Fostering Emotional Intelligence and Empathy Into Leadership

The Case of a Finnish Company X

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International Business   Abstract

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Throughout the decades leadership has evolved continuously, simultaneously developing new and effective approaches to respond to the necessities and requirements modern leadership holds. The leadership tactics utilized a few decades ago have distinctively altered, due to assorted reasons, however mainly because of the need for change and evolvement of generations. The modern world represents an evolving and altering entity, in which uncertainties and changes may cause distress in organizations and in employees, leading to the reason why compassionate, supportive and understanding leadership is highly essential.

In this study, the author attempts discuss the primary reasons for change in leadership, introduces the definition of emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership, in addition to seeking for the specific motives of why fostering empathetic and emotionally intelligent leadership would be highly beneficial in the current organizational world. The author presents perspectives gathered from both employees and leaders, by utilizing both qualitative and quantitative research methods. More precisely, this thesis focuses on analyzing primarily qualitative research data, in the form of in-depth interviews with leaders and employees, with a comparative and observational research approach. In addition, the study also provides quantitative numerical data, which has been gathered through a survey designed to evaluate employee perceptions and perspectives. Moreover, the study provides a closer look at the requirements subordinates perceive necessary and supportive for modern leadership, to provide insights for current or aspiring leaders of what modern employees value and require from leadership. Additionally, the research attempts to seek tangible ways for leaders to potentially foster and introduce more compassionate and humane methods into their leadership.

The overall study is an attempt to conduct research, which is based on a modern, necessary and sensitive topic, which validates and supports both employee and leader viewpoints. Furthermore, the study provides the significance for organizations to develop and enhance their structure with a current, cost-effective and humane approach, which will deliver as a competitive advantage.

Keywords   Leadership, empathy, emotional intelligence, well-being, organizational
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International Business   Tiivistelmä

Vuosikymmenien ajan johtajuus on muovautunut jatkuvalla tahdilla, muuntautuen ja kehittäen uudenlaisia tehokkaita toimintamalleja tukemaan nykyaikaisia tarpeita sekä vaatimuksia, joita moderni johtajuus edellyttää. Toimintatavat, joita on hyödynnetty muutamia vuosikymmeniä sitten, ovat nykyisin muuntautuneet muuksi johtuen moninaisista syistä, mutta erityisesti siitä syystä, että transformaatiolle on ollut tarve. Maailma muuttuu nopeasti, jonka takia muutokset ja samanaikainen epävarmuus saattavat aiheuttaa lisäkuormitusta organisaatioille sekä työntekijöille. Tämän vuoksi erityisesti myötätuntoinen, kannustava sekä ymmärtäväinen johtajuus on nykyisin erityisen tärkeää.

Tässä tutkimuksessa on tarkoituksena havainnoida sekä käsitellä päällimmäisiä syitä johtajuuden kehittämistarpeille. Samalla määritellään tunneälykkyyden sekä empaattisen johtajuuden merkitys. Näiden lisäksi tutkimus tarkkailee myös tärkeimpiä syitä miksi tunneälykäs sekä empaattinen johtajuus on tärkeää nykyisessä organisaatiomaailmassa. Tutkimus käsittelee sekä työntekijöiden, että johtajien perspektiivejä, hyödyntämällä haastatteluita sekä havainnointi tutkimusmenetelmiä. Tutkimuksessa on toteutettu syvähaastatteluja, joissa tarkastellaan vertailevasti eri vaikutuksia, kokemuksia, sekä näkemyksiä. Syvähaastatteluiden lisäksi tutkimukseen on sisällytetty työntekijäperspektiiviä kartoittava kysely, joka tuotti numeraalisia tutkimustuloksia havainnointien tueksi. Tutkimus huomioi myös työntekijäperspektiiviä kattavasti, tuottaakseen täsmennystä siihen, minkälaisia toiveita, tarpeita sekä odotuksia työntekijöillä on johtajuutta kohtaan. Tämän lisäksi tutkimus esittelee toimintamalleja, joita nykyaikaiset johtajat voisivat hyödyntää kehittyäkseen tunneälykkäimmäksi ja empaattisemmiksi johtajiksi.

Kokonaisuutena tämän opinnäytetyön tarkoitus on tuottaa tutkimus ajankohtaisesta, tarpeellisesta sekä paikoittain myös sensitiivisestä aiheesta, ja arvioida sekä työntekijöiden, että johtajien näkökulmia kattavasti. Tutkimus myös osoittaa tunneälykkään sekä empaattisen johtamisen hyödyn organisaation kehittymiseen kustannustehokkaasti, mikä toimii myös kilpailuetuna nykyisessä organisaatiomaailmassa.

Contents

Appendices

Appendix 1 Questions for the in-depth interviews for leaders and managers

Appendix 2 Questions for the in-depth interviews for employees working in subordinate
roles

Appendix 3 Questions for the general survey designed for employees and their perception
on empathetic and emotionally intelligent leadership

Appendix 4 Complete results on the survey

Appendix 5 Data management strategy

1   Introduction

Throughout decades leadership has maintained to evolve and generate innovative approaches to support the advanced necessities and requirements for efficient and effective modern leadership. In the modern world the requirements and core elements for effectual leadership have advanced, due to several reasons. The modern-day obligations for leadership are representing as more humane and considerate, highlighting especially the importance of empathy, emotional intelligence, open communication, and compassion within leadership. The importance of the empathetic leadership is growing rapidly, as empathetic leadership is known to reflect positively to the employee innovation, engagement, retention, inclusivity, the ability to successfully balance work life with personal obligations and additionally increasing overall well-being at work. (Brower, 2021)

In addition to empathy and compassion, the prerequisite for a leader to develop emotional intelligence is articulated. Observing non-emotional requests for executive positions, such as technical abilities or theoretical knowledge, which are significant as well, yet emotional intelligence appears to stand out by being one of the most key and vital elements for effective leadership (Goleman, 2019, p. 4). Emotionally intelligent leadership has become a crucial matter in the modern world, as it is links to employee well-being at work, as fostered emotional intelligence provides the opportunity to comprehend and validate emotional aspects of employees in a more effective way. Furthermore, with emotional intelligence a leader may build and strengthen bonds with employee associations.

Additionally, modern employees are more conscious of their rights, needs, and possibilities. In the modern world, with the evolvement of generations, employees are more empowered to disclose any toxicity within a work environment, which also links to the reasoning why the abilities and skills of leaders are under the spotlight. A toxic work culture can refer to an unpleasant, unsupportive, dishonest, unsafe, or unethical work environment. Moreover, in a toxic work environment, an employee might not be considered as a priority and leaders may deny the chance for employees to raise any of their concerns or wishes. (Perna, 2022)

More precisely, with the following research, the author attempts to analyze and examine proof for the significance of leadership skills, specifically from a perspective which offers more psychological reassurance and safety from leaders to employees. To do so, the author will seek for indications through qualitative and quantitative research methods by representing valuable primary research results and analysing secondary research, to combine the results and acknowledge the probable correlation, which supports both leaders and employees' perspectives and experiences of emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership.

1.1   Objectives for the research

As most people tend to spend most of their lifetime working, it is essential to emphasize on methods how organizations, particularly leaders, may foster approaches which support employee well-being and the feeling of inclusivity. A major influence on work satisfaction lays on the emotional support and psychological reassurance employees may or may not receive from their superiors. To investigate the correlation between emotional intelligence and leadership, it is crucial to demonstrate the impact of empathy and emotional comprehension has onto creating a healthier work environment, and why it is significant, particularly in the modern world.

The primary purpose for this research is to acknowledge the direct importance of empathy and emotional intelligence in leadership, additionally analyze and discuss the factors which contribute to why it is highly necessary for modern leaders to approach their leadership in a more humane and empathetic method. Furthermore, one of the key objectives for this research it to find valuable support for the issue the research question represents, more specifically from a qualitative, narrative and observational perspective, by conducting in-depth interviews with both leaders and employees, in addition to performing a survey for employees, which will hypothetically assist and support the standing of empathetic and emotionally intelligent leadership.

1.2 Commissioning company

As the topic itself is delicate and theoretically intimidating to a certain extent, it is crucial to acknowledge the sensitiveness of the research topic and to respect the delicacy of the matter. Due to the apparent reasons, the commissioning company has requested to remain anonymous, and in this research the company will be referred to as company X. Nevertheless, the commissioning company is a highly valuable source for the research and overall matter, as the organization has a strong background of effectual leadership.

1.2.1 Company X

The commissioning company operates in the private health-care industry, offering medical and nursing services for various client groups within the Pirkanmaa province. The company is a Finnish SME (small to medium sized enterprise), in which the leader manages a team of several members. The company has operated in the industry for several years and the chief executive has a significant history and lots of experience with leadership, exclusively from leading with compassion, empathy, emotional intelligence and understanding, to support psychological safety and employee well-being within a work environment.

In addition to the commissioning company offering an extensive in-depth interview for collecting qualitative data as a part of the primary research, the commissioning company has also granted their approval for the thesis to include comparative research, in the form of conducting in-depth interviews from other unrelated organizational sources, to receive more leader and employee perspectives.

The main outcome the commissioning company is expecting and trusting for, is for the research to acknowledge and support the importance of emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership, and how it outstandingly links to employee dedication, motivation, and well-being at work within various work industries and several associations. Additionally, it is vital to note that the research for the thesis is conducted without funding, and the data is collected through voluntary responses and participation of individuals with diverse occupational backgrounds.

1.3   Research question and hypothesis

The research question directed to this thesis is:

- "How can leaders discover their leadership potential and improve leadership capacity through emotional intelligence and empathy?"

The main motive to choosing this research topic, is due to the value emotional intelligence and empathy in leadership represents in the modern world, specifically in relation to employee well-being, motivation, and dedication. Furthermore, the author's personal interest of modern leadership, empathy and emotional intelligence are foremost contributors to choosing the specific topic.

As the modern world is evolving, under severe circumstances and uncertainties, the importance of psychological reassurance, safety, well-being, open communication, inclusivity, and support within work environments has magnified. Fear-based, unsupportive, dishonest, unethical, or detached leadership can cause significant troublesome within organizations, which can be linked to employees resigning, increased sick-leaves, lack of motivation and decreasing dedication. The initiative and follow-through of leaders to work relentlessly for a healthier, welcoming, and compassionate work environment is currently majorly important (Perna, 2022). Conversely, it is also crucial to state that the uncertainties in the modern world have also caused difficulties for organizations to perform in their standard manner, in addition to challenges with internal communication. For instance, the fear of layoffs and terminations can cause employees to feel the instability and apprehension of an organization, which can cause extensive problems within any sized companies, and lead to employees resigning and switching workplaces in the search of a more trustworthy, stable, and secure work environment. (Sull et al., 2022)

The author hypothetically expects that the research will acknowledge the importance of the research matter, as the collected data will attempt to prove and provide a solid basis for the importance of emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership. The author also believes that the combination of collecting primary and secondary data will be vital to receive an extensive outlook on the matter. The author believes that emotionally intelligent and

empathetic leadership links directly to employee well-being, engagement, retention and motivation.

1.4   The structure of the research

The planned structure for the research of the importance of emotional intelligence and empathy within leadership, is to explore and introduce the main concepts behind the topic, and to furtherly investigate the importance of the research matter through both qualitative and quantitative research methods, and lastly to evaluate and analyze the collected research results, in order to encapsulate the meaning, importance, value and necessity of emotional intelligent and empathetic leadership in the modern world.

The author has planned the structure of the thesis research to discuss and discover the topic in a coherent manner, to ensure the comprehensiveness and a consistent structure for the research. The author has prepared theoretical framework, which attempts to explain the subject and key concepts behind the research question, including significant information collected through reviewing valuable sources. Additionally, the author will conduct in-depth interviews for leaders working in executive roles, and for employees working in subordinate roles. The interviews are based on the individuals perspectives, observations and experiences of past and current encounters with leadership, and specifically highlighting the importance of emotional intelligent and empathetic leadership.

Furthermore, the author has planned to conduct a survey which evaluates the topic from an employee perspective and their experiences, to provide a variable and broader outlook on the matter, as a part of the primary research. The survey is designed to be a straightforward and simple inquiry form, which does not require writing or extensive focusing from the respondents. The questions and responding for the survey are conducted by multiple choices and scaling options. The basis for choosing a modest approach for the survey, is to ensure that the responding can occur on a low threshold and within a couple of minutes, without the need for intense concentration, specifically in the modern world fulfilled with several possibilities for distractions. The author has chosen simplistic, direct questions, which assist the planned survey approach. Questions are presented in Appendix 3.

Lastly the author has planned to conduct secondary research and collect support on the topic from an external case study based on the researched matter, in addition to seeking for recommendations and approaches for leaders to foster emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership. Through the results and analysis, the author attempts to encapsulate the value of the researched subject more precisely. Additionally, the conclusion is planned to summarize the assessment straightforwardly and comprehensively.

1.5   Limitations of the research

Limitations and constraints regarding the research conducted in this thesis, are evidently based on the fact that the research has been conducted with slightly limited resources within a shorter time period during the spring and summer period of 2022, instead of an extensive and prolonged research conducted for years. Nevertheless, it is crucial to note that the primary research results, based on the responses provided by the individuals through the in-depth interviews and survey, are centered on long-term encounters from work life through management, leadership, and subordinate and employee experiences.

Additionally, the research has been conducted within a geographical and cultural limitation, as the interviewees and respondents are mainly located in Finland. However, it is essential to point out, that the focus of the thesis has been to establish and introduce approaches and opportunities particularly for Finnish and Nordic leaders, how to foster ultimate leadership potential through empathy and emotional intelligence. However, the geographical and cultural limitation can cause variety within opinions, encounters, perspectives and necessities from other countries, cultures, and approaches. Despite the fact that the thesis includes comparative research from various industries and perspectives, it is crucial to highlight the nature and sensitivity of the research topic, as empathy and emotional intelligence are both delicate themes, which is why there is a possibility that the presented perspectives and experiences can be varying from other managers, leaders, employees, and subordinate experiences. By others, the author refers to individuals who are not involved in the current research the author is conducting. Furthermore, the delicacy of the topic can also decrease the amounts of replies and information, as the topic may be intimidating for some to discuss about.

2   Theoretical framework

2.1   Main concepts

In order for the research to remain comprehensive and visible, it is vital to introduce, discuss and evaluate the descriptions of the main concepts within the frame of the researched topic, such as leadership, emotional intelligence, empathy and the correlation between leadership and emotional intelligence and empathy. Additionally, it is crucial to characterize the problem statement, and weigh why the topic is significant within the modern organizational culture. Furthermore, the author will seek to investigate matters that correlate between employee well-being at work to empathetic and emotionally intelligent leadership, additionally examining work cultures with the validation of emotions and needs of employees.

2.1.1   Leadership: a brief overview

Leadership is a concept, which is complex to define in simple terms. Leadership has various forms, theories, and definitions. The history of leadership begun with the thought that specific individuals were born to become leaders, having a genetic competency for leadership, and that leadership was an inborn personality characteristic. Leaders were regarded as extremely intelligent individuals, with the ability to serve, support and guide others instinctively. Later, through the "Great Man"-theory, leaders were considered as heroes, with exceptional qualities such as charisma and intelligence, simultaneously having the power to have influence people. After World War II, the discussion of leadership being the act of influencing an organized group of people by setting goals, begun. However, subsequently, leadership continued to be recognized as an influential act, which could be trained, instead of leadership being considered as an inborn trait or capability to influence or have power on others. (Silva, 2016, p.2)

Today, leadership is known as a broad mixture and combination of responsibility, effectual communication, building trust amongst teams and other associations, supportive guidance, critical thinking, and active delegation. Leadership roles are executive positions, in which employees work as subordinates, under the supervision of leaders. Most importantly,

leadership is about knowing how to inspire, motivate, build, and strengthen a team (Ward, 2020). Leaders can exceed to enhance the success of a team through various methods, depending on the overall aim and wanted outcome. There are several forms of leadership, such as servant, transformational and coaching leadership, however all of the methods require efficient and effective leadership competences, such as open communication, empathy, validating emotional standpoints, building trust, and strengthening inclusivity.

