



**Followers' use of vision guidance and
intellectual competency to impact the visionary
leadership perception and integration:
Evidence from UK retail sector**

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Abstract

Background: Leadership vision is used by followers as a strategic tool to secure a successful business future for the organization. For vision integration between followers and leaders, the formation of perception is inevitable. Commercial organizations today adheres to the formality of coming up with the vision statements and promoting them within the companies but fail to address the problem of how the visionary leadership is been perceived and integrated by the followers to bring transformation due to vision.

Objectives: The objective of this study, therefore, was to explore the experiences of UK-based followers in retail organizations. The research questions were as follows: (1) How do followers of visionary leadership by using vision guidance and intellectual ability integrate into a vision that facilitates the formation of shared vision and followers' perception? (2) how these mutually inclusive interconnections develop and cause a whole readiness in the followers to prepare for the organizational change?

Method: An inductive qualitative design was used for this study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 30 followers who had experienced follower-leader relationships in communicating vision. The collected data were then analysed using thematic analysis.

Findings: The themes developed from research questions revealed several ways in which followers use vision guidance and intellectual ability to integrate into vision. The shared vision and followers' perception of visionary leadership that are interlinked with each other offer a comprehensive picture for this type of transformational leadership. The main findings that emerged from the data analysis are about how followers share the vision. Teamwork and bonding with the leaders and the common cause by following the big picture of the retail business trigger shared vision. Through leadership vision, the followers are also impacted by the business objectives of the customer satisfaction/customer service and experience which is the key part of the retail vision. This visionary behaviour inspires the followers and hence creates an ideal self for the leaders that also motivate them to integrate vision into their daily work. This integration is possible when followers have small contributions to work behaviours and the leaders empower broad-based actions in followers. The vision integration depends on the intellectual ability of followers, and it is found that the higher the intellectual ability, the better is the vision understanding. When follower integrates into vision, they experience future guidance which also develops and progress them for future leadership roles and guide them in their work. Each of these themes discussed above encompassed a total of 20 sub-themes on average.

Conclusions: This research has provided a unique insight into the impacts of vision guidance and intellectual competency of followers on sharing of the vision and its perception in the context of the UK-based large retailers. The findings suggest that the followers experience several positive impacts of visionary leadership on their personalities in terms of changes in perception about leaders and adoption of follower role in reaction to the vision shared. Some negative outlier findings also suggest that followers resist the vision and its content from the leaders. These impacts are not limited to personal attributes but also cover the business vision which includes customer satisfaction and supply chain. Such far-reaching impacts of visionary leadership have not been sufficiently explored previously. Contrary to the negative tendencies expressed in the literature of followership, some of the findings indicate positive aspects, such as advanced working and proactive followers. The findings of this study provide a rare insight into the shared vision and follower perception strategies specific to retail business.

Keywords: Leadership, followership, vision, perception & integration

Declaration

I, Mohammad Amir Ali, declare that the ideas, research work, analyses, and conclusions reported in my Ph.D. thesis are entirely my effort, except where otherwise acknowledged. Also, I certify that this thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my work.

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Contents

Abstract.....	1
Declaration.....	3
Acknowledgments.....	4
List of tables and figures	11
1. Introduction	12
1.1 Rationale & Justification of the research	12
1.1.1 Why conduct research on the retail industry?.....	13
1.1.2 Follower’s growth and development	13
1.2 Why visionary leadership is important?.....	14
1.3 Research Questions.....	15
1.4 Problem statement	16
1.5 Research Objectives	17
1.6 Outline of the thesis.....	18
1.7 Delimitation of the scope and key assumptions.....	18
1.8 Chapter summary.....	19
2. Literature review	20
2.1 Introduction.....	20
2.2 Emergence of leadership.....	21
2.2.1 Distinguishing leadership from management: managing to lead	22
2.3 Transformational leadership	24
2.4 Follower centric research	25
2.4.1 Follower’s role.....	26
2.4.1.1 Resistance behaviours	27
2.4.1.2 Proactive behaviours	27
2.4.2 Why follower’s perception is important.....	28
2.5 Visionary leadership.....	28
2.5.1 Vision	29
2.5.2 Skills of visionary leadership in the strategic context	30
2.5.3 Visionary leadership and innovation	31
2.5.4 Visionary leadership in business and commercial organization	31
2.5.5 Emotions and vision commitment	32
2.5.6 Personality of leaders and followers	33
2.5.7 Visionary leadership in retail organizations.....	35
2.6 Propositions and theoretical framework development.....	35
2.6.1 Proposition 1:.....	36

2.6.2	Proposition 2:	36
2.6.3	Proposition 3:	36
2.6.4	Proposition 4:	36
2.6.5	Proposition 5:	36
2.7	Vision Guidance	37
2.8	Shared vision.....	37
2.9	Integration and communication of vision	41
2.10	Followers' perception of visionary leadership.....	43
2.11	Followers' intellectual competency	46
2.12	Chapter Summary	47
3.	Research methodology	49
3.1	Introduction.....	49
3.2	Philosophical consideration.....	49
3.2.1	Ontology.....	49
3.2.2	Epistemology.....	50
3.2.3	Interpretivist paradigm.....	50
3.3	Research rationale, design and researcher	50
3.4	Data collection methods	52
3.4.1	Interview Schedule.....	52
3.4.2	Interview Process	53
3.4.3	How covid19 affect data collection and why?	54
3.5	Data Analysis.....	55
3.5.1	Phase 1: Familiarizing with the Data:	55
3.5.2	Phase 2: Generating Initial Codes:	55
3.5.3	Phase 3: Searching for Themes:	55
3.5.4	Phase 4: Reviewing Themes:.....	56
3.5.5	Phase 5: Defining and Naming Themes:	56
3.5.6	Phase 6: Producing the Report:	56
3.5.7	Transcription	57
3.7	Pilot study.....	58
3.6	Participants.....	58
3.6.1	Rational behind the selection of participants and representing cases	58
3.7.2	Participant Recruitment Process.....	59
3.7.3	Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria.....	59

3.7.3.1	Presence of the vision	59
3.7.3.2	Experience as followers	60
3.7.3.3	Followers Location	60
3.7.3.4	Currently employed	60
3.7.4	Sample size.....	60
3.7.4.1	Situational factors.....	61
3.7.4.2	Data saturation	61
3.7.4	Followers' demographic and background information	62
3.7.4.1	Followers' Gender:.....	63
3.7.4.2	Followers' age:.....	63
3.7.4.3	Followers' Education.....	63
3.7.4.4	Followers' Location	63
3.7.4.5	Experience as the follower	63
3.7.4.6	Followers' area of responsibility.....	64
3.7.4.7	Designation of Followers:.....	64
3.7	Ethical Consideration	65
3.8	Chapter summary.....	65
4.	Findings & Analysis.....	67
4.1	Introduction	67
4.2	Research aim (a): To explore why and how the followers decode shared vision in the retail sector	68
4.3	Research aim (b): To understand why business objectives have a central position in the leadership vision of retail business	76
4.4	Research aim (C): To investigate how and why followers perceive leadership vision in the retail business?.....	94
4.5	Research aim (d): To unsolved why vision guidance is a tool for followers to have future directions for the retail business?	107
4.6	Research aim (e): To confirm how followers perceive intellectual ability for understanding leadership vision.....	116
4.7	Research aim (f): To find out why and how followers in retail businesses integrate into leadership vision.....	120
4.8	Main research question: How do these mutually inclusive interconnections develop and cause a whole readiness in the followers to prepare for the organizational change?.....	129
4.8.1	Vision guidance and follower perception	132
4.8.2	Shared vision and vision guidance	133
4.8.3	Shared vision and follower perception.....	135
4.8.4	Integration and shared vision	137

4.9	Chapter summary.....	138
5.	Discussions.....	140
5.1	Introduction.....	140
5.2	Research problem.....	140
5.3	Research aim (a): To explore why and how the followers decode shared vision in the retail business.....	140
5.3.1	Leadership and organizational vision in retailing.....	140
5.3.2	Common Cause of followers/leaders and big picture or vision.....	141
5.3.3	Followers Engaging role.....	142
5.3.4	Followers' leader (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data).....	142
5.3.5	Follower's Energy and Focus.....	142
5.3.6	Bidirectional vision process.....	143
5.3.7	Not just worker but part of the business (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data).....	143
5.3.8	Covid compliance retailing (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data).....	143
5.3.9	Followers as executing and implementing the vision (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data).....	144
5.3.10	Vision & planning not shared with followers (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data).....	144
5.3.11	Followers Negotiating for future.....	144
5.3.12	Teamwork and Bonding.....	145
5.4	Research aim (b): To understand why business objectives have a central position in retailer's leadership vision.....	145
5.4.1	Business objectives or KPIs as Vision.....	145
5.4.1.1	Customer satisfaction/customer service/ Customer experience.....	145
5.4.1.2	Supply chain (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data).....	146
5.4.1.3	Increase sales (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data).....	147
5.4.1.4	Managing personnel.....	147
5.4.2	Visionary leadership improves business performance.....	148
5.5	Research aim (c): To investigate how followers perceive leadership vision in the retail business?.....	149
5.5.1	Inspirational and Ideal self.....	150
5.5.2	Motivational.....	150
5.5.3	Futuristic (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data).....	151
5.5.4	Strategic thinker.....	151
5.5.5	Demotivating/Not a visionary leader (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data).....	152

5.5.6	Innovative and open to new ideas	152
5.5.7	Manager and leader	153
5.5.8	Personal best.....	153
5.5.9	Higher organizational performance and long-term leader.....	153
5.5.10	Social acceptance by followers	154
5.5.11	Sense of unknown (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data)	154
5.6	Research aim (d): To find out why and how followers in retailers integrate into leadership vision	155
5.6.1	Conflicting ideas dampen vision integration (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data)	155
5.6.2	Integration through standards, processes and procedures (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data).....	155
5.6.3	Small followers' contribution to work behaviours	156
5.6.4	Empower broad-based actions in followers	156
5.6.5	Simplicity and repetition.....	157
5.7	Research aim (e): To confirm how followers perceive intellectual ability for understanding leadership vision.....	158
5.7.1	Higher intellectual ability better vision understanding	158
5.7.2	No need for high intellectual ability	159
5.7.3	Language as a barrier for followers accepting vision (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data).....	159
5.8	Research aim (f): To unsolved why vision guidance is a tool for followers to have a direction for the future of retail business?.....	159
5.8.1	Advance working and proactive followers.....	159
5.8.2	Optimistic future (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data)	160
5.8.3	Certainty to followers (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data)	160
5.8.4	Progression and development of followers.....	160
5.8.5	Guide followers' work.....	161
5.9	Main research question: How do followers of visionary leadership by using vision guidance and intellectual ability integrate into a vision that facilitates the formation of shared vision and followers' perception?.....	162
5.10	Theoretical implications	163
5.11	Practical implications	165
5.12	Chapter summary.....	166
6.	Conclusions	168
6.1	Introduction	168
6.2	Research questions & overview of the findings	168

6.3	Research Problem	169
6.4	How result matches the expectations of the researcher	169
6.4.1	To find out unique and new ways of vision integration to attain business vision in a commercial organization.....	170
6.4.2	To ascertain that vision integration, shared vision, and vision guidance embedded with each other	170
6.4.3	To confirm that in the retail industry of the UK the norm is to arrive at a shared vision with followers and the leadership vision occupies a more important position among followers 171	
6.5	Contributions	172
6.6	Limitations	173
6.7	Recommendations for future research	174
6.8	Personal reflections.....	175
6.9	Chapter summary.....	176
	References	177
	Appendix-A	187
	Appendix-B	188
	Appendix-C	189
	Appendix-D	190
	Appendix-E	191
	Appendix-F	192
	Appendix G	193
	Appendix H	195
	Appendix I.....	196
	Appendix J	199
	Appendix K	201
	Appendix L.....	204
	Appendix M.....	207

List of tables and figures

Table 2: Perspectives and views of leadership in management.....	22
Table 3: Different perspectives and views on visionary leadership	29
Table 4: Respondent Background information.....	65
Table 7: Themes, codes, Number of Sources, and Number of References in Research Aim (a) To explore why and how the followers decode shared vision in the retail sector (b) To understand why business objectives have a central position in retailers leadership vision ..	68
Table 8: Themes, codes, Number of Sources, and Number of References in Research Aim (C): To investigate how and why followers perceive leadership vision in retail business	93
Table 9: Themes, codes, Number of Sources, and Number of References in Research Aim (d): To unsolved why vision guidance is a tool for followers to have a direction for the future of retail business?	107
Table 10: Themes, codes, Number of Sources, and Number of References in Research aim (e): To confirm how followers perceive intellectual ability for understanding leadership vision	116
Table 11: Themes, codes, Number of Sources, and Number of References in Research question (f): To find out why and how followers in retail businesses integrate into leadership vision	119
Table 12: Mutually inclusive embedded Umbrella themes.....	130
Table 13: Overlapping of subthemes/codes in followers' perception and integration	130
Table 14: Overlapping of subthemes/codes in Intellectual competency of followers.....	131
Table 15: Overlapping of subthemes/codes in Integration and vision guidance.....	132
Table 16: Overlapping of subthemes/codes in vision guidance and follower perception	132
Table 17: Overlapping of subthemes/codes in shared vision and vision guidance.....	133
Table 18: Overlapping of subthemes/codes in shared vision and follower perception	134
Table 19: Overlapping of subthemes/codes in Shared vision and integration	136
Table 20: Mixing of subthemes in empowering broad-based actions in followers.....	157
 Figure 1: Theoretical Framework-Vision and followership theory.....	 36

1. Introduction

This chapter has laid the foundation of this thesis. It discussed the rationale of the research which is the total impact of the visionary leadership concepts on followers' perception. Following the justification of the research the purpose of the research has been highlighted to gain an overall understanding that forms a shared vision. The chapter also states the key research questions regarding visionary leadership. The research gap has also been identified and discussed. In addition to the gap, particular broad-level research objectives have been laid down to explicitly define what to achieve from this research. This focussed on the interconnected overlapping of the two main factors like integration and vision guidance and how it influences the shared vision and the perception of the visionary leadership. The research problem relating to the research question is also the part of this chapter that explained the importance of followers' perception and integration of vision in the success or failure of the organization.

1.1 Rationale & Justification of the research

One of the key reasons for considering this research is to gain an overall and combined understanding of visionary leadership. In this, it is important to consider that how the interconnections form between the visionary leadership constructs like vision guidance, integration, and shared vision (Kantabutra & Vimolratana, 2009; Kohles, Bligh, & Carsten, 2012). This research is also undertaken to evidence the follower benefit of visionary leadership which is intellectual competency (Agashae & Bratton, 2001; Thuan, 2019). It is driven with a motive of in-depth knowledge about the shared vision and vision guidance that are the key mechanisms of the visionary leadership. In the literature, some studies highlight the impact of visionary leadership on the emotional bond (Smollan & Parry, 2011; Dvir, Kass, & Shamir, 2004) between the leaders and followers but there is a dearth of research that can be considered as the significant contribution that discusses the links between the key themes. Thus, this research is carried out with a rationale for understanding the key relationships of visionary leadership. These themes are considered in this research because they form the foundations of visionary leadership and their understanding to enrich the theory of visionary leadership and will provide a better understanding of these concepts. There is a lack of research in terms of that how these themes of visionary leadership are connected or how they reinforced each other to form the perception and integration with the intellectual ability of followers as the key hindrance in accepting the change.

1.1.1 Why conduct research on the retail industry?

Another reason that this study research position is unique is its take on retail personnel not in general but specific to the retail industry. Retail industry followers have been chosen for this research as this industry is subject to more change because of its customer-facing experience which is a considerable part of the vision of the organization and determine the destiny in terms of marketing and financial performance (Kantabutra, S. and Vimolratana, P, 2010; Jing, Avery, & Bergsteiner, 2014) . The reason behind conducting this research is significant. Retail industry in UK is a very big sector. More than 3 million people's works in this industry which is 11% of the total working group. A considerable amount of GDP is generated by the retail sector. This research will help to find out how to motivate this group of people.

The Importance of Retailing. 1) Sales to Ultimate consumers of the products. 2) A convenient form of selling quantity-wise. 3) Convenient Place and Location. 4) The lifestyle of the people are shaped by retailing. 5) Retail businesses contribute to the economy. 6) Retail dominates the supply chain. 7) Retail is interdisciplinary.

For the requirement of this research, benefits and disadvantages are both considered to be the key motivation and are the main rationale of undertaking this research. The disadvantages are also discussed in the section of the statement of the problem which focuses on the hindrance-free implementation of organizational change that happens between followers and leaders. The benefits and advantages that are discussed in the following headings become the key and foundation rationale of carrying out this study with emphasis on the retail industry. It appears that visionary transformation is more long-term and cumbersome to achieve because of its futuristic approach (Kantabutra and Vimolratana, 2010). Transformational leadership involved both short-term and long-term changes to the organization and this is the reason that a more general rationale of taking up transformational leadership as the topic of research is vital. Visionary leadership has the following positive outcome and benefits the followers in terms of developing them and leading them towards a higher level of intellectual competencies.

1.1.2 Follower's growth and development

In the context of business organization followers at the middle and lower management under the leadership of the managers or directors are responsible for the daily operations and

management of their respective business functions. Through visionary leadership, followers avail an opportunity to think and work at the top management issues relating to strategic planning and vision achievement (Westley & Mintzberg, 1989; Dvir, Eden, Avolio, & Shamir, 2002). This develops them to become the future visionary leadership which is also related to succession planning. Visionary individuals transcend beyond self-actualization and self-interests for the sake of the group or organization (Adair & J, 2003). The leader nurtures his followers' moral development to internalize these same values and principles. In this way, followers develop a high level of personal development perception under the light of visionary leadership (Dvir et al., 2002)

1.2 Why visionary leadership is important?

Visionary leadership is important since it adds dimensions of long-term development needs, including trends and transformations in the environment around the organization. Visionary leadership prevents leaders and team members from getting stuck with an iterative and reactive approach to development.

Visionary leadership provides long-term goals and purpose. These visionary elements spawn creativity and cooperation since people innovate together to fulfill their common vision. Visionary leadership raises everyone's gaze to see the bigger purpose beyond any mundane short-term tasks.

Visionary leadership is important because of the following:

1. Visionary leadership ensures that we look to the long term and not only to day-to-day matters
2. Visions provide a greater sense of purpose to employees, customers, suppliers, and other stakeholders that participate in reaching them
3. Long term common goals help to unify people and boost creativity
4. Unity and working in the same direction instills cooperation and reduces silos
5. Visionary leadership looks to more significant trends in technology, trade, economy, politics, etc., to gauge how an organization can adjust or drive these trends
6. Visionary leadership creates the opportunity to disrupt competition, as well as understanding the risks of being disrupted

7. It creates a context for team members who can now see mundane everyday activities as part of something greater
8. It builds engagement by involving and inspiring people

Advantages of the Visionary Leadership Style:

- A clear vision creates motivation, inspiration, and unity among team members
- Innovation and creativity thrive under visionary leadership
- Strong awareness of change drivers in the surrounding world increases the chance of successful adaptation by the organization

1.3 Research Questions

Visionary leadership is a type of transformational leadership where injecting change in the organization requires an in-depth understanding of the visionary process and its communication and acceptance by followers to make the vision a reality (Kantabutra, 2008a; Kohles et al., 2012; Michele McDonough, 2010). This change is dependent on how followers perceive change and the vision of the company. Transformation of a company from one state to another demand a greater understanding of visionary leadership and how followers' mind works when agreeing or rejecting the change. When visioning the company future, it is important to consider the market and industry in which the company is operating and how vision can be shared with the followers (Kantabutra, 2010).

Therefore, the main research question driving this thesis is

Main research questions: How do followers of visionary leadership by using vision guidance and intellectual ability integrate into a vision that facilitates the formation of shared vision and follower's perception? How these mutually inclusive interconnections develop and cause a whole readiness in the followers to prepare for the organizational change.

Moreover, to find answers to main research questions this research particularly aims to uncover

Research aim (a): To explore why and how the followers decode shared vision in the retail business.

Research aim (b): To understand why business objectives have a central position in retailers' leadership vision.

Research aim (c): To investigate how followers perceive leadership vision in retail business.

Research aim (d): To find out why and how followers in retailers integrate into leadership vision.

Research aim (e): To confirm how followers perceive intellectual ability for understanding leadership vision.

Research aim (f): To unsolved why vision guidance is a tool for followers to have a direction for the future of retail business.

1.4 Problem statement

In many instances in management practice and theory and especially in the context of the retail industry the followers and leaders misperceive and integrate the vision or a long-term plan of the company (Kantabutra and Vimolratana, 2010). It is important that effective alignment and understanding should be achieved between followers and visionary leaders. This is a great challenge for visionary leaders to change the mindset of followers and divert them on the right path of the business. The perception of followers for visionary leadership varies from industry to industry. The actual perception gets more blurred when the industry is more complex or capital intensive. If the industry is fast-moving consumer goods retail organizations, the corrective actions and deviation from planned requires a perfect alignment of thinking of followers and leaders. The perception of followers about the vision of the leadership should be clear and strategies must be aligned with the vision to prevent the business from heading off-track (Felfe & Schyns, 2006). Visionaries and their followers who do not understand this and may find themselves seemingly moving in circles. The teams experience the frustration of a lot of activity with no results to show for it. The problem of misperception of vision can lead to the decaying of relationships with individuals and followers based on the essential need for openness, trust, and vision integration (M. Taylor, J. Cornelius, & Colvin, 2014)

The leaders at many times lack effective communication and expression of emotions affixed to a vision of the future which causes a gap in the thinking style of followers (Kevin S Groves, 2006). This will lead to the problem within followers to be less futuristic and visionary. They are stuck in the trap of status quo where thinking of guiding business into the right direction is limited and this results in the creation of a gap, lacking vision integration between leaders and followers. Not only emotions but if the visionary leadership is not supposed to be doing what it meant to be, that is guiding the followers on the right path, then also the perception of followers deviates from the planned. Thus, the importance of emotions and vision guidance in

forming shared vision all interplay to form a vision, and this complete picture of perception of visionary leadership is lacking in the literature.

The vision of a leader can be stretched horizontally and vertically in an organization (John P Kotter, 2012). Vertically it takes the leadership vision into diversification of business which is risky if the vision calls for getting into the business that is unrelated to the previous business. It also creates a problem if the firm wants to grow vertically that's acquiring suppliers and competitors. The followers and the leaders make sure that the vision should not be just a dream but instead believable and doable. This is only possible if the management and CEOs are on the same wavelength with the followers. It compliments each other as it is vital that followers do not think the vision of the company to be too emotional and lacks the rationality of going forward.

This study assumed that leadership vision alone without communication to followers has no reality (Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe, & Carsten, 2014; Stam, van Knippenberg, & Wisse, 2010). The reason for this assumption is that a great deal of the problems of perception and integration of visionary leadership lies in the followers. The vision must be integrated with followers and the management team, to achieve the combined impact of the vision (Kohles, Bligh, & Carsten, 2013). Having said this it is important that how the followers of leadership vision perceive and how this motivates them to have the full commitment.

1.5 Research Objectives

The research problem will lead to the following objectives that the current research aims to accomplish and address the problem that practitioners and academics face today.

- To find out unique and new ways of vision integration to attain business vision in a commercial organization.
- To ascertain that vision integration, shared vision, and vision guidance embedded with each other
- To confirm that in the retail industry of the UK the norm is to arrive at a shared vision with followers and the leadership vision occupies a more important position among followers.

1.6 Outline of the thesis

The thesis starts with the introduction which introduces the rationale and justification of the research on leadership. A snapshot is provided which introduces the reader to the launch of the different theories that emerge in many previous decades. This discussion is narrowed down to transformational leadership which is further clarified by comparing it to transactional leadership. Moreover, visionary leadership which is the focus of this research has been introduced as the type of transformational leadership. Follower's centric concepts related to visionary leadership have been identified as key themes in the theoretical framework section. Further chapters will constitute the methodology of the research, data analysis, and identification of main themes that comes from primary data, findings, discussion, implications, and recommendations of future research.

1.7 Delimitation of the scope and key assumptions

This research is limited to the scope of follower-centric studies and only discusses the processes and integration of visionary leadership in followers. Leadership vision formation is out of scope and is not included in the study. Inclusion of leadership vision will take this thesis to the route into the fields of psychology which is not the aim of this thesis and therefore is out of the scope of management studies and business domains in large. An industry context has been chosen to study the perception of followers about visionary leadership which is retail, and other industries for example FMCG, automobile, oil, and aircraft are out of scope of this study. Although visionary leadership is found in all situations with all companies and industries It is assumed that the application of visionary leadership and its acceptance in the retail industry is evident by considering the examples of large retail companies like Aldi and Sainsbury in UK.

The research also assumed that there is the significant importance of followers in the leadership theories as without followers the leader alone cannot fulfil the dream and the vision of the company. This is the reason that compelling and strong management leadership is required. Further to this within business leadership, the other functions of a business are excluded, and the retail customer-facing functions are included in this research. This is because of the assumption that organizational changes are more likely to happen in the retail function therefore application and presence of visionary leadership can be traced in this department as compared to others.

1.8 Chapter summary

This chapter presented with the research questions, aims, and objectives of the research. Two main research questions were established with the breakdown of 6 research aims that help to find out the answer to the main research questions. The research aims are specific and targeted towards the main research questions and the objectives that are guiding force and works more on a broad level. The chapter also highlights the importance of the follower perception of visionary leadership and its place in the leadership literature. The problem of managing the follower perception has been vital in terms of visionary leadership in theory and practice. The chapter also explicitly discussed the prime assumption of this study which is to focus on the followers only. This is reflected when drafting the research questions, aims, and objectives, where how followers' behaviour changes in reaction to the visionary leadership concepts like vision guidance and shared vision. The need for and importance of this research is also taken into consideration in this chapter which suggests that this research is essential and is a pioneering step in studying the follower's perception of visionary leadership. The details related to the skeleton and scope of the research thesis are also part of this chapter.

2. Literature review

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the aim is to present the existing research literature which relates to the current thesis. The chapter takes a funnel approach to the research topic which includes a broad area of leadership and narrows down to followers of visionary leadership. After leadership, the second topic includes transformational leadership. A comparison is presented between transactional and transformation leadership and further the relationship of visionary leadership with transformational has been discussed. This research is focused on retail managers as the leaders therefore research in the managers working as leaders is also part of the literature review to clarify the confusion that the managers in commercial organizations act as the leaders. As mentioned before in the first chapter that the current research is not about the leaders but takes followers in the central position, so theory related to followership is also presented. Visionary leadership is a twofold concept which means it can be studied from the leadership angle and followers' point of view. To understand the vision, it's important to take a view from the leadership perspective as the vision originates from the leaders. For this, first, the vision is defined and then the visionary leadership is co-related with the other concepts like strategic management and innovation. This research also considers the application of visionary leadership into commercial organizations and businesses and research related to this is being discussed to give the reader a flavor of the importance of vision in the businesses like retail. Finally, the emotions and personalities of the leaders affect the follower perception is taken into the discussion and how it is related to the current research.

Progressing the work in 1978 by James Macgregor Burns and Dr. Bernard Bass on transformational leadership, the researchers diverted their attention towards visionary leadership which is a form of transformational but futuristic. The leaders' perceptions of followers include charisma, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation (Boas Shamir, Robert J. House, Michael B. Arthur, 1993). Visionary leadership is an important factor at all levels of the organization. It works at both the micro/individual level, and also at the macro/organizational, and societal level (Harper, 2001). At the individual level, follower perception about visionary leadership carries a key position in following the leader. Thus, it is important to understand the factors that play role in managing the followers' perception of visionary leadership (Michelle Vondey, 2008). Among these factors, vision guidance and intellectual ability are of paramount weightage that shapes this perception and affect the development and performance of followers. To impart knowledge of these factors, leaders rely on

communication and integration with the followers. These concepts resisted first but then gradually transmit into followers' minds to accept the change as the adoption of a new phenomenon. The followers' perception and its management by leaders is the key general focus of this research and the relationship among the constructs that affect perception and integration is a unique selling point of this thesis. Based on the theoretical framework presented in the subsequent sections, propositions have been formulated. These propositions then relate to each theoretical framework construct considering the research conducted in the same area. The theoretical concepts have roots coming from both vision and followership theory that highlights the link between these concepts and the research questions posed in this research.

2.2 Emergence of leadership

Leadership is associated with an electrifying analysis of literature and attracts a good deal of interest among academics and practitioners (Yukl, 2002). Burns (1978) said: 'Leadership is uncertain, ambiguous and least understood phenomena'. Leadership effort covers several civilizations, and it's a current active inquiry of research. The discussion of leadership originated by Machiavelli philosopher in the sixteenth century. However, the analysis of leadership is taken up by Max Weber within the early last century. Since Weber, analysis on leadership has developed additional uniformity of theoretical views (Bass,1990; Yukl,2002). In the twentieth century, the study of leadership began to focus on leader effectiveness (Yukl, 2002). Leadership has been studied under the broad headings of traits, influence, interaction patterns, role relationships (Yukl, 2002). It starts with the personality era in the 1920s and still active with the current transformational era of the 1990s. This thesis research belongs to the latest era of the 1990s as visionary leadership advocates the transformation of leaders and followers.

There are different epistemological opinions to the way researchers examine leadership. These positions guide the current research just like it informs others at the start of their studies. It also advises the researcher about the branch of knowledge leadership belongs to. These branches are subjects of psychology and discipline within management. The current research considers the leadership to consider under the management as it studies the visionary leadership in terms of commercial organizations. It applies vision and leadership to the retail context of the UK. There are different perspectives and views about management leadership which are summarised in table 2 and how it relates to the current research of the thesis.

Author	Perspectives and views of leadership in management
Bass,1990	Within management, leadership is considered the most essential factor of the success or failure of commercial organizations. Current research emphasizes a similar position of the role of visionary leadership in determining the success of commercial organizations for instance retailers.
Peter Drucker-father of modern management	In the leadership process, a leader forms a group to pursue the goals established. Current research is focused on the vision which constitutes leadership objectives and goals.
Kruger (2005)	Management leadership is the human factor that leads an organization towards the achievement of goals through the voluntary cooperation of all people in the business. Current research also studies followers/people who are essential in the achievement of the vision.
Kotter (2010)	The purpose of leadership is to produce change and movement in people's behaviour and conduct. Current research is in line with this view as visionary leadership is also about injecting change and transformation in followers through vision.

Table 1: Perspectives and views of leadership in management

These perspectives in Table 2 suggests that leadership or leaders deal with people and their conduct, which then naturally progresses into the investigation of what makes some people leaders, and other followers and some are just managers and others are leaders.

2.2.1 Distinguishing leadership from management: managing to lead

Locke (2002) takes up leadership as 'the process of urging others to take action towards a common aim'. Leadership is hence relationship-based. It includes followers and it is the process in which a leader does something that persuades others to act. Therefore, leadership has appeared as a practice different, not essentially mutually exclusive from management. Zaleznik, (2005) argues that the difference between managers and leaders in the conceptions of and how they respond to 'chaos and order': managers grip process, seek stability, and

control, and intuitively try to resolve problems quickly, whereas leaders stand chaos and lack of structure.

Locke, (2002) implied that the leader determines vision and strategy while the manager implements the vision and achieves the goals set by the leader. Leaders deals with 'creating a vision while managers will 'develop a plan'. Effective leaders must be able to influence and guide using vision and direction. Personal attributes associated with leadership, such as creativity and visionary, are the 'added value' that leadership brings to management (Adair, 2004).

The current research is on managers and looking at them as the leaders of the business. More often the concept of visionary leadership goes with the leaders, and little is known about how the vision is used by the managers which is the focus of this research. Visionary management is the use of intuition, which is unconscious pattern recognition. This pattern needs to be based on high-quality information and disciplined imagination as opposed to wishful thinking (Millett, 2011). For this research in the context of retail business, quality information is provided to the followers in terms of product inventory situation from a handheld computer device in the supply chain and on the shelves of the retailers. Scenarios of business and managers' intuition are related to each other. Managers are familiar with the mechanics of generating scenarios as alternative views of the future. The structure of scenarios must provide a logical framework for integrating the trends and their possible outcomes. Of course, scenarios can give dimensions and narrative coherence to well-considered expectations for the future. Therefore, visionary managers see the intricate patterns of trends and the possible outcomes. Saloner & Rotemberg, (2000) concludes that from these depictions, managers can interpolate strategies for achieving those futures and develop plans to move from the present to the desired future which is also true for visionary leadership.

A push towards transformational leadership is essential here for this research. This is because of its direct relationship with visionary leadership and the nature of change in the organization. The readers on many occasions confuse the concept and are unable to make a differentiation between the transformation and transactional leadership thus it's necessary that a clear understanding should be introduced to the readers of this research. Also, the other reason for taking up transformational leadership is its recent place in the chronological order of the leadership theories and styles. Within this order, different situations demand different leadership theories, and the same rule applies to transformational leadership which changes according to the type of management change the organization. To understand visionary leadership, clarity of the transformational approach is a prerequisite as many of its characteristics are being used by visionary leadership.

2.3 Transformational leadership

Transformational leadership explains engagement with the followers to create a connection that enhances their motivation and morality (Northouse, 2010). The theory was first coined by Downtown, (1973), then it was further explained by Burns, (1978) comparing it to 'transactional leadership' where leadership is driven by the prospect of a reward. Transformational profit from followers' intrinsic motivation and their desire to do what is perceived right. Later, Bass (1998, 1999) attempted to explain that the effect of transformation on the follower is multi-fold: followers can act on the importance of subordination of individual interests to the larger cause. The larger cause is also true for the visionary leadership style and the followers can connect their respective work to the big picture (vision) of the organization.

The transformational model inspires the followers about the leadership. The transformational leader brings change, who thinks beyond the conventional bounds of the immediate situation and identifies opportunities for growth and increased effectiveness (Maurik, 2001). Dulewicz and Higgs, (2005) describe the transformational model as the 'dominant approach to studying leadership and in line with this approach and the trend, the current research on visionary leadership has been initiated. Recent research conducted by Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe, (2005) reports a new pattern in transformational leadership that focuses on the development of the individual. This pattern also supports this thesis research and argues that vision guidance allows followers to develop and progress within the organization.

There is a difference between transforming and transactional leadership, but researchers and readers confused the concept and striking contrast between the two. Transforming leadership can be better defined when compared with transactional leadership. Burns (1978) introduced transforming leadership on political leaders, but it is now used in organizational psychology also. It changes the perceptions and values and changes the expectations and aspirations of employees. Whereas the transactional approach is based on a "give and take" relationship. Transactional leaders usually do not call for cultural change in the organization. Making a comparison between transactional and transforming leadership styles it can be said that in transformation the leaders and followers are much closer and there is an emotional bond that takes the approach beyond personal gains and commercial relationships between the two.

Extending the previous concepts of Burn (1978), Bass (1998) introduced a new way of looking into transformational leadership and suggests that "transformational" is a better term than "transforming" as it helps to explain how it impacts follower motivation and performance which is also the focus of the current research. It takes the approach of establishing that how the motivation elevate the perception of the followers in visionary leadership. Transformational

leadership and its effect can be better understood through the influence and perception of followers. Transformational leadership provides followers with an inspiring mission and vision and gives them an identity that is in line with this research focus on visionary leadership.

Michele McDonough, (2010) discussed the full range of leadership by introducing four elements of transformational leadership which are targeted to the followers to strengthen the bond between the leaders and followers. The first one is the individualized consideration for followers, which means that leaders provide empathy, support, and an open communication channel with followers and motivate them by placing challenges, celebrating the follower's contribution that each follower makes to the team. The second is intellectual stimulation for followers which means leaders stress creativity in followers, and they take learning as a value-driven activity and unexpected situations are seen as opportunities. In reaction, the followers ask questions, think deeply about things, and come to a better way to execute tasks. The third is inspirational motivation in which followers have a strong sense of purpose and communicate optimism for future goals. The fourth is the idealized influence which reflects high ethical behaviour, pride, and gaining of respect and trust. The four elements tend to be found in visionary leadership also which is not only the focus of this thesis but also will be discussed in more detail in the next section of this chapter. Intellectual stimulation and visionary leadership also take followers into creativity path of their respective jobs. Visionary leadership is the inspirational motivation for the followers. This inspiration comes from seeing the vision of the leader which takes the followers into the future and becomes the cause of this inspiration.

2.4 Follower centric research

In the research and practice of leadership, it is often focused on the leader as a person or his/her behaviour, the role of followers is often neglected. So, one of the obvious questions to ask is why people follow. To answer this question, it is important to note that followers-focused perspectives involved visionary leaders creating a positive and inspirational vision of the future and conveying that vision in an engaging manner that attracts committed followers. These leaders foresee the need for meaning and purpose in followers and use that need to inspire followers to achieve more and to build better futures. In reaction, followers feel motivated by the vision and often feel a sense of solidarity within the group because of the common cause. Focusing on the followers also leads our research to the shared vision which is only possible with the followers and as mentioned above that alone vision without followers will be of no value. This will allow us to say that follower perception has a special position in defining visionary leadership.

Leaders envisioned the future of the organization due to uncertainty and develop a course of action that will let followers to have a shared vision of the company. Thus, followers or team members of leadership must understand and develop agreeableness to the future path of the company (Schyns and Felfe, 2006). Having a vision is not important instead developing a consensus and acceptance with the follower is vital to visionary leadership. First leader sees the future of the company and then the same emotions have been communicated to the followers. This is the reason emotional expressivity and communication of vision play a vital role in achieving a combined or shared vision.

In literature, some studies provide insight into followers' and leaders' relationships. Some focused on follower-centered leadership whereas others highlight the leader-related constructs. Studies in the literature that discussed only the personality of a leader have a shortfall of researching in a tunnel without taking into consideration the other roles involved in the leadership. This is because the leadership process involves people and their interaction and dealing with the followers. Jick, (2001) also suggests the same point of view about the followers that vision contributes only 10%, and implementation is responsible for the rest. The implementation involved the communication, integration, and formation of shared vision with the followers and subordinates in case of a managerial situation. The leader and follower variables both are necessary for realizing a vision, motivation of staff, and vision guidance. Integration of vision is with the followers which makes it a follower's focused concept. The leaders need to have integration and communication with followers to direct them on the right path. How this integration happened is the question taken up in the separate section of integration and communication. One of the reasons that the emotions of the leaders have not been considered in the theoretical framework of this research is the more important position of integration in the relationship to the perception of visionary leadership. Integration is more related to the followers than the emotions. There is a more important position of integration in the follower's centric research. This is the reason that this research focused on the follower perception of visionary leadership and assumed the importance of the followers in the leadership process and approaches.

2.4.1 Follower's role

With role-based perspectives, it is considered that how followers take leadership and followership in the context of ranked roles which is the focus of this research. The researchers are interested in role-based approaches because of advancing understanding of how followers (e.g., subordinates) work with leaders (e.g., managers) in ways that add to leadership literature. When talking about leadership behaviour the most traditional form is the obedient and regardful subordinate (Zaleznik, 2002). But due to the dynamism of the workplace, as well

as a shift from production economies to knowledge economies, resistance and proactive behaviours in followers has been taken up by the researchers as the new direction of leadership and followership research. This new direction calls for an improved role of followers and resulted in more power transferred from leader.

