Article

Exploring Leadership Style and Employee Attitude through Cluster and Sentiment Analyses of In-Depth Interviews of Employees

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Abstract: In today's fast-paced business environment, leaders who fail to recognize and respond to the emotions of their employees can result in stagnation or a lack of growth in their organization. In light of this, the current study presents a method for identifying leadership styles based on the perspectives of employees, exploring their perceptions of specific leadership traits. Drawing upon the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire framework, this study aims to identify the leadership style of Tony Wedding Studio by conducting in-depth interviews with its employees. Through sentiment and cluster analyses of the collected data, the study identifies Idealized Influence Attributes and Laissez-faire as key leadership style traits. Additionally, this study sheds light on how employees react to and feel about their leader's leadership style, providing valuable insights for organizational development and leadership training. Overall, this study emphasizes the importance of understanding and responding to employee perspectives in effective leadership.

Keywords: leadership style; employee attitude; in-depth interview; cluster analysis; sentiment analysis

1. Introduction

Leadership is a widely discussed and popular topic. However, despite the substantial amount of literature on leadership, it is still a complex and fascinating topic (Gomes 2014). There are many definitions and aspects related to the relationship between leadership and other issues; in this article, it is mentioned that leadership relates to how a leader chooses to lead and how his or her behavior impacts an organization and its people. According to Gandolfi and Stone, leadership relates to how a leader chooses to lead and how his or her behavior can or may have an impact on an organization and its people (Gandolfi and Stone 2016). Leadership that is rooted in ethical and compassionate behavior becomes extremely important since innovation and employee well-being are given high emphasis. The study and research on employees' attitudes and views of their leader is a topic that has been and is being studied; indeed, Hunt and Liebscher (1973) asserted that more research is clearly needed to answer questions raised by this investigation, and apparently, work demands and supervisory–subordinate interaction potential do influence leadership and the relationship between leadership and satisfaction.

There will always be relationships in the workplace that exhaust the head and the heart. It is best to refrain from these situations. An employee's functional status is limited to carrying out directives, following regulations, and implementing policies. However, in theory, workers are people with emotions and minds. It is easy to say that no matter what kind of personality or leadership style a leader has, it affects employees in many

ways, including employee satisfaction and attitude, as the result of an analysis of Azizaha et al. (2020) showed similar results on employee satisfaction and productivity based on two opposing leadership styles. According to Khuwaja et al., a leader's realization of his potential following a particular style brings influential consequences in performances (Khuwaja et al. 2020). The present study aimed to add support to researchers' beliefs that certain leadership styles will not only positively influence employees' attitudes but also help to minimize negative perceptions. So, the fact that employees have different attitudes and feelings about their leader is entirely possible because there is only one leader, but each employee has a different personality and ways of dealing with them. Leaders are different, depending on the different job characteristics in the organization, so the relationships will be different.

Through interviewing employees in the organization about their leader, it is possible to determine the characteristics and personality they perceive from their leader, and based on that, it is possible to analyze how they feel. Regarding leaders, an explanation of the relationship between the employee attitudes and personalities and the leader's style will also be further analyzed to see clearly what the employees are doing. Perceptions are collected without going through stereotypical surveys or one-way analysis from only the leader. Therefore, this study addresses the following research question: "How can leadership style be determined based on the employees' perspectives and perceptions of their leader?" by using employee interviews as source data to analyze and determine the leadership style of their leader. Furthermore, based on analyzing whether they feel positive or negative about the characteristics of their leader, finding out what they feel they want to receive and what they want to be changed will be mentioned. To this end, the second research question posed was "How can the content of interviews be interpreted as sentimental evidence based on the characteristics of their leader?".

2. Literature Review

2.1. Leadership Style

Simply, leadership style is the way a leader leads. According to Solà et al. (2016), leadership style is easily understood as a set of attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, and values. Wakabi (2016) mentioned that leadership style is the way in which the functions of leadership are carried out and the manner that a manager chooses to behave toward employees. It can be summed up that leaders may use power and authority, make decisions, and generally interact with others depending on their leadership style. Moreover, a proper understanding of why leadership is so significant and why the chosen leadership style is so important becomes particularly valuable to introducing working definitions of both leadership and leadership style (Gandolfi and Stone 2016).