Instinctively leaders could be considered as the superiors employees may rely on for leading, delegation, problematic situations, receiving feedback, or any additional required support or guidance. Therefore, it could be projected that the most ideal leader would represent themselves as a supportive supervisor, who can be approached on a low threshold, simultaneously giving an employee enough space to work independently and acknowledging their ambition and competences through trust. (Khan, 2016)

Nevertheless, it is crucial to understand that leadership requires much more. Specifically, as the global circumstances within the past years have represented uncertainty and diffidence, also organizational environments have had to adopt to changes within abbreviated time periods. Leadership during the global uncertainties has transparently affected the organizational world as well, as leading remote work, supporting employees increased health concerns and acknowledging general worries about the altering world, has highlighted the importance of compassionate and humane leadership. When employees are experiencing stress, it is highly significant for a leader to support the employees mental health. In order to do so, empathy appears to be one of the most vital attributes for leadership skills. According to Forbes and author Tracy Bower, the combination of mental health, personal lives and performance at work are a major load for any employee to carry. With empathy, a leader can help an employee to navigate and combine work and personal lives together. (Brower, 2021)

Another key element of effective leadership is building trust amongst teams. When creating trust within a team or in a work environment, the main responsibility lays on leaders and managers. In order for superiors to create a trustworthy atmosphere, they must first build a trustworthy bond with their employees on personal level. Mutual trust is a necessity for a functional organization, where both employees and leaders can both rely on one another in

various circumstances. It has been observed, that with built trust, teams can be energized and become more productive (Lewis, 2021). Furthermore, with trust leaders can simply rely on their employees to work professionally, without micromanagement. It is crucial to comprehend, that trust is built on an emotional base, which also requires emotional intelligence, empathy, transparency and authenticity from both participants, the leader and the employee.

2.1.2   The importance of employee perspectives

Employees are individuals working in subordinate positions under the guidance of leaders, without having an executive role and the responsibility of managing, supporting, and developing employees themselves (Merriam-Webster, 2022). Employees can work in various industries, as employees are needed in most organizations. The reason why the perspective of employees is crucial to introduce and evaluate in this research, is to recognize the experiences, thoughts, visions, and requirements employees have for modern leaders. The encounters employees have had, will offer clarity for leaders to comprehend the employee perspective more precisely.

Despite for the general description of an employee to being an individual who is paid to work for another person or association, being an employee is much more. An employee is an individual who confronts the daily activities of their role, carrying responsibility of their work areas and tasks, providing the required outcomes, and ensuring the progress of their own work. In some industries, employees have to face and confront a lot more, such as awful customer feedback, unfortunate encounters with customers, hatred for the organization they work for, difficulties with technical systems, dealing with discrimination by customers and much more. The burden of combining all of the facets can be overwhelming and potentially threaten the mental well-being of an employee. Due these apparent reasons, it is highly important highlight the importance of leaders to foster for instance emotional intelligence and empathy, to support and provide psychological security for employees.

As modern employees have to contend with a lot, it is important for leaders to understand the value of good employees. Employees could be referred to as investments and assets of an organization. According to Roy Ferman, who is the founder and CEO of Seek Capital, by

investing time and resources in employees an organization will improve the overall productivity, increase the support for a creative and collaborative work environment and potentially attract new employees to the organization with a good reputation. (Ferman, 2021)

2.1.3 Emotional intelligence

Intelligence typically implies to an individual's cognitive capacity on a general level. Intelligence can be found in various classifications, such as mathematical, logical, verbal, intrapersonal, interpersonal, visual, and social. However, emotional intelligence (EI/EQ) refers to social intelligence, which describes a characters ability to monitor their own and other's emotions, to define and comprehend the variations between them, in order to utilize the knowledge to assist guiding their actions. (Bashir, 2017, p. 44-45)

In 1995, Daniel Goleman, a key spokesperson and examiner of emotional intelligence, defined that EI provides an individual the ability to comprehend their own emotions, simultaneously knowing how to manage them and to motivate based on the emotional condition. Furthermore, emotional intelligence also refers to the ability of identifying emotions in others and to manage relationships based on the acknowledged emotions. The model for emotional intelligence links to various dimensions, such as self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, and relationship management. (Bashir, 2017, p. 45)

Emotional intelligence is required in several personal and social circumstances in life, as it emphasizes on comprehending emotions on a more intellectual standpoint. Emotional intelligence more precisely is the reaction of how various areas and situations in life can be emotionally perceived, analysed, judged, reasoned, understood, comprehended, and maintained. Emotional intelligence is also known to be related to motivation, self-awareness, self-value, empathy, and social skills. (Lebow, 2021)

When considering the impact of emotional intelligence in work environments and associations, it is vital to note that emotional intelligence is a driving force for organizational development and success with interactions. For instance, an emotionally intelligent team member can practice self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, social skills, and empathy,

which are all vital elements for an effectively communicative employee. For example, an emotionally intelligent colleague can easily empathize with co-workers and accept the circumstances affecting the whole team, and make the needed improvements and adjustments based on the initial problem. (Cassata, 2021)

For example, an individual with a high EI/EQ can understand criticism directed to them or their team, and simultaneously enhance their work performance based on given constructive feedback, to ensure a healthier and improved work environment for the whole team. Additionally, with EI, individuals may know effective ways how to improve time-management to meet expectations and deadlines, to benefit the overall performance of the whole team. More accurately, emotional intelligent co-workers are more open minded, self-aware, empathetic, understanding, and receptive to upcoming adjustments, conducting necessary improvements, and seeking for better opportunities, which benefit the whole team. (Cassata, 2021)

When considering the advantages of being an emotionally intelligent leader, it is transparent that all of the benefits of EI/EQ apply to leadership as well. However, as leadership roles are executive positions, it is essential to highlight that being an emotionally intelligent leader can help motivating employees, building stronger connections with employees, and ensuring healthy communication (Cassata, 2021). Additionally, EI/EQ is vital for leader, since it also helps noticing any difficulties or swift changes from the outset, to ensure that all issues are noticed, reacted to, and taken care of rapidly. More accurately, an emotionally intelligent leader with social awareness, can simply detect the occurring atmosphere and dynamics and correspond with the appropriate actions and improvements needed. (Landry, 2019)

Conversely, with the lack of emotional intelligence, a leader may cause major complications for their team and organization. With the lack of EI/EQ from a leader, a team can suffer from lower employee engagement rates and a higher employee turnover (Landry, 2019). With the lack of emotional intelligence, a leader may cause a negative impact on an organization's economic standing, by increasing costs of recruiting new employees, on-boarding and needed supervision, due to the rapid exchange in employees and lack of commitment.

2.1.4   Empathy

Similarly, to emotional intelligence, empathy is a key and vital skill in many areas of life. Empathy enables individuals to resonate to others emotional viewpoints, needs, aspirations and encounters within a specific situation, circumstance, or experience, resulting in compassionate behavior. Empathy can be expressed through feelings of happiness, excitement, sadness, disappointment, uncertainty, fear, or confusion. In simple terms, empathy is about having the ability to see through other individuals eyes and validate their emotions. (Ioannidou & Konstantikaki, 2008)

More specifically, empathy enables sharing and validating someone else's emotions and imaging yourself within the comparable situation. Essentially, empathy connects individuals and groups, simultaneously creating a healthy surrounding for compassion and understanding (Kisling, 2018). Empathy is remarkably vital for interpersonal and social competences in various circumstances and professions (Riess, 2017, p.74). Additionally, empathy provides a beneficial opportunity to generate an emotional bridge between one and another, which effectively creates a sense of emotional and psychological safety. (Kisling, 2018)

Empathy can be categorized into three types, according to Daniel Goleman, who is the establisher of emotional intelligence.

- Empathetic concern, also known as compassionate empathy, refers to feeling another person's emotions and taking the initiative to help resolving the occurring situation, and having the capability of knowing how to act. (Goleman, 2011)

- Emotional empathy, also known as affective empathy, is the ability to share and feel the emotions of someone else. Emotional empathy can also be referred to emotional contagion, getting caught with the same feelings another individual is facing. A downside to emotional empathy is that is can be at times overwhelming and distressing, to feel tremendously emotional to another individual's situation. (Goleman, 2011)

- Cognitive empathy refers to the type of empathy, in which a person has the ability to comprehend how another person might be feeling in specific situation and recognize the thoughts they might have around it. The ability of cognitive empathy is highly valuable for effective communication. (Goleman, 2011)

Furthermore, it is vital to comprehend that empathy is a key element of emotional intelligence. Similarly, to emotional intelligence, also empathy can be applied to various situations in life. Empathy can be utilized in personal and social surroundings, within families, other relationships, work alliances and other social associations, in which effective communication, validation and acknowledgement of others is essential. Within a work environment, an empathetic work culture is known to encourage deeper collaborative work, decrease the amount of stress in employees and add more motivational morale to working habits. (Zaki, 2019)

Empathy used to be regarded as a gentle talent, however modernly empathy is known to be a neurobiologically based competence due to research of neurobiology (Riess, 2017, p.75). Formerly, empathy was perceived as an intuitive skill which could not be built nor learnt. However, modernly it is implied that empathetic capabilities can be discovered through appropriate training (Riess, 2017, p.74). Leaders, managers, employees, and other acquaintances may benefit significantly from training their people skills to ensure effective communication and well-being, by educating on empathetic competences. Additionally, as mindsets, perceptions, knowledge, and habits evolve on a continuous basis in the modern world, it offers the possibility for growing empathetic abilities as well. (Zaki, 2019)

Empathy can be expressed through demonstrating compassion and acknowledgement for example by gestures, words, and/or by listening respectfully. In empathy, respectful listening is about having the sense to listen with the intention of understanding and validating other viewpoints. The empathetic competence of listening is essential for conflict solving or other problematic situations, in which disagreements may occur. By listening and validation of other's emotional viewpoints may build stronger connections and nurture a wounded environment. (Lynn, 2008, p.54-55)

Similarly, to emotional intelligence, empathy is a broad and humane matter, which represents compassionate and social competences of an individual. Empathy may be a thought-provoking and beneficial resource, as it essentially will assist building stronger connections, trustworthy relationships and understanding of others.

2.2   Problem statement

Emotional intelligence and empathy in correlation to leadership is blatantly a highly discussed and current issue in the modern organizational world, due various purposes. The primary reason the connection of leadership to empathy and emotional intelligence should be examined, is due to modern requirements leadership holds and specifically the beneficial aspects of fostering emotional intelligence and empathy into leadership offers. In contrast, the lack of emotional intelligence and empathy within leadership may cause extensive difficulties within organizations.

Outdated ways of operating leadership, such as fear-based leadership, are ineffective in the modern world, as awareness of mental health and well-being at work, in addition to consciousness of employee rights, has increased. For instance, aspects which traditionally were not brought up for discussion, are now one the most discussed topics, such as the necessity of empathy, comprehension of emotional viewpoints, inclusivity, transparent leadership, and increased struggles with mental health. As generations evolve and become more aware of harmful ways of leadership, the requirements for authentic, empathetic, and effective leadership have evolved simultaneously. In simple terms, the modernly recognized effective approach for leadership is for leaders to lead with empathy, instead of for example critically micromanaging or leading with fear. (Khan, 2016)

However, several leaders do not acknowledge that they still might be leading with fear or authority, and simultaneously causing anxiety in their team members. According to Adrian Gostick, classified as the third speaker in the world of organizational culture, one out of three leaders utilize fear occasionally in their leadership approaches. However, most of the leaders are unaware of their ineffective and damaging leadership mannerism, as most employees do not have the courage of bringing the harmful leadership style (Gostick, 2022). Additionally, leaders conducting fear-based leadership may have learnt the approach from

their former leaders, which is why they instinctively behave in the equivalent manner. (Ebix, 2020)

A fear-based leader might intend to motivate their team members by making comments, such as "if you do not succeed, there could be consequences" which put enormous pressure on employees, yet without providing enough assurance and support to reach the set goals. Additionally, this approach focuses on potential upcoming mistakes, instead of applauding probable achievements. The comments may have the initial idea of provoking eagerness; however, with fear-based comments leaders tend to seek for targets to blame and simultaneously damaging the entire team with their outdated and harmful style. (Gostick, 2022)

Additionally, fear-based leaders might assume that they must remain tough, in order for their authority to be acknowledged and respected. Interestingly, this is usually determination confused with being a genuine leader. With fear-based leadership, teams tend to feel as if they are not heard, or that they might not have a voice to speak up about issues. Another typical feature of fear-based leadership is that employees might automatically assume that they have done something wrong if they are called up for discussion with their supervisor. Furthermore, in teams which are lead with fear, criticism tends to dominate over achievements and applauds. The problematic aspect is that fear-based leaders do not recognize the fact that effectual leadership is actually about connecting and creating fundamental and trustworthy relationships, with the most meaningful participants of their career: their employees. (Gostick, 2022)

According to David Horsager, author of Trust Edge, the most damaging assumption a leader can make, is to suppose that employees trust them automatically based on their executive position and title. Additionally, Horsager mentions in a Forbes article, that mutual trust must be earned, and that it is long run commitment, to build a trustworthy relationship amongst an employee and a leader. (Horsager, 2012)

In addition to fear-based leadership, also micromanagement stands out as a harmful way of running leadership. Micromanagement refers to a style, in which superiors operate unnecessary and overly excessive control on employees actions, specifics and ways of

operating their work. Commonly, micromanaging leaders also override employees decisions, as they strongly believe that they know how to do an employee's tasks better. Additionally, with magnified supervision in the form of micromanagement, leaders may cause a downgrading and dehumanizing effect onto their employees (Khan, 2016). More precisely, micromanagement indicates the assumption that leaders do not trust their employees. Furthermore, typically micromanagement is a result of the lack of modern, effective leadership skills and additionally it highlights the lack of empathy in leadership. Essentially, empathy is a softening skill, which will effectively eliminate micromanagement. (Shurford, 2019, p.36-40)

Evidently, a modern leader must recognize why preferring for instance empathy and emotional intelligence is highly beneficial in their position. More truthfully, if leaders apply emotional intelligence and empathy into their leadership tactics, it may potentially nurture a trustworthy organizational culture (Du Plessis et al., 2015, p.2). However, with the lack of trust, severe damages may occur, which can negatively impact the organization on a wider scale, such as lack of engagement and decrease of productivity from employees. (Ladika, 2021)

2.2.1 The reflection of leadership approaches to employee well-being

Evidently, the approaches a leader chooses and maintains in their leadership, has a direct influence on employees as well. Modernly, leadership is much more than demanding and supervising subordinates. Leaders are required to ensure the safety, well-being, motivation, dedication, and success of employees. When evaluating, how much a chosen leadership tactic has impact on employee well-being, it is apparent that specific approaches, such as fear-based leadership, can cause problems on an employee's well-being and damage their occupational confidence. Constant blaming, belittling and criticism can have severe causes on an employee's professional confidence, as employees may start blindly believing that are causing damage and that the criticism is justified (Brearley, 2018). In addition to the issues fear-based leadership causes on employees', fear-based leadership also has a reflection onto organizational success, if the employees are not dedicated nor feeling inclusive.

Essentially, an employee's occupational excellent well-being can be considered as a resource and investment. Conversely, if an employee feels unwell at work, it may cause emotional exhaustion and low levels of energy, which can end up causing an occupational burnout. Furthermore, process of recovering from a burnout can be extensive, which is why an incomplete recovery can cause more complications, such as chronic fatigue (Perko, 2017, p.34-37). The overall consequences and costs burnouts might cause an organization can potentially become extensive.

According to a study conducted by Gallup in 2018 (Agrawal & Wigert, 2018), with the responses of almost 7,500 full-time employees, the main causes for employee burnouts are:

1. Unfair treatment at work.
2. Unmanageable workload
3. Lack of role clarity
4. Lack of communication and support from a manager
5. Unreasonable time pressure

All causes are linked back to leadership skills, of how employees are managed and the ability and willingness of a leader to try to prevent burnouts, instead of elevated expectations for demanding work and decreased performance of the employees (Agrawal & Wigert, 2018). It is crucial to note, that when employees within an organization are lacking support from leaders and running on low energy for performance, it has a direct reflection to the organization's development, customer service, decisiveness, quality, and aspiration. (Agrawal & Wigert, 2018)

Additionally, the study conducted by Gallup in 2018, indicates severe results and costs of the effects of employee burnouts. For instance, 63% of employees with burnout repeatedly or continually, are more likely to take a sick leave. 23% of the same respondents are more likely to visit the emergency room due to their burnout and physical symptoms caused by it. Additionally, 13% of the respondents suffer from decreased confidence in their occupation. Moreover, all of the respondents were 2.6 times more likely to switch workplaces due to burnout (Agrawal & Wigert, 2018). Overall, the consequences and costs of poor and

ineffective leadership can be massive and destructing, causing long run and pricey obstacles for the entire organization.

Alternatively, compassionate, empathetic, and emotionally supportive leadership can have a positive influence on employees and organizational success. For instance, teams with empathetic leaders are more likely to cope with stress better. Additionally, as mentioned previously, empathetic leadership will increase the motivation and dedication of team members to achieve goals more productively. Furthermore, empathetic leadership will reflect also onto external aspects, as for instance a team with an empathetic leader will be more likely to encounter their work tasks and customers more enjoyably. Transparently, positive psychology has an elevating influence on team spirit and employee well-being, which significantly decreases the chances of despair and burnouts within work environments. (Pedro, 2019, p.10-11)

2.2.2 Evolvement of generations in relation to leadership requirements

The requirements new generations have for leadership have progressed, due to education, awareness, the exceeding speed of technology development, globalization, performance environments and increased diversity (Holt & Marques, 2012, p.97). Essentially, leadership today is much more than just leadership theories, it is about comprehending a complex entirety and establishing innovative approaches to support the necessary and humane alterations needed in the modern world. (Holt & Marques, 2012, p.96)

Millennials, referring to a generation of people born between 1981 to 1996, being the largest generation in American history in numbers. Millennials are known for being ambitious, having a differing outlook on career paths than their parents or grandparents, and who aspire for an ideal balance between work life and leisure (Chen, 2022). Alongside to having a varying mindset than preceding generations, millennials also value nonhierarchic organizations, open communication, feedback, utilization of technology and innovative approaches, which are evident reasons for organizational development. Millennials are educated, inspired and revolutionary individuals, who promote effective communication, embrace nonhierarchical working environments, enjoy making connections and wish for recognition of demanding work (Amjad, n.d.). Millennials have a better insight to their rights

as employees, in addition to their knowledge of harmful organizational behavior. Fascinatingly, millennials tend to not have any tolerance for inefficiency at work, however simultaneously remaining flexible and collaborative.

