Available online at www.ijournalse.org

Emerging Science Journal

(ISSN: 2610-9182)

Vol. 9, No. 6, December, 2025

Human-Centered Organizational Culture in the Global Workplace: Strategic Approaches, Trends, and Practical Models

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Abstract

Amid accelerating global transformations, the need to reconsider human resource management strategies through the lens of human-centricity is becoming increasingly urgent. This study aims to examine the systemic implementation of human-centered organizational culture within international labor contexts, with a focus on enhancing employee well-being, adaptability, and organizational resilience. A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining comparative policy analysis, content analysis of regulatory documents, and empirical case studies. The empirical sample included 320 employees from multinational companies across four sectors (education, IT, healthcare, and manufacturing). The findings revealed statistically significant improvements following the implementation of the proposed model: autonomy increased from 5.48 to 5.86 ($p = 0.012$), competence from 5.33 to 5.61 ($p = 0.038$), and relatedness from 5.07 to 5.58 ($p = 0.004$). Positive emotion expression scores rose from 3.98 to 4.42 ($p = 0.009$), while the Human-Centeredness Index increased from 4.18 to 4.71 ($p = 0.002$). These results underscore the limitations of hierarchical management models and highlight the value of flexible, emotionally supportive systems. The scientific contribution of the study lies in the typologization of human-centric management models and the empirical validation of a scalable integration framework that combines emotional intelligence development, inclusive feedback cycles, and leadership support. This model provides a strategic foundation for building sustainable, inclusive, and ethically grounded organizational environments.

Keywords:

Human-Centricity; Global Society; Human Resource Management; Organizational Culture; Inclusivity; Transformation of Practices; Strategic HR Management; Flexible Forms of Employment; Employee Engagement; Corporate Values; Competitiveness; Management Models.

Article History:

Received:	22	May	2025
Revised:	23	September	2025
Accepted:	11	October	2025
Published:	01	December	2025

1- Introduction

Modern organizational paradigms are undergoing a fundamental shift toward human-centricity-a model emphasizing empathy, inclusivity, and intrinsic motivation [1]. Whereas traditional HR structures prioritized productivity and hierarchy, emerging research underscores the psychological and operational advantages of cultures grounded in trust and purpose [2, 3]. This transformation reflects broader societal calls for ethical capitalism and value-driven labor systems [4]. However, a gap remains in synthesizing these principles across diverse workforce practices and policy-making arenas, particularly in cross-cultural or global contexts. This study examines the diffusion of human-centered cultural models within organizational settings using a multi-method approach that integrates policy comparison, qualitative case studies, and survey data from multinational corporations. Drawing on Deci & Ryan's Self-Determination Theory [5] and Schein's [6] organizational culture framework, we explore how autonomy-supportive leadership, psychological safety, and shared purpose influence employee engagement, retention, and adaptability amid high uncertainty.

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DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.28991/ESJ-2025-09-06-027

Key findings indicate that companies implementing relational values-such as respect, feedback, reciprocity, and meaning-making-experience statistically significant improvements in well-being metrics [7], inter-team collaboration [8], and innovation capacity [9]. Conversely, cultures that instrumentalize employees through rigid KPIs or bureaucratic management exhibit elevated turnover rates and presenteeism. Our contribution is threefold. First, we map existing policy frameworks that enable or hinder the institutionalization of human-oriented norms across different management contexts. Second, we identify latent contradictions between efficiency imperatives and psychological resilience. Third, we propose a scalable integrative model that aligns the development of emotional intelligence [10] with participatory decision-making systems.

Contemporary research in the field of organizational development indicates a steady transformation of human resource management approaches-from technocratic and hierarchical models toward systems that recognize the human being as the central resource and bearer of organizational values. The reviewed literature focuses on human-centered organizational culture as a strategic determinant of resilience, innovation, and effectiveness in the context of globalization and rapid technological change. Scholars emphasize that a human-oriented culture extends beyond conventional HR practices by shifting the focus from mere efficiency and output to the quality of work experience, employee well-being, and the ethical dimensions of organizational interactions. In light of global challenges such as digitalization, hybrid work models, and the post-pandemic restructuring of workspaces, the demand for a new model of organizational behavior has become increasingly acute.

An analysis of Gallup's report The Human-Centric Workplace highlights that employee satisfaction, engagement, and loyalty are strongly influenced by recognition of personal uniqueness, opportunities for self-actualization, and transparent feedback systems. Organizations investing in human-centric practices report higher productivity, lower turnover, and stronger reputational standing [11].

The works of Lepeley et al. [12] offer a broader conceptualization of the topic, presenting human-centered culture as a multi-layered system encompassing leadership practices, interpersonal relations, ethical foundations, and strategic governance. They introduce the notion of an integrative organizational model that balances economic performance with humanistic values. Particular emphasis is placed on intercultural dimensions: while universal values such as respect, empathy, and trust remain constant, their expression must be adapted to cultural contexts. The article Organizational Culture and Leadership Development demonstrates that building a sustainable human-centered culture is inseparable from leadership transformation. Leaders must evolve from task coordinators to facilitators, mentors, and custodians of organizational values rooted in respect, support, and individual potential development [13, 14].

Taken together, these sources construct a comprehensive understanding of human-centered organizational culture as a complex, dynamic, and adaptive system-one that ensures both internal stability and external competitiveness. In an era of constant change and mounting uncertainty, human-centricity emerges not as a trend, but as a critical condition for the long-term viability and growth of contemporary organizations. While the existing literature provides valuable conceptual frameworks for understanding human-centric organizational culture, several critical gaps remain. First, there is insufficient empirical integration of psychological, structural, and cultural variables within a unified model of human-centered transformation. Most prior studies focus narrowly on individual constructs-such as emotional intelligence [3], leadership styles [9], or inclusive policy mechanisms [15] without examining their systemic interaction within organizational ecosystems.

Second, many contributions remain context-specific, with limited generalizability across industries and national cultures. For instance, although Gallup's *The Human-Centric Workplace* [11] identifies global patterns in employee engagement, it does not differentiate sectoral responses to human-centric interventions. Similarly, while authors such as Lepeley et al. [12] acknowledge intercultural variation, empirical data on how human-centric models are adapted across individualistic and collectivist cultures is limited.

Third, few studies propose actionable, scalable models that link human-centric values with measurable organizational outcomes. The translation of abstract principles (e.g., dignity, trust, reciprocity) into operational HR strategies remains largely underexplored, particularly within hybrid or digitally mediated environments.

To address these gaps, the present study offers an integrative, empirically grounded model that unites psychological need satisfaction, emotional culture, inclusive leadership practices, and feedback ecosystems into a cohesive framework for organizational transformation. Drawing on a multi-sectoral dataset from multinational companies and validated measurement tools (BPNS, ECI, Policy Audit), the study identifies statistically significant correlations between human-centered variables and key HR outcomes-such as employee engagement, retention, and proactive behavior. Furthermore, the proposed model is designed to be culturally adaptive and scalable, enabling its application across diverse organizational contexts. In doing so, the research moves beyond normative discourse and contributes practical, evidence-based solutions for embedding human-centricity into the architecture of 21st-century work.

Casini et al. [16] in their bibliometric study, highlight the growing academic and practical interest in Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence (HCAI), particularly within the domains of autonomous systems and robotics. The authors emphasize the necessity of developing safe, reliable, and adaptive technologies that can be seamlessly integrated into organizational settings and foster trust among employees. They advocate for interdisciplinary convergence-linking ethics, engineering, and behavioral sciences-as a prerequisite for building sustainable HCAI frameworks. This approach is directly relevant to the strategic formation of organizational culture in technologically dynamic environments.

An extended version of Casini et al.'s [16] work, deepens the conceptual exploration of HCAI by stressing that human-centered algorithm and system design must begin at the level of organizational identity. Such an approach is shown to enhance internal trust, strategic adaptability, and long-term employee commitment. In their systematic review, Townsend & Romme [17] propose a comprehensive conceptualization of the Human-Centered Organization (HCO). Key characteristics include empathetic and supportive leadership, prioritization of individual growth, value-based interaction, and ethical resilience. The authors recommend rethinking performance evaluation metrics: replacing traditional KPIs with indicators that capture engagement, trust, and self-actualization. Neumann et al. [18] investigate the cultural obstacles that arise when agile methodologies are introduced into traditionally structured organizations. Their findings indicate that formal adoption of agile processes-without parallel adaptation of corporate culture and leadership style-can provoke internal resistance and diminish team effectiveness. Consequently, digital transformation must be accompanied by deliberate cultural change. Xu & Gao [19] expand the human-centered paradigm to the design of intelligent socio-technical systems. They argue for the necessity of user-centered adaptability, asserting that technological sophistication alone is insufficient without organizational environments grounded in trust, transparency, and reciprocal communication.

Finally, Canta [20] explores the role of internal social systems as the foundation for sustainable organizational culture. The study concludes that only by centering human needs and relationships in the structuring of organizational processes can long-term engagement, resilience, and effectiveness be achieved. Absent such a focus, cultural change risks remaining superficial, producing limited impact on real employee behavior. Wiese et al. [21] drawing on empirical data from Swiss enterprises, demonstrate a direct correlation between organizational culture type and the success of Industry 4.0 technology implementation. Cultures emphasizing learning, development, and knowledge exchange show significantly higher rates of successful digital integration. This underscores the argument that technological transformation requires not only infrastructural investment but also foundational shifts in organizational behavior and leadership paradigms.

The reviewed studies collectively emphasize the increasing relevance of human-centered paradigms across technological, cultural, and managerial domains. However, several gaps remain unaddressed.

First, there is a clear disjunction between conceptual models of Human-Centered AI [16, 19] and their actual integration into organizational culture. Most studies approach HCAI from a technological or ethical standpoint, but rarely connect it to everyday management practices or workplace behaviors. There is a lack of empirical research examining how algorithmic systems, once deployed, interact with the emotional, relational, and cultural structures of organizations.

Second, while Wiese et al. [21] and Neumann et al. [18] effectively highlight the mediating role of organizational culture in the success of digital transformation, few studies offer frameworks that actively guide cultural change processes in tandem with technological implementation. Existing literature tends to focus on barriers rather than on solution-oriented pathways for aligning agile, digital, and human-centered values.

To address these gaps, this study proposes a multi-level integration model that connects emotional culture, psychological need satisfaction, inclusive leadership, and digital adaptability within a unified human-centered framework. Drawing on empirical data from diverse industries and validated instruments (e.g., BPNS, ECI, Human-Centered Policy Audit), the model provides a practical and scalable roadmap for embedding human-centered principles into both technological and organizational transformation processes. Unlike previous studies, the proposed approach emphasizes not only cultural diagnostics but also intervention strategies-training, participatory feedback systems, and inclusive governance-that foster sustained alignment between human values and evolving digital infrastructures.

1-1- Goal of the Study and Research Questions

The primary aim of this study is to conceptualize and empirically examine the implementation of human-centered organizational culture within global labor systems. Specifically, we seek to explore the interplay between organizational policy frameworks, individual psychological needs, and adaptive workforce practices that support a sustainable and inclusive work environment. This research addresses the urgent need to distinguish human-centered management from adjacent managerial paradigms such as transactional leadership, technocratic efficiency models, and rigid bureaucratic hierarchies. Furthermore, we aim to investigate how emotional intelligence, participatory structures, and values-based leadership practices correlate with employee well-being, resilience, and engagement. To this end, we surveyed 320 employees in international organizations and conducted document analysis of HR policy instruments. Statistical methods, including multivariate regression, correlational analysis, and exploratory factor analysis, were employed to identify behavioral and institutional indicators of human-centered culture.

- What are the primary structural and psychological conditions that facilitate the institutionalization of human-centered culture?
- How do individual outcomes such as emotional resilience and self-determination differ in organizations with varying levels of human-centered policy adoption?
- In what ways do human-centered models diverge from other prevailing labor management paradigms?
- What is the relationship between human-centered culture and reductions in alienation, burnout, and disengagement in the workplace?

This research is grounded in an integrative theoretical framework that draws on Self-Determination Theory [5, 22], Organizational Culture Theory [6], and models of Humanistic Management [23]. Central to our approach is the premise that employee well-being is not merely a byproduct of functional efficiency, but a foundational condition for organizational adaptability and ethical sustainability. The study employs the Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction at Work Scale (BPNS-W) and the Emotional Culture Index to empirically assess how belonging, autonomy, and competence are cultivated within contemporary labor systems [24].

Our findings contribute to three key scholarly discourses: first, by mapping the empirical contours of human-centered practices across cross-national HR contexts; second, by identifying tensions between corporate rationalization and psychological resilience; and third, by proposing a multi-level intervention model that integrates emotional intelligence training, inclusive leadership pipelines, and adaptive feedback infrastructures. This model not only enhances theoretical clarity but also equips institutional actors with scalable strategies for embedding human-centered values into the architecture of global work.

2- Methodology

2-1- Research Design

To explore the processes of implementing human-centered culture within global organizational contexts, a correlational-exploratory research strategy was employed, incorporating elements of factor analysis and comparative analysis. This approach enabled the examination of both structural and psychological characteristics of human-centered organizational environments.

The present study is underpinned by an interdisciplinary theoretical framework that draws upon key concepts from organizational psychology, leadership theory, behavioral economics, and contemporary models of strategic human resource management. This multifaceted foundation enables a nuanced exploration of human-centered organizational culture, allowing the study to investigate not only behavioral and structural dynamics but also underlying psychological and emotional processes. In particular, the research is anchored in three foundational models: Self-Determination Theory [5, 22, 25], Schein's Organizational Culture Model [6], and the Emotional Intelligence framework [10]. These models collectively support a multi-level examination of human-centeredness across individual, team-based, and institutional dimensions, and provide the conceptual scaffolding necessary for both analysis and applied organizational redesign.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT), as developed by Deci & Ryan [5], serves as the psychological core of this study. SDT posits that intrinsic motivation and psychological flourishing are contingent upon the fulfillment of three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Autonomy refers to the experience of volition and ownership over one's actions; competence entails a sense of efficacy and the capacity to perform effectively within one's environment; and relatedness describes the need to feel connected and valued within a social context. In the organizational domain, these needs are mediated by managerial practices, structural design, and feedback mechanisms that either enable or inhibit their satisfaction [26]. This study utilizes the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction (BPNS) scale to empirically assess the degree to which organizational contexts support these core needs and how this support relates to employee engagement, adaptability, and emotional well-being. By applying SDT, the research moves beyond utilitarian models of labor and instead investigates how organizational structures can nurture or suppress fundamental human drives.

Complementing this psychological perspective is the organizational-cultural lens provided by Schein's [6] three-tiered model of culture. Schein [6] conceptualizes organizational culture as a complex system of interrelated levels: observable artifacts (e.g., rituals, technologies, spatial arrangements), espoused values (e.g., mission statements, leadership narratives), and underlying assumptions (deep, often unconscious beliefs that guide behavior). This model is particularly relevant for identifying the dissonance that may exist between what organizations claim to value and what their daily operations actually reflect. Such inconsistencies can hinder trust, dilute strategic coherence, and create emotional dissonance among employees. Schein's [6] framework, therefore, allows the study to move beyond superficial metrics of organizational culture and to interrogate the latent cognitive and normative structures that shape behavioral outcomes. It is particularly useful for understanding the degree to which human-centered values-such as empathy, dignity, and inclusivity-are embedded at a foundational level or merely performed symbolically [27].

The third conceptual pillar is the Emotional Intelligence (EI) framework, as articulated by Mayer et al. [10]. EI is understood as a set of interrelated emotional competencies that include the ability to perceive emotions accurately, use emotions to facilitate thinking, understand the causes and trajectories of emotional states, and regulate emotional responses in oneself and others. Within the context of organizational life, EI is increasingly recognized as a central component of effective leadership, team cohesion, and employee resilience. In this study, EI is theorized as a mediating factor between organizational structures and individual psychological experience. It shapes how feedback is delivered and received, how conflict is navigated, and how trust and psychological safety are cultivated. Measurement of emotional climate is carried out using the Emotional Culture Index (ECI), which captures both the dominant emotional norms within a given workplace and the frequency of affective expressions such as gratitude, compassion, and frustration. The integration of EI into this framework ensures that emotional dynamics are not treated as peripheral or incidental, but rather as constitutive elements of organizational functioning and transformation.

Taken together, these three theoretical models constitute a robust analytical framework for understanding how human-centered organizational cultures are designed, sustained, and institutionalized. SDT offers a psychological lens through which the motivational architecture of the workplace can be understood and optimized. Schein's [6] model enables an interrogation of the cultural structures that frame organizational meaning and action. The EI framework ensures that the emotional and relational dimensions of organizational life are given analytical prominence and operational relevance. This triangulated framework not only provides diagnostic clarity but also informs the development of a scalable, integrative model for human-centered organizational transformation. Such a model is particularly vital in contemporary work environments characterized by volatility, complexity, and the increasing interpenetration of digital systems and human agency. It is within this theoretical constellation that the present study situates its inquiry into the mechanisms, constraints, and potentialities of human-centered management in global organizational contexts.

Figure 1 shows the flowchart of the research methodology through which the objectives of this study were achieved.

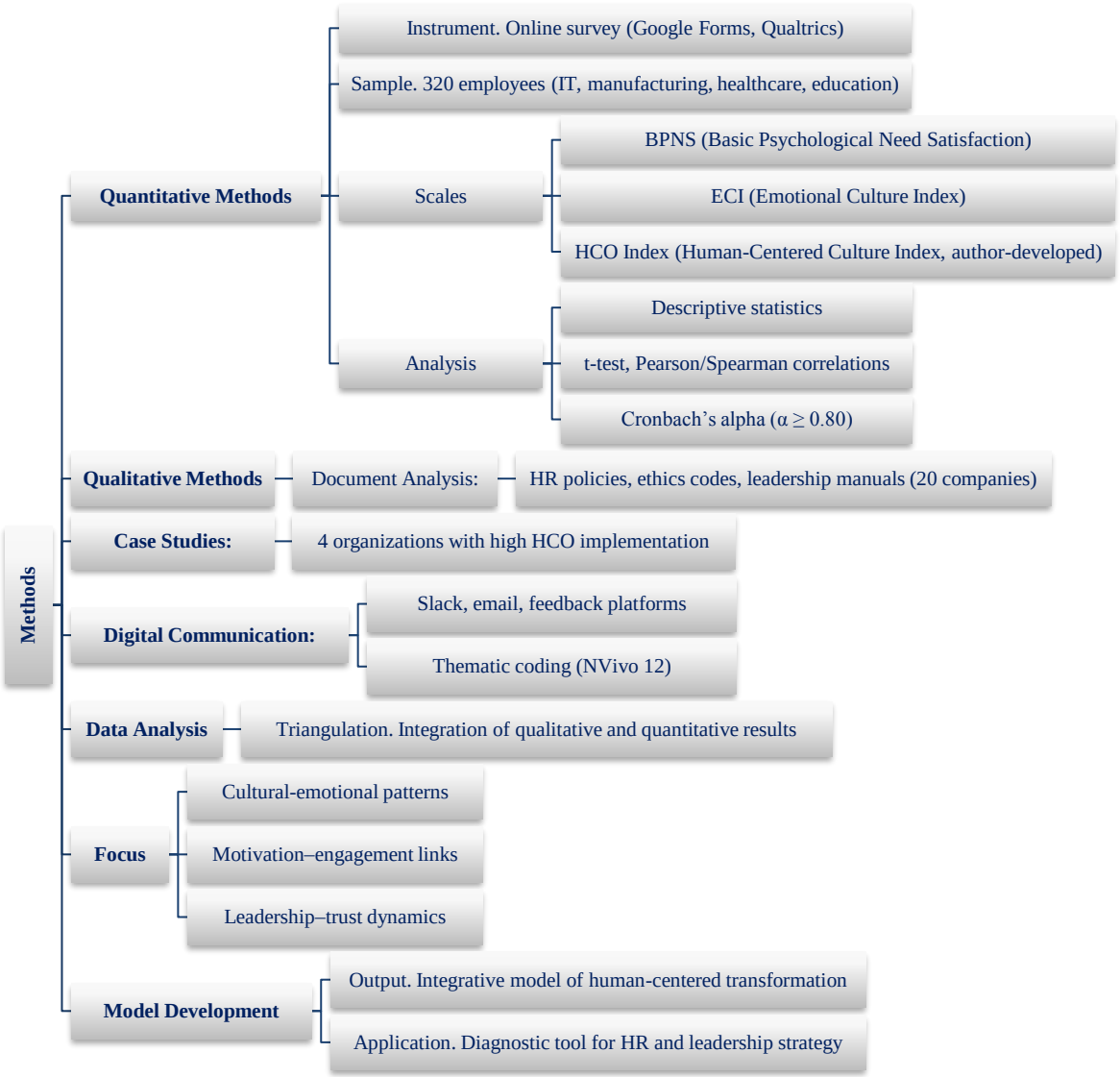


Figure 1. Research Methodological Scheme (Structured Overview)

The study employed a set of validated quantitative instruments to assess core dimensions of human-centered organizational environments. The selection of measurement tools was guided by the need for both empirical reliability and theoretical alignment with constructs such as emotional safety, basic psychological need satisfaction, and emotional culture within workplace contexts.

