfaction

The relationship between leadership styles and employee job satisfaction has been a subject of considerable interest in organizational research. A study by Negoro & Wibowo, (2021) found that among various leadership styles, empathetic leadership has emerged as a noteworthy dimension that plays a pivotal role in influencing job satisfaction among employees. The study's findings indicated a direct and positive correlation between empathetic leadership and employees' job satisfaction. This literature review explores the relevance and role of empathetic leadership in fostering job satisfaction, shedding light on how empathetic leaders impact employee well-being and organizational outcomes.

Research conducted by Kock et al. (2019) found that the favorable impact of empathetic leadership on innovative behavior and job satisfaction/affective states is likely to enhance a follower's overall performance. Elevated job satisfaction is anticipated to foster a heightened desire to excel and increased intrinsic motivation. Moreover, the stimulation of greater innovations is expected to result in more efficient and effective performance behaviors. In a separate study carried out by Castelli, Wan, & Wan (2013), it was established that empathetic leadership is recognized as a potent and instrumental tool in cultivating trustworthy and motivated employees. Consequently, empathy serves to fortify relationships between leaders and employees, effectively addressing shortcomings or mistakes within the organizational

context. As per Wibowo & Paramita (2022), it is commonly noted that leaders employ empathy within the workplace to establish positive and congenial environments for their followers. The utilization of empathy is a fundamental aspect of human survival, as it allows individuals to comprehend that those who express empathy can be relied upon and are inclined to collaborate with others. Consequently, empathy plays a pivotal role in fostering positive relationships among people.

The study conducted by Naritasari, Surwanti, & Nurul (2023) demonstrated a robust impact of empathic leadership on employee performance, as evidenced by an original sample coefficient value of 0.194, a t-statistic value of 2.174, and a p-value of 0.0030. Additionally, the study revealed a significant influence of both empathetic leadership and innovative work behavior on employee performance, indicated by an original sample coefficient value of 0.411, accompanied by a t-statistic value of 4.747 and a p-value of 0.000. This in turn contributed to high levels of job satisfaction. In the study conducted by Chinthamu, N. (2022), it is recommended that management should adopt empathetic leadership practices and encourage leaders to demonstrate empathy. This strategic approach aims to stimulate innovation, foster inclusion, foster job satisfaction and enhance engagement within the workforce. The findings from the study conducted by Zivkovic (2022) reveal that empathy plays a crucial role in augmenting leadership effectiveness by exerting widespread effects on leaders, followers, and the organization as a whole. According to the findings proposed by Haynie, Baur, Harris, Harris, & Moates, K. (2018) leaders who embody empathy tend to cultivate strong and positive relationships with their subordinates. These interpersonal connections are believed to yield numerous benefits for both employees and the organization as a whole. The establishment of such relationships is posited to contribute significantly to the overall well-being and effectiveness of employees, fostering a positive and collaborative work environment. Moreover, the positive rapport between empathetic leaders and their team members is thought to enhance organizational outcomes, promoting increased engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity among employees.

2.12. Challenges and Limitations of Empathetic Leadership in Job Satisfaction

While empathetic leadership is widely acknowledged for its positive impact on job satisfaction and overall organizational success. However, it is important to

acknowledge that empathetic leadership also faces challenges and limitations in its application. In this section, we will explore some of these challenges and limitations, providing a balanced view of the potential obstacles to achieving optimal job satisfaction through empathy.

2.12.1. Emotional Exhaustion and Burnout

One of the significant challenges of empathetic leadership is the risk of emotional exhaustion and burnout among leaders themselves. Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter (2001) describes burnout as a psychological syndrome characterized by chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed. It is marked by feelings of exhaustion, cynicism or detachment from work, and a sense of ineffectiveness and lack of accomplishment. Burnout can have significant consequences on an individual's mental health and overall well-being. While emotional exhaustion can be seen as a state of depleted emotional resources and energy resulting from prolonged exposure to work-related stressors. It is a key component of burnout and is characterized by feelings of being emotionally drained, fatigued, and lacking the energy to cope with the demands of one's job (Maslach et al. 2001). According to research conducted by Wrobel (2013), individuals who exhibit empathy are prone to experiencing emotional exhaustion and burnout. This is attributed to the fact that empathetic individuals tend to engage in emotional labour more frequently compared to their nonempathic counterparts. The study suggests that the heightened emotional involvement of empathetic individuals may contribute to an increased risk of emotional exhaustion and burnout as they navigate the demands of emotional labour in their professional settings. According to Hunt, Denieffe, and Gooney (2017)individuals with high levels of empathy need access to other resources, such as emotional regulation tools, to mitigate the risk of burnout and maintain their well-being.

2.12.2. Over-Identification with Employees

The Cambridge dictionary characterizes over-identification as experiencing an excessive sense of similarity with someone or considering something overly important, potentially in a manner that could be detrimental or unhealthy. While empathy is crucial, leaders must strike a balance between understanding their employees' emotions and maintaining objectivity. Koenig (2018) warns that excessive empathy, or "over-identification," can lead to losing our own emotional ground, blur the lines

between our identities and those of others, and hinder our ability to maintain healthy boundaries. A high degree of emotional or over-identification with employee problems may impair leaders' cognitive clarity and compromise their capacity for sound decision-making. Furthermore, the delivery of constructive criticism or the addressing of performance deficiencies might pose particular challenges for leaders exhibiting excessive empathy.

2.12.3.Time and Resource Constraints

Glover (2021) mentions that the cultivation of empathetic leadership necessitates a dedicated allocation of time and resources. Establishing and sustaining robust relationships with team members entails an ongoing commitment of both temporal and organizational assets, underlining the importance of consistent effort and investment in fostering empathetic leadership within a team or organizational context. Nonetheless, Misiaszek and McCarthy (2022) warn that in high-speed work environments or amid crises, leaders might encounter challenges in dedicating ample time to empathetic interactions. This limitation has the potential to curtail the depth of connections and diminish the efficacy of empathetic leadership.

2.12.4 Cultural and Gender Differences

Eichbaum, Barbeau-Meunier, White, Ravi, Grant, Riess, and Bleakley (2022), posits that the applicability of empathy is not uniform; rather, it is shaped by cultural and contextual factors. This variability poses a challenge for leaders as they navigate the complexities of employing a universally effective empathetic approach. Furthermore, the perception of empathy in leadership can be influenced by gender stereotypes and expectations. Leaders, especially those who are male, may encounter resistance or scepticism when expressing empathy, potentially influencing its effects on job satisfaction.

2.12.5. Perception of Authenticity

According to Eichbaum et al. (2022), the authenticity of empathetic leadership is essential. Nevertheless, leaders may encounter difficulties in authentically conveying empathy, as employees might perceive their actions as lacking sincerity or being motivated by ulterior motives. Scepticism towards empathetic leadership can be a persistent hurdle, as noted by All-things-talent (2021). However, the key lies in finding

a harmonious blend of empathy with other leadership qualities like purpose, vision, strength, and assertiveness.

2.12.6. Training and Development Needs

Misiaszek and McCarthy (2022) highlight the notion that not every leader inherently possesses empathetic skills, suggesting that the cultivation of these skills may necessitate deliberate training and development initiatives. In other words, there is a recognition that empathetic abilities may not be inherent for all leaders, prompting the need for proactive measures, such as targeted training programs, to foster the acquisition and enhancement of empathetic skills among leadership. Hall (2023) has noted that the identification, recruitment, and development of empathetic leaders can demand significant resources and time. This can present challenges, particularly for organizations with limited resources or high turnover rates.

2.12.7. Measurement and Assessment

Measuring the influence of empathetic leadership on job satisfaction is a challenging endeavor. Conventional performance measures might not sufficiently encompass the impact of empathy on employee well-being and contentment. This constraint can impede leaders from effectively showcasing the tangible advantages of empathetic leadership to stakeholders. Nonetheless, various studies have endeavored to investigate this correlation. For instance, Kock et al. (2019) conducted a study revealing that empathetic leadership positively impacts follower performance, job satisfaction, and innovation. In a separate study conducted by Van Bommel (2021), it was revealed that when senior leaders exhibit greater empathy, a notable 86% of employees report an enhanced ability to maintain a work-life balance.

2.13. The Role of Organizational Culture in Supporting Empathetic Leadership

According to Daft (2018:431), Organizational culture is characterized as the collection of fundamental values, assumptions, comprehensions, and norms collectively held by members within an organization and transmitted to new members as the accepted standard. It exerts a potent influence capable of significantly shaping employee morale, productivity, and overall performance.

Research has shown that organizational culture can play a significant role in supporting empathetic leadership. For example, Kalaiarasi & Sundaram (2017) assert

that alignment of the organizations and employees' norms and values enhances organizational performance, facilitating the achievement of the organization's goals. Taplin (2023) suggests that an organizational culture that promotes empathy and compassion is more likely to draw in and retain empathetic leaders. Hall (2023) further emphasizes that a positive organizational culture plays a vital role in furnishing empathetic leaders with the necessary resources and support essential for their success within the organizational context. Maven (2022) on the other hand maintains that organizations that cultivate norms of support and respect are better positioned to nurture empathetic leadership. In such organizational environments, employees find a sense of comfort in seeking help and support whenever the need arises. Kock (2019) suggests that organizations offering support to their employees are more inclined to promote empathetic leadership. This entails providing access to mental health and wellness resources for employees. Zaki (2019) discovered in his research that leaders who exhibit empathy are more likely to achieve success in organizations characterized by a positive organizational culture.

These studies suggest that organizational culture can play a significant role in supporting empathetic leadership. Organizations that value empathy and compassion, create a supportive and respectful work environment, and provide their employees with the resources and support they need are more likely to have empathetic leaders.

2.14. Conclusion

In conclusion, the literature review provides a comprehensive exploration of the multifaceted relationship between empathetic leadership and employee job satisfaction within the non-governmental organization (NGO) sector. Synthesizing a diverse array of scholarly perspectives, this review underscores the pivotal role that empathetic leadership plays in shaping the overall well-being and contentment of employees in NGOs. The findings from various studies consistently highlight the positive impact of leaders who demonstrate understanding, active listening, and a genuine concern for the welfare of their team members. Moreover, the review illuminates the interconnectedness of employee job satisfaction with organizational outcomes, emphasizing the potential for empathetic leadership to contribute not only to enhanced individual fulfilment but also to the broader success of NGOs in achieving their philanthropic missions. As the literature suggests, future research endeavours

should delve deeper into the nuances of empathetic leadership, considering cultural influences, mediating variables, and the long-term implications of such leadership practices. This foundation of knowledge serves as a valuable guide for organizational leaders, researchers, and practitioners seeking to foster positive leadership behaviors and cultivate supportive work environments within the unique context of NGOs.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The research methodology employed in this study serves as a critical framework for exploring the intricate dynamics of empathetic leadership and its impact on employee job satisfaction within the non-governmental organization (NGO) sector. This chapter details the methodological approach undertaken to gather, analyse, and interpret data, with a specific focus on qualitative methods. Qualitative research, chosen for its ability to provide rich, in-depth insights into the subjective experiences of individuals, is particularly apt for unravelling the nuanced nuances of empathetic leadership within the unique context of NGOs. By delving into the lived experiences, perceptions, and emotions of participants, this qualitative approach aims to capture the complexity and depth inherent in the phenomenon under investigation. The subsequent sections of this chapter will outline the research design, participant selection criteria, data collection techniques, and the analytical strategies employed to derive meaningful conclusions from the qualitative data. As we embark on this qualitative journey, the goal is to uncover the subtleties of empathetic leadership in shaping employee job satisfaction and contribute valuable insights to the existing body of knowledge within the realm of organizational behavior and leadership studies.

3.2 Research Hypothesis

According to Hassan (2023) a research hypothesis is a testable statement or proposition that predicts the relationship between variables in a study. It serves as a tentative answer to the research question and provides a basis for empirical investigation. To fulfil the objectives of this study, a set of hypotheses was formulated based on a literature review, and these hypotheses will be examined through empirical evidence.

1. **Hypothesis 1 (H1):** There is a positive association between perceived empathetic leadership, as measured by understanding and responding to employee needs, actively listening to feedback, providing emotional support, and demonstrating genuine concern, and individual employee satisfaction within the non-governmental organization.

2. **Hypothesis 2 (H2):** The work environment in the NGO, including factors such as organizational support, valuing employees, and promoting professional growth and development, significantly influences the overall job satisfaction of employees.

3. **Hypothesis 3 (H3):** The presence of empathetic leaders is positively correlated with higher levels of job satisfaction among employees in the non-governmental organization, suggesting a significant role of empathetic leadership in fostering contentment and well-being.

4. **Hypothesis 4 (H4):** Employee satisfaction in the organization is closely linked to the perception of empathetic leadership, implying that enhancing empathetic leadership qualities will positively contribute to the overall job satisfaction of employees in the NGO.

3.3 Research philosophy

As posited by Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2019:130), a research philosophy can be defined as the foundational set of beliefs and assumptions that form the basis for the generation of knowledge in research endeavours. Essentially, a research philosophy serves as a theoretical framework that provides a descriptive account of the nature of the phenomenon under investigation. Moreover, it outlines the processes involved in the creation of knowledge, offering a rationale for how this knowledge is generated and justified. This understanding aligns with the perspective presented by Mauthner (2020), who underscores the significance of a research philosophy in shaping the theoretical landscape and conceptual framework of a study.

3.3.1 Positivism research philosophy

Park, Konge, and Artino (2019) suggest that within Positivism, the hypothetico-deductive method is employed to test a priori hypotheses, typically expressed in quantitative terms. This approach involves establishing functional relationships between causal and explanatory factors and outcomes. In accordance with Gemma's insights (2018:2), the research philosophy of positivism pertains to the belief systems and assumptions embraced by natural scientists regarding the development of knowledge. Positivism is grounded in the conviction that the observation of human behavior is best conducted through the utilization of numerical tools and techniques,

a methodology that ensures precision while mitigating subjectivity and human error, as emphasized by Žukauskas et al. (2018:129). Elaborating further, Gemma (2018:4) expounds on how the quantitative research approach is fundamentally rooted in positivism. Throughout the course of such studies, researchers deliberately distance themselves from their personal values, working independently to maintain objectivity in their pursuit of knowledge. This detachment is seen as a deliberate measure to uphold the principles of positivism, emphasizing the importance of an objective stance in the research process.