Due to evident reasons, the requirements for modern leadership have altered. Millennials expect, admire, and acknowledge divergent aspects than former generations. Lack of efficiency, effective communication and recognition of achievements are inexcusable in millennial perspectives. It is estimated, that by 2025 millennials will be dominating the work force, as the prior generation is retiring (Carroll, 2022). Currently millennials work in entry-level, mid-senior and senior-leveled professions (Amjad, n.d.). Nevertheless, it is captivating to note that majority of millennials are aspired to become leaders in the future, however a notable number of current leaders are in fact millennials, which indicates that the breakthrough of the millennial generation is already occurring strikingly in the modern organizational world. (Carroll, 2022)

In addition, to millennials highlighting the importance of a healthy work environment, millennials also value an effortless balance between work and leisure time (Seifert, n.d.). For instance, millennials do not perceive office attendance as meaningful, as their preceding generations (Fischer & Kingson, 2022). Millennials consider remote work more valuable, as it offers the desired flexibility and efficiency for their work habits in correlation to leisure hours, as it saves time in commuting and offers more time for free time activities (Seifert, n.d.). Fascinatingly, it is advisable for leaders and recruitment to grasp, that the possibility for remote work is more valuable for millennials, than other occupational benefits such as pay. (Fischer & Kingson, 2022)

As a continuation, millennials are more likely to exchange work positions if they are not allowed the possibility of working remotely, if they wish to, by their superior, as it decreases the feeling of trust, validation and appreciation of employee. Overall, millennials are a diverse and positively demanding generation, who are transforming the organizational structure into a healthier, supportive, encouraging and trustworthy entity. Millennials are more likely to disclose any toxicity or non-supportive atmosphere in an organization, simultaneously by standing up for their rights.

3   Research methodology

3.1   Qualitative research introduction

Qualitative research is collected and evaluated through materials, which are non-numerical. Characteristically, qualitative research is in a narrative perspective, in which experiences, encounters, opinions and outlooks are collected through for instance audio, video or text. The intention of qualitative data is to set a natural setting, which will provide valuable insights and the possibility to establish innovative approaches. The qualitative research methods can be conducted by collecting observations, performing interviews, surveys and focus groups, which can be considered as primary research. Additionally, secondary research, is also a form of a qualitative research method, in which information is collected through existing materials (Bhandari, 2020). The main focus of this study is to collect data through qualitative research methods with a comparative and observational approach, such as in-depth interviews, a survey, a case study and recommendations.

3.2   Quantitative research introduction

Quantitative research is the opposite of qualitative research, in which the focus is on gathering numerical data, to support the occurring research. Quantitative research is typically used in the fields of natural and social sciences, such as economics, sociology, psychology, and chemistry. The main motive of quantitative research is to seek for potential patterns and generate predictions based on the numerical data collected. Quantitative research methods include conducting experiments, forming surveys, and utilizing observations and secondary research, such as gathering historical records, to receive numerical data to support and evaluate the subject matter (Bhandari, 2020). In this thesis, the author is mainly focusing on gathering qualitative research data, however the author's the planned survey for employees, will provide also quantitative numerical data, such as averages and other supportive values to represent potential patterns and similarities.

3.3 Primary research: in-depth interviews

The main aim of the primary research is to collect material, which has not been gathered before. Typically, primary research is in the form of interviews, surveys, or collected observations through other methods, providing an eye witnessing and thought-provoking perspective for the chosen research topic. (University of Southampton, 2021)

The primary research conducted in this thesis is executed through in-depth interviews with two leaders and two employees, to provide both a leader and executive perspective and an employee and subordinate standpoint. The author has also planned to conduct employee perspective survey designed for any individual, with the experience of working as an employee as a subordinate. The interviews and survey are both planned to provide the respondents a natural and safe surrounding to express their observations, experiences, and thoughts around the sensitive topic. The interviews and surveys are anonymous, without collecting any personalized data of any participants. See Appendix 5 to receive more insight of the data management plan and safety of the research.

The main motive for choosing in-depth interviews as a part of qualitative research, is due to the fact that the topic of emotional intelligent and empathetic leadership, in correlation to employee well-being, is visibly a delicate and complex topic, which is based on multiple personal encounters and long-term experiences directly from work-life. In order to investigate and evaluate the observations and experiences and attempt to find acknowledgement of the importance of emotional intelligent and empathetic leadership, it is vital to conduct in-depth interviews directly from resources, with the applicable experiences and encounters, such as leaders, managers, and employees in a subordinate role. All of the questions for the in-depth interviews were designed to generate an open and honest discussion with all participants and to receive insightful data about the participants experiences and thoughts on the subject matter. Additionally, the author will also be seeking for consistency amongst the interviews and responses obtained. Notice Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 to view all the questions represented during the in-depth interviews.

3.4   Primary research: survey

An additional primary research method the author has chosen for the research, is to conduct a survey designed for anyone, with experience of working as an employee in a subordinate role. The survey is designed to evaluate the correlation of emotional intelligent and empathetic leadership to the well-being of employees within organizations, on a general level, regardless of the work industry. The questions represented in the survey are chosen to reflect the requirements, needs and necessities employees would prefer from modern leadership.

Additionally, the survey also evaluates the experiences and observations, specifically from an employee perspective about emotional intelligence, empathy, and general well-being at work. All of the questions are intended to be straight-forward, comprehensive, and cohesive, in order for the survey to be simplistic and easy to respond to on a low threshold. In Appendix 3, all the questions are listed in the accurate order, as they are presented in the actual survey. The survey is carried out through a survey and reporting tool, entitled as Webropol. The admission to the survey tool is provided by Häme University of Applied Sciences, as a supportive resource for students to examine and conduct surveys.

The significance this survey is to attempt to acknowledge the importance of emotional intelligence and empathy in the modern work culture, specifically in Finland, in various work industries. The survey provides support for the qualitative research, however some of the results from the survey are expected to provide quantitative numerical results, as a portion of the questions are scaled questions, single-answer multiple choice questions and some are in the form of close-ended questions, with predefined answers, which provide numerical data. The author believes that a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods for the survey, will carry out a straight-forward, however detailed outlook on the topic through the eyes of the respondents' experiences.

3.5   Secondary research: a case study and recommendations

Secondary research data refers to records and information, which has been collected prior. A secondary research method includes utilizing existing data for a new, alternative research, in which the existing data is significant and beneficial. Secondary data may consist of documents from libraries or educational institutions, academical textbooks, media platforms, information gathered from a website or by for instance, examining existing case studies on a specific or relatable research matter. The beneficial aspects of secondary research data is that it is an inexpensive and a cost-effective research method, and it may provide broad results. Conversely, secondary data could be considered as a riskier choice, as the data may be outdated or it may offer inaccurate and unverified information. (Nasrudin, 2022)

Nevertheless, the author has chosen to explore and investigate existing a case study, on the matter of the conducted research and specifically emotional intelligence, and how it may link to nurturing inefficient leadership skills. Additionally, the author will evaluate other sources on the advantages and disadvantages of emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership, also from a critical viewpoint. Also, the study will provide recommendations of ways how to foster and encourage emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership, to deliver tools and approaches, which current and aspiring leader may benefit from, when evaluating leadership methods.

The reason for choosing secondary research data for the overall study, is for the reason that the author is attempting to seek for similarities and support from secondary sources, which may strengthen the problem statement and research question represented in the study. Additionally, the author believes that utilizing a case study and other data collected prior, will provide a more solid investigation of the chosen topic from a qualitative perspective. Specifically, for recommendations, it is advisable to seek for professional outlooks on how to foster emotional intelligence and empathy in leadership.

4   Results and analysis

4.1   Main in-depth interview 1: commissioning company, leadership in private healthcare

The commissioning company for this study, is the apparent main contributor and primary participant of the conducted in-depth interviews. The main emphasis of the in-depth interview with the commissioning company was to receive insights and observations from a long-term professional, with the solid knowledge and broad experience of leadership and team management. Additionally, the commissioning company has exceeded to perform as an emotionally intelligent and empathetic enterprise, as the chief executive officer and owner has a specific interest for matter. The interview was conducted on June 27th, 2022, and it lasted for 1 hour and 20 minutes in total. The interview was conducted through Microsoft Teams, which is an online meeting and communication platform. As granted prior to the meeting, personalized information will not be presented, due to the sensitiveness of the topic and to ensure the anonymity of the company.

The commissioning company's owner and chief executive officer has worked in leadership positions for the past twenty years, in various industries. However, for the past decade, the leader has been working in current company, which operates in the private-healthcare sector with several employees, in Pirkanmaa province. The chief executive would describe themselves as a leader who is easily approachable on a low threshold, someone who leads with their own example, simultaneously having a strong substantive knowledge within their field of expertise. Furthermore, the leader would describe themselves as a supportive and coaching leader, who has the ability to focus and find the core of the work. They also emphasize, that in health-care occupations, it is easy to get lost on track and occasionally be overwhelmed with emotions, which is why it is necessary for the leader to have the ability of knowing how to empathize emotions, handle possible obstacles and finding a way to get back on track efficiently, with emotional intelligence and empathy to ensure supportive leadership.

As the interviewee discusses how their overall experience with leadership has been, it is transparent that they maintained to be a greatly supportive leader. The commissioning company's executive describes their journey as a leader being more about leading people, instead of leading the work progress. Leadership in their sense, is about being present for the employees, more precisely be willing to help and serve at any given time. They also underlined, that a leader must be interested of their subordinates, their overall well-being and building a genuine relationship with them, which will help them create a dedicated mind-set and trustworthy connection together with the employee.

The commissioning company's executive also states that they believe that emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership is a competitive advantage for organizations. In the healthcare industry employee retention can be short, as nurses and other healthcare professionals are needed and essential all over, which is why they may choose to exchange organizations, if they are not feeling secure in their current occupation. Furthermore, as some businesses compete by offering higher wages, the commissioning company has instead decided to exploit and invest in compassionate and empathetic leadership which provides psychological safety for employees. The interviewee explains that they have managed to have decrease employee turnover with the chosen leadership method.

In contrast, for the most challenging parts of leadership, the commissioning company's chief executive explains that the most demanding part of leadership is to comprehend that as a leader, not all obstacles can nor need to be fixed. More accurately, the interviewee explains that it is highly valuable for a leader to know their professional limits and to not exceed them continuously with their own expense. A leader must understand that they cannot solve everything, even if they wished to. As an extension to the same matter, the executive explains, that is has also been challenging to accept their own limitations regarding to leadership and understanding, that despite the broad knowledge and strong competences a leader may have, leaders do not have the solutions to every matter.

On the contrary, the most straightforward and organic parts of leadership for the commissioning company's executive, has been sustaining a coaching and supportive approach to their leadership. The interviewee explains, that for instance, identifying employees' strengths and acknowledging their talents has occurred inherently, which has

had positive influence on employee motivation, in their experience. Verbalizing and simultaneously strengthening employee professionalism has been one of the most forthright parts of leadership for the commissioning company's executive.

When considering the most vital elements for modern leadership, the interviewee instinctively replies that modern leadership is about maintaining a transparent, servant and supportive method to leadership. A leader must find the core of the work together with the employee, as in the modern world there are several distractions, and it is evident that getting lost on track may cause obstacles. Furthermore, a leader must know how to discover re-enthusiasm amongst a team, specifically in a world in which changes and uncertainties may occur. Unpredictable changes and uncertainties have a tendency to have an impact on work, well-being, and organizations generally. The commissioning company's executive highlights, that specifically in the healthcare-industry, it is crucial for a leader to maintain a humane and empathic approach with effective communication skills, as their employees who work as nurses, may confront very distressing and upsetting situations during their workdays. It is essential for nurses to receive support from their leader through empathy, understanding and by reviewing the work encounters together.

Conversely, approaches which may contribute to bad leadership, are poor communication skills, not having any interest in employees, ignoring employees concerns and opinions, favoring a specific employee instead of others and/or discussing employees personal matters with others, states the interviewee. Additionally, they perceive fear-based leadership as a dreadful method for leadership, which is primarily ineffective. In the modern world, people are more conscious and aware of their rights, in addition to having differing values in comparison to some decades ago, which is why fear-based leadership is considered as an outdated method and potentially being extremely harmful.

When the executive was requested for their view on emotional intelligence, they rapidly replied that emotional intelligence is about acknowledging situations and specifically the emotional standpoints of the circumstances around the matter. Emotional intelligence, in their perception, is about having interest in their employees' emotions, sensing their diverse feelings, and validating them. Additionally, emotional intelligence in leadership provides psychological safety from leaders to their employees, according to the respondent.

An interesting and highly valuable notion the interviewee pointed out, is that a leader must comprehend that when they decide to hire an employee, all of their emotions and prior experiences come along with them as a package deal into their new occupation, which is why a leader must utilize emotional intelligence to help understanding and validating employees experiences. However, the interviewee also emphasizes that an emotional intelligent leader needs to be aware of the boundaries with emotions. For instance, if an emotional situation overpowers concentration extensively, it is crucial for a leader to have the ability to define the limits of when an emotional situation is getting out of hand, so that is does not take over completely.

Overall, the commissioning company's executive does perceive emotional intelligence as an incredibly significant proficiency in leadership, specifically in the modern world. Likewise with emotional intelligence, empathy is also a valuable attribute of effective and modern leadership. In their perspective, empathetic leadership is essentially about comprehending that there is much more to life than an occupation. An empathetic leader understands that an employee has a personal life in addition to work, which may have an impact on their work as well. Additionally, empathetic leadership is about being supportive towards an employee in both joys and in sorrows. Empathy also provides the opportunity for a leader to decrease the workload of an employee, if they are experiencing something demanding in their personal lives.

According to the commissioning company's chief executive, the importance of both emotional intelligence and empathy are clearly identified. Emotional intelligence and empathy offer psychological reassurance and safety for employees, as employees experience that they are heard, understood, and supported. Additionally, the executive discusses about the uncertainties within the world and worries caused by them, such as the occurred pandemic, the warfare in Ukraine, economical instabilities, and the general fear of not knowing what the future holds. The uncertainties are apparent and current reasons why it is essential for leaders to have a compassionate, understanding, and supportive approach to their leadership method in the modern world.

Overall, the general well-being of employees is particularly important. The interviewee explains that it is essential for leaders to specifically utilize emotional intelligence to notice any sudden changes in behavior or anything particular, that may indicate that an employee is not feeling quite right. If they happen to notice anything out of the ordinary, they prefer to discuss their concerns with the specific employee in private, simultaneously providing an empathetic and genuine approach during the conversation. They might use phrases such as "How are you doing, really?" or "I have noticed that you are not quite yourself, is there something I can do for you, to help?" and briefly explain that they have picked up a change in behavior and want to help resolving the possible issue. This is example of empathic concern, discussed in part 2.1.4, in which empathy is utilized to try and resolve an issue, by being active and essentially trying to aid a potentially distressing situation. As the commissioning company operates in private healthcare, the way of working is rather interactive, which is why it may be easier to notice sudden indications of an employee possibly feeling unwell or distressed. However, the interviewee highlights that occasionally their interpretation might be incorrect and that they have read the signs wrong.

Furthermore, when discussed whether executive of the commissioning company believes if there is a correlation between employee well-being, motivation, and dedication to emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership, the answer is inevitable. The interviewee responds that if there is a trustworthy connection between a leader and an employee, it will nurture and strengthen an employee's dedication, engagement, and overall well-being at work. They believe that a leader may benefit from cultivating and building a strong connection with an employee, as it also increases the motivation of an employee. The executive believes, based on their own experience and encounters, that a leader can influence on employee motivation by their own actions. The interviewee has been able to increase dedication and motivate employees by being an empathic, supportive, and coaching leader, which has resulted in reduced employee turnover and pleased employees. Furthermore, the executive also mentions that they have noticed that sick leaves occur rarely, when employees' feel glad, secure, supported, dedicated, and motivated. As humans are a psychosocial entity, it is evident that whilst feeling happy, it has a direct reflection to physical well-being and vice-versa, according to the interviewee's experience.