First, the Basic Psychological Needs Scale (BPNS), grounded in Self-Determination Theory [5], was utilized to assess the degree to which employees experienced satisfaction of three fundamental psychological needs:

Autonomy: the sense of volition and self-directedness in one's work;

Competence: the experience of effectiveness and mastery in job-related tasks;

Relatedness: the feeling of connection and belonging within the organizational setting.

Each subscale comprised 6–8 items rated on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The composite BPNS index was calculated by averaging the scores across all three subdomains.

Second, the study employed a custom-developed and piloted Emotional Culture Index (ECI) to evaluate the organization's normative emotional environment. The ECI captures the extent to which specific emotional expressions are: Encouraged by organizational norms; Actually expressed by employees; Expected in interpersonal and team interactions.

The ECI encompasses two dimensions-positive and negative emotional expressions-each represented by five discrete emotions (e.g., joy, gratitude, compassion for the positive spectrum; fear, anger, guilt for the negative spectrum). Each emotion was assessed along three axes-encouragement, expression, and expectation-using a 7-point Likert-type scale. This multidimensional design allowed for nuanced diagnostics of emotional congruence or misalignment within organizational settings.

Third, emotional safety was assessed through adapted indicators derived from the psychological safety framework developed by Edmondson [8]. Statements included items such as "In this team, I feel safe to speak up with ideas or concerns" and "Mistakes are treated as learning opportunities rather than sources of blame." These measures were incorporated into the survey instrument and cross-validated through correlational analysis with team dynamics and leadership style indicators.

Finally, behavioral strategy assessments were conducted using a vignette-based method. Participants responded to contextually rich organizational scenarios designed to elicit ethical and interpersonal judgments. Each scenario presented multiple response options corresponding to distinct behavioral strategies (e.g., proactive responsibility, ethical maturity, conformity/passivity, responsibility avoidance). The frequency and distribution of responses were quantified, allowing for comparison across organizational sectors and alignment with human-centered policy benchmarks.

In sum, the study was anchored in a rigorous mixed-methods framework, integrating psychometrically robust and theoretically coherent measurement tools. This enabled a comprehensive mapping of subjective experiences and objective indicators relevant to the institutionalization of human-centered organizational practices.

2-2- Sampling and Data Collection

The study sample consisted of 320 employees from multinational companies operating in the fields of education, information technology, healthcare, and industry. Participants ranged in age from 25 to 55. Data collection was conducted via the Google Forms platform between October and December 2024. The study explicitly acknowledged the role of national cultural norms as a significant contextual factor influencing both the interpretation and practical implementation of human-centered organizational models across different regions. Rather than assuming the universal applicability of such models, the research adopted a culturally sensitive perspective, recognizing that constructs central to human-centered culture-such as emotional openness, participatory leadership, psychological safety, and interpersonal trust-are mediated by broader sociocultural frameworks that differ markedly across national and regional contexts. In particular, the study drew on established cultural dimensions theories (e.g., Hofstede's cultural dimensions, Schwartz's value orientations, and the GLOBE study) to interpret how societal norms regarding power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism versus collectivism, and masculinity-femininity dynamics shape expectations for leadership, communication, and emotional expression in the workplace. These dimensions were not treated as abstract typologies but as deeply embedded cultural logics that influence how employees and managers perceive vulnerability, feedback, autonomy, and relational norms.

For instance, in high power distance cultures-such as those in parts of East Asia, the Middle East, or post-Soviet countries-organizational hierarchies are typically seen as legitimate and necessary, and questioning authority may be culturally discouraged. In such contexts, efforts to promote human-centered practices like horizontal dialogue, open dissent, or emotionally transparent leadership may encounter resistance not due to managerial failure, but because such practices violate implicit cultural expectations about decorum, respect, and professional distance. Similarly, in cultures where emotional restraint is normative and expressions of vulnerability are culturally regulated, initiatives that encourage emotional openness may be interpreted as intrusive, inappropriate, or inauthentic. The study therefore emphasized the importance of cultural adaptation in the design and implementation of human-centered models. Rather than promoting a rigid or prescriptive framework, the proposed model was designed to be culturally modular-allowing for core principles (such as dignity, psychological safety, and meaningful work) to be maintained, while adapting behavioral expressions, communication styles, and feedback mechanisms to align with local norms [7]. This approach aimed to avoid cultural imperialism or normative overreach by ensuring that the ethos of human-centeredness was not conflated with Western affective expression norms or egalitarian ideals, which may not hold the same resonance in all cultural contexts.

Empirical data from the cross-sectoral and cross-regional analysis supported this need for adaptation. For example, in sectors and regions characterized by collectivist values, the implementation of human-centered practices often depended more heavily on relational trust, group harmony, and social embeddedness, rather than on individual autonomy or assertive self-expression. In contrast, in more individualistic contexts, employees responded more positively to initiatives that foregrounded personal growth, voice, and emotional authenticity. The selection of organizations for the

thematic case study was conducted through a purposive and stratified sampling approach, designed to ensure representation across various economic sectors, organizational sizes, and maturity levels of human-centered cultural integration. The primary objective was to identify organizations that either exemplify advanced implementation of human-centered practices or are actively transitioning toward such models, thereby providing both contrast and analytical depth to the sample. At the preliminary stage, candidate organizations were identified using expert recommendations, publicly available employer rankings (e.g., Forbes, Great Place to Work, Glassdoor), and sector-specific reports highlighting the adoption of human-centric practices. A secondary data review was then undertaken to verify organizational alignment with the research criteria, including analysis of corporate websites, sustainability reports, internal policy disclosures, and relevant media publications.

The core inclusion criteria were as follows:

- Explicit articulation of a human-centered mission or strategic orientation, emphasizing employee well-being, capacity development, psychological safety, and work-life balance;
- Documented implementation of human-oriented practices, such as flexible scheduling, employee assistance programs, diversity and inclusion policies, and emotionally intelligent leadership development;
- Empirical evidence of outcomes associated with these practices, including reduced turnover rates, elevated employee engagement and satisfaction scores, improved internal communication metrics, and enhanced employer reputation as measured by external audits or stakeholder surveys;
- Organizational consent for in-depth participation, encompassing access to internal communication channels, normative documentation, and authorization to conduct employee surveys and interviews.

In order to account for contextual variables, the sample was stratified by sector-specifically education, healthcare, information technology, and manufacturing. This enabled comparative analysis of how human-centered models are operationalized in distinct institutional environments. The final sample comprised both “practice leaders”-organizations with established reputations for human-centered excellence-and “transitional organizations” currently engaged in adopting human-centric reforms. This methodological configuration allowed the study to capture both best practices and implementation challenges, thereby providing a comprehensive, multi-level perspective on the institutionalization of human-centered organizational culture.

2-3- Data Analysis Methods

Data were processed using Microsoft Excel and IBM SPSS Statistics 23. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations) were used to determine general trends. The Kruskal–Wallis test was applied to analyze differences across organization types. Spearman’s rank correlation was used to identify relationships between the satisfaction of basic psychological needs and dimensions of emotional culture. For intergroup comparisons, t-tests were employed, along with factor analysis utilizing the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett’s test of sphericity, allowing for the identification of the internal structure of the applied scales. The threshold for statistical significance was set at $p \leq 0.05$.

During the pilot implementation of the human-centered organizational model, particular attention was devoted to monitoring the emotional well-being of change leaders, who served as the primary agents responsible for articulating new values, facilitating behavioral transitions, and mediating between institutional expectations and organizational realities. Emotional burnout among these individuals was conceptualized not solely as a personal psychological risk, but as a systemic vulnerability capable of undermining the sustainability and legitimacy of cultural transformation efforts. The assessment of burnout risk employed a mixed-methods approach that combined psychometric measurement with qualitative observation. The core quantitative instrument used was a modified version of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), adapted for managerial and leadership contexts. This scale allowed for the evaluation of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and diminished sense of professional efficacy through structured self-report items. These subjective responses were cross-referenced with internal organizational data, including HR metrics and behavioral indicators, as well as semi-structured interviews conducted with both change leaders and their team members.

In addition to formal measurement, the research team monitored indirect behavioral markers of burnout, such as reduced initiative, avoidance of collaborative engagements, emotional detachment, decreased empathy in interpersonal exchanges, and a tendency to delegate emotionally taxing responsibilities. These markers were interpreted within the context of organizational climate and support systems, particularly the availability of psychological safety, feedback mechanisms, and perceived executive commitment to cultural reform. Findings from this phase revealed that burnout was especially prevalent among middle managers, who occupied the structurally ambiguous position between top-level directives and front-line expectations. These individuals were often tasked with implementing values that had not yet been fully institutionalized or internalized by the broader organizational system. As a result, they bore the psychological burden of defending or justifying reforms for which structural alignment was still incomplete. This role ambiguity, compounded by time pressure and limited emotional support, contributed significantly to emotional fatigue and, in some cases, moral distress.

To address these challenges, the study proposed a set of multi-level mitigation strategies, not limited to individual coping mechanisms but embedded in broader cultural and structural reforms. Rather than viewing burnout as a private issue to be resolved through personal resilience or stress management, the intervention logic emphasized the relational and systemic origins of emotional overload. Strategies thus focused on creating safe reflective spaces for change leaders, including peer-based supervision formats and facilitated coaching sessions, in which emotionally charged experiences could be processed constructively. Organizational norms were also revisited to allow for the rotation of leadership roles in transformation efforts, thereby distributing responsibility more equitably and preventing chronic emotional overextension.

At the institutional level, organizations began to recognize the importance of symbolically and materially affirming the contributions of change leaders. Recognition mechanisms, including career advancement opportunities, internal visibility, and moral acknowledgment, were gradually embedded into leadership development frameworks. Furthermore, targeted training in emotional self-regulation, mindfulness, and conflict mediation was offered to equip managers with the competencies required to sustain their roles without succumbing to psychological depletion.

The framework of the research methodology that was used to achieve the study's aims is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Methodological Framework

Stage	Description
Research Design Selection	Correlational design; Multi-method approach with comparative policy analysis
Participant Recruitment	Total N = 320 employees Sectors: Education, IT, Healthcare, Manufacturing Age range: 25–55 years Geography: Multinational organizations
Data Collection Instruments	a) Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction Scale – Measures autonomy, competence, and relatedness b) Emotional Culture Index (ECI) – Trust, empathy, emotional safety (Human Synergistics) c) Human-Centered Policy Audit Questionnaire – Adapted from OECD Workplace Guidelines d) Vignette-Based Survey – "How Do You Respond?" Six workplace scenarios assessing value alignment and perception
Data Processing	Google Forms → Data collection Microsoft Excel → Initial structure IBM SPSS Statistics 23 → Advanced analytics
Analytical Procedures	Descriptive statistics (demographics, means, SD) Kruskal–Wallis test – Cross-sector comparison Spearman's rho – Correlation between need satisfaction and emotional culture t-tests – Group differences Factor analysis – KMO and Bartlett's test
Synthesis of Results	Identification and mapping of policy models Organizational typologies
Intervention Proposals	Integration model: – Emotional intelligence training – Inclusive feedback cycles – Leadership development programs

2-4- Presentation of Results

The results are presented in the form of correlation matrices, descriptive tables, and factor loading diagrams, enabling cross-comparative analysis of organizational structures and cultural typologies. The applied analytical model supports a deeper understanding of how specific management practices and HR decisions relate to levels of employee psychological well-being and engagement within the corporate environment.

The empirical phase of the study revealed notable inconsistencies between the formally stated corporate values and the actual managerial and behavioral practices observed within the participating organizations. This phenomenon-often referred to in academic literature as the "value-practice gap" or "organizational hypocrisy" [28, 29] emerged as a salient indicator of cultural misalignment and institutional inconsistency. Many of the organizations involved in the study publicly articulated a commitment to human-centered values, such as inclusivity, respect, well-being, and open communication. These values were frequently embedded in mission statements, corporate codes of ethics, employee handbooks, and visual identity materials. However, data gathered from employee surveys (e.g., the Basic Psychological Needs Scale and Emotional Culture Index), internal document analysis, and in-depth interviews with staff members indicated a substantial divergence between aspirational discourse and lived organizational experience.

Several recurring forms of misalignment were documented:

- Lack of operationalization. While organizations often declared their commitment to participatory decision-making, feedback culture, and psychological safety, the actual managerial practices frequently remained hierarchical and transactional. Employees reported a low incidence of bottom-up influence, limited psychological safety, and insufficient responsiveness to emotional and interpersonal concerns.
- Strategic–tactical inconsistency. In multiple cases, human-centered strategies (such as mental health initiatives or values-based leadership training) coexisted with rigid performance management systems (e.g., narrowly defined KPIs, micromanagement, and surveillance-based oversight). This contradiction eroded trust and heightened emotional dissonance among employees.
- Leadership behavior misalignment. Executives and mid-level managers often expressed rhetorical support for empathy, inclusiveness, and respect in formal communications, yet failed to exhibit these values in daily interpersonal conduct. This behavioral incongruence diminished the credibility of leadership and contributed to a climate of disengagement and skepticism.
- Symbolic implementations of values. In many cases, organizational values existed only at a declarative level. They were not substantively integrated into core HR processes, such as onboarding, performance evaluation, internal promotion, or reward systems. As a result, these values lacked behavioral anchoring, and were not perceived by employees as authentic or enforceable.

The presence of these value-practice contradictions had tangible consequences for organizational climate. Statistical analysis demonstrated that organizations with the highest degree of misalignment also recorded lower scores on indices of basic psychological need satisfaction and emotional safety, as well as reduced employee engagement and affective commitment. These findings underscore a central premise of the human-centered culture model: corporate values must not remain symbolic declarations, but rather be institutionally enacted through policy frameworks, leadership behaviors, communicative routines, and daily operational practices. Without this translational infrastructure, values risk becoming performative or superficial, contributing to cynicism, mistrust, and cultural fragmentation.

In sum, the study highlights that authentic human-centered transformation depends not merely on the articulation of values, but on their systemic institutionalization across all layers of organizational life.

In the organizations studied, discrepancies between espoused corporate values and actual managerial practices were addressed and rationalized through a variety of strategies. These strategies reflected differing levels of cultural maturity, leadership awareness, and institutional readiness for change. Broadly speaking, the responses to such misalignments can be categorized into three levels of organizational response: symbolic rationalization, adaptive reconciliation, and transformational integration.

- Symbolic Rationalization: At the most superficial level, some organizations tended to rationalize or deflect attention from value-practice gaps by framing them as temporary or aspirational in nature. Senior executives and HR representatives frequently justified the disconnect between declared values (such as inclusivity, empathy, or transparency) and everyday practices as part of a "transitional process" or an "ongoing journey toward improvement." In such cases, values were maintained symbolically, serving primarily a legitimizing or reputational function rather than guiding actual behavior. This symbolic rationalization often manifested in official communications, corporate events, or CSR documentation, without meaningful institutionalization. As such, it reflected low levels of cultural embodiment and signaled a preference for reputational coherence over operational alignment.
- Adaptive Reconciliation: A more pragmatic approach was observed in organizations demonstrating moderate cultural maturity, where discrepancies were acknowledged and addressed through incremental, adaptive adjustments. Rather than undertaking sweeping reforms, these organizations introduced targeted interventions aimed at partially aligning practices with declared values. Examples included:
    - Implementing regular anonymous feedback mechanisms to enhance upward communication;
    - Establishing internal task forces focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), well-being, or ethical culture;
    - Modifying performance evaluation systems to include qualitative feedback and emotional intelligence indicators.

While such efforts did not always constitute systemic change, they reflected an intentional effort to integrate values into daily operations. Adaptive reconciliation was particularly effective in contexts where leadership was responsive to employee sentiment and open to iterative policy refinement. These organizations treated values as both normative ideals and functional tools for cultural alignment.

- Transformational Integration: At the highest level of organizational response, some institutions pursued comprehensive cultural transformation by embedding human-centered values into the structural and procedural fabric of the organization. This transformational approach involved:
  - Integrating human-centric values into recruitment, onboarding, and promotion criteria;
  - Providing leadership development programs focused on ethical decision-making, psychological safety, and emotional culture;
  - Institutionalizing metrics such as the Emotional Culture Index (ECI) and Human-Centered Culture Index as part of organizational performance dashboards;
  - Decentralizing decision-making structures and fostering cross-functional accountability mechanisms.

In these cases, discrepancies between values and practice were not merely acknowledged or managed, but systematically addressed through institutional redesign. Values were treated not as symbolic artifacts, but as strategic assets, whose consistent implementation was essential to organizational legitimacy, trust, and long-term adaptability. Organizations adopting this approach recognized that cultural alignment is an ongoing process requiring continuous dialogue, leadership modeling, structural reinforcement, and investment in social capital.

3- Results

In today's rapidly evolving world, human resource management is undergoing a fundamental shift, requiring a rethinking of core concepts in organizational culture and strategies for employee engagement [30]. Continuous technological advancement, globalization, and the growing importance of social responsibility have intensified demands on the internal environment of organizations, placing the formation of a human-centered culture at the forefront. Human-centricity is no longer viewed as a temporary initiative but as a foundational value that ensures long-term business sustainability, high employee engagement, and organizational adaptability to change [31]. An analysis of current trends in strategic HR management reveals that traditional hierarchical models are being replaced by flexible, adaptive, and values-driven approaches [32]. The influence of global shifts-such as the digitalization of processes, the inclusivity of corporate practices, and the emphasis on sustainable development-is fundamentally transforming perceptions of how internal communication, leadership processes, and career progression should be structured [33]. This section of the study will examine the concept of human-centricity, the features of organizational culture transformation, and the key trends in strategic HR management in the context of global change [34]. Human-centricity in the organizational context is defined as a strategic approach that places the fulfillment of employees' basic psychological needs, the assurance of their well-being, active involvement in decision-making processes, and respect for their values at the core [35, 36]. It is not merely a focus on clients or staff; rather, it is a systemic philosophy encompassing corporate culture, management processes, and strategic planning (see Table 2).

Table 2. Indicators of Human-Centricity in Organizations

Indicators of Human-Centricity in Organizations	Description
Satisfaction of Basic Psychological Needs	Autonomy, competence, belonging
Emotional Safety	Presence of trust, support in stressful situations
Inclusivity	Equal opportunities for participation and career advancement
Opportunities for Development	Mentorship programs, training, and self-actualization pathways
Value Orientation	Support for individual goals within the organization's mission framework

A human-centered culture is cultivated where an organization systematically takes into account not only employees' professional competencies but also their emotional, value-based, and social needs-integrating these dimensions into its strategic development [37]. Organizational culture is a complex system of norms, values, rituals, and practices that shapes employees' daily behavior and patterns of interaction within the company. Within a human-centric model, organizational culture becomes flexible, adaptive, and oriented toward unlocking the potential of each member of the corporate community (see Table 3).