3.3.2 Interpretivism research philosophy

Interpretivism represents an alternative research philosophy. Interpretivism is characterized as a subjective stance, wherein knowledge and truth regarding the ongoing phenomenon under investigation are contingent upon the subjective interpretations derived from the experiences of the target population (Gemma, 2018:9). In contrast to positivism, where researchers and their values are inseparable, interpretivism introduces a different perspective, asserting that the researcher's values and beliefs significantly influence every stage of the study, ranging from data collection and analysis to the presentation of findings, as noted by Žukauskas et al. (2018:123). Within the realm of interpretivism, a qualitative research methodology takes precedence, according to Venkat and Carter (2018:11). According to Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022 researchers should concentrate on two tiers of interpretation. The initial level entails the observation or experience of phenomena from the subjective standpoint of social participants. The subsequent level encompasses comprehending the significance of the participants' experiences with the aim of offering a "detailed description" or a comprehensive narrative elucidating the phenomenon of interest. This methodology is underpinned by the interpretivist philosophy and revolves around soliciting and analysing the opinions of respondents. The subjective nature of this approach places emphasis on the unique perspectives and experiences of individuals, playing a pivotal role in the construction of knowledge surrounding the phenomenon under investigation.

Opting for an interpretivist philosophy is particularly pertinent when delving into the exploration of the role of empathetic leadership in cultivating employee job satisfaction within a non-governmental organization (NGO) context. Given the subjective nature of

interpretivism, this research philosophy aligns seamlessly with the intricacies of understanding and unravelling the nuanced experiences and perceptions of individuals within the organizational setting. By adopting an interpretivist approach, the study can delve into the subjective perspectives of employees and leaders, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of the emotional dimensions associated with empathetic leadership. This philosophy facilitates an in-depth examination of how employees interpret and ascribe meaning to empathetic leadership behaviors, ultimately contributing to the generation of rich, context-specific insights that can inform strategies for enhancing job satisfaction within the unique dynamics of non-governmental organizations.

Having deliberated on various philosophies, it became imperative to select a research approach that not only aligns with the chosen philosophy but also ensures the systematic execution of the study in a scientific manner. As highlighted by Ahmad, Irfan, Gogoi, and Wasim (2019:2), the selection of a research approach boils down to three primary options: qualitative, quantitative, or a mixed-method approach. The quantitative research approach involves the utilization of statistical methods throughout the process of data collection, analysis, and presentation. This method typically employs closed-ended questions in questionnaires, and the outcomes are often presented in the form of tables and graphs. Conversely, a qualitative research approach revolves around the collection, analysis, and presentation of qualitative data using non-statistical techniques, offering a more nuanced understanding of the phenomena under investigation. The choice between these approaches is crucial for maintaining methodological coherence and achieving the research objectives effectively. Various techniques are employed for gathering qualitative data, such as conducting interviews, administering surveys, organizing focus groups, and making observations (Bhat, 2022).Qualitative research data is gathered through the utilization of the Likert scale which is a five-point measurement tool designed for individuals to convey their level of agreement or disagreement with a specific statement. This scale offers respondents five potential responses to a statement or question, enabling them to express the intensity of their agreement or disagreement, ranging from positive to negative sentiments, regarding the given statement or question (McLeod,2023), and the study's findings are rooted in the subjective opinions and interpretations of the participants, as highlighted by Abuhamda et al. (2021:75). In contrast to the

quantitative research methodology, which typically presents findings using tables and graphs, qualitative research methodology conveys results through narrative forms. To avoid relying on statistics, the research opted for a qualitative approach in conjunction with thematic analysis, another non-statistical method.

3.4 Research design

Thakur (2021) writes that a well-crafted study design lays the foundation for research by defining its type (descriptive, experimental, etc.), sub-type (e.g., longitudinal case study), the central research question, potential hypotheses, key variables, experimental setup (if applicable), data collection methods, and statistical analysis plan (if needed). As articulated by Jilcha (2019:2), the primary objective of crafting a research design is to provide a well-suited framework for a study. Within the intricate tapestry of the research design process, the pivotal decision regarding the research approach assumes paramount significance, as it delineates the methodology for gathering pertinent information essential to the study. The research design process is a multifaceted undertaking, encapsulating a series of interconnected considerations (Jilcha 2019:2). This intricate process intricately outlines the mechanisms for data collection, the criteria for participant selection, the procedures for data processing, and the methodology that will guide the analysis of the gathered data. Additionally, it delineates the strategy for presenting the research findings, thereby contributing to the comprehensive and systematic execution of the study. Boru (2018) explains that there exist three potential types of research designs: exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory.

3.4.1 Descriptive design

According to insights provided by Thakur (2021:56), a descriptive research design can be characterized as a theory-based framework aiming to provide a comprehensive and detailed depiction of an event within the context of its occurrence. This design is particularly employed when the researcher's objective is to furnish an in-depth description of a population or phenomenon. The primary goal is to acquire detailed information about the current status or condition of a group or phenomenon without making causal judgments, as emphasized by Hassan (2022). Essentially, a descriptive research design serves as a valuable tool for researchers seeking to delve into the

intricate details of a subject, offering a nuanced exploration within the specific contextual setting in which the event unfolds.

3.4.2 Explanatory design

According to Longe (2023), explanatory research is characterized as a methodological approach employed to gather data with the intention of elucidating a phenomenon. Thakur (2021:57) suggests that an explanatory research design is a framework wherein the presentation of explanations for the occurrence of an event is central. Through elucidating the reasons behind an event, the explanatory research design not only furnishes a description of the event but also offers a comprehensive understanding of the underlying explanations.

3.4.3 Exploratory design

Swedberg (2020) highlights that exploratory research represents an endeavor to uncover novel and intriguing insights by thoroughly exploring a research topic, serving as the essence of effective research. Singh (2021:1) states that an exploratory research design is a method that aids in gaining a profound understanding of a problem under investigation, particularly in cases where limited knowledge exists about the issue or unfolding event. Within the framework of an exploratory research design, the study environment is not controlled.

For this study, an exploratory research design was chosen, facilitating the exploration of the impact of empathetic leadership on enhancing employee satisfaction within the non-organizational setting.

3.5 Research strategy

According to Saunders et al. (2019:57), the comprehensive plan guiding the approach to a research topic is referred to as a research design. This design encompasses specific objectives derived from the research question, details the sources for data collection, outlines the methodology for data gathering and analysis, addresses ethical considerations, and enumerates inevitable limitations such as constraints on data access, time, location, and financial resources. It is crucial for the research design to demonstrate careful consideration of the components specific to the study strategy. In this particular study, a qualitative strategy will be employed to enable the researcher to construct a robust understanding of the topic and effectively address the research

question. As emphasized by Leavy (2017:9), qualitative research methods value the depth of meaning and individuals' subjective experiences and meaning-making processes. These methods, grounded in inductive designs, aim to generate meaningful and rich descriptive data by exploring the meanings individuals attribute to various aspects of their activities, situations, circumstances, people, and objects. Notably, most exploratory or descriptive research endeavors leverage qualitative methods.

3.5.1 Grounded theory

Grounded theory is characterized as a research approach centered on formulating theories derived from data collected during the study. This method involves the collection and analysis of primary data, leading to the development of a theory. The iterative process continues, with the theory undergoing expansion or the creation of new theories (Stough & Lee, 2021:2). Although the term "Grounded theory" may encompass both methodology and method, its specific reference is to a theory that is inductively derived from a dataset (Saunders et al., 2019:205). Notably, this study opted not to employ Grounded theory, as its primary objective did not involve theory development. Consequently, the strategy was deemed unsuitable for the study's purposes.

3.5.2 Case Study

A case study is a research approach concentrated on comprehending a singular element or entity, such as an organization, along with the events unfolding within it that are of interest to the researcher (Saunders et al., 2019:41). In a case study, information is gathered from members of the organization, with the goal of gaining a profound understanding of the current situation within the specific context where events are taking place. According to Priya (2021), case studies represent a qualitative research design wherein the researcher thoroughly examines a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals. The case or cases are delineated by both time and activity, and researchers employ various data collection procedures to gather comprehensive information over an extended duration. This study embraced a case study approach, providing a framework to delve into the exploration of the impact of empathetic leadership on enhancing employee satisfaction within the non-organizational setting. This strategy was not only congruent with the selected

qualitative research methodology but also facilitated the utilization of a structured interview schedule for primary data collection. The case study design, by its nature, allowed for an in-depth examination of the specific context and dynamics surrounding the role of empathetic leadership in fostering employee satisfaction, aligning seamlessly with the overarching research objectives

3.5.3 Action research

According to Shani & Coghlan (2019:2) Action research intertwines the research process with the implementation of solutions for addressing the research problem. Burns (2015) suggests that Action research is characterized by a self-reflective, systematic, and critical approach to inquiry, involving participants who simultaneously function as members of the research community. The primary objective of action research is to address a persistent problem by taking action based on the responses provided by study participants. However, for this particular study, action research was not employed. This decision stems from the fact that the study's focus did not involve merging the research process with immediate action to solve the research problem. Instead, the study aimed to offer recommendations to the organization's management, leaving the timeline for decision-making in their hands.

3.5.4 Focus group

As per McLeod (2023), a focus group is a qualitative research technique wherein a small group discussion is facilitated among participants who possess shared characteristics or experiences pertinent to the research topic. The objective is to glean insights through group dialogue and the observation of group dynamics. Schulze, Trenz, Cai, & Tan (2022:3089) suggest that a focus group is a research method where diverse participants are brought together for simultaneous group interviews. Structured questions are posed, and the group is overseen by a moderator who manages the interaction and the question-and-answer process the insights shared by participants in the focus group are utilized to address the research problem. However, for this study, a focus group was not employed. Instead, individual interviews were conducted to maintain participant anonymity and confidentiality of responses, making a focus group unsuitable for this specific purpose.

3.5.5 Ethnography

As outlined by Dangal (2021:16), ethnography is characterized as a research approach concentrating on the observation of sociocultural phenomena. Rooted in sociology, ethnography operates under the premise that understanding a society or its culture requires viewing it as a system, where individual components cannot be comprehended in isolation from others. Ethnographic studies typically focus on populations with shared characteristics and culture, conducted in the natural environment of participants within the context where the phenomenon under study unfolds.

3.6 Target population

As per Saunders et al. (2019:294), the complete set of cases or elements, from which a sample is derived, is termed the population. In the context of sampling, the term 'population' deviates from its conventional meaning, as it doesn't exclusively refer to individuals; rather, it encompasses all elements or cases relevant to the study. Researching an entire population can be challenging, as not all elements may be known or easily accessible to the researcher. Consequently, researchers often redefine the population into a more manageable subset, termed the target population (Saunders et al., 2019:295). In this study, the target population comprised senior managers, junior managers, skilled workers, and general workers, with a sample size of 60 participants. Leavey (2017:77) notes that methods employed in natural settings, such as ethnography/field research and some instances of CBPR, often do not have predetermined sample sizes. Instead, the sample size is contingent on the number of individuals choosing to participate. Leavey (2017:77) advises, "Interview as many subjects as necessary to find out what you need to know."

3.7 Sampling strategy

As outlined by Bhardwaj (2019:158), sampling is defined as the process of selecting a sample unit from a target population using suitable tools and techniques. Probability sampling, on the other hand, is characterized as an approach where each element of the population has a known chance of being selected for the study, making it apt for selecting homogeneous samples (Bhardwaj, 2019:158). However, the study did not utilize the probability sampling method for sample selection, given its alignment with quantitative research methodologies. Since the study followed a qualitative research

approach, the probability sampling method was deemed unsuitable and will not be further discussed. Instead, a non-probability sampling approach was considered more suitable for the study, and its variations will be elaborated below.

3.7.1 Non-Probability Sampling

According to Hassan (2022) Non-probability sampling is a sampling technique wherein the researcher exercises judgment in selecting samples for the study. In contrast to probability sampling, non-probability sampling utilizes non-statistical tools and techniques for the selection of sample elements.

3.7.1.1 Convenience sampling

Scholtz (2021:2) defines convenience sampling as a sampling technique where participants are chosen for the study based on their availability and willingness to participate.

3.7.1.2 Purposive sampling

As per Bhardwaj (2019:161), individuals in a sample are selected for this type of sampling based on the study's objectives. This sampling method is also referred to as purposeful and judgmental sampling.

3.7.1.3 Snowball sampling

As described by Saunders et al. (2019:323), the snowball approach is a non-probability sampling technique where participants are enlisted into the study by those already involved. Subsequently, the newly recruited participants proceed to bring in additional participants, creating a cascading effect until the desired sample size is attained.

3.7.1.4 Quota Sampling

As outlined by Iliyasu & Etikan (2021:25), this represents one of the most prevalent nonprobability sampling strategies. In many subpopulations, sampling is conducted before determining a specific number of units. Since there are no prescribed guidelines for achieving these quotas, quota sampling serves as a method to meet sample size objectives for certain sub-populations (Iliyasu & Etika, 2021:25). These groups exhibit shared characteristics that are also redefined by the researcher. Sample elements are

subsequently drawn from these distinct groups and combined into a single pool for the study. Given the nature of the environment under investigation, this sampling strategy appeared effective due to its cost and time efficiency.

3.8 Data collection instrument

A research instrument is defined as a tool utilized for the collection of primary data, and its nature may differ based on the type of data being gathered (Elyazgi, 2018:314). Among the commonly employed methods for data collection is the questionnaire, a structured form or tool completed by respondents from a specific group, supplying the researcher with the requisite data for the study (Taherdoost, 2021:14). In this study the primary data collection instrument employed was a Likert scale. According to Joshi, Kale, & Chandel & Pal (2015) the Likert scale, is a widely utilized survey tool, it provided a structured framework for participants to express their opinions and perceptions regarding empathetic leadership practices and their impact on job satisfaction. This instrument typically consists of a series of statements or questions to which respondents indicate their level of agreement or disagreement on a predetermined scale. Participants in the study were presented with Likert scale items designed to gauge their perceptions of empathetic leadership behaviors within the organizational context. The Likert scale offered a quantifiable measure, allowing for the systematic collection of data on the attitudes and perspectives of individuals, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between empathetic leadership and job satisfaction within the NGO setting.

3.9 Pilot Study

Saunders et al. (2019:540) propose that before deploying a questionnaire for data collection, it should undergo a pilot test involving respondents similar to those who will eventually complete it. The primary aim of the pilot test was to refine the interview guide, ensuring respondents encountered no challenges in answering the questions and that data recording proceeded without complications. Furthermore, it facilitated the assessment of question validity and the potential reliability of the collected data, both for individual questions and, where applicable, scales consisting of multiple questions. The pilot study, conducted with six participants in early October 2023, involved selecting individuals in specific positions as the intended participants. The pilot study was completed within a maximum of two weeks, and its results mirrored

those of the main study, with the piloted group subsequently incorporated into the primary study.

3.10 Data analysis

As per Leavy (2017:150), the data analysis section provides an intricate explanation of the methodologies the researcher will employ to analyse and interpret both datasets, encompassing the utilization of computer software programs. It further addresses the approach to comprehending the relationship between the datasets during this phase, incorporating discussions on the adopted integration framework, comparability, merging of data (when applicable), and data transformation (when applicable). The section also addresses any potential issues that may arise during these analytical processes.

