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From Serving to Adapting: Leadership and Project Success in Multicultural Teams

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Abstract

Purpose - This research investigates the influence of Servant Leadership on project success in multicultural environments, analyzing the mediating role of Adaptive Leadership and the moderating effect of multicultural team challenges.

Design/methodology/approach - A quantitative research was employed through a structured online questionnaire, developed using validated scales from the literature. The instrument measured servant and adaptive leadership behaviors, multicultural challenges, and project outcomes: purposive sampling targeted project managers, team leaders, and team members. Data collection occurred between May and July 2025, resulting in 34 valid responses. The data was analyzed through descriptive statistics and inferential statistical techniques, including t-tests, Pearson correlations, multiple regression, and mediation and moderation analysis.

Findings - The findings provide strong support for Hypothesis 1, confirming that Servant Leadership was significantly associated with Adaptive Leadership. However, Hypotheses 2, 3, and 4 were not supported: Adaptive Leadership did not significantly predict Project Success, no mediation effect was found, and multicultural challenges did not moderate the relationship between Adaptive Leadership and Project Success.

Implications - Theoretically, this study contributes by combining Servant and Adaptive Leadership into a single empirical framework and by testing mediation and moderation mechanisms in multicultural contexts. Practically, it highlights the need for leadership development programs that strengthen servant-oriented values, adaptability, and cultural awareness, while addressing perceptual gaps between leaders and their teams. Limitations related to sample size, geographical imbalance, and overrepresentation of small teams constrain generalizability. Still, the study provides a basis for future research with larger and more diverse samples, longitudinal designs, and complementary qualitative approaches.

Originality/value - While previous studies have examined Servant and Adaptive Leadership separately, this dissertation empirically integrates both styles into a single framework. It connects them to project success in multicultural settings. Moreover, it introduces multicultural team challenges as a moderating factor, extending the existing literature by linking leadership theories with the complexities of culturally diverse project environments.

Keywords: Servant Leadership, Adaptive Leadership, Multicultural Teams, Project Success.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	i
Abstract	ii
1. Introduction	1
2. Literature Review	3
2.1. Leadership and Leadership Styles	3
2.2. Multicultural Teams	7
2.2.1. Challenges of Multicultural Teams	8
2.2.2. Leadership in Multicultural Teams	9
2.3. Project Management	11
2.3.1. Project Management and Leadership	11
2.3.2. Project Management and Culturally Diverse Environments	12
2.4 Similar Studies	13
2.5 Research Framework and Hypotheses	16
3. Methodology	19
3.1 Methodological Aspects of Similar Studies	19
3.2 Methodology Selection	21
3.3 Sample	22
3.4 Measures	23
4. Results	28
4.1 Sample Demographics and Descriptive Statistics	28
4.2 Discussion of Results and Implications	29
5. Conclusion	37
References	39
Annex 1 - Questionnaire Translated	47
Annex 2 - Questionnaire	55
Annex 3 - Questions	62
Annex 4 - Statistical Outputs of Hypothesis Testing	64

List of Tables and Figures

Table 1 - Definitions of Leadership.....	4
Table 2 - Leadership Styles	6
Table 3 - Leadership in Multicultural Contexts.....	11
Table 4 - Aspects of Similar Studies and Main Conclusions	15
Table 5 - Methodological Considerations of Similar Studies.....	20
Table 6 - Structure of the Questionnaire	21
Table 7 - Measures	25
Table 8 - Sample Demographics	30
Table 9 - Cronbach's α for Main Scales	30
Table 10 - Servant Leadership Descriptive Statistics.....	31
Table 11 - Adaptive Leadership Descriptive Statistics.....	32
Table 12 - Multicultural Team Challenges Descriptive Statistics.....	32
Table 13 - Project Success Descriptive Statistics.....	33
Table 14 - T-Tests Results and Effect Sizes.....	35
Table 15 - Pearson's Correlation Matrix.....	35
Table 16 - Summary of Statistical Tests and Conclusions for each Hypothesis.....	37
Figure 1 - Research Framework.....	18

1. Introduction

Leadership is key to managing complexity and fostering team cohesion (Northouse, 1997). Some types of leadership support solid strategic decisions, conflict resolution, and motivating team members (Rehan *et al.*, 2024). Effective leadership influences project management (Rehan *et al.*, 2024) and project outcomes (Cleland, 1995; Rezvani *et al.*, 2016). On the other hand, as globalization has increased, the existence of multicultural teams has grown, alongside challenges and opportunities that underscore the role that leadership plays in managing cultural diversity (Mäkilouko, 2004; Sogancilar & Ors, 2018).

This study explores the link between leadership, multicultural challenges, and project success. Leadership styles such as Servant leadership and Adaptive leadership are successful in fostering inclusiveness, trust, and adaptability—key for project management in multicultural settings (Bonini *et al.*, 2024; Eva *et al.*, 2018). Also, it is essential to address how these types may be used to solve multicultural team issues and enhance project performance in terms of budget, schedule, and quality (Cleland, 1995; Rezvani *et al.*, 2016).

Although individual constructs such as Servant Leadership, Adaptive Leadership, and multicultural challenges have been examined separately, there is still limited research integrating these dimensions within a unified model to explain project success in multicultural environments. For instance, Servant Leadership has been consistently associated with increased team engagement and performance (Eva *et al.*, 2019; Liden *et al.*, 2008), and studies have demonstrated its impact through psychological mechanisms like autonomy and relatedness (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016). However, few empirical studies have tested how this leadership style translates into specific adaptive behaviors in complex cultural settings. Adaptive Leadership itself has been largely explored in the context of dynamic environments (Yukl & Mahsud, 2010; Bonini *et al.*, 2024), yet its role as a mediator in leadership effectiveness remains under-investigated.

Moreover, although the challenges associated with multicultural teams—such as communication barriers and coordination difficulties—have been well-documented (Stahl *et al.*, 2010; Anglani *et al.*, 2023; Sogancilar & Ors, 2018), the moderating role of these challenges on leadership outcomes is still conceptually acknowledged but empirically underexplored. Finally, while project success has been measured using traditional performance indicators in terms of budget, schedule, and quality (Cleland, 1995; Mir & Pinnington, 2014; Rezvani *et al.*, 2016), most frameworks do not take into consideration how team diversity and leadership styles interact to influence those results.

To fill these gaps, this study proposes and tests an integrative model in which multicultural team difficulties moderate the indirect relationship between Servant Leadership and project success, which is influenced both directly and indirectly by Adaptive Leadership. By doing this, it advances the theoretical knowledge of leadership in multicultural project contexts and offers empirical support for leadership tactics that are more context sensitive.

The methodology involves a questionnaire to collect data from experienced project managers, team leaders and team members in multicultural settings. The research tries to evaluate leadership styles, adaptive behaviors, project outcomes, and cultural diversity problems. The data obtained were analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics to characterize the sample, reliability analysis (Cronbach's α) to validate the scales, independent-samples t-tests to compare groups, Pearson's correlations to examine associations between constructs, multiple regression analyses to test the hypotheses, and mediation and moderation analyses (Sobel test and interaction terms) to explore indirect and conditional effects.

The dissertation is structured into five chapters. Following this introduction, the literature review presents a theoretical foundation by exploring key concepts such as leadership styles, multicultural teams, and project management and the relationship between some of these concepts. Further, the literature review analyzes similar studies, specifically those conducted in other nations, and introduces the hypotheses that will be investigated. The third chapter outlines the research methodology, detailing data collection and analysis methods.

The results are provided in the fourth chapter. The sample is briefly described at the beginning of this chapter, followed by an examination of the statistics used to test the hypothesis and a conclusion that discusses the key findings. The final chapter is the conclusion with some suggestions for further studies.

2. Literature Review

In this chapter, there is a theoretical review of some main concepts, such as Leadership, Multicultural Teams, and Project Management, and the relationships between these concepts. It begins with definitions of leadership and several leadership styles, with an emphasis on servant and adaptive leadership. After this, the focus is on multicultural teams, their characteristics, and their main challenges. Lastly, project management and its relationship with Leadership and Cultural Environments. To conclude, there is a combination of similar studies to analyze the main conclusions and different perspectives, as well as to compile and evaluate the contributions of related studies that may serve as helpful sources for this investigation. The study framework suggested at the end of this chapter is the result of the review, which lays out the interactions between these constructs.

2.1. Leadership and Leadership Styles

There are several definitions of leadership that emphasize different perspectives (Stogdill (1974) cited in Northouse (1997)).

Firstly, leadership can be seen as an exclusive characteristic of specific individuals, and as referred to in the Great Man Theory, it is considered innate (Nietzsche (1969) and Grint (2000), cited in Isaac Mostovitz *et al.* (2009)). On the other hand, Cyert (1990) and Parris and Peachey (2013) consider that leadership is a skill that can be developed and is based on the ability to influence others. In this regard, traditional definitions frequently emphasized influence and goal achievement as central to leadership (Northouse, 2018; Yukl, 2013).

After this, leadership can be perceived as a relational process, based on the Leader-Member Exchange (Northouse, 1997), which accentuates the exchanges between followers and leaders. Later, Burns (1978) and Bass (1990) expanded the concept by framing leadership as a relational and motivational process, highlighting mutual transformation and inspiration to exceed expectations.

Lastly, the concept has evolved to a multilevel, context-dependent process, as referred to by Northouse (1997) and Yammarino (2013), as they underline the significance of situational circumstances and highlight how adaptable it is to individual, team, and organizational situations. This evolution also reflects ethical and adaptive responsibilities, as emphasized by Greenleaf (1977) and Heifetz et al. (2009), who point to the need for leaders to serve others, respond to complexity, and demonstrate resilience in challenging environments.

To conclude, leadership and power are closely linked, with power helping explain influence dynamics (Northouse, 1997). Leadership can be considered formal or informal, based on status inside an organization or followers' perceptions of their authority, respectively (Northouse, 1997; Yammarino, 2013). Beyond this, critical scholars such as Alvesson and Spicer (2014) stress that leadership is not simply a behavioral role but also a socially constructed process shaped by discourse and power relations. Taken together, these perspectives demonstrate that leadership has evolved into a multidimensional construct, encompassing individual traits, relational exchanges, contextual adaptability, ethical responsibilities, and socially constructed practices.

Table 1 synthesizes, according to several authors, some definitions of leadership.

Author	Definition
Northouse (2018)	Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group to achieve a common goal.
Yukl (2013)	Leadership influences others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it.
Burns (1978)	Leadership is a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders.
Bass (1990)	Leadership is an interaction among people in which one presents information in such a manner that others are motivated to act.
Greenleaf (1977)	Servant leadership begins with the natural feeling of wanting to serve first.
Heifetz <i>et al.</i> (2009)	Adaptive leadership is mobilizing people to tackle tough challenges and thrive.
Alvesson & Spicer (2014)	Leadership is a socially constructed and discursively produced phenomenon, often shaped by power relations and organizational narratives.

Table 1 - Definitions of Leadership

According to Ngayo Fotso (2021), leadership theories are categorized as traditional or emerging. There are more styles of leadership with different competencies that are being developed in the 21st century, as a result of social life, demographic changes, the financialization of the economy, the expanding digitization of society, the sustainability agenda, and crisis management (Ngayo Fotso, 2021).

Firstly, the Great Man Theory (Carlyle, 1869; Zaccaro, 2007), suggests that effective leadership depends on traits aligned with situational contexts. The Traits Theory is similar; however, the

manifestation of certain characteristics would be constrained by the anticipations or requirements of the collective adhering to the leader (Stogdill, 1948).

Secondly, the Behavioral Theory claims that leadership can be taught in different styles depending on how leaders interact with their teams and relate to their duties and output (Likert, 1961). Leaders should also be able to adopt different leadership styles according to the circumstances, needs, emotions, and degree of experience of their subordinates (Lewin *et al.*, 1939).

The foundation of the Situational leadership model is the interaction between the leader's task-oriented direction, the socioemotional support that is given, and the readiness of the subordinates, which is the capacity and desire to assume responsibility for self-direction (Gonçalves & Mota, 2011). The model's applicability in project management is particularly notable, as it recognizes the variability in team dynamics and encourages leaders to adjust their styles accordingly (Gonçalves & Mota, 2011).

In addition, autocratic leadership is task-oriented and prioritizes authority and control, highlighting the contrasts in the hierarchy between the leader and the subordinate (Malakyan & Ivanova, 2024). This theory believes that employees need guidance and value rules and directions established in their environment. Also, group discussion is not allowed in this type of leadership (Kelly & MacDonald, 2019; Lewin *et al.*, 1939).

Moreover, Democratic leadership fosters team-building and guarantees a participative approach to the team, as leaders encourage followers to share duties and participate in decision-making (Blake & Mouton, 1985). Emotional intelligence represents an important part of Democratic leadership, as it values the role of emotions such as empathy and fairness (Scott *et al.*, 2014).