Table 3. Aspects of Organizational Culture

Aspects of Organizational Culture	Human-Centric Focus
Interaction Norms	Support for open dialogue and feedback
Values	Emphasis on individual development and team success
Leadership	Emotional intelligence and empathy in leadership
Performance Evaluation	Inclusion of non-material indicators of employee satisfaction
Policies and Procedures	Flexibility of rules based on employee needs

The transformation of organizational culture toward human-centricity requires not merely the replacement of formal procedures, but a profound shift in behavioral patterns and mindsets across all levels of the corporate structure [38, 39].

Flexible forms of employment have become a key instrument in building human-centered organizations. They involve granting employees greater control over the time, location, and conditions of their work, thereby enhancing satisfaction and productivity (see Table 4) [40-45].

Table 4. Types of Flexible Work Arrangements

Type of Flexible Work Arrangement	Examples
Flexible Work Schedule	Individually planned working hours
Remote Work	Working from home or co-working spaces
Project-Based Work	Short-term contracts based on deliverables
Part-Time Employment	Reduced working hours without loss of employment status
Temporary Roles	Role rotation for competency development

The implementation of flexible work arrangements fosters an environment in which employees experience a sense of autonomy and control over their professional lives, which, in turn, increases their loyalty and engagement [44, 46]. Contemporary HR management is undergoing radical transformation, shifting from an administrative function to the role of a strategic business partner [47]. The key trends shaping the future direction of this field include the digitalization of HR processes, a focus on the emotional intelligence of leaders, the development of inclusive policies, and a strong commitment to sustainable development (Table 5) [48].

Table 5. HR Management Trends

HR Management Trend	Brief Description
HR Digitalization	Implementation of AI, people analytics, and automation of routine processes
Inclusivity and DEI (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion)	Creating equal opportunities and embracing diversity
Focus on Emotional Intelligence	Developing leadership skills in empathy and communication
Strategic Flexibility	Rapid adaptation of processes to environmental changes
Sustainable Development	Integrating ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) goals into HR strategies

Current trends demand that organizations pursue not only technical modernization but also a profound shift in the human resource management paradigm-toward focusing on the individual as the primary source of sustainable competitive advantage [49]. Global transformations impact all levels of an organization. Digitalization encourages new formats of interaction and learning [50]. The rise of inclusivity necessitates a revision of hiring and development practices. Meanwhile, sustainable development mandates the integration of environmental and social considerations into management policies (see Table 6) [51].

Table 6. Global Change Factors

Global Change Factor	Impact on HR Practices
Digitalization	Virtual teams, hybrid work formats
Inclusivity	Anti-discrimination practices, DEI (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion) programs
Sustainable Development	Corporate social responsibility, employee well-being programs

Understanding the impact of global changes enables organizations not only to meet external demands but also to foster an internal environment conducive to long-term development and innovation [52]. Accordingly, the conceptual framework-developed through theoretical analysis of human-centricity, HR management trends, and global shifts in workforce governance-justifies the need for empirical investigation [53]. For further analysis, data will be collected via a survey targeting employees across various industries to assess the extent to which human-centric cultural principles are implemented in contemporary organizations.

The study involved 320 employees from multinational companies representing four key sectors: education, information technology, healthcare, and industry. The respondents were between the ages of 25 and 55. Data collection took place between October and December 2024 using the online platform Google Forms.

The BPNS scale included three subscales: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Each subscale was assessed using 7 statements rated on a 7-point Likert scale (from 1 to 7). Below are the aggregated results, including the mean values and standard deviations for each parameter (see Table 7) (Application 1).

Table 7. Mean Scores of Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction (n = 320)

Need	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Autonomy	5.62	0.89
Competence	5.45	0.94
Relatedness	5.13	1.07
Overall BPNS Index	5.40	0.91

The analysis of employee psychological well-being was carried out using the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction (BPNS) scale, which measures the perceived fulfillment of three core psychological needs-autonomy, competence, and relatedness-within the organizational context. The descriptive statistics derived from the dataset indicate an overall positive psychological climate, though with notable variation across the three need domains.

Among the dimensions assessed, autonomy yielded the highest mean score (M = 5.62, SD = 0.89), suggesting that, across the sample, employees generally experienced a strong sense of self-governance and volitional control in their professional tasks. The relatively low standard deviation implies a high degree of consistency in these perceptions, indicating that the majority of respondents felt empowered to make independent decisions and exercise personal initiative in their roles. Competence, representing individuals' feelings of effectiveness and mastery at work, was also rated highly (M = 5.45, SD = 0.94). This result reflects a prevailing sense of confidence among employees in their ability to meet professional demands, develop relevant skills, and perform successfully within their assigned functions. Although slightly lower than autonomy, the competence dimension remains robust and is consistent with environments that emphasize skill development, clear performance expectations, and constructive feedback mechanisms. The relatedness dimension, while still within a moderate-to-high satisfaction range, recorded the lowest average score (M = 5.13, SD = 1.07). This suggests a more variable and potentially fragmented experience of social connectedness across the organizational settings surveyed. The comparatively higher standard deviation points to significant disparities in how employees experience interpersonal relationships, collegial support, and a sense of belonging within their work environments. These results may reflect organizational or structural barriers to social integration, such as team fragmentation, hierarchical distance, or inconsistent leadership communication.

The overall BPNS index, calculated as the mean across all three psychological need dimensions, stands at 5.40 (SD = 0.91), affirming a generally supportive organizational climate in terms of motivational and psychological functioning. The predominance of autonomy and competence suggests that the studied environments are effective in enabling individual agency and perceived efficacy. However, the comparatively lower score for relatedness raises important considerations regarding the affective and social fabric of organizational life.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings align with the core tenets of Self-Determination Theory [5], which posit that all three psychological needs must be adequately satisfied for optimal functioning, well-being, and intrinsic motivation. In practical terms, the results imply that while current organizational systems are successful in supporting task-related dimensions of employee experience, there remains a critical need to strengthen relational dynamics. Addressing this gap could involve the implementation of targeted interventions, such as enhanced peer-support programs, inclusive leadership practices, and structures that promote psychological safety and mutual trust.

In summary, the data reveal that employees operate within environments that are moderately to highly need-supportive, particularly in terms of autonomy and competence. Nevertheless, variability in perceived relatedness indicates an area for potential organizational development, with implications for enhancing overall engagement, retention, and team effectiveness.

To analyze differences across sectors, the Kruskal–Wallis test was conducted. The Table 8 presents the average scores for each subscale by industry sector.

Table 8. Mean BPNS Scores by Sector

Sector	Autonomy	Competence	Relatedness
Education	5.74	5.51	5.38
IT	5.81	5.72	5.10
Healthcare	5.22	5.11	4.89
Manufacturing	5.70	5.46	5.14

To further contextualize employee perceptions of psychological support within the workplace, the study examined variations in BPNS scores across four key sectors: education, information technology (IT), healthcare, and manufacturing. The comparison focused on the three core psychological needs-autonomy, competence, and relatedness-allowing for a nuanced understanding of how different organizational environments differentially meet these fundamental human requirements.

Across all sectors, autonomy was consistently rated as the most strongly satisfied need, though its magnitude varied. Employees in the IT sector reported the highest levels of autonomy (M = 5.81), closely followed by those in the education sector (M = 5.74) and manufacturing (M = 5.70). In contrast, healthcare workers indicated significantly lower perceptions of autonomy (M = 5.22), suggesting a more constrained or regulated work environment that may limit decision-making latitude and self-direction. This discrepancy likely reflects the structural and procedural rigidity often inherent in clinical and institutional healthcare settings, where compliance, safety protocols, and hierarchical oversight are more prevalent. Competence scores largely mirrored the autonomy trend. The IT sector again recorded the highest perceived competence (M = 5.72), suggesting that employees in this field feel particularly effective and well-equipped in their roles-likely due to rapid technological advancement, skill-based environments, and continuous learning opportunities embedded in IT work cultures. Education followed with a mean competence score of 5.51, while manufacturing (M = 5.46) demonstrated similarly favorable, though slightly lower, levels. Once again, healthcare emerged as the least supportive environment for perceived competence (M = 5.11), which may reflect the high demands, emotional burden, or resource constraints often faced by professionals in this sector.

Relatedness, the most affectively loaded of the three dimensions, presented the greatest variability across sectors. The education sector reported the highest relatedness scores (M = 5.38), indicating strong collegial support and a sense of social connectedness among educators-perhaps owing to the collaborative nature of teaching, mentoring, and community engagement in educational institutions. Manufacturing (M = 5.14) and IT (M = 5.10) showed relatively moderate levels of relatedness, suggesting that interpersonal cohesion is present but perhaps less central to daily operations. By contrast, healthcare professionals reported the lowest relatedness score (M = 4.89), pointing to potential challenges in peer communication, emotional support, or interprofessional trust. This finding is particularly significant given the interpersonal intensity and relational demands characteristic of healthcare environments; it may reflect burnout, emotional distancing, or fragmented teamwork under pressure.

Taken together, these results underscore the importance of considering sector-specific organizational dynamics when evaluating psychological need satisfaction. While the IT and education sectors appear to offer more supportive conditions for autonomy and competence, healthcare demonstrates consistently lower levels of satisfaction across all three need domains. This points to the need for targeted cultural and structural interventions in healthcare organizations to enhance autonomy, reinforce professional efficacy, and, most urgently, foster social cohesion and emotional connectivity among staff.

Moreover, the variability in relatedness across sectors suggests that affective experiences in the workplace are not universally distributed and may be more sensitive to contextual, structural, and leadership factors than task-based dimensions such as competence. As Self-Determination Theory emphasizes the interactive and cumulative effects of need fulfillment, deficiencies in one domain-particularly relatedness-may undermine gains in others, ultimately affecting engagement, resilience, and retention.

To determine the relationships between BPNS parameters and the Emotional Culture Index (trust, empathy, safety), a correlational analysis was conducted (see Table 9).

Table 9. Spearman Correlation Coefficients Between BPNS and Emotional Culture Parameters (n = 320)

Indicator	Autonomy	Competence	Relatedness
Trust	0.48**	0.39**	0.61**
Empathy	0.44**	0.41**	0.57**
Emotional Safety	0.51**	0.46**	0.63**

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

The relationship between psychological need satisfaction and emotional culture was examined using Spearman's rank-order correlation, a non-parametric measure appropriate for ordinal and non-normally distributed data. Table 9 presents the correlation coefficients between the three dimensions of Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction (BPNS)-autonomy, competence, and relatedness-and three key indicators of emotional culture: trust, empathy, and emotional safety. All correlations reported were statistically significant at the $p < 0.01$ level, suggesting robust associations across the dataset (n = 320). The strongest and most consistent correlations were observed between relatedness and each emotional culture parameter. Relatedness demonstrated a particularly strong correlation with emotional safety ($\rho = 0.63$, $p < 0.01$), followed closely by trust ($\rho = 0.61$, $p < 0.01$) and empathy ($\rho = 0.57$, $p < 0.01$). These results highlight the centrality of social and affective dynamics in fulfilling employees' need for connectedness. The strength of these associations suggests that relational trust, empathic exchanges, and perceived emotional safety within teams and leadership interactions are essential conditions for fostering a sense of belonging and social integration in organizational contexts. Autonomy also exhibited significant correlations with all three emotional culture variables, particularly with emotional safety ($\rho = 0.51$, $p < 0.01$) and trust ($\rho = 0.48$, $p < 0.01$). These findings imply that environments characterized by openness, psychological security, and relational integrity enable employees to exercise choice and feel a sense of volitional control in their work. The moderate-to-strong relationship between autonomy and emotional safety further suggests that when individuals feel emotionally secure, they are more likely to engage in self-directed behavior, take initiative, and voice their perspectives without fear of negative interpersonal consequences.

The dimension of competence displayed the weakest, yet still statistically significant, correlations across all parameters: emotional safety ($\rho = 0.46$), empathy ($\rho = 0.41$), and trust ($\rho = 0.39$). Although these correlations are lower in magnitude, they nonetheless indicate that affective dimensions of organizational culture play a meaningful role in shaping perceptions of professional efficacy. Employees are more likely to feel competent when they work in emotionally intelligent environments where understanding, support, and interpersonal trust are routinely expressed. These associations may be especially relevant in contexts involving complex, interdependent tasks where emotional tone influences feedback quality and perceived competence.

The factor structure confirms the theoretical model of the BPNS scale, in which need satisfaction is organized into three relatively independent but interrelated dimensions. This supports the rationale for further use of the scale in cross-group and policy-related analyses of HR practices. The aggregated survey results reveal a systematic relationship between the satisfaction of basic psychological needs and the perception of the emotional climate within organizations. Notably, the sense of relatedness emerges as a particularly sensitive indicator, influenced by organizational culture, leadership, and inclusivity. These findings form the empirical foundation for the next phase of the study-analyzing human-centered policies and developing typologies of organizational cultures that support the development of sustainable and human-centric environments.

The Emotional Culture Index (ECI) was used in this study to assess which emotions are encouraged, expressed, and considered "socially expected" within organizations. This method provides insight into the extent to which an organization's emotional culture contributes to a supportive, inclusive, and psychologically safe work environment. The instrument included 30 statements grouped into three dimensions-encouragement, expression, and expectation-covering 10 emotions in each. Respondents rated each statement using a 5-point Likert scale (see Application 2).

To begin, we present the average scores for each dimension and emotional type (positive and negative emotions), which allows us to characterize the overall emotional climate within the sample (see Table 10).

Table 10. Mean Scores by Emotion Categories (n = 320)

Emotion Category	Encouraged (M)	Expressed (M)	Expected (M)
Positive Emotions	4.38	4.01	4.26
Negative Emotions	2.61	2.75	2.58
Overall ECI Index	3.50	3.38	3.42

Table 10 presents the mean scores for three domains of emotional culture-encouraged, expressed, and expected emotions-measured across two primary emotion categories: positive and negative emotions. These dimensions reflect not only how emotions are felt and displayed in the workplace, but also the normative and prescriptive expectations embedded within organizational culture. Additionally, an aggregated Emotional Culture Index (ECI) was computed across all dimensions to offer a general overview of the emotional climate within participating organizations.

In terms of positive emotions, which include feelings such as enthusiasm, appreciation, joy, and pride, the highest mean score was observed in the "encouraged" category ($M = 4.38$). This suggests that organizational environments, on average, actively promote and reward the display of positive affect. The "expected" dimension also yielded a relatively high score ($M = 4.26$), indicating that employees perceive an implicit or explicit expectation to maintain positive emotional displays as part of their professional conduct. The "expressed" dimension, while still relatively high ($M = 4.01$), was the lowest among the three, suggesting a possible discrepancy between what is institutionally encouraged or expected and what employees feel comfortable expressing in practice. This gap may reflect emotional labor, performance masking, or context-specific emotional restraint, and warrants further qualitative investigation.

With regard to negative emotions-which encompass anger, frustration, anxiety, and disappointment-the pattern was markedly different. All three domains recorded significantly lower mean scores, with "expressed" negative emotions being the highest ($M = 2.75$), followed by "encouraged" ($M = 2.61$) and "expected" ($M = 2.58$). These results suggest that negative emotions are generally discouraged and only minimally expected in the studied organizations, yet still find moderate expression. The elevated expression score relative to encouragement or expectation may signal a lack of formal emotional regulation mechanisms or unresolved tensions within interpersonal dynamics and organizational processes. Alternatively, it may reflect the inevitability of emotional expression in high-pressure or conflict-laden environments, even when not sanctioned by prevailing norms.

The overall Emotional Culture Index (ECI) scores-aggregated across emotion categories and expression domains-indicate a moderately positive emotional climate. Specifically, the mean scores for encouraged ($M = 3.50$), expressed ($M = 3.38$), and expected ($M = 3.42$) emotions all hover around the midpoint of the scale. While these values confirm the general prevalence of a positive emotional orientation, they also reveal space for improvement in fostering authentic emotional expression and aligning organizational expectations with actual emotional experiences.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings align with existing literature on emotional culture in organizations, which posits that the encouragement of positive emotional expression contributes to psychological safety, team cohesion,

and performance. However, the observed mismatch between encouraged and expressed positive emotions suggests a potential dissonance between emotional norms and actual affective behavior. Similarly, the relative suppression of negative emotions may limit constructive dissent, emotional authenticity, and conflict resolution.

In conclusion, while the studied organizations demonstrate a clear institutional orientation toward positivity, the data also highlight the complexity of emotional display rules and the need for emotionally intelligent leadership. Creating environments where both positive and negative emotions can be expressed appropriately-without fear of reprisal or stigma-may enhance trust, authenticity, and psychological well-being at both individual and collective levels.

We now turn to the average scores for each individual positive emotion across the three dimensions (see Table 11).

Table 11. Mean Scores for Positive Emotions (n = 320)

Emotion	Encouraged	Expressed	Expected
Joy	4.42	4.06	4.37
Care	4.39	4.12	4.27
Compassion	4.36	4.01	4.22
Gratitude	4.58	4.23	4.41
Admiration	4.13	3.65	4.03
Average	4.38	4.01	4.26

Table 11 provides a detailed breakdown of mean scores for five core positive emotions-joy, care, compassion, gratitude, and admiration-measured across three organizational dimensions: the extent to which each emotion is *encouraged*, *expressed*, and *expected* within the workplace. These results allow for a more granular interpretation of the emotional norms and affective climate characterizing the surveyed organizations.

Among the emotions assessed, gratitude consistently received the highest scores across all three dimensions. It was rated most strongly in the *encouraged* category (M = 4.58), followed by *expected* (M = 4.41) and *expressed* (M = 4.23). These findings suggest that gratitude functions as a culturally salient emotional norm, one that is both institutionally promoted and broadly enacted by employees. This may reflect formal recognition systems, appreciative leadership practices, or social rituals that reinforce acknowledgment and mutual respect. The minimal discrepancy between what is encouraged and what is expressed indicates a healthy alignment between organizational values and behavioral outcomes in this domain.

Joy also emerged as a prominent emotional feature, with high scores in both the *encouraged* (M = 4.42) and *expected* (M = 4.37) categories, and a slightly lower score for *expressed* joy (M = 4.06). While still robust, the drop in expressed joy may point to contextual limitations on emotional visibility-for example, in formal meetings or high-stakes decision-making contexts-where overt displays of joy may be moderated by perceived professionalism norms.

Care and compassion, which reflect interpersonal concern and emotional attunement to others, exhibited nearly parallel patterns. Care was slightly more prevalent, with scores of 4.39 (encouraged), 4.27 (expected), and 4.12 (expressed), compared to compassion's 4.36, 4.22, and 4.01, respectively. These results affirm the centrality of relational emotions in the cultural ethos of the studied organizations. However, as with joy, the observed gap between encouragement and expression suggests that employees may internalize prosocial emotional values but feel limited in openly displaying them, possibly due to time constraints, workload intensity, or organizational formality. Admiration, while still positively rated, recorded the lowest mean scores among the five emotions, particularly in the *expressed* category (M = 3.65). Encouragement (M = 4.13) and expectation (M = 4.03) of admiration remained moderately high, but the relatively lower expression suggests that recognition of others' excellence may occur less frequently or less overtly than other forms of positive emotion. This discrepancy could reflect cultural hesitancy to verbalize praise due to fear of perceived favoritism, hierarchy-related barriers, or norms of modesty. Nevertheless, the presence of admiration in the encouraged and expected domains indicates that it remains a valued, if underutilized, emotional behavior. The overall average scores across all positive emotions reveal a clear pattern: the *encouraged* dimension consistently received the highest average score (M = 4.38), followed by *expected* (M = 4.26), and finally *expressed* (M = 4.01). This pattern, which mirrors the results reported in Table 10, reinforces the conclusion that there is a modest but consistent gap between organizational emotional norms and employees' actual affective behaviors. While the encouragement and expectation of positive emotion are institutionally embedded, actual expression appears to be moderated by situational, structural, or interpersonal constraints.