Going back to the past, one of the first researchers on leadership styles was Burns (1978), who stated that there are two types of leadership styles: transformational leadership and transactional leadership. Transformational leadership occurs when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that the leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality, while transactional leadership occurs when one person takes the initiative in making contact with others for the purpose of an exchange of valued things (Burns 1978). Bass (1999) implied that every leader displays a frequency of both the transactional and transformational factors, but each leader's profile involves more of one and less of the others. Those leaders are more satisfying to their followers, and those who are more effective as leaders are more transformational and less transactional.

2.2. Leadership Style and Employee Attitude

Effective supervisory interactions with subordinates, according to Miles and Mangold (2002), also help employee attitudes. Each treatment or communication is different between leaders and employees because the results are different; this is obvious because each person brings a different perspective and forms different employee attitudes when they mention or are asked about their leader. Employees see supervisors as competent when

they create a stimulating work atmosphere, exhibit mutual willpower, and ensure that employment levels are satisfactory (Mitterer 2017). High levels of fairness, loyalty, care, and consideration in leadership raise the level of commitment overall. Positive research shows that a leader's approach has a significant impact on how committed their team members are. Employees will view their leader as a "model" when they see what they want to achieve in their career, which will influence their attitude when receiving positive feedback from the leadership style of their leader. Additionally, this is very important for the development of companies, businesses, and as well as organizations because the key factors affecting and influencing an organization's overall performance and effectiveness are its leadership practices and employee attitudes (Lam and O'Higgins 2012).

2.3. In-Depth Interview

According to Guion et al. (2001), in-depth interviews are excellent tools to use in planning and evaluating extension programs because they use an open-ended, discovery-oriented method, which allows the interviewer to deeply explore the respondent's feelings and perspectives on a subject. This results in rich background information that can shape further questions relevant to the topic.

The key characteristics of an in-depth interview are Open-ended Questions: Questions need to be worded so that respondents expound on the topic, not just answer "yes" or "no." Many open-ended questions begin with "why" or "how", which gives respondents the freedom to answer the questions using their own words. Semi-structured Format: Although it is important to pre-plan the key questions, the interview should also be conversational, with questions flowing from previous responses when possible. For example, if an interviewee remarks, "The elections are approaching", an appropriate response would be, "How do you feel about the candidates involved?" Seek Understanding and Interpretation: It is important to use active listening skills to reflect upon what the speaker is saying. The interviewer should try to interpret what is being said and should seek clarity and understanding throughout the interview. Recording Responses: The responses are typically audio-recorded and complemented with written notes (i.e., field notes) by the interviewer. Written notes include observations of both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as they occur and immediate personal reflections about the interview (Guion et al. 2001).

2.4. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ—also known as MLQ 5X short or the standard MLQ), which was established and developed by Bass and Avolio in 1995, measures a broad range of leadership types from passive leaders to leaders who give contingent rewards to followers to leaders who transform their followers into becoming leaders themselves. The MLQ identifies the characteristics of a transformational leader and helps individuals discover how they measure up in their own eyes and in the eyes of those with whom they work (Bass and Avolio 1995).

Horwitz et al. (2008), who have also used MLQ as a valuable tool to identify specific areas where leadership style would be most beneficial in an educational program, have also collected and summarized definitions of Individualized consideration, Intellectual stimulation, Idealized Influence (Attribute) and (Behavior), Inspirational motivation, Contingent Reward, Management by exception (passive) and (active), as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Summary of the basic leadership styles and their components.

Leadership Styles	Characteristics	Descriptions
Transformational leadership	Idealized influence (Attributes)	Provides vision and sense of mission, gains the respect and trust of followers, and subordinates become encouraged to emulate the behavior and values of the leader.
	Idealized influence (Behavior)	Sets example for follower behavior through own actions, subordinates look to behavior of the leader for guidance of their own behavior.
	Inspirational motivation	Refers to the actions taken when a leader strives to convey the significance of desired goals in straightforward ways, conveys high standards, and assigns followers work that is both tough and important.
	Intellectual stimulation	Encourages creativity, thoughtfulness, rational action, and active problem solving among subordinates. Leaders push employees to question their beliefs and methods of problem solving.
	Individualized consideration	When leaders handle followers on an individual basis and spend more time coaching and training them. Provides individual attention, mentoring, empowerment, and bonding with followers.
Transactional leadership	Contingent reward	Refers to an exchange of benefits between leaders and followers in which work is recognized through the provision of benefits for successful performance or threats and sanctions for unsuccessful performance.
	Management by exception (active)	Actively monitors situations and makes corrective interventions before situations become problematic.
Passive–avoidant leadership	Management by exception (passive)	Takes corrective action only after a problem becomes significant and obvious (retrospective). In some cases, this can be considered as a transformational leader quality when the leader purposely aims to let followers learn from making mistakes.
Laissez-faire	Laissez-faire	Avoiding making decisions, delegating significant decision-making to subordinates, and being reluctant to express opinions on significant or contentious subjects.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Questions and Research Flowchart

As addressed earlier, this study focused on two specific research questions:

Q1: How can leadership style be determined based on the employees' perspectives and perceptions of their leader?