2.4.1.1 *Resistance behaviours*

Resisting behaviour of followers in dealing with the leaders is a common method of interactions between the two. For the current research relevance, this resistance works behind the motive of accepting the follower's point of view and feedback into the leadership positions. Research on follower resistance is a recent effort by Tepper et al., (2001, 2006). The author asked the question of how subordinates will respond to abuse from their supervisors by focusing the investigation on two types of resistance behaviors: constructive and dysfunctional. Constructive resistance is carefully planned dialog with the supervisor (e.g., to negotiate) where dysfunctional resistance involves passive-aggressive responses. The key question for current research in terms of the follower's role as resisting behaviour is when accepting the vision of the leadership, which type of resistance being adopted by the follower. As visionary leadership is constructive and positive initiative, the most appropriate choice of followers' role would be that of constructive resistance with the leaders. This can be counter-checked through this research focusing on the retail context.

2.4.1.2 *Proactive behaviours*

Grant & Ashford, (2008) suggests that proactive behaviour is about the pre-emptive action of followers to impact themselves, the environment, and their leaders. This proactive followership behaviour formed in hierarchical relationships with leaders which can be found in commercial organizations like retail. The key questions are that how employees engage in this behaviour concerning leaders and what is the reaction of leaders from this behaviour. These followers' roles have been discussed in this literature review because of their relevance with the research objectives in terms of the sharing of vision with followers. When the leaders share the vision with the followers, or the followers integrate with the leadership vision, the behaviours of the followers are that of negotiators, being proactive and involvement in advance work. This is due to the futuristic nature of visionary leadership that the followers show proactivity in their behaviours. To work on the vision of the leaders and resist with the leaders with constructive resistance to arrive at the mutually agreed vision, it takes into accounts the interest of both the leaders and followers.

2.4.2 Why follower's perception is important

Followers' images and stereotypes of leaders can lead to how we see leaders. For example, charismatic leadership and the perception of being a leader go hand in hand. This thinking shifts the focus from the leader to the follower and makes the leadership position less important in the leadership process than the perception of a leader by the followers. If the followers decide to perceive the leader as not leader like, then the leader is unable to exert influence over his followers (Černe, Dimovski, Marič, Penger, & Škerlavaj, 2014)

Moreover, stressing the follower research within leadership, Michelle Vondey, (2008) in its study focused on followers by relating it with the organizational citizenship behaviour. The purpose of this research was to suggest a model that creates the discussion of follower-centered leadership and the effect that follower self-concepts and self-determination have on follower behaviour. These self-concepts and determination have a relationship with the vision integration, and it can be implied that the higher the determination of followers, the higher the integration of leaders with the followers.

2.5 Visionary leadership

The visionary leadership is as old as the year 1990 and has connections to the education sector and political science and now applies to the corporate sector (McLarney & Rhyno, 1999). There are many perspectives on visionary leadership but the key thinking and thoughts about this leadership style are summarised in table 3. These perspectives advocate that vision start with the leadership and result in the motivation of the followers. It also suggests that visionary leadership is a type of transformative and power-based inspiration for the followers and provides security and only works when properly shared and communicated.

Author	Perspectives of visionary leadership
Bennis (2008)	Leaders create the vision and turn that vision into reality.
White and Hodgson, (2002)	Leaders ensure that their followers are highly motivated and flexible to achieve the vision
Kahan (2002)	Transformative and power-based inspiration for the followers increases the performance

Westley and Mintzberg (2002)	Dynamic, three stages- One, the vision of the desired future of the organization. Two the vision should be shared and served. Third, every follower is aware of the vision and has the flexibility and initiative to act on it collectively.
Starratt (2011)	Provide a sense of security to the followers and the leaders know that one day the dream will come true
Green (2006)	Show characteristics of charismatic leadership

Table 2: Different perspectives and views on visionary leadership

2.5.1 Vision

Vision can be defined in terms of a mental image or picture, a future orientation, and aspects of direction or goal. It serves as *"a signpost pointing the way for all who need to understand what the organization is and where it intends to go"* (Nanus,2001). Bennis and Nanus & W & B, (1997) explained vision as *"goal-oriented mental construct that guides people's behavior"* Vision by Manasse (2000) as *"the force which molds meaning for the people of an organization"* Nanus (2001) maintains that the "right vision" has five characteristics: it attracts commitment and energizes people, creates meaning in workers' lives, establishes a standard of excellence, bridges the present to the future, and transcends the status quo.

For the requirement of this thesis the vision of leaders which will be the key focus of the discussions only deals with the commercial organization and companies. Vision guidance leads followers and leadership to direct about what core to preserve and what future to stimulate progress toward. Collins and Porras, (2004) suggested that vision and leadership can be understood as vision is at the very core of leadership. Vision is the fuel that leaders run on. It's the energy that creates action. This is the reason that the leadership vision becomes the company vision when the followers are a part of it and thus it is said to be the vision of the company in the corporate world. Thus, visionary leaders must include followers in the process of developing the vision. It's the extension of thinking from the individual level to the organizational and societal level. Here leaders and management started to think like an organization.

Understanding the vision, it is also important to shed light on the individuals who are considered to be visionaries and have characteristics that make them different from others and thus called visionaries. This is vital as these will be considered as the factors and variables of visionary leadership that influence the perception of followers. Here the point to be noted is

that these variables and constructs can be taken as relating to the trait theory of leadership and sometimes studied as the skills and leaders' personality concepts.

2.5.2 Skills of visionary leadership in the strategic context

McLarney & Rhyno, (2001) suggest that to have integration and sharing of vision with followers, visionary leaders share and express the organization's mission and goals (vision) easily and simply so that everybody can understand. This simplicity and easily understood way of sharing a vision with followers is also reinforced by Kotter (2010) and it is suggested that the leadership share vision to develop clarity, flexibility, and focus on the organization which is one of the functions of visionary leadership. It is used as a powerful strategic device for organizational growth.

Riggs, (2004) & Nanus, (2005) draw our attention to the skills of a visionary leader and categorize them according to the benefit it reflects within the organization. First, the authors by defining the nature of visionary leadership mentions that it is direction-centered (strategic) that it becomes a guidance tool to the followers as it is future-oriented. Secondly, visionary leadership act as the strategic change agent that is challenging the status quo, and streams new energy into followers and members of the organization. In this, the leaders not only shift thinking from traditional leadership style but also provoke the followers to do the same which creates meaning in worker lives. Visionary leadership also signals towards visualizing the future of the firm and organization as an activity of standard of excellence (Nanus, 2005). Also, visionary leaders are not only change agent but also perfect spokesperson that uses skills to communicate the vision to the rest of the organization and at the same time act as a coach for the followers and all this attracts follower's commitment and energizes them to achieve the shared vision and be collectivist for a common objective. These skills of visionary leadership equip the leaders with working at the top of the organization and leading the firm's objectives with style and strategy coupled together (Mintzberg et al., 2004). From vision to visionary leadership involves the creation of the envisioned future and working on the strategic direction and planning (Kakabadse et.al, 2005). Strongly co-related is the visionary leadership as innovation with the strategic direction or the top-level steering of the company. Today major big multinational corporations have a vision as the important strategic tool for future planning and is the key guiding force for shaping the company's business objectives (Westley & Mintzberg, 1989). The current thesis research has a similar emphasis as it relates the vision with the business performance and strengthened the previous steps in vision research. It can be implied that visionary leadership can be applied and exist at different levels of the organization and not just at the top of management.

2.5.3 Visionary leadership and innovation

Innovation is vital to a business and to remain successful a business must continually grow, improve, and find new ways to achieve goals. Visionary leaders thrive on innovation and change to reach these goals. The leaders appreciate creative thinking and problem-solving skills in employees. A visionary leader embraces change and views the use of new ideas and processes as progress. In line with the concept of going hand in hand with visionary leadership and innovation Tellis and Golder (2001) suggested that visionary leadership requires more than technological change (innovation). What it demands is the commitment to create a future. It also takes strategic direction by company leaders to achieve long-term firm survival and success. Thus, integration of vision with followers is important in the context of visionary leadership and innovation. This integration from the leaders to the follower is critical for conveying the new ideas and processes. The diffusion of new ideas is carried out in stages starting from innovators and laggards and this idea has been discussed in more detail in the later section of the literature review. Based on Over 300 samples of company, Tellis and Golder (2001) demonstrate that vision of the leader has put an impact on radical innovation.

2.5.4 Visionary leadership in business and commercial organization

While every visionary business leader manages differently, many of these leaders share a few common characteristics. These characteristics by Calia Roberts, (2015) are particular to the business organization and if applied will lead to fruitful results in terms of attainment of business and commercial objectives of the firm. It is important to understand that what visionary leaders do makes them apart from others and provides them a competitive advantage over their peers and followers. Among these characteristics, one is organized learning which motivates the leaders and finds compelling when they find the same trait in the followers. This thinking results in highly skilled and knowledgeable followers all contributing to the success of the organization. The second is building relationships with fellow members of the organization. This will involve respect, team spirit, and learning. The third characteristic of visionary leadership for business firms is pioneering which is setting an example of doing first and believing in innovation and pioneering spirit. This spirit can be found both in attitude and inaction and provides a first-mover advantage to visionary leadership. The importance of the team and subordinates holds the same value as the followers of any leader. When it comes to the team of the leader then we must consider talking about the integration of vision with the followers. As one of the key characteristics of visionary leadership in the business context is building relationships therefore it involves the integration of the vision or plans of the company.

This led us to say that follower-centric research has a prime position in the business world as well and business performance has the relation with the vision discussed in the coming paragraphs.

Jing et al., (2014) worked on the relationship of vision effects on performance particularly in the service industry using five measures: financial assessments, employee and customer satisfaction, productivity, and staff retention. The authors found in the study that organizations whose managers communicate the vision to staff, and whose employees share this vision outperform their peers across all business indicators and retain their employees longer. In these service firms, financial performance and productivity were higher because of the vision. A more focused study by Liu, (2006) on service organizations where the vision is about providing superior customer service to the customers and is used as the competitive advantage. This study contributes towards the vision theory and finds that vision must exert influence on the job satisfaction and service effort of employees. Similar findings from Kantabutra and Avery, (2007) indicate that customer satisfaction to be the main part of the leadership vision. Overall customer and staff satisfaction, and stores with a vision were associated with one another (Kantabutra & Avery, 2011b). Continuing the same research in vision theory Kantabutra, (2011) also examined relationships between followers' shared visions and their emotional commitment to the vision and relates it with customer and employee satisfaction. It was found by the author that all were directly associated with customer and employee satisfaction. Emotions and vision commitment is discussed in the next section in detail.

2.5.5 Emotions and vision commitment

Dulewicz & Higgs, (2005) noted the growing significance of emotional intelligence when considering the future study of visionary leadership. As the vision constitutes the leader's emotional content it is critical that the expression of emotions creates change within the organization. Groves, (2006) confirmed the same relationship between visionary leadership and organizational change magnitude which vary depending on the level of leadership emotional expressivity. It is inferred from the study that for visionary leadership-organizational change relationships will be stronger in conditions of high leader emotional expressivity compared to low leader emotional expressivity. It was also found that visionary leadership is positively related to followers' rating of leadership effectiveness. This could lead to developing a bond of emotions and collective commitment to form a single vision. The emotions not only facilitate the formation of commitment but also its expressivity becomes the bridge between the followers and leaders.

The vision can be categorised into the vision and the non-vision part which can be seen as emotion-focused and cognitive focused respectively. When involving followers this becomes the commitment with the followers in terms of emotions (visionary leadership) and non-visionary (cognitive commitment). Dvir, Kass and Shamir, (2004) tested the same relationships of vision to the emotion-focused affective commitment (AC) versus the cognition-focused continuance commitment (CC) to the organization. From this study, it can be found that it was leading to say that social-oriented values are positively related to AC. The emotional commitment is due to the vision from the leadership side but is a two-way street both involving the followers and leaders. If the leaders with a vision for the future are not only expressive but also emotionally show more intelligence to the members of the organization then transmission of vision is very much possible. Kantabutra and Avery, (2006) findings compliment the importance of vision guidance and emotional commitment to a vision. The study shed light on the relationship of vision guidance with emotional commitment. The present thesis also takes vision guidance but explores its connections with the integration and perception of the vision with followers.

Emotional commitment is with the followers or members of the organization whereas EI (emotional intelligence) is associated with the leaders' emotional ability to communicate change and vision to the organization. Thus, having a leadership vision is part intelligence but the full can be achieved when it penetrates within the organization. Smollan and Parry, (2011) seek to answer how employees' perceptions of the EI of change leaders' impudence their own cognitive, affective, and behavioural reactions. It is apparent that during organizational change there is a great need for vision guidance and emotional commitment to the vision of the organization. These two play an enormous role in achieving the vision.

2.5.6 Personality of leaders and followers

To fully understand the follower's and leaders' sides of visionary leadership it is important to do an in-depth analysis of the general personalities and how this impacts the integration of this vision. Personalities could be of two types either one which rejects and cause resistance to the visionary leadership or the other one which accepts it. This will also relate with the followership theory where the different role of followers was discussed in the previous section of this literature review. To have an obstacle-free adoption of visionary leadership it is worth studying the type of personalities of followers and leaders that promotes the acceptance.

It can be inferred from the literature that the personality traits of the followers and as well as leaders affect the perception of visionary leadership. These personality traits could be self-esteem and the skill of delivering and motivating followers with the help of leader's speech. It

appears that leaders and followers who show emotional commitment in their speeches show high self-esteem in achieving higher organizational performance and a higher perception of visionary leadership. Sidani, (2007) in his study found two personality attributes related to the leader that is speech and self-esteem with followers. These are considered to determine the perception of visionary leadership. It is found from this study, through empirical testing, that there is a significant relationship between transformational leadership and follower self-esteem.

It is implied that extroverted followers commonly have high self-esteem and the leaders' speech has a positive effect on these types of followers. The personality perspectives are important to study in terms of visionary leadership but when comparing these with the vision guidance and integration it can be noted that these factors have a more direct and amplified impact on the followers' perception of visionary leadership. Vision guidance changes the thinking style of the followers which allows them to relate the present state of the organization with the future possibilities.

Schyns and Felfe (2006) focused on the personality of followers and how this affects the perception of leadership. It is found that extraversion and agreeableness are related to the perception of transformational leadership. This implies that the new vision is subject to the degree of agreement of followers with the leadership. It can be inferred that followers that are homogenous in personality perceive a higher degree of transformational/visionary leadership. The authors suggested that there is a positive relationship (for extraversion, openness, agreeableness, diligence, and honesty-humility) and a negative relationship (for neuroticism) between the personality characteristics and the perception of transformational leadership. If the followers agree with leaders and show the behaviour of extroverts rather than introvert, then organizational change is predictable. Followers that are high on extraversion and leaders that are high on emotional expressivity of the vision will lead to organizational change. In this way, the followers carry a high perception of visionary leadership and less resistance to organizational change. This acceptance of vision in followers is smooth for followers who show a high level of extraversion and agreeableness. This means the openness and honesty personality traits moderate the relationship between extraversion and visionary leadership. The relationship between followers and leaders is affected by the personality traits of followers.

Schyns and Felfe (2006) examined the followers but ignores the positive themes of visionary leadership which are shared vision and vision guidance. Although this research considers the general effect of leadership on the followers' personality but hardly relates this to visionary leadership concepts like integration and vision guidance which are branded concepts to

visionary leadership. This is the reason that in this Ph.D. research effect of visionary constructs on the follower perception will be studied.

2.5.7 Visionary leadership in retail organizations

Visionary leadership is not only limited to big corporations and companies and industries. Plenty of examples can be seen from the retail industry at a much lower level of management for example store or retail manager vision for the outlet. Kantabutra and Vimolratana (2010) studied relationships between store managers' passion for the vision and the motivation of staff. The research made links of use of vision among staff and customer satisfaction in Australian apparel retail stores. It was found by the authors that stores with vision have higher staff satisfaction and more frequent use of vision among staff. Store manager passion directly predicts an increase and decrease in the motivational level of staff. The motivation of staff directly predicts enhanced staff satisfaction, while the use of vision among staff directly predicts improved staff and customer satisfaction. This means that vision is not something away from real-life business-oriented problems but does have direct links with business performance. It can be said from this study that the vision in leaders can lead to a positive impact on the motivation of staff which then can affect customer satisfaction and improve the business performance like repeat purchases by the customers. Having a vision for retail can lead to positive outcomes for the perception of visionary leadership. It is implied from Kantabutra, (2008, 2010) research that the justification of choosing the retail organizations for the study of visionary leadership is having a common and vital place of customers in the heart of the vision and retail business.

One of the drawbacks of this research is that it made the connection between the vision and satisfied customers and subordinates but unable to answer the question that how vision changes the perception of followers which could be informing integration and having a shared vision with the followers. These are the questions or the missing information that will be answered by this Ph.D. thesis. Also, this current research is unable to categorically explain that how it develops followers in terms of their intellectual ability through vision sharing.

2.6 Propositions and theoretical framework development

Following are the propositions that this research makes to find support or alternative perspective through qualitative data. In the following sections, first the research has been summarized in each construct of the theoretical framework, and then the proposition related to visionary leadership is linked to the discussion.

2.6.1 Proposition 1:

It is proposed that there is a link between shared vision and integration with followers. Integrated followers influence the formation of shared vision.

2.6.2 Proposition 2:

It is proposed that shared vision vertical flow in the hierarchy of the organization is associated with the empowering leadership behaviours in followers.

2.6.3 Proposition 3:

Shared vision caused vision guidance to form a collectivist leadership. The more it is shared the better it improves vision guidance.

2.6.4 Proposition 4:

Followers' perception of visionary leadership is solved by the interconnections between shared vision, vision guidance and integration of vision with the followers.

2.6.5 Proposition 5:

Follower's intellectual competency prevents or facilitates the perception of visionary leadership

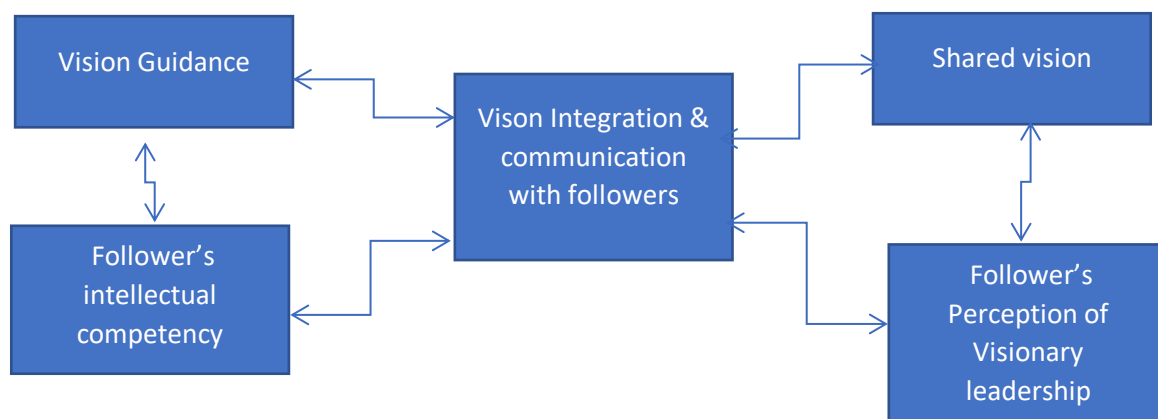


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework-Vision and followership theory

Main research questions: How do followers of visionary leadership by using vision guidance and intellectual ability integrate into a vision that facilitates the formation of shared vision and followers' perception? How these mutually inclusive interconnections develop and cause a whole readiness in the followers to prepare for the organizational change.

2.7 Vision Guidance

When discussing the vision guidance and its importance for the role of followers in the visionary leadership process the organizational performance variables carry key positioning (Avery, 2004; Daft, 2018; Kantabutra, 2009). Leaders and as well as followers need to be proactive and believe in advance working for the future of business. This is only possible when followers are guided by the vision (Daft, 2018; Kantabutra, 2009). The followers' mindfulness and inclination to act make them more visionary (Daft, 2018). In process of vision guidance followers work more broadly in terms of accepting the responsibility, fulfilling the needs of the organization, and take part in change (Chaleff, 2009). One function of vision guidance is therefore to facilitate decision-making and initiative at all levels of the organization (Kantabutra, 2009; Yukl, 2002). Kantabutra's vision theory (2009) also suggests that the vision guidance can satisfy to all organizational interests. When vision guidance is used by followers as the benefit of shared vision then it can impact individual and collective performance. By vision guidance, organizations stimulate progression and development in their people and provide meaningful existence for followers (Kantabutra & Avery, 2004). Vision guidance in this study is defined as the extent to which employees/followers use their store manager's/leader's vision to guide their daily operations. This guidance promotes shared vision and according to Kantabutra it helps in forming the collectivist thinking in followers. The discussion and views of different authors about vision guidance above can lead us to proposition 3.

Proposition 3: Shared vision caused vision guidance to form a collectivist leadership. The more it is shared the better it improves vision guidance.

2.8 Shared vision

Humphreys, Korotov, & Guillén Ramo, (2017) studied the charismatic leaders and how their traits affect the follower's behaviour in accepting the vision. More particularly the authors argue that followers are more likely to share the vision of the leaders in the event of the negative behaviour of leaders and consider this as less important. This implies that the effect of charismatic leaders on the followers is so profound that it neutralizes other negative personality traits of the leaders. This research can also help the current question of the thesis that how followers share the vision but are different in a view that the current research is more focused on the relationship of the shared vision with the follower perception which is charismatic. How the vision is shared in retail organizations is likely to have a similar effect on charismatic leadership like it does on visionary leadership. It's more likely to say that the negative behavior of the visionary leader can be ignored when sharing the vision.

Eldor, (2020) is in favor of discussing about collective engagement that can produce unique value creation by linking the shared vision and service performance that becomes a competitive advantage for the firms. This advantage is difficult to copy for the competitors as it is embedded in a shared vision. The authors carry out their study about shared vision in 198 retail service branches and the findings suggest that collective engagement of employees when shared with the vision improves service performance. The author also finds that the effect of shared vision on service quality is indirect and is the result of collective engagement only, excluding other mechanisms. The present research thesis also argues in the same direction that how shared vision influences the organizational performance indicators like service and customer satisfaction in the context of large retail businesses of the UK. But it differentiates to address the gap in the context of leader and follower relationship for shaping the perception and integration. The present research advocates that shared vision affects the followers' perception of visionary leadership which plays a part in sharing the vision. This research also identifies other mechanisms of a shared vision by which the followers agree to make improvements in the business performance indicators of the retail organizations.

Sergiovanni (1990) described shared vision as "bonding". In this, the leader, and followers bond them together in a common cause. The laborious efforts of followers of an organization increase the prospects of the vision's achievement. These efforts come in the shape of the engaging role of the followers which suggests that without followers the vision can be formed but cannot be materialized with the help of followers as Nanus (1997) has put it

"A vision is little more than an empty dream until it is widely shared and accepted"

The vision starts with a leader's personal concept or a group's combine image of picture of the future and for sharing vision there must be a sense of ownership. Manasse, (1986) argue that the presence of personal vision on the part of a leader, shared with members of the organization, that may differentiate true leaders from mere managers. Sergiovanni, (1990) suggests that shared vision becomes a shared agreement that bonds together leader and follower in a moral commitment. Murphy (1988) argues that the development of shared vision is a must for an organization nowadays and he said that "It is rare to see a clearly defined vision articulated by a leader at the top of the hierarchy and then installed by followers." Therefore, to treat the shared vision as a priority within an organization there is a need for more research and reasoning in shared vision which clearly defines the vision at the top of the organization and then shared it with the followers. Stressing the value of shared vision Westley & Mintzberg (1989) also put it in this way that the vision comes alive only when it is shared. The author's work also implies it is important that vision should be formally developed by the leaders and also with the help of the followers and should adopt a particular approach.

In the first stage of formulating a vision, it is essential to understand everything about the organization as to how and why it exists, and this is according to Manasse's concept of organizational vision: a comprehensive picture of the existing system within its environment. She suggests that the second stage deals with how organizational vision involves a systems perspective to determine the components and how they are interrelated. Nanus (1997) suggests more into this when evaluating the organization for the vision formulation that it is necessary "the basic nature" of an organization can be defined and this can be done by determining its present purpose and its value to society.

A shared vision is essential for the development of an organization, and it gives energy and focus and as suggested by Senge. Berson, Waldman and Pearce (2016) in their research emphasized that leaders and followers together make a shared vision and offer a model that integrates the role of both parties in vision formation. By saying this, author exposed the relationship between the shared vision and the hierarchical leader's vision. The model also examined that both leader and follower-oriented processes and conditions facilitate the formation of shared vision. The authors emphasized that vision formation is a shared process in which followers take a robust and engaging role. This shared process calls for a deeper understanding of the organization which is advocated by Senge, (1994). Deeper understanding means the real reason of existence in which the leaders and as well as the followers together form the shared vision.

The integration between the followers and leaders is necessary for the formation of shared vision. Studies on this relationship are lacking in the literature and are the focus of the current research. Chi-hsiang, (2015) worked on the shared vision and integration within the firms and between the employees and departments. Outside the firms, it deals with integration between suppliers and customers. Findings indicated that the vision correlates positively with a shared vision and shared vision positively relates with the integration. The present thesis study is in the context of the leaders and followers and how their interaction influences the shared vision and integration. The vision integration externally with partner organizations is not in the scope of this thesis research but it considers the followers' experiences of shared vision and integration. It shed light on how these are related to each other which is also the focus of the research by Chi-hsiang, (2015). Therefore, based on the above discussion for retail context following is proposed about this link.

Proposition 1: It is proposed that there is a link between shared vision and integration with followers. Integrated followers influence the formation of shared vision.

As mentioned previously that the input from both sides of leaders and followers is the prerequisite of the process and this knowledge is scarce among researchers and managers.

Shared vision also has a relationship with the perception of visionary leadership. The perception changes with a change in the shared vision. The shared vision can also be compared with participatory management as the leaders share the vision with their followers to turn a dream into a reality (Nanus, 1997). The perception depends on the vision content from the leaders which ultimately causes a change in the shared vision.

Another way the shared vision process from leaders to followers is captured is through collectivism. It can be inferred from the extant literature that the higher the collectivism within the organization the better it provides a strong platform of spreading vision among the members. Margolis and Ziegert, (2016) explore the same connection between formal leaders and collective leadership in teams through the examination of how collective strategic vision flows downward in organizations. The study although diverting our attention of how the shared vision forms through water falling vision from the leaders to followers but is unable to make connection and role of vision guidance and integration in the shared vision and how this changes the perception of visionary leadership in the minds of the followers which ultimately develops the intellectual capabilities of followers. To understand how this pouring process operates, the authors proposed two key characteristics of supervisors: their job satisfaction and empowering leadership behaviours. The study found support for this connection in the teams within a large manufacturing company.

The commercial organization is driven by business-related success measures therefore the vision that comes from leadership in these companies is also shared with the followers in the same spirit. This means that the vision incorporates the contents of business objectives like attainment of sales and profitability through customer satisfaction and service. In this the leaders envisioned the future of the business in terms of planning, setting aims and goals, and then sharing it with the followers so they can secure the support to reach the vision of the organization. This is the reason that most of the research in the literature correlate the effect of the vision on the business and employee performance (Kantabutra & Avery, 2011) and there is a need for calling for more research in different industries with different methodologies (Qualitative) which is addressed through current research. Within commercial organizations, Strese, Keller, Flatten, & Brettel, (2018) work consider the leadership interest in radical innovations which is moderated by a shared vision. The findings suggest that leaders' passion for innovation is related to each other and the more the vision is shared with the members of a firm the more this relationship develops. The perception of leaders to be innovative is because of the shared vision as it suggests and guides the leaders and as well followers about which new product and service should be introduced in the market. The present research provides a more specific answer to questions related to the shared vision, followers'

perception, and trait of a visionary leader as an innovator. The research equates to the followers' thinking to see the leader as an innovator in the context of a shared vision. The current research thesis is comprehensive and answers the wider question of how to bring visionary change in the followers.

2.9 Integration and communication of vision

Integration of the vision between followers and leaders means total interconnectedness. Studies and research that found out the integration and formation of vision from leaders and followers are also a significant contribution to the leadership literature. It can be inferred from the literature that slow diffusion of a new idea can easily be accepted by the innovators and the laggards will be the last ones within the organization to step ahead to fully accept the vision of the company. The links of integration can be found in the shared vision and the collectivism of leadership with followers.

Kohles, Bligh and Carsten, (2013) found that both planned and spontaneous channels in which ideas are communicated and diffused throughout an organization are used that facilitates or hinder vision integration. The authors highlight that a new vision can be understood as an innovation, in which followers are actively involved in decisions adopting or rejecting change. Moreover, the authors suggest in future research, a balanced approach to vision integration that highlights both leader and follower roles is needed. The current research can be considered a balanced approach as it explores the new and retail-specific mechanisms of vision integration which can be further noticed in the chapter of findings of this thesis. In line with the vision integration and follower perception Slåtten, Mutonyi, & Lien, (2021) propose a study to examine factors associated with the integration of organizational vision among employees in hospital organizations. It was found that employees' perceptions of organizational attractiveness are directly and positively related to employees' organizational vision integration.

The diffusion of vision as the innovation gradually transmits into the organization and in its members whereas in other positions big changes like a crisis in the company also require visionary leadership. In this type of crisis handling leadership, leaders also get a chance to exhibit visionary leadership. The slow diffusion of innovation or vision into followers cannot be compared with the instant requirement of leadership in a crisis. The integration of visionary leadership is fast-up and declined process when considering crisis conditions. Hunt, Boal and Dodge (1999) argue the similar two types of charismatic leadership under crisis conditions—visionary and crisis-responsive. It is found that when the crisis condition is over then the effects of crisis-responsive leadership declined faster than other forms of charismatic leadership.

Kotter, (2010) discussed the visionary leadership process as transforming and creating a significant change in the organization which enables the integration of followers. Moreover, the author while defining the same highlighted that it is driven by the sense of urgency by the leader which leads to the development of vision and strategy for the business organization. It is also mentioned by the author that visionary leaders do their personal best to communicate and integrate the change vision and empower broad-based action through peers and followers. Luo, Li, Choi, & Du, (2020) findings suggest that the power distance orientation of followers had a limited moderating effect on the relationship between organizational citizenship behaviour and visionary leadership. In other words, it can be inferred that visionary leadership diffuses the power distance orientation of the followers. The more leaders share the vision of the organization with the followers the more they will hand over the power to the followers. This research finding also supports the research in vision integration where empowering broad-based actions in followers will help in vision integration but the counter-argument is that it will leave with a little power into the hands of the leader and more power to the followers. Predicting that visionary leaders who offer a change in the organization and try to influence the attitudes, perceptions and behaviors of the followers to adopt the vision throughout the organization, encourage empowerment in the leadership process Therefore

Proposition 2: It is proposed that shared vision vertical flow in the hierarchy of the organization is associated with the empowering leadership behaviours in followers.

This integration strategy of leaders generates short terms wins for followers and thus in this way they consolidate gains in producing more change and new approaches to culture. The communication and integration of vision are achieved through simplicity and repetition and using multiple forms that could reach a vast audience within the organization.

Stam, van Knippenberg and Wisse, (2010) focused on vision content and its communication which the authors suggested that it's important for leaders to move followers in direction of a changed vision. The authors here emphasized that just simple communication is not of prime use the concrete question is how and why vision communication influences followers. This is the research question that is considered in this thesis. In this study, it is focused that vision becomes the bridge of inviting followers to form ideal self which not only motivates them but also directs them into an organizational change. Thus, it is inferred from the study results that vision cause and reinforced followers for higher performance because of the ideal self and this also helps in the integration of the vision.

The above studies show that how communication and integration of vision cause a change in the leaders and followers but do not directly suggest that how this will affect the perception of

visionary leadership in followers which this research will address. The study relates the connection of ideal self and vision with the motivation of followers but is unable to identify the factors that lead to this ideal self which could be vision guidance. Also, the same critique applies to the research that considers vision as a diffusion of innovation. This study exposed how the vision transmits into followers as innovation but was unable to explore the question of why this vision is acceptable and agreeable for the followers. Perception and communication are related to each other. The perception of visionary leadership is formed through communication and the expressivity of vision. Higher the order of communication of vision by leaders the better it forms the perception of visionary leadership. But it's not necessary that the perception go hand in hand, and what must be communicated to the followers to have the desired perception of visionary leadership in followers. This thesis will address the relationship of integration and communication of vision with the followers along with the vision guidance and how this integration helps in forming the perception of visionary leadership. The literature lacks the relationship of the main themes of visionary leadership which includes the shared vision and how this is related to the integration and communication of vision.

Kohles et al., (2012) tested a model of the leader-follower communication processes involved in linking vision with follower work behaviors and decisions. The authors found that follower communication regarding vision is crucial and how the vision is understood and integrated by followers into work behaviors, and decisions significantly predict commitment, job satisfaction, and supervisory ratings of performance. The present thesis research also studies vision integration in the context of the retail business and confirms this relationship that vision integration affects the commitment and job satisfaction of the followers and further this research also investigates other ways of vision integration in the retail business.

2.10 Followers' perception of visionary leadership

There is a strong relationship between visionary leadership and vision content. The content is what constitutes the vision. The other leader's related factors that also have an impact on the acceptance of visionary leadership by followers include social acceptance of leaders, personal accountability, and the need for accumulation of people power. Chiu, Balkundi, & Weinberg, (2017) focused on the follower perception considering formal managers as the leaders and argue that both positive and negative social networks determine followers' perception of the leaders. The authors used social networks and social ledger theory with implicit leadership and proposed that leaders who have more positive advice ties and fewer negative avoidance ties are more likely to be recognized as leaders by their followers. The current research also argues that informal networks of leaders bring them greater social power which differentiates

them from leaders from managers. It was also found from this research that leaders who are considered to provide advice and consultation roles are socially powerful as compared to leaders who are avoided by followers, lack informal social power, and are not seen as leaders. All these factors moderate and affect the perception of visionary leadership between the followers and leaders. For example, a higher order of visionary leadership can lead to higher social acceptance.

Sosik and Dinger, (2007) studied the leaders' personal attributes, leadership style and vision content. This study focused on vision statements from the vision content and categorizes them into sections. These categories speak a lot about the nature of these leadership styles and discussed about how it is perceived by the followers. For example, the inspirational vision inspires and impresses the followers by the effects of charismatic leadership and contingent reward leadership. It is more of a proactive approach based on motivating the followers with incentives and was mostly positively associated with instrumental vision themes. In this leaders' need for social approval, self-monitoring, and need for social power act as the moderators. Continuing the research in the same direction of vision content Awamleh, (1999) studied the effects of vision content, delivery, and organizational performance on perceptions of leader charisma and effectiveness. This implies that leadership perception of higher effectiveness is influenced by the organizational performance and vision content. Lowe, Kroeck and Sivasubramaniam, (1996) also highlight the importance of leadership effectiveness and define it as a leader who articulates a vision with peers and subordinates and can intellectually stimulate followers, this also support the argument by Thuan, (2019). This leads us to say that it's a conscious effort by the leaders to involve its followers and subordinates in the communication of the vision to have a homogenous and combine one thinking of the organization. This will motivate and energize them to move in the new direction of vision or changed thinking.

Although speech content and organizational performance affect perceptions of visionary leadership but it is also impacted by the effects of delivery. With extensions of the same thought, it can be said that a higher level of organizational performance perceives as the high level of visionary leadership. It is suggested that through visionary leadership, companies achieve and operate with an increased level of firm effectiveness. M. Taylor, J. Cornelius and Colvin, (2014) worked on the relationship between visionary leadership and the perception of organizational effectiveness in non-profit organizations and found that visionary leaders with high leadership skills complement the highest perceived organizational effectiveness. The downside of the study is that it's leading research with pre assumptive results of the relationship between visionary leadership and perception of organizational effectiveness. A

high level of organizational effectiveness will lead to the follower perception of charismatic leadership which is at its peak in the period of organizational change or crisis conditions. Bryman, (1993) argued this as decaying of charismatic leadership by referring it to the routinization of charisma and ultimately loss of charisma. Charismatic leadership can be compared with the perception of authentic leadership, which is based on honesty, open communication, and transparency. Černe et al., (2014) proposed interactions between leaders' self-perceptions and follower perceptions of authentic leadership on job satisfaction. The author found the support of the interactions and confirmed that the similarity between leadership self-perceptions and follower perception of authentic leadership is beneficial, and both should be at high levels to benefit the follower's job satisfaction.

The effectiveness of visionary leadership and perception on followers are interlinked with each other and are both subject to the vision content. Higher effectiveness of leadership could lead to the enhanced perception of followers. The authors are not able to relate the reasons for higher effectiveness leadership which is the information gap for this research and will be addressed by current research. It can be proposed that better emotional management and vision guidance can be perceived as the higher effective leadership for followers. Instrumental and contributory vision themes belong to the categories of vision content. In these categories vision content related to the integration and vision guidance can also be treated as separate sections and the perception of visionary leadership changes according to the content of the vision. For example, perception changes for charismatic leadership in terms of the motivation of the followers which is also true for visionary leadership. So, it's a valid argument that for each category of the vision, the perception of followers also changes. Kelloway & Gilbert, (2018) conducted research on the assumption that the leaders have different levels of motivation which has different performances and leads to self-determination theory. It addresses the question of what motivates leaders to engage in transformational leadership behaviors. The findings of this study showed that how a leader's motivation relates to followers' perception and suggested that not all forms of motivation, but some forms are related to motivation. For example, autonomous levels of leader motivation are positively related to follower perception of leaders' active constructive leadership which is also a form of visionary leadership and negatively related to follower perception of a passive avoidant. The authors also presented evidence that how the self-determination of motivations of leaders predicts the follower perceptions. This study relates to the current research thesis in terms of the visionary leadership self-concepts and its effect on the follower perception. Visionary leadership is a type of constructive leadership as it brings positive change within the organization which allows us to say that it leaves a positive impact on the follower perception which is also advocated by the current research.

Muterera, Hemsworth, Baregheh, & Garcia-Rivera, (2018) seek and establish the relationship between leaders' and followers' perception of transformational leadership. The results found that there is a significant relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction and organizational performance in both models of leaders and followers. In the follower perception model the effect mediated by employee job satisfaction. Kammerhoff, Lauenstein, & Schütz, (2019) also worked on transformational leadership by confirming the negative effects of conflict on employee job satisfaction and performance. The authors found that transformational leadership has a strong positive relationship with both job satisfaction and performance and negative with the conflicts at the workplace.

Slåtten et al., (2021) argue about the perception of employees for organizational attractiveness and provide evidence that it is directly and positively related to employees' organizational vision integration. The author diverts the researcher's attention to the broad level perception of a wider concept of vision integration which is also the purpose of current research. The current research also presents the evidence of followers' perception relationship with the vision integration and explains how and why this relationship develops. Therefore, based on the cross relational research presented above the following can be proposed.

Proposition 4: Followers' perception of visionary leadership is solved by interconnections between shared vision, vision guidance and integration of vision with the followers.