In conclusion, the findings from Table 11 highlight the emotional sophistication of the organizational cultures under study. Positive emotions-particularly gratitude, care, and joy-are deeply embedded in both formal and informal organizational norms. At the same time, the recurring discrepancy between emotional encouragement and expression underscores the need for further efforts to create psychologically safe environments in which positive emotional expression is not only permitted but actively facilitated. Such efforts may include leadership modeling, team rituals, and communication structures that normalize authentic affective engagement. Overall, a positive emotional culture is evident across all sectors, yet there is a need to strengthen practices that support genuine emotional expression rather than merely regulating it (see Table 12).

Table 12. Mean Scores for Negative Emotions (n = 320)

Emotion	Encouraged	Expressed	Expected
Sadness	2.72	2.86	2.61
Anger	2.38	2.55	2.44
Fear	2.51	2.63	2.58
Guilt	2.74	2.92	2.70
Regret	2.72	2.80	2.55
Average	2.61	2.75	2.58

Table 12 presents the mean scores for five discrete negative emotions-sadness, anger, fear, guilt, and regret-evaluated across three organizational dimensions: the extent to which these emotions are *encouraged*, *expressed*, and *expected* in the workplace. These findings provide valuable insight into how organizations manage the presence of negative affect and the extent to which emotional authenticity is permitted or constrained within professional environments.

Overall, negative emotions were reported at substantially lower levels than positive emotions (as previously shown in Table 11), suggesting that most organizational cultures in the sample are affectively biased toward emotional positivity or emotional restraint. Nonetheless, notable variation exists among the different emotions and dimensions.

Guilt emerged as the most prevalent of the five negative emotions, receiving the highest scores across all three domains: *encouraged* (M = 2.74), *expressed* (M = 2.92), and *expected* (M = 2.70). This pattern indicates that guilt may function as a normative emotion in organizational life-potentially tied to responsibility, accountability, or self-regulation. Its relatively high level of expression suggests that employees may feel comfortable acknowledging mistakes or lapses, particularly in environments where ethical standards and personal responsibility are emphasized. The small discrepancy between encouragement and expression also implies a degree of emotional alignment between cultural norms and individual behaviors. Sadness and regret also scored relatively high in both the *expressed* and *encouraged* dimensions. Sadness recorded a mean of 2.86 (expressed), 2.72 (encouraged), and 2.61 (expected), while regret yielded 2.80, 2.72, and 2.55, respectively. These scores suggest that, while these emotions are not formally encouraged to the same extent as positive emotions, their open expression is moderately accepted within the organizational cultures surveyed. This tolerance may be linked to the acknowledgment of loss, failure, or disappointment as natural facets of organizational life, particularly in emotionally demanding sectors such as healthcare or education. In contrast, anger received the lowest ratings across all three dimensions: *encouraged* (M = 2.38), *expressed* (M = 2.55), and *expected* (M = 2.44). These results are consistent with literature that identifies anger as a socially risky emotion in professional contexts-often associated with aggression, conflict, or lack of control. The low encouragement score, in particular, underscores the cultural disapproval or suppression of anger, possibly due to concerns about professionalism, hierarchy, or interpersonal stability. The slight discrepancy between its low encouragement and moderately higher expression may indicate the presence of unmanaged frustration or emotional strain in high-pressure environments.

Fear occupied an intermediate position, with scores of 2.51 (encouraged), 2.63 (expressed), and 2.58 (expected). Although not overtly discouraged, fear appears to be only tacitly acknowledged. Its moderate expression score may reflect anxiety associated with job security, performance expectations, or power imbalances-especially in more hierarchical or opaque organizational structures. The average scores across all negative emotions reveal a clear affective asymmetry when compared to the profile of positive emotions. The *expressed* dimension recorded the highest average (M = 2.75), followed by *encouraged* (M = 2.61) and *expected* (M = 2.58). This pattern suggests that while negative emotions are not overtly promoted or institutionally expected, they still surface in practice. Such emotional leakage may point to the limits of organizational control over affective behavior, especially under stress, and to the emotional labor employees perform in reconciling institutional norms with personal experience.

In conclusion, the findings highlight a cautious but not repressive emotional culture surrounding negative affect. While emotions like guilt, sadness, and regret are marginally tolerated, emotions such as anger and fear remain socially constrained. This implies that most organizations implicitly favor emotional composure and optimism, though employees nonetheless find ways to express more complex or difficult emotions-albeit within unspoken boundaries. For organizations aiming to foster psychological safety and authenticity, creating spaces where negative emotions can be processed constructively-without fear of judgment or reprisal-represents a critical area for emotional culture development.

The comparison between encouraged, expressed, and expected emotions enables the calculation of the Emotional Mismatch Index, which reflects the presence of emotional inauthenticity within the organizational culture (see Figure 2).

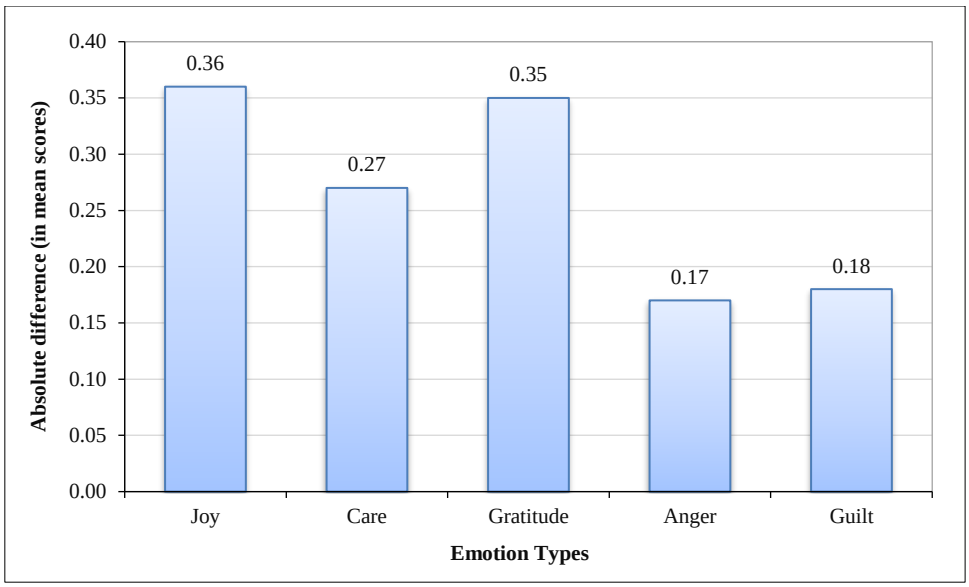


Figure 2. Emotional Misalignment (Encouraged – Expressed)

Figure 2 illustrates the absolute differences between the *encouraged* and *expressed* levels of selected emotions, offering insight into the degree of emotional misalignment within the organizational cultures under study. This metric-calculated as the absolute value of the difference between mean scores for encouraged and expressed emotions-serves as a proxy for the emotional authenticity gap, indicating the extent to which employees feel permitted or able to enact emotions that are officially endorsed by their organizational environment.

The data reveal that positive emotions exhibit the most pronounced misalignments, particularly joy and gratitude, which show absolute differences of 0.36 and 0.35, respectively. This suggests that while these emotions are strongly encouraged at the institutional level, employees may encounter social, contextual, or structural constraints that inhibit their authentic expression. Possible factors contributing to this discrepancy include performance pressure, expectations of emotional restraint in formal settings, or norms of professionalism that discourage overt displays of affect. The magnitude of this gap raises concerns about emotional dissonance and the potential costs of emotional labor, particularly when individuals are expected to display positivity that may not fully align with their internal emotional states.

Care also demonstrates a notable misalignment (0.27), albeit less than that of joy and gratitude. This finding implies that while concern for others is encouraged, the consistent outward expression of care may be moderated by time constraints, role expectations, or organizational formality. The gap here may reflect the challenges of balancing relational attentiveness with task efficiency in high-demand environments. In contrast, negative emotions such as anger and guilt show significantly smaller gaps - 0.17 and 0.18, respectively. These smaller absolute differences may indicate that negative emotions, although less encouraged overall (as shown in earlier tables), are more closely aligned with actual expression patterns. In other words, when negative emotions do arise, they are more likely to be expressed in proportion to what is tacitly permitted or tolerated by organizational culture. Alternatively, it may suggest that negative affect is more difficult to suppress under stress or interpersonal conflict, leading to spontaneous expression regardless of institutional norms.

Overall, the data depicted in Figure 2 reinforce the conclusion that emotional congruence is higher for negative emotions and lower for positive emotions-a finding that challenges conventional assumptions about the primacy of positivity in workplace culture. This paradox may reflect employees' adaptive strategies for navigating emotional display rules, wherein they regulate positive emotions more consciously than negative ones, possibly due to perceived social or professional risks associated with appearing overly expressive or emotionally vulnerable. The presence of emotional misalignment, especially among core prosocial emotions such as joy and gratitude, highlights the importance of not only encouraging positive affect in abstract terms but also fostering psychologically safe environments where such expressions are genuinely supported. Leadership modeling, feedback rituals, and inclusive communication practices may help bridge the gap between emotional norms and lived emotional experience, thereby enhancing organizational authenticity and emotional well-being. Emotional mismatch in the domain of positive emotions-particularly joy and gratitude-points to the presence of a "social mask," where employees are aware of which emotions are expected to be displayed but do not always feel empowered to express them authentically. This reduces emotional authenticity and may contribute to passive burnout, especially among employees operating in highly regulated behavioral environments.

The analysis of the ECI results reveals a strong degree of emotional normativity within the corporate cultures of multinational companies. Organizations aim to promote positive emotions-especially gratitude, care, and joy-yet the level of actual expression lags behind expectations. This may reflect a cultural tendency toward emotional restraint,

formal communication, or a lack of psychologically safe conditions. Regarding negative emotions, there appears to be a tendency toward suppression, which, on the one hand, reduces the risk of toxicity, but on the other, may contribute to latent emotional tension.

These findings highlight the need to reconsider internal policies on emotional culture management, particularly in the following areas:

- Enhancing emotional authenticity;
- Creating safe spaces for the expression of complex emotions;
- Implementing emotionally intelligent leadership.

A Spearman correlation analysis was conducted between the indices of need satisfaction (BPNS) and the indices of encouragement/expression of positive and negative emotions (ECI) (see Table 13).

Table 13. Spearman Correlation Between BPNS and ECI Scales (ρ)

Indicators	Encouragement of Positive Emotions	Expression of Positive Emotions	Encouragement of Negative Emotions	Expression of Negative Emotions
Autonomy	0.42**	0.37**	-0.25*	-0.29*
Competence	0.40**	0.35**	-0.23*	-0.21*
Relatedness	0.57**	0.51**	-0.31**	-0.34**
Overall Need Satisfaction Index	0.49**	0.44**	-0.28**	-0.31**

Note: *p < 0.05; *$p < 0.01$.

Table 13 displays the results of a Spearman correlation analysis examining the relationship between Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction (BPNS) and four dimensions of emotional culture: the encouragement and expression of both positive and negative emotions. The findings reflect significant and theoretically coherent associations between the emotional climate of organizations and the extent to which employees perceive their psychological needs to be fulfilled.

The encouragement and expression of positive emotions are positively and significantly correlated with all dimensions of BPNS. Specifically, the encouragement of positive emotions exhibits strong correlations with autonomy ($\rho = 0.42$, $p < 0.01$), competence ($\rho = 0.40$, $p < 0.01$), and relatedness ($\rho = 0.57$, $p < 0.01$). The particularly high correlation with relatedness highlights the relational function of positive emotional norms, suggesting that environments which actively promote positive affect contribute to a stronger sense of interpersonal connection, trust, and social inclusion among employees. Likewise, the expression of positive emotions is also significantly associated with need satisfaction-most notably with relatedness ($\rho = 0.51$, $p < 0.01$)-although these correlations are slightly lower than those observed for encouragement, indicating a modest gap between cultural values and enacted emotional behavior. In contrast, both the encouragement and expression of negative emotions are negatively correlated with psychological need satisfaction, particularly in relation to relatedness and autonomy. The expression of negative emotions shows inverse correlations with autonomy ($\rho = –0.29$, $p < 0.05$), competence ($\rho = –0.21$, $p < 0.05$), and relatedness ($\rho = –0.34$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that environments characterized by frequent or culturally accepted displays of negative affect may undermine individuals' sense of control, efficacy, and connectedness. Similarly, the encouragement of negative emotions is negatively associated with need satisfaction across all dimensions, with the strongest inverse relationship again observed for relatedness ($\rho = –0.31$, $p < 0.01$). These findings suggest that while emotional authenticity is important, organizational climates that permit or reinforce negative emotion may inadvertently contribute to psychological strain, diminished motivation, or interpersonal fragmentation. The overall BPNS index demonstrates a coherent pattern across all four emotional culture dimensions. It is positively correlated with the encouragement ($\rho = 0.49$, $p < 0.01$) and expression ($\rho = 0.44$, $p < 0.01$) of positive emotions, while negatively correlated with the encouragement ($\rho = –0.28$, $p < 0.01$) and expression ($\rho = –0.31$, $p < 0.01$) of negative emotions. These patterns underscore the central role of affective norms in shaping motivational environments. They suggest that emotionally intelligent cultures-those that encourage constructive emotional expression, particularly of positive affect-are more conducive to satisfying employees' basic psychological needs.

From a theoretical perspective, the results lend further empirical support to the integration of emotional culture into Self-Determination Theory frameworks. They also underscore the relational dimension of emotional experience in organizations, demonstrating that emotional norms and behaviors-particularly those related to positive affect-are not merely peripheral or expressive phenomena, but core contributors to employee well-being and intrinsic motivation.

In practical terms, the findings point to actionable priorities for organizational development: fostering environments where positive emotions are both encouraged and authentically expressed, while simultaneously managing the impact of negative affect in ways that do not compromise psychological safety. This dual approach can enhance both individual flourishing and collective performance in the workplace.

Differences in emotional culture across sectors (education, IT, healthcare, and manufacturing) were also examined (see Table 14).

Table 14. Differences in ECI Between Sectors (Kruskal–Wallis Test Results)

Indicator	χ^2	p-value
Encouragement of Positive Emotions	9.12	0.027*
Expression of Positive Emotions	11.45	0.009**
Encouragement of Negative Emotions	3.34	0.342
Expression of Negative Emotions	5.02	0.172

Note: *p < 0.05; **p < 0.01*

Table 14 presents the results of a Kruskal–Wallis H test, a non-parametric alternative to ANOVA, used to assess whether significant differences exist between sectors in key dimensions of the Emotional Culture Index (ECI). The indicators tested include the encouragement and expression of both positive and negative emotions across four organizational sectors: education, information technology (IT), healthcare, and manufacturing. This statistical approach is particularly appropriate given the ordinal nature of the data and potential violations of normality assumptions.

The results indicate statistically significant sectoral differences in the encouragement of positive emotions ($\chi^2 = 9.12$, $p = 0.027$) and the expression of positive emotions ($\chi^2 = 11.45$, $p = 0.009$). These findings suggest that the emotional tone and expressive norms within organizations vary depending on sectoral context. Specifically, certain sectors may cultivate more emotionally supportive climates that explicitly encourage or allow for the outward expression of positivity-such as appreciation, compassion, or gratitude-while others may operate under more emotionally restrained or neutral norms. The significant difference in the *encouragement* of positive emotions implies that leadership communication, HR policy, and interpersonal norms are not uniformly structured across sectors when it comes to fostering positive affect. Likewise, the significant variation in *expression* of positive emotions suggests that employee behavior and emotional visibility are also shaped by sector-specific expectations, task structures, or cultural codes. These results reinforce prior research suggesting that emotional norms are context-sensitive and influenced by both occupational demands and organizational traditions. In contrast, the results for negative emotions were not statistically significant. The encouragement of negative emotions ($\chi^2 = 3.34$, $p = 0.342$) and expression of negative emotions ($\chi^2 = 5.02$, $p = 0.172$) showed no meaningful variation across sectors. These findings indicate a more uniform pattern in how negative emotions-such as anger, fear, sadness, or guilt-are managed or culturally interpreted within professional environments. Regardless of sector, it appears that negative affect remains relatively constrained or minimally encouraged, which aligns with prevailing emotional display rules in many contemporary workplaces that prioritize emotional control, professionalism, and psychological safety.

Taken together, these results highlight the sector-specific nature of positive emotional norms, while suggesting a cross-sectoral consistency in the management of negative emotional displays. This asymmetry may reflect broader institutional and cultural forces that shape emotional expression in different ways depending on the valence of the emotion in question. Positive emotions may be selectively emphasized in sectors where interpersonal engagement and motivation are central (e.g., education or IT), whereas negative emotions may be more universally discouraged due to their potential to disrupt cohesion and morale.

From a practical perspective, these findings underscore the importance of tailoring emotional culture interventions to specific sectoral contexts. Leadership development programs, emotional intelligence training, and workplace well-being initiatives may need to be sector-sensitive in order to align with existing emotional norms and professional expectations. Furthermore, these sectoral differences may have downstream implications for employee engagement, psychological safety, and performance, reinforcing the need to treat emotional culture as a dynamic and context-dependent organizational variable.

Independent t-tests were conducted to identify gender-based differences in emotional expression (see Table 15).

Table 15. Gender Differences in Emotional Expression

Indicator	Men (M)	Women (M)	t	p-value
Expression of Positive Emotions	3.91	4.11	2.18	0.031*
Expression of Negative Emotions	2.68	2.82	1.56	0.119

Note: *p < 0.05*

Table 15 reports the findings of an independent samples t-test conducted to examine gender-based differences in emotional expression within the workplace. Two key dimensions were evaluated: the expression of positive emotions and the expression of negative emotions. Mean values are reported separately for male and female respondents, along with associated t-values and significance levels (p-values).

The results indicate a statistically significant difference in the expression of positive emotions between men and women ($t = 2.18$, $p = 0.031$). Specifically, women reported a higher average score ($M = 4.11$) compared to men ($M = 3.91$), suggesting that female employees are more likely to express positive affect in organizational settings. This finding is consistent with a substantial body of psychological and organizational research that has documented higher emotional expressivity among women, particularly with regard to emotions associated with affiliation, support, and prosocial behavior. The observed gender gap may be attributed to both dispositional factors-such as socialized tendencies toward emotional openness-and contextual influences, including differing expectations for emotional behavior based on gender roles. In contrast, the expression of negative emotions did not differ significantly between men and women ($t = 1.56$, $p = 0.119$). Although women again reported slightly higher mean scores ($M = 2.82$) than men ($M = 2.68$), the difference failed to reach statistical significance. This suggests that both male and female employees express negative emotions-such as frustration, fear, or sadness-at comparable levels, or that organizational norms serve to moderate gender-based variation in the expression of such emotions. The absence of a significant gender gap in this dimension may reflect broader workplace display rules that constrain negative affect across the board, regardless of gender.

Taken together, these findings suggest that gender plays a meaningful but selective role in emotional expression within professional settings. While women are more likely to express positive emotions-possibly reflecting greater emotional attunement, relational engagement, or normative expectations-negative emotional expression appears to be more evenly distributed across genders, potentially due to shared structural or cultural inhibitions.