Q2: How can the content of interviews be interpreted as sentimental evidence based on the characteristics of their leader?

In order to conduct this research, the first step involved obtaining permission from the leader and Human Resources Department of Tony Wedding Studio Company. This step ensured that the research was conducted in an ethical manner and that the company was aware of the research being conducted. The second step involved inviting participants to participate in the study using the convenience sample method. This method is a type of non-probability sampling that involves selecting participants based on their accessibility and availability. Next, an in-depth interview was conducted with participants to gather their views and feelings about their leader. To ensure objectivity and eliminate bias, the

participants were interviewed anonymously. Once the in-depth interviews were conducted, the contents were converted into text for analysis. This was performed by transcribing the interviews word-for-word, which allowed for an accurate and detailed analysis of the data.

Then, the data were imported into NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software, where frequency analysis was conducted. This analysis identifies the most common themes and patterns that emerge from the data. For measuring content, numerous methods have been developed and introduced to date. A suitable method that can be used in this study, taking into account the research objectives and potential benefits, is the development of a specific clustering and sentiment analysis using NVivo, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software that supports grounded theory research and improves the analytical quality. The capacity to quickly organize, analyze, and categorize qualitative data is one of NVivo's many features and one of its best applications. In addition to being able to ingest and manage a variety of formats and data kinds, this feature is included (Jackson and Bazeley 2019). The data were then coded using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) framework, which was used to determine the leadership style based on the employees' perceptions. The data were further analyzed using cluster analysis and sentiment analysis to identify patterns in the data and determine the overall sentiment toward the leader. Additionally, NVivo enables automatic sentiment analysis of texts based on four categories: very positive, slightly positive, somewhat negative, and strongly negative. The program compares the target text set to a sentiment dictionary and codes the text at several levels of analysis, such as the sentence, paragraph, or cell, depending on the level of analysis (Jackson and Bazeley 2019).

Finally, the results were evaluated to answer the research questions. The findings were interpreted and analyzed to draw conclusions and provide insights into the leadership style of the company's leader. A flow chart for the designed methodology is shown in Figure 1.
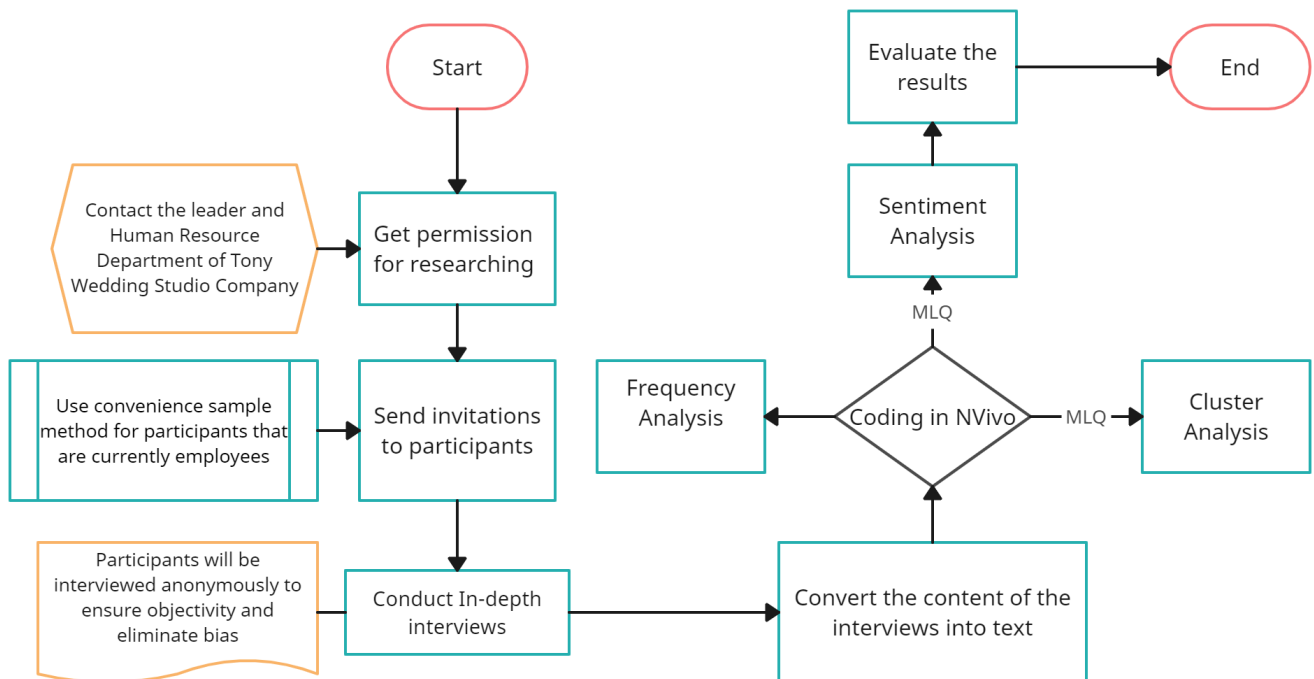