Additionally, Laissez-Faire is based on granting autonomy and delegating responsibility to subordinates (Bass, 1985; House, 1971), which means that the leader does not participate in decision-making and lets the subordinates handle problems (Kelly & MacDonald, 2019; Lewin *et al.*, 1939). Laissez-faire is considered passive and values self-direction and making decisions on one's own (Malakyan & Ivanova, 2024). Lastly, these leaders have also been characterized as achievement-oriented (Bass, 1985; House, 1971).

Furthermore, traditional theories also include: Transactional and Transformational leadership (Ngayo Fotso, 2021). Transactional leadership is based on the idea that followers and leaders have a mutually reliant relationship relying on reciprocal exchanges between leaders and followers; leaders give their subordinates something of value and obtain something they desire in return

(Abbas & Ali, 2023; Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987). Also, it is defined by systems of rewards and penalties (Abbas & Ali, 2023).

On the other hand, in Transformational leadership, according to Bass (1985), a leader may motivate followers to go above and beyond by cultivating a common goal and integrating fundamental principles into the organization's culture. By promoting the common good and fostering a reciprocal relationship between leaders and followers, this leadership style promotes growth on both sides (Bass, 1985). Transformational leadership inspires followers to exceed expectations by aligning them with meaningful goals and values (Ngayo Fotso, 2021).

Adaptive leadership, one of the emerging theories, is characterized by the idea that leaders must have the ability to lead groups through adaptive difficulties that call for changes in attitudes, convictions, and actions (Heifetz *et al.*, 2009). This type focuses on the interaction between leaders and the environment, which fosters knowledge and flexibility (Heifetz *et al.*, 2009). Also, adaptive leadership fosters organizational resilience (Bonini *et al.*, 2024) and is central to ambiguity dynamics, where one must strike a balance between participatory and directive methods to successfully involve various stakeholders (Yukl & Mahsud, 2010).

Lastly, Servant leadership is characterized by giving less value to the goals of the organization and, in return, putting team members' motivation, well-being, and personal growth first (Greenleaf, 2013). This type of leadership encourages cooperation between team members and characteristics like being trustful and empathic (Eva *et al.*, 2018; Singh, 2014). To conclude, servant leadership creates a feedback-driven culture (Liden *et al.*, 2008; Yousaf, 2018).

Table 2 synthesizes the most relevant leadership styles, their key characteristics, and the authors who defined them.

Leadership Style	Main Characteristics	Authors
Great Man Theory	Leadership is innate; leaders are born with special traits.	Carlyle (1869); Zaccaro (2007)
Trait Theory	Certain traits explain leadership but depend on the social context.	Stogdill (1948)
Behavioral Theory	Leadership can be taught; it focuses on styles of interaction and task performance.	Likert (1961); Lewin <i>et al.</i> (1939)
Situational	Adapting the style according to the maturity and readiness of subordinates.	Gonçalves & Mota (2011)

Autocratic	Focus on authority, hierarchy, and control; limited participation of subordinates.	Lewin et al. (1939); Kelly & MacDonald (2019); Malakyan & Ivanova (2024)
Democratic	Participation, shared decision-making, empathy, and fairness.	Blake & Mouton (1985); Scott <i>et al.</i> (2014)
Laissez-Faire	Total autonomy for subordinates; the leader does not interfere in decision-making.	House (1971); Bass (1985); Lewin <i>et al.</i> (1939)
Transactional	Based on exchanges, rewards, and punishments.	Kuhnert & Lewis (1987); Abbas & Ali (2023)
Transformational	Inspires followers to exceed expectations; emphasizes values and collective goals.	Burns (1978); Bass (1985); Ngayo Fotso (2021)
Servant	Prioritizes well-being, motivation, and personal growth of team members; cooperation, empathy, and trust.	Greenleaf (1977, 2013); Liden <i>et al.</i> (2008); Eva <i>et al.</i> (2018); Singh (2014)
Adaptive	Leading in complex contexts; managing ambiguity, resilience, and balance between directive and participative approaches.	Heifetz et al. (2009); Yukl & Mahsud (2010); Bonini <i>et al.</i> (2024)
Distributed	Sharing leadership functions among several members.	Spillane (2006)

Table 2 - Leadership Styles

2.2. Multicultural Teams

Marquardt and Horvath (2001) defined multicultural teams as task-oriented groups composed of individuals from various cultural backgrounds. In contrast, Halverson and Tirmizi (2008) described people from different cultural backgrounds who manage connections inside and outside of organizations, share accountability for results, consider themselves a coherent unit, and rely on one another for tasks.

Multiculturalism emerged in the 1960s in countries like the United States and Canada (Chua *et al.*, 2012; Hero, 2010). Professional services, such as architecture, engineering, and construction, facilitated the migration of professionals to exchange knowledge and manage operations in different countries (Carrillo, 1994). Multiculturalism represents cultural diversity, aiming to promote equality and harmony by integrating and controlling this diversity (Anglani *et al.*, 2023).

Cultural Diversity is key to developing cross-cultural competencies (Parboteeah *et al.*, 2015) and addressing issues related to linguistic disparities, values, and beliefs that influence interactions, communication, and decision-making (Anglani *et al.*, 2023). This concept arises when organizations

engage in multinational initiatives and conduct commerce across national borders (Konanahalli *et al.*, 2014) or internationalize by hiring local staff or sending specialists abroad either permanently or temporarily (Bell & Young, 1998; Oviatt & McDougall, 2005).

Despite its importance, cultural diversity can pose risks if disparities in political and legislative systems, countries, cultures, faiths, or behaviors lead to miscommunication or the loss of important information (Anglani *et al.*, 2023).

2.2.1. Challenges of Multicultural Teams

To ensure the effectiveness of multicultural teams, some challenges need to be addressed (Sogancilar & Ors, 2018). Kappagomtula (2017) identifies challenges such as differences in work habits, equipment, procedures, geographical dispersion, and cultural affinity. Additionally, integration is hindered by cultural or behavioral disparities, differing gender attitudes, and stakeholder expectations (Kappagomtula, 2017).

Ineffective communication and misunderstandings also pose challenges (Sogancilar & Ors, 2018). These communication issues are more noticeable in brainstorming sessions or meetings and the clear meaning of some expressions may be lost, as referred to by Sogancilar and Ors (2018). Adler (2002) notes that some cultures value direct communication and others indirect approaches, which can lead to some confusion. Furthermore, individualistic cultures value directness, while collectivist cultures may cause miscommunication and misinterpretation (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). There are also some coordination problems due to the interpretation of some deadlines across cultural contexts (Sogancilar & Ors, 2018).

Expectations and working styles present another challenge for multicultural teams (Sogancilar & Ors, 2018). Some examples of these differences in working styles are related to their approach to work-life balance, with some emphasizing strict separation between work and personal life while others integrate them; also, autonomy is valued differently (Sogancilar & Ors, 2018). Adler (2002) notes that while some people are motivated by security and monetary rewards, others are more motivated by relationships or flexible work schedules.

Intolerance and lack of knowledge about diversity are further challenges (Sogancilar & Ors, 2018). This situation can lead to conflicts and a lack of team cohesion due to a lack of awareness about team members' cultural differences (Sogancilar & Ors, 2018). Collectivist cultures have different priorities from individualistic cultures, as they prioritize group harmony rather than personal goals and achievements (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

These challenges highlight the complexity of managing multicultural teams (Sogancilar & Ors, 2018). As Behfar et al. (2006) stated, cultural disparities can raise the likelihood of conflict, jeopardizing teamwork (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003).

Despite these obstacles, Adler (2002) argues that when diversity is well-managed, it may turn these problems into chances for creativity and various viewpoints, which will improve team performance.

2.2.2. Leadership in Multicultural Teams

Leaders of multicultural teams have an important role in using both human and technical abilities to plan, manage, and build trust and role clarity among team members (Caligiuri *et al.*, 2020).

Expatriate managers are sent by their companies to work in another country for a limited time, typically to transfer organizational culture, expertise, or skills to foreign operations (Caligiuri *et al.*, 2020).

There are three main styles of leadership that expatriate managers follow (Björkman & Schapp, 1994). Firstly, Didactical Leadership promotes ideas by comparing how problems have been solved by other businesses and recommending visiting those businesses to get knowledge and duplicate their achievements (Mäkilouko, 2004).

Furthermore, Organization Design Leadership involves selecting international team members who share the company's view and focus on minimizing cultural challenges by sticking to established methods, and not adjusting to local culture (Mäkilouko, 2004).

Third, Culturally Blind Leadership focuses on leaders who disregard cultural variations and keep established practices without making any changes, which can cause serious issues, such as the breakdown of collaboration (Black & Porter, 1991; Selmer, 2002).

The choice of leadership style is influenced by the individual personality of the managers and their capacity to adapt to foreign situations (Selmer, 2002). Some managers are more focused on cultural differences and how to solve cultural problems and others tend to ignore cultural differences and the necessity to adapt (Mäkilouko, 2004). The way people see other cultures and team members may be influenced by schemas or perceived similarities (Mäkilouko, 2004).

Moreover, people's capacity to adapt to different cultures might be explained by several personality characteristics (Selmer, 2002). On this note, agreeableness, emotional consciousness, emotional stability, intellect, openness, and extroversion can be useful in creating effective coping mechanisms (Mäkilouko, 2004).

There are common characteristics that multicultural leaders follow (Bloom *et al.*, 1994). Firstly, leaders emphasize moral behavior and workers' welfare and prioritize effective management of cultural diversity (Bloom *et al.*, 1994). After this, they promote involvement in decision-making and prioritize people and relationships above work, balancing between extremes (Bloom *et al.*, 1994). On the other hand, Wills and Barham (1994) highlight different characteristics, such as cognitive complexity, as leaders should comprehend, relate to, and gain knowledge from many cultures. Also, emotional energy and psychological maturity, valuing the ability to cope with stress brought on by uncertainty and bewilderment in multicultural environments and selecting flexible and open coping mechanisms over defensive ones (Wills & Barham, 1994).

Additionally, Mäkilouko (2004) outlines three leadership styles based on how leaders see other cultures: Ethnocentrism, Synergy and Polycentrism.

Firstly, Ethnocentrism is a formal, task-oriented leadership style based on cultural blindness, leading to team division and considering foreign members inferior (Mäkilouko, 2004). This style promotes the separation of the working teams, considering the foreign members inferior (Mäkilouko, 2004). Also, they work on separate sides considering the features of each project (Mäkilouko, 2004).

The Synergy style is less common than ethnocentrism and relies on the idea of cultural synergy, which fosters communication and relationships among project team members (Mäkilouko, 2004). This type of leadership is considered informal and direct and is the main force behind intra-team communication (Mäkilouko, 2004).

Lastly, Cultural Polycentrism combines the ideas of having relationships between project team members and task-oriented leadership styles (Mäkilouko, 2004). The first goal of the leaders is not to make the multicultural team adapt to one of the working styles but to be an intermediary of the team and understand how individuals from both cultures think and how they may work together without everyone on the team completely understanding their differences (Mäkilouko, 2004). Also, the leaders are the main motor of action (Mäkilouko, 2004).

In conclusion, and illustrated in Table 3, the literature identifies various leadership styles and attributes that are particularly relevant in multicultural and expatriate contexts. Earlier contributions, such as Black and Porter (1991) and Björkman and Schapp (1994), highlight more rigid approaches like culturally blind or didactical leadership, often centered on transferring practices without cultural adaptation. In contrast, later works, including Mäkilouko (2004) and Caligiuri *et al.* (2020), emphasize adaptability, trust-building, and coping mechanisms as essential

skills for effective leadership in diverse environments. Complementing these perspectives, Bloom *et al.* (1994) and Wills and Barham (1994) underline moral responsibility, relational focus, and psychological maturity as critical personal traits. The evidence shows a clear evolution from task-oriented and ethnocentric approaches towards more flexible, relational, and ethically grounded models of multicultural leadership.

Leadership Style	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Didactical Leadership	✓	✓					
Culturally Blind Leadership		✓					
Ethnocentrism						✓	
Synergy			✓			✓	
Polycentrism						✓	
Moral behavior & workers' welfare			✓	✓			
Psychological maturity				✓			
Role clarity & trust-building					✓		
Adaptability & coping						✓	✓

(1) Black & Porter (1991) (2) Björkman & Schapp (1994) (3) Bloom *et al.* (1994) (4) Wills & Barham (1994) (5) Selmer (2002) (6) Mäkilouko (2004) (7) Caligiuri *et al.* (2020)

Table 3 - Leadership in Multicultural Contexts

2.3. Project Management

Project success can be analyzed from different strands (Malik *et al.*, 2022). There are three concepts that characterize success: delivering the project on time, staying within the budget, and guaranteeing the desired level of quality (Rezvani *et al.*, 2016). Also, for global projects to be successful, human elements like flexibility, teamwork, and strong leadership are key (Brière *et al.*, 2015).