It is crucial for leaders to understand, that in the modern world it is important to invest into employees and utilizing emotional intelligence, to ensure their dedication to the organization. Additionally, the executive also believes that it is essential for leaders to remember take care of themselves by having days off from work and valuing time off. By setting an example, it encourages employees to also invest in their own leisure hours and simultaneously recharging. The executive prefers to spend time with their family, hobbies, and studying to recharge from work. They believe that increasing their knowledge by studying, will also increase their comprehension of understanding variable situations, encounters, obstacles, and personalities in their executive role.

When considering ways, how can leaders foster emotional intelligence and empathy in their leadership, the commissioning company's chief executive highlights that a leader should always be interested in their employees and also validate their prior experiences and current necessities. Also, a leader must know how to be an effective communicator and have the ability of listen to employees thoughts, visions, and ideas and simultaneously keeping an open mind. Similarly, a leader should always have room for understanding employees emotions, concerns, and circumstances. Furthermore, leaders should not be afraid of conflicts, instead leaders should observe them as opportunities to gain experience more about resolving issues and enhancing organizational communication. The executive of the commissioning company wraps their point: each leader has their own abilities, which can be enhanced and improved, however each leader is an individual who has to find their own unique path for efficient leadership methods.

4.2   Comparative research of the in-depth interviews

The commissioning company has granted their approval for the author to conduct comparative research, with the similar research method of gathering qualitative data by performing an in-depth interview for another leader from a different organization and industry. In addition to interviewing another leader, the author has performed two separate interviews with employees from other organizations and industries, to provide an employee perspective to the matter.

4.2.1   In-depth interview 2: leadership in a larger organization

The second in-depth interview was performed on July 15th, 2022, through a face-to-face meeting with a leader of a larger organization, with a team of sixty employees in subordinate occupations. Overall, the organization in total is considered as a large organization with over 250 employees is total. The industry remains as confidential information, likewise to any other specific information, to ensure the anonymity of the interview. Similarly, to the in-depth interview with the commissioning company, the identical questions were asked during the comparative second in-depth interview with the leader in a larger organization.

The second interviewee, who will be referred to as interviewee B, has been a leader and supervisor for the past eleven years in addition to working in total for twenty years, which is closely equivalent with the commissioning company's chief executive's experience. Similarly, to the main in-depth interviewee, interviewee B also describes themselves as a coaching leader, who may be approached on a low threshold and who wishes to be a supportive, listening, empathetic and compassionate leader. Distinctively, interviewee B, emphasizes that they are not a leader who utilizes authority and exploits power in an inappropriate way, as it is extremely important for them to be the quite opposite.

The overall experience of interviewee B has been varying. They have had the opportunity to work in various industries, which has advanced their leadership experiences and encounters with diverse personalities and circumstances. Interviewee B highlights that their experience as a leader has been natural and inherent for them, as they consider themselves as a genuine leader. Nevertheless, the leader mentions that the general circumstances of a leader can be very uplifting, and conversely occasionally harsh. Leaders must make tough decisions every so often, which is why interviewee B wishes to speak openly, yet anonymously, about their experiences. Interestingly, they have found emotional intelligence and empathy to be vital, curing elements when obstacles have occurred. For instance, if an employee has made an error, it is particularly important for a leader to approach the unfortunate situation with empathy and compassion, despite the made mistake, to ensure that the employee feels supported instead of being frightened.

According to interviewee B, one of the hardest parts of leadership has been the to give negative constructive feedback. Initially, the leader found themselves to be puzzled with finding the right words for constructive criticism. In addition to giving practical feedback, interviewee B found it hard and upsetting when they could not resolve an employee's issue in their personal life, however simultaneously keeping up a balance of not interfering too much. Interviewee B, similarly, to the commissioning company's executive, mentions that a leader must define and acknowledge their professional boundaries. However, the leader mentions that all encounters, both positive and negative, have developed their personal professionalism and abilities to correspond effectively to the modern requirements for leadership.

As a continuum, interviewee B mentions that the simplest part of leadership has been to remain as a supportive, coaching, effectively communicative and empathic leader. They emphasize, that they have noticed that employees value when they are genuinely supported, heard, and understood, which has had a positive influence on organizational success as well. Additionally, interviewee B has received compliments of being a fair, compassionate, empathetic, trustworthy, and unbiased leader.

When interviewee B was interviewed about their perceptions of good and bad leadership, the responses were similar to the replies received from the commissioning company's executive. According to interviewee B, good and effective leadership is about the ability to remain as a supportive, coaching, trustworthy, reassuring, and secure leader. By utilizing the features pointed out, interviewee B believes that it will help an employee strengthen their work identity and build their occupational confidence. Additionally, by applying empathy and emotional intelligence can be highly beneficial for modern leaders. On the other hand, according to interviewee B, attributes of bad leadership could be represented by exploiting authority destructively, by trying to intimidate or frighten employees with their executive position. Moreover, interviewee B perceives arrogant behavior from leaders to being a sign of incompetence and poor knowledge of effective leadership.

Also, if a leader does not listen or acknowledge their employees opinions, perspectives, or concerns, it may be very destructive and harmful. According to interviewee B, typically a leader who does not value their employees opinions, is also a leader who does not trust nor respect their employees.

During the conversation, interviewee B enlightened their perceptions and thoughts about emotional intelligence and empathy. As a leader in a larger organization, they perceive emotional intelligence to being a part of building a genuine connection with each employee, getting to know them extensively and building a trustworthy bond. Interestingly, likewise with the commissioning company's executive, interviewee B pointed out that listening a major part of emotional intelligence. They mention, that listening to employees is particularly important, to receive a fundamental comprehension to their ideas, concerns, and visions. Correspondingly, empathy is a vital element for building a strong connection. According to interviewee B, empathy is about validating employees emotional standpoints and trying to sense the circumstances around them. Interviewee B believes that both emotional intelligence and empathy are vital tools for effective and modern leadership.

Similarly, to the in-depth interview with the commissioning company's executive, also interviewee B acknowledges that employee well-being is extremely important. If an employee feels unwell long-term, it is likely that they might resign from their occupation, which is an unfortunate obstacle and extra cost for an organization. Interviewee B believes that in the modern world, employees have several possibilities to choose from, which is why organizations should invest in employees to ensure the retention. As a continuation, investing in employee well-being and effective leadership is a competitive advantage for an organization, as employees are more unlikely to leave their work positions if they feel pleased, supported, and valued in their occupation. The visions and responses of interviewee B are remarkably similar to the data gathered in part 2.2 and specifically in part 2.2.1. Interviewee B has also witnessed firsthand, how unemphatic and lack of emotional intelligence can destroy a work community, increase significantly sick leaves, and raise employee turnover. Specifically fear-based leadership and exploiting authority adversely can be very harmful and cause a toxic work environment.

Suggestions interviewee B would give other leaders, of how to foster emotional intelligence and empathy in leadership methods, would be to acknowledge their position, however keeping mind that a leader's most vital task is to serve, support and help employees. Being a leader is not about being on a pedestal and having authority, it is about being a genuine and compassionate leader, who has the ability to lead, support, serve and coach a team. Interviewee B also emphasizes, that leaders should remain open minded, effectively communicative, and transparent.

4.2.2   In-depth interview 3: employee perspective in private healthcare

As mentioned prior, the employee perspective is particularly valuable and significant to the research conducted in this thesis, due to the apparent reason that employee viewpoints and experiences are useful information, as it will provide an outlook from the opposite section, and it may assist leaders understanding the importance of the research matter. The first in-depth interview with an employee was conducted on July 17th, 2022, through a direct live meeting. The employee, who was interviewed, has worked in private healthcare for the past thirty years and has broad experience of working in subordinate occupations. Yet, it is crucial to mention, that the interviewee was not linked nor associated in any circumstance with the commissioning company, as they operate in an entirely different region and in separate branches of healthcare. The interviewee will be referred to as interviewee C. Due to the similar reasons represented in previous in-depth interviews, also interviewee C wishes to remain anonymous. Also, interviewee C has worked, in addition to private healthcare for thirty years, as well in other occupations for ten years, which sums up to a total of forty work years' experience as an employee.

Interviewee C would describe themselves as a dedicated, hardworking, precise, and professional individual. Their overall experience of interviewee C working as an employee has been understandably very varying and diverse. However, interviewee C mentioned quickly, that working in healthcare can be occasionally distressing and demanding, which is why they perceive their occupation and industry as challenging at times.

When interviewee C was questioned about their visions of a great and effective leader from an employee's point of view, they replied that great leadership is about trusting employees,

and their ideas, visions, and decision-making process. Also, in their opinion, remaining as an unbiased and fair leader is significant. As a continuation, interviewee C was questioned about empathetic leadership and whether they have experienced it from they current or previous leaders, interviewee C confirms that they have encountered empathetic leadership. They describe empathetic leadership as a natural support, which has helped enormously with connecting work life to personal life. An empathetic leader has understood the limitations of a personal life circumstance and its impact on work, which has made interviewee C feel at ease and secure. Interestingly, when interviewee C was asked about whether they have experienced emotionally intelligent leadership in their current or previous positions, they quickly reply that they have not encountered emotional intelligent leadership considerably during their work history. Interviewee perceives emotional intelligence as a modern and new attribute, which has not been valued as much in the past, as it is currently.

Interviewee C explains that generations have evolved, and that they unfortunately have had to experience ineffective leadership in the past, as they have worked for several decades and seen diverse leadership methods, of which most have been unsuccessful and even harmful. Interviewee C explains that ineffective and terrible leadership methods have a tendency of being linked to lack of trust. Bad leadership can be observed if a leader makes assumptions and accusations, without any evident proof. The most harmful approach a leader can have, is to vent their personal misery onto employees. Interviewee C emphasizes, that they have witnessed all of the mentioned ineffective leadership approaches, with dreadful consequences, such as generating into a toxic work environment, in which employees feel distressed and unwell. Interviewee C also mentions that lack of effective leadership abilities, has affected dedication and motivation of several staff members, which has caused an increase in employee turnover.

When interviewee C was asked about their experiences with unempathetic and non-emotional intelligent leadership, they confirm that they have had several encounters with unempathetic leadership, specifically during the occurred Covid-19 pandemic. Their leader did not comprehend the concerns of employees, regarding the health risk the pandemic caused, and simultaneously ignored and invalidated all of the worries employees had. According to interviewee C, this had a tremendously negative impact on the trustworthiness

of their leader. They also mention that the lack of empathy and emotional intelligence is a key reason, why employees tend to exchange jobs, specifically in the healthcare industry. If leaders lack empathy and emotional intelligence, it is likely that an employee will not bring up any of their concerns or innovative ideas, as they fear that they will be not acknowledged or valued. Instead, employees choose to exchange workplaces and seek for compassion from other locations.

On the bright side, interviewee C does acknowledge how positively emotional intelligence and empathy would have on employee dedication and motivation, in addition to employees also feeling well and secure in the occupations. Evidently, interviewee C does encourage leaders to try and educate themselves on empathy and emotional intelligence, to become successful and effective leaders.

4.2.3   In-depth interview 4: employee perspective in a larger organization

The author strongly believes that a second in-depth interview with another employee perspective would be beneficial, to provide an even and equal outcome, by interviewing two leaders and two employees. For the second in-depth interview with an employee, the author selected to interview an employee who has extensive experience of working in subordinate positions, in a larger organization. The interview was conducted on July 19th, 2022, through a face-to-face meeting. Equally, to other in-depth interviews, also the last in-depth interview was conducted anonymously, which is why individualized information, which could be linked back to a specific individual or organization, will not be introduced. The second employee interviewed will be referred to as interviewee D.

Interviewee D has worked in large organizations for the past fifteen years, mostly in subordinate roles as a standard employee, without any executive responsibilities. Interviewee D has worked in various industries, which is why they provide an extensive outlook on employee experiences as a valuable addition to the research. Interviewee D describes themselves as a dedicated, hardworking, and social employee, who is always willing to assist colleagues and superiors. Their overall experience in subordinate roles has been diverse, as they have encountered both positive and negative situations in various work environments.

When interviewee D was asked about the thoughts about good leadership, from an employee perspective, they swiftly responded that good and effective leadership in the modern world is about having transparent and open communication, the ability of making clear-cut choices, trusting in employees and provide the opportunity for employees to maintain self-leadership in their tasks. According to interviewee D, all of these qualities go hand in hand and support one another. For instance, if a leader does not trust their employee, it is obvious that employee self-leadership cannot occur. Similarly, open, and transparent communication is linked to a trustworthy connection between a leader and an employee, encapsulates interviewee D.

In contrast, interviewee D's outlook on ineffective and poor leadership can be noticed, when a leader is condemning employees and does not appear to value their staff. According to interviewee D, if an employee makes a mistake, it is crucial for a leader to acknowledge the mistake in private and take partially the responsibility of the actions caused by the mistake. If a leader publicly puts the blame on a specific employee without taking accountability, they will cause damage on the employees' work-identity, their occupational confidence, and their trustworthy bond. It is essential for a leader to discuss the possible mistake in private and ensure a new strategy for improving the whole team, so that the mistake will not be replicated.

Interestingly, interviewee D also mentions that lack of leadership skills can be represented when changes occur in an organization. Interviewee D believes that is crucial for a leader to lead with their own example. For instance, during an organizational change, it is vital for leaders to be exemplary in change management, by accepting the modifications and innovative approaches with a positive and encouraging attitude, to ensure a healthier change process. Additionally, interviewee D believes that it is crucial for a leader to be confident in their occupation, by having the ability to make clear choices and not be indecisive. Indecisiveness can be damaging for organizational communication, as vague policies and uncertain decisions can cause extensive problems for employees to operate accordingly.

As the conversation moves to discussing empathetic and emotionally intelligent leadership, interviewee D contemplates for a brief moment before replying, until interviewee D

highlights how important both empathetic and emotionally intelligent leadership is, and specifically in the modern world, due the rapid changes and uncertainties globally. Interviewee D mentions, that they have an empathetic and emotionally intelligent leader in their current work environment, who acknowledges and understands the difference between work hours and leisure. Additionally, they perceive an emotionally intelligent leader to be a superior, who understands and supports employees in emotional circumstances, validates employees experiences and does not dismiss employees thoughts. An empathic leader, according to interviewee D, is an executive who wants to build a healthy and trustworthy connection with their employees, additionally valuing employees opinions. To do so, a leader must understand employees perspectives and thoughts, specifically by being compassionate and supportive in all circumstances.

The benefits of emotional intelligent and empathetic leadership, based on interviewee D's perceptions, are increased motivation and dedication to work related tasks, in addition to decreasing sick-leaves and employee turnover. Interviewee D explains that they have witnessed several situations, in which a leader has entirely invalidated an employee in a serious matter, which caused the employee to be on a long-term sick leave. Additionally, the unfortunate encounter had a reflection to other staff members, as their faith and trust in their leader was shattered, based on the reaction and actions a colleague faced with the supervisor. The other staff members assumed, understandably, that the same leader would react similarly, if they were to be in a comparable circumstance. Additionally, the entire team was terrified of bringing up any of their own thoughts, ideas, or visions during the process, in fear or being rejected and perceived negatively. As a reflection of the harmful leadership method, the dedication and motivation of employees was diminished significantly, which had an additional impact on organizational success and results. Interviewee D mentions, that their colleague's unfortunate encounter was the primary reason, why they also decided to exit the organization and switch career paths. Interviewee D summarizes that harmful, fear-based leadership is their sense, the complete opposite of emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership, as fear-based leadership has severe consequences in several aspects, and emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership is conversely highly beneficial.

When questioned about the qualities of an ideal, modern leader, interviewee D stated that an openly communicative leader, who has the ability to transfer information transparently in both negative and positive circumstances would be ideal attributes of a good leader. In addition, from an employee's perspective, it would be significant that a trustworthy bond would be built, in which the employee feels secure and valued by their superior. A trustworthy connection would also ensure an employee that their leader supports them in all conditions and encourages them to take responsibility and conduct self-leadership.

4.2.4 An analysis on the collected data from the in-depth interviews

Based on all four in-depth interviews, in which the primary interviewee was the commissioning company's executive, all of the in-depth interviews provided insightful information and vital evidence for the conducted overall research. Additionally, the in-depth interviews acknowledged the problem statement, and specifically highlighted the importance of emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership. Fascinatingly, all of the in-depth interviewee's responses and thoughts were rather consistent. For instance, the methods and experiences of both leaders were comparable, as both leaders acknowledged the importance of effective and transparent communication, in addition to having a coaching and supportive approach to their leadership methods. The author noticed several similarities in both leaders viewpoints and experiences, although both of the leaders have worked in varying industries and are not associated in any sense. The author believes that both leaders have a similar mentality of leadership, which is very effective in the modern world.