The qualitative analysis of data obtained from the Likert scale responses in Sections 2, 3, and 4 aimed to extract nuanced insights and interpret the subjective perspectives of participants within the NGO. Beyond the numerical scores, a thematic analysis was employed to discern recurring themes and patterns across the Likert scale items. In Section 2, which focused on Empathetic Leadership, open-ended responses or comments provided by participants were scrutinized for common threads related to understanding employee needs, active listening, emotional support, and a genuine concern for well-being. Similarly, for Section 3, capturing Employee Satisfaction, qualitative analysis involved delving into the written comments to explore sentiments regarding job satisfaction, the work environment, feeling valued, professional growth, and work-life balance. The responses in Section 4, where the connection between Empathetic Leadership and Employee Satisfaction was explored, underwent qualitative coding to identify qualitative indicators of how empathetic leadership positively influences job satisfaction. Thematic categories were established, allowing for a rich narrative that complemented the quantitative findings. This qualitative analysis not only added depth to the numerical scores but also provided a holistic understanding of the participants' perceptions, shedding light on the intricate dynamics between empathetic leadership and employee satisfaction within the organizational context. Saunders et al. (2019:651) outlines that Thematic Analysis encompasses the researcher's coding of qualitative data to discern themes or patterns for subsequent analysis. Additionally, this method proves applicable to both extensive and more

compact qualitative datasets, facilitating the generation of detailed descriptions, explanations, and theoretical insights pertaining to the research question.

3.11 Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, trustworthiness relates to the credibility, dependability, transferability, and conformability of both the research tool and its findings (Kyngäs, Kääriäinen & Elo ,2020:2). Stahl and King (2020:26) suggest that within the subjective realm of shared realities, such as the trustworthiness of the research, readers and authors may identify common ground in their respective productive processes.

3.11.1 Credibility

Stahl and King (2020:26) emphasize that the credibility of a qualitative study pertains to the accuracy of the study's findings. To establish credibility, Stenfors et al. (2020:597) assert the importance of justifying the research methodology and explaining the data collection process during the study's implementation. In this particular study, credibility was safeguarded through the execution of a pilot study. This preliminary investigation ensured the relevance of the chosen methodology for addressing the research questions. Additionally, the study took measures to ensure that participants selected had sufficient tenure in the organization, ensuring their ability to provide information that authentically reflected their understanding of empathetic leadership and its impact on job satisfaction.

3.11.2 Transferability

Transferability in qualitative research pertains to the degree to which the study's outcomes can be extended to a comparable population in a similar setting, producing consistent results (Stahl & King, 2020:27). This concept involves the ability of the findings to be applicable to another context, environment, or group, accompanied by a thorough explanation of how the research's operational context influenced the results (Stenfors et al., 2020:596).

To guarantee transferability, it was ensured that the samples selected for the study were representative of the target population. The assumptions and rationale guiding the sample selection process were meticulously documented, ensuring transparency in the methodological approach.

3.11.3 Dependability

Elo et al. (2020:2) defines dependability as the stability of data over time concerning the drawing of conclusions and findings in a study. Saunders et al. (2019:217) elaborate that dependability involves documenting all changes made to establish a reliable and comprehensible account of the evolving study focus for others to understand and evaluate. It is crucial to assess the data analysis process and techniques to ensure they align with the standards of the research design employed in the study (Elo et al., 2020:6). In this study, dependability was assured by explicitly stating the demographic characteristics of the representative sample and providing a clear and justified rationale for the use of purposive sampling in participant selection. An audit trail was also established to meticulously document the entire research process, ensuring transparency and dependability.

3.11.4 Conformability

Kasirye (2021:5) characterizes conformability as the objectivity of a study, emphasizing the avoidance of bias to ensure accurate representation of respondents' opinions regarding the subject under investigation. In this study, conformability was maintained by meticulously transcribing interviews in a manner that faithfully captured the true opinions of respondents. The research process avoided leading questions, and the findings were strictly derived from the genuine perspectives expressed by the participants.

3.12 Limitations of research

According to Theofanidis and Fountouki (2018:156), the term "limitation" in a study refers to the inherent weaknesses that the researcher cannot control, and these weaknesses may arise from factors such as the research design, financial constraints, or time limitations. This research while insightful, is not without its limitations. One significant constraint is the potential for response bias. Participants may provide responses that they perceive as socially desirable or aligned with organizational expectations, leading to an overestimation of the positive impact of empathetic leadership. Additionally, the cross-sectional nature of the study poses a limitation in establishing causation. The research captures a snapshot of the relationship at a specific point in time, making it challenging to infer the directionality of the influence between empathetic leadership and job satisfaction. Furthermore, the study's

generalizability might be constrained by the specific context of the NGO under investigation. Different organizational cultures, structures, or sectors may yield varied results. Finally, the reliance on self-reported data introduces the possibility of common method bias, as participants report both on empathetic leadership and job satisfaction.

3.13 Elimination of bias

As indicated by Yarborough (2021:1), research bias is synonymous with impartiality that may infiltrate any stage of the research process, posing the risk of introducing prejudice into the study. Bias can manifest in various ways, including distortion of original data, inaccurate reporting of information, or discrimination, thereby influencing the study's outcomes (Yarborough, 2021:1).

To ensure the rigor and reliability of the study, deliberate measures were taken to eliminate potential biases. Firstly, the research design incorporated a diverse and representative sample from within the NGO's, encompassing various organizational levels and roles. This diversity aimed to mitigate selection bias and enhance the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the research employed a rigorous and standardized data collection process, emphasizing clear instructions to participants and minimizing ambiguity in survey questions. To address response bias, confidentiality was prioritized, assuring participants that their responses would remain anonymous. Moreover, the researcher maintained objectivity throughout the analysis, employing systematic and transparent procedures to interpret data. These deliberate steps were undertaken to enhance the validity and trustworthiness of the study by minimizing the influence of biases on the results.

3.14 Ethical consideration

Gallegos Erozi (2021:15) emphasizes that ethical considerations transcend conventional research norms, extending to the protection of subjects and participants. Minimizing harm, ensuring confidentiality, and conducting a transparent participation process with informed consent are integral components that align with the overall "integrity of research." Saunders et al. (2019:254) further highlight the significance of addressing ethical considerations in research, emphasizing the need for researchers to anticipate and proactively address these concerns. By doing so, researchers can

demonstrate to tutors and ethics committees that the research design and proposal are formulated to minimize ethical issues and prevent any unethical practices.

3.14.1 Informed consent

The concept of informed consent in research involves an information exchange between the researcher and human participants, ensuring that detailed and sufficient information about the study is provided to enable participants to make informed decisions about their involvement (Manandhar & Joshi, 2020:89). In this study, efforts were made to secure informed consent by incorporating a consent form that outlined the study's purpose and the participants' responsibilities. The consent form explicitly communicated the voluntary nature of participation, and details regarding the maintenance of respondent anonymity and confidentiality were also addressed. Participants were only given the questionnaire after providing their consent by signing the consent form.

3.14.2 Ensuring participant safety

Yiğit Gençten (2021:147) identified potential risks for participants in the study, encompassing psychological, physical, social, and legal harm. To safeguard participants from harm, the interview guide avoided soliciting personal details, participant information remained confidential, and research questions were carefully crafted to avoid eliciting negative emotions.

3.14.3 Anonymity and confidentiality

Sim and Waterfeld (2019:3008) highlighted the distinction between anonymity and confidentiality, clarifying that anonymity involves concealing the respondent's identity, while confidentiality entails safeguarding the secrecy of the information shared by the respondent. The preservation of respondent anonymity was guaranteed by avoiding group interviews, thereby preventing the disclosure of responses between participants. To uphold confidentiality, the study's information was not disclosed to external parties for alternative purposes. Rigorous measures were implemented, such as password protection for recorded interviews and secure storage of hard copies, ensuring exclusive access limited solely to the researcher. These stringent protocols were established to prioritize the privacy and protection of participant information.

3.15.4 Securing permission to conduct study

Approval to conduct this research was actively pursued from a carefully selected group of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The granted permission not only signified a green light for the study but also emphasized crucial ethical considerations that needed meticulous adherence to maintain the highest standards of research ethics. This comprehensive approval process involved a detailed review of the proposed study protocol, ensuring alignment with ethical guidelines. The commencement of the study was contingent upon the formal receipt of permission letters, underscoring the commitment to ethical research practices and the importance of conducting the study with due diligence.

3.16 Conclusion

The research methodology adopted for investigating the role of empathetic leadership in fostering job satisfaction within non-governmental organizations (NGOs) reflects a purposeful and systematic approach. The philosophical foundation of the study aligned with an interpretivist perspective, recognizing the subjective nature of experiences and the need to understand the nuanced aspects of empathetic leadership in the context of NGOs. The qualitative research design, supported by thematic analysis, proved instrumental in exploring the multifaceted dimensions of empathetic leadership and its impact on job satisfaction. The careful selection of participants through purposive sampling, coupled with ethical considerations and the rigorous validation of research tools, enhances the credibility and dependability of the study. The integration of Likert scale responses within the qualitative framework provided a nuanced understanding of participants' perspectives. The acknowledgment of limitations, such as potential biases, and the commitment to ethical principles further contribute to the robustness of the research methodology. Overall, the chosen research approach strategically navigated the complexities of studying empathetic leadership in the unique organizational setting of NGOs, providing a solid foundation for meaningful insights and valuable contributions to the existing body of knowledge.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

In this pivotal section, we delve into the heart of the study, embarking on the comprehensive exploration of the outcomes, discussions, and the nuanced interpretation of the findings. The focus pivots towards unravelling the intricate relationship between empathetic leadership and job satisfaction within the unique context of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). By meticulously dissecting the gathered data, this chapter aims to illuminate the impact of empathetic leadership on the contentment and professional fulfilment of employees within the NGO setting. The ensuing discussions and interpretations endeavour to provide a profound understanding of how empathetic leadership practices contribute to fostering job satisfaction, shedding light on the multifaceted dynamics at play in this distinctive organizational milieu.

4.2 Presentation of findings

In this section, a detailed presentation of the experimental results obtained from the study will be provided, offering comprehensive insights into the outcomes derived from the research.

Table 2 below presents a concise summary of the demographic information pertaining to all study participants. This tabulation encompasses various demographic characteristics, including but not limited to gender, age, tenure within the non-governmental organization (NGO) sector, current job positions, and the highest educational qualifications attained by the respondents. The comprehensive breakdown of these demographic details aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the diverse participant profiles involved in the study.

Table 1: Demographic information

Demographic variables	Description	Total number	percentage
Age group in years	18-25	10	17%
	26-35	16	26%
	36-45	13	22%
	46-55	13	22%
	56-65	8	13%
Number of years in NGO	1-3	6	10%
	4-7	30	50%
	8 and more	24	40
Current position	Junior Level	30	50%
	Middle Level	20	33%
	Senior Level	10	17%
Highest Qualification	Certificate	12	20%
	Diploma	18	30%
	Undergraduate degree	15	25%
	Postgraduate/hons	8	13%
	Masters	7	12%
Gender	Male	23	38%
	Female	37	62%

The graphic data regarding demographic variables within the NGO sector provides a comprehensive snapshot of the workforce composition as follows:

Figure 5: Age Group Distribution:

Age group distribution

Age Group	Percentage
56-65	13%
46-55	22%
36-45	22%
26-35	26%
18-25	17%
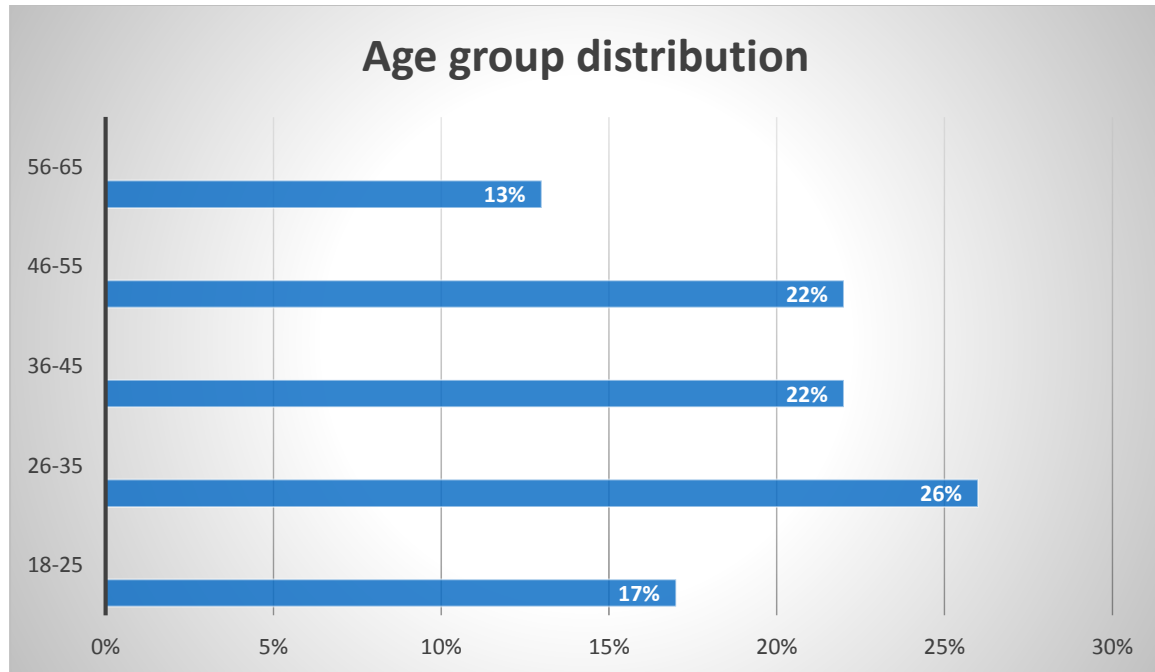
The comprehensive examination of age distribution within the NGO sector in figure 5 above underscores the richness of the workforce in terms of varied career stages. Notably, the age group of 26-35 constitutes the largest segment at 26%, reflecting a significant representation of professionals in the mid-career stage. Following closely, the 36-45 age group comprises 22%, affirming a balanced distribution across diverse career stages. The presence of the 18-25 age group at 17% suggests an influx of early-career professionals, contributing to the sector's dynamism. Additionally, the 56-65 age group, accounting for 13%, signifies the valuable input of seasoned individuals, highlighting the wealth of experience within the NGO workforce. This diversity in age groups is crucial for the study as it illuminates the varying perspectives and contributions from individuals at different career stages, offering a nuanced understanding of the potential impact of empathetic leadership on job satisfaction across this diverse age spectrum