2.3.1. Project Management and Leadership

Project leadership involves a process within an organizational function where a leader represents someone who takes responsibility for the needs and rights of the people who choose to follow him or her (Cleland, 1995). Leaders must adapt to each phase of the project, which means that sometimes they have to change the specific roles for each phase of the project, dividing their functions between being a leader and a technical expert in project management (Mäkilouko, 2004).

It is possible to divide project teams into Core and Visible teams (Briner *et al.*, 1996). The core team represents the permanent members of the project, while the visible team is temporary and when their knowledge is no longer required, they depart the project (Mäkilouko, 2004).

As referred by previous studies, there are several styles of leadership (Ngayo Fotso, 2021). However, some styles can be more effective in ensuring project success (Zada *et al.*, 2023). On this note, it is important to highlight Servant Leadership (Zada *et al.*, 2023). To better understand the relationship between project management effectiveness and Servant leadership, it is key to analyze the Social Exchange Theory (Zada *et al.*, 2023).

The Social Exchange Theory is based on two pillars, trust and reciprocity and it states that these interactions between leaders and employees help to create a collaborative environment of trust and values, solving conflicts (Zada *et al.*, 2023). This environment is characterized by employees who work for a servant leader and feel obligated to return the favor by completing projects successfully (Zada *et al.*, 2023).

Furthermore, to guarantee project effectiveness, conflict resolution is also crucial, as conflict within the project team or between the project team and parties not directly involved in the project may reduce the efficacy of project management (Zada *et al.*, 2023).

A Servant Leader has to have some characteristics for the employees to follow him and ensure an effective team that concentrates on goals and accomplishes them (Zada *et al.*, 2023). Firstly, servant leaders have to be observant and receptive to the concerns of their teams and try to solve issues even before they become issues (Malik *et al.*, 2022). Also, they have to be empathic, proactive, open, and fair (Zada *et al.*, 2023).

These characteristics turn Servant Leadership into an important part of guaranteeing project success, as it creates a cooperative and emotionally stable space (Malik *et al.*, 2022). Also, by giving constant feedback and fostering an environment of adaptability, this type ensures that projects meet stakeholder expectations and community requirements, especially in collectivist societies where assistance and personal care are highly valued (Liden *et al.*, 2008; Yousaf, 2018).

2.3.2. Project Management and Culturally Diverse Environments

International projects usually depend on the collaboration between two or more countries (Grisham, 2009). This collaboration promotes a comprehension of regional possibilities and constraints, creating inclusive and prosperous solutions that consider the parties' various social, political, and cultural settings (Anglani *et al.*, 2023).

The involvement of international stakeholders forces project managers to possess a deep understanding of cultural factors that have a big impact on project interactions, including behaviors, languages, customs, conventions, beliefs, and values (Anglani *et al.*, 2023). Culture affects project success, highlighting how it affects essential team dynamics, including cooperation, empathy, communication, trust, responsiveness, cultural adaptability, and group dynamics. Still, it is not common for researchers and professionals to address this in the project management discipline (Presbitero, 2021). These cultural elements are essential to accomplishing project goals and maintaining the unity and effectiveness of diverse teams (Anglani *et al.*, 2023).

For project managers, cultural awareness and competence are not just a benefit but also a requirement as they make it possible to manage teams effectively in multicultural settings (Anglani *et al.*, 2023). Furthermore, successful global team management requires several critical qualities, including adaptability, tolerance for cultural differences, and effective communication (Elena, 2010).

Lastly, Multiculturalism is an essential tool for international projects, as working with diverse teams fosters valuable insights, enabling a deeper understanding of unique challenges and opportunities (Mesly *et al.*, 2013; Wang *et al.*, 2016). This leads to project success (Anglani *et al.*, 2023).

2.4 Similar Studies

The literature that focuses on leadership, multicultural teams, and project management offers different perspectives that complement each other.

According to leadership, Mäkilouko (2004) and Kappagomtula (2017) focus on managing diverse teams and emphasize cultural adaptability as a principal value to guarantee effective leadership and consider that leaders in varied situations must balance relational and task-oriented attributes. On the other hand, Zada *et al.* (2023) and Malik *et al.* (2022) focus on establishing trust and adaptability, which are requirements in leadership, reflecting contemporary organizational issues. The inclusion of servant and adaptive leadership in multicultural settings is conceptually supported by this research. Still, they do not empirically examine the interactions between leadership styles or how they impact project results.

After this, and based on the construction sector, Mäkilouko (2004) and Ochieng and Price (2010) highlight the impact of cultural variety on team dynamics, decision-making, and conflict resolution. In contrast, Kappagomtula (2017) and Onyeneke and Abe (2024) demonstrate how cultural issues affect team effectiveness regardless of the situation, focusing on multiple industries. Although these

studies establish the existence of cultural problems, they do not conceptualize or measure them as moderating variables in leadership-performance models, which is the gap that this research fills.

In project management, Kappagomtula (2017) and Ochieng and Price (2010) emphasize human-centric tactics like empathy and cooperation, while Zada *et al.* (2023) highlight the importance of organizational culture. Borges *et al.* (2024) offer a more practical viewpoint that values cost, time, and quality results. Despite acknowledging the relationship between leadership and project outcomes, these studies do not investigate potential mediating or moderating factors or incorporate intercultural complexity into their explanatory models.

In conclusion, past contributions provide valuable insights into multicultural leadership and project dynamics. Still, they are fragmented and lack a unified, empirically proven framework that links leadership behaviors, multicultural team problems, and project success. This study aims to close the gap by combining servant and adaptive leadership into a single conceptual model, examining mediation and moderation effects, and applying them to multicultural project environments across sectors. Table 4 compiles the focus and main findings of similar studies conducted in different countries and sectors. The following section on methodology contains more details about the methodological aspects of those similar studies.

Author	Sector	Study Focus	Main Conclusion
Borges et al. (2024)	Construction	Multicultural Teams Project Management	The success of multicultural teams projects is measured by timely project completion, quality, participant satisfaction, and commercial value.
Ochieng & Price (2019)		Multicultural Teams Leadership	Effective communication in multicultural teams depends on cultural awareness, trust, collectivism, and empathy.
Makilouko (2004)		Leadership Project Management Multicultural Teams	Leadership in multicultural projects demands understanding foreign cultures and leveraging relational and task-oriented traits.
Kappagomtula (2017)	Multiple sectors		Effective leadership in large multicultural projects requires fostering trust, cultural adaptability, and cohesive teamwork to achieve project success and address socio-cultural complexities.
Zada et al. (2023)	Non-government organisations (NGOs)	Leadership Project Management	The effectiveness of servant leadership in project management relies on organizational culture strength.
Malik et al. (2022)			Servant leadership (SL) enhances project success (PS) through improved emotional intelligence (EI), while job stress (JS) does not mediate this relationship, but team effectiveness (TE) moderates and reduces the negative impact of JS on PS.
Onyeneke & Abe (2024)	Public and Private Sectors	Leadership Project Management Multicultural Teams	Inclusive leadership is key to managing cultural diversity and enhancing workgroup creativity and performance.

Table 4 - Aspects of Similar Studies and Main Conclusions

2.5 Research Framework and Hypotheses

The main goal of this study is to analyze the role of Servant Leadership in Project Success, which is mediated by Adaptive Leadership and moderated by Multicultural Team Challenges.

On this note, Servant leadership promotes trust and cooperation between team members, fostering a flexible environment (Eva *et al.*, 2018; Zada *et al.*, 2023). This type promotes open communication and adaptability, which are the main characteristics of Adaptive Leadership (Bonini *et al.*, 2024; Heifetz *et al.*, 2009). Hypothesis 1 states that servant leadership has a positive impact on adaptive leadership. Servant leadership items cover behaviors like awareness, career development, personal support, community orientation, altruism, empowerment, and ethics. On the other hand, the Adaptive Leadership items include situational awareness, flexibility, style switching, relational adaptation, team adaptation, crisis guidance, stakeholder balance, and responsiveness. This combination enabled the analysis to examine whether servant-oriented behaviors promote adaptive practices such as flexibility and problem-solving. Consequently, this allows us to formulate the following hypothesis:

H1: Servant Leadership positively impacts Adaptive Leadership

Adaptive leadership fosters adaptability, resilience, and collaborative decision-making, essential for project success (Yukl & Mahsud, 2010). The ability to adjust strategies guarantees that projects complete their objectives on schedule and within budget (Cleland, 1995; Rezvani *et al.*, 2016). Hypothesis 2 assumes that Adaptive Leadership positively impacts Project Success. In this case, the Adaptive Leadership items were compared with the Project Success items, which capture outcomes regarding timeliness, budget compliance, client objectives, acceptance, problem solving, process quality, and stakeholder satisfaction. The connection assesses whether adaptive leadership behaviors translate into higher project efficiency and effectiveness. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Adaptive Leadership positively impacts Project Success

Adaptive leadership turns the trust and cooperation that Servant Leadership cultivates into feasible plans for project success (Bonini *et al.*, 2024; Liden *et al.*, 2008). Adaptive leadership improves quality and satisfaction by immediately addressing issues (Cleland, 1995; Malik *et al.*, 2022). It frequently takes over as the main factor in project success when used as a mediator, diminishing the direct effect of servant leadership (Bonini *et al.*, 2024; Zada *et al.*, 2023). Our third hypothesis examines whether Adaptive Leadership mediates the relationship between Servant Leadership and

Project Success. We identified this connection by combining Servant Leadership dimensions with Adaptive Leadership and Project Success. This pathway explores whether servant behaviors indirectly impact project outcomes through adaptive practices.

Our third hypothesis, 3a, looks at the indirect route, examining how servant leadership affects project success through adaptive leadership. Hypothesis 3b explores the direct link between servant leadership and project success. By comparing the direct path with the mediated path that includes adaptive leadership, we can see if considering adaptive leadership changes or eliminates the direct effect of servant leadership on project success. This helps us determine whether adaptive leadership partially or fully mediates the relationship.

Therefore, the hypotheses to be tested are as follows:

H3: Adaptive Leadership acts as a mediator between Servant Leadership and Project Success

H3a: Servant Leadership influences Project Success indirectly through Adaptive Leadership

H3b: When Adaptive Leadership is included as a mediator, the direct impact of Servant Leadership on Project Success will decrease (partial mediation) or disappear (full mediation)

To improve creativity and project results, adaptive leadership uses flexibility and cultural sensitivity to solve multicultural issues such as communication obstacles and cultural misconceptions (Adler, 2002; Anglani *et al.*, 2023; Sogancilar & Ors, 2018; Yukl & Mahsud, 2010). Lastly, Hypothesis 4 explores how Multicultural Team Challenges affect the relationship between adaptive leadership and project success. These factors identify obstacles and gaps in communication, diversity, and adapting to multicultural organizational settings. By looking at how they interact with adaptive leadership and project success, we can see if greater multicultural challenges make adaptive leadership more crucial for achieving successful projects. On this basis, the hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H4: Multicultural team challenges amplify the positive impact of Adaptive Leadership on Project Success

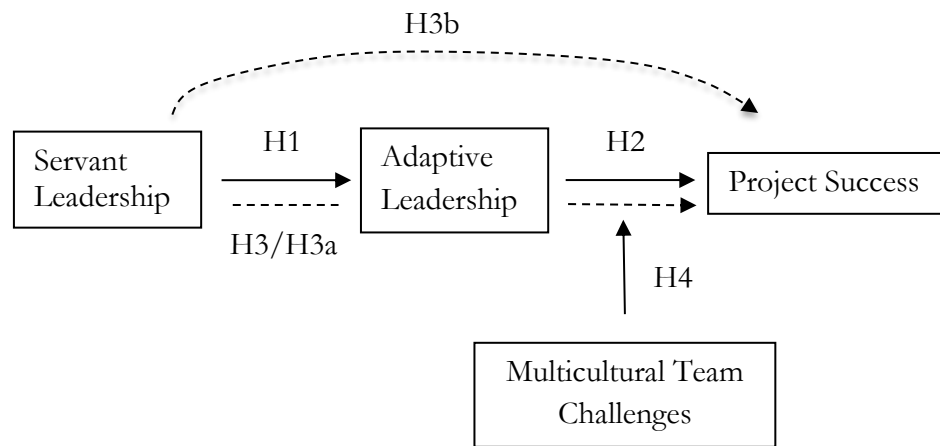


Figure 1 - Research Framework

3. Methodology

This section includes a summary of the methods used in similar studies. It then focuses on the chosen methodology, along with a description of each phase, information sources, and survey structure.