2.11 Followers' intellectual competency

Intellectual competency for this research about visionary leadership can be defined as the follower's ability to understand wider business concepts and direction. Thuan, (2019) studied the relationship between leader intellectual stimulation and follower creativity and found a positive direct association between the two variables which implies that a higher degree of intellectual competency increases the follower performance. The focus of this research is also on the same direction of followers' intellectual competency and how it impacts the vision. Specifically, the question is how the followers use intellectual ability to understand the vision. This current research will also suggest that followers' intellectual competency has links with the follower's perception of visionary leadership, and it will uncover that how these two are connected or influences each other. Moreover, Thuan (2019) provides evidence that a leader's behavior has a partially indirect association with follower creativity through follower abilities and work characteristics. In the context of the current research question, it is implied that leader behaviour could be visionary and follower creativity is the change in the follower's mindset because of the vision sharing. Thus its fair to think the relationship of followers

perception and intellectual competency of follower and vision can be better digested by the followers with high intellectual competency. Therefore, it is proposed that

Proposition 5: Follower's intellectual competency prevents or facilitates the perception of visionary leadership

Linking the intellectual competency of followers and vision integration Slåtten et al., (2021) worked on like-minded objectives of this thesis by focusing on the employees' perspective of the vision. The findings indicated that the organizational vision integration among employees is directly and positively related to creative performance in their respective work roles. Creative performance can also be related to intellectual competency and high creative performance is due to the superior intellectual competency of the followers. The current research intends to prove this relationship again in the context of the retail setting and further answer the question that how this relationship develops.

2.12 Chapter Summary

As mentioned in the introduction that this chapter took a funnel approach starting from the broad area of research which is leadership and narrow it down to the research question and emphasised the research gap on many occasions of the literature review. It also relates the existing literature with the topic of research which is visionary leadership and its perception on followers. The chapter introduces the readers to the transformational approach of leadership and presents the contrast between this approach and transactional and relates this with the visionary leadership which is the focus of this research. It also assumes that readers are unaware of the basic concepts related to visionary leadership like vision and visionaries and the connection of visionary leadership with innovation. Readers are also introduced to the significance of focusing and studying this leadership style within the business and commercial organization. Also, clear exclusion has been made in terms of including the follower's centric research and within this, the factors of visionary leadership have been discussed after recognizing the importance of followers in the visionary leadership process. The chapter ends with linking the leadership with the context of the industry related to the retail industry by discussing the visionary leadership in the retail organization.

In all the sections of this chapter, an explicit and conscious effort has been to relate the given knowledge with the topic of the thesis and highlight the missing information that can be seen as the value addition by this research for future researchers. In doing this synthesis, summary and aggregation and disaggregation of themes allow the analysis to be comprehensive.

This chapter introduces the readers to the theoretical framework concepts of visionary leadership. It summarizes and critiques the research in each category of this framework. The relationship of this theoretical framework with the current research has also been discussed. The propositions for the current research are then presented which covers the categories of the theoretical framework. This framework of visionary leadership consists of the vision guidance, shared vision, followers' perception of the visionary leadership, intellectual competency, and vision integration. Each of these took its turn and discussed in detail the main argument of the researchers. The research questions are again put into context to relate them with the theoretical framework.

3. Research methodology

3.1 Introduction

In this methodology chapter, the aim is to describe the 'what', 'how' and 'why' of various components of this research project. It starts by identifying my epistemological position based on the research objectives. Next is the introduction of the qualitative methodology and explaining its benefits for the current research inquiry. I outline the complex processes related to participants, paying particular attention to the recruitment processes, the sample size, the inclusion and exclusion criteria, the selection process, and the demographics of the selected participants. Then, I discuss the data collection processes. A detailed account is provided of the process of choosing a method, creating a semi-structured interview schedule, and conducting the interviews. The data analysis section follows next, in which I discuss the thematic analysis and explain the six phases. I discuss the ethical considerations of this study. I reintroduce the two research questions that this study aims to answer:

Main research questions: How do followers of visionary leadership by using vision guidance and intellectual ability integrate into a vision that facilitates the formation of shared vision and followers' perception? How these mutually inclusive interconnections develop and cause a whole readiness in the followers to prepare for the organizational change.

3.2 Philosophical consideration

3.2.1 Ontology

This research is designed to capture and uncover the truth and facts about followers' perception and integration of visionary leadership. The research is focused on the thoughts and thinking process of subordinates (followers) rather than inanimate objects. This is the reason that ontology relevant to natural science, realism, and internal realism, can be ruled out for this research. Relativism and nominalism or in-between ontologies is a right fit for studying the respondents' perceptions and integration of visionary leadership. A realist view of followers' perceptions will assume that there is a single perception for example visionary leaders are charismatic. The internal realist will see the truth from many angles and assume that it lies beneath the surface reasons. Thus, charisma and agreeableness could be surface factors whereas intellectual competency and vision guiding are underlying antecedents to

followers' perception. From the relativist position, the nominalist perspective will draw attention to the way sense-making and intuition for visionary leadership has connections to follower perceptions.

3.2.2 Epistemology

Positivism and constructionism epistemology is suitable for studying visionary leadership and its perception for followers. An exploratory study is needed to find out the link between the two which means following constructionism epistemology. As said before ontology tells us that the assumption is that there may be many different realities and hence the researcher needs to gather multiple perspectives through qualitative methods. This type of epistemology is called triangulation which refers to gathering views and experiences of diverse individuals and followers.

3.2.3 Interpretivist paradigm

The study primarily deals with the interaction of people, people's perception of leadership and the outcome of leadership activities based on their style and traits of leadership thus it takes an interpretivist paradigm. The epistemological position of the researcher is in understanding the subjective meaning of social action (Bryman, 2012). The interpretive paradigm adopts an ontological position that assumes that reality is constructed and arises out of social interaction (Denzin & Lincoln, 1995). In essence, the interpretive paradigm discovers meaning and interpretations by studying cases intensively in a natural setting using the resulting data for analytical induction. The interpretative paradigm usually leads to qualitative research.

3.3 Research rationale, design and researcher

In this section, the rationale behind choosing an inductive qualitative approach is reasoned. The previous research in leadership is majorly quantitative and due to the visionary nature and futuristic approach of this leadership the qualitative research is a better option. Most of the visionary content of leadership constitutes words and pictures of the future therefore it's essential to describe this type of transformational leadership into qualitative constructs. Qualitative research brings more quality and depth into a research inquiry. These characteristics are similar to the research aims of this study. For example, following how and why questions, this research involved finding in-depth information about the perception and integration of visionary leadership. After all, it is meaning that qualitative researchers are most interested in. Qualitative research assists in taking an insensitive approach to understanding how individuals make sense of their worlds and how they experience events. Qualitative methods would generate rich descriptions of local contexts and individual subjective

experiences. Conger, (1998); Bryman et al, (1988); Alvesson, (1996) suggest that the benefits of adopting qualitative research on leadership include flexibility to follow unexpected ideas during research; sensitivity to contextual factors; ability to study symbolic dimensions and social meaning; in-depth and longitudinal explorations of leadership phenomena'. There is a possibility of encountering unexpected ideas and findings through this research as it involves the exploration of views and experiences of followers about visionary leadership. The contextual factors in this research focused on the retail context that will show the different and varying results about the followers' perception and integration. The social meaning benefits also apply to the current research as it records the thinking of the followers which are subject to the leaders and their colleagues.

Denzin and Lincoln (2017) suggest "Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them". Therefore, a qualitative approach in this research allows the development of new themes and concepts by gaining a deeper understanding of what lies underneath the phenomena.

The positivism and constructionism epistemological positioning were also considered when choosing the research design. A growing number of researchers have suggested that qualitative research inquiry can accommodate constructionism positioning. With these considerations in mind, a qualitative research design is more appropriate for this study. Qualitative research can be deductive or inductive. This project involved an inductive approach, which is more qualitative and exploratory. Inductive qualitative research produces theory and explores meanings from collected data (Hayes, Hopkinson, & Taylor, 2016). Thus, it allowed me to develop a theory after careful exploration of the phenomenon of follower perception and integration of visionary leadership. This theory comes from the lived experiences rather than preconceived ideas and according to Willig, "Using preconceived 'variables' would lead to the imposition of the researcher's meanings, and it would preclude the identification of respondents' ways of making sense of the phenomenon".

According to Yin (2012), 'how' and 'why' questions are more appropriate to the use of exploratory studies and inductive approach. 'How' questions are usually associated with describing relationships, (previously identified by answering a 'what' question). On the other hand, 'why' questions tend to explain the reasons why those relationships exist (Whetten, 1989; Yin 2012). The underlying aims and rationale of this proposed doctoral research reflect the general recognition that research of this nature is best conducted using a qualitative approach. As previously stated, Yin (2012), states that 'how' and 'why' questions are more appropriate to the use of this kind of study when the nature of the study is to understand a

previously un-researched limited explored subject like visionary leadership. As far as this current research is concerned it explored the previous research concepts and shed light on the new avenues for future research.

Researcher

Thompson (2003) recommends researchers state their background and values as a way of avoiding personal biases that might crooked the research processes. Consequently, in this section, I will introduce myself and elaborate a little more on the origin of this research. I am a brown male, who is a student of Doctorate in management program at the Brunel University London. At the time of submitting this research, I was 46 years old. Whilst on the doctoral program, I conducted various qualitative research projects as part of my assignments with the Ministry of Justice UK as the researcher and evaluator for the commercial bids. I had previous experience of conducting a literature review in my master's degree for job role of a research assistant at Telfer school of management, university of Ottawa Canada. I had some leadership experience before I started this doctoral program, much of which was related to marketing positions within product management with companies like Johnson & Johnson and Barrett Hodgson. I am originally from Pakistan and Canada, and I came to the UK to pursue my dream of becoming a researcher and consultant in the field of management. According to Sobh and Perry (2006), the researcher should have been researched or experienced before the reality related to leadership and followership. I had research experience as the research executive in marketing research in an agency from which I started my career and was involved in various research projects with clients who approached the agency because of the leadership level managerial decision for their businesses. So, I have seen the reality of management decisions from the perspective of academicians and as well as practitioners. For visionary leadership I had the experience of using this skill in my previous jobs at the personal level and the organizational level, and when serving the customers at the frontline.

3.4 Data collection methods

3.4.1 Interview Schedule

The interview schedule is consisting of 5 parts which are in line with the research questions asked in the first chapter of this thesis and can be accessed by Appendix J. The starting and the first part is demographic data which collects information about the participants like age, gender, and education. The first part also has background information like the location of the retail store, experience as a follower and designation of the participants.

The second part of the interview schedule is the shared vision which is one of the components of the research question and 3 questions relate to this category. These questions are planned to invoke the discussion of participants to answer the research question. The third part is related to the vision guidance, and it has 4 questions. These questions capture the views of the participants in terms of the vision guidance being able to guide follower work by vision. This part also addresses the concern in the research question and aims to collect follower information that answers the research question fully. The fourth part is about the follower perception and has 4 questions that invoke the discussion in the followers. The fifth and the last part is about vision integration which has 2 questions and directions. This part also leads the discussion in the direction of the intellectual competency of the followers. All these areas of the interview schedule answered the research question, and all the questions were open-ended. The questions are majorly indirect links to the category and the research questions, and this type of questioning helps in finding the inner meaning of the respondents. The simple layman words are used in formulating the questions to better understand the lower management followers of the retail business. Avoiding complex concepts in the interview schedule aid in better communication and understanding between the researcher and the respondents. The leaders will be first confirmed that they have or think about the visionary leadership and take the vision of the retail outlet as the driving force for managing the store in terms of layout, management of the subordinates and finance side of the store that includes the pricing and inventory management and overheads.

Probing techniques will be used to find out the hidden meaning of the superficial answer to the questions by the followers. This will involve asking for more and to the answer given by the respondents and adding "why" to the response. While probing, techniques like clarification, finding the real purpose, and sticking up with the relevance will be used throughout the in-depth interviews.

3.4.2 Interview Process

The interview process starts with choosing a setting with little distraction in the retail premises and participants' workplaces. This is usually the place/room where the respondents take a break from work and have lunchtime and sometimes when the retailer is a big supermarket then it would be the conference and meeting room where the managers gather all the subordinates to discuss the issues related to the business. These places help in having a quality recording of the interviews. The advantage of interview location as stores will be beneficial for the appropriate response from the leaders and followers. The atmosphere of retail outlet will be directly related to the questions asked in the interview and the respondents can better relate the questions with the location of the interview when answering them

After the place has been identified, the respondents will be explained the purpose of the interview. This is also detailed in the participant's information sheet and for this research, the purpose is to explore the follower's perception and integration of visionary leadership and its related concepts. The respondents are also informed about the terms of confidentiality and security of their jobs by involving themselves in this research and were reminded that they could withdraw at any time. Then comes to explain the format of the interview and different sections of the interview schedule which are demographic information about the respondents, the shared vision, vision guidance, follower perception of visionary leadership and vision integration. While asking questions from the interview schedule the prompts are used to encourage discussion and remind the participants of the focus of the research when some participants go off track from the main topic. Also, after this the respondents before starting the interview tell them how to get in touch with the researcher or the contacts in the ethics committee of the university. Respondents will be also asked for their permission to record the interview. Before the interviews, all the participants go through the Participant Information Sheet (Appendix I) and Informed Consent Form (Appendix G). The interviews commenced only after the participants had read and discussed the Informed Consent Form. Interview sessions were recorded with a Samsung Galaxy J4 plus digital voice recorder. The interview recordings were transferred to a password-protected laptop. Each data file was then encrypted.

3.4.3 How covid19 affect data collection and why?

The data collection is from the retailers, so it was almost impossible to conduct the interviews during the pandemic and lockdown. The pandemic calls for a surge in the customers shopping for the essentials, so the retailers and the managers were very busy during this and were not in favor of interviews. This considerably affect the timelines of the research project and timely data collection was not possible which force to move the data completion and other phases and stages of the project like data analysis, coding, and transcription. This constraint of the pandemic has direct and indirect effects on the quality of interviews which was beyond the control of the researcher (Mohammad & Firouzkouhi, 2021)

Although the pandemic suggests minimal contact with the respondent, to maintain quality of research face to face interviews were conducted because of the following reasons.

Contact. Levels of contact with participants will vary.. This research in an area is completely new, identifying and working with followers may require some initial face to face contact but this would at least minimise contacts.

Connectivity. Getting access to a strong enough internet connection to carry out voice or video calls is difficult.

Communication. Communicating through voice calls and video calls makes research difficult, compared to face-to-face contact. Using voice-notes to follow-up and continue communication with participants after an interview discussion has been a useful way to continue research and build relationships and trust.

3.5 Data Analysis

In thematic analysis, a theme “refers to a particular, recognizable configuration of meanings which co-occur in a way that is meaningful and systematic rather than random and arbitrary” (Willig, 2013, p. 58). In the current research based on the two proposed research questions, the themes in this study fell under five categories: Shared vision, vision guidance, follower’s intellectual competency, follower perception of visionary leadership and vision integration. My goal was to group these answers based on the similarities shared between them. The length of themes varied depending on how much depth the participants provided on each umbrella theme. Following are six phases of data analysis.

3.5.1 Phase 1: Familiarizing with the Data: The familiarisation with the data started at the very beginning when the data were collected and transcribed. Transcription of each file has been carried out in the safety of my home. During the stages of collecting and transcribing the data, the themes and patterns started to emerge which confirms research findings that the process of data analysis starts from data collection (Howitt, D., & Cramer, D., 2011). Certain patterns started emerging during the interview process. For example, the participants showed teamwork and bonding as the way of how the vision is shared. The data was actively read and re-read multiple times to familiarise with all the aspects of the data.

3.5.2 Phase 2: Generating Initial Codes: The initial codes have been generated at this stage of thematic analysis. These codes are identified and summarised to answer the research questions. A ‘data-led approach was adopted where the codes are guided by the data and its characteristics (Braun, V., & Clarke, V., 2016). A sample of initial codes can be looked at in Appendix K.

3.5.3 Phase 3: Searching for Themes: This involves sorting the different codes into likely themes and organising all the relevant coded data extracts within the identified themes. Essentially, different codes may combine to form an overarching theme (Braun, V., & Clarke, V., 2016). Consequently, I searched for the themes based on the initial coding. For example,

codes like 'change in the direction of the vision' relate to the broader themes of the 'follower roles' which then comes under the umbrella theme of the shared vision, and it addresses the research question of how the vision is shared with the followers.

3.5.4 Phase 4: Reviewing Themes: The themes are then reconsidered and re-evaluated generated in phase 3. I combined, polished, separated, and even rejected some of the themes. For example, the themes of customer satisfaction, customer experience, customer service, sales, supply chain, and managing personnel were combined into one theme of business indicators/key business performance indicators. Among the discarded themes within the umbrella theme of the follower perception of visionary leadership, the participants discussed the 'leader's observation' and 'sole trader vs public ltd' which occurred once or twice in the data set. These themes do not represent the follower's perception and are just the description of the leader's method of managing the followers. In the umbrella theme of vision integration, the discarded theme which occurred very low in a count is 'integration through perfection'. This subtheme does not relate to the umbrella theme of vision integration and the respondent mentioned this as the behaviour of the leader and not as a way of integration into the vision. In this phase, I also assessed the validity of individual themes with the entire data set. Then, I devised a thematic map representing themes and subthemes. This map can be found in Appendix A to F.

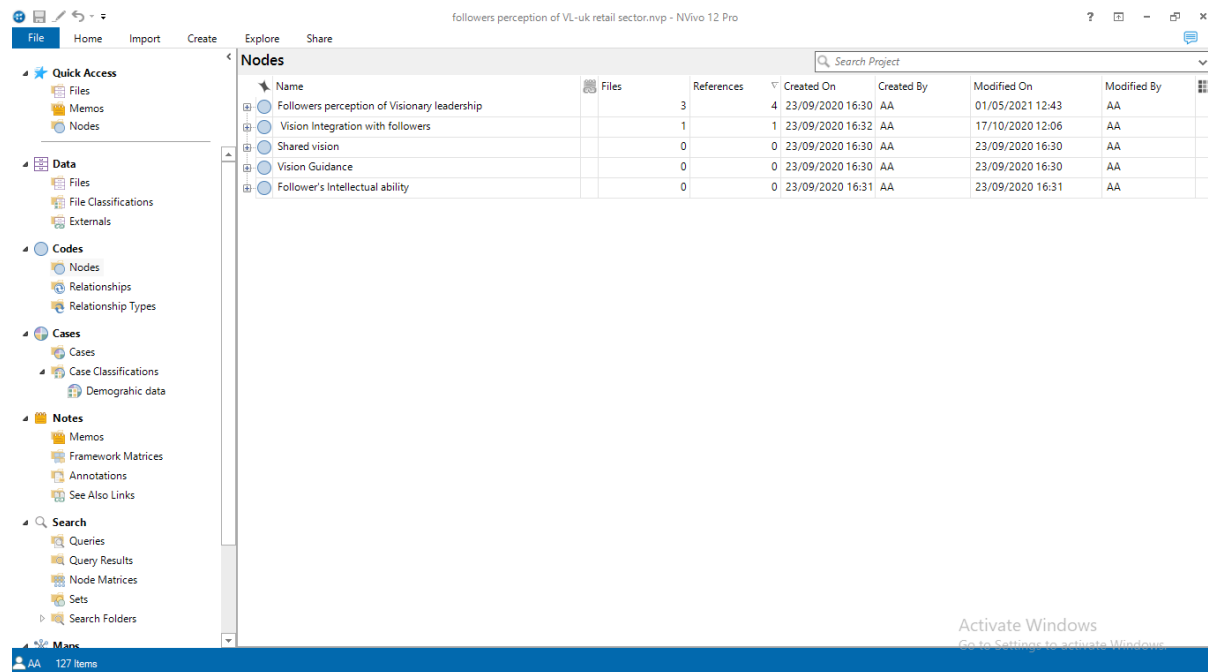
3.5.5 Phase 5: Defining and Naming Themes: In this phase defining and clarification of the theme is achieved by grasping and capturing the essence of each theme. Braun and Clarke (2017) described this process as identifying the 'story' that each theme tells. It is important to consider how it fits into the broader overall 'story' in relation to your research question or questions, to ensure there is not too much overlap between themes. For example, the subtheme 'follower's engaging role' helps us to answer the research question is how the vision is shared with the followers which tells the readers half story about the bidirectional vision process. In this, the leaders, and followers both take part in the process, but followers view this as an engaging role with the leadership vision. Finally, I composed detailed descriptions to reflect the story of each theme. An example of one such theme with related excerpts can be found in Appendix L.

3.5.6 Phase 6: Producing the Report: In the last phase, the written report describing the data that emerged from the final analysis is secured. I provided a rich yet concise story derived from a variety of themes and this involved the description of themes and subthemes and explaining the relationship of each theme with the umbrella theme and how one subtheme is related with another one. This report is outlined in the findings and analysis chapter of this

thesis in form of a table showing themes, subthemes and their occurrence in the files/sources and references by the respondents.

3.5.7 Transcription

The in-depth interviews will serve to identify important issues and concerns. All interviews will be transcribed and content analysed using established qualitative data analysis techniques (Miles, 1994) using qualitative data software, NVIVO.



The screenshot shows the NVivo 12 Pro interface with a project titled 'followers perception of VL-uk retail sector.nvp'. The 'Nodes' list is displayed in a table format:

Name	Files	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By
Followers perception of Visionary leadership	3	4	23/09/2020 16:30	AA	01/05/2021 12:43	AA
Vision Integration with followers		1	23/09/2020 16:32	AA	17/10/2020 12:06	AA
Shared vision	0	0	23/09/2020 16:30	AA	23/09/2020 16:30	AA
Vision Guidance	0	0	23/09/2020 16:30	AA	23/09/2020 16:30	AA
Followers Intellectual ability	0	0	23/09/2020 16:31	AA	23/09/2020 16:31	AA

To be consistent with standard practice in qualitative research, a combination of broad indirect questions and direct questions will be used throughout the interview (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2012). Questions that lead to obvious answers will be avoided to uncover the actual response of the respondents. This can be achieved by asking indirect and broad questions first from respondents to avoid cueing them into the desired response. With this method of questioning, the respondents themselves suggest areas of leadership, company vision and performance that are important to them (Yin, 2012). Any questions or inconsistencies in the data will be clarified by telephone call back to the key informants. This process will enhance the validity of the study (Yin, 2012).

The data will be collected then tape-recorded for further analysis and interpretation. Themes will be recorded that are related to one another. Data analysis strategies like the deconstruction of the text, looking up for hidden subtexts, and conclusions of deeper meaning or the multiple meanings of the themes around the constructs, will be adopted. The text produced from the interviews will be labeled for themes and articulation between the themes.

3.7 Pilot study

A pilot study will allow improvement in questionnaire design and interview schedule. A total of 9 followers or team members will be interviewed in the phase of the pilot study. Care will be taken to not to overlap the interviews within one retail store and the interviews will be conducted in the confidentiality of the other participant's interview. According to Kim, (2011) the pilot study will also aid in finding issues and barriers related to recruiting potential participants and engaging the use of oneself as a researcher in a culturally appropriate way. This pilot study will also provide insights and reflect the importance of the process and its difficulty in conducting an inquiry and finally, it provides the opportunity of modifying the interview questions. All these essential requirements of a pilot study can apply to the current research for example when recruiting participants during the pilot it was helpful to know that the store managers play a critical role in recruiting followers. While recruiting, the store managers confirmed that the followers or their colleagues know about the issues related to the vision and the interaction between the manager and the subordinate adheres according to the ideas laid down in the followership theory. Concerning the interview questions, the feedback from the pilot study and the supervisor allows the number of questions reduced to 12 from 16 and this is undertaken to keep the interest of the participant alive. Also, the pilot study changes the interview questions in a way that will have more relevance with the broad categories of visionary leadership. As the pilot study was conducted in the London area which is culturally diverse in terms of the participants and followers working in the retail businesses the feedback was to give extra care when interviewing the participants from different cultures and communities and this is achieved as to not to deviate from the aims and goals of the interviewing and data collection which is also in line with Kim, (2011) guidelines.

3.6 Participants

3.6.1 Rational behind the selection of participants and representing cases

The participants or subjects are vital to this research project because they are the producers of the data. The constructionism approach of this study resounds with this notion of participant significance. Collecting the data from individuals, rather than relying on other types of data, is crucial for a constructionism epistemology. All themes and conclusions drawn in this research project are based on the personal insights that these participants were willing to share. Hence, it is of paramount importance to understand the identity of participants and how they were selected.

The reason that this research is focused on the leadership and the followers in the context of the retail industry the research methodology for this research is aiming to consider the role of

subordinates as the followers. The scope of this research which is limited to the retail stores will reduce the top-level organizational vision to the store level. Targeted subordinates (followers) will be selected as convenience samples from the stores in London. A total of 30 followers will be interviewed about visionary leadership.

3.7.2 Participant Recruitment Process

I identified approximately 7 large retailers across London that provide fast-moving consumer goods to the customers. I sent emails to the managers of these retailers introducing myself and inviting them to participate in my research. I composed the standard invitation email to Participate in a Research project, which can be found in Appendix H. While less than half of the retailers that I contacted responded to inform me that they had circulated my email among their staff, this approach generated the interest of 30 individuals. Overall, my participant recruitment strategy generated the interest of 30 individuals. I supplied them with the Participant Information Sheet, which is included in Appendix I.

3.7.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria.

In this section, I introduce and explain the inclusion and exclusion criteria that were applied to all 30 individuals who showed their interest in the research. In positivist and constructionism epistemological positioning, I acknowledge my role in choosing inclusion and exclusion criteria. Careful consideration was given when selecting participants for this study. I chose a purposive non-random sampling technique as the most efficient method to gain access to participants. Here, the entire sampling process depends on the researcher's judgment and knowledge of the context. I compared each individual to the inclusion and exclusion criteria, which resulted in 30 out of 35 individuals being identified as suitable for the research. Then, these 30 individuals were provided with the Informed Consent Form that can be found in Appendix G. In the following sections I discussed the inclusion and exclusion criteria for this research which is based on the researcher's judgment and knowledge of the retail context.

3.7.3.1 Presence of the vision

The organizations that will be selected for this study must have a vision at the corporate and individual leadership levels. Large retailers like Sainsbury's, Aldi, Iceland met these criteria and agreed to participate. These organizations had adopted the vision for many years before data collection and purposefully utilized a variety of communication channels in attempts to disseminate the vision, including communication from top management and immediate supervisors, employee forums, intranet, and newsletter, etc.

3.7.3.2 Experience as followers

It is the requirement of the data collection and this research that the experience in the follower's role should be adequate to make judgments about the topic of visionary leadership and its perception. The more experienced the respondents are for playing the role of follower the better it is for the research. It can be assumed that more experience will allow the researcher to capture the depth of the experiences as the follower and their relationship with the leaders would let the researcher depend on the response of the participants.

3.7.3.3 Followers Location

London is the location for data collection and is one of the criteria. It is a multicultural and diversified city which will allow to include different nationalities in the sample, and this will enhance the quality of the research and does not lead to varying results due to the different backgrounds of the respondents. The interviewee's response to be coming from different communities provide a flavor of the international element which will attract the interest of the leaders who work globally or in a multinational environment and will have implication for this research. Caza, Caza, & Posner, (2021) also support the current research choice of data collection as a multicultural city of London and suggests that leading people from diverse cultures is centrally important in organizations. The study also suggests that transformational or visionary leadership behaviour is universal, and leaders and followers perceive this style of leading similarly across cultures. The follower satisfaction derived from visionary leadership in diverse cultural cities is the same.

Another reason is that London represents a large part of the UK population. Location of followers is also important for this research because many leadership roles are operated from London which means the influence of leadership decisions for retailers is firstly affected in this city. Also due to limited research resources and time, it was convenient to base the sample from London.

3.7.3.4 Currently employed

Being in the current follower role at the time of data collection was another criterion. Former employees in the follower roles were not suitable for this study. With time, people may forget their previous follower role and their relationship with their leaders. In addition, such experiences can be mixed up with their current practices. The current experiences are more relevant as it provides fresh perspectives towards the topic of this research. The study aimed to capture all experiences related to the perception and integration of the vision.

3.7.4 Sample size

Sample size and its determination are important to the research as they provide information about the population and the sample is used to draw the findings. There are complex

processes involved in this research in deciding the sample size and it is accomplished by basing the decision on the two factors: situational factors and data saturation.

There are a lot of different debates concerning the sample size and the process of determining the number of participants in qualitative research (Fugard & Potts, 2015; Hammersley, 2015; Emmel, 2015). Fugard, A. J., & Potts, H. W, (2015) argue about quantitative methods for arriving at the sample size but this was not well taken by other researchers as it was the quantification of qualitative research. Among these researchers is Emmel (2015) who oppose that the purpose of thematic analysis is only the finding of themes. The author also challenged that this perception is rather constraining and that the number of participants is not decided at the beginning of qualitative research, but rather the participant sample size is chosen at a much later stage of data collection once more information has been obtained. It was also argued by the researchers that the quality cannot be guaranteed by identifying the number of participants before gaining knowledge of emerging themes. More is not always better, especially in qualitative research, where the depth is emphasized over the width. Braun and Clarke (2017 p. 742) acknowledged that

“bigger isn’t necessarily better. The bigger the sample, the greater the risk of failing to do justice to the complexity and nuance contained within the data”

3.7.4.1 Situational factors

Situational factors specific to this study had to be addressed when deciding the initial number of participants. More than 30 in-depth interviews might have prompted a repetition of themes and resulted in unproductive use of time. This research project was carried out by a single researcher as a sixty-thousand-word thesis project for a professional doctorate course. Having up to 30 participants met the requirements of the scope of a doctoral thesis as well as the capacity of one researcher. After the consideration of such situational factors, I decided to enroll no more than 30 participants.

3.7.4.2 Data saturation

The homogenous nature of the research does not require a high number of participants due to the ability of detecting emerging themes in the data. In such cases, the data is often saturated. Data saturation was the other element that assisted in determining the number of participants required for the present study. Boddy (2016 p. 427) defined data saturation as

“the point at which no new information or themes are observed in the data from the completion of additional interviews”

Before proceeding to explain the rationale for incorporating data saturation, it is important to be clear about its purpose. Generalization was not a motive of the study. Rather, saturation was chosen for quality assurance purposes. Fusch and Ness (2015 p. 1408) claimed categorically that

“failure to reach saturation has an impact on the quality of the research”

Thus, I aimed to establish persistence in all stages of the current study. Monitoring data saturation provided me with an insight into identifying if the current study managed to capture the emerging themes or if there were more themes that the study did not have the scope or capacity to explore. Such insights into the data were important for several reasons.

One, data saturation helped to determine the point at which no more participants were required, as no new themes emerged. The endpoint of the data analysis was based on the data itself rather than the felt senses of the researcher (Sobh and Perry, 2006). For the current research, I felt that data saturation is reached during the pilot data collection with around 9 respondents which were based on the data and do not have any connection with the sensation of the researcher. The repetition of the subthemes within the umbrella theme started to emerge at this point and some of the examples of this repetition are ‘progression and development of the followers’ which is due to vision guidance and the ‘teamwork and bonding’ within the shared vision.

Two, unsaturated data may inform future research studies by identifying the gaps in methodology. This unsaturated data in the current research are also said to be outliers which come in the data away from mainstream themes and for example, the subtheme ‘vision and planning not shared with followers’ is the example of the unsaturated data which also suggest that future research can be taken up in this area where followers in the retail context have the opinion that shared vision does not exist according to the followers and the vision rest with the leaders and not shared with the followers.

The background in terms of the follower’s location, experience as followers, area of responsibility, and designation of the follower are as follows.

3.7.4 Followers’ demographic and background information

This study collected data from the followers in the retail sector of the UK between the periods of Aug 2020 to Jan 2021. As explained in the previous section, using the interview schedule this study collected a total of 30 interviews. The demographic profiles of these 30 respondents/followers are detailed below.

3.7.4.1 Followers' Gender:

The gender of the respondents is presented in table 4. The results revealed that the gender of respondents is a split of 20 males and 10 females. This can lead us to say that the retail industry in London is dominated by male roles which demand a high degree of hard work required by the retail organizations and is more appropriate for males rather than females.

3.7.4.2 Followers' age:

The age of the respondents was also part of demographics. The data shows that there is only one respondent aged between 15-20 years, 7 respondents were between the years of 21 to 25, and 5 interviewees are of the age of 26-30 years. The highest number of respondents lies in the bracket of 31-35 years which are 8 in number and 3 subjects were aged between 36-40 years. A lower number of only 1 respondent is of the age of 41-45 and around 4 interviewees aged between 46-50 and only 1 is of the age bracket of 51-65. The youngest and the oldest were found to be the lowest in numbers of subjects interviewed whereas the highest are of middle age. Most of the data related to age lie between 21 to 40 years. It seems that the retail industry attracts mostly the young talent to work in a follower's role under the leadership of the store manager.

3.7.4.3 Followers' Education

Most of the respondent's education levels were at Bachelors (14 respondents) and college (9 respondents). Further, the data shows that out of 30, 5 have master's degrees and none hold a Ph.D. degree. This matches with the previous finding of age with the education. A majority of low age group have the education of bachelor's and A level and masters.

3.7.4.4 Followers' Location

It was found that the respondents/followers in the retail sector were from 7 retail stores in the London area (Table 5). The companies they represented are Sainsbury's, Aldi UK, and Iceland. These are global and big companies in terms of their size and market share and have established a vision for the company. On average there were 4.2 followers per retail outlet and these outlets also vary in their size as some are big supermarkets whereas others are Local convenience stores.

3.7.4.5 Experience as the follower

Respondents/followers were asked about their number of years of experience as followers within the team with the leadership role of their manager. It was found that out of 30 interviews, 15 interviewees have experience of 1-3 years as the follower and reporting to the leadership. 11 found to have 4-8 years of experience as the follower and 3 have recorded as 8-12 years of experience. Only one interviewee was found to be working for long years of 16-20 years as a follower under the leadership role of the manager. It was required that subjects of this research show adequate time spent in the follower-leader relationship thus having the capacity

to respond to the questions asked related to visionary leadership. This point is discussed in more detail in section 4.7.3.2 under the heading of criteria used to select the participants.

3.7.4.6 Followers' area of responsibility

The background of the follower was explored by responding to them about the work and area of responsibility in the retail outlet (Table 6). It was found that the majority (19 out of 30) of the followers mentioned having been involved in the till operations, shelving of the inventory, and receiving of the deliveries. Also, it was evident that 5 out of 30 respondents were undertaking broad level responsibilities like managing personnel designated as the retail assistant and customer service assistant but reporting to the leadership position: the store manager. 4 out of 30 were also found to be related to carrying out the responsibility of the customer service.

3.7.4.7 Designation of Followers:

Follower's designations inform about the hierarchy within the retail organization and provide more confidence in treating the roles as the follower and leader in the business. It was found that out of 30 respondents 14 were working as a store assistants and 3 have the designation of retail assistant in 7 retailers. These two positions are similar in nature of the work and the level of position is the same and has the same distance between the leader and follower. The second most found designation in retailers is customer trading manager with the number of respondents to 5 which is a senior position than the retail assistant/store assistant but reports to the leadership position of store manager as the follower. There was 2 deputy manager which is next to the leadership of the retailer but follows the store manager. Also, out of 30, 4 were customer assistants who face and interact with the customers, 1 was non-duty trading and 1 was trading assistant and all were found to be reporting and following the leadership position of the store.

Location	Number of matching cases
Sainsburys Local Gants hill	8
Aldi Newbury park	7
Sainsburys Barkingside	1
Iceland Barkingside	1
Aldi Seven kings	5
Sainsburys Loughton	4
Sainsburys Romford North str	4
Area of responsibility	
Unassigned	0

Not Applicable	1
Till, shelving & Deliveries	19
Customer service and till	4
Cleaning	0
Managing personnel	1
Managing personnel, overheads, customer satisfaction	5

Table 3: Respondent Background information

3.7 Ethical Consideration

In this section, I discuss the ethical considerations of this study. I followed the ethical procedures set by the College of Business at Brunel University. I filled out an ethics application where I outlined my ethical considerations for this research. I was transparent and thorough about the processes of this study. As a result, the Postgraduate School Panel granted me research approval on the delegated authority of the University Research Ethics Committee. The evidence of this can be found in Appendix M.

3.8 Chapter summary

A qualitative research methodology has been adopted for this study. The reason for this choice is the previous research in leadership is quantitative and due to the visionary nature and futuristic approach of this leadership the qualitative research is supposed to be a better option. Most of the visionary content of leadership constitutes words and pictures of the future therefore it's essential to describe this type of transformational leadership into qualitative variables. The vision of the future cannot be quantified in numbers and its description by the leaders and followers must take the form of qualitative description.

The coding and main themes are identified in the literature review and the same will be used in the data analysis for this research. After coding, the instrument for measuring qualitative response as in-depth interviews had been described in this section and the main ingredients of the questionnaire. The location of interviews is an important consideration for conducting interviews. The benefit of the location to the research had been discussed. A detail for the pilot study is also given in this section along with the benefits of the same. Also, an estimate of how many interviews will be conducted in the pilot study. As the managers will take a lead role in managing the retail outlet, they will be considered leaders for this research, and the leader's

team under him taken as the followers. These leaders and followers are participants of this research. Data analysis is the next step in the methodology which constitutes the transcription and answers the question of how data will be analysed by using NVIVO. Finally, in this chapter, the philosophical stance has been discussed in terms of Ontology, Epistemology, and interpretivist paradigm.

4. Findings & Analysis

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the findings of a rigorous data analysis have been presented. This includes the interpretations and overlapping of the findings. Further relation of these with the literature is accessible in the next chapter of discussions where a detailed analysis can be read. These findings elaborate and provide answers to the research questions raised in this study:

Main research questions: How do followers of visionary leadership by using vision guidance and intellectual ability integrate into a vision that facilitates the formation of shared vision and followers' perception? How these mutually inclusive interconnections develop and cause a whole readiness in the followers to prepare for the organizational change.

Research aim (a): To explore why and how the followers decode shared vision in the retail business

Research aim (b): To understand why business objectives have a central position in retailers' leadership vision

Research aim (c): To investigate how followers perceive leadership vision in retail business

Research aim (d): To find out why and how followers in retailers integrate into leadership vision

Research aim (e): To confirm how followers perceive intellectual ability for understanding leadership vision.

Research aim (f): To unsolved why vision guidance is a tool for followers to have a direction for the future of retail business?

Each of the research aim is answered in turn. I provide tables of findings that outline the themes, subthemes/codes of each research question. The tables also identify the number of sources and the number of references within each theme. The number of sources refers to the number of participants who contributed to the creation of each theme while the number of references refers to the total number of citations across all the participants, which were used to form each theme. Then, I present and explain each of the themes before illustrating these themes with direct quotations from the participants to cast some light on the transparency of the elements that comprised each theme.

Each of these themes is further divided into subthemes/codes. The themes and subthemes is outlined, explained, and illustrated with direct quotations from the participants. Before exploring the themes, I first provide a table that identifies the themes, the number of sources, and the number of references supporting each theme.