Figure 1. Research Flowchart.

To further elaborate, conducting interviews anonymously can help ensure that the participants feel comfortable sharing their honest opinions and experiences without fear of repercussions. This can help to eliminate bias in the data by allowing participants to speak freely without worrying about how their answers may be perceived by their colleagues or

superiors. By using open-ended questions, this study was able to capture rich and detailed responses from the participants, allowing for a deeper understanding of their thoughts and feelings about their leader. Having a skilled moderator who is able to effectively communicate with the participants and guide the conversation can also help to ensure that the data collected are accurate and relevant to the research questions. Overall, the use of anonymity and a skilled moderator can help to create a safe and productive environment for participants to share their perspectives, leading to more reliable and insightful data for the study.

3.2. Sampling and Data Collection

This study collected information from Tony Wedding Studio, a company in the wedding photography industry, based in the south of Vietnam, with 5 branches and more than 200 employees in various departments. Because the COVID-19 pandemic, which occurred from 2019 to 2021, has greatly delayed the wedding ceremonies of couples, indeed, according to a statistical report from Kavilanz (2022) for CNN Business, an estimated 2.6 million weddings are expected to take place in 2022, up from 2.2 million in 2019, before the pandemic broke out. So, it can be seen that the wedding industry in 2022 will be an extremely busy industry, not only for the employees but also for the heads and leaders of the wedding service industry.

With the interview invitation from the author sent to the Human Resources Department of Tony Wedding Studio to conduct the research, 15 participants, who are currently employees in the company's departments, accepted the invitation to participate. Moderators received questions from the author to conduct the in-depth interviews, and to keep the participants' answers objective, the participants' personal information was guaranteed to be safe and undisclosed; thus, trust could be obtained from the participants, and the responses and interviews would not be biased.

Conducting in-depth interviews with 10 to 15 participants can provide rich and meaningful data for qualitative research. This sample size is often used in qualitative research because it allows for a deep exploration of the research topic while still being manageable in terms of time and resources. According to a study of Guest et al. (2006), which investigated the sample size needed to achieve data saturation in qualitative research, including in-depth interviews, the authors found that for most projects, saturation was achieved after 12 interviews, and that increasing the sample size beyond this did not result in substantially different findings. Along with the fact that this study mainly studies leadership style through employees' perceptions, the questions and research scope were limited to the topic being explored for the research. Malterud et al. (2016) argued that sample size should be determined by the research question, the quality of the dialogue between interviewer and participant, the specificity of the phenomena being studied, and the theoretical framework guiding the research. In summary, conducting in-depth interviews with 10 to 15 participants can provide rich and meaningful data while also being manageable in terms of time and resources. This sample size allows for a greater depth of analysis, ensures the quality of the data, and makes the study more feasible.

4. Results

4.1. Frequency Analysis

With interviews from 15 anonymous participants who are employees of Tony Wedding Studio, the first step was frequency analysis. To ensure reliability, this study assigned 100 words with 3 or more letters to display in Table 2. To maintain an accurate ranking, this study chooses to find exact matches or groups of words with the same root and excludes adverbial words or non-meaningful words such as "be", "being", "a", "an", and "my". For the number one keyword ("leader"), there is a word that can be considered a synonym, which is "boss" (number four), but this is the way it works in the company: employees use different words because of the difference between departments, and different thoughts and

ways of saying it, along with a lot of definitions in research papers that show the difference between these two definitions (Chudasama 2021; Bekhruz 2022).