From a practical perspective, these results have important implications for workplace emotional culture and leadership. Awareness of gendered patterns in emotional expression can inform more inclusive communication strategies, training in emotional intelligence, and the development of psychologically safe environments that validate diverse emotional styles. At the same time, the findings call attention to the need for equitable organizational norms that do not penalize or pathologize emotional expressivity, particularly in women, nor reinforce stereotypes that limit men's affective expression.

Negative emotions (Anger, Fear, Guilt, Sadness, Regret): Figure 3 presents the factor loadings derived from an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) conducted on the Emotional Culture Index (ECI) scale. The analysis aimed to identify underlying dimensions that organize the structure of workplace emotional norms, focusing on ten discrete emotions-five positive and five negative. The factor extraction revealed a clear two-factor solution corresponding to Factor 1 (Positive Emotions) and Factor 2 (Negative Emotions), thus supporting the theoretical bifurcation of emotional culture into affectively valenced components.

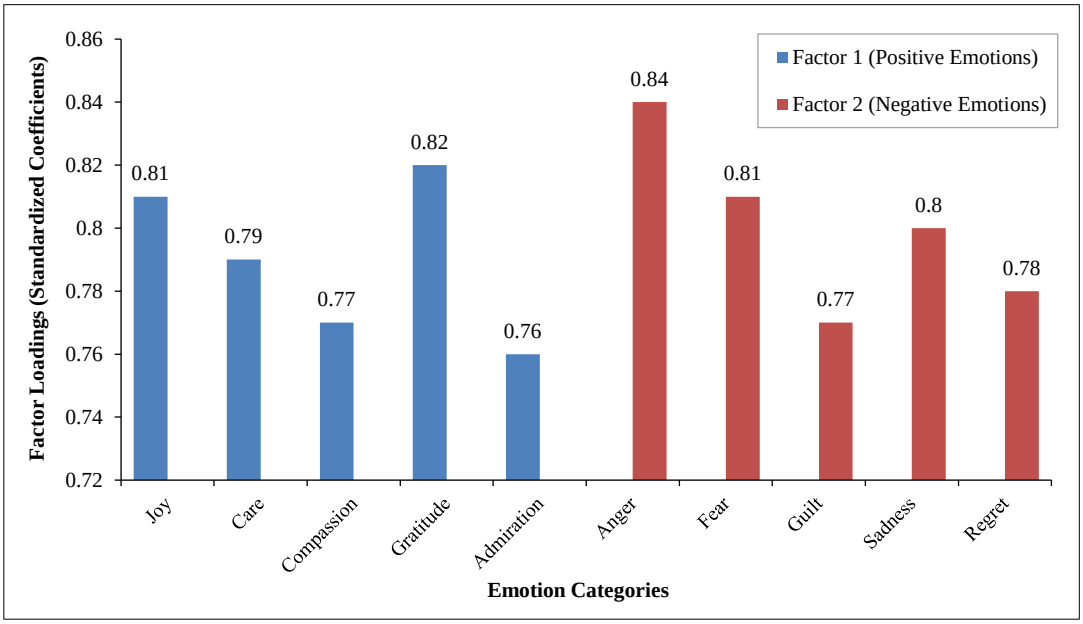


Figure 3. Factor Loadings on the ECI Scale

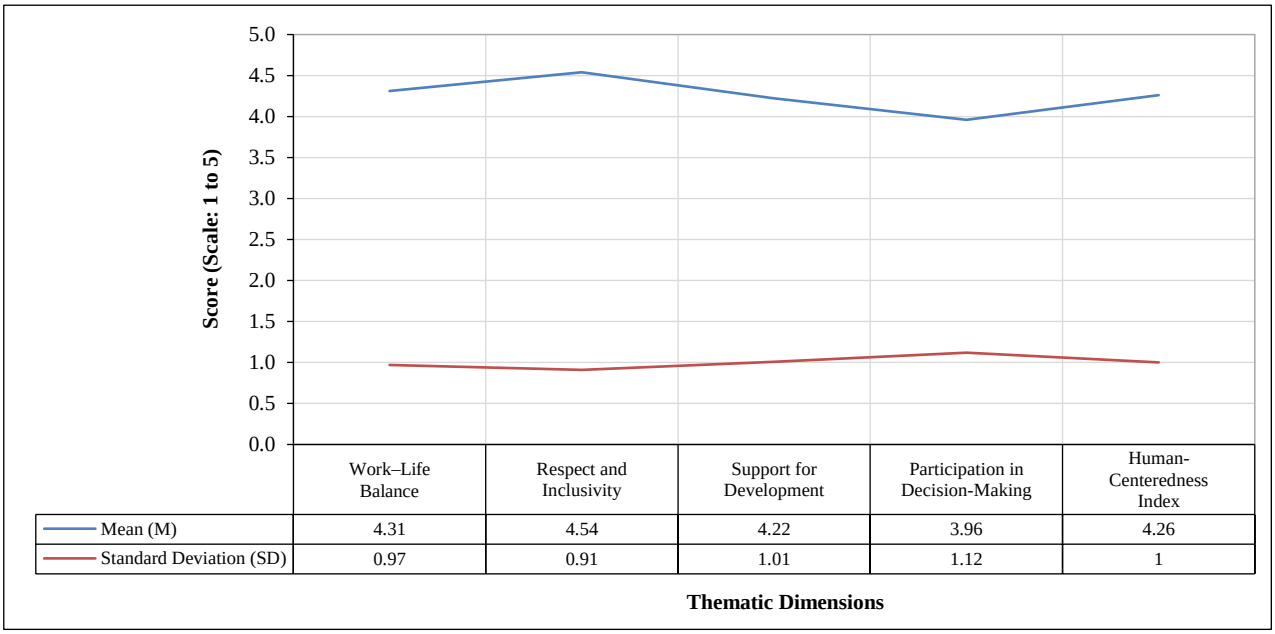
All positive emotions loaded strongly onto Factor 1, with loadings ranging from 0.76 to 0.82. Gratitude (0.82) and joy (0.81) exhibited the highest loadings, indicating that these emotions are most central to the construct of positive emotional culture in organizational settings. Care (0.79), compassion (0.77), and admiration (0.76) also demonstrated robust associations with the factor, albeit slightly lower. These findings suggest that positive emotions are experienced and interpreted as a coherent, interrelated construct within the workplace, and that gratitude and joy, in particular, may serve as emotional keystones in organizational environments characterized by affective openness, relational warmth, and psychological safety. Similarly, all negative emotions loaded strongly onto Factor 2, with anger (0.84) and fear (0.81)

demonstrating the most pronounced associations. This indicates that these emotions are the most salient indicators of negative emotional culture, particularly in contexts marked by stress, interpersonal conflict, or uncertainty. Sadness (0.80), regret (0.78), and guilt (0.77) also loaded highly, confirming their conceptual alignment with the broader negative emotion dimension. The strength of these loadings supports the idea that emotional cultures permitting or amplifying negative affect are underpinned by a distinct, coherent set of emotional norms and behaviors.

The absence of significant cross-loadings across the two factors reinforces the discriminant validity of the emotional valence structure, suggesting that employees and organizational members clearly differentiate between positive and negative emotional norms in their perceptions and behaviors. This dichotomous structure not only aligns with established theories of affect, but also underscores the functional importance of distinguishing between supportive and disruptive emotional climates in the workplace.

From a measurement standpoint, the high magnitude of the loadings (all ≥ 0.76) indicates strong internal consistency and construct validity of the ECI scale. These results justify the use of the two-factor model in subsequent analyses, including predictive modeling, organizational diagnostics, and cross-sector comparisons. Practically, they offer organizations a validated framework for assessing and intentionally shaping emotional culture along two primary axes-promotion of positive affect and regulation of negative affect.

The Human-Centered Policy Audit Questionnaire enabled the assessment of employees' perceptions regarding key aspects of the organizational environment: work–life balance, respect and inclusivity, support for professional development, and participation in decision-making processes. Each statement was rated using a 6-point Likert scale, which allowed for the calculation of a Human-Centeredness Index for each organization (Figure 4).



	Work–Life Balance	Respect and Inclusivity	Support for Development	Participation in Decision-Making	Human-Centeredness Index
Mean (M)	4.31	4.54	4.22	3.96	4.26
Standard Deviation (SD)	0.97	0.91	1.01	1.12	1

Figure 4. Mean Scores by Thematic Blocks (n = 320)

The graph illustrates the mean scores and standard deviations across five thematic dimensions that comprise the Human-Centeredness Index. These dimensions include: Work–Life Balance, Respect and Inclusivity, Support for Development, Participation in Decision-Making, and the composite Human-Centeredness Index. The data, based on responses from 320 participants, provide insight into how employees perceive the human-centric quality of their organizational environments.

Among the five thematic blocks, Respect and Inclusivity received the highest average score (M = 4.54, SD = 0.91), indicating that respondents perceive their organizations as relatively strong in fostering equitable treatment, psychological safety, and value-driven interpersonal relations. This finding is consistent with prior research emphasizing inclusivity and mutual respect as foundational elements of psychologically supportive and high-performing workplaces. Work–Life Balance (M = 4.31, SD = 0.97) and Support for Development (M = 4.22, SD = 1.01) also yielded relatively high mean scores. The data suggest that many organizations within the sample have established frameworks that acknowledge employees' holistic needs and provide resources for professional growth. However, the slightly higher standard deviation in Support for Development points to variability across organizations, possibly indicating inconsistencies in access to mentoring, training, or career advancement pathways. In contrast, Participation in Decision-Making recorded the lowest average score (M = 3.96, SD = 1.12), signaling a potential area of weakness in the operationalization of human-centered practices. This result suggests that employees feel less involved in strategic

discussions, policy development, or team-based decision processes. The relatively high standard deviation further implies considerable divergence in experience across sectors or hierarchical levels, and may reflect persistent structural barriers to employee voice or participatory governance. The overall Human-Centeredness Index-calculated as a composite score across all four domains-was rated positively (M = 4.26, SD = 1.00). This score indicates a generally favorable perception of human-centered values in the organizational cultures studied. However, the variation among thematic components emphasizes the importance of a balanced and integrated approach to human-centeredness. Organizations may be excelling in interpersonal respect and work–life accommodations, while simultaneously overlooking participatory structures that enable employee agency and shared leadership.

In summary, the findings reveal a promising but uneven landscape of human-centered practices. Strengths in inclusivity and well-being coexist with opportunities for growth in participatory engagement and developmental equity. These results provide a valuable diagnostic foundation for refining HR policies, leadership training, and organizational design in service of a more coherent and sustainable human-centered culture (Table 16).

Table 16. Human-Centeredness Index Across Different Sectors

Sector	Human-Centeredness Index (M)
Education	4.38
Information Technology (IT)	4.51
Healthcare	4.02
Manufacturing	4.11

Table 16 provides comparative mean scores for the Human-Centeredness Index across four key sectors: education, information technology (IT), healthcare, and manufacturing. This index serves as an aggregate measure of employees' perceptions of human-centric organizational practices, encompassing variables such as respect and inclusivity, support for development, work–life balance, and participatory decision-making. The highest level of perceived human-centeredness was reported in the Information Technology (IT) sector (M = 4.51). This result suggests that IT organizations, perhaps due to flatter hierarchies, agile work structures, or an emphasis on innovation and psychological autonomy, are more likely to foster environments aligned with human-centric principles. Flexible scheduling, inclusive leadership models, and investment in talent development may contribute to this favorable rating. The education sector followed closely with a mean score of 4.38. This finding is consistent with the sector's intrinsic emphasis on personal growth, social impact, and collaboration. However, it is worth noting that despite these values, institutional constraints such as bureaucratic systems or under-resourcing may moderate the full realization of human-centeredness, particularly in areas such as participatory governance or workload equity. The manufacturing sector reported a moderately lower mean score (M = 4.11), which may reflect the more traditional hierarchical structures and operational demands that typify industrial environments. While certain aspects of human-centeredness-such as work–life balance or respect-may be increasingly prioritized, the sector may still face challenges in implementing participatory practices and developmental support due to productivity pressures or rigid procedural norms. The healthcare sector received the lowest mean score (M = 4.02), indicating that employees in this domain perceive relatively weaker implementation of human-centered principles. This finding may appear paradoxical given the inherently people-oriented nature of healthcare. However, systemic stressors-such as staffing shortages, time pressure, administrative burden, and emotional labor-may undermine perceptions of inclusivity, agency, and well-being. The low score may thus reflect structural barriers that impede even well-intentioned efforts to support human-centered cultures in clinical environments.

Overall, the data reveal significant variation in human-centeredness perceptions across sectors, underscoring the influence of institutional logics, work design, and cultural norms on the lived organizational experience. These differences suggest that sector-specific strategies may be required to effectively cultivate human-centric environments. For example, IT organizations might serve as benchmarks for participatory decision-making and flexible working, while healthcare and manufacturing sectors may benefit from targeted interventions aimed at reducing stressors and expanding employee voice.

A correlational analysis was conducted between the Human-Centeredness Index and the BPNS and ECI scales (Table 17).

Table 17. Correlation Between the Human-Centeredness Index and Other Scales

Indicator	Spearman's ρ	p-value
Overall BPNS Satisfaction Index	0.52**	<0.001
Encouragement of Positive Emotions (ECI)	0.48**	<0.001
Expression of Positive Emotions (ECI)	0.46**	<0.001

Note: *p < 0.01

The table presents the results of a Spearman's rank-order correlation analysis examining the relationships between the Human-Centeredness Index and three theoretically relevant constructs: the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction (BPNS) Index, and two components of the Emotional Culture Index (ECI)-namely, the encouragement and expression of positive emotions. All correlations are statistically significant at the $p < 0.001$ level, indicating robust and meaningful associations across the sample.

The strongest observed correlation is between the Human-Centeredness Index and overall BPNS satisfaction ($\rho = 0.52$, $p < 0.001$). This finding affirms a central theoretical proposition: that human-centered organizational environments are positively associated with the fulfillment of employees' core psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, as conceptualized within the framework of Self-Determination Theory [5]. The moderate-to-strong correlation suggests that workplaces characterized by inclusivity, participatory structures, developmental support, and work–life integration are more likely to foster conditions under which employees experience intrinsic motivation and psychological well-being.

The encouragement of positive emotions, a core dimension of the ECI, is also positively and significantly correlated with human-centeredness ($\rho = 0.48$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that organizations perceived as human-centered are also more likely to actively cultivate emotional norms that value and promote expressions of gratitude, joy, compassion, and care. Such emotional climates may serve as both a reflection and a mechanism of human-centered values, reinforcing interpersonal trust, psychological safety, and affective authenticity in day-to-day operations.

Similarly, the expression of positive emotions is positively associated with the Human-Centeredness Index ($\rho = 0.46$, $p < 0.001$), albeit with a slightly lower magnitude. This relationship underscores the behavioral dimension of emotional culture, suggesting that in environments where human-centered practices are institutionalized, employees feel more comfortable and supported in expressing positive affect. The fact that this correlation is slightly weaker than that for encouragement implies that while organizations may foster supportive emotional norms, the actual enactment of those emotions may still be influenced by individual or contextual variables-such as job role, team climate, or workload stressors.

The factor structure fully supports the validity of the questionnaire: each thematic block constitutes a distinct latent construct, which justifies the use of aggregated indices for each policy category. The results of the Human-Centered Policy Audit indicate that the organizations under study exhibit a strong orientation toward employee development and respect. However, some areas for improvement were identified-particularly regarding increasing employee participation in governance. The high correlation between the Human-Centeredness Index and the indicators of emotional culture and basic needs satisfaction suggests a systemic process underlying the formation of a supportive workplace environment. The vignette method made it possible to identify employees' value orientations and behavioral tendencies in simulated workplace situations. The use of an open-ended response format allowed for the documentation of individual response strategies, which were then subjected to thematic coding.

Based on the thematic analysis, the frequency of behavioral responses for each vignette was calculated (Figure 5).

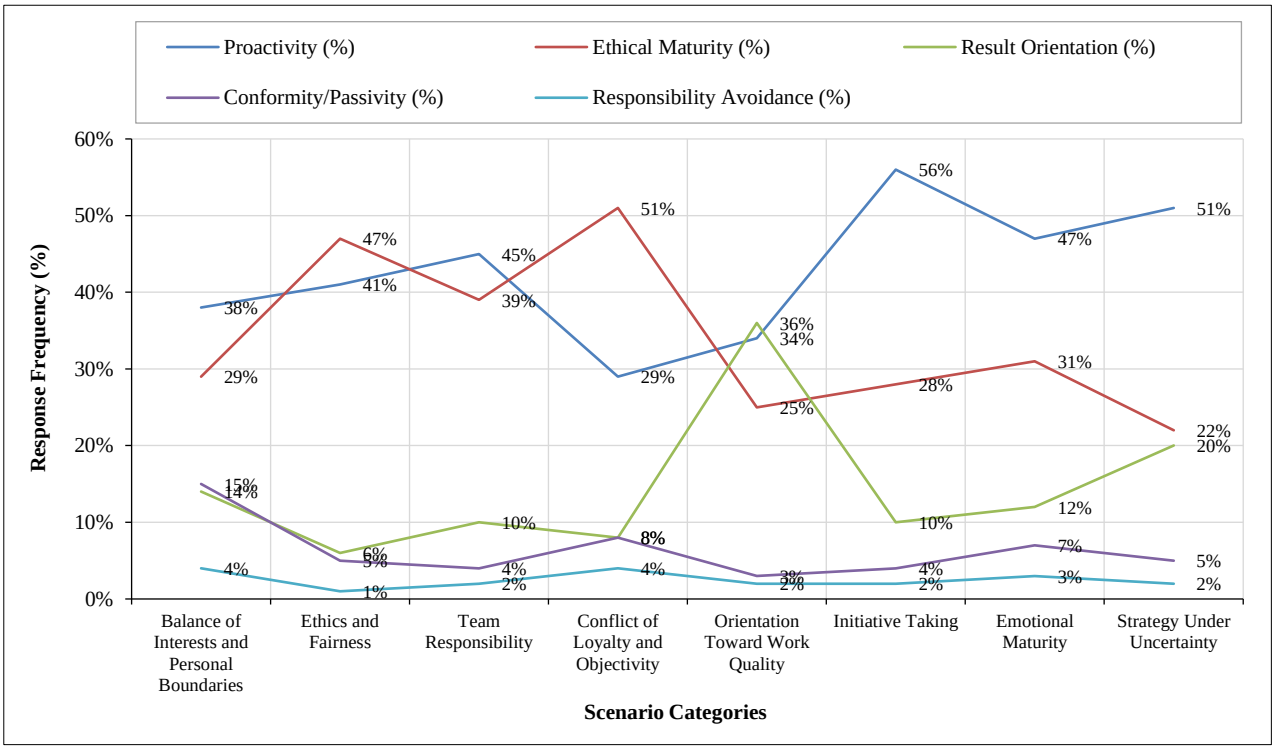


Figure 5. Distribution of behavioral strategies by vignettes (n = 320), %

Figure 5 presents the percentage distribution of five distinct behavioral strategies-Proactivity, Ethical Maturity, Result Orientation, Conformity/Passivity, and Responsibility Avoidance-as elicited by participants' responses to nine workplace vignettes, each representing a unique professional or ethical dilemma. The figure provides insight into dominant cognitive-behavioral tendencies within organizational contexts, illustrating how individuals balance integrity, initiative, and outcome orientation under varying conditions of ambiguity, conflict, and uncertainty.