Figure 6: Gender distribution

Gender Distribution

38%

62%
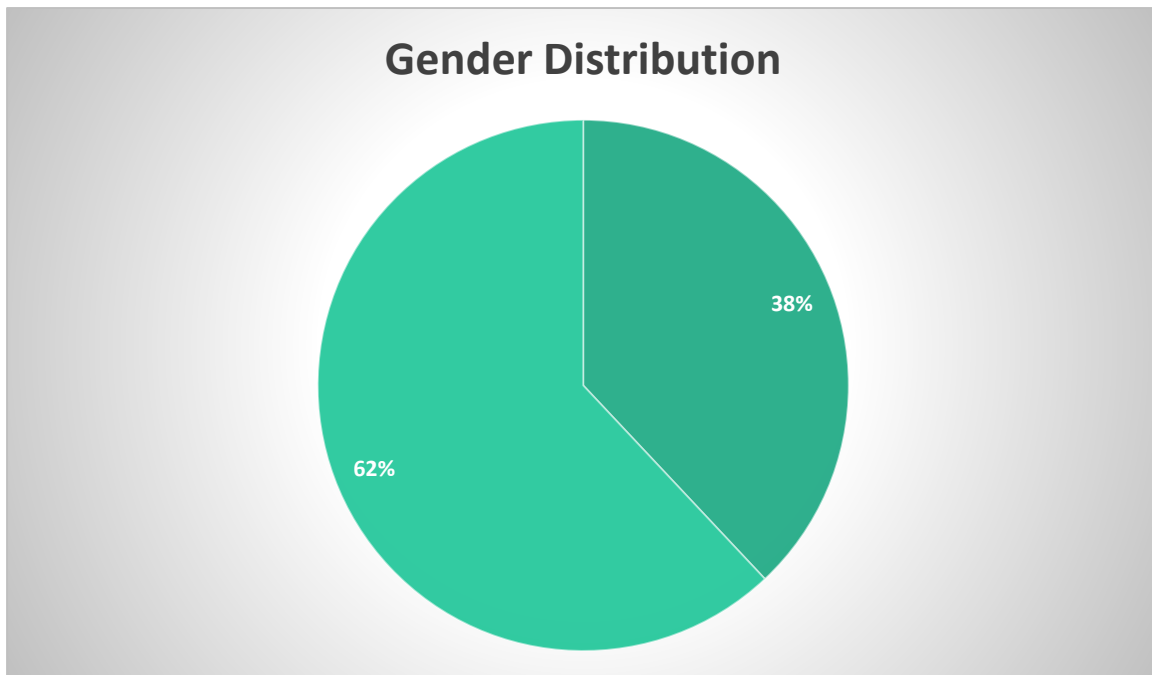
The statistical breakdown of gender distribution within the NGO sector in figure 6 offers valuable insights into the composition of the workforce. The analysis reveals a pronounced prevalence of females, constituting a substantial 62% of the total, with males comprising the remaining 38%. This gender distribution sheds light on the noteworthy presence of women in various roles within the NGO workforce. Recognizing this gender dynamic is essential for the study, as it emphasizes the diverse perspectives and contributions of both males and females in the organizational context, providing a nuanced understanding of how empathetic leadership may impact job satisfaction across different gender demographics.

Figure 7: Years of Experience in NGOs:
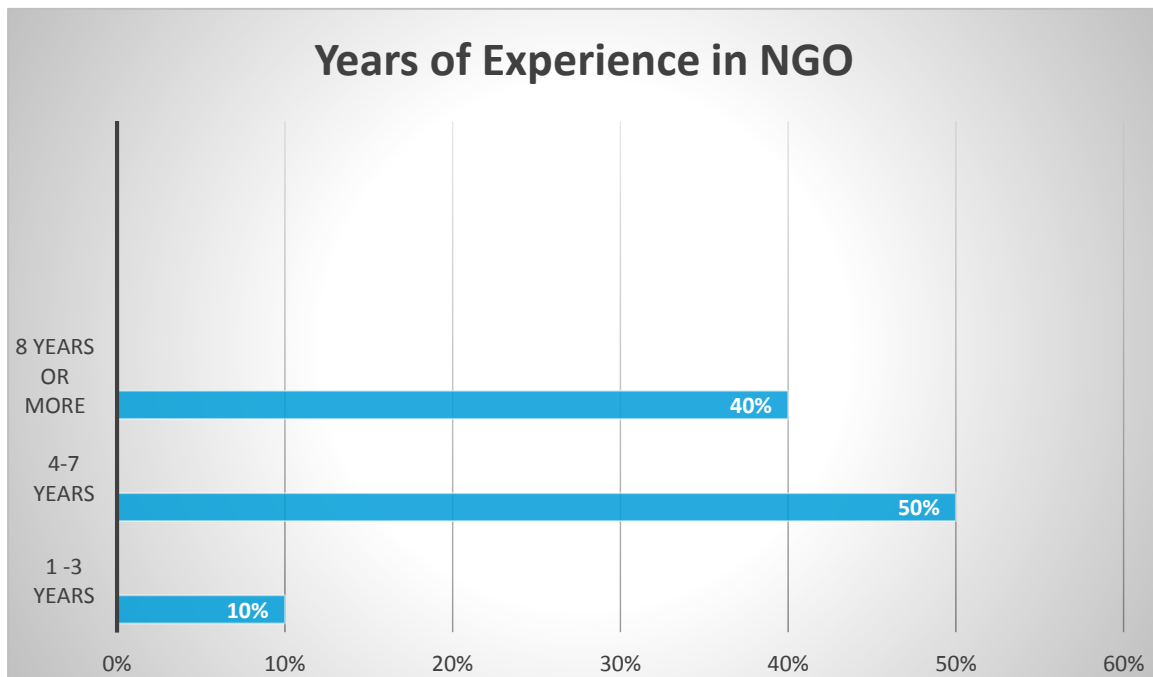
Examining the distribution based on years of experience in figure 7 reveals compelling insights into the workforce's tenure within the NGO sector. A significant 50% of employees boast 4-7 years of experience, embodying a substantial and seasoned segment that has likely garnered valuable insights. Additionally, 40% of the workforce has amassed 8 or more years of experience, pointing to a stable and knowledgeable segment with a wealth of expertise. A smaller yet noteworthy 10% of individuals have been part of the NGO sector for just under 3 years. Recognizing these nuances in experience is crucial for the study, as it unveils the depth and breadth of expertise within the organization, providing a nuanced perspective on how empathetic leadership influences job satisfaction across a spectrum of experienced professionals.

Figure 8: Current Position Distribution:

Current position distribution
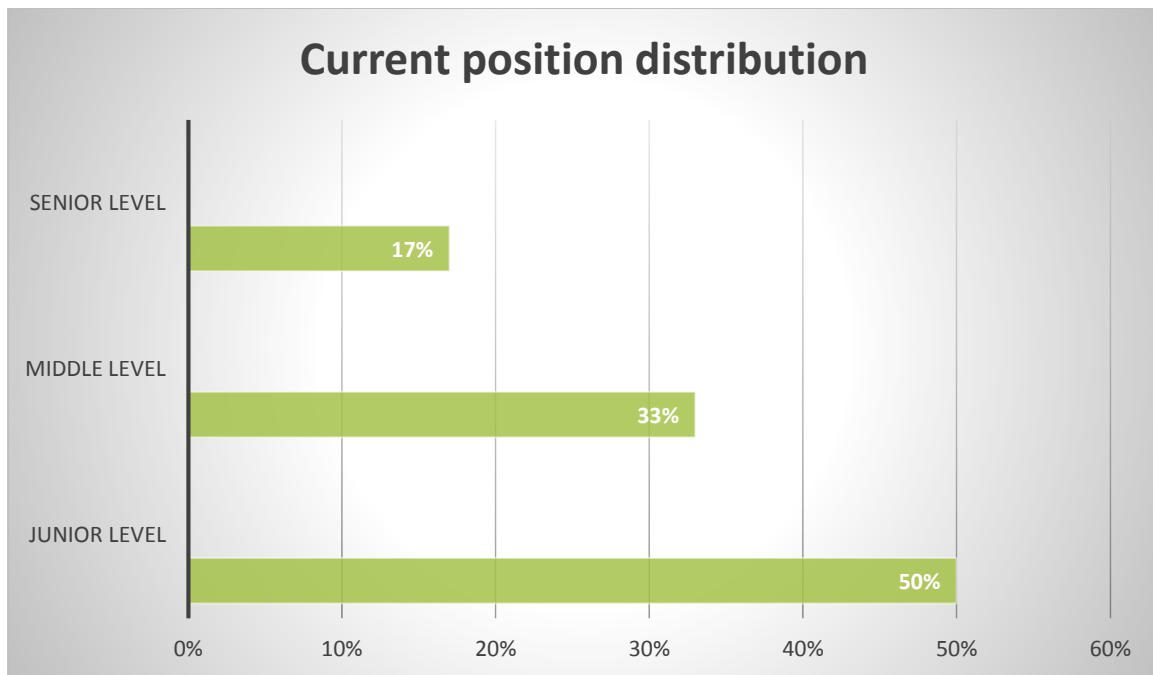
The distribution of current positions within the NGO workforce in figure 8 reflects a standard pyramid structure commonly observed in organizational hierarchies. Notably, junior-level positions constitute a significant portion at 50%, forming the broad base of the pyramid. In contrast, middle-level positions account for 33%, and senior-level positions represent 17% of the workforce. This hierarchical arrangement signifies the diverse roles and responsibilities inherent in the NGO sector, emphasizing a robust foundation of junior professionals. Recognizing and understanding this organizational structure is crucial for this study as it unveils the intricate dynamics and varied contributions of employees at different levels, providing valuable insights into the influence of empathetic leadership on job satisfaction across this diverse professional landscape.

Figure 9: Highest Qualification Attainment:

Qualification distribution

Qualification	Percentage
MASTERS	12%
POSTGRADUATE DEGREE	13%
UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE	25%
DIPLOMA	30%
CERTIFICATE	20%
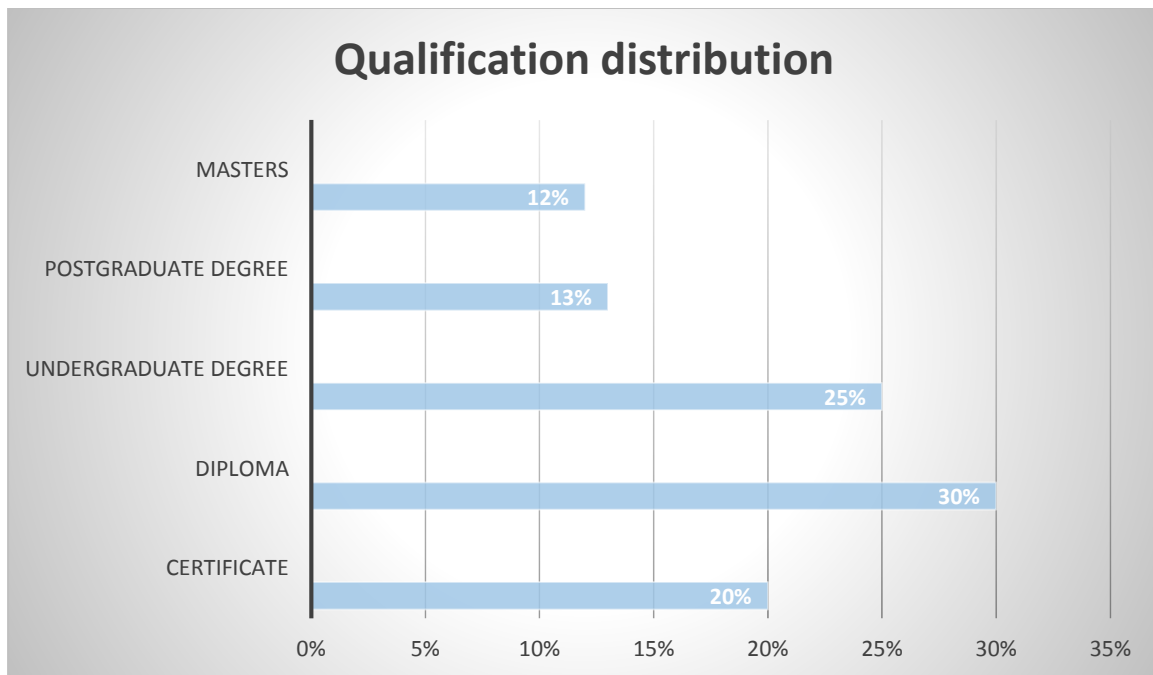
The educational makeup of the NGO workforce in figure 9 significantly influences the organizational dynamics. The observed diversity, with 25% holding undergraduate degrees and 13% possessing postgraduate or honours qualifications, highlights the range of academic backgrounds contributing to the organization. Particularly notable is the considerable presence of individuals with certificates (20%) and diplomas (30%), indicating the prevalence of practical skills and hands-on experience among the workforce. This diversity is not just a statistical detail; it holds considerable importance for the current study. It emphasizes the need to recognize and value practical expertise alongside formal education, shedding light on the nuanced requirements and competencies within the NGO sector. This recognition is crucial for understanding how empathetic leadership impacts job satisfaction in this complex professional landscape.

Overall Interpretation:

The data paints a comprehensive picture of the NGO sector's demographic landscape. The sector benefits from a diverse age range, experienced professionals, and a hierarchical structure reflecting different levels of expertise. The educational diversity highlights the importance of a varied skill set within the workforce. Understanding these demographics is crucial for assessing the impact of empathetic leadership on

job satisfaction, considering the varied needs and expectations across different career stages and roles within the NGO sector.

4.3 Core themes derived from primary data sources

Various themes surfaced during the analysis of the primary data, aligning with each predefined objective of the study. The ensuing section provides a detailed summary of these identified themes, organized under their respective research objectives, as presented in Table 3 below.

Table 2: Objectives and thematic insights

Objectives	Core themes
Objective 1: To explore the role of empathetic leadership in fostering job satisfaction.	**Theme 1** The role of empathetic leadership in fostering Job satisfaction.
Objective 2: To explore the relationship between empathetic leadership and job satisfaction.	**Theme 2** Empathetic leadership and its influence on job satisfaction
Objective 3: To establish the close relationship between the presence of empathetic leaders and the overall satisfaction of employees in the non-governmental organization.	**Theme 3** Maslow's hierarchy of needs of empathetic leadership and job satisfaction

Data collected directly from participants indicate that the fishbone analysis in figure 9 below highlights the significant factors contributing to overall job satisfaction. These include leadership, organizational culture, employee well-being, training and development, communication, job satisfaction, work-life balance, employee engagement, conflict resolution, and performance feedback. The Fishbone analysis or cause-and-effect analysis, is a visual tool designed to identify and analyse potential causes of a specific problem (Lewis, 2024). In our exploration, let's take a detailed look at the various factors, often referred to as participants, contributing to the crucial role of empathetic leadership in fostering job satisfaction within the distinctive context of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). This analytical approach enables us to uncover the interconnected elements that influence the complex dynamics between empathetic leadership and the overall job satisfaction of individuals engaged in NGO environments.