4.2 Research aim (a): To explore why and how the followers decode shared vision in the retail sector

It is found that followers integrate into the vision of the leadership by following the method of teamwork and bonding. The followers achieve the integration through adopting an engaging role with the leadership in the retail business. The vision within retailing is about envisioning the aims and objectives of the business and among these, the most important is the customer experience, customer satisfaction, and achieving the key performance indicators of retail business like sales and profitability.

Table 4: Themes, codes, Number of Sources, and Number of References in Research Aim (a) To explore why and how the followers decode shared vision in the retail sector (b) To understand why business objectives have a central position in retailers leadership vision

Umbrella Theme	Themes	Codes/subthemes	Number of sources	Number of references
Shared vision				
		Teamwork and Bonding	22	34
		Followers Engaging role	17	28
		Followers' leader	13	26
		Visionary leadership improves business performance	13	16
		Follower's Energy and Focus	11	14
		Leaders' expectations	14	19
		Young leaders	2	2
		Common Cause of followers	11	11
		Leaders Big picture or vision	12	18

		Leadership vision in retailing	8	10
		Organizational vision and Individual vision	5	7
		Vision and daily work	3	4
		Bidirectional vision process	6	8
		Vision & planning not shared with followers	7	8
	Business objectives or Key performance indicators (KPIs) as Vision		6	7
		Customer satisfaction	19	30
		follower's role in customer service	7	12
		Customer experience	14	20
		Supply chain	10	13
		Increase sales	8	12
		Personnel	3	7
Shared vision		Use of vision to manage people	4	4
		New direction to Vision	5	5
		Covid compliance retailing	5	6
		Productive followers	3	6
		Not just worker but part of business	4	5
		Vision sharing by advertising and hierarchy	3	4
		Followers as executing and implementation of vision	2	3
		Follower's Mindset changes	3	3

		Followers Negotiating for future	2	2
	Negative attitude of followers towards shared vision	Followers taking vision as more work	1	1

Umbrella Theme 1. Subtheme: Teamwork and Bonding

Participants of this research suggested that for visionary leadership the teamwork and bonding between the followers and the leader are at most important. The teamwork and bonding subtheme is the overarching theme within the shared vision stated by the 22 respondents out of 30 and was found in 34 references. It suggests the importance of teamwork and bonding to a shared vision. The following examples elaborate on this notion

Yeah, because I think you know that openness with everybody includes everybody. it fosters a team ethics as opposed to you know, where everybody thinks I am an individual and we are not working as the team and so it does not work so well and in this case, everybody working for him or herself and not working for each other and certainly for this environment you have to work as the team.

(Respondent 2)

Respondent 2 above extends the teamwork into ethics and compares it with working as the individual. This is contrary to the shared vision and visionary leadership. Respondent 2 expressed that working in a team in a retail context is not the requirement of the shared vision but also complying with the urge of doing the right thing. Working in a team allows to share each other problems and wipe out the worries of working alone, which has a positive impact on the shared vision.

Off course if the manager won't share with us what he wants from us and he would be sitting in the office and tell other managers to go and tell them, so it does not look nice as we are working as a team. So, it looks likes that they are higher than you and it seems that you can't approach them, and you are comfortable with them. So, what the manager wants from us he always shares so it is nice to get involved in that. It's like a family and teamwork and you feel that you have a bond with the manager

(Respondent 5)

In this also the respondent 5 stress the behaviour of the manager/leader as the team leader which minimize the gap between the followers and the leaders. Respondent 5 discussed the involvement of the leader with followers and promotes teamwork and bonding that helps in sharing the vision.

I think my manager is always there to help you so and I don't think he is out of the team as he is the manager, and he works with the team for example if someone struggling with something he is gonna jump into it and help and resolve it in front of you. All the managers are working as same as we work and they have more responsibilities, but they are not going to leave it on us coz I am manager.... no, it does not work like that.

I try to have teamwork with the manager and get close to him to have integration and this will allow me to better spread the vision into the team.

(Respondent 7)

The interviewee co-relates the teamwork with integration with followers and leaders and how this impacts the vision integration. Specifically, respondent 7 highlights the ways of sharing vision. The problems solving attitude of the leader also fill the gap between the leaders and followers and enhances teamwork and bonding.

Closely connected followers with each other and with the manager form the platform for the shared vision. This will also result in teamwork and vision also is the tool of having integrated followers.

Vision owned by the manager, or the leader is just the vision and cannot become the reality if not shared with the followers. Integration is achieved with the follower when the bond between the manager and follower follows strict rules of honesty. A shared vision with honesty could result in a shared vision.

he is really working as the team rather than as the boss you know when at some places when there is a boss, and he will say you do this do that my time is over and I am gonna home now so he is not like that he is trying to push as a whole team let's say if there is a problem with something, so he always tries to sort it out first

(Respondent 15)

In the above excerpt, the respondent suggested that the manager believed strongly in teamwork and did not behave like a boss and acted as a problem solver for the followers. This leads us to say that the follower's perception of visionary leadership changes with the working and leadership style of the leader. From respondent 15, shared vision needs a mechanism and tools between the followers and leaders to work closely. This can also be found in the vision integration where the standards and procedures are used as the method of sharing vision and integration. Further the respondent suggests that vision is better shared with the followers through honesty and if the leaders are clear and transparent about the aims and objectives of the business. In this way followers tend to build trust and confidence in the relationship.

Umbrella Theme 1. Subtheme: Followers Engaging role

Followers as executing and implementation of vision

Followers Negotiating for future

When mentioning the role of followers in sharing vision the follower engaging role was found to be the top referenced theme with 17 respondents and 28 cited places in the interview transcript. This implies that the engagement of the followers with their leaders plays a critical role in disseminating the vision of the business. This can be noted in the following evidence from the respondents:

He shares the vision with me and if my manager won't share it then how I am gonna implement. Integrated followers mean more connected team members of the manager. When I follow my manager then I feel more integrated with his style of thinking which leads to the shared vision between me and the manager.

(Respondent 4)

In this, the respondents correlate the shared vision and integration and shed light on how engagement results in both. There are also the clues that the shared vision enables followers to take up implementation roles and following the leader, which means more vision integration and aligning with the leadership vision.

Yeah, I think that. When he tells me the business guidelines which is something every day that you follow but the point, he shares his vision with me which kind of motivates me to work more and to find my way to help him achieve the vision. He does not force me to achieve the vision coz it is not his job to put it on our shoulders his vision. We have to use our own initiative to get involved in the vision.

(Respondent 5)

Here also it was found that for engagement, followers use personal initiative to take part in vision sharing and that leads to motivation for the followers. Respondent 5 present a striking relationship between the follower's engagement, sharing of the vision, and motivation.

Agree - higher engagement /connection with my manager gives a clear sense of direction to achieve the shared goal. (Respondent 6)

The participant also agrees with the importance of engagement when presented with the relationship of the same with the shared vision. Respondent 6 further suggests that engagement with the leader is necessary for the understanding of direction and shared goal of the vision.

He supervises us when we are working and for me its customer services and shelving and from time to time, we give him update on our performance that how we are following him and his instructions in serving the customer, and this is how we integrate with him. He also shares vision (Respondent 8)

The time-to-time update and supervision of the leader for the followers is also found to be a way of keep aligning the followers with the vision and relating it with the customer which is one of the parts of the vision in the retail business. Engagement takes many forms and from the respondent 8, frequent updates on the performance in customer services enhance the engagement with the leader that also helps in having an effective integration. As the customer is the main part of the visionary leadership in the retail context so following it through engagement with the leader is like making the vision part of the daily work of followers.

My role in sharing vision is that of implementing it into our jobs. As we are at frontline facing the customers so we need to follow the vision of the company where customers are regarded as important and should be cared for at any cost. (Respondent 10)

It is also found from the respondents that when vision is shared by the leadership position in retail business the follower's role would be that of executing and implementing it. Here the participant explained this by giving an example of the customer as the part of the vision and how this is important for the followers facing the customers. The number of sources is 2 and referenced at 3 places for this theme. Although the role of followers in sharing vision was not of that much importance in the overall discussion for the subjects it is worth mentioning that

followers act as the implementors.

For example, they increase or decrease the budget and give you targets that are harder to hit so obviously they are trying to make more money so we try to get our self-ready to accept the change that comes with the vision so at first we say that we work very hard to hit the targets last time so this time we need our own targets but the way company react to it that you did 5% so now you do 10% next month. So yeah, I guess for me right now I accept it as it is the part of the work and we have done it as the managers are saying to work on it. But sometimes I always challenge the targets when I found the targets to be unfair or the expectations are too high or too much what we have it right now.... you know what I mean. So, few weeks back they were telling us that we gonna reduce the hours because they give us extra hours due to corona and social distancing so I objected that how we can deliver the service with social distancing with less labour. If you have one less person, then you cannot do it. So, if I find the targets or the vision is unreasonable then I challenge it, but it was coming down from centrally then it will stop by my manager. I try to challenge the business goals to some extent, but I come to know that my managers hands are tight, and we have to deliver the result without the argument then I will try not the resist but provide an alternative but then again it depends on the case-by-case basis.

(Respondent 5)

Followers playing the role of negotiators and discussing the future of the retail business with leaders is mentioned by 2 participants and referenced at 2 places, In the response above the follower explained in detail the process of negotiating for vision with the leadership roles. In this way, the vision of the leadership is a shared outcome of the leader and followers. The example discussed is the input from followers about the labour hours of the followers. Respondent 5 further explain the resistance behaviour by challenging the targets shared by the leadership, but the leaders often explain that it's part of the grand business vision of the organization and the followers did not have the role to negotiate it.

Umbrella Theme 1. Subtheme: Followers leader

Followers' leader is one of the most prominent themes within the scope of the visionary leadership in the retail sector, having as many sources as 13 out of 30, and 26 references. It is a way to win heart share and motivation of the followers by leadership behaviour and

working style. This type of leadership of the manager is evident by followers in the following script.

He is a very good team leader, and this is his best quality that he is not treating us like workers, as we are not part of him, or the team and he works with us on an equal level which motivates us and thinks of him as not the leader or manager but part of the team. (Respondent 11)

The participants clearly distinguish the concept of merely working as the manager and acting as a leader and setting up an example of working with the followers. This further established that this research considers interviewing the leaders and not managers who show the qualities of visionary leadership. Respondent 11 suggests that it is vital for the leader to be like a follower and work on an equal level with the workers which is the sign of the true leader. When the leader shows that he is among one of the followers then it's easy to share the vision with them. Within the context of retail, this is a frequently used mechanism for leaders to come at the follower level and then persuade them to follow the broad level targets and objectives of the business.

Yes, I like to be like him and achieve what he has achieve coz usually when he does same thing, for example, I do like working in the morning coming to store so he does it which is a way of faster work in the morning and be more productive, so he sets a very good example not just by telling you how to do but he just shows you how to do and that motivates me. (Respondent 9)

The two themes of teamwork and bonding overlap with the follower's leader as both addresses the wellbeing of the follower by maintaining a positive relationship with the followers. Setting the example in the minds of the followers helps the leaders in sharing the vision and answering the fundamental question of how the vision is shared with the followers in the retail business.

I think my manager is always there to help you so and I don't think he is out of the team as he is the manager, and he works with the team for example if someone struggling with something he is gonna jump into it and help and resolve it in front of you. All the managers are working as same as us obviously they have more responsibilities, but they are not going to leave it on us coz I am manager... no it does not work like that. (Respondent 12)

Respondent 12 also liked the behaviour of the leader to work with the follower. It suggests that the leader is a leader when he does not think that he is the leader. The perception is acceptable for the followers which not only solves the followers' work-related problems but also motivates them to do more.

4.3 Research aim (b): To understand why business objectives have a central position in the leadership vision of retail business

Theme 1. Subtheme: Business objectives or Key performance indicators (KPIs) as Vision

In this broader theme of business objectives and key performance indicators, several sub-themes emerged linked to the customer experience, customer satisfaction, follower's role in customer service, supply chain, increase sales, personnel, and new direction to vision. Business indicators are considered to be the vision because the job of the leader of the store mainly comprises of achieving the business results and therefore, he or she envisions the future of business by attaining these aims and goals. The sharing of vision with the followers is a huge part of business objectives which is the viability of visionary leadership.

Umbrella Theme 1. Subtheme: Business objectives or KPIs as Vision-customer satisfaction

The customer satisfaction theme within the business vision is the most visible theme with the respondents, advocates with 19 sources 30 references. It is most important when the leader shares the business vision with the followers. This is shown in the following sample of interviews.

The vision of making the customer happy is also something I practice in my daily life and has become part of my personality. The sharing of vision also gives me knowledge and wisdom of staying ahead of customer behaviour and trends which becomes a reason for success in my job. (Respondent 1)

The respondent above talked about the relationship between customer satisfaction and the sharing of vision. There had been the example that how the vision affects the follower's daily work. The wisdom of catering and understanding customers and comes out as success because vision made them futuristic and working ahead. Here the respondent 1 explained the intensity of the vision and it is so strongly shared with the followers by the leaders that it

becomes the practice of the daily working life and personality of the followers. This suggests that the vision makes the follower proactive in following the leadership by understanding the customer behaviour and succeeds the follower in their work.

The vision is related to the shelving of products and is about meeting the demand of the customers and making the products available to achieve high sales. The vision is to serve the customers and make the customer happy and satisfied with the customer services and meeting the demand. (Respondent 7)

Here also the interviewee made the connection of the vision and landing into a happy and satisfied customer, and this is achieved through meeting the demand of customers which helped in raising the sales. It has links and connections to the other subthemes of increasing the sales and supply chain. Respondent 7 explained these connections, and all this is possible and can be achieved through sharing of vision.

Manager's vision combined with the computer information guides us in advance what to stock in shelves and fill up the stores for the sales. The vision also helps the manager and us in having a layout of the store for the customers.

So, one of the examples is customer satisfaction, and one of the factors that managers monitor is how quickly the customers exit the store when they are doing the shopping. So, we decided to visit the customer a smooth one so there is no blockage at the entrance of the store so the impression on the customer is not good about these blockage

For example, we must keep the shelves filled up from the stock from our suppliers which is about keeping the customer happy. Everything has the opposite reaction so we keep the customer happy by our supplies and so for my manager customer satisfaction is very important so if the shelves are tidy and stocked correctly customer will be happier and customer satisfaction goes up.

(Respondent 14)

Respondent 14 explained that vision needs tools like IT to make the dream a reality of customer satisfaction. This is achieved by improving the layout of the store so that customers can be attracted to the business. All these tactics by the follower and leaders are aligned towards the vision accomplishment that guides the followers to work in the direction of

customer satisfaction. Also, in line with the vision of customer satisfaction the leaders and as well as the followers' effort is to make the customer visit as delightful as possible. The idea that is explained by respondent 14 is to delay the length of the visit of each customer and the objective is to maximize the time spent by the customer in the store. The leadership vision is also to attract the customer towards the business which can be achieved through better shelving of the products. All the examples detailed by respondent 14 are about customer satisfaction which is the key part of the leadership vision.

Umbrella Theme 1. Subtheme: Visionary leadership improves business performance

Visionary leadership improves business performance is also an emerging theme reflected from 13 respondents out of 30 and cited in 16 references. It correlates the main topic of this research which is visionary leadership and business performance and presents the evidence from the interviews that if the leaders in retail business practice visionary leadership qualities, it will have a detrimental effect on the business. The link between this is important to introduce as business performance and customers are key to the vision of the retailers.

Since he came into the leadership here the store has improved. So, let's take an example of availability, so products which are not out for sale, so his leadership covers those, and he is making sure that has been met and keeping track. (Respondent 15)

It is clear from the above evidence that the relationship between retail visionary leadership and business performance exists. Followers and leaders were collectively responsible for the supply and availability of the products. Respondent 15 diverts the attention of the leadership responsibility towards waste products that are not out for sale. Respondent 15 seems to be impressed by how the leader fulfils and takes care of the products which are not good for sale.

Visionary leadership of my manager gives me the impression that customer service is critical to store operations as we keep the customers happy in processing the returns of the products. Using the vision to forward the agenda of store profitability is also fascinating and huge effort by the manager. (Respondent 9)

Here also the respondent 9 mentioning customer service and how this would enhance the business indicators like profitability and customer satisfaction. This proves the use of vision to achieve a business future.

Yes, off course he shares the vision with me what he wants to do.... Again, the bottom line is to improve the store since he had been into this store, and he had brought many changes to the store which improved the store standards.

I do effort to analyse vision of the manager and then try to understand its contents and areas of concerned which overlaps with my job. Then I figure out how my manager see the future of our business and the areas he wants to have improved or change

(Respondent 16)

Reinforcing the same relation between visionary leadership and business performance the respondent 16 states that the leader of the business uses his visionary skills to improve the retail-look and improve the standards. Further to strengthen the same the leader of the retail engages the follower by making them understand the contents and areas of vision and bring changes in the business.

Umbrella Theme 1

Theme: Business objectives or KPIs as Vision-

Subtheme: customer satisfaction

Subtheme: followers' role in customer service

This is the subcategory theme within the context of customer satisfaction. Followers' role in customer service has been mentioned by 7 subjects with 12 references. How customer service is part of the vision of the leadership is mentioned in the following response.

Yes, my manager shares the customer service-related vision with me, and it is because we face the customer directly and according to his vision the customer experience should be pleasant and satisfying and there will be consistent service to each new customer (Respondent 5)

The participant unfolds the connection of customer service with the leadership vision. In a retail setting, the follower faces the customer, so customer service is important having a satisfied customer which is the vision of the leader. Respondent 5 further suggests that the vision of customer service in the retail context can be achieved through consistent service to every new customer. The leadership shares this vision with the follower as it is the essential requirement and followers must show this in their work behaviours.

I think we can say that what is my role in carrying that vision forward so for example enhancing the customer services, so my role sitting at the till is to guide the customers who are standing in the queue so serve the customers in a way so as to customer don't have to wait for long in the queue. Be fast and be accurate in serving the customers instead of seeing that there is a long queue, and we do nothing about it. So, the vision is carried out through improving the customer services so we are trying to serve the customers very respectfully and be polite with them and if the customer has some issue and some query and has some questions and if I can't answer them to best of my ability and if I think I am not doing good service to the customers then I definitely ask manager to come in and step in.

(Respondent 7)

Here also not letting the customers wait in a queue when working on the till and providing service to them is crucial in having the vision of improving customer service. Respondent 7 discussed the mechanism of following the vision through better customer services. This service includes being respectful and polite with the customers and if the follower is unable to act in following the leadership vision, then the leader step-in to ensure that customer service should not be overlooked. The idea is to implement and achieve the different parts of the vision through followers and leaders.

Umbrella Theme 1. Subtheme: Business objectives or KPIs as Vision

Subtheme: customer experience

Nearly half (14) of the respondents mentioned the customer experience, and there were 20 references in total from 14 interviews. This makes this theme within business vision an important one for retailers and can be noted in the following evidence from the respondents:

For example, taking the customer first is the part of the managers vision and this integrates when we follow a particular layout for the store which gives the customer a delightful experience of shopping in the store. (Respondent 18)

The participant strongly suggested that how the vision of the leader is implemented by the followers to have a superior and delightful customer experience. Respondent 18 further suggest that the leadership vision help in integrating by putting the customer first. It is found from respondent 18 that the store layout is particularly important in changing the customer experience and is part of the vision. This will allow us to say that the vision can be a driving force in queuing the follower to incorporate the vision content into their work.

...also, customer lineup affects the customer experience of the store so the target and the vision of the manager is to have less of these at the entrance and speed up the check outs of the customers so there would be no que of the customer which not only look good for the customer but also, it's against the concept of good business.

The main vision of the manager for the store is that the store should look good, nice, and tidy up and there should not be any mess in the store which look bad to the customer. When customer comes in the store, he should think that oh it is a nice and clean store. This is my manager's vision

(Respondent 17)

Here also in these two quotes from the followers, it is suggested that customer experience directly affects both the vision of the leader and waiting of customers for long period. The store is clean, nice, and tidy all adds up to the visionary leadership thinking in the business. Respondent 17 appears to be stating about the customer experience and its importance to the leadership vision. In this, the customer ques can be better managed as it affects the experience throughout customer visit. The vision of the leadership is to have a pleasant and superior customer experience which can result in speed-up check-outs.

First of all, you need to be quick while doing the task on the time and be polite to the customers which is very important because the customers are our priority. The store should be tidy up and everyone should like nice. Yes, my manager shares the customer service-related vision with me, and it is because we face the customer directly and according to his vision the customer experience should be pleasant and satisfying and there will be consistent service to each new customer.

(Respondent 10)

Respondent 10 also explained that how a better customer experience can be achieved and confirmed that the leadership shares this vision. The clean and tidy-up store is a positive thinking about customer service and in line with the leadership vision of the higher performance of customer service. Respondent 10 further mentioned the reasoning of shared vision is to face customers directly and followers are in more frequent contact with them.

Umbrella Theme 1. Subtheme: Business objectives or KPIs as Vision

Subtheme: Supply chain

It was found from the respondents that the supply chain was part of a bigger business vision of the leadership among retailers with 10 participants talking about this in 13 references. Following is the evidence collected regarding this notion of the supply chain:

The manager's vision is to have a constant supply of products for the customers and this vision is achieved through having a planned stock ready which is possible through the information from the computer system about the update of the inventory level. The computer also tells us which product is on offer and is on the promotion and maintains the pricing info for the product on the shelves. (Respondent 8)

The follower supports the leadership vision with the supply chain which is then ultimately managed through the information systems that keep the followers informed about the stock position, products on offer, promotion, and pricing. Respondent 8 suggests the connection of leadership vision with the retail supply chain. The supply chain is also a major part of the vision and must be practiced and implemented by the followers. The follower is in use of the computer handheld device which informs them of the latest stock position of the products and its shelving requirement which translates into a vision of a better supply chain.

Manager involved us in the planning and vision through computer aided future decision about the inventory in the store and managing the customer demand in a way to not to order from the suppliers too much or not to meet the demand. (Respondent 9)

Similarly, the above quotation from the participants suggested that how computer systems help the followers think about the future of the business in terms of supply chain and inventory which is in line with the vision of the leader. Respondent 9 claims that the leadership involves them in the planning of the store which is the future course of action for the business. This is achieved through IT and smart shopping that brings more power and transparency to the customers.

Umbrella Theme 1. Subtheme: Business objectives or KPIs as Vision

Subtheme: Increase Sales

As retailers are commercial organizations therefore the sales are a fundamental business indicator. It was found that increasing sales is the responsibility of both the followers and

leaders and is also a main part of the leadership vision. It is the main theme under business vision/objectives with sources number to 8 and with 12 references. From these references following elicit the same point.

Yes, the manager involves us in the planning of the store for the pricing and promotion. The manager has the vision of the sales achievement for this he plans the changes in the pricing and promotion of the products just to stimulate the sales. So, his vision of maximising sales is subject to our planning and vision of maintaining the right prices and promotion for the products. (Respondent 14)

The above is the evidence by the follower that they are been involved in the vision by the leadership for pricing and promotion which is linked to the sales achievement. Respondent 14 accepts that his leadership involves him in the planning and vision sharing and this would involve the sales increase strategies to be overseen by the leaders and followed by the team members. Respondent 14 also takes on the credit of maximizing the sales through vision sharing which is possible by having the right prices and promotion of the products.

So, I was inspired by his managerial style coz he does not just lock you down in your job but involve you in the creativity of the job. So, he asked us to use your imagination to be more creative in doing the activities that will boost sales, so you don't feel that you are stuck in the job, but you start thinking that you play more and give some more to the work and for the business. So, it's nice and develops yourself in promotion and sales of products.

(Respondent 17)

Respondent 17 appreciates the style of leader as the visionary leader. It says that the leader did not just ask you to do the job but involve the followers in more creative work which uses the intellectual ability, for example understanding the vision of the leadership. It also suggests that the leaders persuade the follower to involve in developing and progressing activities that are most likely to implement the vision of the leadership to achieve higher sales.

Yeah, but we don't have this because of the Covid but in generally if I am talking general terms then my manager is very good at explaining the objectives in terms where we want to go how to deal with the customers and be friendly with them so that they can come back and spend more money so we will be more prosperous. If we have more sales, then it's better but it's getting more difficult because of covid as we all can't be get together for quite a while. (Respondent 18)

In these two responses first, the advantage of leadership vision to the follower has been highlighted as it stipulates more creativity to the follower's job and the daily monotonous and hard-working job of the followers. This is coupled with the imagination which brings more sales, and the participants appreciate its development because of the vision from the leader. Also, respondent 18 point out Covid a reason of not sharing the vision and objectives by the leader of the store. In pre covid period he mentioned the aims and goals of the business were shared by the leadership position which resulted in more sales and business to the store.

Umbrella Theme 1. Subtheme: Business objectives or KPIs as Vision

Subtheme: Personnel

Managing personnel is also necessary for achieving the vision of the business and it was found from the background information on participants that it is often the responsibility of the deputy managers and leadership position of the retail business to manage the followers. As there were 3 participants involved in managing the followers, the sources that mentioned this theme 3 times and it is referenced on 7 occasions.

So, few weeks back they were telling us that we gonna reduce the hours because they give us extra hours due to corona and social distancing so objected that how we can deliver the service with social distancing with less labour. If you have one less person, then you cannot do it. (Respondent 13)

Here the respondent 13 provided us with the evidence of using the labour hours supplied by the leadership of the store in managing the followers/personnel. As discussed before in the theme of followers as the negotiators of the vision, the followers take the control of the future from the leaders by asking for more labour hours.

His plans are to improve the KPI of the store and the plans are for recruitment. You should have people working in the store beforehand since the covid19 started the plan is to have more people in the store because of the increasing demand from the customers. (Respondent 19)

The theme 'use of vision to manage people' under the broad theme of personnel is also the evidence that the visionary leadership is in practice when followers suggested that the leader use the vision of Covid compliance business and bring changes to the human resource management like recruitment of followers because of the increasing demand from the

customers during the lockdown. Respondent 19 further confirmed the same by mentioning the key performance indicators of the business. This suggests that how the pandemic changes the vision and goals of the leadership in terms of the extra demand of the colleagues due to the increasing demand of the customers.

Umbrella Theme 1. Subtheme: Business objectives or KPIs as Vision

Subtheme: New direction to the vision

In 5 interviews out of 30 with 5 references, the respondents said there is evidence from the followers that leadership vision delivers a new direction for the followers. The significance of vision in new directions is evident from the following transcript

The change you would have been so if you don't know the vision and plan that managers have then you are lost, and you don't know what is the next step. when you imagine what the vision is or what is gonna happen then you are ok but when you don't know where you are then you wonder how you fit in his overall vision. (Respondent 18)

It implies from respondent 18 that vision it has to be communicated properly. To have a new direction implemented and take effect in the retail business, the vision must be shared. Also, respondent 18 suggests that if the vision and plans from the leadership are not shared then the followers are lost. Contrary to this new direction leads followers to the concept of the vision guidance that provides certainty and guidance to the followers.

It depends on what is it. You will always expect change in targets and change in goals so what happens that every quarter or month or every period they change the targets. (Respondent 2)

This is the reason that visionary leadership is often explained through strategic management that is the formation of the aims and goals for the organization. When these objectives change then a new direction is been communicated to the followers to achieve the team objectives. Respondent 2 explained that the targets and goals constitute vision, and these can be changed in the near future for the quarter and month. This suggests that the vision is affected by the short terms' plans of the leadership. Although the vision is long-term for this research it is found that the short terms changes in the plan will also have implications on the vision of the retail organization.

Followers Positive attitude towards Shared vision

Umbrella Theme 1. Subtheme: Follower's energy and Focus

This subtheme, 'follower's energy and focus' within the shared vision was found to be in discussion with 11 interviewees and at 14 places. The leader's expectations (14 sources and 19 references) provide the followers with energy and focus on their work. Young leaders (2 sources and 2 references) showed more capability to take up vision and the extra thinking (Subtheme: Followers taking vision as more work) into their attitudes when dealing with the followers. The following script from the followers was found to be providing detailed evidence.

when they will say that they have this much of planning, and we need our colleague help in this to do the job and then we can improve our department and our store. we give more choice to the customers and our store will come in the best in the region, so we try to get some points and according to these points your position is set in the region. But this is how we got encourage by the manager to work in this direction to take the store on top. (Respondent 3)

One of the reasons of the visionary leadership is to have the vision for followers to get the business on top in the region. This is found to be the cause of energy and focus for the followers, and it is the store-specific vision of the leader. Respondent 3 asserts the same thinking of how the followers energized and focused on their work by the leadership vision of taking the business on top of the region. This ranking of the business works by assigning points to the performance of the store which means more points suggest better performance. The criteria of the point-based system are the source of motivation and encouragement for the followers, and it energized them to work in this direction.

Yeah, I would say so. It is not his job to share vision with me and when he does that, he is more connected to his job instead of just coming in doing his job and going home that makes me motivated me as well.

My impression is positive. He keeps on reminding about the planning of the store and the futuristic approach inspires to be a good leader for the entire store. He creates a positive energy among the team members of the store.

(Respondent 5)

It is found to be positive, energetic, and motivating for the followers if the leader has the vision and shares it with the followers. This would allow the followers to come up to the leaders' expectations and work, in line with the leadership vision. The visionary leaders also involve the follower in futuristic activities like planning of the store and thus heighten the image of the leader. It generates energy for followers in their work and environment

Umbrella Theme 1. Subtheme: Productive followers

It was found through interviews that the sharing of vision with the followers ensued productive followers and it has been noted in 3 interviews and at 6 places which means fewer respondents had the discussion of productive followers on more occasions. This evidence of productive followers can be seen in the following transcripts.

Yeah, my manager share vision with me, and his vision is too be as productive as possible and basically to achieve our goals even better what we are doing now and to achieve those goals we need to be more like a team and get the store a facelift or you can say renovated. (Respondent 9)

According to respondent 9, the vision helps followers to be more productive which is one of the aims of the leaders for the followers. The team create a facelift for the store look and feel.

My role is to do my best I can and as fast as I can and as productive I can. Well, me getting more productive means having a plan every day and sticking to that plan and you reach productivity when you do the same thing again and you find short cuts in the same process and that is how you can get more productive, so my plan is to repeat the same thing every day and just perfect them. (Respondent 10)

Here also the respondent 10 explained what it means to be productive in the role of followers which is corresponding to the expectations of leaders. It is worth noting here that followers refer the productivity in their work and not as the result of sharing of vision but to carry out the daily tasks of the job through shortcuts. The shortcuts also lead to productivity.

Umbrella Theme 1. Subtheme: Not just workers but part of business

Follower's Mindset changes

Sharing vision also means having a change in the perception of followers about the leadership. The followers started thinking about leadership in a more positive way and think of themselves

not just workers but part of the business and leadership. This subtheme has been repeated in 4 interviews and referenced at 5 places. Similarly, the sharing of vision also changes the mindset of followers and is found to be from 3 sources and 3 references. The presence of these subthemes can be felt with the following transcripts.

Yes, connection with the manager is two-fold one is the supervision of the job-related task which is customer services and other one is the vision related. Vision connection is stronger as it is away from the routine work. (Respondent 20)

Yeah, sure because when they share their vision you feel part of the business, so the team works together for the common goal and the Aldi is the big company (Respondent 23)

Yes, in terms of mindset your mind set changes as well into focused mode it's time to put your manager head-on. We have good relationship with the management and with the manager with colleagues and we work well. At times we are driving to achieve the vision and picture he has for the business so for that you have to change your mind set a little bit now I need to manage, and it becomes a little bit more delegation to the colleagues give them focused and give them the job to do which is again always fulfilling and contribute into managers vision. (Respondent 22)

In the above two responses from the respondents 20, 22, and 23, it is found that followers perceive vision as a positive measure towards them which changes the mindset of followers. They become broad-minded in their approach following a common goal that matches with the leadership vision. Respondent 20 explained the reasons for the connection with the leaders. It suggested that the connection is twofold, one is job-related and the other one is vision related and the latter is stronger, as it takes the long-term approach and is away from the routine work. The vision connection of the follower with the leader makes them feel that followers are not just workers but part of the bigger business vision.

Followers Negative attitude and opinion towards shared vision

Umbrella Theme 1. Subtheme: Vision and planning not shared with followers

Followers taking vision as more work

Followers also expressed a negative attitude regarding the sharing of vision in terms of vision and planning not shared with them by the leaders (7 sources and 8 references). This opinion

is not about having a negative opinion about visionary leadership, but they said that they are not involved in the planning and vision from their leaders. This is on part of the leaders and the followers mentioned that following the vision is like doing more and extra work (1 source and 1 reference)

I think my manager does not have a visionary leadership style practice in his job instead he is a good manager with efficient people skills.

No, he does not involve me in the planning that has to do with the management team.

Sharing a vision is about doing more work but I come for work, so I don't mind doing more work, but I am indifferent to new work and new changes that our manager asks us to participate in.

(Respondent 14)

In the above response it was found that respondent 14 rejects the idea of visionary leadership in their respective leaders but at times does not agree that their leaders share the vision or involve them in the planning of the business. Also, as the followers in the retail setting are already occupied with their daily work like till, shelving, and deliveries, so they take the sharing of vision as more work which they avoid.

Umbrella Theme 1. Subtheme: Common cause of followers

Subtheme: Leaders Big picture or vision

This subtheme indicates how sharing of vision brings followers and leaders closer because of a common cause. This is a projecting theme with 11 participants talking about this on 11 references and it connects the follower with the leader's big picture or vision (12 sources and 18 references). These themes make the follower think in broader terms and uncover how their work fits in the overall picture of the leadership vision. Some of the script's samples can provide a better view of how the respondents view this in terms of sharing of vision.

Yeah, I feel that I am connected to the manager also with the top of the Sainsburys by following the vision as there are common things in the vision and in our jobs for example customers

it is not the individual objectives of the job but a combine common goal of arriving to his vision, The integrated team is formed after having a shared vision.

When the perception and the manager's vision is homogenous then we can have integration of work which is teamwork, and this teamwork is working towards a common vision.

(Respondent 17)

Respondent 17 shed some light on how their respective work and leadership vision has common grounds and is the way to connect to the leaders. Also, the interviewee explained the integration formation between the followers and leaders through common perception. Respondent 17 further points out that customers are the key part of the vision, and the follower connects to the leader because both have the priority of serving the customers.

Yes, sharing of vision brings more power to you and you start thinking long term change which is a company wide effort for the customers and for the employees of the Sainsburys. It makes me to think big and complete and relates my job with the overall company and my manager's vision. (Respondent 18)

By addressing the importance of thinking big, the respondent 18 provided evidence of following the vision in terms of the customers and employees. It is a corporate vision followed by all the employees of the retail organization. This allows the followers to also make their work wide enough to fit in the corporate vision.

Yes, sharing the vision changes me to do my job with big objective in mind. It opens my mind, and I am able to connect my scope of the job with the overall strategic aim of the company.

So, it's like a bottom-up approach so if he has anything he wants to do he tell us.....so the manager has the picture and then he feeds that to us to achieve business objectives.

The vision of the manager guides me on what to do in broader terms but then we have to relate this with the micro-level job responsibilities, but the big picture is only known to the manager. In this way, the manager guides us in the daily working of the store in how to use handheld devices for inventory control and filling up the shelves.

(Respondent 24)

Respondent 24 accept the effect of vision on the working and explained that how it benefits the followers by opening his or her mind. It also allows connecting the small scope of followers' work with the overall strategic aim of the company. On other occasions, the same respondent mentioned that it's a bottom-up approach, and the leader has the big picture which he or she feeds to narrow the scope, to achieve business objectives. The respondent also gives examples of inventory control and filling up the shelves for relating the bigger vision with the micro-level job of the followers. This relates to the supply chain vision of the retail business.

Umbrella Theme 1. Subtheme: Leadership vision in retailing

Subtheme: Organizational vision and individual vision

Subtheme: Vision and daily work

On some occasions, during the interviews with the followers, it was found that leadership vision in retailing is specific to the business while at other places it is in line with the retailer's corporate vision. In this category, there is one subtheme (leadership vision in retailing, 8 sources and 10 references) and two more subthemes of organizational vision and individual vision (5 sources and 7 references), and vision and daily work (3 sources and 4 references).

In these meetings and it was quite informative coz in these the manager spoke to us about where this store is in comparison to other local and Aldi stores as well, so he told us that we are kind of in the bottom level and we need to move up and how we are going to move up, so he shares his vision. (Respondent 8)

Yes, he does share the vision it and he want to be the best store in the area and the region. So, the top goal, for now, is to be the best in the area.

Its good he knows what he wants, and he knows who actually can help him to achieve the target or take the store forward coz it's not just our store we have around 800 stores in the UK, so he also tells us the ranking of the store in the UK, so we were in the top performing stores in the UK, but we are lacking behind, so we have to improve on that

(Respondent 21)

It is an indication by the respondent 21 that during meetings, the manager shares the informative vision. It informs the followers that how the business is performing in comparison to other Aldi and local stores and if it is underperforming, then how the business should be changed to achieve the vision. It is found that on many occasions the follower expressed that the leadership vision of the store is essentially competing for the store performance with other company stores and move on top in terms of sales and other business performance indicators.

The vision of my manager is in line with our company vision.

Yes, mind of the worker is important factor to do our job but our job as the retail assistant requires lots of work to be done with our hands and it's a physical work, but our manager lets us use our mind for understanding the vision and apply it to your job. There is a credit goes to our manager who also believe in developing mental

capabilities of the worker and this is how the worker comes out of the daily routine work and use his mind to have a better future. (Respondent 7)

As previously common to the theme named leaders' big picture it was also found that vision of the manager is in line with the company vision which is related with an organizational and individual vision. The individual vision is the store specific and leaders' originated vision, whereas the organizational is the corporate vision that covers the entire organization.

Umbrella Theme 1. Subtheme: Bidirectional vision process

The bidirectional leader-follower processes are found to be the sub-theme of vision sharing and are repeatedly found in 6 sources and 8 references. It is also important to mention here that this vision process is not one way from leader to the follower but it's the result of interaction and communication between both the leader and follower. The same has been found from the interviews in the following evidence in a retail setting.

I think the way I see it is it's a two-way process and here manager explain about vision what is it and if people have any questions, they can ask and it's like a Q and A and this is the way I see it. (Respondent 12)

When asked about the vision as the process this respondent 12 replied that it's a two-way process that required input both from the leader and follower sides. The leader first communicates the vision to the follower and then the question from the follower elucidates the position of the leader and the follower.

If he wants things from us, then he has to share the vision with the team without a team he can't work alone. I think it is same he needs us, and we need him. If there is no manager just the team working in the store, then it would not work like that. We need the leader; the leader is there to guide us according to the vision. If there is no leader then it would be madness. (Respondent 11)

Here also the respondent 11 said that the vision process is bidirectional, and it is because of the interdependent relationships of the leader and follower. In this, both need each other to achieve the vision's aim and goal.