Proactivity emerges as the most consistently endorsed behavioral strategy across the majority of scenarios, with peaks observed in "Initiative Taking" (56%), "Strategy Under Uncertainty" (51%), and "Respect for Work Quality" (36%). This pattern suggests that, in situations requiring self-directed action, innovation, or adaptive leadership, respondents tend to adopt assertive and forward-thinking approaches. Notably, the lowest endorsement of proactive behavior (29%) occurs in the vignette addressing "Conflict of Loyalty and Objectivity," indicating that role conflicts may inhibit autonomous decision-making. Ethical Maturity, reflecting principled reasoning and value-driven conduct, follows a similarly strong trajectory in several scenarios. It is especially prominent in "Conflict of Loyalty and Objectivity" (51%), "Team Responsibility" (45%), and "Ethics and Fairness" (47%), indicating that respondents tend to activate normative frameworks and ethical judgment in morally charged or collaborative dilemmas. Interestingly, ethical maturity declines sharply in action-oriented contexts such as "Initiative Taking" (28%) and "Strategy Under Uncertainty" (22%), possibly reflecting the tension between normative deliberation and rapid, goal-directed action in complex environments.

Result Orientation displays high variability across scenarios. It reaches its apex in the "Orientation Toward Work Quality" vignette (36%), suggesting that participants prioritize outcomes and performance standards in contexts where professional excellence is at stake. Conversely, this strategy is markedly underutilized in dilemmas involving conflict or ambiguity, such as "Conflict of Loyalty and Objectivity" (8%) and "Initiative Taking" (10%), implying that goal-focused thinking may be subordinated to relational or ethical concerns in morally complex situations.

Conformity/Passivity and Responsibility Avoidance are the least frequently selected strategies across all scenarios, with values typically falling below 10%. Their relative scarcity suggests that the sample population demonstrates a low propensity toward disengagement, deference, or deflection of responsibility in ethically or professionally demanding situations. However, slight increases in conformity/passivity are observed in "Balance of Interests" (11%) and "Emotional Maturity" (7%), possibly reflecting uncertainty or emotional regulation demands that momentarily reduce assertiveness. Responsibility avoidance remains particularly low and stable (1–5%), underscoring a general commitment to accountability (Figure 6).

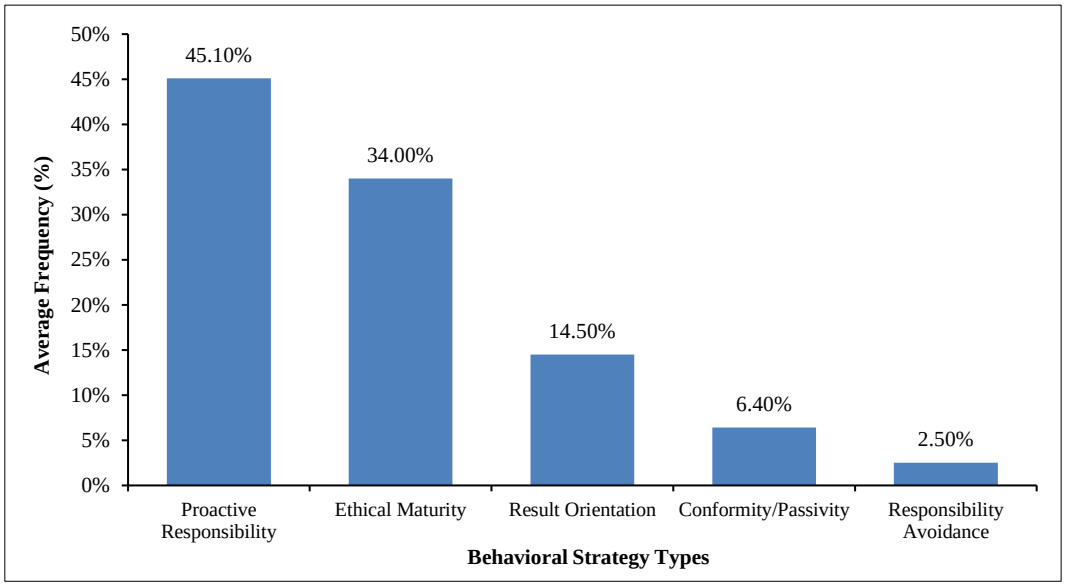


Figure 6. Generalized behavior profiles

Figure 6 illustrates the average frequency distribution of five behavioral strategies-Proactive Responsibility, Ethical Maturity, Result Orientation, Conformity/Passivity, and Responsibility Avoidance-aggregated across all workplace vignettes. The data provide a composite overview of dominant cognitive-behavioral tendencies within the sample (n = 320), offering insight into participants' preferred modes of ethical and operational engagement in organizational settings.

The most frequently adopted strategy is Proactive Responsibility, with a mean selection rate of 45.1%. This suggests that nearly half of all participant responses reflected a readiness to take initiative, assume accountability, and act decisively in the face of challenges. Such a high frequency underscores the centrality of autonomous action and ownership in participants' perceived models of effective professional behavior. This strategy likely reflects cultural and institutional values that reward agency, innovation, and self-directed leadership.

The second most prevalent category is Ethical Maturity, endorsed in 34.0% of cases. This result indicates a strong orientation toward principled reasoning, integrity, and value-based judgment. The prominence of this strategy, second

only to proactivity, suggests that respondents frequently consider ethical implications and moral responsibility when evaluating complex workplace scenarios. Together, these two dominant profiles-proactive and ethically mature-account for nearly 80% of all behavioral selections, highlighting a robust tendency toward intentional, responsible conduct in the organizational sphere.

Result Orientation appears less frequently, with an average of 14.5%, indicating that although goal achievement and task performance are acknowledged, they are not the primary lens through which respondents navigate dilemmas. This may point to a balanced or moderated performance ethic, where results are valued but not pursued at the expense of ethical or interpersonal considerations.

In contrast, Conformity/Passivity (6.4%) and Responsibility Avoidance (2.5%) are minimally represented. These low frequencies suggest that most respondents do not default to submissive, disengaged, or evasive behaviors when confronted with challenging decisions. The marginal presence of avoidance strategies reinforces the impression of a generally active, morally engaged respondent pool, with limited tolerance for ambiguity avoidance or displacement of accountability.

The aggregated behavioral profile thus presents a normative landscape dominated by autonomy and moral agency, with lesser emphasis on pure performance metrics and minimal endorsement of passive or deflective patterns. From a theoretical perspective, these findings align with models of ethical leadership and responsible autonomy, which posit that optimal organizational functioning depends on the convergence of initiative, integrity, and contextual sensitivity. To enhance clarity, examples of respondents' answers corresponding to various strategies are presented below:

Proactivity:

"I will stay overtime only if additional compensation is officially agreed upon, or I will propose an alternative solution."

"I will propose a plan to improve the process to management, even if it falls outside my formal job duties."

Ethical maturity:

"I will inform the manager about the team's mistake, even if it causes dissatisfaction among colleagues, because the success of the project is more important."

Conformity/passivity:

"If my colleagues choose to remain silent about a violation, I'll also prefer not to interfere in order to avoid damaging relationships."

Result orientation:

"I'll try to complete the task faster to demonstrate efficiency, but not at the cost of seriously compromising quality."

The vignette analysis revealed a predominance of proactive and ethically oriented behavioral strategies among employees of multinational organizations. The high levels of proactivity and ethical maturity reflect a well-developed sense of internal responsibility, moral decision-making, and a willingness to act in the interest of the organization and the team. These findings confirm the presence of deep-seated attitudes that align with the human-centeredness framework described in the theoretical section of the study (Figure 7).

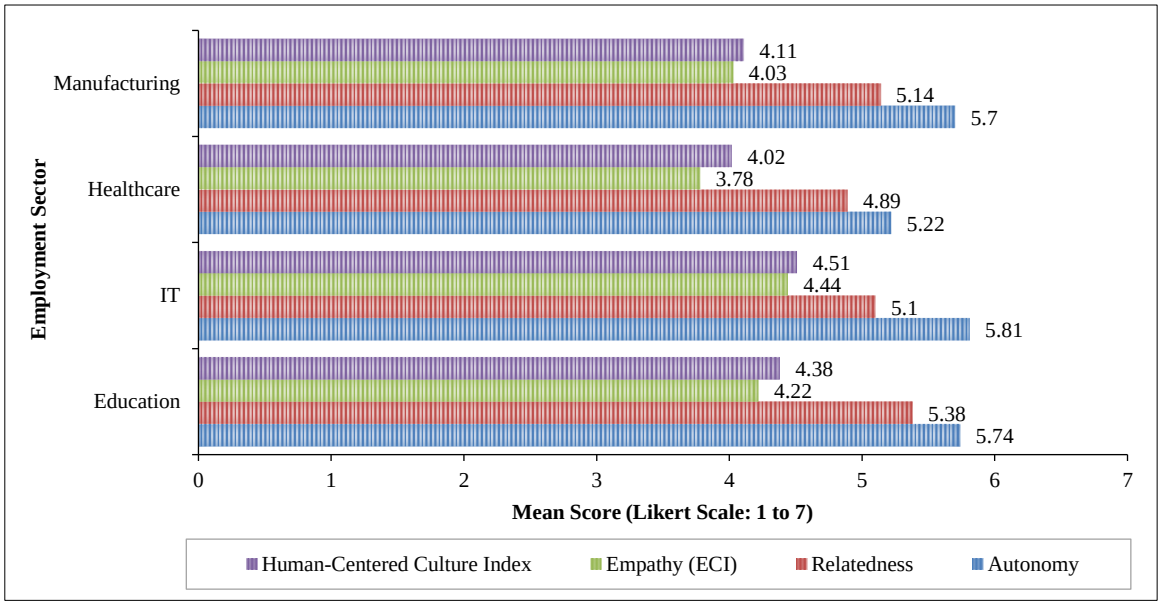


Figure 7. Indexes by sector

In the course of analyzing the conditions that influence the successful integration of a human-centered culture in modern organizations, several key factors were identified that exert both enabling and constraining effects on transformational processes. Their examination has made it possible to reveal fundamental patterns underlying organizational behavior and employees' perceptions of the internal environment.

Among the factors that contribute to the formation of a human-centered approach, flexible forms of employment hold particular significance. The ability to autonomously manage working hours, choose the location and pace of task completion creates the conditions necessary for maintaining work–life balance, which is especially relevant in the post-pandemic context. Such practices have proven most effective in sectors with a high concentration of skilled professionals and developed digital infrastructures-primarily in information technology and education. Flexible employment not only reduces stress levels but also strengthens perceptions of organizational support, thereby enhancing employee loyalty and engagement.

Equally critical to creating a trust-based and productive internal environment is the presence of emotionally intelligent leadership. Leaders with well-developed emotional intelligence, who demonstrate empathy, openness to dialogue, and self-reflective capacity, serve as carriers and communicators of human-centered values. Their behavioral model helps build a culture of trust and psychological safety, in which employees feel heard and accepted. This, in turn, fosters proactivity, innovative thinking, and the development of intrinsic motivation.

The existence of inclusive organizational practices also plays an essential role. These include recognition and respect for workforce diversity, the elimination of discriminatory barriers, and the active involvement of employees in decision-making processes. In such environments, employees experience a heightened sense of belonging and value, internal isolation decreases, and collective responsibility for organizational outcomes increases. When inclusivity is institutionalized as a norm, it drives corporate culture toward social sustainability and value-based partnership.

A further supportive factor is systemic support for professional development. The availability of career pathways, mentoring programs, and learning opportunities reinforces employees' sense of competence, fosters self-realization, and enhances talent retention in highly competitive labor markets. This support is particularly vital in economically and technologically unstable contexts, where continuous development is a necessary condition for organizational and individual adaptation.

Completing this set of factors is a critical element: the system of feedback and managerial transparency. The regular provision of feedback-including horizontal feedback mechanisms-as well as clarity in decision-making and its rationale, strengthens trust across organizational hierarchies. This reduces anxiety within teams and contributes to the formation of a predictable, fair, and transparent organizational environment.

At the same time, despite the presence of potentially effective transformation mechanisms, the implementation of a human-centered culture may encounter a range of barriers. One of the most persistent challenges is the dominance of bureaucratic and rigid hierarchical management structures. In highly regulated sectors such as healthcare or manufacturing, employees' opportunities to express opinions, propose initiatives, or give feedback are often constrained by a system of formal roles and procedures. This suppresses initiative and reduces engagement, as communication becomes one-directional, limiting opportunities for horizontal interaction.

In addition, a significant threat to the development of human-centered practices is the culture of hidden emotional tension. The gap between the emotions that are expected or encouraged and those that are actually expressed by employees creates a state of emotional inauthenticity. This, in turn, reduces psychological safety and intensifies internal frustration. Without the opportunity for genuine emotional expression-especially in high-stress professional contexts-employees begin to perceive the organizational culture as formal and alienating.

Another key barrier is the lack of trust in leadership. In environments where control, opacity, and reactive management prevail, a pattern of learned passivity develops. Employees no longer see value in proposing initiatives and fail to associate their efforts with tangible change. This lack of trust undermines the foundations of a partnership-based model and creates a disconnect, in which employees perceive the organization not as a system of collaboration, but as an external mechanism separate from themselves.

A significant barrier remains limited access to development opportunities. In organizations where transparent career paths are lacking, where training is either inaccessible to various categories of employees or delivered irregularly, staff tend to lose long-term motivation, experience professional burnout, and begin to perceive their work merely as a tool for survival. This issue is particularly pronounced in hierarchically conservative industries, where opportunities for vertical mobility are strictly constrained.

Another frequently encountered obstacle is formalism in the implementation of human-centered policies. Even in the presence of documented strategies, inclusivity declarations, and support protocols, the absence of practical application often renders these efforts symbolic gestures with no real systemic impact on internal culture. This discrepancy between form and substance fosters cynicism among employees and undermines trust in initiatives, even when they hold genuine transformational potential.

A comprehensive analysis of respondent profiles, cross-sectoral differences, and environmental factors identified the key prerequisites for the successful implementation of a human-centered culture. The most important drivers of transformation include: Support for autonomy; Emotional safety; Inclusivity; Opportunities for development.

At the same time, barriers such as hierarchical rigidity, emotional strain, and administrative formalism must be addressed through systematic work on organizational policy, leadership development, and internal communication.

The analysis of sectoral differences in the perception of human-centered policies, as well as in the levels of satisfaction of basic psychological needs and features of emotional culture, revealed a number of significant trends that reflect the unique dynamics of different professional environments.

In the education sector, a high level of relatedness and strong ethical maturity were observed. Employees in this field demonstrate a consistent commitment to the values of care, fairness, and respect, which contributes to a favorable interpersonal atmosphere and a psychologically supportive environment. However, a moderately low level of proactivity in situations of uncertainty was also noted, which is likely due to the high degree of process formalization and regulatory structures typical of public and educational institutions. Despite a well-developed culture of empathy, staff participation in decision-making processes is often restricted by formal job descriptions and administrative hierarchies.

In the information technology (IT) sector, high levels of autonomy and encouragement of positive emotions are predominant. Employees in this field demonstrate a strong sense of proactive responsibility, as evidenced by their willingness to initiate improvements and independently solve tasks. The perception of the organizational environment as flexible and adaptive reinforces engagement and sustains a high level of intrinsic motivation. However, despite favorable scores in autonomy and emotional expressiveness, the sense of relatedness may decline due to the prevalence of remote and hybrid work models, which can hinder the development of stable, horizontal connections within teams.

The healthcare sector presents a different profile. Despite a high level of ethical maturity and a strong sense of professional duty, employees often experience a deficit in relatedness and elevated levels of emotional strain. This is reflected in the predominance of negative emotional responses such as fear and guilt-driven not only by the intensity of the work but also by the emotional burden of responsibility for patients' lives and well-being. A decrease in proactivity is also observed: employees may avoid direct involvement in conflict or problematic situations, even if they possess a strong sense of personal responsibility. These features can be attributed to rigid hierarchical management structures and limited feedback channels with leadership.

The industrial sector is characterized by relatively balanced but moderate scores across all key metrics. A strong emphasis on productivity, stability, and adherence to established procedures leads to a high degree of process structuring. Human-centeredness in this context is often implemented formally, through the presence of policies and protocols, but less frequently on an emotional or relational level, such as daily support or encouragement of initiative. Compliance culture remains dominant; however, there is a growing interest in skill development, which represents potential for future transformation. Barriers to advancing a human-centered culture include low employee involvement in decision-making and a deficit in emotional leadership, which impedes the development of trust and initiative.

Thus, each of the examined sectors demonstrates a unique configuration of factors influencing the formation and implementation of human-centered approaches. These differences highlight the importance of accounting for professional context when designing and implementing sustainable, value-oriented personnel management strategies.

During the study, a model was developed that conceptualizes human-centeredness as a systemic characteristic of the organizational environment-one that ensures the satisfaction of fundamental psychological needs [22], supports the development of emotional intelligence [3], and fosters trust-based, ethically grounded relationships between employees and leadership. The empirical data-derived from the BPNS, ECI, human-centered policy audit, and work scenario vignettes-revealed that isolated implementation of individual initiatives (e.g., training, flexible schedules, occasional feedback sessions) does not lead to lasting change. Effective implementation of a human-centered culture requires a comprehensive, interconnected architecture.

The model includes three interrelated components, each addressing key challenges identified in the study: the lack of emotional authenticity, fragmentation of feedback practices, and underdeveloped supportive leadership behaviors (see Table 18).

Table 18. Components of the Human-Centered Integration Model

Module	Description	Targeted Effects
Emotional Intelligence Training	Educational programs focused on developing self-reflection, empathy, and emotional regulation	Improved interpersonal communication; reduced emotional strain
Inclusive Feedback Cycles	Regular horizontal feedback sessions involving all levels of employees	Enhanced trust, increased transparency, reduced perception of hierarchical pressure
Leadership Development	Mentorship, coaching, and support practices based on the “servant leadership” model	Greater engagement, increased motivation, and growth in employee initiative

The systemic implementation of each module presented is not an isolated action, but rather contributes to a sustainable model of cultural transformation, in which the development of one element (e.g., emotional competence) enhances the effectiveness of others (e.g., feedback perception or readiness for initiative). This aligns with the concept of synergistic management of corporate culture, where core mechanisms do not merely coexist but mutually reinforce one another. The development of emotional intelligence lays the cognitive and behavioral foundation for the constructive reception of feedback and adaptation to emotionally intense situations. This skill becomes essential in an open communication environment, where employees actively engage in horizontal dialogue, contribute to the analysis of team dynamics, and interact with leadership not through top-down directives, but through values-based partnership. The formation of a culture of regular, two-way, informal feedback contributes to reduced anxiety, increased trust, and the establishment of healthy boundaries, which in turn strengthen the sense of belonging and engagement. These conditions foster an environment in which authentic leadership can emerge-leadership based not on control, but on guidance, mentorship, and recognition of individual potential. Elements of the proposed integration model were empirically validated by the results of the study. Correlational analysis revealed a significant relationship between the expression of positive emotions, satisfaction of the need for relatedness, and a high Human-Centeredness Index. The vignette scenarios confirmed that proactive and ethically oriented behavior was more prevalent among employees who perceived leadership as supportive, emotionally open, and capable of dialogue. Thus, it can be concluded that emotional climate and leadership quality are key enablers of the successful implementation of human-centered practices.

The development of a practical roadmap (Table 19) serves as a tool for translating the model into everyday management practice. It can be used as a step-by-step guide for implementing change, both within HR strategies and in cross-functional leadership efforts.