Table 2. Frequency of the 100 top keywords.

Rank	Word	Freq	Weighted (%)	Rank	Word	Freq	Weighted (%)
1	Leader	229	12.56	51	Strict	7	0.38
2	Work	80	4.39	52	Case	6	0.33
3	Pressure	43	2.36	53	Come	6	0.33
4	Boss	35	1.92	54	Department	6	0.33
5	Company	32	1.76	55	Difficult	6	0.33
6	Want	26	1.43	56	Directly	6	0.33
7	Help	23	1.26	57	Good	6	0.33
8	Recognized	21	1.15	58	Made	6	0.33
9	Mistakes	20	1.10	59	Meet	6	0.33
10	Contribution	19	1.04	60	Share	6	0.33
11	Advantages	18	0.99	61	Wrong	6	0.33
12	Motivate	17	0.93	62	Answer	5	0.27
13	Rules	16	0.88	63	Benefits	5	0.27
14	Sales	16	0.88	64	Determine	5	0.27
15	Solve	16	0.88	65	Feeling	5	0.27
16	Well	16	0.88	66	KPIs	5	0.27
17	Branch	15	0.82	67	Months	5	0.27
18	Difficulties	15	0.82	68	Opportunity	5	0.27
19	Rarely	15	0.82	69	Ask	4	0.22
20	Satisfied	15	0.82	70	Branches	4	0.22
21	Job	14	0.77	71	Care	4	0.22
22	Mistake	13	0.71	72	Chose	4	0.22
23	Problems	12	0.66	73	Contributions	4	0.22
24	Recognition	11	0.60	74	Customers [2]	4	0.22
25	Contact	10	0.55	75	Departments	4	0.22
26	Customer [1]	10	0.55	76	Difficulty	4	0.22
27	Factors	10	0.55	77	Easy	4	0.22
28	Problem	10	0.55	78	Employee	4	0.22
29	Receive	10	0.55	79	Interact	4	0.22
30	Regulations	10	0.55	80	Listen	4	0.22
31	Support	10	0.55	81	New	4	0.22
32	Approachable	9	0.49	82	Opinion	4	0.22
33	Set	9	0.49	83	Right	4	0.22
34	Stay	9	0.49	84	Situation	4	0.22
35	Tell	9	0.49	85	Solution	4	0.22
36	Time	9	0.49	86	Specifically	4	0.22
37	Try	9	0.49	87	Way	4	0.22
38	Find	8	0.44	88	Achieve	3	0.16
39	Give	8	0.44	89	Applied	3	0.16
40	Manager	8	0.44	90	Better	3	0.16
41	Motivation	8	0.44	91	Client	3	0.16
42	Participant	8	0.44	92	Colleagues	3	0.16
43	Talk	8	0.44	93	Complete	3	0.16
44	Terms	8	0.44	94	Course	3	0.16
45	Affect	7	0.38	95	Creates	3	0.16
46	Environment	7	0.38	96	Deal	3	0.16
47	Participants	7	0.38	97	Errors	3	0.16
48	Rewards	7	0.38	98	Example	3	0.16
49	Salary	7	0.38	99	Fine	3	0.16
50	Stress	7	0.38	100	Friendly	3	0.16

[1] Participants are helped by the leader with each customer. [2] Participants felt stress with the customers.

As shown in Figure 2, up to 100 words are displayed in varying sizes, with frequently occurring words appearing in larger font sizes. The main meaningful words in this sample

can be identified as "leader" (number one, 12.56%), "work" (number two, 4.39%), "pressure" (number three, 2.36%), "boss" (number four, 1.92%), and "company" (number five, 1.76%).

Figure 2. Word cloud.

