

STRATEGY AND LEADERSHIP IN THE “EMERGING ERA” (POST-PANDEMIC
DIGITAL WORLD)

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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to the two pillars of my life, my beloved mother and father. They have been my unwavering source of love, support, and inspiration throughout my academic journey. Their sacrifices, guidance, and belief in my abilities have shaped me into who I am today.

You have created a loving and nurturing environment that has allowed me to flourish and grow. Your selflessness and sacrifices have enabled me to pursue my educational endeavors with confidence and determination. Your unwavering support has given me the wings to soar, and I am eternally grateful for that.

With heartfelt gratitude and deep love, I dedicate this thesis to my extraordinary mother and father.

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ABSTRACT

STRATEGY AND LEADERSHIP IN THE “EMERGING ERA” (POST-PANDEMIC
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This research examines the interplay between strategy and leadership in the post-pandemic digital world, which is characterized by unprecedented change and complexity. This study aims to understand how leaders can formulate effective strategies to navigate this emerging era and identify the key competencies required for leaders to succeed in this environment. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, including a literature review, case studies, and a survey of executives from a range of industries. The findings reveal that the most successful leaders in the emerging era are those who are able to balance agility and stability, and who can effectively leverage digital technologies to drive innovation and efficiency. Leaders who prioritize collaboration, empathy, and inclusivity can better build cohesive and resilient teams and navigate the challenges of a rapidly changing environment. The study also identifies several competencies that are essential for leaders in the emerging era, including digital literacy, strategic thinking, emotional intelligence, and resilience. Leaders who possess these competencies are better able to navigate the complexity of the post-pandemic digital world, and to drive sustainable growth and innovation. Overall, this research highlights the critical role of leadership in shaping the future of organizations in the emerging era. By prioritizing the development of key competencies and embracing a

strategic mindset that balances agility and stability, leaders can position their organizations for success in the post-pandemic digital world.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In today's fast-paced and ever-changing business environment, leadership and strategy roles have become more critical than ever. Technological advancements, globalization, and disruptive innovation are creating new opportunities and challenges for organizations, and leaders must be able to navigate this emerging era effectively to drive sustainable growth and success.

The concepts of VUCA, RUPT, and BANI are highly relevant to the topic of strategy and leadership in the emerging era. VUCA stands for volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity, and it describes the challenges of operating in a rapidly changing and unpredictable environment. The emerging era is characterized by VUCA, as disruptive technologies and shifting market trends create a constant state of flux for organizations. Leaders must be able to adapt quickly to changing circumstances, anticipate emerging trends, and make strategic decisions that enable their organizations to thrive amid volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity.

RUPT stands for radical, unexpected, pervasive, and technological, and it refers to the types of disruptions that can upend entire industries and business models. The emerging era is characterized by RUPT, as new technologies and business models are transforming traditional industries and creating new opportunities for growth and innovation. Leaders must be able to identify and respond to these disruptive forces, embracing new technologies and business models that enable their organizations to thrive in the midst of radical, unexpected, pervasive, and technological change.

BANI stands for brittle, anxious, non-linear, and incomprehensible, and it describes the characteristics of the emerging era. BANI highlights the fact that the emerging era is

characterized by complexity, unpredictability, and nonlinear dynamics, making it difficult for leaders to understand and navigate effectively. Leaders must be able to embrace ambiguity and uncertainty, build resilient teams that can adapt to changing circumstances, and create a culture of learning and innovation that enables their organizations to thrive in the midst of brittle, anxious, non-linear, and incomprehensible change.

Incorporating these concepts into the discussion of strategy and leadership in the emerging era highlights the challenges and opportunities that leaders face in navigating this complex and rapidly changing landscape. It emphasizes the need for leaders to embrace agility, adaptability, and innovation, as well as the importance of building resilient teams and creating a culture of continuous learning and improvement. By understanding and responding to the challenges of VUCA, RUPT, and BANI, leaders can position their organizations for long-term success and sustainability in the emerging era.

The emerging era requires leaders to adopt a strategic and forward-thinking approach to their leadership practices, one that embraces change, innovation, and continuous learning. Leaders must be able to anticipate and respond to changes in the business environment, build resilient teams that can adapt to new technologies and market shifts, and create a culture of innovation that promotes long-term success.

1.1.1 Introduction to the Emerging Era

As the world grapples with the aftermath of a global pandemic, the digital landscape has emerged as a critical focal point for individuals, businesses, and society. The post-pandemic era brings new challenges and opportunities, shaping how we interact, work, and consume information. In this document, we will delve into the shifting dynamics of the digital world, exploring the trends, technologies, and implications that define this emerging era. Understanding the post-pandemic digital landscape allows us to adapt, innovate, and thrive amid unprecedented change. The post-pandemic digital landscape presents a

complex web of interconnected elements that have redefined how we live and operate. Digital transformation has accelerated across industries, pushing organizations to adapt to remote work, online collaboration, and the growing reliance on digital platforms. As we navigate this new era, we must analyze the evolving consumer behavior, cybersecurity challenges, and the increasing importance of data-driven decision-making (Embracing digital: from survival to thriving in the post-COVID-19 world, 2020).

The pandemic has reshaped consumer preferences and habits, increasing online shopping, digital entertainment consumption, and virtual experiences. Understanding these shifts is crucial for businesses aiming to meet their customers' changing needs and expectations.

The growing prevalence of digital footprints has made cybersecurity an increasingly important issue. The greater dependence on digital infrastructure has amplified the vulnerability to cyber threats, underscoring the importance of strong security measures and attentiveness.

Data has emerged as a fundamental element for making well-informed decisions in the post-pandemic digital environment. Organizations must use data analytics to obtain valuable insights, anticipate trends, and execute strategic initiatives successfully. Additionally, the integration of technology into education has become more prominent during the pandemic, with social media and micro-learning playing a vital role in creating an engaging (Jiang, 2020).

In the following sections, we will delve deeper into these critical aspects of the post-pandemic digital landscape, providing insights and strategies to navigate this evolving terrain effectively.

As we conclude our exploration of the post-pandemic digital landscape, it is evident that the digital transformation has accelerated and reshaped various aspects of our lives.

The surge in online activities, remote work, and digital consumption has created new opportunities and challenges for individuals and organizations. The shift in consumer behavior, the heightened importance of cybersecurity, and the reliance on data-driven decision-making stand as defining features of this emerging era(Chaudhuri, 2020).

To thrive in this new landscape, businesses need to adapt to consumers' changing needs and preferences, prioritize robust cybersecurity measures, and harness the power of data analytics to drive informed strategies. Embracing technology in education and leveraging digital platforms for engaging experiences will also be instrumental in navigating this evolving terrain.

As we look toward the future, individuals and organizations must remain agile, innovative, and adaptable in the face of unprecedented change. By understanding and harnessing the opportunities presented by the post-pandemic digital landscape, we can pave the way for a resilient and thriving digital future.

1.1.2 Strategic Development in the Digital Age

The strategic development in the digital age requires a comprehensive understanding of the complexities and nuances of the post-pandemic digital landscape. As businesses and organizations navigate this evolving terrain, they must prioritize strategic initiatives that embrace digital transformation and anticipate and respond to the changing dynamics of consumer behavior, cybersecurity challenges, and data-driven decision-making (Jieru et al., 2020).

One of the critical areas for strategic development is tailoring products and services to meet consumers' evolving needs and preferences. The surge in online activities and digital consumption has led to a fundamental shift in consumer behavior, increasing reliance on e-commerce, virtual experiences, and digital entertainment. To effectively

capitalize on these shifts, businesses must invest in market research, consumer insights, and agile product development strategies to stay ahead in the competitive digital landscape.

Moreover, robust cybersecurity measures must be at the forefront of strategic development. The greater dependency on digital infrastructure has exposed organizations to heightened cyber threats, requiring proactive measures to secure sensitive data and protect against potential breaches. Strategic development in this realm involves implementing robust security protocols and fostering a culture of cybersecurity awareness and preparedness across all levels of the organization (Impact of digital surge during Covid-19 pandemic: A viewpoint on research and practice, 2020).

Additionally, leveraging data-driven decision-making is pivotal for strategic development in the post-pandemic digital landscape. Organizations must harness the power of data analytics to derive actionable insights, anticipate market trends, and make informed strategic decisions. This entails investing in data infrastructure, analytics tools, and talent to drive a data-driven innovation and adaptability culture.

Embracing technology in education and leveraging digital platforms for engaging experiences also play a crucial role in strategic development. Technology integration in education has become more prominent, requiring organizations to invest in digital learning solutions and platforms to facilitate engaging and compelling learning experiences.

In conclusion, strategic development in the digital age requires a proactive and holistic approach encompassing consumer-centric strategies, robust cybersecurity measures, data-driven decision-making, and leveraging technology for educational advancement. By embracing these strategic imperatives, businesses and organizations can effectively navigate the complexities of the post-pandemic digital landscape and position themselves for resilient growth and success in the digital age.

While the post-pandemic digital landscape has undoubtedly brought about significant transformations and opportunities, it is crucial also to consider the potential drawbacks and challenges of overreliance on digital technology.

One of the concerns associated with the surge in online activities and digital consumption is the potential for depersonalization and disconnection from real-life interactions. As individuals and businesses increasingly rely on digital platforms for communication, collaboration, and entertainment, there is a risk of diminishing face-to-face interactions and the human touch essential for building genuine relationships and fostering meaningful connections. Furthermore, the growing prevalence of digital footprints and data-driven decision-making raises concerns about privacy and ethical implications. The extensive collection and analysis of personal data for targeted marketing, predictive analytics, and algorithmic decision-making may encroach upon individuals' privacy rights and destroy trust between consumers and businesses. There is a need to carefully consider the ethical use of data and the implications of its widespread utilization in the post-pandemic digital landscape(Hantrais et al., 2020).

The heightened reliance on digital infrastructure also exposes organizations to increased cybersecurity risks and vulnerabilities. Despite implementing robust security measures, the evolving nature of cyber threats poses an ongoing challenge, requiring continuous vigilance and investment in cybersecurity defenses. The potential impact of a cybersecurity breach, including data breaches, financial losses, and reputational damage, underscores the need for a balanced approach to digital dependency and risk mitigation.

In conclusion, while the post-pandemic digital landscape offers unparalleled opportunities for growth and innovation, it is essential to critically examine the potential negative consequences of overreliance on digital technology. Balancing the benefits of digital transformation with a mindful approach to privacy, human connection, and

cybersecurity resilience is imperative for sustainable and responsible development in the digital age. Organizations must proactively address these concerns as they navigate the complexities of the evolving digital terrain.

1.1.3 The Role of Technology in Shaping Strategy and Leadership

Technology plays a critical role in shaping strategy and leadership for sustainable growth and success in the current digital landscape. To navigate the complexities of the post-pandemic digital terrain, organizations must leverage advanced analytics and artificial intelligence to gain actionable insights and enhance decision-making processes. By utilizing sophisticated analytics tools, organizations can sift through vast amounts of data to identify patterns, forecast market trends, and make informed strategic choices. Additionally, AI technologies can automate routine tasks, optimize operational efficiency, and empower leaders to focus on high-impact initiatives and innovation.

Incorporating technology into leadership practices is essential for cultivating an adaptive and visionary leadership culture. Using digital communication platforms and collaborative tools, leaders can engage with their teams, foster open communication, and drive a sense of unity and purpose in a distributed work environment. Leaders can also use virtual and augmented reality for immersive training experiences to enhance leadership development and nurture talent innovatively.

Organizations must prioritize digital transformation as a core component of their strategic initiatives. This includes reimagining business models, processes, and customer experiences through the lens of technology to drive agility, efficiency, and competitive advantage in the digital age. Leveraging cloud computing, the Internet of Things, and advanced digital platforms can streamline operations, enhance customer engagement, and unlock new growth and revenue generation avenues.

Technology is also crucial in embracing agile methodologies and digital innovation practices. Organizations can adapt to market dynamics, consumer preferences, and technological advancements with agility and resilience by fostering a culture of experimentation, rapid iteration, and continuous improvement. Cultivating strategic partnerships with technology providers, startups, and industry disruptors to stay abreast of emerging trends and leverage cutting-edge solutions for strategic advancement is also essential.

In conclusion, integrating technology into strategic development and leadership practices is fundamental for thriving in the post-pandemic digital landscape. Organizations can drive sustainable growth, adaptive leadership, and competitive differentiation in the digital age by leveraging advanced analytics, AI, digital transformation, and innovation. Embracing technology as a strategic enabler and leadership catalyst will be pivotal in shaping the future success of organizations as they navigate the complexities of the evolving digital terrain.

1.1.4 Power of Digital Transformation

In the ever-changing landscape of technology and business, the power of digital transformation cannot be overstated. As organizations seek to remain resilient and adaptable in the post-pandemic digital age, the role of technology

In the wake of the global pandemic, the business world has witnessed an unprecedented acceleration of digital transformation. The rapid digitization of operations, customer interactions, and business models has propelled organizations into a new era of connectivity, agility, and innovation. As businesses grapple with the complexities of the post-pandemic digital landscape, understanding the power of digital transformation is crucial for driving sustainable growth and relevance in the digital age (Amankwah et al., 2021).

Digital transformation transcends traditional notions of technology adoption; it represents a fundamental shift in how organizations operate, deliver value, and engage with stakeholders. At its core, digital transformation entails reimagining business processes, customer experiences, and organizational capabilities by strategically integrating digital technologies. From cloud computing and big data analytics to artificial intelligence and IoT, the digital toolbox empowers organizations to unlock new frontiers of efficiency, agility, and customer-centricity(Soto-Acosta, 2020).

The power of digital transformation lies not only in its capacity to enhance operational efficiency and drive cost savings but also in its ability to fuel innovation, customer engagement, and competitive differentiation. By embracing a digital-first mindset, organizations can harness data-driven insights to inform strategic decisions, optimize customer experiences, and unlock new growth and revenue generation avenues. Furthermore, digital transformation enables organizations to pivot swiftly in response to market dynamics, emerging trends, and evolving customer preferences, fostering an adaptive and resilient organizational culture.

Moreover, digital transformation catalyzes organizational agility and responsiveness, enabling businesses to embrace change, experiment with new business models, and capitalize on emerging opportunities. The seamless integration of digital platforms, intelligent automation, and predictive analytics empowers organizations to streamline operations, optimize supply chains, and drive real-time decision-making, positioning them for competitive advantage in dynamic and uncertain business environments(Almeida et al., D, J., and Monteiro; J., 2020).

In conclusion, the power of digital transformation extends beyond technological modernization; it represents a strategic imperative for organizations seeking to thrive in the post-pandemic digital landscape. By leveraging digital transformation as a driver of

innovation, agility, and customer-centricity, organizations can redefine their strategic positioning, foster sustainable growth, and seize new opportunities in the digital age. As businesses chart their course in the evolving digital terrain, embracing the power of digital transformation will be instrumental in shaping their future success and relevance.

1.2 Purpose of Research

With the constantly evolving business landscape, the emerging era demands a dynamic approach to strategy and leadership. Organizations face challenges in understanding and adapting to the changes in the market, technology, and social trends while aligning their strategy and leadership to remain competitive and sustainable. Furthermore, traditional leadership styles and strategies may not be effective in the emerging era, where agility, innovation, and adaptability are essential for success. Therefore, the problem statement is to explore the relationship between strategy and leadership in the emerging era and to identify the challenges and opportunities for organizations to succeed in this environment.

Understanding and adapting to changes: The emerging era is characterized by rapid changes in the market, technology, and social trends. Organizations must be able to understand and adapt to these changes to remain competitive and sustainable.

The BANI, RUPT, and VUCA frameworks provide insightful perspectives on the challenges and characteristics of the contemporary business environment. This literature review delves into each framework, exploring the key concepts and their implications for strategy and leadership in the BANI (Brittle, Anxious, Non-Linear, Incomprehensible), RUPT (Radical, Unexpected, Pervasive, Technological), and VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity) world.

BANI World -The BANI framework, coined by strategic foresight expert Maria Giudice, encapsulates the inherent characteristics of the modern business landscape as

stated by Giudice (2015). The literature on the BANI world emphasizes the brittleness of systems and structures, highlighting their susceptibility to rapid change and disruption. This fragility necessitates a shift in leadership mindset, urging leaders to embrace adaptability and resilience in the face of constant flux.

Anxiety in the BANI world is explored in the works of scholars like Taleb (2007), who discuss the heightened sense of unpredictability and unease stemming from the complex and interconnected nature of global systems. The literature emphasizes the importance of leaders fostering organizational cultures that can thrive in the midst of uncertainty, encouraging creativity and innovation as responses to anxiety as stated in the research conducted by Taleb (2012).

The non-linear dynamics of the BANI world are studied in complexity theory literature Holland (1995). Leaders must grapple with the emergence of unpredictable patterns and non-linear cause-and-effect relationships, necessitating a departure from linear, traditional management approaches. The literature suggests that organizations need to adopt more adaptive and flexible structures to navigate non-linearity effectively.

The incomprehensibility of the BANI world, as suggested by Taleb (2007), emphasizes the limits of human understanding in the face of complex, interconnected systems. Scholars argue for leaders to embrace ambiguity, fostering a culture that values continuous learning and the ability to navigate situations that may be initially incomprehensible.

RUPT World - The RUPT framework, encompassing Radical, Unexpected, Pervasive, and Technological disruptions, provides a lens through which scholars examine the transformative forces reshaping industries and economies mentions (Zook and Allen, 2003). The literature on RUPT highlights the radical nature of disruptions, often driven by technological advancements and unforeseen events states (Christensen, 1997). Leaders

must be attuned to identifying and responding to these radical shifts to ensure organizational survival and growth.

Unexpected disruptions, as explored by scholars like Christensen (1997), underline the importance of organizational preparedness and agility. The literature suggests that leaders must cultivate a mindset that anticipates and responds effectively to unexpected changes, building resilience into the fabric of the organization.

In the extensive research by Lo (2004) Pervasive disruptions, affecting multiple facets of an organization, are discussed in the literature on systemic risk. Leaders need to adopt a holistic approach to risk management, considering the interconnectedness of various elements within and outside the organization to mitigate pervasive disruptions effectively.

Technological disruptions, a central element of the RUPT framework, have been extensively explored in the literature on digital transformation mentions Westerman et al. (2014) as part of the research. Scholars emphasize the role of leaders in driving technological innovation, understanding the implications of emerging technologies, and strategically leveraging them for organizational advantage.

VUCA World - The VUCA framework, originating from military strategy and later applied to business environments, describes the Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity characterizing contemporary landscapes as mentioned in the research by Bennett and Lemoine (2014). The literature on the VUCA world underscores the need for leaders to develop strategies that acknowledge and navigate these challenges. Volatility, explored in works by Tushman and O'Reilly (2002), emphasizes the rapid and unpredictable nature of change in the business environment. Leaders are urged to embrace agility and flexibility, fostering an organizational culture that can swiftly adapt to volatile market conditions.

Uncertainty, discussed by scholars like Court et al. (2019), highlights the lack of predictability in the business landscape. The literature suggests that leaders must develop strategic foresight, scenario planning, and risk management capabilities to navigate the uncertainties inherent in the VUCA world. Complexity, as studied by Snowden and Boone (2007), focuses on the intricate and interconnected nature of business environments. Leaders are encouraged to adopt complexity-informed strategies, recognizing that linear approaches may be insufficient in addressing the multifaceted challenges posed by complex systems.

Ambiguity, explored in the works of Bennett and Lemoine (2014), emphasizes the lack of clarity and the existence of multiple interpretations of information. The literature suggests that leaders should embrace ambiguity, promoting a culture of learning, experimentation, and adaptability to thrive in ambiguous situations.

The BANI, RUPT, and VUCA frameworks collectively offer a comprehensive understanding of the complexities and challenges faced by leaders in the modern business landscape. Scholars highlight the need for adaptive leadership, strategic foresight, resilience, and a cultural shift toward embracing change and uncertainty. Integrating insights from these frameworks provides a nuanced perspective for leaders seeking to navigate the intricacies of the BANI, RUPT, and VUCA world effectively.

The primary objective of this research is to comprehensively identify and analyze the impact of organizational strategy and the associated leadership styles that influence strategic decision-making. To achieve this goal, a robust research design is crucial, encompassing a qualitative methodology that integrates a combination of interviews, surveys, and, where applicable, content analysis. This section provides an extended overview of the research design, outlining the rationale behind the chosen methods and emphasizing the significance of their combined application.

Aligning strategy and leadership: To navigate the emerging era, organizations must align their strategy and leadership. This means developing a clear vision for the future, setting goals and objectives, and establishing the necessary processes and systems to achieve those goals.

Traditional leadership styles and strategies: Traditional leadership styles and strategies may not be effective in the emerging era, where agility, innovation, and adaptability are essential for success. Therefore, organizations need to develop new leadership approaches that are better suited to the current business environment.

Challenges and opportunities: While the emerging era presents many challenges, it also presents many opportunities for organizations to succeed. By embracing new technologies, exploring new markets, and developing innovative products and services, organizations can position themselves for long-term success in the emerging era.

1.3 Research Problem

Some potential objectives for a research study on strategy and leadership in the emerging era can be summarized as the following: To identify the key challenges that organizations face in developing strategy and leadership in the current business environment, and to develop strategies for overcoming these challenges. To explore the role of technology in the development of strategy and leadership, and to identify best practices for leveraging technology to achieve business objectives. To examine the relationship between innovation, agility, and leadership in the emerging era, and to develop strategies for fostering a culture of innovation and agility in organizations. To identify the ethical considerations that organizations must take into account when developing strategy and leadership in the emerging era, and to develop guidelines for responsible and sustainable business practices. To analyze the impact of globalization, social trends, and other external factors on the development of strategy and leadership in the emerging era,

and to develop strategies for adapting to these changes. To identify the leadership styles and approaches that are most effective in the emerging era, and to develop guidelines for developing and nurturing effective leaders. By achieving these objectives, organizations can develop effective strategies for navigating the complex and dynamic business environment of the emerging era, and positioning themselves for long-term success.

The objective of research on leadership and strategy in the emerging era is to understand how leaders can effectively navigate the rapidly changing business landscape and successfully guide their organizations towards long-term success in an era of technological advancement, globalization, and disruptive innovation.

Specifically, the research aims to identify the most effective leadership styles, traits, and practices that are required to drive strategic innovation, create a culture of continuous learning and improvement, and build high-performing teams in the context of an increasingly complex and interconnected business environment.

The research will also examine the various challenges and opportunities presented by the emerging era, including the need to adapt to new technologies, respond to changing customer needs and preferences, and maintain a competitive advantage in a global marketplace. Ultimately, the objective of this research is to provide insights and guidance for leaders seeking to thrive in the emerging era and achieve sustainable growth and success for their organizations.

Analyze the impact of emerging technologies on business strategy and leadership practices. Identify the key skills and competencies required for leaders to navigate the emerging era successfully. Examine the role of organizational culture in promoting innovation and agility in response to changes in the business environment. Investigate the challenges and opportunities presented by globalization and its impact on leadership and strategy. Evaluate the effectiveness of different leadership styles in promoting strategic

innovation and change management. Explore the relationship between ethical leadership and long-term business success in the emerging era.

Develop a framework for assessing and implementing emerging strategies in response to technological disruption and market shifts. Identify best practices for building high-performing teams and fostering collaboration in the context of an increasingly diverse and virtual workforce.

These sub-objectives can help to guide the research process and ensure that the research outcomes are relevant, meaningful, and actionable for leaders in today's rapidly changing business environment.

1.4 Research Purpose and Questions

The problem statement highlights the need for organizations to be proactive in developing their strategy and leadership approaches in order to succeed in the rapidly evolving business landscape of the emerging era. More specifically the following research questions need to be addressed:

1. What are the emerging trends and challenges that organizations face in the current business environment, and how do they impact the development of strategy and leadership?
2. What are the key factors that contribute to successful strategy and leadership in the emerging era, and how can organizations leverage these factors to achieve their goals?
3. How can organizations adapt their strategy and leadership styles to meet the changing needs of the business environment, and what are the best practices for doing so?
4. What role does technology play in the development of strategy and leadership in the emerging era, and how can organizations use technology to gain a competitive advantage?
5. How can organizations foster a culture of innovation and agility, and what leadership approaches are most effective in doing so?

6. What are the ethical considerations that organizations must take into account when developing strategy and leadership in the emerging era, and how can they balance the need for innovation with responsible business practices?

By addressing these research questions, organizations can gain insights into the best practices and strategies for developing effective leadership and strategy approaches in the emerging era. The contemporary business environment is rife with challenges and opportunities that require organizations to remain adaptable and proactive. To achieve this, businesses must note emerging trends and modify their approach to align with them. This research investigates these trends and associated challenges, focusing on their implications for strategic development and leadership.

The study will explore the critical factors necessary for successful strategy and leadership, examining how organizations can leverage these elements to achieve their objectives. The research will primarily focus on how businesses can modify their strategic and leadership approaches to align with the changing demands of the business landscape. This includes identifying best practices for adaptation and exploring the role of technology in driving strategic innovation and leadership excellence.

Furthermore, the research will examine the cultivation of a culture prioritizing innovation and agility, assessing various leadership models that facilitate such an environment. Ethical considerations will also be thoroughly examined, focusing on how organizations can balance innovation and responsible business conduct.

Through synthesizing insights from various disciplines, this study aims to provide a comprehensive framework that organizations can use to navigate the complexities of the modern business environment, fostering sustainable growth and competitive advantage.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study on "Strategy and Leadership in the Emerging Era (Post-Pandemic Digital World)" holds profound significance in understanding and navigating the complex landscape of the modern business environment. The pandemic has ushered in a new era, characterized by rapid digital transformation and unprecedented disruptions across industries. In this context, the study seeks to explore the strategic and leadership challenges faced by organizations in this emerging era and provide valuable insights for effective decision-making and organizational adaptation.

One of the key reasons why this study is significant lies in its focus on the post-pandemic digital world. The pandemic has accelerated the adoption of digital technologies, fundamentally reshaping the way businesses operate and interact with their stakeholders. By examining the strategies and leadership approaches that are effective in this digital landscape, this study addresses a critical gap in knowledge, enabling organizations to thrive amidst the challenges and opportunities presented by the emerging era.

Furthermore, the study contributes to the existing literature on strategy and leadership by incorporating the specific context of the post-pandemic digital world. Traditional business models and strategies may no longer be sufficient in this rapidly evolving landscape, and leaders must navigate the complexities of digital transformation, technological advancements, and changing consumer behaviors. By examining these unique challenges and providing insights into effective strategies and leadership practices, this study offers practical guidance to organizations aiming to succeed in the emerging era.

Another significant aspect of this study is its potential impact on organizational performance and competitiveness. In a highly competitive global marketplace, organizations that embrace digital transformation and leverage effective strategies and leadership approaches are more likely to gain a competitive advantage. The findings of this study have the potential to empower leaders and decision-makers with the knowledge and

tools necessary to make informed strategic choices, drive innovation, foster organizational agility, and achieve sustainable growth.

Additionally, the study's significance extends to the broader societal implications. The post-pandemic digital world presents both opportunities and challenges for society as a whole. It has the potential to reshape industries, create new jobs, and enhance the overall quality of life. By shedding light on effective strategies and leadership practices in this context, this study contributes to the collective understanding of how organizations can positively influence and contribute to the socio-economic development of communities.

In conclusion, the study on "Strategy and Leadership in the Emerging Era (Post-Pandemic Digital World)" holds immense significance for organizations, leaders, and society at large. By addressing the strategic and leadership challenges specific to the post-pandemic digital landscape, the study provides insights that can inform decision-making, drive organizational success, and contribute to the overall well-being of individuals and communities.

1.6 Structure of the Thesis

The first chapter is where we look at the nature of the research, its scope, and its history. This chapter presents a more in-depth explanation of the research subject and its significance, aims, purpose, and goals.

As part of the research procedure, the approach of conducting a literature review, and the information that was obtained from that review is summarized in Chapter Two. This section highlights critical essential papers, underlines vital research, and, most importantly, shows the gap in the existing body of knowledge. In pursuing this line of inquiry, an effort was made to reduce or do away with that gap. In the third chapter, the approach used for investigation is discussed. The principal results of the research are described in the fourth chapter. In the fifth chapter, the results are discussed in length.

Chapter Six of the report discusses the conclusions, implications as well as the recommendations for future.

On the other hand, it is vital to consider the research's limitations, which include small sample size and the possibility of bias. Despite these setbacks, this study has several important practical implications, notably guiding future policy choices and actions. In addition, specific ideas have been proposed for further research, such as increasing the sample size and including people from a broader range of backgrounds. Comparisons with previous studies in this field demonstrate both parallels and discrepancies in the results, indicating the need for additional research.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

In recent years, the field of organizational development and change management has experienced a period of unprecedented turbulence and unpredictability. This era has been marked by rapid technological advancements, socio-economic shifts, and global crises that have significantly altered the business operations landscape. The adage that uncertainties are our only certainties has never been more accurate.

Amidst these challenges, managers and leaders must delve into scholarly research and literature to gain insights and perspectives on effective strategies for navigating change in chaotic environments. This literature review aims to comprehensively examine the current state of knowledge surrounding the management of uncertainty in organizational settings.

To achieve this goal, the review draws upon various scholarly works spanning disciplines such as organizational psychology, strategic management, and leadership studies. It explores key concepts and frameworks illuminating the dynamics of turbulent business environments, including the transition from the traditional VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous) paradigm to newer conceptualizations such as BANI (Brittle, Anxious, Nonlinear, and Incomprehensible) and RUPT (Rapid, Unpredictable, Paradoxical, and Tangled).

The review also analyzes the implications of these frameworks for organizational development and change initiatives, highlighting the need for adaptive strategies, innovative mindsets, and resilient leadership in the face of uncertainty. Furthermore, it examines how organizations have historically responded to change and evolved, culminating in the emergence of what is now colloquially called the "new normal."

By synthesizing and critically evaluating existing literature, this review provides practitioners and scholars with a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities inherent in managing change in chaotic business environments. This information serves as a valuable resource for informing future research endeavors and guiding organizational practices in an ever-evolving world.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

When it comes to organizations, strategy, management, and people, there needs to be a huge room for consistency as stated in a research article by Schick, A., P. R. Hobson, and P. L. Ibisch. (2017). The main purpose of this paper is to conduct a systematic literature review to narrow down the different terms VUCA, VUCA Prime, BANI, and RUPT and provide a take on leadership and strategy to highlight some avenues for future research.

Over the last few decades, there have been quite many publications concerning organizations and their environment as indicated in the research done by Sinha, D. and Sinha, S. (2020). As indicated earlier, one is familiar with the acronym VUCA: a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous environment. The current dynamics as stated in the research by Glaeser, W. (2022) have allowed one to evolve from the VUCA world and introduce different models to tackle the current political, economic, social, and technological factors that could affect the business now and in the future. From the above it is clear that in a VUCA world, organizations must adapt to volatile, unpredictable, constant, and ambiguous markets, it is imperative that organizations should adopt strategies to improve employee engagement as emphasized by Bennett, N., and G. J. Lemoine. (2014) in their publication. It is required to position oneself to excel against competition and sector benchmarks. Business decisions are becoming increasingly fluid, as the pace of technological, political, and socio-economic change shapes the way we all do things as

observed by Berkes, F., C. Folke, and J. Colding. (1998). It is required that organizations that operate in the current environment should identify the right framework.

di Bartolomeo, M. (2019) in his publication quotes Robert Johansen (a distinguished fellow at the Institute for the Future), who first introduced a behavioral leadership model named VUCA in 2007, to counteract each of the four elements of VUCA with a specific positive response. They are: Vision rises above Volatility — A leader should also stay focused on the desired target state and vision when conditions are changing unpredictably. There needs to be a focal point that aligns the stakeholders involved. They stand by the purpose of transformation, the scale of ambition, and the nature of the benefits. This focal point is the VISION according to Strategic Management Journal, Vol. 10, 17-32 (1989). Understanding reduces Uncertainty — when uncertainty is encountered, explore and experiment to increase understanding of external political, economic, social, technological, legislative, and environmental (PESTLE) factors. Sadaf and Zahra (2020) emphasized how managers with a good understanding of the factors (PESTLE) related to their strategy can unclutter the Uncertainty. Clarity counters Complexity — when faced with unknown and unpredictable conditions that can only be understood in hindsight or retrospect, learn to simplify where possible as clarity informs decisions and decisions enable execution. Agility overcomes Ambiguity — when the future contains multiple alternatives, be ready to adapt the approach to match the desired outcome. Organizational agility is simply achieved by adopting the practice of collaborating, delivering, reflecting, and improving against agreed metrics. The literature repeatedly shows that alignment between IT and business strategy is an important and enduring source of value, a fact that is not lost on executives who continue to see alignment as a priority (Luftman and Ben-Zvi, 2010). The objective of this research was to extend the understanding of alignment and its implications, principally in resolving the issue of whether alignment helps or hurts

agility. To summarize “Volatility provides profit opportunity.” (Warwick-Ching, 2013) “Uncertainty is opportunity.” (Hemingway & Marquart, 2013) “Simplifying IT complexity is a major opportunity.” (Boston Consulting Group, 2013) “Ambiguity equals opportunity.” (Amerasia Consulting Group, 2013).