Table 5: Themes, codes, Number of Sources, and Number of References in Research Aim (C): To investigate how and why followers perceive leadership vision in retail business

Umbrella theme	Themes	Codes/Subthemes	Number of sources	Number of references
Followers' perception of Visionary leadership				
	Positive perception	Inspirational and Ideal self	19	23
	Positive perception	Motivational	12	20
	Positive perception	Futuristic	10	14
	Positive perception	Strategic thinker	9	12
	Positive perception	Positive and good	8	10
	Positive perception	Problem solver	9	10
	Positive perception	Cooperative and open to ideas	7	9
	Positive perception	experienced knowledgeable and confident	9	9
	Formation of perception	perception through word of mouth	9	9
	Negative perception	Demotivating	6	7
	Positive perception	Innovative	6	7
	Positive perception	Manager and leader	6	6
	Positive perception	People skills	4	6
	Positive perception	Busy and hardworking	4	5
Formation of perception	Perception through actions	4	4	

	Formation of perception	how VL perception formed	3	3
	Positive perception	Personal best	3	3
	Positive perception	Professional	2	3
	Positive perception	Higher organizational performance	2	2
	Positive perception	Long term leader	2	2
	Positive perception	Social acceptance by followers	2	2
	Formation of perception	Source of visionary leadership perception	1	2
	Positive perception	Emotionally intelligent	1	1
	Negative perception	Not a visionary leader	1	1
	Positive perception	Sense of unknown	1	1

4.4 Research aim (C): To investigate how and why followers perceive leadership vision in the retail business?

Umbrella Theme 2: Follower's perception of Visionary leadership

Sub-theme: Inspirational and Ideal self

Under the second umbrella theme of followers' perception of visionary leadership the first and most overarching subtheme was found to be 'inspirational and ideal self'. Nearly more than half (19 sources) of the respondents voted for visionary leadership to be inspirational at 23 places. It can be said that the follower's perception of visionary leadership in retailers is to be inspirational and satisfy one's conception of what is perfect; most suitable- ideal self. It can be judged that how inspired are the followers with their leaders from the following response.

Yeah, I am inspired with him as he is very hard working, and he knows how to deal with most of the situations and I want to be like him. Yes, the impression and the perception of vision is source of inspiration, and it will give me a strong reason to follow my manager as he is not only working but also have a vision of how the working

of the store should look like for the customers. His approach and way of doing things inspires me and his communication to the team members and uniting his team to have a shared vision inspires me. (Respondent 5)

How this perception of the followers becomes the source of inspiration is also claimed by respondent 5, and this is found in another theme with the one source and one reference: 'perception becomes inspiration'. Respondent 5 appears to be inspired by the leadership and confirms that the perception and impression of the leader is the source of inspiration and becomes the reason for following the manager. The follower in this quote also suggests that the leadership style of the leader and the communication about the vision with the team members also drive them to be like leader, and prepare the follower for future leadership roles within the retail business.

Coz when I became Customer trading manager, it was last year and me and my manager work together to get things done, so my managers say among those things 10 things done but I stand up and say that 4 things done from his perspective. 10 things are possible to complete, and he says that he can do it in front of me so it's a source of inspiration for me that the way he extends the bar of work in the store. I did copy him what he did it works for me so I'm managing to get more work done

Yeah, off course. I want the store to go up. I mean if it is possible for the store manager then definitely, I admire him and inspire him. He is good guy, and he knows what he is doing. Matt is amazing and he is good leader and I like to follow him.

(Respondent 24)

Respondent 24 in the above excerpt also suggests the way follower perceive their leaders. As the customer trading manager in one of the retailers from sample provided with the example that his manager asked him to complete 10 things, and he did 4 things, but then his leader show him how to complete more work in less time which is a source of inspiration and extended the bar for work in the store. In this way, respondent 24 copy and admire his leadership position and perceive his leadership qualities for creating an ideal self.

Umbrella Theme 2: Follower's perception of Visionary leadership

Sub theme: Motivational

It is found in this research that visionary leadership in retailers is motivational for the followers. This subtheme was found in nearly half of the interviews in 12 sources and 20 references. In

simple words the vision makes the followers motivated as it adds more energy and focus (subtheme within shared vision) to their current job roles and prepares them for the future senior roles (subtheme: progression and development of followers). This can be seen in the following transcripts from the followers.

Yes, it gets me closer to my manager as sharing the vision is about sharing the future of the business and I am part of the business. It makes me more aware that how my job fits in the overall business which motivates me to work with more devotion and I get connected to my manager. (Respondent 8)

Yes, I like to be like him and achieve what he has achieved coz usually when he does same thing, I do like working in the morning coming to store so he does it way faster work in the morning and be more productive, so he sets a very good example not just by telling you how to do but he just shows you how to do and that motivates me.

Actually, he encourages more work and smart work. Manager working hard and we have to work with him and when we see the manager work hard then its good motivation for us to work like him and this is where he inspires us.

(Respondent 25)

Respondent 25 provides the reasons of this motivation which is found to be the way to get more closer to the leader and with the business and becomes the 'followers leader'. This subtheme of the follower's leader can also be evident in another respondent's comments about the leader working in the morning with the follower and being more productive and setting an example of good working practices. This uplifts the follower perception of visionary leadership. The two subthemes, 'follower leader' and 'motivational' complement each other and go hand in hand. When the leader of the business work hard like a follower then it is a good motivation and inspiration for the followers.

Umbrella Theme 2: Follower's perception of Visionary leadership

Sub-theme: Futuristic

Being the leader as futuristic in leading the store is also one of the predominant subthemes with discussions from 10 interviews with 14 references. One of the main characteristics of visionary leadership is its nature to be futuristic. Involving the followers in the planning provide evidence that the leader of the business is practicing the visionary leadership style. The subtheme 'futuristic' has the common theme under the vision guidance and its sub-theme

'advance working and proactive followers'. The follower perception of visionary leadership changes by advanced working and proactive followers and is evident in the following script.

Yeah so, we have the routers, and we have the plan anything that head office sends out if we got any changes in the store for example we need to shift around.... we have product potentially moving places so we need a shift around... we will then sit down look for what is coming up in our system and prepare for and sit down and organize the way in which we need something coming up overnight so we someone over night to take care of that, so we work together and see well ahead of time where we want to be. (Respondent 21)

My impression about my manager is that he thinks ahead of the current business situation and the benefit of this thinking that we can satisfy the customer more and meet the demand and get the supply chain moving smoothly. (Respondent 18)

My impression is positive. He keeps on reminding about the planning of the store and the futuristic approach inspires to be a good leader for the entire store. He creates a positive energy among the team members of the store. (Respondent 17)

The participants mentioned that the impression he holds of his leader is positive. Involving the follower in planning is proved to be the futuristic approach and inspires the followers. Thus, we can see that the follower perception is affected by being futuristic and the followers are inspired by the leader if the leader is a strategic thinker. Respondent 21, to complement the visionary futuristic approach suggests that the team members and the leadership together plan for the moving of the products from store to store and back to suppliers. This happens when the business has excess inventory and does not fit in the category of waste products. To plan this, the followers and leaders work ahead of their time to send back the excess inventories. At other times the respondent 18 relates the futuristic working approach with the customer and their demand for products. The leaders and as well followers have to answer the question that what the customer demand is and how it can be satisfied through the effective supply of the products. The perception of the followers about futuristic behaviour is thus positive as it benefits the business.

Umbrella Theme 2: Follower's perception of Visionary leadership

Sub-theme: Strategic thinker

Followers in retail business found their leaders describe the properties of the strategic thinker and this can be understood from 9 respondents and at 12 references. Strategic thinker also supports the subtheme 'futuristic' as the strategic planning is future oriented and presents the business scenarios of the year ahead. The literature also discusses the vision, future, and strategic management in the same context.

I will take vision as you mean essentially the goal and targets for the business. There will be company based target and then there be store specific targets so the company might say that we want to reduce the labor by 3% this is what the company share with us and we got that done and there will be store specific ones so, for example, customer satisfaction so that has been given by the store manager to us and then they will be reviewed every four weeks and in the review, we set the targets for the customer satisfaction to be excellent and then we get feedback from the customer that how we are doing. (Respondent 19)

Respondent 19 is explaining how strategic management and thinking are practiced in retail business by giving examples of the company-based and store-specific targets which are reviewed between the leaders and followers. The respondent confirms the meaning of the vision which is essentially the goals and targets of the business which suggests that the business and the leadership are practicing the notion of visionary leadership. Visionary leadership is correlated with strategic management and the concept of customer satisfaction and feedback from the customer about the business are part of the vision.

at times I feel more connected when the manager shares his vision of working with me and starts thinking of me and him as a team achieving the bigger objectives for the store operation. (Respondent 8)

Here also it can be understood that by referring to bigger objectives the participants signal to the strategic level aims and objectives for the business which is the vision of the leadership, and it is a way to connect the followers with leaders. Respondent 8 refers to the bigger objectives to the vision and strategic plan of the business. It is clear from the quotation that

when these objectives are shared with the follower the perception of the leader changes as strategic thinkers who believe in foresightedness and long-term goals.

Umbrella Theme 2: Follower's perception of Visionary leadership

Sub-theme: experienced knowledgeable and confident

Follower's perception of visionary leadership is affected by the experience, knowledge, and confidence the leaders exhibit to the followers. Experience is appreciated by the respondents from 9 sources and at 9 places.

I wanna say it in this way that intelligence is one thing when defining it. My manager has years of experience which is not comparable to any knowledge. I think it's not academic intelligence or rational intelligence but coz I recognize that he has all years of experience and if you base someone's smartness on some mistake then it's horribly wrong. (Respondent 20)

My impression is that he is doing a very good job as the manager and he has a lot of knowledge as the manager which is important, and he shows us different techniques to some, maybe people who are working for 5 years and do not know and that shows he is a manager and the leader. (Respondent 18)

Respondents 20 and 18 in quotations suggest that the follower carries the perception of the leader as the experienced manager and if the leader did not have academic intelligence or rational decision making then he will be perceived as the leader of the business.

Umbrella Theme 2: Follower's perception of Visionary leadership

Sub theme: perception through word of mouth

Subtheme: perception through actions of leader

What and how followers' perception is formed are the questions taken up in this theme and in the subtheme of perception through word of mouth. 9 interviews with 9 references talked about these followers' perceptions which can be noted in the following quotes of the respondents

I form the perception of my manager's work through his meetings and dealings with the team and the impression he leaves among the team members which is also telling me the general word of mouth he has with the team. The word of mouth becomes the

impression and perception of the visionary leadership of the manager. (Respondent 10)

My manager is popular with his vision of the business in the team which has positive word of mouth. (Respondent 16)

In this, the participants uncover that the perception of visionary leadership is formed in the minds of followers. Meetings and dealings with the leadership are some of the ways to form the word of mouth among the followers. By this word of mouth, the leader's image and perception of the leadership style and vision becomes well known. Respondent 10 emphasizes word of mouth as the key source of forming perception about the leadership which is the general opinion of followers about the leader. This suggests that the importance of follower perception is the key to the impression of the leader and the power rest with the followers about what should be the thinking about the leader. Respondent 16 also confirmed that the vision can be used by the leaders to be popular in followers and this also creates word of mouth about the leadership traits. The follower and leader interactions, general followers' opinions, and word of mouth both contribute to the formation of the perception.

Umbrella Theme 2: Follower's perception of Visionary leadership

Sub theme: Demotivating

Sub theme: Not a visionary leader

Umbrella Theme 1 shared vision

Subtheme: Vision and planning not shared with followers

Followers taking vision as more work

There were also some negative sub-themes about the follower's perception of visionary leadership, and it was found that the participants showed that they felt demotivating (6 sources and 7 references) and did not find the visionary qualities (1 source and 1 reference) in their leaders. This subtheme overlaps with the subtheme in vision sharing when the vision and planning are not shared with the followers or when the follower's point of view of the vision is taken as 'more work' in eyes of followers. Following are the script samples that strengthen these subthemes. It can be noted from these themes, in two categories that shared vision affects the follower's perception of visionary leadership and showed the importance of sharing

the vision with the followers and how much is the follower's perception is important when asking the follower about the vision perception of their leaders.

*Ahead of your shift say hello and say goodbye at the end of the shift after hard work, I mean little things make a huge difference because at the end of the day retail working is a hard job. You do not have to be robots coming and working and going home.
(Respondent 16)*

Many managers don't have a leadership role in the store it's mainly come for work, doing your work, and going home there is nothing more in terms of motivation and nothing inspirational it's just like coming and doing your work.

I understand my manager and his vision and where he is coming from... it's just that the motivational part is not there.

(Respondent 20)

These quotations from one of the respondents showed that how much it is demotivating for the follower if there is no sharing of vision and leaders does not believe in giving extra to followers on top of their daily hard work. Thus, it is found that vision in this situation could be very satisfying for the followers in terms of productivity and professional development, and growth. Respondent 20 explained how important is for the manager to share vision because of the motivation of the followers. Further to this, the perception of the followers' changes about the leadership as demotivating and negative. The leader who doesn't share the business vision of the retail organization and followers face the difficulty to follow as there is no vision or future goals for the business. Respondent 20 complains about the leadership and working environment of the retail business. There is a lack of motivation for the work as there is no leadership role of the manager. This explains that there is a need and curiosity of followers to get involved in high intellectual activities and issues relating to business for example sharing of the vision. Otherwise, the follower builds a negative perception of the leadership.

Umbrella Theme 2: Follower's perception of Visionary leadership

Sub-theme: Innovative

Subtheme: Cooperative and open to ideas

When followers were asked about their leaders, they responded that they are innovative and advocates a new way of problem-solving. In some 6 interviews out of 30 and 7 references, the follower quoted for innovative visionary leadership quality. Following is the indication by the respondents as examples of followers' perceptions.

My impression is that he is a fast thinker and superb in problem-solving and implementing new ideas for the betterment of the store.

For example, he tries to push things on the colleagues to manage and get new things done, new products, and for example transaction processing and smart shopping. The manager allocates time and person especially for these new things implemented

(Respondent 28)

Innovative leadership changes the follower perception in a positive sense and the leader involved the follower in the new things. In the above, the efforts from the leadership position to involve the followers in innovative ideas is also said to be visionary leadership quality. Respondent 28 mentioned new ideas referring to the innovation in the leadership behaviour which cause the perception of follower to be positive about the leader. In the retail context, the changing customer behaviour calls for smart shopping which also drives the leadership and follower of the organization to present the customers with smart innovative solutions and build the perception of the leadership to be innovative and customer-focused.

Umbrella Theme 2: Follower's perception of visionary leadership

Sub-theme: Manager and leader

It is found that respondents prefer to perceive their managers to be leaders rather than a manager. They made difference between the two on about 6 occasions and in 6 interviews in this research and it was found that managers are related with the implementation of the policies and strategies, whereas the leaders guide and influence the followers. But the manager must be called the leader as he or she has a team to lead for the business to be successful. Following are the samples transcripts from the London retailers that reinforce the same idea.

I would say that there is a slight difference between the manager and the leader. Yeah, but in a sense, he can be called a leader coz he got a team to lead for the business to be successful

His leadership and management make him try to make a link between the manager and the leader and for the management, you have to implement and for the leadership, you have to guide the people to work more and be like him.

(Respondent 25)

Respondent 25 also differentiates between the leader and the followers by saying that if there is a team under the manager then he can be seen as the leader. Respondent 25 further suggests that the manager implements and the leader's guide and works with the followers to set the example for an implicit vote for the leader.

Umbrella Theme 2: Follower's perception of Visionary leadership

Sub-theme: Busy and hardworking

This subtheme of the follower's perception found the leaders to be busy and hardworking which confirms with the sharing of vision subtheme of the follower's leader. This is where the leaders try to share the vision with the followers and bridge the gap between the follower and leaders. It portrays a positive and motivational image to the follower about the leaders and the same can be noticed in the below quotations.

I have high emotions for him as he works hard and with devotion. The emotions give me more motivation to be just like him and it gives me the reason to learn from his experience.

He is a leader he is not a boss, and he got the attitude and personality for being a leader he doesn't need to shout... just people follow him coz he is great. He works very hard.

(Respondent 24)

Here in the above quotation respondent 24 clarifies that the leaders in the retail sector consciously and deliberately change the follower perception as being good leaders who care for their followers. As mentioned in the last subtheme 'Manager and leader' the participant explicitly said that his manager is a leader and not a boss.

Umbrella Theme 2: Follower's perception of Visionary leadership

Sub theme: how visionary leadership perception formed

Subtheme: Source of visionary leadership perception

This is an important subtheme under the banner of follower perception and although its occurrence is low in the data, it communicated a power full message that how the visionary leadership perception formed in the retail business. It was found that participants discussed this subtheme from 3 sources and 3 references. Following are some of the references.

I form the perception of my manager's leadership style through his personality and by his working as the manager. The information comes from interaction with him in meetings and on the floor of the store. Also, his dealing with other colleagues gives me input in developing a perception of his leadership.

They are always planning and collaborating with us to uphold our process and implement new initiatives. Perception is formed by carefully noticing the managerial and visionary qualities of the manager which reflect in the working and management of the store.

The daily problem solving by the manager in the store also gives an idea about his visionary leadership.

(Respondent 17)

From the above transcript's samples, it can be implied about the perception of visionary leadership that followers provide a practical answer when asked about how the perception is formed. They responded that it is by the leader's personality and the leader's working on the floor of the store, and from the interaction of the follower with leaders in the meetings. The leaders always involved the followers in the planning in carrying out job duties and implementing new initiatives (innovative) which build a perception of the visionary leadership.

Umbrella Theme 2: Follower's perception of Visionary leadership

Sub-theme: Personal best and professional

This is also a low occurrence subtheme within the follower perception of visionary leadership, but it accurately describes one of the traits of the visionary leader that is giving personal best and professional leader. Both themes were found to be in 3 interviews and with 3 references and in 2 sources and 3 references respectively.

For my manager, I would say he is the best and he gives his personal best to whatever he does in the business, and he got the best leadership qualities

My managers at Tesco had the vision to be the best in the store for the business segments we had, and he used to say that I want my team to be the best and I want everybody to recognize that this is the strong team and everyone in the team had a secure relationship with the manager.... that was his vision

(Respondent 26)

Here the respondent 26 had a positive perception of his leadership style. It can be noticed from this respondent that the followers note their leaders show or practice the personal best in their work and they expect their team to also follow the same principle of working. This suggests that the leaders set the example of best working practices that influence the followers. They work on the same lines to follow their leaders.

Umbrella Theme 2: Follower's perception of Visionary leadership

Sub-theme: Higher organizational performance and long-term leader

Again, a low occurrence subtheme within the follower's perception of visionary leadership with 2 sources and 2 references. It was found that through higher organizational performance the visionary leadership is possible. The concept of visionary leadership does not go with ordinary thinking and performance and shows the characteristics of a long-term leader. The long-term leader is a believer in higher organizational performance. The following statement from respondent 12 as followers shows how the leader of the store takes a different route into a high-performing business through teamwork which was only possible by following the standards laid down by the leadership of the business.

When we came here in 2017 the situation of the store was very low, and he improved it taking it up to the standards. That was the biggest achievement of the teamwork.
(Respondent 12)

Umbrella Theme 2: Follower's perception of Visionary leadership

Sub-theme: Sense of unknown

This is again found to be a low occurrence sub-theme but a stronger unique to sample concept in terms of followers' perception of visionary leadership. It is only mentioned by one participant whose response is given below.

My impression about his role is that of high personal integrity and someone who develops a clever sense of the unknown as we do not know how the customer will react in terms of the prices and promotions in the store and also the layout of the store so there is a risk of the unknown which is catered through the vision of the manager, so I think the manager is dynamic and multitalented when using his visionary abilities and also the information from the system. (Respondent 12)

Respondent 12 believes in having a positive perception of the leader by complimenting the leadership style as having a sense of unknown. This trait of leadership is very specific to the visionary leadership style which also argue that vision is about creating a future for the organization. According to the respondent, this sense of unknown indicates the followers about how the customer will behave to the pricing and promotions changes to the product. The vision helps the leader to develop his sense of the unknown regarding the layout of the store for appealing to customers. This visionary perception of follower about the leader minimizes the risk of doing the business and yield long-term benefits to the entire team.

Umbrella Theme 2: Follower's perception of Visionary leadership

Sub-theme: Social acceptance by followers and emotionally intelligent

These two subthemes are also found to be low occurrence. The social acceptance by followers is due to the leader's shared vision. It is found that leaders when share their idea and vision are better accepted by the followers and the leaders. This is evident from the following transcript sample from one of the respondents.

He tries to share his ideas with us... he is asking us and getting feedback about the business from us that what do you think about this. (Respondent 16)

Respondent 16 mentioned the feedback from the followers by the leader. It's a way to get more social acceptance and if the follower agrees with the vision and ideas shared by the leader then they accumulate more social power from the followers. The follower perception changes when the leaders share the vision with the followers.

Table 6: Themes, codes, Number of Sources, and Number of References in Research Aim (d): To unsolved why vision guidance is a tool for followers to have a direction for the future of retail business?

Umbrella Theme	Themes	Codes/Subthemes	Number of sources	Number of references
Vision Guidance				
	Functions of vision guidance	Progression and development of followers	18	27
	Functions of vision guidance	Guide followers work	16	25
	Mechanism and methods of vision guidance	Advance working and proactive followers	15	22
	Functions of vision guidance	Planning aid vision guidance	15	18
	Functions of vision guidance	Creates meaning in followers' lives	10	12
	Functions of vision guidance	Followers Commitment	8	8
	Functions of vision guidance	Broad minded followers	4	5
	Functions of vision guidance	Optimistic future	5	5
	Functions of vision guidance	Planning and vision motivate followers	3	4
	Functions of vision guidance	Certainty to followers	1	1

4.5 Research aim (d): To unsolved why vision guidance is a tool for followers to have future directions for the retail business?

Umbrella Theme 3: Vision Guidance

Subtheme: Progression and development of followers

Sharing a vision with the follower guides and develop them to take future roles within the business. The followers show interest in vision guidance as it presented them with the opportunity to grow. This subtheme within the vision guidance is most overarching and it is a win-win situation for both the leaders and followers. From the leader's side: they wanted to share the vision with the follower, whereas from the follower's side, they take it as the

progression and development opportunity to rise above in the hierarchy of the organization. This subtheme was found to be from 18 sources and 27 references. Below are some of the citations from the respondents that will further present the evidence that how the follower reacted to vision guidance. The codes and subthemes combine to form two themes categorised as the functions of vision guidance and mechanisms. Functions explain what the vision guidance do to followers and mechanisms are how they do it.

100 percent so whatever vision my manager has for the store he allows us to be part of it as we are developing as well with him, and we also want to get higher and take senior roles. So, when my manager gives us the vision of what he sees and what he wants us from his store it allows us to take on the responsibility and see the store in the same way he sees it as if we are running the store so it allows us to progress even more so because we can all see it together.

I follow my manager's instructions. He is the leader of the store so I can rely on his advice and vision. He also makes effort to pass on the knowledge related to the vision and this causes a push of ideas towards us, and we start working under his instructions to convert his vision into reality.

(Respondent 22)

In the above, the participants mentioned that vision is the knowledge (subtheme: experienced knowledgeable, and confident) and as the follower, they rely on their advice and instructions about the future of the business. Respondent 22, in this quote showed the interest of followers for development and progression in a retail organization which is the result of vision guidance. This happens when the vision guidance directs the follower to the path of more responsibility and sees the business in the same way as the leader sees it. When the follower and leaders together are guided by the vision then it's easy to work on the collective targets. Respondent 22 further suggests that the followers rely on the leadership advice, and this is the reason that they see them as the leaders of the business. The knowledge shared by the leader becomes the source of followers' development and they are ready to take the next roles.

Umbrella Theme 3: Vision Guidance

Subtheme: Guide follower's work

It is found that in 16 interviews and at 25 places, the follower expressed that vision guidance provides them the lead to their daily work. The small follower contribution combines to realize the big aims of the vision. This necessitates that follower at all levels of the retail organization perceive the vision as compatible with their work roles. This is further reinforced in the following samples from the interviews:

the vision from the manager is the standardized operations of the store in which the manager can visualize how the store will look like in the future for the customers to be attractive and impulsive. The layout of the store is a perfect example of guiding me to decorate the store according to the vision of the manager. The vision of the manager also constitutes the customer to be happy and satisfied and have a terrific experience when they visit the store. This also guides me in doing my job every day.

Yes, both vision guides us in future directions. Managers' vision for the store is more we follow because it relates to our job and directly to the success of the store.

(Respondent 13)

Here the respondent 13 referred both to the corporate vision and personal store manager's vision. The store-level vision is a better guide to followers' work. The participant has discussed the example of how the vision guides the followers' work which we can see is related to the retail business. Respondent 13 further explain by example that how vision guidance directs the follower in a certain path. This can be understood by followers working on the layout of the store or having a superior customer experience which is aligned to the vision of the leadership.

Oh yeah, of course, the sharing of vision makes me think about the business of retailing in a wider sense and has more impact on my job on a smaller scale.

First, the vision of the manager becomes shared with when it's shared with us, and then it becomes our perception, and this perception will be used for practicing and implementing into the daily working through integration.

(Respondent 18)

This exceptional respondent 18 showed how the different concepts of visionary leadership are related to each other which is one of the research questions of this research. It was also

suggested that vision guidance gives followers thinking of business in a broader sense, and its impact on the smaller scale. Respondent 18 provides clues for how the perception of visionary leadership forms. This process starts with sharing and communicating the vision to the followers, and how they process this information to build the perception.

Umbrella Theme 3: Vision Guidance

Subtheme: Advance working and proactive followers

This subtheme is related to the vision guidance in terms of advanced working by the followers, as both are futuristic. The participants for this subtheme said that the vision guidance made them involve in advanced working and turned them into proactive followers. This sub-theme has 15 sources and 22 references which made this a principal subtheme. The following script indicates that why advanced working and proactive followers turned out to be a success for achieving the vision for the business.

Yes, the vision makes us plan our store operations in advance which becomes the guiding force for all the store activities including the customer service. The aim and vision of customer service are to have a satisfied customer.

Sharing the vision encourages feedback from the team. Proactively using the feedback, you receive can change how you get to the end result but ultimately supports you in following the direction you set out.

Yeah, for the advance working the manager involve me in the planning. The planning is around customer services and pricing. For pricing, we have to anticipate the customer buying decision for various price points. The manager and I develop an excel sheet for pricing which involves the comparison of sales at different prices. Likewise for customer services the manager also involves me in the planning of swift and satisfying service to the customer.

(Respondent 26)

Respondent 26 appreciated the sharing of vision and said that it encourages feedback from the follower. This in advance can change the result for the follower. Also, on other occasions, the respondents imply that the planning is part of the vision guidance which prepares the follower for the problem faced by the business. Some examples in this context are anticipation of customer buying decisions and pricing. These are also given by the participants to emphasize the advanced working and proactive follower due to vision guidance

Umbrella Theme 3: Vision Guidance

Subtheme: Planning aid vision guidance

Vision guidance is the future direction help for the followers. Planning the store operations with the follower help to define the vision guidance and planning becomes part of the vision guidance. It is found from the interviews that followers think that their leaders involved them in planning which helps in vision guidance. This is a major subtheme with 15 sources and 18 references and can be counter check with the follower comments below:

Manager involved us in the planning through computer aided future decision about the inventory in the store and managing the customer demand in a way to not to order from the suppliers too much or not to meet the demand.

Mostly we know what we have to do every day and our job contributes to the planning of the store. I follow what the manager tells us to do and his planning for the store is his vision of his. The document and the computer involve us in planning and tell us what is needed on the shelves, and this is what managers vision for the store guides us to operate the store.

He makes short-term, medium-term, and long-term plans for the store. If the short-term plan is not met and then the long-term plan also has to change accordingly. The manager looks for how we can improve the people who work and how we can improve the stock position, wages, and waste so on looking at the KPI to improve and the overall standards of the shop.

(Respondent 25)

The planning of the store by the leadership is part of the vision guidance and just like planning help to organize for the future, the vision guidance also supports follower guide for aims and objectives. Here the respondent 25 said that there was short term, medium-term, and long-term plan for the store in terms of achieving the vision related to the development of the people or improving the stock position, wages, and waste, and standards. All this planning by the leader with the follower help decides where to take the business and this vision must be shared with the followers.

Umbrella Theme 3: Vision Guidance

Subtheme: Creates meaning in followers' lives

Vision guidance creates meaning in the followers' working lives and they started to steer and imagine the future of the business just like leaders. This is supported by the following quotes from the interviews:

Yeah, I would say so. It is not his job to share vision with me and when he does that, he is more connected to his job instead of just coming in doing his job and going home that makes me motivated me as well. (Respondent 12)

Vision guidance advocates against the monotonous daily work of the followers and provides new meaning to the followers. In this regard respondent 12 reassured the leadership behavior as positive when he or she share the vision. The guidance along with this build a connection with the leadership and motivate followers.

Not like inspires me but he does motivate us and give us his impression that he is not using us just workers.

Yes, it does coz the way my manager is about explaining stuff like his vision makes you feel part of the business you do not feel like the staff just 9 to 11 shift you part of the business and the way he likes you to get into the business is like you can make the difference.

I think I do agree with this coz if most of the team don't know what vision is it's more like what you are getting out of this company then a lot of followers can't put their best in the work, they do well as opposed to this if you don't understand that what the vision is then you just coming for the work and don't take interest in big things

(Respondent 9)

Respondent 9 suggests that they see the leader changing their lives by sharing the vision and providing guidance for the followers. Further to explain this in more detail the vision motivates the followers and make the work of follower meaningful. The absence of vision makes the followers egocentric in their behaviour and they started to just follow the shift timing from 9 to 5 and start to think about themselves and not about the leadership and organization. The follower is unable to put their best if there is no vision.

Umbrella Theme 3: Vision Guidance

Subtheme: Broadminded followers

It was found that due to vision guidance, as one of the functions of visionary leadership, followers become broad-minded. The samples scripts from the transcribed interviews strengthen the function of vision guidance: broad-minded followers. It comes from 4 sources and 5 references:

Yes, after understanding the vision I feel my thinking about the business has broadened and I also got relaxed from doing the monotonous work I have to do every day in the store. The vision also makes me a positive work and believe in teamwork.

Yes, the vision provides a great and effective way of connecting to your manager as it broadens our thinking about customer services, and you feel that you are contributing to the success of the business which is taking care of the customers. The vision not only connects you in terms of the customer services but in all areas of the retail operations

(Respondent 20)

Respondent 20 present an escape of followers from the daily monotonous work which is because of the vision guidance. The success of the business is because of the superior service to the customers and by acting broad-minded. Followers connect the contribution of the success with their job and business vision.

Umbrella Theme 3: Vision Guidance

Subtheme: Optimistic future

Vision guidance also caused followers to be optimistic about the future of the business which would result in betterment in the state of mind of the leaders and followers. This is one of the advantages of a shared vision that it provides guidance to the followers in terms of where to go and how to go to achieve the vision for tomorrow. From 5 interviews and on 5 occasions the follower suggested that vision provides an optimistic future about business and in return gives security and prosperity to the business. This is evident in the following quote from one of the respondents:

Yeah, you get positive when coming to know about his vision and planning we come to know new things he is planning and the good positive future of the business. Always you think it's gonna be better. (Respondent 6)

Respondent 6 believes visionary leadership to be the constructive behaviour of the leader. This can be noticed when the respondent says that followers become positive when faced with the vision and planning of the leadership. This positive thinking of business, for being good in the future brings an optimistic mindset and environment that promotes growth and prosperity for the members of the organization.

Umbrella Theme 3: Vision Guidance

Subtheme: Planning and vision motivates followers

As previously found that followers feel motivated with the visionary leadership style, here it is reconfirmed that planning and vision motivate followers. It has been found from 3 interviews and 4 references that involving the followers in planning motivates them. The vision which constitutes planning as the main part has elements of setting up aims and objectives for the business. This can be found in the following citations from the respondents. Also, the focus of followers in their present work is doing the hard work so as previously mentioned that they found vision to be motivating and inspiring for leaders.

Yes, I feel that I am part of the planning process and therefore it motivates me

Yes, the manager involves us in the planning of the store for the pricing and promotion. The manager has the vision of the sales achievement for this he plans the changes in the pricing and promotion of the products just to stimulate the sales. So, his vision of maximising sales is subject to our planning of maintaining right prices and have promotion for the products.

(Respondent 11)

Umbrella Theme 3: Vision Guidance

Subtheme: Certainty to followers

Vision guidance also provides followers with certainty in their work. They get clarity and if there is no guidance from the vision then the follower felt that they are lost, and they are not sure of the next step. So, a vision made the follower certain about the future of the business and this

is clear from the following quotation that how the absence of vision guidance deviates from the direction and creates chaos:

The change you would have is if you don't know the vision and plan that managers have then you are lost, and you don't know what the next step is. When you imagine what the vision is or what is gonna happen you do not know where you are and how you fit in his overall vision. (Respondent 13)

Respondent 13 discussed how uncertainty develops when there is no visionary leadership. The future certainties provide security and peace of mind for the followers as they know where the organization is heading and why. It informs the follower about their role in the future direction. The certainty is the function of vision guidance (see Table 9)

Umbrella Theme 3: Vision Guidance

Subtheme: Follower's commitment

To fully understand the vision guidance, followers must show full commitment towards their leaders. This commitment is confirmed by the followers in the following quotes from 8 interviews and at 8 references and it also suggested that without this commitment the leaders cannot guarantee teamwork and bonding with the followers which means sharing of vision is not possible. How the followers show commitment is shown in the examples given below in terms of cooperation by followers to do extra shifts and work hard and push more into their daily work. Here also the previous subtheme of follower engagement in sharing vision has to be differentiated with the commitment. Follower engagement is more valid when sharing of vision is required, whereas the commitment more goes to the vision guidance. Vision guidance gives followers' commitment to its vision because it is following the direction to achieve the aims and goals.

He as the manager works in a team and if he pushes me for some more shifts then I try to come up to his expectations and the bottom line is I'm here to do my job and if he wants me to do get involved in any extra work then I am happy to do it

I have always been told to work hard and always try my best and push myself and that is what he wants from us he always tries to push us in different ways and at the same time he supports us as well.

(Respondent 15)

Respondent 15 showed the commitment he or she has with the leader. This is reflected by coming up to the expectations by agreeing to take more work like vision implementations. The respondent further explains the commitment with the leadership by pushing the bar of work which does not mean that followers only work, it's also the leader who will support them.

Table 7: Themes, codes, Number of Sources, and Number of References in Research aim (e): To confirm how followers perceive intellectual ability for understanding leadership vision

Umbrella Theme	Codes/Subthemes	Number of sources	Number of references
Follower's Intellectual ability			
	Higher intellectual ability better understanding	15	15
	No need for high intellectual ability	8	9
	Education and intelligence	3	3
	Language barrier for followers	1	1

4.6 Research aim (e): To confirm how followers perceive intellectual ability for understanding leadership vision.

Umbrella Theme 4: Follower's intellectual ability

Subtheme: Higher intellectual ability better understanding of vision

Subtheme: Education and intelligence

This is theme 4 regarding the follower's intellectual ability to understand the vision. Opinion from the follower was discussed with the followers about what they think about their intellectual ability and the vision. Higher intellectual ability is needed for a better understanding of the vision was found to be the top leading subtheme with 15 interviewees discussing about this with 15 references. This reinforced the relationship of the intellectual ability of the follower and understanding of the vision. The following samples from the respondent's interviews expressed the same point:

Yeah, the perception of the vision and the mental power go hand in hand. One requires the other just like you require the more mental capacity to understand the vision, which is complex and futuristic, so it needs a greater intellectual ability to make the perception of the vision. (Respondent 8)

Respondent 8 made the relationship of the perception of the vision in the minds of the followers with the mental capacity. They defined the vision to be complex and futuristic which makes it complicated to understand and internalize by the followers.

Intellectual ability is the ability of the mind. Yes, knowledge and wisdom play a critical role in the formation of the perception of vision. The higher the mental capabilities the better you understand the vision of the manager and better you integrate with him for having supersonic performance teams. (Respondent 12)

Respondent 12 linked the mental capabilities of followers with the vision integration and the participants define the intellectual ability and explained how the perception of vision related to the knowledge and wisdom of the followers.

Yes, the mind of the worker is an important factor to do our job, but our job as the retail assistant requires lots of work to be done with our hands and it's a physical work, but our manager lets us use our mind for understanding the vision and apply it to your job. There is a credit goes to our manager who also believe in developing mental capabilities of the worker and this is how the worker comes out of the daily routine work and use his mind to have a better future. (Respondent 13)

This is quite an influential quote made by one of the followers about the leadership role in developing intellectual capabilities. Although much of the work of the follower in the retail setting is done by hands still the leaders persuade the followers to come out of the daily work and focus on the vision and long-term goals of the business. Respondent 13 agrees with the relationship of the intellectual ability of followers with the vision understanding.

The more educated and intelligent you are, the better you form the perception of the manager's vision. That's why in recruiting for these positions the intellectual ability is the key criterion for getting the job for this position. Understanding the vision also requires a higher level of intellectual ability because creating a future is not easy if you

are not intelligent. You should have the mind to understand the vision. (Respondent 17)

Complimenting the initial subtheme, the respondent 17 above mentioned that followers' education and intelligence play an important role in forming a perception of visionary leadership.

Umbrella Theme 4: Follower's intellectual ability

Subtheme: No need for high intellectual ability

This subtheme was found to be presenting the opposite point of view where participants said that they would not require the high intellectual ability to understand the leadership vision, and this is also a unique finding to the sample under study. This is a second most popular subtheme (8 sources and 9 references) within the follower's intellectual ability where the followers did not agree with the need for intellectual ability to pursue the vision in their work. It is due to the nature of the work they engage on the floor of the retailers. Some of the participants put the same in this way in the following quotes:

No, I would not say intellectual ability will allow me to see his vision more clearly. I would not say that it would make a difference how I see him it would be easier to perceive his vision and goals and put them into action so better you understand his vision and whatever he wants us to do the easier for you to implement it in your own job.

So, I don't think that there is as you know... when my manager says to me and if he has the vision to go to Mars in 20 years then I am quite capable to understand that.

(Respondent 18)

Respondent 18 here above reassured his intellectual ability with the leaders by saying that even if the vision is to go to Mars in 20 years, then he is quite capable to understand. This means to say that the vision of the leaders in retailers does not require education or intelligence to decode by the followers. Further to explain follower intellectual behavior the respondent 18 accepts that this ability will allow seeing the vision of leadership more clearly.

Umbrella Theme 4: Follower's intellectual ability

Subtheme: Language as a barrier

The participant for this subtheme brought a new direction to the discussion of the intellectual ability of followers to understand the vision of the leader and is unique to the sample of this research. Although the occurrence of this sub-theme is very low (1 source and 1 reference), but it was the realism of the London retailers. The city is full of diverse people and from different cultures where language could be one of the barriers to understanding the vision of the leader. The same can be felt in the following reference from the respondent:

The main barrier is the language, as English is not everybody's first language here and some people struggle with it, and sometimes people misinterpret what others mean.... that type of thing. (Respondent 13)

Respondent 13 suggests that language can play a role in the intellectual abilities of the followers. Further clarifying the link if the followers don't understand the language of business, then it's highly likely that they foresee difficulty in interpretation of the instructions from the leadership.