4.2. Cluster Analysis

The idea of a code is to represent an object, phenomenon, or idea in an abstract manner, or, to put it more simply, it could be used to identify themes in a document (Jackson and Bazeley 2019). Using the data from the in-depth interviews of 15 participants and based on the characteristics of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) framework, which are shown in Table 1 and expressed in Figure 3, this study coded the contents into 9 measurements: Idealized Influence Attribute (IIA), Idealized Influence Behavior (IIB), Inspirational motivation (IM), Intellectual Stimulation (IS), Individualized consideration (IC), Contingent Reward (CS), Management by exception (active) (MEA), Management by exception (passive) (MEP), and Laissez-faire (LF).
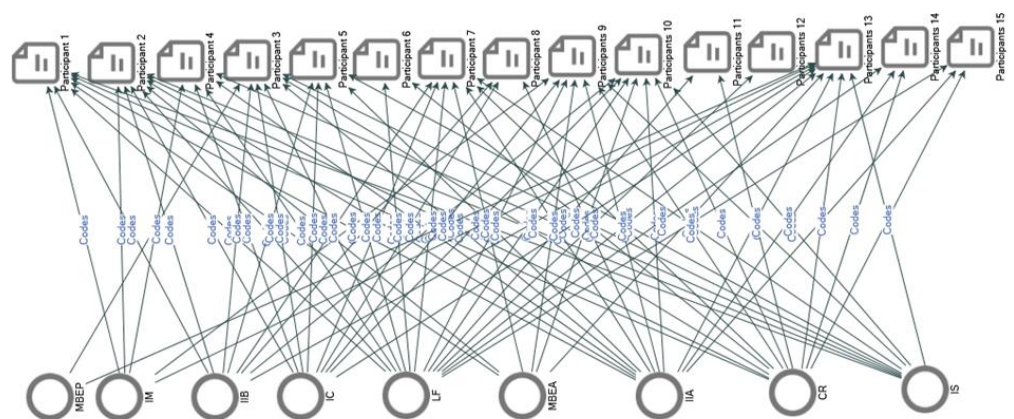

Figure 3. Coding in-depth interviews of 15 participants based on MLQ framework.

Furthermore, the most frequently used keyword is "Leader", which has a 12.56% weighted percentage. Some sample quotes are shown in Table 3, as seen below. Additionally, from the results of the table below, it can be concluded that from the employees' points of view, through the in-depth interviews of 15 participants (incognito), the characteristics of their leader, through coding analysis according to MLQ framework, include Idealized Influence Attributes and Laissez-faire.

Table 3. Sample illustration of the coding node.

Code Name	Frequency	Example Quote
Idealized Influence (Attributes)	56	"My leader built the Binh Duong branch, where I am working, like a family" (Participant 4)
Idealized Influence (Behavior)	17	"My leader is a hard worker" (Participant 7)
Inspirational motivation	10	"Sometimes my boss will send friends from other departments to help if the workload of my department (dressing room) is too much" (Participant 2)
Intellectual stimulation	15	"I have some health problems; my boss can still let me rest during work hours to recover" (Participant 2)
Individualized consideration	27	"Every time he appears, the atmosphere is always happy" (Participant 2)
Contingent Reward	26	"My job is just to focus on running the right KPIs, and if I do better than what is proposed, I will receive other rewards" (Participant 1)
Management by exception (active)	7	"My leader will first find a way to help solve the problem between me and the client first" (Participant 10)
Management by exception (passive)	2	"Sometimes my boss is a bit harsh when I do something wrong, which makes me a bit sad" (Participant 3)
Laissez-faire	79	"Leaders rarely show up to solve the problem" (Participant 6)

4.3. Sentiment Analysis

This research employed sentiment analysis to explore the relationships between different categories of data as a way of synthesizing and making sense of the data. It is important to note that NVivo does not rate content on a Likert scale based on how well it meets the Likert criteria specific to each piece of content. The sentiment of each word is analyzed in isolation, not taking into account the context of the words when this analysis is conducted. Table 4 provides matrix coding results according to the sentiment of the words.

Table 4. Matrix coding with auto word sentiment.

	Positive	Very Positive	Negative	Very Negative
MBEP	0	0	18	18
MBEA	26	0	60	28
IM	51	14	44	0
IS	132	38	64	37
IIB	35	0	12	12
CR	197	107	111	66
IC	30	21	28	0

It is also possible to code sentiment based on the analysis of sources in NVivo. The table above (Table 4) shows that each sentiment node represents a range on a scale of sentiment. Compared to the other themes, "Laissez-faire" has the highest negative sentiment. However, the most positive sentiments are associated with "Contingent Reward".