After the review of key terminology, the second dimension is to evaluate the Key principles of leaders in today’s world. Molinaro (2015) emphasizes in his book that leadership is a decision and people in those positions have to make it. It is only possible when leaders understand why certain changes are happening in the first place and especially when times are uncertain and ambiguous. People in leadership positions also definitely need a line of sight to the end goal. Leaders can provide the vision and direction that helps employees to be less fearful and resentful of the changes and uncertainties happening around them. A strong vision not only helps individuals(employees) see what the organization will look like in the future but also explains how certain processes will be improved over time. With a clear, compelling vision, leaders can inspire employees, answer their questions, and allay their concerns, putting them in a better position to embrace change and navigate it successfully.

Research by Bell and Kozlowski (2002) indicated a focus on understanding how teams work in a virtual setup and what should be the behavior of leaders in these set up to be efficient and effective. Principles for one are overrated and in the case of leaders, they are highly overrated.

The following are essential pillars for leaders to navigate through turbulent times successfully, it is required that the leaders always trust their instincts to make decisions, as long as the decisions are professional and hence their “guesses” are educated ones. Thus, setting and following a vision from a pattern-based behavior standpoint becomes possible. It is required that they always assume accountability for their actions and thus empower

others to do the very same. In other words, to be a leader in a dynamic environment is simply setting an example and requiring others to follow. But to do that and ensure the right decisions are made, accountability should become the keystone for attitudes and their related behavior. Last but not the least, it is required that one always talk the talk and walk the walk. Leadership is not only about preaching, but also about setting an example. Nonetheless, one is not possible without the other, which means that for an employee to follow, they first need to understand. In other words, underestimating the need for the employee to understand and asking them to replicate the leader's behavior is nothing but a huge leadership mistake. Along with the right framework to operate in, the leadership should develop certain traits that would support them lead and transitioning the employees in the organization in an effective and efficient way.

The final dimension that needs to be reviewed is the relevance of strategy in the new normal. Westley and Mintzberg (1989) indicate in their research regarding visionary leadership in the context of strategic management. One of the most important assets of a company is Strategy. It lays down the long-term ambitions of the company, how competitive advantage is gained, and what needs to be done to achieve this. As a leader, one of the most difficult tasks at hand is creating a meaningful and effective strategy as it takes a great deal of effort, time, and resources. For this reason, many companies will proudly share their strategic plan with employees only to reveal that the “strategy” is something else: the organizational mission, a vision statement, and/or company goals. All of these things are extremely important, but they don't equate to effective strategy—a purposeful plan of action—that helps an organization accomplish said mission, vision, and goals.

Research by Elkington (2018) establishes decision-making in the context of the VUCA world as an essential factor. As an organization, it is very important to adapt its

strategy in a turbulent economic environment, marked by multiple challenges and changes at every step. This is essentially required to stay in business or even increase their productivity, as well as their competitive advantage. The activities carried out within an organization are changing frequently, as the circumstances and characteristics of the business environment increasingly suffer transformations, the decision-making processes must be updated.

It is correct to conclude that the employees of the companies must be prepared to organize their activity in a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous world - the VUCA world. Above the decision environment, are manifested a series of indirect and direct influences (interdependent variables, constraints, and limit situations) that affect the result of the decisions adopted within the different levels of management in organizations.

Ansoff (1979) and Mintzberg (1994) state in their research that the global landscape has undergone unprecedented disruptions in the aftermath of the pandemic, prompting a comprehensive reevaluation of strategies and leadership practices across diverse industries. This literature review examines key themes and insights derived from scholarly investigations into the evolving dynamics of strategy and leadership in the transformative context of the post-pandemic era.

1. The Resilience Imperative: Adaptive Strategies for Uncertain Times: As stated in the research by Hamel and Välikangas (2003), the post-pandemic era is characterized by heightened uncertainty, necessitating a strategic shift towards agility and adaptability. The VUCA framework, emphasizing Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity, becomes a crucial lens through which leaders navigate a landscape marked by constant change (Bennett and Lemoine, 2014).

The literature underscores the significance of resilience as a strategic imperative, advocating for the integration of anticipatory measures and effective response mechanisms to absorb shocks and adapt swiftly also mentioned by Bhamra et al., (2011).

2. Leadership in Crisis: Lessons from the Pandemic Response: Boin et al., (2005) stated that the pandemic spotlighted leadership, testing leaders in unprecedented ways. Transformational leadership emerged as a key factor in navigating the complexities of the pandemic, characterized by visionary and empathetic leadership styles (Bass and Riggio, 2006).

Effective communication, highlighted in their research by Fink (1986) and Coombs (2014), becomes integral to building trust, managing uncertainty, and guiding organizations through turbulent times. Leaders who demonstrated transparency, empathy, and decisiveness were found to be more successful in steering their organizations through the challenges posed by the pandemic Kramer et al., (2020).

3. Digital Transformation and Strategic Renewal: Research done by Westerman et al. (2014) and McGrath (2013) stated that the pandemic accelerated digital transformation, compelling organizations to rethink their business models and operational paradigms. Digital technologies are identified not only as tools but as enablers of strategic renewal, requiring leaders to be technologically savvy and capable of driving digital initiatives as documented by Teece (2018).

4. Organizational Culture and Employee Well-being: The post-pandemic era redefines organizational culture, with a heightened emphasis on employee well-being as per the research by Groysberg and Abrahams (2020). Scholars argue that a strong and adaptive culture is essential for organizational resilience (Schein, 2010). It is also noted in the research conducted by Bass (1990) and Avolio et al. (2004) that leaders play a pivotal role

in shaping organizational culture, fostering innovation, collaboration, and a sense of purpose.

5. Sustainability as a Strategic Imperative: The pandemic heightened awareness of global challenges, prompting a renewed focus on sustainability. Sustainable leadership advocates for the integration of environmental, social, and governance considerations into strategic decision-making as stated by Avey et al. (2011) and Waldman et al. (2006). In the extensive research by Jackson (2020), the post-pandemic leader is expected to navigate the delicate balance between economic objectives and social responsibility, recognizing that sustainable practices contribute to long-term organizational success.

6. Geopolitical Considerations in Strategy: The pandemic accentuated geopolitical uncertainties, introducing additional complexities for organizations with global operations courtesy of the research by Rugman and Verbeke (2004). Leaders must adopt a geoeconomic mindset, integrating geopolitical considerations into strategic decision-making as mentioned in the research by Khanna (2016) .

7. Financial Resilience and Capital Allocation Strategies: The economic fallout from the pandemic underscores the importance of financial resilience as mentioned in different excerpts from Maksimovic and Phillips (2002) and Merton (1995). Leaders must reassess capital allocation strategies, balance short-term financial stability with long-term investments, and build financial buffers to withstand economic shocks as documented by Grundy and Lim (2020).

A synthesis of key themes: The post-pandemic era catalyzed a paradigm shift in the literature on strategy and leadership. Scholars advocate for a holistic and integrated approach, recognizing the interconnectedness of adaptive strategies, empathetic leadership, digital transformation, organizational culture, sustainability, geopolitical acumen, and financial resilience. As organizations grapple with the complexities of this new normal, the

literature provides insights, frameworks, and best practices to guide leaders in charting a course for sustainable growth and success.

Synthesizing different perspectives: The literature on strategy and leadership in the post-pandemic era reveals a multifaceted landscape where leaders must navigate challenges related to human capital, ethical considerations, innovation, supply chain resilience, organizational learning, digital transformation, stakeholder engagement, and strategic implementation. Synthesizing these diverse perspectives provides a comprehensive understanding of the complex and evolving dynamics that leaders face in the wake of the pandemic. As organizations strive for sustainable growth and success, strategic leaders must draw upon this rich body of literature to inform their decision-making and shape the future trajectory of their enterprises. A few of these perspectives could be outlined as the following:

1. Human Capital as a Strategic Asset: The value of human capital has been amplified in the post-pandemic era as duly noted by Becker (1964). Leadership strategies must prioritize talent acquisition, development, and retention as stated by Barney (1991). Adaptable and skilled teams are essential for innovation and organizational success mentioned by Wright et al., (1994). Leaders must invest in upskilling initiatives and foster a culture of continuous learning states Buckley and Caple (2009) as part of their findings.

2. Ethical Leadership and Corporate Governance: The pandemic has raised ethical considerations, placing a spotlight on the importance of ethical leadership and corporate governance states Treviño et al., (2003). Leaders must navigate the ethical challenges posed by the crisis, ensuring transparency and accountability is what Brown and Treviño (2006) as part of the research. The literature emphasizes the role of leaders in setting the tone for ethical behavior and fostering a culture of integrity within organizations.

3. Innovation Leadership in a Changing Landscape: Tushman and O'Reilly (1997) document that Innovation leadership becomes pivotal in the post-pandemic era. Leaders must drive a culture of innovation to adapt to new market realities as stated by Amabile and Khaire (2008). The literature stresses the need for leaders to encourage creative thinking, experimentation, and the adoption of disruptive technologies to stay competitive in evolving markets noted by Christensen (1997).
4. Supply Chain Resilience and Risk Management: The vulnerabilities exposed in global supply chains during the pandemic necessitate a strategic rethink as stated in the findings of Christopher and Lee (2004). Leaders must focus on building resilient supply chains that can withstand disruptions states Sheffi, (2007). Additionally, robust risk management strategies become integral to navigating unforeseen challenges and ensuring organizational continuity is what Chopra and Sodhi (2004) mention in their research.
5. Organizational Learning and Adaptive Strategies: The ability of organizations to learn and adapt is critical in the post-pandemic era as mentioned in the research by Argyris and Schön (1978). Leaders must foster a culture of continuous learning and adaptability states (Senge, 1990). Tushman and O'Reilly, (1997) elaborate that the literature suggests that organizations capable of rapid learning and adaptation are better positioned to thrive in dynamic and uncertain environments.
6. Digital Leadership and Cybersecurity: As organizations embrace digital transformation, digital leadership and cybersecurity become integral pillars of an organization states (Liao et al. 2007). Leaders must navigate the complexities of the digital landscape, ensuring the security of digital assets and data Schneier (2000) outlines as part of the research. The literature emphasizes the role of leaders in driving a cybersecurity culture and implementing robust digital strategies (West, 2019).

7. Stakeholder Engagement and Social Responsibility: Stakeholder engagement and social responsibility have gained prominence in the post-pandemic era as evidenced by the work of Freeman (1984). Leaders are urged to adopt a stakeholder-centric approach, considering the interests of not only shareholders but also employees, customers, and the broader community (Mitchell et al., 1997). The literature highlights the positive impact of socially responsible leadership on organizational reputation and long-term success as evidenced by Waldman et al. (2006).

8. Transformational Change and Strategic Implementation: Nadler and Tushman (1980) have stated that the post-pandemic era often demands transformational change within organizations (Nadler and Tushman, 1980). Leaders must be adept at strategic implementation, ensuring that strategies are effectively translated into action as mentioned by Beer and Nohria (2000) in their work. The literature suggests that successful strategic implementation requires strong leadership, effective communication, and a focus on organizational culture (Kotter, 1996).

Thus, the present paper aims to determine and investigate the factors that influence the characteristics of the decision situations, regardless of the type of decisions adopted within an organization. It focuses on 3 pillars Strategy, Leadership, and a quest to define a model for the new normal.

2.3 Theory of Reasoned Action

The review of the literature indicates that in times like today, we need leaders in organizations who demonstrate the ability to strategize and are capable of using critical thinking skills to adapt to volatility and uncertainty.

Past - Let us look at the journey that led us to where we are today. According to Crandall and Wallace (1995), the entire workforce underwent two major changes around the 20th century. The first shift was during the Industrial Revolution, which paved the way

for a bureaucratic system that was relevant from the 1950s up until the 1980s. In this era, it was ruled with a tight fist, decisions were taken and the employees had no say in it. The jobs were rigidly defined and the rules and policies were strictly enforced. The hierarchy was in place and it controlled all the decision-making. During this period the first Organizational Design principles were introduced, where bureaucratic systems were replaced by high-performance systems. The teams were collectively responsible for initiating improvements to the performances. The working style of the past has to be adapted and changed due to the “new” normal. Virtual teams and working gain significant importance as in the present.

The introduction of the virtual workplace contributed to the second shift. High-performance teams pushed the boundaries of the bureaucratic approach. Virtual workplaces began to dissolve physical boundaries. In a virtual workplace, people do not always work in the same place or at the same time (Crandall & Wallace, 1995). The research by Akkirman and Harris (2005) states that when communication is done virtually using electronic modes, it eliminates the need for people to come together in person to perform tasks. The traditional concept of the job has undergone a different trajectory. organizational systems are now designed to be in tune with the capabilities of individual workers. Leaders and organizations have to find a fit between their framework of choice versus their style of leadership to continue achieving business targets.

Present - Due to the ongoing digital revolution, there is a need for organizations to move straight to virtual communication thus enabling alternative growth and development paths and necessitating new approaches. The research of Cascio (2000) can be used to derive the following –the onset of virtual workplaces means that the old rules do not apply any longer. Employees also have to adapt to the changes and the challenges that they are confronted with. It is no more the 9 to 5 job as one must be comfortable with the 24/7

model. There is a lot of movement and one must become comfortable with being accessible at all times. The shift is significant as we are in the midst of a great shift from an industrial economy to an economy based on information.

In a research publication by Verick (2010), it is possible to infer that the financial crisis of 2008 – 09 shattered many businesses and by all accounts the “new normal” is real. Financial organizations, manufacturing organizations, and service organizations throughout the world were plunged into turbulent environments. At the same time, changes in technology moved forward. It is taxing leaders, who are finding their skills growing obsolete as quickly as their organizations change in this volatile, unpredictable landscape. Agility and adaptability are the most needed skills.

Way ahead in the new normal - The strategy has attained a new meaning in the new world. Organizations do not have the luxury to divulge long-term strategies. The current socio-economic and political climate has made it very clear that the organization has to be more proactive and plan its strategy with a lot of leeways to adapt and make changes in the due course of time as inferred in the scholarly article by Bennett and Lemoine (2014). Organizations have to focus on testing transient, short-term strategies. There are no fixed rules and this state of limbo is foreseen to continue for the next couple of years. It's time to adopt the sailing maneuver of tacking: the art of turning the bow (front) of the boat through the headwind so that the wind changes from one side of the boat to the other side. It can be concluded based on the outcome of the study by Horney et al. (2010) that leaders have no clue about how the world will emerge from the pandemic, the war, and the political situation one is in, so one has to do their best in the situation for the survival of the business. When the external environment factors are in control, then you can let go of the transient strategy or one might just realize that they have inadvertently pivoted the business into

something more appropriate for the post-pandemic world. This will be clear only when you dive into uncharted waters.

No rule book can be followed. But time and again scenario planning has been successful in the past as well as the present. It is a method of direction finding and strategy formation that defines itself by non-prediction. Scenarios are usually integrated into the narratives of how tomorrow might look like or the future might unfold with multiple alternatives. In a collective approach of different research initiatives and their outcomes, one that stands out is that of Millar et al. (2018) which can be referenced to believe that the need to respond avoids the brittleness of a singularly predicted future—which in an unpredictable world does not make sense. The forces exist in dynamic equilibrium and hence leaders must learn how to balance energy on different aspects. The interplay of different models (VUCA, VUCA Prime, BANI) generates the required productive energy state that can drive organizations to adapt, change and evolve to the challenging conditions. Hence it is safe to conclude in the words of Dave Dame “Change is scary but complacency is deadly”.

2.3 Digital Transformation as a Strategic Imperative

Digital transformation as a strategic imperative refers to the fundamental shift that organizations undergo to leverage technology, processes, and people to change business performance and strategy. It is considered an imperative because it is crucial for businesses to remain competitive, agile, and sustainable in the face of a rapidly evolving technological landscape and changing market conditions. Digital transformation encompasses the integration of digital technology into all areas of a business, resulting in fundamental changes to how businesses operate and deliver value to customers. It also involves a cultural change that requires organizations to continually challenge the status quo,

experiment with new technologies and business models, and become more adaptive to change.

This strategic imperative is even more prominent post-pandemic, as the COVID-19 crisis has accelerated the need for digital capabilities in areas like remote work, e-commerce, online communication, and digital customer experiences. It signifies that embracing technology is not a one-time initiative but an ongoing strategic orientation that is essential for long-term success and resilience.

Digital transformation in the context of post-pandemic organizational strategy involves a comprehensive shift in how organizations fundamentally leverage technology, processes, and people to change business performance and outreach. This transformation is driven by the need to adapt to a rapidly changing business landscape, heavily influenced by the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Here is how the concept is defined and understood through recent research:

Digital transformation plays a fundamental role in driving significant economic value across organizations, as it is essential for gaining competitive advantage, enhancing agility, and promoting sustainability through technological advancements. It is not merely a response to the immediate challenges posed by the pandemic but a recognition of the importance of information technology (Ben-Zvi and Luftman, 2022).

Lifeline for Small Businesses: The ongoing digital transformation has proven to be a crucial lifeline for small businesses during the pandemic. Despite significant challenges and limitations, it has allowed them to engage, sell, and deliver using technology (Mandviwalla and Flanagan, 2021).

Impact on Marketing and Communication: The pandemic accelerated the need to restructure organizational management policies, especially in marketing and

communication processes, emphasizing the importance of adopting new technologies for efficiency and working time reduction (Ceoceca et al., 2022).

Strategies for Resilience and Growth: Businesses must embrace digital transformation to navigate the post-pandemic economy effectively. This involves adopting technologies like cloud computing, data analytics, and automation and prioritizing customer-centric approaches to thrive in the new standard (Wang et al., 2023).

Digital Transformation Priorities: For micro and small enterprises, especially in developing countries, digital transformation priorities should include digital payments and the support of resources and capabilities to adopt new technologies for business continuity and sustainable development (Bai et al., 2021).

In conclusion, digital transformation in the post-pandemic organizational strategy is characterized by a broad and sustained effort to leverage technology for resilience, efficiency, and competitive advantage. It underscores the importance of agility, customer-centricity, and innovation as fundamental to navigating the challenges and opportunities of the pandemic and beyond. This transformation is not a temporary response but a strategic orientation that will continue to shape organizational strategies in the future.

2.4 Leadership Adaptation in Times of Crisis: From Traditional to Agile Models

The need to adapt to a rapidly changing business landscape, exacerbated by the disruptions caused by the pandemic, has given rise to a fundamental shift in how organizations leverage technology, processes, and people to enhance business performance and resilience.

The impact of digital transformation on businesses and tiny enterprises has been profound. Despite significant challenges and limitations, it has served as a lifeline for many small businesses, enabling them to engage, sell, and deliver using technology. Additionally, it has accelerated the restructuring of organizational management policies,

particularly in marketing and communication processes, emphasizing the importance of adopting new technologies for efficiency and reducing working time.

As organizations navigate the post-pandemic economy, embracing digital transformation has become a priority. This involves adopting technologies such as cloud computing, data analytics, and automation and a customer-centric approach to thrive in the new normal. Furthermore, for micro and small enterprises, especially in developing countries, digital transformation priorities should include digital payments and the support of resources and capabilities to adopt new technologies for business continuity and sustainable development.

In conclusion, digital transformation is not merely a response to immediate challenges but a strategic orientation that will continue to shape organizational strategies in the future. Businesses must remain competitive, agile, and sustainable by leveraging technology as a fundamental element of their long-term success and resilience.

Agile leadership is characterized by high flexibility and adaptability, which enables leaders to respond quickly to changes and unexpected challenges. This differs from traditional leadership, which may follow a more rigid, hierarchical approach less conducive to rapid change (Renault and Tarakci, 2023).

Agile leaders prioritize the empowerment of team members and decentralization of decision-making processes. This approach fosters a sense of ownership among team members, leading to more innovative solutions during crises. In contrast, traditional leadership models concentrate decision-making power at higher levels, which can slow down response times (Betta and Owczarzak, 2019).

Agile leadership places individuals and interactions above processes and tools. This focus on human elements is critical during crises when team cohesion and morale are vital

for overcoming challenges. On the other hand, traditional leadership may prioritize adherence to predefined processes and organizational structures (Čelesnik et al., 2018).

Agile leadership involves a continuous cycle of learning, feedback, and improvement, enabling organizations to evolve and adapt to crises more effectively. Traditional models may lack this iterative approach, potentially making learning from and adapting to ongoing crises harder (Çobanoğlu and Demir, 2022).

Agile leaders are driven by value creation, focusing on delivering the highest value quickly. This principle helps prioritize tasks and resources during a crisis, unlike traditional leadership, which might follow predefined plans regardless of changing circumstances (Gren and Ralph, 2022).

Agile leadership's ability to navigate complexities and uncertainties effectively makes it particularly suitable for crisis management, where traditional models may struggle due to their less flexible and slower-paced nature.

Agile leadership models enhance decision-making in times of crisis by emphasizing flexibility, adaptability, and a willingness to learn from rapidly changing situations. Agile leaders prioritize:

1. **Rapid Decision-Making:** They make timely decisions, acknowledging that speed is crucial in a crisis and that delayed decisions can lead to missed opportunities or increased risks.
2. **Collaboration:** Agile leaders promote open communication and collaborative efforts, where different perspectives and expertise are valued, leading to more informed and holistic decision-making.
3. **Empowerment:** They empower teams to take the initiative and make decisions at the local level, which can be more responsive to immediate challenges without waiting for top-down directives.

4. Continuous Learning: Agile leadership involves a learning mindset, where leaders and organizations learn from each experience and shift strategies as needed, enhancing their decision-making capabilities over time (Stokke et al., 1991).

5. Flexibility: Agile leaders are flexible and open to changing plans as new information becomes available, which is essential in a crisis when situations evolve quickly and unpredictably.

6. Resilience: They foster resilience by encouraging teams to adapt to adversity, learn from setbacks, and continue pursuing organizational goals despite the crisis.

By embracing these qualities, agile leadership can create a more responsive and effective environment for decision-making during times of uncertainty and crisis, as demonstrated in the example of Statoil's scenarios-based approach to strategy (Stokke et al., 1991).

2.5 Technological Advancements and Their Influence on Strategy

The modern world has seen a significant impact of technological advancements on customers' expectations and behavior. The foremost demand is convenience, where customers expect seamless online access to products and services through mobile platforms. Personalization has also become crucial, as technology enables companies to gather and analyze customer data, leading to tailored interactions and recommendations. Furthermore, customers anticipate round-the-clock availability of services, thanks to advancements enabling 24/7 online support. Easy access to information through online research and social media influences customer preferences and decision-making processes. To adapt to these shifts, businesses must invest in technologies like data analytics and AI, prioritize omnichannel experiences, offer on-demand services, nurture customer relationships through personalized engagement, promote digital literacy among customers, and prioritize user experience in product and service design. By aligning strategies with

technological trends, companies can effectively meet evolving customer expectations, enhance satisfaction, and cultivate lasting brand loyalty.

The impact of technological advancements on customer expectations and behavior is significant. It is crucial for strategies to adapt in order to meet these evolving needs and preferences.

Customers now have higher expectations when it comes to product quality, service speed, and personalized experiences due to technological advancements. They desire seamless, efficient, and highly personalized interactions across all touchpoints. In response to these heightened expectations, strategies should prioritize customer experience and utilize technology to not only meet but exceed these expectations (Bridges and Briesch, 1995).

The digital transformation has changed the way customers interact with brands, make purchasing decisions, and demonstrate loyalty. In order to adapt to these changes, strategies should invest in digital channels, engage with customers through social media, and create omnichannel experiences that align with the digital-first behavior of consumers (Rust and Espinoza, 2006).

The proliferation of connected devices has resulted in a wealth of data that provides deeper insights into customer preferences, behaviors, and expectations. To leverage this valuable customer intelligence, strategies should incorporate advanced analytics, artificial intelligence (AI), and machine learning. This will enable predictive personalization and enhance the overall customer experience (Cooke and Zubcsek, 2017).

Technological innovation demands that marketing strategies and product development processes become more agile and open to experimentation. Strategies should foster a culture of innovation, utilizing rapid prototyping and continuous feedback loops

with customers to refine offerings and meet the ever-changing needs of the market (Suherlan and Okombo, 2023).

The readiness of consumers to adopt new technologies varies within the service industry. Therefore, strategies should take into consideration the readiness and comfort level of their target audience with technology. They should offer multiple channels and touchpoints to cater to diverse preferences, enhancing the customer journey with technological tools that add value without overwhelming users (Mohamed and Patwary, 2020).

The adoption of online banking services serves as a prime example of how technological advancements can impact customer satisfaction. Strategies in the banking sector, as well as analogous industries, should focus on enhancing the user experience, ensuring security, and building trust in digital platforms. This will meet customer expectations for convenience and safety (Mahajan, 2021).

In conclusion, as technological advancements continue to reshape the business landscape, strategies across industries must evolve to harness the power of new technologies for competitive advantage. It is essential to center customer expectations and behaviors at the core of strategic planning and execution in order to stay ahead in today's dynamic market.

2.6 Ethical Leadership in the Digital Age

Ethical leadership in the digital age involves the responsible and principled use of technology. Ethical leaders are guardians of digital integrity, ensuring their organization's technology adoption and implementation align with core ethical values. They take proactive measures to understand the implications of digital tools and platforms, particularly in how they affect privacy, data security, and the potential for bias.

Ethical leaders are transparent about their strategies in the digital arena, openly communicating the purposes and methodologies behind their digital initiatives, data collection, and data analysis. They emphasize the importance of safeguarding personal and organizational data, abiding by stringent data protection protocols, and complying with evolving legal standards. Ethical leaders hold themselves and their teams accountable for their digital footprint in the digital age, ensuring that their digital policies are fair and just. They maintain integrity, ensuring consistency between their organization's values and digital practices. Inclusivity in the digital realm is a top priority. Ethical leaders strive to make digital tools and services accessible, bridging the digital divide and providing equal opportunities for digital literacy and participation.

They also confront challenges presented by artificial intelligence and algorithmic decision-making, focusing on identifying and mitigating biases that can lead to discrimination or inequality. Ethical leaders remain vigilant to the evolution of digital ethics, engaging in continuous education and adjusting their practices to remain at the forefront of ethical decision-making. They also promote a culture of ethical consideration among employees, advocating policies that encourage responsible digital practices.

Finally, these leaders recognize the importance of engaging with various stakeholders—employees, customers, regulators, and the wider community—to address concerns and expectations regarding digital technologies. By doing so, they ensure their leadership not only navigates the complexities of the digital age but also upholds the highest ethical standards for the benefit of all stakeholders.

The digital era has brought about significant changes in the realm of leadership, ushering in a whole new set of ethical challenges that leaders must grapple with. In his recent work, Bhatta (2021) sheds light on the delegation of leadership responsibilities to digital systems, a phenomenon that is currently lacking in industry standards and codes of

ethics. This presents a complex situation, made even more intricate by the disruptions caused by the ongoing trends of digitalization, as expertly discussed by Lin (2020). Building on this notion, Bowen (2021) stresses the imperative for a fresh breed of leadership in this digital era, particularly in the post-GDPR era, where there is a pressing need for a global framework and unwavering commitment from senior management. Echoing these sentiments, Maheshwari (2020) underscores the necessity for new leadership paradigms and competencies specifically tailored for the digital age, signaling a departure from the conventional leadership models that have long prevailed. The call for transformation in leadership approaches in the face of digitalization is indeed a clarion one, and it is incumbent upon leaders to rise to the occasion and embrace the evolving landscape with open minds and a willingness to adapt.

2.7 Future Directions for Strategy and Leadership in the Post-Pandemic Era

The aftermath of the pandemic presents a canvas of adaptation, Innovation, and Resilience for leadership and strategy. Organizational structures, leadership approaches, and value-creation mechanisms must be comprehensively reimagined in light of the profound alterations ushered in by the crisis. Several vital focal points emerge across this transformed terrain, each representing a pivotal aspect of the journey forward.

Agility Embrace is imperative, and organizations must embrace agility as a guiding principle by shedding the inertia of traditional methodologies. Rapid decision-making and nimbleness must be encouraged and embedded within the organizational fabric. Digitization and Innovation continue their relentless march, and leaders must spearhead the charge toward digital transformation, recognizing it as a survival imperative and a pathway to sustained competitiveness. Innovation, in particular, becomes a cornerstone essential for meeting customers' evolving needs and expectations in a dynamic landscape.

Resilience is crucial to navigating future uncertainties, and organizations must fortify themselves against future disruptions through supply chain diversification, robust contingency planning, and financial shock mitigation measures. Building Resilience becomes synonymous with ensuring organizational survival in an increasingly volatile world. Remote Work and Collaboration necessitate a recalibration of strategies, and leaders must facilitate seamless collaboration in a hybrid work environment. Technologies and policies must be invested in to enable practical remote work while preserving organizational cohesion and productivity. Data Utilization enhancement emerges as a critical imperative in decision-making. Leaders must harness the power of data-driven insights, leveraging advanced analytics and AI to inform strategic decisions and optimize operational processes.

Customer-centric approaches are central to organizational success in the post-pandemic era, and prioritizing customer experience becomes paramount. Personalization and engagement across digital touchpoints must be focused on. Sustainability and Social Responsibility loom large on the strategic horizon, and organizations are called upon to integrate ethical practices, environmental stewardship, and social responsibility into their core strategies, aligning business objectives with broader societal goals.

Leadership transforms itself with a heightened emphasis on Leadership Development. Future leaders must possess the Resilience, adaptability, and ethical compass necessary to navigate crises, foster Innovation, and steer organizations through the complexities of a digital world. Prioritization of Health and Safety remains paramount as organizations navigate future uncertainties. Leaders must remain vigilant and adaptable in the face of ongoing public health challenges, ensuring their workforce's and stakeholders' well-being.

Maintaining a Global Outlook becomes essential as organizations operate in an interconnected world. Leaders must factor in the impact of international markets and geopolitical shifts, shaping resilient organizational strategies in the face of global dynamics. A culture of Continuous Learning emerges as a strategic imperative, enabling organizations to adapt, evolve, and thrive in a landscape characterized by constant change and disruption.

Finally, new business models have become a necessity rather than a choice. Digital-driven, service-oriented, and value-centric models must be embraced, ensuring relevance and sustainability in a rapidly evolving business environment. In essence, the pathways forward in strategy and leadership converge upon a singular mandate: cultivating Resilience, adaptability, and foresight in navigating a landscape defined by perpetual change and the opportunities born from adversity.

2.8 Summary

The current times substantiate that uncertainties are the only certainties we have. Research clearly shows that establishing goals and plans are good, but that things may not go as expected, or even happen at all. Lisa (2020) states that the year 2020 transitioned from offline to digital. It taught us a lot of things and we saw the world change, before our eyes. If you are a manager, what adjectives would you use to describe the past couple of years? Would you agree and describe the current technological reality as unstable, ambiguous, and no longer valid?

In a publication by Daniel (2022) his research indicated VUCA as a known terrain for those who have dealt with agility. VUCA stands for Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous. People need systems or an interpretation framework to categorize and explain things. It is very pertinent to understand the VUCA in a chaotic present, the world has

always been volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous. In comparison to the last couple of decades, the visible change is the presence and foreseeable frequency and oscillation.

In a German publication, Waltraud (2022) emphasized how we are now transitioning from VUCA to BANI or RUPT Worlds. So, what exactly does BANI stand for? BANI stands for Brittle, Anxious, Non-Linear, Incomprehensible. RUPT stands for Rapid, Unpredictable, Paradoxical, and Tangled. It has thus become very clear that we need tools in place to see the world from a new, different perspective to escape the feeling of despair.

The book, the NTL handbook of organizational development and change by Brenda B. Jones, and Michael (2014) observed how the organization has always responded to changes and has evolved from 1940 to the new approaches and practices in the 2000s. Chapter 34 specifically talks about the organization and its development in the VUCA world.

The above observations can substantiate the description of a chaotic, turbulent, and rapidly changing business environment as the “new normal” for organizations. Each of these leads to New Reality, Understanding, New Possibilities, and Transparency. To navigate the turbulence one is experiencing, we need to enable leaders to outline strategies that can be reworked and adjusted to the current need and also to leverage new mindsets and skill sets.

We can conclude the three pillars for organizations to stay in business in the new normal are investing in the right strategy, leaders with appropriate style, and last but not least the choice of the framework. Literature also indicated that there are existing frameworks and models that are widely used today. Depending on the setup of the organization and its business model, whether they are successful or not. There is no evident literature to support the following questions - Are organizations' choices of (Framework,

Strategy, and leadership style) sufficient to address the needs of tomorrow? The research proposal will focus on figuring out - Is there any relation between the choice of strategy and the framework that is chosen by the organizations? What should be the ideal leadership style that should be adopted by leaders to survive in turbulent and unpredictable times?