3.1 Methodological Aspects of Similar Studies

Studies on leadership, multicultural teams, and project management show different methodological aspects regarding industry focus, data collection methods, statistical analysis, and sample size. Table 5 summarizes the methodological aspects of studies in different countries, such as Guyana, Kenya, the UK, Finland, China, India, Nigeria, and Pakistan, including sectoral focus, data collection strategies, and sample size.

From this analysis, it is possible to conclude that most studies do not limit their focus to a single sector, with some addressing multiple industries. However, the most common sectors are Construction (Borges *et al.*, 2024; Mäkilouko, 2004; Ochieng & Price, 2010) and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) (Malik *et al.*, 2022; Zada *et al.*, 2023).

Regarding sample size, Malik *et al.* (2022) stand out by being the research with the highest sample size of 441 respondents in Pakistan. After this, Onyeneke and Abe (2024) covered 338 people and 56 organizations in Nigeria's public and private sectors. Lastly, Zada *et al.* (2023) also presented a high sample size of 288.

The data collection mainly focused on questionnaires; however, there were also different types of interviews (Kappagomtula, 2017; Mäkilouko, 2004; Ochieng & Price, 2010). Zada *et al.* (2023) differ from the other authors in implementing a three-phase questionnaire. In all these methods, the respondents were mainly project managers or project team members (Kappagomtula, 2017; Mäkilouko, 2004; Malik *et al.*, 2022; Ochieng & Price, 2010). However, even when not mentioned directly, most studies concentrate on managers, directors, or professionals at the leadership level with firsthand knowledge and expertise in multicultural project management.

Lastly, every author performed some statistical analysis, the most common being descriptive statistics analysis.

Author	Country	Sector	Data Collection	Sample Size	Response Rate	Key Informant	Statistical Analysis	Measures
Borges et al. (2024)	Guyana	Construction	Questionnaire	64	68%	Professionals from general contractors, consultants, designers, subcontractors in technical managerial, and director role	SPSS	5-point Likert scale
Ochieng & Price (2019)	Kenya and UK		Semi-structured Interviews	20	Not explicitly stated	Senior project managers with experience managing multicultural teams in engineering projects	–	–
Makilouko (2004)	Finland		Non-structured Interviews	34	Not explicitly stated	Project members, team members, chief engineers and construction site managers in multicultural teams	Grounded Theory	–
Kappagomtula (2017)	China and India	Multiple sectors	Structured Interviews	39	78%	Project team members and managers	SPSS	–
Zada et al. (2023)	Pakistan	NGOs	Three-phase Questionnaire	288	a) 96.06% b) 89.47% c) 95.75%	Employees from various NGOs	Hierarchical regression analysis; Hayes' PROCESS Macro	5-point Likert scale
Malik et al. (2022)	Pakistan		Questionnaires	441	83%	Project team members	PLS-SEM	–
Onyeneke & Abe (2024)	Nigeria	Public and Private Sectors	Paper-based & Online Questionnaires	338 individuals; 56 groups	43.6% (paper); 100% (online)	Employees within diverse organisations and their supervisors	SPSS 25.0, STATA 15, and PROCESS macro 3.4	7-point Likert scale

Table 5 - Methodological Considerations of Similar Studies

3.2 Methodology Selection

The data collection method chosen to analyze the relationships between Servant Leadership, Adaptive Leadership, Multicultural Challenges, and Project Success was a questionnaire. This type of data collection is considered the most suitable for this study as it allows the methodical collection of opinions and experiences from a wide range of people and the examination of correlations between essential variables. Moreover, similar research has extensively employed the questionnaire approach, guaranteeing the validity and comparability of the findings.

The questionnaire's structure is divided into four parts, each designed to achieve specific research goals and hypotheses: Part 1 gathers information about the organization and the respondent. Part 2 measures the level of Servant Leadership within the organization and evaluates Adaptive Leadership behaviors. Part 3 investigates the influence of cultural differences, communication barriers, and related strategies on leadership and project success. Lastly, Part 4 assesses project outcomes (timeliness, quality, satisfaction) under Servant and Adaptive Leadership.

Annexes 1 and 2 provide the full version of the questionnaire in Portuguese and English, revealing the items applied in the study. Table 6 provides an overview of the questionnaire structure, linking each section to the constructs and corresponding authors.

Part	Content	Description	Author
I	General Information	5 questions: organisation sector, years of experience in multicultural teams, number of nationalities in the team, current role (team member, team leader, project manager), team size	-
II	Assess Leadership Styles	7 questions: 5-point Likert scale measuring trust, empathy, listening, commitment to the team, personal development, community building, and empowerment. 8 questions: 5-point Likert scale evaluating adaptability, problem-solving, feedback-seeking, flexibility, conflict management, and openness to change	Liden <i>et al.</i> , 2015; Nöthel <i>et al.</i> , 2023
III	Key challenges faced by Multicultural Teams	9 questions: 5-point Likert scale regarding communication barriers, cultural misunderstandings, work style differences, coordination difficulties, conflict frequency, and overall team cohesion.	Sogancilar & Ors, 2018; Ochieng and Price, 2019
IV	Project Success	7 questions: 5-point Likert scale assessing project success in terms of time, budget, quality, and stakeholder satisfaction	Wu <i>et al.</i> , 2017

Table 6 - Structure of the Questionnaire

The methodology adopted in this dissertation proves to be particularly suited to the study's objective, as it coherently combines the exploratory and confirmatory nature of the research. Firstly, using a structured questionnaire applied to members, team leaders and project managers in

multicultural contexts allows direct perceptions of participants to be captured, ensuring the collection of quantitative data on the constructs of Servant Leadership, Adaptive Leadership, Multicultural Challenges and Project Success. This approach is consistent with previous leadership and team management studies, favoring self-reported measures to capture organizational experiences and practices (Liden *et al.*, 2008; Yukl & Mahsud, 2010).

Secondly, using descriptive and inferential statistical analyses, including measures of central tendency (mean and mode) and dispersion (standard deviation) and t-tests, Pearson correlations, multiple regression models, mediation (Sobel Test), and moderation analyses to evaluate the proposed hypotheses. This methodological strategy allows us to identify general patterns of perception and empirically test relationships between variables, such as mediations and moderations, in line with the recommendations of the literature in applied social sciences (Hayes, 2018).

Additionally, the conceptual model integrates mediating and moderating variables, allowing for the testing of indirect and conditional effects. Adaptive Leadership was examined as a potential mediator, while Multicultural Challenges were analyzed as a possible moderator, operationalized through established measurement scales. This approach strengthens the study's explanatory capacity by considering not only direct relationships but also the contextual and underlying mechanisms shaping leadership effectiveness in multicultural project settings.

Furthermore, the study adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional design to examine associations and statistical effects between leadership styles and project outcomes; causal inference cannot be established. The data was collected through a structured questionnaire, with measurement instruments adapted from internationally recognized scales, ensuring methodological rigor and comparability with prior research.

Thus, the methodology employed simultaneously ensures scientific rigor, international comparability, and practical relevance, answering the hypotheses formulated and contributing to the existing literature.

3.3 Sample

This study targeted professionals actively involved in multicultural project environments to investigate the influence of servant leadership on project success, with adaptive leadership as a mediating factor and multicultural team challenges as a moderator. The sample included project

managers, team leaders, and team members, as these roles are essential for understanding leadership dynamics in culturally heterogeneous contexts (Mäkilouko, 2004; Onyeneke & Abe, 2024).

Eligibility criteria required participants to be part of project teams with more than one nationality. Moreover, participants were expected to have direct or indirect involvement in leadership and project management processes, ensuring alignment with the study's objectives (Anglani *et al.*, 2023).

The recruitment strategy used purposive sampling, allowing for intentional selection of individuals with relevant expertise in multicultural settings. This non-probability approach is especially suitable for exploratory studies that aim to understand practitioners' knowledge in complex organizational environments (Etikan *et al.*, 2016). Data collection was done through a structured online questionnaire created with Google Forms, which is included in the appendix of this dissertation. The questionnaire was developed using validated scales from the literature and organized into four main sections: (1) demographic and contextual information; (2) Servant Leadership style, based on the scale by Liden *et al.* (2008), and Adaptive Leadership style, based on Heifetz *et al.* (2009) and Yukl and Mahsud (2010); (3) Multicultural Team Challenges, drawing on Anglani *et al.* (2023) and Sogancilar and Ors (2018); and (4) Perceived Project Success, adapted from Rezvani *et al.* (2016).

The questionnaire was distributed through professional platforms like LinkedIn and other relevant digital networks, and it stayed open from May to July 2025 to maximize reach and participation. Respondents were informed of the study's goals. All participants provided informed consent before participation and could withdraw at any time. Data were analyzed and reported in aggregate form. The study followed the institution's ethical standards.

A total of 38 responses were initially collected. However, four participants (one team leader and three team members) were excluded for not meeting the eligibility criterion of working in teams with more than one nationality, leaving 34 valid responses. Although modest, this sample size is considered adequate for the exploratory nature of the research. The selection criteria ensured the inclusion of qualified individuals, thereby enhancing the content validity and practical relevance of the findings in assessing the impact of leadership styles on multicultural project success (Malik *et al.*, 2022; Zada *et al.*, 2023).

3.4 Measures

This study used validated scales to assess the constructs, guaranteeing dependability and conformity with the research framework. The questionnaire was organized into four main parts.

Part I covered general information and included five questions about the organizational sector, years of experience in multicultural teams, the number of nationalities in the team, current role (team member, team leader, or project manager), and team size. This section provided the contextual and demographic background for the analysis.

Part II assessed leadership styles. Servant Leadership was measured using the multidimensional Servant Leadership Scale (Liden *et al.*, 2008). This study highlights four sub-dimensions: empowerment and awareness, humility and altruism, stewardship and ethics, and emotional support. This framework aligns with Greenleaf's (1977, 2013) conceptualization of servant leadership and recent validations by Eva *et al.* (2018), ensuring comprehensive coverage of servant-oriented qualities. Malik *et al.* (2022) also point out that the scale emphasizes the importance of cooperation and flexibility in modern organizations. Adaptive Leadership was also examined, focusing on how often and how effectively leaders demonstrate situational flexibility and problem-solving behaviors. This construct includes five sub-dimensions: situational awareness, flexibility and responsiveness, crisis management and stakeholder balance, leadership style switching, and relational adaptation. This operationalization highlights leaders' ability to handle challenges through adaptability and problem-solving, as proposed by Heifetz *et al.* (2009).

Part III focused on challenges faced by multicultural teams, broken down into three parts: obstacles to collaboration, organizational responses and gaps, and their influence on project success. The questions in this section identified both difficulties—such as communication barriers, cultural misunderstandings, work style differences, and unresolved organizational issues—and positive strategies that teams and organizations can use to overcome them. This method aligns with earlier research on cultural diversity in teams (Stahl *et al.*, 2010; Anglani *et al.*, 2023; Sogancilar & Ors, 2018). Including these items highlights the challenges described by Anglani *et al.* (2023), who emphasize the complexity of communication and cultural adaptation in multicultural project environments. For the construct Multicultural Team Challenges, the original questionnaire included both negatively and positively worded items (barriers versus adaptive responses). To ensure that higher values consistently represented greater perceived challenges, positively framed items were reverse-coded before computing the composite scores. This recoding procedure facilitated more coherent statistical analyses and interpretation of the results.

Part IV evaluated project success using both objective and subjective criteria. The construct was structured into three sub-dimensions: efficiency, performance, quality, and stakeholder satisfaction. The measurement followed multidimensional frameworks established in the project management

literature (Shenhar & Dvir, 2007; PMI, 2017; Rezvani *et al.*, 2016), reflecting the consensus that project success goes beyond time, cost, and quality to include wider stakeholder perspectives and satisfaction.

All items in the questionnaire were measured using a 5-point Likert scale, which ensured consistency across constructs and provided transparent and comparable perceptions of leadership behaviors, multicultural challenges, and project outcomes.

Table 7 presents a detailed mapping of the constructions, items, and questions used in the survey, synthesizing the measurement model.