Figure 10: Fishbone analysis of the role of empathetic leadership on job satisfaction
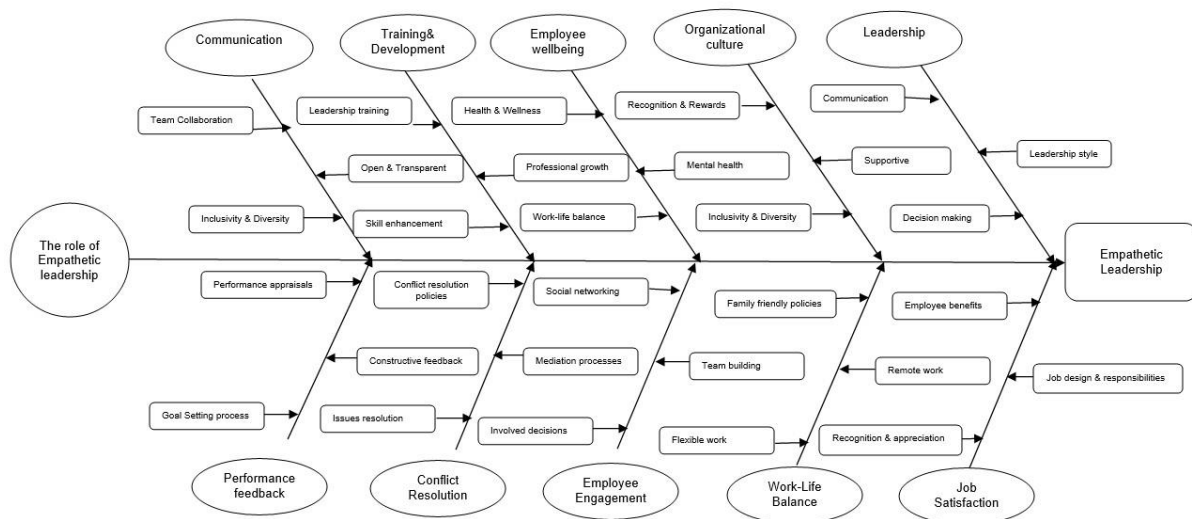
Leadership Style:

Participants emphasized the impact of empathetic leadership styles on job satisfaction. They particularly appreciated leaders who demonstrated understanding, compassion, and a genuine concern for their well-being. This emphasis on understanding, compassion, and a sincere concern for the well-being of team members aligns with Miller's (2022) definition of empathetic leadership – the ability of

leaders to comprehend and connect with the feelings and experiences of their followers. The importance of empathetic leadership in NGOs lies in its direct impact on fostering a positive work environment and enhancing overall job satisfaction among participants. Leaders who demonstrate empathy create a workplace culture that values the individual experiences and concerns of their team members. This, in turn, contributes to a sense of trust, belonging, and motivation within the organization.

Communication:

The significance of effective communication within the organizational framework cannot be overstated. It stands out as a pivotal factor, as highlighted by participants who emphasized the critical role of open and transparent communication in fostering a supportive work environment. Instances were cited where empathetic communication directly contributed to heightened job satisfaction. In alignment with these observations, Jung (2014) underscores the importance of clear communication regarding organizational goals, transparent decision-making processes, and supportive management practices. According to Jung, such communication practices play a crucial role in instilling a sense of purpose and direction among participants, ultimately enhancing overall job satisfaction. In essence, the ability to convey organizational objectives transparently and facilitate supportive management practices becomes instrumental in creating a work environment where individuals feel a greater sense of purpose, thereby contributing significantly to their job satisfaction.

Organizational Culture:

The recurring theme of empathetic leadership in influencing organizational culture underscores its profound importance. Participants acknowledged the crucial role leaders play in establishing a culture that prioritizes values such as empathy, inclusion, and collaboration. According to Taplin (2023), organizations fostering a culture that promotes empathy and compassion are not only more likely to attract but also retain empathetic leaders. Furthermore, Hall (2023) emphasizes the pivotal role of a positive organizational culture in providing empathetic leaders with the requisite resources and support needed for their success within the organizational context. The emphasis here lies in understanding that a nurturing and positive culture not only draws empathetic leaders but also provides them with the conducive environment necessary for their effective leadership. In essence, the role of empathetic leadership extends beyond

individual actions; it contributes significantly to shaping an organizational culture that fosters empathy and enhances the overall success and well-being of both leaders and participants.

Employee Well-being:

The widespread acknowledgment of empathetic leaders' focus on employee well-being highlights its significant importance. Participants recounted instances where leaders actively championed mental health, work-life balance, and personal development, all of which contributed positively to overall job satisfaction. As Sharma (2023) observes, leaders practicing compassionate empathy are inclined to prioritize the well-being of their teams. This emphasis on well-being can lead to reduced stress, enhanced job satisfaction, and elevated morale among team members. Consequently, this positive cycle ultimately results in heightened productivity and increased engagement within the organizational context.

Recognition and Feedback:

Acknowledging individual contributions and providing constructive feedback emerged as integral aspects of empathetic leadership. Participants expressed a profound sense of value when their efforts were recognized, contributing significantly to their overall sense of purpose and satisfaction. Bakhtawar (2016) emphasizes the substantial importance of recognition and appreciation in influencing job satisfaction, particularly within the distinctive context of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). This underscores the role of empathetic leadership in fostering an environment where individuals feel recognized, appreciated, and motivated in their contributions to the organization's mission.

Training and Development:

Participants valued organizations that committed to training programs aimed at cultivating empathetic leadership skills. They acknowledged the favourable impact of these programs on both leaders and the overall work environment. According to Wharton University (2023), offering avenues for skill enhancement, training programs, and opportunities for career growth plays a pivotal role in contributing to the overall job satisfaction within an organization. This underscores the importance of continuous

learning and professional development in fostering a positive and satisfying workplace environment.

Work-Life Balance:

Empathetic leaders received praise for advocating a healthy work-life balance. Participants recounted instances where this emphasis on balance played a crucial role in enhancing their job satisfaction and overall well-being. Attaining an optimal work-life balance is deemed essential for maintaining job satisfaction, as highlighted by Mengistu (2020). This underscores the importance of leaders fostering an environment where employees can balance their professional and personal lives, ultimately contributing to their overall job satisfaction and well-being.

Employee Engagement:

Empathy emerged as a critical catalyst for employee engagement. Participants narrated experiences where empathetic leaders cultivated a sense of connection, engagement, and a collective dedication to the organization's mission. As highlighted by Kock et al. (2019), empathetic leadership stands out as an indispensable skill for those aiming to establish a positive and productive work environment. Moreover, it has the potential to elevate employee engagement and job satisfaction, underscoring its pivotal role in fostering a thriving and harmonious workplace.

Conflict Resolution:

Empathetic leadership proved instrumental in resolving conflicts, with participants highlighting situations where leaders facilitated open and empathetic discussions, resulting in effective resolutions and the preservation of a positive work atmosphere. As Sharma (2023) asserts, leaders equipped with cognitive empathy can detect potential conflicts early, while those with emotional empathy navigate conflicts with heightened sensitivity. Compassionate empathy further motivates leaders to seek constructive solutions that mutually benefit all parties involved. This underscores the importance of empathetic leadership not only in conflict resolution but also in fostering a harmonious and collaborative work environment.

Job Satisfaction:

Participants noted that the correlation between job design and responsibilities aligned with individual strengths had a positive impact on their satisfaction in their roles. Additionally, participants highlighted that the provision of more employee benefits could contribute to an increase in job satisfaction. In a study by Kazaara et al.(2023), it was found that although employees in NGOs are frequently driven by a sense of purpose and commitment to social causes, fair and competitive compensation remains crucial for their overall job satisfaction. This underscores the importance of not only aligning roles with individual strengths but also ensuring competitive compensation to enhance job satisfaction within the NGO sector.

Table 3: The respondents' perception on the role of empathetic leadership as per objective 1.

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
	Questions	1	2	3	4	5
	Section 2: Empathetic Leadership					
1.	Empathetic leaders in our organization understand and respond to the needs and concerns of employees.	2	4	9	10	35
2.	Empathetic leaders in our organization actively listen to employees' feedback and ideas.	1	1	8	7	43
3.	Empathetic leaders in our organization provide emotional support to employees when needed.	2	3	8	8	40
4.	Empathetic leaders in our organization demonstrate a genuine concern for the well-being of employees.	0	2	6	10	42

Section 2: Empathetic Leadership

1. **Understanding and Responding to Needs:**

   The study showed that a significant and noteworthy majority, precisely 75% of the participants, actively participated in expressing their collective acknowledgment. This shared sentiment revolves around the recognition that leaders who embody empathetic qualities within their organizational roles exhibit a distinct capacity for understanding and responding to the multifaceted

needs and concerns of their employees. Cherry (2023) posits that leaders possessing cognitive empathy gain valuable insight into their team's concerns, motivations, and needs, facilitating informed decision-making, conflict resolution, and effective communication.   The high level of agreement observed among participants suggests a pervasive and overwhelmingly positive perception of empathetic leadership within the organizational setting. This collective viewpoint signifies a widespread consensus among the study's participants that empathetic leaders possess a pronounced ability to navigate and cater to the diverse array of needs and concerns prevalent among the workforce. Delving deeper into the implications of this consensus, it becomes evident that the alignment of empathetic leadership characteristics with the organizational context holds immense significance. This alignment creates an inclusive and supportive environment where employees, across varying roles and responsibilities, perceive themselves as being genuinely heard, valued, and supported by their leaders.This positive organizational sentiment is instrumental in fostering a culture of harmony and responsiveness within the leadership framework. Employees feel a sense of connection and trust in a work environment where empathetic leadership prevails, leading to an overall enhancement of the organizational culture. In this dynamic, the alignment of empathetic leadership traits with the organizational context becomes a catalyst for cultivating a harmonious and responsive culture, contributing to the holistic well-being and job satisfaction of the workforce.

2. **Active Listening to Feedback:**

The findings from the survey showcase a robust consensus, with a substantial 83% of participants expressing a shared perspective on empathetic leaders actively engaging in the process of listening to employees' feedback and ideas. This notable level of agreement underscores a prevailing acknowledgment of the empathetic leaders' commitment to cultivating an inclusive and participative environment within the organization. Within this context, the term "actively listen" suggests that empathetic leaders go beyond mere hearing; they are deeply engaged in understanding and valuing the input provided by employees. This active listening approach contributes to a receptive leadership style,

emphasizing a genuine interest in the thoughts, concerns, and innovative ideas put forth by the workforce. The significance of this agreement extends to the organizational dynamics, where a leadership style characterized by active listening becomes a catalyst for fostering open communication. Sharma (2023) suggests that leaders can enhance their communication effectiveness by comprehending and empathizing with the emotions of team members. This improvement results in more constructive feedback, attentive listening, and increased empathy, ultimately enhancing overall communication within the team. Employees feel not only heard but also genuinely understood, creating a workplace culture that encourages the free exchange of ideas and perspectives. This, in turn, contributes to a collaborative atmosphere where employees feel empowered to contribute meaningfully to the organizational goals.

3. **Providing Emotional Support:**

Within the surveyed cohort, a significant and noteworthy 80% of participants actively shared their perspective, collectively expressing the sentiment that leaders displaying empathetic qualities in their organization consistently extend emotional support when it is needed. This substantial agreement highlights the pivotal role that empathetic leaders play in addressing the emotional well-being of their team members, underlining the critical importance of leadership that goes beyond operational aspects to encompass the holistic support and care of the workforce. The pronounced level of consensus among participants conveys a prevailing belief in the capacity of empathetic leaders to provide not just professional guidance but also a supportive framework for emotional well-being within the organizational context. Empathetic leaders are more likely to provide their employees with emotional support. This can help to improve employee morale and job satisfaction (Hougaard et al. 2021). The emphasis on emotional support implies a leadership approach that recognizes the individual experiences, challenges, and emotions of team members, acknowledging the inherent human aspect of the workplace. Delving into the nuanced implications of this collective viewpoint, it becomes evident that the participants perceive empathetic leaders as instrumental in creating a workplace culture that prioritizes the emotional health of its members. The

leaders, in this context, are seen as approachable figures who foster an environment where team members feel comfortable seeking emotional support when faced with personal or professional challenges. This consensus underscores the idea that empathetic leadership, particularly when imbued with empathy, extends beyond the traditional confines of task-oriented management. Instead, it becomes a source of solace and encouragement for the workforce. Such leadership qualities contribute not only to the emotional well-being of individual employees but also to the overall resilience and cohesiveness of the organizational culture. Ultimately, the resounding agreement on the provision of emotional support by empathetic leaders emphasizes the profound impact that empathetic leadership can have on creating a workplace environment that genuinely cares for and supports the holistic well-being of its members.

4. **Demonstrating Genuine Concern:**

The extensive examination of data gathered from the study unequivocally highlights a prevailing sentiment among participants, with an overwhelming 87% expressing a shared perspective. This collective viewpoint emphasizes that empathetic leaders are widely perceived as authentically demonstrating genuine concern for the well-being of their employees. This statistical majority underscores the profound impact and significance of authentic leadership within the organizational framework. The resounding agreement among participants indicates a consistent recognition of empathetic leaders not merely as authoritative figures but as individuals who genuinely prioritize and care about the overall well-being of their team members. This perception resonates with the essence of authentic leadership, where leaders are not only proficient in their roles but also exhibit a sincere and heartfelt commitment to the welfare of those under their guidance. According to Amatenstein (2020) compassionate empathy, often referred to as empathic concern or empathetic action, represents the highest and most altruistic level of empathy. It goes beyond understanding and sharing feelings; it motivates individuals to take positive and supportive action to alleviate another person's suffering or distress. Delving deeper into the implications of this data, it becomes apparent that the perception of empathetic leaders as authentically caring for employee well-

being contributes significantly to the organizational culture. In such an environment, employees are more likely to feel valued, supported, and motivated, fostering a sense of loyalty and commitment to the leadership and the organization as a whole. The emphasis on the authenticity of leadership in caring for employee well-being also speaks to the broader narrative of organizational trust. When leaders are perceived as genuinely concerned for the welfare of their team, it engenders a trustful relationship between leadership and employees. This trust forms the bedrock of a positive organizational culture and fosters an environment conducive to collaboration, innovation, and overall job satisfaction.