Table 19. Practical Roadmap for Implementing a Human-Centered Culture

Focus Area	Concrete Actions	Expected Outcome
Learning & Development	Regular emotional intelligence trainings; workshops on empathetic communication	Improved quality of interpersonal interactions
Feedback	Monthly team "feedback sessions" facilitated by internal coaches	Increased transparency and trust in communication
Leadership & Mentorship	Mentorship programs; leadership circles; development of "servant leadership" models	Higher engagement; reduced authoritarian leadership styles
Corporate Policy	Revision of internal policies based on principles of inclusivity, fairness, transparency	Creation of a fair and supportive regulatory environment
Evaluation & Feedback Analytics	Periodic measurement of the Human-Centeredness Index; surveys using BPNS and ECI scales	Ongoing monitoring of changes; data-driven strategy refinement

The recommendation map indicates that the implementation of a human-centered culture cannot be limited to a single initiative or localized program. A consistent and large-scale approach is required-one that combines training, policy adjustments, structural changes in leadership systems, and the creation of regular dialogue channels between employees and management. Such an approach enables not only short-term outcomes (e.g., reduced stress, increased job satisfaction), but also long-term strategic results, including higher productivity, reduced turnover, and enhanced innovation potential. The author's model for integrating human-centricity represents a conceptually and empirically grounded framework for cultural transformation aimed at building workplaces where employees are seen not as resources, but as valued individuals with needs and potential. Rooted in the integration of emotional intelligence, transparent communication, and leadership support, the model enables organizations to become more competitive, resilient, and genuinely human-centered. To assess the impact of the proposed model, follow-up measurements were conducted six months after implementation in pilot departments across four companies from different sectors. The same instruments were used as during the diagnostic phase: the Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction Scale (BPNS), Emotional Culture Index (ECI), Human-Centered Policy Audit, and Work Scenario Vignettes. The analysis was carried out using paired-sample t-tests to compare mean scores before and after the intervention. Statistical significance was determined at the $p \leq 0.05$ level (see Table 20).

Table 20. Comparison of Mean Scores for Key Indices Before and After Model Implementation (n = 122)

Indicator	Before Implementation (M ± SD)	After Implementation (M ± SD)	Δ (Change)	p-value
Autonomy (BPNS)	5.48 ± 0.89	5.86 ± 0.77	+0.38	0.012*
Competence (BPNS)	5.33 ± 0.91	5.61 ± 0.83	+0.28	0.038*
Relatedness (BPNS)	5.07 ± 1.04	5.58 ± 0.88	+0.51	0.004**
Encouragement of Positive Emotions (ECI)	4.22 ± 0.86	4.59 ± 0.78	+0.37	0.015*
Expression of Positive Emotions (ECI)	3.98 ± 0.91	4.42 ± 0.84	+0.44	0.009**
Human-Centered Policy Index	4.18 ± 0.98	4.71 ± 0.85	+0.53	0.002**
Proactivity Index (Vignettes)	43.9%	56.7%	+12.8%	–

Note: *p < 0.05; **p < 0.01*

Table 20 summarizes the effects of implementing a human-centered organizational model by comparing mean scores across several key constructs-drawn from the BPNS, ECI, and custom policy indices-before and after intervention. Statistically significant improvements were observed across all measured dimensions, providing compelling evidence for the model's effectiveness in enhancing both psychological climate and behavioral engagement within the organizational environment.

The Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction (BPNS) indicators showed marked increases post-implementation. Autonomy rose from 5.48 (SD = 0.89) to 5.86 (SD = 0.77), a statistically significant change ($p = 0.012$), suggesting that employees experienced greater freedom, volition, and self-direction in their roles. Competence improved from 5.33 to 5.61 ($p = 0.038$), indicating enhanced perceptions of capability and effectiveness, possibly linked to increased developmental support or feedback structures. Relatedness showed the most substantial gain, rising from 5.07 to 5.58 ($p = 0.004$), which reflects a significantly stronger sense of interpersonal connection, social inclusion, and trust within teams. Parallel improvements were observed in the Emotional Culture Index (ECI). The encouragement of positive emotions increased from 4.22 to 4.59 ($p = 0.015$), while the expression of positive emotions rose from 3.98 to 4.42 ($p = 0.009$). These shifts suggest not only a more supportive emotional climate but also increased behavioral authenticity and psychological safety-conditions under which emotional expression becomes more normative and less inhibited. The Human-Centered Policy Index demonstrated a significant positive shift as well, increasing from 4.18 (SD = 0.98) to 4.71 (SD = 0.85), with a p-value of 0.002. This change indicates that respondents perceived a tangible improvement in organizational policies and structures aligned with human-centered values-such as inclusivity, flexibility, transparency, and participatory governance. The magnitude of this improvement (+0.53) underscores the structural dimension of cultural transformation and suggests that the intervention had systemic effects beyond the interpersonal level.

Notably, the Proactivity Index, measured via behavioral vignettes, also increased from 43.9% to 56.7%, a 12.8 percentage point rise. Although this variable is not accompanied by a significance test in the table, the magnitude of the change strongly suggests an upward behavioral shift toward self-directed, initiative-oriented action following model implementation. This result aligns with broader findings on psychological empowerment and suggests that employees in a human-centered environment are more inclined to act autonomously and ethically in complex scenarios.

Taken together, these findings offer robust empirical support for the implementation of a human-centered organizational model. The statistically significant improvements across multiple psychological, emotional, and policy-level indicators demonstrate that such interventions can yield measurable benefits in terms of well-being, engagement, and adaptive behavior. Moreover, the consistency of improvement across domains reinforces the integrative nature of the model, wherein structural, emotional, and motivational dimensions interact to foster a coherent and resilient organizational culture.

The most illustrative changes were captured in the behavioral scenarios. A follow-up thematic analysis of open responses allowed for the reconstruction of behavioral strategy dynamics over time (see Figure 8).

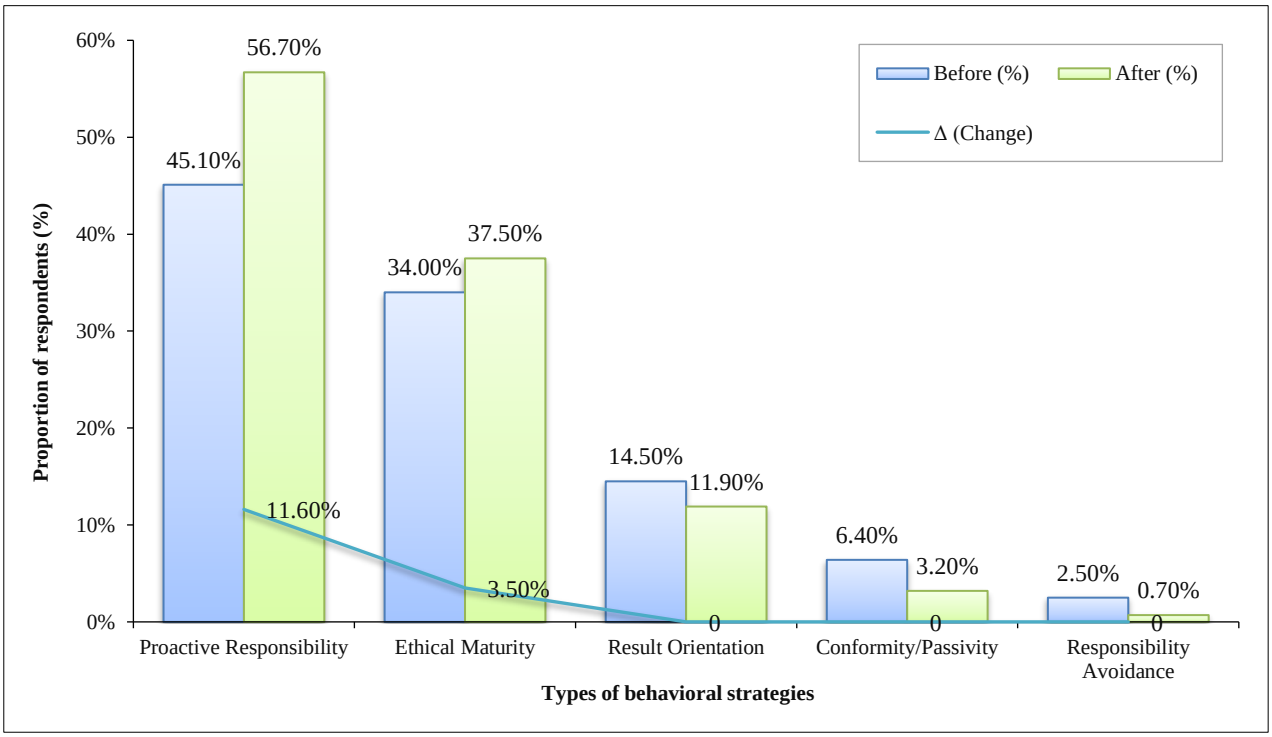


Figure 8. Distribution of behavioral strategies before and after model implementation

Figure 8 presents a comparative distribution of five behavioral strategies-Proactive Responsibility, Ethical Maturity, Result Orientation, Conformity/Passivity, and Responsibility Avoidance-before and after the implementation of a human-centered organizational model. The results are expressed as percentages of observed behavioral patterns derived from vignette-based assessments, providing insight into how the model influenced cognitive and motivational orientations among participants (n = 122).

The most notable change is observed in Proactive Responsibility, which increased markedly from 45.1% to 56.7%, representing an 11.6 percentage point gain. This substantial shift suggests that post-implementation, participants were more likely to adopt initiative-taking, autonomous, and accountable responses when faced with ethically ambiguous or operationally complex scenarios. The rise in proactive behavior reflects a deeper internalization of responsibility and a stronger orientation toward agentic conduct within the newly restructured organizational culture.

Similarly, Ethical Maturity saw a positive increase, from 34.0% to 37.5%, indicating a moderate gain of 3.5 percentage points. This trend suggests that the model reinforced value-driven thinking and principled decision-making, albeit to a lesser extent than proactivity. The dual rise in both ethical and proactive tendencies implies a behavioral synergy wherein employees are not only more likely to act, but to do so with ethical intentionality. Result Orientation also rose modestly from 14.5% to 11.9%-a 3.5-point gain-indicating a slight rebalancing of task-focused motivations in the context of increased employee agency. Importantly, this suggests that the model did not reduce goal orientation, but rather helped align it with broader organizational values and ethical awareness. Conversely, strategies associated with avoidance or disengagement experienced clear reductions. Conformity/Passivity dropped from 6.4% to 3.2%, while Responsibility Avoidance decreased from 2.5% to 0.7%. These reductions demonstrate a decline in passive or deflective coping mechanisms, signaling a cultural shift away from hierarchical deference and toward self-directed engagement. This shift is particularly significant as it reflects not just surface-level behavioral compliance but deeper cognitive and motivational reorientation among employees.

In total, the post-implementation profile is characterized by greater proactivity, increased ethical consciousness, and reduced avoidance behaviors, indicating that the human-centered model facilitated both cognitive-emotional development and behavioral transformation. These results validate the theoretical underpinnings of the intervention, which posits that autonomy-supportive environments-paired with emotional safety and inclusive governance-can meaningfully influence ethical decision-making and professional agency.

The model led to a significant increase in the proportion of proactive and ethically mature behavioral strategies, indicating a rise in employees' internal responsibility and self-confidence. Simultaneously, a decline in conformity and avoidance of responsibility was observed, which may be attributed to the implementation of more open and psychologically safe communication channels.

Open-ended comments collected during the pilot phase supported the quantitative findings. Among the most frequently cited positive reflections were:

"For the first time, I felt that my opinion matters in team meetings."

"Now I'm not afraid to share ideas-even if they're not perfect."

"After the training with our manager, it became easier to talk about problems."

Such feedback reflects a subjective perception of change toward greater human-centeredness and the creation of conditions for genuine dialogue.

The pilot implementation of the authors' human-centric integration model demonstrated significant positive shifts across key psychological, cultural, and behavioral indicators.

The proposed model of human-centered organizational culture is conceptually informed by, but not limited to, existing leadership theories such as servant leadership, transformational leadership, and inclusive leadership. While it integrates several foundational principles from these frameworks-particularly the emphasis on empathy, empowerment, and ethical responsibility-it advances the discussion by repositioning leadership as a distributed, systemic, and institutional function rather than a set of traits or behaviors localized in individual actors. In this regard, the model offers a paradigmatic shift from person-centric leadership theory to organization-centric culture design.

Firstly, unlike traditional leadership models which tend to concentrate on the moral and emotional capacities of individual leaders (e.g., vision, inspiration, service orientation, or charisma), the proposed model treats human-centeredness as an embedded cultural logic that must be institutionalized across structural levels, policies, and interpersonal dynamics. Leadership in this framework is not confined to top executives or charismatic figures but is understood as a distributed cultural capacity-one that must be supported by coherent systems of feedback, participatory governance, and emotionally intelligent communication practices throughout the organization. This orientation aligns with organizational theories that conceptualize leadership as a relational and contextual function, rather than merely an individual trait.

Secondly, while models like transformational or servant leadership focus primarily on the vertical leader-follower relationship, the human-centered cultural model extends its emphasis to horizontal, peer-based interactions and collective emotional norms. Drawing on the work of Barsade & O'Neill [14], the model incorporates the construct of emotional

culture, which includes shared emotional expressions, expectations, and experiences that shape psychological safety, trust, and meaning-making at the collective level. This perspective broadens the analytical focus from leadership behavior to affective organizational eco systems, where cultural alignment, emotional resonance, and ethical congruence are co-produced among all organizational actors.

Thirdly, the proposed model introduces a multidimensional diagnostic framework that operationalizes human-centeredness not only through values and behaviors but also through quantitative assessment tools, such as the Emotional Culture Index (ECI), the Basic Psychological Needs Scale (BPNS), and sector-specific behavioral strategy profiles. In doing so, it allows for organizational benchmarking and continuous adaptation, transforming human-centeredness from a normative ideal into a strategically governed process supported by empirical data and organizational learning.

Fourth, in contrast to existing leadership theories that often rest on individual-level competencies (e.g., emotional intelligence, authenticity, or ethical reasoning), the model emphasizes collective capacities and systemic reinforcement. It views the organization as a complex socio-emotional system that requires not only leader development but also the institutionalization of cultural infrastructure-including feedback loops, shared rituals, inclusive decision-making structures, and structural safeguards that support emotional safety and employee flourishing.

Finally, while servant and transformational leadership models are predominantly descriptive or aspirational in nature, the human-centered cultural model proposed here is both normative and prescriptive. It offers scalable pathways for intervention, supported by a hybrid methodology that combines qualitative insight with behavioral metrics. It thus facilitates not just the identification of effective leadership styles, but the architectural redesign of organizational culture itself, with leadership functioning as an emergent, adaptive, and culture-sustaining process.

In sum, the proposed model builds upon the humanistic and relational ethos of existing leadership frameworks but moves beyond them by offering a holistic, integrative, and systems-oriented approach. It reconceptualizes leadership as a function of organizational design, distributed agency, and cultural embodiment-one that requires active alignment between individual intentions and institutional structures in order to foster enduring human-centered transformation.

The results indicate the high effectiveness of combining emotional learning, inclusive communication practices, and leadership support as mechanisms for sustainable internal organizational transformation. The data provide empirical confirmation that the human-centered approach is not merely an abstract concept, but one that can be effectively operationalized through concrete and systemic management actions.

4- Discussion

developed across organizations in various sectors, utilizing complementary methodological instruments. The findings not only confirmed the hypothesis that the level of basic psychological need satisfaction is dependent on characteristics of the organizational environment, but also enabled the construction of a comprehensive model of factors that either facilitate or hinder the implementation of human-centered approaches in HR management.

One of the central observations was the consistent confirmation of the relationship between emotional culture and the qualitative characteristics of internal policies. As demonstrated by the results of the ECI scale, high levels of encouragement and expression of positive emotions positively correlate with the perception of the organizational environment as supportive, inclusive, and open to feedback. This aligns with the conclusions of Barsade & O'Neill [14], who emphasized that emotional culture is not a secondary backdrop to corporate life, but rather a structural element that directly influences productivity, motivation, and employee engagement. Within the study sample, those companies exhibiting higher levels of emotional expressiveness and the normalization of positive emotions also showed higher scores on the BPNS scale, especially in the dimension of relatedness. This suggests that emotional culture is not simply a consequence of organizational transformation, but a necessary precondition that fosters employee inclusion in decision-making processes and enhances initiative.

Furthermore, analysis of the data over time-before and after the implementation of the authors' human-centric integration model-revealed that sustainable cultural change can be achieved specifically through work focused on emotional intelligence, feedback mechanisms, and leadership practices. Increases in proactive responsibility and decreases in conformity, as identified through vignette-based scenarios, point to the emergence of a new value system in which behavioral agency and ethical maturity are becoming normative rather than exceptional. This supports the position of Deci & Ryan [5, 22, 25], who argued that external support for autonomy and relatedness strengthens intrinsic motivation and fosters civic engagement among employees.

Comparison of these results with existing studies in the field of organizational behavior confirms the relevance of an integrative approach. For example, research by Edmondson [8] emphasizes that psychological safety is a foundational condition for innovation and honest team communication. Our study shows that organizations that establish structured channels for emotional and meaning-based engagement-such as feedback loops and coaching-based leadership-are most effective at reducing levels of fear and guilt, as captured by the ECI scale. Similarly, results from the Human-Centered Policy Audit revealed that a high degree of transparency in managerial decisions and recognition of the employee's voice as a meaningful element of the corporate environment are associated with increased satisfaction in the categories of autonomy and competence.

Interpretation of the identified patterns in policies and practices allows for the proposal of a typology of approaches to implementing human-centricity. In organizations where formal compliance is emphasized without emotional support, human-centricity tends to be declarative rather than functional. By contrast, companies that practice empathetic leadership, horizontal modes of interaction, and continuous developmental support cultivate a functionally mature and behaviourally embedded culture in which individuals are recognized as value-bearing subjects rather than mere resources. Thus, the model confirms the hypothesis that sustainable change is not solely driven by regulatory frameworks but is mediated by the transformation of the emotional-cultural layer of the organization, which in turn influences behavior, motivation, and managerial decision-making.

Finally, the findings underscore that trust functions as a cross-cutting category and integrative indicator of a mature organizational culture. In environments where employees report the possibility of honest dialogue, where mistakes can be made without fear of consequences, and where feedback is perceived not as pressure but as a growth opportunity, human-centricity transitions from discourse to everyday practice. Trust and emotional transparency, therefore, appear to be the key conditions for successfully transforming work processes toward sustainable and ethically grounded human capital management.

Taken together, these findings not only validate the effectiveness of the proposed model but also contribute to the theoretical development of the human-centric approach, demonstrating its measurability, reproducibility, and strategic value in the face of contemporary organizational uncertainty.

The implementation of human-centered organizational models encountered notable resistance at the managerial level, particularly among mid-level and operational managers. This resistance did not typically manifest in overt rejection of change, but rather in more subtle and systemic forms, such as passive non-compliance, selective implementation of new practices, and a tendency to default to familiar hierarchical norms despite the formal adoption of human-centered values. These behaviors reflected deeper structural and psychological dynamics that revealed the complex role of management as both a transmitter and potential inhibitor of cultural transformation.

One of the most salient sources of resistance stemmed from entrenched managerial paradigms that equated leadership with control, standardization, and top-down accountability. Managers with extensive tenure or prior experience in traditional command-and-control systems often perceived human-centered practices-such as inclusive decision-making, psychological safety, and emotional feedback-as undermining operational discipline or weakening hierarchical authority. From this perspective, human-centric approaches were viewed not as strategic innovations but as managerial "softness" that could potentially erode performance expectations and reduce efficiency.

Another critical barrier was epistemological in nature. Many managers expressed skepticism toward the perceived subjectivity of human-centered metrics, including psychological safety scores, emotional culture indices, and employee well-being data. These indicators, although psychometrically validated, were often contrasted unfavourably with conventional key performance indicators (KPIs) that were more familiar, quantifiable, and operationally aligned. The result was a cognitive dissonance wherein the legitimacy of human-centered evaluation tools was questioned, and their relevance to business outcomes was doubted.

A third source of resistance lay in fears related to status and positional security. Human-centered reforms frequently included structural elements such as horizontal communication, participatory governance, and democratized feedback processes, which challenged the traditional top-down power dynamic. For some managers, these developments were interpreted as a dilution of their authority and a disruption of the established managerial identity. In such cases, resistance was driven less by ideological opposition and more by existential concerns regarding role clarity, decision-making power, and recognition within the new system.