Table 8: Themes, codes, Number of Sources, and Number of References in Research question (f): To find out why and how followers in retail businesses integrate into leadership vision

Umbrella Theme	Themes	Codes/Subthemes	Number of sources	Number of references
Vision Integration with followers				
	Mechanisms and methods of integration	Integration through standards or vision	10	14
	Functions of integration	Integration promotes shared vision	9	9
	Functions of integration	Integrated followers enhance shared vision	3	3
	Functions of integration	Integration and communication of vision	7	7
	Mechanisms and methods of integration	Empower broad-based actions in followers	6	6
	Mechanisms and methods of integration	Processes and procedure way of vision integration	4	4

	Mechanisms and methods of integration	Simplicity and repetition	3	3
	Mechanisms and methods of integration	Conflicting ideas dampen vision integration	2	2
	Mechanisms and methods of integration	Trial and error vision integration method	1	1
	Mechanisms and methods of integration	Small followers' contribution	16	20

4.7 Research aim (f): To find out why and how followers in retail businesses integrate into leadership vision

Umbrella Theme 5: Vision integration with followers

Subtheme: Small followers' contribution

How the vision is understood and integrated by followers into work behaviours and decisions significantly predict what would be the small follower's contribution to their work. This research aims to satisfy the broad area of the vision which would result in vision integration. This subtheme was found to be from 16 interviews and 20 references. Following are the sample script from the respondents highlighting the same point of how vision integrates by followers.

I am doing what I have to do in my work, and I try to follow his instructions and do what he suggests us to do. Our daily work is supported by the physical work and the computer-supported work and on top of this, the manager's vision also allows us to apply to our daily work and make the things and result more customer-focused.

(Respondent 9)

It is suggested by respondent 9 that vision integration makes the followers more customer-focused and as previously said that it's a priority for the leadership vision that how followers integrate with the leaders by following the same principle. The respondent in this quote says that he or she follow what is expected of his leader, but at the same time accomplishes the vision of the leader by applying its contents into the daily work. This also reflects on the work of followers.

Yes, it gets me closer to my manager as sharing the vision is about sharing the future of the business and I am part of the business. It makes me more aware that how my job fits in the overall business which motivates me to work with more devotion and I get connected to my manager

Oh yeah of course the sharing of vision makes me think about the business of retailing in a wider sense and has more impact on my job on a smaller scale.

(Respondent 27)

Also, respondent 27 expressed their opinion of how the follower work fits in the overall business of retailing vision. It makes the followers think from a wider angle which can have more impact on the smaller scales. Another evidence from this respondent shows small contributions of followers in their work by informing how the work fits in the overall business and helps in connecting with the leadership. The small follower contribution is about follower integration into the work and with the vision of the leader. This also closes the gap between the follower and the leader as followers work with the motive and goal of vision.

It helps me tell what I have to contribute to the bigger picture of his vision and goals and he tells me what is expected of me, so I know what to do when I come in.

I agree with this coz we all have a role to play in the store and if someone does not do it then it will affect the vision

(Respondent 21)

Respondent 21 mentioned that they all have a role to play to contribute to the bigger picture of the leader. Thus, they come to the expectations of the leader and if the follower declined to input his or her efforts into the vision then it will be unable to achieve the big objectives of the business and will lead to deterioration of the business outcomes.

I make the effort to analyse vision of the manager and then try to understand its contents and areas of concerned which overlaps with my job. Then I figure out how my manager sees the future of our business and the areas he wants to have improvement or change

It opens my mind, and I am able to connect my scope of the job with the overall strategic aim of the company

(Respondent 26)

Small follower contribution and vision integration come in the shape of the contents and areas of vision that overlaps with the follower work behaviours, and it opens the mind, and the follower can connect his or her work with the overall strategic aim of the leadership vision. Respondent 26 explained the steps of sharing and integration of the vision process. He acknowledges that following initiative is important for having integration of vision. The leader's priority for the area improvement provides directions to the follower to make changes in the work. This unfolds the mind of followers, and they are better able to connect their work with the vision of the leadership.

Umbrella Theme 5: Vision integration with followers

Subtheme: Integration through standards

Followers in retailers showed that vision integration is also acquired through implementing the standards in the retail store. Examples of these standards are automatic transaction processing, the layout of the store, and shelving the store using handheld device which addresses the broad objectives of the vision. It is the way of integration in followers in their work behaviours. This subtheme was found to be covering 10 interviews and 14 sources and indicates in the following quotations from the followers:

whatever he says to you to do like any target he sets for you or any standard he set to achieve he does it himself and he shows me in front of me so it is like I can do it why can't you and his standards are too good, so his leadership and motivation is pretty good.

We have standards we the team has our standards, and the manager has standards as well, so we check our standards, and they are not up to the standards then we ask them to redo it again. We check the standards through paperwork, and we also do the visual checks of the shelves on the floor.

(Respondent 23)

Respondent 23 in the above stressed the importance of the standards in the retail operations and how this is used by the leaders to achieve the visionary leadership objectives. These standards in the store are enforced through doing paperwork like excel sheets and visual checks of the shelves which gives feedback to the leadership about the appropriate shelving for the products. Standards are a means to achieve vision integration between the leaders and followers and it also change the work behaviours of the followers.

His vision involves improving the waste standards, improving colleagues, and team training.

When I do work, I just make sure that standards are met. I don't like panic and I want everything to be smooth in the store like a customer coming in, so I just make sure everything is in place and tight when we open so the bottom line is the standard has to meet.

(Respondent 18)

Discussing the relationship of vision integration and standards of followers' work, the respondents said that improving waste standards in retail and developing the followers through team training also helps in the vision integration. Further to explain how the integration of vision is achieved through mechanisms and methods of following standard, the respondent 18 reinforced the importance of working with the standards of retail operations.

Umbrella Theme 5: Vision integration with followers

Subtheme: Integration promotes shared vision

Subtheme: Integrated followers enhance shared vision

From the interviews, a trend was visible about the integration and shared vision. It was found that participants were making some logical connections between these two. This is apparent from 9 sources and in 9 references whereas integrated follower enhances the shared vision and was found to be from 3 sources and 3 references. Following were the noticeable scripts:

If I would not be close to my manager, then I would not take on his vision or take on what he is doing or what he wanted to achieve. (Respondent 7)

Here the closeness implies vision integration, and respondent 7 claims that without this it's not possible to understand the vision of the leader and come up to his or her expectations.

Yeah, coz I think you know that openness with everybody includes everybody it fosters a team ethics as opposed to you know where everybody thinks I am an individual and we are not working as the team and so it does not work so well and in this case, everybody working for him or herself and not working for each other and certainly for this environment you have to work as the team. (Respondent 3)

Respondent 3 when referring to teamwork mentioned that openness creates a positive environment for vision integration and if there will be too much emphasis on individualism and working for self, then the concept of vision integration diminishes.

I think the more integrated I feel with my manager the easier it is to form the shared vision. Connecting with your manager is the key to having the vision transferred from the manager to the team member and connection comes with the initiative from both sides. (Respondent 22)

Respondent 22 here referred to theme one: shared vision and subtheme: Bidirectional vision process which is the overlapping theme with the vision integration. It can be implied from these two themes that vision integration and shared vision come into force due to the bidirectional vision process where initiative from leaders and as well as followers is necessary for connection between the two.

The outcome of shared vision is having more integrated followers with the manager. The more managers share the vision with the team members the more integration between them. He shares the vision of having one team in the store.

Integrated followers like us enhanced the shared vision as the shared vision is dependent on the relationship of the followers and the manager.

(Respondent 22)

Expressing the relationship between the shared vision and integration one of the findings is related to the outcome of a shared vision and the integrated followers. Further to strengthen the association, it can be implied that the more leader shared their vision, the more will be integrated followers. It's a continuous process until the one vision of the leader-follower is achieved which is 100% vision integration.

Umbrella Theme 5: Vision integration with followers

Subtheme: Integration and communication of vision

Leader-follower communication regarding vision is crucial and the same has been found through the interviews in this research that open communication is the key to understanding

the vision. Strong and effective communication leads to better vision integration. From 7 sources and 7 references, it is found that the link between vision integration and communication is vital. In the following script samples it can be notice that how effective communication in retail business is achieved and what is the role of communication in strengthening the relationship of leader-follower.

You mean the communication with the team? Vision communication is through emails and writing memos we also use whats app and social media for the communication. For the integration of the followers, I would say that the more integrated with the team the more knowledge you will have or the more vision you can have which is shared coz your communication is more open, and you are more integrated with your manager and the team

I think the communication of the leader is important that is what the leader wants to do and what he has to communicate with you so as the follower. I have to understand what he wants so I deliver the same expectations does not matter if it's 100% or not even if I understand what he wants and he thinks that he has communicated the vision to me then it is integrated.

(Respondent 28)

Clearly from the above example statements, communications allow followers to come up to the expectations of the leader and when there is 100% effective communication then it results in vision integration. Respondent 28 explained the real methods and ways of communication used between followers and leaders. These are through emails, memos, and WhatsApp, and social media groups which is a nowadays trend of connecting the people. This also provides an effective medium of communication and integration. The more the followers integrate with the leadership the more they are knowledgeable about the vision.

Umbrella Theme 5: Vision integration with followers

Subtheme: Empower broad-based actions in followers

It is found from the interviews that vision integration is achieved through empowering broad-based actions in followers by the leaders. This subtheme was discussed by the followers in 6 interviews and at 6 references. The followers discussed how the leaders empower followers to take on broad-based actions in their daily work behaviours which is evident from the following quotations:

Yes, the sharing of vision makes me think about the business of retailing in a wider sense and has more impact on my job on a smaller scale.

the sense that whatever he says you to do like any target he sets for you or any standard he set to achieve he does it himself and he shows me in front of me so it's like I can do it why can't you and his standards are too good, so his leadership and motivation are pretty good. It is not necessary words but its most actions.

(Respondent 13)

Further, the evidence that targets and goals have been practiced by the leader through actions and not just by words, also indicates to facilitate the vision integration. Respondent 13 suggests that when wider concepts and responsibilities are applied to the follower work, then it creates more impact on a smaller scale. Respondent 13 also explained that the leader first shows himself how the targets of the vision can be achieved which set the example of motivating good leadership practices in followers.

Umbrella Theme 5: Vision integration with followers

Subtheme: Processes and procedure way of vision integration

Subtheme: Integration through standards

This subtheme was expressed by the participants as the mechanisms and methods of vision integration and compliments the previous subtheme 'standards'. This is found to be a low occurrence theme but can become a powerful one if combined with the integration through standards. Processes and procedures are the way of executing and implementing the standards in retailers. Integration through standards is one of the top subthemes of vision integration. Followers suggest that they follow processes and procedures which are the standard way of doing business and help in achieving the vision integration. Processes and procedures were talked about by 4 respondents and at 4 references and the following are the sample transcripts from some of the respondents:

Well, it comes back to what are processes and procedures are like? And you know you got the processes and procedure to do something and you know you might have to think a different way about how you gonna achieve the aim? so it's some of it is written down and a lot of is needed to be picked up during the job and I think that.....you know you try to do your job in a certain way then you have to think about why you are doing it and how you must do it and you got this vision and how you

gonna achieve this...you have this vision and how you do your job to link your job with the vision. (Respondent 7)

So, nothing personal and it is all business so it's from the company perspective that what he wants to follow the company process and procedure. It's the same, nothing change coz we all follow the manager instructions and procedures. (Respondent 17)

The processes and procedures are an important way of conducting the retail business and have established links with the vision integration. Vision standardized the retail operations for the follower and all followers in this research expressed the need of following the processes and procedures and sticking to the standards which is part of the leadership vision. Respondent 7 establishes the link between following the procedures and process of retail operations with the vision. The questions of carrying out the follower work in terms of the why and how followers understand processes and procedure answer that how the vision should be followed. The process and procedure provide the mechanism and methods for achieving the vision integration. Further to explain these mechanisms of vision integration respondent 17 suggests that if the followers implement the instructions of leadership by adhering to the processes and procedures of retail then we assume that they have followed the vision.

Umbrella Theme 5: Vision integration with followers

Subtheme: Simplicity and repetition

Simplicity and repetition (a low occurrence subtheme of vision integration) in followers' communication also help in vision integration. The participants have talked in 3 sources and at 3 references about this subtheme. How the respondents expressed their point of view about simplicity and repetition can be noted in the following quotes:

The sharing of vision makes me simple, authentic, accept information from multichannel, and repetition makes me understand the vision better and reinforces the message in the mind of the team.

Yes, what he says and what he does is basic it's very common sense as it is a retail job at the end of the day. I feel that if you are a supervisor then it is different as you have more responsibility, they have more colleagues under you.

(Respondent 12)

The vision is simple, futuristic, and authentic that makes the follower also able to understand the vision. Thus, integration is possible by repeated messages from the leader to the followers. Respondent 12 in line with this finding provides the evidence that sharing of vision is a simple process and if the respondent is exposed to repeated messages about the vision, then it's easy to understand the future goals of the business. This suggests that although the vision is about the leadership aims and objectives which makes an impression that this will be complex and hard to understand, it's better to be simple, basic, and follow common sense.

Umbrella Theme 5: Vision integration with followers

Subtheme: Conflicting ideas dampen vision integration

As suggested by the followers a close relationship with the leader is the prerequisite of the vision integration. Close relationship means that followers agree with the leaders and do not have a conflicting perspective of looking at the vision. This rushes the relationship with the leader a resisting one that can lead to disagreement which undermines the vision integration. This subtheme is also a low occurrence and only has 2 sources and 2 references. Following is the illustration from the excerpt:

We have the ability to look at the vision and I might even say should I wanna be careful about it a little bit? So, his idea what he wants is completely different from mine, but if we share our ideas and take half my idea and half of his, however, if we are not closer to each other then it's difficult to achieve we both have conflicting ideas then the things started to resist. (Respondent 11)

Respondent 11 asserts his stakes in the vision and explained this through conflicting ideas in vision integration. The followers and leaders must be close to each other, and this integration is not possible if both do not show agreeableness in their interactions. This agreement not only affects the vision integration, but also the follower perception, and if the follower does not agree with the leadership vision, then it's highly unlikely that they can be leading in the desired direction.

Theme 5: Vision integration with followers

Subtheme: Trial and Error-integration method

Low occurrence (1 source and 1 reference) but very practical subtheme of vision integration and it was expressed by the customer trading manager at Sainsbury's as the follower of the

store leader. Trial and error were found to be one of the methods of working with the followers when aiming to achieve the objectives and vision integration. This method was adopted to achieve the business objectives like customer satisfaction, boosting sales and profitability.

For us, it will be trial and error. Try something to trying boost customer satisfaction, trying boost sales, and trying for profitability might be little things about pushing the sales high in front of the store just like that little might work, or it might not work. If it works brilliantly and if does not work that is fine as well. I think in terms of we used the most in this store to try to improve the sales and the shop is just the trial and error.

(Respondent 26)

In the above excerpt, although respondent 26 expressed full confidence in using the trial-and-error method with working with the followers, it also shows that sometimes it did not work which is also ok. This can be a learning point as it answers the question of why the method does not work to have integration between the leaders and followers.

4.8 Main research question: How do these mutually inclusive interconnections develop and cause a whole readiness in the followers to prepare for the organizational change?

The interconnections between the visionary leadership concepts are taken into consideration in this thesis. This research offers the opportunity to mix these subthemes and present the explanation of how and why integration exists. It helps in answering the research question of how these mutually inclusive interconnections develop and cause a whole readiness in the followers to prepare for the organizational change (Table 12). The research will lead to findings (interconnectedness) that support the following proposition.

Proposition 4: Followers' perception and shared vision are solved by the link between vision guidance and integration of vision with the followers.

The current research found that when followers integrate into the leadership vision it motivates them and changes their perception in a positive manner (Kantabutra & Avery, 2007; Densten, 2005). Greater vision integration is achieved when the leaders share targets and goals of the business with the followers which makes them strategic thinkers (Table 13)

Table 9: Mutually inclusive embedded Umbrella themes

Name	Files	References
Integration & follower perception	6	13
Integration & shared vision	19	44
Integration & vision guidance	11	16
Intellectual ability & All	10	14
Shared vision & follower perception	24	71
Shared vision & vision guidance	23	61
Vision Guidance & follower perception	12	20

Table 10: Overlapping of subthemes/codes in followers' perception and integration

Vision Integration	Follower perception
Small follower contribution	Futuristic
Small follower contribution	Motivational
Integration through standards	Strategic thinker
Integration through targets and goals	Strategic thinker

Among the interconnections under study in this research, the vision integration and follower perception of visionary leadership have the most less common subthemes (sources: 6 and references: 13) which suggest that these are found to be less connected to each other. The findings suggest that when the followers integrate and engage with the leaders, the perception changes, or the perception becomes clearer and positive. For instance, from table 13, the integration through small followers' contributions into their work behaviours makes the follower perception futuristic and motivational. This happens because the vision guides small follower contribution that changes the followers' work. This results in motivational and futuristic followers. Slåtten et al., (2021) worked on a similar relationship of vision integration and follower perception by focusing on employee perspectives in terms of the vision. The findings indicated that the employees' perception of organizational attractiveness is directly and positively related to employees' organizational vision integration. This allows us to say that the employees perceive the organizational attractiveness as increasing and more acceptable when they are integrated with the vision. A similar relationship can also be confirmed by the findings of the current research which says

that in the retail context, vision integration is possible through following the standards of retail operations. This also makes the followers strategic thinker and positively affect the follower perception of visionary leadership.

The intellectual competency of followers was also found to be not significant connections with the other visionary leadership categories. The low occurrence of 10 interviews out of 30 and 14 references in these 10 sources makes this category less integrated as compared to others (see table 14). The higher intellectual competency of the follower helps them to integrate more effectively through small follower contribution into their work that changes the perception as the experienced, knowledgeable, and confident leaders who are also futuristic (Thuan, 2019; Kohles et al., 2012; Slåtten et al., 2021). Findings indicated that the organizational vision integration among employees is directly and positively related to creative performance in their respective work role. These research findings suggest that the creative performance is caused due to followers' intellectual competency that helps in the understanding of the vision. The integration of vision among followers calls for a high level of understanding, knowledge, and wisdom.

Table 11: Overlapping of subthemes/codes in Intellectual competency of followers

Intellectual competency	
Higher intellectual ability higher understanding	Integration: Small followers' contribution
Higher intellectual ability higher understanding	Perception: experienced knowledgeable and confident
Higher intellectual ability higher understanding	Perception: Futuristic

It is found from this research that vision integration and vision guidance are better connected, forming relationships, informing us why and where these links are formed. A low occurrence of 11 sources and 16 references gives us insight into this affiliation but it is not embedded with each other as compared to other umbrella themes. Within integration, the small follower's contribution of vision into their work makes them advance and proactive followers and vision integration affect the guidance. Also, small followers' contribution advocated by Kohles et al., (2012), guide them towards their work which means through integration the followers realize the vision guidance and prepare them to take future leadership roles by progression and development (Dvir et al., 2002)

Table 12: Overlapping of subthemes/codes in Integration and vision guidance

Vision Integration	Vision Guidance
Small followers' contribution	Advance working and proactive followers
Small followers' contribution	Broadminded followers
Small followers' contribution	Guide followers work
Small followers' contribution	Progression and development of followers

Table 13: Overlapping of subthemes/codes in vision guidance and follower perception

Vision Guidance	Follower perception
Future not shared with followers	Demotivating
Future not shared with followers	Not a visionary leader
Advance working and proactive followers	Futuristic
Creates meaning in followers' lives	Motivational
Guides followers work	Motivational
Guides followers work	Futuristic

4.8.1 Vision guidance and follower perception

Vision guidance and follower perception were found to be interconnected to each other and 12 respondents are talking on 20 references about this and confirm that they merge. This is evident while discussing vision guidance the participants mentioned that the 'future of the business is not shared with the followers' which suggests the follower perception as 'demotivating' and followers consider the leader not a visionary. Contrary to this the follower also practices advanced working and being proactive in their work which makes the perception 'futuristic' (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). This has been referenced at 4 places. Also, one of the functions of vision guidance is that it creates meaning in followers' working and personal lives which motivates them and helps in re-shaping the perception. Through vision guidance, the leaders guide the follower's work and make it futuristic as it constitutes the components of the vision (Chaleff, 2009). In sum, we can say that support for proposition 4 about vision guidance shape the follower perception of visionary leadership is evident.

Table 14: Overlapping of subthemes/codes in shared vision and vision guidance

Shared Vision	Vision guidance
Customer satisfaction	Advance working and proactive followers
Customer satisfaction	Guide followers work
Customer satisfaction	Progression and development of followers
Followers' role in customer service	Advance working and proactive followers
Followers' role in customer service	Broadminded followers
Followers' role in customer service	Guide follower work
Increase sales	Advance working and proactive followers
Increase sales	Planning and vision motivate followers
Supply chain	Guide followers work
Leaders big picture or vision	Guide follower work
Leaders big picture or vision	Broadminded followers

4.8.2 Shared vision and vision guidance

Proposition 3: Shared vision caused vision guidance to form a collectivist leadership. The more it is shared the better it improves vision guidance.

This is the second most coupled pair and as the name suggests due to shared vision, the vision guidance materialized. This combination is sourced from 23 respondents and has 61 references which is a significant coverage from 30 interviews. This will allow us to say that shared vision cause vision guidance and the more it is shared with followers the better it will improve the vision guidance: support proposition 3. The question is how this is caused, and the answer lies in the subthemes from this research that overlap with customer satisfaction. The leaders share the vision of customer satisfaction with the followers, and they consider it part of their work through advanced working and being proactive. For example, in the retail context, the respondents in this research mentioned that serving the customer fast in the long queue would make customers satisfied which is also argued and established by (Kantabutra, 2011; Smith, 1993). Customer satisfaction as part of the leadership vision guides the followers in their daily work on how to take care of customer needs in everything they do in their work. Likewise in a retail setting customer service is central to the vision and results in customer satisfaction. A shared vision of increasing sales also makes the followers proactive in their

work. For example, followers work in advance on the layout of the store, promotion, and offers on products to increase sales. Within the shared vision of the supply chain, where the aim of business is making the product available, it also guides followers in their work, for instance, to keep the shelving UpToDate. This follower work is backed up with information technology and the follower can track the product in the whole supply chain through computers. The findings suggest that the vision, which is central to the business, affects the business objectives. The business indicators like customer satisfaction and sales mirror the leader's big picture or the vision which guides the followers in their work and make them broad-minded. When the vision is shared by the leaders, the current research suggests that it energizes the followers. The followers' work becomes more meaningful, and it also guides their work which makes the work less uncertain and aligned with the vision.

Table 15: Overlapping of subthemes/codes in shared vision and follower perception

Shared vision	Follower perception
Followers' leader	Busy and hardworking
Followers' leader	Innovative
Followers' leader	Inspirational and ideal self
Followers' leader	Motivational
Followers' leader	Perception through actions
Followers' leader	Personal best
Teamwork and bonding	Innovative
Teamwork and bonding	Motivational
Followers' energy and focus	Futuristic
Followers' energy and focus	Motivational
Common cause of followers	Futuristic
Common cause of followers	Innovative
Customer experience	strategic thinker
Store specific vision	Strategic thinker
Company-specific vision	Strategic thinker
Leaders big picture	Strategic thinker
Leaders big picture	Futuristic
Not just worker but part of business	Motivational

Vision and planning not shared with followers	Not a visionary leader
Vision and planning not shared with followers	Demotivating

4.8.3 Shared vision and follower perception

Shared vision and follower perception are found to be one of the most connected umbrella themes with 24 sources and 71 references. One of the reasons for these deeply linked categories is that when the vision is shared from leaders to followers it changes the perception of visionary leadership. This is attributed to the change in the mindset of the followers. The shared vision is the category where the leader takes the initiative of the bidirectional vision process and works with the followers as one team. This is named as 'followers leader'. In the retail context, this changes the perception of followers, and they think of their leader as busy and hardworking, and it also inspires the followers. The followers admire the leaders and his leadership style. Through 'followers leader' initiative the follower develops the perception of their leader through his actions which is not limited to just communication. It also motivates them to work more and it changes the perception of the leader as a motivator and this also supported by Kelloway & Gilbert, (2018)

As discussed before that teamwork and bonding allow the vision to be shared and it also affects the follower's perception of visionary leadership. Innovative behaviour is triggered by the leaders and adopted by the followers in a team which enhances the bonding between the followers (Tellis, 2006; Sergiovanni, 1990). The current research finding suggests that the bonding motivates the follower for adopting new ideas and approaches to business. For example, in the retail context, the customer self-checkout is backed up with the technology that has been the result of teamwork. Energy and focus in followers are also the results of shared vision, and it has an impact on the follower perception. It motivates them and followers see the leaders as the leaders and not just managers. The findings indicate that the common cause of followers with the leaders has links to the leaders to be innovative and futuristic. This happens when leaders share the vision with the followers which acts as the common cause for both. The followers after communicating with the vision learn new ideas and concepts of doing their work and decisions, and this has also made them more future-oriented which changes the follower perception.

Follower's perception of leaders as strategic thinkers has links to the customer experience,

managing personnel, company-specific, and store-specific vision. All these areas are of leadership in nature and are part of the vision in the retail business. Store-specific vision is about taking the store up on the top of the region or country in terms of business indicators whereas the company-specific vision is the vision of the overall company or corporate. Both are strategic and sharing them with the followers changes the perception. Vision and planning not shared with the followers were found to be demotivating for them. The followers think of leaders as not visionary leaders and not a part of the business and treating them as just the workers.

As suggested by the above that visionary leadership improves business performance as it places followers into the category of higher organizational performance which leads to the ideal self and followers' inspiration for the leaders. These overall changes the perception and impression of the followers about their image and about how they see the leaders. Muterera et al., (2018) in line with the shared vision and follower perception findings from the current research, seek to establish the connection between leaders' and followers' perception of transformational leadership and its relationship with the organizational performance (shared vision). This performance is shared with followers in terms of sales, customer satisfaction, profitability, and supply chain which is discussed in the previous paragraph as the relation between the shared vision and followers' perception. The author argues that follower perception shows that how transformational leadership has a significant, positive relationship with organizational performance. Although the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational performance was similar in both leaders' perception and followers' perception models, in the later the effect was almost entirely mediated by employee job satisfaction.

Table 16: Overlapping of subthemes/codes in Shared vision and integration

Vision Integration	Shared Vision
Small follower's contribution	Leaders big picture or vision
Integration through standards	Customer satisfaction
Integration through standards	Followers' leader
Integration through standards	Covid compliance business
Integration through standards	Increase sales
Integration through standards	Customer experience
Integration by targets and goals	Common cause of followers

Integration by targets and goals	Customer experience
Integration by targets and goals	Customer satisfaction
Integration by targets and goals	Personnel
Integration by targets and goals	Supply chain
Integration by targets and goals	Leaders big picture
Integration by targets and goals	Not just worker but part of business
Integration by targets and goals	Teamwork and bonding

4.8.4 Integration and shared vision

Integration and shared vision like 'shared vision' and the 'follower perception' are also well embedded. It is sourced from 19 interviews and 44 references, discussing the overlapping nature of both umbrella themes. To note that how and why they are linked with each other we have to see the subthemes just like we did to other pairs of umbrella themes.

The shared vision has the leader's big picture which affects the integration of vision through small followers' contribution into their work. It is also found from this research that the integration is acquired through following the standards of operations in the retail context and it reflects the connection of standards with the leadership vision. These standards are met by the followers in terms of customer satisfaction, increase in sales, and customer experience. In this way, followers integrate into the vision of leaders to achieve the shared vision attached to the business objectives. Integration of vision is also achieved through following and adopting the targets and goals of the business by followers. These targets and goals similarly come in as customer satisfaction, managing personnel, and supply chain. The followers agree to follow the common cause in terms of the business objectives and integrate them into the vision of the retail business. The targets and goals are the reflections of the leader's big picture. The followers also integrated with the leadership vision when they think of themselves as part of the business and not just playing roles of workers. The leaders integrate with the followers by empowering them with broad-based actions and leading them by working shoulder to shoulder with them. The integration is caused due to communication and observations of the followers which changes the mindset and small followers' contribution. It is also evident that visionary leadership improves business performance. Therefore, the above discussion and based on the findings, support is found for the following proposition.

Proposition 1: It is proposed that there is a link between shared vision and integration with followers. Integrated followers influence the formation of shared vision.

From this research, the above link can be elaborated for the proposition made in the third chapter of this thesis and this can be noted in terms of enhancing and complimenting each other. The details of this link between the two concepts are discussed in the following finding from the previous chapter.

The participant here referred to the theme one: shared vision and subtheme: Bidirectional vision process, which is an overlapping theme with the vision integration. It is implied from these two themes that the vision integration and shared vision happened due to the bidirectional vision process where initiative from leaders and as well as followers is necessary for connection between the two. The outcome of shared vision is having more integrated followers with the manager. The more managers share the vision with the team members the more integration between them. The leader shares the vision of having one team for the business. Integrated followers enhanced the shared vision as the shared vision is dependent on the relationship of the followers and the manager.

Expressing the relationship between the shared vision and integration one of the findings is the outcome of shared vision, which is the integrated followers with the leadership. Further to strengthen this relationship it can be implied from the findings that the more leader shared vision the better will be the integration. This will be an ongoing process until the one vision for leader-follower is achieved. Chi-hsiang, (2015) also proved the same relationship of shared vision and integration within the firms and between the employees. Findings indicated that the vision correlates positively with a shared vision and shared vision positively relates with the integration. The present thesis study is in the context of the leaders and followers and how their interaction influences the shared vision and integration which is unlike from Chi-hsiang, (2015) study where the integration was taken into consideration among the customers and suppliers. But the findings between the two studies are similar and the context of a commercial organization is also a common ground for both studies.

4.9 Chapter summary

In this chapter, I have presented the findings of the analysis that I undertook of the participant interviews. The findings relating to the research question (a) were outlined first before moving on to the findings of the research question (b). I provided the number of sources and the number of references contained within each theme before outlining the themes and subthemes. First in answering the research question (a) I explained how the subthemes are related to the shared vision and the business objectives placed in the central position in the

leadership vision. Second, I explained the perception of followers for visionary leadership. The third is vision integration where subtheme is provided with evidence that how and why followers integrate into the vision in a retail context. Finally, is the vision guidance: the emphasis was how it guides the followers in their work behaviour and decisions.

5. Discussions

5.1 Introduction

This chapter describes and interprets the significance of the research findings. Also, it situates the research in the existing narrative and pinpoints its implications for the field. I discuss each of the themes within the research questions and propositions made initially in this research, with particular attention to their contribution to knowledge and research. The findings relate to the literature review in terms of visionary leadership. The findings are specific and targeted to the visionary leadership in the retail context. Some of the findings complement the concepts and theories previously researched by the authors whereas some are new retail-specific findings that might have an indirect relationship with the already explored concepts. This now further explain visionary leadership in a new context. The visual representation of all themes and subthemes in the form of a map can be accessed in Appendix A to F.

5.2 Research problem

The research problem that this research address deals with the followers' perception and integration of visionary leadership. The focus and scope are limited to businesses and commercial organizations. This is the sector where the research problem lies and is an opportunity for researchers and practitioners to research the area. To be effective organizations and for long-term survival, businesses should use visionary leadership in their work behaviour and decisions. Visionary leadership is better to control by the perception of its followers. The perception is not clear and blurred if the leaders do not manage the followers realistically to keep the organization on track to business growth and success. How the followers integrate with the leadership vision is also another important area where the management face problem of implementing visionary leadership.

Main Research Question: How do followers of visionary leadership by using vision guidance and intellectual ability, integrate into a vision that facilitates the formation of shared vision and followers' perception?

5.3 Research aim (a): To explore why and how the followers decode shared vision in the retail business

5.3.1 Leadership and organizational vision in retailing

This finding indicates that the vision can be from a person and for an organization. In this research, it is found that the participants expressed that their store leader has a business-

related vision which could be to bring the store on top in the region or in-country. The retailer in this research also has a corporate-level general vision that includes the customers, suppliers, and employees. While formulating this vision, it is important to learn everything about the organization as to why it exists. This is according to Manasse's concept of organizational vision, "a comprehensive picture of the existing system within its environment." She suggests that organizational vision involves a systems perspective to determine the components and how they are interrelated. Similarity exists between the organizational vision of the current research and Manasse's concept of vision. The systems perspective includes the customers, employees, and suppliers which are internal and external environments of the organization. Nanus (1997) suggests that "the basic nature" of an organization can be defined by determining its present purpose and its value to society and from this research, the purpose is found to be selfish and practical. This purpose includes maximizing the profit, sales, and customer satisfaction which is the vision of the retail organization, and it is conflicting with the point of view of Nanus (1997) that focuses on giving value to society. This value is not the focus of this thesis, but it answers the research question that how and what vision is shared with followers.

This research extends previous work and introduces new ideas about shared vision. The research contributes to the same direction as the previous researcher sees the shared vision but applies it into the context of the retail business. The unique findings in shared vision are also considered changed directions. Sergiovanni, (1990) work has been extended in terms of the shared vision and bonding in the followers. Teamwork comes out to be the new dimension of shared vision which contributes positively to the knowledge of sharing the vision with the followers. The common cause of followers and leadership big picture of the business is also the application of the ideas worked by Manasse, (1986). This research contributed by finding the same thoughts in the retail business. Follower's leader is the new contribution of the shared vision from the current research and is one of the ways the leaders share the vision with the followers. The finding of followers' opinions about the leaders to treat them not just workers but part of business contributed as the value addition in the research of shared vision. Astonishingly this research finds the roles of followers when dealing with the leaders and found the previously researched roles of negotiator and being proactive with the leaders.

5.3.2 Common Cause of followers/leaders and big picture or vision

This finding indicates that why the followers accept the shared vision from the leaders. The observation is also similar to the Sergiovanni (1990) findings of why leaders and followers with

a shared set of values and commitment, bond them together in a common cause to meet a goal. The concerted efforts of members of an organization increase the possibilities of the vision's accomplishment. Followers see their managers as the leaders when they have been exposed to the big picture of the business and are aware of their inputs and contribution to the overall success of the business (Manasse, 1986). According to the current research, this big picture is only possible through a shared vision.

5.3.3 Followers Engaging role

It is found from the interviews that followers by engaging with the leaders, understand and decode the vision of the business which is a similar finding from Berson, Waldman and Pearce, (2016) that emphasized that leaders and followers together make a shared vision. It offers a model that integrates the role of both parties in shared vision formation. The findings from the authors also examined that both leader and follower-oriented processes and conditions facilitate the formation of shared vision and the authors emphasized that it is a shared process in which followers take a vigorous and engaging role.

5.3.4 Followers' leader (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data)

Followers' leader in the retail business is the initiative from leadership side for pursuing an engaging role towards followers, and is a unique finding in terms of the shared vision. In this, the leader actively works like its team members on the floor of the retailer and sets an example for the followers which motivates them to be like the followers. The connection and effect of this are far-reaching into the perception of followers as it strongly changes the impression of followers about the leadership of the business and many times inspires them. This also makes a connection and similarity with Kohles et al., (2013) about the bidirectional vision process. The followers and leaders in this process both take an active part in getting the vision communication across and answer the research question that how the followers decode shared vision.

5.3.5 Follower's Energy and Focus

This finding suggests that the follower's energy and focus is the driving force towards understanding the vision. Senge, (1994) also argued similar positions that a shared vision is essential for the development of a learning organization (also matches with the follower's progression and development finding under vision guidance) and it gives energy and focus to its followers. It is also found from the current study that this follower's energy and focus is due to more specific to the leaders who are young and where the followers satisfy the leader's expectations. Nanus (1997) support this finding that to assist leaders in developing an

appropriate vision it must attract commitment and energize people which is a similar opinion about sharing of vision with the followers in the current retail context research.

5.3.6 Bidirectional vision process

The question of how vision is shared with followers can be better answered if we consider the vision process as bidirectional which means both leader-follower are involved in sharing vision. This bidirectional vision process was discussed by the respondents in this research is related to both umbrella themes: shared vision and vision integration. This finding suggests that the vision process is bidirectional and for this reason, it is an interdependent relationship of the leader and follower as both need each other to achieve the vision's aims and goals. Similar emphasis can be seen when Kohles, Bligh and Carsten, (2013) explored employees' perceptions of the bidirectional leader-follower processes that may facilitate or hinder vision integration. In both the studies it's also common that the relationship of bidirectional leader-follower interaction and vision integration has been discussed where we can say that it overlaps in the topics of shared vision and vision integration.

5.3.7 Not just worker but part of the business (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data)

When leaders share the vision with the followers, they take it as if they are not considered to be just workers but part of the business and have stakes in carrying out retail business decisions. This positive attitude from the followers further nurtures the relationship of leader-follower vision sharing. This finding is new and retail-specific as the followers involved in the daily work of operating the store and shared vision create a positive impression on their minds. This links with the follower motivation and energy which is further discussed in the section of followers' perception of visionary leadership as suggested by Senge, (1994) where the author argues to link the energy with the followers learning and development.

5.3.8 Covid compliance retailing (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data)

As this research is focused on the retailers so during the pandemic the retail business is very busy with customer shopping, but the store leadership must come with the Covid compliance business. The customers and employees of the retail organization following social distancing and masking also become part of the shared vision of leaders. This vision of covid compliance business has to be shared with the followers who are responsible for implementing and adhering to the protocols of the pandemic. This is a new and sample-specific finding lacking

connection to previous literature, which suggests that how to carry out business in pandemic and communicating the vision/protocols to the followers.

5.3.9 Followers as executing and implementing the vision (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data)

In this study, one focus was to establish the role of the followers when sharing the vision. This finding suggests that when vision is shared by the leadership in the retail business, the follower's role (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014) would be that of execution and implementation of the vision and strategic goals. Although the role of followers in sharing vision was not of that much importance in the overall discussion for the subjects it is worth mentioning that followers act as the implementors. It also answers the question of how the vision is shared by followers.

5.3.10 Vision & planning not shared with followers (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data)

Somewhat surprisingly this finding suggests that vision and planning are not shared with the followers in the retail sector which is a deviation from the rest of the findings. The main findings are positive aspects of sharing a vision and answer the questions of how and why vision is shared with the followers and do not present the evidence that the vision is not shared. This finding is contrary to Westley & Mintzberg, (1989) which concludes that the vision comes alive only when it is shared, which leads us to say that if the vision rests with the leader only and is not shared, then there is no utility of it without followers. From the current research, negative opinion of the followers for 'vision and planning not shared' with them consider as negative behaviour of their leaders which could impact the visionary leadership and sharing of the vision. Humphreys et al., (2017) study of the charismatic leaders and how their traits affect the follower's behaviour of accepting the vision supports the finding of the thesis regarding shared vision. Green (2006) says that visionary leaders, to make the dream a reality, show characteristics of charismatic leadership. The author like in visionary leadership argues that the effectiveness of this type of leadership is so much on followers that if on some occasions, the negative behaviour of leaders of not sharing the vision with followers diffuses by the overall impact of the visionary leadership.