Item Question			
<i>Empowerment & Awareness (SLEmpAw)</i>			
Servant Leadership	My employees can tell if something work-related is going wrong. / My leader can tell if something work-related is going wrong.	SLEmpAw1	Q1
	I give my employees the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way they feel is best. / My leader gives me the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way that I feel is best.	SLEmpAw2	Q6
	<i>Humility & Altruism (SLHumAlt)</i>		
	I make my employees' career development a priority. / My leader makes my career development a priority.	SLHumAlt1	Q2
	I put my employees' best interests ahead of my own. / My leader puts my best interests ahead of his/her own.	SLHumAlt2	Q5
	<i>Stewardship & Ethics (SLStEth)</i>		
	I emphasize the importance of giving back to the community. / My leader emphasizes the importance of giving back to the community	SLStEth1	Q4
Adaptive	I would not compromise ethical principles to achieve success. / My leader would not compromise ethical principles in order to achieve success.	SLStEth2	Q7
	<i>Emotional Support (SLEmoSup)</i>		
	My employees can seek my help if they have a personal problem. / I would seek help from my leader if I had a personal problem.	SLEmoSup1	Q3
Adaptive	<i>Situational Awareness (ALSitAw)</i>		
	I quickly understand which leadership behaviour is best suited to a given situation. / My leader quickly understands which leadership behaviour is most appropriate for a given situation.	ALSitAw1	Q8

Multicultural Team Challenges	<i>Flexibility & Responsiveness (ALFlexRes)</i>		
	I modify my leadership approach when unexpected events occur. / My leader modifies his leadership approach when unexpected events occur.	ALFlexRes1	Q9
	I respond appropriately to unforeseen circumstances or unexpected challenges. / My leader responds appropriately to unforeseen circumstances or unexpected challenges.	ALFlexRes2	Q15
	<i>Crisis Guidance & Stakeholder Balance (ALCrisStk)</i>		
	I guide my team through difficulties, ambiguity and highly complex situations. / My leader guides the team through difficulties, ambiguity and highly complex situations.	ALCrisStk1	Q13
	I balance the different conflicting needs of the various stakeholders. / My leader balances the different conflicting needs of the various stakeholders.	ALCrisStk2	Q14
	<i>Leadership Style Switching (ALSwitch)</i>		
	I alternate between directive and shared leadership styles, depending on the demands of the situation. / My leader alternates between directive and shared leadership styles, depending on the demands of the situation.	ALSwitch1	Q10
	I adapt my leadership style based on the needs of the team members. / My leader adapts his leadership style based on the needs of the team members.	ALSwitc2	Q12
	<i>Relational Adaptation (ALRelAd)</i>		
	I try to understand the needs of my team members and adjust my responses accordingly. / My leader tries to understand the needs of the team members and adjusts his responses accordingly.	ALRelAd1	Q11
	<i>Barriers to Collaboration (MCBarrCol)</i>		
	Ineffective communication and misunderstandings hinder effective collaboration within the team.	MCBarrCol1	Q16
	Different working styles and expectations create challenges in teamwork and project execution.	MCBarrCol2	Q17
	Intolerance and lack of knowledge related to diversity negatively impact team dynamics and inclusivity.	MCBarrCol3	Q18
	Managing multicultural project teams presents significant difficulties in achieving project objectives	MCBarrCol4	Q21
	<i>Organizational Responses & Gaps (MCOrgGap)</i>		
	My organization has implemented effective strategies to enhance communication in multicultural project teams.	MCOrgGap1	Q19
	There are still unresolved challenges in my organization regarding the management of multicultural project teams.	MCOrgGap2	Q20

	<i>Impact on Project Success (MCImpPS)</i>		
	A well-managed multicultural project team contributes positively to project success.	MCImpPS1	Q22
	In multicultural teams, I effectively adapt my leadership style to deal with cultural differences and promote collaboration. / In multicultural teams, my leader effectively adapts his leadership style to address cultural differences and promote collaboration.	MCImpPS2	Q23
	I recognise that the success of the project depends significantly on my ability to adjust to multicultural challenges. / The success of our project depends significantly on our leader's ability to adjust to multicultural challenges.	MCImpPS3	Q24
Project Success	<i>Efficiency (PSEff)</i>		
	The project was completed on schedule.	PSEff1	Q25
	The project was completed on budget.	PSEff2	Q26
	<i>Project Performance / Quality (PSQual)</i>		
	The results of the project met the client's objectives.	PSQual1	Q27
	The project was successfully delivered with qualified acceptance.		
	The project managed to solve most of the problems encountered during implementation.	PSQual2	Q28
	The project execution process was satisfactory (e.g., good organization, clear communication, effective collaboration,	PSQual3	Q29
	<i>Stakeholder Satisfaction (PSStkSat)</i>	PSQual4	Q30
	The project met the client's specific requirements, resulting in their satisfaction with the results obtained.	PSStkSat1	Q31

Table 7 - Measures

Measures were administered differently by role: project managers and team leaders provided self-ratings, while team members evaluated their leader. This distinction was maintained in the analysis, with group comparisons conducted by role to avoid mixing self- and other-ratings. Independent-samples t-tests were used to compare project managers/team leaders with team members across the main constructs, treating the two roles separately. In contrast, correlational and regression analyses were performed on the combined dataset (N = 34), as the hypotheses concerned the associations between constructs rather than role differences.

4. Results

This chapter sorts and examines the information gathered via the questionnaire. It begins with a synopsis of the sample's statistics. Then, the previously developed theories are explored and tested.

4.1 Sample Demographics and Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive profile of the sample provides several. Most respondents are team members (70,59%), while 20,59% are team leaders and only 8,82% are project managers. This distribution indicates that the dataset mainly emphasizes operational perspectives rather than top-level strategic leadership. Regarding professional experience, most participants reported having between five and twenty years in leadership roles (90%), which enhances the credibility of their responses since they are based on extensive practical experience. In contrast, only 10% of the sample had less than five years of experience, suggesting that junior professionals are underrepresented.

Teams also show cultural diversity through certain patterns. Half of the respondents (50%) reported working with teams that have at least two nationalities, while 29,41% had two to three nationalities and 20,59% had four or more. Note that teams with no different nationalities were excluded because they can't be considered multicultural. Even with this adjustment, the data still indicates that multiculturalism isn't prominently present in the sample, raising questions about how well the findings reflect the complexity of highly diverse teams.

The sample's geographic distribution highlights a regional imbalance. Most respondents are from Europe (55,88%), with fewer from America (2,94%). Several reported hybrid distributions, such as Europe and America (17,65%) or Europe, Africa, and Asia (8,82%), while a minority represented groups spanning three or more continents- Europe, Africa, and America (5,88%) or Europe, Asia, and America (2,94%). Only 5,88% of the sample reported teams across all continents. This reveals a strong European bias that limits the global applicability of the results.

Table 8 describes the demographic profile of the sample, including roles, experience, team size, and cultural composition.

<i>Sample (%)</i>	
<i>Current position</i>	
Project Manager	8,82%
Team Leader	20,59%
Team Member	70,59%
<i>Experience in Leadership Positions</i>	
<5	10,00%
≥5 and ≤10	20,00%
<10 and ≤20	70,00%
<i>Nationalities within the Team</i>	
2	50,00%
3-4	29,41%
≥5	20,59%
<i>Team Size</i>	
≤15	73,53%
>15 and ≤30	20,59%
>30	5,882%
<i>Distribution of Teams by Continent</i>	
Europe	55,88%
America	2,94%
Europe and America	17,65%
Europe, Africa, and Asia	8,82%
Europe, Africa, and America	5,88%
Europe, Asia, and America	2,94%
All of them	5,88%

Table 8 - Sample Demographics

4.2 Discussion of Results and Implications

The reliability analysis demonstrated that all scales had adequate internal consistency, with Cronbach's α ranging from 0,80 (Servant Leadership) to 0,95 (Project Success) (Table 9). These values confirm that the measurement instruments were robust and internally consistent, as they exceed the commonly accepted thresholds.

Scale	Number of items	Cronbach's α
Servant Leadership	7	0,80
Adaptive Leadership	8	0,92
Multicultural Challenges	9	0,82
Project Success	7	0,95

Table 9 - Cronbach's α for Main Scales

Following the research hypotheses, we mapped the questionnaire items to each relationship to evaluate the theoretical model.

Aligning hypotheses, survey items, and conceptual links builds a foundation for testing the proposed research framework. This enables us to evaluate the direct, indirect, and moderating effects on the relationship between leadership styles, multicultural challenges, and project success. The full list of items is in Annex 3.

Analyzing the results, the questionnaire reveals key patterns highlighting differences between leadership and follower roles. Project managers and team leaders tend to score higher on most questions than team members. This indicates a perceived gap between leadership and followers, which is especially important when considering how leadership behaviors, team dynamics, and project success interact in multicultural environments.

For Servant Leadership, project managers and team leaders reported very high scores in areas like Personal Support ($M = 4,90$, $SD = 0,30$) and Ethics ($M = 4,90$, $SD = 0,30$), with very low standard deviations, indicating strong consensus on their importance. In contrast, team members assigned these dimensions significantly lower ratings, especially Personal Support ($M = 3,46$, $SD = 1,53$) and Ethics ($M = 3,75$, $SD = 1,39$), demonstrating greater variability in their perceptions. This difference, shown in Table 10, highlights a disconnect between leaders' self-assessments and team members' evaluations of servant-oriented behaviors.

Servant Leadership						
Item	Project Manager/Team Leader			Team Member		
	Mean	Trend	SD	Mean	Trend	SD
Awareness	4,00	4,00	0,89	4,04	5,00	1,17
Career Development	4,20	4,00	0,75	3,54	4,00	1,08
Personal Support	4,90	5,00	0,30	3,46	5,00	1,53
Community Orientation	4,30	5,00	0,78	3,63	4,00	1,22
Altruism	3,50	3,00	0,81	3,42	4,00	1,19
Empowerment	3,30	3,00	1,19	4,25	4,00	0,72
Ethics	4,90	5,00	0,30	3,75	5,00	1,39

Table 10 - Servant Leadership Descriptive Statistics

Adaptive Leadership also presents a consistent trend in which project managers and team leaders reported higher means than team members. For example, leaders rated Style Switching very highly ($M = 4,80$, $SD = 0,40$), while team members rated it much lower ($M = 3,67$, $SD = 1,25$). Similarly, leaders strongly endorsed Relational Adaptation ($M = 4,60$, $SD = 0,49$) compared to a more moderate evaluation from team members ($M = 3,58$, $SD = 1,11$). These discrepancies reinforce the idea that leaders perceive themselves as more adaptive than what is recognized by their teams, as is it possible to see in Table 11.

Adaptive Leadership						
Item	Project Manager/ Team Leader			Team Member		
	Mean	Trend	SD	Mean	Trend	SD
Situational Awareness	3,90	4,00	0,83	3,63	4,00	1,11
Flexibility	4,30	4,00	0,64	3,79	4,00	1,15
Style Switching	4,80	5,00	0,40	3,67	4,00	1,25
Relational Adaptation	4,60	5,00	0,49	3,58	3,00	1,11
Team Adaptation	3,70	4,00	1,10	3,38	5,00	1,28
Crisis Guidance	4,50	4,00	0,5	3,75	5,00	1,23
Stakeholder Balance	4,30	4,00	0,64	3,83	4,00	1,07
Responsiveness	4,10	4,00	0,70	3,67	4,00	1,03

Table 11 - Adaptive Leadership Descriptive Statistics

Results from the Multicultural Team Challenges (Table 12) indicate increased agreement among groups. Project Managers, Leaders, and Team Members all strongly agreed that communication barriers hinder collaboration (Project Managers/ Team Leaders: $M = 4,80$, $SD = 0,40$; Members: $M = 4,29$, $SD = 1,02$), with relatively low standard deviations showing a shared understanding of this issue. Both groups also recognized the positive effects of multiculturalism on the team (Project Managers/ Team Leaders: $M = 4,60$, $SD = 0,66$; Members: $M = 4,67$, $SD = 0,62$). However, Team Members indicated more variation regarding Unresolved Challenges ($M = 3,46$, $SD = 1,26$), suggesting that perceptions of structural limitations may vary based on their role and closeness to decision-making.

Multicultural Team Challenges						
Item	Project Manager/Team Leader			Team Member		
	Mean	Trend	SD	Mean	Trend	SD
Communication Barriers	4,80	5,00	0,40	4,29	5,00	1,02

Work Style Differences	4,30	5,00	0,90	4,0	5,00	0,96
Diversity Intolerance	4,50	5,00	0,67	3,88	5,00	1,54
Organizational Strategies	4,0	4,00	0,63	3,71	5,00	1,24
Unresolved Challenges	3,30	2,00	1,10	3,46	4,00	1,26
Management Difficulties	3,30	2,00	1,10	3,33	3,00	1,07
Positive Team Impact	4,60	5,00	0,66	4,67	5,00	0,62
Leader Cultural Adaptation	4,30	4,00	0,64	3,88	3,00	0,93
Leader Adjustment	4,30	5,00	0,78	3,71	5,00	1,31

Table 12 - Multicultural Team Challenges Descriptive Statistics

The results of Project Success showed that, with project managers, leaders, and team members consistently having high average scores across all areas, most ratings were 4 or 5. Leaders showed the least variation, with standard deviations often below 0,8, while team members exhibited slightly more variation. For example, Project Managers and Leaders rated Budget Compliance at 4,10 (SD = 0,83). In contrast, Team Members rated it at 4,33 (SD = 0,75), indicating that both groups share a similar view of the project's effectiveness despite differences in opinions on leadership, as shown in Table 13.