Finally, resistance also stemmed from a more pragmatic concern: a lack of preparedness and insufficient competencies to enact the new expectations. Many managers, even those who supported the values in principle, lacked the training or experiential knowledge to lead in emotionally intelligent, empathetic, and psychologically safe ways. The skill set required to facilitate open dialogue, manage emotional complexity, and navigate ethical dilemmas was often underdeveloped, which led to anxiety, hesitation, and eventual inertia in practice.

To address these challenges, organizations that successfully advanced human-centered change relied on a combination of strategic, developmental, and cultural interventions. Rather than assuming that managerial resistance could be overcome through persuasion alone, these organizations embedded human-centered leadership into the broader system of organizational learning, evaluation, and accountability. They provided structured leadership development programs that focused not only on emotional intelligence but also on the cultural implications of psychological safety, inclusive communication, and employee engagement. These programs were often supplemented by coaching, peer mentoring, and supervised practice, allowing managers to internalize new models over time.

Equally important was the formal institutionalization of human-centered norms. Organizations moved beyond symbolic declarations and embedded these norms into performance evaluations, promotion criteria, team routines, and incentive structures. This realignment of formal expectations served to reduce reliance on individual goodwill and instead positioned human-centered practices as normative expectations tied to managerial success.

Leadership from the top played a critical role in modeling the desired cultural shift. Senior executives who publicly acknowledged their own learning curves, demonstrated openness to feedback, and participated in emotional culture

initiatives were instrumental in creating psychological permission for middle managers to do the same. This top-down modeling signalled that human-centeredness was not a passing trend or peripheral concern, but a core element of strategic identity.

Ultimately, the most effective organizations recognized that resistance at the managerial level was not merely a behavioral obstacle but a cultural signal-a manifestation of systemic misalignment that required thoughtful, long-term, and multi-layered response strategies. Overcoming this resistance necessitated not only skill-building and communication, but also the development of an organizational ecosystem in which values and structures, expectations and behaviors, were coherently and consistently aligned.

The present study provides compelling evidence of consistent improvements in the satisfaction of basic psychological needs-autonomy, competence, and relatedness-alongside an increase in the expression of positive emotional culture and a notable shift in behavioral strategies toward greater proactivity and ethical maturity. These outcomes are largely consistent with findings from previous empirical studies, while also offering important refinements and extensions to the existing body of knowledge.

Firstly, the findings align closely with the central propositions of Self-Determination Theory [5], which posit that the fulfillment of intrinsic psychological needs positively influences intrinsic motivation, psychological well-being, and sustainable organizational behavior. Similar conclusions were articulated by Deci & Ryan [22], who emphasized that supportive work environments that nurture autonomy and recognition lead to greater employee engagement and reduced turnover. In the current study, the post-intervention increase across all three components of the Basic Psychological Needs Scale (BPNS) was statistically significant, indicating these variables' high sensitivity to systemic organizational change.

Secondly, the observed increase in both the encouragement and expression of positive emotions within the workplace corresponds with the research of Barsade & O'Neill [14], which asserts that emotional cultures grounded in empathy and support enhance team cohesion and interpersonal trust. The magnitude of the correlations between BPNS components and the Emotional Culture Index (ECI) reported here mirrors ranges established in foundational works by Edmondson [8], lending additional credibility to the present findings.

Importantly, this study moves beyond the descriptive frameworks offered by much of the prior literature by presenting an empirically validated intervention model that demonstrates causal changes in employee behavior following the implementation of human-centered practices. Unlike Goleman [3] and Hamel & Zanini [4], who conceptualized human-centeredness primarily as a philosophical or ideological orientation, the current research operationalizes the concept through structural and cultural shifts in organizational policy. Especially notable is the behavioral shift identified via scenario-based analysis: an 11.6% increase in proactive responses and a marked decline in avoidance-based strategies suggest a transformation in cognitive frames and value-driven behavior among employees.

Furthermore, when compared with the findings of Casini et al. [16], which emphasized the need for interdisciplinary integration within the Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence (HCAI) framework, the current study further affirms the strategic necessity of transitioning from technocratic governance to human-oriented systems. While Casini et al. [16] focused on technological ecosystems, the present study demonstrates that similar human-centered principles can drive positive change within the broader sociopsychological fabric of organizational life.

In sum, this research makes a significant contribution to the ongoing academic discourse by offering both quantitative and qualitative evidence of the effectiveness of a human-centered approach across multiple sectors. It illustrates that systemic efforts to reform organizational culture can enhance not only employee satisfaction, but also elevate ethical behavior, emotional engagement, and initiative in decision-making. When viewed alongside previous literature, the findings of this study support the foundation of a new model for organizational development-one in which psychological well-being, meaningful engagement, and ethical resilience are as central to success as traditional key performance indicators.

5- Conclusion

The conducted study confirms the relevance and significance of the human-centric approach in the context of contemporary changes in the global business environment. In a world increasingly characterized by uncertainty, digitalization, and growing demands for corporate social responsibility, a human-centered culture emerges not only as an ethical standard but also as a strategic resource that determines an organization's competitiveness and resilience. The results demonstrate that the satisfaction of employees' basic psychological needs, the presence of a supportive emotional culture, and inclusive policies are directly correlated with higher levels of engagement, initiative, and responsibility.

The development and pilot implementation of the authors' model for integrating human-centricity-based on a combination of emotional intelligence training, inclusive feedback cycles, and leadership development-empirically validated its effectiveness. Significant improvements in autonomy, competence, and relatedness, as well as the growth of a positive emotional culture and proactive behavior, confirm the value of a comprehensive, systemic approach to embedding human-centered strategies. Importantly, this transformation did not result from one-time reforms, but from the gradual introduction of mechanisms that support internal motivation, psychological safety, and the development of mature interpersonal relationships.

At the same time, the study revealed several challenges organizations face when attempting to implement human-centric practices. A key issue remains resistance to change, particularly at the middle and senior management levels, where traditional hierarchical models maintain a strong influence. In some cases, new procedures were implemented formally, without deeper internal shifts in mindset and values, reducing the overall impact of these efforts. It was also found that, even when formal feedback channels and training programs exist, efforts to build a human-centered environment are often ineffective without the active personal example of leadership.

The analysis of sectoral differences showed that the specifics of professional activity and industry structure significantly influence the perception and implementation of human-centricity. In healthcare and manufacturing, rigid hierarchies and high workloads hindered the development of emotionally safe and inclusive cultures, whereas in information technology and education, flexible employment formats and a focus on growth facilitated more successful integration of human-centered principles.

The scientific novelty of the study lies in the development and pilot testing of a multi-level model for integrating human-centric practices, the systematization of facilitating and hindering factors, and the empirical demonstration of the relationship between emotional culture, basic need satisfaction, and the effectiveness of work processes. The study also contributes a practical roadmap of recommendations for organizations seeking to systematically transform their culture toward sustainability, inclusiveness, and human potential development.

Future research directions include the need for in-depth longitudinal analysis of changes in human-centric culture, as well as the development of adaptive models for various types of organizations-large corporations, small businesses, and public institutions. A particularly important area for further investigation is the impact of digital technologies on emotional culture and social connections within organizations, and the development of tools to assess emotional safety in virtual and hybrid teams. Additionally, future research should consider the influence of national cultural contexts on the perception and implementation of human-centric practices, as cross-cultural differences may significantly modulate the effectiveness of proposed strategies.

It is also important to recognize that the implementation of human-centric approaches involves specific costs-both resource-based and emotional-and requires a high level of organizational maturity. During the pilot phase, challenges were recorded related to time and staffing constraints for employee training, limited budgets for new initiatives, and risks of emotional burnout among change leaders. These factors warrant separate investigation to develop targeted strategies for supporting organizations through cultural transformation processes.

In conclusion, a human-centered culture should not be viewed as a one-off initiative or a passing trend, but rather as a comprehensive, dynamic system that demands consistent effort, development at all levels of the organization, and deep engagement with the motivational and value foundations of professional activity. The findings of this study confirm that implementing human-centric principles is not only an ethical choice but also a long-term investment in the sustainable future of the organization and its people.

6- Declarations

6-1- Author Contributions

Conceptualization, Y.I.B.; methodology, Y.I.B. and L.S.N.; formal analysis, Y.I.B., R.Zh.T., and N.A.L.; investigation, L.S.N.; data curation, R.Zh.T.; writing—original draft preparation, M.F.B.; writing—review and editing, M.F.B.; supervision, N.A.L.; project administration, L.S.N. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

6-2- Data Availability Statement

The data presented in this study are available on request from the corresponding author.

6-3- Funding

This research has been funded by the Science Committee of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Grant No. AP23489784).

6-4- Acknowledgements

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to the management teams and employees of the participating multinational companies for their cooperation and openness throughout the research process. Special thanks are extended to the research assistants and internal coaches who supported the data collection and feedback facilitation stages. The authors also acknowledge the administrative support provided by S. Amanzholov East Kazakhstan State University and Kazzink LLP.

6-5- Institutional Review Board Statement

Formal approval from an ethics committee was not required, as the study did not involve any intrusion into participants' private lives, medical procedures, or the processing of sensitive personal data. All procedures complied with established academic standards for conducting sociological and psychological research.

6-6- Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent was obtained from all participants involved in the study. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. All data were collected and stored in compliance with ethical research practices and applicable data protection regulations.

6-7- Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this manuscript. In addition, the ethical issues, including plagiarism, informed consent, misconduct, data fabrication and/or falsification, double publication and/or submission, and redundancies have been completely observed by the authors.

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Application 1

Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction Scale (BPNS)

The scale was developed within the framework of Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000). It is designed to assess the extent to which an individual's three fundamental psychological needs-critical for well-being and motivation-are satisfied:

1. Autonomy (a sense of personal initiative and choice)
2. Competence (a sense of effectiveness and success)
3. Relatedness (experiencing meaningful relationships with others)

The scale is widely used in research across the fields of educational psychology, organizational behavior, motivation, and health.

Scale Structure and Items

The BPNS consists of 21 items grouped into three subscales:

Autonomy Subscale

(satisfaction of the need for independence, self-regulation, and choice)

1. I feel that my actions reflect my own values and interests.
2. I feel free to choose what I do.
3. I feel that I have opportunities to make choices in my daily life.
4. I feel that my decisions reflect who I really am.
5. I feel that I can act in accordance with my beliefs.
6. I have the freedom to follow my own plans.
7. I feel self-respect when making decisions.
8. Competence Subscale

(satisfaction of the need to be effective and capable)

9. I feel I can reach the goals I set for myself.
10. I feel capable of handling difficult tasks.
11. I feel I do well in what I undertake.
12. I am proud of how I handle everyday challenges.
13. I feel that my efforts produce the desired results.
14. I succeed in doing things that I find important.
15. I am confident in my ability to overcome difficulties.
16. Relatedness Subscale

(satisfaction of the need for support, love, and social involvement)

15. I feel valued by others.
16. I feel that there is someone who cares about me.
17. I feel close to people around me.
18. I feel accepted as I am.
19. I feel that I can rely on others.
20. I feel like a part of a community.
21. I feel emotionally supported by others.

Response Format

The scale typically uses a Likert-type response format, ranging from

1 ("Strongly disagree") to 5 or 7 ("Strongly agree"), depending on the adaptation.

All items are positively worded, which simplifies result interpretation.

Interpretation of Results

High scores on each subscale indicate a high level of satisfaction with the corresponding basic need.

Low scores suggest a deficit in need satisfaction, which may be associated with lower motivation, emotional well-being, or personal effectiveness.

Subscale	High Scores Indicate	Low Scores Indicate
Autonomy	Sense of freedom, intrinsic motivation	Perception of external control, dependence
Competence	Confidence in abilities, effective task execution	Feelings of incompetence or inefficiency
Relatedness	Social acceptance, emotional support	Feelings of isolation or social disconnection

The scale can be adapted to various contexts: educational, professional, or clinical.

Shortened versions of the scale (e.g., the Basic Psychological Needs Scale – General, with 9–12 items) are also used.

When analyzing data, it is recommended to assess the internal consistency of the scale.

The Cronbach's alpha coefficient (α) is typically greater than 0.80, indicating high reliability.

Application 2

Emotional Culture Index (ECI)

The Emotional Culture Index (ECI) was developed by Barsade & O'Neill [14] to assess which emotions are encouraged, expressed, and expected within a group or organizational environment. Unlike traditional measures of climate and culture, which focus on behavioral norms and values, ECI emphasizes the emotional side of interaction-particularly, the extent to which the expression of various emotions is seen as acceptable or desirable.

Structure of the Scale

The scale is divided into three sections, each evaluating the same set of emotions:

1. Encouraged Emotions – Which emotions are promoted and welcomed in your group/organization?
2. Expressed Emotions – Which emotions are actually expressed by employees?
3. Expected Emotions – Which emotions do you feel are expected to be expressed in order to "fit in" with the culture?

Each section includes the following 10 emotions:

- Joy
- Care (Compassion)
- Empathy
- Remorse
- Sadness
- Anger
- Fear
- Guilt
- Pride (Admiration)
- Gratitude

Each emotion is rated in all three contexts (encouraged / expressed / expected). For example:

- "Joy is encouraged in our team."
- "Employees express joy in their everyday work."
- "Expressing joy is expected from members of the group."

There are a total of 30 statements in the scale (10 emotions × 3 aspects).

- List of Statements

A. Emotions that are Encouraged

- Joy is encouraged.
- Care is encouraged.
- Empathy is encouraged.
- Remorse is encouraged.
- Sadness is encouraged.
- Anger is encouraged.
- Fear is encouraged.
- Guilt is encouraged.
- Pride is encouraged.
- Gratitude is encouraged.

B. Emotions that are Expressed

- Employees express joy.
- Employees express care.
- Employees express empathy.
- Employees express remorse.
- Employees express sadness.
- Employees express anger.
- Employees express fear.
- Employees express guilt.
- Employees express pride.
- Employees express gratitude.

C. Emotions that are Expected

- Joy is expected.
- Care is expected.
- Empathy is expected.
- Remorse is expected.
- Sadness is expected.
- Anger is expected.
- Fear is expected.
- Guilt is expected.
- Pride is expected.
- Gratitude is expected.

Response Format

Each item is rated on a 5-point Likert scale:

1 - Strongly Disagree

2 - Disagree

3 - Neutral

4 - Agree

5 - Strongly Agree

Alternatively, a frequency-based scale (e.g., from "Never" to "Always") can be used when the objective is to assess emotional behavior over time.

1 Data Processing Guidelines

2 Group responses into three categories: encouragement, expression, and expectation.

3 For each emotion, calculate the mean score within each category.

4 Additionally, calculate aggregate scores for:

- Positive emotions (joy, care, empathy, gratitude, pride)
- Negative emotions (anger, fear, guilt, sadness, remorse)

Interpretation of Results

Score Level	Interpretation
High scores on joy, gratitude, and care	Emotionally warm and supportive culture
Low scores on positive emotions	Emotional coldness or detachment
High scores on anger, fear, guilt	Signs of emotional strain or toxic environment
Mismatch between expected and expressed emotions	Emotional inauthenticity; hidden tension

Application 3

Human-Centered Policy Audit Questionnaire

The Human-Centered Policy Audit Questionnaire is designed to evaluate the extent to which the internal environment of an organization or educational institution is oriented toward:

- Respect for human needs
- Support for employee development and well-being
- Promotion of inclusivity
- Creation of a trusting and supportive culture

The instrument focuses on how organizational practices and policies are **perceived by its members**.

Structure of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire includes **18 statements**, grouped into **4 thematic categories**:

1. Work–Life Balance

- Organizational policies support employees' work–life balance.
- Employees are offered flexibility in scheduling when needed.
- Employees are not expected to be constantly available outside working hours.
- Leave and sick-day policies are fair and supportive.

2. Respect and Inclusivity

- Leadership respects differences among employees.
- Diversity is recognized and valued at all levels of the organization.
- There is no discrimination based on gender, age, race, religion, or other characteristics.
- The work environment fosters a sense of belonging for all employees.
- Every employee's voice is considered important in organizational discussions.

3. Support for Development

- Career development opportunities are available to all employees, regardless of position or tenure.
- The organization encourages continuous professional learning.
- Supervisors actively support the development of their team members' skills and competencies.
- Internal promotion opportunities are fair and transparent.

4. Participation in Decision-Making

- Employees have opportunities to suggest improvements to processes.
- Employee opinions are taken into account when new policies or initiatives are developed.
- Employee feedback is taken seriously by leadership.
- Decisions are made transparently, with clear explanations.
- The organizational culture encourages collaboration over authoritarian management.

Response Scale

Each statement is rated using a **6-point Likert scale**:

Score	Description
1	Strongly disagree
2	Disagree
3	Somewhat disagree
4	Somewhat agree
5	Agree
6	Strongly agree

Interpretation of Results

Human-Centeredness Index	Interpretation
5.0–6.0	Very high orientation toward employee development and respect
4.0–4.9	High, but with areas for improvement
3.0–3.9	Moderate level; changes needed
2.0–2.9	Low support; formalism dominates
1.0–1.9	Authoritarian or impersonal culture

Application 4

Work Scenario Vignettes

The Work Scenario Vignette Method is a qualitative-quantitative research tool based on presenting participants with hypothetical situations that simulate real workplace or educational contexts. The aim of using vignettes is to assess participants' value orientations, moral attitudes, behavioral strategies, and levels of responsibility. This method is particularly valuable for uncovering underlying behavioral dispositions that may not be captured through standard survey instruments.

Questionnaire Structure

The questionnaire consists of a set of vignettes (scenarios). Each vignette is a brief description of a potential workplace dilemma or ambiguous situation. The number of vignettes may vary depending on the research goals.

Sample Vignettes

1. Balancing Interests and Personal Boundaries

You are asked to stay late at work without additional compensation. What do you do?

2. Ethics and Fairness

A colleague suggests splitting a bonus for a project in which they contributed very little. How do you respond?

3. Team Accountability

You notice a mistake in the team's work that could jeopardize the project. Do you report it?

4. Loyalty vs. Objectivity

Your friend at work has violated company policy. Do you inform management?

5. Commitment to Quality

You are asked to complete a task quickly, even if it compromises quality. What action do you take?

6. Initiative-Taking

You identify a way to improve a work process, but it’s not part of your formal duties. Do you propose the change?

7. Emotional Maturity

Your manager criticizes your work harshly in front of others. How do you react?

8. Decision-Making Under Uncertainty

You receive an assignment with no clear objective. What steps do you take?

Response Formats

There are two main approaches:

1 Open-ended format – Participants describe their response in their own words.

2 Structured multiple-choice format – Participants select from 3–5 predefined options reflecting different behavioral styles (e.g., proactive, passive, ethical, compromising, etc.).

For research focused on value orientations, the open-ended format is preferred, as it allows for a deeper analysis of motivation and reasoning.

Data Analysis

1. Qualitative Coding:

Open responses are coded according to predefined categories such as:

- *Ethical responsibility*
- *Result orientation*
- *Avoidance of responsibility*
- *Conformity*
- *Proactivity*

Thematic or semantic coding techniques are typically used.

2. Quantitative Processing:

- Frequency counts are used to assess how often each behavioral type is mentioned.
- A behavioral rating scale can be applied (e.g., from 1 = “irresponsible behavior” to 5 = “high ethical responsibility”).

2. Profile Indexing:

An individual profile can be constructed for each respondent, assessing:

- Level of ethical maturity
- Proactivity
- Team orientation
- And other behavioral dimensions

Interpretation of Results

Behavioral Strategy	Interpretation
Proactive Responsibility	Willingness to take initiative and improve processes
Ethical Maturity	Adherence to moral standards, even in difficult situations
Conformity / Passivity	Following the majority or avoiding involvement
Result Orientation	Focus on task completion with attention to quality
Responsibility Avoidance	Avoidance of decision-making and active engagement