The coding stripes featured in NVivo make it possible to examine all the relevant text and identify the sentences, which have a significant role in establishing the relationship, as well as to determine the node from which the sentences are part and the node from which they originate. Following the coding and analysis of all the relevant text found in the contents of 15 participants' interviews, the sentimental themes found within the letters were compiled and analyzed. A visualization of the results is shown in Figure 4, as seen below.
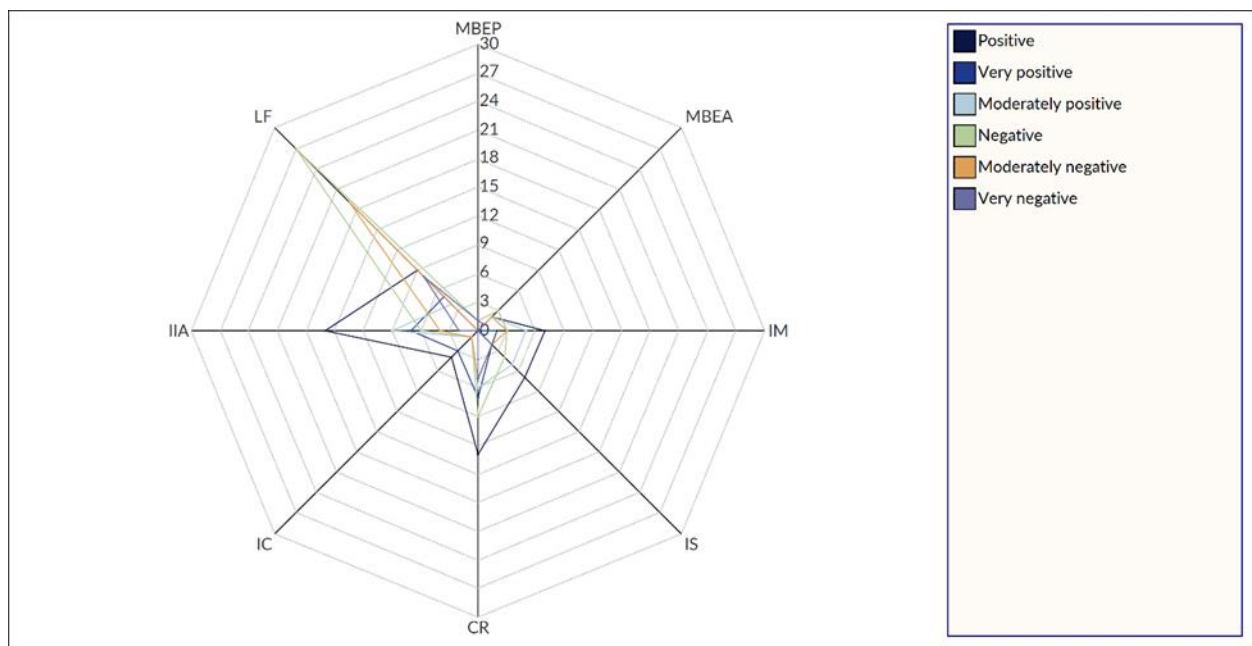
Figure 4. Matrix coding spider web diagram.

Based on Figure 4, it can be analyzed and found that employees felt negatively about their leader's characteristics. This can be easily understood because Laissez-faire can be defined as an abdication from the responsibilities and duties assigned to the superior (Skogstad et al. 2007). Additionally, in the interview in this study, a question was asked by the moderator to the participants: what do they want their leader to improve? In response, a significant proportion of the participants expressed the desire for their leaders to exhibit greater care and concern towards them.

5. Discussion

The data analysis shows that there is "consistency" between the content of the interviews and the attitudes, as well as employee satisfaction with the job and their leader. This can, thus, provide valuable insight into understanding the desired identity of an organization and its image through understanding and analyzing the perspective of employees, within the company or organization, about their leader. It is worth noting that, in this study, the results show that it is highly accurate to rely on the MLQ framework when analyzing employees' perspectives and opinions about their leader's leadership style. Shakespeare[1] wrote: "The scariest thing is the disease of not listening, it is a very common evil". Listening to and receiving other people's thoughts is not merely the reception of information by hearing, but also a positive attitude in life. Listening to members' feelings about their leader's leadership style is an obvious approach. "A great way to understand yourself is to seriously reflect on everything you find irritating in others"—Kevin Kelly[2].