5.3.11 Followers Negotiating for future

The finding indicates that followers protect their interests by negotiating with the leaders about the future of the business. Here also the followers play a more engaging role with the leadership which is emphasized by Berson, Waldman and Pearce (2016) in their research that

leaders and followers together make a shared vision, and integrate the role of both of these parties in vision formation. The roots of this go back to the followership theory and the role of followers as resistant. Leadership research is highly leader-centric which results in little attention being given to followers who refuse to follow the leaders. This reality matches with Barnard's (1938) acceptance theory of authority which also highlight about the follower resistance. The author stressed their investigation on two types of resistance behaviors: constructive and dysfunctional. Constructive resistance, like the findings of the current research, involves well-intended efforts to open a dialog with the supervisor (e.g., ask for clarification or negotiate). Dysfunctional resistance involves passive-aggressive responses.

5.3.12 Teamwork and Bonding

This study found that participants expressed teamwork and bonding in the followers as the key for how the vision is shared with followers. These findings are similar to Sergiovanni, (1990) which supports the notion of a leader's efforts to develop a shared vision described as "bonding". The difference between teamwork and bonding is having a bonding between the follower that fosters teamwork. Sergiovanni, (1990) only refers to bonding between the leaders and followers while from this research in the retail context, teamwork was also considered with the bonding as both compliments each other. Bonding brings teamwork and by teamwork, bonds establish between the followers and leaders.

5.4 Research aim (b): To understand why business objectives have a central position in retailer's leadership vision

5.4.1 Business objectives or KPIs as Vision

5.4.1.1 Customer satisfaction/customer service/ Customer experience

According to current research customer satisfaction was found to be an important part of the vision sharing in the retail context. In this research and most other studies, it is found that customer satisfaction is affected by the vision positively and it is an important part of the vision. The key question is that how this study is different from the others when considering customer satisfaction. In this research, the rigorous interviews with the respondents uncover the in-depth reasoning that why vision has a positive relationship with customer satisfaction and this makes this study different from the rest. Here it indicates, that in thesis research, the leaders share the customer service-related vision with the followers. The sharing is due to the dependence of business success on customer satisfaction. Similar findings in the study by Liu, (2006)

emerged when focusing on service organization and achieving higher customer satisfaction through customer service. The results show that vision positively contributes to the service efforts of the participants and similar findings imply from this research that customer satisfaction and service is an important part of the vision sharing and must be communicated to the follower. One of the reasons for this relationship is that there is a high turnover of customers in the retail environment and the consistent quality of service to each customer is vital for a satisfied customer. Also not letting the customers wait in a queue when working on the till and providing service to them is a crucial part of having the vision of improving customer service. Equating shared vision with the customer service yield similar results by Eldor, (2020) who found that shared vision effect on service quality is indirect and is the result of only collective engagement excluding other mechanisms. The finding from this research discusses that shared vision compels the followers to execute and implement vision related to the customer service which is the priority of leaders' agenda of installing the vision. The sharing of vision with service elements creates a combined impact on the performance of the business. The difference between Eldor, (2020) research and the current research is the exploration of the added mechanism that has been affected by the shared vision. These additional mechanisms like integration and perception of vision work in the totality to bring change in the organization.

Kantabutra and Avery, (2007) also endorse the importance of customer satisfaction to be the main part of the leadership vision. This is because the current research is focused on the retailers where customer satisfaction is central to the business vision. This study examined relationships between followers' shared vision, their use of their leader's vision, and their emotional commitment to the vision. All were directly associated with customer and employee satisfaction (Kantabutra, 2011). Overall customer and staff satisfaction, and stores with a vision were associated with one another. Associations were also found between shared visions characterized by the attributes, and enhanced customer and staff satisfaction (Kantabutra & Avery, 2011)

The finding for the customer experience is related to customer satisfaction as the superior experience leads to a more satisfied customer. This indicates the importance of the customers in the vision of retailing. As one of the followers put it by emphasizing that customer wait on the till is not appropriate in terms of the customer experience and it is the vision of the leadership to have a delightful and satisfying customer experience.

5.4.1.2 Supply chain (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data)

The availability of the products for the customers is also an important part of the retail vision and for this reason, the participants consider this the main theme for business vision. An efficient and effective supply chain means meeting the demand of the customers promptly which maximizes the sales and satisfies the customers. This finding also indicates that a good supply chain of products is backed up with strong IT support that informs the leaders and followers about the stock position of the product throughout the supply chain. The vision of the leadership is to have a smooth supply of highly demanding products which is possible through taking timely decisions impacting the future of business.

5.4.1.3 Increase sales (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data)

This is one of the top-level strategic goals of the retailer as the survival of any retailer is dependent on repeat and increase sales and must be the part of leadership vision. The future of business is to maximize sales and profitability. All the follower's activities and work have been geared in this direction of increasing the sales which also indicates that the customer is satisfied. Increasing the store sales is the responsibility of the leadership and all the followers in the retail are involved and shared with this vision of maximizing the sales. This depends on many factors which include the location of the retail store, the layout, and the look of the store. Prices of products and promotions and offers on the products are also indicators of sales. This is a new finding and has links in the literature in a general relationship of vision with business performance. There is a dearth of research for this relationship between sales and visionary leadership. The positive relationship previously discussed by researchers is about general organizational performance. This led us to say that applying and using vision by leaders cause an increase in sales. Jing et al., (2014) found similarly that organizations whose leaders communicate the vision to staff and whose employees share this vision show higher financial performance and productivity which includes sales. This thesis research also advocates that achieving high sales is part of the vision. It stipulates more creativity to the follower's job and the daily monotonous and hard-working work. This when coupled with the imagination brings more sales and the participants appreciate its development because of the vision from the leader.

5.4.1.4 Managing personnel

Managing personnel is the business's key performance indicators within the retail sector as it contributes directly to the success of the business in terms of customer service. Managing

them is the key to achieving the leadership vision and it is found from this research that it is achieved through followers negotiating roles with the leadership. This has become overly important when during the lockdown period the increase in customer demand attributes to the increase in working hours. The results indicate that visionary leadership is found to be motivating for the followers when leadership manages the followers in terms of hours and no of employees. We can notice that managing followers involve vision integration through empowering broad-based actions which also enhance customer and staff satisfaction (Kantabutra and Avery, 2007), as discussed in section 6.4.2.1

Measuring the effect of vision on followers, Jing, Avery and Bergsteiner (2014) suggest that organizations whose managers communicate the vision to followers retain their employees longer. This finding relates to what has been found in the current research about the negotiating role of followers in sharing and formulating the vision. In this, the follower engages with the leadership to decide on the future of the business which leads us to say that it increases the satisfaction of followers/employees as they are part of the business. The vision is decided by the mutual understanding of both leaders and followers which causes the follower to work for a long time in the company. Discussing the followers and employees of the organizational vision the relationship of perception and shared vision is important and is researched by Muterera et al., (2018) The author similar to the finding of the current research argues that perception is important in determining the extent and intensity of the shared vision and organizational performance and further extend the findings by saying that in the follower perception model the job satisfaction is the predominant variable that affects the transformational leadership. Discussing the job satisfaction and performance it is implied from the current research that conflict could arise when the followers take the role of negotiating the business objectives and vision. According to Kammerhoff et al., (2019) this conflict has negative effects on employees' job satisfaction and performance and undermines the perception of visionary leadership.

5.4.2 Visionary leadership improves business performance

Finding from this research confirms that visionary leadership improves business performance. The performance in the retail sector includes customer satisfaction, sales and profitability, supply chain, management of personnel, and customer experience. Visionary leadership has confirmed effects on all these as researched by Kantabutra and Avery, (2007). A similar finding by the current research where participants expressed that under the manager's visionary leadership the store has improved. The availability of the products and customer service vision have been used by the leadership in moving the business forward. During interviews, the followers explained the question of how visionary leadership improves business performance.

It indicates that the follower carefully notes the areas of vision and then tries to match it with their jobs and accordingly make changes and improvements.

The link between the two is important to readers as business performance and customers are key to the vision for the retailers and visionary leadership includes characteristics of business vision. Kantabutra & Avery, (2011a) also argue same by examining the relationships between followers' use of their leader's vision and associated organizational performance in retail stores. The findings of both studies endorse the importance of vision guidance and emotional commitment and were significantly associated with organizational performance.

The current research contributed to the area of organizational performance and specifically to the business performance indicators by presenting the new thinking that answers the questions that why customer satisfaction and sales are part of the vision and the leaders' expectations. This research also found that the organizational performance constructs previously researched with the vision introduced the readers to its application into the retail businesses of the UK.

5.5 Research aim (c): To investigate how followers perceive leadership vision in the retail business?

Why and how followers' perception is formed are the questions considered in this research. The participants uncover that the perception of visionary leadership is formed in the minds of followers. In the retail context, the meetings and dealings with the leaders are some of the ways to form the word of mouth among the followers. By this word of mouth, the leader's image and perception of the leadership style and vision becomes well known. This research also suggests that the follower perception is formed through the personality and working style of the leaders. The followers receive information about the perception in meetings and the way leaders work on the floor in the retail context which becomes word mouth and runs in the chain to form the opinion and perception. Chiu et al., (2017) substantiate the findings from the current research where authors argue the leaders' central positions in both positive and negative networks predict follower perception of their leadership. These informal and formal social networks through regular meetings and dealing with the followers trigger positive advice ties between the leaders and followers which change the followers' perception and the manager seen as leaders instead of non-leaders.

Findings from the current research suggest that followers' perception is also influenced by how innovative the leader is and how much the leader involves followers in bringing new initiatives. The problem-solving attitude also provides information to the follower about the

leaders. Actions speak louder than words and when the leader work through actions it builds image and communicates the vision to the followers. In line with these findings of follower perception of a visionary leader to be innovative and problem-solving, Černe et al., (2014) work on the perception of authentic leadership and found that follower perceptions of this type of leadership predict employee job satisfaction. This also supports the argument implied from the current research that innovative and problem-solving leader positively relates to the follower perception of visionary leadership.

5.5.1 Inspirational and Ideal self

In the retail context, the follower perception is to be inspired by the leadership of the store. The finding from this research suggests that the visionary qualities of the leaders invite followers to create an ideal self-a leader who they admire and wanted to be like him. The difference between the inspiration and ideal self is first the follower inspire their leaders. Later, for followers, it turns out to be ideal selves. This follower's inspiration is due to many reasons and one of them is the follower thinks that their manager is hard-working, a problem solver, and unites the followers for a common cause or vision (Adair & J, 2004). Similarly, Stam et al., (2010) argue that a desired image of the follower came into existence is because of the perception of vision. The author indicates that the focus of the vision should be on the follower to have an ideal self. In this thesis, the respondents mentioned both inspiration and ideal self at one place which is due to the vision, whereas Stam et al., (2010) only relates the vision communication with the ideal self and elaborate that vision is used by leaders to mobilize followers which is possible when they inspire their leader and create ideal self.

5.5.2 Motivational

This research found that motivation changes the follower's perception of visionary leadership and prepares the followers for the change. Similar findings of motivation and followers' perception have been observed by Kelloway & Gilbert, (2018) who argue that leaders vary in their motivation leading to different levels of performance. Visionary leadership is a type of active constructive leadership where the leader carries out efforts of constructing the future and vision of the business. Similar to the current research, findings suggest that leader motivation is positively related to follower perceptions.

This motivation comes in the shape of followers working more and thinking of bigger steps as discussed before in finding of 'leader big picture and a common cause of followers. Visionary Leadership is built on inspiring and motivating people to pursue a long-term vision and in the retail context, this motivation is often the result of the leaders working with the

follower's shoulder to shoulder, which has been discussed in the finding of 'follower's leader'. Vision motivates the followers as it adds more energy and focus (subtheme within shared vision) to their current job roles and prepares them for the future senior roles (subtheme: progression and development of followers) (Dvir et al., 2002; Kantabutra & Avery, 2007). It's worth highlighting the relationship emerging from these themes in two categories: shared vision affects the follower's perception of visionary leadership. Thus, it is found from the current research that vision could be satisfying for the followers in terms of productivity and professional development.

5.5.3 Futuristic (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data)

This finding indicates that followers perceive visionary leadership to be futuristic. Involving the followers in the planning is evidence that the leader of the business is practicing the visionary leadership style with sharing of the vision. The subtheme 'futuristic' has the common theme under the vision guidance which is 'advanced working and proactive followers. Here the follower perception of visionary leadership changes by vision guidance, advanced working, and proactive followers. The participants from this research mentioned that the impression they hold of their leader is positive and involving the follower in planning is the futuristic approach and inspires the followers. Thus, we can see that the follower perception is affected by being a leader futuristic. Followers are also inspired by the leader if the leader is a strategic thinker.

5.5.4 Strategic thinker

This finding means that the follower perceives their leaders as strategic thinker. The perception is reinforced with the thinking of leaders to be considered as 'futuristic'. As the strategic planning is futuristic and presents the business scenarios of the year ahead the literature also discusses the vision, future, and strategic management in the same context. The follower needs to have a perception of leaders to be a strategic thinker because in a vision the leader sees the picture of the future. In retailing, the finding suggests that the leaders have company-based and store-specific strategic planning and vision where the bigger and wider objectives of business have been addressed. It's a way to connect with the followers. These objectives and goals are for all followers and can be understood by the leaders and followers which is also suggested by McLarney & Rhyno, (1999) that visionary leaders' vision statement should always in a tangible and easily understood way and developed with clarity, flexibility, and focus on the organization. The vision is used as a powerful strategic device to motivate the followers, and this has been discussed in previous findings where follower perception of leadership is to motivate the followers through vision.

The perception of followers to see the leaders as strategic thinkers also has been seen by Riggs, (1994), Nanus, (1992) where strategic thinker is considered to be one of the skills of a visionary leader. The authors suggest that visionary leadership is direction centered which is similar to the strategic thinking. This perception of followers about visionary leadership prepares the leaders for working at the top of the organization and leading the firm's objectives with style and strategy (Mintzberg et al., 1998) and requires more than just vision.

5.5.5 Demotivating/Not a visionary leader (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data)

As previously discussed in the shared vision and in agreement with the research findings of 'vision and planning not shared with followers' the follower perceived this as demotivating. In the retail sector, the followers work hard and if they are not involved in the planning and vision then the perception of the leadership is that of demotivating leadership. This also suggests that it is an outlier in comparison to what most of the respondents think of the leadership style of the manager as positive. This is in contrast with what is advocated by Kantabutra and Avery, (2007) about the vision capability of motivating the followers. Not practicing visionary leadership is demotivating for the followers and builds a negative perception. Likewise, for example, conflict is considered as having negative effects on the followers' job satisfaction and performance whereas transformational leadership shows strong positive relations. Kammerhoff et al., (2019) argue that these negative effects can undermine the follower's performance which is also true for the follower who doesn't perceive their leadership to be visionary and is demotivating for them. This finding of the follower perception of leadership as demotivating can be a conflicting relationship between the follower and leaders which can lead to rejecting any change in the organization.

5.5.6 Innovative and open to new ideas

Tellis and Golder (2001) suggested that visionary leadership requires more than technological change (innovation). A similar finding has been drawn from this research that smaller-scale new initiatives and ideas by the leaders make them innovative in the eyes of followers and this is sometimes related to technology like customer smart shopping. In other instances, it's an ordinary way of doing the same processes and procedures in a new way that has nothing to do with the technology. A visionary leader embraces change and views the use of new ideas and processes as progress. Strese et al., (2018) work consider the leadership interest in radical innovations. The findings suggest that leaders' passion for innovation is related to each other and the more the vision is shared with the members of the firm the more this relationship develops. Findings from this research indicate that innovative leadership changes the follower

perception in a positive sense and changes the leaders who involved their followers in new things. In the above, the efforts from the leadership position to involve the followers in innovative ideas is also said to be visionary leadership quality.

5.5.7 Manager and leader

Respondents from this research prefer to perceive their managers to be leaders rather than the only manager. It is suggested from the literature that managers are concern with the implementation of the policies and strategies whereas the leaders guide and influence the followers which are similar to what Lock (1991) describes leadership as the process of inducing others to act towards a common goal. The current research indicates that followers mentioned that the manager should be called a leader because he or she has a team to lead for the business to be successful. As previously found from this research and similarly Locke (1991) suggests that the leader establishes vision and strategy while the manager implements the vision and controls the means to reaching the goals set by the leader.

Chiu et al., (2017) worked on the perception of leaders by followers and differentiate between what is seen by a follower as a leader and what is not. The author assumed leaders have more positive advice ties and fewer negative avoidance ties and these individuals are more likely to be recognized as leaders by their followers. Moreover, similar to the finding of this research, leaders are those who are central in the advice network are socially powerful and are seen as leaders, and leaders who don't possess social power are not seen as leaders by followers.

5.5.8 Personal best

This finding accurately describes one of the qualities of the visionary leader, which is giving personal best and being professional. Kotter (2010) refers to it as one of the characteristics that visionary leaders do their personal best to communicate the vision and empower broad-based actions in followers to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization. It is also discussed that vision transform and creates a significant change in the organization which provides leaders and followers an opportunity to practice the best of their jobs. Similarly in this research, the followers praise the leaders to have the best leadership qualities which have a positive follower's perception. Also, the current research suggests that personal best is the way of getting recognized in the organization.

5.5.9 Higher organizational performance and long-term leader

Leaders thinking about the vision elevate the image and perception of followers. This finding suggests that visionary leadership is possible through higher organizational performance. The concept of visionary leadership does not go with ordinary thinking and performance. The long-term leader is a believer in higher organizational performance. Sidani, (2007) in his research implied that the leaders and followers who show emotional commitment in their speeches address followers with high self-esteem succeed in achieving higher organizational performance and higher followers' perception of visionary leadership. Speeches and leadership vision serve the same purpose of enhancing follower perception.

5.5.10 Social acceptance by followers

The current research suggests that factors that have an impact on the follower's perception of visionary leadership include social acceptance of leaders and the need for accumulation of people power. These factors moderate and affect the perception of visionary leadership. For example, a higher order of visionary leadership can lead to higher social acceptance. The social acceptance by followers is because of leaders' shared vision and when they share their idea for visionary leadership they are better accepted by the followers. Discussing the social acceptance to mediate followers' perception and by incorporating social networks and social ledger theory with implicit leadership theories Chiu et al., (2017) find that managers who are central in the advice network are socially powerful in contrast to managers who are avoided by followers lack informal social power is not seen as leaders.

5.5.11 Sense of unknown (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data)

Sense of unknown is reflecting visionary thinking and kicks in when you are lost about the future of the business. It provides a sense for the future, which is unknown and considered to be a stronger concept in terms of followers' perception of visionary leadership. From this research, it has been noted that a sense of the unknown is a trait of visionary leadership where the leaders depend on their judgment on the information received from the technology and make predictions of the business. This is a new finding from this research and has connections with the vision guidance which is also about vision providing directions for the future. In the literature, there is a need of researching this area of how visionary leaders make sense of the unknown which has been touched upon in chapter 2 about the use of intuition of managers.

This research contributes to the current literature in the category of the follower perception of visionary leadership by finding the perception already identified by the previous research and applies to the retail business and new perceptions of followers that are specific to the sample of the study. The previous perception is leaders to be strategic thinkers, inspirational and ideal

self for the followers (Calia Roberts, 2015; Stam et al., 2010), and the new perception of followers are leaders to have a sense of unknown.

5.6 Research aim (d): To find out why and how followers in retailers integrate into leadership vision

5.6.1 Conflicting ideas dampen vision integration (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data)

This research finding suggests that there are factors that deter the vision integration which is because of conflicting ideas of followers with the vision. This happens when there is a difference of opinion between the leaders and followers. The followers disagree to apply the vision content into their work behaviours as suggested from the current research. Moreover, the followers take this vision as more work on top of what they are already doing as hard work which includes shelving, moving heavy inventories, till operations, etc. As suggested by the followers in current research, a close relationship with the leader is the -prerequisite of the vision integration and a close relationship means that followers agree with the leaders and do not have a conflicting perspective of the vision.

Found by Kohles, Bligh and Carsten, (2013) the spontaneous and planned way of vision integration contributes to the current research by identifying the same methods in the context of the retail business in a different form. This form is in the shape of standards and procedures in carrying out duties of the followers which is said to be planned and the spontaneous methods/mechanisms. These are the vision communication with simplicity and repetition. This research also contributes by introducing the sample-specific unique way of vision integration and what hinders it. For example, having the conflicting ideas of followers with the leadership dampens the vision integration.

5.6.2 Integration through standards, processes and procedures (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data)

This finding is found to be low occurrence but can become a powerful one if combined with the integration through standards. Processes and procedures are the way of executing and implementing the standards in retailers. Followers implied that they follow processes and procedures which are a standard way of doing business. As mentioned before that standard is a planned way of having vision integration and the leaders in retail invested time to develop these standards and procedures to be followed by the team. Vision integration is achieved because these processes indicate and reflect the vision of the leadership. In the vision integration literature, there is no direct relevance of this finding but indirectly these standards

can be planned for the implementation for the followers (Kohles, Bligh and Carsten, 2013). The common area in both the research is the finding that planning is the part of the vision (follower perception: strategic thinker) and standards are a way of achieving the vision through followers.

The processes and procedures are important in conducting the retail business and have established links with the vision integration as well. It standardized the retail operations for the follower and all followers in this research expressed the need of following the processes and procedure and sticking to the standards which is part of the leadership vision.

5.6.3 Small followers' contribution to work behaviours

This finding suggests that vision integration is achieved by having small followers' contributions into work behaviours. These small efforts into the jobs of the followers lead to bigger vision attainment and that is how each follower's work is important to realize high-level aims and objectives. How the vision is understood and integrated by followers into work behaviours and decisions significantly predicts what would be the small follower's contribution to their work, which aims to satisfy the broad area of the vision, and this would result in vision integration (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). In the current research, the respondents expressed their opinion of how the followers work in the overall business of retailing which makes them think from a wider angle and can have more impact on the smaller scales of the work behaviours. This assumes that if there is a lack of performance at small scales then it affects the vision. Small follower contribution and vision integration come together when the contents and areas of vision overlap with the follower work behaviours, and the follower can connect his or her work with the vision and strategic aim of the leadership

Kohles et al., (2012) work on the leader-follower communication, perceptions of the company's vision, and its integration into their work behaviors. This work leads to a similar result with additional effects on commitment and job satisfaction. It is suggested from this research that if the vision is understood and integrated by followers into work behaviours and decisions then it has links with job satisfaction. The same point has been previously discussed under the finding of managing personnel when the vision is shared with the followers. It is evident from this finding that vision causes the motivation for the job and can lead to job satisfaction. The vision also motivates followers to enhance their performance.

5.6.4 Empower broad-based actions in followers

Vision integration is also possible when leaders empower more broad work to the followers.

This will allow followers to have more impact on the work of followers and expressed that they are more part of the business vision. Similar research by Margolis and Ziegert, (2016) about how collective strategic vision flows downward in organizations discussed by the authors, where job satisfaction and empowering broad-based leadership behaviours were the key factors that affect this flow. The difference between the current research and this research is that the data was collected from prominent retailers in the UK whereas this research is from a large manufacturing company, but the focus of both studies is vision integration which is possible through empowering leadership behaviours into followers. Further the current research offers evidence that how targets and goals have been practiced by the leaders through actions and not just by words which also indicate to facilitate the vision integration in the retail sector. Vision-based leaders, therefore, empower their followers by assigning tasks that lead to greater positive experiences and heightened self-confidence, thus persuading followers of their capabilities and creating an environment of positive emotions (Lussier & Achua, 2001)

Table 17: Mixing of subthemes in empowering broad-based actions in followers

Empower broad-based actions in followers	Broad minded followers
Empower broad-based actions in followers	Vision Guidance: Guide followers work
Empower broad-based actions in followers	Vision Integration: Integration through standards

Proposition 2: It is proposed that shared vision vertical flow in the hierarchy is associated with the empowering leadership behaviours in followers.

The finding above supports the proposition made in the first chapter of this thesis: empowering leadership behaviours in followers, shared vision flow vertically in the hierarchy. The answer to this proposition situates in the vision integration where the leaders and followers come together if leaders empower broad work to the followers which have a meaningful change in followers' lives. Also, this proposition further suggests that vision integration through empowering broad-based actions in followers makes them broad-minded instead of keep focusing on their current roles (see Table 12). This empowerment also guides the followers in their work as the vision covers the narrow scope of work and the followers are guided by integration through following standards in the retail context.

5.6.5 Simplicity and repetition

Simplicity and repetition (a low occurrence subtheme of vision integration) in followers' communication also provide links to better vision integration. Kotter, (2010) argues that the integration strategy of leaders generates short terms wins (small followers' contributions), and thus in this way they consolidate gains in producing more change and new approaches to culture. From this research, it is suggested that the communication and integration of vision are achieved through simplicity and repetition and using multiple forms that could reach a vast audience within the organization. The vision is simple, futuristic, and authentic that making the follower also able to understand the vision and thus integration is possible by repeated messages from the leader to the followers. Simplicity and repetition are also the practice followed in the advertising world where the same message is communicated in the minds of consumers to build brand values and product features and benefits. The same principle applies here in vision integration when simple and repeated messages about vision are communicated to the followers.

5.7 Research aim (e): To confirm how followers perceive intellectual ability for understanding leadership vision.

5.7.1 Higher intellectual ability better vision understanding

This finding must be tested in the retail context as it is evident from the demographic data of the respondents that followers in this sector are majorly involved in the physical work rarely using their mental abilities to understand and apply vision into their work. The follower in this research suggests that higher intellectual ability is needed for a better understanding of the vision. They made the link of the followers' perception with the mental capacity because they defined the vision to be complex and futuristic. It is complicated to understand and internalized by the followers. Thuan, (2019) found a similar relationship between leader intellectual stimulation and follower creative performance. Understanding vision is intellectual stimulation. The results illustrated that follower creative ability partially mediated the positive effect of leader intellectual stimulation on follower creativity. Therefore, the following proposition is supported.

Proposition 5: Follower's intellectual competency prevents or facilitates the perception of visionary leadership.

The finding above supports the proposition made in the first chapter of this thesis that is the follower's intellectual competency prevents the perception. In this thesis, the respondents linked the mental capabilities of followers with vision integration. The participants also define intellectual ability and explained how the perception of vision related to the knowledge and

wisdom of the followers. They agree with the relationship of the intellectual ability of followers with the vision understanding and mentioned that followers' education and intelligence play an important role in forming the perception of visionary leadership. Thus, followers' intellectual competency has an impact on their perception.

5.7.2 No need for high intellectual ability

This finding is a contradiction to what is found early about intellectual ability and vision understanding. In the current finding, the participants said that they would not require high intellectual ability and they can understand the vision of their leader. This also opposes what Thuan, (2019) argues about the increase in followers' performance when exposed to intellectual stimulation by the leaders. One of the reasons for this rejection of relationships is that followers in the current thesis don't want to admit and accept that they are inferior in understanding the high-level issues related to the business. So, they mentioned that they don't need high intellectual ability but in realism, they might not be able to understand the vision. This can be better understood when respondent 15 reassured his intellectual ability with the leaders by saying that even if the vision is to go to Mars in 20 years, then he is quite capable to understand. This means that the vision of the leaders in retailers does not require education or intelligence to decode by the followers.

5.7.3 Language as a barrier for followers accepting vision (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data)

This finding is a new direction to the discussion of the intellectual ability of followers to understand the vision of the leader. Its occurrence is very low, but it can be taken as the reality of the London retailers which is full of diverse people and from different cultures where language could be one of the barriers to understanding the vision of the leader.

This research contributes to the existing literature related to the stimulation of the intellectual abilities of the followers by leaders by presenting a new angle as the vision to be the reason for the stimulation. The finding that higher intellectual competency leads to a better understanding of the vision of leadership is the extension of what is researched by Thuan, (2019) and can be also a step forward in the thought process related to the vision theory.

5.8 Research aim (f): To unsolved why vision guidance is a tool for followers to have a direction for the future of retail business?

5.8.1 Advance working and proactive followers

Vision guidance being futuristic allows the follower to involve in advanced working and become proactive. Why advance working and proactive followers turned out to be a success for achieving the vision for the business is the question answered through vision guidance. In the visionary leadership context, one function of a vision is therefore to facilitate decision making, initiative, and discretion by followers at all levels (Kantabutra, 2009; Yukl, 1998). Decision-making and initiative are qualities of proactive followers, and it is necessary that when working in advance, the follower must take initiative or kick off the visionary leadership process (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). In the current research, the participants appreciated the sharing of vision and mentioned that it encourages feedback from the follower which in advance can change the result for the follower. Some examples in this context from the current research are customer buying decisions and pricing where the participant emphasizes the advanced working and proactive follower because of vision guidance.

5.8.2 Optimistic future (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data)

Vision guidance caused followers to be optimistic about the future of the business which would result in betterment for the leaders and followers. This is one of the advantages of shared vision that it provides guidance to the followers and educates them about where to go and how to proceed to achieve the vision for tomorrow. Vision provides an optimistic future about business and in return, it gives security and prosperity to the followers. The positivity that spread from the vision guidance in followers changes the atmosphere of the organization and this optimism help the followers to follow in their footsteps for a better future.

5.8.3 Certainty to followers (Sample unique: Originally emerged from data)

Vision guidance also provides followers with certainty in their work. They get clarity and the findings suggest that if there is no vision then the follower felt that they are lost, and they are not sure of the next step. So, vision guidance makes the follower certain about the future of the business, and when it deviates from the guidance it creates chaos as there is no vision from the leader. Commercial organizations like large retailers from this thesis are influenced by internal and external factors which bring a great deal of uncertainty to the businesses. Vision guidance offsets this uncertainty and provides a clear path towards the survival and growth of the organization.

5.8.4 Progression and development of followers

It is found from the current research that the progression and development of followers is the result of vision guidance. This happens when followers are shared with the vision and are exposed to a wider angle of business success. This develops the followers and presents the opportunity to grow within the hierarchy of the organization (Dvir et al., 2002). It serves the objective of both the leader and the follower. For a leader, the concern is to guide through the vision, and for the follower, it develops and progresses them for the future. Vision guidance also develops the followers in terms of managing the risk for the future and minimizing failure. From the current research, it is implied that the development of followers through vision comes from many areas of leadership concerning customer satisfaction and service.

5.8.5 Guide followers' work

This is an important finding and suggests that the vision guidance provides followers a lead to their daily work. The small follower contribution in vision integration combines to realize big aims of the vision which support the finding of 'Common Cause of followers/leaders and big picture or vision' in the shared vision category. This necessitates that follower at all levels of the retail organization perceive the vision as compatible with their work roles. It was also suggested that vision guidance gives followers thinking of business in a broader sense and its impact on the smaller scale on the work. Consistent with this view of the current research, Kantabutra's vision theory (2009) asserts that an effective vision includes all organizational interests, thus allowing followers to interpret the vision in their innovative ways to guide their duties. How followers use the vision to guide their work could impact individual and collective performance outcomes. The Kantabutra work does not emphasize the follower work to be associated with the leaders' big picture or vision which is one of the findings of current research. Although followers come up with new ways of guiding their duties under vision, the guidance provides the follower with the long-term effect of their work into the business.

The research in the category of vision guidance brings a new perspective to the literature and debates about visionary leadership which can be considered value-added contributions to the knowledge of followership. This contribution is significant as it made possible through identifying the effect of vision guidance on the followers. For instance, it makes the follower less uncertain about the future of the business which is due to the guidance of vision. The vision guidance also makes the follower optimistic about where the business heading off. This research also contributes to the existing debate about visionary leadership in terms of how it develops and progresses the followers and guides them into their work behaviours which is also a significant contribution in the context of the retail business. Previously such in-depth analysis and findings of visionary leadership are not evident in the literature and through this

research, it is possible to further present the evidence about questions of why vision guidance is a tool for followers to have a direction for the future of retail business?

5.9 Main research question: How do followers of visionary leadership by using vision guidance and intellectual ability integrate into a vision that facilitates the formation of shared vision and followers' perception?

Followers of visionary leadership use vision guidance and their intellectual abilities to understand the vision of their leaders. They do this by adopting the method of advanced working and being proactive in their work behaviour and decisions. The followers reason this because of progressing and developing themselves as the future leaders in a commercial organization like retail. This understanding of vision and the drive of followers guide them in their daily work and the vision serve as the steering and guiding them to a path of business success and prosperity. The followers believe in a positive relationship of intellectual abilities and vision understanding and appreciate the important role of these competencies in advancing the vision in their work roles. To foresee the future of business with the leaders the follower becomes certain about the future of the business and works accordingly with their leaders to achieve the business vision and minimize risks to the business. This would allow followers to see the optimistic future of the business in line with their leaders.

To be able to understand the vision and see the future of the business, the followers integrate with their leaders and with other team members to have desired vision integration. The integration is achieved through small work contributions of the followers and by empowering broad-based work to followers, which add up into the attainment of a big and long-term picture of the leader and is a common goal of leaders and followers. The vision integration comes in both forms of spontaneous and planned channels. Among planned, the vision integration is achieved through following and practicing the standards, processes, and procedures whereas the spontaneous is getting the message across through simplicity and repetition. Having integration with the leaders, the followers develop the perception of leadership style in terms of inspiring, creating ideal self and motivation.

Followers in the commercial organization also believe their leaders to be strategic thinkers and futuristic as they practice the principles of strategic management like developing and sharing the aims and goals for the business. This perception of followers is affected by the communication and sharing of vision by leaders who build the image of innovators and problem-solvers for the follower and who see their immediate boss as the leaders and not just

managers. The vision guidance and intellectual competencies of the followers facilitate the vision integration and develop follower perception of the visionary leadership. When thinking of the vision the leaders do their personal best which changes the perception of the followers into a more positive one and place this perception into a higher organizational performance that brings social acceptance and power to the leaders.

The sharing of vision by the leaders with the follower also have positive outcomes for key business performance indicators like customer satisfaction, customer experience and service, sales, profitability, and supply chain. This proves that visionary leadership improves business performance. The shared vision is due to the teamwork and bonding between the follower and the leaders. When sharing vision, the leaders in retail organizations become 'followers' leaders' by working shoulder to shoulder with the followers. In this way, the leaders have a positive effect on the follower's perception of visionary leadership. This visionary initiative energizes the followers and they start focusing on the implementation of the vision by adopting an engaging role with their leaders. Involvement of both leaders and follower cause bidirectional vision process where sometimes the followers play a negotiating role with their leaders to arrive at the mutually agreed vision for the organization. This also changes the mindset of the followers, and they start to think of themselves as part of the business and not just workers. This vision can be organizational or corporate, but it also works at the store level in this research, and at an individual level when considering retail in the context. This means that visionary leadership can apply to all levels of an organization and not specifically to only top management.

5.10 Theoretical implications

First, the findings support the reconceptualization of leadership vision and provide a theoretical model that can be subsequently refined and expanded. This suggests that the different areas of visionary leadership are interlinked with each other, and the followers' use of vision guidance and their intellectual competency helps to attain the vision integration and build the perception of followers. This model is an alternate and addition to vision theory by (Kantabutra, 2008; Kohles et al., 2012) where authors consider the theory related with the vision and other variables like vision guidance and integration. This research adds to this existing theory by incorporating the shared vision, intellectual competency, and follower perception of visionary leadership which makes the theory more comprehensive.

There is hardly any concrete research step in shared vision, and this is supposed to be the first effort in taking up the shared vision with the other variables of visionary leadership. The addition and introduction of teamwork with the bonding in the followers is value addition and

is specific to the retailers. Previously the theory about shared vision only discusses the bonding whereas this research argues about teamwork as an important supplementary factor for the shared vision.

Previously the vision theory about the business and financial objectives only relates to customer satisfaction where in this research evidence is provided about other measures related with the marketing and human resources like sales, managing personnel, and supply chain also affected because of the vision. This research suggests that these business objectives have a link to the visionary leadership for a commercial organization, but more research can be taken where clarity of how the sales and supply chain is affected by practicing the visionary leadership.

The theory about vision guidance talks about the guidance followers receive when carrying out their work and this research applies the same concept to the retail sector and found similar results but other findings like 'certainty to followers' and 'advance working and proactive followers' are important additions to the vision guidance. This suggests that how different followers' roles affect the vision guidance.

Within vision theory, the topic of integration between the followers and leaders provides extensive insights about the integration process, and apart from the similar finding of small contribution of followers into the big picture of the leaders, this research extends by providing reasoning for integration as the conflicting ideas between the leaders and followers. The vision integration theory is further established by having evidence from the retail sector for empowering broad-based actions in followers.

Not much research has been done on follower perception of visionary leadership. This is the major milestone in the theory of follower's perception wherein the retail sector the follower carries a positive and as well as negative perception of their visionary leaders. There are few new additions (sense of unknown) to the perception from this research while the rest of these are the same which are already found in the literature as a strategic thinker, followers being inspired and ideal self, leaders as innovators, and leader as futuristic. This research uncovers the relationships of the existing theory variables to the perception and explains how the perception is affected by these variables.

The intellectual ability of the followers and the visionary leadership was taken up together in the theory and this is the first time, to the best of my knowledge, the relationship has been exposed in this research. Previous traces of this can be found in the followership theory and this research in terms of the intellectual ability of followers will be a value addition in both the vision theory and followership theory.

5.11 Practical implications

The retailers from this research findings can benefit when the top management is considering motivating the followers. The store managers would be aware that while practicing visionary leadership how the follower should be involved in their vision for the business. This research will also inform the policy and decision-makers of the commercial organizations about the reasons for adopting visionary leadership at all levels of the company. The findings which are specific to the retailers can be used by the retail managers in terms of shared vision through team working and bonding. Retailers that are not practicing visionary leadership will find great opportunities to find new ways of achieving business objectives like sales and customer satisfaction.

On top of that, the research will give a helicopter view of visionary leadership and its impact on the shared vision and vision integration when considering the follower. The research suggests that visionary leadership changes the follower perception in the context of retailers and commercial organizations. The results also suggest that the use of the vision as an aligning function within the organization should not just be for CEOs and top executives. Advantages like involvement in leaders' big picture and follower engaging role will inform the organizations to better strategize for followers to accept the vision and follow the leaders.

As this research is follower-focused so the organization can learn and better understand the role of the follower. Keeping the leader-follower close to each other and shaping the perception of the followers. The importance of the bidirectional vision process also suggests to the organization that both leaders and followers complete this process. The followers negotiating role in the vision process will also develop the organizational learning in terms of the follower role in deciding the future of the business. The store-level vision which is to reach the top of the region and country can also be reached through practicing the visionary leadership concepts. Findings from this provide evidence that visionary leadership improves business performance and business objectives are an important part of the vision. As the key business performance indicators are part of the vision so organizations can better plan for the financials and as well as for customer satisfaction which includes the management of the followers and supply chain of the products. The findings also inform the big retailers work around their store-level strategies to better suit the visionary leadership and the management of followers. The findings from the follower perception of the visionary leadership also advise the organization that how this perception form what should these companies do to have a positive perception of their leadership roles. The current perception of the followers indicates that having visionary leadership qualities in the manager will allow organizations to establish super performing teams at the middle and lower level of the management.