When analyzing the experiences of both employees through the in-depth interview, differences can be noticed. For instance, interviewee C, whose occupation is in private healthcare, working in a subordinate role, highlights the importance of empathy and how occasional lack of it in leadership within healthcare environments, can be distressing. Interviewee C has an extensive history of working as an employee, which refers to the fact that they have worked for several decades and have had to witness harmful approaches, which are modernly known to be outdated and ineffective. Interviewee C also highlighted that the lack of empathy from leaders during the uncertainty of the occurred covid-19 pandemic, was detrimental. Similarly, interviewee D also highlighted how outdated, fear-

based leadership methods can cause major damage to an organization, as it can have severe consequences by the decrease of employee motivation and dedication, in addition to the negative impact on employee well-being, causing sick-leaves and increasing employee turnover.

The commissioning company's executive made an insightful and importance declaration during the in-depth interview: a new employee is an investment and package-deal, in which all their experiences, emotions, qualities and traumas come along with them. More precisely, a leader must understand that each employee is an individual, who comes along with their own, unique history. The author considers the notion presented by the commissioning company's executive is very innovative, insightful and vital, which may be beneficial for other leaders and/or aspiring leaders to contemplate on. Additionally, as the thought presented by the commissioning company's executive, of emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership being a competitive advantage is captivating, as it could be viewed as a new motive for other organizations to consider.

To conclude the thoughts and visions all participants had for their ultimate leaders in the in-depth interviews, it is notable that an ideal leader in the modern world, in their perception, would be an empathetic, openly communicative, transparent, genuinely compassionate and supportive superior, who is willing to receive and give feedback. Additionally, the importance of knowing how to listen as a leader was pointed out as a highly valuable attribute.

4.3   Survey results

The survey, which was conducted in this specific research, was designed for all participants, who have worked as an employee, in a subordinate role, in which they have been led and managed by a superior. The questions presented in the survey were designed to be straightforward, comprehendible, and easy to follow along. As mentioned in part 3.4, all questions were presented in the survey in the accurate order, which can be found in Appendix 3. All additional information of the survey can be obtained from part 3.4, in addition to the data management plan in Appendix 5 and complete survey results in Appendix 4.

The survey was published on July 17th, 2022, and it remained open for a two-week period, from July 17th to July 31st, 2022. The survey was offered and available to approximately 500 individuals, and sent through different digital platforms such as LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, and Google Mail. The survey was promoted by highlighting the anonymity ja security of the survey, as it did not collect any personalized data nor could any responses be linked back to any specific respondent. Additionally, the author also highlighted the lightness of the survey, as the survey would only take standardly five minutes to respond to.

The total number of collected responses was 34, which was 6.8 % responses from the overall individuals whom to the survey was available to, if the estimated audience was 500 individuals. In total, the link was opened 90 times, however all of the individuals who started responding (34) did finish the survey up to compliance. The importance of highlighting the compliance number, is to correspond to author's attempt to create an easy, straightforward, and simplistic survey, which could be replied to on a low threshold. The author believes that the lack of responses could be reasoned by the sensitive topic which can be intimidating, a short time-period for collecting responses (14 days) and for timing of the survey, which was is middle of the hectic summer holiday period, in mid-July 2022. However, for all of the questions represented in the survey, the author received very insightful information to support the problem statement and importance of the research.

The first question was designed to pursue for information about the number of years of work experience the respondents have. The majority (32%) have worked as an employee for 5-10 years, which after 27% of respondents had worked in subordinate roles for 10-15 years and 26% had worked as an employee for over 15 years. Results are demonstrated in Picture 1.
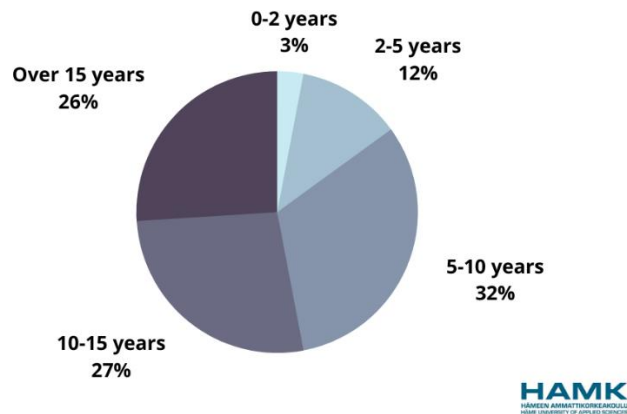
Picture 1. Results on graph for Q1, designed and created by the author.

The second question was designed to jump directly into the topic of the research: how important the respondents perceive good leadership in correlation to their personal well-being at work, as an employee. The question was conducted in a scaled option, with 1 representing as "not important at all" and 10 as "extremely important". The average of the total answers was 9,4 which indicated that the majority of respondent do perceive good leadership as a major influence on to their personal well-being at work, as an employee.
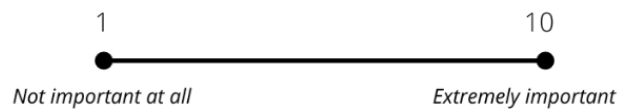
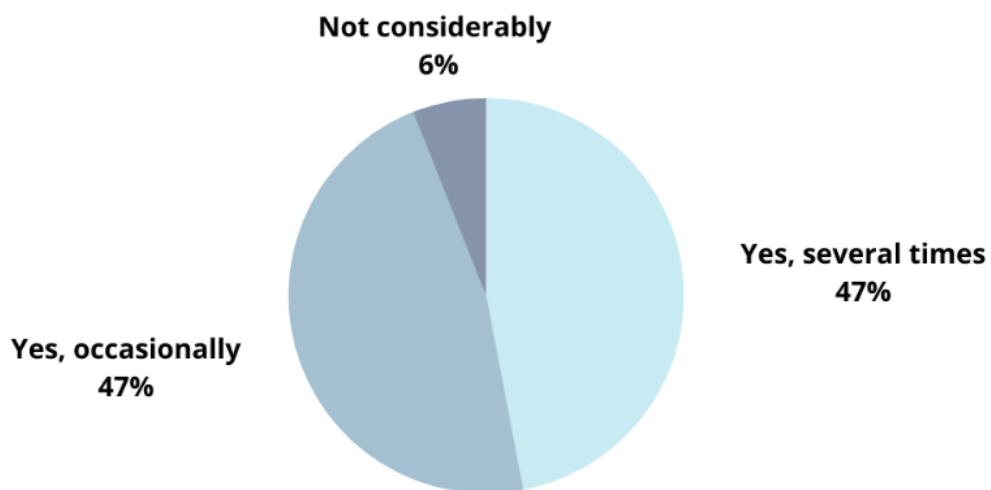Picture 2. Results on Q2, designed and created by the author.

The third question was designed to evaluate the attributes employees find appealing, when considering an ideal leader. The respondents could choose three options. As there were 34 respondents, out of them all there was 95 choices made in question 3. Out of all the choices, option C "an empathetic leader, who understands you as an individual and your personal circumstance with compassion and is flexible" was the most prevalent response, with an outstanding result of 74%, signifying several respondents had chosen this topic as a key attribute for an ideal leader. The second, most common response was option A with 68% "a leader who trusts you and your individual decision making", which highlights the assumption presented earlier, that trust is a major aspect for effectual leadership, specifically in the employee perspective. The third most commonly admired feature of an ideal leader was option B, with a result of 53% as a respondents choice. Option B refers to "an effectively communicative leader, who knows how to communicate in a proper and efficient manner and sets out goals straightforwardly". In picture 3, all results are represented.
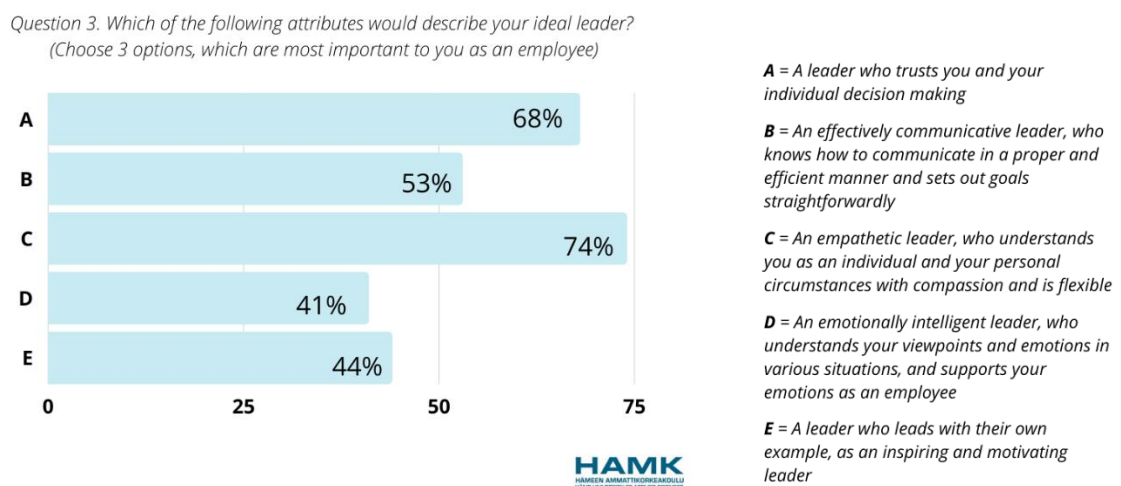
Picture 3. Results on Q3, graph designed and created by the author.

The fourth question was yet again designed to be simplistic, straight to the point, however remaining even so meaningful, as it evaluated whether the respondents have or have not encountered unpleasant and/or unsupportive leadership. The question was a multiple-choice, in which one answer could be selected out of four options, "yes, several times", "yes occasionally", "not considerably" and "not at all". The question and the responses were very supportive for the conducted research, as out of all respondents 94% replied affirmatively that they have faced unpleasant and/or unsupportive leadership. 47% responded "yes, several times" and another 47% replied "yes, occasionally", leaving a 6% of respondents stating that they had not considerably encountered unpleasant and/or unsupportive leadership. Results can be identified from picture 4.

Question 4. Have you ever experienced unpleasant and/or unsupportive leadership?

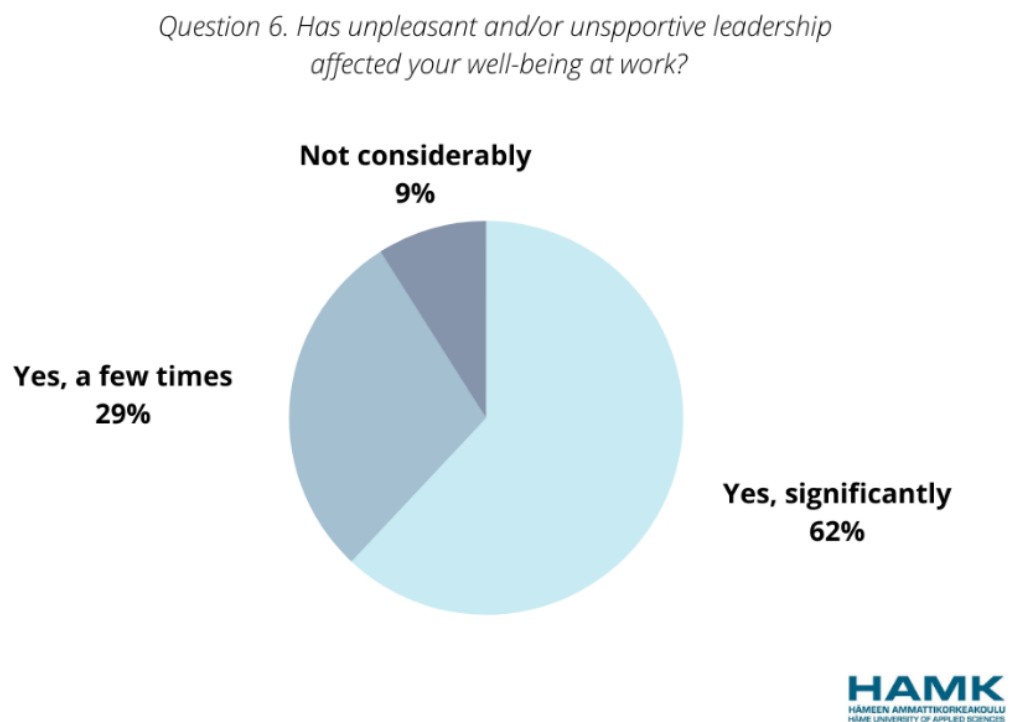Picture 4. Results on Q4, graph designed and created by the author.

As a continuation, question 5 in the survey evaluated whether unpleasant and/or unsupportive leadership has affected the respondents motivation or dedication at work. The options were formed into multiple choices, in which one option could be selected. Similarly, to question 4, the four different options were offered from "yes, significantly", "yes, occasionally", "not considerably" and "not at all". From the responses, a considerable majority of respondents with 76% declared that unpleasant and/or unsupportive had significantly affected their motivation or dedication at work. Additionally, 21% also responded that unpleasant and/or unsupportive leadership had occasionally affected their motivation or dedication at work, which indicates that 97% of all respondents confirmed that unpleasant and/or unsupportive leadership has impacted their motivation and dedication. Yet, 3% of respondents stated that unpleasant and/or unsupportive leadership had not affected their motivation or dedication at work. In picture 5 all results are presented.
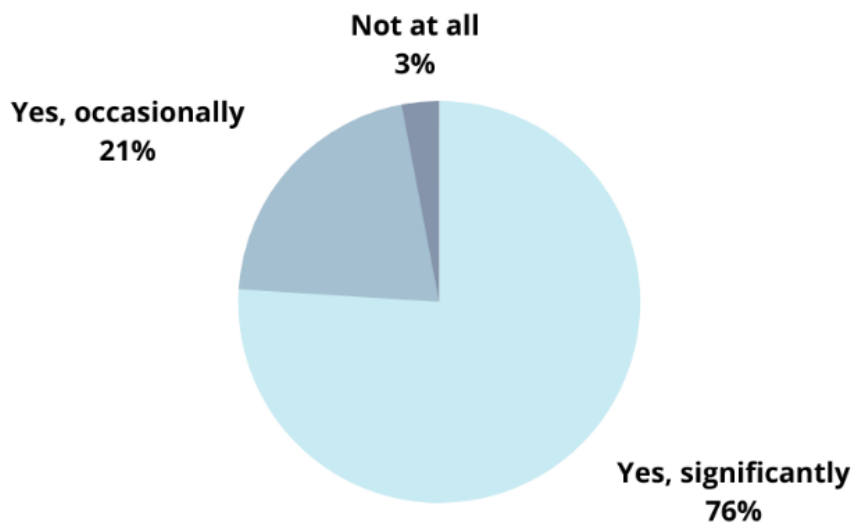
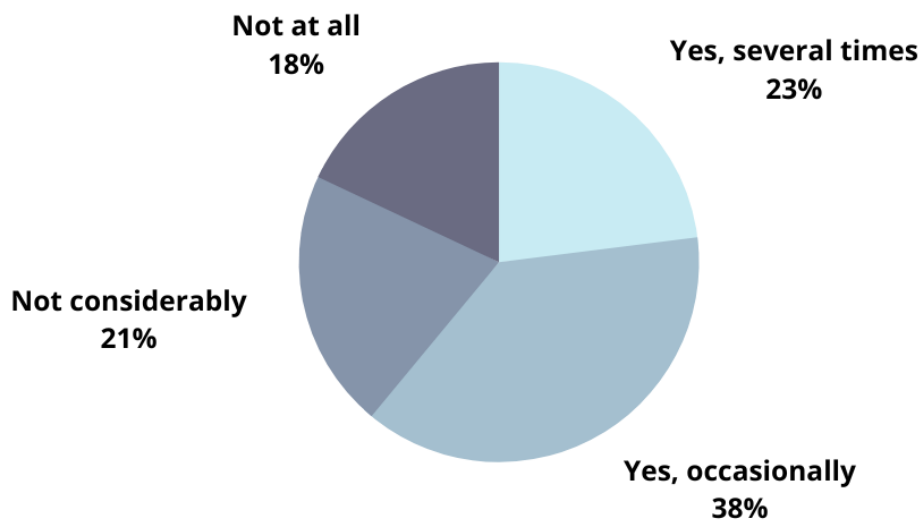Picture 5. Results on Q5, graph designed and created by the author.

As a natural sequel of the similar topic, in question 6 the author wanted to seek for information, whether unpleasant and/or unsupportive leadership had impacted the respondents well-being at work. The question form and options offered, were analogous to Q4 and Q5. Interestingly, 62% of respondents replied that affirmatively that unpleasant and/or unsupportive leadership had affected their well-being at work several times. However, in addition to that, also 29% of respondents stated that unpleasant and/or unsupportive leadership had affected a few times to their well-being at work, which implies that in total 91% of the respondents affirmed that unpleasant and/or unsupportive leadership has impacted their well-being at work. Nevertheless, 9% of respondents replied that unpleasant and/or unsupportive leadership had not considerably affected their occupational well-being. In picture 6 below, all results can be obtained.

Picture 6. Results on Q6, graph designed and created by the author.