Table 4: perceptions of respondents on the influence of empathetic leadership on job satisfaction

	Section 3: Employee Satisfaction					
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1.	I am satisfied with my work in this NGO.	0	1	4	2	53
2.	The work environment in our NGO is conducive to employee satisfaction.	1	1	6	2	50
3.	I feel valued and appreciated by the organization.	4	6	2	2	46
4.	My organization supports my professional growth and development.	0	3	7	3	47
5.	I have a good work-life balance in my role.	3	10	2	5	40

Section 3: Employee Satisfaction

1. **Overall Job Satisfaction:**

   An overwhelming consensus emerged from the participant responses, with a significant majority, specifically 92%, expressing a high level of satisfaction with their work within the Non-Governmental Organization (NGO). This resounding affirmation unveils a pervasive and positive sentiment among the workforce, reflecting contentment and fulfilment in their respective roles within the organizational framework. The remarkable percentage of satisfaction implies that the participants, by and large, find their work in the NGO fulfilling and rewarding. Weir (2023) notes that employees who feel valued for their work in advancing the organization's mission are more likely to experience heightened

job satisfaction. This level of contentment may extend beyond mere job-related tasks, encompassing factors such as organizational culture, work environment, and the alignment of personal values with the NGO's mission and objectives. Delving into the nuanced implications of this high satisfaction rate, it becomes apparent that the positive sentiment is indicative of a workplace environment that meets or exceeds the expectations and needs of the employees. It suggests that the organizational structure, leadership style, and overall work atmosphere within the NGO contribute to a fulfilling and satisfying professional experience for the majority of participants. Furthermore, such a high satisfaction rate can be linked to the perception of meaningful work within the NGO sector. Employees in NGOs often derive satisfaction from the sense of purpose and the opportunity to contribute to social causes. Therefore, the high satisfaction rate may signify a strong alignment between the personal values and aspirations of the participants and the overarching mission of the NGO.

2. **Conducive Work Environment:**

The survey results unveil a substantial agreement among participants, with an impressive 87% expressing a shared sentiment regarding the work environment within their Non-Governmental Organization (NGO). This collective viewpoint underscores a prevailing belief that the conditions and atmosphere within the organization significantly contribute to employee satisfaction. The high percentage of agreement suggests a robust consensus on the positive impact of the organizational environment on overall job satisfaction among participants. As Kock et al. (2019) pointed out, empathetic leadership holds the capacity to enhance both employee engagement and job satisfaction, emphasizing its crucial role in cultivating a flourishing and harmonious work environment. The acknowledgement of the work environment being conducive to employee satisfaction delves into the intricacies of the organizational conditions. Participants, by expressing agreement, indicate a perception that extends beyond individual job roles to encompass broader factors such as workplace culture, organizational policies, and the quality of interpersonal relationships within the NGO. Examining the nuanced implications of this shared sentiment, it becomes evident that the positive perception of the work environment aligns with the overall satisfaction of

employees. Elements contributing to this positive work environment might include supportive leadership, open communication channels, opportunities for professional growth, and a commitment to the well-being of the workforce. Moreover, the agreement on the positive work environment implies that the NGO has successfully established conditions that foster collaboration, engagement, and a sense of purpose among its employees. This aligns with the broader understanding that a conducive work environment is instrumental in not only retaining talent but also in promoting employee productivity, motivation, and overall job satisfaction.

3. **Feeling Valued and Appreciated:**

The survey outcomes reveal a prevailing sentiment among the majority of participants, with a substantial 80% expressing a positive feeling of being valued and appreciated by the organization. This substantial percentage implies a widespread acknowledgment among a significant portion of the workforce that their contributions and efforts are recognized and esteemed within the organizational context. According to Brown (2022) inspirational and empathetic leadership fosters a positive work culture, where employees feel motivated and valued. However, it is essential to note a discernible segment, constituting 20% of the respondents, expressing a more neutral or negative sentiment concerning their perceived value and appreciation within the organization. This minority viewpoint suggests a potential area of concern that warrants deeper investigation into the factors influencing this subset's perception of appreciation.

4. **Support for Professional Growth:**

The research outcomes reveal a significant consensus among participants, with an impressive 83% expressing a shared belief that their organization actively supports their professional growth and development. This robust agreement suggests a prevailing positive stance regarding the organizational commitment to facilitating the career advancement and ongoing development of its employees. The high percentage of agreement indicates a widespread perception that the organization values and invests in the professional growth of its workforce. According to Parsons (2022), making this investment creates

a favourable workplace atmosphere, wherein employees sense appreciation and receive support for their personal and professional development. This support for career development could encompass various initiatives, including training programs, mentorship opportunities, skill-building workshops, and avenues for career progression within the organization. It becomes apparent that the positive organizational approach to employee career advancement contributes to a work environment that fosters continuous learning and growth. Participants, by expressing their belief in organizational support, indicate a sense of confidence and assurance in the opportunities provided for them to enhance their professional skills and advance in their careers. Moreover, this shared belief aligns with broader organizational success metrics. A commitment to professional growth and development is not only beneficial for individual employees but also contributes to the overall effectiveness, adaptability, and innovation of the organization. Employees who perceive support for their career advancement are likely to be more engaged, motivated, and dedicated to contributing their best to the organization's goals.

5. **Work-Life Balance:**

The survey findings shed light on a significant aspect of participants' experiences within the organization, revealing that a substantial 75% perceive having a good work-life balance in their current roles. This predominant agreement indicates a widespread acknowledgment and contentment among the majority of the workforce concerning the equilibrium between their professional responsibilities and personal life, showcasing a positive facet of the organizational environment. Achieving an ideal equilibrium between work and personal life is considered crucial for sustaining job satisfaction, as emphasized by Mengistu (2020). However, it is noteworthy that a notable quarter of the participants, constituting 25%, express a more neutral or negative stance on their work-life balance. This minority viewpoint points to potential areas for improvement in the organizations' practices related to work-life balance, suggesting a need for further exploration into the factors influencing this subset's perceptions and experiences. The positive sentiment among the 75% majority implies that the organization has implemented effective policies, practices, or a supportive culture that allows employees to navigate their

professional and personal commitments successfully. Elements contributing to this positive work-life balance may include flexible work schedules, remote work options, clear communication regarding expectations, and an organizational culture that prioritizes employee well-being. On the flip side, the concerns expressed by the 25% minority call for a detailed examination into the factors impacting their work-life balance. This exploration may involve gathering specific feedback through surveys, conducting individual interviews, or facilitating focus group discussions to identify the challenges faced by this subset and discern potential areas for improvement. Addressing the concerns of the 25% minority not only contributes to their individual well-being and job satisfaction but also aligns with broader organizational goals. A healthy work-life balance is instrumental in promoting employee morale, reducing burnout, and enhancing overall productivity and job satisfaction.

Table 5: Participants perceptions on the relationship between empathetic leadership and job satisfaction as per objective 3.

	Section 4: Empathetic Leadership and Employee Satisfaction					
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1.	Empathetic leadership positively influences employee satisfaction in our organization.	0	1	6	10	43
2.	The presence of empathetic leaders contributes to a higher level of job satisfaction among employees.	0	0	6	2	52
3.	Empathetic leadership is crucial for enhancing employee well-being and contentment.	0	0	4	6	50
4.	In our organization, employee satisfaction is closely tied to the presence of empathetic leaders.	0	1	8	1	51

Section 4: Empathetic Leadership and Employee Satisfaction

1. Positive Influence on Employee Satisfaction:

The survey findings reveal a compelling consensus among participants, with an overwhelming 88% expressing a shared belief that empathetic leadership exerts a positive influence on employee satisfaction within their organization.

This resounding agreement underscores the pervasive acknowledgment among the workforce of the profound impact that empathetic leadership has in shaping the overall job contentment and well-being of employees. The robust agreement implies a widespread recognition that leaders who exhibit empathetic qualities contribute significantly to fostering a positive and supportive work environment. As highlighted by Kock et al. (2019), empathetic leadership stands out as an indispensable skill for those aiming to establish a positive and productive work environment. This positive work environment, in turn, translates into heightened employee satisfaction, as evidenced by the strong majority expressing agreement. It becomes evident that empathetic leadership is perceived as a cornerstone for shaping the organizational culture. The leaders' ability to understand, empathize, and respond to the needs and concerns of employees is acknowledged as a pivotal factor in creating a workplace where individuals feel valued, heard, and supported. Moreover, the high percentage of agreement indicates that the positive impact of empathetic leadership extends beyond individual roles and responsibilities. It permeates the broader organizational dynamics, contributing to a culture of trust, collaboration, and shared purpose. In such an environment, employees are not only motivated but also derive a sense of fulfilment and satisfaction from their work. The emphasis on the positive influence of empathetic leadership aligns with the broader understanding that leadership styles directly impact organizational success. Organizations with empathetic leaders are better positioned to attract and retain talent, enhance employee engagement, and create a workplace that thrives on mutual respect and understanding.

2. **Contributing to Higher Job Satisfaction:**

The survey outcomes underscore a robust and compelling correlation between the presence of empathetic leaders and increased job satisfaction, as indicated by a substantial 90% agreement among participants. This overwhelming consensus reveals a resounding acknowledgment of the profound and positive impact that empathetic leadership has on the overall job satisfaction of individuals within the organizational context. The strong correlation implies that when leaders exhibit empathetic qualities, there is a corresponding enhancement in the satisfaction levels of the workforce. Agarwal (2018)

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mentions that in an NGO, a positive work environment characterized by a shared dedication to the organization's mission, transparent communication, and a supportive atmosphere fosters higher job satisfaction. Empathetic leaders are perceived as those who not only understand the professional needs and challenges of their team members but also resonate with their personal experiences and concerns. This alignment between leadership qualities and employee satisfaction suggests that empathetic leaders contribute significantly to creating a workplace environment where individuals feel valued, supported, and fulfilled in their roles. It becomes apparent that empathetic leaders play a crucial role in shaping the emotional well-being and contentment of the workforce. The ability of leaders to connect on an emotional level, show understanding, and actively respond to the needs of employees contributes to the creation of a positive organizational culture. In such a culture, individuals are more likely to derive satisfaction not only from the nature of their work but also from the interpersonal dynamics and leadership support within the organization. Moreover, the 90% agreement emphasizes the broad consensus among participants, transcending individual differences and job roles. It signifies that the positive influence of empathetic leadership is not confined to specific departments or levels within the organization but is a pervasive and shared experience across the workforce.

3. **Crucial for Well-being and Contentment:**

The survey results illuminate a prevailing sentiment among participants, with an overwhelming majority of 93% expressing the viewpoint that empathetic leadership holds paramount importance in elevating employee well-being and contentment. This resounding agreement underscores the indispensable role that empathetic leadership plays in fostering a positive and nurturing work environment within the organizational context. The substantial percentage of 93% suggests a widespread recognition among participants that leaders who exhibit empathy contribute significantly to the overall sense of well-being and satisfaction experienced by employees. This acknowledgment implies that empathetic leaders go beyond mere task-oriented management; they actively engage with the emotional and personal aspects of their team members, creating an environment where individuals feel valued, understood, and

supported. As Sharma (2023) observes, leaders practicing compassionate empathy are inclined to prioritize the well-being of their teams. This emphasis on well-being can lead to reduced stress, enhanced job satisfaction, and elevated morale among team members. It is clear that the integral role of empathetic leadership extends to various facets of the workplace. These leaders are seen as instrumental in not only addressing professional concerns but also in fostering a culture that prioritizes the holistic well-being of employees. Their ability to connect on an emotional level, show understanding, and provide support contributes to a work environment where individuals thrive emotionally, leading to increased job satisfaction and contentment. Moreover, this collective acknowledgment of the crucial role of empathetic leadership emphasizes the widespread consensus among participants, transcending individual differences and job roles. It signifies that the positive impact of empathetic leadership is perceived as a shared and fundamental aspect that influences the well-being of the entire workforce.

4. **Close Tie Between Empathetic Leadership and Employee Satisfaction:**

The survey outcomes reveal a noteworthy consensus among participants, with a substantial majority of 87% expressing agreement that employee satisfaction within their organization is intricately linked to the presence of empathetic leaders. This collective viewpoint underscores the profound interdependence between leadership practices and the overall contentment experienced by employees within the organizational framework. The significant percentage of 87% indicates a widespread acknowledgment among participants that the style of leadership, specifically characterized by empathy, plays a pivotal role in shaping the satisfaction levels of the workforce. This agreement suggests that leaders who demonstrate empathy are perceived as key influencers in creating a workplace environment where employees feel heard, understood, and supported in their professional endeavours. It becomes evident that the connection between empathetic leadership and employee satisfaction extends beyond the superficial. The study conducted by Naritasari, Surwanti, & Nurul (2023) demonstrated a robust impact of empathic leadership on employee performance, as evidenced by an original sample coefficient value of 0.194, a t-statistic value of 2.174, and a p-value of 0.0030. Empathetic leaders are not

only seen as responsive to the professional needs and challenges of their team members but also as individuals who understand and resonate with their personal experiences. This deeper level of connection contributes to a workplace culture where individuals find value, motivation, and fulfilment in their roles. Moreover, the 87% agreement underscores a broad consensus among participants, indicating that the perceived impact of empathetic leadership is not confined to specific departments or hierarchical levels within the organization. Instead, it is a shared recognition that transcends individual differences, highlighting the universal nature of the influence that empathetic leadership practices have on the overall job satisfaction of employees.

4.4 Conclusion

The comprehensive examination of the findings distinctly points towards a robust and affirmative correlation between empathetic leadership and employee job satisfaction within the Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) sector. The overarching sentiment conveyed by participants indicates a notable prevalence of high job satisfaction levels, underscoring the overall positive atmosphere cultivated by empathetic leadership. However, amid these commendable levels of satisfaction, discernible areas emerge, particularly in the realms of perceived appreciation and work-life balance, where targeted organizational initiatives could further elevate employee well-being and contentment. The findings spotlight the integral role played by empathetic leadership in shaping a positive work environment and exerting a substantial influence on overall job satisfaction throughout the study. It is evident that leaders who exhibit empathy contribute significantly to the positive atmosphere within NGOs, fostering an environment where employees feel valued, understood, and supported. This positive association between empathetic leadership and job satisfaction extends beyond general sentiments, forming a foundational element in the overall well-being and contentment experienced by individuals engaged in the NGO sector. While the study underscores the prevailing high levels of job satisfaction, the nuanced examination of specific areas, such as perceived appreciation and work-life balance, unveils opportunities for targeted interventions. Addressing these areas with a strategic focus could further amplify the positive impact of empathetic leadership, enhancing employee well-being and contributing to even higher levels of overall job satisfaction within the unique context of Non-Governmental Organizations.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In the exploration of the intricate relationship between empathetic leadership and job satisfaction within the Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) sector, this study engaged with a diverse cohort of 60 participants. The ensuing chapter marks the culmination of our investigation, serving as a platform where empirical findings, participant feedback, and theoretical frameworks converge. Through a synthesis of key discoveries, this chapter endeavours to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of empathetic leadership on job satisfaction in the unique organizational context of NGOs. As we reflect on the insights gleaned from the study, our focus shifts towards delineating strategic recommendations. These recommendations are designed to not only enrich our understanding of the empathetic leadership-job satisfaction nexus but also to offer actionable insights for fostering a workplace environment that optimally supports the well-being and contentment of employees in the NGO sector.

5.2 Findings from the study

The findings from the study on the role of empathetic leadership in fostering job satisfaction within the Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) sector reveal compelling insights into the dynamics of organizational well-being. Through a nuanced exploration involving 60 participants, the research illuminates a strong positive correlation between empathetic leadership and heightened job satisfaction. Participants overwhelmingly expressed that leaders demonstrating empathy significantly contribute to a positive and supportive work environment, influencing their overall contentment in their roles within NGOs. While the majority reported high levels of job satisfaction, the study highlights specific areas, such as perceived appreciation and work-life balance, where targeted organizational efforts could further enhance employee well-being. These findings not only underscore the pivotal role of empathetic leadership in shaping job satisfaction but also provide valuable implications for strategic interventions aimed at fostering a more enriching and fulfilling work experience in the NGO sector.

5.2.1 Finding from literature review

Commencing from section 5.2.1.1, the findings extracted from the literature review will be expounded upon, categorized under distinct thematic threads for a comprehensive exploration and understanding of the identified patterns and insights.

5.2.1.1 Findings from the role of empathetic leadership in fostering job satisfaction

The collective findings from the reviewed studies underscore the pivotal role of empathetic leadership in fostering job satisfaction among employees. Negoro & Wibowo's (2021) study establishes a direct and positive correlation between empathetic leadership and job satisfaction, emphasizing its significance as a noteworthy dimension in influencing employee well-being. Kock et al. (2019) and Castelli, Wan, & Wan (2013) contribute to this understanding by highlighting the far-reaching impact of empathetic leadership on innovative behavior, affective states, and the cultivation of trustworthy, motivated employees. The study by Naritasari, Surwanti, & Nurul (2023) further strengthens this link, demonstrating a robust effect of empathic leadership on employee performance, subsequently contributing to heightened job satisfaction. Chinthamu's (2022) recommendation for management to embrace empathetic leadership practices aligns with the broader theme of encouraging innovation, fostering inclusion, and enhancing job satisfaction and engagement. Zivkovic's (2022) study emphasizes the comprehensive effects of empathy on leaders, followers, and the organization, further highlighting its significance in driving organizational success. Finally, the work of Haynie et al. (2018) emphasizes the positive relationships cultivated by empathetic leaders, emphasizing their role in promoting employee well-being and organizational effectiveness. Collectively, these findings affirm the critical impact of empathetic leadership in creating positive work environments and contributing to overall job satisfaction and organizational success.

5.2.1.2 Findings on The Role of Organizational Culture in Supporting Empathetic Leadership

The amalgamated findings from various studies posit a comprehensive understanding that underscores the substantial impact of organizational culture on the expression and efficacy of empathetic leadership within the organizational milieu. According to Daft (2018), organizational culture is delineated as a potent force that molds employee

morale, productivity, and overall performance, signifying its pervasive influence on the organizational landscape. The confluence of organizational and employee norms and values, as illuminated by Kalaiarasi & Sundaram (2017), emerges as a pivotal determinant contributing to heightened organizational performance and the accomplishment of overarching goals. Taplin (2023) accentuates the pivotal role of cultivating a positive organizational culture that places a premium on empathy and compassion, asserting its instrumental function in both attracting and retaining empathetic leaders. Furthermore, Hall (2023) underscores the indispensable role of a positive organizational culture in providing essential resources and support for the triumph of empathetic leaders, elucidating the symbiotic relationship between cultural positivity and empathetic leadership success. Maven's (2022) contribution adds depth to this understanding, suggesting that organizations fostering norms of support and respect create an environment wherein employees feel not only comfortable but encouraged to seek help and support. In alignment with this, Kock (2019) posits that organizational support, including access to mental health and wellness resources, plays a pivotal role in fostering empathetic leadership. Zaki's (2019) research concludes that leaders displaying empathy are more likely to thrive in organizations characterized by a positive organizational culture. In essence, these collective findings underscore the intricate and interwoven relationship between organizational culture and the cultivation of empathetic leadership, highlighting the pivotal role played by shared values, robust support systems, and a positive cultural environment in fostering empathetic leadership within organizational frameworks.

5.2.1.3 Findings on Empathy in Action

Empathy, as delineated by Cerqueira (2019) and Cherry (2023), operates at three distinct levels, each contributing varying degrees of emotional depth and engagement. Leaders, being instrumental in guiding organizations, must develop competence across these levels to lead authentically, as argued by Van Bommel (2021). The study unearthed compelling insights into the operational dimensions of empathy, specifically focusing on Cognitive Empathy, Emotional Empathy, and Compassionate Empathy. At the foundational level, Cognitive Empathy, involves a rational and analytical process, enabling leaders to understand and recognize others' emotions and perspectives (Clarke, 2023). Leaders possessing cognitive empathy gain valuable insight into their team's concerns, motivations, and needs, facilitating informed

decision-making, conflict resolution, and effective communication (Cherry, 2023). Maven (2022) accentuates the practical implications, noting that leaders with cognitive empathy can discern when team members are overwhelmed, allowing for workload adjustments and tailored support, thereby enhancing team morale and productivity. Moving to a deeper level, Emotional Empathy, entails not only understanding but also feeling another person's emotions alongside them (Bogenberger, 2023). This level fosters a profound connection, as individuals can physically and emotionally sense what others are going through (Psychology-today, 2023). Leaders with emotional empathy connect with their team on a more profound emotional level, celebrating successes with genuine joy and providing sincere support during challenging times (Hall, 2023). This deep emotional resonance fosters camaraderie and trust within the team. At the pinnacle, Compassionate Empathy represents the highest and most altruistic level of empathy (Amatenstein, 2020). It goes beyond understanding and sharing feelings, motivating individuals to take positive and supportive actions to alleviate others' suffering (Weiland, 2023). Leaders with compassionate empathy not only understand and share in their team's emotions but are also driven to actively support and uplift team members (Hougaard, Carter, & Afton, 2021). They create an environment where team members feel valued, supported, and empowered, ultimately leading to increased loyalty, motivation, and overall well-being among team members.

5.2.1.4 Findings on Empathetic Leadership and its Influence on Job Satisfaction

Leadership, as defined by Daft (2018), is a process of influencing others to achieve common goals, and its impact on job satisfaction is a crucial aspect in organizational dynamics. Extensive research has explored the relationship between leadership and job satisfaction, with a consensus emerging that empathetic leadership significantly contributes to positive job satisfaction. This synthesis is supported by a meta-analysis conducted by Avolio, Waldman, and Yammarino (1991), encompassing 32 studies, revealing a moderately strong correlation of 0.32 between leadership and job satisfaction. Empathetic leadership, as highlighted by Muttalib, Muhammad, & Zehri (2023), exerts influence on job satisfaction through various mechanisms. Firstly, by creating a positive and supportive work environment, leaders can enhance job satisfaction. Herrity (2022) suggests that clear expectations, regular feedback, and opportunities for professional development contribute to this positive environment. Additionally, Jaffe (2022) emphasizes the importance of fair and impartial treatment

by leaders, fostering respect among employees, further contributing to job satisfaction. Motivation and inspiration, as outlined by Tenney (2023), represent another avenue through which leadership influences job satisfaction. Empathetic leaders motivate employees by setting clear and achievable goals, providing necessary resources, and acknowledging achievements. Tenney (2023) underlines the ability of empathetic leaders to inspire and drive employees, creating a positive atmosphere and offering avenues for career progression, thereby positively impacting job satisfaction.

The complexity of the relationship between leadership and job satisfaction is acknowledged by Muttalib, Muhammad, & Zehri (2023), who highlight the influence of factors like leadership style, employee characteristics, and organizational culture. However, the study underscores the significant role played by leadership in determining job satisfaction. Supporting these findings, a survey by the Society for Human Resource Management in 2014 revealed that 73% of employees affirmed the direct influence of their supervisors' leadership style on their job satisfaction. Moreover, Gallup's study in 2013 found that positive relationships with managers correlate with higher employee engagement and job satisfaction. Guo's (2022) research adds that employees who perceive their leaders as ethical and honest are more likely to express satisfaction with their jobs.

5.2.1.5 Findings on Challenges and Limitations of Empathetic Leadership

While empathetic leadership is widely recognized for its positive impact on job satisfaction and overall organizational success, it is crucial to acknowledge the challenges and limitations that can hinder its application. Empathetic leadership introduces the risk of emotional exhaustion and burnout among leaders. Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter (2001) describe burnout as chronic workplace stress leading to feelings of exhaustion, cynicism, and ineffectiveness. Empathetic individuals, engaging more frequently in emotional labor, are prone to emotional exhaustion and burnout (Wrobel, 2013). Individuals with high empathy need additional resources like emotional regulation tools to mitigate burnout risk (Hunt, Denieffe, and Gooney, 2017). On the other hand, Excessive empathy, termed "over-identification," may lead to blurred boundaries and hinder decision-making (Koenig, 2018). Maintaining objectivity while understanding employees' emotions is crucial, as over-identification can compromise cognitive clarity and pose challenges in addressing performance issues.

Cultivating empathetic leadership requires dedicated time and resources. However, in fast-paced environments or crises, leaders may face challenges in allocating sufficient time to empathetic interactions, potentially limiting the depth of connections (Glover, 2021; Misiaszek and McCarthy, 2022). Empathy's applicability is shaped by cultural factors, posing challenges for leaders in adopting a universally effective approach (Eichbaum et al., 2022). Gender stereotypes may influence the perception of empathetic leadership, with male leaders potentially encountering resistance or scepticism, impacting its effects on job satisfaction. Authenticity is crucial in empathetic leadership. However, leaders may struggle to authentically convey empathy, facing scepticism or perceptions of insincerity from employees (Eichbaum et al., 2022; All-things-talent, 2021).(Misiaszek and McCarthy (2022) cautions that not all leaders inherently possess empathetic skills, necessitating deliberate training initiatives Identifying, recruiting, and developing empathetic leaders may demand significant resources and time, posing challenges for organizations with limited resources or high turnover rates (Hall, 2023). Measuring the impact of empathetic leadership on job satisfaction is challenging. Conventional performance measures may not adequately capture empathy's influence on well-being. However, studies like Kock et al. (2019) and Van Bommel (2021) have attempted to explore this correlation, revealing positive impacts on follower performance, job satisfaction, work-life balance, and innovation.

5.1.1 Findings from primary research

Within this segment, we delve into and explore the outcomes derived from the primary research conducted.

5.1.1.1 Findings on empathetic leadership

The study, encompassing 60 participants, revealed a significant and noteworthy majority of 75% actively expressing their collective acknowledgment. Participants recognized that leaders embodying empathetic qualities demonstrate a distinct capacity to understand and respond to the multifaceted needs of their employees. This aligns with Cherry's (2023) assertion that leaders with cognitive empathy gain valuable insights for informed decision-making, conflict resolution, and effective communication. The high level of agreement suggests a pervasive and overwhelmingly positive perception of empathetic leadership. This consensus

underscores the alignment of empathetic leadership characteristics with the organizational context, creating an inclusive and supportive environment, where employees feel genuinely heard, valued, and supported. This positive organizational sentiment is instrumental in fostering a culture of harmony and responsiveness within the leadership framework, contributing to the holistic well-being and job satisfaction of the workforce. The alignment of empathetic leadership traits becomes a catalyst for cultivating a harmonious and responsive culture. Survey findings showcase a robust consensus, with 83% of participants expressing a shared perspective on empathetic leaders actively engaging in listening to employees' feedback and ideas. This underscores empathetic leaders' commitment to cultivating an inclusive and participative environment, going beyond mere hearing to deeply understand and value employees' input. This active listening approach contributes to a receptive leadership style, fostering open communication and a workplace culture that encourages the free exchange of ideas and perspectives. Within the surveyed cohort, 80% of participants expressed the sentiment that leaders displaying empathetic qualities consistently extend emotional support when needed. This underscores the pivotal role of empathetic leaders in addressing the emotional well-being of their team members, emphasizing the importance of leadership that extends beyond operational aspects. This collective viewpoint highlights empathetic leaders as instrumental in creating a workplace culture that prioritizes the emotional health of its members, fostering an environment where team members feel comfortable seeking support when faced with challenges. A resounding 87% of participants expressed a shared perspective that empathetic leaders authentically demonstrate genuine concern for the well-being of their employees. This underscores the profound impact and significance of authentic leadership within the organizational framework. Participants consistently recognized empathetic leaders not just as authoritative figures but as individuals genuinely prioritizing and caring about the overall well-being of their team members. This perception contributes significantly to the organizational culture, fostering a sense of loyalty, commitment, and trust between leadership and employees, ultimately enhancing job satisfaction.

5.1.1.2 Findings on employee satisfaction

A resounding consensus emerged among participants, with an overwhelming 92% expressing high satisfaction with their work within the NGO. This notable percentage

implies that participants find their work fulfilling, possibly extending beyond tasks to encompass organizational culture, work environment, and alignment with the NGO's mission. The high satisfaction rate suggests that the organizational structure and leadership contribute to a satisfying professional experience, reflecting a positive workplace environment. Survey results revealed a substantial agreement (87%) among participants regarding the positive impact of the organizational environment on overall job satisfaction. Participants acknowledged that organizational conditions, including workplace culture and policies, significantly contribute to employee satisfaction. This aligns with the understanding that a conducive work environment fosters collaboration, engagement, and a sense of purpose among employees, ultimately enhancing job satisfaction. The majority (80%) of participants expressed a positive feeling of being valued and appreciated by the organization. This implies widespread acknowledgment that their contributions are recognized, fostering a positive work culture. However, 20% expressed a neutral or negative sentiment, indicating a potential area of concern requiring further investigation into the factors influencing this subset's perception of appreciation. An impressive 83% of participants believed that their organization actively supports their professional growth and development. This shared belief reflects a positive organizational commitment to facilitating career advancement and continuous development, contributing to a work environment that encourages learning and growth. This aligns with the broader success metrics of organizational effectiveness, adaptability, and innovation. A significant 75% of participants perceived having a good work-life balance, indicating contentment with the equilibrium between professional and personal life. This positive sentiment suggests effective policies, practices, or a supportive culture within the organization. However, the 25% minority expressing a more neutral or negative stance highlights potential areas for improvement in work-life balance practices, calling for further exploration into the factors influencing this subset's perceptions and experiences. Addressing these concerns aligns with organizational goals related to employee well-being and job satisfaction.

5.1.1.3 Findings on Empathetic Leadership and Employee Satisfaction

The survey findings reveal a compelling consensus among participants, with 88% expressing a shared belief that empathetic leadership positively influences employee satisfaction. This agreement underscores the widespread acknowledgment of the profound impact empathetic leaders have in shaping job contentment and well-being. The recognition suggests that leaders with empathetic qualities significantly contribute to fostering a positive and supportive work environment, aligning with Kock et al.'s (2019) emphasis on empathetic leadership in establishing a positive work environment. This positive influence extends beyond individual roles, permeating the broader organizational dynamics, fostering a culture of trust, collaboration, and shared purpose. The survey outcomes reveal a robust correlation between the presence of empathetic leaders and increased job satisfaction, with 90% of participants expressing agreement. This consensus reflects a profound acknowledgment of the positive impact empathetic leadership has on overall job satisfaction. Empathetic leaders are perceived as those who not only understand professional needs but also resonate with personal experiences, contributing to a workplace where individuals feel valued, supported, and fulfilled. This alignment between leadership qualities and employee satisfaction suggests that empathetic leaders play a crucial role in shaping emotional well-being and contentment. An overwhelming majority of 93% express the viewpoint that empathetic leadership is crucial in elevating employee well-being and contentment. This resounding agreement underscores the indispensable role empathetic leaders play in fostering a positive and nurturing work environment. Leaders who exhibit empathy are seen as instrumental in actively engaging with the emotional and personal aspects of their team members, contributing to an environment where individuals feel valued, understood, and supported. The acknowledgment emphasizes the integral role of empathetic leadership in addressing both professional and holistic well-being. The survey outcomes reveal a noteworthy consensus, with 87% expressing agreement that employee satisfaction is intricately linked to the presence of empathetic leaders. This collective viewpoint highlights the profound interdependence between leadership practices, specifically characterized by empathy, and overall employee contentment. Leaders demonstrating empathy are perceived as key influencers in creating a workplace environment where employees feel heard, understood, and supported. This connection between empathetic

leadership and employee satisfaction extends beyond superficial aspects, emphasizing a deeper level of connection that contributes to a workplace culture where individuals find value, motivation, and fulfilment. The broad consensus indicates that the perceived impact of empathetic leadership transcends individual differences, underscoring the universal nature of its influence on the overall job satisfaction of employees.

5.3 Conclusions of the findings

This section is dedicated to presenting comprehensive conclusions derived from the extensive exploration of research findings.

5.3.1 Conclusion on findings from the role of empathetic leadership in fostering job satisfaction

The amalgamated findings from the reviewed studies consistently underscore the paramount importance of empathetic leadership in cultivating job satisfaction among employees. The studies collectively reveal a direct and positive correlation between empathetic leadership and job satisfaction. They affirm the critical impact of empathetic leadership in creating positive work environments and contributing significantly to overall job satisfaction and organizational success.

5.3.2 Conclusion on findings on The Role of Organizational Culture in Supporting Empathetic Leadership

these collective findings underscore the intricate and interwoven relationship between organizational culture and the cultivation of empathetic leadership, emphasizing the pivotal role played by shared values, robust support systems, and a positive cultural environment in fostering empathetic leadership within organizational frameworks.

5.3.3 Conclusion on findings on empathy in action

This examination of the various facets of empathy serves to highlight the critical significance for leaders to cultivate proficiency across these dimensions. This imperative emphasizes the need for leaders to enhance their skills in understanding and navigating the intricacies of Cognitive Empathy, Emotional Empathy, and Compassionate Empathy.

5.3.4 Conclusion on findings on Empathetic Leadership and its Influence on Job Satisfaction

These collective findings underscore the critical role of empathetic leadership in influencing job satisfaction and, by extension, contributing to the overall success and well-being of the organization. They highlight the multifaceted nature of leadership, as a process influencing others toward common goals, significantly shapes job satisfaction, a pivotal aspect of organizational dynamics.

5.3.5 Conclusion on findings on Challenges and Limitations of Empathetic Leadership

While empathetic leadership is widely acknowledged for its positive effects on job satisfaction and overall organizational success, it is imperative to recognize the inherent challenges and limitations associated with its application. Understanding and addressing these challenges are essential for leaders aiming to effectively implement empathetic leadership and optimize job satisfaction within their organizations.

5.3.6 Conclusion on empathetic leadership

The comprehensive results of this study unequivocally validate the pivotal significance of empathetic leadership in crafting a positive organizational culture. This nurturing approach creates an environment that actively promotes the well-being of employees, fostering heightened job satisfaction within the workplace.

5.3.7 Conclusion on employee satisfaction

The findings study paints a vivid picture of a thriving workplace within the NGO, where an overwhelming 92% of participants express high job satisfaction. This extends beyond tasks, encompassing organizational culture and mission alignment. A significant 75% perceive a good work-life balance, reflecting effective policies or a supportive culture, while the 25% minority calls for attention to improve practices. Addressing these nuanced findings ensures alignment with organizational goals of enhancing employee well-being and job satisfaction.

5.3.8 Conclusion on empathetic leadership and employee satisfaction

The survey findings underscore a compelling consensus among participants, with 88% expressing a shared belief in the positive influence of empathetic leadership on employee satisfaction. This resounding agreement reflects a widespread

acknowledgment of the profound impact empathetic leaders have on shaping job satisfaction and overall well-being.

5.4 Recommendations based on findings

This section will provide recommendations based on the research findings.

5.4.1 Recommendations based on literature review

Based on the comprehensive literature review, several key recommendations emerge for organizations aiming to enhance job satisfaction through empathetic leadership:

5.4.1.1 Cultivating Empathy Across Leadership Levels

It is recommended that Organizations can invest in programs and training initiatives aimed at developing empathetic leadership skills at various levels. This includes equipping leaders with the ability to operate at different empathetic levels, such as Cognitive Empathy, Emotional Empathy, and Compassionate Empathy, as highlighted by the research. Special emphasis should be placed on the practical implications of cognitive empathy, enabling leaders to understand team members' concerns and needs for informed decision-making.

5.4.1.2 Integrating Empathy into Organizational Culture

Recognizing the intertwined relationship between organizational culture and empathetic leadership, it is recommended that organizations should actively work towards fostering a positive and supportive culture. This involves aligning organizational values with empathy, as suggested by Taplin (2023) and Maven (2022). Initiatives promoting support, respect, and inclusivity within the organizational framework should be encouraged, creating an environment where employees feel comfortable seeking help and support.

5.4.1.3 Strategic Organizational Support

Building on the notion that organizational support significantly contributes to empathetic leadership, it is recommended that companies can implement policies providing easy and just in time access to mental health and wellness resources. This strategic support system, as proposed by Kock (2019), can act as a crucial foundation for empathetic leadership success. Clear expectations, regular feedback, and

professional development opportunities, as recommended by Herrity (2022), can further enhance the positive work environment.

5.4.1.4 Addressing Challenges and Limitations

It is recommended that organizations should acknowledge and proactively address the challenges associated with empathetic leadership. Measures to prevent burnout among empathetic leaders, such as providing emotional regulation tools, should be considered. Strategies to mitigate the risks of excessive empathy, like maintaining objectivity and clear boundaries, are vital. Additionally, organizations must recognize the influence of cultural factors, gender stereotypes, and authenticity concerns, and implement measures to overcome these barriers.

5.4.1.5 Dedicated Training Initiatives

Given the variability in leaders' inherent empathetic skills, its is recommended that deliberate training initiatives should be implemented to identify, recruit, and develop empathetic leaders. This aligns with the caution from Misiaszek and McCarthy (2022) that not all leaders possess these skills inherently. Investing time and resources in developing empathetic leadership capabilities can be particularly challenging but is crucial for long-term success.

5.4.1.6 Holistic Measurement Approaches

It is recommended that Organizations move beyond conventional performance measures when evaluating the impact of empathetic leadership on job satisfaction. Studies like Kock et al. (2019) and Van Bommel (2021) provide valuable insights into alternative metrics such as follower performance, work-life balance, and innovation. Adopting a holistic approach to measuring empathetic leadership effectiveness will provide a more accurate understanding of its influence on employee well-being and job satisfaction.

5.4.2 Recommendations based on primary research

Based on the primary research findings, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance employee satisfaction and strengthen the positive impact of empathetic leadership within the NGO:

5.4.2.1 Emphasis on Empathetic Leadership Development

It is recommended for organizations to prioritize the development of empathetic leadership skills through training programs and workshops. The study reveals a strong association between empathetic leadership and positive employee perceptions. Investing in leadership development initiatives aligned with empathetic qualities, especially cognitive empathy as emphasized by Cherry (2023), can contribute to a more supportive and inclusive work environment.

5.4.2.2 Promoting Active Listening Practices

The research underscores the importance of empathetic leaders actively engaging in listening to employees' feedback and ideas. It is recommended for organizations to encourage and promote active listening practices, ensuring that leaders go beyond mere hearing to deeply understand and value employees' input. This approach fosters open communication and contributes to a workplace culture that values diverse perspectives.

5.4.2.3 Addressing Emotional Well-being

The study highlights the pivotal role of empathetic leaders in addressing the emotional well-being of team members. It is recommended for organizations to prioritize strategies and initiatives that support emotional health, recognizing that empathetic leadership goes beyond operational aspects. This includes creating a culture where employees feel comfortable seeking emotional support when faced with challenges.

5.4.2.4 Cultivating an Authentic Leadership Culture

Participants overwhelmingly expressed the importance of authentic leadership in the form of genuine concern for the well-being of employees. It is recommended for organizations to cultivate a culture of authenticity, where leaders are perceived not just as authoritative figures but as individuals genuinely prioritizing and caring about the overall well-being of their team members. This authenticity contributes significantly to organizational culture, fostering loyalty, commitment, and trust.

5.4.2.5 Enhancing Recognition and Appreciation Practices

While a majority of participants felt valued and appreciated, the study identifies a subset expressing a neutral or negative sentiment. It is recommended for

organizations to investigate and address factors influencing this perception, ensuring that recognition and appreciation practices are consistently applied. Recognizing and valuing employees for their contributions fosters a positive work culture, contributing to overall job satisfaction.

5.4.2.6 Optimizing Work-Life Balance Initiatives

The study reveals positive sentiments regarding work-life balance but highlights a minority expressing a more neutral or negative stance. It is recommended for organizations to further explore factors influencing this subset's perceptions and experiences to optimize work-life balance initiatives. Addressing concerns in this area aligns with organizational goals related to employee well-being and job satisfaction.

5.4.2.7 Reinforcing Organizational Support for Growth

The study indicates a strong belief among participants that their organization actively supports their professional growth and development. It is recommended that Organizations should reinforce and expand these support mechanisms, aligning with broader success metrics of organizational effectiveness, adaptability, and innovation. Providing opportunities for continuous learning and growth contributes to employee satisfaction.

5.4.2.8 Strengthening the Link between Empathetic Leadership and Employee Satisfaction

The study highlights a robust correlation between empathetic leadership and increased job satisfaction. It is recommended for organizations to actively strengthen this link by consistently emphasizing the positive influence of empathetic leaders in creating a supportive work environment. Promoting a culture of trust, collaboration, and shared purpose further solidifies the positive impact of empathetic leadership on overall employee contentment.

5.5 Areas for future research

After researching the role of empathetic leadership in promoting job satisfaction within non-governmental organizations (NGOs), it becomes clear that future research in this domain should explore several avenues to enhance our understanding and gain valuable insights. Firstly, investigating the long-term effects of empathetic leadership on job satisfaction could reveal insights into the sustainability of positive outcomes

over time. Understanding the evolution of empathetic leadership practices and their lasting impact on employee satisfaction would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of their relationship. Secondly, exploring potential moderating variables, such as organizational size, cultural context, or leadership tenure, could provide nuanced insights into the conditions under which empathetic leadership most strongly influences job satisfaction. Thirdly, delving into the specific mechanisms through which empathetic leadership contributes to job satisfaction, including its impact on organizational culture, work-life balance, and employee recognition, would offer actionable insights for organizational leaders. Additionally, considering the perspectives of leaders themselves and how they navigate challenges related to maintaining empathy in various organizational contexts could provide a more holistic view. Finally, incorporating quantitative measures alongside qualitative assessments can establish a robust methodology for future studies, enabling a more comprehensive analysis of the intricate interplay between empathetic leadership and job satisfaction in NGO settings.

5.6 Limitations of the study

While this study contributes valuable insights into the relationship between empathetic leadership and job satisfaction within non-governmental organizations (NGOs), several limitations should be acknowledged. Firstly, the qualitative approach, while providing in-depth understanding, might limit the generalizability of findings to other settings beyond the scope of NGOs. The study's reliance on a sample of 60 participants, encompassing both leaders and employees, may not fully capture the diversity of roles and experiences present in the entire NGO sector. Additionally, the self-reported nature of the data introduces the possibility of response bias, as participants might provide responses influenced by social desirability. The cross-sectional design offers a snapshot of the relationship, but a longitudinal approach could provide a more comprehensive understanding of how empathetic leadership evolves over time and its sustained impact on job satisfaction. Furthermore, while the study delves into the perspectives of both leaders and employees, a more extensive exploration of leaders' experiences could enrich the understanding of the challenges and facilitators in implementing empathetic leadership within NGOs. Recognizing these limitations is essential for interpreting the study's findings and underscores the

need for further research to address these constraints and provide a more nuanced understanding of empathetic leadership in the NGO context.

5.7 Conclusion

This study thoroughly examined the intricate connection between empathetic leadership and job satisfaction within the unique context of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Utilizing a qualitative methodology, the research involved 60 participants with diverse roles across various NGOs, aiming to uncover the subtleties of empathetic leadership behaviors and their significant impact on employee satisfaction. Beyond establishing a simple correlation, the study sought to provide organizational leaders with qualitative insights into specific behaviors that contribute to enhanced job satisfaction. The results reveal a compelling and positive relationship between empathetic leadership and increased job satisfaction among NGO employees, highlighting impactful leadership behaviors such as active listening and providing emotional support. Participants consistently emphasized the positive influence of leaders who genuinely care about their well-being, fostering a deep sense of belonging and professional fulfilment. This research makes a substantial contribution to existing knowledge by offering a nuanced qualitative exploration of empathetic leadership in the NGO sector. While prior research has recognized the importance of leadership styles, this study goes a step further by confirming the positive correlation between empathetic leadership and job satisfaction and providing a profound understanding of the contextual nuances shaping this relationship within the NGO landscape. By incorporating perspectives from both leaders and employees, this study enhances our understanding of the challenges and facilitators associated with implementing empathetic leadership practices. Ultimately, it serves as a catalyst for positive change within NGOs, advocating for environments where empathetic leadership is acknowledged as crucial for employee satisfaction and overall organizational success.

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