The findings related to the vision integration also have importance to the organizations as it suggests that how to close the gap between the leaders and followers and what is the effect of the vision sharing on the followers. The finding of small followers' contribution to the work behaviour of the followers will help companies to tailor the job description and specification of the follower according to the vision of the leaders. This small scope work of the follower will bring big changes which could be in the line with the leadership vision. Also, after the findings impact the organizations, the companies will be better prepared to empower the followers and the leaders so that the followers can integrate more into the vision. Specifically discussing retailers and the spontaneous and planned channels of vision integration, the retailer can further strengthen their standards, processes, and procedures in line with the vision so that they can be practiced and followed by the followers.

The finding of intellectual competency of the follower also suggests that training and development have paramount importance for understanding the vision and strategic goals of the organization. These programs will enhance and improve the intellectual ability of the follower and thus they can better integrate with leadership vision.

The vision guidance findings will be beneficial and important for the organizations in terms of followers' progression and development as it enhances the learning process of the followers. The characteristics of the business visionary by Calia Roberts, (2015) also emphasize the same and argue that this is particular to the business organization. If practiced will lead to productive results in terms of attainment of business and commercial objectives of the firm. Among these characteristics, one is organized learning which motivates the leaders and followers. This thinking results in highly skilled and knowledgeable followers all contributing to the success of the organization.

5.12 Chapter summary

In this final chapter, the aim is to elaborate and consolidate the findings developed during the process of this research and as well as to situate it against the existing literature. It started by focusing on the first research question: How do followers of visionary leadership by using vision guidance and intellectual ability, integrate into a vision that facilitates the formation of shared vision and followers' perception? This main research question is subdivided into 6 specific questions which all aim to answer the main research question. Each specific research question then relates to the findings and themes that help to answer the questions of how and why related with a shared vision, vision guidance, follower perception, intellectual competency, and integration. The second research question is how these interconnections develop and cause a whole readiness in the followers to prepare for the organizational

change? This research question is answered with the help of overlapping themes between the umbrella themes and the answers depend on the data originating from the NVIVO data analysis file.

6. Conclusions

6.1 Introduction

The current thesis set out to explore the concepts of visionary leadership and its impacts on the followers. In this concluding chapter, the findings and research questions of this study are revisited and then elaborated on the research contributions, the limitations, and the future research of the study. Finally, the research is concluded with personal reflections.

6.2 Research questions & overview of the findings

Visionary leadership is about leading the team of followers under the umbrella of vision. It is the future course of action. How this future is achieved by the leaders and followers is the broad question that unfolds the use of vision guidance and intellectual ability of followers to integrate into a vision that forms the follower's perception and shared vision. To answer the first research question of this study it is essential to build knowledge about the visionary leadership constructs and its interconnectedness with each other which brings a change in the organization.

Vision is about foreseeing ahead and predicting, and its wide coverage for the organization makes it complex to understand by the followers. Vision guidance is beneficial for the followers, and they use this intuition to see ahead in the future and make logical conclusions/patterns about where the business is heading. Based on the findings from this research the intellectual abilities of the follower are important in understanding the vision. The followers adopt the roles as resistant/negotiator with the leaders and act as executor and implementor of vision to make their work behaviour as part of the vision (Thuan, 2019; Agashae & Bratton, 2001; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). The follower intellectual competency also prevents or facilitates the perception of visionary leadership. The finding that the higher is the intellectual ability, the better is the understanding of the vision also suggests that the follower's higher intellectual ability helps in forming the follower's perception. When followers make small contributions to their work it will integrate them into the leadership vision. Vision integration is influenced by many factors. In this current research, it is impacted by the vision guidance and intellectual abilities of the followers and in the retail business context, it is influenced by the planned and spontaneous mechanism (Kohles et al., 2013). It is found from this research that when followers integrate more with their leaders it changes the perception of the visionary leadership, which could be positive and as well as negative. For large retail businesses this perception comes in the shape of the strategic thinker (Westley & Mintzberg, 1989), futuristic,

motivational (Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993), and inspirational (Adair & J, 2004). Through this perception and traits of visionary leadership, the leaders and followers strive to achieve the business vision of customer satisfaction, customer experience, employee satisfaction (Kantabutra & Avery, 2007), sales, and supply chain. Followers when integrating into the vision are guided by it into their work through vision guidance (Kohles et al., 2012).

The visionary leadership concepts described in this study were found to be related to each other. Some pairs are more related while others are less. The most overlapping and connected concepts are shared vision with followers' perception and vision guidance. The vision integration and follower perception are least overlapped.

6.3 Research Problem

The problem of alignment and understanding between followers and leadership cause business failures. This research, by its value-added inputs into the vision integration suggests that how to achieve this alignment and integration. Moreover, the problem is what factors play that will solve the problem of misperception of followers about visionary leadership traits and personality. This problem can lead to the decaying of relationships with individuals and followers. This will lead to followers being less futuristic and visionary. They find themselves stuck in the trap of the status quo where thinking of guiding business in the right direction is limited and this results in the creation of a gap between leaders and followers. Findings from this research have helped in solving this problem and explored the factors that influence the follower perception of visionary leadership. The insights and results broaden the thinking of visionary leadership in the context of the retail business where followers and leaders can misperceive the vision (Kantabutra and Vimolratana, 2010). The major obstacle for visionary leaders is to change the mindset of followers and divert them on the path of business success. From this research, it is possible to answer the question that comes to the mind of the leaders and top management regarding how the vision should be shared and integrated with the effect of vision guidance and intellectual competencies of the followers. The research provides a helicopter view of the factors of visionary leadership which solve the problem of business visionaries in motivating the followers and having a full engagement with their vision agenda.

6.4 How result matches the expectations of the researcher

This study was guided by the questions and objectives: conclusions of the study will be drawn by revisiting the objectives and relating these to results. Therefore, section 7.3.1 to section 7.3.4 examines how the research objectives have been met. Looking at the following

objectives in the first chapter will allow us to measure how well the expectations match the results.

6.4.1 To find out unique and new ways of vision integration to attain business vision in a commercial organization.

This objective of the research is also supported by the findings, and it suggests that through interviews, the follower mentioned a unique way of vision integration that provides a different perspective. These ways are discussed in more detail in sections 6.6.4 and 6.6.5 of chapter 6. For the attainment of this objective of the research the planned and spontaneous channels of vision integration were found from the interviews as the mechanisms of vision integration (Kohles et al., 2013). These ways and methods provide vision closeness through simplicity and repetition of communication. By following standards, processes, and procedures of retail operations in line with the leadership vision the followers integrate with the vision. These new ways are found in addition to vision integration by empowering broad-based actions in followers and small followers' contributions into the work behaviours (Kohles et al., 2012).

6.4.2 To ascertain that vision integration, shared vision, and vision guidance embedded with each other

The third proposition and the second research question in chapter 1 about the vision guidance and shared vision come up to the expectations of the researcher. Shared vision cause vision guidance and when the vision is shared with the followers it becomes the guidance tool for the follower. This gives directions for future course of actions in terms of business success. The more it is shared the better it improves vision guidance.

The question is how this mechanism works, and the answer lies in the subthemes that overlap with customer satisfaction. The leaders share the vision of customer satisfaction with the followers, and they consider it part of their work and practice it with advanced working and being proactive. For example, in the retail context the respondents in this research mentioned that serving the customer fast in the long queue would make customers satisfied and happy (Kantabutra, 2011; Smith, 1993). Customer satisfaction as part of the leadership vision also guides the followers in their daily work on how to take care of customer needs. Likewise in a retail setting customer service is central to the vision and leads to customer satisfaction. Increase sales also make the followers proactive in their work and put followers in the context of retail work. For instance, advanced working on the layout of the store, promotion, and offers on products is adopted to increase the sales. Within the shared vision is the supply chain where the aim of business is making the product available to the customers at the leadership

and as well as followers' level. It also guides them in their work for instance to keep the shelving UpToDate. The follower work is backed up with information technology and the follower can track the product in the whole supply chain through computers. So, the vision, which is central to the business, affects the business objectives. The business indicators like customer satisfaction and sales, mirror the leader's big picture/vision, which guides the followers in their work and makes them broad-minded. When the vision is shared by the leaders, this research suggests that it energizes the followers.

This objective was about the link between the shared vision and the integration of vision in followers and the integrated followers influence the formation of shared vision. This research found this link in terms of what are common themes between these two concepts. These two findings are shared vision and subtheme: Bidirectional vision process which is an overlapping theme with the vision integration, and it can be implied from these two themes that the vision integration and shared vision happened due to the bidirectional vision process where initiative from leaders and as well as followers is necessary for connection between the two. The above objective of this study is also supported by the vertical flow of shared vision, which is associated with empowering the leadership behaviours in followers.

6.4.3 To confirm that in the retail industry of the UK the norm is to arrive at a shared vision with followers and the leadership vision occupies a more important position among followers

This research found that in most of the large retail organizations recruited for the data collection, it is evident that the leaders of the store have a vision for the business or have been exposed to a single corporate vision for the entire company. They share the vision with their followers for desired perception and integration. Except for a few findings from the current research contrary to sharing of the vision with the followers, this research showed a full practice of the leadership vision in the organizations and the importance given to the leadership vision by the followers. The extent of the followers' interest in leadership can be measured by the argument and findings from this research. The followers use the vision for higher intellectual stimulation, progression, and development within the retailers (Thuan, 2019; Dvir et al., 2002). The vision practice by the leaders in retail is so prominent that the companies have now started to have specific business functions vision for example supply chain vision in Primark UK. Also finding from this research support the objective that leaders share vision through word of mouth, meetings with the followers. Vision communication (Kohles et al., 2012) was found to be prevalent throughout all 7 stores selected in this research.

6.5 Contributions

This research has contributed to vision and followership theory and broadly into the literature of leadership. Within followership, the application of followers' roles into retail context and vision was a significant contribution. The research also indicates that how these roles change in terms of the retail business and vision. In vision theory, the contributions are in the visionary leadership concepts and their interconnections with each other.

The vision integration (Kohles et al., 2012, 2013; Berson, Waldman, & Pearce, 2016) is an important area of visionary leadership and this research contributes in terms of ways of applying planned and spontaneous mechanisms of vision integrations in the retail context. It also confirms the previous argument that small followers' contribution to work behaviours and decisions to achieve the big picture/vision of the leadership is the explanation of vision sharing and integration. The planned ways are embedded in the standards and procedures of the retail operations. The followers carry out these processes to address the concerns related to the vision and it has translated into the standards of retail business. For example integration is possible through higher customer satisfaction and fast service to the customers.

Within the notion of intellectual competency (Thuan, 2019; Agashae & Bratton, 2001) this research contributed to the knowledge of the follower understanding of the vision and their intellectual competency. This relationship has not been taken in the literature previously and this is the pioneering effort for the insights for the role of intellectual abilities of the follower in accepting or rejecting the vision of the leadership. For vision guidance to the followers about the work they perform in the organizations this research contributes to the role of the vision guidance. It also expands the knowledge that how and why it develops and progresses the followers to take future leadership positions in the companies. Vision guidance findings extend followership theory in terms of changing follower's behavior into advanced and proactive roles (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014)

In the shared vision (Kantabutra & Avery, 2011) as discussed earlier the roles of followers from followership theory like constructive negotiation role and implementor role, the role of teamwork along with the bonding in followers as suggested by (Senge, 1994) and (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014) were some of the value additions in the research of vision and followership.

This research also contributes to the perception (Sidani, 2007) of the follower by confirming the traits of the leaders in the context of the retail business. It extends the knowledge base in the formation of the perception of followers by introducing leadership traits that impact the perception and are unique to the sample of this study. The follower perception of visionary leadership in this study is named as 'sense of unknown' and 'personal best'. Also, it

contributed to how the other factors of visionary leadership, for example, the business objectives of commercial organization, vision integration, shared vision, and vision guidance affect the perception in the retail setting. Apart from the previous focus on customer satisfaction (Kantabutra, 2011) in the retail business, this research contributed to new business performance indicators like sales, supply chain, and how to manage followers with their position with the vision. The practical contributions or how the findings of this research informed the management practitioners are discussed in more detail in section 6.11.2 of chapter 6.

For answering the second main research question of this study this study confirms and leads to new thinking and provides answers to the relationship of the visionary leadership concepts. These findings are significant contributions as there is not much research in this area where the comprehensive questions about visionary leadership are taken into research considerations. The top connected and overlapped relationship of shared vision with followers' perception and vision guidance has contributed to vision research and resolved questions of how and why this overlap exists. It also provides valuable insights into the retail organizations of the UK as it extends the previous research (Eldor, 2020; Chi-hsiang, 2015) in these relationships.

6.6 Limitations

First, although the research covers the broad topic of leadership it is only limited to the followers, and perspectives related to them are part of the study. Leaders' opinions and discussions were excluded from this study. The second limitation exists regarding the representativeness of the sample. As this was a qualitative inquiry, this research does not make claims that the findings are generalizable to other settings for example other industries and companies (Boddy, 2016). While this study took care to ensure the participation of respondents from diverse backgrounds in the sample, the research was carried out with a sample from London, UK.

Third, the sample selected for this study was specifically colleagues and subordinates of managers in large retailers of the UK and as a result, the findings do not apply to other management levels, organizations, and industries. Due to time and resources limitations the size of sample size is 30 respondents. Although qualitative studies are always conducted with fewer respondents compared to quantitative, the sample size could be increased for a more representation of the population and can include nationwide coverage to include more perspective on the subject in future research (Fugard, A. J., & Potts, H. W, 2015)

6.7 Recommendations for future research

Future research should consider choosing and recruiting other commercial organizations and industries with the same concepts of visionary leadership/followership. This will bring variations in the results because of the change in the organization and industries. Other followers' visionary variables that affect the shared vision and perception would also make the relationships complete and add positively to the vision theory. This could result in better management and leadership decisions regarding the followers. Specific suggestions for future research for each concept of visionary leadership will be as follows.

How teamwork among the followers and with the leaders enhance the understanding of vision is one of the research question suggestions for future research. Only this research shows that teamwork improves the collective impact of followers and thus it is important to call for more research in this area. Nowadays innovation/vision is possible through teamwork and not through individuals. Shared vision does not have much research so it will help to further reconfirm the concepts and relationships in this area. Future research should also consider more work in the roles of followers. The research in this area would ask a question similar to what the process of this constructive resistance is and how it will impact the vision from the leadership as suggested by Tepper et al. (2001)

Business objectives are the backbone of commercial organizations and it's been impacted by many factors that result in better business scenarios. Future research should be on other financial indicators for example the impact of vision on sales, supply chain, and profitability. Today companies have a dedicated vision for the supply chain for example Primark UK and it would be interesting to explore these companies where vision is correlated with the supply chain. The idea of supply chain is to be cost effective and efficiency by smooth flow of goods and services. How this vision impact the followers and what is the role of leadership to involve them into the supply chain vision of the retailers.

Within follower perception, future research would be about visionary leadership traits and its impact on the perception of followers in other capital-intensive industries. The leader's traits for visionaries become the perceptions of its followers. In terms of managing the perception of followers, leaders engage with the followers by working at their level and becoming 'followers' leader'. How this changes the perception and motivates them would be another area of future research. Sense of unknown is a new finding from the current research and has connections with the vision guidance which is also a research direction for the future. This would have links to psychology discipline and specifically speaking when managers become visionaries and

use intuition to make predictions. Follower perception of visionary leadership as the strategic thinker would also be one of the avenues for the future research. This would ask research questions like how strategic vision is being perceived by the followers.

For vision integration, the future research could be in the direction of other methods of vision integration in other organizations which are spontaneous and planned, and how these planned channels become a part of the vision. Another area of future research would be on what broad areas of followers' work should be empowered and how this will address segments of the vision. These directions will further solve the puzzle of vision integration and will bring more perspective from different organizations which will also build the theory related to the vision.

The advantage of vision guidance is to make followers certain for the future of business. This would be another road to future research where vision not only provides certainty to the leaders but also make it sure for the followers about work and decisions and they get optimistic about the future.

At the middle and lower levels of the commercial organizations, it is difficult to communicate and implement the vision, so the role of the follower intellectual ability plays an important part in further investigation. This current research identified the language as the barrier for understanding the vision in a multicultural city of London so future research in this direction will bring a wealth of information to the existing literature. The research could be the multicultural factors that hinder or support the diffusion of the vision. Also, another way the research should take the lead is what and why vision content and areas of vision stimulate the intellectual ability of followers. This will be an area where research will show that how follower comes out from the daily routine of work and focus on the vision using their intellectual ability.

6.8 Personal reflections

The findings of the current study made me realize and consider the impacts of vision on businesses. I am still passionate about this issue, and I hope to work with the leaders as well as with the followers in the future to bring more clarity to this phenomenon of visionary leadership/followership. However, these findings made me more mindful of the possible impacts of working with followers and how it affects the leaders and ultimately the organizations. Realizing such impacts is important because I can now weigh the risks of the work and prepare myself for this job. I would also like to see more researchers working on this same topic and expand the knowledge base. As vision is a fascinating and magical topic, after this research I have developed an urge to involve myself in further inquiry related to this subject. The passion for this field also builds an expectation within me that more organizations practice visionary leadership and, its magic work for the businesses.

6.9 Chapter summary

In this chapter, research comes together by providing an overview of the central findings of the study. The significance of the findings and how they relate to one another have been discussed. Then comes the elaborations on the contributions, limitations, and future research of the current study. I discussed the benefits of this study towards many large retail organizations that seek to improve the businesses in terms of customers and employees (followers and leaders). Finally, I took time to reflect on the impact of the research on my own experience, attitudes, and practice as research

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Appendix-A-Subthemes

Shared vision

Main Research question: How followers of visionary leadership by using vision guidance and intellectual ability, integrate into vision which facilitate formation of shared vision and follower's perception? how these interconnected relationships develop and cause a whole readiness in the followers to prepare for the organizational change.

why and how the followers decode shared vision in retail business

Team work and Bonding

187

Common Cause of followers/leaders' big picture or vision

Followers Engaging role

Follower's Energy and Focus

Followers' leader

Bidirectional vision process

Not just worker but part of business

Covid compliance retailing

Follower's Mind set changes

Vision & planning not shared with followers

Followers as executing and implementing vision

Followers Negotiating for future

Appendix-B-Subthemes Followers' Perception

Main Research question: How followers of visionary leadership by using vision guidance and intellectual ability, integrate into vision which facilitate formation of shared vision and follower's perception? how these interconnected relationships develop and cause a whole readiness in the followers to prepare for the organizational change.

how follower perceive leadership vision in retail business?

- Inspirational and Ideal self
- Motivational
- Futuristic
- Strategic thinker
- Innovative and open to new ideas
- Leadership and organizational vision in retailing
- Manager and leader
- Personal best
- Higher organizational performance and long-term
- Social acceptance by followers
- Sense of unknown

Appendix-C-Subthemes Followers' Intellectual

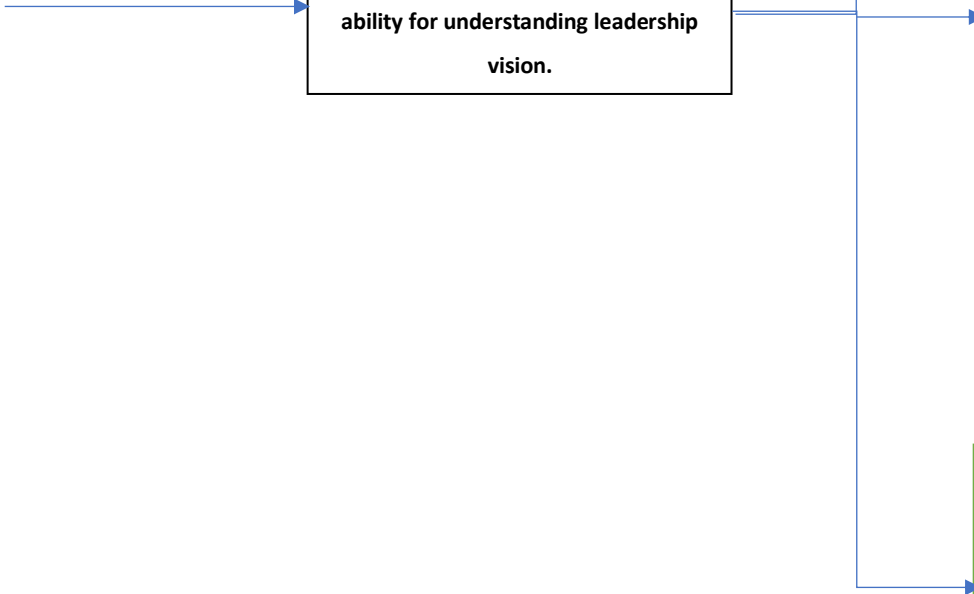
Main Research question: How followers of visionary leadership by using vision guidance and intellectual ability, integrate into vision which facilitate formation of shared vision and follower's perception? how these interconnected relationships develop and cause a whole readiness in the followers to prepare for the organizational change.

how followers perceive intellectual ability for understanding leadership vision.

Higher intellectual ability better vision understanding

No need of high intellectual ability

Language as barrier for followers accepting vision



Appendix-D-Subthemes Vision Guidance

Main Research question: How followers of visionary leadership by using vision guidance and intellectual ability, integrate into vision which facilitate formation of shared vision and follower's perception? how these interconnected relationships develop and cause a whole readiness in the followers to prepare for the organizational change.

how followers perceive intellectual ability for understanding leadership vision.

Progression and development of followers

Guide followers work

Advance working and proactive followers

Creates meaning in followers' lives

Certainty to followers

Broad minded followers

Optimistic future

Appendix-E-Subthemes

Vision Integration

Main Research question: How followers of visionary leadership by using vision guidance and intellectual ability, integrate into vision which facilitate formation of shared vision and follower's perception? how these interconnected relationships develop and cause a whole readiness in the followers to prepare for the organizational change.

why and how followers in retailers integrate into leadership vision?

Conflicting ideas dampen vision integration

Simplicity and repetition

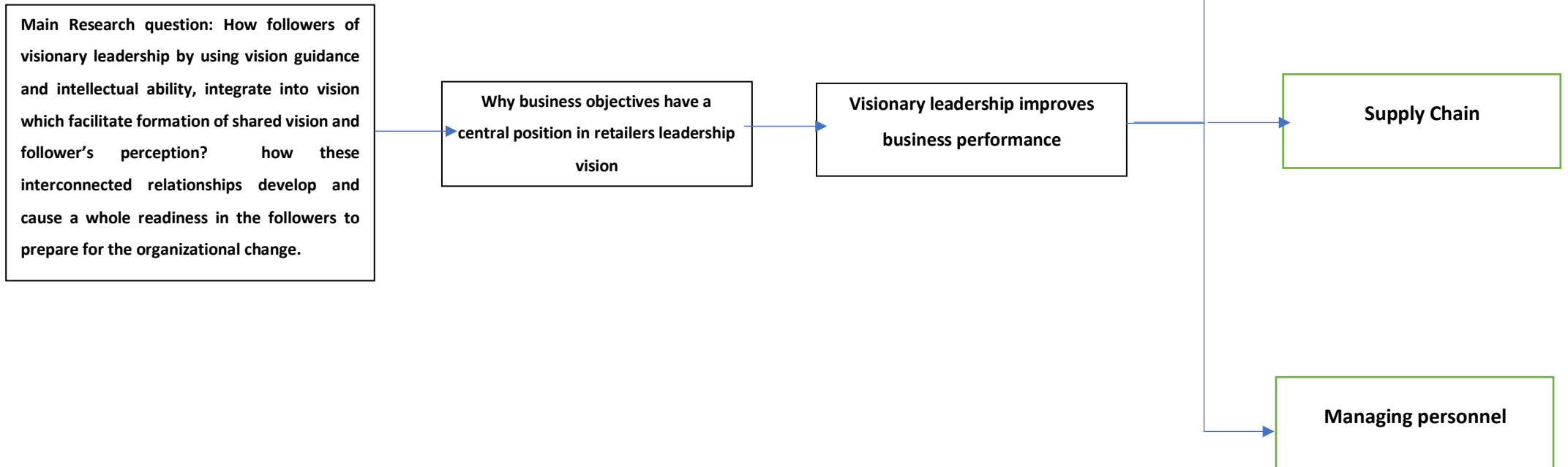
Integration through standards, processes and procedures

Integration and communication of vision

Small followers' contribution

Empower broad based actions in followers

Appendix-F-Subthemes Business Vision



Appendix G

CONSENT FORM

Follower use of vision guidance and intellectual competency to impact the visionary leadership perception and integration: Evidence from UK retail sector

**APPROVAL HAS BEEN GRANTED FOR THIS STUDY TO BE CARRIED OUT BETWEEN
10/04/2020 AND 10/06/2020**

The participant (or their legal representative) should complete the whole of this sheet.		
	YES	NO
Have you read the Participant Information Sheet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study? (via email/phone for electronic surveys)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you received satisfactory answers to all your questions? (via email/phone for electronic surveys)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Who have you spoken to about the study?		
Do you understand that you will not be referred to by name in any report concerning this study?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you understand that:		
• You are free to withdraw from this study at any time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• You don't have to give any reason for withdrawing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Choosing not to participate or withdrawing will not affect your rights?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• You can withdraw your data any time up to 10/06/2020	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to my interview being audio recorded	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I agree to the use of non-attributable quotes when the study is written up or published	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The procedures regarding confidentiality have been explained to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree that my anonymised data can be stored and shared with other researchers for use in future projects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to take part in this study.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Signature of research participant:		
Print name:	Date:	
Witness Statement		
I am satisfied that the above-named has given informed consent.		
Witness signature:		
Print name:	Date:	

Appendix H

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT:

Follower use of vision guidance and intellectual competency to impact the visionary leadership perception and integration: Evidence from UK retail sector

Greetings,

My name is M. Amir Ali, and I am a research PhD student working with Brunel business school at Brunel University. We are conducting a research study about followers' perception of visionary leadership in retail sector. I am emailing to ask if you would like to take about 30 minutes to complete a face-to-face interview for this research project. Participation is completely voluntary, and your answers will be anonymous.

If you are interested, please send me a reply by this email I will be happy to provide you additional information.

If you have any question, please do not hesitate to contact me through email or by mobile phone no 07455915712.

Thank you for your time.

M. Amir Ali

PhD student

Brunel business school

Brunel University

m.ali@brunel.ac.uk

amir75ali@gmail.com

Appendix I

CBASS

Brunel business school

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Study title:

Follower use of vision guidance and intellectual competency to impact the visionary leadership perception and integration: Evidence from UK retail sector

Invitation Paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

What is the purpose of the study?

The prime purpose of this research is to add to the growing literature and research in the area of visionary leadership. However a second sub-purpose of the study is to explore the influence of various variables on the development and intellectual ability of the follower of visionary leadership. In order to conduct this study the researcher has to find and recruit subjects of leaders and followers who think and work in the same manner of visionary leadership and has the vision to direct and guide the subordinates which is also said to be transformational leadership.

Why have I been invited to participate?

You have been invited to participate because you hold a key position of retail managers in your company which is a leadership position managing at least 3 followers/team members who follows your instructions and the leadership position. There are total 25 retail managers that will be invited to participate in this study. You are also chosen because you are on this position for at least 3 years.

Do I have to take part?

As participation is entirely voluntary, it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form.

If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

if you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw your data, without giving a reason, until the point at which your data is anonymised. After this point it will no longer be possible to identify your data.

If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw your data, without giving a reason, until the point at which your data is made publicly available in an anonymised form.

What will happen to me if I take part?

You will be interviewed for this research for 45 min and the end date for this project is 2020 December. During interview you will be answering the questions in detail which will be asked by me. These interviews will be recorded and the details of this will be available in the consent form.

What do I have to do?

You just have to take the interview and answer the questions asked during the interview

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

No apparent risk is attached to these interviews apart from type of questions asked will be related with the visionary leadership. No confidential information will be asked during these interviews and your response to the questions will be kept confidential.

What if something goes wrong?

If any thing goes wrong or the participants wants to launch a complain it is advised that the Phd student should be contacted, or his supervisor can also be contacted. If the participants wishes to complain the person to be contacted is the Chair of the CBASS research Ethics committee, David Gallear, who can be contacted via cbass-ethics@brunel.ac.uk.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

All information which is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. Any information about you which leaves the University, will have your name and address removed so that you cannot be identified from it. The information about the demographics variable like gender education and age will be locked and confidential and the data will be destroyed following the completion of the dissertation.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The research data will be coded (for anonymity) and analysed by the Phd student before being reported. The results will be used primarily for a dissertation/final year project and may be later reported at a conference or in a scientific journal. The anonymised research data may also be shared with other researchers for further analysis, but at no point will any uniquely identifiable data be shared. The data will be stored for a period of at least ten years from completion of the project. If you take part in this research, you can obtain a copy of the publication by contacting the student.

Who is organising and funding the research?

The Phd student himself and Brunel University is organizing and funding the research.

What are the indemnity arrangements?

Brunel University provides appropriate insurance cover for research which has received ethical approval.

Who has reviewed the study?

This study has been reviewed by the College Research Ethics Committee.

Passage on the University's commitment to the UK Concordat on Research Integrity

Brunel University is committed to compliance with the Universities UK Research Integrity Concordat. You are entitled to expect the highest level of integrity from our researchers during the course of their research.

For complaints and questions about the conduct of the Research

**College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, Chair –
Professor David Gallear (David.Gallear@brunel.ac.uk)**

Contact for further information and complaints

For general information

Student Name: Mohammad Amir Ali

Email: m.ali@brunel.ac.uk

Supervisor name: Dr. Selcuk Uygur

Email: Selcuk.uygur@brunel.ac.uk

Appendix J

Interview Schedule

FOLLOWERS/TEAM MEMBER

Demographic and Background information:

Role or position in Retail outlet:

Area of responsibility:

Age:

No of years in a subordinate/follower's role:

Gender: Male/Female

Store location:

Education level:

Data

SHARED VISION

1. Does your manager share his vision of the store with you? If yes, then what is it?
2. What is your role in sharing vision with you?
3. Do you feel more connected when your manager shares with you, his vision? How please explain in more detail.

VISION GUIDANCE

4. Do you think that the vision of your manager guides you for future directions for the store? How please explain in detail.
5. Is your manager involving you in the planning of the store? If yes, then how?
6. How this planning helps you directs you in future
7. Is sharing of vision cause a change in you. If yes, then what kind of change and how you use this change to guide you in your daily work?

FOLLOWERS PERCEPTION OF VISIONARY LEADERSHIP

8. What is your impression about the visionary leadership role of your manager?

9. How you form the perception of visionary leadership of your manager?
10. Is your perception of vision becomes source of inspiration for yourself? If yes, then how?
11. How this perception of the manager's vision helps you integrate with him to form a shared vision.
12. Is your intellectual ability to understand vision of your manager plays critical role in formation of its perception

INTEGRATION OF VISION WITH FOLLOWERS

13. How you practice and implement the vision of your manager in your daily work?
14. How integrated followers influence the formation of shared vision?

Appendix K

Sample of generating Initial codes

<p>I will take vision you mean essentially the goal and targets for the business. There will be company based target and then there be store specific targets so the company might say that we want to reduce the labour by 3% this is what company share with us and we got that done and there will be store specific ones so for example customer satisfaction so that has been given by the store manager to us and then they will be reviewed every four weeks and in the review we set the targets for the customer satisfaction to be excellent and then we get feedback from the customer that how we are doing.</p>	<p>Company specific vision</p> <p>Store specific vision</p>
<p>It depends on what is it. You will always expect change in targets and change in goals so what happens that every quarter or month or every period they change the targets</p>	<p>Change in the vision</p>
<p>So, few weeks back they were telling us that we gonna reduce the hours because they give us extra hours due to corona the social distancing so objected that how we can deliver the service with social distancing with less labour. If you have one less person, then you cant do it.</p>	<p>Managing personnel</p>
<p>Yes, the vision guides me for future directions and keeps me ahead of the current situation which allow me to serve the customers. This applies to the shelving which is about making the product available</p>	<p>Futuristic</p>

for the customers in the store. The shelving also has deliveries as part of the job where I have to receive the deliveries at the back of the store and scan them into the computer system in order to update the information system.

Sharing a vision about doing more work but I come for work so I don't mind doing more work, but I am indifferent to new work and new changes that our manager ask us to participate.

I think my manager does not have a visionary leadership style practice in his job instead he is a good manager with efficient people skills.

The perception is the general picture of the visionary leadership of my manager and this picture is used to get closer to him and integrate and form the shared vision which is not the individual objectives of the job but a combine common goal of arriving to his vision, The integrated team is formed after having a shared vision.

Yeah, offcourse coz its says that I know a lot and I have all the ability to understand this thinking which is not true many times. I wanna say it in this way that intelligence is one thing when defining it my manager has years of experience which is not comparable to any knowledge, I have its not academic intelligence or rational intelligence but coz I recognize that he has this all years of experience s if you based

Make product available

Followers taking vision as more work

Leader's People skills

Follower defining perception

Common goals of leaders and followers

No alternate to experience

someone smartness on some mistake then its horribly wrong.

The intellectual ability gives you way to choose the right alternative among my manager provides and choose it with the less risk and more benefit. The intellectual ability will give you clear understanding of the goals and vision.

You mean the communication with the team. Communication is through emails and write memos we also use whats app and social media also for the communication. For the integration of the followers, I would say that the more integrated with the team the more knowledge you will have or the more vision you can have which is shared coz your communication is more open and you more integrated with your manager and the team. The more integrated I feel with my manager the more closely i form the shared vision. Connecting with your manager is the key of having teamwork with your manager and connection comes with the initiative from both sides.

Follower defining intellectual ability

Integration results in knowledgeable followers

Appendix L
Phase 5: Umbrella theme: Vision Integration
Subtheme: Small followers' contribution

Participant 1	<p><Files\Aimee Luke> - § 1 reference coded [4.55% Coverage]</p> <p>Reference 1 - 4.55% Coverage</p> <p>First, I see how my job relates to the vision of the manager and I identify the area which are covered by the vision for example my manager think that customer should be given top priority and if I am working on the layout of the customer which for the customer then I can see that I am contributing in the vision of my manager by having a layout good looking for customer.</p>
Participant 2	<p><Files\Atidzhe> - § 1 reference coded [4.80% Coverage]</p> <p>Reference 1 - 4.80% Coverage</p> <p>I am doing what I have to go in my work andi try to follow him instructions and do what he suggests us to do. The daily work of ours is supported by the physical work and also the computer supported work and on top of this the managers vision also gives us the opportunity to apply to our daily work and make the things and result more customer focused.</p>
Participant 3	<p><Files\Avanish Patel> - § 2 references coded [4.27% Coverage]</p> <p>Reference 1 - 2.76% Coverage</p> <p>Yes, it gets me more closer to my manager as sharing the vision is about sharing the future of the business and I am part of the business. It makes me more aware that how my job fits in the overall business which motivates me to work with more devotion and I get connected to my manager</p>

	<p>Oh yeah offcourse the sharing of vision makes me think about the business of retailing in a wider sense and have more impact on my job at a smaller scale.</p>
Participant 4	<p><Files\Ben lawrence> - § 1 reference coded [1.61% Coverage]</p> <p>Reference 1 - 1.61% Coverage</p> <p>The big picture and we are all there to fill our piece to into the big picture. If that piece does not fit, try taking out and fit something else.</p>
Participant 5	<p><Files\Daniel> - § 3 references coded [12.57% Coverage]</p> <p>Reference 1 - 5.53% Coverage</p> <p>Well, we all have role individually to help me to do our job and to do best we can so that we can progress together to achieve his vision. I try to understand his vision every time in the meetings and then help him as much as I can.</p> <p>Reference 2 - 4.08% Coverage</p> <p>It helps me telling what I have to to contribute in the bigger picture of his vision and goals and he tells me what is expected of me, so I know what to do when I come in.</p> <p>Reference 3 - 2.97% Coverage</p> <p>I agree with this coz we all have the role to play in the store and if someone does not do it then it will affect the vision</p>
Participant 6	<p><Files\Jamal> - § 1 reference coded [3.63% Coverage]</p>

	<p>Reference 1 - 3.63% Coverage</p> <p>Yeah, by sharing it you know what your role is what you need to do and what are the demands which is according to the vision of the manager.</p>
Participant 7	<p><Files\Jay Kumar patel> - § 2 references coded [7.09% Coverage]</p> <p>Reference 1 - 3.88% Coverage</p> <p>Yes, sharing the vision makes me change and prepares me to do my job with big objective in mind. It opens up my mind and also my style of working and I am able to connect my scope of the job with the over strategic aim</p> <p>Reference 2 - 3.21% Coverage</p> <p>If the worker is intelligent, it easier for him or her to understand the vision and broad concepts and how it relates to the micro task that adds up into big parts of the vision.</p>
Participant 8	<p><Files\Olquta> - § 1 reference coded [3.58% Coverage]</p> <p>Reference 1 - 3.58% Coverage</p> <p>I do effort to analyze vision of the manager and then try to understand its contents and areas of concerned which overlaps with my job. Then I figure out how my manager see the future of our business and the areas he wants to have improvement or change</p>



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Appendix M

5 April 2020

LETTER OF CONDITIONAL APPROVAL

**APPROVAL HAS BEEN GRANTED FOR THIS STUDY TO BE CARRIED OUT BETWEEN
 06/04/2020 AND 01/12/2020**

Applicant (s): Mr Mohammad Ali

Project Title: Followers' perception of Visionary leadership in UK retail sector

Reference: 22711-LR-Mar/2020- 25227-2

Dear Mr Mohammad Ali

The Research Ethics Committee has considered the above application recently submitted by you.

The Chair, acting under delegated authority has agreed that there is no objection on ethical grounds to the proposed study. Approval is given on the understanding that the conditions of approval set out below are followed:

- Please ensure that you monitor and adhere to all up-to-date Government health advice for the duration of your project.
- A14.1 – Methodology - Under the current circumstances due to the social/movement restrictions being placed as a result of the Coronavirus, you are permitted to carry out your interview via an online method or telephone rather than physically face-to-face. You must still provide your participants with the Participant Information Sheet and seek their informed consent via a Consent Form.
- A18.1 – Consent - You do not need to include a Witness Statement section on your consent form unless your participants are unable to give informed consent e.g., if they are under 18 or otherwise vulnerable, neither of which appear to apply to your project. The agreed protocol must be followed. Any changes to the protocol will require prior approval from the Committee by way of an application for an amendment.

Please note that:

- Research Participant Information Sheets and (where relevant) flyers, posters, and consent forms should include a clear statement that research ethics approval has been obtained from the relevant Research Ethics Committee.
- The Research Participant Information Sheets should include a clear statement that queries should be directed, in the first instance, to the Supervisor
- (where relevant), or the researcher. Complaints, on the other hand, should be directed, in the first instance, to the Chair of the relevant Research Ethics Committee.

Approval to proceed with the study is granted subject to receipt by the Committee of satisfactory responses to any conditions that may appear above, in addition to any subsequent changes to the protocol.

The Research Ethics Committee reserves the right to sample and review documentation, including raw data, relevant to the study.

You may not undertake any research activity if you are not a registered student of Brunel University or if you cease to become registered, including abeyance or temporary withdrawal. As a deregistered student you would not be insured to undertake research activity. Research activity includes the recruitment of participants, undertaking consent procedures and collection of data. Breach of this requirement constitutes research misconduct and is a disciplinary offence.



Professor David Gallear

Chair of the College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee