



# **The Impact Of Transformational Leadership On Employee Job Satisfaction In Ireland's IT Sector**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study seeks to examine the impact of transformational leadership on employee job satisfaction within the Irish IT sector, with a specific focus on how employees perceive the core dimensions of transformational leadership. As organisations continue to navigate rapid technological change and workforce expectations, effective leadership becomes increasingly critical in shaping employee outcomes. A quantitative research approach was employed, using a structured questionnaire distributed to 50 employees across five IT organisations in Ireland. The survey measured employees' perceptions of transformational leadership behaviours and their levels of job satisfaction. The study adopted a positivist research philosophy and utilised descriptive and inferential statistical techniques to interpret the data. The findings indicate that employees generally held moderately positive views of transformational leadership behaviours of their leaders. Transformational leadership was found to positively impact key aspects of job satisfaction, though no significant effect was observed on collaboration and teamwork, and work-life balance and wellbeing. All core dimensions of transformational leadership were recognised by the respondents to be present in their organisations although with some variations amongst them. These findings contribute to the growing body of literature on leadership effectiveness in dynamic and innovation-driven sectors like the IT sector. It also highlights the need for IT organisations to strengthen transformational leadership practices particularly in areas that enhance employee engagement and satisfaction, by investing in leadership development programmes. Future research should consider exploring mediating variables such as organisational culture, team dynamics, employee demographics or generational differences to gain deeper insight into the leadership-job satisfaction relationship.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Introduction

Leadership is a complex and multidimensional concept that has been widely studied over time. In today's fast-paced and increasingly globalized world, it holds more relevance than ever (Benmira and Agboola, 2021). The strategic and vital role of leadership in realizing an organisation's vision, mission, and goals is one of the key reasons why people continue to explore and examine every aspect of it. Effective leadership is recognised as key to the success of any organisation (Mansyur *et al.*, 2022). Among the many factors that influence leadership effectiveness, leadership style plays a crucial role, as it shapes how leaders interact with their teams, make decisions and drive performance.

Research largely agrees that no single leadership style is universally effective for all managers. According to Bolden (2004) there are various leadership styles such as charismatic, transactional, transformational, distributed, servant and team leadership style. For the purpose of this research, the focus is mainly on transformational leadership. Transformational leadership is typically defined by the leader's behaviours and their impact on followers. Unlike transactional leadership which is based on an exchange process that motivates compliance with the leader's directives and organisational expectations, transformational leadership operates through a deeper influence process. It inspires followers to rise above their personal interests in pursuit of organisational goals and collective success. Transformational leadership motivates followers to exceed initial expectations, fostering a sense of trust, loyalty, respect, and admiration toward the leader (Neider and Schriesheim, 2002).

Job satisfaction is most commonly described as a positive or pleasurable emotional state arising from an individual's evaluation of their job or work experiences. It has remained a central focus in research by scholars and industrial-organisational psychologists for nearly a century, owing to its critical role in shaping employee behaviour and contributing to organisational effectiveness (Yanchovska, 2022). Employee satisfaction represents a vital organisational asset, contributing significantly to long-term success, well-being and sustainability. Beyond individual motivation and job characteristics, recent studies on employee job satisfaction highlight the significance of organisational setting and leader–follower dynamics as key factors in enhancing employee satisfaction (Chen *et al.*, 2021).

The information technology industry covers an expansive scope of operations, extending from application and software installation to the development of complex computer networks and databases (Raja *et al.*, 2024). The IT sector's rapid pace and intense competition make employee job satisfaction and retention critical to organisational success. To navigate this environment effectively, organisations are to adopt leadership styles that actively promote job satisfaction, enabling them to retain talent and remain competitive in an evolving business landscape (Sari *et al.*, 2021).

## **1.2. Research aim and objectives**

This study aims to explore the impact of transformational leadership on employees job satisfaction within Ireland's IT sector. While the concept of transformational leadership is applicable across various sectors including healthcare, education and both private and public organisations, it holds particular significance in the IT industry and this is due to the sector's constant need for digital transformation. To navigate rapid technological advancements, achieve sustained success, and remain competitive, IT companies require innovative and adaptive leadership approaches (George and Sreedharan, 2023).

To achieve the overall aim, the objectives of this research are:

1. To assess employees' perception of transformational leadership styles within IT organisations in Ireland.
2. Explore the relationship between transformational leadership and employee job satisfaction in the Irish IT sector.
3. To determine which elements of transformational leadership (e.g., idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration) have the greatest impact on job satisfaction among IT employees.

## **1.3. Research Questions**

The following research questions guide this study:

1. How do employees in the IT sector view transformational leadership style within their organisation?
2. What core dimensions of transformational leadership are recognised by employees within the IT sector?

3. Which aspects of job satisfaction are most impacted by transformational leadership?

#### **1.4. Research Hypotheses**

The study proposes to test the following research hypotheses:

1. H01: Employees do not have a positive perception of transformational leadership within their organisation.  
HA1: Employees have a positive perception of transformational leadership within their organisation.
2. H02: Employees in the IT sector do not significantly recognize the core dimensions of transformational leadership within their organisation.  
HA2: Employees in the IT sector significantly recognize the core dimensions of transformational leadership within their organisation.
3. H03: Transformational leadership has no significant impact on any aspect of job satisfaction among employees in the IT sector.  
HA3: Transformational leadership significantly impacts one or more aspects of job satisfaction among employees in the IT sector.

#### **1.5. Research Methodology**

To investigate the impact of transformational leadership on employee job satisfaction, this study adopts the quantitative research design. Quantitative research consists of a set of strategies, techniques and underlying assumptions used to investigate psychological, social and economic phenomena by examining numerical patterns gathered from collected data. This research design makes it possible for researchers to conduct a wide range of statistical analyses that interprets and aggregates the data (Ahmad *et al.*, 2019). Data collection is an essential element in research across all fields of study. The collected data serves as the foundation for researchers to assess and test their hypotheses (Mazhar *et al.*, 2021). As a basis for this research, a questionnaire based survey will be employed. This explores the individual views and experiences that will be used to test the hypotheses, by using statistics. The survey questionnaire consisted of 21 items divided into different sections. It included background information questions, Likert scale items ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly

Disagree" and from "Not at All" to "To a Great Extent," as well as checkbox options and open-ended questions.

## **1.6. Research Structure**

The research will be subdivided into 5 chapters. The first chapter is an introduction and provides an overview of the study's overall concept. It outlines the research aim, objectives and questions along with the hypotheses to be tested. The research method used during the course of the research is also explained. The second chapter presents a critical review of current and existing literature related to transformational leadership, its impact on employee job satisfaction and specific focus on the IT sector in Ireland. The literature review will briefly review leadership as a concept, followed by a discussion on transformational leadership in the workplace. It then explores the concept of employee job satisfaction, examines the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction across various sectors and finally narrow the focus to the IT sector within the Irish context. Chapter three outlines the study's research methodology detailing the research design, data collection process, sampling and the method of data analysis. It also provides a justification for the use of a quantitative approach and discusses the ethical considerations relevant to the study. Chapter four presents the analysis of the primary data, summarizes the key findings and uses the results to test the proposed hypotheses and identify any gaps or alignment between the findings and insights gathered from secondary research. The final chapter focuses on the discussion of the research findings in relation to existing literature and highlights the implications of the results. This chapter also offers recommendations for future research and conclusion of the study.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to review existing literature on transformational leadership and its impact on employee job satisfaction focusing on the IT sector in Ireland. This section will give an overview of key leadership theories and styles. The concept of transformational leadership and job satisfaction are explored including their core dimensions and factors. The chapter critically analyses existing studies on how transformational leadership affects job satisfaction across various sectors before narrowing the focus to the Irish IT sector where rapid change and talent retention present unique leadership challenges. The chapter will conclude by summarizing key findings and identifying gaps in the literature that justify the need for this research.

### 2.2. Theoretical Foundations

#### 2.2.1. Overview of Leadership Theories

Leadership is the process by which an individual influences others whether individuals, groups or entire organisations. It refers to the ability to motivate members of a group or organisation to voluntarily participate in activities or tasks that support the achievement of the group's or organisation's goals (Ratnaningtyas *et al.*, 2021). As cited in Alberto, (2016), Stogdill (1950) defines leadership as "the process of influencing the activities of an organized group toward goal setting and achievement. In line with this perspective, Susita *et al.*, (2020) state that leadership appears in two forms: formal leadership, which is exercised by individuals appointed or elected to roles of formal authority within an organisation and informal leadership, which is exercised by individuals who acquire influence because of their specialized skills that address the needs of others.

Leadership theories have evolved significantly over the years, shifting beyond a sole focus on innate personality traits to recognizing that leadership is a context-driven process influenced by a leader's actions, skills and ability to guide others effectively (Perera *et al.*, 2021). This shift shows that leadership is not a static attribute but a dynamic concept. Hunt and Fedynich (2018) highlight the evolving concept of leadership noting that it changed to meet the shifting needs of organisations and followers. Early theories like the Great Man Theory saw leadership

as innate trait held by heroic individuals such as Napoleon, Genghis Khan and Alexander the Great thereby limiting leadership to a predetermined group of people. In contrast, Trait and Behavioural Theories focused on observable qualities rather than fixed personal characteristics. Later, Situational and Contingency Theories emerged which marked a significant shift, these theories emphasized context in shaping effective leadership. They rejected the notion of a one-size-fits-all leadership style highlighting the importance of aligning leadership qualities and styles with the demands of the context (Asrar-ul-Haq and Anwar, 2018). Contemporary models such as transformational, transactional, servant and authentic leadership further advance this understanding by framing leadership as a shared, adaptive process shaped by leader-follower interactions and organisational dynamics (Deshwal and Ashraf-Ali, 2020). Extensive research supports this perspective by suggesting that there is no single universally effective leadership style but rather leadership effectiveness is influenced not only by the leader's traits but also by the group's characteristics and the surrounding environment (Leadership: Research Starters Topic, 2021).

### 2.2.2. Review of Leadership Styles

Leadership style refers to a distinctive approach to leading, marked by personal involvement and commitment toward achieving a specific vision and fostering the growth of both the organisation and its members. Contemporary perspectives highlight various leadership models, including servant leadership, laissez-faire, transactional, transformational styles among others (Dimitrijević, 2023).

Servant leadership style focuses on the growth and wellbeing of employees and team members, prioritizing their needs and fostering a sense of belonging. This style involves shared power in decision-making, aligns individual needs with shared values, supports collective development and cultivates strong commitment toward achieving the organisation's goals (Hai and Van, 2021). According to Mohzana *et al.* (2023), servant leadership is founded on compassion, empowerment, vision, humility and trust. A leader's humility is demonstrated through a willingness to listen to members' concerns, reduce social distance between themselves and others, consider input from subordinates when making policies and display wisdom in their actions. While these traits are particularly effective in fostering inclusive and collaborative environments, they may not fully address the need for dynamic change and innovation in fast-paced sectors like IT.

Laissez-faire leadership is a style in which leaders intentionally avoid taking on or assigning organisational responsibilities. This approach allows employees significant autonomy, empowering them to make decisions independently (Hossin *et al.*, 2024). Kamal *et al.* (2024) argue that the leadership style marked by limited guidance can lead to negative outcomes within organisations. Although it may offer benefits in teams composed of highly skilled and motivated members where creativity and innovation are encouraged, this style is often associated with unfavourable effects. A key issue is the absence of clear direction, as leaders may not define specific goals, resulting in confusion and reduced productivity. This suggests that laissez-faire leadership may not be well-suited to contexts that require cohesive, adaptive responses to rapid change, such as the IT sector.

Transactional leadership is grounded in the use of authority and structured exchanges to motivate employees. Leaders reward followers for meeting set objectives and may impose penalties when expectations are not met. This leadership style tends to be most effective in well-established organisations with clearly defined structures and goals, where the emphasis is on maintaining order and reinforcing existing practices (Benmira and Agboola, 2021). While this leadership style can enhance short-term performance, promote discipline and support team coordination, it may also limit creativity and intrinsic motivation. This reinforces the idea that in sectors driven by constant innovation such as IT, purely transactional approaches may be too rigid to inspire long-term employee satisfaction and adaptability. The article by Dong (2023) highlights that overreliance on transactional methods may lead to disengagement or higher turnover. It suggests that future leadership development should integrate transactional elements with more adaptive and transformational approaches to remain effective in dynamic, modern work settings.

### 2.3. Overview of Transformational Leadership

In 1978, Burns introduced the concept of transforming leadership, emphasizing a mutual relationship where leaders and followers work together to achieve goals beyond their immediate self-interest. Bernard Bass in 1985 later expanded the theory by renaming it transformational leadership. Bass demonstrated how transformational leadership enhances follower motivation and performance which has now greatly influenced leadership research (Dias *et al.*, 2022). The evolution of this concept highlights how transformational leadership shifts the focus from purely transactional exchanges to a more relational and shared process.

Transformational leadership is theoretically defined as a set of behaviours aimed at developing, communicating and maintaining a shared vision. These behaviours are considered transformational because they are intended to inspire employees to move beyond personal interests in pursuit of broader organisational objectives (Jensen *et al.*, 2019). This suggests that transformational leadership can align individual motivation with collective purpose which is particularly significant in dynamic organisational environments. Consistent with this view, Heenan *et al.* (2024) states that transformational leadership is fundamentally relational and social, reflecting a human-centred approach that actively engages followers in the process of change. This relational and social dimension underscores the potential of transformational leadership to build trust and shared commitment among team members. It is often regarded as a highly effective leadership style for driving change, fostering collaborative and organisational cultures and establishing vision and direction. However, the extent of its effectiveness can vary depending on organisational context and the balance between inspiring followers and ensuring ethical leadership practices. Transformational leadership is commonly linked with key behaviours such as individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation and idealized influence also known as charisma (Guttermann, 2023). These behaviours show how transformational leadership can build adaptive and motivated teams but also raise concerns about managing such influence to prevent over-dependence from employees.

Individualized consideration refers to offering personalized support, encouragement and guidance. This process also offers ongoing feedback to the individual and connects their current needs to the organisation's overall mission while intellectual stimulation encourages followers to think critically, view challenges from new angles and explore innovative solutions (Yukl, 2019). Inspirational motivation describes the leader's capacity to motivate and energize employees to pursue ambitious goals that may have once seemed out of reach (Heenan *et al.*, 2024). Lastly, idealized influence involves both the leader's actions and how followers perceive them. Leaders with idealized influence prioritize others' needs over their own, avoid using power for personal benefit, uphold strong moral values and set high expectations (Bayler and Ozcan, 2012). Studies have shown a strong correlation among the four components of transformational leadership, indicating that these behaviours often appear together. According to Kaya (2024), transformational leaders are regarded as role models who inspire trust and respect, articulate a motivating vision and foster creativity and innovation within their teams to achieve outstanding goals.

Essentially, transformational leadership stands apart from other leadership styles by emphasizing values and emotions, giving priority to employees' needs, assigning responsibilities that encourage development and in turn has positive effect on employee's job satisfaction (Igbomor, 2024). While the transformational leadership style suggest a positive impact on motivation and performance, it is important to note how these conceptualizations might overlook the potential challenges of power dynamics and follower dependence that can emerge in practice. This complexity underscores the need to critically assess how transformational leadership operates within diverse organisational contexts and in this research case, the IT sector in Ireland.

#### 2.4. Overview of Employee Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction continues to be a key factor that managers prioritize in employees to promote organisational productivity and overall success. It is a positive emotional state that arises from evaluating one's job or the experience of performing it. From an organisational standpoint, it significantly contributes to higher levels of employee commitment, which in turn supports overall success and growth (Kumari *et al.*, 2021). Hilton *et al.* (2023) explains that job satisfaction encompasses various factors and Herzberg's two-factor theory is a widely used framework to organize these factors. This theory suggests that certain workplace elements, known as motivators lead to satisfaction such as achievement, recognition, personal growth, the nature of the work and responsibility while the absence of hygiene factors like job security, working conditions, company policies, salary, the relationship between leaders and employees as well as the opportunity to contribute to organisation's procedures and goal setting processes can cause dissatisfaction (Diputra *et al.*, 2024; Cannas *et al.*, 2019).

When employees work under favourable conditions that combine both intrinsic motivators and extrinsic hygiene factors, they are more likely to experience job satisfaction (Tiro and Rena, 2024). Job satisfaction positively influences employee behaviour leading to increased commitment, performance, loyalty and engagement. When employees are satisfied with their jobs, they are more likely to be motivated, dedicated and actively engaged in carrying out their work responsibilities. Conversely, it helps reduce turnover, grievances, lateness and absenteeism (Mira *et al.*, 2019). An organisation's success largely depends on the level of satisfaction experienced by its employees. Employee retention tends to be higher when job satisfaction is present. As satisfied employees reach high-level goals and perform effectively,

organisations benefit by gaining a stronger competitive advantage (Rodjam *et al.*, 2020). However, some researchers (Chimote and Malhotra, 2020; Lee *et al.*, 2022) argue that Herzberg's theory may oversimplify the complex, evolving nature of job satisfaction in modern work environments. In the IT sector where roles and technology constantly evolve, employees may value different combinations of motivators and hygiene factors than those identified in earlier frameworks. Tiro and Rena (2024) suggest that when organisations balance both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, employees are more likely to be satisfied, motivated and engaged, reducing turnover and enhancing performance. Nonetheless, these positive outcomes are not guaranteed; the effectiveness of efforts to boost job satisfaction often depends on how leadership practices align with employee expectations and the dynamic workplace context (Mira *et al.*, 2019; Rodjam *et al.*, 2020). This highlights the need to examine how transformational leadership, with its focus on vision, individualized support and relational dynamics, may influence job satisfaction in the Irish IT sector.

## 2.5. Relationship Between Transformational Leadership And Job Satisfaction

The study by Kaya (2024) assessed the relation between transformational leadership and job satisfaction among 417 teachers of public and private schools in Istanbul. The study used a simple random sampling method, mainly exploring whether professional resilience and job satisfaction acted as mediators between transformational leadership and creativity. The findings indicated that transformational leadership had a positive impact on both job satisfaction and professional resilience of the teachers. The study's findings are limited by its focus on teachers in a single city, reliance on self-reported data prone to social desirability bias and a cross-sectional design that prevents causal conclusions. This study's findings are consistent with existing research done by Kyambade and Namatovu (2025) which investigated the influence transformational leadership has on employee job satisfaction of Ugandan healthcare workers. Data was gathered from 180 questionnaires that were filled. The findings demonstrate a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction indicating that employees who perceive their leaders as transformational tend to report greater satisfaction with their jobs. Although transformational leadership typically promotes job satisfaction, its effectiveness may be limited in settings characterized by resource shortages and heavy workloads as seen in Uganda's health-care sector. The study measured transformational leadership and job satisfaction as single overall scores, overlooking how the

different dimensions of transformational leadership influence different aspects of job satisfaction.

A further review on the influence of the transformational leadership style on employee job satisfaction and turnover intention by Tiro and Rena (2024) in South Africa's public sector used a quantitative research method, collecting data from 250 participants through a self-administered structured questionnaire. The research findings suggest that respondents held moderately positive views of their managers' transformational leadership behaviour and found a slight positive relationship between transformational leadership and employee job satisfaction; nonetheless, the association was not strong enough to be considered practically significant. However, it is important to note that the study's participants were limited to employees in positions ranging from levels 1 to 12, excluding those in senior management. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to all public sector employees in South Africa. Similarly, Diputra *et al.* (2024) found that transformational leadership has a positive but statistically insignificant effect on job satisfaction. The research relied on measurable data from 264 4-Star hotel employees in Bali to explore cause-and-effect relationships and it tested the questionnaire to ensure it was both valid and reliable. The analysis suggests that in the context of the hotel industry, implementing transformational leadership has not significantly influenced employee job satisfaction but it enhances organisational culture and work motivation. Although the data sampling was limited to only 4 star hotel employees and the data was primarily collected through self-assessments which may have introduced bias.

The studies done by Siswanto and Yuliana (2022) and Igbomor (2024) evaluated the effect of transformational leadership dimensions on job satisfaction among 405 teachers and school staff in East Java and employees working in 6 hospitality firms in different senatorial district in Delta state, Nigeria respectively. The result for Siswanto and Yuliana study indicated that idealized influence, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration had a direct positive impact on job satisfaction, whereas intellectual stimulation did not show a significant effect. Limitation to this study is that some of the questionnaire results may be biased due to variations in the time periods of data collection and the limited geographical scope of the study while the result gotten from Igbomor revealed a strong and positive relationship between job satisfaction and transformational leadership particularly the dimensions known as idealized influence and inspirational motivation. The study suggests that it's part of a leader's role to shape how employees perceive their jobs and whether they find satisfaction in them. However it is important to note that transformational leadership has 4 dimensions but the study only

considered two-idealized influence and inspirational motivation and the population and sample size of the study was relatively small.

## 2.6. Transformational Leadership in the IT sector and Irish Context

Information Technology (IT) is among the fastest-growing industries. While IT organisations benefit from skilled and talented employees to boost growth and productivity, they also face significant challenges due to high employee turnover intentions (Farooq *et al.*, 2022). The IT sector marked by rapid technological change and high demand for skilled professionals presents unique challenges for workforce retention. In this context, job satisfaction plays a crucial role as it significantly influences employee commitment and reduces turnover, making it a key area of interest for both researchers and practitioners (Josifoski, 2024). Kim and Yoon (2025) improves insight into how transformational leadership in IT companies impacts employees' innovative actions. The findings suggest that the emotional support and intellectual stimulation offered by leaders promote innovation that goes beyond personal development, emphasizing the crucial role of transformational leadership in encouraging innovative thinking.

Pradhan *et al.* (2018) suggest that employees who perceive their leaders as transformational are more likely to feel satisfied with their jobs, which subsequently leads to improved performance. The study states that transformational leadership has a positive impact on employees in the IT sector in India contextual performance. Transformational leaders are said to encourage their followers to put in greater effort, collaborate and prioritize collective goals over personal interests to achieve exceptional performance. This leadership style impacts employees' emotions and attitudes more than their direct performance, inspiring them to display increased contextual performance. Contrary to these findings, Crespi-Valbona and Mascarilla-Miró (2018) conducted a survey involving 4,207 IT professionals in Spain to examine how six factors (job position, teamwork atmosphere, leadership, recognition and compensation, physical working conditions, and personal working conditions) affect employee satisfaction. Among these six dimensions, leadership was the least influential factor reported by IT employees. In these IT companies, the emphasis is on teamwork, interaction, and collaboration with colleagues, so leadership or direct supervision typically involves delegation, democratic participation, autonomy, etc., in alignment with the competences of the professionals involved while the position dimension and teamwork atmosphere are the two strongest predictors of employee satisfaction.