Project Success						
Item	Project Manager/Team Leader			Team Member		
	Mean	Trend	SD	Mean	Trend	SD
Timeliness	4,40	5,00	0,80	4,46	5,00	0,76
Budget Compliance	4,10	5,00	0,83	4,33	5,00	0,75
Client Objectives	4,20	4,00	0,75	4,25	4,00	0,72
Acceptance	4,30	5,00	0,78	4,25	4,00	0,66
Problem-Solving	4,30	5,00	0,78	4,13	4,00	0,73
Process Quality	4,20	5,00	0,75	4,13	4,00	0,83
Stakeholder Satisfaction	4,30	4,00	0,64	4,33	5,00	0,75

Table 13 - Project Success Descriptive Statistics

Although these trends are positive, the results also reveal some weaknesses. One key limitation is the gap between project managers', leaders', and team members' views on servant and adaptive behaviors, especially in Personal Support, Flexibility, and Ethics. Project managers and team leaders consistently rated themselves higher than team members rated their leaders, which suggests they might be overestimating their practices or not being sufficiently recognized by their teams. The variation among team members also highlights the diversity of experience within multicultural teams, which could limit how well the results apply to other situations. Additionally, some items, such as Unresolved Challenges and Management Difficulties, received lower average scores, indicating that not all challenges are equally significant.

Despite this, the connection between adaptive leadership and project success, along with recognizing multicultural challenges as key contextual factors, supports the relevance of the conceptual model presented in this dissertation. The findings highlight the interaction between leadership behaviors and multicultural complexity and provide practical insights for leadership development. They indicate that servant-oriented behaviors alone may not be enough unless they are translated into adaptive practices that team members recognize. However, the descriptive analysis also shows areas that need further research. Future studies should explore the reasons behind the perceptual gap between leaders and team members and examine how multicultural challenges intersect with leadership behaviors in different organizational and sectoral contexts.

Independent samples t-tests revealed that project managers and team leaders rated themselves significantly higher than members on Adaptive Leadership ($t(31) = 2,74$, $p = 0,010$, Cohen's $d = 0,85$). There was also a non-significant trend for Servant Leadership ($p = 0,081$, $d = 0,55$). However, no significant differences were observed between the Multicultural Challenges or Project Success groups.

Table 14 presents the independent samples t-test results comparing project managers and team leaders with team members across the four constructs. Independent samples t-tests were conducted using Welch's correction, as the assumption of equal variances could not be guaranteed. Accordingly, the reported degrees of freedom are adjusted values rather than based on the conventional formula.

Scale	M (SD) (1)	M(SD) (2)	Mean diff.	t(df)	p	Cohen's d
Servant Leadership	4,16 (0,50)	3,73 (0,87)	+0,43	1,81 (28)	0,081	0,55
Adaptive Leadership	4,28 (0,32)	3,66 (0,98)	+0,62	2,74 (31)	0,010	0,85
Multicultural Challenges	3,00 (0,17)	3,00 (0,37)	0,00	0,00 (31)	1,000	0,00
Project Success	4,26 (0,69)	4,27 (0,66)	-0,01	-0,04 (16)	0,970	0,01

(1) Project Manager/ Team Leader (2) Team Member

Table 14 - T-Test Results and Effect Sizes

Our Pearson's correlation matrix, shown in Table 15, confirmed the expected relationships between constructs. The results indicated strong correlations between Servant Leadership and Adaptive Leadership ($r = 0,76$, $p < 0,001$), and moderate correlations between Servant Leadership and Project Success ($r = 0,37$, $p = 0,033$). The association between Adaptive Leadership and Project Success was also moderate ($r = 0,32$, $p = 0,061$), not statistically significant at the 5% level but marginal at the 10% level.

Variable	SL	AL	MC	PS
SL	1,00			
AL	0,76 ($p < 0,001$)	1,00		
MC	-0,03 ($p = 0,857$)	-0,18 ($p = 0,322$)	1,00	
PS	0,37 ($p = 0,033$)	0,32 ($p = 0,061$)	0,04 ($p = 0,839$)	1,00

Table 15 - Pearson's Correlation Matrix

For Hypothesis 1, which suggests that Servant Leadership has a positive impact on Adaptive Leadership, independent samples t-tests showed that project managers and team leaders rated themselves significantly higher in both Servant Leadership and Adaptive Leadership compared to team members (SL: $t(28) = 1,81$, $p = 0,081$, $d = 0,55$; AL: $t(31) = 2,74$, $p = 0,010$, $d = 0,85$). The correlation between Servant Leadership and Adaptive Leadership was strong and positive ($r = 0,76$, $p < 0,001$). A regression analysis further supported this hypothesis, indicating that Servant Leadership was significantly associated with Adaptive Leadership ($\beta = 0,84$, $p < 0,001$), accounting for 58% of the variance ($R^2 = 0,58$). Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is strongly supported.

For Hypothesis 2 (H2), which links Adaptive Leadership to Project Success, both groups consistently reported high scores on project outcomes. At first glance, this suggested that Adaptive Leadership might be connected to positive results. However, the inferential analyses did not

support this. The correlation between Adaptive Leadership and Project Success was moderate ($r = 0,32$, $p = 0,061$), not statistically significant at the 5% level but marginal at the 10% level, but regression analysis controlling for Servant Leadership showed no significant predictive effect (AL $\beta = 0,08$, $p=0,69$; SL $\beta = 0,24$, $p=0,27$; $R^2 = 0,14$). Therefore, H2 is not supported.

For Hypotheses 3, 3a, and 3b, which explore the mediating role of Adaptive Leadership, the results showed an indirect path: higher Servant Leadership scores were linked to higher Adaptive Leadership, which also correlated with greater Project Success. However, mediation analysis revealed no significant indirect effect ($a \times b = 0,07$; Sobel $z=0,40$, $p=0,69$). This indicates that Adaptive Leadership does not mediate the relationship between Servant Leadership and Project Success in this sample. Thus, H3/H3a/H3b are not supported.

For Hypothesis 4 (H4), which examines the moderating effect of Multicultural Team Challenges, group means showed perceptual differences regarding the barriers and benefits of multicultural teams. However, regression analysis including the interaction term (AL $\times$ MC) revealed no significant moderation effect ($\beta = 0,05$; $p = 0,91$; $R^2 = 0,11$). Therefore, H4 is not supported.

The results support H1, confirming that servant-oriented behaviors enhance adaptability. However, although descriptive data indicated positive trends, H2, H3, and H4 were not statistically confirmed. These inconsistencies may partly reflect the ceiling effects in the Project Success scale (high means and low variability), the perceptual gap between project managers and team leaders and members, and the small sample size, limiting statistical power.

Although the study has limitations, the results highlight the important role of Servant Leadership in fostering Adaptive Leadership. They also indicate that adaptive behaviors might not always guarantee project success in multicultural settings. The differing perceptions among project managers, team leaders, and team members offer opportunities for further research, especially regarding how leadership styles are viewed differently across organizational levels. Future research should explore organizational and contextual factors that increase the likelihood of Adaptive Leadership impacting project outcomes.

Table 16 summarizes the statistical analyses conducted for each hypothesis, presenting the tests performed, the key results, and the respective conclusions.

Hypothesis	Test(s) Performed	Key Results	Conclusion
H1: SL → AL	Independent-samples t-test, Pearson correlation, Regression	SL vs AL: $t(31)=2,74, p=0,010, d=0,85$; $r=0,76, p<0,001$; Regression $\beta=0,84$, $p<0,001, R^2=0,58$	Supported – Servant Leadership significantly predicts Adaptive Leadership
H2: AL → PS	Correlation, Multiple regression (control for SL)	$r=0,32, p\approx0,05$; Regression $\beta(AL)=0,08$, $p=0,69, \beta(SL)=0,24, p=0,27, R^2=0,14$	Not supported – Adaptive Leadership does not significantly predict Project Success
H3/H3a/H3b: Mediation	Mediation analysis (Sobel test)	Indirect effect $a\times b=0,07$; Sobel $z=0,40$, $p=0,69$	Not supported – No significant mediation by Adaptive Leadership
H4: MC moderates AL → PS	Moderation regression (interaction term)	Interaction $\beta=0,05, p=0,91, R^2=0,11$	Not supported – No significant moderation effect of Multicultural Challenges

Table 16 - Summary of Statistical Tests and Conclusions for each Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1 was supported, as Servant Leadership significantly predicted Adaptive Leadership, consistent with prior research highlighting the link between servant-oriented behaviors and adaptability (van Dierendonck, 2011; Liden *et al.*, 2015).

Hypothesis 2 was not supported. Although adaptive leadership correlated moderately with project success, the regression analysis did not confirm its predictive effect, which contrasted with expectations in the project management literature (Turner & Müller, 2005; Rezvani *et al.*, 2016).

Hypotheses 3, 3a, and 3b were also not supported. While Servant Leadership predicted Adaptive Leadership, the indirect effect through Adaptive Leadership was not significant, diverging from models that propose mediation pathways (Hoch *et al.*, 2018).

Finally, Hypothesis 4 was not supported. Multicultural challenges did not moderate the relationship between Adaptive Leadership and Project Success, echoing the complexity and ambivalence of multicultural dynamics noted in prior studies (Stahl *et al.*, 2010).

5. Conclusion

This dissertation examined the connection between Servant Leadership and Adaptive Leadership in addressing Multicultural Team Challenges and achieving Project Success across diverse settings. Using both theoretical and empirical perspectives, it provided a detailed view of how leadership behaviors are seen by team leaders, project managers, and team members, and how these behaviors influence project outcomes in culturally diverse environments. The results confirmed that servant-focused behaviors establish a foundation of trust, empowerment, and ethics, while adaptive strategies are essential for turning these values into successful project results. However, only Hypothesis 1 was statistically supported, whereas Hypotheses 2, 3, and 4 were not confirmed, which may be associated with ceiling effects in the Project Success scale, perceptual gaps between leaders and members, and the limited sample size.

This research contributes by integrating Servant and Adaptive Leadership into a single empirical framework, expanding on previous literature that often examined these styles separately. It also advances understanding by exploring the mediating and moderating mechanisms of Adaptive Leadership and Multicultural Challenges, which remain underexplored in project management studies.

Practically, the findings emphasize the need for leadership training programs that promote servant-oriented values, improve adaptability, cultural awareness, and ensure alignment between how leaders see themselves and how followers perceive them.

However, some limitations need to be acknowledged. The sample size was relatively small, which reduces the statistical power of the analyses and limits how broadly the results can be generalized. The study is underpowered to detect small effects (power <0,80), which may explain marginal results (AL-PS). Self-report measures from similar sources raise the possibility of common-method bias; diagnostics (Harman's single-factor <50%) suggest they are not dominant but cannot be ruled out. The sample was also unbalanced, primarily consisting of European respondents and small teams, which may not fully capture the dynamics of larger or more geographically dispersed teams. Another limitation arises from the perceptual gap between project managers, team leaders, and team members. Project managers and team leaders consistently rated themselves higher on servant and adaptive behaviors than team members, suggesting either a tendency for self-enhancement or a lack of recognition from subordinates. This divergence emphasizes the complexity of leadership perception and questions the objectivity of self-reported data. Additionally, this dissertation deliberately excluded gender as an analytical factor, asserting that leadership effectiveness and

project performance should be evaluated based on individual potential, capabilities, and professional performance rather than gender categories.

Another methodological limitation concerns the mediation and moderation analyses. These were tested using regression-based procedures (Sobel and interaction terms), but more robust techniques such as bootstrapping with bias-corrected confidence intervals (e.g., PROCESS with 5,000 resamples) were not applied. Likewise, variance inflation factors (VIF) and centering procedures for interaction terms were not performed. This constrains the robustness of the mediation and moderation findings, which should therefore be interpreted with caution.

In addition, the statistical analyses did not include systematic diagnostics of assumptions, such as Shapiro-Wilk tests for normality, Levene's test for homogeneity of variance, or explicit treatment of outliers and missing data. Although no severe anomalies were apparent in the dataset, the absence of these checks may affect the stability of the results. Future research should incorporate formal assumption testing and transparent reporting of data screening procedures.