Based on this research, the content of the interviews can be interpreted and understood more effectively. From a theoretical perspective, the following implications can be listed. First, this study extracted measures of positive or negative attitudes from employees when they were asked about their leader and the relationship between them and their leader. Through the use of cluster analysis and sentiment analysis, this study examined 15 participants who were employees of Tony Wedding Studio with anonymous interviews for possible payouts. Conclusions were drawn about how their leader's leadership style was perceived, which has been shown by Muller and Turner that different leadership styles are more likely to result in success on various project types, as well as how these interviews could be interpreted as evidence of sentiment based on cluster analysis and sentiment analysis (Muller and Turner 2007). When compared with simple analytic languages, it

gives more contribution and importance to Big Data analysis in business management as well as when applied to human resource management. Furthermore, this study can be used as a guide for companies to further improve their messaging techniques in order to better understand the perspectives and feelings of employees in the business/organization through their leader's people. From a novel perspective, this study provides a more complete understanding of employees' job satisfaction and their leader's satisfaction. Finally, "Leadership", which is a key issue in this study, is also highlighted in this article as the expression and highlighting of the relationship between employees and leaders; from there, conclusions can be drawn about changes made by leaders to improve employee satisfaction, thereby taking measures to make businesses and organizations better and better. According to Hanifah et al. (2014), by having a certain leadership style, then, leaders will be able to affect the performance of employees in an organization.

The findings of this study suggest that a considerable portion of the coding results are associated with the feelings and perspectives of employees, which is not surprising given that high-performing companies are well positioned to foster employee engagement and provide a solid foundation for long-term growth. Leadership has recently been recognized as a critical factor for fostering engaged employees and driving success in firms (Van Dierendonck 2011). By focusing on the behavior and leadership style of the leader, companies can establish positive perceptions and maintain employees by listening to their feedback and fostering a culture of sharing ideas.

Indeed, a positive company culture can be established by analyzing and responding to the views and opinions of employees. Effective leadership can facilitate this process by encouraging open communication and creating a supportive work environment where employees feel valued and empowered. By investing in the development of their employees, firms can enhance their overall competitiveness and build a reputation as an employer of choice. Overall, the results of this study suggest that leadership style plays a critical role in shaping employee perceptions and driving long-term engagement and success in firms.

6. Conclusions

The current study aimed to explore how employees perceive their leaders and how their perceptions are associated with different leadership styles. To achieve this, employee interviews were conducted to gather information about their feelings and views of their leaders. Anonymity was ensured to maintain the objectivity of the data. The interviews provided insights into how employees react to their leaders and their relationships. The study employed cluster and sentiment analysis to evaluate and analyze the interviews. The first research question aimed to determine how leadership style is perceived by employees. The analysis revealed that employees have varied thoughts and emotions when it comes to their leaders. The measures were ranked in order of preference, from highest to lowest, as Laissez-faire, Idealized Influence Attributes, Individualized consideration, Contingent Reward, Idealized Influence Behavior, Intellectual stimulation, Inspirational motivation, Management by exception (active), and Management by exception (passive). It is essential to ensure that the topics and standards for evaluation are compatible to obtain reliable results. Furthermore, the study established a correlation between the content of employee interviews about their leader and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), developed by Bass and Avolio (1995). The findings from Table 3 indicate that, from the perspective of the workforce, the characteristics of their leader through coding analysis include Idealized Influence Attributes and Laissez-faire.

The second research question aimed to explore how the content of interviews could be interpreted as sentimental evidence based on the characteristics of their leader. The study found that measuring employee sentiment was an effective way to analyze their attitudes toward their leader. The majority of employees reported feeling positive when receiving rewards based on the characteristic "Contingent Reward." Conversely, employees felt negative when their leaders lacked attention, which is the "Laissez-faire" characteristic.

This study, despite its valuable insights, is not without its limitations. The use of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) framework, while established and widely used, may not fully capture the complexity of leadership styles. Future research may consider incorporating additional models to provide a more comprehensive assessment of leadership. Additionally, the current study solely utilized a quantitative approach and did not employ a mixed-methods approach, which combines qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. Incorporating mixed-methods research could uncover deeper insights and reveal hidden information that could be used for effective management and collaboration. Furthermore, macro-level analysis could be used to uncover more nuanced relationships and dynamics within the organization. Despite these limitations, the present study provides a solid foundation for future research to build upon and expand our understanding of leadership in the workplace.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: Not applicable.

Notes

[1]   William Shakespeare (1564–1616) was an English playwright, poet, and actor.

[2]   Kevin Kelly (born 1952) is the founding executive editor of Wired magazine, and a former editor/publisher of the Whole Earth Review.

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