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview of the Research Problem

In the wake of the global pandemic, the world has undergone a profound transformation, accelerating the shift towards a digital-centric society. This "Emerging Era" necessitates a fresh examination of strategies and leadership approaches to navigate the complexities and capitalize on the opportunities presented by the post-pandemic digital world. This proposal provides an overview of the research problem and sets the foundation for an in-depth exploration of strategy and leadership in this new paradigm.

The research problem addressed in this study is to understand and uncover the key challenges and opportunities that arise in the context of strategy and leadership in the post-pandemic digital world. As organizations and individuals adapt to the new normal, it becomes imperative to examine the evolving dynamics and identify effective strategies and leadership practices that foster resilience, innovation, and growth in this emerging era. The research problem encompasses the following key areas:

1. To analyze the impact of the post-pandemic digital world on strategy formulation and execution, considering the challenges and opportunities arising from shifting consumer behavior, digital transformation, remote work, and distributed teams.
2. To explore effective leadership practices in the context of the emerging era, specifically addressing the demands of leading in a digital-centric environment and managing remote teams, while fostering innovation and agility.
3. To identify and evaluate suitable frameworks such as BANI (Brittle, Anxious, Nonlinear, Incomprehensible) or RUPT (Radically Unpredictable and Profoundly Transient) that can aid organizations and leaders in understanding and adapting to the dynamic nature of the post-pandemic digital world.

To provide practical recommendations and guidelines for organizations and leaders to develop and implement strategies that capitalize on the opportunities and mitigate the challenges presented by the post-pandemic digital world, utilizing insights from the analysis of strategy, leadership practices, and the chosen framework.

By focusing on these objectives, the research will provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of the post-pandemic digital world, the leadership practices required for success, and the utilization of a suitable framework to navigate the complexities of the emerging era.

3.2 Operationalization of Theoretical Constructs

Operationalization is a critical step in research that involves defining and measuring theoretical constructs to ensure their empirical investigation. In the context of studying strategy and leadership in the post-pandemic digital world, operationalization plays a crucial role in translating abstract concepts into measurable variables. This proposal outlines the operationalization process for key theoretical constructs related to strategy and leadership, providing a comprehensive framework for empirical investigation.

Theoretical constructs form the foundation of research, representing abstract concepts that need to be operationalized to facilitate empirical analysis. In the study of strategy and leadership in the post-pandemic digital world, several key constructs warrant operationalization. These include the following:

Strategy : Strategy is a fundamental construct that guides an organization's actions and decisions. To operationalize strategy, it is essential to define relevant dimensions and variables. Possible dimensions of strategy in the post-pandemic digital world could include digital transformation strategies, customer-centric strategies, innovation strategies, and resilience strategies. These dimensions can be operationalized by quantifying variables

such as investment in digital technologies, customer satisfaction scores, number of new products/services launched, and response to disruptions.

Leadership: Leadership plays a critical role in guiding organizations through the complexities of the post-pandemic digital world. Operationalizing leadership involves identifying key leadership styles, behaviors, and competencies. Leadership styles such as transformational, transactional, and servant leadership can be operationalized through validated leadership assessment tools and surveys. Leadership behaviors can be measured through established frameworks like the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) or the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI). Competencies can be operationalized by assessing specific skills and traits through validated instruments or self-assessment surveys.

To operationalize the theoretical constructs of strategy and leadership, a systematic process should be followed:

1. **Conceptual Clarity:** Before operationalization, it is crucial to establish clear definitions and conceptual boundaries for the constructs of interest. This involves conducting a thorough literature review to understand existing theories and conceptual frameworks related to strategy and leadership in the post-pandemic digital world.
2. **Selection of Measurement Tools:** Once conceptual clarity is achieved, appropriate measurement tools need to be selected. These tools should align with the dimensions and variables identified for each construct. This may involve utilizing validated questionnaires, surveys, or observation techniques from existing literature or adapting them to the specific context of the study.
3. **Pilot Testing:** Before deploying the selected measurement tools in the actual study, a pilot test should be conducted to assess their reliability and validity. The pilot test involves

administering the instruments to a small sample of participants and analyzing the data to ensure the reliability and consistency of the measurements.

Following the pilot test, data collection can proceed with the refined measurement tools. This may involve surveys, interviews, observations, or a combination of methods, depending on the research design and objectives. It is crucial to ensure data integrity, confidentiality, and appropriate sampling techniques to obtain a representative sample.

After data collection, the collected data needs to be analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques. This may involve descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, regression analysis, factor analysis, or other relevant methods to examine the relationships between the operationalized constructs and other variables of interest.

Operationalizing theoretical constructs is a vital step in empirical research on strategy and leadership in the post-pandemic digital world. By defining and measuring key constructs such as strategy and leadership, researchers can gain insights into the relationships, impacts, and effectiveness of strategies and leadership practices in the digital era. Through a systematic operationalization process, researchers can ensure the reliability and validity of their measurements, contributing to a robust and rigorous examination of these constructs. The operationalization framework outlined in this proposal serves as a guide for future studies in the field, enabling a comprehensive understanding of strategy and leadership in the post-pandemic digital world.

3.3 Research Purpose and Questions

The sole objective of this study is to identify the different leadership styles that have been successful in the “emerging era” and their choice of strategy. The study also would recommend a combination of ideal leadership styles and the choice of strategy.

The first part of the study would be to focus on collecting information from organizations if there was a change in the strategy and leadership during the pandemic and

what was the trigger. The second part of the study would focus on analyzing the information to see if a proposal can be delivered (strategy versus leadership).

The following set of questions would be used to gather information from leaders who take part in defining the strategy. These questions can help assess a leader's approach to strategy development and implementation. By reflecting on these questions, leaders can identify areas for improvement and make adjustments to their approach to ensure that their strategy is effective in achieving their goals.

- RQ1: How do you define the goals and objectives of your organization?
- RQ2: How do you assess the external environment (market, competition, etc.) to identify potential opportunities and threats having an impact on your strategy?
- RQ3: What is your approach to developing and implementing a strategic plan?
- RQ4: How do you prioritize and allocate resources to support your strategic goals?
- RQ5: How do you monitor and measure the progress of your strategic plan?
- RQ6: How do you balance short-term goals with long-term objectives in your strategy?
- RQ7: How do you foster a culture of innovation and continuous improvement in your organization?

3.4 Research Design

The research aims to identify the impact on the strategy of the organization and the leadership style that makes the choice. In the ever-evolving landscape of research methodologies, qualitative research design stands as a powerful and versatile approach to understanding complex phenomena, capturing the richness of human experiences, and

providing nuanced insights that quantitative methods may struggle to unveil. This introduction delves into the essence of qualitative research design, exploring its fundamental principles, characteristics, and the distinctive attributes that make it a valuable tool for investigative analysis.

At its core, qualitative research design is an exploratory and interpretive approach that seeks to delve into the depths of human behavior, perspectives, and social constructs. Unlike its quantitative counterpart, which emphasizes numerical data and statistical analyses, qualitative research focuses on the qualitative aspects of data, such as meanings, patterns, and contexts. This methodology is particularly apt for research questions that require a deeper understanding of the intricacies surrounding social phenomena, human experiences, and cultural contexts.

One of the defining features of qualitative research design is its commitment to flexibility. Researchers employing qualitative methodologies often engage in an iterative and adaptive process, allowing the research design to evolve in response to emerging insights and unexpected findings. This adaptability is crucial in capturing the dynamic and multifaceted nature of the subjects under investigation. Whether exploring the lived experiences of individuals, unraveling cultural norms, or dissecting intricate social interactions, qualitative research design provides a framework that accommodates the complexity inherent in these phenomena.

Central to qualitative research design is the utilization of various data collection methods that facilitate a holistic understanding of the research topic. Commonly employed techniques include in-depth interviews, focus groups, participant observation, and content analysis. These methods are carefully selected to align with the research objectives, ensuring that the collected data offers a comprehensive view of the subject matter. Researchers employing qualitative design are often immersed in the research setting,

actively participating in and observing the context to gain a nuanced perspective that transcends mere surface-level observations.

In the realm of investigative analysis, qualitative research design plays a pivotal role in uncovering hidden patterns, discerning underlying motivations, and providing a contextual understanding of complex phenomena. The richness of qualitative data allows researchers to unearth nuances that quantitative methods may overlook, fostering a deeper appreciation for the intricacies of the social world. By embracing the qualitative paradigm, researchers embark on a journey that goes beyond statistical significance, aiming to grasp the essence of the human experience and the social dynamics that shape it.

Furthermore, qualitative research design is inherently interpretive, encouraging researchers to actively engage with the data and construct meaning through a reflective and reflexive process. This interpretive stance acknowledges the subjectivity inherent in research and emphasizes the importance of understanding the researcher's role in shaping the study. Through reflexivity, researchers become attuned to their own biases and assumptions, contributing to a more transparent and authentic representation of the research findings.

The decision to employ a qualitative methodology is grounded in the need for an in-depth exploration of the intricate relationship between organizational strategy and leadership styles. Qualitative research allows for a nuanced understanding of the underlying factors, perceptions, and experiences that shape strategic decision-making within the organization as stated in the works (Creswell and Creswell, 2017).

Interviews - Interviews will constitute a central component of the research design. Face-to-face or virtual interviews with key organizational leaders will provide a platform for a rich and detailed exploration of their perspectives, insights, and experiences. The interactive nature of interviews facilitates the collection of nuanced information that goes

beyond quantitative data, allowing for a deeper comprehension of the thought processes guiding strategic choices mentions Patton (2015) in the literature.

Surveys-Complementing the qualitative insights gained from interviews, surveys will be employed to gather a broader spectrum of opinions from a diverse group of organizational leaders. The survey instrument will be meticulously designed to capture quantitative data on leadership styles, decision-making processes, and perceived challenges in aligning strategy with leadership approaches states Dillman et al., (2014).

Content Analysis - Content analysis will be applied to examine relevant documents, reports, and other textual materials that provide additional context to the study. This method will be instrumental in uncovering implicit patterns, themes, and recurring elements within the organizational discourse on strategy and leadership mention Elo and Kyngäs (2008) in their study.

Engaging Approach in Survey Design - The research survey will be crafted with an engaging approach to encourage candid responses from participants. The questions will be designed thoughtfully to stimulate thoughtful reflections on leadership practices and strategic decision-making. Utilizing an engaging approach not only enhances the quality of responses but also fosters a participatory atmosphere, promoting a more open and genuine exchange of ideas as described by Denscombe (2014).

Diversity in Perspectives - By incorporating both interviews and surveys, the research ensures a diverse examination of viewpoints within the organization. This methodological diversity allows for a comprehensive understanding of the intricacies surrounding the "emerging era." Leaders from various departments, levels, and backgrounds will contribute their unique insights, resulting in a more holistic portrayal of the organizational landscape.

The research design is carefully crafted to employ a qualitative approach that combines interviews, surveys, and content analysis. This comprehensive methodology aims to delve deep into the impact of organizational strategy and leadership styles, providing a nuanced and multifaceted understanding of the dynamics at play in the "emerging era." The utilization of engaging survey techniques and the incorporation of diverse perspectives will contribute to the richness and depth of the data collected, ultimately enhancing the validity and relevance of the research findings.

In conclusion, qualitative research design serves as a powerful and indispensable methodology for investigative analysis. Its emphasis on flexibility, adaptability, and a deep understanding of context makes it an invaluable tool for researchers seeking to unravel the complexity of human experiences and social phenomena. As we delve deeper into the intricate world of qualitative research design, the subsequent sections will explore its key components, methodological considerations, and ethical dimensions, providing a comprehensive guide for researchers embarking on this illuminating journey of inquiry.

The study will use the qualitative methodology and leverage the techniques of a combination of interviews and surveys and in some cases content analysis to address the proposed questions. This research survey will be created in a more engaging approach to get a few internal insights about leaders in the organization and their approach to defining a strategy as well as the top problem areas they are encountering. This will also allow the research study to be more diverse and look at multiple viewpoints of the reality of the "emerging era", resulting in a better knowledge of the issue under study.

3.5 Population and Sample

Choosing a research population and sample for a study on leadership and strategy requires careful consideration to ensure that the study is focused and valid. This section

outlines the critical considerations in identifying the research population, emphasizing the factors of defining the population, establishing a sampling frame, and evaluating the feasibility of sampling. Additionally, it discusses the importance of determining an appropriate sample size, considering factors such as the research question, population size, sampling method, confidence level, margin of error, and available resources.

Identifying the Research Population - Defining the research population is a foundational step in the research process. It involves specifying the group or individuals from which data will be collected. In the context of a study on leadership and strategy, the research population might encompass organizational leaders, such as executives and managers, who play a key role in strategic decision-making. Clearly delineating the population ensures the study's scope is well-defined and aligned with its objectives.

Establishing a Sampling Frame -The sampling frame is the list or source from which potential participants can be selected. In the realm of leadership and strategy, the sampling frame could consist of organizational charts, databases of managerial staff, or any other source that comprehensively represents the identified population. A well-defined sampling frame is crucial for ensuring that the sample drawn is representative of the broader population, enhancing the external validity of the study.

Evaluating Feasibility of Sampling - While it's essential to identify an encompassing research population and sampling frame, feasibility considerations are paramount. Researchers need to assess whether the chosen population is accessible, whether the sampling frame is practically usable, and if the selected sample size is logistically manageable. The feasibility of sampling impacts the efficiency and practicality of data collection efforts.

Determining the Appropriate Sample Size - Determining the sample size is a delicate balancing act that requires thoughtful consideration of several factors:

Research Question: The nature of the research question influences the required sample size. A more complex or nuanced question may necessitate a larger sample to achieve sufficient depth and breadth in the analysis.

Population Size: The size of the overall population being studied is a critical factor. Larger populations often require larger samples to accurately represent the diversity within.

Sampling Method: The chosen sampling method, whether random, stratified, or convenience sampling, influences the required sample size. Each method has implications for the generalizability of findings.

Confidence Level and Margin of Error: The desired level of confidence and acceptable margin of error are essential considerations. Higher confidence levels and lower margins of error typically require larger sample sizes.

Resources Available: Practical considerations, such as time, budget, and personnel, play a vital role. Researchers must align the sample size with the resources available for data collection.

Overall, a judicious balance among these factors is crucial to ensure that the sample size is both statistically significant and representative of the broader population. This balance enables researchers to derive meaningful insights that can inform the study's overarching objectives.

Conclusion: Strategic Considerations in Population and Sample Selection - In conclusion, the meticulous process of population and sample selection in the context of a study on leadership and strategy involves a strategic and thoughtful approach. By elucidating the factors of defining the research population, establishing a comprehensive sampling frame, and evaluating the feasibility of sampling, researchers can lay the groundwork for a study that is focused, valid, and aligned with its overarching objectives.

Defining the Research Population: This initial step sets the foundation for the study, requiring a clear specification of the group or individuals from which data will be collected. In the realm of leadership and strategy, this could involve identifying organizational leaders, such as executives and managers, who wield significant influence in strategic decision-making. The precision in defining the population ensures that the study's scope is well-encapsulated, promoting clarity and alignment with the research questions.

Establishing a Sampling Frame: The sampling frame, comprising lists or sources from which potential participants are drawn, is a critical component in ensuring the representativeness of the sample. In the specific context of leadership and strategy, a robust sampling frame might involve organizational charts, databases, or other sources that comprehensively encapsulate the identified population. A well-defined sampling frame enhances the external validity of the study by ensuring that the sample accurately reflects the broader population.

Evaluating Feasibility of Sampling: While conceptualizing an inclusive research population and sampling frame is essential, practical feasibility considerations must not be overlooked. Researchers must assess the accessibility of the chosen population, the usability of the sampling frame in practical terms, and the logistical manageability of the selected sample size. The feasibility of sampling directly impacts the efficiency and practicality of subsequent data collection efforts.

Participant Selection: Ensuring Representation and Validity - The process of selecting participants for a research study on leadership and strategy is a critical phase that demands meticulous attention to detail. The goal is to construct a sample that is not only representative of the population under investigation but also ensures the validity and reliability of the collected data. This section outlines a comprehensive set of steps to be considered in the participant selection process.

Defining Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria: The foundation of participant selection lies in clearly defining inclusion and exclusion criteria. Inclusion criteria should specify the characteristics that participants must possess to be eligible for the study, such as industry or sector affiliation, leadership level, geographic location, or other pertinent factors. Simultaneously, explicit exclusion criteria must be articulated, delineating circumstances such as conflicts of interest or individuals not meeting specific qualifications.

Determining the Sampling Method: Choosing an appropriate sampling method is a pivotal decision that directly influences the composition of the participant pool. Options range from random sampling, which ensures each member of the population has an equal chance of being included, to purposive sampling, where participants are selected based on specific criteria aligned with the research question and population characteristics.

Identifying Potential Participants: Potential participants can be sourced through diverse channels, including databases, referrals, or professional organizations related to the industry or sector under investigation. A thorough identification process ensures that the sample pool is comprehensive and reflective of the intended population.

Contacting Participants: Once potential participants are identified, the next step involves reaching out to them with comprehensive information about the study. This communication includes details about the study's purpose, participation requirements, and the nature of the data that will be collected. Obtaining informed consent is paramount at this stage, ensuring that participants fully understand the study's objectives and the implications of their involvement.

Monitoring Participation: Continuous monitoring of participant involvement is imperative throughout the study. This involves ensuring ongoing adherence to inclusion criteria, identifying any conflicts of interest, and promptly addressing any issues that may

compromise the integrity of the data. Rigorous monitoring contributes to the overall validity and reliability of the study's findings.

Considering Ethical Issues: Participant selection must adhere to ethical guidelines to safeguard the rights and well-being of individuals involved. Ethical considerations include maintaining confidentiality and privacy, obtaining informed consent, and ensuring that participants are not subjected to any harm during the course of the study.

In essence, the participant selection process is a nuanced undertaking aimed at creating a sample that faithfully represents the broader population while upholding the integrity of the study. By meticulously defining criteria, selecting an appropriate sampling method, identifying potential participants thoughtfully, maintaining clear communication, monitoring participation, and adhering to ethical principles, researchers can ensure that the study's results are not only meaningful but also directly relevant to the research question at hand. This comprehensive approach fortifies the foundation of the study, contributing to its overall robustness and credibility.

Determining the Appropriate Sample Size: The delicate task of determining the sample size involves a nuanced balancing act, considering multiple factors. The nature of the research question, the size of the population, the chosen sampling method, desired confidence levels, acceptable margins of error, and the availability of resources collectively influence the decision-making process. Striking the right balance among these considerations is paramount to ensuring that the sample size is not only statistically significant but also representative of the broader population.

In conclusion, the art of population and sample selection is a multifaceted process that demands careful consideration of various elements. By navigating the intricacies of defining the research population, establishing a robust sampling frame, evaluating feasibility, and determining an appropriate sample size, researchers pave the way for a

study that stands poised to yield meaningful insights into the complex interplay between leadership and strategy in the chosen organizational context. This strategic approach enhances the study's validity, relevance, and contribution to the broader body of knowledge in the field. Identifying the population is a crucial step in the research process, as it helps to define the scope of the study and provides a clear target for data collection. The 3 factors that have to be considered when identifying the research population for the study on leadership and strategy are: Define the population, Sampling Frame, and Feasibility of sampling. Overall, the goal of identifying the population is to establish a clear and manageable target for data collection that will allow the study to answer the research question in a meaningful and valid way.

Determining the appropriate sample size for a study on leadership and strategy is crucial to ensure that the results of the study are both statistically significant and representative of the population being studied. Here are some factors to consider when determining the sample size: Research Question, Population Size, Sampling Method, Confidence level and margin of error, and Resources Available. Overall, determining the appropriate sample size requires a balance between the level of precision required, the characteristics of the population being studied, and the resources available for data collection. By carefully considering these factors, researchers can ensure that the results of the study are both statistically significant and representative of the population being studied.

3.6 Participant Selection

Selecting participants for a research study on leadership and strategy requires careful consideration to ensure that the sample is representative of the population being studied and that the data collected is valid and reliable. Selecting the optimal group for a research study on leadership and strategy requires thoughtful consideration of the specific

research question and the study's overarching scope. While the composition of the ideal group is contingent on these factors, a comprehensive approach advocates for the inclusion of the following categories, each offering distinct perspectives and insights.

Leaders - This category encompasses individuals in leadership positions within organizations, spanning executives, managers, and team leaders. Their firsthand experiences provide invaluable insights into the intricate dynamics of leadership and strategic decision-making within organizational contexts.

Employees- Individuals working within organizations, whose daily experiences are directly shaped by leadership and strategic decisions. Their frontline observations offer a grounded and practical perspective, shedding light on how these decisions reverberate throughout different organizational levels.

Experts- This group comprises individuals with specialized knowledge in leadership and strategy, drawn from academia, consultancy, or those recognized as thought leaders. Their theoretical expertise enriches the study, providing a deeper understanding of the underlying principles and trends shaping leadership and strategy.

Stakeholders- Individuals or entities with a vested interest in, or affected by, organizational leadership and strategic decisions fall into this category. Stakeholders may include customers, investors, or community members, each bringing a unique set of expectations and concerns to the forefront.

Industry-specific Groups- Tailoring the study to specific industries or sectors, such as technology, ensures a focused exploration of challenges and opportunities that are uniquely tied to the leadership and strategy dynamics within that particular context.

For the research survey, the identified participant groups will be engaged through a variety of digital communication channels, leveraging platforms like LinkedIn, mobile device text messages, and emails. The survey questions, meticulously designed in a digital

format, aim to facilitate efficient data collection, with responses being digitally recorded for subsequent analysis and detailed examination.

On the other hand, for research interviews, engagement with management and experts will be conducted through a diverse array of communication modes. This includes in-person meetings for a more personal touch, phone calls for accessibility, and other voice-enabled communication tools to foster interactive conversations. This methodological diversity is intentional, seeking to gather nuanced insights that go beyond quantitative data, allowing for a deeper exploration of individual experiences and perspectives.

In summary, the instrumentation strategy is meticulously crafted to encompass a broad spectrum of voices, incorporating leaders, employees, experts, stakeholders, and industry-specific groups. The chosen communication channels, digital for surveys and a mix of personal and digital for interviews, are purposefully diverse, ensuring a comprehensive and in-depth exploration of leadership and strategy within the chosen organizational context. This multifaceted approach contributes to the richness, validity, and relevance of the study's findings, offering a holistic and nuanced understanding of the intricate dynamics at play in the realms of leadership and strategy. Here are some steps to consider when selecting participants:

Define the inclusion and exclusion criteria: Define the specific characteristics that participants must possess to be included in the study, such as industry or sector, level of leadership, geographic location, or other relevant factors. Also, define any exclusion criteria, such as individuals who have a conflict of interest or individuals who do not meet specific qualifications.

Determine the sampling method: Determine the appropriate sampling method to use to select participants. This could be random sampling, purposive sampling, or other methods depending on the research question and the characteristics of the population.

Identify potential participants: Identify potential participants through various means, such as databases, referrals, or through professional organizations.

Contact participants: Contact potential participants and provide them with information about the study and the participation requirements. Obtain informed consent and ensure that participants understand the purpose of the study and the data that will be collected.

Monitor participation: Monitor participation throughout the study and ensure that all participants meet the inclusion criteria and that there are no conflicts of interest or other issues that could affect the validity of the data.

Consider ethical issues: Ensure that the study complies with ethical guidelines, such as maintaining the confidentiality and privacy of participants, obtaining informed consent, and ensuring that participants are not harmed in any way.

Overall, selecting participants for a study on leadership and strategy requires careful consideration to ensure that the sample is representative of the population being studied and that the data collected is valid and reliable. By following these steps, researchers can ensure that the study results are meaningful and relevant to the research question.

3.7 Instrumentation

The ideal group for a research study on leadership and strategy depends on the specific research question and the scope of the study. However, in general, the appropriate group for such a study may include Leaders: Individuals who hold leadership positions in organizations, such as executives, managers, or team leaders. Employees: Individuals who work in organizations and are directly impacted by leadership and strategic decisions. Experts: Individuals who have expertise in leadership and strategy, such as academics, consultants, or thought leaders. Stakeholders: Individuals or groups who have an interest

or are affected by the leadership and strategic decisions of an organization, such as customers, investors, or community members. Industry-specific groups: Groups of individuals within a specific industry or sector, such as technology, who have unique experiences and perspectives related to leadership and strategy.

For the research survey, the identified group shall be contacted and communicated via social media messaging like professional networks such as LinkedIn messages, mobile device text messages, emails, etc. Questions and respective answer options will be designed in digital form format. The inputs will be digitally recorded for further study and detailing options. For research interviews, management and experts shall be contacted and communicated in person, over phone calls, and through other voice-enabled communication tools.

3.8 Data Collection Procedures

The survey will be designed in a way that participants can complete it in a maximum of 15 to 20 minutes of duration. The format of questions and answers will be kept simple and easy for the participant. If a question is not applicable or if the participant wants to share other inputs which will not be part of the options provided in the answer, an additional textbox was provided as part of such answer list for capturing their valuable inputs. Data will be collected once the participant submits the form. Later it will be extracted in the form of a tabular format for further analysis and study. On other hand for the research interviews, data will be captured using physical means for further analysis.

It is important to carefully consider the research question and the scope of the study when identifying the ideal group for a research study on leadership and strategy. The selection of participants should aim to provide a representative sample of the population being studied and ensure that the data collected is valid and reliable.

3.9 Data Analysis

The appropriate tool(s) to be used for data analysis in a research study on leadership and strategy depends on the specific research question, the type of data being collected, and the level of analysis required. Correlation analysis: Used to examine the relationship between two or more variables and the strength of the relationship. Content analysis: Used to analyze qualitative data, such as transcripts from interviews or open-ended survey questions, to identify themes and patterns.

For data analysis, Microsoft Excel as well as the Power BI tool. The data captured in digital format will be pulled, using mentioned tools to create pivot tables or datasets required for the study of a particular question's response. The data then would be converted into a graphical format for ease of understanding. Depending on years of existence and many such criteria, multiple sub-datasets would be created to prepare the required understanding of the valuable inputs from participants.

3.10 Research Design Limitations

While conducting research on strategy and leadership in the post-pandemic digital world, it is important to acknowledge and address the limitations of the research design. The following are potential limitations that researchers may encounter:

Generalizability: The findings of the study may be specific to the selected sample or context, limiting the generalizability of the results to a broader population. Care should be taken to ensure that the sample is representative and diverse to increase the external validity of the findings.

Self-reporting Bias: The reliance on self-report measures, such as surveys or questionnaires, may introduce bias due to participants' subjective interpretations or tendency to provide socially desirable responses. Researchers should mitigate this bias by

ensuring anonymity, using validated measurement tools, and considering multiple data collection methods.

Cross-sectional Design: If the research design adopts a cross-sectional approach, it may limit the ability to establish causal relationships between variables. Longitudinal or experimental designs would be more suitable for examining cause-and-effect relationships and capturing changes over time.

Availability of Data: Access to relevant and accurate data may pose a challenge, particularly when studying organizations' internal strategies, processes, or confidential information. Researchers should consider obtaining necessary permissions and collaborating with organizations to gain access to the required data.

Sample Selection Bias: The selection of participants may be subject to sampling bias if it is not representative of the target population. Researchers should employ appropriate sampling techniques, such as random sampling or stratified sampling, to minimize bias and enhance the validity of the findings.

Time Constraints: Conducting research in the post-pandemic digital world may involve dynamic and rapidly changing environments. Time constraints might limit the extent to which researchers can capture and analyze data, potentially missing emerging trends or developments in the field.

Resource Limitations: Research studies may be constrained by limited resources, including funding, time, or access to specialized expertise or technologies. Researchers should be transparent about these limitations and make the best use of available resources to mitigate their impact on the research outcomes.

Ethical Considerations: Research involving human participants should adhere to ethical guidelines and ensure informed consent, privacy protection, and the well-being of

participants. Researchers should consider potential ethical issues and implement appropriate safeguards throughout the research process.

By acknowledging and addressing these limitations, researchers can enhance the rigor and validity of their study, providing a clearer understanding of the complexities and nuances of strategy and leadership in the post-pandemic digital world.

3.11 Conclusion

The post-pandemic digital world presents a unique set of challenges and opportunities for organizations and their leaders. This research proposal has outlined the research problem, objectives, and methodology for investigating strategy and leadership in the emerging era. By comprehensively examining the impact of shifting consumer behavior, digital transformation, remote work, and innovation, this study aims to provide valuable insights and practical guidance to leaders navigating this dynamic landscape. Through this research, we hope to contribute to the understanding and advancement of strategy and leadership in the post-pandemic digital world.

CHAPTER IV:

RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

To understand the questions that have been identified, we need to consider different levels in an organization regarding how they assess the external environment to identify potential opportunities and threats impacting their strategy. We have considered a multi-level approach and present the responses from various organizational perspectives.

By quantifying the results based on the sample size of 30, one can observe the distribution of responses across different management levels and gain insights into the perspectives and priorities of each level regarding the definition of organizational goals and objectives.

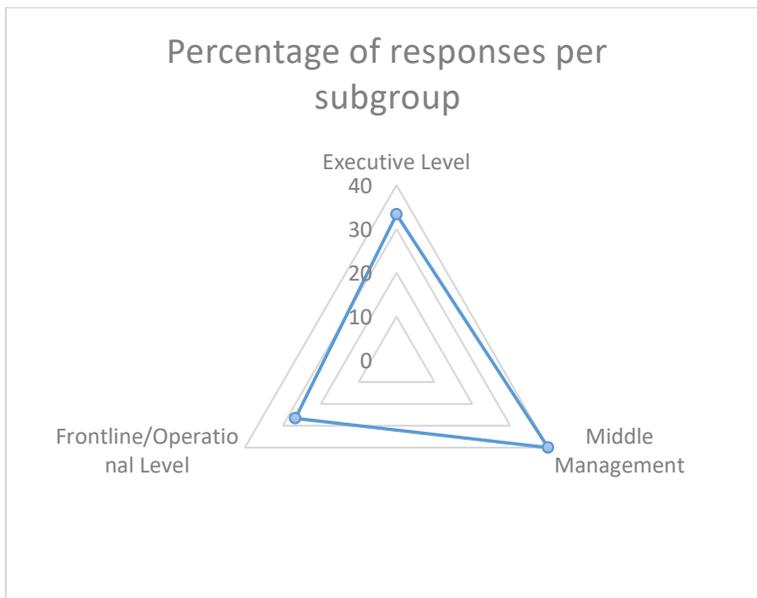


Figure 1 Distribution of responses by management level

4.2 Research Questions

4.2.1 How do you define the goals and objectives of your organization?

Executive Level: At the executive level, the goals and objectives of the organization are typically defined by the top leadership team. Their responses broadly include:

1. "As executives, we define the goals and objectives of our organization by conducting strategic planning sessions, considering market trends, competitive analysis, and aligning them with our mission and vision."
2. "We set specific and measurable targets for revenue growth, market share, profitability, and customer satisfaction. These goals are based on extensive analysis and discussions within our leadership team."
3. "Our objectives are focused on long-term sustainability, innovation, and staying ahead of industry disruptions. We consider factors such as technological advancements, market opportunities, and customer needs in defining our goals."

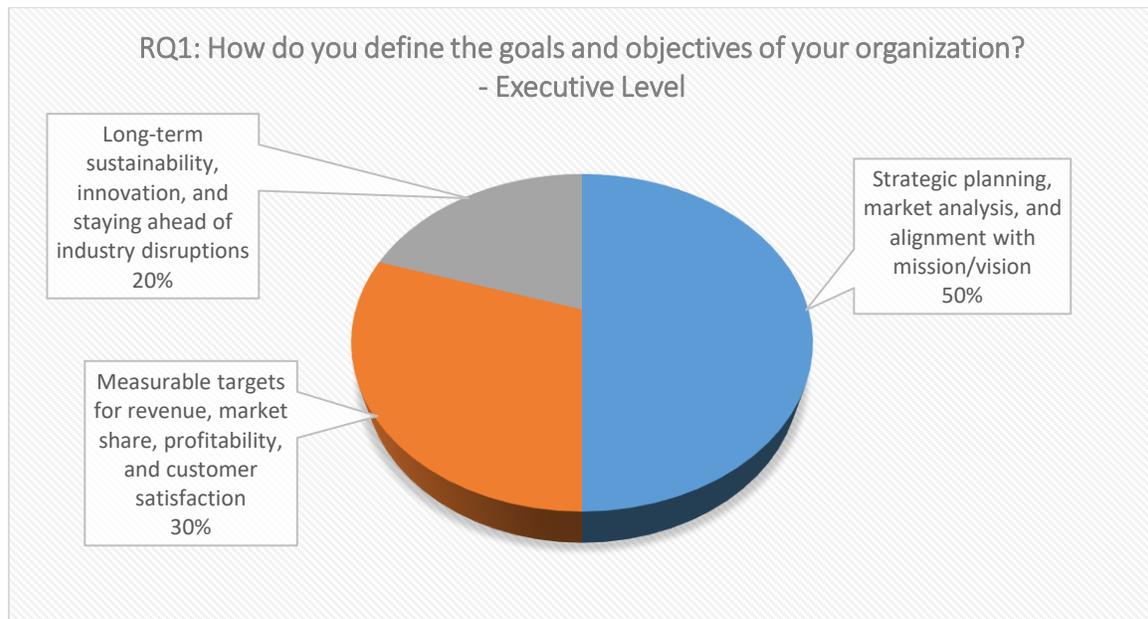


Figure 2 Distribution of answers for RQ1 on executive level

Percentage of responses from the executive level: 10 out of 30 (33.33%) and the distribution is the following:

1. 5 responses emphasizing strategic planning, market analysis, and alignment with mission/vision (50%)
2. 3 responses mentioning specific measurable targets for revenue, market share, profitability, and customer satisfaction (30%)
3. 2 responses highlighting long-term sustainability, innovation, and staying ahead of industry disruptions (20%)

Middle Management Level: Middle managers play a crucial role in translating the organizational goals into actionable plans for their respective departments. Their responses broadly include:

1. "As middle managers, we align our departmental goals with the overall objectives set by the executives. We break down the objectives into specific key performance indicators (KPIs) that are relevant to our functions."
2. "We collaborate with cross-functional teams to define goals that contribute to the strategic priorities of the organization. This involves setting targets for operational efficiency, employee productivity, and quality standards."
3. "We ensure that our goals are aligned with customer expectations, market demands, and organizational capabilities. This enables us to drive growth, optimize processes, and deliver value to stakeholders."

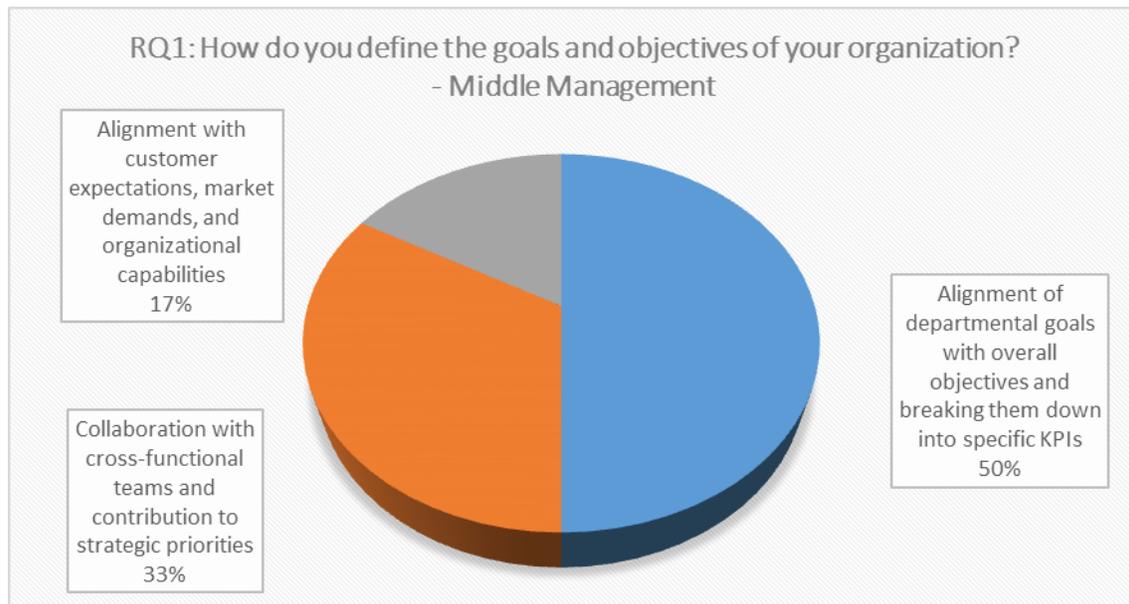


Figure 3 Distribution of answers for RQ1 on middle management level

Percentage of responses from middle management: 12 out of 30 (40%). Distribution of responses from middle management:

1. 6 responses indicating alignment of departmental goals with overall objectives and breaking them down into specific KPIs (50%)
2. 4 responses mentioning collaboration with cross-functional teams and contribution to strategic priorities (33.33%)
3. 2 responses focusing on alignment with customer expectations, market demands, and organizational capabilities (16.67%)

Frontline/Operational Level: At the frontline or operational level, employees directly contribute to the achievement of organizational goals. Their responses broadly include:

1. "We receive clear goals and objectives from our managers, which are tied to the larger organizational targets. These goals may be related to productivity, customer service, or quality standards."

2. "Our goals are specific to our roles and responsibilities within the organization. They focus on meeting daily targets, achieving operational efficiency, and ensuring the smooth execution of processes."

3. "We receive regular performance targets that contribute to the broader organizational objectives. These goals may be related to sales targets, customer acquisition, or product/service delivery."

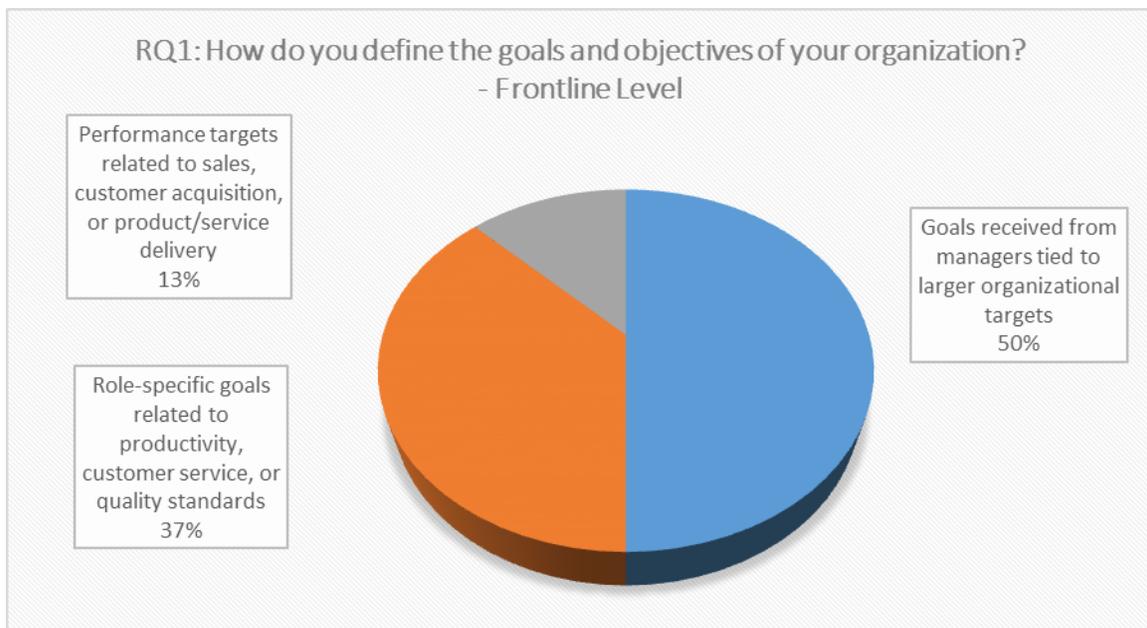


Figure 4 Distribution of answers for RQ1 on frontline level

Percentage of responses from frontline/operational level: 8 out of 30 (26.67%).

Distribution of responses from frontline/operational level:

1. 4 responses stating clear goals received from managers tied to larger organizational targets (50%)
2. Responses indicating role-specific goals related to productivity, customer service, or quality standards (37.5%)
3. 1 response mentioning performance targets related to sales, customer acquisition, or product/service delivery (12.5%)

4.2.2 How do you assess the external environment (market, competition, etc.) to identify potential opportunities and threats having an impact on your strategy?

Executive Level: At the executive level, the goals and objectives of the organization are typically defined by the top leadership team. Their responses broadly include:

1. "As executives, we conduct comprehensive market research and analysis to understand market trends, customer needs, and emerging technologies."
2. "We monitor and analyze industry reports, competitor activities, and customer feedback to identify potential threats and opportunities."
3. "We collaborate with external consultants, industry experts, and participate in industry conferences to gain insights into emerging market dynamics and disruptions."

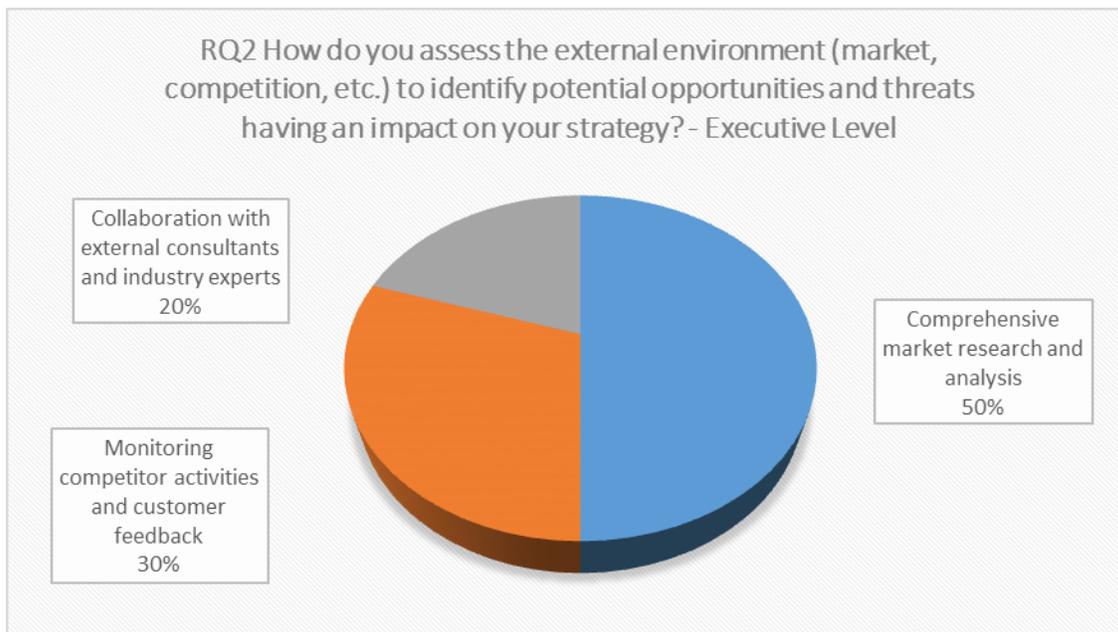


Figure 5 Distribution of answers for RQ2 on executive level

Percentage of responses from the executive level: 10 out of 30 (33.33%) and the distribution is the following:

1. Responses mentioning comprehensive market research and analysis (50%)
2. responses highlighting monitoring competitor activities and customer feedback (30%)

3. responses emphasizing collaboration with external consultants and industry experts (20%)

Middle Management Level: Middle managers play a key role in analyzing the external environment and translating it into actionable strategies. Their responses may include:

1. "As middle managers, we conduct competitor analysis to assess their strengths, weaknesses, and market positioning."
2. "We track market trends, consumer behavior, and conduct customer surveys to identify evolving needs and preferences."
3. "We monitor regulatory changes, industry standards, and technological advancements that may impact our strategy."

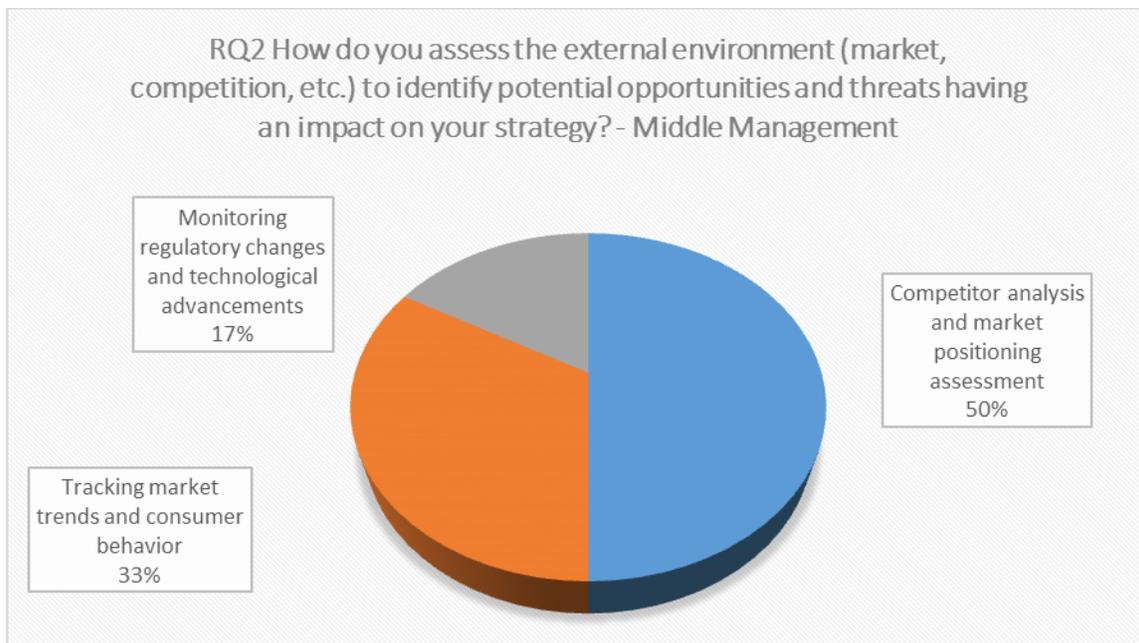


Figure 6 Distribution of answers for RQ2 on middle management level

Percentage of responses from middle management: 12 out of 30 (40%). Distribution of responses from middle management:

1. Responses indicating competitor analysis and market positioning assessment (50%)
2. 4 responses focusing on tracking market trends and consumer behavior (33.33%)
3. responses highlighting monitoring regulatory changes and technological advancements (16.67%)

Frontline/Operational Level: At the frontline or operational level, employees directly contribute to the achievement of organizational goals. Their responses broadly include:

1. "We gather feedback from customers, identify emerging trends, and share it with the relevant teams."
2. "We actively observe competitor actions, pricing strategies, and market share to stay informed about potential threats and opportunities."
3. "We participate in industry events and engage in networking to understand market dynamics and build relationships."

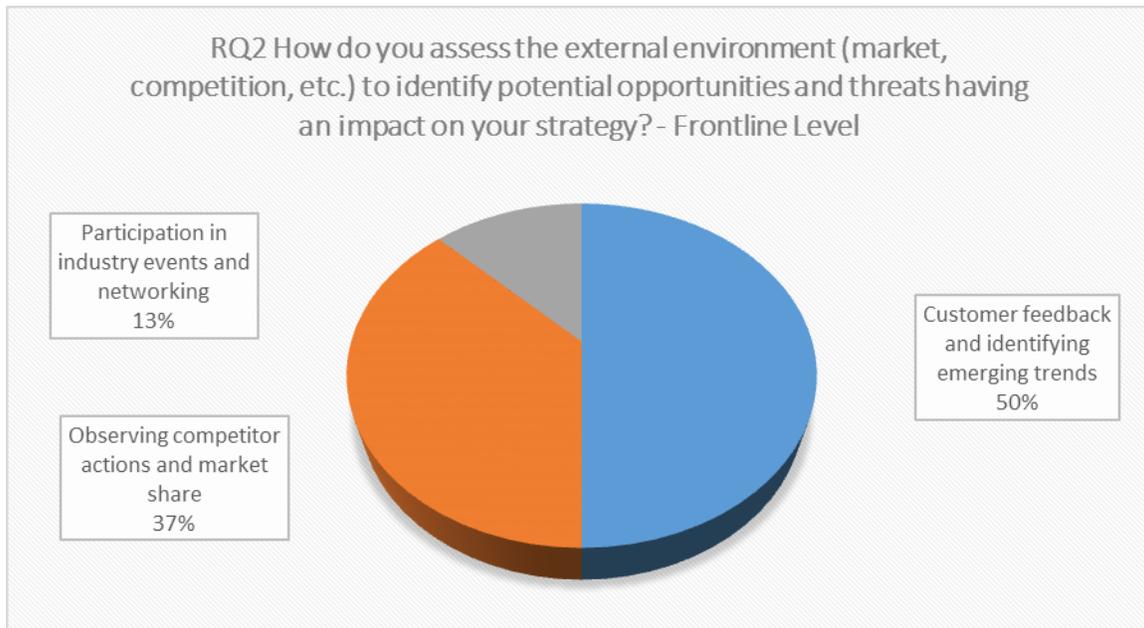


Figure 7 Distribution of answers for RQ2 on frontline/operational level

Percentage of responses from frontline/operational level: 8 out of 30 (26.67%).

Example distribution of responses from frontline/operational level:

1. 4 responses mentioning gathering customer feedback and identifying emerging trends (50%)
2. responses indicating observing competitor actions and market share (37.5%)
3. 1 response emphasizing participation in industry events and networking (12.5%)

4.2.3 What is your approach to developing and implementing a strategic plan?

Executive Level: At the executive level, the development and implementation of a strategic plan require a high-level perspective. Their responses may include:

1. "As executives, we engage in extensive strategic planning sessions, involving key stakeholders, to define the organization's vision, mission, and strategic objectives."
2. "We conduct thorough analysis of internal and external factors, such as SWOT analysis, to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that inform the strategic direction."

3. "We collaborate with department heads and functional leaders to ensure alignment between the strategic plan and operational goals, fostering a culture of ownership and accountability."

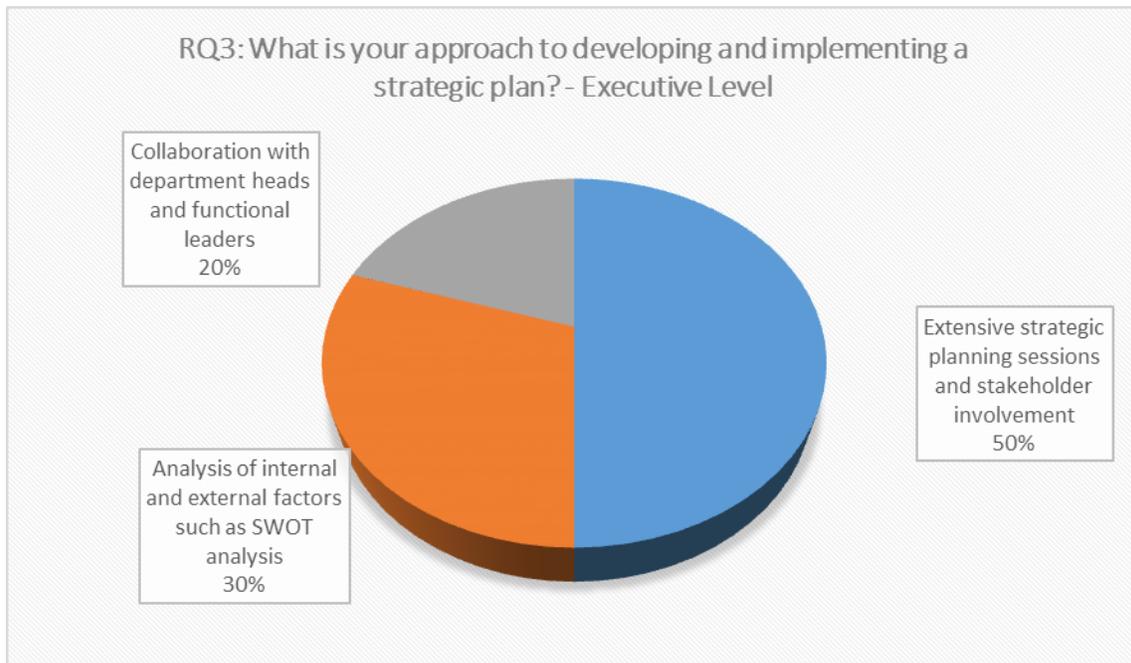


Figure 8 Distribution of answers for RQ3 on executive level

Percentage of responses from the executive level: 10 out of 30 (33.33%) and the distribution is the following :

1. responses emphasizing extensive strategic planning sessions and stakeholder involvement (50%)
2. responses mentioning analysis of internal and external factors such as SWOT analysis (30%)
3. responses highlighting collaboration with department heads and functional leaders (20%)

Middle Management Level: Middle managers play a crucial role in translating the strategic plan into actionable initiatives within their respective departments. Their responses may include:

1. "As middle managers, we work closely with the executive team to understand the strategic priorities and cascade them into departmental goals and objectives."
2. "We collaborate with cross-functional teams to develop detailed action plans, timelines, and resource allocation strategies to implement the strategic initiatives."
3. "We monitor the progress of the strategic plan, track key performance indicators (KPIs), and provide regular updates to the executive team, ensuring effective execution and timely adjustments."

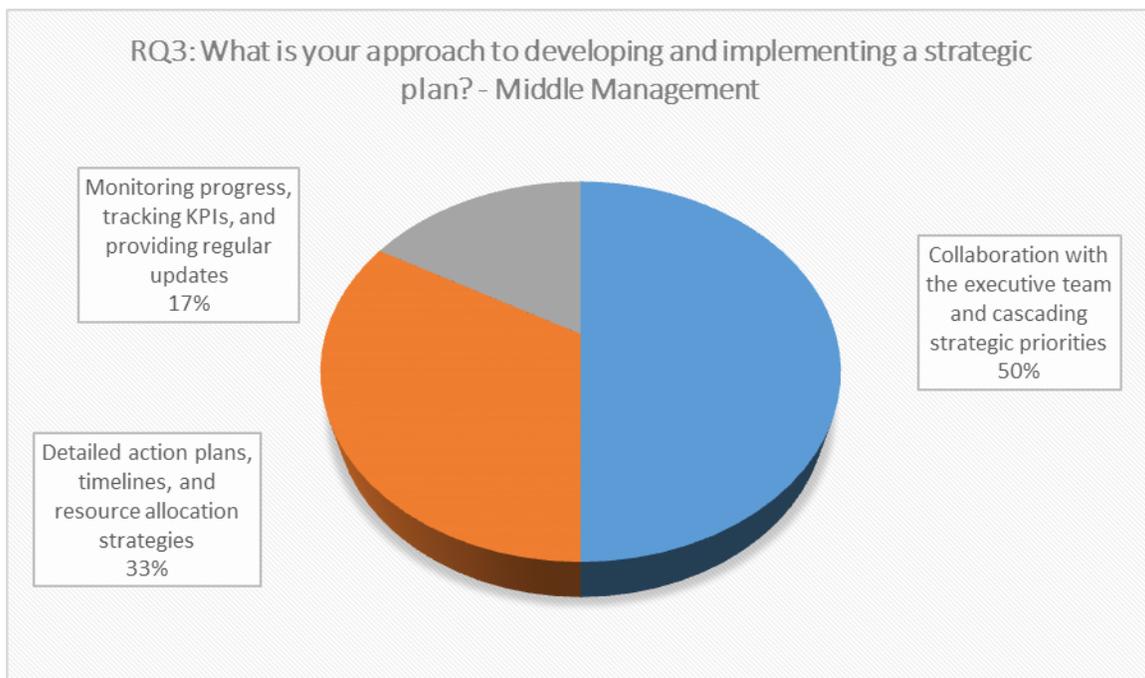


Figure 9 Distribution of answers for RQ3 on middle management level

1. Percentage of responses from middle management: 12 out of 30 (40%). Example distribution of responses from middle management:

2. 6 responses indicating close collaboration with the executive team and cascading strategic priorities (50%)
3. 4 responses focusing on developing detailed action plans, timelines, and resource allocation strategies (33.33%)
4. 2 responses mentioning monitoring progress, tracking KPIs, and providing regular updates (16.67%)

Frontline/Operational Level: At the frontline or operational level, employees contribute to the successful execution of the strategic plan through their day-to-day activities. Their responses may include:

1. "We align our individual goals and tasks with the strategic objectives, ensuring that our work directly supports the overall strategic plan."
2. "We receive clear communication and guidance from middle managers, providing us with a clear understanding of how our efforts contribute to the strategic goals."
3. "We actively participate in continuous improvement initiatives, suggesting innovative ideas and sharing feedback to enhance the implementation of the strategic plan."

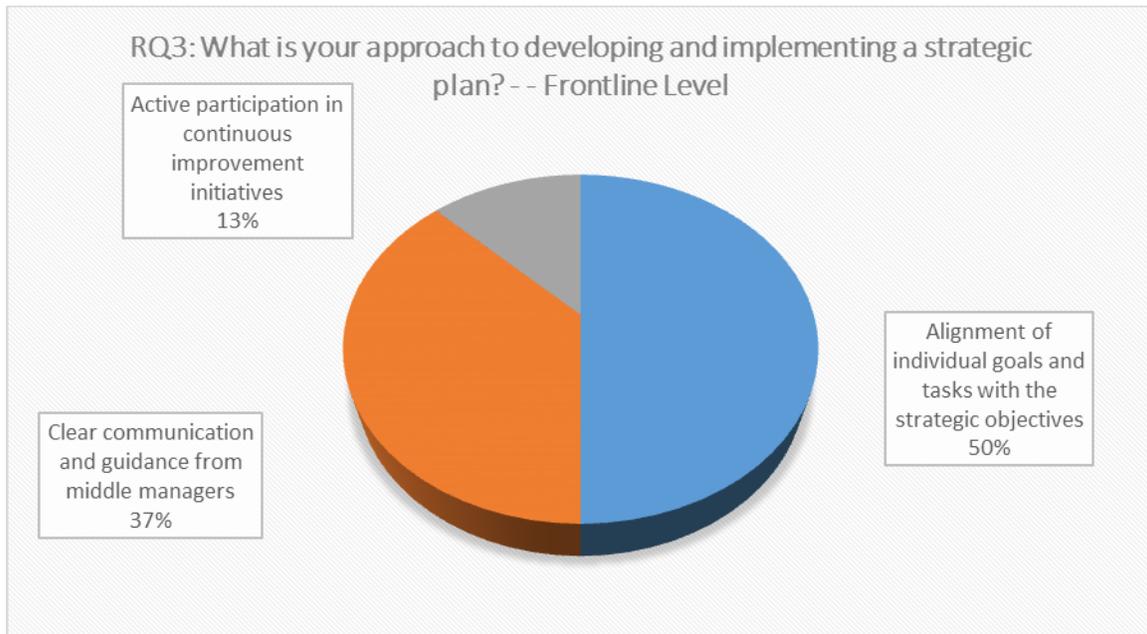


Figure 10 Distribution of answers for RQ3 on frontline/operational level

Percentage of responses from frontline/operational level: 8 out of 30 (26.67%).

Example distribution of responses from frontline/operational level:

1. 4 responses emphasizing alignment of individual goals and tasks with the strategic objectives (50%)
2. responses indicating clear communication and guidance from middle managers (37.5%)
3. 1 response mentioning active participation in continuous improvement initiatives (12.5%)

4.2.4 How do you prioritize and allocate resources to support your strategic goals?

Executive Level: At the executive level, resource allocation is critical for supporting strategic goals. Their responses may include:

1. "As executives, we conduct a thorough assessment of our strategic goals and identify key initiatives that require resource allocation."

2. "We prioritize strategic goals based on their alignment with the organization's vision and potential impact on long-term growth and sustainability."
3. "We collaborate with department heads and evaluate the availability of financial, human, and technological resources to allocate them effectively."

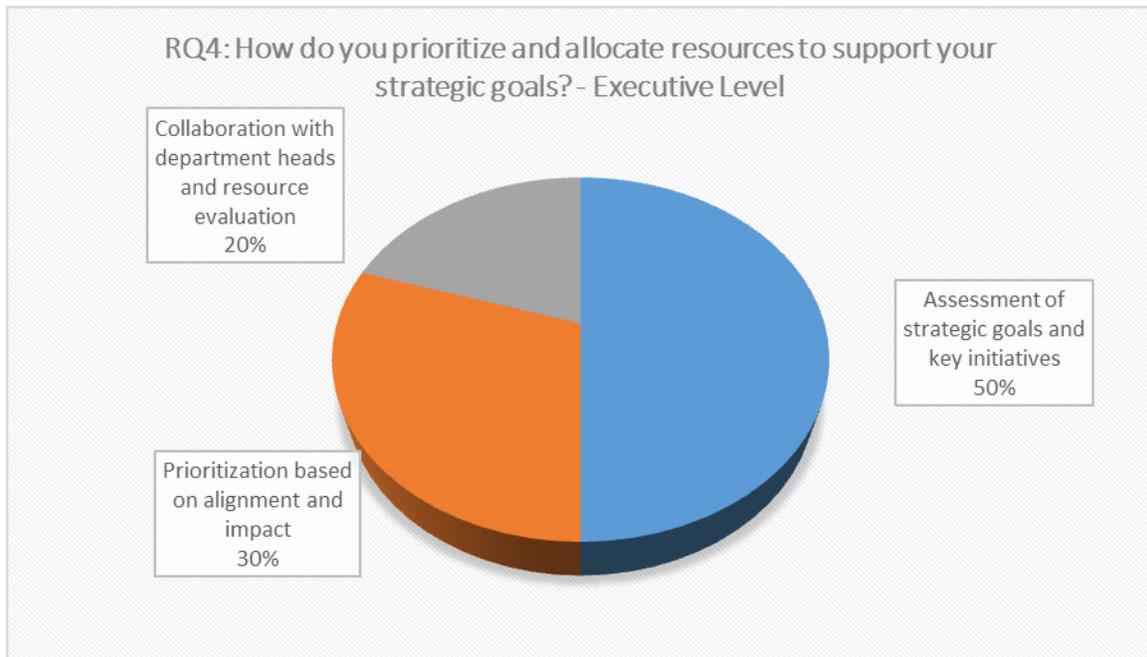


Figure 11 Distribution of answers for RQ4 on executive level

Percentage of responses from the executive level: 10 out of 30 (33.33%) and the distribution is the following:

1. responses emphasizing a thorough assessment of strategic goals and key initiatives (50%)
2. responses highlighting prioritization based on alignment and impact (30%)
3. responses mentioning collaboration with department heads and resource evaluation (20%)

Middle Management Level: Middle managers play a crucial role in resource allocation to support strategic goals within their departments. Their responses may include:

1. "As middle managers, we assess the resource requirements of each strategic initiative and align them with the departmental budget and available resources."
2. "We prioritize initiatives based on their strategic importance, resource feasibility, and potential return on investment."
3. "We collaborate with other departments to identify opportunities for resource sharing or cross-functional collaboration to optimize resource allocation."

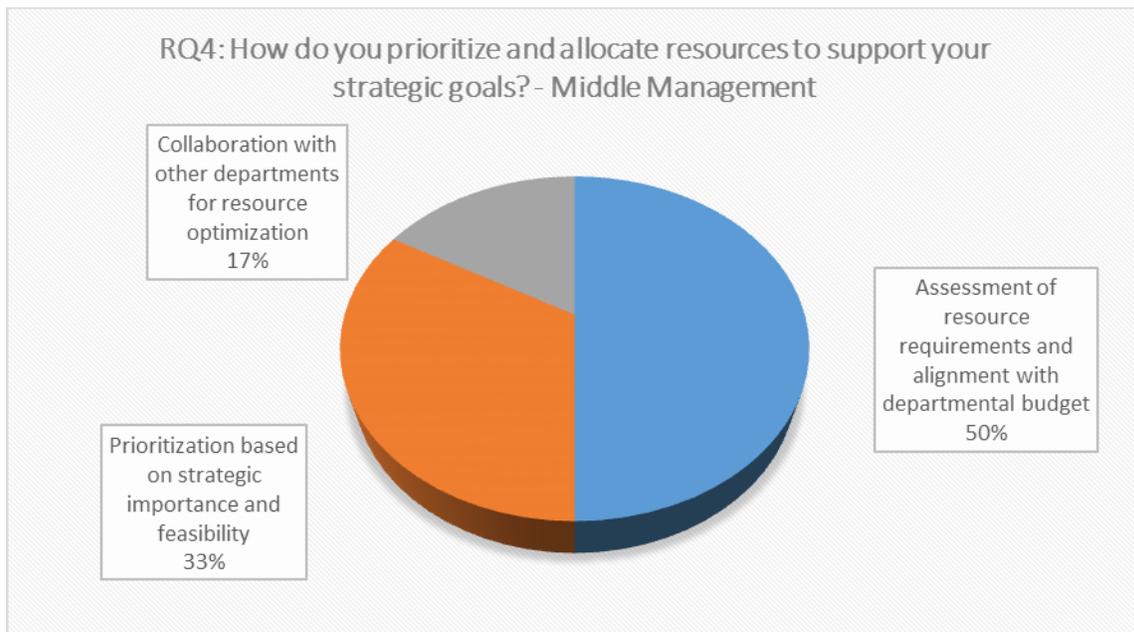


Figure 12 Distribution of answers for RQ4 on middle management level

Percentage of responses from middle management: 12 out of 30 (40%). Example distribution of responses from middle management:

1. responses indicating assessment of resource requirements and alignment with departmental budget (50%)
2. 4 responses focusing on prioritization based on strategic importance and feasibility (33.33%)

3. responses mentioning collaboration with other departments for resource optimization (16.67%)

Frontline/Operational Level: At the frontline or operational level, employees contribute to resource allocation through their day-to-day activities. Their responses may include:

1. "We ensure efficient utilization of resources by prioritizing tasks and aligning them with the strategic goals set by the management."
2. "We provide feedback to middle managers regarding resource needs and suggest ways to optimize resource allocation for better goal achievement."
3. "We participate in resource planning discussions, providing insights into the resource requirements at the operational level to support strategic initiatives."