In question 7, the author attempts to continue the investigation of the same matter, whether the respondents have encountered intimidating leadership, as for instance with fear or authority, as an example fear-based leadership. Question 7 is also a multiple choice, with four options to choose one from. The options are similar to the question presented previously with four options from yes to no. 38% of the respondents indicated that they have occasionally encountered leadership, which potentially tried to intimidate them as an employee. 23% of the respondents had a sturdier experience of facing intimidating leadership several times. 21% of the respondents stated that they had not encountered intimidating leadership considerably, and 18% had not at all. The responses are somewhat equal on yes and no in total, with 61% in total affirmed that they had encountered intimidating leadership and 39% had not. Note picture 7 below to see all results.

Question 7. Have you ever experienced leadership, which has tried
to intimidate you as an employee, with fear or authority? (E.g., fear-based leadership)

Picture 7, results on Q7. Graph designed and created by the author.

The survey continued to evaluate the experiences of the respondents with emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership. In question 8, the author wanted to investigate whether the respondents had experienced empathetic leadership in their current or previous occupations as employees. The question was presented similarly to the previous questions, in the form of multiple choice, in which four options are offered from which one

option can be selected. Fascinatingly, the majority of the respondents, with 55%, had occasionally experienced empathetic leadership. Additionally, 36% of the respondents had experienced empathetic leadership several times, which presents a total of 91% affirmative responses for experiencing empathetic leadership several times or occasionally. Yet, 9% of the respondents stated that they had not considerably encountered empathetic leadership. In picture 8 all responses can be similarly seen below.

Question 8. Have you experienced empathetic leadership in your current or previous workplace? (An empathetic leader: a leader who understands your viewpoint, personal circumstances and offers empathy always when required)

Not considerably
9%

Yes, several times
36%

Yes, occasionally
55%

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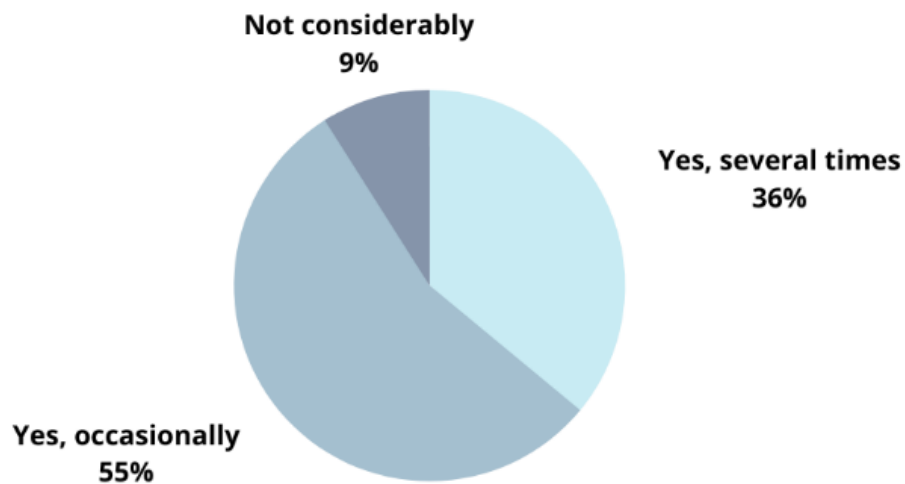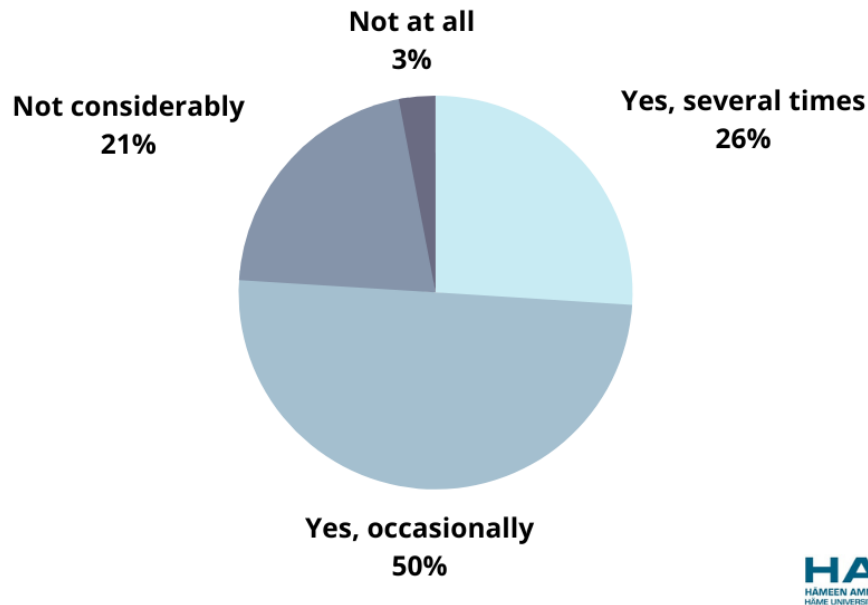
Picture 8. Results on Q8, graph designed and created by the author.

Evidently, the author also wished to seek for data based on the respondents experiences, whether they have encountered emotionally intelligent leadership, in addition to empathetic leadership. The question was represented similarly, as the previous questions, with the option to choose from four different selections, which indicate yes or no. 50% of the respondents affirmed that they have experienced emotionally intelligent leadership occasionally. In addition, 26% of the respondents stated that they had encountered emotionally intelligent leadership several times. In total, 76% of respondents confirmed that they have had emotionally intelligent leaders in their current or earlier occupations. However, 21% of the respondents noted that they had not experienced emotionally intelligent leadership considerably and 3% indicated that they have not at all, leaving a total

of 24% of the respondents not having the experience of emotionally intelligent leadership. The results can be seen in picture 9 below.

Question 9. Have you experienced emotionally intelligent leadership in your current or previous workplace? (An emotionally intelligent leader: a leader who understands you, your feelings, concerns, thoughts and validates your emotions as an employee)

Picture 9. Results on Q9, graph designed and created by the author.

The final questions of the survey (Q10-Q12) were scaled questions, in which the responses were collected with a scaling method. All the questions were offered with a scale of 1-10, with 1 implying the lowest importance rate on the matter and 10 indicating the highest importance rate on the matter. For question 10, the author attempted to find the importance rate of empathetic leadership, according to the respondents thoughts. The average rate on the collected responses was 8,9. The lowest value a respondent had chosen was 5,0 and the highest was 10,0, which indicates that all 34 respondents do perceive empathetic meaningful and valuable, however in varying extents. In picture 10, all results can be discovered.

Question 10. Please indicate how important would you value empathetic leadership as an employee?

1   10

Not important at all   *Extremely important*
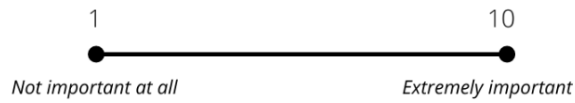
Min Value	Max Value	Average	Median	Sum	Standard Deviation
5,0	10,0	8,9	9,0	304,0	1,3

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Picture 10. Results on Q10, graph designed and created by the author.

For question 11, the author examined the importance rate of emotionally intelligent leadership, from an employee perspective. Likewise, to Q10, the average rate of the importance on emotionally intelligent leadership was 8,9 according to the respondents, which is the exact average, what was collected for Q10. However, in question 11, the minimum importance value a respondent had chosen was 6,0 and the highest was 10,0, which indicated that the respondents perceive emotionally intelligent leadership slightly more valuable than empathetic leadership. All results can be seen in picture 11.

Question 11. Please indicate how important would you value emotionally intelligent leadership as an employee?

1   10
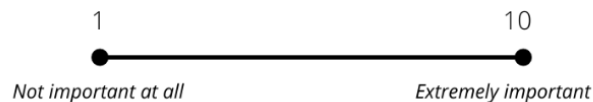
*Not important at all*   *Extremely important*

Min Value	Max Value	Average	Median	Sum	Standard Deviation
6,0	10,0	8,9	9,0	301,0	1,2

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Picture 11. Results on Q11, graph designed and created by the author.

The remaining question of the survey was question 12, in which respondents were asked to give a scaled value of their perception, whether they consider emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership important to ensure a non-toxic, supportive, and motivating work environment. Interestingly, the results on the question 12 were impressive. The overall average importance rate of the respondents was 9,5. The minimum value a respondent had chosen was 6,0 and the highest 10,0 which were comparable results to Q11, however as the average value is higher in question 12 than in Q11, the result indicates that more respondents had chosen a higher importance rate for the matter. In picture 12, all results for Q12 can be discovered.
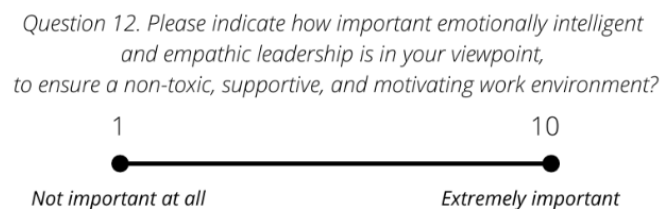
Picture 12. The results on Q12, graph designed and created by the author.

4.3.1 Analysis on the survey results

The examination of the perceptions of employees on emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership, in addition to exploring employee experiences and needs for effectual and modern leadership, through a survey was an effective, supportive, and valuable addition to the conducted research, as it provided the assumed sustenance the author was seeking for. Despite the fact that the survey only collected 34 responses, the responses still maintained consistent in the data collection. The responses were relatively stable and the majority of respondents had the similar experiences, encounters, and interests, which was significant for

the conducted research, as the author wished to find supportive data through a primary research method. Through the data collected, it is transparent that effectual and modern leadership does require compassion, empathy, understanding, and validating of emotions.

The respondents acknowledged that there is a link between excellent leadership and employee well-being in Q2, by providing an average importance rate of 9,4 from the respondents. Correspondingly, unpleasant and unsupportive has affected the well-being of the majority of the respondents, with affirmation of 91% in total of the respondents stating that they have occasionally or several times encountered bad leadership impacting their well-being, in Q6. 74% of the respondents also replied in Q3, that empathetic leadership would be an ideal attribute of a leader, which indicated the value of empathetic leadership in the modern world. In addition to empathy, the respondents would also value leaders who trust their employees and their independent decision making. Interestingly, the respondents had encountered more empathetic leadership occasionally or several times with a total of 91%, than they have experienced emotionally intelligent leadership, which had a total of 71% for occasional or continuous emotionally intelligent leadership. Overall, the results indicated the importance of emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership in the modern world.

When analyzing the success and comprehensiveness of the survey, the outcome was adequate. The feedback received from a few of the respondents was rather positive and encouraging. However, when considering terminology, the author supposes that empathy as a term is more familiar to the majority of people, as emotional intelligence on the other hand is a modern concept. Additionally, emotional intelligence and empathy can possibly be confused with one another, as they have similar characteristics, however emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize own or other's emotions, and empathy is about having the capability of understanding other's circumstances and emotional standpoints (Di Lorenzo et al., 2019). Yet, the author preferred to add a descriptive definition of both terms into the questions, to ensure that the respondents comprehend the inquiry straightforwardly. In addition, the author was delighted, that all 34 respondents finished the survey without difficulty, which supposedly indicates that the survey was straightforward and easy to respond to.

4.4   Examining evidence from a prior case study

As secondary research, the author chose to utilize existing case studies on the specific research matter, to gather more insights and solid evidence for the overall study. The author chose to seek for modern and recent case studies, as the topic is also researched from a current perspective.

A modern case study, from 2018 and conducted by Gina Abudi's enterprise Abudi Consulting Group, was gathered by utilizing of emotional intelligence, to help managers succeed. The client of Abudi's consulting business was a pharmaceutical organization, which was experiencing inefficient leadership and complaints from employees. The managers were lacking with inconsistency of giving feedback to all team members, as they had a tendency to provide feedback to only specific, chosen individuals. The method caused problems with inclusivity and team spirit. The overall leadership method also caused an increase of employee turnover, in addition to emotional setbacks and outbursts by the managers out of overwhelm and frustration. (Abudi, 2018)

Abudi's professionals took the initiative to start evaluating the missing elements and skills, which the managers were lacking, instead of eliminating the mid-leveled managers. The evaluation acknowledged that it was evident, that the managers lacked the necessary skills of how to lead and communicate effectively. Abudi consultants made a 360 assessment of the current situation and provided a full report on the missing elements of effective communication, engagement with employees and opportunities for staff development. Along with the report, Abudi professionals provided their recommendations of necessary steps to nurture the situation. Additionally, Abudi consulting group explained and communicated the reasons for change, in addition to communicating with the employees to ensure their participation of the process. The consultants communicated through group meetings, department meetings, focus groups, daily conversations, regular e-mails and one-to-one discussions, which were scheduled prior. Additionally, the consultants sent a survey to the staff, to gather more insights to the matter. (Abudi, 2018)

The results of the investigation provided essential data for the consultants. Firstly, the engagement of the staff for the survey was high, as the consultants received 498 replies out

of five hundred sent surveys. Additionally, the survey highlighted key information, as for instance a majority of the current mid-leveled leaders had been promoted to their position from not having management experience precedingly, which caused further frustration amongst managers and explained the reason for the lack of leadership skills. The frustration was noticed through the outbursts on employees and by managers having to spend more time on completing their work tasks. Additionally, the survey and investigation indicated that several of the mid-level leaders had not remained unbiased, as they have chosen specific individuals as their favorite subordinates, spending more time communicating with specific individuals instead of all employees. The lack of emotional intelligence impacted their ability to interact, communicate and engage with employees overall. (Abudi, 2018)

Abudi consultants provided a strategic plan and program for the organization to heal and improve from the situation, specifically by utilizing emotional intelligence. The program included opportunities for the managers to communicate effectively, learning to deal with and accept conflicts, collaborative work across the organization, collaborative problem solving, emphasizing on listening and engaging, establishing through building stronger connections, learning to manage problematic personalities, and by inspiring and influencing others positively. The program lasted for six months, in which they conducted online meetings, monthly virtual sessions, problem solving steps through virtual platforms and by conducting cohorts once every three months. Additionally, the consultants offered coaching for the managers in smaller groups. (Abudi, 2018)

The results of the program indicated success, as the organization shared that they have started to resolve problems independently and effectively, practicing the new skills, and building a stronger network together, with collaborative work. The participation during the program was also dedicated, which presumably indicated employees were devoted to find a solution for the obstacles. Overall, the addition of emotional intelligence was viewed as beneficial and facilitated the organization (Abudi, 2018). Similarly, to the study collected during this thesis, the importance and knowledge of effective leadership skills was highly represented. The case study acknowledged and supported the notion, that with the lack of knowing how to lead employees in the modern organizational world, can be destructive even in a larger organization.

5   Recommendations

5.1   Opportunities for leaders to enhance and cultivate emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership

Despite the fact that emotional intelligence and empathy may be a part of an individual's natural personality, there are ways how emotional intelligence and empathy can be practiced. For instance, a leader can practice their capability of understanding other's emotions, by attempting to understand their own emotions during stressful or upsetting situations. By understanding, paying attention and recognizing your own emotions, it is easier to comprehend and validate others emotional standpoints as well.

Additionally, according to Psych Central and author Cathy Cassata and medical reviewer PsyD Bethany Juby, practicing self-reflection with friends and family on empathy, adaptability, flexibility, and co-operative skills, can be beneficial to see how the capabilities are perceived by loved ones. Receiving feedback and contemplation can help understanding personal development areas, and ways how to foster emotional intelligence in executive positions. Additionally, practicing other alternative ways would be beneficial. Professionals would recommend trying mindfulness practices. According to Cassata, mindfulness may assist advocating self-awareness and understanding emotional viewpoints more exclusively (Cassata, 2021). Mindfulness can be trained through educating on the matter by reading, attending courses, listening to audiobooks or podcasts, watching videos, or by performing independent exercises.

In addition to reflecting with loved ones and training mindfulness, in order to become more emotionally intelligent, interestingly leaders may find it beneficial to train skills to become more empathetic. According to Dolly Daskal, a key spokesperson for leadership, emphasizes the importance of leaders to learn how to dedicate to listening truly. A leader must listen exclusively, by noticing of all communication from verbal to body language and the tone of voice. It is crucial for leaders to understand, that occasionally it is more beneficial to listen and acknowledge employees, than to speak back or interrupt them. In addition to listening exclusively, it is also important for a leader to be fully present, by decreasing all distractions from the surroundings and giving their undivided attention to their employee, to foster

empathetic and emotionally intelligent leadership. To become an empathetic leader, a leader should invest their time into getting to know their employees, without hesitation or judgment, and remaining unbiased in all scenarios (Daskal, 2018). Overall, having a genuine interest in employees, their well-being, motivation and dedication and combining it into effective communication, will provide results for empathetic and emotionally intelligent leadership. Picture 13 represents a mind-map created by the author, with the collected information from the study, based also on Cathy Cassata's and Lolly Daskal's provided insights.
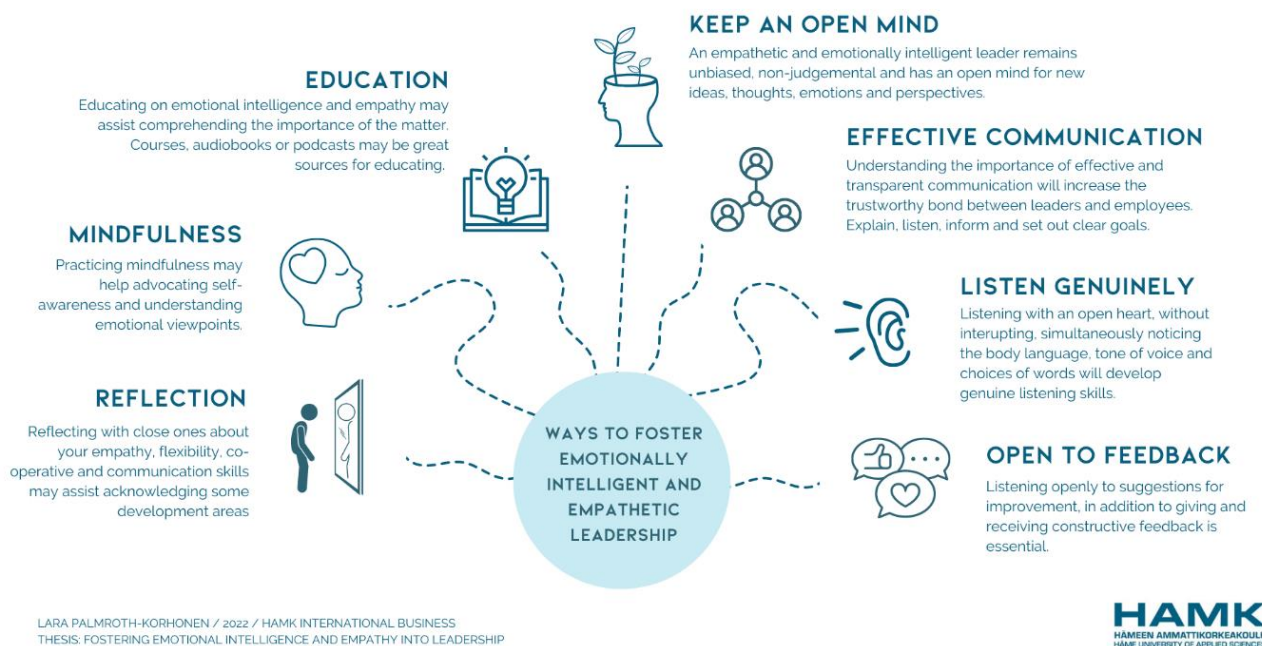
Picture 13. Mind-map on ways how to foster emotional intelligence and empathy in leadership, created by the author. (Cassata, 2021) (Daskal, 2018)

In addition to the key suggestions presented by Dolly Daskal and Cathy Cassata, the author wants to highlight the recommendations made by the commissioning company's CEO and interviewee B during the in-depth interviews, that in order to become an empathetic and emotionally intelligent leader, keeping an open mind and investing time in employees will be very beneficial. Listening and acknowledging an employee's viewpoints without distractions is essential. Additionally, also viewing an employee as an investment and as a human who has their own personal life, could be a thought-provoking and opening paradigm.

5.2 Emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership as a competitive advantage for organizations

As the modern world evolves, organizations are required to stand out and have strong competitive advantages. Based on the research conducted, and specifically in-depth interviews and on the experiences of the commissioning company's executive as a leader, it is transparent that emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership may be a competitive advantage for several organization, as it links to employee retention and dedication, as emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership offers security, compassion, trust and validation of employees. EI and empathy may also outweigh external benefits, such a higher wage or other external advantages.

Emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership is an inexpensive leadership method and approach, which may have significant beneficial results on an organization's overall success. For instance, empathetic organizations operating in sales can close more deals, endorse their sales, and grow more efficiently. Generally, employees in empathetic organizations have a tendency of being more dedicated, productive and have the ability to perform improved collaborative work (Lo, 2020). In addition, empathetic leadership provides the necessary flexibility in the uncertain and evolving world, in which leaders much have the ability to navigate through obstacles and overcome challenges compassionately. Furthermore, leaders must acknowledge what the current generation is lacking and in need of. Empathy represents as a valued and appreciated attribute of modern leadership, with the current generation (Fraser, 2021). As Jane Fraser, who is the president of Citigroup and CEO of Global Consumer Banking and Citi, encapsulates perfectly, "Empathy is the competitive advantage that will separate the winners from the losers." (Fraser, 2021)

Emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership will potentially perform as a competitive advantage in several industries, specifically in the industries in which employee retention is not typically long, which could be for instance healthcare and service industries, as the commissioning company's executive mentioned in the in-depth interview. By investing time and effort into developing into an empathetic and emotionally intelligent leader will benefit the whole organization, in costs, but most importantly in employee well-being and engagement, as the in-depth interviews acknowledged.

5.3 Critical evaluation of empathetic leadership

In addition to all of the several beneficial aspects of emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership, it is crucial to evaluate the disadvantages and possible consequences of the matter. Empathy is known to be linked to helping make considerate, humane and supportive choices, however occasionally empathy may be a drawback. Intermittently, empathy may lead to affecting judgement and decision process, in which a specific individual may benefit more than others around. Also, empathy may have an impact on getting overwhelmed with emotions, as it triggers altruistic impulses, which then affects our judgment abilities to make the appropriate decisions (Hourgaard & Carter, 2018). Additionally, empathy may occasionally also affect the ability to ensure diversity, within a work environment, as empathy may cause a natural instinct to empathize with individuals, who are more similar to one another, instead of everyone. Fascinatingly, empathy may cause unintended discrimination. (Hourgaard & Carter, 2018)

Additionally, both empathy and emotional intelligence may cause moments of overwhelm, in which both attributes may cause distress for leaders. When encountering overstimulation of situations, in which continuous empathy and emotional intelligence is required, it may turn the beneficial attributes into a burden. For instance, if leaders continually listen and encounter situations, in which they have to take in all of the frustration, anger and emotions of their employees, it may exhaust leaders on the long run. More precisely, the continuous overdose of empathy may lead to burnouts of leaders. (Hourgaard & Carter, 2018)

Interestingly, empathy and emotional intelligence may have a dark side, which may cause disadvantages, if a leader gets caught up in overwhelming situations. However, it is crucial to note that both empathy and emotional intelligence separately may have several beneficial effects, and by combining both the advantages will be more beneficial. Empathy together with emotional intelligence will decrease the chances of distress, overwhelming and undesirable scenarios, as emotional intelligence provides the opportunity to control, view and understand emotions more precisely, due to self-awareness being a part of emotional intelligence.

5.4   Overall analysis

The research conducted in this thesis, provided a diverse outlook on the matter. The initial idea of the research was to find valuable and considerable evidence on the importance of emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership, specifically in the modern world, in addition to stating the problem of why the absence of emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership can be harmful and destructive in several aspects.

The research has recognized that the lack of compassion, empathy, identifying emotions, and the ability to control emotional setbacks has a damaging impact on employee well-being, dedication and motivation. Additionally, the employee turnover is likely to increase, if employees do not feel supported, valued or understood. If an employee feels as if their viewpoints or concerns are not relevant in their superiors judgement, it may shatter the trust they have for their leader. Additionally, if leadership lacks emotional intelligence and empathy, it may have a destructing impact on employees collaborative skills with both leaders and other colleagues, as the case study acknowledged. Furthermore, leaders who lack emotional intelligence are more likely to be biased and favor a specific employee over another employee, which may cause extensive problems in the work atmosphere.

Evidently, as the uncertainties and alterations globally with the occurred covid-19 pandemic, warfare in Ukraine and the economic instabilities which may indicate a potential upcoming recession, in addition to several other changes, have caused genuine concerns all over. The observational studies acknowledges that compassionate leadership, which validates employees emotional standpoints, is more essential now than ever before.

The combination of all conducted research and collected data, both qualitative and quantitative, have offered a solid basis and acknowledgement for the matter of the importance of emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership in the modern world. The research provided observations, experiences, opinions, emotional viewpoints and also comparative results.

All of the collected data has remained consistent, indicating that all of the chosen research methods have supported one another and were successful in correlation to the hopes and predications made by the author. The experiences from employees from the in-depth interviews in comparison to the collected data from prior case studies are parallel, providing the desired consistency and acknowledgment of the importance of the research question.

Additionally, whilst comparing the data collected from the in-depth interviews with both leaders, interestingly both leaders had similar outlooks on what is effective, modern leadership and specifically the importance around the matter. Likewise, to the in-depth interviews, the employee survey also corresponded to the similar information provided in the theoretical framework, such as empathy being regarded as a top quality for ideal leadership. Also, the survey and in-depth interviews linked to one another by the fact that fear-based leadership may have extensive and broad destruction on organizations, as it decreases the feeling of inclusivity, trust and appreciation. Due to these reasons, the majority of employees do highly value and appraise emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership, according to the study conducted in this thesis.

On a positive note, according to the survey results, most of the employees have encountered emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership in some extent, however yet still leaving room for improvements. Also, empathy as a phrase is more familiar to most, in comparison to emotional intelligence, as EI remains as a more modern and mysterious characteristic to some. However, the awareness of emotional intelligence is continuously rising, due to its high value. Also, emotional intelligence is a highly intriguing and current discussion topic, which can be educated on from several sources such as literature, case studies, podcasts, videos, interviews and other studies.

6   Conclusion

To encapsulate the conducted research, it is essential to note that the importance of emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership is acknowledged as highly valuable, specifically in the modern and current world. As one of the objectives the commissioning company was hoping from the research, was to recognize the importance of the matter, the research did exceed to represent the intended outcome and correspond to the commissioning company's expectations.

The study identified the research question, problem statement and hypothesis accordingly, providing the presumed outcome on the matter. By combining primary research, in the form of in-depth interviews and a survey, to secondary research from a prior case study and other supportive material, offered an extensive and solid outcome. The end result offered efficient opportunities, insights and methods for current or aspiring leaders to utilize, when fostering compassionate leadership with empathy and emotional intelligence, in addition to explaining specific motives for the matter.

Moreover, the research acknowledged the external benefits of emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership, as it is an inexpensive and effective way for an organization to improve in several aspects. The research attempted to seek for answers, of how beneficial the examined leadership method may be. The research recognized, that by fostering emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership, it presumably will have a positive influence on overall results, increase better dedication and higher motivation from employees, reinforce sales and most importantly, be highly beneficial for employee well-being, in addition to the entire organizational culture. Whilst employees feel secure and dedicated to their employment, the employee turnover will decrease and it will save expenses for the organization in recruitment and on-boarding costs on the long-run.

Furthermore, emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership is also a modern competitive advantage for organizations, as fostering the specific method will improve employees collaborative work, promote employees' occupational confidence and engage employees to their employer and occupation.

As the commissioning company discovered, that specifically in the healthcare industry employee turnover can be extremely high, if employees are not comfortable in their work environment, which is why the commissioning company assumed that their ability to maintain emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership has been a vital competitive advantage for them. Additionally, the study also acknowledged that the evolvement of generations, has impacted to the needs and requirements of leadership. Specifically, millennials do tend to have different outlooks on effectual leadership than the preceding generation, highlighting the importance of non-toxic and supportive work environments, in which flexibility and appreciation is represented.

As the author assumed, the employee perspective was also revealing and supportive for the hypothesis. According to the collected data, employees have had to encounter harmful and unfortunate leadership methods, which has negatively impacted their well-being, motivation, dedication and commitment to remain engaged in a specific organization. In the current world, employees have several employment opportunities and exchanging workplaces appears to be more common modernly, if the work environment is toxic and does not support employee well-being. As discovered in the survey's last question and results, employees perceive emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership essential to ensure a non-toxic, supportive and motivating work environment, with a 9,5 average importance rate up to ten.

The advantages of emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership are higher, than the disadvantages. As the disadvantages include the possibility of leaders being overwhelmed with empathy, is the specific reason why it is crucial for leaders to utilize emotional intelligence together with empathy, as emotional intelligence is partially about the ability to control and understand emotions before they get carried away. The combination of applying emotional intelligence and empathy to leadership methods represents as an effective and efficient approach, for leaders to engage, support, understand and enhance an organization cost effectively, compassionately and in a modern way. The establishment of emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership will potentially have long-run beneficial outcomes for organizations in various industries.

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Appendix 1: Questions for the in-depth interviews for leaders and managers

1. Please give a general description of the years of work experience you have had, and how long have you worked as a leader or manager.
2. How would you describe yourself as a leader (with adjectives)?
3. Can you describe in a few words, your overall experience as a leader?
4. What have you found as the most challenging part of leadership throughout your experience as a leader?
5. What have you found as the easiest part of leadership throughout your experience as a leader?
6. How would your employees describe you as a leader?
7. What do you perceive as the most vital and key features for a modern leader?
8. What attributes might contribute to bad leadership?
9. How do you perceive emotional intelligence on a general level?
10. How important would you value emotional intelligence in leadership, as a leader?
11. How do you perceive empathy on a general level?
12. How important would you value empathy in leadership?
13. How important would you value the well-being of an employee, as a leader?
14. Do you believe that there is a correlation between employee well-being to emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership?
15. Do you believe that there is correlation between employee dedication and motivation to emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership?
16. Do you find yourself as an emotionally intelligent and empathetic leader?
17. How could a leader improve their emotionally intelligent and empathy skills, in your opinion and from your experience?

Appendix 2: Questions for the in-depth interviews for employees working in subordinate roles

1. Please give a general description of the years of work experience you have had, and how long have you worked as an employee?

2. How would you describe yourself as an employee (with adjectives)?

3. Please describe your general experiences as an employee.

4. What sort of attributes could contribute to good leadership in your opinion as an employee.

5. Have you experienced empathic leadership in your current or previous workplaces?

6. Have you experienced emotionally intelligent leadership in your current or previous workplaces?

7. What sort of attributes could contribute to bad leadership in your opinion as an employee.

8. Have you ever found a correlation between bad leadership to your personal motivation or dedication at work?

9. Has bad leadership ever caused you to feel unwell at work?

10. Have you possibly experienced unempathetic or non-emotionally intelligent leadership? If yes, then continue to question 11-12. If no, then continue to question 13.

11. Has unempathetic leadership ever caused you to think about switching workplaces?

12. Has the absence of emotional intelligence of your current or previous leader ever caused you to think about switching workplaces?

13. Would you find emotionally intelligent and empathetic leadership supportive to your personal contribution, dedication, and motivation at work?

14. Have you ever feared to bring up an issue at work to your manager or leader, in the fear of being rejected with your issue and development idea?

15. Could you give a description of your ideal, modern leader.

Appendix 3: Questions for the general survey designed for employees and their perception on empathetic and emotionally intelligent leadership

1. Please indicate the number of years of work experience as an employee.
   - 0-2 years
   - 2-5 years
   - 5-10 years
   - 10-15 years
   - +15 years

2. How important do you perceive good leadership in correlation to your well-being as an employee?
   - Rating from 1-10 (1=not important at all, 10 extremely important)

3. Which of the following attributes would describe your ideal leader? (Choose 3 most important to you as an employee)
   - A leader who trusts you and your decision making
   - Effectively communicative leader, who knows how to communicate in a proper and efficient manner and sets out goals straightforwardly
   - Empathetic, understands you as an individual and your personal circumstances with compassion and is flexible
   - Emotionally intelligent, understands your viewpoints and emotions in various situations, and supports your emotions as an employee
   - A leader who leads with their own example, as an inspiring and motivating leader

4. Have you ever experienced unpleasant or unsupportive leadership or management?
   - Yes, several times
   - Yes, a few times
   - Not considerably
   - Not at all

5. Has unpleasant leadership ever affected your motivation or dedication at work?

   - Yes, significantly

   - Yes, occasionally

   - Not considerably

   - Not at all

6. Have you ever experienced leadership that has tried to intimidate you or make as an employee fear? (Fear-based leadership)

   - Yes, several times

   - Yes, a few times

   - Not considerably

   - Not at all

7. Have you experienced empathic leadership in your current or previous workplace?

   - Yes, several times

   - Yes, a few times

   - Not considerably

   - Not at all

8. Have you experienced emotionally intelligent leadership in your current or previous workplace?

   - Yes, several times

   - Yes, a few times

   - Not considerably

   - Not at all

9. Please indicate how important would you value empathetic leadership as an employee?

   - Rating from 1-10 (1=not important at all, 10 extremely important)

10. Please indicate how important would you value emotionally intelligent leadership as an employee?

   - Rating from 1-10 (1=not important at all, 10 extremely important)

11. Please indicate how important emotionally intelligent and empathic leadership is in your

viewpoint, to ensure a non-toxic, supportive, and motivating work environment?