Also, future research could expand the sample to include participants from different regions, especially Asia, Africa, and Latin America, to improve external validity and enable cross-cultural comparisons. Conducting longitudinal studies might show how leadership behaviors evolve during various project phases. Using a mixed-method approach with surveys and interviews would enrich the analysis by capturing both quantifiable patterns and personal experiences of multicultural leadership. Further research could also broaden the framework to examine other leadership styles, such as transformational or transactional, to determine if they interact differently with multicultural challenges. Additionally, exploring how organizational culture and institutional mechanisms influence the effectiveness of servant and adaptive leadership would be particularly important for diverse or virtual teams.

In conclusion, this dissertation demonstrates that leadership effectiveness in multicultural project environments is best understood through the interaction of servant and adaptive behaviors, influenced by the challenges posed by cultural diversity. The findings highlight leadership's potential and complexity in global settings: servant values provide the ethical and relational foundation, while adaptability allows for responses to changing and uncertain conditions. This research adds to academic discussions by acknowledging both strengths and limitations. It offers practical insights for organizations seeking to improve their ability to manage projects successfully in increasingly multicultural and project-oriented environments.

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Annex 1 - Questionnaire Translated

Este questionário faz parte de um projeto de investigação do Mestrado em Gestão da FEP, Universidade do Porto. O objetivo é recolher a sua opinião sobre o papel do estilo de liderança no sucesso de projetos multiculturais.

Este estudo é anónimo, e todas as respostas serão mantidas confidenciais e armazenadas de forma segura. Por favor, responda com sinceridade. Não existem respostas certas ou erradas. O questionário demora aproximadamente 5 minutos a ser preenchido e está dividido em 3 partes.

Se tiver alguma dúvida, por favor contacte-me por email: up202008143@up.pt.

A sua contribuição é muito valiosa. Obrigada!

Sofia Saraiva

Ao prosseguir, confirma que leu as informações fornecidas e que concorda em participar neste estudo

I. Informação Geral

Qual é o seu cargo atual?

- ☐ Gestor de Projeto (responsável pela gestão geral do projeto)
- ☐ Líder de Equipa (foco na liderança da equipa e no desempenho do grupo)
- ☐ Membro de Equipa

Gestor de Projeto (responsável pela gestão geral do projeto)/ Líder de Equipa (foco na liderança da equipa e no desempenho do grupo):

Quantos anos de experiência tem em cargos de liderança em equipas multiculturais?

Quantas nacionalidades diferentes estão representadas na sua equipa atual? _____

Indique, por favor, quantos membros da sua equipa pertencem a cada nacionalidade (por exemplo, portugueses, 2 espanhóis, 1 italiano)._____

Quantas pessoas integram no total a sua equipa?_____

II. Avaliar o estilo de liderança

Indique, por favor, o seu grau de concordância com cada uma das seguintes afirmações: (1) - Discordo totalmente; (2) - Discordo parcialmente; (3) - Indiferente; (4) - Concordo parcialmente; (5) - Concordo totalmente

Relacionado com estilos de liderança		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Os meus colaboradores conseguem perceber quando algo relacionado ao trabalho não está a correr bem.					
2.	Dou prioridade ao desenvolvimento de carreira dos meus colaboradores.					
3.	Os meus colaboradores podem procurar a minha ajuda caso tenham um problema pessoal.					
4.	Destaco a importância de retribuir à comunidade.					
5.	Coloco os interesses dos meus colaboradores acima dos meus próprios interesses.					
6.	Dou liberdade aos meus colaboradores para lidarem com situações difíceis da forma que considerarem mais adequada.					
7.	Não comprometeria princípios éticos para alcançar o sucesso.					

Relacionado com a adaptabilidade nos estilos de liderança		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Compreendo rapidamente qual o comportamento de liderança mais adequado para uma determinada situação.					
2.	Modifico a minha abordagem de liderança quando ocorrem eventos inesperados.					
3.	Alterno entre estilos de liderança diretiva e partilhada, consoante as exigências da situação.					

4.	Procuo compreender as necessidades dos membros da minha equipa e ajusto as minhas respostas em conformidade.					
5.	Adapto o meu estilo de liderança com base nas necessidades dos membros da equipa.					
6.	Guio a minha equipa perante dificuldades, ambiguidade e situações de elevada complexidade.					
7.	Equilibro diferentes necessidades em conflito entre os vários stakeholders.					
8.	Respondo de forma adequada a circunstâncias imprevistas ou desafios inesperados.					

III. Principais desafios enfrentados por equipas multiculturais

Indique, por favor, o seu grau de concordância com cada uma das seguintes afirmações: (1) - Discordo totalmente; (2) - Discordo parcialmente; (3) - Indiferente; (4) - Concordo parcialmente; (5) - Concordo totalmente

Relacionado com principais desafios de equipas multiculturais		1	2	3	4	5
1.	A comunicação ineficaz e os mal-entendidos dificultam a colaboração eficaz dentro da equipa.					
2.	Diferenças nos estilos de trabalho e nas expectativas criam desafios na execução das tarefas e na gestão do projeto.					
3.	A intolerância e a falta de conhecimento sobre diversidade afetam negativamente a dinâmica da equipa e a inclusão.					
4.	A minha organização implementou estratégias eficazes para melhorar a comunicação em equipas multiculturais.					
5.	Ainda existem desafios não resolvidos na minha organização relativamente à gestão de equipas multiculturais.					

6.	Gerir equipas multiculturais apresenta dificuldades significativas para o alcance dos objetivos do projeto.					
7.	Uma equipa multicultural bem gerida contribui positivamente para o sucesso do projeto.					
8.	Em equipas multiculturais, adapto eficazmente o meu estilo de liderança para lidar com diferenças culturais e promover a colaboração.					
9.	Reconheço que o sucesso do projeto depende significativamente da minha capacidade de me ajustar aos desafios multiculturais.					

Membro de Equipa:

Quantas nacionalidades diferentes estão representadas na sua equipa atual? _____

Indique, por favor, quantos membros da sua equipa pertencem a cada nacionalidade (por exemplo, portugueses, 2 espanhóis, 1 italiano). _____

Quantas pessoas integram no total a sua equipa? _____

I. Avaliar o estilo de liderança

Indique, por favor, o seu grau de concordância com cada uma das seguintes afirmações: (1) - Discordo totalmente; (2) - Discordo parcialmente; (3) - Indiferente; (4) - Concordo parcialmente; (5) - Concordo totalmente

Relacionado com estilos de liderança		1	2	3	4	5
1.	O meu líder consegue perceber quando algo relacionado ao trabalho não está a correr bem					
2.	O meu líder dá prioridade ao meu desenvolvimento de carreira.					
3.	Eu procuraria a ajuda do meu líder caso tivesse um problema pessoal.					

4.	O meu líder destaca a importância de retribuir à comunidade.					
5.	O meu líder coloca os interesses da equipa acima dos seus próprios interesses.					
6.	O meu líder dá-me liberdade para lidar com situações difíceis da forma que considerar mais adequada.					
7.	O meu líder não comprometeria princípios éticos para alcançar o sucesso.					

Relacionado com a adaptabilidade nos estilos de liderança		1	2	3	4	5
1.	O meu líder compreende rapidamente qual o comportamento de liderança mais adequado para uma determinada situação.					
2.	O meu líder modifica a sua abordagem de liderança quando ocorrem eventos inesperados.					
3.	O meu líder alterna entre estilos de liderança diretiva e partilhada, consoante as exigências da situação.					
4.	O meu líder procura compreender as necessidades dos membros da equipa e ajusta as suas respostas em conformidade.					
5.	O meu líder adapta o seu estilo de liderança com base nas necessidades dos membros da equipa.					
6.	O meu líder orienta a equipa perante dificuldades, ambiguidade e situações de elevada complexidade.					
7.	O meu líder equilibra diferentes necessidades em conflito entre os vários stakeholders.					

8.	O meu líder responde de forma adequada a circunstâncias imprevistas ou desafios inesperados.					
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II. Principais desafios enfrentados por equipas multiculturais

Indique, por favor, o seu grau de concordância com cada uma das seguintes afirmações: (1) - Discordo totalmente; (2) - Discordo parcialmente; (3) - Indiferente; (4) - Concordo parcialmente; (5) - Concordo totalmente

Relacionado com principais desafios de equipas multiculturais		1	2	3	4	5
1.	A comunicação ineficaz e os mal-entendidos dificultam a colaboração eficaz dentro da equipa.					
2.	Diferenças nos estilos de trabalho e nas expectativas criam desafios na execução das tarefas e na gestão do projeto.					
3.	A intolerância e a falta de conhecimento sobre diversidade afetam negativamente a dinâmica da equipa e a inclusão.					
4.	A minha organização implementou estratégias eficazes para melhorar a comunicação em equipas multiculturais.					
5.	Ainda existem desafios não resolvidos na minha organização relativamente à gestão de equipas multiculturais.					
6.	Gerir equipas multiculturais apresenta dificuldades significativas para o alcance dos objetivos do projeto.					
7.	Uma equipa multicultural bem gerida contribui positivamente para o sucesso do projeto.					
8.	Em equipas multiculturais, o meu líder adapta eficazmente o seu estilo de liderança para abordar diferenças culturais e promover a colaboração.					

9.	O sucesso do nosso projeto depende significativamente da capacidade do nosso líder de se ajustar aos desafios multiculturais.					
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Gestor de Projeto (responsável pela gestão geral do projeto)/ Líder de Equipa (foco na liderança da equipa e no desempenho do grupo)/ Membro de Equipa:

IV. Perceção dos participantes relativamente ao sucesso dos projetos em que estiveram envolvidos

Para responder às perguntas desta secção, solicitamos que tenha em mente um projeto específico em que tenha participado e que envolveu a colaboração de membros de diferentes origens culturais.

Indique, por favor, o seu grau de concordância com cada uma das seguintes afirmações: (1) - Discordo totalmente; (2) - Discordo parcialmente; (3) - Indiferente; (4) - Concordo parcialmente; (5) - Concordo totalmente

Relacionado com gestão de projetos		1	2	3	4	5
1.	O projeto foi concluído dentro do prazo previsto.					
2.	O projeto foi concluído dentro orçamento previsto.					
3.	Os resultados do projeto satisfizeram os objetivos do cliente.					
4.	O projeto foi entregue com sucesso e aceitação qualificada.					
5.	O projeto conseguiu resolver a maioria dos problemas encontrados durante a execução.					
6.	O processo de execução do projeto foi satisfatório (ex.: boa organização, comunicação clara, colaboração eficaz, resolução adequada de problemas).					
7.	O projeto atendeu aos requisitos específicos do cliente, resultando na sua satisfação com os resultados obtidos.					

Obrigada!

As suas respostas ajudarão a compreender melhor o papel do estilo de liderança no sucesso de projetos multiculturais, em particular no que diz respeito à liderança servidora, liderança adaptativa e aos desafios enfrentados por equipas culturalmente diversas.

Annex 2 - Questionnaire

This questionnaire is part of a research project for the Master in Management at FEP, University of Porto. It aims to gather your opinion on the role of leadership style in the success of multicultural projects.

This study is anonymous, and all responses will be kept confidential and securely stored. Please answer honestly. There are no right or wrong answers.

The questionnaire takes approximately 5 minutes to complete and is divided into 3 parts. If you have any questions, please contact me by email: up202008143@up.pt.

Your contribution is very valuable. Thank you!

Sofia Saraiva

By proceeding, you confirm that you have read the information provided and agree to participate in this study.

I. General Information

What is your current job title?

- ☐ Project Manager (responsible for overall project management)
- ☐ Team Leader (focus on team leadership and group performance)
- ☐ Team Member

Project Manager (responsible for overall project management)/ Team Leader (focus on team leadership and group performance):

How many years of experience do you have in leadership roles within multicultural teams? _____

How many different national cultures are represented in your current team? _____

Please indicate how many members belong to each nationality in your team (e.g., 3 Portuguese, 2 Spanish, 1 Italian). _____

What is the total number of team members? _____

II. Assess Leadership Style

Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements: (1) - Strongly disagree; (2) - Disagree; (3) - Neither agree nor disagree; (4) - Agree; (5) - Strongly agree

Related to leadership styles		1	2	3	4	5
1.	My employees can tell if something work-related is going wrong.					
2.	I make my employees' career development a priority.					
3.	My employees can seek my help if they have a personal problem.					
4.	I emphasize the importance of giving back to the community.					
5.	I put my employees' best interests ahead of my own.					
6.	I give my employees the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way they feel is best.					
7.	I would not compromise ethical principles to achieve success.					

Related to adaptability in leadership styles		1	2	3	4	5
1.	I quickly understand which leadership behaviour is best suited to a given situation.					
2.	I modify my leadership approach when unexpected events occur.					
3.	I alternate between directive and shared leadership styles, depending on the demands of the situation.					
4.	I try to understand the needs of my team members and adjust my responses accordingly.					
5.	I adapt my leadership style based on the needs of the team members.					
6.	I guide my team through difficulties, ambiguity and highly complex situations.					
7.	I balance the different conflicting needs of the various stakeholders.					