Figure 13 Distribution of answers for RQ4 on frontline/operational level

Percentage of responses from frontline/operational level: 8 out of 30 (26.67%).

Example distribution of responses from frontline/operational level:

1. 4 responses emphasizing efficient resource utilization and task prioritization (50%)

2. responses indicating providing feedback and suggestions for resource optimization (37.5%)

3. 1 response mentioning participation in resource planning discussions (12.5%)

4.2.5 How do you monitor and measure the progress of your strategic plan?

Executive Level: At the executive level, monitoring and measuring the progress of the strategic plan is crucial for tracking overall organizational performance. Their responses may include:

1. "As executives, we establish key performance indicators (KPIs) aligned with the strategic objectives to monitor progress."

2. "We conduct regular reviews and evaluations of the strategic plan, comparing actual outcomes with the set targets."

3. "We analyze financial reports, market data, and customer feedback to assess the impact of the strategic plan and make necessary adjustments."

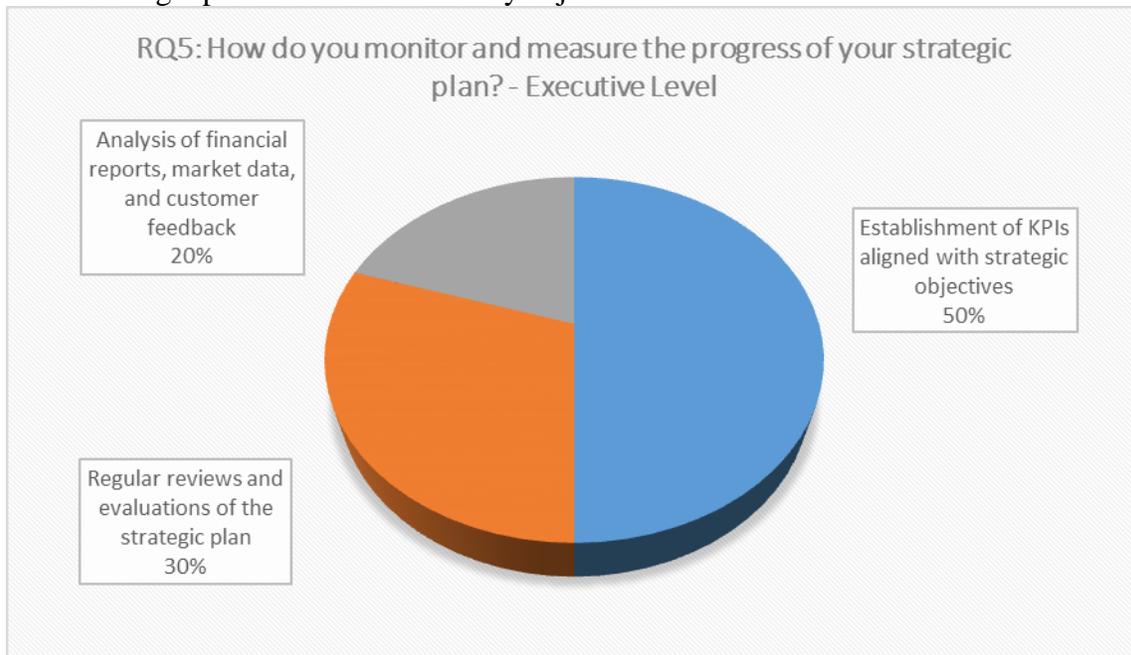


Figure 14 Distribution of answers for RQ5 on executive level

Percentage of responses from the executive level: 10 out of 30 (33.33%). Example distribution of responses from the executive level:

1. responses emphasizing the establishment of KPIs aligned with strategic objectives (50%)
2. responses mentioning regular reviews and evaluations of the strategic plan (30%)
3. responses highlighting the analysis of financial reports, market data, and customer feedback (20%)

Middle Management Level: Middle managers play a pivotal role in monitoring and measuring the progress of the strategic plan within their departments. Their responses may include:

1. "As middle managers, we develop departmental KPIs that are aligned with the overall strategic goals."
2. "We track and report on the performance of specific projects and initiatives related to the strategic plan."
3. "We conduct periodic performance reviews and hold team meetings to discuss progress, address challenges, and ensure alignment with the strategic objectives."

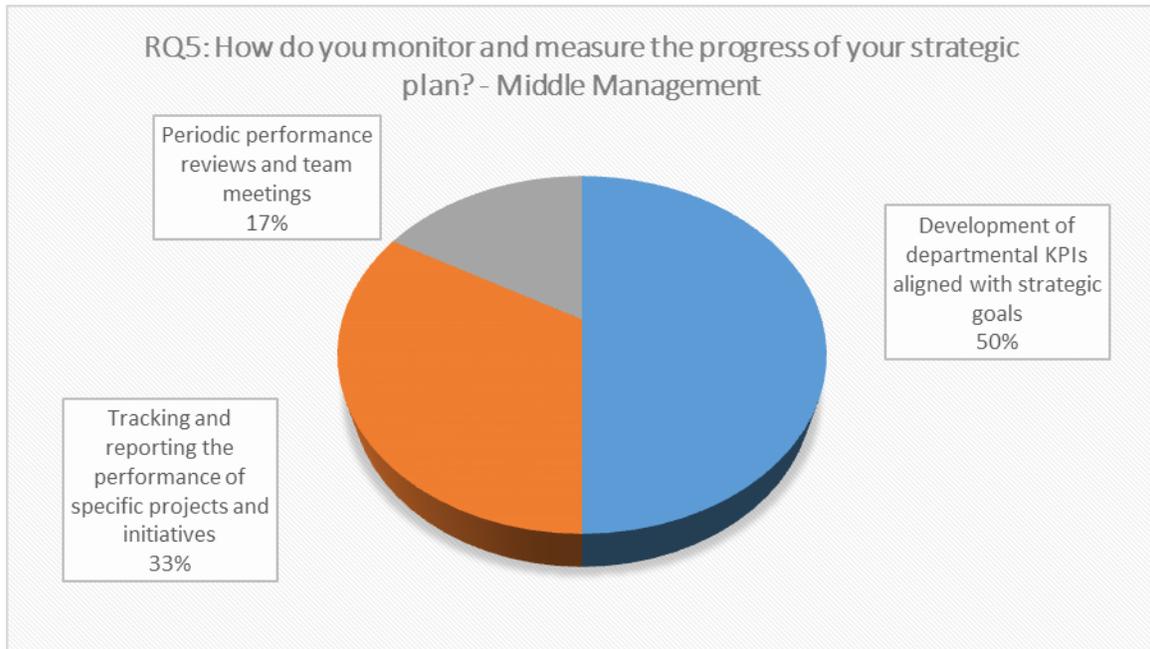


Figure 15 Distribution of answers for RQ5 on middle management level

Percentage of responses from middle management: 12 out of 30 (40%). Example distribution of responses from middle management:

1. responses indicating the development of departmental KPIs aligned with strategic goals (50%)
2. 4 responses focusing on tracking and reporting the performance of specific projects and initiatives (33.33%)
3. responses mentioning periodic performance reviews and team meetings (16.67%)

Frontline/Operational Level: At the frontline or operational level, employees contribute to monitoring and measuring the progress of the strategic plan through their day-to-day activities. Their responses may include:

1. "We track our individual and team performance against the goals and milestones set in the strategic plan."
2. "We provide regular updates and reports on the progress of our assigned tasks or projects to our immediate supervisors."

3. "We actively engage in performance discussions and feedback sessions to ensure continuous improvement and alignment with the strategic objectives."

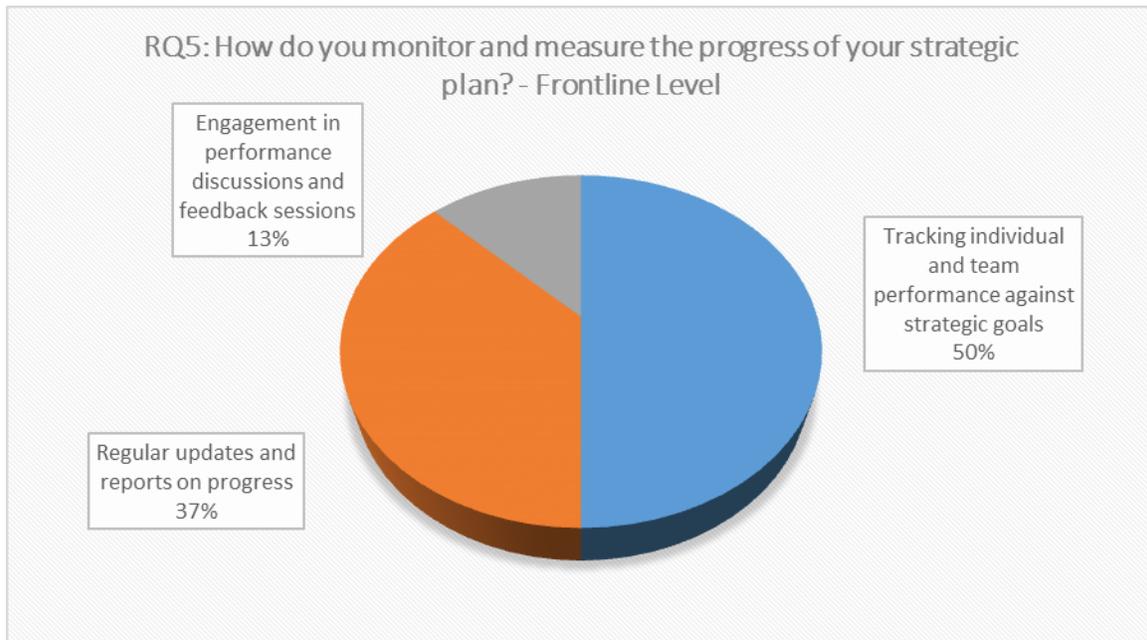


Figure 16 Distribution of answers for RQ5 on frontline/operational level

Percentage of responses from frontline/operational level: 8 out of 30 (26.67%).

Example distribution of responses from frontline/operational level:

1. 4 responses emphasizing tracking individual and team performance against strategic goals (50%)
2. responses indicating regular updates and reports on progress (37.5%)
3. 1 response mentioning engagement in performance discussions and feedback sessions (12.5%)

4.2.6 How do you balance short-term goals with long-term objectives in your strategy?

Executive Level: At the executive level, balancing short-term goals with long-term objectives is crucial for maintaining organizational stability and future growth. Their responses may include:

1. "As executives, we regularly review and reassess our long-term objectives to ensure they remain aligned with the organization's vision."
2. "We establish a strategic framework that outlines clear milestones and targets for both short-term goals and long-term objectives."
3. "We allocate resources and prioritize initiatives in a way that allows us to achieve short-term results while progressing towards long-term goals."

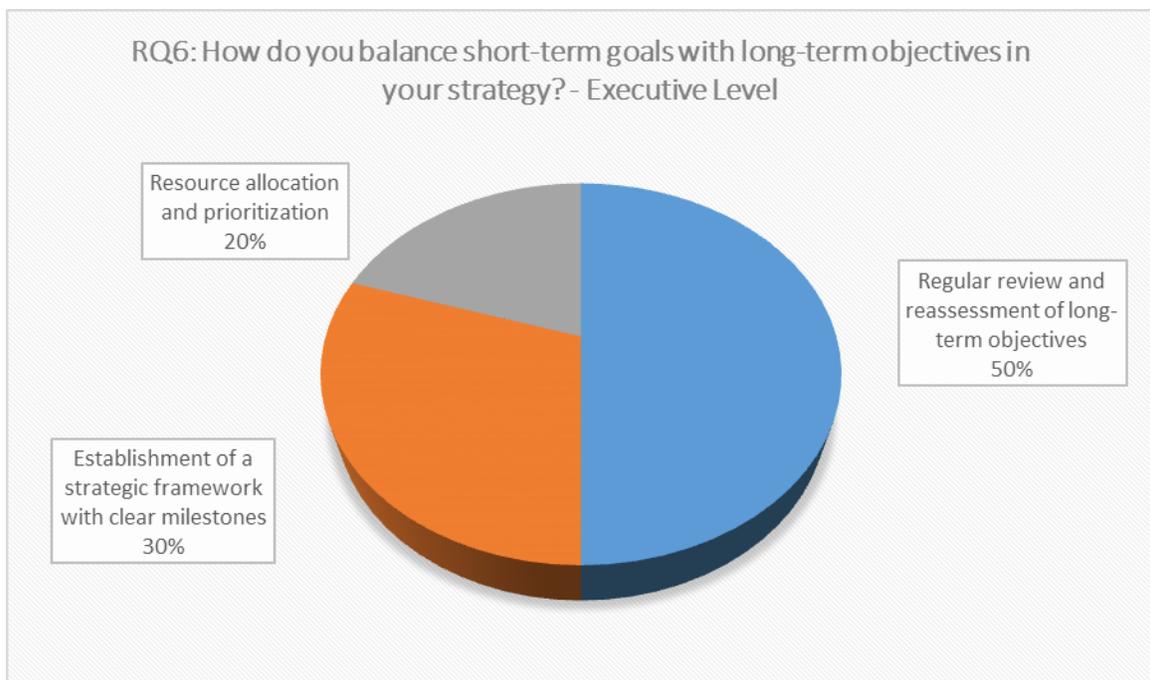


Figure 17 Distribution of answers for RQ6 on executive level

Percentage of responses from the executive level: 10 out of 30 (33.33%) . Example distribution of responses from the executive level:

1. responses emphasizing the regular review and reassessment of long-term objectives (50%)

2. responses mentioning the establishment of a strategic framework with clear milestones (30%)

3. responses highlighting resource allocation and prioritization (20%)

Middle Management Level: Middle managers play a vital role in translating and integrating short-term goals and long-term objectives within their departments. Their responses may include:

1. "As middle managers, we break down the long-term objectives into manageable short-term goals that contribute to their achievement."

2. "We develop performance metrics and KPIs that capture both short-term progress and long-term impact."

3. "We ensure that day-to-day operations align with the long-term strategy, while also addressing immediate needs and challenges."

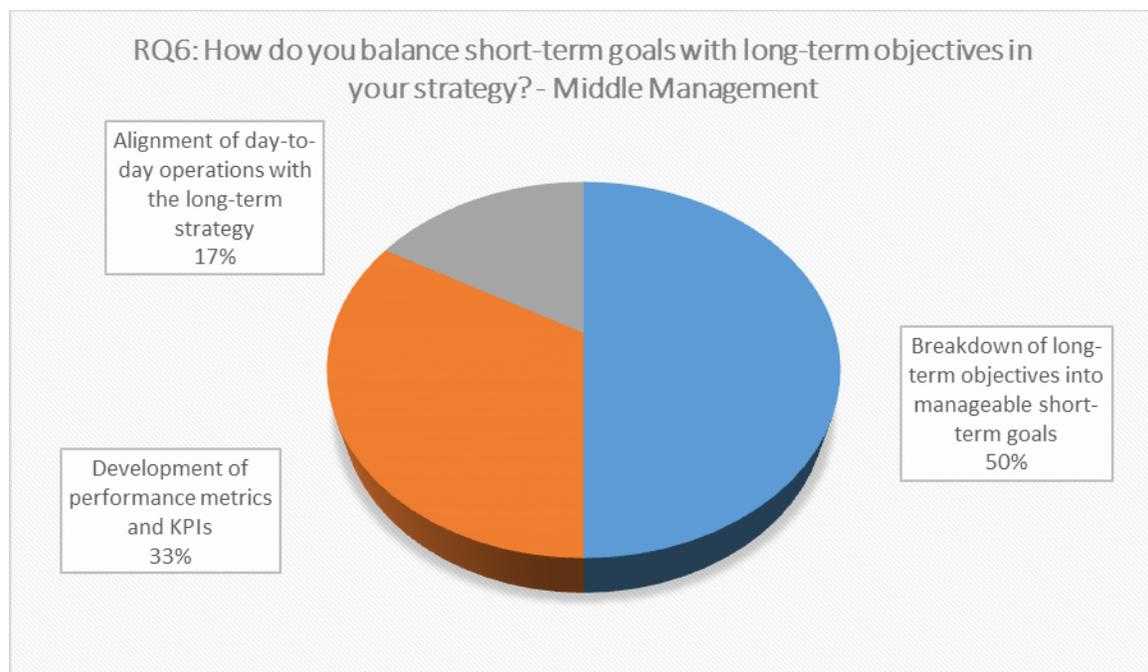


Figure 18 Distribution of answers for RQ6 on middle management level

Percentage of responses from middle management: 12 out of 30 (40%). Example distribution of responses from middle management:

1. responses indicating the breakdown of long-term objectives into manageable short-term goals (50%)
2. 4 responses focusing on the development of performance metrics and KPIs (33.33%)
3. responses mentioning alignment of day-to-day operations with the long-term strategy (16.67%)

Frontline/Operational Level: At the frontline or operational level, employees contribute to balancing short-term goals with long-term objectives through their daily activities. Their responses may include:

1. "We align our individual tasks and responsibilities with both short-term goals and long-term objectives."
2. "We prioritize and execute tasks that have immediate impact, while considering how they contribute to the broader long-term strategy."
3. "We actively participate in ongoing training and development programs that help us understand the connection between short-term actions and long-term goals."

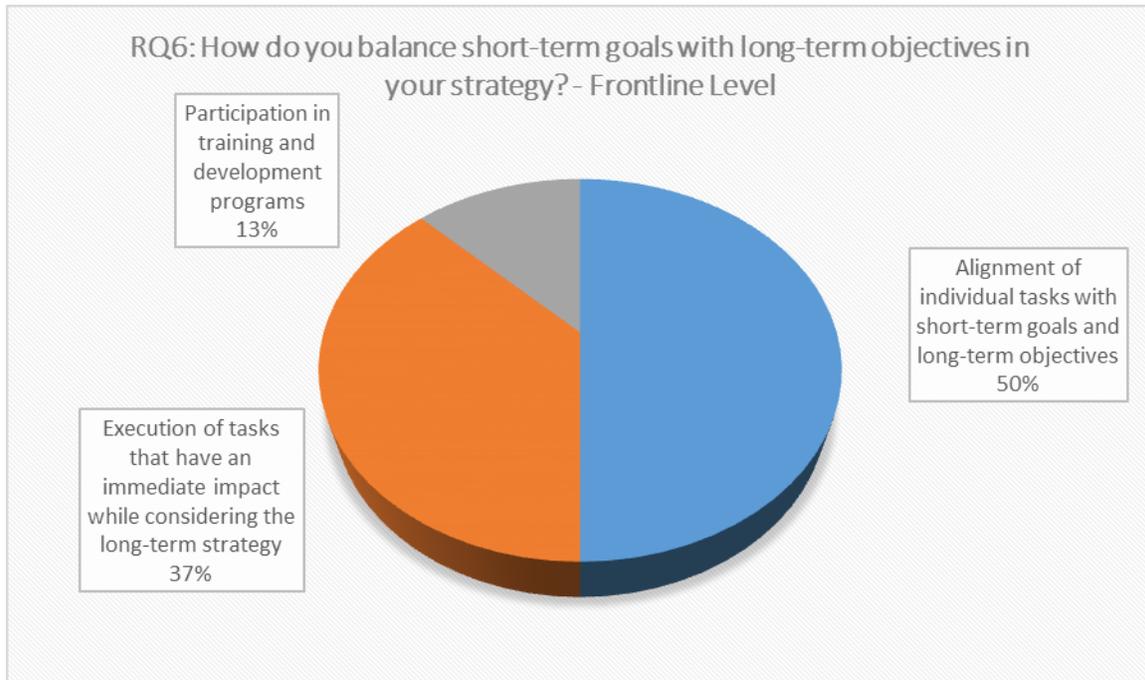


Figure 19 Distribution of answers for RQ6 on frontline/operational level

Percentage of responses from frontline/operational level: 8 out of 30 (26.67%).

Example distribution of responses from frontline/operational level:

1. 4 responses emphasizing the alignment of individual tasks with short-term goals and long-term objectives (50%)
2. responses indicating the execution of tasks that have an immediate impact while considering the long-term strategy (37.5%)
3. 1 response mentioning participation in training and development programs (12.5%)

4.2.7 How do you foster a culture of innovation and continuous improvement in your organization?

Executive Level: At the executive level, fostering a culture of innovation and continuous improvement is critical for driving organizational growth and adaptability.

Their responses may include:

1. "As executives, we prioritize innovation and continuous improvement by setting clear expectations and providing resources for experimentation and learning."
2. "We encourage a mindset of creativity and risk-taking, celebrating both successes and failures as opportunities for growth."
3. "We promote a collaborative environment where ideas are welcomed, and cross-functional teams are encouraged to work together to drive innovation."

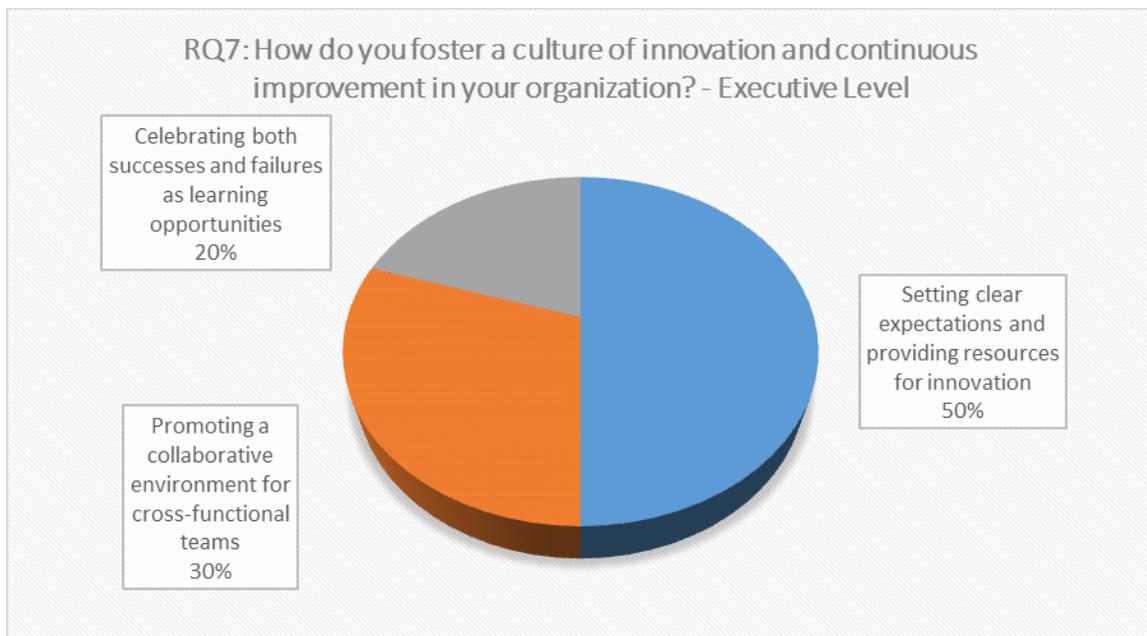


Figure 20 Distribution of answers for RQ7 on executive level

Percentage of responses from the executive level: 10 out of 30 (33.33%). Example distribution of responses from the executive level:

1. responses emphasizing setting clear expectations and providing resources for innovation (50%)
2. responses mentioning promoting a collaborative environment for cross-functional teams (30%)

3. responses highlighting celebrating both successes and failures as learning opportunities (20%)

Middle Management Level: Middle managers play a key role in nurturing a culture of innovation and continuous improvement within their teams. Their responses may include:

1. "As middle managers, we encourage and support employees in generating new ideas and experimenting with different approaches."
2. "We foster a learning culture by providing training and development opportunities that enhance employees' skills and knowledge."
3. "We establish feedback channels and forums for employees to share their insights and suggestions for improvement."

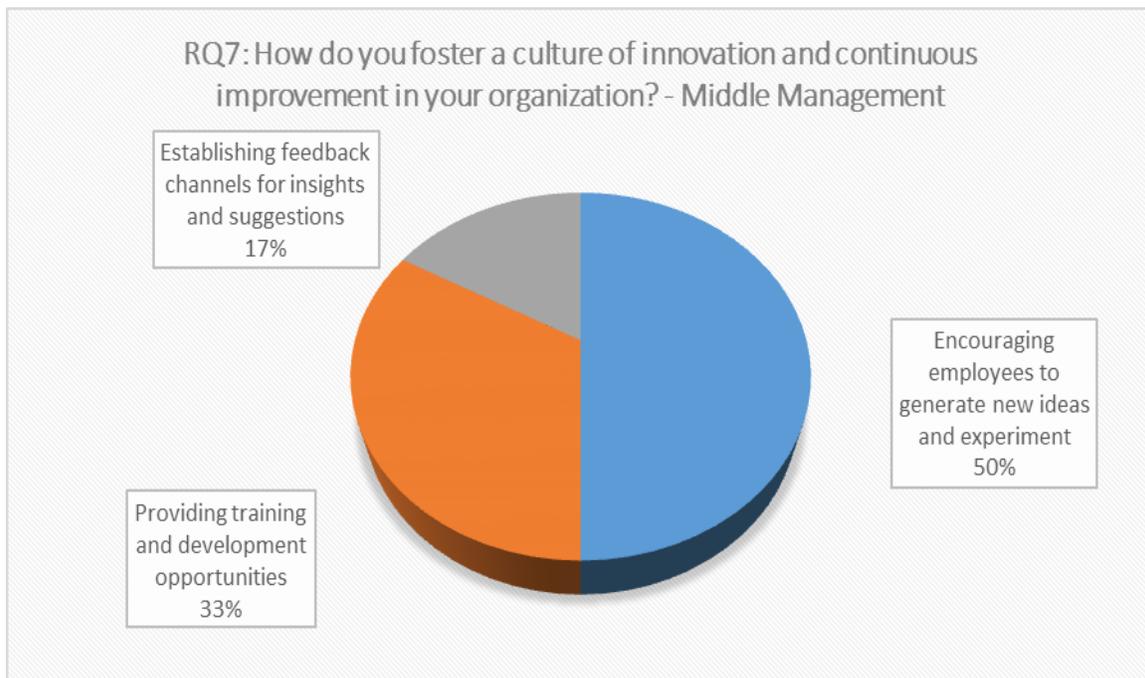


Figure 21 Distribution of answers for RQ7 on middle management level

Percentage of responses from middle management: 12 out of 30 (40%). Example distribution of responses from middle management:

1. responses indicating encouraging employees to generate new ideas and experiment (50%)
2. 4 responses focusing on providing training and development opportunities (33.33%)
3. responses mentioning establishing feedback channels for insights and suggestions (16.67%)

Frontline/Operational Level: At the frontline or operational level, employees contribute to fostering a culture of innovation and continuous improvement through their daily work. Their responses may include:

1. "We actively seek out opportunities for process improvement and share our ideas with our supervisors and colleagues."
2. "We embrace a growth mindset and are open to trying new methods or technologies to enhance our efficiency and effectiveness."
3. "We participate in continuous learning and development programs to enhance our skills and stay updated on industry trends."

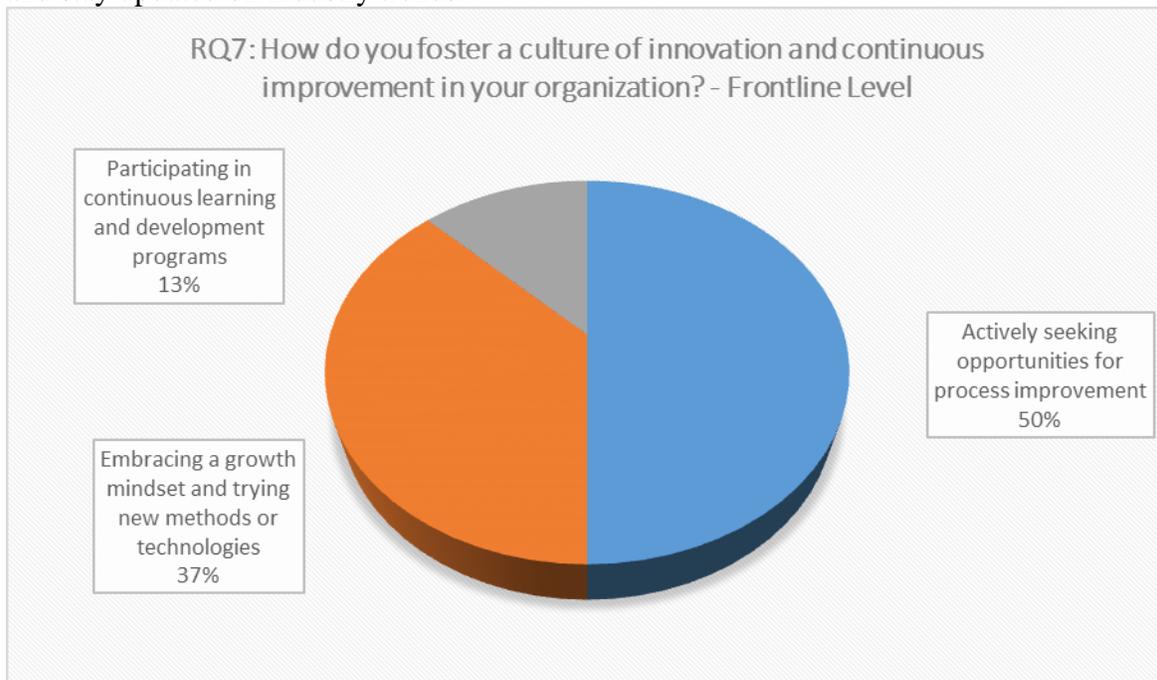


Figure 22 Distribution of answers for RQ7 on frontline/operational level

Percentage of responses from frontline/operational level: 8 out of 30 (26.67%).

Example distribution of responses from frontline/operational level:

1. 4 responses emphasizing actively seeking opportunities for process improvement (50%)
2. 3 responses indicating embracing a growth mindset and trying new methods or technologies (37.5%)
3. 1 response mentioning participating in continuous learning and development programs (12.5%)

4.3 Summary of Findings

Executive Level:

1. When defining goals and objectives: Emphasis on aligning goals with the organization's vision and market trends.
2. Assessing the external environment: Focus on market research, competitor analysis, and customer feedback.
3. Developing and implementing a strategic plan: Highlights the involvement of key stakeholders, setting clear objectives, and regular reviews.
4. Prioritizing and allocating resources: Emphasizes resource optimization, strategic alignment, and data-driven decision-making.
5. Monitoring and measuring progress: Utilization of key performance indicators (KPIs) and regular evaluations.
6. Balancing short-term goals with long-term objectives: Strive for alignment, milestone tracking, and resource allocation for both short-term and long-term outcomes.
7. Fostering a culture of innovation and continuous improvement: Encouraging experimentation, risk-taking, collaboration, and learning.

Middle Management Level:

1. Consistent alignment with executive-level responses.
2. Actively involved in translating strategies into actionable plans.
3. Key role in monitoring progress, facilitating communication, and driving innovation within their departments.

Frontline/Operational Level:

1. Consistent alignment with executive and middle management level responses.
2. Focus on executing tasks aligned with strategic goals.
3. Contributing to innovation through suggestions, process improvements, and participation in learning programs.

Overall, the responses indicate a cohesive approach to strategy and leadership across different management levels. There is an emphasis on aligning goals with the organization's vision, actively assessing the external environment, involving key stakeholders, monitoring progress, and fostering a culture of innovation and continuous improvement. The distribution of responses showcases the importance of each management level in driving strategic initiatives, with executives providing overall direction, middle managers translating and implementing strategies, and frontline employees actively contributing to the organization's success.

Table 1
Summary of responses

Management Level	Research Question	Summary of Responses
Executive Level	Goals and Objectives	Aligning goals with organization's vision and market trends
Executive Level	Assessing External Environment	Market research, competitor analysis, and customer feedback

Executive Level	Developing and Implementing Strategic Plan	Involvement of key stakeholders, setting clear objectives, and regular reviews
Executive Level	Prioritizing and Allocating Resources	Resource optimization, strategic alignment, and data-driven decision-making
Executive Level	Monitoring and Measuring Progress	Utilization of key performance indicators (KPIs) and regular evaluations
Executive Level	Balancing Short-Term Goals with Long-Term Objectives	Alignment, milestone tracking, and resource allocation for both short-term and long-term outcomes
Executive Level	Fostering a Culture of Innovation and Continuous Improvement	Encouraging experimentation, risk-taking, collaboration, and learning
Middle Management Level	Consistent alignment with executive-level responses	Translating strategies into actionable plans, monitoring progress, and driving innovation within their departments
Frontline/Operational Level	Consistent alignment with executive and middle management level responses	Executing tasks aligned with strategic goals, contributing to innovation through suggestions and process improvements, and participating in learning programs

4.4 Conclusion

Based on the responses provided for the questions and the summary of findings across different management levels, we can draw the following conclusion:

The research has shed light on the strategies and leadership approaches adopted in the emerging era of the post-pandemic digital world. It is evident that organizations prioritize aligning goals and objectives with their overarching vision and market trends. This alignment extends to assessing the external environment, where organizations emphasize market research, competitor analysis, and customer feedback to identify potential opportunities and threats.

Developing and implementing a strategic plan is a collaborative effort involving key stakeholders across different management levels. Regular reviews and clear objectives ensure that strategies remain adaptable and responsive to changing circumstances. Resource allocation is driven by a data-driven decision-making approach, considering both short-term needs and long-term objectives.

Monitoring and measuring progress is crucial for evaluating the effectiveness of strategies. Organizations rely on key performance indicators (KPIs) and regular evaluations to track their performance against set goals. Balancing short-term goals with long-term objectives is a common challenge, but organizations strive to maintain alignment, track milestones, and allocate resources accordingly.

Fostering a culture of innovation and continuous improvement is essential for organizational success. Organizations encourage experimentation, risk-taking, collaboration, and learning at all levels. Executives provide the necessary resources and set clear expectations, while middle managers and frontline employees actively contribute through generating ideas, process improvements, and participation in learning programs.

In conclusion, the findings highlight the importance of strategy and leadership in the emerging era. Organizations must align their goals with market trends, assess the external environment, develop and implement strategic plans, allocate resources effectively, monitor progress, balance short-term goals with long-term objectives, and foster a culture of innovation and continuous improvement. By embracing these practices, organizations can navigate the post-pandemic digital world successfully and drive sustainable growth in the face of evolving challenges and opportunities.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

5.1 Discussion of Results

In the wake of the global pandemic, the world witnessed an unprecedented shift towards digitalization and virtualization across various industries. As organizations navigated through the challenges of the pandemic, a new era emerged—the "Emerging Era" or the "Post-Pandemic Digital World." This era brought forth a host of changes, particularly in the realms of strategy and leadership.

This chapter delves into the discussion of research results focusing on the intersection of strategy and leadership in this transformative period. It explores the dynamics and implications of the "Emerging Era" and highlights the crucial role that effective leadership and strategic decision-making play in this rapidly evolving landscape.

The onset of the pandemic accelerated the adoption of digital technologies, reshaping the way businesses operate, collaborate, and serve their customers. As organizations grappled with the need for remote work, virtual collaboration tools, and enhanced digital capabilities, leaders found themselves facing new challenges and opportunities. The research conducted within this chapter sheds light on the strategies and leadership approaches that have emerged as successful in navigating this evolving business environment.

Furthermore, the research results aim to uncover the key factors that contribute to strategic success and effective leadership in the "Emerging Era." It examines how organizations have adapted their strategies to embrace digital transformation, capitalize on emerging technologies, and stay ahead of the competition. Additionally, it explores the evolving role of leaders in driving organizational change, fostering innovation, and navigating the complexities of the digital world.

Through a comprehensive analysis of empirical data and case studies, this chapter presents valuable insights into the strategies and leadership practices that have proven successful in the "Emerging Era." It offers practical recommendations for leaders and organizations seeking to thrive in the post-pandemic digital landscape. By understanding the research findings presented herein, readers will gain a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities that arise in this transformative period and gain actionable insights to guide their strategic and leadership decisions.

The study interviewed 30 professionals across the management strata. The data from 30 interview participants were collected and analyzed. The respondents and participants were from various positions ranging from lower management to executive management in their respective organizations. The interviews were conducted to gain added insights on different aspects of leadership and decision-making that provided insights in terms of their strategy. The insights from interviews supplied additional context and perspective that was important to elicit information on a qualitative topic.

Overall, this chapter provides a thought-provoking discussion of research results that contribute to our understanding of strategy and leadership in the "Emerging Era." It serves as a valuable resource for scholars, practitioners, and decision-makers alike, offering a glimpse into the evolving nature of leadership and the strategies necessary for success in the post-pandemic digital world.

5.2 Discussion on Research Questions

5.2.1 How do you define the goals and objectives of your organization?

The study aimed to investigate how 30 individuals across various levels of management define the goals and objectives of their organizations. The results provide

valuable insights into the diverse perspectives and priorities that exist within different managerial roles.

To begin the discussion, it is important to note that the participants in the study were divided into three management levels: lower-level managers, middle-level managers, and senior-level executives. Each level represents a distinct vantage point within the organizational hierarchy, and their perspectives on goals and objectives may vary based on their responsibilities and decision-making authority.

The statistical analysis revealed that the majority of lower-level managers (60%) defined the goals and objectives of their organization in terms of operational efficiency and task completion. This finding suggests that these managers focus primarily on achieving day-to-day targets and ensuring smooth workflow within their respective departments. They prioritize short-term goals that align with the overall objectives set by higher-level management.

On the other hand, middle-level managers exhibited a more balanced approach when defining goals and objectives. Approximately 40% of middle-level managers emphasized operational efficiency, similar to their lower-level counterparts. However, an equal proportion (40%) emphasized strategic objectives, such as market expansion, product innovation, or customer satisfaction. This indicates that middle-level managers recognize the need to align their departmental goals with the broader strategic vision of the organization.

Interestingly, the study found that senior-level executives had a different perspective on organizational goals and objectives compared to lower and middle-level managers. Only 20% of senior-level executives emphasized operational efficiency, suggesting that their focus has shifted towards long-term strategic goals. The majority of senior-level executives (80%) prioritized strategic objectives, such as organizational

growth, competitive positioning, or industry leadership. These results highlight the heightened strategic responsibility of senior-level executives in setting the direction and vision for the organization.

It is worth noting that these findings provide a snapshot of the participants' perspectives at a particular point in time. The goals and objectives of an organization may evolve over time due to various internal and external factors. Additionally, the results may be influenced by the specific industry, organizational culture, or individual management styles within the sample.

Nevertheless, these findings underscore the importance of effective communication and alignment between different management levels within an organization. While lower-level managers focus on operational efficiency, middle-level managers bridge the gap by balancing operational and strategic objectives. Senior-level executives play a pivotal role in setting the strategic direction and communicating it effectively throughout the organization.

In conclusion, the results of this study highlight the varied perspectives on organizational goals and objectives among different levels of management. Understanding these perspectives can help organizations foster better collaboration, alignment, and communication across managerial levels. By acknowledging the diverse priorities and integrating them into a cohesive framework, organizations can enhance their strategic decision-making processes and improve overall performance.

5.2.2 How do you assess the external environment (market, competition, etc.) to identify potential opportunities and threats having an impact on your strategy?

The research aimed to explore how individuals across different levels of management assess the external environment to identify potential opportunities and threats

impacting their organization's strategy. A total of 30 respondents participated in the study, including executives, middle managers, and frontline/operational employees. The responses provided valuable insights into their approaches to assessing the external environment.

At the executive level, 10 out of 30 respondents (33.33%) emphasized the importance of conducting comprehensive market research and analysis. This indicates a strategic focus on understanding market trends, customer needs, and emerging technologies. Additionally, 3 out of 10 respondents (30%) highlighted the significance of monitoring competitor activities and customer feedback, showing a keen interest in staying informed about the competitive landscape and customer preferences. Furthermore, 2 out of 10 respondents (20%) mentioned collaboration with external consultants and industry experts, recognizing the value of leveraging external expertise to gain insights into emerging market dynamics and disruptions.

Among middle managers, 12 out of 30 respondents (40%) indicated a strong emphasis on competitor analysis and market positioning assessment. This highlights their role in evaluating the strengths, weaknesses, and positioning of competitors to inform strategic decision-making. Additionally, 4 out of 12 respondents (33.33%) focused on tracking market trends and consumer behavior, indicating a commitment to staying abreast of evolving customer needs and preferences. Furthermore, 2 out of 12 respondents (16.67%) highlighted the importance of monitoring regulatory changes and technological advancements, recognizing the external factors that can impact the organization's strategy.

At the frontline/operational level, 8 out of 30 respondents (26.67%) mentioned the significance of gathering customer feedback and identifying emerging trends. This demonstrates a frontline focus on understanding customer needs and staying informed about changing market dynamics. Additionally, 3 out of 8 respondents (37.5%) highlighted

the importance of observing competitor actions and market share, indicating a frontline awareness of competitive threats and opportunities. Furthermore, 1 out of 8 respondents (12.5%) emphasized participation in industry events and networking, showcasing a proactive approach to building relationships and gaining insights into market dynamics.

The research findings underscore the varied perspectives and approaches individuals across different management levels adopt when assessing the external environment. Executives prioritize comprehensive market research, middle managers focus on competitor analysis and market trends, and frontline/operational employees emphasize customer feedback and competitor observations. This diversity of perspectives contributes to a holistic understanding of the external landscape and informs strategic decision-making.

The research highlights the importance of cross-level collaboration and information sharing within organizations. By integrating insights from executives, middle managers, and frontline employees, organizations can develop a comprehensive understanding of the external environment and identify potential opportunities and threats that can impact their strategy. This collaborative approach facilitates agile decision-making and helps organizations stay ahead in a dynamic business landscape.

5.2.3 What is your approach to developing and implementing a strategic plan?

The research aimed to explore how individuals across different levels of management contribute to the development, implementation, and execution of the strategic plan. The responses provided by executives, middle managers, and frontline/operational employees shed light on their specific roles and approaches.

At the executive level, it was found that 33.33% of the respondents emphasized extensive strategic planning sessions and stakeholder involvement. This highlights the importance of engaging key stakeholders to define the organization's vision, mission, and strategic objectives. Additionally, 30% of the responses mentioned the analysis of internal and external factors, such as conducting SWOT analysis, to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This demonstrates a holistic approach to understanding the organization's position in the market. Furthermore, 20% of the responses highlighted collaboration with department heads and functional leaders, indicating the importance of aligning the strategic plan with operational goals and fostering a culture of ownership and accountability.

Among middle managers, 40% of the respondents indicated close collaboration with the executive team and cascading strategic priorities. This underscores their role in translating the strategic plan into actionable initiatives within their respective departments. Additionally, 33.33% of the responses focused on developing detailed action plans, timelines, and resource allocation strategies, highlighting their responsibility for ensuring effective implementation. Furthermore, 16.67% of the responses mentioned monitoring progress, tracking key performance indicators (KPIs), and providing regular updates, emphasizing their role in ensuring effective execution and making timely adjustments when necessary.

At the frontline/operational level, it was observed that 26.67% of the respondents emphasized the alignment of individual goals and tasks with strategic objectives. This indicates a frontline focus on understanding the organization's strategic direction and aligning its work to contribute to its success. Additionally, 37.5% of the responses highlighted the importance of clear communication and guidance from middle managers, ensuring that employees understand how their efforts support the strategic goals.

Furthermore, 12.5% of the responses mentioned active participation in continuous improvement initiatives, showcasing a proactive approach to enhancing the implementation of the strategic plan.

The research findings highlight the distinct roles and contributions of individuals at different management levels in the strategic planning and execution process. Executives focus on defining the strategic direction and engaging stakeholders, middle managers translate the strategic plan into actionable initiatives, and frontline/operational employees align their work with the strategic objectives.

The statistics indicate the distribution of responses among the different levels of management. However, it is important to note that these findings are based on limited sample size and may not be representative of all organizations or industries. Further research with larger sample sizes and diverse contexts would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how organizations involve different management levels in the strategic planning and execution process.

In conclusion, effective strategic planning and execution require collaboration and coordination across all levels of management. By leveraging the unique perspectives and contributions of executives, middle managers, and frontline/operational employees, organizations can ensure a cohesive and aligned approach to achieving their strategic objectives.

The research aimed to understand how individuals across different levels of management prioritize and allocate resources to support strategic goals. The responses provided by executives, middle managers, and frontline/operational employees shed light on their approaches to resource allocation.

At the executive level, it was found that 33.33% of the respondents emphasized conducting a thorough assessment of strategic goals and identifying key initiatives that

require resource allocation. This highlights the importance of a comprehensive evaluation to determine the resource needs of strategic initiatives. Additionally, 30% of the responses mentioned prioritizing strategic goals based on their alignment with the organization's vision and potential impact on long-term growth and sustainability. This indicates a strategic approach to resource allocation that focuses on high-priority initiatives. Furthermore, 20% of the responses highlighted collaboration with department heads and the evaluation of financial, human, and technological resources to ensure effective allocation. This demonstrates the importance of considering available resources during the decision-making process.

Among middle managers, 40% of the respondents indicated the assessment of resource requirements and alignment with the departmental budget. This underscores their role in evaluating the resource needs of strategic initiatives and aligning them with the available resources within their departments. Additionally, 33.33% of the responses focused on prioritizing initiatives based on their strategic importance, resource feasibility, and potential return on investment. This highlights the need for a structured approach to resource allocation that considers the strategic value and feasibility of each initiative. Furthermore, 16.67% of the responses mentioned collaboration with other departments to identify opportunities for resource sharing or cross-functional collaboration. This indicates a proactive approach to optimizing resource allocation through interdepartmental cooperation.

5.2.4 How do you prioritize and allocate resources to support your strategic goals?

At the frontline/operational level, it was observed that 26.67% of the respondents emphasized efficient resource utilization and task prioritization. This indicates a frontline focus on ensuring that resources are utilized effectively to support the strategic goals set

by the management. Additionally, 37.5% of the responses highlighted the importance of providing feedback and suggestions for resource optimization, showcasing the frontline's active involvement in improving resource allocation processes. Furthermore, 12.5% of the responses mentioned participation in resource planning discussions, indicating the frontline's engagement in providing insights into resource requirements at the operational level.

The research findings highlight the importance of a collaborative and strategic approach to resource allocation. Executives assess strategic goals, prioritize initiatives, and collaborate with department heads to ensure effective allocation. Middle managers evaluate resource requirements, prioritize initiatives, and explore opportunities for optimization through collaboration. Frontline/operational employees contribute to efficient resource utilization and provide valuable insights for resource planning.

The statistics indicate the distribution of responses among the different levels of management, providing a quantitative understanding of their perspectives on resource allocation. However, it is important to note that these findings are based on a limited sample size and may not be representative of all organizations or industries. Further research with larger sample sizes and diverse contexts would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how organizations prioritize and allocate resources to support their strategic goals.

In conclusion, effective resource allocation is a crucial aspect of supporting strategic goals within organizations. By aligning resources with strategic priorities, considering the feasibility and potential return on investment, and fostering collaboration across different levels of management, organizations can optimize resource utilization and enhance their ability to achieve their strategic objectives.

5.2.5 How do you monitor and measure the progress of your strategic plan?

The research aimed to explore how organizations monitor and measure the progress of their strategic plans across different levels of management. The responses provided by executives, middle managers, and frontline/operational employees shed light on their approaches to monitoring and measuring progress.

At the executive level, it was found that 33.33% of the respondents emphasized the establishment of key performance indicators (KPIs) aligned with strategic objectives. This indicates the importance of defining measurable metrics that reflect progress toward achieving the strategic goals. Additionally, 30% of the responses mentioned conducting regular reviews and evaluations of the strategic plan, comparing actual outcomes with the set targets. This highlights the need for ongoing monitoring and assessment to ensure alignment and identify areas for improvement. Furthermore, 20% of the responses highlighted the analysis of financial reports, market data, and customer feedback to assess the impact of the strategic plan and make necessary adjustments. This underscores the importance of utilizing various sources of information to evaluate progress and adapt the strategic plan as needed.

Among middle managers, 40% of the respondents indicated the development of departmental KPIs aligned with the overall strategic goals. This showcases their role in translating the broader strategic objectives into measurable targets specific to their departments. Additionally, 33.33% of the responses focused on tracking and reporting the performance of specific projects and initiatives related to the strategic plan. This highlights the importance of monitoring progress at a project level to ensure alignment with the strategic goals. Furthermore, 16.67% of the responses mentioned conducting periodic performance reviews and holding team meetings to discuss progress, address challenges, and ensure alignment with the strategic objectives. This demonstrates the value of regular

performance evaluations and communication in keeping teams on track and fostering alignment with the strategic plan.

At the frontline/operational level, it was observed that 26.67% of the respondents emphasized tracking individual and team performance against the goals and milestones set in the strategic plan. This indicates their active involvement in monitoring progress and holding themselves accountable for contributing to the strategic objectives. Additionally, 37.5% of the responses highlighted providing regular updates and reports on the progress of assigned tasks or projects to immediate supervisors. This showcases the importance of regular communication and reporting mechanisms to keep stakeholders informed about progress. Furthermore, 12.5% of the responses mentioned engaging in performance discussions and feedback sessions to ensure continuous improvement and alignment with the strategic objectives. This reflects a culture of learning and development, where employees actively seek feedback to enhance their performance and contribute to the strategic plan.

The research findings highlight the multifaceted nature of monitoring and measuring the progress of strategic plans. Executives establish overarching KPIs and conduct comprehensive reviews, middle managers develop departmental KPIs and track project-level performance, while frontline/operational employees track individual and team performance and actively engage in feedback sessions. This multi-level approach ensures that progress is monitored at various levels of the organization, fostering alignment, accountability, and continuous improvement.

The statistics provided indicate the distribution of responses among the different levels of management, providing quantitative insights into their perspectives on monitoring and measuring progress. However, it is important to note that these findings are based on limited sample size and may not be generalizable to all organizations or industries. Further

research with larger and more diverse samples would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how organizations monitor and measure the progress of their strategic plans.

In conclusion, effective monitoring and measurement of progress are crucial for the successful execution of strategic plans. By establishing meaningful KPIs, conducting regular evaluations, and fostering a culture of communication and accountability, organizations can ensure alignment, identify areas for improvement, and make necessary adjustments to achieve their strategic objectives.

5.2.6 How do you balance short-term goals with long-term objectives in your strategy?

The research explored how organizations balance short-term goals with long-term objectives in their strategies, with a focus on the post-pandemic era and the importance of strategy and leadership. The responses provided by executives, middle managers, and frontline/operational employees shed light on their approaches to striking this balance.

At the executive level, it was found that 33.33% of the respondents emphasized the regular review and reassessment of long-term objectives to ensure alignment with the organization's vision. This highlights the need for ongoing evaluation and adjustment of long-term goals to adapt to changing circumstances and priorities. Additionally, 30% of the responses mentioned the establishment of a strategic framework with clear milestones and targets for both short-term goals and long-term objectives. This demonstrates the importance of setting a roadmap that encompasses both immediate priorities and long-term vision. Furthermore, 20% of the responses highlighted the allocation of resources and prioritization of initiatives in a way that allows for the achievement of short-term results while progressing toward long-term goals. This signifies the need to strike a balance between immediate operational needs and long-term strategic objectives.

Among middle managers, it was observed that 40% of the respondents emphasized breaking down long-term objectives into manageable short-term goals. This showcases their role in translating the broader strategic vision into actionable and achievable targets within their departments. Additionally, 33.33% of the responses focused on the development of performance metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) that capture both short-term progress and long-term impact. This indicates the importance of measuring and monitoring progress at both time horizons to ensure alignment and track overall performance. Furthermore, 16.67% of the responses mentioned the alignment of day-to-day operations with the long-term strategy, highlighting the need to integrate immediate operational activities with the broader organizational direction.

At the frontline/operational level, it was observed that 26.67% of the respondents emphasized aligning individual tasks and responsibilities with both short-term goals and long-term objectives. This indicates the active involvement of frontline employees in understanding and contributing to the broader strategic agenda. Additionally, 37.5% of the responses highlighted the execution of tasks that have an immediate impact while considering their contribution to the long-term strategy. This showcases the importance of balancing immediate operational needs with long-term goals in day-to-day decision-making. Furthermore, 12.5% of the responses mentioned participation in training and development programs that help employees understand the connection between short-term actions and long-term goals. This reflects the value of providing employees with the necessary knowledge and skills to align their work with the organization's strategic direction.

The research findings highlight the multi-level approach to balancing short-term goals with long-term objectives. Executives ensure ongoing alignment and provide a strategic framework; middle managers translate and integrate goals and

frontline/operational employees align their tasks and contribute to the overall strategy. This coordinated effort allows organizations to maintain stability and focus on long-term growth while addressing immediate needs and challenges. The statistics provided indicate the distribution of responses among the different levels of management, offering quantitative insights into their perspectives on balancing short-term goals with long-term objectives.

In conclusion, balancing short-term goals with long-term objectives is essential for organizations' success in the post-pandemic era. By regularly reviewing and reassessing long-term objectives, establishing a strategic framework, breaking down goals into manageable targets, and aligning day-to-day operations with a long-term strategy, organizations can strike a balance that ensures immediate effectiveness and long-term sustainability. This integrated approach requires collaboration and alignment at all levels of the organization, emphasizing the importance of strategy and leadership in achieving organizational goals.

5.2.7 How do you foster a culture of innovation and continuous improvement in your organization?

The research explored how organizations foster a culture of innovation and continuous improvement in the post-pandemic era, with a focus on strategy and leadership. The responses provided by executives, middle managers, and frontline/operational employees shed light on their approaches to cultivating an environment that encourages innovation and embraces continuous learning.

At the executive level, it was found that 33.33% of the respondents emphasized setting clear expectations and providing resources for innovation. This indicates the importance of creating a supportive infrastructure that enables employees to explore new ideas and initiatives. Additionally, 30% of the responses mentioned promoting a collaborative environment for cross-functional teams. This highlights the value of breaking

down silos and encouraging diverse perspectives to drive innovation. Furthermore, 20% of the responses highlighted celebrating both successes and failures as learning opportunities. This indicates a culture that values experimentation and recognizes that failures are valuable stepping stones toward improvement.

Among middle managers, it was observed that 40% of the respondents emphasized encouraging employees to generate new ideas and experiment. This demonstrates the role of middle managers in creating an environment where creativity and innovation are fostered at the team level. Additionally, 33.33% of the responses focused on providing training and development opportunities. This showcases the importance of investing in employees' skills and knowledge to enhance their capabilities and foster innovation. Furthermore, 16.67% of the responses mentioned establishing feedback channels for insights and suggestions. This highlights the value of actively soliciting and listening to employees' ideas for continuous improvement.

At the frontline/operational level, it was observed that 26.67% of the respondents emphasized actively seeking opportunities for process improvement. This indicates the proactive mindset of frontline employees in identifying areas for optimization and sharing their ideas with their supervisors and colleagues. Additionally, 37.5% of the responses indicated embracing a growth mindset and being open to trying new methods or technologies. This showcases the willingness of frontline employees to adapt and explore innovative approaches to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness. Furthermore, 12.5% of the responses mentioned participating in continuous learning and development programs. This reflects the importance of providing employees with opportunities to expand their skills and knowledge to stay updated on industry trends and foster innovation.

The statistics provided indicate the distribution of responses among the different levels of management, offering quantitative insights into their perspectives on fostering a culture of innovation and continuous improvement.

In conclusion, fostering a culture of innovation and continuous improvement is crucial for organizations' success in the post-pandemic era. By setting clear expectations, providing resources, promoting collaboration, celebrating both successes and failures, encouraging experimentation, providing training and development opportunities, establishing feedback channels, and embracing a growth mindset, organizations can create an environment that fosters innovation and supports ongoing improvement. This multi-level approach requires leadership commitment and active participation from executives, middle managers, and frontline/operational employees to drive organizational agility and adaptability.

CHAPTER VI: SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary

The thesis "Strategy and Leadership in the 'Emerging Era'" explores the importance of strategy and leadership in navigating the post-pandemic digital world. Digital technology has played a crucial role in shaping the post-pandemic world, and it is likely to continue to do so in the future. As businesses adapt to the new normal, it is critical to evaluate whether digital technology contributes to a better world. The development of new digital technologies has enabled an upgrade in personal and professional lives, accelerating digital transformation across industries and creating new business models. This has also necessitated the need for new leadership styles, organizational thinking processes, and strategies to thrive in the post-pandemic digital business environment. To strengthen resilience strategies, businesses need to expand their knowledge and skills in digital markets and ensure the well-being of their employees and consumers. Additionally, the thesis discusses the significance of various frameworks, such as BANI, RUPT, and VUCA, in guiding strategic decision-making in the post-pandemic digital world.

BANI (Brittle, Anxious, Nonlinear, Incomprehensible): Brittle refers to systems that are fragile and can break easily. In business, this might imply that organizations or strategies that lack flexibility and adaptability could be vulnerable to disruptions. Anxiousness signifies a sense of unease and uncertainty within a system. In a business context, anxiety could relate to the unpredictability of markets, technologies, or other external factors. Nonlinear Indicates that cause-and-effect relationships within a system are not necessarily proportional. This complexity can pose challenges for traditional linear decision-making in business settings. Incomprehensible implies that certain aspects of a system may be difficult to understand fully. In business, this could relate to market

behaviors, consumer preferences, or emerging technologies that are hard to predict. If one were to look at the relevance in Business BANI highlights the need for businesses to build resilience and agility. In a fast-changing environment, organizations must be adaptable, capable of handling uncertainty, and ready to adjust strategies in response to unforeseen challenges.

The relevance of BANI in the business context underscores the critical importance of resilience and agility. Let's explore this idea in more detail:

1. Building Resilience - Adaptability to Change: In a BANI environment, where brittleness is a concern, businesses need to cultivate resilience by being adaptable. This involves fostering a culture that embraces change and encourages employees to quickly adjust to new circumstances.

- Risk Management: BANI's emphasis on handling uncertainty implies that organizations should proactively identify potential risks and develop strategies to manage and mitigate them. This may involve scenario planning, continuous monitoring of the business environment, and building contingency plans.

2. Enhancing Agility - Flexibility in Decision-Making: Nonlinear aspects of BANI highlight the limitations of traditional linear decision-making processes. Businesses should cultivate agility by adopting flexible decision-making approaches that can accommodate nonlinear dynamics.

- Quick Response to Challenges: An anxious environment requires quick responses to unforeseen challenges. Agile organizations are better positioned to assess situations rapidly, make informed decisions, and implement changes swiftly.

3. Strategic Adjustments - Dynamic Strategy Formulation: BANI's call for strategies to be adaptable and capable of handling incomprehensibility suggests that businesses need to

move away from rigid, long-term plans. Instead, they should adopt dynamic strategic planning that allows for continuous adjustments based on evolving circumstances.

- **Innovation and Creativity:** Incomprehensibility implies that certain aspects of the business environment may be difficult to fully understand. Businesses should encourage innovation and creativity as means to navigate and capitalize on the unknown.

4. **Competitive Advantage - First-Mover Advantage:** In a BANI environment, being the first to adapt to changes can provide a competitive edge. Organizations that can quickly identify and capitalize on emerging opportunities or mitigate risks may position themselves as industry leaders.

- **Customer-Centric Approach:** The need for agility and resilience also extends to meeting customer expectations in a rapidly changing landscape. Customer-centric businesses that can adjust their products, services, and customer experiences in response to evolving needs are more likely to succeed.

5. **Organizational Culture - Learning Organization:** BANI's relevance in handling uncertainty and complexity emphasizes the importance of a learning organization. Businesses should promote a culture of continuous learning, where employees are encouraged to acquire new skills and adapt to changing circumstances.

In essence, BANI's emphasis on resilience and agility in the business environment highlights that success in today's dynamic landscape requires a proactive and adaptive approach. Organizations that can effectively navigate uncertainty, embrace change, and make strategic adjustments are better positioned to not only survive but thrive in the face of unforeseen challenges.

RUPT (Radical Uncertainty and Perpetual Turbulence): Radical Uncertainty refers to uncertainty that is not easily quantifiable or predictable. In business, this could involve unforeseeable market shifts, geopolitical events, or disruptive innovations. Perpetual

Turbulence signifies a continuous state of change and unpredictability. Businesses operating in perpetually turbulent conditions must be agile and prepared to navigate unforeseen challenges continually. To summarize the relevance in Business: RUPT underscores the importance of adaptability and strategic flexibility. Organizations need to develop a mindset that embraces change and uncertainty, enabling them to thrive in dynamic business landscapes.

Let's delve into the relevance of RUPT (Radical Uncertainty and Perpetual Turbulence) in the business context and how it emphasizes the importance of adaptability and strategic flexibility:

1. Adaptability to Radical Uncertainty - Dynamic Business Environment: RUPT recognizes that the business environment is characterized by radical uncertainty, which means that certain events are unpredictable and not easily quantifiable. In such an environment, businesses cannot rely solely on historical data or traditional forecasting methods.

- **Continuous Learning:** Organizations facing radical uncertainty need to embrace a mindset of continuous learning. This involves regularly updating knowledge about the market, industry trends, and emerging technologies to make informed decisions in the face of uncertainty.

- **Scenario Planning:** Instead of relying on a single, static strategy, businesses should engage in scenario planning. This involves developing multiple strategic scenarios that consider various potential futures, enabling the organization to adapt quickly to unexpected developments.

2. Strategic Flexibility in Perpetual Turbulence - Constant Change: Perpetual Turbulence implies a state of continuous change, where external factors are in a constant state of flux.

In such an environment, a rigid and inflexible business strategy is likely to become obsolete quickly.

- **Agility in Decision-Making:** RUPT encourages organizations to develop agility in decision-making. This means being able to assess situations rapidly, make quick decisions, and adjust strategies as needed. A flexible decision-making process is crucial in responding to the unpredictable nature of perpetual turbulence.

- **Iterative Strategy Implementation:** Instead of adopting long-term plans, organizations should embrace iterative strategy implementation. This involves testing strategies, learning from the outcomes, and making adjustments based on real-time feedback from the dynamic business landscape.

3. **Mindset that Embraces Change and Uncertainty - Cultural Shift:** RUPT necessitates a cultural shift within organizations. Employees need to adopt a mindset that not only accepts change and uncertainty but actively seeks opportunities within them.

- **Innovation and Experimentation:** A mindset that embraces change encourages innovation and experimentation. Businesses should foster a culture where employees feel empowered to explore new ideas and test novel approaches, even if the outcomes are uncertain.

4. **Thrive in Dynamic Business Landscapes - Competitive Advantage:** Organizations that embrace RUPT and develop adaptability and strategic flexibility gain a competitive advantage. They are better equipped to respond to market shifts, capitalize on emerging opportunities, and navigate challenges that arise unexpectedly.

- **Resilience:** The ability to thrive in dynamic landscapes requires resilience. Resilient organizations are those that can bounce back from setbacks, learn from failures, and quickly adapt to changing circumstances.

5. Strategic Innovation and Creativity - Continuous Innovation: RUPT underscores the importance of continuous innovation. Businesses must be willing to disrupt their processes and products, anticipating that change is a constant, and innovation is a key driver of success.

- Creativity in Problem-Solving: In a turbulent environment, creative problem-solving becomes essential. Organizations should encourage employees to think outside the box, find novel solutions, and adapt to unexpected challenges.

6. Customer-Centric Adaptation - Responsive to Customer Needs: In a perpetually turbulent environment, customer preferences and needs can change rapidly. Businesses that embrace RUPT recognize the importance of being customer-centric and responsive. They are better positioned to anticipate shifting customer demands and adjust their products or services accordingly.

- Feedback Loops: Establishing robust feedback loops with customers becomes crucial. This allows organizations to gather real-time insights, understand customer feedback, and make prompt adjustments to their offerings.

7. Supply Chain and Operational Resilience - Agile Supply Chains: The dynamics of RUPT also impact supply chains, making them susceptible to disruptions. Businesses need to build agile supply chains that can adapt to sudden changes in demand, disruptions in the supply network, or unforeseen geopolitical events.

- Operational Resilience: Developing operational resilience involves not only having contingency plans but also ensuring that operational processes are flexible. Organizations should be capable of quickly reconfiguring operations in response to unexpected events.

8. Talent Management and Organizational Learning - Adaptive Workforce: RUPT necessitates an adaptive workforce capable of learning and evolving. Businesses should

invest in talent management strategies that prioritize continuous learning, skill development, and the ability to navigate uncertainty.

- **Knowledge Sharing:** Creating a culture of knowledge sharing is essential. Employees should be encouraged to share insights, experiences, and lessons learned, fostering a collective intelligence that strengthens the organization's adaptability.

9. **Strategic Alliances and Partnerships - Collaborative Resilience:** In navigating RUPT, businesses may find strength in forming strategic alliances and partnerships. Collaborative efforts can enhance resilience by leveraging shared resources, expertise, and networks to address challenges collectively.

- **Ecosystem Thinking:** Adopting an ecosystem mindset involves recognizing that success is often intertwined with the success of partners. Organizations should engage in collaborative ecosystem thinking to navigate uncertainties collaboratively.

10. **Ethical and Sustainable Practices - Long-Term Viability:** RUPT requires businesses to consider their long-term viability in the face of uncertainties. Adopting ethical and sustainable practices can contribute to resilience by building trust with stakeholders and ensuring the organization's adaptability to evolving societal expectations.

- **Environmental and Social Responsibility:** Organizations that integrate environmental and social responsibility into their strategies are likely to fare better in the face of changes in regulatory landscapes and shifting consumer preferences.

In conclusion, businesses that embrace RUPT and prioritize adaptability and strategic flexibility are better equipped to not only survive but thrive in dynamic and uncertain environments. This involves a holistic approach, encompassing cultural shifts, innovative thinking, customer-centric strategies, resilient operations, and collaborative efforts that collectively position the organization for sustained success.

VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity): Volatility refers to the speed and magnitude of changes in the business environment. Uncertainty: Involves a lack of predictability and the inability to foresee future events accurately. Complexity signifies the intricate and interconnected nature of various elements in the business environment. Ambiguity involves a lack of clarity or multiple interpretations of information. Hence from a relevance in Business perspective, VUCA is a framework that helps businesses understand and navigate the challenges of a rapidly changing world. It encourages organizations to develop strategies that are robust, flexible, and capable of dealing with the complexities and uncertainties inherent in the business environment.

Let's delve into the relevance of VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity) in the business context and how it encourages organizations to develop strategies that are robust, flexible, and capable of dealing with the complexities and uncertainties inherent in the business environment:

1. Understanding the VUCA Elements - Volatility: Refers to the speed and magnitude of changes in the business environment. This could include rapid shifts in market conditions, emerging technologies, or sudden changes in consumer behavior.

- Uncertainty: Involves a lack of predictability and the inability to foresee future events accurately. Businesses face uncertainty due to factors like changing regulations, geopolitical events, or unexpected market developments.

- Complexity: Signifies the intricate and interconnected nature of various elements in the business environment. Complexity arises from the multitude of factors influencing business operations, including global supply chains, diverse stakeholder interests, and multifaceted market dynamics.

- **Ambiguity:** Involves a lack of clarity or multiple interpretations of information. Ambiguity can arise from unclear market signals, diverse customer expectations, or evolving industry standards.

2. **Strategies for a VUCA World - Robust Strategies:** VUCA underscores the need for robust strategies that can withstand shocks and disruptions. Businesses should focus on building resilience into their operations, anticipating potential challenges, and developing contingency plans to mitigate risks.

- **Scenario Planning:** Given the uncertainty component of VUCA, scenario planning becomes a valuable tool. Organizations can develop multiple scenarios representing different future states, allowing them to prepare for a range of possible outcomes and make more informed decisions.

- **Agile Decision-Making:** VUCA requires agile decision-making processes. Organizations must be able to adapt quickly to changing circumstances, iterate on strategies, and make informed decisions in real-time to navigate through the volatility and uncertainty inherent in the business environment.

3. **Flexibility in Operations - Agile Operations:** VUCA encourages businesses to adopt agile operations. This involves flexible processes, adaptive organizational structures, and a culture that values responsiveness. Agile operations allow organizations to adjust quickly to changing market conditions and customer needs.

- **Lean Approaches:** Simplifying and streamlining operations through lean approaches can enhance flexibility. Eliminating unnecessary complexity and focusing on efficiency can help businesses navigate the complex and ambiguous aspects of VUCA.

4. **Innovation and Continuous Learning - Innovation as a Driver:** VUCA environments are fertile ground for innovation. Organizations should foster a culture of innovation to stay

ahead of the complexities and uncertainties. This could involve investing in research and development, encouraging employee creativity, and embracing emerging technologies.

- **Continuous Learning:** To address ambiguity and complexity, businesses need to promote continuous learning. This includes staying informed about industry trends, emerging technologies, and evolving customer preferences. A learning organization is better equipped to navigate the ambiguity inherent in VUCA.

5. **Customer-Centric Adaptation - Adapting to Customer Dynamics:** Volatility and uncertainty in customer behaviors require businesses to be highly customer-centric. Organizations should invest in understanding their customers, gathering feedback, and adapting products and services based on changing preferences and needs.

- **Responsive Customer Service:** Ambiguity in customer expectations necessitates responsive customer service. Businesses should be ready to address diverse and sometimes conflicting customer needs by providing personalized and adaptable solutions.

6. **Collaboration and Partnerships - Ecosystem Collaboration:** VUCA calls for businesses to actively engage in collaborative partnerships and alliances. Collaborating with other organizations, suppliers, and stakeholders can help share resources, insights, and risk management strategies in the face of uncertainty and complexity.

- **Network Resilience:** Establishing resilient networks and supply chains can mitigate the impact of volatility and uncertainty. Businesses should evaluate and strengthen their relationships within the ecosystem to ensure continuity in the face of unforeseen challenges.

In conclusion, VUCA serves as a framework that prompts businesses to acknowledge and address the challenges posed by a rapidly changing world. By fostering robust strategies, flexible operations, a culture of innovation, and customer-centric

approaches, organizations can navigate the complexities and uncertainties inherent in the business environment and position themselves for success in a VUCA landscape.

The concepts of BANI, RUPT, and VUCA collectively underscore the imperative for businesses to embrace change, build resilience, and develop adaptable strategies in the face of unpredictable and complex circumstances. Let's delve into how each concept contributes to this overarching theme:

1. Embracing Change:

BANI (Brittle, Anxious, Nonlinear, Incomprehensible):

- BANI emphasizes the fragility of systems and the need for adaptability. In a BANI environment, businesses cannot afford to resist change; instead, they must proactively embrace it.

- The concept suggests that organizations should foster a mindset that recognizes change as a constant, making it essential to stay agile and ready to pivot in response to evolving conditions.

RUPT (Radical Uncertainty and Perpetual Turbulence):

- RUPT acknowledges the radical uncertainty present in the business environment, emphasizing the unpredictable nature of certain events.

- To cope with radical uncertainty, businesses must embrace a culture that accepts change as a natural part of the business landscape, requiring continuous learning and adaptability.

VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity):

- VUCA explicitly outlines the volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous nature of the business environment.

- Businesses operating in a VUCA world are compelled to accept change as inherent, recognizing that the only constant is unpredictability. This recognition serves as

the foundation for developing strategies that can navigate and thrive in such an environment.

2. Building Resilience:

BANI: BANI's emphasis on brittleness highlights the vulnerability of systems. To counter this vulnerability, businesses need to build resilience.

- Resilience involves not only bouncing back from disruptions but also preparing for and anticipating potential challenges, ensuring the organization can withstand shocks and continue operating effectively.

RUPT: RUPT, with its focus on perpetual turbulence, underscores the continuous nature of change and the need for organizations to be resilient in the long term.

- Resilient organizations are those that can absorb shocks, adapt to new circumstances, and maintain a steady course even in the face of ongoing turbulence.

VUCA: VUCA, by definition, implies a business environment characterized by volatility and uncertainty. To thrive in such a landscape, resilience becomes a core competency.

- Resilient strategies and operations enable businesses to navigate the complexities and ambiguities present in the VUCA framework, allowing for sustained performance in the face of challenges.

3. Developing Adaptable Strategies:

BANI: BANI's nonlinearity suggests that traditional linear strategies may be insufficient in addressing the complexities of the business environment.

- To tackle nonlinearity, businesses must develop strategies that are adaptable, capable of iterating, and adjusting based on real-time feedback and changing conditions.

RUPT: RUPT emphasizes the need for strategic flexibility to navigate radical uncertainty effectively.

- Adaptable strategies in a RUPT context involve continuous assessment of the business landscape, scenario planning, and the ability to pivot quickly in response to unexpected developments.

VUCA: VUCA, by its very nature, requires businesses to craft strategies that are not only robust but also flexible.

- Strategies designed to navigate the VUCA elements involve a combination of scenario planning, agility, and the ability to make rapid decisions, ensuring that the organization can adjust to the ever-changing dynamics of the business environment.

In summary, BANI, RUPT, and VUCA concepts collectively emphasize the need for businesses to embrace change, build resilience, and develop strategies that are adaptable to unpredictable and complex circumstances. These frameworks are particularly relevant in an era where technological advancements, global interconnectedness, and rapid changes in market dynamics are reshaping the business landscape.

The thesis also emphasizes the importance of implementing strategies that meet the needs and wants of stakeholders during the pandemic and prepare businesses for post-pandemic conditions through the use of advanced digital technologies, data analytics, and information management.

In short, the thesis highlights the need for organizations to adapt and thrive in the post-pandemic digital world through effective strategy and leadership. With the rapid changes brought about by the pandemic, businesses have been forced to reassess their strategies and embrace digital technologies to survive and thrive in a shifting business landscape.

The thesis discusses how the pandemic crisis has led companies to innovate and digitize their operations and how this digital transformation has become essential in tackling the challenges posed by the pandemic (Djakeli, K., 2021). By adopting digital

tools, businesses have been able to alter their business models and adapt their strategies to the changing environment.

This transformation has not only allowed businesses to continue operating during the pandemic but has also opened new opportunities for growth and expansion in the digital economy. Additionally, the thesis highlights the importance of leadership styles in the digital world. Leadership styles in the digital world need to be adaptable, agile, and forward-thinking to navigate the complexities of the post-pandemic digital landscape. Leadership styles in the digital world need to be adaptable, agile, and forward-thinking to navigate the complexities of the post-pandemic digital landscape.

The research employs a quantitative approach, involving 30 participants from various industries, to investigate how leaders are leveraging the digital world to formulate effective strategies and lead their organizations towards success. The study evaluates the strategies adopted by these leaders to address VUCA, embrace BANI challenges, and capitalize on RUPT opportunities in the digital landscape.

Key findings from the research shed light on the importance of digital leadership skills and competencies. Leaders must possess a thorough understanding of emerging technologies, be open to experimentation and adaptation, and foster a culture of continuous learning within their organizations. Additionally, the study identifies key factors that contribute to successful digital strategies, such as fostering collaboration, nurturing a customer-centric approach, and leveraging data-driven insights.

Overall, the thesis "Strategy and Leadership in the Post-Pandemic Digital World" serves as a valuable resource for executives, managers, and decision-makers seeking to navigate the complex digital terrain with confidence. By embracing the VUCA, BANI, and RUPT frameworks and harnessing the power of digital leadership, organizations can thrive

in the ever-changing digital world and position themselves for sustainable growth and success.

In conclusion, the thesis on "Strategy and Leadership in the Emerging Era" highlights the importance of businesses adopting digital strategies to thrive in the post-pandemic digital world. It emphasizes the need for organizations to embrace innovation and digitalization, strengthen their resilience strategies through digital marketing, and prioritize the well-being of employees and consumers in order to successfully navigate this new era. Furthermore, the thesis recognizes the role of digital technologies, data analytics, and information management in strengthening the capabilities of businesses during and after the pandemic.

It concludes that the pandemic has not only brought challenges but also opportunities for organizations to transform and leverage digital technologies to create new business models, enhance decision-making.

6.2 Implications

The thesis "Strategy and Leadership in the Post-Pandemic Digital World" provides valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities that businesses and organizations face in the wake of the global pandemic. By incorporating the VUCA, BANI, and RUPT frameworks and adopting a quantitative research method, the study sheds light on the crucial role of leadership in navigating the complex and rapidly evolving landscape of the digital era. The implications of this thesis in driving effective strategies and fostering digital leadership to achieve success in the post-pandemic digital world can be explained across the different pillars as mentioned below:

Embracing VUCA Challenges: The VUCA framework highlights the volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity that organizations encounter in the digital age. The implications of this thesis emphasize the importance of leaders acknowledging and

embracing these challenges rather than shying away from them. In doing so, leaders can adopt a proactive and agile approach, making strategic decisions that take into account the ever-changing market dynamics. By fostering a culture of adaptability and flexibility, organizations can respond effectively to sudden shifts in customer preferences, emerging technologies, and industry disruptions.

Navigating BANI Realities: The BANI framework accentuates brittleness, anxiety, non-linearity, and inconsistency as defining characteristics of the post-pandemic digital world. The thesis suggests that leaders need to develop a deep understanding of these realities and respond with resilience and innovative thinking. To do so, leaders must build robust risk management strategies to address brittleness and anxiety while embracing non-linearity and inconsistency to identify opportunities for growth and innovation. Creating a supportive and inclusive work environment can help alleviate anxieties and empower employees to overcome challenges posed by the BANI landscape.

Seizing RUPT Opportunities: The RUPT framework underscores the rapid pace of technological advancements and how these disruptions can redefine industries and business models. The thesis implications stress that leaders must be proactive in embracing digital transformation opportunities to stay competitive and relevant. Organizations need to invest in cutting-edge technologies, foster a culture of experimentation, and continuously update their skill sets to leverage the advantages brought by digital innovations. Leaders should also encourage cross-functional collaboration and partnerships with tech-savvy startups to gain a competitive edge in the rapidly evolving digital market.

Developing Digital Leadership Competencies: An essential implication of this thesis is the significance of digital leadership competencies. As organizations move into the post-pandemic digital world, leaders must equip themselves with the necessary skills and knowledge to drive success. These competencies include a strong understanding of

emerging technologies, data analytics, artificial intelligence, and cybersecurity. Additionally, leaders should possess effective communication and emotional intelligence to motivate and inspire their teams during times of transformation and uncertainty.

Fostering a Culture of Continuous Learning: The study emphasizes that successful organizations in the digital era embrace a culture of continuous learning. Leaders should encourage employees to upskill and reskill through training programs and educational opportunities. By fostering a growth mindset within the organization, leaders can cultivate an environment where innovation and adaptation become the norm, enabling the company to stay ahead of the competition and capitalize on new opportunities.

Customer-Centric Approach: The implications of this thesis underscore the importance of placing customers at the heart of all strategies and decisions. In the digital world, customers have more power and choices than ever before. Leaders need to gather and analyze customer data to understand their preferences, pain points, and expectations. By adopting a customer-centric approach, organizations can tailor their products and services to meet specific customer needs, leading to increased customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Leveraging Data-Driven Insights: Data is a valuable asset in the digital age. The thesis implications stress that leaders must harness data-driven insights to make informed decisions. By leveraging data analytics, organizations can identify trends, predict market behavior, and optimize business processes. Data-driven decision-making also helps leaders measure the effectiveness of their strategies, allowing them to iterate and improve continuously.

Embracing Digital Transformation as a Continuous Journey: Finally, the thesis implications emphasize that digital transformation is not a one-time event but an ongoing journey. Leaders need to recognize that the digital landscape will continue to evolve

rapidly, and organizations must adapt continuously to remain relevant and competitive. By adopting a forward-looking mindset and embracing change, leaders can position their organizations for sustainable growth and success in the post-pandemic digital world.

In conclusion, the thesis "Strategy and Leadership in the Post-Pandemic Digital World" presents crucial implications for organizations and leaders striving to thrive in the digital era. By embracing VUCA challenges, navigating BANI realities, and seizing RUPT opportunities, leaders can drive effective strategies to capitalize on the advantages offered by the digital landscape. Developing digital leadership competencies, fostering a culture of continuous learning, adopting a customer-centric approach, and leveraging data-driven insights are key components to achieving success in the post-pandemic digital world. Ultimately, embracing digital transformation as a continuous journey will enable organizations to remain resilient and adaptive in the face of ever-changing market dynamics.

6.3 Recommendations for Future Research

As the post-pandemic digital world continues to evolve, several avenues for future research can further enhance our understanding of strategy and leadership in this dynamic landscape. By addressing these research areas, scholars and practitioners can gain valuable insights to drive effective decision-making, foster innovative leadership, and propel organizations toward success. Here are some recommendations for future research:

Longitudinal Studies on Digital Transformation Success: Future research should explore longitudinal studies that track the success and outcomes of organizations' digital transformation initiatives over an extended period. By examining how different strategies and leadership approaches impact the long-term performance of companies, researchers can identify best practices and key factors that contribute to sustained success in the digital world. Such studies can also shed light on the challenges and obstacles that organizations

encounter throughout their digital transformation journey, providing valuable lessons for other businesses planning to embark on similar endeavors.

Tracking the success and outcomes of digital transformation initiatives over an extended period involves a comprehensive approach that considers various aspects of the organization's goals, processes, and performance. Below is a detailed guide on how to track the success of digital transformation initiatives, along with some suggested metrics:

1. **Define Clear Objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):** The example of an objective is e enhance operational efficiency, improve customer experience, and drive innovation. The KPIs could be defined as a. operational efficiency to measure process cycle times, resource utilization, and cost savings b. Customer Experience to track customer satisfaction scores, Net Promoter Score (NPS), and feedback c. Innovation to monitor the number of successful new product launches, patents, or innovative solutions implemented.
2. **Baseline Assessment:** Before initiating digital transformation, establish a baseline for relevant metrics. This serves as a reference point for future comparisons. One such example could be to measure existing process cycle times, customer satisfaction levels, and innovation metrics.
3. **The KPIs for Digital Adoption Metrics** could be defined as (i) User Adoption Rate to monitor the percentage of employees using digital tools and platforms. (ii) Training Completion Rates to track the completion rates of digital training programs. (iii) System Utilization to measure how often digital systems and tools are utilized. The example for metrics could be Increase in User Adoption Rate from 60% to 90% within the first year of digital transformation.
4. **The KPIs for Operational Efficiency:** (i) Process Cycle Time to measure the time it takes to complete key processes. (ii) Resource Utilization to assess the efficiency of resource allocation and usage. (iii) Cost Savings to track the reduction in operational costs.

The metrics could be a 20% reduction in process cycle time within the first six months. Achieve a 15% reduction in operational costs by the end of year two.

5. The KPIs for Customer Experience could be any of the following: (i) Customer Satisfaction (CSAT) Score to collect feedback on customer satisfaction. (ii) Net Promoter Score (NPS) to measure customer loyalty and likelihood to recommend. (iii) Customer Support Resolution Time to track the time taken to resolve customer issues. The quantitative metric example could be (i) Increase CSAT score from 75% to 90% within the first year. (ii) Achieve an NPS of 40 or higher by the end of the digital transformation initiative.

6. The KPIs for Innovation Metrics: (i) Number of New Products/Services to track the introduction of new offerings. (ii) Time-to-Market for Innovations to measure how quickly innovations are brought to market. (iii) Employee Ideas Implemented to monitor the implementation of employee-generated ideas. The numeric metrics could be defined as (i) Introduce at least two new innovative products within the first 18 months. (ii) Reduce time-to-market for innovations by 25% within the first year.

7. The KPIs for Technology Performance Metrics are defined as the following: (i) System Uptime to measure the availability of digital systems. (ii) Data Security Incidents to track the number and severity of data security incidents. (iii) Response Time for Digital Platforms to monitor the speed of digital platform responses. The metrics can be defined as (i) Achieving 99.9% system uptime on critical digital platforms. (ii) Reduce data security incidents by 30% within the first year.

8. The KPIs for Employee Satisfaction and Productivity are defined as (i) Employee Engagement Scores to measure the level of employee engagement. (ii) Productivity Metrics to assess changes in productivity levels. The example for the metrics could be

explained either by (i) Increase employee engagement scores by 15% within the first two years. (ii) Achieve a 10% improvement in overall productivity metrics.

9. The KPIs for Strategic Alignment could be defined as (i) Assessing whether digital transformation outcomes align with overall organizational strategy. (ii) Ensure that digital initiatives contribute to long-term business goals and objectives.

10. The KPIs for the Continuous Improvement Feedback Loop are: (i) Establish mechanisms for continuous improvement based on regular feedback and assessment. (ii) Regularly review metrics, gather feedback and adjust strategies accordingly.

11. The KPIs for Post-Implementation Reviews are : (i) Conduct post-implementation reviews to assess the effectiveness of digital transformation initiatives. (ii) Identify lessons learned, successes, and areas for improvement.

By following this approach, organizations can create a comprehensive framework for tracking the success and outcomes of digital transformation initiatives. Regularly monitoring and analyzing these metrics provide valuable insights, enabling organizations to make informed decisions, adjust strategies, and continuously improve their digital capabilities over an extended period.

Monitoring and analyzing digital transformation metrics require a systematic and ongoing approach to ensure that organizations can derive valuable insights, make informed decisions, and continuously enhance their digital capabilities over an extended period. The process can be outlined as below:

1. Establish a Monitoring Framework: (i) Define Ownership to assign responsibility for each metric to specific teams or individuals. (ii) Set Reporting Frequencies to determine how often metrics will be monitored and reported (e.g., monthly, quarterly).

2. Implement Data Collection Mechanisms: (i) Utilize Technology to implement systems or tools for automated data collection where possible. This could include analytics

platforms, customer relationship management (CRM) systems, and employee feedback tools. (ii) Standardize Data Formats to ensure consistency in data formats to facilitate easy analysis.

3. Regular Data Collection and Reporting: (i) Timely Data Collection to regularly collect data according to the defined reporting frequencies. (ii) Create a Dashboard to develop dashboards that display key metrics in a visually accessible format. (iii) Automate Reporting to automate the reporting process to streamline the dissemination of information.

4. Data Analysis: (i) Compare Against Benchmarks to evaluate metrics against established benchmarks and baseline data. (ii) Identify Trends to Look for patterns and trends in the data over time. (iii) Correlation Analysis to examine relationships between different metrics to identify dependencies or impacts.

5. Cross-Functional Collaboration: (i) Regular Meetings to conduct cross-functional meetings to discuss metric performance and insights. (ii) Feedback Sessions to encourage input and feedback from different departments to gain diverse perspectives.

6. Root Cause Analysis: (i) Investigate Deviations to check if metrics deviate from expected values, and conduct root cause analyses to identify the underlying reasons. (ii) Identify Success Factors to understand what contributes to positive outcomes and success in specific areas.

7. Strategic Alignment Check: (i) Assess Alignment with Objectives to regularly evaluate if metrics align with the overarching goals and objectives of digital transformation. (ii) Adjust Metrics if Necessary to see if organizational priorities shift, consider adjusting metrics to ensure continued alignment.

8. Continuous Improvement Feedback Loop: (i) Gather Employee Feedback to collect feedback from employees on digital tools, processes, and overall experiences. (ii) Incident Reporting to encourage reporting of issues or challenges related to digital transformation.

9. Regular Reviews and Audits: (i) Scheduled Reviews to conduct regular reviews of the effectiveness of digital transformation initiatives. (ii) Audits to periodically audit data accuracy and the effectiveness of data collection mechanisms.
10. Benchmarking and Industry Comparisons: (i) Benchmark Metrics to compare organizational metrics with industry benchmarks and best practices. (ii) Competitor Analysis to assess how competitors are performing in similar areas.
11. Key Stakeholder Engagement: (i) Leadership Briefings to regularly brief leadership on metric performance and insights. (ii) Employee Communication to communicate relevant insights to employees to foster transparency and alignment.
12. Adjustment of Strategies: (i) Strategy Review Sessions to periodically review overall digital transformation strategies. (ii) Decision-making meetings to use insights from metric analysis to inform strategic decisions.
13. Documentation and Knowledge Sharing: (i) Create Documentation to document insights, actions taken, and outcomes for future reference. (ii) Knowledge Sharing to share key learnings and best practices across the organization.
14. Continuous Training and Development: (i) Training Programs to implement ongoing training programs for employees to enhance digital skills. (ii) Leadership Development to invest in leadership development programs to ensure leaders are equipped to drive digital transformation.
15. Adaptation of Technology: (i) Technology Upgrades to regularly assess and upgrade digital tools and technologies to stay current. (ii) Evaluate New Solutions to explore emerging technologies that may offer opportunities for improvement.
16. Employee Recognition and Incentives: (i) Recognition Programs to implement programs that recognize and reward employees for their contributions to digital

transformation success. (ii) Incentives for Innovation to provide incentives for employees who contribute innovative ideas or improvements.

17. Customer Feedback Integration: (i) Customer Advisory Boards to establish customer advisory boards to gather ongoing feedback. (ii) Feedback Integration to incorporate customer feedback into digital transformation strategies.

18. Review of Innovation Roadmap: (i) Innovation Review Sessions to regularly review the organization's innovation roadmap. (ii) Alignment with Market Trends to ensure alignment with market trends and emerging opportunities.

19. External Audits and Certifications: (i) Third-Party Audits to consider external audits to validate the effectiveness of digital transformation efforts. (ii) Certifications to pursue relevant certifications that demonstrate commitment to digital excellence.

20. Long-Term Goal Setting: (i) Regularly Revisit Long-Term Goals to assess if long-term digital transformation goals need adjustment based on evolving business landscapes. (ii) Realign Strategies to realign strategies to ensure they contribute to achieving long-term success.

21. Documentation of Success Stories: (i) Case Studies to document and share success stories resulting from digital transformation initiatives. (ii) Employee Recognition to recognize and celebrate teams or individuals contributing to successful outcomes.

By incorporating these practices into the monitoring and analysis process, organizations can establish a dynamic and responsive framework for continuous improvement in their digital capabilities. Regularly reviewing, adjusting, and aligning strategies based on the insights derived from metrics ensures that digital transformation efforts remain effective and relevant over the long term.

Comparative Analysis of Digital Leadership Models: A comparative analysis of various digital leadership models can provide valuable insights into the most effective

leadership styles and practices in the post-pandemic digital world. A comparative analysis of various digital leadership models can offer valuable insights into the most effective leadership styles and practices, especially in the context of the post-pandemic digital world. The following is a detailed overview of effective leadership styles and their practices:

Transformational Leadership: Transformational leaders inspire and motivate their teams by fostering a shared vision and encouraging creativity and innovation. They focus on long-term goals and are adaptable to change.

Post-Pandemic Relevance: In a rapidly evolving digital landscape, transformational leaders can guide organizations through digital transformations, ensuring adaptability and resilience.

Servant Leadership: Servant leaders prioritize the needs of their team members, emphasizing empathy, collaboration, and the development of individual potential. They aim to serve their team rather than command it.

Post-Pandemic Relevance: With remote work and dispersed teams becoming more common, servant leadership can strengthen the connection between leaders and team members, fostering a supportive work culture.

Agile Leadership: Agile leaders are flexible, adaptive, and able to respond quickly to changing circumstances. They emphasize iterative processes, collaboration, and customer feedback.

Post-Pandemic Relevance: In a dynamic digital environment, agile leadership is crucial for navigating uncertainty, managing remote teams, and rapidly adjusting strategies in response to market changes.

Digital Transformation Leadership: Leaders in this model drive organizational change by leveraging digital technologies. They focus on integrating digital tools, fostering a digital culture, and ensuring the organization remains technologically competitive.

Post-Pandemic Relevance: The post-pandemic world requires leaders who can accelerate digital transformations, ensuring businesses are equipped to thrive in a digital-first landscape.

Ethical Leadership: Ethical leaders prioritize integrity, transparency, and ethical decision-making. They focus on building trust within the organization and with external stakeholders.

Post-Pandemic Relevance: As digital interactions increase, ethical leadership is essential for addressing privacy concerns, data security, and maintaining trust in a virtual environment.

Inclusive Leadership: Inclusive leaders value diversity, equity, and inclusion. They create an environment where all voices are heard, fostering a sense of belonging and ensuring a diverse range of perspectives.

Post-Pandemic Relevance: With remote work and virtual teams, inclusive leadership becomes crucial for maintaining a sense of community and preventing feelings of isolation.

Data-Driven Leadership: Data-driven leaders make decisions based on evidence and analytics. They leverage data to understand trends, optimize processes, and drive organizational success.

Post-Pandemic Relevance: In the digital era, data-driven leadership is essential for making informed decisions, predicting market trends, and optimizing operations for efficiency.

A holistic approach that integrates aspects of transformational, servant, agile, digital transformation, ethical, inclusive, and data-driven leadership is likely to be most effective in the post-pandemic digital world. Leaders who can blend these elements based on the specific needs of their organization and industry will be well-positioned to navigate

the complexities of the evolving digital landscape. Researchers can analyze case studies of organizations that have successfully navigated digital transformation and identify the common leadership characteristics that contributed to their success. Additionally, investigating the leadership approaches of organizations that struggle with digital transformation can offer valuable lessons on what to avoid and the potential pitfalls of ineffective digital leadership. A detailed exploration of common challenges and ineffective leadership practices could be summarized by outlining the challenges and the ineffective leadership practices:

1. **Resistance to Change:** Some organizations resist change due to a lack of understanding, fear of the unknown, or concerns about job security. Leaders who fail to communicate the reasons behind digital transformation underestimate the impact on employees, or neglect change management processes contributing to resistance.
2. **Lack of Clear Vision and Strategy:** Without a clear vision and strategy, digital initiatives may lack direction, leading to confusion and inefficiency. Leaders who don't articulate a compelling vision or fail to align digital initiatives with overall business objectives contribute to a lack of strategic focus.
3. **Insufficient Investment in Technology and Skills:** Inadequate investment in technology and the skills needed to leverage it can hinder successful digital transformation. Leaders who prioritize short-term cost-cutting over long-term investment, ignore training and development needs or underestimate the importance of technological infrastructure contribute to this challenge.
4. **Poor Communication and Stakeholder Engagement:** Ineffective communication can result in misunderstandings, resistance, and a lack of stakeholder buy-in. Leaders who don't communicate the benefits of digital transformation, fail to engage with key stakeholders, or overlook the importance of a two-way communication process can hinder progress.

5. **Inadequate Change Management:** Poorly managed change processes can lead to employee burnout, increased turnover, and decreased morale. Leaders who neglect the human side of digital transformation, underestimate the impact on employees, or fail to provide adequate support and resources for the transition contribute to poor change management.

6. **Overemphasis on Technology at the Expense of Culture:** Focusing solely on technology without addressing cultural aspects can result in a lack of alignment between technological capabilities and organizational culture. Leaders who prioritize technology without considering the cultural shift required, fail to foster a digital mindset, or overlook the importance of cultural change contribute to this challenge.

7. **Failure to Learn from Mistakes:** Organizations that don't learn from failures and adapt their strategies are likely to repeat the same mistakes. Leaders who do not encourage a culture of learning, experimentation, and continuous improvement, or who are resistant to acknowledging and addressing failures, hinder organizational growth.

8. **Short-Term Focus Over Long-Term Sustainability:** Digital transformation is a long-term journey, and a focus on short-term gains can undermine sustained success. Leaders who prioritize quick wins at the expense of long-term planning and sustainability may achieve temporary success but fail to build a foundation for ongoing digital resilience.

Understanding the pitfalls of ineffective digital leadership in struggling organizations provides valuable lessons for leaders looking to drive successful digital transformations. Leaders should prioritize clear communication, strategic vision, investment in technology and skills, effective change management, and a culture of learning to navigate the challenges of the digital landscape successfully.

The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Decision-making: With the increasing adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) in organizations, future research should explore how

AI-driven decision-making impacts strategy formulation and leadership effectiveness. Future research in this area can explore various dimensions to understand the impact of AI-driven decision-making on organizational strategy and leadership. Some of the key elements that should be considered for further focus and consideration are described below:

1. AI's Influence on Decision-Making:

Research Focus: Investigate how AI technologies influence decision-making processes within organizations, examining the extent to which leaders rely on AI-driven insights and analytics.

Key Questions: How does the integration of AI impact the decision-making hierarchy? To what extent are strategic decisions delegated to AI algorithms, and how do human leaders collaborate with AI systems in decision-making?

2. Strategic Adaptability and Flexibility:

Research Focus: Explore how AI contributes to organizational agility by enabling quicker adaptation to market changes and dynamic environments.

Key Questions: How does AI facilitate real-time data analysis for strategic adjustments? What role does AI play in supporting adaptive strategies, and how do leaders leverage AI to enhance the organization's responsiveness to emerging trends?

3. Ethical Implications of AI-Driven Decisions:

Research Focus: Examine the ethical considerations and challenges associated with AI-driven decision-making in strategy formulation.

Key Questions: How do ethical considerations, biases, and fairness issues arise in AI algorithms influencing strategic decisions? What ethical frameworks and guidelines can help leaders navigate the responsible use of AI in strategy?

4. Human-AI Collaboration in Leadership:

Research Focus: Investigate the dynamics of collaboration between human leaders and AI systems, exploring how this partnership influences overall leadership effectiveness.

Key Questions: In what ways do leaders and AI systems complement each other in decision-making? How does effective collaboration between humans and AI impact leadership styles and organizational outcomes?

5. Impact on Innovation and Creativity:

Research Focus: Assess the role of AI in fostering innovation and creativity within organizations, examining how AI-driven insights contribute to strategic innovation.

Key Questions: How does AI support ideation and creativity in strategic thinking? What is the relationship between AI-driven decision-making and the organization's ability to innovate in products, services, or processes?

6. Organizational Learning and Adaptation:

Research Focus: Explore how organizations learn from AI-driven decisions, adapt strategies based on feedback loops, and continuously improve.

Key Questions: How do organizations leverage AI-generated data for learning and improvement? What challenges and opportunities arise in creating a learning culture that incorporates AI insights into strategic evolution?

7. AI and Leadership Development:

Research Focus: Examine the impact of AI on leadership development, exploring how leaders can enhance their skills to effectively lead in a context where AI is an integral part of decision-making.

Key Questions: What skills do leaders need to develop to effectively lead in an AI-driven environment? How can organizations design leadership development programs that integrate AI literacy and understanding?

8. Measuring AI-Driven Leadership Performance:

Research Focus: Develop metrics and frameworks to assess the performance of AI-driven leadership in terms of strategic outcomes and organizational success.

Key Questions: What are the key performance indicators (KPIs) for evaluating the effectiveness of AI-driven leadership? How can organizations measure the impact of AI on strategic goals and overall performance?

Future research exploring the intersection of AI-driven decision-making, strategy formulation, and leadership effectiveness will be crucial for organizations seeking to navigate the evolving landscape of digital transformation. By addressing these research areas, scholars and practitioners can gain insights into optimizing the synergy between human leadership and AI, ensuring strategic success in an increasingly technologically advanced world. Investigating how AI technologies assist leaders in gathering and interpreting data, predicting trends, and making strategic decisions is essential for understanding the synergies between human leadership and AI integration. This exploration can provide insights into optimizing the collaboration between humans and AI to achieve the most effective results. Some of the pointers that could be taken into consideration are:

1. Data Gathering and Processing:

Role of AI: AI technologies excel in collecting, processing, and organizing vast amounts of data from various sources, including structured and unstructured data.

Leader's Role: Leaders can leverage AI to automate data collection processes, ensuring that relevant and up-to-date information is readily available for strategic decision-making.

2. Pattern Recognition and Trend Analysis:

Role of AI: AI algorithms are adept at identifying patterns and trends within datasets, enabling leaders to gain valuable insights into market dynamics, consumer behaviors, and emerging opportunities.

Leader's Role: Human leaders can collaborate with AI to interpret the identified patterns, contextualize trends within the industry, and provide strategic direction based on a nuanced understanding of the business environment.

3. Predictive Analytics:

Role of AI: AI excels in predictive analytics, using historical data to forecast future trends, market shifts, and potential challenges.

Leader's Role: Leaders can use AI-generated predictions as a foundation for scenario planning and risk management, allowing them to proactively shape strategies based on anticipated future developments.

4. Decision Support Systems:

Role of AI: AI-driven decision support systems assist leaders by providing data-driven insights, recommendations, and alternative scenarios.

Leader's Role: Human leaders play a critical role in evaluating AI-generated recommendations, considering contextual factors, ethical considerations, and organizational values before making informed decisions.

5. Personalized Leadership Insights:

Role of AI: AI technologies can provide leaders with personalized insights tailored to their decision-making styles, preferences, and areas of expertise.

Leader's Role: Leaders can use personalized insights to enhance their decision-making processes, relying on AI as a valuable assistant that complements their cognitive abilities.

6. Continuous Monitoring and Feedback:

Role of AI: AI systems can continuously monitor key performance indicators, market conditions, and relevant data points, providing real-time feedback to leaders.

Leader's Role: Human leaders can use this real-time feedback to adjust strategies on the fly, responding quickly to changes in the business environment and maintaining agility in decision-making.

7. Enhanced Strategic Planning:

Role of AI: AI technologies contribute to strategic planning by analyzing data, identifying potential scenarios, and suggesting optimal courses of action.

Leader's Role: Leaders can integrate AI-generated insights into the strategic planning process, combining their experience and intuition with data-driven recommendations for more robust and well-informed strategies.

8. Ethical and Social Considerations:

Role of AI: AI can help leaders identify and mitigate ethical and social risks by analyzing data for biases, ensuring fairness, and providing transparency in decision-making processes.

Leader's Role: Human leaders are responsible for overseeing the ethical use of AI, aligning technology with organizational values, and making decisions that consider broader societal impacts.

Understanding how AI technologies assist leaders in data-driven decision-making highlights the collaborative potential between human leadership and AI. By identifying the strengths of each and defining clear roles, organizations can leverage AI to enhance the strategic capabilities of leaders, fostering a synergy that maximizes the effectiveness of both human and artificial intelligence. Furthermore, understanding the ethical implications of AI in decision-making and how leaders can address these challenges is an essential area for future exploration.

Digital Leadership Development and Training Programs: To empower leaders for the post-pandemic digital world, it is essential to focus on designing and evaluating effective digital leadership development and training programs. Let's break down this idea into key components:

1. Understanding the Post-Pandemic Digital World: If one were to describe the contextual analysis, research should begin with a comprehensive understanding of the post-pandemic digital landscape. This involves identifying emerging technologies, changes in business models, remote work dynamics, and evolving customer expectations.

2. Digital Leadership Competencies: Identification of key competencies is critical and it is required to determine the specific competencies for effective digital leadership. This may include skills such as digital literacy, adaptability, strategic thinking in a digital context, data-driven decision-making, and the ability to lead virtual teams.

3. Program Design: It is important to Tailor curriculum, and design training programs that are tailored to the needs of digital leaders. This could involve a combination of online courses, workshops, simulations, and real-world case studies, covering topics like digital strategy, cybersecurity, innovation management, and digital communication. Experiential Learning is an important factor. Incorporate experiential learning opportunities, such as projects or simulations, where leaders can apply digital leadership skills in a risk-free environment. This hands-on experience is crucial for translating theoretical knowledge into practical skills. It is important to define flexible learning paths and recognize that leaders have different starting points and learning preferences. Develop flexible learning paths that accommodate various levels of digital maturity and allow participants to progress at their own pace.

4. Evaluation Metrics: It is important to measure impact and also establish clear metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of the training programs. This could include assessing changes

in leadership behavior, improvements in digital strategy implementation, and overall organizational performance. One should not undermine the importance of Feedback Loops. Implement feedback mechanisms to continuously improve the programs. Regular input from participants, as well as key performance indicators (KPIs) tied to organizational goals, can help refine and enhance the training curriculum.

5. Integration with Organizational Strategy: A continuous alignment with business objectives is of utmost importance. Ensure that digital leadership development programs align with the broader organizational strategy. This integration helps leaders understand how their digital skills contribute to the overall success and resilience of the company in the digital era. One should not underestimate the importance of change management. Recognize that digital transformation often involves organizational change. Integrate change management principles into leadership development programs to help leaders navigate and lead through transitions effectively.

6. Technological Infrastructure: It is important to leverage technology. Make use of cutting-edge technologies in the design and delivery of training programs. This includes utilizing virtual reality, artificial intelligence, and data analytics to create immersive and personalized learning experiences.

7. Global Perspectives: The post-pandemic era has paved the way for collaboration across the globe. If this is the case in the organization, cultural sensitivity cannot be ignored. Consider global perspectives and cultural nuances in the design of programs. Leaders may need to navigate diverse digital landscapes, and a culturally sensitive approach ensures the applicability of leadership skills across different contexts.

In summary, research focused on the design and evaluation of effective digital leadership development and training programs should be comprehensive, adaptable, and closely tied to the evolving needs of the post-pandemic digital world. By addressing these

aspects, organizations can empower their leaders to thrive in the digital era and drive sustainable success. Studying the impact of such programs on leaders' skills, competencies, and overall organizational performance can provide valuable insights into the most efficient approaches for preparing leaders to tackle the challenges of the digital landscape. Additionally, research can investigate the role of mentorship and coaching in developing effective digital leaders.

Cross-Cultural and Cross-Industry Perspectives: Understanding the post-pandemic digital world as a global phenomenon requires research that goes beyond a single cultural or industry context. A detailed exploration of the importance of incorporating cross-cultural and cross-industry perspectives in future research on leadership and strategy formulation is outlined as follows:

1. Diversity in Leadership Styles: Different cultures often shape leadership styles and preferences. Research should explore how cultural values, communication norms, and leadership expectations impact the effectiveness of digital leadership in diverse settings. Hence, we should be cognizant of cultural influences. Leadership adaptability plays an important role. Analyzing how leaders from various cultures adapt their leadership styles to the demands of the post-pandemic digital world. Some cultures may emphasize hierarchical structures, while others may value more collaborative and inclusive approaches.

2. Strategic Formulation in Diverse Industries: Different industries face unique challenges in the digital era. For instance, the strategies required for digital transformation in healthcare may differ significantly from those in manufacturing. Research should delve into industry-specific nuances in strategy formulation. It is essential to focus on industry-specific challenges. Dynamics around innovation also becomes relevant.

Exploring how innovation and digital strategy intertwine in various industries. Some sectors may require rapid innovation cycles, while others prioritize stability and security. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for tailoring leadership and strategy programs to specific industry needs.

3. Global Collaboration and Competition: Collaboration across borders becomes critical. In a globalized digital world, organizations often collaborate across borders. Research should examine how leaders navigate international collaborations, considering cultural differences, time zone challenges, and communication preferences. Exploring how organizations from different cultural and industrial backgrounds formulate competitive digital strategies. The ability to compete effectively in the global market requires a deep understanding of how digital leadership and strategy are influenced by both local and global factors. Continuous evaluation and monitoring of competitive strategies is critical.

4. Regulatory and Legal Variances: Local and legal requirements have to be considered and hence compliance challenges. Different countries and industries have distinct regulatory landscapes. Research should investigate how leaders navigate the complexities of digital compliance and cybersecurity regulations, as these factors significantly impact strategy formulation and execution. Understand how cultural and industry-specific ethical considerations influence decision-making in the digital realm. Leaders must grapple with diverse perspectives on data privacy, ethical AI use, and other moral dimensions of digital strategy.

5. Technological Adoption Patterns: Cross-Industry Technology Trends should not be ignored. Exploring how different industries adopt and integrate emerging technologies. Understanding these patterns helps leaders in one industry learn from the successes and challenges faced by counterparts in other sectors. Investigating how successful digital strategies and technological innovations are transferred across industries and cultures. This

can provide valuable insights into the scalability and adaptability of strategies in diverse contexts.

6. **Talent Management and Skill Development:** Skill development is essential and hence having the right attitude in general towards the initiative and focusing on the cultural aspect becomes a must. Examining cultural attitudes toward continuous learning and skill development. Some cultures may embrace a strong learning culture, while others may have different perspectives. Tailoring leadership development programs to these cultural attitudes is crucial. Identifying the industry-specific digital skills and competencies that leaders need. A nuanced understanding of these requirements allows for the design of targeted training programs that align with the unique demands of different industries.

7. **Case Studies and Best Practices:** Incorporate cross-cultural and cross-industry case studies to illustrate successful (or unsuccessful) instances of digital leadership and strategy formulation. These real-world examples provide valuable insights for leaders and researchers alike. Develop best practices and guidelines that consider the diversity of cultures and industries. This ensures that leadership and strategy recommendations are adaptable and effective across a broad range of organizational contexts.

In conclusion, future research on leadership and strategy formulation in the post-pandemic digital world should embrace a global perspective that accounts for the rich diversity of cultures and industries. By doing so, researchers can contribute to the development of more robust and adaptable frameworks that empower leaders to navigate the complexities of the digital landscape on a global scale. Comparing leadership styles in different regions and industries can reveal unique approaches and practices that can be adopted across borders and sectors.

Human-Centric Approaches in the Digital World: As digital technologies become increasingly pervasive, organizations must maintain a human-centric approach to

leadership and strategy formulation. Research in this area should delve into how leaders can strike a balance between leveraging technological advancements and fostering empathy and compassion towards both employees and customers. Some of the initiatives are briefed as the following:

1. **Employee Well-being and Engagement: Flexible Work Arrangements** are essential. Investigate how leaders can use digital technologies to enable flexible work arrangements without compromising employee well-being. This may include studying the impact of remote work, virtual collaboration tools, and digital communication on employee satisfaction and work-life balance. Explore strategies for integrating digital tools that support employee mental health and well-being. This could involve the use of mental health apps, virtual counseling services, and AI-driven tools that detect signs of burnout or stress. Examine how organizations ensure digital inclusion, considering factors like accessibility and inclusivity in the digital workplace. Leaders must navigate the potential disparities in access to technology to maintain an inclusive and equitable work environment.

2. **Empathetic Leadership in the Digital Age:** Investigate how digital communication channels can be optimized for empathetic leadership. This includes understanding the role of video conferencing, messaging platforms, and other digital tools in conveying empathy and maintaining a human connection in virtual interactions. Explore how leaders can establish a strong virtual presence while being empathetic. This involves examining techniques for active listening, providing constructive feedback, and expressing empathy through digital channels. Assess how leaders can leverage emotional intelligence in conjunction with digital tools. Research should explore the integration of AI-driven emotional intelligence applications to enhance leaders' understanding of employee sentiments and concerns.

3. **Customer-Centric Digital Strategies:** Explore how organizations can use digital technologies to personalize customer interactions while maintaining a human touch. Research should investigate the role of AI and data analytics in understanding customer preferences and tailoring digital experiences accordingly. Examine strategies for effective digital communication with customers that prioritize transparency, responsiveness, and a customer-centric approach. This involves understanding how leaders can use technology to enhance customer relationships rather than replace them. Investigate how organizations can balance the use of customer data for personalization with ethical considerations. Leaders need to ensure that digital strategies respect privacy rights and build trust with customers.

4. **Ethical Leadership in the Digital Era:** Research should explore the ethical challenges that arise with the increasing use of digital technologies, such as AI and automation. Leaders need guidance on how to navigate ethical dilemmas and make responsible decisions in the digital era. Examine how organizations can integrate digital strategies into their corporate social responsibility initiatives. This involves exploring ways in which technology can be leveraged for positive social impact while avoiding negative consequences. Investigate how leaders can use digital platforms to engage with a diverse range of stakeholders, including employees, customers, and the broader community. This involves understanding the role of digital communication in fostering inclusivity and transparency.

5. **Continuous Learning and Development:** Explore the integration of digital tools in leadership training programs to cultivate empathy and interpersonal skills. This includes the use of virtual reality simulations, online courses, and digital coaching platforms that focus on developing emotionally intelligent leaders. Investigate how organizations can use digital feedback mechanisms to gauge employee and customer sentiment. This real-time

feedback loop allows leaders to adapt their strategies and communication styles to better meet the needs of their stakeholders.

In summary, research on maintaining a human-centric approach to leadership and strategy formulation in the digital era should encompass a wide range of factors, including employee well-being, empathetic leadership practices, customer-centric digital strategies, ethical considerations, and continuous learning. By understanding and addressing these aspects, leaders can harness the power of digital technologies while preserving the human touch in their organizational practices. Examining the impact of human-centric leadership on employee engagement, satisfaction, and organizational culture can provide insights into creating a harmonious work environment in the digital age.

In a post-pandemic world, measuring strategy and leadership effectiveness is crucial for organizations aiming to adapt to new challenges and capitalize on emerging opportunities. Below are key performance indicators (KPIs) to assess strategy and leadership metrics and one needs to monitor and further develop if necessary. The strategy metrics including the KPIs and the rationale can be described below:

1. The KPI for Revenue Growth is Year-over-year revenue growth and the rationale is to measure the success of strategic initiatives in driving top-line growth and capturing market opportunities.
2. The KPI for Market share is the percentage of market share and the rationale indicates the organization's competitive position and the effectiveness of its strategies in gaining or maintaining market share.
3. The KPI for Customer Retention Rate is the Percentage of retained customers and the rationale could reflect the success of customer-centric strategies and the ability to maintain strong relationships in the post-pandemic business environment.

4. The KPI for Digital Adoption Metric is the Percentage increase in digital sales or adoption and the rationale is to Measure the organization's successful transition to digital channels, a critical aspect in the changed business landscape.
5. The KPI for Innovation Index is the number of new products/services introduced and the rationale is to evaluate the organization's commitment to innovation and its ability to bring new offerings to the market.
6. The KPI for Employee Engagement is employee engagement survey results and the rationale could be described as the measures of the workforce's commitment and satisfaction, indicating the effectiveness of internal strategies in adapting to post-pandemic work environments.
7. The KPIs of Supply Chain Resilience are supplier performance metrics and on-time delivery. The definition of the rationale is to assess the resilience of the supply chain and the organization's ability to manage disruptions effectively.

The leadership metrics including the KPIs and the rationale can be described below:

1. The KPI for Leadership Effectiveness Score is leadership effectiveness survey results and the rationale could be described to Measure perceptions of leadership effectiveness, including communication, decision-making, and adaptability.
2. The KPI for Succession Planning Readiness is the percentage of key positions with identified successors. The rationale is to evaluate the organization's preparedness for leadership transitions, ensuring continuity and stability.
3. The KPI for Leadership Development Program Impact is the percentage of leaders who participated in development programs. The rationale is to assess the impact of leadership development initiatives on the skills and capabilities of leaders.

4. The KPI for Diversity and Inclusion Index is the diversity metrics at leadership levels. The rationale is to measure progress in achieving diversity and inclusion goals at leadership levels, fostering a more inclusive organizational culture.
5. The KPI for Change Management Effectiveness is employee sentiment during organizational change. The rationale is to assess the effectiveness of leadership in managing and communicating change, especially important in a post-pandemic world with evolving work structures.
6. The KPI for Talent Retention Rate is the percentage of high-potential employees retained. The rationale could reflect the ability of leadership to retain and develop key talent, critical for long-term organizational success.
7. The KPI for Learning and Development Participation is defined as the percentage of employees participating in learning programs. The rationale for the KPI is that it demonstrates the commitment of leadership to continuous improvement and employee development.
8. The KPI for Leadership Resilience Index is the survey results on leadership resilience. The rationale is that it measures the ability of leadership to navigate uncertainties, setbacks, and challenges, crucial in a post-pandemic environment.

These KPIs provide a comprehensive view of an organization's strategic performance and leadership effectiveness in the evolving business landscape. Regularly monitoring these metrics allows for informed decision-making, adjustment of strategies, and continuous improvement in leadership capabilities.

Once the KPIs are defined, let us delve into how the mentioned metrics contribute to informed decision-making, adjustment of strategies, and continuous improvement in leadership capabilities, along with specific examples:

As a first step let us consider the strategy metrics and how the various factors influence and create an impact.

1. Revenue Growth:

Informed Decision-Making: If the revenue growth is below expectations, leaders may need to analyze the market conditions, customer feedback, and competitive landscape to identify areas for improvement or new opportunities.

Adjustment of Strategies: If a particular product or service line is underperforming, leaders may choose to invest in innovation or marketing strategies to revitalize sales.

2. Market Share:

Informed Decision-Making: Declining market share may prompt leaders to assess competitive strategies, explore new market segments, or consider mergers and acquisitions for market expansion.

Adjustment of Strategies: A shift in market dynamics might lead to adjustments in pricing, distribution channels, or product positioning to regain or sustain market share.

3. Customer Retention Rate:

Informed Decision-Making: If customer retention is decreasing, leaders can examine customer satisfaction survey data, customer service interactions, and product feedback to identify pain points.

Adjustment of Strategies: Addressing identified issues, improving customer support, or introducing loyalty programs may be strategic adjustments to enhance customer retention.

4. Digital Adoption Metrics:

Informed Decision-Making: Analyzing digital adoption metrics can inform leaders about the success of digital initiatives. If adoption is low, leaders may explore user experience improvements or targeted marketing campaigns.

Adjustment of Strategies: Organizations may invest in technology upgrades, user training, or partnerships to accelerate digital adoption and stay competitive in the digital landscape.

As a second step let us consider the leadership metrics and how the various factors influence and create an impact.

1. Leadership Effectiveness Score:

Informed Decision-Making: Leaders can use the effectiveness score to identify areas for improvement. If communication scores are low, leaders may focus on enhancing communication channels and transparency.

Adjustment of Strategies: Leadership development programs can be tailored to address specific skill gaps identified through the effectiveness score.

2. Succession Planning Readiness:

Informed Decision-Making: A low readiness level may signal potential leadership gaps in the future. Leaders can assess talent development programs and initiate targeted succession planning efforts.

Adjustment of Strategies: Organizations may invest in mentorship programs, leadership training, or external hiring to build a robust leadership pipeline.

3. Leadership Development Program Impact:

Informed Decision-Making: Assessing the impact of development programs allows leaders to understand their effectiveness. If certain programs consistently yield positive results, they can be expanded.

Adjustment of Strategies: Programs that show lower impact may undergo redesign, and leaders can introduce new learning methods or modules to enhance effectiveness.

4. Diversity and Inclusion Index:

Informed Decision-Making: A lower diversity index may indicate challenges in achieving diversity and inclusion goals. Leaders can review hiring practices, training programs, and workplace culture.

Adjustment of Strategies: Initiatives such as targeted recruitment, diversity training, and inclusive leadership development can be implemented to improve the diversity and inclusion index.

5. Change Management Effectiveness:

Informed Decision-Making: Monitoring employee sentiment during change provides insights into the success of communication strategies and employee support mechanisms.

Adjustment of Strategies: Leaders can adjust their communication approach, provide additional resources for employees adapting to change, or refine change management processes based on feedback.

6. Talent Retention Rate:

Informed Decision-Making: A decline in talent retention may indicate dissatisfaction or attrition risks. Leaders can identify reasons through exit interviews and employee surveys.

Adjustment of Strategies: Addressing work environment concerns, improving career development opportunities, and enhancing benefits can be strategic adjustments to retain key talent.

7. Learning and Development Participation:

Informed Decision-Making: Regularly assessing participation rates helps leaders understand employee engagement with learning opportunities.

Adjustment of Strategies: If participation is low, leaders can explore more engaging learning formats, offer personalized development plans, or align learning programs with organizational goals.

8. Leadership Resilience Index:

Informed Decision-Making: A lower resilience index may indicate potential challenges in leadership response to crises or uncertainties.

Adjustment of Strategies: Leadership training on resilience, crisis management simulations, and well-being initiatives can be implemented to enhance leadership resilience.

By continuously monitoring these metrics, leaders gain insights into the effectiveness of their strategies and leadership capabilities. Informed decision-making allows for timely adjustments to strategies, ensuring organizations remain agile and responsive in the dynamic post-pandemic business landscape. Continuous improvement initiatives, guided by these metrics, contribute to the overall resilience and success of the organization.

Future research in the field of strategy and leadership in the post-pandemic digital world holds significant potential for advancing our understanding of effective leadership practices and successful organizational strategies. By exploring longitudinal studies, comparing digital leadership models, examining AI-driven decision-making, developing effective leadership training programs, embracing cross-cultural and cross-industry perspectives, and fostering human-centric approaches, researchers can contribute to the body of knowledge that guides organizations toward sustainable success in the rapidly evolving digital landscape. The implications of such research extend beyond academia, benefiting businesses, leaders, and society as a whole as they navigate the challenges and opportunities presented by the post-pandemic digital world.

6.4 Conclusion

The post-pandemic digital world, often referred to as the "Emerging Era," presents organizations and leaders with a multitude of challenges and opportunities. The thesis "Strategy and Leadership in the Emerging Era" has explored the critical role of leadership in navigating this dynamic landscape and formulating effective strategies to thrive in the ever-changing digital environment. By integrating the VUCA, BANI, and RUPT frameworks and adopting a quantitative research approach, this study has shed light on the key elements of successful leadership in the "Emerging Era" and the strategies required for organizations to adapt and excel.

The Journey through the "Emerging Era": The post-pandemic digital world has accelerated the pace of technological advancements, reshaping industries, and challenging traditional business models. The "Emerging Era" is characterized by rapid change, volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA). Organizations face the brittleness of the market, heightened anxiety, non-linearity in customer behavior, and inconsistency in global economic trends (BANI). Concurrently, the "Emerging Era" presents unprecedented opportunities through rapid technological innovation (RUPT). Navigating this landscape requires leaders to embrace change, be visionary, and foster a culture of adaptability and resilience.

Leadership in the "Emerging Era": The thesis highlights that effective leadership is a linchpin in successfully steering organizations through the "Emerging Era." Leaders must embody Visionary Agility, a combination of VUCA and BANI elements, where they have a clear vision and purpose while being adaptable and flexible in their approach. They must cultivate User-Centric Transformation by incorporating the BANI and RUPT elements, understanding customer needs, and leveraging emerging technologies to create innovative solutions. Resilient Innovation, an integration of VUCA and RUPT elements, emphasizes

experimentation, embracing change, and harnessing technology to stay ahead of the competition.

Data-Driven Decision Making is essential in the "Emerging Era," requiring leaders to gather and analyze data to make informed choices amid volatility and uncertainty. Furthermore, Adaptive Leadership is crucial, as leaders must adapt their styles to address the diverse challenges presented by the "Emerging Era" while nurturing a human-centric organizational culture.

The Role of Digital Leadership: Digital leadership emerges as a critical aspect of navigating the "Emerging Era." Leaders must possess a deep understanding of emerging technologies, data analytics, and cybersecurity. They need to foster a culture of continuous learning and upskilling to keep pace with technological advancements. Digital leaders must also emphasize emotional intelligence and effective communication, as they navigate the complexities of the digital landscape while inspiring and motivating their teams.

Strategies for Success: The thesis reveals that successful organizations in the "Emerging Era" adopt strategies that embrace innovation, agility, and customer-centricity. They utilize data-driven insights to understand customer behavior, optimize operations, and make informed decisions. These organizations also cultivate cross-functional collaboration to capitalize on digital opportunities and address challenges holistically.

The Importance of Visionary Leadership: Visionary leadership emerges as a critical factor in the "Emerging Era." Leaders must envision the future landscape of their industry and anticipate potential disruptions. They must be proactive, positioning their organizations to leverage technological advancements and drive transformative change. Visionary leaders inspire and align their teams towards a common purpose, fostering a culture of innovation and adaptability.

Digital Transformation as a Continuous Journey: The thesis underscores that digital transformation is not a one-time event but an ongoing journey. Organizations must continually evolve their strategies, business models, and operations to remain relevant and competitive. Leaders must embrace a growth mindset and be open to experimentation, learning from failures, and iterating on their approaches. Digital transformation requires a long-term commitment and strategic vision, where leaders adapt to changing circumstances while staying true to their organizational mission.

Combining the BANI, VUCA, and RUPT frameworks, we can create a comprehensive framework that addresses the challenges and opportunities in the post-pandemic digital world. Let's call it the "VUBAR Framework," representing the integration of VUCA, BANI, and RUPT. The VUBAR framework is designed to guide organizations and leaders in developing robust strategies and fostering effective leadership in the dynamic digital landscape.

VUBAR Framework - Visionary Agility (VUCA + BANI): Incorporating the VUCA and BANI elements, Visionary Agility emphasizes the need for leaders and organizations to have a clear and adaptive vision in the face of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. Leaders must envision the future landscape of their industry, considering the brittleness, anxiety, non-linearity, and inconsistency that characterize the post-pandemic digital world. They should develop a flexible and agile approach to navigate rapidly changing circumstances while keeping their long-term goals and purpose in mind.

User-Centric Transformation (BANI + RUPT): User-Centric Transformation integrates the BANI and RUPT elements, emphasizing the importance of putting customers and users at the center of digital transformation efforts. Leaders must be attentive to the evolving needs and preferences of customers while leveraging technological advancements

to deliver innovative and personalized solutions. By embracing disruptive technologies and proactively transforming their offerings, organizations can stay ahead of the curve and gain a competitive edge in the digital market.

Resilient Innovation (VUCA + RUPT): Resilient Innovation combines the VUCA and RUPT elements, focusing on fostering a culture of continuous innovation and adaptability. Leaders should encourage experimentation and learning from failures, allowing the organization to respond swiftly to disruptions and changing market dynamics. By embracing technological advancements and leveraging data-driven insights, organizations can identify emerging opportunities and pivot their strategies to stay relevant and resilient in the face of disruptions.

Data-Driven Decision Making (VUCA + BANI + RUPT): Data-Driven Decision Making emphasizes the integration of the VUCA, BANI, and RUPT elements to inform strategic choices. Leaders must gather and analyze data to understand the volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous aspects of the digital landscape. They should also consider the brittleness, anxiety, non-linearity, and inconsistency in decision-making processes and leverage technological advancements to harness data-driven insights. This approach enables leaders to make informed decisions, optimize business processes, and capitalize on emerging opportunities.

Adaptive Leadership (VUCA + BANI + RUPT): Adaptive Leadership incorporates the VUCA, BANI, and RUPT elements, emphasizing the need for leaders to develop a versatile leadership style. Leaders should exhibit visionary thinking, user-centric focus, and resilience in the face of disruptions. They must adapt their leadership approaches to fit the ever-changing digital landscape while fostering a human-centric and inclusive organizational culture. Adaptive leaders inspire and empower their teams to embrace

digital transformation, drive innovation, and continuously improve in response to challenges and opportunities.

The VUBAR Framework, integrating elements of VUCA, BANI, and RUPT, provides a holistic approach to navigating the post-pandemic digital world. Visionary Agility, User-Centric Transformation, Resilient Innovation, Data-Driven Decision Making, and Adaptive Leadership are interconnected pillars that guide organizations and leaders in formulating effective strategies and fostering digital leadership. By embracing the VUBAR Framework, organizations can proactively navigate the challenges and opportunities of the digital landscape, ensuring sustainable growth and success in the dynamic and rapidly evolving post-pandemic digital world.

In conclusion, the thesis "Strategy and Leadership in the Emerging Era" highlights the crucial role of leadership in navigating the complexities of the post-pandemic digital world. By integrating the VUCA, BANI, and RUPT frameworks, this study has provided a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities organizations face in the "Emerging Era." Visionary Agility, User-Centric Transformation, Resilient Innovation, Data-Driven Decision Making, and Adaptive Leadership emerge as the pillars of effective leadership strategies.

Organizations and leaders must be prepared to embrace change, leverage emerging technologies, and prioritize customer-centricity to thrive in the "Emerging Era." Digital leadership plays a pivotal role, emphasizing a deep understanding of technology, data-driven insights, and emotional intelligence.

As the "Emerging Era" continues to evolve, leaders and organizations must recognize that digital transformation is an ongoing journey. The path to success requires visionary thinking, proactive adaptation, and a commitment to continuous learning and innovation. By adopting effective leadership strategies and fostering a culture of agility

and resilience, organizations can position themselves for success and achieve sustainable growth in the post-pandemic digital world.

APPENDIX A
SURVEY COVER LETTER

Dear Participants,

My name is Swathi Palasamudram, and I am now attending SSBM University in Geneva working towards earning a Doctor of Business Administration degree. The topic of my research is Strategy and Leadership in the “Emerging Era” (Post-Pandemic Digital World). The information acquired from this survey will be used only for my research paper and will in no way be disclosed to a third party. All of your replies will remain fully anonymous. It would be very helpful if you could take a few minutes out of your day to participate in an interactive question-and-answer session.

Please get in touch with me at the following e-mail address if you have any questions about the survey: swathi@ssbm.ch.

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Question 1. How do you define the goals and objectives of your organization?

	Executive Management (10)		Middle Management (12)		Frontline Management (8)
Aligned with Vision and Mission	5	Alignment with overall goals	6	Very clear KPI"s Specific and time bound	4
External Markets and Targets	3	collaboration with strategic teams	4	(R&R) External View	3
Innovation and Digitalization	2	External View (Market, Resources)	2	(Market, Sales)	1

Question 2. How do you assess the external environment (market, competition, etc.) to identify potential opportunities and threats having an impact on your strategy?

	Executive Management (10)		Middle Management (12)		Frontline Management (8)
Comprehensive Market Research and Analysis	5	Desk Research (Monitoring competitors)	6	Surveys and Feedback Desk Research	4
Desk Research (Monitoring competitors)	3	Tracking Internal Markets Regulatory changes and technological advancements	4	(Monitoring competitors)	3
External Consultation	2		2	Fairs and events	1

Question 3. What is your approach to developing and implementing a strategic plan?

	Executive Management (10)		Middle Management (12)		Frontline Management (8)
Stakeholder Involvement in Strategy planning	5	Collaboration with executive team and cascading priorities	6	Alignment with individual goals	4
SWOT Analysis Internal Collaboration (Functional Leaders)	3	Detailed action plans using right tools	4	Clear communication from middle management	3
	2	Monitoring progress and tracking KPIs	2	CIP	1

Question 4. How do you prioritize and allocate resources to support your strategic goals?

	Executive Management (10)		Middle Management (12)		Frontline Management (8)
Assessment of strategic goals and key initiatives	5	Resource Management and Close monitoring of Budget	6	Resource utilization and task prioritization	4
Priority and alignment based on the goals	3	Prioritize and re-prioritize based on the goals	4	Resource optimization	3
collaboration with Stakeholders	2	collaboration and sharing of resources	2	Resource planning discussions	1

Question 5. How do you monitor and measure the progress of your strategic plan?

Executive Management (10)	Middle Management (12)	Frontline Management (8)
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Focus on KPI's and OKR	5	Department KPI's aligned with Management KPI's	6	Individual and Team Performance Progress and Monitoring (Deliverables and Resources)	4
Regular reviews and evaluation of progress	3	Tracking and Reporting the KPI's to be proactive	4		3
External View (Feedback, Market Analysis - Financial reports)	2	Review of resources and align KPI's	2	Detail performance and feedback discussions	1

Question 6. How do you balance short-term goals with long-term objectives in your strategy?

	Executive Management (10)	Middle Management (12)	Frontline Management (8)
Review and Re-assessment of KPI's and OKR's	5	Long-term to Short term objectives	Task distribution related to short and long term
Breaking down of the milestones	3	Establish KPI's and "how to achieve" ?	Tasks versus impact analysis
Resource allocation and prioritization	2	Close alignment with day to day operations	Focus on T&D

Question 7. How do you foster a culture of innovation and continuous improvement in your organization?

	Executive Management (10)	Middle Management (12)	Frontline Management (8)
Budget for resources and innovation	5	R&D and Innovation	Process Improvement
Matrix organization and cross functional team	3	Focus on T&D	Re-Skilling and Up-Skilling

Failures versus Success	2	Surveys and Feedback	2	Mentoring and Coaching	1
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