- Rating from 1-10 (1=not important at all, 10 extremely important)

Appendix 4: Complete results for the survey

1. Please indicate the number of years of work experience you have had as an employee.

Number of respondents: 34
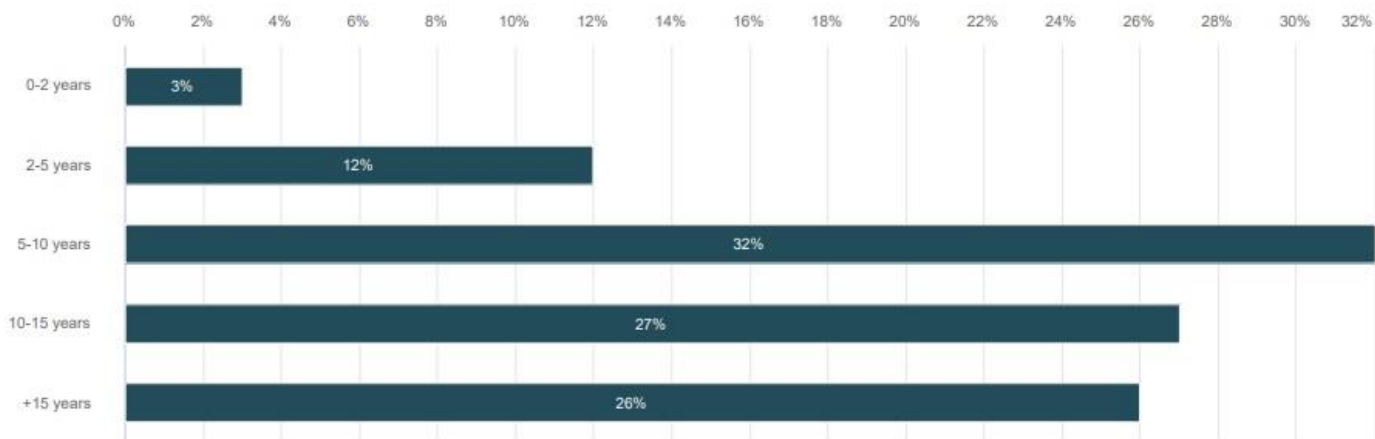
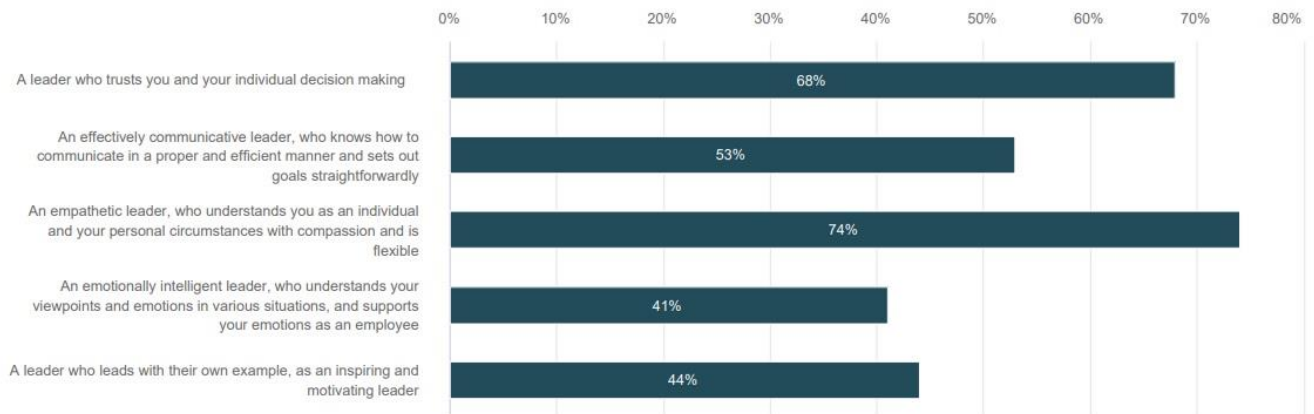|	n	Percent
0-2 years	1	2,9%
2-5 years	4	11,8%
5-10 years	11	32,3%
10-15 years	9	26,5%
+15 years	9	26,5%

2. How important do you perceive good leadership in correlation to your personal well-being at work, as an employee?

Number of respondents: 34

Min value	Max value	Average	Median	Sum	Standard Deviation
6,0	10,0	9,4	10,0	318,0	1,1

3. Which of the following attributes would describe your ideal leader? (Choose 3 options, which are most important to you as an employee)
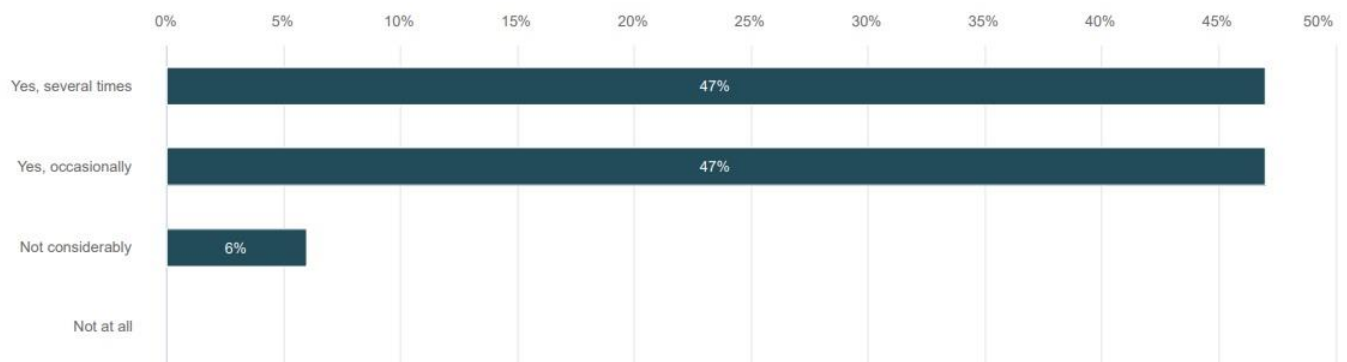
Number of respondents: 34 , selected answers: 95

| | | 0% | 10% | 20% | 30% | 40% | 50% | 60% | 70% | 80% |

A leader who trusts you and your individual decision making — 68%

An effectively communicative leader, who knows how to communicate in a proper and efficient manner and sets out goals straightforwardly — 53%

An empathetic leader, who understands you as an individual and your personal circumstances with compassion and is flexible — 74%

An emotionally intelligent leader, who understands your viewpoints and emotions in various situations, and supports your emotions as an employee — 41%

A leader who leads with their own example, as an inspiring and motivating leader — 44%

	n	Percent
A leader who trusts you and your individual decision making	23	67,6%
An effectively communicative leader, who knows how to communicate in a proper and efficient manner and sets out goals straightforwardly	18	52,9%
An empathetic leader, who understands you as an individual and your personal circumstances with compassion and is flexible	25	73,5%
An emotionally intelligent leader, who understands your viewpoints and emotions in various situations, and supports your emotions as an employee	14	41,2%
A leader who leads with their own example, as an inspiring and motivating leader	15	44,1%

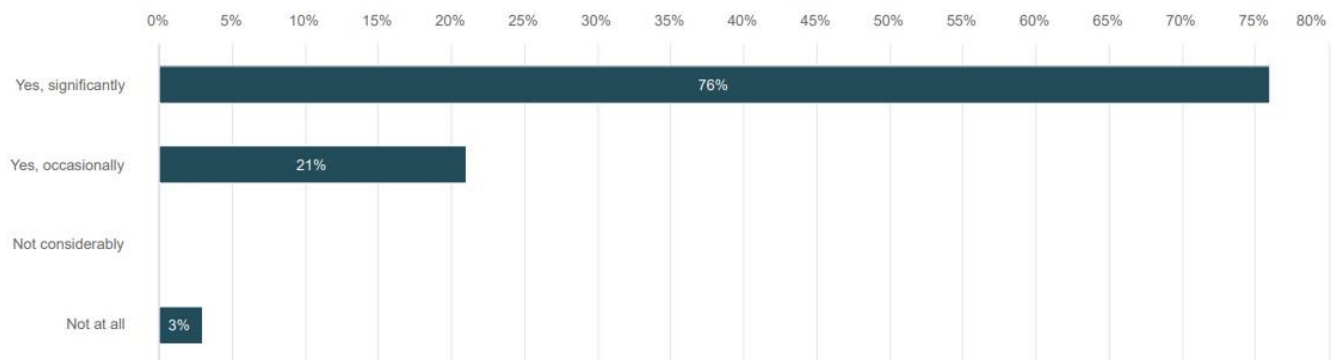**4. Have you ever experienced unpleasant and/or unsupportive leadership?**

Number of respondents: 34

| | 0% | 5% | 10% | 15% | 20% | 25% | 30% | 35% | 40% | 45% | 50% |

Yes, several times — 47%

Yes, occasionally — 47%

Not considerably — 6%

Not at all —

	n	Percent
Yes, several times	16	47,0%
Yes, occasionally	16	47,1%
Not considerably	2	5,9%
Not at all	0	0,0%

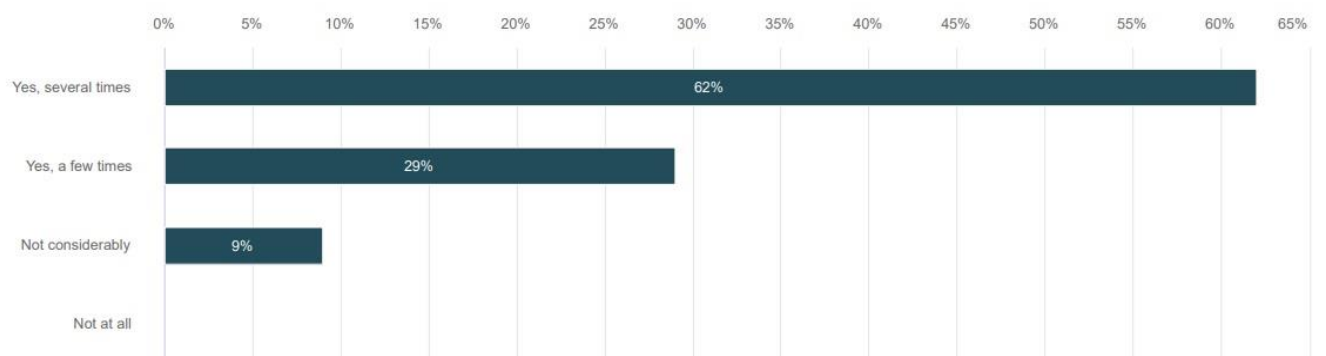**5. Has unpleasant and/or unsupportive leadership ever affected your motivation or dedication at work?**

Number of respondents: 34

	n	Percent
Yes, significantly	26	76,5%
Yes, occasionally	7	20,6%
Not considerably	0	0,0%
Not at all	1	2,9%

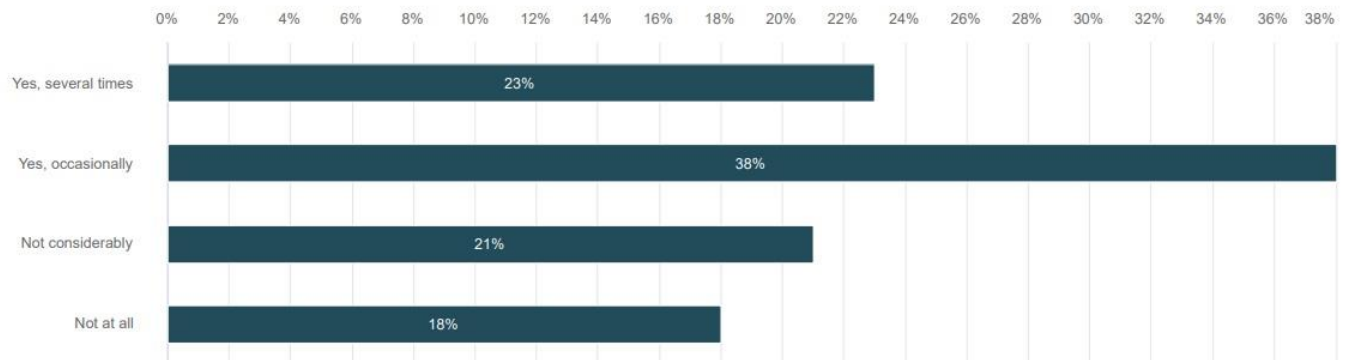**6. Has unpleasant and/or unspportive leadership affected your well-being at work?**

Number of respondents: 34

	n	Percent
Yes, several times	21	61,8%
Yes, a few times	10	29,4%
Not considerably	3	8,8%
Not at all	0	0,0%

7. Have you ever experienced leadership, which has tried to intimidate you as an employee, with fear or authority? (E.g., fear-based leadership)

Number of respondents: 34

		0% 2% 4% 6% 8% 10% 12% 14% 16% 18% 20% 22% 24% 26% 28% 30% 32% 34% 36% 38%
Yes, several times		23%
Yes, occasionally		38%
Not considerably		21%
Not at all		18%

	n	Percent
Yes, several times	8	23,5%
Yes, occasionally	13	38,2%
Not considerably	7	20,6%
Not at all	6	17,7%

8. Have you experienced empathetic leadership in your current or previous workplace? (An empathetic leader: a leader who understands your viewpoint, personal circumstances and offers empathy always when required)

Number of respondents: 33

		0% 5% 10% 15% 20% 25% 30% 35% 40% 45% 50% 55%
Yes, several times		36%
Yes, occasionally		55%
Not considerably		9%
Not at all		

	n	Percent
Yes, several times	12	36,4%
Yes, occasionally	18	54,5%
Not considerably	3	9,1%
Not at all	0	0,0%

10. Please indicate how important would you value empathetic leadership as an employee?

Number of respondents: 34

Min value	Max value	Average	Median	Sum	Standard Deviation
5,0	10,0	8,9	9,0	304,0	1,3

11. Please indicate how important would you value emotionally intelligent leadership as an employee?

Number of respondents: 34

Min value	Max value	Average	Median	Sum	Standard Deviation
6,0	10,0	8,9	9,0	301,0	1,2

12. Please indicate how important emotionally intelligent and empathic leadership is in your viewpoint, to ensure a non-toxic, supportive, and motivating work environment?

Number of respondents: 34

Min value	Max value	Average	Median	Sum	Standard Deviation
6,0	10,0	9,5	10,0	322,0	0,9

Appendix 5: Data management strategy

The author of the thesis has prepared and gathered knowledge of the ethical principals and guidelines required for thesis writing. The chosen research methods have been conducted appropriately, with the primary focus of gathering valuable and insightful perspectives, which directly concern the research topic and topics surrounding it.

All other related materials will be stored on the author's personal OneDrive account, which is protected through a PIN-code and a password, to ensure that no other exterior parties will have the access to the collected information. The research material stored on the author's OneDrive will be deleted after 1 year (365 days) after the thesis has been completed. Nevertheless, all the available data will be handed out to the commissioning company, if requested.

The commissioning company has granted and given their seal of approval for carrying out an in-depth interview with them, and additionally for other in-depth interviews. The data collected from the other in-depth interviews are from external individuals, who are not linked to the commission company in any sense. The commissioning company has also granted their approval to conduct a general employee perspective survey, in order to provide comparative research for the evaluation and analysis.

As the commissioning company wishes to remain anonymous, the materials collected and received through the thesis process will stored accordingly, without any access for any exterior parties. All the materials collected through the first in-depth interview, are provided to the commissioning company as well. As the in-depth interview with the commissioning company was conducted through a Microsoft Teams-meeting and it was recorded with consent of the interviewee, the stored recording will expire in 60 days after the meeting. All the specific information of the recording of the meeting and storage is provided by Microsoft Teams for the commissioning company representative as well. All notes which the author has written through the interview, stored on the author's personal One Drive, will be demolished directly after the thesis is completed. Additionally, the collaboration with the commissioning company has been authorized with an official thesis-agreement in cooperation with HAMK.

The additional in-depth interviews have been conducted through meetings face-to-face, without recordings or exterior parties being present. All participants have agreed and permitted for the information to be presented in the thesis, however without any personal details, such as name, age, gender, location, specific details of occupation, marital status, or religious perspectives. Similarly, to the commissioning company's in-depth interview, also the notes taken and written during the other in-depth interviews, will be stored on the author's personal OneDrive and they will directly be demolished after the completion of the thesis. The author will not publish nor discuss any personalized or delicate information of the interviewees, as the thesis does not collect any personalized data in any relation, which could be linked to any participant later on.

The survey conducted does not store or gather for any personal information, which could be linked to any specific participant, such as a name, age, gender, location, marital status, religious perspective, or any other delicate personal information, as the survey was operated completely anonymously. The survey is executed through the Webropol-questionnaire tool, into the admission was provided by HAMK. The results collected through the survey will be stored in the Webropol servers during the thesis process, however the data will be deleted from Webropol after the thesis is completed. The author will download the survey results into the personal One Drive account and the data will be deleted after 1 year (365 days) the thesis has been completed.

All the citated and referenced materials have been assessed precisely in the provided reference list of the thesis, prepared according to the HAMK citation guide (valid from 1/11/2020). The thesis has been created in the HAMK thesis template and the author will submit the thesis in a PDF-format, to ensure the safety and required technological usage of the research.