8.	I respond appropriately to unforeseen circumstances or unexpected challenges.					
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III. Key challenges faced by multicultural teams

Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements: (1) - Strongly disagree; (2) - Disagree; (3) - Neither agree nor disagree; (4) - Agree; (5) - Strongly agree

Related to key challenges of multicultural teams		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Ineffective communication and misunderstandings hinder effective collaboration within the team.					
2.	Different working styles and expectations create challenges in teamwork and project execution.					
3.	Intolerance and lack of knowledge related to diversity negatively impact team dynamics and inclusivity.					
4.	My organization has implemented effective strategies to enhance communication in multicultural project teams.					
5.	There are still unresolved challenges in my organization regarding the management of multicultural project teams.					
6.	Managing multicultural project teams presents significant difficulties in achieving project objectives.					
7.	A well-managed multicultural project team contributes positively to project success.					
8.	In multicultural teams, I effectively adapt my leadership style to deal with cultural differences and promote collaboration.					
9.	I recognise that the success of the project depends significantly on my ability to adjust to multicultural challenges.					

Team Member:

How many different national cultures are represented in your current team?_____

Please indicate how many members belong to each nationality in your team (e.g., 3 Portuguese, 2 Spanish, 1 Italian)._____

What is the total number of team members?_____

II. Assess Leadership Style

Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements: (1) - Strongly disagree; (2) - Disagree; (3) - Neither agree nor disagree; (4) - Agree; (5) - Strongly agree

Related to leadership styles		1	2	3	4	5
1.	My leader can tell if something work-related is going wrong.					
2.	My leader makes my career development a priority.					
3.	I would seek help from my leader if I had a personal problem.					
4.	My leader emphasizes the importance of giving back to the community.					
5.	My leader puts my best interests ahead of his/her own.					
6.	My leader gives me the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way that I feel is best.					
7.	My leader would not compromise ethical principles in order to achieve success.					

Related to adaptability in leadership styles		1	2	3	4	5
1.	My leader quickly understands which leadership behaviour is most appropriate for a given situation.					

2.	My leader modifies his leadership approach when unexpected events occur.					
3.	My leader alternates between directive and shared leadership styles, depending on the demands of the situation.					
4.	My leader tries to understand the needs of the team members and adjusts his responses accordingly.					
5.	My leader adapts his leadership style based on the needs of the team members.					
6.	My leader guides the team through difficulties, ambiguity and highly complex situations.					
7.	My leader balances the different conflicting needs of the various stakeholders.					
8.	My leader responds appropriately to unforeseen circumstances or unexpected challenges.					

III. Key challenges faced by multicultural teams

Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements: (1) - Strongly disagree; (2) - Disagree; (3) - Neither agree nor disagree; (4) - Agree; (5) - Strongly agree

Related to key challenges of multicultural teams		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Ineffective communication and misunderstandings hinder effective collaboration within the team.					
2.	Different working styles and expectations create challenges in teamwork and project execution.					
3.	Intolerance and lack of knowledge related to diversity negatively impact team dynamics and inclusivity.					

4.	My organization has implemented effective strategies to enhance communication in multicultural project teams.					
5.	There are still unresolved challenges in my organization regarding the management of multicultural project teams.					
6.	Managing multicultural project teams presents significant difficulties in achieving project objectives.					
7.	A well-managed multicultural project team contributes positively to project success.					
8.	In multicultural teams, my leader effectively adapts his leadership style to address cultural differences and promote collaboration					
9.	The success of our project depends significantly on our leader's ability to adjust to multicultural challenges.					

Project Manager (responsible for overall project management)/ Team Leader (focus on team leadership and group performance)/ Team Member:

IV. Participants' perception of the success of the projects in which they were involved

To answer the questions in this section, we ask you to think of a specific project in which you have participated and which involved the collaboration of members from different cultural backgrounds.

Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements: (1) - Strongly disagree; (2) - Disagree; (3) - Neither agree nor disagree; (4) - Agree; (5) - Strongly agree

Related to project management		1	2	3	4	5
1.	The project was completed on schedule.					
2.	The project was completed on budget.					
3.	The results of the project met the client's objectives.					

4.	The project was successfully delivered with qualified acceptance.					
5.	The project managed to solve most of the problems encountered during implementation.					
6.	The project execution process was satisfactory (e.g. good organization, clear communication, effective collaboration, adequate problem solving).					
7.	The project met the client's specific requirements, resulting in their satisfaction with the results obtained.					

Thank you!

Your answers will help to better understand the role of leadership style in the success of multicultural projects, particularly with regard to servant leadership, adaptive leadership and the challenges faced by culturally diverse teams.

Annex 3 - Questions

Q1- My employees can tell if something work-related is going wrong. / My leader can tell if something work-related is going wrong.

Q2- I make my employees' career development a priority. / My leader makes my career development a priority.

Q3- My employees can seek my help if they have a personal problem. / I would seek help from my leader if I had a personal problem.

Q4- I emphasize the importance of giving back to the community. / My leader emphasizes the importance of giving back to the community.

Q5- I put my employees' best interests ahead of my own. / My leader puts my best interests ahead of his/her own.

Q6- I give my employees the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way they feel is best. / My leader gives me the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way that I feel is best.

Q7- I would not compromise ethical principles to achieve success. / My leader would not compromise ethical principles in order to achieve success.

Q8- I quickly understand which leadership behaviour is best suited to a given situation. / My leader quickly understands which leadership behaviour is most appropriate for a given situation.

Q9- I modify my leadership approach when unexpected events occur. / My leader modifies his leadership approach when unexpected events occur.

Q10- I alternate between directive and shared leadership styles, depending on the demands of the situation. / My leader alternates between directive and shared leadership styles, depending on the demands of the situation.

Q11- I try to understand the needs of my team members and adjust my responses accordingly. / My leader tries to understand the needs of the team members and adjusts his responses accordingly.

Q12- I adapt my leadership style based on the needs of the team members. / My leader adapts his leadership style based on the needs of the team members.

Q13- I guide my team through difficulties, ambiguity and highly complex situations. / My leader guides the team through difficulties, ambiguity and highly complex situations.

Q14- I balance the different conflicting needs of the various stakeholders. / My leader balances the different conflicting needs of the various stakeholders.

Q15- I respond appropriately to unforeseen circumstances or unexpected challenges. / My leader responds appropriately to unforeseen circumstances or unexpected challenges.

Q16- Ineffective communication and misunderstandings hinder effective collaboration within the team.

Q17- Different working styles and expectations create challenges in teamwork and project execution.

Q18- Intolerance and lack of knowledge related to diversity negatively impact team dynamics and inclusivity.

Q19- My organization has implemented effective strategies to enhance communication in multicultural project teams.

Q20- There are still unresolved challenges in my organization regarding the management of multicultural project teams.

Q21- Managing multicultural project teams presents significant difficulties in achieving project objectives.

Q22- A well-managed multicultural project team contributes positively to project success.

Q23- In multicultural teams, I effectively adapt my leadership style to deal with cultural differences and promote collaboration. / In multicultural teams, my leader effectively adapts his leadership style to address cultural differences and promote collaboration.

Q24- I recognise that the success of the project depends significantly on my ability to adjust to multicultural challenges. / The success of our project depends significantly on our leader's ability to adjust to multicultural challenges.

Q25- The project was completed on schedule.

Q26- The project was completed on budget.

Q27- The results of the project met the client's objectives.

Q28- The project was successfully delivered with qualified acceptance.

Q29- The project managed to solve most of the problems encountered during implementation.

Q30- The project execution process was satisfactory (e.g. good organization, clear communication, effective collaboration, adequate problem solving).

Q31- The project met the client's specific requirements, resulting in their satisfaction with the results obtained.

Annex 4 - Statistical Outputs of Hypothesis Testing

Teste T: duas amostras com variâncias desiguais		
	<i>SL Leaders</i>	<i>SL Members</i>
Média	4,16	3,73
Variância	0,25	0,76
Observações	10,00	24,00
Hipótese de diferença de média	0,00	
gl	28,00	
Stat t	1,81	
P(T<=t) uni-caudal	0,04	
t crítico uni-caudal	1,70	
P(T<=t) bi-caudal	0,08	
t crítico bi-caudal	2,05	

Teste T: duas amostras com variâncias desiguais		
	<i>AL Leaders</i>	<i>AL Members</i>
Média	4,28	3,66
Variância	0,10	0,96
Observações	10,00	24,00
Hipótese de diferença de média	0,00	
gl	31,00	
Stat t	2,74	
P(T<=t) uni-caudal	0,01	
t crítico uni-caudal	1,70	
P(T<=t) bi-caudal	0,01	
t crítico bi-caudal	2,04	

Teste T: duas amostras com variâncias desiguais		
	<i>MC Leadres</i>	<i>MC Members</i>
Média	3,00	3,00
Variância	0,03	0,14
Observações	10,00	24,00
Hipótese de diferença de média	0,00	
gl	31,00	
Stat t	0,00	
P(T<=t) uni-caudal	0,50	
t crítico uni-caudal	1,70	
P(T<=t) bi-caudal	1,00	
t crítico bi-caudal	2,04	

Teste T: duas amostras com variâncias desiguais		
	<i>PS Leaders</i>	<i>PS Members</i>
Média	4,26	4,27
Variância	0,48	0,44
Observações	10,00	24,00
Hipótese de diferença de média	0,00	
gl	16,00	
Stat t	-0,04	
P(T<=t) uni-caudal	0,48	
t crítico uni-caudal	1,75	
P(T<=t) bi-caudal	0,97	
t crítico bi-caudal	2,12	

SUMÁRIO DOS RESULTADOS								
<i>Estatística de regressão</i>								
R múltiplo	0,34							
Quadrado de R	0,11							
Quadrado de R ajustado	0,03							
Erro-padrão	0,65							
Observações	34,00							
ANOVA								
	<i>gl</i>	<i>SQ</i>	<i>MQ</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>F de significância</i>			
Regressão	3,00	1,65	0,55	1,29	0,30			
Residual	30,00	12,84	0,43					
Total	33,00	14,50						
	<i>Coefficientes</i>	<i>Erro-padrão</i>	<i>Stat t</i>	<i>valor P</i>	<i>95% inferior</i>	<i>95% superior</i>	<i>Inferior 95,0%</i>	<i>Superior 95,0%</i>
Interceptar	4,27	0,11	37,36	0,00	4,03	4,50	4,03	4,50
AL_C	0,25	0,13	1,87	0,07	-0,02	0,53	-0,02	0,53
MC_C	0,21	0,37	0,56	0,58	-0,55	0,97	-0,55	0,97
X	0,05	0,44	0,12	0,91	-0,86	0,96	-0,86	0,96

SUMÁRIO DOS RESULTADOS								
<i>Estatística de regressão</i>								
R múltiplo	0,37							
Quadrado de R	0,14							
Quadrado de R ajustado	0,08							
Erro-padrão	0,63							
Observações	34,00							
ANOVA								
	<i>gl</i>	<i>SQ</i>	<i>MQ</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>F de significância</i>			
Regressão	2,00	2,02	1,01	2,51	0,10			
Residual	31,00	12,47	0,40					
Total	33,00	14,50						
	<i>Coefficientes</i>	<i>Erro-padrão</i>	<i>Stat t</i>	<i>valor P</i>	<i>95% inferior</i>	<i>95% superior</i>	<i>Inferior 95,0%</i>	<i>Superior 95,0%</i>
Interceptar	3,04	0,56	5,48	0,00	1,91	4,18	1,91	4,18
SL_score	0,24	0,21	1,12	0,27	-0,20	0,67	-0,20	0,67
AL_Score	0,08	0,19	0,40	0,69	-0,32	0,47	-0,32	0,47

SUMÁRIO DOS RESULTADOS								
<i>Estatística de regressão</i>								
R múltiplo	0,76							
Quadrado de R	0,58							
Quadrado de R ajustado	0,57							
Erro-padrão	0,58							
Observações	34,00							
ANOVA								
	<i>gl</i>	<i>SQ</i>	<i>MQ</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>F de significância</i>			
Regressão	1,00	14,94	14,94	44,42	0,00			
Residual	32,00	10,76	0,34					
Total	33,00	25,70						
	<i>Coefficientes</i>	<i>Erro-padrão</i>	<i>Stat t</i>	<i>valor P</i>	<i>95% inferior</i>	<i>95% superior</i>	<i>Inferior 95,0%</i>	<i>Superior 95,0%</i>
Interceptar	0,60	0,50	1,21	0,24	-0,41	1,61	-0,41	1,61
SL_score	0,84	0,13	6,67	0,00	0,58	1,10	0,58	1,10