In the study conducted by Heenan *et al.* (2024), the authors aimed to qualitatively explore how transformational leadership is understood and enacted within an Irish context focusing on the perspectives of school and system leaders. Transformational school leadership was seen as a model for bringing about positive change in individuals and schools. Interviewees identified numerous benefits of transformational school leadership such as motivation, a positive school culture, shared vision, collective goals, empathy, effective communication, leadership development, empowerment, stronger relationships, inclusive growth, collaboration, and a sense of agency. Another noted benefit of transformational school leadership was that it enabled school communities to exceed individual expectations. However, a few participants saw this as a possible limitation as it could lead to increased workload and pressure for both school leaders and staff.

Transformational leadership is relevant across various sectors, including healthcare, agriculture, automotive, education and both private and public organisations. However, it is especially crucial in IT companies, where digital transformation demands significant changes in how technology, talent and processes are leveraged to enhance business performance. A dynamic and effective leadership style is essential for adapting to evolving technology, achieving success and staying competitive (George and Sreedharan, 2023).

## 2.7. Conclusion

This literature review has explored the evolution of leadership theories, examined key leadership styles and focused on transformational leadership and its relationship with employee job satisfaction. Although the relationship between transformational leadership and employee job satisfaction has been widely studied, existing findings present notable limitations especially regarding the impact of the core dimensions of transformational leadership. In the IT sector, transformational leadership has been shown to foster innovation and performance, yet studies also highlight other dominant predictors of job satisfaction, such as job role and teamwork atmosphere. In the Irish context, there is a noticeable gap in empirical research that specifically examines the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. This absence of focused study means that assumptions about how transformational leadership influences job satisfaction in this fast-paced, innovation-driven industry will remain largely untested. Addressing this gap is important not only for enhancing organisational practice but

also for contributing meaningful insights to the broader theoretical discourse on leadership and workplace dynamics.

## CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the research methodology used to conduct this research. It explains the specific research methods adopted to address the research questions and test the stated hypotheses regarding the relationship between transformational leadership and employee job satisfaction within the IT sector in Ireland. This chapter is organized into several key sections. It begins by discussing the research design and philosophical approach that guided the study, followed by an explanation of the population, sampling methods and data collection procedures. It then describes the data analysis techniques used to interpret the findings. There is also a discussion of the ethical considerations that were observed throughout the research process. Finally the chapter concludes with the limitations of the research method used.

### 3.2. Research Design

A research design serves as the overall strategy that links the research questions to practical and attainable data collection and analysis. It outlines a specific plan of action, guiding the steps needed to carry out the research. Essentially, it transforms research questions into a framework for gathering data, ensuring that the study can produce meaningful and relevant answers (Asenahabi *et al*, 2019). The selection of a research design is crucial because it shapes how the relevant information for a study will be gathered (Indu and Vidhukumar, 2019).

For this research study, the quantitative research design was used. Quantitative research is a systematic approach that centres on measuring and analysing relationships, behaviours, phenomena or patterns using statistical and numerical data. It involves collecting quantifiable data to uncover trends, test hypotheses and make broader generalizations (Thomas and Zubkov, 2023)). According to Pregoner (2024), there are several types of research design in quantitative research which are experimental, quasi experimental, descriptive, comparative and correlational. The study employed a quantitative survey-based research design that combines

descriptive-correlational elements. The labels in this hybrid model reflect that the research explores descriptive and relational questions. The structured questionnaire enabled a descriptive assessment of employees' perceptions of transformational leadership and its core dimensions within IT organisations in Ireland. It also facilitates a correlational analysis of the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction and the relative impact of different transformational leadership dimensions on job satisfaction. This dual approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of the topic while using statistical methods to test the hypotheses.

### 3.3. Research Approach And Philosophy

Research philosophy is a set of ideas about how to effectively collect, evaluate and use information on a particular topic. Essentially, it's the guiding framework a researcher follows when conducting research and trying to generate new knowledge (Sciberras and Dingli, 2023). In the context of business and management research, Saunders (2019) outlines five key philosophical paradigms that guide methodological choices: critical realism, interpretivism, postmodernism, pragmatism, and positivism. Critical realism is both scientific and transcendental, viewing the world as organized, diverse and constantly evolving. It uses scientific ideas but also recognizes that not everything can be fully known (Bisman, 2010). Interpretivism emphasizes that individuals construct their understanding of the world based on personal experiences, cultural backgrounds and situational contexts (Norman *et al.*, 2023). Postmodernist research philosophy challenges traditional scientific methods by recognizing knowledge as socially constructed and shaped by power dynamics, emphasizing continual self-reflection and questioning of assumed truths while pragmatist research philosophy recognizes knowledge as context-dependent and action-oriented, valuing its practical usefulness in organisational settings. It emphasizes trial and error learning and continuous testing of ideas, focusing on knowledge that creates positive, real-world outcomes rather than on abstract or universal truths (Turyahikayo, 2021).

This study adopted a positivist research philosophy, guided by the research objective to examine relationships between measurable variables. Positivism focuses on objective facts and measurable data, using existing theory to develop hypotheses. In a positivist philosophy, the researcher remains objective and separate from the research data to avoid influencing the findings. The research is conducted in a manner that aims to be free from personal values or

bias. Positivist researchers emphasize gathering quantifiable data that can be examined using statistical methods (Saunders, 2019). As a scientific approach that values structure, measurement, generalizability and testable hypotheses, the deductive approach is typically grounded in the positivist research philosophy. The deductive approach aims to explain causal relationships between concepts and variables. It requires defining and measuring concepts in a way that makes it possible to collect factual data. This structured approach allows researchers to expand on existing knowledge and support the advancement of theoretical frameworks within their field (Pregoner, 2024).

The positivist philosophy was adopted in this study as it emphasizes objectivity and measurement, allowing for the collection of quantifiable data through the structured survey; ensuring that findings are based on observable, numerical evidence rather than subjective interpretation. The deductive approach further supports this objective stance by starting with existing theories of transformational leadership and job satisfaction, then testing the hypotheses using statistical analysis.

### 3.4. Population and Sampling

#### 3.4.1. Population

The study population refers to a group of individuals who are the main focus of the research. The research aims to benefit this group and data is typically gathered directly from them. To identify the ‘target population’, it is necessary to define the particular characteristics or attributes of the group under study as this ensures the study’s findings accurately reflect or can be applied to a broader population (Hossan, 2023). The target population for this study consisted of employees working in the IT sector in Ireland. Ireland has earned a reputation as the “Silicon Valley of Europe”, attracting a host of global tech giants and startups alike. This appeal is no accident as it stems from favourable policies, highly skilled talent pool and a thriving business environment. Together, these factors create an ecosystem where companies like Google, Apple, Meta (Facebook), Microsoft and Amazon have established major European operations, reinforcing Ireland’s status as a global tech hub (O’Briens, 2024).

### 3.4.2. Sampling

A sampling frame is the list of people that you draw your sample from. It represents the target population that your study wants to understand (Hossan, 2023). Seeing that Ireland is home to a lot of IT companies, only employees in these companies were sampled: Google (Internet services and cloud computing), Toast Inc (Restaurant technology and Point of Sale POS system), Workday (HR and Finance Tools), Amazon (E-commerce and cloud computing) and Mastercard (Fintech). These companies represent diverse and prominent segments of the IT sector. As these companies are leaders in their respective areas, insights from the employees will provide a comprehensive and credible view of the IT workforce and related issues relevant to this research work. Employees working in these companies were accessed via LinkedIn, emails and referral from family and friends. Having a good sampling frame ensures your sample accurately represents the larger group, minimizing bias in your research results.

### 3.4.3. Sampling Method and Size

Researchers use sampling techniques to choose a smaller group of individuals from a larger population to include in their study. There are generally two ways to choose your sample when doing research: non-probability sampling and probability sampling (Hossan, 2023). Probability sampling means that the likelihood of each individual being chosen from the target population is known and generally equal for all while non-probability sampling means that this likelihood is not known, and some individuals may have a higher or lower chance of being included (Saunders 2019). For this study, the probability sample was adopted as it provides a statistically reliable approach in which every element of the target population had a known chance to being selected for this study. There are different ways to measure probability like simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling and cluster sampling. Simple random sampling was chosen for this study due to its statistical robustness. This probability sampling type minimizes bias by giving every individual in the population an equal chance of selection. This method is particularly suitable for quantitative research, especially when the population is finite and clearly defined (Berndt, 2020).

A sample size of 50 employees was selected for this study. This number was determined based on the time and resources available, as well as the accessibility of participants from selected

companies. This approach ensured that data collection remained feasible while still capturing relevant insights from the target population.

### 3.5. Data Collection Method

The data collection instrument for this study was a survey questionnaire, developed using Google Forms. The questionnaire was designed to gather quantitative data related to transformational leadership and employee job satisfaction. It consisted of 21 items divided into different sections. It included background information questions, Likert scale items ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree" and from "Not at All" to "To a Great Extent," as well as checkbox options and open-ended questions to allow for more detailed responses. The study adopts measurement instruments that were empirically validated in the work of Siswanto and Yuliana (2022) which examined the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction, with trust and team cohesiveness as mediating variables. The questions format were tweaked to suit this study's research questions and test the hypotheses. A copy of the full questionnaire is provided in the *Appendix*.

Participants were approached through a combination of professional networks such as LinkedIn, direct email invitations and referrals from current employees within Ireland's IT sector. The survey link was shared along with a brief explanation of the study's purpose, assuring participants of confidentiality and voluntary participation. Eligibility criteria were clearly stated and participants were informed that the survey would take approximately 1–2 minutes to complete. This process was used because it is cost-effective, easy to distribute, and allows for anonymity and wider reach.

### 3.6. Data Analysis Method

To answer the research questions the data will be statistically analysed using IBM SPSS (V.29). The data collected will be downloaded from Google Sheets to Microsoft Excel, which provides the opportunity to clean and reorganise the data so it is ready for upload to the SPSS software. Once this has been completed and the data successfully uploads to SPSS, it is then ready for multiple analysis that will test the hypotheses and answer the research questions.

Considering the focus of the research questions, both descriptive and inferential statistical methods were employed in the data analysis. Descriptive statistics including frequencies, percentages and mean scores were used to summarize demographic data such as gender, job title and tenure in the organisation, as well as to provide an overview of respondents' perceptions of transformational leadership and job satisfaction. Inferential statistics were applied to test the research hypotheses and explore relationships between variables. Specifically, Pearson correlation was used to examine the relationship between transformational leadership - its four dimensions and job satisfaction. In addition, One-Sample T-tests, ANOVA and multiple regression analysis were conducted to assess the statistical significance and predictive power of the variables.

### 3.7. Ethical Considerations

Ethical consideration is a fundamental part of the research process and cannot be overlooked. Ensuring honesty in data collection and reporting, protecting participants' privacy, confidentiality and presenting results truthfully are essential to maintaining research integrity. Ethical standards must be upheld at every stage of the study (Hasan *et al*, 2021).

This study was conducted in accordance with established ethical research guidelines outlined by National College of Ireland. Participation was entirely voluntary and all participants were informed about the purpose of the research prior to completing the survey. Informed consent was obtained through a clear explanation in the introductory statement section of the online questionnaire, outlining the nature of the study and the use of the data. Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained and also mentioned to the participants of the survey. No personally identifiable information was collected, and responses were kept securely and used solely for academic purposes to complete this dissertation.

### 3.8. Limitations

The sample size of 50 participants though sufficient for exploratory analysis, may limit the generalizability of findings to the wider IT workforce in Ireland. Also, the study relies on self-reported survey responses, which are subject to potential response biases such as social desirability or inaccurate self-assessment. This could affect the reliability of responses on leadership perception and job satisfaction.

Quantitative research can sometimes miss the deeper context and underlying factors that shape relationships, limiting its ability to capture the full complexity of individual experiences and social phenomena. Its methods are often less flexible, making it harder to adjust to new insights or unexpected developments that arise during the study. By prioritizing numerical data, quantitative research may oversimplify complex issues, reducing them to mere statistics and overlooking the intricate aspects that are critical to understanding the topic fully.

Although the study adopts a positivist stance emphasizing neutrality, the use of professional networks to reach participants introduces a potential layer of researcher influence. This limitation is acknowledged even as steps were taken to ensure anonymity and voluntary participation.

### 3.9. Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the methodological framework used to investigate the relationship between transformational leadership and employee job satisfaction within the IT sector in Ireland. The significance of the research design, approach, philosophy and analysis method which will allow for objective analysis of data through statistical techniques has been discussed as well as the importance of observing ethical standards throughout the process. With the data now collected and prepared for analysis, the next chapter will present the findings that addresses the study's research questions and hypotheses.

## CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings and statistical analysis of data collected to explore employee perceptions of transformational leadership and its impact on job satisfaction in Ireland's IT sector. The data analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS (V.29) and the results are structured in alignment with the study's research questions and hypotheses. Descriptive statistics was used to analyse the demographic information of the employees and the general perception of leadership and job satisfaction. The one-sample t-test, correlation, ANOVA and multiple regression analysis were used to test the hypotheses and offer a detailed understanding of the phenomena under investigation.

### 4.2. Response Rate

The study targeted a sample of 50 respondents, all of whom completed the survey, resulting in a 100% response rate.

### 4.3. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic data such as gender, job title and tenure were collected to provide context for interpreting employees' perceptions of transformational leadership and job satisfaction. These factors can influence how transformational leadership style is experienced across different roles and career levels. Including them allows for subgroup analysis and strengthens the validity of findings by accounting for potential variations within the sample.

#### Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Female	18	36.0	36.0
	Male	32	64.0	64.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0

Table 1.1 Gender

Your current job title

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Accountant	1	2.0
	AWS cloud support	1	2.0
	Cloud Engineer	1	2.0
	Cloud Security Engineer	1	2.0
	Cloud Support Engineer	1	2.0
	Customer Support Specialist	12	24.0
	Data Analyst	1	2.0
	Data Center Technician	1	2.0
	Data Centre Engineering Operations	1	2.0
	International Support Representative	1	2.0
	Network engineer	1	2.0
	Network Engineer	1	2.0
	Program Manager	1	2.0
	QA Engineer	2	4.0
	Sales assistant	1	2.0
	Senior Security Engineer	1	2.0
	Senior Software Engineer	3	6.0
	Software Engineer	14	28.0
	System Development Engineer	1	2.0
	Tech manager	1	2.0
	Technical Support Specialist	3	6.0
	Total	50	100.0

Table 1.2 Job Title

### Years spent in your organisation

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	1-3 years	23	46.0
	4-6 years	8	16.0
	Less than 1 year	15	30.0
	More than 6 years	4	8.0
	Total	50	100.0

Table 1.3 Length of Service in Their Organisation

The tables above present the following data collected based on the 50 participants in the study:

#### 1. Gender

The figure below shows that the sample consisted of 32 males (64%) and 18 females (36%).

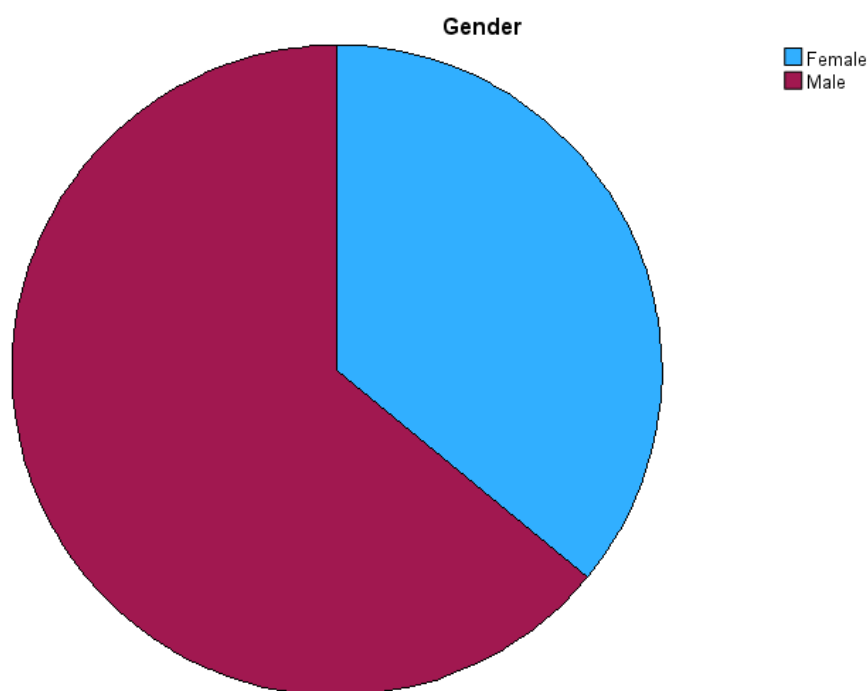


Figure 1.1 Gender Pie Chart

#### 2. Job Roles

Of the 50 respondents who completed the questionnaire, 28% were Software Engineers, while 24% were Customer Support Specialists. Senior Software Engineers and Technical Support

Specialists each accounted for 6% of the responses. The remaining participants represented a range of IT-related roles, including Accountants, AWS Cloud Specialists, Data Analysts, QA Engineers among others. This indicates that a significant portion of participants are engaged in hands-on technical functions, reflecting the IT-sector focus of the study. As shown in Figure 1.2, respondents are distributed across a range of job titles, with varying representation.

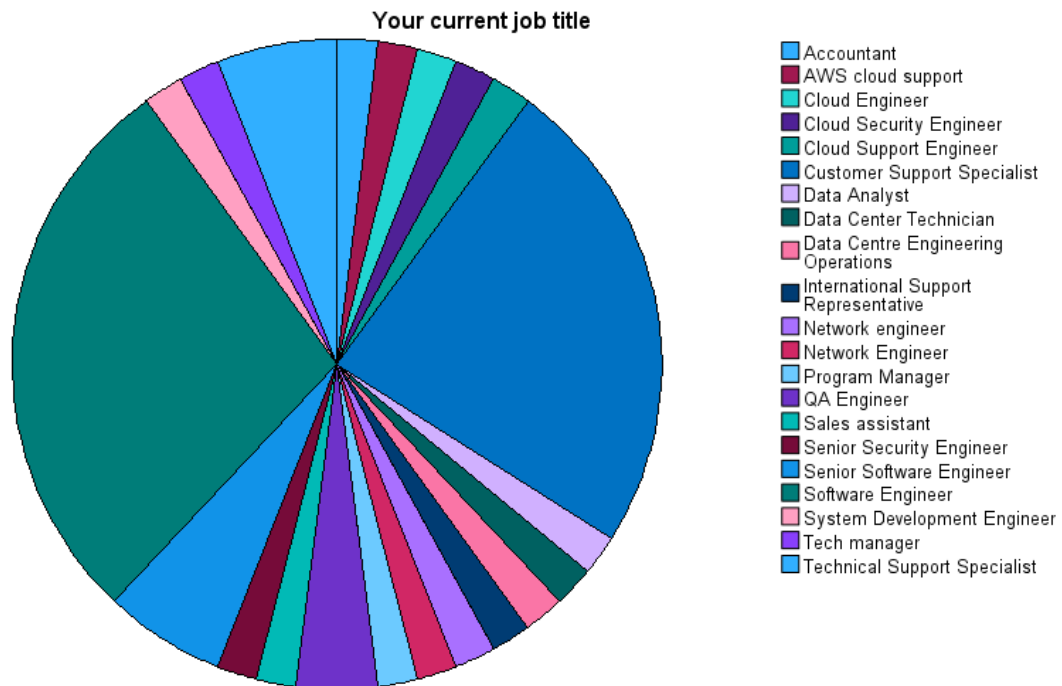


Figure 1.2 Job Roles Pie Chart

### 3. Years spent in the organisation

As illustrated in Figure 1.3, the majority of respondents (46%) have worked in their current organisation for 1–3 years, indicating a relatively stable mid-term tenure. This is followed by 30% who have been with their organisation for less than 1 year. Those with 4–6 years of experience make up 16%, while only 8% of respondents reported being in their organisation for more than 6 years. This distribution reflects a workforce that is largely early- to mid-career, with fewer long-term employees.

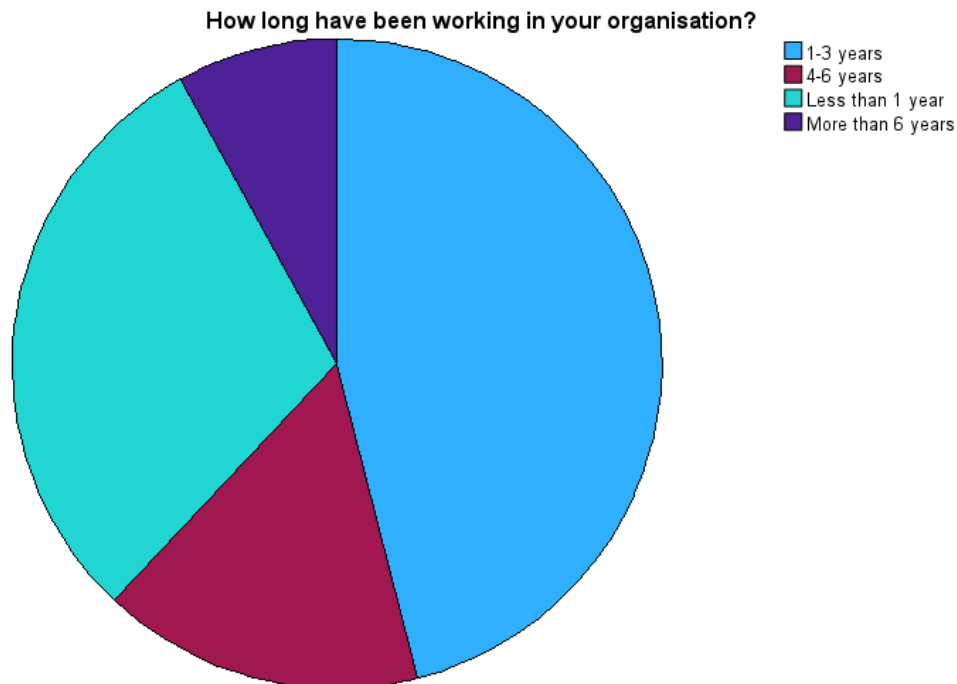


Figure 1.3. Length of Service in the organisation Pie Chart.

In summary, the demographic profile of respondents shows a workforce that is predominantly male, technically oriented, and in the early to mid-stages of their careers in the Irish IT sector.

#### 4.4. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics offers initial insights into the overall trends in the data. Respondents generally reported moderate to high levels of agreement with statements related to transformational leadership behaviours and job satisfaction indicators. The table and figures below will show the descriptive analysis result on how employees perceive transformational leadership and its core dimensions in their IT organisations.

##### 4.4.1. Employees Perception of Transformational leadership.

There were five 5-point Likert scale questions asked to gain insight into the perception employees have towards transformational leadership in their organisation. The 5-point Likert-scale questions, ranged from 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree.

## Statistics

		My organisation's leadership motivates me to perform beyond my expectations.	The leadership in my organisation encourages new ideas and innovative thinking.	The leadership at my workplace inspires me to work towards shared organisational goals.	My workplace leaders values individual needs and provides personal support.	Overall, I have a positive perception of the leadership style within my organisation.
N	Valid	50	50	50	50	50
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.92	4.04	4.14	3.84	3.86
Median		4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Mode		5	4	5	4	4
Std. Deviation		1.085	0.832	0.969	1.131	1.088
Minimum		1	2	1	1	1
Maximum		5	5	5	5	5

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics on Respondents' Perception of Transformational Leadership

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics related to employees' perception of leadership within their organisations. Participants generally expressed positive views of leadership within their organisations, with mean values for all items ranging from 3.84 to 4.14. Inspiring shared goals was the highest rated with a mean of 4.14 with the lowest rated being providing personal support at 3.84.

The following histograms display the distribution of responses for each item on the leadership perception scale, including mean, standard deviation and sample size (N = 50). Each chart represents one of the five statements assessed.



Figure 2.1. Distribution of Responses on Leadership Motivation



Figure 2.2. Distribution of Responses on Leadership Encouragement of Innovative Thinking

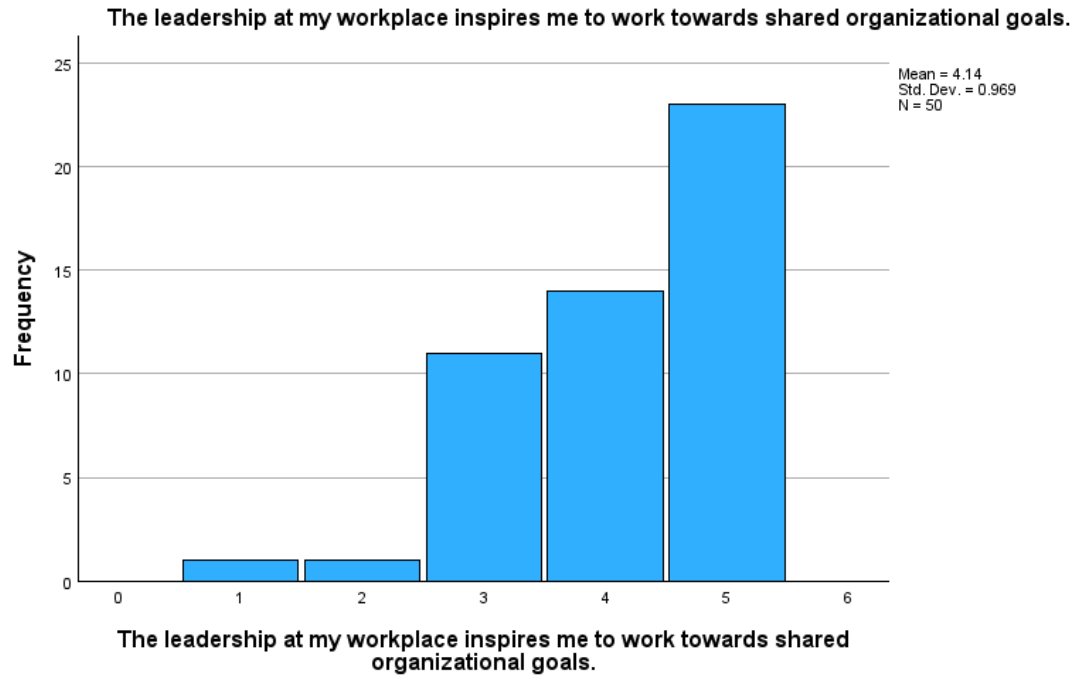


Figure 2.3. Distribution of Responses on Leadership Inspiration to work towards Shared Goals.



Figure 2.4. Distribution of Responses on Leadership provision of Personal Support.



Figure 2.5. Distribution of Responses on Overall Perception on Leadership Style.

#### 4.4.2. Recognition of Core Dimensions of Transformational leadership.

Four (4) 5-point Likert scale questions were used to assess employees' perceptions of the core dimensions of transformational leadership within their organisation. The scale ranged from 1 = Not at all to 5 = To a great extent, allowing respondents to indicate the extent to which each core dimensions (Idealized influence, Inspirational motivation, Intellectual stimulation and Individualized consideration) was demonstrated by their leaders.

#### Statistics

		I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide a strong sense of purpose and mission. (Idealized Influence)	I recognize that my organisation's leaders articulate a clear and inspiring vision for the future. (Inspirational motivation)	I recognize that my organisation's leaders challenge me to think creatively and approach problems from different angles. (Intellectual stimulation)	I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide personalized support and development opportunities (Individualized consideration)
N	Valid	50	50	50	50
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.94	3.86	4.06	4.02
Median		4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Mode		4	4	5	5
Std. Deviation		1.038	0.969	1.058	1.134
Minimum		1	1	1	1
Maximum		5	5	5	5

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics on Respondents' Recognition of Core Dimensions of Transformational Leadership

The above table shows moderately high recognition across all four core dimensions of transformational leadership, with the highest mean (4.06) for Intellectual stimulation and the lowest (3.86) for Inspirational motivation. Median values were consistently 4.00, indicating general agreement across responses.

Below are the frequency histograms that refer to the mean, standard deviation and sample size (N = 50) for the core dimensions of transformational leadership variables assessed in this study.



Figure 3.1. Distribution of Responses on Recognition of Idealized Influence.



Figure 3.2. Distribution of Responses on Recognition of Inspirational Motivation.

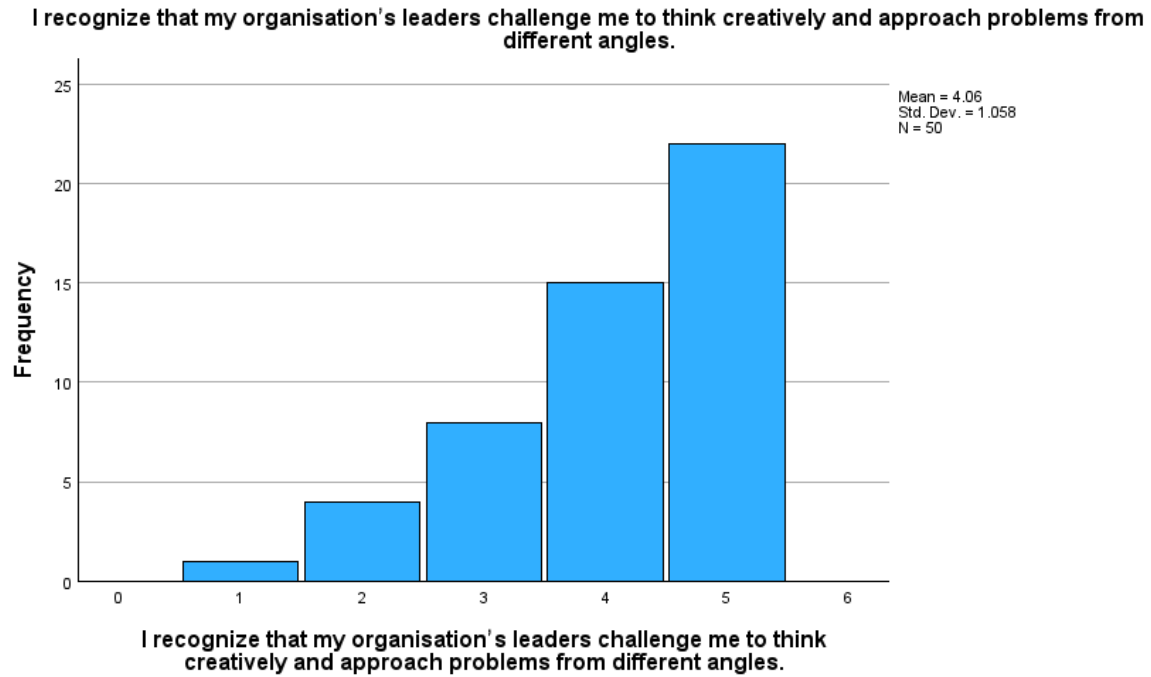


Figure 3.3. Distribution of Responses on Recognition of Intellectual Stimulation.

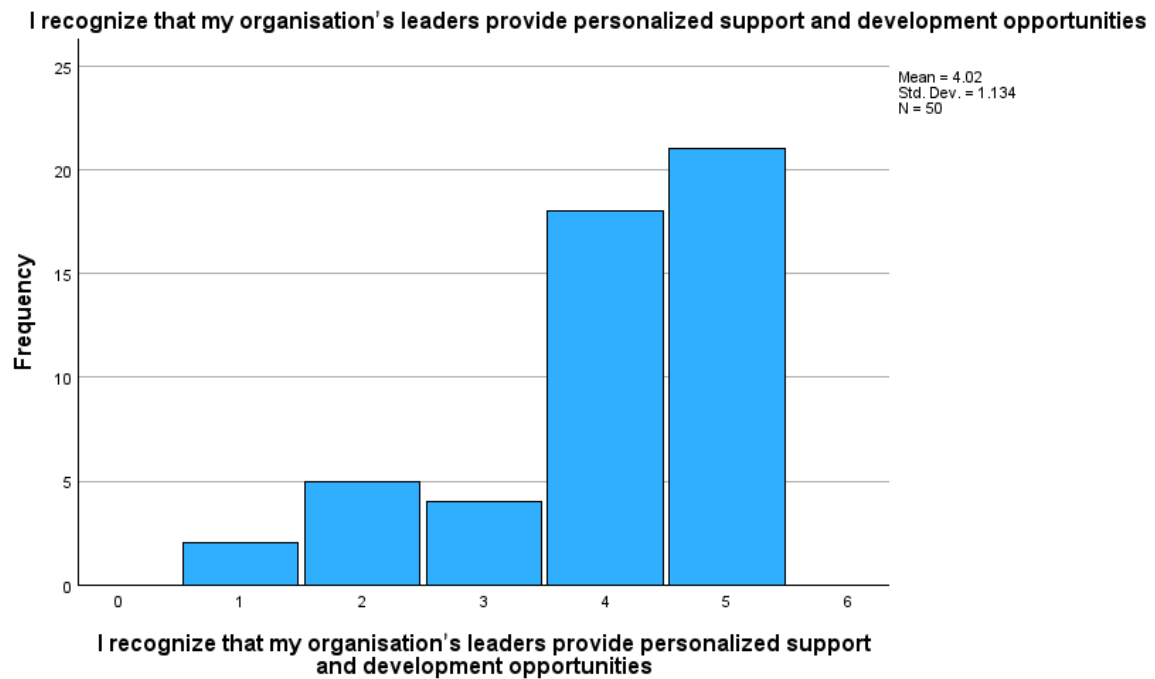


Figure 3.4. Distribution of Responses on Recognition of Individualized Consideration.

In summary, the descriptive analysis reveals that employees generally perceive transformational leadership positively, both in terms of specific leadership behaviours and across its core dimensions. These patterns establish a strong foundation for the inferential analysis presented in the subsequent section.

## 4.5. Pearson Correlation Test

This analysis examined the strength and direction of the linear relationships between transformational leadership variables and different aspect of job satisfaction. The results help identify which leadership behaviours are most closely associated with employee satisfaction levels in the IT sector.

### 4.5.1. Relationship Between Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction

To test the relationship between the two variables – transformational leadership and job satisfaction, respondents were asked to indicate the aspects of job satisfaction most impacted by their organisation's leadership style by selecting from a predefined list of options. This allowed for the identification of key satisfaction factors within the IT work environment.

		Correlations										
		I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide a strong sense of purpose and mission.	I recognize that my organisation's leaders articulate a clear and inspiring vision for the future.	I recognize that my organisation's leaders challenge me to think creatively and approach problems from different angles.	I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide personalized support and development opportunities	Feeling Valued and Appreciated	Opportunity for Professional Growth and Development	Motivation and Enthusiasm	Sense of Purpose and Meaning	Collaboration and Teamwork	Supportive and Innovative Work Culture	Work Life Balance and Wellbeing
I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide a strong sense of purpose and mission.	Pearson Correlation	1	0.843**	0.654**	0.677**	0.270	0.276	0.286*	0.287**	-0.033	0.379**	0.010
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	0.058	0.052	0.044	0.043	0.821	0.007	0.946
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
I recognize that my organisation's leaders articulate a clear and inspiring vision for the future.	Pearson Correlation	0.843**	1	0.665**	0.653**	0.264	0.294*	0.209	0.213	-0.033	0.291*	0.009
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<0.001		<0.001	<0.001	0.064	0.038	0.146	0.137	0.819	0.041	0.953
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
I recognize that my organisation's leaders challenge me to think creatively and approach problems from different angles.	Pearson Correlation	0.654**	0.665**	1	0.731**	0.281*	0.295*	0.183	0.257	0.032	0.243	0.078
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<0.001	<0.001		<0.001	0.048	0.037	0.202	0.072	0.824	0.089	0.593
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide personalized support and development opportunities	Pearson Correlation	0.677**	0.653**	0.731**	1	0.269	0.498**	0.201	0.200	0.010	0.267	0.254
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001		0.059	<0.001	0.161	0.165	0.945	0.061	0.075
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Feeling Valued and Motivated	Pearson Correlation	0.270	0.264	0.281*	0.269	1	0.261	0.529**	0.559**	0.210	0.345*	-0.019
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.058	0.064	0.048	0.059		0.068	<0.001	<0.001	0.143	0.014	0.898
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Opportunity for Professional Growth and Development	Pearson Correlation	0.276	0.294*	0.295*	0.498**	0.261	1	0.227	0.158	0.307*	0.209	0.168
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.052	0.038	0.037	<0.001	0.068		0.112	0.273	0.030	0.144	0.242
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Motivation and Enthusiasm	Pearson Correlation	0.286*	0.209	0.183	0.201	0.529**	0.227	1	0.715**	-0.091	0.346*	-0.142
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.044	0.146	0.202	0.161	<0.001	0.112		<0.001	0.529	0.014	0.324
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Sense of Purpose and Meaning	Pearson Correlation	0.287**	0.213	0.257	0.200	0.559**	0.158	0.715**	1	-0.068	0.299*	-0.026
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.043	0.137	0.072	0.165	<0.001	0.273	<0.001		0.639	0.035	0.859
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Collaboration and Teamwork	Pearson Correlation	-0.033	-0.033	0.032	0.010	0.210	0.307*	-0.091	-0.068	1	0.162	0.201
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.821	0.819	0.824	0.945	0.143	0.030	0.529	0.639		0.260	0.162
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Supportive and Innovative Work Culture	Pearson Correlation	0.379**	0.291*	0.243	0.267	0.345*	0.209	0.346*	0.299*	0.162	1	0.209
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.007	0.041	0.089	0.061	0.014	0.144	0.014	0.035	0.260		0.144
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Work Life Balance and Wellbeing	Pearson Correlation	0.010	0.009	0.078	0.254	-0.019	0.168	-0.142	-0.026	0.201	0.209	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.946	0.953	0.593	0.075	0.898	0.242	0.324	0.859	0.162	0.144	
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4. Pearson Correlation Analysis of Transformational Leadership Behaviours and Job Satisfaction Factors.

This section shows the relationship between the core dimensions of transformational leadership (independent variables) and various aspects of job satisfaction (dependent variables). As shown in Table 4, the Pearson correlation coefficients indicate several statistically significant relationships, with p-values less than 0.05, suggesting meaningful associations between certain leadership dimensions and job satisfaction indicators.

#### 4.6. Research Hypotheses Testing Outcomes.

##### 4.6.1. Hypotheses One

To establish the perception that employees have of transformational leadership within their organisation, a One Sample test was conducted using a neutral test value of 3 (the midpoint on the 5-point Likert scale).

Table 5.1 provides an output for the test which indicates that all leadership perception items had mean scores significantly higher than 3, with p-values less than 0.001. Overall, participants expressed a positive view of leadership in their organisations ( $M = 3.86$ ,  $t(49) = 5.588$ ,  $p < .001$ ). These findings provide robust evidence for rejecting the null hypothesis ( $H_{01}$ )

##### One-Sample Test

Test Value = 3

	t	df	Significance		Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
			One-Sided p	Two-Sided p		Lower	Upper
My organisation's leadership motivates me to perform beyond my expectations.	5.996	49	<0.001	<0.001	0.920	0.61	1.23
The leadership in my organisation encourages new ideas and innovative thinking.	8.839	49	<0.001	<0.001	1.040	0.80	1.28

The leadership at my workplace inspires me to work towards shared organisational goals.	8.318	49	<0.001	<0.001	1.140	0.86	1.42
My workplace leaders values individual needs and provides personal support.	5.250	49	<0.001	<0.001	0.840	0.52	1.16
Overall, I have a positive perception of the leadership style within my organisation.	5.588	49	<0.001	<0.001	0.860	0.55	1.17

Table 5.1. One Sample Test for Hypotheses One

#### 4.6.2. Hypotheses Two

To test if employees do or do not significantly recognize the core dimensions of transformational leadership within their organisation, the One Sample and ANOVA test was conducted. One sample test was to compare the mean response for each leadership dimension against a neutral test value (3) and the ANOVA was to test if recognition levels differ across the various leadership core dimensions.

The result shown in Table 5.2 indicates that employees significantly recognise all four core dimensions of transformational leadership. All p-values < 0.001, mean differences are positive and > 0.8 and CI do not cross zero. These findings provide strong support for HA2.

#### One-Sample Test

Test Value = 3

t	df	Significance		Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		One-Sided p	Two-Sided p		Lower	Upper

I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide a strong sense of purpose and mission. (Idealized Influence)	6.402	49	<0.001	<0.001	0.940	0.64	1.24
I recognize that my organisation's leaders articulate a clear and inspiring vision for the future. (Inspirational motivation)	6.275	49	<0.001	<0.001	0.860	0.58	1.14
I recognize that my organisation's leaders challenge me to think creatively and approach problems from different angles. (Intellectual Stimulation)	7.086	49	<0.001	<0.001	1.060	0.76	1.36
I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide personalized support and development opportunities (Individualized consideration)	6.362	49	<0.001	<0.001	1.020	0.70	1.34

Table 5.2. One Sample Test for Hypotheses Two.

Table 5.3 presents the ANOVA results testing for statistically significant differences in how participants rated various aspects of transformational leadership across groups. All four items yielded statistically significant F-values ( $p < 0.05$ ), indicating that perceptions of transformational leadership dimensions significantly differ amongst employees in the IT sector.

## ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide a strong sense of purpose and mission. (Idealized Influence)	Between Groups	27.808	4	6.952	12.508	<0.001
	Within Groups	25.012	45	0.556		
	Total	52.820	49			
I recognize that my organisation's leaders articulate a clear and inspiring vision for the future. (Inspirational Motivation)	Between Groups	13.635	4	3.409	4.737	0.003
	Within Groups	32.385	45	0.720		
	Total	46.020	49			
I recognize that my organisation's leaders challenge me to think creatively and approach problems from different angles. (Intellectual Stimulation)	Between Groups	23.001	4	5.750	8.132	<0.001
	Within Groups	31.819	45	0.707		
	Total	54.820	49			
I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide personalized support and development opportunities (Individualized consideration)	Between Groups	31.837	4	7.959	11.500	<0.001
	Within Groups	31.143	45	0.692		
	Total	62.980	49			

Table 5.3. ANOVA Testing for Hypotheses Two.

#### 4.6.3. Hypotheses Three

To test Hypotheses 3, a multiple regression analysis was carried out to determine whether transformational leadership significantly predicts key elements of job satisfaction among employees in the IT sector.

Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
1	(Constant)	0.784	1.247		0.629	0.533			
	I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide a strong sense of purpose and mission. (Idealized Influence)	0.165	0.531	0.087	0.312	0.757	0.270	0.046	0.044
	I recognize that my organisation's leaders articulate a clear and inspiring vision for the future. (Inspirational Motivation)	0.102	0.563	0.050	0.182	0.857	0.264	0.027	0.026

I recognize that my organisation's leaders challenge me to think creatively and approach problems from different angles.  (Intellectual Stimulation)	0.244	0.419	0.130	0.583	0.563	0.281	0.087	0.083
I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide personalized support and development opportunities  (Individualized consideration)	0.144	0.394	0.082	0.365	0.717	0.269	0.054	0.052

Table 6.1. Regression Analysis: Feeling Valued and Appreciated

The table above shows that none of the predictors have p-values  $< 0.05$ , meaning none are statistically significant predictors of feeling valued and appreciated although intellectual stimulation had the highest standardized Beta coefficient, suggesting a relatively stronger influence. The overall model, including the constant ( $B = 0.784$ ,  $p = 0.533$ ), suggests that although these leadership dimensions may contribute to feelings of being valued, the evidence is not strong enough to confirm a significant predictive relationship in this sample.

#### Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part

1	(Constant)	1.215	1.008		1.205	0.234			
	I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide a strong sense of purpose and mission. (Idealized Influence)	-0.234	0.429	-0.137	-0.545	0.588	0.276	-0.081	-0.070
	I recognize that my organisation's leaders articulate a clear and inspiring vision for the future. (Inspirational Motivation)	0.157	0.455	0.086	0.344	0.732	0.294	0.051	0.044
	I recognize that my organisation's leaders challenge me to think creatively and approach problems from different angles. (Intellectual Stimulation)	-0.227	0.338	-0.135	-0.670	0.506	0.295	-0.099	-0.086
	I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide personalized support and development opportunities (Individualized consideration)	0.991	0.319	0.634	3.111	0.003	0.498	0.421	0.398

Table 6.2. Regression Analysis: Opportunity for Professional Growth and Development.

Table 6.2 shows that amongst the predictors, only individualized consideration emerged as a statistically significant contributor with  $p$  value = 0.003 which is  $< 0.05$  suggesting that when employees perceive their leaders as offering personal support and development, they are significantly more likely to report having opportunities for professional advancement. In contrast, the core dimensions did not show statistically significant effects as all  $p$  values are greater than 0.05.

Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
1	(Constant)	0.639	1.263		0.506	0.615			
	I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide a strong sense of purpose and mission. (Idealized Influence)	0.706	0.538	0.367	1.312	0.196	0.286	0.192	0.187
	I recognize that my organisation's leaders articulate a clear and inspiring vision for the future. (Inspirational Motivation)	-0.253	0.570	-0.123	-0.445	0.659	0.209	-0.066	-0.063
	I recognize that my organisation's leaders challenge me to think creatively and approach problems from different angles. (Intellectual Stimulation)	0.004	0.424	0.002	0.010	0.992	0.183	0.001	0.001
	I recognize that my organisation's	0.055	0.399	0.031	0.139	0.890	0.201	0.021	0.020

leaders provide personalized support and development opportunities (Individualized consideration)								
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Table 6.3. Regression Analysis: Motivation and Enthusiasm

Table 6.3 presents the regression results showing the strongest predictor was idealized influence ( $B = 0.706$ ,  $\beta = 0.367$ ,  $p = 0.196$ ) though still non-significant as  $p$  value is  $> 0.05$ . Other core dimensions showed minimal or no predictive value. Overall, all four leadership dimensions were included as predictors, none reached statistical significance because all  $p$  values are  $> 0.05$ .

#### Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
1	(Constant)	0.442	1.261		0.351	0.727			
	I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide a strong sense of purpose and mission. (Idealized Influence)	0.657	0.537	0.340	1.223	0.228	0.287	0.179	0.173
	I recognize that my organisation's leaders articulate a clear and inspiring vision for the future.	-0.318	0.569	-0.154	-0.559	0.579	0.213	-0.083	-0.079

(Inspirational Motivation)								
I recognize that my organisation's leaders challenge me to think creatively and approach problems from different angles.	0.350	0.424	0.185	0.827	0.412	0.257	0.122	0.117
(Intellectual Stimulation)								
I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide personalized support and development opportunities	-0.116	0.399	-0.065	-0.290	0.773	0.200	-0.043	-0.041
(Individualized consideration)								

Table 6.4. Regression Analysis: Sense of Purpose and Meaning

Table 6.4 shows that while all predictors showed varying degrees of association with the dependent variable, none of them reached statistical significance as all p-values were above 0.05. Although, idealized influence had the strongest positive relationship ( $\beta = 0.340$ ,  $p = 0.228$ ), suggesting a potential though not statistically significant.

#### Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
1 (Constant)	4.082	1.139		3.584	<0.001			

I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide a strong sense of purpose and mission.  (Idealized Influence)	-0.092	0.485	-0.055	-0.190	0.850	-0.033	-0.028	-0.028
I recognize that my organisation's leaders articulate a clear and inspiring vision for the future.  (Inspirational Motivation)	-0.111	0.514	-0.062	-0.216	0.830	-0.033	-0.032	-0.032
I recognize that my organisation's leaders challenge me to think creatively and approach problems from different angles.  (Intellectual Stimulation)	0.159	0.383	0.098	0.416	0.679	0.032	0.062	0.062
I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide personalized support and development opportunities  (Individualized consideration)	0.026	0.360	0.017	0.072	0.943	0.010	0.011	0.011

Table 6.5. Regression Analysis: Collaboration and Teamwork

This section shows that none of the predictors were statistically significant, with all p-values well above 0.05. The strongest predictor in terms of standardized beta weight was intellectual stimulation ( $\beta = 0.098$ ,  $p = 0.679$ ), but even this was not statistically meaningful.

#### Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
1	(Constant)	0.466	1.226		0.380	0.706			
	I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide a strong sense of purpose and mission. (Idealized Influence)	0.870	0.522	0.450	1.665	0.103	0.379	0.241	0.229
	I recognize that my organisation's leaders articulate a clear and inspiring vision for the future. (Inspirational Motivation)	-0.228	0.554	-0.110	-0.412	0.682	0.291	-0.061	-0.057
	I recognize that my organisation's leaders challenge me to think creatively and approach problems from different angles.	-0.011	0.412	-0.006	-0.027	0.978	0.243	-0.004	-0.004

(Intellectual Stimulation)								
I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide personalized support and development opportunities	0.068	0.388	0.038	0.175	0.861	0.267	0.026	0.024
(Individualized consideration)								

Table 6.6. Regression Analysis: Supportive and Innovative Work Culture

The table above presents the regression analysis, indicating that only idealized influence approached significance, with a standardized beta coefficient = 0.450 and a p-value of 0.103 ( $p > 0.05$ ), meaning it was not statistically significant. The remaining predictors showed weak and non-significant effects ( $p > 0.68$ ), with some exhibiting slightly negative beta coefficients.

#### Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
1	(Constant)	3.407	1.098		3.102	0.003			
	I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide a strong sense of purpose and mission.	-0.320	0.468	-0.188	-0.685	0.497	0.010	-0.102	-0.095
	(Idealized Influence)								
	I recognize that my organisation's leaders articulate	-0.185	0.496	-0.101	-0.373	0.711	0.009	-0.056	-0.052

a clear and inspiring vision for the future. (Inspirational Motivation)								
I recognize that my organisation's leaders challenge me to think creatively and approach problems from different angles. (Intellectual Stimulation)	-0.214	0.369	-0.128	-0.580	0.565	0.078	-0.086	-0.081
I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide personalized support and development opportunities (Individualized consideration)	0.845	0.347	0.541	2.435	0.019	0.254	0.341	0.340

Table 6.7. Regression Analysis: Work Life Balance and Wellbeing

Table 6.7 summarizes the analysis reflecting individualized consideration as the only statistically significant variable with a standardized beta = 0.541, a t-value = 2.435 and a p-value of 0.019 which is lesser than .05.

This section shows a partial support of HA3 as Individualized Consideration showed a significant positive effect on Opportunities for Professional Growth and Work-Life Balance. Overall these findings suggests that transformational leadership was not a consistent predictor across all aspect of job satisfaction.

#### 4.7. Summary of findings

In summary, this chapter has presented the findings of both descriptive and inferential analysis in answering the study's research questions and testing of the hypotheses. The data strongly suggests that employees have a positive perception of transformational leadership style in their organisations, significantly recognize the core dimensions of this leadership

style and while some aspect of job satisfaction appear less influenced by leadership behaviours, the overall trend supports the central role of leadership style in shaping employee experience.

The next chapter will discuss these findings in relations to existing literature reviewed and provide practical recommendations for future study.

## CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

### 5.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the key findings of the research analysis in relation to existing literature and research objectives. It also addresses the research questions and hypotheses, outlines implications of the study, its limitations and suggestions for future research. The chapter concludes with a summary of the main conclusions drawn from the research.

The aim of this study was to explore the impact of transformational leadership on employees job satisfaction within Ireland's IT sector. To achieve this aim, the objectives of this research were to see the following:

1. To assess employees' perception of transformational leadership styles within IT organisations in Ireland.
2. Explore the relationship between transformational leadership and employee job satisfaction in the Irish IT sector.
3. To determine which elements of transformational leadership (e.g., idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration) have the greatest impact on job satisfaction among IT employees.

The next section will present the findings from the data analysis and examine whether they align with the insights from the literature review.

### 5.2. Discussion Of Research Questions And Hypotheses

#### 5.2.1. Question 1 – Employees' Perception on Transformational leadership

The first research question was how do employees in the IT sector view transformational leadership within their organisation?

Leaders have a vital role in influencing employees' perceptions and attitudes toward job satisfaction. Transformational leaders inspire change by redefining employees' values, needs,

goals, and sense of purpose, motivating them to exceed expectations (George and Sreedharan, 2023).

Following the analysis of the data, respondents had an overall positive perception of the leadership in their organisation as most common responses were either 4 (Agree) or 5 (Strongly Agree). The combined findings across all five leadership characteristics reveal a predominantly positive perception of transformational leadership among employees in the IT sector. The strong scores for transformational attributes on motivation to perform beyond expectations, encourage new ideas and shared vision on organisational goals indicate that transformational leadership style is actively practiced and well received within the sampled organisations. However, perception of personal support varied amongst individuals suggesting that this component may require reinforcement through training and policy alignment. Given the overall positive trend reflected in high mean scores, strong clustering around agreement and minimal negative responses; the null hypothesis (H01) was rejected as there is sufficient evidence to support the alternative hypothesis (HA1) which states: Employees have a positive perception of transformational leadership within their organisation.

This finding aligns with previous studies on perception of transformational leadership (Kyambade and Namatovu, 2025; Kaya, 2024; Darabant and Narayanan 2024), which suggest a positive relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction, indicating that employees who perceive their leaders as transformational tend to report higher levels of job satisfaction.

This section addresses the first research objective by assessing employees' perceptions of transformational leadership styles within IT organisations in Ireland.

#### 5.2.2. Question 2 – Recognition of Core Dimensions of Transformational Leadership.

To address Research Question 2, four key dimensions of transformational leadership-idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration were explored through targeted survey statements.

Transformational leadership is characterized by leaders who, through idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration, help employees recognize their responsibilities and understand the importance of their tasks. This

leadership approach meets higher-level employee needs and enables them to fully develop their potential to reach peak performance, thus promoting the shared growth and advancement of both the individual and the organisation (Liu *et al.*, 2024).

**Idealized Influence:** This dimension also referred to as charisma, focuses on a leader's ability to create and communicate a clear purpose and set challenging goals to achieve a mission. It motivates employees to go beyond their personal interests and work towards achieving shared organisational objectives (Hilton *et al.*, 2023). *Figure 3.1* indicates that the majority of the employees recognise this core dimension of transformational leadership, though some variation in responses is evident. Most participants responded favourably, suggesting that most employees recognise their leaders as effectively articulating a meaningful organisational vision and purpose, an essential feature of idealized influence. The standard deviation of this dimension indicates moderate dispersion, suggesting that while the central tendency was positive, not all respondents experienced this leadership trait equally. This inconsistency may reflect departmental differences in communication, leadership style or employee engagement levels. These findings suggest that while the sense of purpose communicated by leadership is broadly acknowledged and valued, there is still room to improve its reach and consistency across the organisation.

**Inspirational Motivation:** A key element of transformational leadership where leaders motivate and inspire their followers by clearly communicating a compelling vision. These leaders behave in ways that encourage followers to embrace new ideas and commit to achieving the organisation's goals and objectives (Gonfa, 2019). *Figure 3.2* reflect a positive but slightly more mixed perception compared to other leadership dimensions. There is an indication that majority of employees believe their leaders communicate an inspiring vision of the future. However, about 28% of the sample population selected more neutral or negative options which suggests that not all employees share this experience. This is also reflected in the standard deviation, showing a moderate spread in responses. This dispersion still suggests that some employees may feel disconnected from leadership's future-oriented messaging, or that the vision shared is not always clear or inspiring in practice. These findings highlight the need for leadership teams to focus not only on crafting an inspiring vision but also on consistently communicating it in a way that resonates with all levels of staff. By making strategic goals more visible and relatable, leaders may be able to enhance motivation and trust across the organisation.

**Intellectual Stimulation:** This component of transformational leadership refers to a leader's ability to foster innovation and creativity by challenging assumptions and encouraging new ways of thinking. Leaders who demonstrate this dimension motivate followers to explore new approaches when addressing familiar problems (Hilton et al., 2023). *Figure 3.3* shows a strongly positive perception among participants. About 74% of the sample agreed to the recognition of this dimension, indicating a clear endorsement of intellectual stimulation. Despite this largely positive view, some variation remains. A smaller subset of respondents selected lower ratings contributing to a relatively moderate standard deviation. This spread shows that not all employees are equally exposed to or engaged in creative problem-solving opportunities, which may depend on job roles, team dynamics or leadership consistency across departments. These findings affirm that intellectual stimulation is a recognised strength among leaders in the surveyed organisations, particularly within the context of the Irish IT sector where agility and innovation are crucial. Leadership development programs that focus on cultivating creativity across all levels and roles may help ensure this dimension of transformational leadership is more evenly experienced.

**Individualized Consideration:** This core dimension is characterized by a leader's ability to recognize and respond to the unique needs and abilities of each employee. It involves offering personalized support, mentorship and encouragement, while respecting individual differences and fostering personal growth. Leaders demonstrating this quality create a supportive environment that nurtures development and innovation (Gonfa, 2019). *Figure 3.4* reveals that employees generally perceive this aspect of leadership positively, though with a notable degree of variation in perception. Majority of respondents selected Strongly Agree or Agree suggesting that many employees experience leaders as supportive and invested in their personal growth. This type of leadership behaviour plays a critical role in fostering job satisfaction, trust and loyalty, especially in dynamic sectors like IT where employee development must be continuous. However, the standard deviation (highest of all the core dimensions) reveals greater variability in responses. This suggests that while many employees feel supported, others may not share this experience, potentially perceiving a lack of personalized support or development opportunities. The variation may stem from several factors, such as managerial inconsistency, workload pressure or structural limitations in mentorship and training programs. This points to the need for more consistently applied

development, strengthen support and foster a more inclusive culture of coaching and mentoring.

In summary, the analysis shows consistent recognition of all four dimensions of transformational leadership by employees in the sampled IT organisations, although there are areas for improvement. These findings provide strong empirical support for the alternative hypotheses (HA2): Employees in the IT sector significantly recognize the core dimensions of transformational leadership within their organisation. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H02) is rejected.

### 5.2.3. Question 3 –Aspects of job satisfaction impacted by Transformational Leadership style.

Job satisfaction is influenced by more than just rewards. Leadership plays a critical role by shaping key workplace factors such as working conditions, career advancement opportunities and the overall employee experience (Cannas *et al.*, 2019). Leadership that aligns with the needs of employees can significantly enhance their performance by fostering job satisfaction, which in turn helps employees feel more secure and supported in their roles (Paais and Pattiruhu, 2020).

To address the third research question, the result of the analysis conducted indicates that transformational leadership significantly impacts several key aspects of job satisfaction among employees in Ireland's IT sector. Specifically, Idealized influence demonstrated a positive association with employees' motivation and enthusiasm, sense of purpose and meaning and engagement in innovative work. Inspirational Motivation was linked to opportunities for professional growth and development as well as innovative work. Intellectual Stimulation positively affected employees' sense of feeling valued and appreciated and their access to professional growth and development. Finally, Individualized Consideration was also found to contribute positively to the aspect of opportunities for professional growth and development. These relationships were statistically significant, thus providing evidence against the null hypotheses (H03). However, the findings also show that transformational leadership does not have significant impact on two specific aspect of job satisfaction: collaboration and teamwork, and work-life balance and wellbeing. Therefore, the alternative hypotheses (HA3), confirming that transformational leadership does significantly impact one or more aspects of job satisfaction.

The findings of this study suggest that transformational leadership significantly influences various aspects of employee job satisfaction within the IT sector in Ireland. This supports the conclusions of the study by Sunarsi *et al.* (2021), which found a positive and significant relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. However, these results stand in contrast to several other studies (Diputra *et al.*, 2024; Sisiwanto & Yuliana, 2020; Igbomor, 2024), which reported no statistically significant effect of transformational leadership on job satisfaction and argued that not all of its dimensions directly impact employee satisfaction. This discrepancy highlights the contextual nature of leadership effectiveness and suggests that factors such as culture and organisational structure may mediate the impact of transformational leadership behaviours.

This section addresses the third research objective by determining if transformational leadership has impact on job satisfaction amongst employee working within IT organisations in Ireland.

### 5.3. Implications Of Findings

This study contributes to the broader literature on transformational leadership by validating the relevance of its core dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration within the Irish IT sector. The results support the argument that transformational leadership significantly impacts key aspects of job satisfaction. In particular, the findings contribute to the academic understanding of how leadership styles are perceived within the information technology (IT) sector, an environment characterized by rapid innovation, knowledge intensity and continuous change. Furthermore, the study highlights that some dimensions may have more pronounced effects than others, suggesting the development of transformational leadership theory within the context of contemporary organisational environment, particularly in dynamic sectors like the IT sector.

From a practical perspective, the study points to the need for IT organisations to strengthen transformational leadership practices. For instance, the positive association between individualized consideration and opportunities for professional growth suggests that leaders who provide personal support and development opportunities can enhance employee engagement and retention. Similarly, intellectual stimulation impact on feelings of being valued indicates that encouraging innovation and critical thinking may reinforce job

satisfaction. These insights can inform leadership development programs, performance management strategies and mentorship initiatives within the sector.

The findings propose the integration of leadership assessment and development into broader organisational policy. HR departments and senior management should consider implementing frameworks that regularly evaluate leadership effectiveness through employee feedback. Policies should also support inclusive leadership approaches that account for the diverse needs and aspirations of employees, particularly in dynamic sectors like IT where talent development and retention are vital.

#### 5.4. Limitations Of The Study

While this study has provided valuable insights into employees' perceptions of transformational leadership style and its impact on employees' job satisfaction within IT organisations in Ireland, several limitations should be acknowledged.

The sample size was relatively small, with responses collected from only 50 participants. Although efforts were made to ensure diversity by selecting participants from five different IT organisations, the limited number of respondents may reduce the generalisability of the findings to the broader population of IT employees across Ireland. Secondly, the study applied a quantitative research approach using a structured questionnaire survey. While this method enabled efficient data collection and statistical analysis, it inherently restricts the depth of insight into participants' experiences or contextual interpretations. Also, time constraints posed a significant limitation. The entire dissertation had to be completed within a short period of time, with only 10 days allocated for data collection. This short window for participant engagement may have affected the response rate and limited the ability to conduct follow-up inquiries or clarify responses.

Despite these limitations, the study provides a foundational understanding of transformational leadership perceptions in Irish IT organisations and can serve as a basis for future research with larger samples and mixed methods approaches.

### 5.5. Recommendations For Future Research

Given the variability observed in how certain dimensions of transformational leadership are recognized, future research could explore moderating or mediating variables such as organisational culture, team dynamics, employee demographics or generational differences to better understand the underlying dynamics in the leadership-job satisfaction relationship. Comparing transformational leadership with other leadership styles, such as transactional or servant leadership, may also help identify which styles are most effective in the Irish IT context. Additionally, including the perspectives of leaders or managers themselves would provide a more balanced and comprehensive view of leadership dynamics. Finally, with the increasing prevalence of remote and hybrid work arrangements in the IT sector, future research should investigate how transformational leadership is perceived and practiced in virtual environments and how this influences employee satisfaction and engagement.

### 5.6. Conclusion

This study set out to explore impact of transformational leadership on employees' job satisfaction within five IT organisations in Ireland. Grounded in transformational leadership theory, the research aimed to assess employees perception of transformational leadership style, explore how leadership behaviours such as idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration are practiced and recognized by employees and how these perceptions relate to their satisfaction at work.

The findings revealed that transformational leadership and its dimensions are generally viewed positively by employees and is associated with aspects of job satisfaction. In particular, aspects such as feeling valued and appreciated, opportunities for professional growth and development, motivation and enthusiasm, sense of purpose and meaning and supportive and innovative work culture were statistically impacted by the core components of transformational leadership style. These results align with aspects of existing literature that highlight the positive influence of transformational leadership on employee satisfaction, although some studies presented differing perspectives, indicating the complex nature of leadership effectiveness in dynamic, innovation-driven sectors like IT.

This research makes a meaningful contribution to the understanding of leadership effectiveness within the Irish IT context a sector that continues to grow and evolve rapidly.

Despite its limitations, the study offers valuable insights that contribute meaningfully to both academic research and practical implementation. The findings highlight the importance of integrating leadership development into broader talent management and retention strategies, supporting efforts to enhance employee satisfaction and drive organisational success.

In conclusion, the findings of this study affirm that transformational leadership is an important factor in shaping and within the IT industry. As organisations continue to adapt to rapid technological and workplace changes, fostering leadership styles that inspire, support and engage employees will be essential in sustaining satisfaction, performance and long-term organisational growth.

### **5.7. Personal Learning Statement**

Undertaking this research has been an intense yet intellectually stimulating and rewarding experience that has significantly contributed to my academic, professional and personal growth. My initial motivation came from a strong interest in understanding leadership styles and their impact on employees, particularly within the dynamic and innovative context of the IT sector and narrowing it down to Ireland. Beyond fulfilling academic requirements, I was driven by a desire to explore a topic that holds significant relevance for the future of human resource practice.

While this research process helped me develop and refine variety of skills, the process was not without its difficulties. Limited time for data collection and the challenge of securing participant responses placed significant demands on my organisational and problem-solving abilities. This was also my first time using SPSS which required both patience and a willingness to engage deeply with statistical analysis. Although the software initially felt unfamiliar, doing each analysis gradually enhanced my understanding and the data became more meaningful.

Personally, this research broadened my understanding of the complexities of human behaviour within organisational contexts. It also reinforced my interest in pursuing a career in Human Resources, with a particular focus on leadership development, employee engagement and organisational culture. This experience has also provided me with the skills and perspective needed to approach future research and professional challenges with

increased confidence and clarity. If I were to conduct a similar study again, I would consider increasing the sample size and using the qualitative method to gain more in-depth insights.

In summary, this research journey has not only sharpened my academic knowledge but also prepared me for real-world HR practice by enhancing critical skills, self-discipline and a reflective mindset.

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## APPENDIX

Questionnaire Survey sent to respondents.

Section 1 of 6

### The impact of transformational leadership on employee job satisfaction, focusing on Ireland's IT sector

**B** *I* U  

This survey is a part of a research study exploring the impact of transformational leadership on employee job satisfaction within Ireland's IT sector. It should take approximately 1-2 minutes to complete. Your answers will be kept confidential and anonymous. Please answer honestly based on your experiences.

Thank you for participation.

After section 1 Continue to next section

Section 2 of 6

Background Information

Description (optional)

Your current job title/role \*

Short answer text

How long have been working in your organisation? \*

- ☐ Less than 1 year
- ☐ 1-3 years
- ☐ 4-6 years
- ☐ More than 6 years

Gender

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Prefer not to say

### Section 3 of 6

Perception of Transformational Leadership



Kindly rate the following statements on a scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

My organisation's leadership motivates me to perform beyond my expectations. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly agree

The leadership in my organisation encourages new ideas and innovative thinking. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly agree

The leadership at my workplace inspires me to work towards shared organizational goals. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly agree

My workplace leaders values individual needs and provides personal support. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly agree

Overall, I have a positive perception of the leadership style within my organisation. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly agree

#### Section 4 of 6

Recognition of core dimensions of Transformational Leadership



Kindly indicate your agreement on a scale of 1 (Not at all) to 5 (To a great extent)

I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide a strong sense of purpose and mission. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not at all	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	To a great extent

I recognize that my organisation's leaders articulate a clear and inspiring vision for the future. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not at all	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	To a great extent

I recognize that my organisation's leaders challenge me to think creatively and approach problems from <sup>\*</sup> different angles.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not at all	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	To a great extent

I recognize that my organisation's leaders provide personalized support and development opportunities <sup>\*</sup>

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not at all	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	To a great extent

After section 4 Continue to next section

Section 5 of 6

Aspects of Job Satisfaction Impacted by Transformational Leadership.



Description (optional)

Which of the following aspects of your job satisfaction are positively impacted by your organisation's <sup>\*</sup> leadership style?

Select all that apply.

- ☐ Feeling valued and appreciated
- ☐ Opportunities for professional growth and development
- ☐ Motivation and enthusiasm
- ☐ Sense of purpose and meaning
- ☐ Collaboration and teamwork
- ☐ Supportive and innovative work culture
- ☐ Work life balance and wellbeing

If there are other aspects of your job satisfaction influenced by leadership that are not listed above, please share them here.

Long answer text

In your own words, how would you describe the leadership style within your organization?

Long answer text

After section 5 Continue to next section

Section 6 of 6

**Thank you for your participation!**



Your insights are valuable and will contribute to research on transformational leadership and employee job satisfaction in the Irish IT sector.